



VintageVoice

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Welcome

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Welcome to the latest edition of Vintage Voice.

Spring has a way of waking up more than just the landscape, it stirs something in every Volkswagen enthusiast. After months of cold garages, half-finished projects, and the steady hum of space heaters fighting winter's slowdown, the first warm breeze feels like an invitation. Doors open, dust rolls out, and suddenly the familiar silhouettes of Beetles, Buses, Ghias, and Golfs start reclaiming the roads.

This season always brings a sense of renewal. Engines that have been patiently waiting for attention finally get their turn. Fresh oil, a tightened valve here, a tuned carburetor there, small rituals that mark the unofficial beginning of driving season. For many, spring is when a long-promised fix becomes a reality, or when a new idea finally takes shape in the workshop.

But the real magic lies in returning to the community. Cars emerge from winter like old friends drifting back into town. Cruise nights reappear on the calendar. Parts swap meets buzz with familiar faces and new stories. Shows fill weekends again, each one offering its own snapshot of the culture we share.

Spring reminds us why we're drawn to these machines in the first place. They're more than sheet metal and engines; they're a lifestyle threaded with tradition, creativity, and camaraderie. As the days grow longer, may your projects find momentum, your travels stay trouble-free, and your VW bring you the kind of joy that only the open road in a new season can deliver.

Are you ready? I'm ready.

Eric Arnold, Editor
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VintageVoice

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CONTENTS

WELCOME

Read about what's new with Vintage Voice.

2

THE PODIUM

Club President Eric Goodman updates you with the latest club news.

5



THE HISTORIAN'S CORNER

VOLKSWAGEN IN THE US. 1980 was the end of air-cooled engine Volkswagen imports to the US, except for 4,572 Convertibles which were sold as 1979 models, even though some of them had been built in early January...

6

UPCOMING EVENTS

Plan to attend your next VW show, swap meet or camp out!

10

CLASSIFIEDS

Find that part you need, or your next VW!

11



BUILDING A NOS ENGINE

I have owned my 1973 VW Thing (Type 181) since 2008. I spent a few years restoring the Thing back to as factory-correct as...

12

SCALE MODEL BUILDING

18

At the breakout of WWII, the production of the civilian KdF-Wagen was cut down, it was not quite stopped. In the years...

PRESS ON REGARDLESS

20

What a great day; what a terrible, horrible day... What it was, it was autumn. Where it was, it was Southeast Louisiana...



PATIENCE PAYS OFF

22

It was 2004 at the Sacramento Bugorama. Frank Mattos saw a 'metallic root beer' colored Beetle being towed toward the swap section....



THE REAL DEAL

26

Tomas Nielsen and his wife Annemette are what you can call, the real deal. This couple, homebased in Denmark, lives and breathes Volkswagen. Tomas started his journey...

THE EXACTLY "WHAT NOT TO DO" MANUAL FOR VOLKSWAGEN BUG RESTORATION

32

It's been rainy pretty steady here at Silly Billy Central, so much so that I've begun to wonder whether I was going to float away...

The Podium with President Eric Goodman

Celebrating 50 Years of the VVWCA & A New Chapter for My VW Thing

As you know, 2026 is the 50th Anniversary of the Vintage Volkswagen Club of America. For half a century, the VVWCA has been the gathering place for enthusiasts who share not only a love for the cars, but also the stories, friendships, and memories that surround them.

Today's vibrant community of collectors, restorers, historians, and lifelong VW loyalists, this organization has stood strong because of its members. Your passion is the engine that has kept us going for five decades - and it's the fuel that will propel us into the next fifty years.

As part of this anniversary year, our newsletter will highlight key moments in VVWCA history - iconic events, standout contributors, early publications, and the extraordinary cars that brought people together. I encourage every member to share your photos, stories, and memories. This is your club's history, and your voice deserves to be part of the celebration.

Speaking of engine, one of the highlights of my own VW journey this year has been the completion of a new engine for my 1973 VW Thing, masterfully built by Jake Raby. Many of you already know Jake's reputation for crafting engines that blend engineering precision, reliability, and performance in a way few can match. This engine is very rare and something you don't see everyday.

The article in this issue details the full build, but I want to share a personal note here: driving the Thing with this new engine has completely transformed the experience. It's still the same spirited, quirky, open-air classic we all love but with a smoothness,

responsiveness, and confidence that makes every mile feel like a celebration.

A VW is more than a car; it's a companion on the road. And upgrades like this remind us that keeping these vehicles alive isn't just about preservation; it's about continuing their story. Photos about my new engine build in this edition.

As we honor 50 years of community and craftsmanship, I'm reminded how fortunate we are to be part of something built to last. Whether you're restoring a car from the ground up, maintaining a driver, or simply enjoying the camaraderie that comes with being a VW enthusiast, you are part of what makes the VVWCA strong.

Thank you for your support, your passion, and your dedication. Here's to an incredible anniversary year and to many more miles together.

Thanks,
Eric L. Goodman, President
Vintage Volkswagen Club of America
President@vwwca.com



THE HISTORIAN'S CORNER

By Heinz Schneider

VOLKSWAGEN IN 1980

THE BEETLE CONTINUES



VOLKSWAGEN IN THE US: 1980 was the end of air-cooled engine Volkswagen imports to the US, except for 4,572 Convertibles which were sold as 1979 models, even though some of them had been built in early January of 1980. The last Beetle convertible was built January 10th, 1980 at the Karmann factory. These 1980 built convertibles were designated 1979 models for legal reasons. The 1979 convertibles used chassis numbers starting from 1592 2036036 and went to 1592 204 3705. Engine numbers for the US convertible models started with AJ 01 43 097. The price remained the same as it was the year before: \$6,170.

THE NUMBERS

Total worldwide Beetle production reached 236,177 in 1980, of which 187,993 were built in Brazil and 4,913 in Mexico. Starting in 1980, a new chassis numbering system for the Beetle was used. The first two numbers indicate the model; in the case of the Beetle, it was 11. The letter behind the 11 tells us the model year starting all over again with the letter A for the 1980. So, the first new 1980 model classic Beetle built under this new numbering system had chassis number 11A 0 000 001.

A total of 4,517,845 Beetles were officially sold in the US since its introduction in 1949 starting with the two claimed by Volkswagen advertising. It is assumed that actually a few hundred Beetles had entered the US before 1949 all brought in by GIs returning from their duty in Europe. Additionally, tens of thousands were



imported during the gray market period in the early sixties when official imports could not keep up with actual demand. These unofficial cars are not included in the official count, so it can easily be said that over 5 million Beetles came to the US.

CHANGES FOR 1980

Volkswagen in Germany, by now producing a great range of different models put all its engineering efforts into its newly introduced water-cooled engine model cars. In Brazil and in Mexico where Beetle production continued, changes were introduced off and on and I will list some of them but cannot guarantee the accuracy since information regarding these cars has been very sporadic and some changes affected only a limited number of cars. In many cases unscheduled changes were necessary simply because of problems with parts suppliers.

MEXICAN BEETLE

The fully integrated head rests and a four-spoke steering wheel were reintroduced and used in Mexico at least until 1982. Mexico celebrated in 1980 the local building of the one millionth Beetle. Another

celebration took place in Mexico the same year on the occasion of the 20 millionth Beetle being built worldwide. A special very attractive model was built to celebrate that occasion. It sported a light metallic gray clear coat paint and a gray cloth interior for exporting to Europe.

