

The Birth of a Club

A Brief History

The Spirits of '53 Corvette Club was started in the spring of 1974. Its name was not selected until later that year.

The club was originally based in South Brunswick at the apartment of one of the three founders, all of whom lived in town. They were Ron Pientka, Richard Arcadu and Richard Denike.

Its beginning actually took place in late 1973 when, unbeknownst to the other two, each founder had purchased his first Corvette. The common bond among the three was a Sunoco Station where they bought gas. It was at this station, Larini's on Route 27, they met and compared cars, a brown 1974 coupe, a gold 1969 roadster and a white 1969 coupe. One discussion led to another and eventually the subject of a Corvette Club was mentioned. After reviewing the limited number of clubs available and what they offered, it was decided there was a need for a new, well organized, active club in this area.

The three formulated a basic format on which to develop a membership campaign. Leaflets were left on Corvette windshields. One of the first "meetings" of the fledgling club was held at the Mid-State Mall parking lot and succeeded in

attracting a number of Corvette owners. Membership grew from three to ten to fifteen...

The first group of elected officers of the Spirits of '53 was: Walt Donovan, Wayne Weidmann, Ron Pientka and Rich Denike.

The following have served as President of the club: Walt Donovan, Wayne Weidmann, Andy Benesko, Andy Benesko, Ken Kotacska, Ken Pfeiffer, Dale Moffatt, Larry Castrovinci, John Datz, Rich Parrillo, Richard Paul, Jim White, John Niemiec and presently Kevin Moran.

Laffin Chevrolet, South River, became the sponsor of the club during the presidency of Wayne Weidmann and remained a faithful sponsor until their doors closed in 2009. Meetings are currently held at Pierre's Restaurant in South Brunswick every first Tuesday of the month.

The club traditionally has been a social organization. Since its inception, members have participated in such activities as car shows, cruise nights, rallies, races, picnics, holiday parties, Broadway shows, casino trips and softball games against other clubs.