

# HISTORIC HILL CLIMBER

PHA Archives

Volume I, Issue I  
January 2009

## Welcome To The First Issue

**PHA TURNS 50 IN  
2009!!**

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### Archive is looking for:

- 1967 Hobbie/Green Mountain results
- 1968 Weatherly results
- 1971 Rose Valley results
- 1971 Weatherly results
- 1972 Pine Grove results
- 1972 Duryea results
- 1972 Rose Valley results
- 1972 Weatherly results
- 1975 Pine Grove results
- 1976 Pine Grove results
- 1976 Duryea results
- 1977 Watkins Glen results
- **MORE TO COME!!**

While doing my work with the archives and coming in contact with so many ex-hill climbers it has become apparent that connecting one time friends and acquaintances has become a very important part of the job. I think it is also important that this network, of people that shared this unusual connection to a not so common motor sport, continues to be the family it has always been.

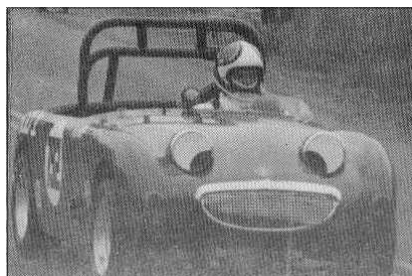
This issue will be the first, of what I hope to be a quarterly digest of happenings at the PHA Archives. Since I've taken the position and have had my contact information posted on the PHA website, I've been contacted on numerous occasions by people researching cars they own, once owned, or want to own. I've been contacted by families trying to locate cars or get race data on a family member. I call these "cases" and I will share them with you.

With all the photos & films that have come in, ID'ing cars/drivers is another big job. When I can, I run the car's number against the result sheets and come up with an ID quick, that is...if I can see the number!! I have an electronic file of "unknowns", for those of you that are on my email distribution list you have seen some of these and have come to my rescue on more than one occasion. I will have a few of these in the digest as well.

In fact, this "digest" will appear to be more like a newsletter with photos, historic articles, possibly some features like; "where are they now", event reviews, archive acquisitions, and other historic based write ups.

I look forward to organizing gatherings, continuing to do presentations and meeting as many of you as I can. Although, I have a small budget allotted to me from the PHA...much of what I'll be doing will be on my own. The PHA's history is too rich for it to be lost and forgotten...that's why I'm here!

**PHOTO ID'S NEEDED:** As stated before, a large number of photos in the collection need ID'ed. I will have a segment in the newsletter, send a few out on the email distribution list or you could set up a time to come visit sometime!



The Sprite may be a "2 driver" car...circa early to mid 70's. The car above has been hinted at a being a Koveleski car...but there has been nothing to confirm that. What do you think?? Please contact me with any clues!

More about me:

My name is Ron Mann and I'm 40 years old. I grew up on the hill that the Hershey Hill Climb was run...but I was too young to remember it. I had always heard people talk about it but never grasped the magnitude of the event until it's rebirth in 2002. I got involved as the Pit Steward for the first 3 years. At this time I learned about the PHA and wanted to get involved even more. I built up a 1965 VW Notchback into a car that I could run hills with...it isn't very competitive, but I have fun. Being a history buff...I couldn't help but delve into the PHA's history and the history of hill climbing itself. I was blown away...I started to gather artifacts on my own and documenting what I found. I wanted to hear stories, first hand...so I sought drivers out and met with them. This all led to the position I'm in now as the Historian & Archivist for PHA. I have the official PHA files from 1959 - roughly 1984. With some spattering of later things. The PHA files...although in pretty good shape, were exposed to some damp conditions causing a lot of the mechanical fasteners (staples & paper clips) to rust. The files were also not 100% complete. There are many results missing that I hope we can find, so a complete set of results can be achieved.

I'm married to my wife Julie and we have two dogs; Devo (Whippet) & Reese (Rhodesian Ridgeback). I'm a member of the AACA, Derry Township & South Hanover Township Historical Societies, I'm the past President & Event Coordinator (7+ years) of the Harrisburg Area Volkswagen Club (PA's Largest at the time) and I'm employed by The Hershey Company as a Capital Project Specialist and Supervisor of Pilot Plant Operations. I have since added two historic hill climb cars to my collection of vehicles: The first Subaru hill climber owned by Mike Oleyar & driven by Tom Donald in 1972 (Later driven by Horace Fracno & Ken Lewis in the 80's) and the Oswald family built Viper SR-1, that was driven to multiple records and FTD's (1987 - 2005) by Jim Oswald. Both of these cars are expected to return to the hills in 2009!



Alan Singer	Don Kennedy	Joe Whiteley
Alex Coles	Don McLaughlin	John Bolton
Bill Bikle	Don Struke	John Dohner
Bill Weaver	Duffy Ovens	John Gearhart
Robert & Norma Oswald	Fred Brandt	John Pitman
Bruce Baker	George Wagner	John & Jane Stinsmen
Buddy Scolastico	Marc Gerstein	John Katzbeck
Charlie Lambert	Gil Morrissey	Judy Beattie
Dan Lipperini	Henry Brillinger	Keith Kendig
Dave Latsha	Howard Fetterolf	Larry Long
Dave Schubel	Bob Ladd	Larry Shaffer
Dave Smith	Jerry Coffee	Lyle Heck
Dave Walter	Jim Sieling	Mel Horn
Dennis Frick	Jim Hahn	Mike Farling
Dennis Williams	Jim Margrave	Neil Fogelberg
Don Fatzinger	Jim Sariano	Ray Gross