BRAZILIAN BEETLE

At the insistence of the Brazilian government the air-cooled Volkswagen engine had to be made available burning alcohol. Volkswagen modified the regular 1600cc air cooled engine for use with alcohol by using two carburetors and increasing the compression ratio to 10-1. In addition, changes had to be made to the fuel tank and fuel systems to protect them from the corrosive effect of alcohol. The alcohol burning engine produced about 3hp less than the regular 1600 engine. Headrests became an optional item for the Beetle in Brazil.

OTHER VOLKSWAGEN NEWS

In Germany Volkswagen expanded its commercial truck production by cooperating with another German company M.A.N. These trucks were assembled at the Hannover plant at the same production facility as the Type 2 Transporter.

[VintageVoice](#)



1980





Just for fun, drive something sensible.

The Volkswagen Rabbit has always been a most sensible combination of economy, performance and room, all wrapped up in one single automobile.

So now, along comes a Rabbit that makes sense and a splash at the same time. The Rabbit GTI. The Rabbit with extra flair.

With large front spoiler, husky steel-belted radials, stylish black fender flares, and sport accents here, there, and everywhere.

All standard equipment on the Rabbit GTI.

The beat goes on with an AM/FM stereo system with cassette player, specially bolstered sports seats with adjustable head rests, sports steering wheel and tachometer. Even a rear window washer/wiper is standard on the Rabbit GTI.

And while the Rabbit GTI gets you there with flair, it also gets you there in a flash. A fuel-injected engine zips this Rabbit from 0 to 80 km/h in just 8.2 seconds and does so economically on regular gas with a 5-speed manual transmission.

Just for fun, check out a Rabbit GTI at your nearest Volkswagen Dealer. Common sense has never been so exhilarating.

The
GTI
Rabbit


US\$12.99

ISSUE 22 : SUMMER 2025

VOLKSMANIA

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skye's
the limit!



Volkswagen Celebrates **75** Years of the Type 2

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Event info as of Jan 1st, 2026

Contact show organizers/websites for the latest updates.

March 13, 2026

Volkswagens On The

River

Yuma, AZ

Come join us for another Volkswagen's on the River Camp-out, Show and Swap! Camping starts Friday March 13th gates opens at 10am. Chicken Dinner 5pm \$12, includes 1st Keg of beer.

Show Saturday March 14th open to all Volkswagen's any year any model, this is a VW Show. No makes or other specialty vehicles, Volkswagen show only. volkstoration@gmail.com

March 28, 2026

Meet In The Middle 2026 Solvang, CA

Meet us in the Middle for a gathering of VW enthusiasts from Southern and Central California. The location is beautiful Nojoqui Falls Park in Santa Barbara County. It is near the Danish style city of Solvang. Take the short hike up the trail to the falls that are usually flowing nicely this time of year. This is our big "Central Coast Event", don't miss out!

No Entry Fee but bring some cash for the raffle to support this event. 9am to 2pm
Central Coast Chapter
Vintage Volkswagen Club of America

April 11, 2026

Springfest 2026

Corona, CA

Inland Valley Volkswagens & Wolfsburg West Present Springfest 2026.

Saturday, April 11th, 2020, 9:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M. at Wolfsburg West 2850 Palisades Dr., Corona, CA 92880

Space is limited, so come early. Gates Open at 8:00 A.M. for Car Show participants. This show will include; people's choice awards, raffles for awesome prizes, swappers, lots of cool VW's and fun folks. Dash Plaques for the first 100 Participants, Open to ALL Volkswagens. \$20 for Show Cars, \$40 for Swap spaces, free for spectators. For more information please visit, www.ivvw.org

April 25, 2026

Volks of Dunn Ocala

Ocala, FL

Fourth Annual VW Car Show Air Cooled and Water Cooled are welcome.

Top 25 award, admission \$10.00 VW parts vendors are welcome, spot fee \$25.00.

Come a join us on this family event.

Contact Maggie: 616-821-7585



To list your upcoming event,
email editor@vwwca.com



CLASSIFIEDS

COST: Members receive 2 free classified ads. Limit of two per issue. Non-members: \$10.00. Each ad will appear in two issues of the *VintageVoice*.

PHOTOGRAPHS: 1 photo per advertisement please. Photos cannot be returned, digital preferred.

LIMITATIONS: Ads are published on a space available basis. Copy submissions must be emailed. ONLY VW parts, cars, toys or literature will be accepted. No cars for sale newer than 1991 can be accepted. VVWCA accepts no liability relating to the purchase of an item.

ADVERTISING DEADLINE: All advertisements must be received prior to the 1st of Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, Dec for the following newsletter.

SUBMIT YOUR AD TO: editor@vwwca.com

CARS FOR SALE

1974 Super Beetle. Good condition. Mileage unknown. Asking \$8,500. (865) 368-1209.



WANTED

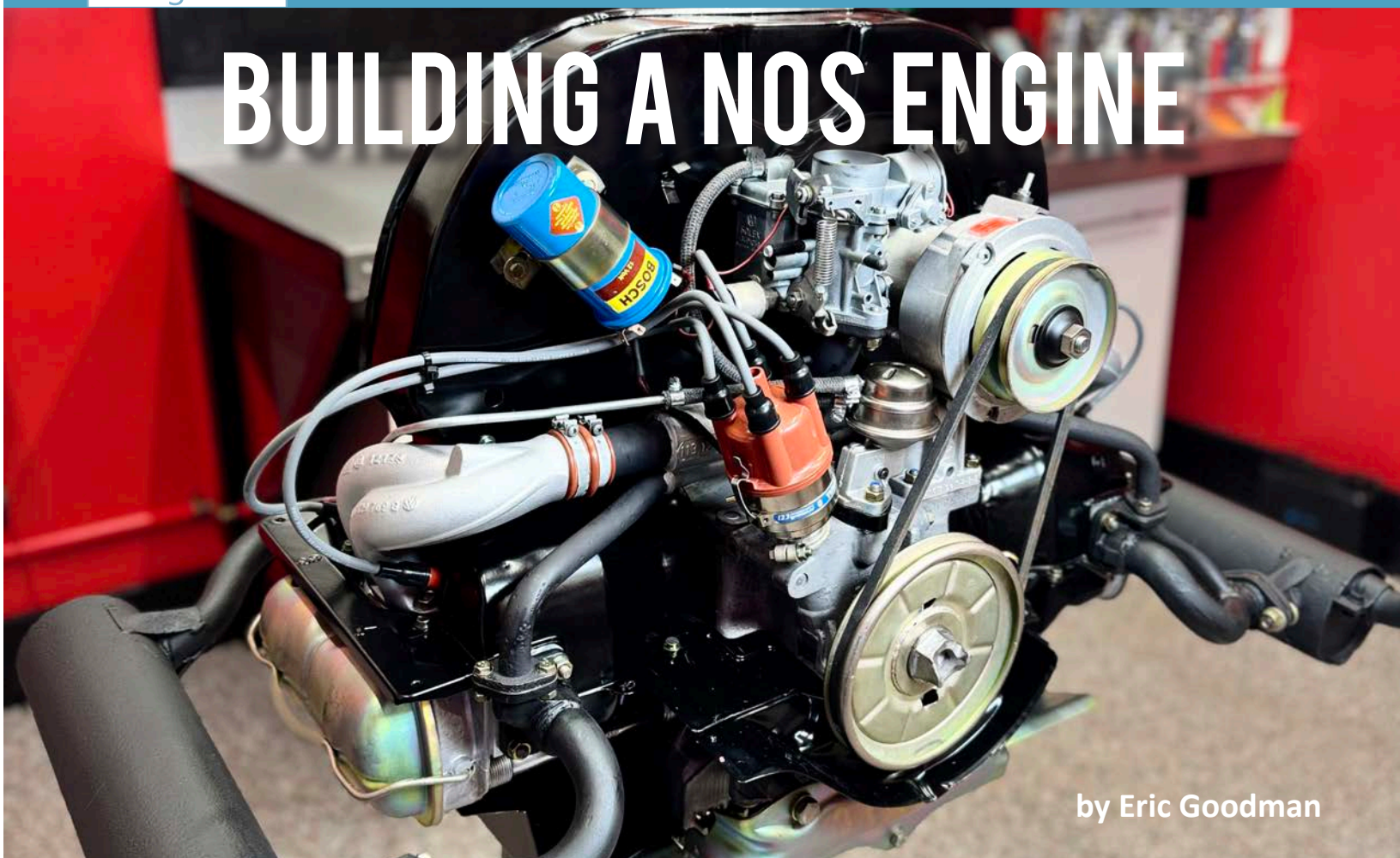
I Buy Old Porsche & VW in any condition & title status. 356, 911, 912, 914-6 & VW bus, trucks, vanagon, bug, ghia, thing. 540-358-0330 - FishHeadLouie

