



PHONE 583-8323

THIRD & KENTUCKY

961 SOUTH THIRD STREET • LOUISVILLE, KY. 40203

ON OR ABOUT 20 NOV 1953 A CAR DELIVERY TRACTOR AND TRAILER PULLED UP TO OUR LOT AT 961 S. 2ND ST. WITH 4 1953 CORVETTES ON BOARD. ONE FOR V.V. COOKE CHEVROLET, THE OTHER THREE FOR DEALERS IN NASHVILLE, TN., ALANTA, GA. , AND JACKSONVILLE, FL. . THEY HAD ALREADY DELIVERED ONE TO A DEALER IN CINCINNATI OH. AS YOU KNOW ALL 300 1953'S WERE MADE ON A SPECIAL ASSEMBLY LINE IN FLINT, MICHIGAN. WHITE WITH RED INTERIOR AND WHITE TOP. OURS WAS SERIAL # 161.

SHORTLY AFTER IT WAS UNLOADED THE SERVICE MANAGER FOR THE LOUISVILLE ZONE OFFICE OF CHEVROLET CALLED AND SAID DON'T LET ANYONE DRIVE IT UNTIL THEY CAME DOWN AND INSPECTED IT. WITH THEIR SUPERVISION WE HAD LEONARD BARNES, OUR ACE TUNE UP MAN CHECK THE TIMING. THE CARBURETOR ADJUSTMENT (THERE WERE 3 SIDE DRAFTS-A FIRST FOR CHEVROLET) THE POINT SETTINGS ETC. AS THEY LEFT THEY CAUTIONED US NOT TO LET SOMEONE DRIVE IT FOR FEAR OF ANY BODY DAMAGE, BECAUSE NOBODY KNEW HOW TO REPAIR FIBERGLASS.

WE HAD JUST HAD A BIG WHOLESALE USED CAR SALE AND HAD SOLD 736 USED CARS IN ONE WEEK AND OUR USED CAR LOT ON 2ND ST. (200X200) WAS EMPTY. SO AS SOON AS THE ZONE OFFICE PEOPLE LEFT WE WERE OUT IN THE USED CAR LOT DOING GYMKHANA TURNS AND OTHER HIGH SPEED CORNERS ETC!

MY BROTHER-IN-LAW BOB HOOK HAD JUST PURCHASED HIGHLAND CHEVROLET ON BARDSTOWN ROAD AND HE CALLED AND WANTED ME TO COME GIVE HIM A LOOK AT THE NEW CORVETTE AND TAKE HIM FOR A RIDE. SO I DROVE UP AND PICKED HIM UP FOR A DEMO. WE WENT ZIPPING THRU CHEROKEE PARK, AROUND CORNERS SHOWING HOW WELL IT HANDLED. WE CROSSED THE BRIDGE BY BIG ROCK AND APPROACHED THE FIRST STREET THAT TURNED SOUTH OUT OF THE PARK. I TOLD HIM WATCH HOW WELL IT WOULD TURN A 90 DEG CORNER. UNKNOWN TO US THE FIRE DEPT. HAD BEEN CHECKING FIRE HYDRANTS A FEW MINUTES BEFORE WE GOT THERE AND THERE WAS A 30' WIDE WET ROAD WHERE THEY HAD SPRAYED WATER ACROSS THE ROAD FROM THE HYDRANT. NEEDLESS TO SAY WE DID ABOUT 2-360'S SPINS UP THE STREET. WHEN WE STOPPED HE SAID, DID THAT SCARE YOU AS BAD AS IT DID ME? I AGREED AND WE DROVE SLOWLY BACK TO HIS DEALERSHIP, THINKING ABOUT WHAT CHEVROLET HAD SAID ABOUT FIBERGLASS REPAIRS!

IN APRIL OF 1954 I WAS CALLED UP TO GO TO MY SERVICE DUTY WITH UNCLE SAM'S UNITED STATES AIR FORCE. AS WE ALL KNOW THE 1953 CORVETTE HAD SNAP IN SIDE WINDOWS WITH FRICTION CLOSURES ON THE VENT WINDOWS, THE TRUNK WAS VERY SMALL, (AND LEAKED) THE TOP LEAKED; NOT THE KIND OF CAR YOU NEED TO BE DRIVING AROUND THE COUNTRY, PARKED MOST OF THE TIME AND ETC.

THE LIST PRICE ON A 1953 BEL AIR WAS THEN \$1818.00 AND THE PRICE ON THE 1953 CORVETTE WAS TWICE THAT AT \$3636.00. VOLZ CHEVROLET IN MADISON, INDIANA HEARD WE HAD THE CAR FOR SALE. MR. VOLZ EVIDENTLY WANTED A CORVETTE FOR HIS SON. SO HE CAME DOWN AND WE SOLD IT TO HIM FOR THE FULL PRICE OF \$3636.00 I HAD ABOUT 3000 MILES ON THE CAR WHEN WE SOLD IT TO MR. VOLZ. WHAT HAPPENED TO #161 AFTER THAT WE DON'T KNOW. I HAVE MADE SEVERAL INQUIRIES TO SEE IF ITS STILL IN EXISTENCE TO NO AVAIL.

AND THATS THE SAGA OF OUR FIRST CORVETTE

1953-#161

V.V. COOKE CHEVROLET
V.V. COOKE JR.

V.V. Cooke Jr.