
It all Started with a Picture by Terry Brim

The first question I always ask people whenever I do an interview for a feature article in the Vette Gazette is “how did you get started in cars?” Usually, the answer is my father, brother, uncle, friends, etc. were car nuts and that was how I got started. Jim Stukenborg’s initial response was he didn’t get it from his father. Jim allows as to how his father was the slowest driver in the world.

After some reflection, it hit him, with obvious excitement in his voice, Jim said “I know, I remember exactly the day”. Jim was a freshman in high school and the football team went to Ohio State for a football game. Along the way, they stopped for lunch and there was a hotrod magazine on the news stand with a picture of a 32 duce coupe with a chopped top. Jim remembers thinking that was the most beautiful car he had ever seen!

That was the beginning for Jim. After that came a 37 Ford, a 40 Ford. After high school, came a 34 Dodge coupe and a Packard V12. Jim then promptly put the

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Packard V12 in the 34 Dodge coupe and he was on his way! Unfortunately according to Jim, he destroyed the Packard making the switch and the 34 Dodge burned up in a garage fire. Undaunted however, Jim was hooked with the need for power and speed. In 1956, he

bought a 51 Ford with a Olds engine. Next Jim says he got hot on a Studebaker hardtop with a 6 banger...wow! Not to be deterred however, it wasn’t long until he dropped another olds V8 in the Studebaker.

Now at this point you’re probably wondering what does all this have to do with Corvettes? Well just be patient and read on, we’ll get there.

Eventually in 1962, Jim traded the Studebaker on a 59 Corvette....finally! Again however, not happy with what he had, Jim traded out the 3 speed for a 4 speed tranny in the vette.

When I asked Jim where he learned all his mechanical skills, his response was “I didn’t learn it at home....learned it the hard way, trial and error”.....sound familiar to anyone?

Jim had his 59 vette about 3 years until he got married and had a kid....sound familiar to anyone other than yours truly?

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Jim then traded the vette for as

he puts it, the world’s worst car, a 1964 Opal Cadet of all things. It didn’t take him long however to trade the Opal for a Turbo Corvair. Unfortunately this turned out to be as Jim puts it “another drag queen” which had been rode hard and put away wet!

From there Jim moved onto yet another Turbo charged Corvair,. This time however, it was a very nice 66’ convertible.

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His next machine was a 72 Camaro. Jim wanted a Z28 with Air Conditioning, but of course as we all know, GM made no such animal in 72'. His solution was to get a 4 speed 396 with Air and then put Z28 strips and wheels on it, not a bad solution for someone who really wanted a Z28 with air!

Jim says he drove the Z28 for about 18 months, but then he no-

ticed a 65 Corvette coupe for sale sitting along the road. It wasn't stock however, it had a duck tail rear end and no front bumper.....but it was a vette. Unfortunately, he waited to late to make the guy an offer he would accept and the car was sold.

Soon after, Jim saw yet another vette for sale, but again he waited to long to make the guy an offer he would accept and that car also sold out from underneath him. At about this time, 72' early 73', Jim decided the Corvette market was really taking off and that he had better get on board.

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When he went over to look at the car in the ad, it

Shortly thereafter as Jim put it, one day he saw this absolutely beautiful green 65 Corvette coupe go by. (I think what really grabbed Jim's attention were the 10 inch rear wheels). Jim remembers thinking how much he would like to have that car,. Just about that time, he saw an ad in the local newspaper for a green 65 vette coupe, could it

was the same one he had seen on the road. In Jim's words, he went ape over the highly modified custom coupe. He still has the car today over 30 years later.

Jim drove the car many



years before he had it painted corvette red which is the color you see today.

The car was originally Glen Green, but according to Jim, "all corvettes are red" ...gee, now where have I heard that one before?

How many of you have a vette in your garage where the last time you put gas in it was 1992?



Jim is currently rebuilding the rear suspension and the differential in the vette along with detailing out some of the engine compartment.



With the help of Larry Linder and some of the other club members, Jim hopes to have the 65 back on the road by next spring. continued on page 3

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Jim is a true mussel car guy. After buying the 65 coupe, he has owned a 71 GTO convertible which he still has and a Buick Turbo Regal, which eventually was stolen and parts of which were found in a chop shop in West Carrolton. Jim found another Turbo Regal a few months later this time with T-tops which he would use to replace the one that was stolen.

In 1999 He bought a V8 corvaire of all things which he still owns.....so many cars Jim!!



Finally in 2001, Jim bought the car which most of us see him in at our meets, a 2001 red 6 speed corvette convertible.

Like most of us this winter , Jim will have plenty of time to get his 65' coupe put

Back together and ready for spring. Let's hope after all these years sitting in his garage, Jim is indeed successful this winter in getting the car finished.....it will be good to have one more mid-year from the club on the road!!!!