**Email Dist. Members: Join now!**

Ray Heisey	Others we are in contact with:
Richard Rohrbach	Mike Oleyar
Robert Baker	Dave Heisey
Robert Laepple	Chuck Callis
Ron Light	Mark Meyers
Ron Szurgot	Murray Sperling
Sam Armstrong	Henry Mearig
Scott Dames	Barry Patterson
Scotty Dietz	Kerry Hitt
Ted Klaus	Jake Krone
Tim Sprinkle	Pete LoBianco
Todd Firestone	Lloyd Geib
Tom Hartman	Ken Gamble
Tom Knorr	Oscar Koveleski...and more!!
William Black	

## Archive Case #1

I had received an email from a Zachery Chappell. He wrote that while visiting his Grandfather...the stories of these "hill climb races" started to bubble up. Not knowing what his Grandfather was really talking about...the stories deepened. He went on to tell Zach of an amazing home built car that he put together with Corvette parts and a body that came in a box. How it was piloted by a pretty competent driver and ran against some of the time's most important sports car drivers. Zach, knowing that maybe his Grandfather was spinning some silk...contacted PHA Archives to get some more scoop. What we found out was that Zach's Grandfather was Jack Chappell, builder of the Corvette powered Devin known as the Blue Goose and most successfully piloted by John Bolton!! All that Jack was telling Zach was true....I provided photos and results for Zach and he provided contact information so that I could go visit Jack & John in person.

I enjoyed two meetings with Jack, John and Dave Huff...watching films and talking hill climbing. Jack recounted how the Blue Goose was later sold to Dale Jaffe where it had more success but then seemed to have disappeared. Much later, while meandering around a junk yard he came face to face with the Blue Goose again...where he bought it on the spot. It was to be Jack's next project restoration, but unfortunately Jack passed away this past summer.

Hopefully, the Blue Goose will get restored and will once again roar up the hills!



Jack, in the white sweat shirt, giving the Blue Goose a good work over...as John Bolton pilots the Goose in 1967.



I had acquired some original 8x10's from Giant's Despair. After the transaction, I made a positive ID on the car and driver. Turns out they are Charlie Kurtz in a Bobsy. The car was built in '64 and ran w/a 1700 Carrera 4 motor on the east coast by Millard Ripley and Charlie Kurtz (Aug '64 Competition Press article). Next owned by Ted Tidwell (GA) and run with a 2L 904 motor per a for sale add in Competition Press. Next owned by Terry Methaney and run with the Porsche 2L. Next to Noah Lacona (IA) who sent it back to Mong to be converted to an HRE (Gus Hutchinson Racing Engines) 1300 Twin Cam engine and run as CSR in the 70's. Then Brandt, Hunter, Rickle, Beuter, and then Don Blenderman in '87. Don (owner of Speedstar, Inc. in Houston, Texas) did a bare frame restoration and sold it to the current owner, David Marx in '05. Don's shop had done a previous frame up SR3 restoration and currently runs an Afla-powered SR3.

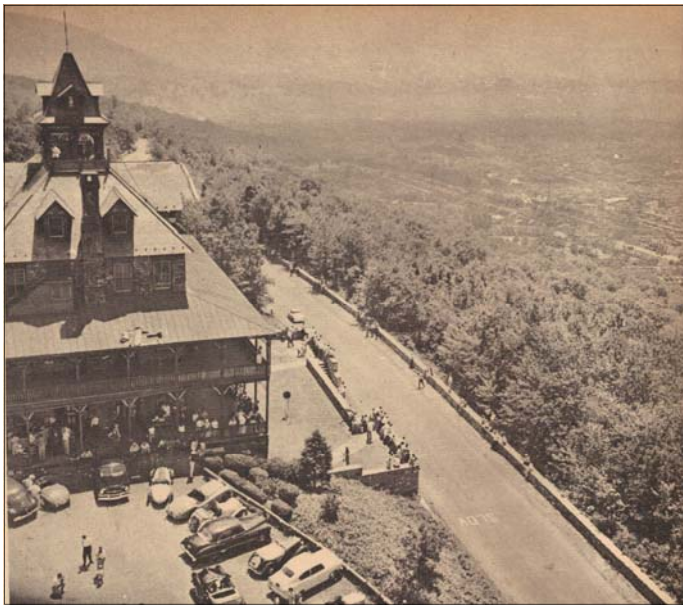
## Where is it now?

Left: original 8x10 of Charlie at Giant's Despair right: car as last seen on RaceCar.Com where it was listed as sold.



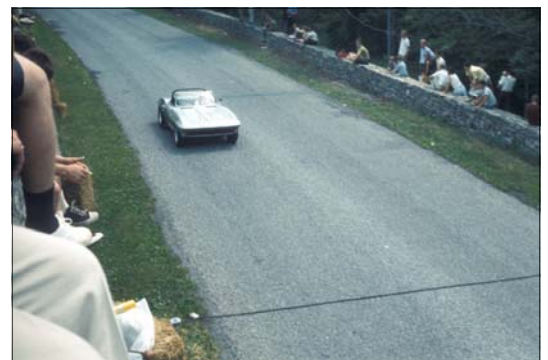


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The Summit House, on the top of Mount Penn, was part of the Reading skyline until 1959 (when it was demolished). The parking lot was used to stage hill climb cars after they crossed the finish line in front of the Hotel. For many of you, a memory of the hotel might be rare...but today we still see remnants of, what looks to be, a most beautiful building. The slab, stone walls and stairs all remain to this day. Can you imagine, sitting on one of those huge porches and watching sports car after sports car zing by??

Above and below, the Summit hosts the finishers and guests of the Duryea Hill Climb. Right: original post card of the Summit Hotel.



Above: photo taken from a top of the wall in front of where the Summit Hotel once stood - circa 1968