

# NSW CORVETTES

unlimited car club inc.

PUT THE *"STING"* BACK INTO LIFE



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NOVEMBER 2020

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<b>NOV</b>	<b>2020</b>	
<b>Saturday 14th</b>	Northern Run – Organised by Peter Cox Please contact Peter on 0438 323 744. Spaces are limited.	<b>CRN17/20</b>
<b>Thursday 19th</b>	Codger Run – Organised by Peter Cox Please contact Peter on 0438 323 744. Spaces are limited.	<b>CRN18/20</b>
<b>28<sup>th</sup> November</b>	Christmas/40 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Lunch Ettalong Diggers Club – Cost \$51.50 per person Please contact Mandy by 7 <sup>th</sup> November on 0409-668-341.	<b>CE11/20</b>
<b>DEC</b>	<b>2020</b>	
<b>Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>CLUB MEETING – CURRENTLY ON HOLD</b> Brighton Lakes Recreation & Golf Club – 43 Brickmakers Drive, Moorebank. Committee Meeting starts at 6.00pm. Dinner from 6.30pm. General Meeting starts at 8.00pm. All Welcome.	<b>CM11/20</b>
<b>Sunday 6th</b>	Soar & Roar – Eastern Creek - TBA	<b>CE12/20</b>
<b>Sunday 13th</b>	Breakfast Run- Organised by Mandy Caprin Please contact Mandy on 0409-668-341. Spaces are limited.	<b>CE13/20</b>
<b>Thursday 17th</b>	Codger Run – Organised by Peter Cox Please contact Peter on 0438 323 744. Spaces are limited.	<b>CRN19/20</b>

**PLEASE NOTE: DUE TO THE CURRENT SOCIAL DISTANCING RULES AND GOVERNMENT RESTRICTIONS, RUNS MAY CHANGE SLIGHTLY AS RESTRICTIONS ARE UPDATED. FOR UPDATES ON CLUB MEETINGS, CHECK THE WEBSITE OR FACEBOOK.**

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## Executive Committee

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Doug



Mandy



Cathy



Charlie



Vicki



Ray



Margaret



♦ Founded 1980 ♦

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Corvette Club Maryland U.S.A.*

## CLUB ADDRESS

NSW Corvettes Unlimited Car Club Inc.

PO Box 1044

GREEN VALLEY NSW 2168

## MEETINGS

1ST TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH

**The New Brighton Golf Club**

43 Brickmakers Drive Moorebank

Meetings commence at 8.00 pm

*All members, children and visitors welcome*

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CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME

Contact Editor

**Deadline for reports and articles  
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meeting night.**

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Please note EFT payments can be made to Club's official account which is  
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Steve



Geoff



Bob



Jorge



Paul

## LIFE MEMBERS:

Maurie Mouyat, Steve Busutil, Frank Rejtano,  
Stephen Browne, Les Teefy

# president - Message



## ***Hello Members,***

While our community is starting to come to grips with how our future will be with the underlying threat of Covid 19, we all need to practice the basic hygiene principles. I believe that we are in for the long haul with this challenge. Be diligent and take no chances.

We have had a committee meeting this month, I thank our Club VP and partner Tony and Lynn Charlton for convening the meeting at their home. As things stand at present the club meetings will not be re-established until our usual meeting rooms become available. I'm informed by the staff at New Brighton that there are no plans at present to re-open the meeting rooms. Members will be informed of any changes in that position as soon as we know.

You will see a number of runs being put forward and I sincerely trust that there will be good numbers attending while taking the required covid related precautions.

In the last few months we have had a number of new members join the club, I hope to get to meet you all in the near future, perhaps at the Christmas Run which is looking to be a good opportunity for members to get out in their 'vettes, as this year it is a day time event. If the covid regulations don't change I'm hoping to see as many of you on the run as possible.

**Bob Fitzsimmons**



Maurie Mouyat  
Paul Tullock  
Derek Cunningham  
Maureen Fitzsimmons  
Mark Jarman  
Wayne Fisher  
Bernard Dawe  
Christopher Gullo  
Joe Sammour  
John Natoli





Hello Everyone and hope you're all well,

We attended a Breakfast run organised by Mandy during October at Mulgoa. Unfortunately we couldn't stay too long, but long enough to have breakfast and a catch up with fellow members as it clashed with Bathurst and most were keen to travel home to watch the Race. Thanks Mandy for getting us out of the house!

