

Michigan

“Where it all began”



Volume 13 Issue 5

Dates to Remember

SACC dues > National and Chapter are due Dec. 1
See page 22 for 2024 renewal application

*National membership is required
to be a Chapter member*

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MISACC CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON
11:30 am DECEMBER 9, 2023
AUBREE'S GRILL > DEXTER, MI

Please contact Tom Gamache prior to Dec. 1st
tsgama22@comcast.net

MISACC Lighthouse Tour

Part One Sept. 30 2023



Don't forget our website

www.solidaxlecorvettemi.com



From President's Laptop

Oct/Nov 2023

Michigan Chapter members,

Our **Saturday, September 30th Club Event** was Segment 1 of our 5 planned Great Lakes Lighthouse Tours.

Segment 1 started from Lightship Huron in Port Huron on M-25N to Unionville, driving Lake Huron's scenic coastline, then south on M24, ending in Lapeer for dinner. From all indications and feedback, our shoreline cruise was a great success. Although this was a week or 2 early for peak color, for many of us, this tour was our Fall Color Tour.

Our next Lighthouse Tour, Segment 2, from Standish to Mackinaw City on M-23 is in planning for 2024 driving season. We have identified at least four lighthouses that were open and available.



My latest brainstorm idea, I call the Ultimate Lighthouse Tour, would be combining the Hell (MI) to Paradise (MI) Run with visiting the three major lighthouses (Mackinaw City, Crisp Point Lighthouse & Whitefish Point Lighthouse) on the route. If you feel your C-1s not suitable for this type activity, those who have C-5s, 6s, 7s & Land-Yacht SUVs might find it entertaining. This is really an anytime in the summer event, TBD at the 2024 Spring Membership Meeting.

Any trip originating in Mackinaw area is an opportunity to drive Segment 3 of the Lighthouse Tour that starts in Mackinaw City, I-75S to US-31S to Traverse City, M22 around the Leelanau Peninsula and ends at Frankfort, Mi.

Many of us in Michigan Chapter have caravanned long distances to attend SACC National Conventions in places like Harrisburg, PA, Bowling Green, KY, Kissimmee, FL, Memphis, TN, York, PA, Lakeland, FL and Mechanicsburg, PA.

We drive together as a group for many reasons but safety and visibility are #1 & #2. When travelling in caravan, we try to keep approx. 3-4 car lengths between cars and maintain as constant a speed as possible to avoid the accordion effect.

These two things greatly reduce the possibility of outsiders breaking into the caravan and causing disruption.

Our Christmas Lunch > Aubree's private dining room, Dexter, MI Dec. 9, 11:30 am- 2:00 pm.

We look forward to greeting both old and new friends.

Interesting thing is, after 1 meeting we cannot tell the difference.

Remember, every mile of seat time is a good memory!

Bill Huffman, Pres.

Michigan Chapter SACC



Don't forget our website: www.solidaxlecorvettemi.com



MI SACC Lighthouse Tour Sept 30, 2023

The weather was fantastic - couldn't have ordered it any better. 13 participants, driving five C1's a newer ZO6 Vette and an SUV. Participants were Jim & Cindy Dillon (SUV), Joe & Marie Feko (red '61), Bill & Stef Huffman (red '60), Paul & Cheryl Lemieux (white '59), Mike & Christine McLain (maroon '62), Bill Penzer (maroon '62) and John & Kandy Ronayne (black ZO6).

Most of us met in Port Huron at the Bob Evans restaurant in the morning and proceeded to the Lightship Huron (retired in 1971) where we were given a tour of the lightship which is now a National Historical Monument and is docked on the shore of the St. Clair River. Our tour guide gave us a history of the ship plus details of the inner workings of the ship, much to the delight of the gearheads among us.

Next, we drove to the Fort Gratiot Lighthouse which was Michigan's first lighthouse and after visiting the gift shop, walked around the area and took pictures. There were tours available here too and some may have climbed to the top of the lighthouse.

