

## The story behind the 1966 Corvette

I grew up a child of the 60s and learned how to work on cars, out of necessity. The cars I owned were old and not dependable and after watching a mechanic install a water pump on my 1968 Firebird Convertible (I always loved convertibles), I decided I should be able to do things myself. From then on, I hung around garages, at friend's houses who had Dads that worked on their cars and eventually, I started working at a gas station at age 16. I did anything to be around cars and learn about working on them. When I was in undergraduate school at UGA, I worked in a body shop doing light mechanical work and I also made money as a "shade tree" mechanic working on student's cars in dorm and apartment parking lots. I found it was a great way to meet girls as when someone broke down, word was to just call me.

Once I completed law school and started a family, I figured I better get my dream car while I could. Of course, my dream car was a mid year Corvette convertible. As a longtime subscriber to Hemmings (there was no internet then), I watched ads there and in the Classic Auto Trader (remember they had printed ones at every C store) and the hunt was on. I wanted either a white or red car, and it had to be very original and in good shape. It had to be a convertible. I also preferred a 1965 or a 1966. After looking for approximately one year, I found my car just outside of Binghamton NY. After discussing the car in detail with the owner, I decided it was worth making a trip to see the car and buy it, if it passed my inspection. By now I knew a lot about mid years, what matching numbers meant, what block and numbers they should have, and so forth. I went there knowing I was willing to go there and not get it, if it wasn't what I thought I would be.

I arrived in Binghamton NY on a crisp fall October 1992 morning and met with the Seller/owner, Robert McQuarrie at his home. He was a personable and older man, 76 years of age. He told me he bought the car in 1972 at the local Chevrolet dealership when the original owner traded the car in on a new, 1972 Corvette. So he was the second owner. He said he drove the car for many years but starting in 1986, he quit driving the car as his health got worse and even then, he didn't drive the car much in the harsh NY winters. He lived in a well kept neighborhood and had the car in his enclosed garage. After driving the car and looking it over and meticulously checking the serial numbers, block number, engine and other parts/intake numbers and other items I had referenced in various Corvette manuals/authentication books I had, I bought the car and we left Binghamton with it. My brother in law was with me and we brought it back on his car trailer.

When I got the car back to Georgia we put it on a lift at my brother in laws business (Campbell Tire Company in Alpharetta GA – still there but under different ownership) and we went through the car one end to the other. The car had some surface rust here and there but nothing major. By now I had located every well known mid 60s Corvette mechanic in the area and was involved in local corvette clubs where there is a great network of people. Through these groups I met Jim Bressner at American Corvette in Powder Springs, GA and David Bagwell and Carl Etter in Kennesaw, GA. David and Carl are legendary in Corvette and A Body Gm car circles in this area although now Carl is retired with health issues and David doesn't do much repair work anymore either. At or around this time, I had both rear trailing arms replaced at American Corvette, the leaf springs and any other parts that needed replacing done by David Bagwell and the rear end cover that supports the leaf springs replaced too. I did minor or not so major repairs myself. We also sandblasted the frame and painted the entire frame with POR 15. We replaced literally anything the car needed. After that I drove and enjoyed the car with few, if any problems for the next several years. We changed the oil regularly and always repaired anything that had any issue. But all in all, problems were minimal.

In the winter of 1995 we decided to take a car trip cross country on old route 66 that coming summer. Although I felt the car would make it (the engine was original and had not ever been torn down), I decided to have David Bagwell rebuild the engine. David was the most well known and respected corvette mechanic around and David rebuilt the engine in the winter of 1995, keeping everything bone stock and correct. He also added hardened valves which allows the car to be run on unleaded gas. After the rebuild we made the route 66 trip all the way across the country with no issues and after that, took other trips to Chicago, Ohio, the mid Atlantic states and multiple trips to Florida and St. Simons Island Ga, where I used to have a home. All during this time the car was maintained and never once broke down on a trip. For a 1960s car, it also used a minimal amount of oil and still does not leak or use fluids. The last road trip I took in it was about 2 years ago to a car show in Daytona Beach Florida. With side trips and running around it was well over 1000 miles by the time I got home. Again, no problems of any kind. I have regularly driven the car to north Georgia in recent years and just enjoyed it on nice days.

In the last year I have had to down size as I had added some other cars over the years. I have sold two other newer Corvettes and a 1967 GTO. I never sold this car or even considered doing so as it was my nicest car and my favorite car. The joke in the family was I would be "buried in it". We recently purchased our retirement home in Florida and now I just don't have a place to keep it. I could store it somewhere but given I am not as agile as I used to be, getting under it, working on it or otherwise relying upon others doesn't work well for me. I didn't mention that in 2004 I had a custom built detached garage constructed at my house with a 4 post lift so I have had the luxury of being able to put anything up I was working on. Having a set up like this won't be possible for me at my new home so after quite a bit of consternation, I decided to part with what has been my pride and joy since October of 1992. The spare parts, books, collectible items I have going with the car are testimony to how I felt about it and how I treated it. I even have 2 nice corvette bar stools and almost anything I saw anywhere, I thought would be good to have with the car. I've been buying and stockpiling these items for years. When buying parts, I also bought mostly NOS parts or correct repros. I've never put anything on the car that wasn't correct. Unless the part is a weird one, there is likely a spare in my collection. I also saved about everything that came off the car. I also have a file with every receipt on everything I have purchased, parts and repairs wise. As I mentioned, if the car had anything break or go bad, it was replaced immediately. My philosophy on the car was to keep it "California ready" – to me that means if I wake up tomorrow and want to drive to California, the car would get me there.

As years went on I got more curious about the history of the car before Robert McQuarrie. NCRS offered a service to provide this information so I ordered the dealership delivery certification from NCRS and got an authentication sheet from them that shows the car was delivered new from the factory in St. Louis, to a dealership in northern New Jersey called Sun Chevrolet. I researched that dealership too but it is now out of business. The serial numbers give you the manufacture date and this car was built later in the model year, March of 1966. (The 1967s I think came out around August of 1966). The car has the correct trim code and engine serial number under the glove box that matches the numbers on the block, near the water pump. This is all original, never messed with or altered. It is very easy to authenticate this car and I wouldn't have bought it if I hadn't done so myself. I've been called "OCD" and that is probably an understatement. But, it serves me well, especially in dealing with old cars.

I'm available to answer any questions any buyer has on the car now, or later. I have tried to include everything I can think of because when I have purchased classic cars, the history and information I could get on them mattered to me. I will provide David Bagwell's contact info and I know he would speak to

anyone about the car. I'll leave Carl alone because he is in failing health now and had had to sell his own amazing collection of Corvettes in the last few years.

The car doesn't have a title and has never been titled. When I bought it and brought it back from New York, I went to the Ga DMV with my bill of sale and all info. They gave me a Georgia tag but told me they couldn't title it because "to get a title, you have to have a title", and in 1966 New York didn't title cars. So they were not going to issue the "first" title. No state requires a title on a vehicle this old but I am enclosing my original bill of sale from Bob McQuarrie with the car, everything Bob McQuarrie gave me, past tag receipts and a bill of sale from me so tags and ownership proof are not now and will never be an issue.

Lastly, I am not a car dealer or in the car business. I'm a 38 year practicing attorney who loved these cars since I was a teenager and thankfully reached a point in my life where I was able to have what I couldn't have growing up. I have had 30 years of fun with car as it turns heads everywhere it goes and when you run into a purist that knows the car as I do, they are always amazed how nice it is, and how original it is.

If you have questions and want to speak with me on the car, let Scott or Rick at Bullseye Auction know and I will answer any questions.