We also managed to hold a committee meeting at a private residence on 11 October 2020. A decision arising from that meeting was in regard to Historic Plate allocation/registration. As you may well know the discussion around Historic Plates within our club has been an ongoing merry-go-round for the past few years at committee/members meetings. Your committee has started the process of clarifying how Historic Plate rules and registration will be implemented in the future. Firstly, the 3 run /event / meeting rule, has now been abandoned. This will greatly advantage our members who live outside the Sydney/Central Coast areas who found it difficult to attend the now defunct mandatory 3 run /event / meeting rule. However we would still encourage all members old and new to attend as many runs/events as they can, as we would still like to meet and greet all our NSW Corvette members from all parts of NSW.

Cheers everyone,

**Tony**



## Secretary's Report - Belinda

*Hi Car Clubbers,*

Once again due to the current state of COVID 19 restrictions, the monthly meetings have been put on hold, however, we will continue to collaborate and get the magazine to you.

Just a reminder, if you haven't already renewed your membership, please do so ASAP.

### *Guess who is turning 40?*

Yes, NSW CORVETTE UNLIMITED CAR CLUB has hit a milestone. Hoping to see as many of you as possible at our luncheon as per the events Calendar.

Over the past months of lock-down, we have many new members, I would like to WELCOME you to our social network.

*New Members over the past 6 months:*

*Leon Hagel*

*Tony Christie*

*Rick Thomas*

*Anthony Euston*

*Ian Charker*

*Joe Sammour*

*John Natoli*

*Michael Turner*

*Les Sorm*

*Nikola Radmanovic*

*Doug Zipevski*

*Frank Nashaty*

*Bill Crealy*

*Joe Zappia*

*Leigh Johnston*

*Mark Estephan*

# CRUISING WITH THE CODGERS IN OCTOBER

It's easy for plans not to work but Northerners are good at adapting to new situations so when we have to make changes everyone stays cool and the general attitude is that's - OK just show us where to go ...

This month we were joined by Bo and Tina who cruised up over the Hawkesbury, Jean and Pete who were giving 'The Road Warrior' a workout, The Barrets running in the Stingervette, Col Clarke who likes to take our pics and Wayne and Wilma in the yellow C6. Some of our other regulars were Absent With Leave..... sometimes you just can't get those appointments when you want them to leave you alone on cruising days!

We cruised along Hue Hue Road and on to Canton Beach at Toukley to enjoy fresh air, coffee and views of the water and the hills before rolling on to the picnic area on Lake Munmorah at Budgewoi for lunch.

Stuart was parking the C4 when a young lady started shouting at him for interrupting her Zoom conference with a few gentle revs while he was parking next to her. Of course Stu couldn't hear what she was saying but things soon quietened down and we all gathered at the BBQ closest to the black swans to enjoy some friendly chit chat. About this time ED and Ree arrived to join us for lunch too. Once again a very happy gathering was enjoyed by all.

The date for the November Codgers will be **Thursday 19th November**. The Commencement point will be the Ourimbah Interchange, meeting at 9-45am for a 10-00am start. At this stage the itinerary is so secret even I don't know the details. But all will be revealed in the usual way as soon as possible so keep the date and check for the plan !!!!!!!

We are also looking at Saturday 14th November for a weekend run. The details will be out very soon Northerners.

Check the date for the Club's Christmas gathering which will also be the 40th Anniversary of the foundation of the Club. As it is marked down for Ettalong it will be simple for us to attend. Please support Mandy for the work she has put in to this.

J & P are staying at the Mantra which is part of the Ettalong Diggers complex. See you there!!! Saturday 28th November

The Date for the last 2020 Codgers will be Thursday 17th December. More later

Hope to see you somewhere on the road soon

Cheers

**Pete 0438 323 744**



COME JOIN US FOR OUR  
**NSW CORVETTE  
CHRISTMAS  
40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY  
CELEBRATION**

*At ETTALONG DIGGERS CLUB*

*12.30pm*

*SATURDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER*

*COST \$51.50 PER PERSON.*

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*BY 7<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER*



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# A Corvette Story

By Warrewyk Williams



## The Prologue

### *Was this such a good idea?*

The tyres felt sort of square, the horn didn't work; unfortunately, I discovered this approaching a roundabout about two seconds after realising the brakes were not quite what they used to be, and just to rub salt in the wounds the damn radio sounded terrible because the automatic aerial wouldn't do its automatic thing and raise!

This is the price one pays for not using one's Corvette! And Port Macquarie suddenly seemed like a long way away.

## The Past

I'd wanted a Corvette ever since I first spotting a picture of the "new" 1974 Corvette in a car magazine whilst at school. I think it was that picture that developed my interest in cars and the fascination never left. I remember when the 1980 Corvette was released thinking the front and rear design changes were improvements that made the car even more appealing to me.



