

# Key Notes

March 2017



Serving Western New York VW Enthusiasts for *Thirty* Years!

## EXECUTIVE COMMENTS by Bob LaPorte

The long cold NY winter is when I always get a majority of work done on my vintage VWs, but not this year. The unusually mild weather would be even more incentive to be lying around on my back under a car, but instead I've spent the last two months trying to reno our main floor bathroom. Since that project seems to be a crappy story so far, I will reflect on some VW time spent during our December trip to Europe.

After a couple days in Bad Orb, Germany recovering from jet lag and greeting Agnes' family, we headed to Austria to meet my friend Andreas Holzinger for the weekend. On Autobahns, the trip was supposed to take 5.5 hours, but because of severe fog most of the way, as well as some incorrect settings on the German speaking GPS, 6.5 hours later we arrived in Innsbruck. After touring the University of Innsbruck institute of Botany with Professor Holzinger, we spent the evening walking around the city and experiencing the local Christmas market while drinking Gluehwein (holiday after dinner drink of hot sweet wine). Translates to glow wine and it sure keeps you warm on a cold evening.

The following day we headed towards Andreas' home of Salzburg, but en route stopped to meet some of his VW acquaintances. At a large farm, we met an 80 year old fellow named Herr Schickler, and as you see in the photo with Agnes, he has a '67 panel van with factory sliding side door. He still uses this bus year round to transport building materials and anything else that will fit inside or on top. This guy is nonstop, currently working on an addition to his barn as well as several Fiat Topolinos.



[Above: Herr Schickler (l) Agnes (r)]

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*The March meeting will be held on March 15, 2017. It's still at the Ship N' Shore in Lockport. Please come early to enjoy their great food with other club members and swap stories of how best to keep in the VW mood whilst not driving your classic VW. Maybe you're lucky enough to have one of the newer VWs with a non-air-cooled engine and can drive it year round!*

After a night's rest in Salzburg, I went grocery shopping with Andreas in his favorite driver a '61 VW panel van. After just a couple miles I said, "This thing is a death trap!" Andreas was appalled at my statement, but I asked him to stop so I could check the king and link pins with the usual "pull and push at the top of the front tires." To my amazement, they were tight. Still not sure if I should belt myself in or be prepared to jump, I asked why there were bolts missing from the under dash tray.

(continued page 3).

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*Contributions from  
members and non-members  
are **strongly**  
encouraged.*

**Coming Events**

This information has been gathered from many sources. Before making any plans to attend any of these events, please confirm that the information is accurate, and that the event has not been changed or cancelled by contacting the website or phone number listed.

**March 15:** Monthly meeting at Ship N' Shore at Lockport. @ 7pm.  
Come early to swap stories and break bread with fellow club members,  
plus support our wonderful hosts!

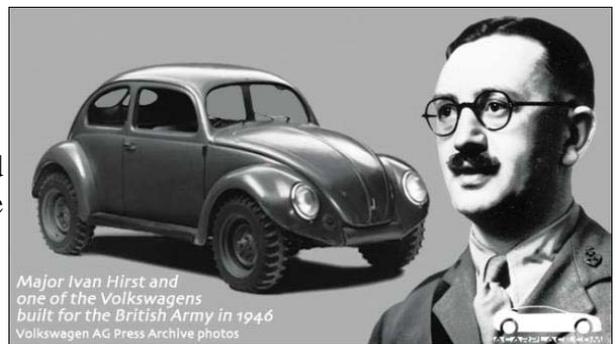
**A Little March VW History**

Most who have spent time driving a classic air-cooled VW know that after WW2 ended, Major Ivan Hirst was asked to determine the viability of restarting production of the Beetle. After collecting various bits stored in different factory outbuildings, his small team of engineers from the British army got the factory (renamed Wolfsburg from KdF-stadt) running. First produced was the Kübelwagen, as most parts were easily available. Next was the Schwimmwagen, but was quickly stopped due to the agreements that prevented military vehicles from being produced by Germany. Finally, the Beetle started production.

On August 22, 1945, the British government placed an order for 20,000 VW "saloons." Quite a task, considering none had been made to date. March 1946 was a significant month, because it was the first time 1,000 VWs had been made in a single month!

What may not be common knowledge is that Ford was offered the opportunity to invest in VW in the early years, but turned it down because it was only a partial investment, not total ownership of the automaker. Otherwise, VW might be part of the "Ford Group" today!

Another set of facts significant to VW (sort of): Major Ivan Hirst was born on March 4, 1916 and died on March 10, 2000. He appeared in an episode of Top Gear about a month before he died.



Major Ivan Hirst and  
one of the Volkswagens  
built for the British Army in 1946  
Volkswagen AG Press Archive photos

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(Continued Bob's executive comments, from page 1).

He replied, "It's been that way for years and hasn't fallen off." If you haven't already guessed, Andreas likes his vintage cars as they are found - no matter what they look like. To him, the rust, dents and faded paint are just additional character.



[Left: '61 Panel (death trap)  
Above: Front of '53 Panel van  
Below: '50 & '53 Panel vans  
Below left: '66 Fire bus]

Austria has very strict vehicle inspections, but Andreas has a friend who can "take care" of this problem by continuing to patch any exposed rust holes and supposedly keeping the mechanics in good order. The sad part is he has several other VW buses, some of which are in much better shape, but he has no spare



time, so they just sit in storage. His vintage VWs include several panel vans from 1950 to '65, a '66 Fire Bus, '68 Fastback and Vanagon Westfalia Synchro that he uses for family vacations.

