



WIDE LOOK FOR # 401

Al Polus of Spring Valley, California has given his 401 a new wide look with his treatment of his rear window. His "Road-runner" has a larger back window, (see Whales on Wheels Vol.III-No.1 for details). But by outlining an even wider area in flat black paint gives the illusion of a really WIDE back window. It also helps by making the back of the Van look lower and not so bulbous .

FROM -

~~WHALES ON WHEELS~~

A Publication of GROUP ULTRA VAN

A CORSA Chapter

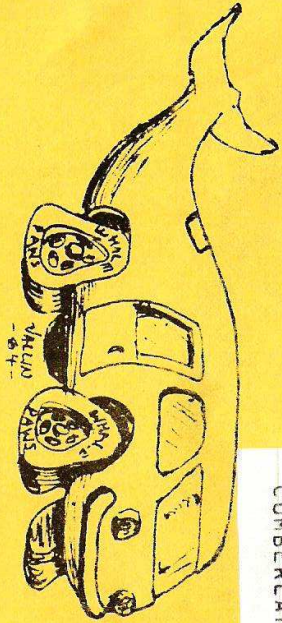
1199 Dunsyre Drive

Lafayette, California 94549

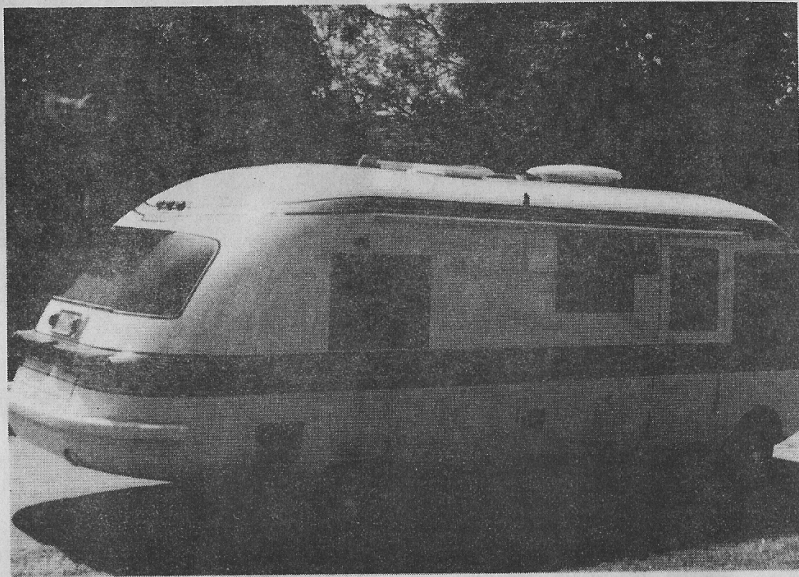


LOUIS GRIGGS #334 1/85  
626 BROOKFIELD AVE.  
CUMBERLAND, MD. 21502

FIRST CLASS



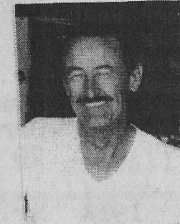
The use of more tail lights to light up at nite also helps others see our Ultras in the dark. Since these tail lites are situated close to eye level, it really helps others to see them when we use them. Al also outlined all of the windows in black paint. It helps offset the odd and unmatched lines of all the windows. Al painted his Ultra with polyurethane paint, which the work was done by a local aircraft paint shop in the San Diego area. Nice job, Al ! Now let us all get out there and do the same !!!!



# Corvair

Spoken Here

Jim Craig #232



Otherwise this monthly, bi-monthly, or occasionally written article is known as "Jim Craig's Corner". Whatever you call it, we will be talking Corvair here. Perhaps some articles will be offbeat somewhat, but its all in fun. So we hope you enjoy it.

For those of you who may remember or may have forgotten or have never knew in the first place, did you know that it was not Craig Lamont #307 or Fred Leary #434 that claimed the first cross country record on a two-wheeled vehicle? (I know the Ultra has four. WOW!) This is about motorcycles or 'motorsickles' as Mel Dinesen #200 calls them. Now there's a guy that knows his 'sickles'; more about Mel later.

You have undoubtedly heard of Cannonball Baker, right? No? Well, read on....

The following are records set when there were not many paved roads in the country. They were all riding Indian motorcycles, when setting records.

1. 1906 Mr. L.J. Mueller  
single cyl. 2.5 H.P.  
San Francisco to New York  
31 days, 12 hours, 15 minutes
2. 1911 Mr. Volney Davis  
Twin Cyl. 7 H.P.  
San Francisco to New York (3746  
20 Days, 9 Hrs., 1 Min. Miles)
3. 1914 Mr. Cannanball Baker  
Indian Twin "V", 2 cyl.  
San Diego to New York (3578.9  
11 Days, 11 Hrs., 10 Min. Miles)  
(Baker beat the transcontinental car  
car record by five days riding in  
daylight only. The cars record  
was made by day and night driving)
4. 1915 Mr. Cannon ball Baker  
In this ride he set a record that  
stood for years, for covering three  
countries of the North American  
Continent. Namely Canada, United  
States and Mexico. He rode from  
Vancouver British Columbia, Canada  
thru Washington, Oregon and Calif.  
and into Mexico, Tijuana. 1655.5  
miles, 3 Days, 9 Hr., 15 min.  
Indian 2 cy. motorcycle.