Many years later, in 1993, I decided the time had finally come. I'd saved my dollars and was ready with cash to buy my chosen vehicle. Not wanting to make a mistake by buying a dud I thought it best to contact the Corvette club and see if there were any tips I could obtain to ensure I bought the best vehicle possible.

In the back of the Unique Cars Magazine was a Club Guide and there listed was a phone number for NSW Corvettes Unlimited. Ringing the number one evening I found myself talking to a very animated voice belonging to the then Club President, Mr Stephen Browne.

Before I knew it, I had agreed to attend a club meeting at Auburn RSL club on a Tuesday night. Naturally I convinced my wife, Carmel, she needed to attend and so with my mother looking after our very young children both under 2 years old we hopped into our trusty Leyland P76 and headed to Auburn. (Why a P76? That's why I could afford a Corvette – and the bonnet happened to open the same way too.)

At the meeting it was clear there were some real characters in the club, Steve Browne, Chief among them. We were introduced to many members and very often the first question we'd be asked is what year model did we have? Now my Leyland P76 happened to be built in 1974 build so I just said, "1974" but when I answered, "Four point four" to the big block or small block question, I had to divulge the fact that our '74 was actually a P76.

This didn't perturb us from occasionally attending the odd meeting and even a couple of weekend runs until we finally bit the bullet and joined the club as official members in 1995, albeit still with a Leyland P76.

In fact, I was still driving the P76 when we attended the 1995 Christmas Party where I played Santa Claus (who arrived in Paul & Kathy Tullock's Mustang - of all cars).

I was still driving the P76 when we attending the South Coast festival with the club including the circuit of honour around the arena.

I was still driving a P76 when elected secretary of the club! And I was still driving a P76 every time I went to look at a Corvette for sale.

By this stage I'd learned a fair bit about Corvettes courtesy of various members who had become great friends and of course Steve Browne who had so often kindly accompanied me to look at quite a few possible purchases, but no matter how I tried, I just couldn't find the right 1974 or 1981 'Vette for me.

One month the Club magazine arrived and in it was a story by a member, Jeff Wilson, who had finally managed to get his 1981 Corvette on the road. The story just resonated with me and inspired me to double my efforts ultimately resulting in Carmel and I driving to Figtree (down Wollongong way) to view a two tone 1981 model.

The beige/dark metallic bronze two tone automatic Corvette coupe actually looked good, though there were a few stone chips and some other issues. I was very pleased it had most of the factory options fitted I desired and though I originally wanted a manual, after a test drive and a bit of negotiation I agreed on a price and the owner even said I could take it with me as he knew who I was (club membership paid off here).

## A Corvette Story (cont'd)



The day of the purchase

I'll admit I probably should have had "Browney" with me on this occasion as after my excitement had abated (and I removed the rose coloured glasses a few days later) I realised that the steering column didn't exactly feel solidly mounted and the speedo didn't work and the other instruments didn't actually work (aside from the tacho and oil pressure gauge) and the heater didn't work and the A/C was non-existent and the radio was dead and in fact the engine had a miss and... I thought I was in trouble – expensive trouble.

Again, the club came to the rescue as I was put in touch with a company called Corvette Action and a gentleman named Tex Carnegie who after an inspection agreed to undertake the reconversion of my Corvette.

The main problem was the botched RHD conversion attempt that had essentially destroyed the steering column, dash, heater core, vents and glovebox and more and Tex needed these in order to complete the job.

Now Tex was a big guy and a member of the Black Uhlands Motorcycle Club. The day I dropped my car off he turned up to work on his Harley looking every bit a Black Uhlan. Was this the right guy for the job I wondered?

Either way he was very polite and said I was free to drop in any time to see how the work was progressing and a week later I did just that. It was a shock to see the "Cappuccino Chupa Chup", as my 'Vette had been nicknamed, in such a state of disassembly. However, if I had any doubts about Tex's attention to detail they were relieved when I saw the seats carefully wrapped in plastic with the car's various nuts and bolts in zip-lock bags and all carefully labelled.



What a mess. The reconversion.

Meanwhile I still needed to locate some parts and I figured this was not going to be an easy task. However, in 1998 the spirit of Zora Arkus Duntov, must have been smiling on me as I did the first logical thing anyone would do and approached Ian King Chevrolet, a local wrecker only a five-minute drive from where I lived.

## A Corvette Story (cont'd)

When I asked for Corvette parts, at first, I was told they didn't normally stock Corvette but, as luck would have it, half a car had come in with a job lot they'd bought recently from the US and then added, as if it was a problem, "it was left-hand drive". No problem, bring forth the parts!

