

Terry

I enjoyed your KCC site, thanks for sharing.

I know some of the members from shows etc, but know Gary Martin very well, 35 years give or take.

I will add a postscript to the story on 1953 Corvette # 161. You may post it on the KCC site if you like.

The photo of the '53 Corvette delivery was taken by the Courier Journal; they were called to commemorate the FIRST Corvette sold in Kentucky.

The salesman Alton 'Robbie' Robinson still proudly has the original 8 x 10 under glass on his desk.

V V Cooke Sr had 'clout' with Chevrolet due to his superior sales records and could get whatever he wanted in the way of vehicles, so when the news of the new Corvette spread, SR put in a request for one. As all of you know, Chevrolet Motor Division was very selective as to who were allowed to receive the 300 1953's. Movie stars and people in the public eye were selected to receive these cars.

Jim Mayden loaned me a copy of the 8 x 10 which I had digitally enlarged to 2 ' x 3 ' for use in my business booth in the 1993 Carl Casper Show.

For '93 the 40th anniversary of the Corvette I had on loan the NCRS restored # 23 1953 and a new 1993 from Bachman Chevrolet for my booth, with the enlarged photo displayed between the two color matching Corvettes.

Fast forward to 2006, I met with the Editor of Corvette Fever Magazine and described an article I had in mind about V V Cooke Chevrolet's Corvette.

SCCA racing exploits and the prominence of the dealer in High Performance Service and Sales. V V Cooke Chevrolet was known not just in Louisville but all of KY, Indiana and Tennessee for its excellent Service Department and stock of new and used Corvettes for sale. He was receptive to the story and was willing to accept it from a 'rookie' writer.

The four part story covered V V Cooke Chevrolet's SCCA racing, V V Cooke Jr the sponsor, V V Cooke the Dealership and V V Cooke Chevrolet, seller of the FIRST Corvette in Kentucky. The article was published in the 2007 issue of Corvette Fever. It can be viewed on the 'net at this site:

www.corvettefever.com Once on the site, **SEARCH "The Winners Circle"** for the complete story.

V V Cooke Jr, Jim Mayden, the Barker Brothers and the whole staff at the dealership had finally received some national recognition for their tireless efforts in the Corvette and High Performance business.

News of the magazine article spread quickly and I began receiving phone calls from many previous employees, one of which was Robbie Robinson. He was so enthused about "HIS" 8 x 10 photograph being in the magazine! We had a nice conversation about how the sale came about and how proud he was of having that original photograph.

A month or so later a call came in from Madison, IN from the local newspaper asking permission to use the Delivery photo of the '53 for publishing in their newspaper. They wanted to do a Human Interest story about a local resident who was in the photo and his connection to the car.

The Corvette was sold to Voltz Chevrolet in Madison In and the information I had received was that Mr. Voltz was the man in the drivers seat, with Robbie Robinson standing on the left and V V Cooke Jr on the right.

The next phone call from Madison was Terry Pyles, the son of Vernon Pyles, the man ACTUALLY seated in the photo!

It turned out that Vernon Pyles was the Service Manager for Voltz Chevrolet and his job was to go to Louisville on Friday and pick up the '53 and drive it back to Madison, keep it at home for the weekend and bring it to the Dealership on Monday.

Terry was ten years old at the time and Monday morning his Dad dropped him off at school in the 1953 Corvette on the way to the Dealership!

Could you imagine, in 1953, riding to school in America's First Sportscar..... a BRAND NEW Corvette, one of only 300 produced.....it had to be like being dropped off in a Rocketship!

Terry's phone call was centered around purchasing a nice 8 x 10 copy of the photograph. I asked if he would like to have one a little larger.....like 2' x 3'.

He was excited! So I had more copies prepared and he and his father insisted on coming to Louisville to pick up the photo.

I was now on a mission to get the three gentlemen together for a photo signing of the delivering of the '53 Corvette, FIFTY FOUR years later!!!

A date was agreed upon and the three men in the original photo, Vernon Pyles the driver, Robbie Robinson, the salesman and V V Cooke JR, the selling dealer of the FIRST Corvette sold in Kentucky gathered to sign copies for each of us.....what a moment in Corvette History!

Recently, Corvette # 161 has surfaced, after missing for decades. It was found, outside a machine shop in the midwest area, in a serious state of disrepair, but with a concentrated effort by it's new owner it has been restored to it's original glory. He has made contact with V V Jr to hear the storys of the '53's early days.

Now you know the rest of the story.

Patrick Knight
Former Mechanic
V V Cooke Chevrolet..