

the *Fanbelt*

new jersey association of CORVAIR enthusiasts



The Beach House Needs a Little Work

See the interesting story behind this house (which has almost nothing to do with Corvairs) beginning on Page 2.

It's a Drag!

Corvairs Go Racing with the VW Club

See the story on Page 2



Motorcyclepedia Tour
Sunday, April 30
-- see inside --

The Fanbelt is published monthly by the New Jersey Association of Corvair Enthusiasts (NJACE), Inc. P.O. Box 631, Ridgewood, NJ 07451. Deadline for contribution is the 20th of each month. Classified-style advertising of interest to Corvair owners is available, free of charge, to all persons. A commercial ad can be placed in an issue of the *Fanbelt* for \$50 per full page, \$30 per half page, \$20 per quarter page, and \$10.00 per business-card. (Generally, classified advertisers are those offering individual cars and/or a limited number of parts, while commercial advertisers are those offering services and/or parts from stock. NJACE reserves the right to make this determination). All advertising must be PC-compatible or type-able copy. NJACE is a chapter of the Corvair Society of America (CORSA), Inc., P.O. Box 607, Lemont, IL 60439. Meetings of NJACE are held periodically at locations and times as announced in this newsletter. All interested persons are welcome. Additional events and activities are held throughout the year. Membership in NJACE is open to individuals and families. Information and applications are available at any meeting or by writing to NJACE, P.O. Box 631, Ridgewood, NJ 07451, or by visiting www.corvair.org/chapters/njace.

The "Air Raid" Drag Races

by Al Lacki

On Sunday, April 9th, the Central New Jersey Volkswagen Society arranged bracket races for VW Beetles and other cars with air-cooled engines, Corvairs included, at Island Dragway in Great Meadows, New Jersey. A few of us Corvair guys joined in the fun.



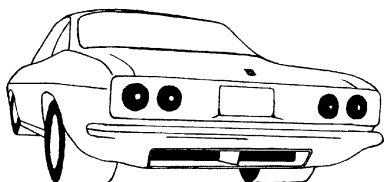
Of course, there were other kinds of cars at the strip that day, ranging from tiny trikes with snowmobile engines to all-out 1,000 horsepower rails.

My best quarter-mile run was 18.614 seconds at 72.69 miles per hour. No, not blazing fast, but not bad for a Corvair.



Al Lacki's 1966 Monza (left) edges ahead of Brian O'Neill's 1965 Corsa at the "Air Raid" drag races on April 9th.

Front page photo and this photo by Dan Schmidt.



The Rampside at the "Hepburn House"

by Bob Marlow

Six miles from our home in Lavallette stands the house in the photo on the first page, a dilapidated and rickety-looking beachfront house in the barrier island town of Mantoloking. To everyone in the area, it is a reminder of the damage wrought by Hurricane Sandy, primarily because it is the only damaged property that has not been razed or rehabilitated.



No one seems to know why this house remains as it is, but there is an accompanying story surrounding the property that is fascinating, to a greater or lesser degree, to the locals: Everyone calls it the "Hepburn House," because, as the story goes, it is where movie icons Katharine Hepburn and Spencer Tracy retreated to spend time away from public scrutiny.

That is about as much in the way of fact that appears to be available. There is no evidence that either Hepburn or Tracy ever owned the house, and the current owners, apparently a development company, aren't talking on the subject to anyone. So it remains a conversation piece along the NJ Route 35 oceanfront.

That conversation shifts from the unsubstantiated Hepburn-Tracy story to the puzzle as to why the house remains in as-damaged condition. Prior to what is now called "Superstorm Sandy" striking New Jersey in October of 2012 the house was already falling into disrepair, and since the storm the only significant activity on the property has been the removal of a garage that was in worse shape post-storm than the house.

There has been some vigilance about shooping trespassers and curiosity-seekers from the property, which is why my photo of the Rampside in the driveway was a quick in-and-out operation on the most recent sunny day. It strikes me as odd – as it does virtually everyone else – that so little has been done to secure the property from a safety standpoint and so little

done in all other respects as well.

The oceanfront land on which the house sits, if neighboring lots are to be a guide, is worth several million dollars, which only deepens the mystery of why it sits disused. A year ago a person claiming to be a member of the family of those who own the property posted a message online stating, "There are several mitigating circumstances as to why this home has not been demolished," but offering no further specifics.

So it sits, photographed by me and by countless others traveling on Route 35 each day.