This was known as the Three Flags Run. It is still run yearly by a selected few motorcyclist, hosted by various Cycle Clubs of the Western States and Canada, and it has become known as the "Three Flags Classic". The starting point is alternated yearly between Tijuana and Vancouver B.C. and to say the least it

is quite a honor to be chosen for this run. Check points and rest areas are selected along the assigned route. All riders must arrive at the destination point within a set time frame or be disqualified. Each event starts on a Friday evening and ends the following Sunday afternoon.

Now whenever you hear about the Cannonball Run of the Three Flags Classic you'll know what they are talking about.

Well all was not lost this issue. At least this was about air cooled engines.

"Corvairs Forever"  
Jim Craig

#### WINDSHIELDS NOW AVAILABLE

Francis Boydston called me from Albuquerque to let me know he has thoses much talked about Peruvain step van windshilds for our Ultras. Both sides are available and they are tinted (a rosey gray tint). He tried cutting one and it cracked, so you will have to plan to use them in one piece.

Contact: Francis Boydson #435  
6829 Kelly NE  
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87109  
Area Code (505) 821-1506

The price is \$343.88 per side, and Francis has a glass shop in Albuquerque that will install them for \$60.00 labor and the normal price for new rubber for mounting. So a winter holiday in the south west could also bring new windshilds.

Often it seems that little design change is occurring in motorhomes — radical change, that is. One look at the passenger cars of today in comparison to those made 10 years ago will prompt the conclusion that motorhomes of today have evolved considerably less.

Of course, changes have occurred: better aerodynamics, more variety in chassis (such as rear engines), introduction of diesel engines, improved interior designs and far better accessories. And the motorhome should more properly be compared (chassis-wise) to medium-duty trucks, than to passenger cars.

Still, it's nice to see someone with engineering and design expertise start with a clean sheet of paper and come up with a motorhome that is really different. An exceptionally interesting current example is the Vixen, a design concept created by a couple of talented automotive engineers who spent many years in top management of major motor companies. Under development for many months, the Vixen concept recently entered its final phase, with the groundbreaking for a manufacturing plant in Pontiac, Michigan. The concept includes fuel economy expectations in the mid-30-mpg range, rear diesel power, a very sophisticated suspension for sports car-like handling, light weight and an expandable top that will give the motorhome adequate headroom above its garageable height. The motorhome holds promise of being a superb road vehicle, judging from the backgrounds of the two developers, who have held top-management engineering jobs with major auto makers.

While intimate details of the project are not yet being publicized, some very intriguing information is available, and we'll feature it next month, along with photos of the motorhome.

While the Vixen definitely is highly innovative, compared to conventional motorhomes of today, it brings back memories of a 1960s design that was way ahead of its

time, the Ultra Van. While the name does not have the pizzazz of current terminology, and its appearance vaguely resembled that of a beached whale, the Ultra Van was aerodynamic, consisting of a squarish aircraft fuselage with four wheels and an engine in the rear. Its length was 22 feet and its dry weight was an incredibly low 3,400 pounds. Power originally was a six-cylinder Chevrolet Corvair engine, replaced later with a side-mounted V-8.

The problem had to do with the era in which it was produced — 1962 to 1973. Fuel economy of the Ultra Van ranged from 15 to 20 mpg, but who cared, when gasoline was 30 cents a gallon? It's ironic that the motorhome went out of production just prior to the fuel crisis, when the motorhome's miserly fuel appetite would have been very well appreciated.

If you're a long-term *MotorHome* subscriber, you'll remember a feature article on the Ultra Van concept and its inventor in our May 1975 issue. Occasionally I still see one of these unique motorhomes roaming the nation's highways.

Sophistication of the new Vixen apparently will extend far beyond a design like the Ultra Van, as well it should. Automotive technology has advanced dramatically in the past few years, and more of that improvement should be evident in motorhomes, specifically in areas such as suspension, design, engine-combustion control and gear versatility. Gasoline engines in motorhomes, notably the Chevrolet 454, are basically the same as they were more than a decade ago; computerized fuel-injection systems are creating excellent horsepower gains in car and light-truck engines that have been around for many years.

Sophistication in downsized packages isn't automatically assured of instant success. Motorhome buyers are more interested in space, practicality and luxury. But designs like the Vixen are welcome in an industry that needs to do a little more fantasizing. □

