We celebrated VMSC's 50th Anniversary! Carol & Rich Can Bernard Cooley & meghan Hamm Shirley Palleson Evelyw applewhel

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YMSC HISTORY



50 YEARS!

HISTORY OF THE VIRGINIA MOTOR SPORT CLUB, INC.

The Virginia Motor Sport Club was formed in the fall of 1950 in Charlottesville, Virginia. Mark Condon of Harper Motors in that city is credited with starting the club and was its first President. Most of the membership was made up of students from the University of Virginia. This gave us a fair size club during the school session, but mighty few during the summer.

The club was first known as the Virginia Sports Car Club. The name was changed about the first of 1951 to Virginia Motor Sport Club. This change was made because many felt the name indicated that owning a sports car was a prerequisite to becoming a member. Back in those days we had quite a few enthusiastic members who drove Detroit iron.

In 1951 Mark Condon still headed the club in Charlottesville, and Jim Henderson of Transport Sales was the Richmond representative. The Richmond contingent then numbered some 25 members. By the end of 1951, most of the interest centered around the Richmond area, and we elected Allen Fine as our President for 1952.

During 1952 a number of sports cars made their way into Virginia, and at the October 1952 meeting, we elected Bill Claflin of Warrenton, Virginia, to be our President for 1953. Many sports car owners attended this meeting and asked that several of the cities be represented. The club was divided into four areas, namely, Warrenton, Richmond, Roanoke, and Norfolk, each headed and represented by an area chairman.

Reports rendered at the annual (October) meeting in 1953, showed that the Richmond area had the largest number of members and had scheduled the most activities. This prompted us to return the club headquarters to Richmond, and Joe Crenshaw was elected President for 1954. During 1954 the club was incorporated, and no longer divided into areas. By 1954 we had grown to approximately 80 members.

In 1955 "Happy" Batcheller was elected President. Activities and membership continued to grow slowly, but steadily.

The membership voted in Jack Lewis as our President in 1956 and again in 1957. Under his direction the club grew by leaps and bounds. The membership numbered over 150. During 1956 we started the monthly publication know as CHECKPOINTS, which is read and enjoyed by many in this country and overseas.

In 1958 we elected our first foreign born President. He is Robert Walker of London, England. We now change officers with the turn of the year. John Kessler of Richmond, Virginia, accepted office 3 January 1959.

Monthly meetings are held on each third Thursday with entertainment provided. Rallies, etc., are scheduled at least once each month.

This brings V.M.S.C. up to date.

_January, 1959



HISTORY OF THE VIRGINIA MOTOR SPORT CLUB...CONTINUED

VMSC started out mainly as a rally club; TSD (Time-Speed-Distance) rallies were held at least once a month. The Old Dominion Rally was first held in 1955, and was an annual event for many years. There were several members who participated in sports car racing, and numerous trips were organized to spectate at VIR, Marlboro, and even Nassau. VMSC began holding gymkhanas as early as 1956, and they have evolved into our present day autocrosses. In 1975 the first Series 3 Roadcross was held on the midway roads at the Virginia State Fairgrounds, and the Series became our most popular annual event, with 125-car fields.

Year-end trophies have been presented at the annual awards banquets since 1957, and are awarded based on points earned in competition events and attendance at monthly club meetings. At the 1st Annual VMSC Banquet on January 5, 1957, trophies were given to the top ten overall—Allen Rennie placed 11th and was given guardianship of the new club mascot, a "bright-eyed young hamster, until such time as he should relinquish the coveted 11th position". Since the demise of the hamster, VMSC has honored the last overall trophy position each year with the highly coveted northbound-end-of-a-southbound-horse trophy.

The social aspect of VMSC has always been a high priority. Meetings have featured programs such as movies or speakers—we even had Tex Hopkins and Roger Penske as guest speakers during the 1960s. During the 1950s, members who had experienced unusual misfortune were presented the Hard Luck Trophy. Over the years this has evolved into the D.A.M. (Dumb Ass of the Month) Award, which is presented at club meetings to the member who has exhibited extreme lack of judgement during the month. In 1976, one member performed so many acts of unassisted lunacy that he was awarded the only D.A.Y. (Dumb Ass of the Year) Award ever given out—Mike Castleberry holds a special place in VMSC's history!

Our monthly newsletter, CHECKPOINTS, is now in its 45th year of informing and entertaining the membership. That entertainment reached new heights in 1975 when Jack East and Dick Jones signed on as co-editors and unleashed their creative talents on VMSC. Another phenomenal era of CHECKPOINTS was brought on with the ingenious editorial team of Gary Stout and Dick Jones. In 1978 an additional VMSC milestone was reached with the election of our first woman President, Barbara Greenwood.

Throughout the past fifty years, many good times have been shared—such as picnics, trail rides, wine and cheese parties, go-karts at Buckroe Beach, and staying up all night singing "Drift Away" at the Greenwoods. Some things have changed—we have become a strictly autocross club, not having staged any rallies since 1996. But others remain constant, such as our love affair with the automobile, the thrill of motorsports competition, and the deep friendships we have formed with others who share common interests. Hopefully this will be a lasting legacy for VMSC in our next fifty years.

_January, 2000



































The Sheraton Park South January 22, 2000





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