PARTS, ETC. FOR SALE

Johns Car Corner Parts, Accessories, Literature, Memorabilia plus vehicles 1978 Brazillia, all at Johns Car Corner in Westminster, VT (just follow the signs) US Rte 5 in Westminster, VT 05158 johnscorner@Gmail.com 802-722-3180



BUILDING A NOS ENGINE



by Eric Goodman

I have owned my 1973 VW Thing (Type 181) since 2008. I spent a few years restoring the Thing back to as factory-correct as possible. I wanted it to look stock and have original German VW parts. You may not know but many of the parts on a VW Thing are Type 181-specific. Parts are not interchangeable with other VW models like the Bug, etc. While restoring the Thing, I found out it had a Type 1 1600cc engine from a VW Bug installed in it. I always wanted to replace it with an original AM case engine that is correct for a VW Thing (Type 181).

Jake Raby, owner of Raby's Aircooled Technology, is the National Technical Director for the VVWCA and friend of mine since 2018, when met him as I joined the club as VP. Jake is regarded as the top Porsche Type 4 air-cooled engine builder in the county. He is also a VW guy, as his dad owned a VW Thing himself which Jake still owns today. He told me he has not built a VW Type 1 engine in over two decades, after building hundreds

prior. He wanted to be different and decided to focus on his conversion systems to support the Porsche 914/ VW Type 4 engine into chassis like the VW Thing and Beetle as well as the Porsche 356 and 912.

I asked him in 2020 if he would build a Type 1 engine for my VW Thing and he said no! He said the cost would be prohibitive, as he would not use any Chinese parts. He only uses German-made parts or ones he makes himself.

I told him I would like to build a Type 1 motor from all NOS parts. He was intrigued by the idea but said I would never find 50-year-old NOS parts to build the engine with. As we talked more, he said he would start looking in Germany and with his contacts, to see what he could find. He also mentioned he had a three-year waiting list to get one of his engines.

In June 2021, I put my name on his waiting list. My engine was slowing dying after already being rebuilt once and it was just very tired. Jake lives in



Georgia and I live in California but he helped me work on it remotely, shipping me parts to keep it on the road. I am not mechanically inclined and he was very helpful with videos and lots of calls. He rebuilt my stock carb and had me add a 123 distributor, so he could check the engine stats remotely.

In October of 2021, Jake said he had started sourcing NOS German parts and was having some luck.

In January of 2022 after a 100 mile+ VW cruise with the VVWCA, my Thing's engine was leaking oil badly from behind, and the pulley had low compression. Jake said the rings and cylinders were shot! He was not sure how much longer we could keep my engine going but he was still looking for the parts needed to build the new engine.

So, my VW Thing sat in the garage for few years...and in June of 2023, I found an AM case that a club member had for sale after rebuilding his Thing from two cars. This followed Jake purchasing two other AM cased engines, both of which had terminal flaws that Jake would not accept. The only issue was the "good" AM case that we found had been opened for 90.5 cylinders, so we faced a challenge. Either we had to enlist LN Engineering (a company Jake helped organize, where he currently acts as technical director) to custom machine a custom set of cylinders to utilize the 90.5-cylinder size at the case, retaining the original 85.5mm bore size, retaining a stock 1600cc engine as we had planned, or search for NOS Cima/Mahle 90.5mm cylinders and pistons, and make the engine a 1776cc.

We decided to take the latter route, so Jake changed up the engine combination, sourcing a custom billet tool steel camshaft and lifters from Friarsalon Nowak in Germany. Jake did some tricks to the cylinder heads to improve flow without compromising port velocity. These changes were done conservatively, but to compliment the added displacement of the 1776cc engine. The character of the VW Thing was always a focus, and many times Jake told me how unimportant "horsepower" was for my car. His focus was torque, cool running, smoothness and longevity.

Jake had located many NOS parts: original factory cylinder heads, pistons, bearings, skid plate,

pushrod tubs, etc. all with VW factory logos. Jake said, "Porche parts are cheaper than NOS Type 1 parts." It was not easy to find what we needed in factory-original boxes but he did. He has many parts coated for longevity and dynamically balanced the whole assembly. Now we had a factory-correct case and parts to build the engine. In July of 2023, I shipped the engine to Jake's shop in Georgia.

Jake spent months welding, dry blasting all the original tin and powder coating everything. He refused to use new hardware, so he cleaned all my original hardware using acid and then re-plated it in yellow zinc. In September of 2024, I shipped him my VW Thing to install the engine after it was completed. Jake started assembly in December of 2024.

