

VAIR VIEWS

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Claude Blain's 1966 Fitch Sprint

Club Meeting for January,

1-23-2021 at 1pm

Flywheel Clatter

We're embarking on a new year for SMCC. I look forward to serving the club as president and also getting back to some of the more "normal" things we've done in years past. While being hindered by the pandemic during 2020, the end is still unknown. However, we can all hope that the vaccine and other measures will allow things to open up so we can return to social activities. As most of you know, the name of the president's newsletter article has had various names over the years. I chose mine from a combination of actual experience with my 63 Monza as well as my potential words being more noise than sage information. ;o) Any ideas for club activities, beyond our normal slate of meetings and tech sessions, are always welcome. Please contact me at your convenience in person, via email, text, or phone. I am at your service. One of the activities we started on last year was an SMCC sponsored car show. Looking ahead, I'd very much like to attempt the show this year if at all possible. Hope to see you at the January Meeting

Don Hemwall





Club Meeting: January 23rd, 1pm. Jefferson Underground. This will be a hybrid of in person and Zoom meeting.

SMCC Agenda January 23, 2021

Sale of 50/50 tickets

Call to Order 1 PM

Pledge of allegiance

Approval of minutes of 10/24/2020

Treasurer's report

Membership chairman report

Historian report

Old business

- ◆ Fitch Sprint Committee Update/Discussion (Sprint Committee)
- ◆ Donation to the Corvair Museum in Glen Arm, IL

New business

- Other?
- Updates on anyone's progress on their cars
- Thank members for attendance and support
- Motion to adjourn?
- Adjourn 50/50 drawing

Don Hemwall is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting. (instructions)

Topic: SMCC January Meeting

Time: Jan 23, 2021 12:30 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82748389541?pwd=STY0NDI4YStRaU85UC9ZNGpzNDBKdz09>

Meeting ID: 827 4838 9541

Passcode: 491053

One tap mobile

+13126266799,,82748389541#,,,,*491053# US (Chicago)

+19292056099,,82748389541#,,,,*491053# US (New York)

Dial by your location

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington D.C)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