Then, we proceeded to a scenic turnout rest stop along Lake Huron for about a 20 minute break. Back in the cars for the drive to the Harbor Beach Light which rests on the tip of a breakwater wall far out from the shore. We were able to view this lighthouse from the end of a long fishing pier in the Judge James H. Lincoln Memorial Park. The boat tours to the light recently ended for the season.

Our last stop was the Pointe aux Barques Lighthouse in Port Hope. The beautiful area around the light is a county park, and although the museum and gift shop had closed for the season, there were sign boards around the area telling the story of the lighthouse, ship wrecks and of the Great Lakes.

We closed out this fun day of beautiful lighthouses and awesome views of Lake Huron with a nice scenic drive mostly along the coastline subsequently turning inland for dinner in Lapeer. Most were able to stay for dinner and it was a pleasant way to chat about the day and share with others the wonders of Michigan.

Tour related questions:

Please contact Paul Lemieux ASAP jplvet9@gmail.com



MISACC Lighthouse Tour Part One > #109 to #105



#109 Huron Lightship



The HURON Lightship was the last operating lightship on the Great Lakes and served for over 50 years when she was retired in 1970. She is permanently moored on the banks of the St. Clair River in Pine Grove Park.

#108 Fort Gratiot Light

Fort Gratiot Light, the first lighthouse in the State of Michigan, was constructed north of Fort Gratiot in 1829 by Lucius Lyon. Lyon, who later became one of Michigan's first U.S. Senators.



MISACC Lighthouse Tour Part One > #109 to #105



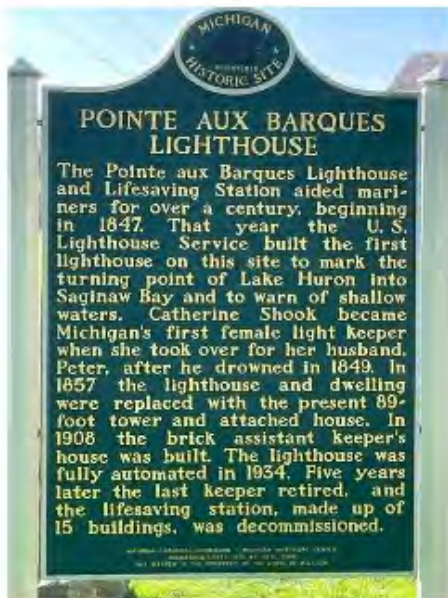
#106 Harbor Beach Light



The Harbor Beach Lighthouse is a “fireplug”, was built and began to shine its light over the lake in 1885. The outer shell of the lighthouse is made of cast iron. Brick and plaster line the inner walls. The lighthouse is unique because of its six decks with rooms. It can be toured on Saturdays throughout the summer. The tour cost is \$20 which includes a short boat ride to and from the lighthouse, tour of the lighthouse and the Girce House Museum.



#105 Pointe aux Barques Light



The original Pointe aux Barques Lighthouse was constructed of stone taken from the shore of Lake Huron in 1848. The keeper's house and separate tower were located on a three-acre clearing hacked out of the dense wilderness. Participants

- Paul and Cheryl Lemieux - white '59
- Bill and Stephanie Huffman - red '60
- Mike and Christine McLain - maroon '62
- Bill Penzer - maroon '61
- John and Kandy Ronayne - black 206
- Jim and Cindy Dillon - black SUV
- Joe and Marie Feko - red '61

By 1857, the ravages of shoreline weather and a fire in the interior of the house created the need for a new structure. The new keeper's house and attached 89-foot tower were built of the finest brick available. The light is still an active aid to navigation, making Pointe aux Barques one of the oldest continuously operating Lights on the Great Lakes.



Solid Axle Corvette Club Michigan Chapter 2023 Events Information

Gilmore Car Museum Corvette/Camero, Hickory Corners, MI – Sunday, July 16, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Pre-registration required online and cost is \$20 per vehicle, which includes admission for the driver and one guest. Participant gate open from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Questions: contact jronayne33@gmail.com

Champion: John Ronayne

Troy Traffic Jam Classic Car Show, Columbia Center, Troy, MI – Troy Historical Society,

Sunday, August 6. In order to park together, there is an area for clubs to meet up and drive in at the same time.