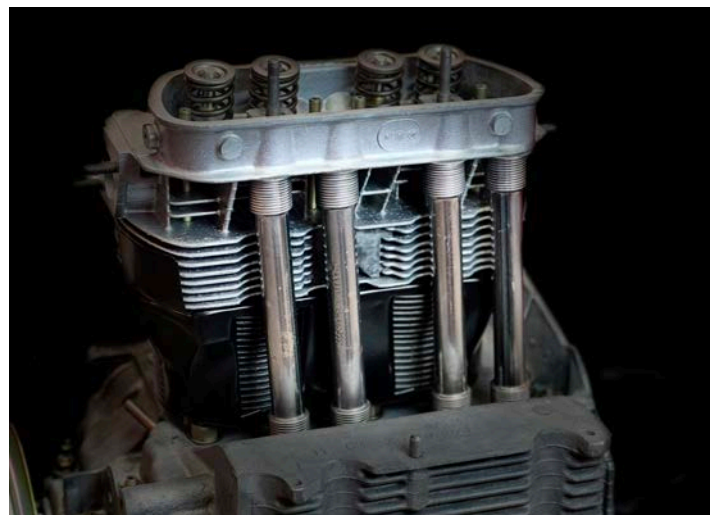
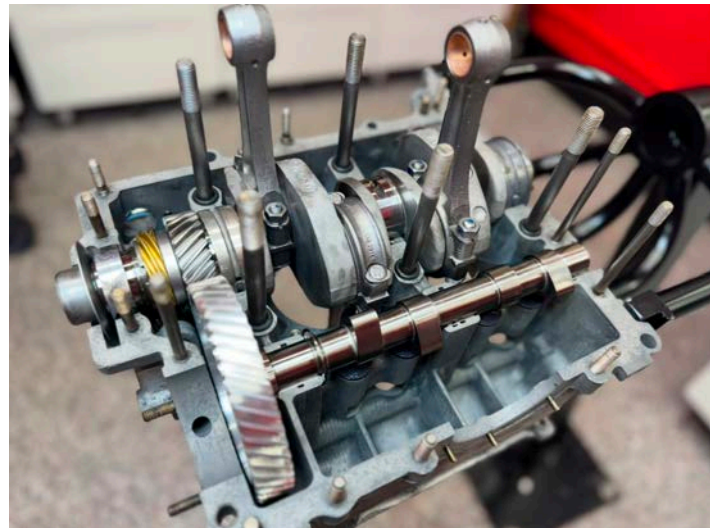
Jake was also building other customer engines and had two engines for Mr. Collier's collection at REV's Institute, and they took priority over my engine. Jake has built many engines for his collection including Type 1 and Type 4 engines. Some of the NOS parts we sourced were found to have flaws, which is likely why they were never used and sat in boxes for decades. Jake warned me about this factor of using NOS parts, stating that they can be bad right out of the box just like new stuff.

He took 336 photos of the entire build, documenting everything. The detail is amazing. Check out the photos.

Our goal was to build a stock-looking AM Thing engine from NOS parts but with more power and upgraded features, like an alternator and 123 distributor. We increased the engine to a 1776cc and polished everything inside to perfection. It's a beautiful Thing — literally!

DYNO STATS

70HP @ 4K RPM and 110lbs of torque measured at the rear wheels on Jake's Dyno Jet 248 chassis dyno. The torque curve is more of a plateau that seems to never end when driving the car. With flywheel power we are close to 80HP on Jake's engine dyno, almost double stock. With stock carb and exhaust, Jake said this is rare to have performance like that with only





mild engine mods that were created to work within the confines of the stock carb, air filter system and Thing-specific dual exhaust that is very inefficient. To determine the combinations he needed he flow tested my intake system with the air filter included on his flow bench, and then utilized engine development software to design the rest of the combination based around these factors. The goal was for everything to work together within the engine, and to live on California fuel.

It was completed in February 2025 and shipped back to California in May of 2025. Since then, I have been driving it every few days. It has lots of power and I cruise the freeways at 75 mph or take my time on Pacific Coast Highway looking at the Pacific coastline. Jake said it will be another two decades before he builds another Type 1 engine and will probably never build another NOS one. He considered this a “legacy build” taking him back to where he and his company started.



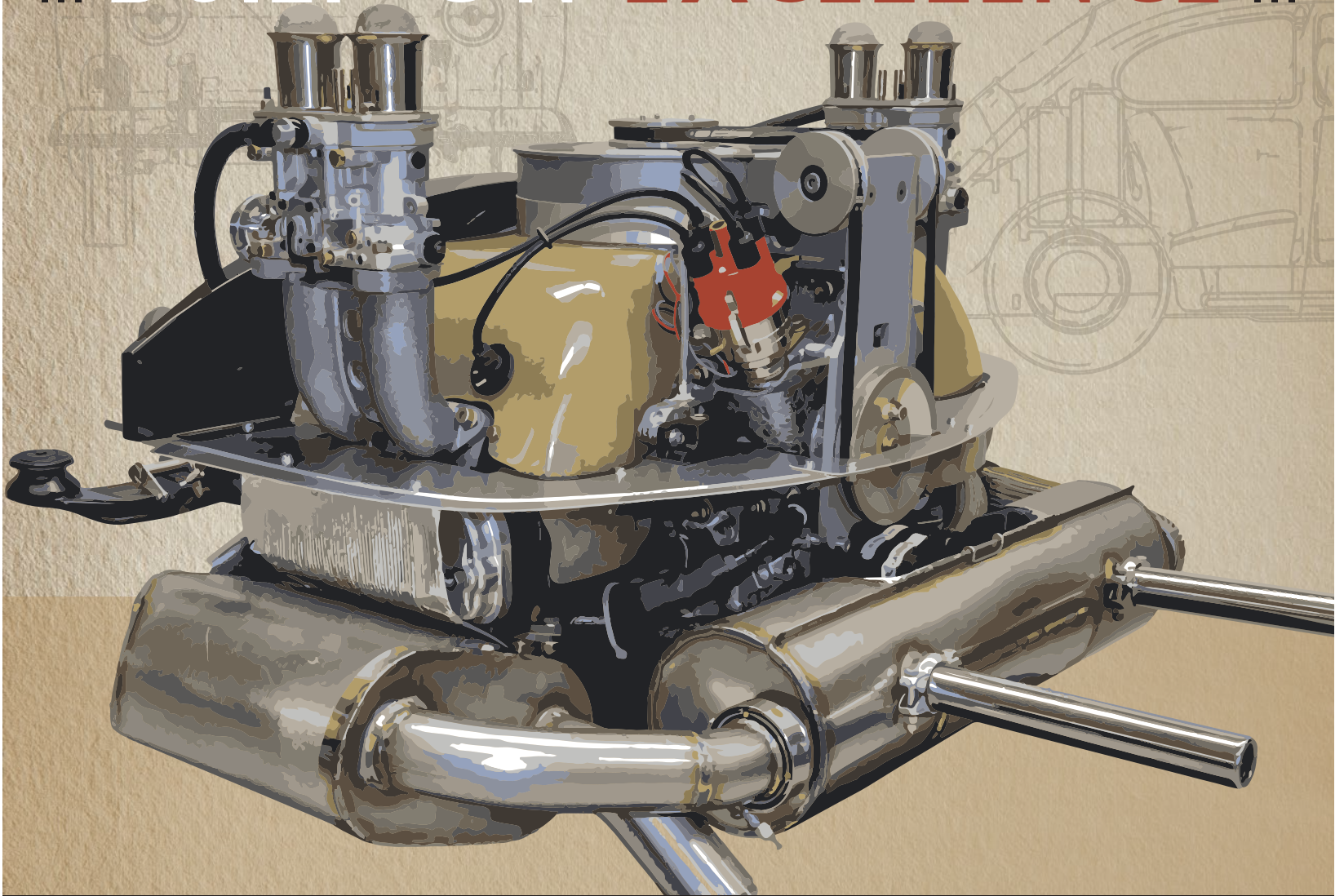
It been a long road (4 years) and is the only new NOS Type 181, 1776cc engine in the country like it (and probably the world) but I am happy to have a Raby-built engine that will last longer than my lifetime! He is a master of his craft and a treasure to the vintage Porsche and VW community. Thank you, Jake, for taking on this project with me — you are the man!

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SCALE MODEL BUILDING



by Mike Epstein

A

t the breakout of WWII, the production of the civilian KdF-Wagen was cut down, it was not quite stopped. In the years 1938-40, 54 vehicles in a 'Sedan' version were produced. In 1942-44, 630 cars were then manufactured in total. All cars were fitted with slit covers on the front headlights. Some of them were equipped with Notek lights.

