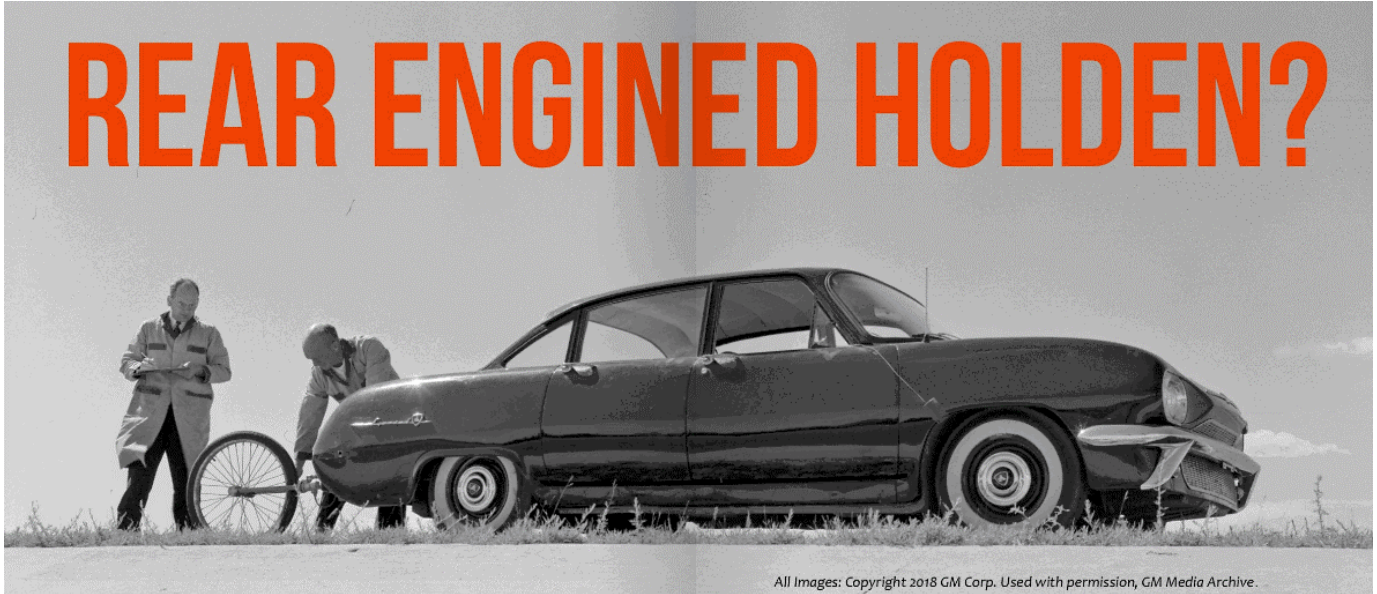


REAR ENGINED HOLDEN?



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This is part of an article that appeared in an Australian publication called Shannons Retro Auto, November 2018

Here's an automotive trivia question. Was there ever a rear engine Holden?

Answer: Yes. Sort of.

And this is the photo of it

So what is this car?

It's a Holden all right, because the badges say so and the hub caps have the red lion logo.

But looks can be deceiving.

The Australian insignias were all part of an elaborate disguise to hide the car's true identity and destiny—the Chevrolet Corvair.

The Corvair 's champion was Mr. Ed Cole soon to be president of all of General Motors but in 1957, he was the general manager of Chevrolet.

The Corvair was GM's answer to the rising tide of imported small cars. Ford and Chrysler went with a conventional driveline layout for their compacts, the Falcon and Valiant. But

Cole, the engineer, wanted to go radical.

He reasoned that an air cooled engine eliminated all of the complexity, costs and weight of cooling systems, A rear mounted engine also meant no drive lines, Saving even more weight and costs.

Ed Cole wanted to keep his new car as secret as possible. He did not want the media, the competition and some in-

side of GM to know what he was developing.

To throw everyone off the scent he decided to disguise the project as a development program for Holden in Australia. It was given the code XP76 and Cole went to great lengths to establish the "Holden" deception.