By the way, this house is not to be confused with Katharine Hepburn's magnificent waterfront home in Fenwick, Connecticut, which the actress built in 1939 after the "New England Express" hurricane demolished the family home on that site. Most recently that home was on the market for some \$28 million.



Katharine Hepburn, who enjoyed a 67-year film career and who earned 12 Oscar nominations, died at age 96 in 2003. Spencer Tracy, whose own show business career spanned over 40 years and garnered him nine Oscar nominations, died at age 67 in 1967. Hepburn and Tracy made nine movies together, and their unorthodox personal relationship – Tracy was married but separated – lasted 27 years.



President's Message

by Brian O'Neill

What? No gas pedal!

Corvairs and Corvair people have been a big part of my life for many years now. It's been a great relationship. But lately something else has been getting a lot of my attention. No, I'm not giving up on Corvairs.

The new attraction is a 1913 Ford Model T.



This unique vehicle was donated to my local historical society about one year ago. It was owned by a local dentist, who inherited it from his father. The father was the real car guy. The dentist didn't do much with the car and knew very little about it. When he donated it, he said it was in perfect condition and had run just a couple of years ago.

Surprise! It wasn't perfect. So far three other historical society members and myself have formed a working group to bring this car back to a roadworthy condition. The Gang of Four as we refer to ourselves has discovered and overcome quite a number of issues.

The very first thing we had to deal with was a gas tank in which gasoline had turned to pure shellac. We did some research and discovered that a new tank could be had for slightly over \$100. Located under the front seat, it is held down with two bolts and would've been very simple to change. So we ordered a new one and waited for its delivery. And waited, and waited, and waited some more.

After numerous phone calls and e-mail messages, the truth was out. It seems that all five of the major companies in the United States that deal in Model T parts got their replacement tanks from the same supplier. The supplier was a small one-man operation and when he retired and stop making the tanks that was the end of it. Many hours of cleaning with some harsh chemicals finally broke up the molasses.

That was just the start of it. Next, we discovered the radiator leaked and was beyond repair. A new radiator was close to \$1500. Fortunately, we found a very good used one for only a couple of hundred dollars. After that was installed, we discovered the next leak was the cylinder head gasket. So off came the head and a new gasket installed.

While all this was going on, we did get to drive the car little bit only to discover an as-yet unresolved issue with the steering. As we accelerate and reach about 20 miles an hour both front wheels begin to vibrate violently and try to rip the steering wheel out of your hands. So much so that if you're not careful it will break your fingers. A completely rebuilt front suspension has not cured the problem. We have even imported a Model T expert from Pennsylvania of all places. Although he has been working on Model T's since the early 1960s, he's not sure what causes this problem.

Just the other day we discovered that on both the intake and exhaust manifolds, the Model T uses a combination of a flat gasket and things that are very similar to the exhaust doughnuts on a Corvair engine. We have ordered new ones and will be installing them next week.

Driving this car takes great concentration. All of us are so used to operating the clutch with our left foot and the gas pedal with the right foot and using whichever foot is more comfortable for us on the brake. Well, in a Model T there is not really a clutch. This pedal is used to shift between high and low gear. But before it works a lever on the driver's left side has to be moved forward. When that is done, and the driver pushes this pedal all the way down the transmission is in low gear. Letting the pedal all the way up gets you into high gear. There is no gas pedal. There is a lever on the steering column which you move as you accelerate. I can't tell you how many times I stepped on why I thought was the clutch pedal only to put the car in gear. What a thrill!

So, I'm not giving up on Corvairs. They are still my first love but this Model T has given me a great appreciation for the engineers and technicians involved in inventing the automobile as we know it today.

Activities

by David Hunter,
Activities VP



On Sunday, April 30, we will be traveling to **Motorcyclopedia**, an 85,000-sq ft museum in Newburgh, New York, featuring over 500 Motorcycles from 1897 onward.

Several galleries include the Indian Timeline (with an Indian for every year in production), Harley-Davidson, Choppers, Police and Military Motorcycles, and more. There are even two Walls of Death, or Motordromes, set up on the lower floor. There is also a small section of Japanese and British motorcycles.

For this trip we will meet at I-87 northbound - Mile Marker 33 - Ramapo Plaza - Between Exits 16 (Woodbury Toll Barrier) & 15A (Suffern Rt 17N) around 11:00 and depart around 11:30. From the rest stop, there will be a caravan to the museum. The drive from the rest stop is about 35 miles. We'll arrive at the museum around 12:15. Admission is \$11.00 dollars per adult (tax included). Ages 3 -12 are \$5.00 and under 3 are free.

