

# Old Cars

www.oldcarsweekly.com

Weekly News & Marketplace

## EXPRESS

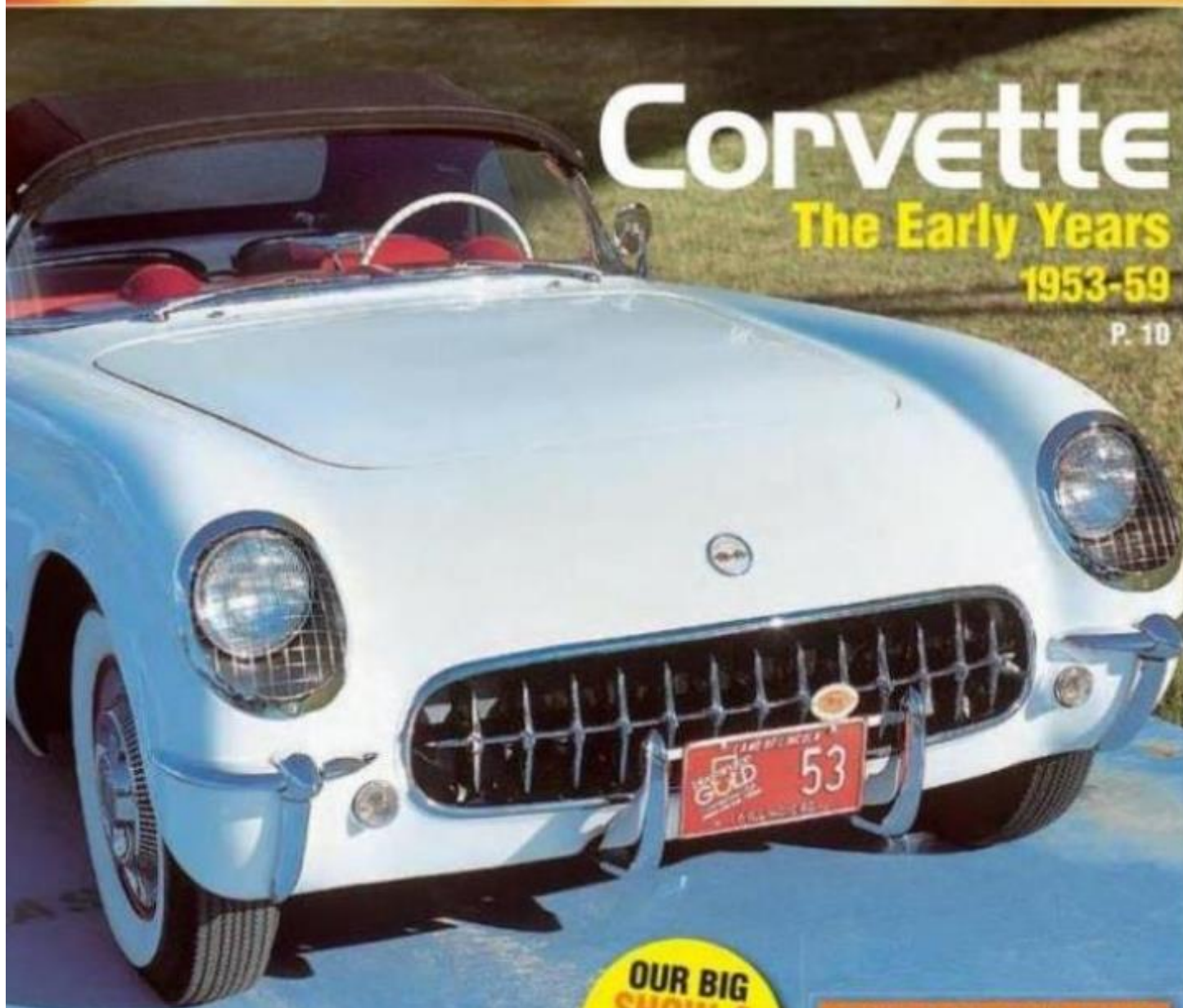
July 13, 2017

# Corvette

## The Early Years

### 1953-59

P. 10



## PLUS

- HOBBY NEWS & NOTES, P. 8
- FORD FIND: RARE MODEL Y PROTOTYPE, P. 32

**OUR BIG  
SHOW &  
AUCTION  
CALENDAR**  
P. 48

### ADVERTISEMENT INDEX

Madison Classics .....	2
Heartland Die-Cast & Promo.....	3
Cars of Summer .....	5
Holmen Lions Kornfest Car Show.....	6
Diecast Direct, Inc. ....	7
D & D Classic .....	9
Krause Publications .....	15