He even went to the trouble of using Holden stationery, letterheads and forms with Holden logos on them for all of the



Testing torsional rigidity. Rear wheel "tuck under" is significant.



TUCSON CORVAIR ASSOCIATION
Established 1975

TCA 2020 Events at a Glance

The **Corvairsation** is a monthly publication of the Tucson Corvair Association, which is dedicated to the preservation of the Corvair model of the Chevrolet Motor Division of General Motors. The Tucson Corvair Association is a chartered member of the Corvair Society of America (CORSA) as Chapter 357.

Membership dues are \$15 per year for individuals and \$18 for families. Initial dues are \$19 for individuals and \$22 for families (includes one name tag) Make checks payable to the Tucson Corvair Association and mail to the TCA Treasurer.

Change of Address: Report any change of address or phone number to the Membership Chair.

CORSA membership dues are \$45 per year (\$90 for 26 months) and include a subscription to the CORSA Communiqué, a monthly publication. Rates are \$37 per year and \$74 for 26 months for a "virtual" membership. CORSA memberships is not required for membership in the Tucson Corvair Association, but is highly recommended. See any TCA officer for more information.

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Third Tues of each month

Monthly Meeting. 7:00pm. O'Rielly Chevrolet, 6160 E Broadway, Tucson. Meetings are in the 2nd story conference room above the used car office. TCA monthly meeting are held in conjunction with the Classic Chevy Club.

Mar 15, Sun

Breakfast Gathering. 8:30am, Black Bear Restaurant, Broadway Place, 6095 E Broadway. Club will buy!!

April 25, Sat

35th Annual Chevy Showdown. 9am to 3pm. Desert Diamond Casino, 1000 W Pima Mine Road, Sahuarita, Arizona.

Jul 6-11, 2020

CORSA Convention. San Diego, California. Crown Plaza Hotel, 2270 Hotel Circle North. Go to CORSA website for more details. www.corvair.org.

First Quarter 2020 Meeting Minutes

A brief business meeting was held on February 18, 2020 with members Allen Elvick, Ron Bloom, Tim Lindhorn, Bill Sala, Jim Mills and Mike Lake present.

Items discussed included a breakfast outing to Black Bear Restaurant on March 15, and the upcoming National Convention to be held in San Diego in July.

No treasurer's report available at the time of the meeting.



A Tail of Two Valve Springs

Van Pershing

We, my grandson Parker and I, recently obtained a '68 Monza coupe in hopes of putting it back together and making a fun car for him to sport around in.

We started with the engine and drive train. The car was in the middle of being transformed from a 4-speed to a Power Glide so we had a little bit of work to do and a few parts to find to bring it back to a full-on 4-speed. The engine was in okay shape so we freshened it up with new rings and bearings. The head had been recently redone and it appeared they had only been run for a very short time.

Upon further inspection we found that some genius had installed some "new and improved" intake valve springs that weren't quite up to Corvair specs. It then became apparent why the new heads had not run very long.

Just about the time you think you've seen just about everything, something completely new rears its ugly head!



In both photos, the spring on the left is the stock Corvair valve spring. The one on the right is the "new and improved" spring. There was about and .001 inch end play in the smaller spring when installed. The engine must have had zero to very little compression.



Rear Engine Holden?

Continued from page 1

paperwork.

Components developed for the project carried Holden parts numbers. The initial styling of the Corvair was done in the international styling studio at GM headquarters, not in the Chevrolet studio, to add another layer of secrecy.

Some of the clay prototypes carried badges that said "La Salle II by Holden". Others had "Holden" spelled across the engine cover.

The first running prototypes were tested at GM's Arizona proving grounds. They used development bodies because the final shape had not yet been determined. Badged as a Holden the prototypes used the FE/FC badges and bits of its chromed trim. A Holden steering wheel and hubcaps completed the disguise.

The Vauxhall name also was used to camouflage the Corvair. A lengthened Victor, with the Corvair six cylinder engine stuffed in the boot, was used as a test mule and so was a Porsche.

