



# The Preservationist



The Member Newsletter of the Historic Race Circuits of Elkhart Lake Preservation Society

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Holiday Issue

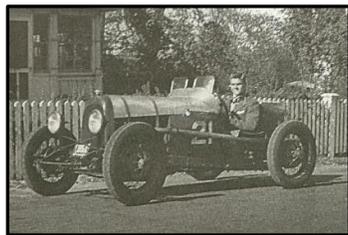
2016

## Corwith and Joan Hamill "A Couple for all Seasons" *By Fred Egloff*

Corwith was indeed a sports car pioneer. He learned to drive in his older brother's Mercer in 1926 at the age of 12. His brother also provided him his nickname "Corky" because of his difficulty pronouncing Corwith. "Corky" grew up in Lake Forest, Illinois. While attending Yale he met the Colliers and joined ARCA, a prewar predecessor of SCCA. He had a half interest in Scuderia Whiff's Whippet Special. He worked on it all winter and



*"Corky" and Joan Hamill with a cuddly friend in a trip "down under".*



*"Corky" in the Reyburn-Hamill Whippet Special.*

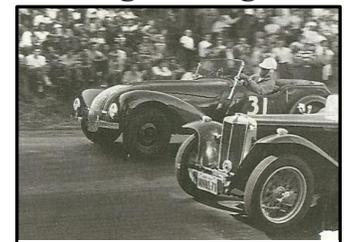
Nat Reyburn drove it in the prewar east coast road races held at Alexandria Bay, Briarcliff, etc. during the summer.

Upon graduation in 1936 he was employed as assistant Treasurer of the Elgin National Watch Co. sponsors of the Elgin National Road Races until 1933. These were the last Road Races

in the Midwest until Elkhart Lake in 1950. "Corky" rescued the 5 ft. tall 41 lb. sterling silver trophy from its use by a softball league. The D. Cameron Peck collection and other auto museums held it until it was recently returned to Elgin.

In 1948 "Corky" read about the new Allard Tourer in *AUTOCAR*. He purchased assembled and ran in the car by the time

Wacker called a meeting to organize Chicago Region SCCA. "Corky" and his Mercury Allard were regular participants in all the early events. He finished midfield at Watkins Glen in 1949 and Elkhart Lake 1950-52.



*1949 - "Corky" at Watkins Glen driving his No. 31 L model Mercury-Allard Tourer.*

In 1951 he was the Chicago Region R. E. and established the popular regional publication *PISTON PATTEN*,

named by TV legend Dave Garroway, and shared with the Milwaukee Region. For a period he then served as National Treasurer of SCCA.

Corky was a world traveler, president of the Chicago Zoological Society. And described as “one of the greatest civic leaders of the past century”.



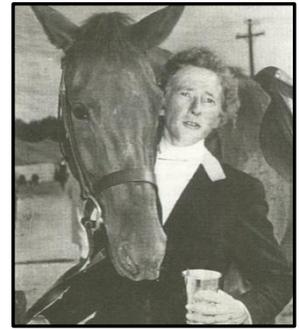
*Joan Hamill in the No.7 Allard at the start of the ladies race in 1950*

Joan Hamill participated in many SCCA events herself finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> in the 1950 ladies race at Elkhart Lake.

Joan was a competitive driver and some said that she was always just a few “ticks” quicker than “Corky”.

Joan was also a very prominent competitive equestrian rider and

served on the board of the U. S. Equestrian Team.



*Joan with her favorite horse “George Washington”*

She played a major role in creating the 61 mile Illinois Prairie Pathway.

Joan’s Midwestern roots run deep... her banking ancestors had financed uniforms for U. S. Grant’s volunteers in Galena when the Civil War began.

The Hamills resided in Wayne, Illinois and were married for 65 years. Joan Hamill passed away in 2002 at the age of 86. “Corky” passed away in 2013 at the age of 99.

They are survived by 3 children, 6 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren.

## Village Resurfaces Lake Street

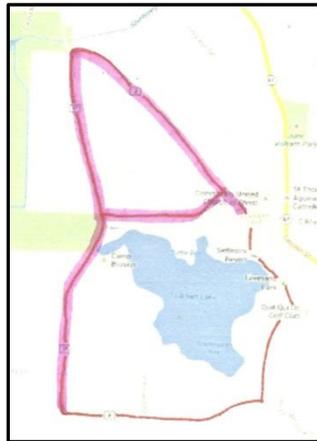
Under contract to the Village, the Sheboygan County Highway Department resurfaced the historic circuit (Lake Street) between Rhine and the Ostoff Walkway in October of this year. The project completed the resurfacing in the Village that began with the portion of Lake Street from the south end of the Ostoff Walkway to CTY AJ in 2014. HRC Directors met



and worked with Village President, Alan Rudnick and Greg Schnell, Sheboygan County Transportation Director, to insure that the provisions of the 2010 Resource Management Plan would be complied with. We are happy to report that no deviation occurred and cooperation between the respective parties was excellent.