Low and behold, even more fortuitously, the half a car was a 1981 model Corvette the same as mine and I was offered the dash and other bits for the ridiculously cheap sum of \$150. I couldn't believe my luck and I was more than prepared to hand over the cash as soon as I saw the crash pad and glove box lid, however the guy serving me said I guess you might just as well take the other bits and subsequently brought out a full set of instruments, centre console bezel, steering column, vents, fuel filler cap and flap, rear lights and even the vin tag – which was for a dark metallic bronze Corvette only five numbers further down the production line than my car! Eureka!

The reconversion took nearly seven weeks, Tex said it would have been much easier and quicker to convert a LHD car, but when I got the call to say, "Your Corvette is ready to go", I couldn't wait to see my car again – mind you had visited it every week up until then!

The drive home was a joy. Tex had done everything he said and everything worked even the air conditioning. The only thing that bugged me was the passenger side sun visor had no vanity mirror - admittedly I'd been pre warned about this as left hand visors in RHD Corvettes were usually not converted or as in my case, simply replaced with a plain visor offering no mirror. However and small price to pay for being able to drive a fully functional Corvette of my own.

The Cappuccino Chupa Chup attended many club meetings, club runs and National Corvette events and through this car I met many wonderful people, even on occasion, "Corvette Royalty", like Dave McLellan - Chief Design Engineer from 1975 to 1992, Dave Hill - Chief Engineer for the C5 and C6, John Cafaro - Chief Designer for the C5, Dick Guldstrand – Racing Driver, John Lingenfelter – NRHA Driver, Mike Yager - Mid America Motorworks and more.

In fact it was Mike Yager who I met at a Corvette dinner in Monterey, California in 2002, who had a RHD passenger sun visor made specially for my car so Carmel could finally use the light-up vanity mirror and that "wrong" sun visor finally stopped bugging me!



*Convention Drive Day at Holden's test track, Lang Lang in 2004*

However, the people Carmel and I consider Corvette Royalty are those that we met on a recent club weekend event at Port Macquarie. Not only did we meet old friends we made new ones too. What a great weekend, and many thanks Richard & Lynne Jagger for organising this event.

In retrospect, it was certainly with some regret that for the last eight years or so I had devoted so much of my time to work while my Corvette languished in a garage under a dust cover only being taken out once a year for its obligatory rego check.



*Corvette Royalty at Port Macquarie!*

## A Corvette Story (cont'd)

Somehow, I need to take back my weekends and spend a little more time at home with my family and a little less time interstate with Fujifilm so I can spend a little more time with our Cappuccino Chuppa Chup and the rest of the Corvette Royalty in NSW Corvettes Unlimited.

Maybe something good did come out of this COVID craziness?



*The Cappuccino Chupa Chup at Timbertown, Wauchope (Not Africa)*

### The Epilogue

As the Corvette ate up the miles on the Pacific Highway heading to Port Macquarie the tyres had rounded themselves, the brakes returned, heck, even the aerial came back to life as did the horn. All my '81 'Vette wanted was to be driven or as Carmel said, as we passed the Taree turn off, "Our Corvette's happy again, it just needed a good run."

Now, I really have to ensure I do exactly that on a more regular basis, it's not only good for the car, it's even better for me.



### The Cappuccino Chupa Chup - A Short History

1981 Corvette Built at Bowling Green  
350ci, 190HP Engine  
3 Speed Turbo Hydra-Matic Automatic Transmission  
AU3 Power Door Locks  
A42 Power Driver's Seat  
CC1 Removable Glass Roof Panels  
C49 Rear Window Defogger  
DG7 Electric Sport Mirrors  
D84 Two Tone Paint Beige/Dark Metallic Bronze  
K35 Cruise Control  
N90 Aluminium Wheels  
UM6 AM-FM Radio electronically tuned stereo with cassette  
U75 power Antenna

Sold New by Stevenson Chevrolet, Golden, Colorado, USA

The fifth owner was an Australian exchange teacher working in Denver who brought the car back to Australia in 1993.

Unfortunately the original RHD conversion left the car in a drivable but incomplete state.

Car purchased in June, 1998 by present owner.

Reconverted September 1998 by Tex Carnegie at Corvette Action.

