CORVETTE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

—Presented by Dale Pearman

(Note: Dale has given SACE permission to reprint his Bloomington Gold workshop booklet. Thanks, Dale!)

Q. My 1962 Corvette is within 500 cars from the end of the production run, and I've lost points in N.C.R.S. events because of a 1961 trunk latch pedestal. I have a 1961-style pop-up spring held to the pedestal with a single clamp and a Phillips-head screw on the passenger side. This spring does NOT sit in a well, depressed from the top surface of the pedestal. The judge said that it was an improper repair but I know for a fact that no repairs were ever done to this area of the car. Is it original?

A. Yes! I have been able to document, through Mr. Joe Johnson of Indiana, that starting at about serial number 14,100 in the 1962 production run, St. Louis started using all their inventory of trunk latch pedestals, clamps and pop-up springs from prior years. In 1961, the trunk LID had no special provision to engage the rubber bumper in the pop-up spring mounted on the pedestal's DRIVER side. All 1962 Corvettes used a 1962 trunk LID, differing from 1961 lids in that on the PASSENGER side, a square elevated fiberglass platform was provided to allow the rubber bumper on the spring to seat.

1961 springs were mounted on the top of the trunk lock pedestal, driver's side, with a single clamp and Phillips-head screw. (Rubber bumper of course on the spring). For 1962, a hole was cut in the pedestal, passenger side, and a shelf inside was formed for the spring to be attached in this well with rivets and clamps. (A bumper was also on the top of this spring).

After S/N 14,100, anything goes with respect to the pedestal and spring. I've documented one example with no well, no spring, and a 1961 style hole in the passenger side for the Phillips head screw. Another example shows a correct 1961 assembly on a 1962. Still, another shows no well, a Phillips head screw hole, and the end of a 1961 spring through the guide hole and clamped with a 1961 clamp and screw, all on the passenger side. I've never seen an original 1962 with a 1961 trunk lid (yet!) I wonder if end-of-production 1961 models and 1962 lids, or if VERY early 1962's had 1961 lids. Any help here would be appreciated. On page 342 of Noland Adams' first book a photograph is shown of a rubber convertible top lid bumper attached to the underside of a 1961 trunk lid with a Phillips screw. I'm not sure that i agree with what he states as being "original" for the 1961-62 production runs.

Q. I went to get a pair of window regulators for my 1958 Corvette and the guy said they didn't sell them any more. He said that 62's would work. Am I gonna get fastenered?

A. Yes! 1956-58 window regulators, (3723473 left and 3723474 right), have been discontinued for some time now. Reworked 1959-62 regulators for use in 1956-58 cars are available from a few of the better Corvette supply houses. You may be able to rework a 1959-62 pair yourself by bending the main arm and measuring for conformity with the originals. It's an easy job. Go back to Mr. Goodparts and purchase a 3757665 left and 3757666 right, if you so choose.

Q. Why do some bumperette assemblies stick out from the grilles so far on 1961-62 models?

A. 1958-60 Corvettes used teeth or vertical chromed pieces attached to a horizontal grille bar in front as opposed to the 1961-62 models which used a cast aluminum grille and a chromed steel horizontal grille bar. (1961 natural finish aluminum grilles are positioned close-up to the grille bar and 1962 anodized black or gold grilles are positioned further back with the use of spacers). The bumperettes are to be located further forward on 1958-60 cars to clear the grille teeth. As a result, two designs existed for bumperette supports; short ones, (1961-62, 3782765 left, 3782766 right), and long ones, (1958-60 supports; short ones, (1958-60 3739331 left, 3739332 right). As a cost-cutting maneuver, G.M. has discontinued the shorter version, reasoning that "one size does all." When you see the bumperettes more than an inch or so in front of the grille bar on 1961-62 cars, the reason is probably because the wrong supports are being used. The correct lengths are being made as reproductions, or if so inclined, the restorer may easily cut, weld, smooth and refinish an early, longer set for use on 1961-62 Corvettes.

Q. On a 1962 Corvette, aluminum rocker moldings are used on both sides. Are they supposed to be painted in-between the strips.

All early production 1962 body sill moldings, 3820541 (left) and 3820542 (right) were unpainted until serial number 6000 or so when a flat black paint was added to the depressed portion of the rocker molding stamping, thereby accenting the raised aluminum horizontal ribs. I have observed both painted and unpainted moldings on mid-run production cars. Mike Ernst reports seeing unpainted moldings as late as S/N 6700.

A. These body sill moldings were held to the car along the top edge by a continuous retainer strip, (3814766) attached with four screws, (9412276) as opposed to the separate retainer pieces used on the mid-years. Two chrome-plated Phillips head oval screws, 9168496) were visible; one on either end of the molding in counter-sunk, dimpled depressions and retained with flat spring nuts (445109). Visible from underneath the car were five fastener assembles (I've seen six and seven as well) along the bottom of the molding (screw 9417692, washer 120392, split ring lock, washer 12-380, and hex nut 134551). Fiberglass holes were drilled to the template formed by the molding.

Q. I have a 1962 Fuel-Injected Corvette and recently I rebuilt the windshield washer system. The heat shield for the fluid jar is made of aluminum. Is it supposed to be painted, left "natural" or what?

A. The heat shield was installed before the black-out eggshell paint process and therefore should appear the same shade of black as the rest of the engine compartment. The fiberglass underneath the shield is natural and unpainted. This shield is held to the inner fender with either hex or clutch head cap screws, (160046), lock washers, (120217) and nuts, (120614). I have seen mainly hex screws on production '62's.

Q. I see two different gas tank meters for sale in XXXXXXX's parts catalog; one for '58-60 Corvettes and another for '61-62 Corvettes. What is a "gas tank meter" and what is the difference between the two?

A. The 1956-60 meter assembly was G.M. (1518785) while that for 1961-62 was (5642125). The only difference between the two meters was the manner in which the fuel outlet connected to the main fuel line running along the frame. A brass fitting with female threads was soldered to the end of the pipe for a rigid connection on the earlier cars, while a clamped rubber hose was used in 1961-62. Also, on the intake end of the meter pipe, a strainer assembly, (3751491) was used on all models. Part (5642125) is still serviced by A-C Delco as of this writing (5-18-90).

Q. I just bought a pair of bezels for the headlights on my white 1962 and had them professionally painted. The spears with the rivets were installed correctly, but the bezels won't fit right on the car. Have I done something wrong?

A. The '61-62 headlamp bezel (G.M. calls them "doors") are part number 3779239 and have been discontinued for some time now (Unavailable). G.M., however, has made available a "reissue" door, part number 3742509, sold as part number 3779239, which is the same casting number as the 1958-60 door with two holes drilled for the spear and either de-chromed or unchromed. I can't determine how the chrome is deleted. As I recall, two different casting numbers were involved between the two year groups, and therefore some differences could exist in shape. This fact would account for some of the misfit. The junction of the spears, (extension fender molding), (3779240), with the top molding assembly (3740215) left much to be desired as shipped from the factory. Usually a gap appeared between the two pieces. Joe Calcagno, a 1962 Corvette collector and restorer, wrote for the N.C.R.S. Restorer magazine a couple of years ago, that by using a nylon washer between the fiberglass fender and the top molding at the first mounting stud, a better fit would result in that most of the gap would be transferred to a visually less dominant portion of the assembly. I have used his advice to advantage on my cars. One one occasion, I had to trim back a portion of the top fender molding in order to get a decent appearance. The doors are mounted with four screws each, chrome plated oval Phillips head, (3770549) for 1961-62, and (3732018) for 1958-60 (Same screw, different numbers).