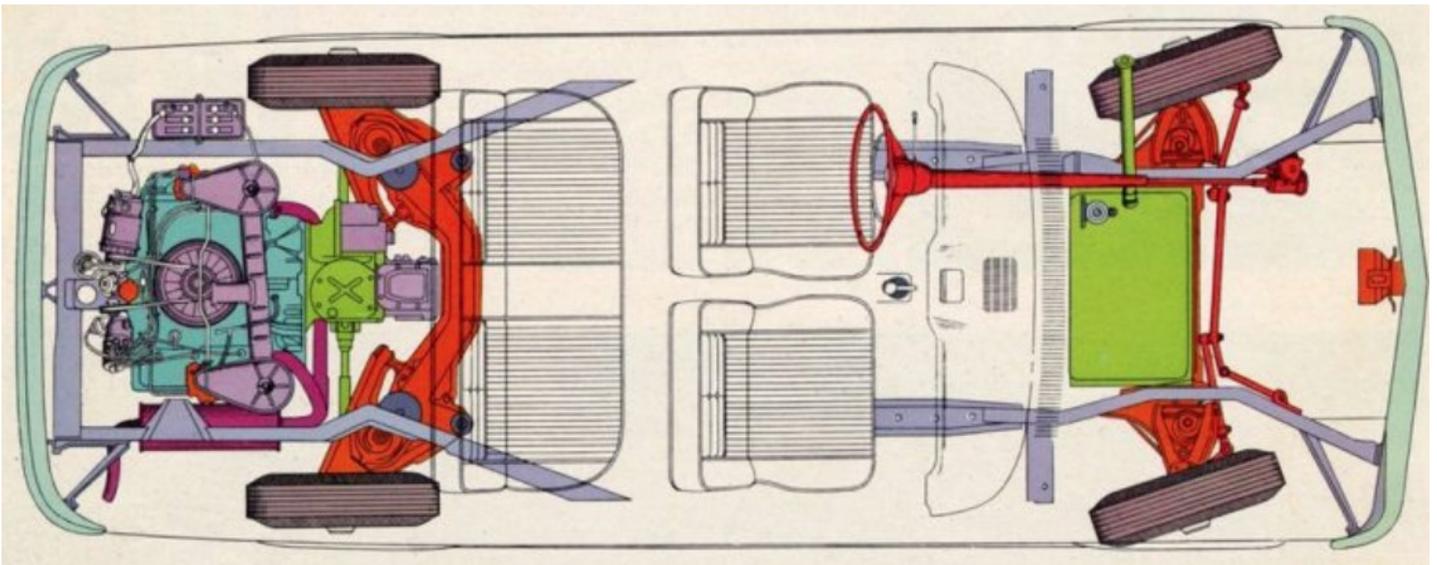
Meeting ID: 827 4838 9541



January Meeting announcement

The majority of the email replies indicated that an in person meeting, masked and spaced, at the Jefferson Underground is the preferred method. There also were enough replies that want to do Zoom. So, we're going to do both. The board will meet at noon on January 23, 2021 and then the general meeting will start at 1:00 pm. I will bring my laptop and start a Zoom meeting about 12:50 pm so those who wish to attend via Zoom may do so. This will be our first attempt at a hybrid meeting so, hopefully it will go okay. I think hearing will be our biggest challenge. I will do my best to keep both live and Zoom participants included and engaged.

Don H



AMAZON SMILE:

I just wanted to share this with you. So far Amazon smile has donated over \$900 to the Corvair preservation foundation and over \$100 in this last quarter. This is a very simple way to help out our museum expenses and it costs us nothing extra when we order from Amazon. Simply type in smile Amazon instead of just Amazon, when you are ordering and list the Corvair preservation foundation as your charity. In this time, I am sure that even more people are ordering things instead of going out to get them

Tom Yengel



Steve Dodson	1-18
Brandon Hogan	1-24
Don Hogan	1-20
David Mattull	1-31

The Fitch Sprint Update

by Carl Briggs

The Show Me Corvair Club on December 15, 2020 received a very valuable package from Curt Sproul, the California, Maryland donor of his father's 1965 Fitch Sprint to the National Museum of Transportation in Saint Louis. This heavy package contained every document, note and letter written about the history of William C. Sproul's car since purchase on March 16, 1965 from A. D. Anderson Chevrolet located in Baltimore Maryland. We now have the original purchase order and invoice showing the features purchased with the car. The box also includes the Corvair Sprint by Fitch catalog, several Corsa Quarterlies from 1965 and 1975, the Car and Driver issue about the Fitch Sprint from September 1965 and the 1963 Car Life special edition about the Corvair. In the back of Car Life are various articles and ads about the early speed modifications used in Corvair engines, many of which are used today.



The really good news is that we have very rare communications and purchase orders for John Fitch and Company showing all the modifications made in two separate visits to Falls Village, Connecticut. We also have the same information for Raoul F. Balcaen III the owner of IECO where the Carter 4 barrel induction system was purchased. Included also are many installation instructions for the various add-ons.

Mr Sproul's Corvair adventure began on February 4, 1965 when he ordered the car from Chevrolet via A.D. Anderson Chevrolet, Inc. in Baltimore. Maryland. Mr Sproul then resided in Ellicott City, Maryland, a suburb of Baltimore. The base price for the new late model body style Corvair model 10737 Corsa sport coupe in color code W for Grey was \$2571.75. The purchased options totaled \$298.75 for a total price of \$2870.50. The dealer gave him a 10% discount plus an \$1,100 trade in value for his 1963 Corvair Monza coupe. The options included a 4 speed transmission for \$91.50, a 3:55 to 1 ratio positraction differential, a push button AM radio for \$75.00, undercoat for \$30.00, the comfort and convenience group option for 28.00 and a padded dash for \$16.15. Do you not yearn for yesterday's prices? According to the Fisher body tag the body was created in early March, 1965. It was delivered to the dealership and paid for on March 16, 1965.



Lieutenant Commander Sproul's adventure with John Fitch and Company began with a request for their catalog on May 10, 1966. He followed up with his first visit to Falls Village, Connecticut to have Fitch install the first round of improvements. This occurred on March 17, 1967. The paper work sent by Curt supports the fact that his dad's car was one of about 200 conversions done in the Fitch shop in Connecticut.