Original condition aside from:

- RHD conversion
- Remote Control concealed 12 CD Stacker mounted on a custom fabricated bracket fastened into the original LHD Accelerator mounting points. No new holes drilled. (Some people say I'm OCD.)
- Dual Exhaust system built to 1981 Corvette "Off Road" spec's.
- Custom made factory look Passenger Sun visor with light-up vanity mirror





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Total Months Repts			\$0.06	\$1,120.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,120.06
Closing balance			-\$20.00	\$1,120.00	-\$875.00	-\$90.00	-\$363.64	-\$432.05	\$8,095.72
1st Investment Acct	open	\$1,122.59	\$0.04						\$1,122.63
2nd Investment Acct		\$40,837.65	\$162.62						\$41,000.27
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# From the Trea\$ury

Please see copy of spreadsheet opposite, covering the completed month of September. For some reason, possibly I was pressing too many buttons, last month the unfinished September was printed – mistake, I try not to do the current month since this copy press is submitted sometimes weeks ahead of the months closing. However, I have updated the spreadsheet to reflect exact trading for September. The two Investment accounts are also up to date. Most trading over this period is virtually either magazine and postage costs or the receipt of renewals plus cost incurred with new members.

Our overall situation stands at \$50,218.62, helped up by \$162.62 on last report due to the account's accrual of Interest.

As I type monies for the Christmas function and the February weekend away are pouring in – two very promising events – please consider and get you monies and bookings in (call Events Co-ordinator Mandy).

Below is a re-print of the item posted on the Club's Forum, I've taken the time to reprint this, since its often pointed out to me by one of our long-term diligent members "that not everyone is on the Facebook or Forum or ..." so as a service to all.

"Members, just a quick note to advise that your Committee is always working in the background for you and the club as a whole. As you know the Golf Club is towing the NSW Government's hard line with Covid19 restrictions, but recently your committee met at a private home to discuss the status of future runs and some general business. One item discussed was H'plates, and the once requirement of three (3) runs, after discussion and a vote by all present that were allowed to vote – it was resolved by a significant majority that this club no longer requires compulsory runs by members on the H'plate scheme. (The Secretary took minutes as appropriate).

However, this is not the end of discussion on H'plates, although not finalised or voted on, I can advise that streamlining of H'plate applications and processing along with methods to record and track members' cars are in the process of being written up ready for approval. Some changes are to protect the Club, whilst others are to protect the individual plate holder. The streamlining of processing and recording of members' cars, is long overdue, and will assist your Club in moving forward in ever changing times.

If you have any thoughts or comments please stick them on the Forum or pm or email me, the Secretary, President or the Vice President. All of us will be happy to hear from members and will of course represent your ideas at the next meeting."

Regards, Doug, Treasurer.

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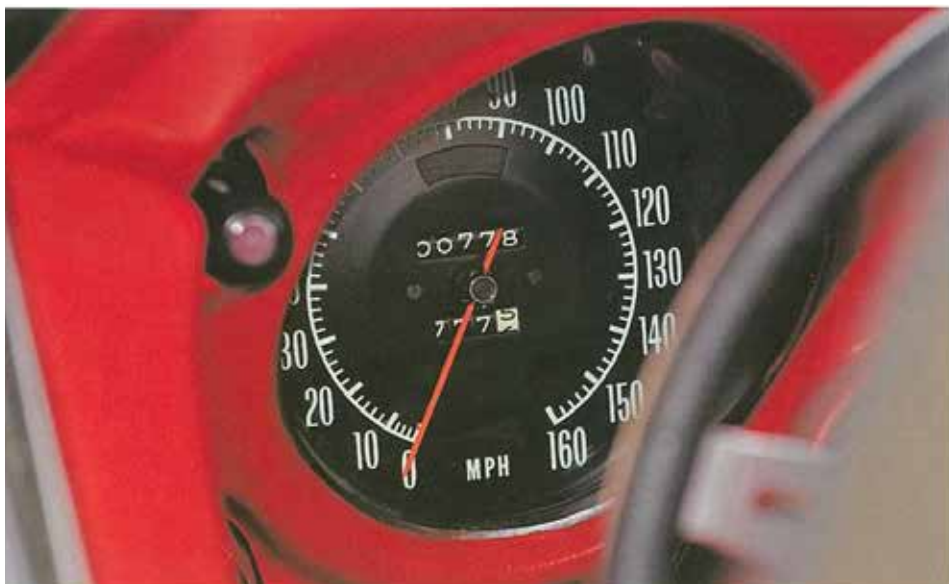
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A 25% non-refundable deposit is required to book, balance due on arrival.

I have chosen this particular weekend because it ties in with the  
'Rising from the Ashes Car & Bike Rally' that was postponed to 28th February.  
For those who wish to participate, cost is \$25 per car to enter.  
Full details in upcoming magazine.



If you would like to attend you need to book  
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and notify me on 0409 668 341

Mandy.



