

An Abbreviated History of My 1965 Corsa Corvair

by Richard Campi

My strawberry red 1965 Corsa Corvair convertible was originally purchased by me, when new, in Logansport, IN as a hard-top sedan. The car was white with an eighth inch red pinstripe all around the vehicle at the crease. The interior was all red. The price was very good there and then!

I have enjoyed driving this car very much for over five decades and over half a million miles. At less than 7000 miles, I converted the factory Firestone tires to Michelin steel belted tires which kept it on the road with much more certainty. Previously, every time a semi-truck would pass me coming the opposite way, the Corvair would tend to do a side hop. At an undisclosed increased speed, the front of the car tended to lift off the pavement losing traction and ability to steer (planing). These tendencies grasped my attention, hence the change of tires!

I especially enjoyed at times, the interior carrying capacity. With the back seat folding down I could carry many large items. Many people with these cars would utilize the front trunk to ice drinks for picnics!

When I first lived near 38th St and High School Road in NW Indy, I had the car serviced at the Lafayette Square Sears. I purchased "Lifetime Warranty" mufflers and batteries until they refused to honor their own replacement agreements. After much complaining, they refunded my original price. (Did I win my fight with Sears?)

In 1980, I had a trailer hitch put on the Corvair and purchased a Coleman Versa Trailer. This helped in 1983, when I moved from NE Indy to my present house in Fountain Square towing many loads of boxes and stuff. I did have 13 larger items such grand piano, refrigerator, stove, etc. moved professionally. I drove the Corvair to visit my sister and family in Burlington, VT in 1984. While there, I found and purchased a Scamp Travel Trailer, the towed it back to Indy over hill and dale of impressive topography.

In the late 80's, I paid \$2000 to have my Corvair (professionally???) painted yellow like my '75 Triumph Spitfire. The paint job was fair, but they lost trim parts and damaged my windshield and body work. I took it to court and won the case with damages, but



the business was set up that so that one could not collect in any law suit.

I did join the CCC in the late 1980's; but with mine as a daily driver, it was a poor example. I didn't get involved at that time. By the 1990's, it was a "rust bucket".

Dan Brizendine has been my car's doctor for over four decades. The last two times he saw it at Hubler Chevrolet before restoration, he condemned the body of the vehicle. He told me that sometime I would be going down the road and maybe run over pieces of my own car. Susan thought that her feet might go through the passenger side floor. We discussed the extensive work the car body would need or the possibility of moving all mechanisms to a different body.



I then looked on eBay (my first time). I found a '65 Corvair convertible body for \$565 in a little town near the Hudson River and West Point, NY. Susan's sister was having a surprise 50th Birthday Party



in MD in Dec., 2009. We drove our SUV there for a short visit then on to see the Corvair. It was a Corsa 140hp convertible without the motor. We paid for it, rented a U-Haul car trailer nearby, and towed the body back to IN.

I had discussed, at a place of restoration, the estimated cost of transposing all of my car's "guts" into the convertible body and having it end up as a "show car" including the time frame for completion. We took the rusty car and the purchased body there. I wanted to drive to and attend the 2010 National CORSA Convention in Cedar Rapids, Iowa in June. With a month to go, I demanded that it be finished. It was already 3 times longer in the shop than estimated. It was also 2 and 1/2 times more expensive than originally estimated.

I finally obtained the car just a few days before we were to leave. I was glad to drive there with others from the club, because they made several motor adjustments along the way and at the convention.

I put the newly red convertible Corsa in the concourse judging. I did this for more than one concern. I logically knew that I would find out all that was out of order. I certainly did. To my dismay, my car was the only one in that judging not to be of "gold standard" which is a minimum of 350 of 400 points. My car received 345 Points or "silver standard". When I returned to IN, I immediately drove it to Hubler and paid \$3600 additional to have done what was to have been already finished at the other shop.

In spite of these expenses, I have always enjoyed my Corvair and want to keep it original or as original (stock).



So, What Could Go Wrong?

Irony overload.



Ok, friend, I've got a job for you. It's a tough one...