Micky Wright

*The 1958 Corvette was similar in many ways to the 1958 model.*

# 1959

The 1959 Corvette was basically a cleaned-up 1958. The fake hood louvers and vertical chrome strips on the trunk were removed. Interior changes included redesigned bucket seats and door panels, a fiberglass package tray under the sissy bar and concave gauge lenses. A tachometer, outside rearview mirror, seat belts, dual exhaust and electric clock were among the standard features. Sunvisors became optional. New concave instrument lenses reduced reflections. The optional four-speed manual transmission had a T-shaped reverse-lockout shifter with a white plastic shifter knob. There were seven exterior body colors offered: Tuxedo Black (Black or White soft top); Classic Cream (Black or White soft top); Frost Blue (White or Blue soft top); Crown Sapphire (White or Turquoise soft top); Roman Red (Black or White soft top); Snowcrest White (Black, White, Tan or Blue soft top) and Inca Silver (Black or White soft top). Blue, Red, Turquoise, and (for the first time) Black interiors were available. The armrests and door handles were in a different position, the seats had a new shape and a shelf was added.

## I.D. NUMBERS

The Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) is located on a plate on the left front door hinge pillar post. For 1959 the numbers were: J59S100001 to J59S109670. The first symbol (J) indicates Corvette. The second and third symbols (59) indicate the model year. The fourth symbol identifies the assembly plant (S = St. Louis, Mo). The last six symbols indicate the sequential production number. Engine code suffixes were: CQ = three-speed manual transmission; CR = three-speed manual transmission and fuel injection; CS = three-speed manual transmission, high-lift camshaft and fuel injection; CT = three-speed manual transmission and dual four-barrel carburetors; CU = three-speed manual transmission, high-lift camshaft and dual four-barrel carburetors; DG = Powerglide automatic transmission; DH = Powerglide automatic transmission and fuel injection and DJ = Powerglide automatic transmission and dual four-barrel carburetors. Cars with optional four-speed manual transmissions used the same engine code suffixes as cars with three-speed manual transmissions. The beginning engine numbers were 0001001 and up at each assembly plant with F = Flint, Mich. and T = Tonawanda, N.Y. The body number plate was located on the engine side of the cowl. The Fisher Body Style Number 59-867 identifies a Corvette. The Body Number is the production serial number of the body. The Trim Number indicates the interior trim color and material. The vinyl upholstery was available in Black, Blue, Red, or Turquoise. The Paint Number indicates the color combination. The 1959 Corvette



Wicky Wright

**The 1959 Corvette listed at \$3,875.**

acrylic lacquer exterior colors offered were No. 502A Frost Blue; No. 503A Tuxedo Black; No. 504A Crown Sapphire; No. 506A Roman Red; No. 508A Classic Cream; No. 509A Inca Silver and No. 510A Snowcrest White. The body side cove could be painted Silver or White.

#### ENGINES

**BASE ENGINE:** V-8. Overhead valve. Cast-iron block. Displacement: 283 cid. Bore and stroke: 3.87 x 3.00 inches. Compression ratio: 9.50:1. Brake hp: 230 at 4800 rpm. Five main bearings. Hydraulic valve lifters. Carburetor: Carter Type WCFB four-barrel Model 2816.

**OPTIONAL ENGINE:** V-8. Overhead valve. Cast-iron block. Displacement: 283 cid. Bore and stroke: 3.87 x 3.00 inches. Compression ratio: 9.50:1. Brake hp: 245. Five main bearings. Carburetor: Two four-barrel carburetors.

**OPTIONAL ENGINE:** V-8. Overhead valve. Cast-iron block. Displacement: 283 cid. Bore and stroke: 3.87 x 3.00 inches. Compression ratio: 9.50:1. Brake hp: 250. Five main bearings. Induction: Rochester fuel injection.