The first Beetle destined for the army was produced in 1941. It was a Sedan modified for off-road use, denominated type 92 (since May 1943 denominated type 82E), with a chassis of the Kubelwagen and a two-door KdF body. The outfit of the car was spartan, restricted only to essential items, and the floor, like with the Kubelwagen, was made from wood.

The chronic shortage of fuel in Germany during WWII led to tests of alternative "domestic fuels", such as gas from burning wood (besides other fuels). For this kind of drive was adapted also this type. The VW cars driven by wood gas generators were designated Type 230. In contrast to other cars, the wood gas generator with Volkswagen and Kubelwagen cars was installed in the front part of the vehicle. This car also featured a

specially developed roof luggage carrier. The attendance of these cars was technically very demanding.

Technical data: Length 4060 mm. Width 1570 mm. Height 1640 mm. Wheel base 2400 mm.

Kit No. T 35017. There are some modifications to this kit that I had to do which made this a bit more of a challenge but you just have to jump in and go for it.

This requires that you cut out a section of the chassis to fit part of the gas generator as well as the hood under the handle. Those are the only modifications to the body, otherwise it's a straight forward kit just like the T35013 VW Type 87 and T35014 VW Type 82E that they offer. If you're really into this modification this you can get kit No. 3008 VW Type 92 SS interior Set which includes new doors, instrument panel, cloth roof (rolled), and seats for the Type 87. Also available is kit No. 3009, VW Engine set for either the Type 87 or 82E which includes the new interior of the engine compartment, engine, hood, gearbox and exhaust. These mods would require you remove the engine lid that is part of the body and would most likely require modification to the chassis as well. I have not tried these two new kits, but they sound really cool!

Another tricky part to this model is all the metal etched parts: if you're not used to dealing with these, make sure you get a good pair of scissors made for this or use a very sharp Exacto knife and sand the little nubs left on the parts. This is a bit hard to do depending on how small those parts are. Bending metal etched parts is easily done with the aid of "bending pliers" made for that purpose. Gluing metal etched parts together is another thing. I thought Super Glue would work best in this situation when putting the sides of the roof rack together but it didn't. The glue I used worked best at gluing my fingers to the metal before the metal dried to each other! There are different types of Super Glues out there especially at hobby stores, some are thick, some are thin, some dry in a few seconds others give you time - you could end up with a half dozen different ones, experiment for yourself. Forming these parts for this model was a bit of a challenge but the results came out great. You even had to make the semaphore boxes and semaphores!

The model only comes with one spare tire to put in the roof rack so I borrowed another one I had in my collection of parts I hadn't used from other kits, then I had a kit of extra jerry cans etc which I used some items from, like a shovel.

Making the car look like it's been through hell is the fun part, use your imagination. The dirt I used came from a kit of 4 bottles called "Rustall." One of the bottles is actual dust made of finely ground rock. That, combined with pastels brushed on then airbrushed with flat acrylic, held everything down till it was finished. One of the things I love to do is make it look like the windshield wipers actually work by making a mask of shelf paper and applying that to the windshield before that final spray of flat, then removing the mask to give the appearance of them working.

And there you have it! [VintageVoice](#)



PRESS ON REGARDLESS

by Barry Zanca



What a great day; what a terrible, horrible day... What it was, it was autumn. Where it was, it was Southeast Louisiana. Rick Madrid had a black 1962 Bug modified with a hot cam, two carburetors and an ANZA exhaust system. It also had Borrani wire wheels with two-spoke knock-off hubs. The car was sporting new Sears radial tires. His Bug was fun to drive, sounded great and ran like crazy.

Rick had entered it into yet another road rally with the SCCA. This one was called “Press-on-Regardless” and he asked Barry Z to navigate. That meant, once handed the instructions, the navigator had to follow the directions to the next checkpoint – and no one knew where they were going. The directions were written in CODE.

Those who had run road rallies before knew the abbreviations: Like “CAST” which means Change Average Speed To...or “SRIP” which means Sign Reading in Part. There are several other ‘coded’ messages, which if not known or understood will get the crew LOST, LOST, LOST.

So, here we go. Any type of foreign car or sports car may participate; today we are up against a couple of Porsches, two or three other VWs, a Jaguar XKE coupe, a Volvo P1800S, a Renault Alpine, an Alpha Romeo and at least three Corvettes of different vintage. Not the least of which was Larry Indovina’s brand new COMPUTER EQUIPPED ‘Vette. This was in the early 1970’s.

In a road rally, timing is everything. Larry was set up with the latest in technology, built into his ‘Vette. All we had was a clipboard, a stopwatch, and an under-dash add-on set of three gauges. Talk about flying by the seat of your pants!

But we were game. The cars were flagged off at three-minute intervals. The goal was to stay on time

and NOT get lost. We started out in the fifth position on the East Bank of the Mississippi River from Elmwood Shopping Center. Directed south toward the river, the first turn put us on Jefferson Highway headed upriver toward Kenner, LA. We stayed on River Road for 20 miles all the way through the Spillway, made a loop at Montz, hit the first checkpoint, and ran back down River Road, seeing the participants behind us moving the other way.

The guy and girl who were behind us [in an old ‘Vette] we saw coming out of a side street in Kenner that we had passed a long time ago. They were either very lost or were cheating.

Anyway, we soon found ourselves on top of the skinny, rickety, scary old Huey P. Long bridge crossing the Muddy Mississippi which is almost a mile wide at that point. There was a train traversing the bridge right next to us and the entire bridge was shaking. After a few more CASTs and SRIPs we found ourselves on the Lafitte-Larose Highway. This is a two-lane road with scant shoulders [in some places, there are NONE], swamp on both sides and is very hard to drive at night because it is not well striped, nor does it have any lighting!

It was on this road that I remarked to Rick, who was doing about 50 mph, “Wow, that looks just like one of YOUR wheels.” At that instant, the right rear side of the Bug sat down on the brake drum and the muffler. I could just imagine the shower of sparks flying from the underside of the car.

The wheel and tire passed us up and careened off the road into the swamp. Rick fought the car off onto what little shoulder there was and got out cussing up a storm. While we considered our situation, two of the Rally cars passed us and we could hear shouts of derision. That did not help the situation one bit.

I told Rick that I would wade out into the muck of the swamp and retrieve his expensive wheel, which was now floating about six or seven yards from the roadway in a patch of algae. He grunted, and then said that he was going to go find his chrome knock-off hub.

I managed to get the wheel back to the car but was wet from my belly-button down; the swamp water had a fetid smell. No gators or snakes today, Thank the Lord. Rick gave up on trying to find the hub after walking back almost a quarter of a mile.

What to do now? At least the lost tire was on the right side of the road, so we could jack the car up safely. Rick got the jack. I unbolted the Borrani adapter. Rick got the spare tire and together we put the VW spare on. He jacked the car down and checked the other three hubs to make sure they were good and tight. The nasty, grassy wheel went on top of the gas tank, because the tire was too wide to fit into the well.

Needless to say, all of the Rally participants had passed us by, and some were already passing us on their way back. A few hooted; a few waved – nobody stopped. Hey, are we in New York?