## County to Resurface CTY P, J and JP

The Sheboygan County Highway Department (SCHD) has announced plans to grind and resurface CTY P from Kimberly's Korner to the Marsh Turn, CTY J from the Marsh Turn to Rhine Street and CTY JP that runs between the two from the Hard Right to Ted's Turn. The project is scheduled to begin in March of 2017. Under the provisions of the 2010 Resource Management Plan resurfacing is allowed as long as the resurfacing does not (1) change the width, grade or elevations of the roadway or shoulders, (2) does not change the geometry of the curves and

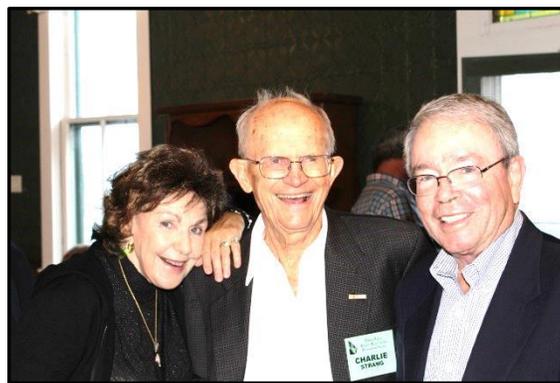


*Portion of the Historic Circuits planned for resurfacing.*

(3) otherwise conforms to the provisions of the Resource Management Plan. HRC Directors have been coordinating with Sheboygan County Transportation Director, Greg Schnell, and the State Historic Preservation Officer, Chip Brown, at the Wisconsin State Historic Society to insure that no deviation from the provisions of the Plan is intended or will occur. The SCHD resurface the CTY A portion of the circuits from Kimberly's Korner to the intersection with CTY AJ several years ago and it is hoped that the work planned for next year will go as smoothly.

## Fall Dinner Event Wraps up the Year

Eighty-nine members and their guests attended the HRC Fall Dinner Event held at the historic Siebkens Resort on Thursday September 15<sup>th</sup>. Siebkens served a beef wellington dinner enjoyed by all. The program featured the history of the Mercury Marine 1955 Chrysler 300 NASCAR racing team that revolutionized stock car racing. Milwaukee native Carl Kiekhaefer, founder of Mercury Marine, decided to build a NASCAR



*Charlie Strang (center) with members Fred and Anne Stratton.*

racing team to promote the Company's image. Building the team around the best cars and drivers, the team won the championship in both 1955 and 1956. They were the first truly professional team wearing matching uniforms and transporting cars on trailers in an era when most drivers wore overalls and drove their cars to the tracks. Guest speakers for the event were Charlie Strang, retired Chief Engineer of Mercury

*Photo by Ron Nelson*

Marine and automotive journalist and

Chrysler 300 enthusiast, Andy Mikonis.

*Note: A full gallery of photos from the dinner event can be seen on Ron's web site [ronaldnelson.zenfolio.com](http://ronaldnelson.zenfolio.com)*

## Officer and Director Election for 2017

The Annual Directors Board meeting for the election of Directors and Officers was held October 9, 2016.

Chairman of the Board - John Calhoun was elected to serve as Board Chairman for calendar 2017.

Directors - George Bruggenthies, whose term expires at the end this year, was elected to serve another five year term. Spencer Chapple, whose term also expired at the end of the year, reported that he would be unable to serve another term. Serving Directors for 2017 are George Bruggenthies, John Calhoun, Tom Hollfelder, Carl Jensen, Clyde Morter

and Mark Pfaller II.

Officers - Elected to serve for calendar 2017 were:

President	Tom Hollfelder
Vice Pres.	Mark Pfaller II
Secretary	Carl Jensen
Treasurer	George Bruggenthies

Special Recognitions - In recognition of Founder status and services rendered to HRC since the inception of the movement to preserve the Historic Race Circuits, Spencer Chapple was named Director Emeritus and both he and daughter Julie Morter were unanimously awarded Honorary Life Memberships by the Board.

## Historic Marker Maintenance

For the many non-society members touring the Historic Circuits the appearance of the historical markers is the primary window thru which they see the results of the Society's effort to preserve the circuits. Recognizing the importance of the appearance of the markers and finding it increasingly difficult to find volunteers to maintain the markers, the Board contracted the

care of the area around the markers to Bugz Lawncare & Property Maintenance, LLC. Bugz completed the first mowing just prior to the Fall Dinner Event. Perhaps you've noticed the expanded mowing and improved appearance. Bugz, will be mowing every two weeks during the growing season and as frequently as appearance requires in the off season.