On our last evening in Austria we visited a farm quite a ways up towards the top of a mountain in the Alps. Beginning at the base of the mountain in our rental car, a huge VW Multi Van, we zig zagged back and forth as well as around the circumference of the mountain. As we climbed higher, the road got smaller and steeper until it was just two ruts in the dirt. I was thankful it was pitch dark because I don't think I would have wanted to drive this "road" if I could see where I was. At the summit, we arrived at a large barn. Looking back down the hill, we could see a lighted outline of a small lake in the valley below.

Inside the barn were several VW projects and finished cars. Christian is in his twenties and is what I would consider a self-taught metal master. He is currently working on a '55 VW pickup that was stripped down almost to the frame. His next project is a '54 Kombi Postal Bus that is one of the oldest known to exist. It will be a patina bus; he is trying to save as much of the original paint as possible, but there sure is a lot of rust. Sadly, I did not get any photos, but here is a video of the recovery. <https://youtu.be/U7elvMEhPiA>.



Needless to say, the trip for me was amazing and I met some very interesting VW Bus enthusiasts. On Sunday morning, we departed Salzburg heading back to Bad Orb, Germany. This time the sun was shining, very little traffic and the roads were dry. We made the 560 km trip in 4.5 hours flat. You can figure out the average speed, but this is safely possible mainly due to the well-maintained Autobahns - an NO left lane "campers" allowed.

With spring only a couple weeks away, it's time to start thinking about getting your vintage VWs ready for another summer of fun in WNY! Keep to the right, pass left and watch out for drivers who think they are on the Autobahn!



[Above: VW 7 passenger Multivan]

## Classified Ads

**For Sale:** 1979 super parts! New tire on rim \$60. Two running boards ribbed rubber on them good shape (call for price). New muffler never used for 1600 engine. \$180. New boot for convertible top never used (tan) \$200, plus other small parts. Back lower seat (black) \$50 or offer. Inside door panels front and rear (black) \$50 or offer. Carpet under hood (black) new \$20. Call Don Baltus 649-4375 (September 2016)

**For Sale:** 1971 Super Beetle Convertible. Karmann badged. Very good condition. Rust-free, garaged year round. Bright yellow with custom yellow and black interior. Like new black top. New top boot. Great looking car. Front end lowered with custom wheels and tires. Strong runner. Recently rebuilt engine by Vince Harrington with less than 400 miles. Engine mods include Weber progressive carb, Petronix ignition, glass pack muffler, Scat fan shroud. Oversized cylinders and pistons - 88's, mild cam-Engle, alternator. Includes many spares. Could be returned to stock if desirable. \$10,900.00 OBO George at 716-439-4162 N.Y. More pictures available on line. [geonpruwithell@aol.com](mailto:geonpruwithell@aol.com) (July 2016)

**For Sale:** 1970 Campmobile. Excellent inside, faded paint outside, no body work required, needs engine. Please call Richard Colli if interested 631-603-7173. The bus is in the Long Island, NY area. (July 2016)

**For Sale:** VW Rabbit 16V Convertible Project includes (2) VW Rabbit convertibles (1983 8V good shape, 1981 16V with rust issues), running/inspected, rebuilt 16V engine w/ stand, engine hoist, lot of new/used parts for converting the 8V. Everything needs to go. Asking \$2900 obo. Pictures available at United, talk to Howie. Call 689-9723, ask for Bill for more information (February 2016).

**For Sale:** I have one new Billet bumper for a 79 VW Super beetle, and one new fuel pump, never used, was tested, pressure was too low for my car. The company wouldn't take it back. Make a reasonable offer on both items, separate or together. Contact John at 716-622-2976 (February 2016)

**For Sale:** my ECP, The Eternal Cabrio Project. \$4000. It's a 1989 Cabrio with some modifications. Call or email me for details and a "look see". Vince Harrington 716-930-5686, [zuwie41@yahoo.com](mailto:zuwie41@yahoo.com) (February 2016)

**For Sale:** 1979 Beetle convertible, original 18,600 miles unrestored. Excellent condition Silver with Black top. Asking \$22,500 OBO. Dennis Ketch Cell 716-535-6114 car is in Youngstown, NY email [riverhousedd@hotmail.com](mailto:riverhousedd@hotmail.com) (February 2016)

**For Sale:** VWAWNY Memorabilia, flags, badges, decals, medals, etc. See VWAWNY.com for full description and latest listings as well as special VW tools for loan to members. Contact Bob LaPorte 716-795-3569 or email [Busnutbob@gmail.com](mailto:Busnutbob@gmail.com)

**For Sale:** Seatcovers, aftermarket patterns-usually plaid vinyl in the center, and solid vinyl around the edges. \$125 per car includes hogrings. Available for '65 Beetle (blue), '70 Beetle (black or red), Karmann-Ghia (orange), American cars with bench seats (1949-1980). Contact Ken Weinstein 716-689-6888 (nights) or e-mail [KMW57@hotmail.com](mailto:KMW57@hotmail.com). (January 2016)

**Service Offered:** Line boring service for all Type 1 style engine cases from 40HP up. Also available air cooled and water cooled engine and transmission re-building. Consult services also available on site or internet. Vince Harrington 716-693-5510. No calls after 9:30pm.

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