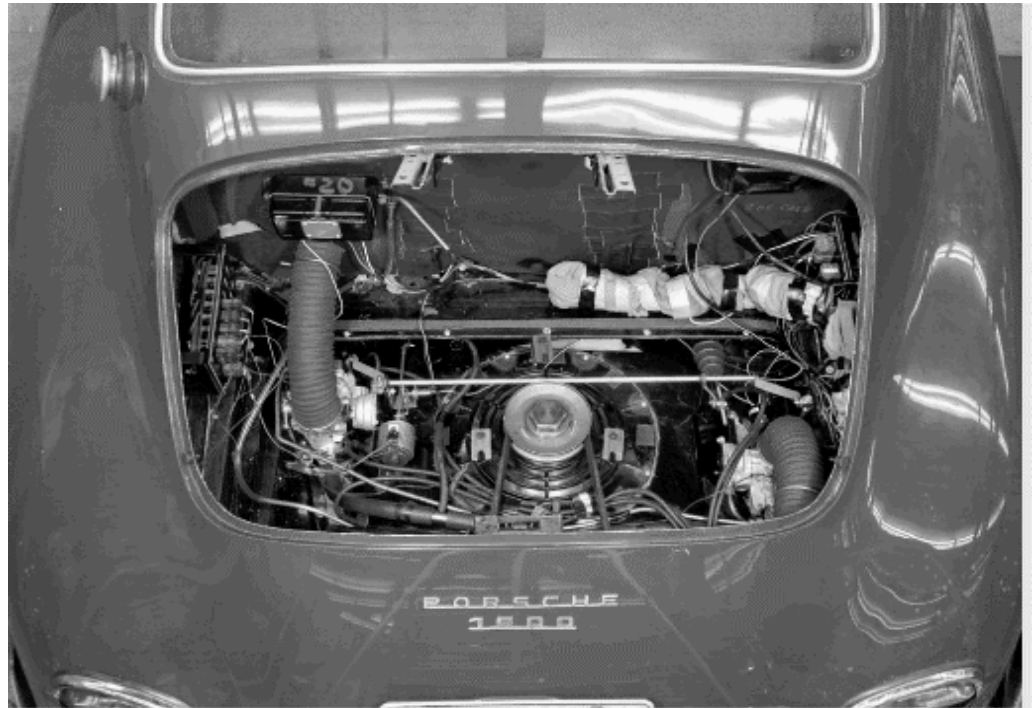
Styling of the Corvair began in early 1957 and full sized clay models were being evaluated in June of that year.

Chevrolet unveiled the new car in late 1959.. First year sales topped 250,000 units. But Ford sold twice as many Falcons. Plus, the Ford was so much simpler to build and service.

GM got the message.. By August 1960, with the Corvair not yet 12 months on the market, Chevrolet had the Chevy II/Nova design locked away. It was released in late 1961.

We all know the story of the Corvair and it's rear suspension, the inadequacies of which led Ralph Nader to write his book, *Unsafe at Any Speed*.

Despite all of the media attention Chevrolet still managed to sell 1.7 million Corvairs during its nine year production, and its styling was copied by many car makers.

