

## THE SPECIALISTS

# LONG ISLAND CORVETTE SUPPLY

The world's foremost manufacturer of  
1963-67 Corvette parts.



Todd, Scott, Richard and Kim Cohen stand in their spacious, modern 25,000-square-foot facility in Copiague, N.Y., which is filled with machine tools.

By Richard Prince  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY THE AUTHOR

If you own a 1963-67 Corvette, chances are overwhelming that some of the parts on your car came from Long Island Corvette Supply. Over the past two decades, this business has grown from humble beginnings to become the world's largest supplier of parts for midyears. With more than 2,000 different parts manufactured in-house, everything from mechanical, trim, body and electrical parts are made, whether they're stamped, cast or extruded. Even the more esoteric items, such as grille-to-body brackets, clips, moldings and seat plates, are manufactured. And to exacting OEM specs.

Company founders Richard Cohen and daughter Kim began selling reproduction parts in the 1970s after son Scott dragged home a sorry-looking 1963 Convertible that needed just about everything. Once restoration began, Scott was continually frustrated by the un-

availability of needed parts. Richard had studied engineering in college, and used his training to fabricate some of the simpler items needed for the car. And, quite logically, he figured that if they needed those parts, others must also need them. He tried to sell copies of his newly minted reproductions to some of the Corvette parts businesses then in operation, but found little interest among the dealers. Just slightly discouraged, he decided to go directly to car owners by advertising in enthusiast magazines and, before long, orders began to trickle in.

In a few short years, the trickle turned into a deluge as the Corvette restoration hobby grew by leaps and bounds in the late 1970s. By 1980, Richard left his regular job as a science teacher, and he and Kim devoted themselves full-time to the business. Together they traveled around the country to all the major Corvette shows and displayed their ever-increasing inventory for sale. In addition to

their own reproductions, they offered new GM and used original parts to the growing legions of enthusiasts hungry for the bits and pieces needed to restore their cars. Before long, the volume of business required additional personnel, and sons Scott and Todd, as well as 15 additional employees, joined the team over the course of several years.

As the business grew through the 1980s, they continuously invested in the tooling needed to bring more and more quality reproduction parts to market. Most of the fabrication was done by an independent machine shop under contract to Long Island Corvette Supply, but when that shop closed its doors permanently, there was a great deal of confusion and all of Long Island Corvette Supply's tooling was in peril.

After carefully considering all of their options, they decided to buy the machine shop lock, stock and barrel, and move the entire operation to New York from neighboring New



The storage area houses more than 10,000 different midyear parts in stock for immediate delivery. The warehouse features aisle after aisle of neatly organized and numbered bins and boxes, making it easy to fill orders promptly.



Ignition shield covers, clips, clamps, connectors, moldings, trim and brackets are just some of the many quality OEM-spec reproduction parts fabricated in-house.



Long Island Corvette Supply reproduces complete 1964-67 shifter assemblies to exacting specifications. To ensure consistent quality, a dial caliper is used to check the accuracy of all newly minted shifter arms.



Several midyear Corvettes are kept on hand in the warehouse to help verify the fit and accuracy of reproduction parts.



Some of the more than 2,000 different parts that are manufactured in-house range from simple clips to very complex assemblies, such as this 1963-64 grille.

Jersey. Having the entire operation in-house has allowed the Cohens to exercise complete control over all the steps necessary to bring a new part to the marketplace, and has permitted them to dramatically increase both the quality and volume of reproductions offered.

To accommodate the machine shop equipment, as well as its exponentially expanding inventory and growing work force, Long Island Corvette Supply moved into a huge 25,000-square-foot facility in 1993. The front of the building houses a showroom, offices and the shipping department. Kim is the resident computer expert, and plays a key role in inventory control and customer service. After 17 years in the business, she is undoubtedly one of the world's foremost experts on midyear Corvette parts. In addition to knowing just about every one of the thousands of part numbers in their catalog by heart, Kim can readily tell you what the correct part is for any given application, and can point out mod-

el year running changes and any differences, regardless of how minute, among original, GM replacement and reproduction parts.

Younger son Todd, who joined the company in 1987, is manager of both the warehousing areas and the shipping department. This is probably the equivalent of two full-time jobs, when you consider that Long Island Corvette Supply ships to every town throughout America as well as to dozens of countries around the world.

Beyond the showroom and offices lies an incredibly efficient warehouse, which holds the more than 10,000 different parts the business carries. Past a doorway at the far end of the warehouse is the machine shop, with its vast array of humming, clattering and whirling equipment. Older son Scott heads the tool and die business, and supervises the fabrication of all the reproduction parts. Scattered throughout the machine shop are various original parts and assemblies that are used to test

the fit and exactness of reproduction components as part of continuous quality control checks. Several of the family's own midyear Corvettes are also used to help ensure the fit and quality of the reproduction parts.

The Cohen family has come a long way from the days when Richard and Kim first created Long Island Corvette Supply. Today, they preside over a thriving business that has helped give our hobby its vibrancy by supplying the parts necessary to restore the cars.

The family's own fine collection of vintage Corvettes includes one of the two 1967 big-tank cars made, as well as one of the approximately five 1965 396 big-tankers produced.

So what does the future hold for the Cohens? Undoubtedly, continued success in the Corvette parts business and, they hope, at least one more 1965 396 big-tank car. You can call Long Island Corvette Supply at 800-466-6367, or write to them at 1445 Strong Ave., Copiague, NY 11726. ☛