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# Breakfast Run

## Sunday 18th October

Another great Breakfast at Settlers Mulgoa and although it was a little overcast, the rain held off and we all made it home in time to watch the rest of the Bathurst Supercars race.

Good food and even better company.

Thanks everyone who joined in and hope to see you all next time.

Regards,  
Mandy



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# 60 Years of the small block Chev.

It would be very difficult to overstate the significance of the venerable Chevy small-block V-8. From its landmark features and manufacturing breakthroughs upon its introduction in 1955 to its lasting cultural influence six decades later, it is more than an icon of the automotive industry—it is one of the most significant achievements in industrial design from the 20th century.

Chevrolet didn't invent the V-8 engine, of course—and it didn't even develop the basic overhead-valve design—but the Chevy small-block helped revolutionize its design and manufacturing in ways that made it more attainable to the broader base of automobile customers. In short, it brought high performance to the people.

In observance of the small-block Chevy's 60 years of service, this month we're taking a look at the origins of the design and its development through the original muscle car era. We'll follow up next month with the engine's progression from the mid-'70s through Chevrolet's latest versions.

The engine got its start in the years following World War II. GM's manufacturing might and development prowess were strengthened by the innovations demanded during the war production years, but while it had the resources to do whatever it wanted, the near abandonment of civilian vehicle development meant the company entered the 1950s selling cars driven by antiquated technology. Chevy's hardy "Stovebolt" inline-six-cylinder engine was a prime example. It was old before the war and had soldiered along because of its relatively low cost and respectable durability—it was the only engine available for the Corvette's 1953 introduction, when it was renamed the

Blue Flame.

With eight-cylinder engines available in Fords for years, Chevy engineers began work on their own V-8, and they were well into the project when Chief Engineer Ed Cole transferred to Chevrolet from Cadillac. He had overseen the development of Cadillac's overhead-valve V-8, a 331-cubic-inch engine that was introduced in 1949, but represented about a decade of research and development. Having lived with the project for years, he brought his enthusiasm for the OHV V-8 to Chevrolet.

The original V-8 design didn't "stretch" far enough, in Cole's estimation. He challenged his new team with tightening the engine package to make it more compact, less costly and easier to manufacture. Upon its debut in the 1955 Chevy lineup, the new V-8 engine was physically smaller, 50 pounds lighter and more powerful than the Stovebolt six, instantly relegating the old inline engine to a bygone era of running boards and acetylene lamps.

Chevrolet's V-8—it wouldn't be called "small-block" until after the big-block engine came along a decade later—had a minimalist design that took advantage of streamlined production techniques. A relatively new green-sand casting method was used for producing the blocks, which dramatically reduced the number of cores. The real magic, however, was inside the block and beneath the rocker covers. It was designed with components and procedures that seem commonplace today, but were state-of-the-art innovations—even revolutionary—six decades ago. They included lightweight stamped-steel rocker arms that allowed a much higher RPM range; hollow pushrods that carried oil to the cylinder heads; a single-piece intake

manifold, which combined the water outlet, exhaust heat riser, distributor mount and valley cover; internal lubrication, which eliminated the need for external oil lines and greatly reduced the chance of leaks—a breakthrough feature not found on other low-price car lines. Also, its compact size required less iron in its manufacture that, in turn, required less coolant during operation.

The new V-8's cylinder heads were another important step forward. Their cross-flow port design and wedge-shape combustion chambers were very efficient and, when combined with the comparatively high RPM capability of the valvetrain, gave the new engine a broad performance band that was almost unparalleled in the industry. The quintet of head bolts around each cylinder provided superior cylinder-head retention, as well.





The original small-block had 3.75-inch bores and a 3.00-inch stroke, displacing a mere 265 cubic inches (4.35 liters). With a four-barrel, the engine was rated at 195 (gross) in the 1955 Corvette, or 26 percent more than the Blue Flame six, and revved with enthusiasm. It gave the fledgling sports car a shot of serious performance and likely saved it from cancelation.

Zora Arkus-Duntov, the Corvette's champion, also helped boost Chevrolet's overall performance street cred with the small-block when he drove a disguised, pre-production and small-block-powered '56 Chevy in the Pikes Peak hill climb race and shattered the sedan-class record by more than two minutes. It was a feat that established the engine's credibility with customers and a high-performance legacy that led to a small-block-powered Corvette winning Le Mans in 1960.