Questions, contact Joe Feko jfeko@wowway.com

Champion: Joe Feko.

Corvettes America Car Show, Everest Collegiate High School and Academy, Clarkston, MI – Saturday, August 12, 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Proceeds from the silent auction are donated to local charitable organizations.

[Corvette America Show - America's Corvette Club \(americascorvetteclub.org\)](http://americascorvetteclub.org)

Questions contact: choochoooharry@comcast.net

Champion: Harry Jones.

Woodward DreamCruise

Champion: Dave Ruby

NCRS invitation to MI SACC join them in downtown Birmingham on August 19, 2023

Corvette Crossroads, Mackinaw City, MI - Saturday, August 26, 2023 starting at 9:00 a.m. –

(Note: Weekend trip – travel up Friday, return Sunday or Monday; suggest reservations at Riviera Motel, phone 231-436-5577 or www.shawdowofthebridge.com.)

MISACC block of rooms are spoken for. Presently, the Huffmans, Lemieuxs, Rubys, and Ronaynes, are planning a caravan to the event. Location; Saturday 9:00 am to 2:00 pm Mackinac Island Ferry Co. parking lot (Straits State Harbor) 409 S. Huron Ave. Mackinac Bridge Parade 7:00 pm

Questions? Contact Bill at swh73@comcast.net

Champions: Bill Huffman

Paragon Reproductions Open House > CANCELLED

PARAGON IS GONE All goods and services are now available at Corvette Central

Lighthouse Tour Part 1 Sept. 30

See pages 3 thru 6 for Tour writeup

Champion: Paul Lemieux

Fall Color Tour:– Rained out

Champions: John & Kandy Ronayne

MISACC Christmas Lunch, - Saturday, December 9, 2022

Please advise Tom Gamache (tsgama22@comcast.net)

prior to Dec. 1st,

if you are planning to attend



MI SACC EVENT CALENDAR

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	CHAMPION
May 31– June 3	SACC National Convention	Bloomington, IL	B HUFFMAN
July 16	Gilmore Corvette/Camero	Hickory Corners, MI	J RONAYNE
August 6	Troy Traffic Jam	Columbia Center, Troy	J FEKO
August 12	Corvettes America Car Show	Clarkston, MI	H JONES
August 19	Woodward DreamCruise	Birmingham, MI	D. RUBY
August 26—27	Corvette Crossroads	Mackinaw City, MI	P LEMIEUX
CANCELLED	Paragon Open House	Swartz Creek, MI	B HUFFMAN
Sept. 30	Lighthouse Tour 1	Port Huron. MI	P LEMIEUX
Oct 7-8 or 14-15	Annual Color Tour	RAIN OUT	J RONAYNE
Dec 9	Christmas Luncheon	Aubree's Grill Dexter, MI	T GAMACHE



Don't forget our website

www.solidaxlecorvettemi.com



1954 Corvette Prototype: A Euro-flair design that never was

Haggerty Media by Matteo Licata

02 August 2023



Copyright and Courtesy of Gooding & Company | Images by Josh Hway

Chevrolet built just 4640 Corvettes between 1953 and 1955, which makes each survivor of this initial "C1" design a special car in its own right. But perhaps none is quite as special as the [1954 Corvette prototype](#) that will go under the hammer at Gooding & Company's Pebble Beach auction on August 18 and 19. Because the mere fact this 'Vette still exists at all is exceptional.



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This car's story goes back all the way to the very beginning of the Corvette program, prior to '53, when GM built a batch of around 15 pre-production of experimental and display use. Largely hand-built, these vehicles were issued only a four-digit S.O. ("Shop Order") code for internal use rather than a regular production-code number, as would have been used for a salable car.



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Known initially as S.O. 2000, this particular Corvette prototype began life as a pale-yellow hardtop model. It didn't stay that way for long, though. Dismantled in early 1954, its body returned to GM's design department where it received a new "S.O. 2151" code as well as a new chassis.

