

HISTORY OF THE NATIONAL CORVETTE MUSEUM



budget, not to exceed \$2000, for the legal work necessary to charter a foundation and apply for the IRS 501c(3) status that would give the organization tax deductible not-for-profit status. Through the hard work of John Perrette, that application was successful the next year.

In the fall of 1989 at the Auburn Cord Duesenberg Museum in Auburn, Indiana, the foundation held its initial board of directors meeting. Ironically that meeting was in the boardroom of the Auburn Cord Duesenberg Company. Present were Ray Battaglini, Jon Brookmyer, Bill Clupper, Keith and Judy Kibbe and me. Ray Battaglini was elected President; I became Vice President; Judy Kibbe Secretary and Jon Brookmyer Treasurer. Bylaws were drafted and approved. Dan Gale was elected one of the directors even though he was unable to attend. He voted on issues and agreed to the nomination by telephone. The name of the organization was to be the NCRS Foundation and the building called The National Corvette Museum. Ray was given the charge of pursuing registration with the State of New Mexico and IRS 501c(3) approval.

Winter 1990 found the board reviewing proposals from several cities that wanted the Corvette Museum in their area. Bowling Green, Kentucky, was chosen as the site based on their location and offer of land and infrastructure improvements. During the summer of 1990 it became clear that the name of the organization was limiting the scope of the fundraising. The new name chosen was National Corvette Museum (NCM) Foundation. November 1990 saw the opening of the Museum

Annex in Bowling Green. This gave the organization a presence in the community and a source of revenue. Operations were moved from my home in Berwyn, Illinois, to Bowling Green, Kentucky. A reorganization of the board brought more people to head the many committees: Dan Gale to the Presidency and Darrel Bowlin, now retired from GM, to Executive Director.

In the fall of 1991 the capital campaign began. Among the many contributions was an NCRS donation of \$50,810. March 1992 brought Dan Gale to Bowling Green on a semi-permanent basis. He, along with the newly retired Bowling Green Plant Manager Paul Schnoes, successfully raised 10 million dollars in bonds from the banking community and local governments.

Construction of the building and displays began in the summer of 1993, and in 1994 NCRS donated another \$50,000 to the museum. Fall 1994 saw the grand opening, only 10 years after the concept was put forth.

With the grand opening, ongoing operations became the focus. We have supported the museum gift shop with a continuous program of reduced-cost NCRS items. In 1997 and 1998 NCRS donated a total of another \$12,000 in cash. Also in 1998 the museum expanded its land holdings through the purchase of 25 adjoining acres at the cost of \$800,000 and will soon be the NCM Motorsports Park scheduled to open in August 2014. <http://www.motorsportspark.org/>

The museum is, in every way it can be, an NCRS project. 2014 will be the 20th Anniversary caravan and celebration. Be there or be square. **TCR**