After just two years on the market, the small-block began its steady march upward in displacement, power and technological advancement. The engine grew to 283 cubic inches in '57, the same year that Chevrolet introduced the Ramjet version with mechanical fuel injection. It had its quirks (many fed-up owners had the engines converted to carburetion), but just about the only other mainstream manufacturer to offer fuel injection at the time was Mercedes-Benz.

The foibles of the Rochester-supplied Ramjet system—the top version reached 375 horsepower by 1964

(and lasted through the 1965 model year)—didn't diminish the basic performance of the underlying small-block V-8, which rolled into the 1960s with yet another displacement increase, to 327 cubic inches, in 1962.

It was, of course, the 350-cubic-inch version, launched in the 1967 Camaro SS, that made the small-block the household standard of V-8 engines. Millions of 350 engines were built and powered the Corvette, Camaro and many other models through the end of the Gen II era, in 1996.

But dark days were looming for the American auto industry as the 1970s unfolded, and though the small-block Chevy V-8 would suffer its share of compromises, it would endure to achieve new heights of performance and efficiency.

But after the glory days of the 1960s, the American auto industry faced harsh challenges in the form of increasingly stringent emissions-output regulations and consumer demand for improved fuel economy. Our historical review picks up the story just as the future of the V-8 engine was seeming particularly bleak.

**HITTING BOTTOM AND LOOKING UP** If the small-block's story were being told on a Behind the Music-style retrospective, the 1970s would be the point in the show where the narrator starts talking about the band's downward spiral, with 1975 being the point at which he says something like, "and just when no one thought it could get any worse, it all came crashing down."



# 60 Years of the small block Chev.



In 1986, the first revamp of the basic small-block design was introduced, featuring a revised block that was modified to accept an improved one-piece crankshaft seal, among other changes. This was also the point where aluminum cylinder heads debuted on the Corvette. For 1987, roller-type lifters began to be used for some applications. These later-type small-blocks are easily identified by their center-style valve cover bolts.

By the early '90s, the Gen II small-block was introduced as the LT1 and, later, the LT4. It featured new, low-friction internal components, optically triggered ignition and reverse-flow cooling to enable the most powerful small-blocks since the heyday of the muscle car era, including 330 horsepower from the LT4.

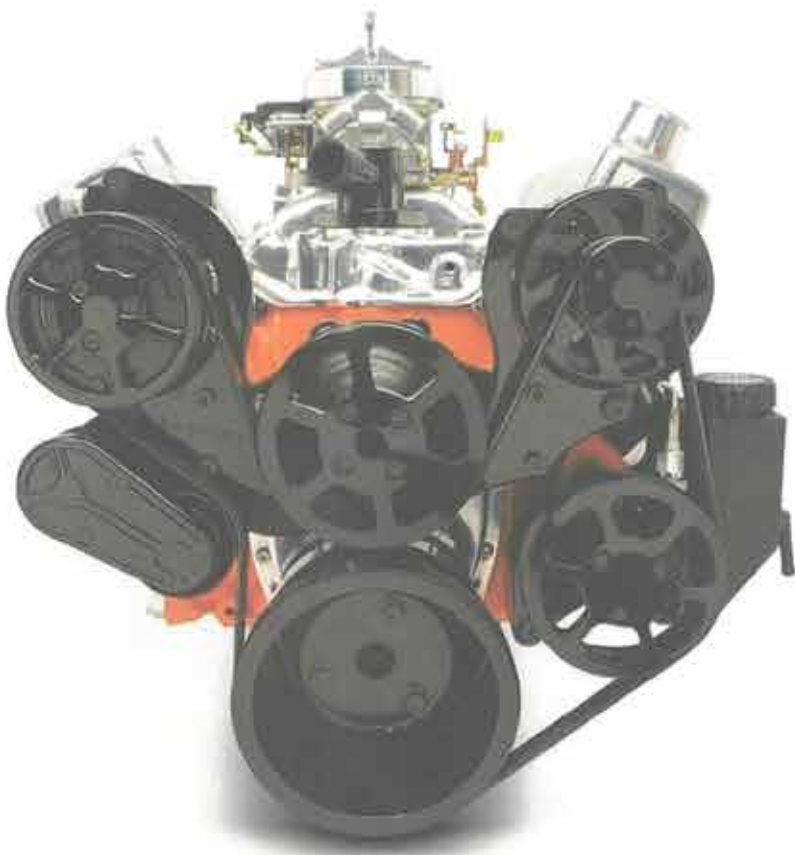
Significantly, the castings for the Gen II blocks and heads were different than Gen I blocks, to support the new coolant flow path, making component interchangeability between LT1/LT4 and earlier small-blocks fairly limited.

