

Feature Article

Life begins well let's see.....After Retirement

by Terry Brim

At least that's the way it was with one of our chapter members corvette life. Meet Les Ashmore....he's the one grinning from ear to ear. Les retired about 10 years ago and before retirement he never really thought much about corvettes or any other kind of car for that matter....they were just transportation. A means of getting from one place to another.

After retirement, Les did a couple of unique things. First he took up woodworking and from what I saw, he is darn good at it. His living room furniture was all made by Les and looks as if it had just been delivered from the mills of North Carolina.

The second thing Les did was to decide that he wanted an old car....like something from the 20s or 30s. After some initial thought however, he began to rethink his decision....maybe a car that old wasn't the way to go after all.....maybe the parts would be too hard to find.

His next idea was to get an old Thunderbird...a FORD! What was he ever thinking! Les says he liked the two seaters (55-57), even considered a 59 thru 61, but decided with his limited garage space, maybe they were a little too big. At this point, Les wasn't sure what he was going to do. He still wanted an old car, but just wasn't sure what it was he wanted.

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Then fate entered the picture! About 6 years ago, Les was at the annual 4th of July car show in Centerville.....As it

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turns out, that is the one car show Les attends every year. This year as Les was walking along looking

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at the cars, he suddenly spotted a black on black 60 vette with silver coves. Immediately, Les knew this was the car he HAD to have! According to Les, his thought was "Oh my God, that's itthat's the car! Les was absolutely sure he now knew the kind of car he wanted. It had to be a black on black 59-60 corvette! Jeff Bernhardt, another chapter member, had just finished restoring the car and it was a beauty.

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Being retired and on a fixed income he was concerned about the

cost. However, he knew he had to have "one of them". And so, Les started his search but he couldn't find anything. He didn't know anyone who

had a corvette. Someone finally told him about a dealer in Springfield. When Les visited the dealer, however, they didn't have anything worth buying.

Les continued to look through the newspapers, magazines, etc but had no luck. A few weeks later he got a call from the salesman in Springfield telling him that they just gotten a 61 vette so back he went. It

was not a black on black but rather a red on red with white coves and it was a 61 not a 59-60. Although, it wasn't exactly what he was looking for, he put a refundable deposit down on the car. He had been looking for quite some time and had reached the conclusion these cars were hard to find.

About the same time however, someone told Les about another dealer in northern Ohio. So once again, Les and his wife went off in

search of a black on black 59-60 vette. When Les got there he told me that he couldn't believe his eyes....all those corvettes!

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According to Les however, the prices narrowed the selection down very quickly, there were only two of them in his price range. Oddly enough, both were also red on red with white covers.....Must have been destiny that Les was supposed to have a red on red vette with white covers!

After test driving the car and doing some negotiations a deal was struck. The car was solid and complete however, it kept jumping out of 2nd gear. According

you had better have both hands on the steering wheel when turning a corner and he didn't have a 3rd hand to hold the gear shift in 2nd gear.

to Les, when confronted about the car popping out of 2nd, the salesman said "aww, you know these old cars"yeah right!

Notwithstanding, Les bought the car and had it delivered. After driving it a couple of times, Les decided that he needed to get the transmission fixed. With no power steering or power brakes, according to Les, you had better have both hands on the steering wheel when turning a corner and he didn't have a 3rd hand to hold the gear

gear shift in 2nd gear.

After going over the car, Jeff said "Les, you've got a real sweet car, you did ok"

Les took the car to Jeff Bernhard's Restoration Station and asked Jeff to go over the car and tell him what he had bought..... According to Les, he told Jeff "don't sugar coat it, be honest with me" After going over the car, Jeff said "Les, you've got a real sweet car, you did ok"

I'd say by the looks of this beauty, Les did more than just ok!

See you around the cruise-ins Les.....enjoy your retirement!



Guess all corvettes really are red!



Look Tony, this one has a trunk also!