**OPTIONAL ENGINE:** V-8. Overhead valve. Cast-iron block. Displacement: 283 cid. Bore and stroke: 3.87 x 3.00 inches. Compression ratio: 9.50:1. Brake hp: 270. Five main bearings. Carburetor: Two four-barrel carburetors.

**OPTIONAL ENGINE:** V-8. Overhead valve. Cast-iron block. Displacement: 283 cid. Bore and stroke: 3.87 x 3.00 inches. Compression ratio: 10.50:1. Brake hp: 290. Five main bearings. Induction: Rochester fuel injection.

#### TRANSMISSIONS

**STANDARD MANUAL TRANSMISSION:** A three-speed manual all-synchromesh transmission with floor-mounted gear shifter was standard equipment.

**AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION:** A two-speed Powerglide automatic transmission was optional equipment.

**OPTIONAL MANUAL TRANSMISSION:** A four-speed manual all-synchromesh transmission with floor-mounted gear

shifter was optional equipment.

#### CHASSIS FEATURES

Wheelbase: 102 inches. Overall length: 177.2 inches. Overall height: 51.6 inches. Overall width: 72.8 inches. Front tread: 57 inches. Rear tread: 59 inches. Ground clearance: six inches. Tires: 6.70 x 15. Frame: Welded steel box-section, X-braced type. Front suspension: Independent; upper and lower A-arms, unequal-length wishbones; coil springs; anti-roll bar; tubular shocks. Steering: Saginaw recirculating ball, 17:1 ratio; 3.7 turns lock-to-lock; 38.5-foot turning circle. Rear suspension: Live axle on semi-elliptic leaf springs, tubular shock absorbers. Rear axle type: Hypoid semi-floating. Brakes: Four-wheel hydraulic, internal-expanding, 11-inch diameter drums, 157 square inches effective lining area (121 square inches with optional sintered metallic linings). 15-inch steel bolt-on wheels. Standard rear axle ratio with three-speed 3.70:1; with Powerglide: 3.55:1. Optional axle ratios: 4.11:1 and 4.56:1.

#### OPTIONS

Additional cove color (\$16.15). RPO 101 Heater (\$102.25). RPO 102 Signal-seeking AM radio (\$149.80). RPO 107 Parking brake alarm (\$5.40). RPO 108 Courtesy lights (\$6.50). RPO 109 Windshield washer (\$16.15). RPO 261 Sunshades (\$10.80). 276 Five 15 x 5.5-inch wheels (No charge). RPO 290 White sidewall tires 6.70 x 15 (\$31.55). RPO 313 Powerglide automatic transmission (\$199.10). RPO 419 Auxiliary hardtop (\$236.75). RPO 426 Electric power windows (\$59.20). RPO 269 283-cid 245-hp dual four-barrel carburetor V-8 engine (\$150.65). RPO 469C V-8 283-cid 270-hp dual four-barrel carburetor engine (\$182.95). RPO 579 V-8 283-cid 250-hp fuel-injection engine (\$484.20). RPO 579D V-8 283-cid 290-hp fuel-injection engine (\$484.20). RPO 473 Power-operated folding top mechanism (\$139.90). RPO 675 Positraction axle with optional ratio (\$48.45). RPO 684 Heavy-duty brakes and suspension (\$425.05). RPO 685



Jerry Hoesley

**1959 Corvette with 283-cid V-8**

Four-speed manual transmission (\$188.30). RPO 686 Metallic brakes (\$26.90)

**HISTORICAL FOOTNOTES**

A 250-hp fuel-injected 1959 Corvette with the 3.70:1 rear axle could go from 0-to-60 mph in 7.8 seconds. It did the quarter mile in 15.7 seconds at 90 mph and had a top speed of 120 mph. A 290-hp fuel-injected 1959 Corvette with the 4.11:1 rear axle could go from 0-to-60 mph in 6.8 seconds; from 0-to-100

mph in 15.5 seconds. It did the quarter mile in 14.9 seconds at 96 mph and had a top speed of 124 mph. Road & Track described the 1959 Corvette as “a pretty package with all the speed you need and then some.”

1959 CORVETTE					
Model Number	Body/Style Number	Body Type & Seating	Factory Price	Shipping Weight	Production Total
J800	867	2-dr Rd-2P	3875	2912	9670



Jerry Hoesley

**1959 Corvette in Roman Red**