Well, we got the car back underway and drove to the third checkpoint in Lafitte. Then Rick drove like a man possessed, trying to make up for lost time. This was the final leg of the Rally, and we really didn't know where the Finish Line was. We were hopelessly behind; didn't have a clue where the others were or where we were going.

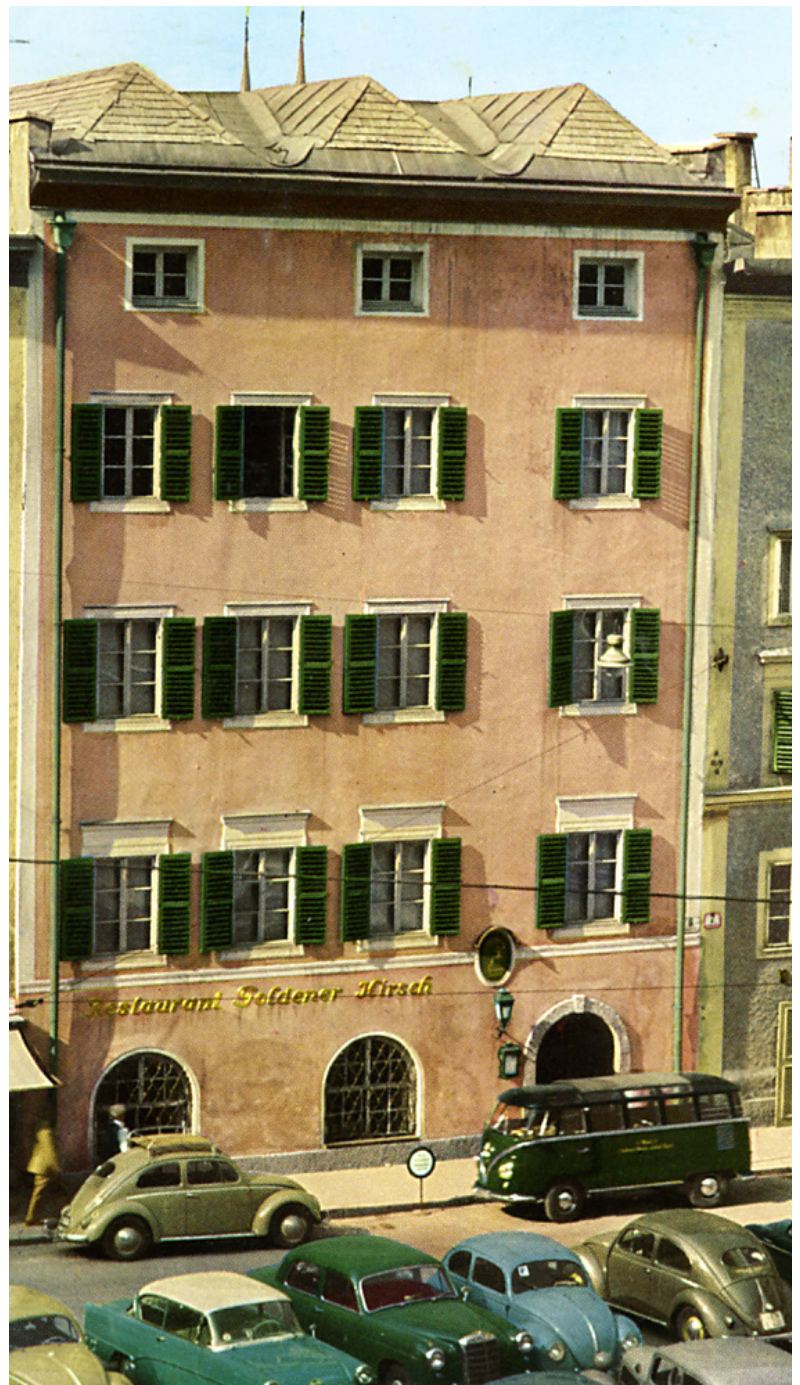
I followed the directions as best I could, and when we got to Hwy. 90 we pulled into a Gulf station. By sheer luck, one of the Check Point girls was filling up her station wagon. We both ran over to her and asked where the Finish Line was. She started laughing and said that everyone had come in but us – uh, DUH! Then she said that they were all in the back of Jean Lafitte Park only four blocks from our location.

Once we got there, the ribbons had already been given out and the group was at the Bar-B-Que. Except us. The RallyMaster told us not to worry – just go on over to the BBQ - which we did. I was not enjoying this – still soaking wet and getting jibes and bad vibes from other participants.

Once we got to the food, I was feeling a little better. The RallyMaster grabbed a bullhorn and announced something like: “Well, all of the trophies and ribbons have been given out – except one. Remember the name of this Rally is PRESS ON REGARDLESS; the winner of this Rally gets the BLACK Ribbon and it goes to Rick and his buddy, because they surely persevered and actually finished.”

So, Rick came away with the cherished Black Ribbon, and I came away with a very Bad Cold.

VintageVoice



PATIENCE PAYS OFF



by Eric Arnold

It was 2004 at the Sacramento Bugorama. Frank Mattos saw a ‘metallic root beer’ colored Beetle being towed toward the swap section. As he followed the trailer, he turned to his friend and said “I’m going to buy that car!”

“I watched the car roll by me on the trailer, and the wheels are what caught my attention. I knew I wanted the car, so I followed the seller to their swap spot”. He gave the car a good look, noting it needed some cosmetic TLC. The interior was mostly stripped; no headliner, carpet, or seat covers, but it didn’t have any rust. There was no engine, but it did have a good transmission, and those wheels! He made a deal with the seller and brought the 1962 to his home in Washington that week.

Over the next three years, the Bug would get lowered, have an engine installed, a slight mechanical refresh and become a runner. Not much else would be planned for the ‘62, because another car had Frank’s attention, a 1957 Oval he had waiting in the wings.

Frank decided to sell the ‘62 to help fund a restoration of the Oval, but first it needed to be painted. While the interior was still original black, the mismatched exterior body panels weren’t going to fetch top dollar. He put the car into the hands of friend Paul Iozzio, and asked him to make it more presentable. “I’m a fan of black VWs, and black was the factory color for this car, and we wanted to try and keep it original.”

Paul took the exterior down to bare metal, and that’s when he asked Frank to come over. “It was immaculate! Paul said it was just too nice to give the car anything but the best.” Now a decision had to be made. There was still much to do, but the ‘62 was staying!

By 2008, Frank had been promoted to Parts Manager with Volkswagen of Tacoma, so his time to spend restoring the car was minimal. Thankfully, he was not in a hurry, because this build is far from over!

All of the parts of the ‘62 were painted - including the interior - by 2009, with Paul working on the Bug between his other projects. Frank finally brought the

car home in 2010, and started the very long process of assembly.

The engine Frank installed was originally planned for the Oval; he started building it back in 2003, but did not fully complete it until 2010. It's a massive 2054cc, 74x94 Engle 125 with straight cut cam gears. Autocraft 1.4 rockers, original VW dual port heads with 40.35.5 head, valve seats installed by Darrick Oliver, port and polish by Frank. Dual 44 IDF Weber carburetors, hot rod flat black modified engine tin by Tony Stern, and AA exhaust dress the engine quite nicely. The engine was assembled by Frank and John Morris at Morris Race Engine in Port Orchard, Washington. "When I finally got the car running I had George Tsagrinos at The Wagen in Las Vegas tune the carbs and swap the linkage to Berg linkage" Frank added.

