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Site of the Week

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Site Profile

Web site:

[1971 LT-1 CORVETTE STINGRAY ALBUM](#)

Site owners:

STUART & SUSAN CORK

Location:

MARKHAM, ONTARIO

Occupation:

GRAPHIC ARTIST & WEB DESIGNER

Car(s) owned:

1971 CHEVROLET CORVETTE, 1993 EAGLE TALON, 1995 JEEP CHEROKEE

Stingray Snapshots

Reviewed July 5, 1999

Got that old-car itch? Hankering to buy the ride of your dreams but don't know where to start? Before jumping into the deep end of the pool, dip a toe into the water at Stuart & Susan's 1971 LT-1 Corvette Stingray Album, a detailed account of a Canadian couple's transformation of a well-traveled — 118,000 miles on the odometer — sports car into an award-winning show car.

Stuart and Susan Cork, who run a home-based graphic arts and Web design shop in Markham, Ontario, a Toronto suburb, were Corvette neophytes when they bought their LT-1 Stingray coupe in 1993. (The LT-1 designation is the option code for the car's high-performance 350-cubic-inch V-8 engine.) Stuart, 38, went to several classic-car auctions before deciding a 1968 to 1972 Corvette would be the right choice. "I prefer the Corvette to a conventional muscle car because [it's] more purpose-built as a performance car," he says. "A Corvette has a certain cachet to it."

Inside the Site



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Labor of Love

After acquiring their dream car, Stuart, with Susan's "moral support," performed what is called a "body-on" restoration (as opposed to removing all body and mechanical parts and rebuilding from the frame up) over four years. As he immersed himself in the restoration, Stuart became an expert on their Corvette. It was built on June 21, 1971, in St. Louis, Mo. for sale in Canada, he discovered, and the Corks are the 11th registered owners. When Stuart originally found the Corvette at a used-car dealer six years ago, it was painted black, which Stuart knew was not a factory color in the year it was manufactured. He had the dealer paint it silver before he bought it, but later stripped the paint, refinished the body and restored the car to sunflower yellow, its factory color.

When the Corks purchased the Corvette, its engine had already been rebuilt and therefore did not require "major surgery." Stuart decided that the major mechanical and body repairs that were required were best left to professionals. "I'm just a hobbyist, and I know my limitations," notes Stuart, who has no automotive repair training. "I won't touch brakes or heavy-duty drivetrain components. I leave that to the experts. I did the bolt-on type repairs and smaller, simpler cosmetics." In fact, Stuart did most of the interior restoration, including stripping and repainting trim plates, hand-dying the carpet to its original "saddle" hue and restuffing the bucket seats. Although he found the work difficult and time-consuming, he didn't lose sight of the small details: "I was becoming a perfectionist, and I didn't want even one wrinkle in the upholstery." The result is a mechanically sound, visually appealing 1971 'Vette that regularly wins awards at club shows and turns heads on the road.

Word to the Wise

The Corks' Web site, launched around Christmas 1998, is equally attention-grabbing. Chronicling the history of their restoration online, the Corks used their design skills to create an attractive, creative theme: The opening menu employs a nifty "behind-the-wheel" navigation scheme and the interior pages contain buttons styled like the round

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Site Highlights

[RESTORATION HISTORY](#)

Follow the Corks' illustrated history of the restoration of their dream car.

[DETAILS & SPECIFICATIONS](#)

Read the history of the LT-1 option and the Corks' impressions of driving their Corvette.

Related Sites

[LARRY'S LT-1](#)

Visit this site dedicated to another LT-1 Corvette.

[HISTORY OF THE CORVETTE](#)

Explore milestones in the Corvette's 46-year history.

[A&W's 'VETTE](#)

Check out another Corvette restoration project, in progress.

cars.com Intersections

[SUMMER CARS 99](#)


Read this **cars.com** special on roadsters and convertibles — view photos and video of the 1999 Corvette.

gauges on a Corvette dashboard. The site generously credits the specialty shops that worked on the car and suppliers who provided original-equipment replacement parts. There also are helpful links to Corvette clubs and other Corvette-related sites.

The Corks are deeply involved in Corvette club activities with Stuart organizing shows for members to display their restored cars in judged competition. Their car is an integral part of their social life, taking them on cruises and tours across Canada with other Corvette enthusiasts. Stuart's strongest advice to those planning to restore an old car is to join a "marque club" such as the Corvette Club of Ontario, which serves as a valuable resource tool and ongoing social group. Members typically have deep knowledge of the particular car and freely offer advice on which cars to buy, where to find parts and problem solving. He also urges those who restore cars to enjoy them on the road instead of making them museum pieces. "There's simply no point in saving it so someone else can drive it," he says. "If you're never going to drive a car because that makes it more valuable, you could just as well keep something on a mantelpiece instead."

Reported by [Rick Popely](#) for cars.com



Drivers wanted. 

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