Following the museum visit we'll go to Billy Joe's Ribworks, a restaurant overlooking the river. Entrées are around \$12.00 - \$17.00. The interior is rustic, with a stuffed goat with sunglasses and a hat hanging on the wall. We have made reservations for up to thirty people, but we need to confirm the count – **please call Tim Schwartz at 201-447-4299, or send him an email at tim@bristolnj.com to let him know if you'll be joining us at the restaurant.**

The weather should be nice in late April and other attractions include the Riggio Galleries museum, across the river in Beacon, which houses the Dia Art Foundation's collection of art from the 1960s to the present. There is a ferry terminal in Beacon, or the walkway across the Hudson in Poughkeepsie, which is a 2.6 miles roundtrip walk.

Tech Session Update

by Larry Ashley

Do-over!

The weather for last month's tech session wasn't awful, but it was too wet and sloppy for Curt Stone to be expected to drive his 1969 convertible the 90 miles from his home in Cherry Hill to the body shop. So last month we instead did some work on Brian O'Neill's race engine, and this month we'll tackle Curt's job.

Curt's car has the typical oil leaks that plague Corvairs and the plan is to do, at the very least, the push rod O-rings. The plan is to do it on the lift, so the drivetrain can remain in the car and it is much easier than on the floor of the shop where you can never get the car high enough.

With the right tools (Brian has what is needed for the job) the job will be much easier. A lot of damage can be done to the tubes when not removed properly. In spite of that, if any don't come out willingly, or are damaged, I do have an inventory of them. I have been dismantling and parting out engines for a while, so I do have them in stock.

Also this month we will R&R the fuel tank sending unit in Ron Zielensky's 1962 convertible. Both of these tasks are jobs that everyone's Corvair needs sooner or later, so come on out and learn, lend a hand, and enjoy the pizza lunch.

As usual we will meet at Ashley's Auto Body immediately after the breakfast meeting on Saturday, May 6. See you there!



274 Hillside Ave, Flanders, NJ 07836



This month we welcome new members Robert and Pamela Newell, from Westfield. The Newells own a 1964 Spyder convertible and Robert notes, "I look forward to meeting the group." We look forward to meeting you, too!

NJACE Calendar of Events

Sunday, April 30

Driving Tour to Motorcyclepedia in Newburg, NY – details on page 4.

Saturday, May 6

Monthly breakfast at the Empire Diner, Rt. 46, Parsippany, 9 AM.

Saturday, May 6

Tech Session at Ashley's Auto Body, Hillside Avenue, Flanders, immediately following the breakfast. Topics are replacement of pushrod tube O-rings and fuel tank sender.

Sunday, May 7

66th Annual Spring Meet Car Show sponsored by the New Jersey Region of the Antique Automobile Club of America, at the Mennen Arena, 161 East Hanover Avenue, Morristown. Details at <http://njregion.aaca.com/2017-spring-meet>

Sunday, May 28

42nd Annual "Motorama" Car Show presented by the Jersey Lakeland Region of the Vintage Chevrolet Club of America, at the High Mountain Middle School ball field, 515 High Mountain Road in North Haledon. This year's Feature Car is the Camaro. More details at <http://clubs.hemmings.com/jlrveca/>

Saturday, June 3

Monthly breakfast at Bucky's on the Lake, Picatinny Arsenal, 9 AM.

Three to Go ...Literally

The good news: Everyone has renewed their membership.

The bad news: Except for three. So it is our sad duty to report that the following three members will be dropped from our membership roster:

Monica Pearson
Matt Posthumus
Joseph Valentino, Jr.

But wait! Isn't there something that can be done to stay these executions? Well, yes, there is. These soon-to-be-former members can still renew, without penalty, by using the renewal form sent with any of the recent newsletters or as found under the [Join Us](#) tab on our club web site,

<https://www.corvair.org/chapters/njace/>

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NJACE Classifieds for May, 2017

I have decided to put my 1966 Ermine White Monza up for sale to make room in my garage for my next air-cooled rear engine project (more news on the new project later!) I have enjoyed restoring / working on the Corvair and it has introduced me to a new group of friends / like-minded individuals through NJACE. It would be great if another club member would assume ownership and I am willing to be quite open-minded for a club member with regards to pricing.