At that time, John Fitch offered 35 add-on options to enhance the operation and appearance of the Sprint. These are the initial options that William had installed to convert his Corsa coupe to a Fitch Sprint coupe:

Sprint Fastback 904 Ventop with forward, top and rear fenderline black stripes

Seat bracket for a tall driver

Lucas long range driving light

Ammeter and oil pressure gauge in dashboard above the radio

Carpet behind rear seat area

Stage one Sprint engine upgrade, four individual air cleaners

Tuned length dual mufflers, trombone shaped exhaust extractors

GT. Suspension with rear Koni shock absorbers

Fast steering arms and hydraulic damper

Judson electronic magneto ignition

Metallic lined brake shoes

Image from Car and Driver



In addition to the John Fitch modifications, William also communicated with Raoul (Sonny) Balcaen III, owner and proprietor of IECO, a major supplier of Corvair visual and mechanical add-on features in the 60's and 70's. Beginning on September 20 1965, just six months after the purchase of his CORSA, William ordered from their catalog an engine compartment locking system and asked about their 4 barrel Ram Induction system, exhaust systems, gauges for oil pressure and amperes, and individual air cleaners. From above it is clear that he did obtain the individual air cleaners, the dash mounted gauges and the trombone exhaust system from John Fitch in early 1967. Even though the engine compartment lock was not available of the late model body, William did order a racing seat belt and the Ram Induction Carter AFB carburetor system, plus a Uni-Syn carburetor adjuster with his credit for the unavailable rear lock. Even though the racing seat belt attachment did not work out, the Ram Induction system was shipped on June 6, 1968 and received in June, 1968. He also inquired about an aluminum oil pan and the adaptability of an oil temperature gauge. He had the induction system installed by an unknown vender.

William C. Sproul revisited the John Fitch shop at the end of February, 1969. On this occasion he had many repairs done as well as new items added. The car had 42,028 miles on it by 1969. The new equipment added included:

New Grant wood steering wheel installed.

New 600 DH Penetrator driving and fog lights installed on front bumper.

New Columbus shock absorbers replace original spiral front shocks.

New 140 hp muffler set replaced trombone set.

New Sunbeam Alpine seat replaced original front driver's seat.

New competition seat belt and shoulder harness mounted for driver's seat.

New aluminum oil pan with temperature sending unit and oil.

New Stewart Warner oil temperature gauge mounted to replace dash clock.

Installed 4 primary Corvair HV carbs and linkage to replace the IECO Carter AFB 4 barrel kit.

(All replaced units were saved and returned to the owner.)



Repairs included:

- Replacement of clutch pressure plate , disk, throw out bearing, pilot bushing and input shaft seal
- Tuneup with 6 Champion L15Y plugs and points
- Replaced the rear engine mount
- Resealed lower engine shrouds
- Replaced rear license plate lens
- Repaired Lucas driving light wiring
- Reglued rear compartment carpeting
- Repainted flat black on upper surfaces plus lower body panels



When the car was received by the museum, the following observations were made:

The driving/fog lights had been removed from the front bumper, but the switch on the left dash board remained.

The IECO 4 barrel AFB Carter unit had replaced the four Corvair HV carburetors which were not found in the car. The original carbs were found.

The trombone exhaust system was still present on the car.

The Sunbeam Alpine seat had been replaced with the original and the competition harness had been removed.

The Judson magneto had been replaced with the Mark Ten ignition box and standard coil.

Among the available accessories that William Sproul decided to not purchase:

- Gabriel adjustable rear shocks. He got Koni adjustibles instead a 1966 option

- Adjustible headrests

- The passenger grab rail mounted above the glovebox

- The expensive Hands/Offenhouser aluminum wheels

- Michelin or Pirelli radial tires

- Blaupunkt AM-FM radio

- The quick shift kit

- The Brazilian rosewood gear shift knob. He opted for something else.

FASTBACK 904 VENTOP OPTIONS

For a striking addition to the '65 Corvair coupe. Aside from the stunning new appearance which the long sweeping lines of the FASTBACK create, it shades the rear window and rear passenger seat from the sun. The double roof thickness forms an insulated air layer to further cool the car interior. The conformation of the Fastback closely resembles the new road-racing championship cars — the Porsche 904 and the Ferrari 275 LM, and achieves the same efficient air flow and high speed stability for the Corvair. Creates a truly distinctive car for the individual.

KIT

INSTALLED

\$89.50 Ready to paint. * **\$89.50**
 Ready to paint and install.



\$102.00 Painted Black Satin, to go with any color. **\$102.00**
 Ready to install.*



\$102.00 Painted Black Satin, with Striping painted at John Fitch & Co., **\$125.00**
 Striping to be done at local paint shop at extra charge. *

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