Dennis Kaveney at Strictly Speed Transmission built a Super Diff gearbox with double snap rings, welded third and fourth gears, 5mm shift forks and sliders, and hardened keyways. Mated with the big engine, this pair produce plenty of get up and go!



The lowered stance emanates from a four inch narrowed beam in the front, built by Cameron Johnson at Volksfab. It sports EMPI disc brakes and drop spindles assembled by Brian (aka: Supalowbus). In the rear, Jerfab four inch adjustable drop plates with Jaycee spring plate retainers and EMPI disc brakes as well.

Of course, those wheels...which started this entire journey! Fifteen inch Flat 4 Enkei 5 spokes, "They'll stay on the car forever!" With 135 tires on the front and 205/65s on the rear, they give the Bug a signature look, and a great stance.

It's now 2013, and the time had come to start work on the interior. Frank went back to his friends at Volksfab, who custom made the headliner, door panels, seat covers and German square-weave carpet kit. "I knew I wanted something that was a mix between stock and custom. Every time I looked at that freshly painted



body, all I could see going along with it was red. After speaking with Volksfab, I made up my mind and we went over the design. They managed to put together exactly what I had envisioned. It's perfect!"

Fast forward to 2015, Frank and his family moved to Henderson, Nevada, where Frank accepted the position of Parts Manager at Findlay Volkswagen, where he is still to this day.

Findlay is amazingly supportive of the vintage community, and they have encouraged Frank to dial in the final details of the '62 once he transported it from Washington to Nevada.

He kept the ball rolling, but naturally, he couldn't have done this alone. "My wife Nickie and my sons Christian and Ayden have helped throughout the assembly. Everything from installing the suspension and bleeding the brakes to hanging the body panels, they were there to help."

Finally, it's 2019, and the '62 was ready for its inaugural car show, VW's Invade the Dam. Frank rolled

onto the grass and joined the event. The Bug would not only win a 'Top Pick' award, but also be one of two Best of Shows! Now that's what we call making a splash in your debut!

"The plan now is to just drive it!" Frank says. Even so, there are still small items on his to-do list. "I want to switch up the engine tin color, clean up the engine wiring a bit, and I have some interior changes planned."

Fifteen years in the making, that is a lengthy restoration by anyone's measure. As long as you maintain a positive mindset, you will be successful. As Frank so eloquently stated "It doesn't matter if it takes 15 months or 15 years, the journey is the fun part. The finished car is the joy."

VintageVoice



THE REAL DEAL



by Dieter Lamaire

T

omas Nielsen and his wife Annemette are what you can call, the real deal. This couple, homebased in Denmark, lives and breathes Volkswagen. Tomas started his journey in 1999 and has been in the scene ever since. Some of his previous builds were a '66 resto, '56 oval resto, '65 Cal look, '50 Split Old Speed, '52 Zwitter Old Speed and now he's the proud owner of a '57 Oval Cal Look.

The project started in 2022, with quite a decent base. All of the bodywork was already completed by Favrskov Autoopretning. This made the goal of revealing the car at the VolksWorld Show 2023 pretty much achievable. Tomas knew exactly which direction he wanted to go with the Bug. It needed to be cool, different and had to match the Cal Look subculture to the maximum.

Before the paintwork was done, Tomas removed all of the excessive trim and small grills. All holes were properly filled and some new ones were made for

Lucas indicator lights. To make the car appealing, the color L53 – Sealing Wax Red was chosen. This color is traditionally used on the VW Campervan, roughly between 1950-1961. The window trim, T-bars and running boards have been painted in black.

Looking at the car you can find one detail after another, honoring the Cal Look style. On the driver's side, you can find a modified Black Talbot Berlin mirror, including a thermometer. On the front, there are some 60s/70s homemade Cal Look/Race-inspired head lights with toned flat lenses. In the back, we can notice some homemade taillight glass with 'blue-dot'. Cal Look cars are defined by a specific stance, and for that, Tomas lowered the front by 10cm with a 2-inch narrowed front beam in combination with drop spindles. The back only declined by 2cm, creating a sporty stance, by adjusting the original splines. Under the arches the black painted Sprint Stars are hiding a set of original 356B brakes. The rims are covered in F560 Firestone rubber in the front, and wide Oval F70 tires in the back.

Defining this specific type of car always involve a decent, race-inspired interior. For this '57 Oval, barely nothing was left untouched. The front seats are a set of original VW seat bottoms modified to fit Original 60s/70s Simca 1000 Rally lightweight bucket seats. The back seat is covered with diamond stitched leather, and so are the panels. The original Superior 500 steering wheel was painted black and the horn button was covered in black leather to match the rest. A Superior shifter with self-made gear knob gives the cockpit an additional touch. The dashboard remained quite stock, except for the Porsche 912 Tachometer and some painted grills and knobs.

Last but not least, we have the engine which is another big feature on Cal Look cars. They are made to perform so most of them are tuned to the max. Tomas put a 1600cc engine, with a 1641-cylinder set into the back of his Bug. A 30HP blower housing with doghouse cooling and small diameter 12V alternator were added. A NOS flywheel machined to 8 pins and balanced with 200mm HD Kennedy Stage One Clutch joined in. Add an Engle 120 camshaft, a full flow CB oil pump with Cagero oil cooler system, a set of 48 IDA twin carburetors with 34 mm venturis and stacks, and you know Tomas means business.

With approximately 90hp, Tomas is able to drive his VW as much as possible. After a road trip of 4144 km (2575 miles) around Europe this summer, together with his wife Annemette, the Danish mechanic looked forward to what's next. The '57 wasn't Tomas his first project, and for sure it won't be his last. While writing this story, Tomas, already started tinkering on his wife's '72 Super Beetle. Another one to watch in the future!

VintageVoice







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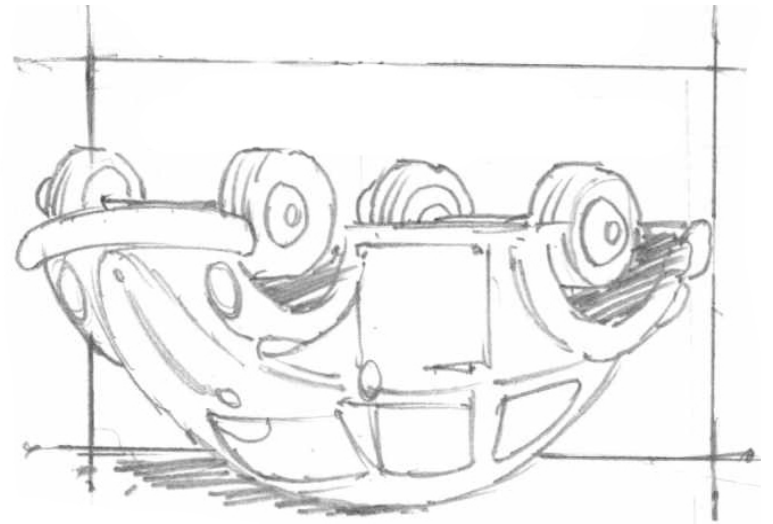
The Exactly “What Not to Do” Manual for Volkswagen Bug Restoration

by Bill Ungar (aka “Silly Billy”)

Installment #24:

Should You:

- A. Buy a Car Cover for Your Volkswagen? Or
- B. Let Mother Nature Turn Your Volkswagen into a Rust Heap?