A few facts about the car:

- I have all of the original paperwork including bill of sale and maintenance records for the car along with receipts for all of the replacement parts from Clark's;
- The odometer reads just shy of 27,000 original miles;
- The car is in excellent condition with almost no rust – the only issue is a dent on the driver's side door;
- It is a four-speed which now shifts like butter thanks to a recent tech session w/ the club;
- 95 hp engine which has recently been tuned and runs strong;
- The interior is original and in excellent condition with the exception of a tear in the driver's seat – I have a replacement cover which I have not installed;
- The tires are in excellent condition as well.

I usually drive it to the monthly breakfast meetings if the weather is nice. Asking \$6900, willing to negotiate if a NJACE member is interested.

Hakan (Doc) Kutlu, phone 973-978-1942, email hkutlu@optonline.net, Mendham.



***A Press Release
received from the
International Motor Racing
Research Center:***

WATKINS GLEN, N.Y. (April 19, 2017) – Sports car racing legend, engineer and innovator John Cooper Fitch will be the subject of a Center Conversations talk May 6 at the International Motor Racing Research Center.

"The Exciting Life of John C. Fitch" will be presented at 1 p.m. by Fitch historian and archivist Lawrence W. Berman and Fitch friend Bob Sirna.

Fitch's 1966 Corvair-based Phoenix prototype will be on display for the talk. It is expected to arrive at the Center next week.

The talk is sponsored in part by the Watkins Glen Area Chamber of Commerce, and is open to all. The Racing Research Center is located at 610 S. Decatur St., Watkins Glen, N.Y.

A \$5 donation for admission is requested to help defray costs.

The talk will be live-streamed at www.youtube.com/user/IMRRC/live or via the Center's website at www.racingarchives.org/stream/. The talk also will be archived on the Center's YouTube channel to watch in the future.

The Racing Research Center, a motorsports archival and research library, houses a significant collection of Fitch materials, including his own archives donated late last year by his sons, John, Christopher and Stephen Fitch. Berman facilitated the donation.

"We are delighted to have Larry Berman, a leading expert on Fitch's career, and Bob Sirna, who traveled for many years with Fitch, provide their unique perspectives on his remarkable life and contributions to racing," Head Archivist Jenny Ambrose said.

"Their beautifully illustrated presentation will be part of a larger celebration of Fitch's life and will serve as the opening event for the Center's new exhibition on Fitch. Featuring selections from the Center's extensive Fitch collections, the exhibition will include his goggles and racing helmet, trophies from his racing victories and portraits by noted motorsports photographer Jesse Alexander. Photographs, papers and ephemera reflecting Fitch's diverse interests and accomplishments will also be

displayed," Ambrose said.

Fitch established his collection at the IMRRC in 1999 with the donation of papers relating to his engineering career as a safety designer and consultant, with particular emphasis on the Fitch Inertial Barrier and the displaceable guardrail.

Other donors have added to the Fitch materials over the years.

Fitch died on Oct. 31, 2012, at the age of 95.

"John Fitch lived an exciting, storied and full life. We will attempt to hit the highlights of an amazing career which included fighter pilot, race car driver, race and highway safety specialist, fuel catalyst inventor and many more," Berman said. "In reviewing his many accomplishments, one would have to conclude that it was an honor and a privilege to have been considered his friend."

The Fitch Collection includes correspondence, technical reports and publicity and sales materials relating to the Corvair-powered Fitch Phoenix. The one-off car is now owned by Charles Mallory of Connecticut, who has generously placed it on display at the Center.

Fitch became the first Sports Car Club of America (SCCA) National Champion in 1951, claimed a victory at the 12 Hours of Sebring in 1953, won his class in the Mille Miglia in Italy in 1955 and was awarded a Golden Jubilee Tourist Trophy at Dundrod in Northern Ireland the same year. He won five major international road races, including the first Buenos Aires Grand Prix in Argentina in 1951.

He participated in almost 140 races on three continents, from the first post-World War II road race at Bridgehampton in 1949 to his last professional race at Sebring in 1966.

Fitch's work as an inventor was extensive. His most well-known innovations include the inertial barriers, barrels that protect drivers from dangerous hazards at exit ramps and bridge abutments; the Driver Safety Capsule, a compartment in a race car that surrounds and protects drivers in the event of a collision; and his devices and treatments for improving fuel economy in cars and ships.

For more information about the work of the International Motor Racing Research Center, visit the website www.racingarchives.org.