Most important in this context, the car got a fresh look. Under the watch of GM's legendary design chief Harley Earl, this Corvette was transformed into a so-called "Proposal Car," a prototype built for GM management to evaluate the styling changes intended for the Corvette's 1955 model year. Given that the scope of this project was a simple facelift, likely meant to rekindle interest in the Corvette amid flagging sales, the car's fundamental design and proportions didn't change. Nevertheless, it's an intriguing glimpse into Earl's ideas for the Corvette's evolution, highlighting a somewhat different design direction from the one he eventually chose for the model's subsequent 1956 revamp.



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In automobile design, the period between the end of World War II and 1960 was characterized by an intense creative exchange between the two sides of the Atlantic. On the one hand, to people in war-ravaged Europe, the triumphant U.S.A. represented a beacon of progress, the promise of a brighter future. In car design terms, this translated into European automakers' wide adoption of design elements like wraparound glass and tailfins.



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Design cues like the aggressive egg-crate grille, non-functional hood scoop, and slanted air outlets on the front fenders were all lifted straight from period Ferraris. Chevrolet's curvaceous little roadster originated from Harley Earl's desire to create an all-American answer to the growing success of European sports cars, so the look of this proposed facelift seems to further build on that original idea.



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On the other hand, Detroit's stylists sought inspiration from the Old World's design heritage to lend a certain prestige and sophistication to their mass-market offerings. This Corvette prototype serves as an excellent case in point.



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Interestingly, the decorative chrome trim pieces adorning the fender's air outlets are only present on the left side of the car. The same goes with the Corvette script, which is also placed differently from left to right. A convenient way to evaluate different options using a single model, such asymmetrical prototypes are still a staple of every automaker's design process.



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The most notable styling change at the rear of S.O. 2151 is the trunk lid, whose shape is redolent of the '54 Motorama's fastback Corvair show car. The exhaust tips integrated into the rear bumperette's design are another noteworthy feature, if only because they are the sole design element from this Corvette that made it onto the redesigned 1956 model.



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General Motors ultimately decided not to change the Corvette's appearance for the 1955 model year. With just 700 cars produced that year, the Corvette program was hanging by a thread and was ultimately, albeit indirectly, saved by the Ford Motor Company. As the Thunderbird outsold the Corvette more than 20 times over in '55, GM reimagined the Corvette for 1956 with better weather protection, roll-up windows, and an overall glitzier appearance.



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For GM or any other automaker, cars like S.O. 2151 are development tools. It may seem cold and shortsighted through a retrospective lens, but once such prototypes serve their purpose, their life expectancy can usually be measured in weeks. So, although we may never know exactly how this unique Corvette managed to escape destruction, let alone slip into private hands, it's important to recognize its survival as an exceptional occurrence.



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Following a painstaking restoration that took three years and brought this forgotten piece of Corvette history back to its appearance during its (fleeting) glory days of mid-1954, S.O. 2151 made its public debut at The Amelia in March this year.



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Given the car's unique status and significance, it comes as no surprise that Gooding & Company estimates it could fetch between \$1.5M and \$2M on the auction block, which means it could become the most expensive "C1" Corvette ever sold. That honor currently belongs to a 1962 Corvette "Gulf Oil" race car, which sold for \$1.65M in 2015 at an RM Sotheby's auction.

Although few people can afford to bid for the privilege of being this Corvette's next custodian, those who saved, lovingly restored, and documented it all made a priceless contribution to the preservation of automobile history. That makes us all a little bit richer, no?



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Welcome to the Michigan Chapter
SOLID AXLE CORVETTE CLUB



Michigan Chapter SACC Membership or Renewal Application - New ___ Renewal ___ Yr. ___
Michigan Chapter Membership requires membership in the National SACC organization.

For record keeping: MI SACC collects both National and Chapter dues and submits your National dues to SACC National.

	1 year
Michigan Chapter SACC dues @ \$15.00 a year:	\$15.00.
Michigan Chapter SACC windshield decals: ___ decals @ \$5.00 each:	_____
National SACC yearly dues, renewable December 1st :	\$45.00 *
	Total : _____

Chapter dues include our quarterly Chapter Newsletter "Michigan"

National Membership includes the quarterly magazine "On Solid Ground"

SACC National publishes an annual membership & roadside assistance roster. The roster contains names, phone numbers, city & state, but no street address. It also has a field to indicate that you are willing to help if a traveling SACC member needs roadside assistance in your area.