Dear Loyal Readers,

It's been rainy pretty steady here at Silly Billy Central, so much so that I've begun to wonder whether I was going to float away in my Volkswagen, down the driveway, into the street, across town, along the freeway, and into the L.A. River. As exciting as that sounded, I was determined to stay on dry land (which is currently wet land).

But I had an important decision to make. Would I let Mother Nature and her rain, pollution, bugs, leaves, dirt, sticks, and bird droppings take their destructive course – or would I buy a car cover for my Beetle?

As you can probably gather, I do not own a “garage”. This made buying insurance for my classic Volkswagen rather tenuous. Insurance companies insisted that I “garage” my VW so that they would insure it (to protect their investment I suppose). My carport didn't qualify as a garage (no sides, back, or front – just a top) and so finding an insurer was “challenging”. I finally found one, but I had to meet them at midnight, on a dark bridge, and pay with a briefcase full of cash.

I should say, that a few years back I did buy a car cover for the Beetle, but after covering it, and several days of not being able to “see” my Volkswagen,

I decided to return the cover. Part of the joy of owning a Volkswagen (I find) is looking at it on a regular basis. But, watching it soak (from morning dew, and the occasional rain) and watching it rust – was impeding my joy.

And then came this week's rain storm. Six inches in two days. Remember the Volkswagen commercial where they want to show you how well sealed the car is – and so they float a Bug in what looks like a lake or harbor? The guy on the commercial is waving out of the driver's window? That guy was me, only I wasn't waving – I was signaling to my wife to throw me a safety line to keep me from floating away.

And so, I did what any self-respecting Volkswagen owner would do. I bought the cheapest (and thinnest) car cover I could find. I imagined the same factory that makes plastic cling wrap – also made this car cover (as a sideline). And so, after encasing my Bug in cling wrap (in the pouring rain mind you), it looked like a what you would expect. A wet “left over”.

Whenever the wind would surge, the bottom of the cover would rise up and uncover the Bug, and so I would run out of the house, and attempt to anchor the skirt of the cover. I say “attempt” because, I never really

succeeded in holding the cover down. At one point, it became airborne, and drifted away like an enormous helium balloon at an amusement park. There I was. Standing in the rain, soaked to the skin. Next to my Volkswagen, no longer covered in plastic, also soaked to the skin.

And so, what advice do I have for you, the reader of this column? What gems of knowledge, might I share with you? I dare remind you, that my technical knowledge of Volkswagens is non-existent. *How to Keep Your Volkswagen Alive: A Manual of Step-by-Step Procedures for the Compleat Idiot* was written for me, and about me, but I've never read it. My advice, is that whatever I tell you to do, do the complete opposite.

1. If you are not fortunate enough to own a garage, but you are fortunate enough to own a Volkswagen, thank your lucky stars that you at least have the Volkswagen. Every garage gets overcrowded with junk, that eventually needs to be hauled. Garages need to be swept and tidied. Think of the work you are saving.
2. If you only have a carport (like me) to cover your Volkswagen, keep a spare car cover on hand – just in case it rains. That way, when the rain has started to fall, and is coming down in buckets, you can race out to the Volkswagen and cover it just in time to encase the soaked car! This will ensure that your Bug, is only partially soaked. And that the water under the cover will be unable to evaporate!
3. So that you can look at your Volkswagen while it is covered, buy a car cover that looks exactly like the outside of a Volkswagen! You can even drive your Bug with the cover on – assuming the window portions are clear plastic! This is a great idea for Volkswagen owners that want to avoid washing and polishing their car. Just a quick spray with a hose and you're on your way. Ferrari owners will be tempted to put this cover on their cars to impress their friends.
4. And finally, if you don't have a garage, and need to leave your Volkswagen outside (carport or not), rest assured that without a cover, you will have the perfect view of your Bug, Transporter, Fastback, or Ghia – and will be able to admire it – without having to unlock and open a pesky garage door. Once the rain (or snow) has passed, you can dry it off and wax it, and start the process over again. After all, the best car cover is the one you never have to use.

Yours Truly,
Silly Billy

[VintageVoice](#)



WHY CAR SHOWS SHOULDN'T BE CANCELED JUST BECAUSE IT RAINS

by Eric Arnold

If you've ever spent days or weeks polishing your car, prepping your gear, and counting down the days to a show, only to see "RAIN POSSIBLE" appear in the forecast - you know that sinking feeling. Suddenly, rumors start flying, promoters panic, and before a single drop even hits the pavement, some shows rush to cancel altogether.

But here's the truth: rain shouldn't be the reason a car show shuts down. In fact, some of the best automotive memories happen when enthusiasts push past the forecast and show up anyway.

1. Enthusiasts Are Resilient

Car people aren't fragile. Anyone who has driven a classic, tuned, or heavily modified vehicle knows that weather is just another variable, not an automatic deal-breaker. Attendees who make the effort to come out in the rain are the most passionate, engaged, and supportive of the community. These are the people who make shows special.

2. Rain Creates Unexpected Magic

Rain-soaked pavement? That's nature's mirror. Reflections double the drama of a car's lines, colors,

and stance. Photographers love it. Viewers love it. Even owners end up loving the unique photos and atmosphere that sunny days simply can't recreate.

Plus, a misty morning or light rain can make the event feel intimate - almost cinematic. Instead of being lost in the crowds, the cars and their stories take center stage.

3. Car Shows Are About More Than Weather

A good show isn't just rows of polished vehicles - it's conversations, connections, vendors, music, clubs, family memories, and the shared culture that brings car people together. Canceling because of rain overlooks everything else an event offers.

Most car enthusiasts would rather brave a drizzle than stay home and lose the opportunity to gather with friends.

4. Canceling Hurts Everyone

When shows cancel last-minute, there's a ripple effect:

- Vendors lose business.
- Promoters lose credibility.
- Participants lose money and time.



- Spectators lose their weekend plans.
- Sponsors lose exposure.

Rescheduling rarely brings back the same momentum - and in many cases isn't even possible. A slightly wet show is better than no show at all.

5. Cars Are Made to Be Driven

Unless a show is specifically for museum pieces or ultra-rare survivors, most vehicles can handle a bit of rain. Modern detailing products, waxes, ceramic coatings, and coverings mean a drizzly day isn't going to ruin anyone's paint. Wiping down a car after a rain shower is hardly a crisis - it's almost a ritual.

6. The Forecast Is Almost Always Wrong

How many times have we all seen this?

- Forecast: 90% chance of rain
- Reality: Cloudy morning, beautiful afternoon

Canceling based purely on prediction often means missing out on a perfectly good day. A "rain or shine" commitment gives events stability and stops knee-jerk decisions based on unreliable forecasts.

7. Community Comes First

The car culture thrives on consistency. When shows refuse to cancel, it sends a message: We're here for the community, no matter what. It builds trust, tradition, and loyalty. Rain becomes part of the story - not the end of it.

Final Thoughts

Rain doesn't ruin a car show - fear does. The passion and energy of the automotive community are stronger than a few clouds overhead. When promoters stick to the plan and enthusiasts show up anyway, the result is almost always worth it.

The cars still shine.
The people still gather.
The memories are often even better.

So next time the weather threatens, don't call it off. Grab a canopy, pack a towel, and let the show go on.

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