

“Now and Then”...*My Corvettes Story*

By: Norm Neffield # 2799

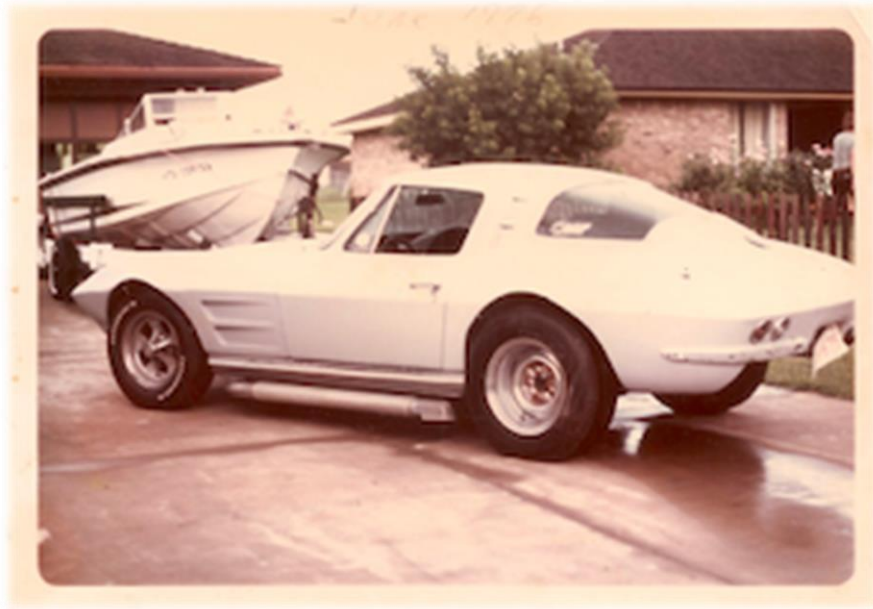
Every *now and then* you fall in love with a car brand, style, or color. In 1964, I was in high school and working at a small garage in Cleveland, Ohio. Getting around wasn't a problem because I was driving a '55 Chevy with rusted out panels, mostly bald tires and a patchwork of spray can color. What can I say, I had a job and a car!

One day, I went to work after school and in the parking lot sat a red '59 Corvette. The boss said it's here for a new engine because the owner broke the one in the car. So, within the next week we installed a brand-new short block engine in it. The only stipulation from the owner was that when we delivered back to him the engine had to be “broke in”. Back then this was a requirement before doing any full throttle racing or high-speed driving.

Well, the boss said to me “How would you like to take this home with you, drive it for the weekend and put about 500 miles on it”? What could I say? Wow, was I in heaven! Boy did I put the miles on it, visiting friends, cruising the streets, and hitting all the drive-ins, diners and dives.

Today it's difficult to recall many details about the car except it had a four-barrel carb and was red with white coves. So went my first experience with Corvettes.

Fast forward to 1976. At a Corvette junkyard outside of Mesquite, Texas. I was still a gearhead at heart and needed a project. There it was, just like when Clark Griswold looks up and sees “The Griswold family Christmas tree” standing all alone in a field. A 1964 Coupe with air conditioning. Who cared if it had “fender flairs”, street slicks and Pontiac bucket seats. For \$1800 I had my project and I owned my first Corvette. Did I mention the Thrush side pipes, and it was in primer too!



I knew about the NCRS in 1977, but C2's were not within their judging scope until 1983. I did my best restoring the car based on information from magazines, friends and close examination of other Corvettes of the same year. The restoration was truly a labor of love and when I received my first top flight award, I was quite pleased.

Fast forward again to 2019 and “*Now and Then*” soon became “*Then and Now*”, as I had become too old to work on and maintain the car. It was time to move on. Selling the car was easy but letting go of it was very difficult. Watching someone else drive away with my labor of love for 48 years was hard to do. A sad day to say the least!

After the restoration.



Within a few weeks I was looking for something newer that required little maintenance and much more pleasing to drive.

I knew I wanted red. I knew I wanted saddle interior. What I came up with was a 2015, Z51, Crystal Red Metallic with Kalahari interior. A real beauty. Wow! Again, was I one happy Corvette owner!

Then something unexpected happened. The gentleman who I sold the '64 to called and wanted to know if I wanted it back. He knew my son had an interest in owning the car and after his wife had passed away, he realized he needed to downsize his car collection. I did not hesitate an instant about taking it back, making sure that it will stay in the family well in to the future... ***Norm Neffield NCRS # 2799 nneffield@comcast.net***

"Now & Then"... The photo on the left was taken in the Fall of 2024 in the same location as the right hand photo taken in the Spring of 1983. Note, that the tree in the background hasn't changed after all those years!