If you do not want your name listed in the roster initial here: _____

If you do not want to participate in the road side assistance program initial here: _____

FAILURE TO INITIAL ABOVE INDICATES YOUR PERMISSION TO BE LISTED AND WILLINGNESS TO HELP IN THE ROSTER.

If you are a new member: SACC National will send you a National membership number separately.

If you are an existing National member please insert your National membership # _____

Please make checks payable to: MI SACC and mail to: Paul Lemieux
MI SACC Treasurer
403 Loris Lane
Oxford, MI 48371

Questions: contact Paul Lemieux > jplvet9@gmail.com

Applicant Name _____ Co-Applicant: _____

Address _____

City _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home phone _____ Work/Cell: _____

E-Mail _____ Fax: _____

Corvettes presently owned - please include the VIN # for all C-1's

I will enjoy participating in these club activities: Driving tours ___ Get away weekends _____

Museum tours ___ Historic site/shop tours ___ Car Shows ___ Tech sessions ___ Race events ___

Newsletter Contributions ___ Tour/Event Planning ___ Other _____

I would be interested in attending the planning meeting Yes ___ No ___

Signature: _____ Date: _____

I am currently a member of the following automotive clubs/organization _____

Visit our website: www.solidaxlecorvettemi.com

**Michigan Chapter SACC
2023 Volunteers**

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jronayne33@gmail.com

Solid Axle Corvette Club

The Solid Axle Corvette Club is for enthusiasts who drive and show America's first sports car., our beloved C1's. The Solid Axle Corvette Club invites you to share our enthusiasm and dedication to the Solid Axle Corvettes, and to enjoy the fellowship of our members.

SACC is the initials of the Solid Axle Corvette Club. So, just what is a solid axle Corvette? The rear axle housing on all 1953 to 1962 Corvettes was a one-piece shell. The rear differential (rear gears) and the axles were mounted within this rear axle housing. (The rear axle housing is sometimes called a solid [or straight] axle housing.)

Beginning with the 1963 model year, Corvettes had an independent rear suspension (IRS). The rear differential is built into the center housing: universal joints and short shafts (called jack shafts) transfer power to the rear wheels. Each rear wheel reacts independently to the road surface, and has earned the nickname "rubber axle".

The Solid Axle Corvette Club (SACC) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation, care, history, and enjoyment of the 1953 to 1962 Corvettes. Ours is a family oriented club with membership covering all members of your family. You do not need to own a Corvette to join.

Road Rules

The *Michigan* is the quarterly newsletter for the Michigan Chapter of the Solid Axle Corvette Club and is published four times yearly (Spring, Summer, Fall & Winter). It is published in PDF format, and e-mailed to members in good standing.

Membership in the Michigan Chapter is open **only** to members of the parent organization, the Solid Axle Corvette Club. The Solid Axle Corvette Club is a non-profit organization, serving members with an interest in 1953—1962 model year Corvettes. Ownership of a Solid Axle or any Corvette is not necessary to become a member of the organization.

The newsletter provides a forum for members to communicate with other members. As a result, the newsletter will often contain member opinions. Those opinions should not be construed as an endorsement by Michigan SACC or the parent organization, SACC.

Direct Questions to:

National SACC Membership Chairman

Lucy Badenhoop, SACC NATIONAL
P.O. Box 2288
N. Highlands, CA 95660-8288
badenhoop@comcast.net

Michigan membership dues, inquiries and corrections to the address list should be directed to the Treasurer:

Paul Lemieux

403 Loris Lane
Oxford, MI 48371
jplvet9@gmail.com

Membership renewal and application form on preceding page.

Please submit articles for publication to the editor.

Generally, articles for publication should follow the broad theme of anything of interest to the Solid Axle Corvette community". Suggested items for publication would include how-to articles, parts information, performance issues, scheduled events, restoration or repair information, and personal stories.

The Michigan Newsletter editor can be reached at:

Dave Ruby, Editor
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30120 Lincolnshire E.,
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druby@comcast.net