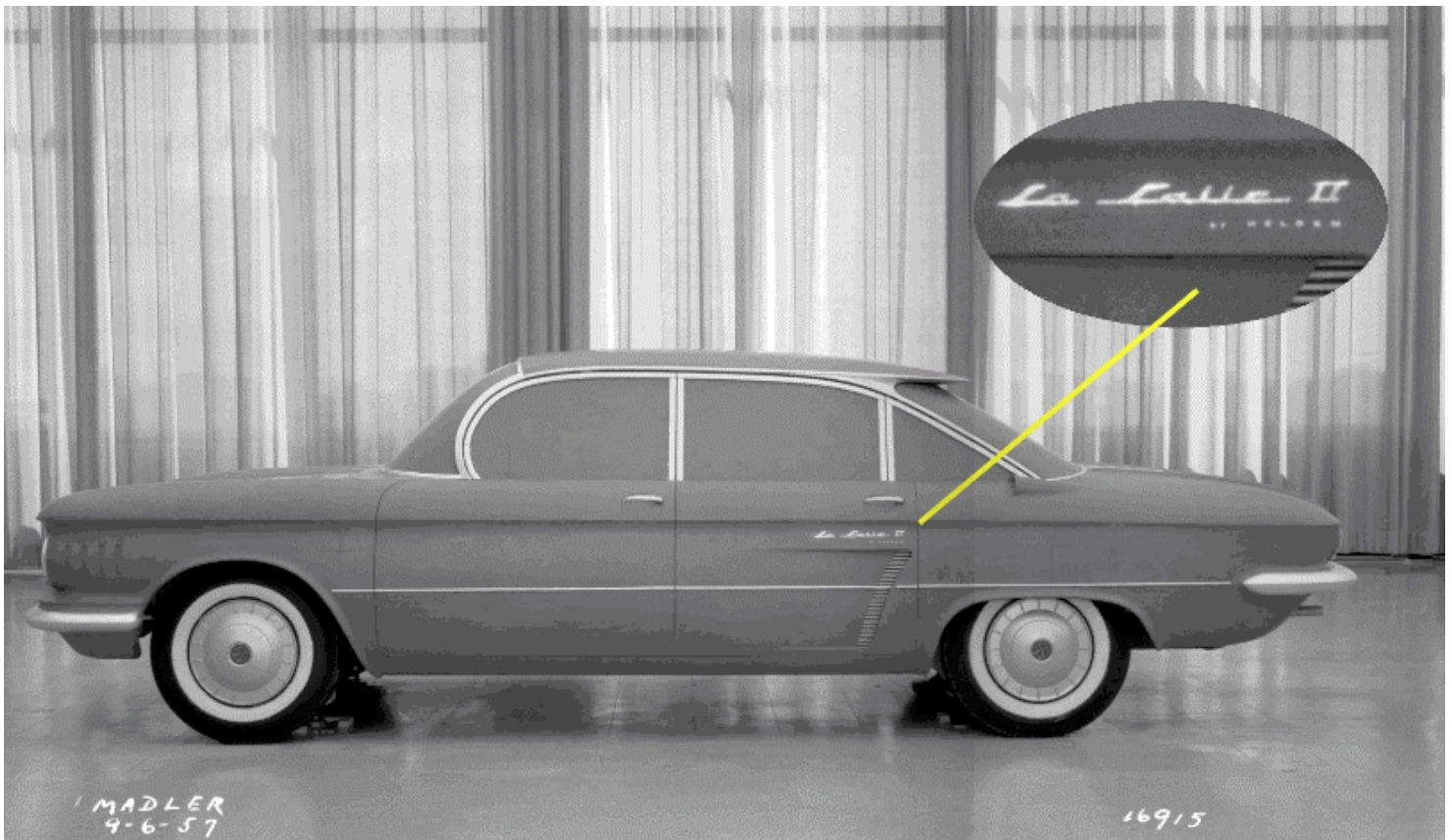


Corvair's engine in a Porsche

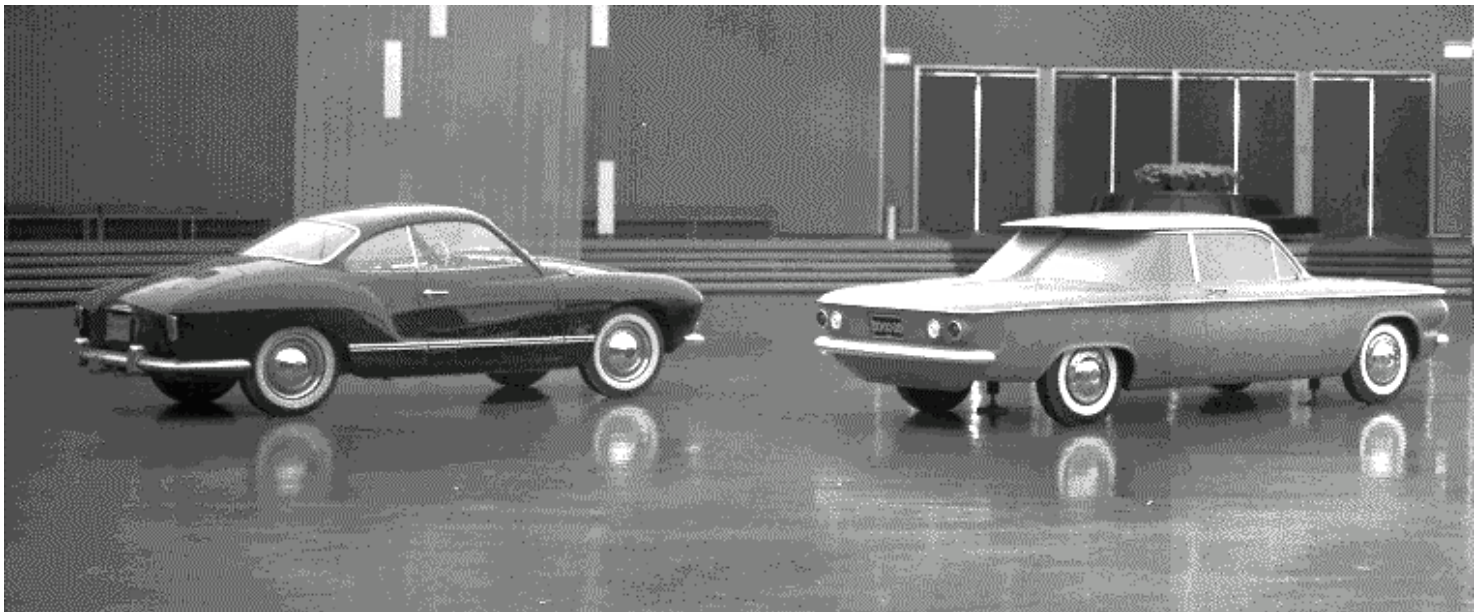


A 1957 Vauxhall Victor was also a development prototype.

More Holden



This June 1957 proposal displays many of the styling themes that would be seen on the Corvair, including the “flat top” roof line. Badge say “La Salle by Holden”,



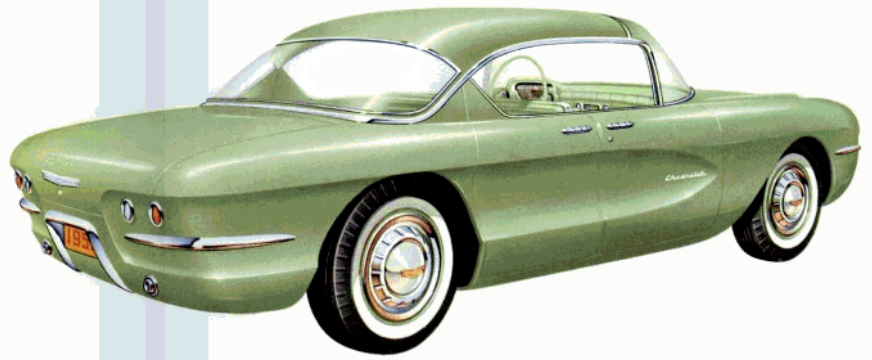
In July 1958 a coupe proposal is being compared to a VW Karmann Ghia. The coupe’s roof shape was changed prior to production.

COVAIR DESIGN ORIGINS

According to authors David Hollis and Michael Lamm in their book *A Century of Automotive Style*, the Covair's design origins can be traced to two cars: The 1955 Chevrolet Biscayne dream car, seen on the right, and the 1959 Oldsmobile.

The Biscayne provided the strong defined belt line and rear end shape while the Oldsmobile front end, penned by Irv Rybiki, was downsized to fit the smaller Corvair.

The Corvair's main designers were Ned Nickles and his assistant Carl Renner. They adapted the cantilevered roof line from the 1959 GM four door hardtops to fit the smaller Corvair sedan.



Biscayne



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