As with other manufacturers at the time, Chevrolet found itself having to strangle its engines to meet new federal regulations, while also answering to a public asking more insistently for better fuel economy. So, it was in 1975—the engine's 20th anniversary—that Chevrolet introduced a puny, asthmatic 262-cubic-inch version of the V-8. It was rated at just 110 horsepower—making it smaller and considerably less powerful than the original '55 version. A 350-cubic-inch version was still available, but it was a shadow of its former self. It made only 165 horses in the Corvette, representing a staggering 85-horsepower reduction from just the previous model year. Only five years earlier, the famed LT-1 350 was gross rated at 370 horsepower in the Corvette and 360 horses in the Camaro Z28.

In 1976, the small-block started its long climb back to the top. To be sure, it was a slow rise, as numerous emissions challenges kept 350 engines and manual transmissions out of some markets, primarily in California, but by the early 1980s, GM was putting its considerable engineering prowess toward ensuring the engine's long-term viability. One of the first stabs at modernization was 1982's lamented Cross-Fire fuel injection system, which was a twin-throttle-body injection system that, like the early Ramjet system, proved finicky, but it was merely a stumble out of the gate in a technological sprint to the end of the 1990s.

Engineers nailed the "fuelie" equation with the 1985 introduction of Tuned Port Injection (TPI) on the Corvette. Its electronically controlled port fuel-injection system was definitely advanced for the time and served as the basic blueprint for the multi-port fuel injected engines used on most passenger cars and light-duty trucks to this day.

While the original-style small-block is no longer available in a production vehicle, it's far from retired. General Motors manufactures service replacement versions and Chevrolet Performance (formerly GM Performance Parts), sells thousands of Gen I high-performance crate engines every year.





**ENTER THE LS1** The Gen III small-block was introduced as the LS1 engine in the 1997 Corvette, ushering in a several-year phase-out of the original-style small-block in GM North American production vehicles. The LS1 displaced 5.7 liters, similar to the previous-generation small-block, but the cubic-inch measurement differed slightly: 346 for the LS1 versus the traditional 350 cubes. It joined the Camaro and Firebird lineups in 1998.

The designs for the cylinder block and cylinder heads were completely new. The block featured a "long-skirt" architecture, meaning the sides of the block extended below the centerline of the crankshaft. And for the first time, the production cylinder block was cast in aluminum, while the crankshaft was located with six-bolt main caps, including four vertical and a pair of horizontal fasteners.

The rigid Gen III block not only enhanced smoothness, but was necessary to support an advanced, distributorless ignition system that was dependent on very precise camshaft and crankshaft position readings to trigger individual ignition coils for each cylinder. And compared to the Gen I/Gen II small-blocks, the camshaft location was pushed higher in the Gen III architecture to lay the groundwork for larger-displacement engines. The higher position allowed for longer-stroke combinations without the worry of camshaft interference or the reliance on smaller-base-circle cams that would be generally weaker—particularly at higher RPM—than cams with a larger base circle.

Exceptionally high-flowing cylinder heads debuted on the Gen III small-block, featuring 15-degree valve angle versus the Gen I/Gen II's 23-degree angle. This enabled a straighter, more direct and unimpeded path to the combustion chambers.

In 2005, the Gen IV branch of the LS family was born as the LS2 in the Corvette. The most distinguishing differences between Gen II and Gen IV cylinder blocks

are larger bores (on some engines), different camshaft position sensor locations (front timing cover area on Gen IV blocks and top-rear position on Gen III blocks) and, on most Gen IV blocks, cast-in provisions for GM's Active Fuel Management cylinder deactivation system. Cylinder-head design evolved, too.

The pinnacle of performance in the Gen IV was the Corvette ZR1's 638-horsepower supercharged LS9 engine. It was the most powerful automotive engine ever from General Motors, but time and the small-block march on and shortly after, the Gen V small block was introduced in the C7 Corvette—heralding the return of the "LT1" name—Chevrolet introduced a new supercharged small-block dubbed "LT4." Powering the C7 Corvette Z06, it's rated at a stunning 650 horsepower and 650 lb.ft. of torque.

Some have argued the LS and new LT engines aren't true small-blocks, because they aren't interchangeable with the early engines, but the spirit of the design is clearly evolved from the original.

**INTO THE FUTURE** In 2011, GM produced its 100-millionth small-block engine. The tally is probably around 105 million by now, but perhaps more remarkable than that milestone is the enduring viability of the engine. Its cam-in-block architecture with 4.400-inch bore centers—the center-to-center distance between the cylinders—has remained a constant and proven more adaptable to performance, emissions and efficiency demands than its original engineers could have possibly dreamt.



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