

# CLASSIC DRIVER



## 1963 Chevrolet Corvette (C2) Stingray Convertible

Lot sold	<b>USD 66 904 - 80 285</b> GBP 50 000 - 60 000 (listed)	Drive	LHD
Year of manufacture	1963	Condition	Used
Mileage	69 083 mi / 111 179 km	Location	
Gearbox	Manual	Fuel type	Petrol
Chassis number	30867S108815	Exterior colour	Other
Number of seats	2	Car type	Other
Drivetrain	2wd	Engine number	308675108815
Lot number	205	Exterior brand colour	Sebring Silver

### Description

UK-supplied, left-hand drive, second-generation Corvette Sting Ray with 69,083 miles. Built in St Louis in early 1963 fitted with a 327ci, OHV V-8, manual gearbox, LSD, and factory Hardtop. Registered as 7EXV on 28/03/1963 to Harry Rodger Webb (Cliff Richard) in Winchmore Hill, London. Both the buff and green logbooks remain with the car, the early one has been signed by Cliff (H R Webb) twice. Purchased by our vendor in 2012 from Claremont Corvette after they had fully refurbished the car. That work included a respray in Sterling Silver, new soft top, carpets, leather seats, clutch, flywheel and tyres. Great history file with Logbooks, old MOTs, original stickers, radio manual, V5c and lots of invoices. A lovely example of "America's Sports Car" with fabulous celebrity provenance. Now in its seventh generation, the Corvette began life in 1953 with the C1 - a model that inspired a generation of young Americans and gave the Ford Empire a nine-year headache. However, it was the C2, the immortal Sting Ray produced between 1963 and 1967, that really set Chevrolet's cash registers ringing and left us with the most desired and collectable Corvette to date. Designed by Larry Shinoda

under the guidance of the legendary Bill Mitchell, influences on the Sting Ray's unique and unforgettable form are said to include: the E-type Jaguar, a Mako Shark once caught by Mitchell, the 'Q Corvette' concept car of 1957 and the 'Mitchell Sting Ray' design exercise. By the autumn of 1959, elements of the two unique Corvettes had been blended into XP-720 - the design programme that led to the production of the Sting Ray (later changed to Stingray) as we know it. According to its Chassis Number, this lovely left-hand drive, Corvette convertible emerged from Chevrolet's St Louis plant in early 1963 fitted with a 327ci, OHV V-8, a four-speed manual gearbox (\$188), Positraction rear axle (LSD) \$43.05, finished in Silver Blue (912) with a Black Vinyl interior and supplied with an optional Hardtop in body colour (\$236). It was immediately shipped to the UK by British and Colonial Motors of St. Martins Lane in London prior to being registered as 7 EXV on 28/03/1963 to a Mr Harry Rodger Webb, perhaps better known as Sir Cliff Richard OBE. Both the Buff and Green Log Books remain with the car and the early one has been signed by Cliff (H R Webb) twice, initially when he lived at Winchmore Hill and subsequently when he moved to Upper Nazeing in Essex. Naturally, such a flamboyant motor car has worn different number plates with later owners including AHK 514A, 5 SOO, 959 NOJ and currently 55AFR since 1974. Our vendor purchased the car in early November 2012 from Claremont Corvette - The Original Corvette Specialists for 47,995 and there is a Bill of Sale in the owner's file. There is a further invoice in the file, dated 21/10/12 from Claremont indicating that the Corvette had been substantially refreshed prior to our vendor becoming the car's proud owner. That work included a full respray in Sebring Silver by MechSpray with the hardtop painted to match, a new black convertible top, new period-correct carpets, the worn vinyl seat covers replaced with leather, four new black-wall radial tyres fitted and balanced on repainted wheels, hubcaps re-polished with new spinners, a new clutch and flywheel, the engine compartment valeted, the original air cleaner re-chromed, new electric window switches, gear knob and doorknob and finally, a full pre-sale service. Since purchasing this very special Chevrolet around seven years ago, Claremont Corvette have been tasked with sundry items of maintenance and enhancement and there are a couple of invoices in the file (23/07/2013 for 2,507.82 and 14/10/2014 for 2,528.72) in return for their care and attention. As you can see from the photographs, 55 AFR presents well in its coat of Sebring Silver and remains in remarkably fresh condition having been lightly used over the last seven years. The black interior is lightly patinated appearing essentially original apart from the recovered seats and you can't help wonder how many legends of sixties rock and pop have travelled in these seats and fiddled with the original Delco radio during Cliff's ownership. In addition to the early logbooks, the car is accompanied by a number of older MOTs the oldest of which dates from 1969, Bills of Sale, the refurbishment and maintenance invoices from Claremont, a considerable number of older invoices, and some original stickers and decals. This is an attractive and well-maintained example of America's Sports Car from a great year, and with only 69,000 miles and in this lovely condition, is very sensibly guided, however, we can't help feeling that a lot of people will be interested in it simply because it was owned and regularly driven by the most successful British chart act of all time. Over a career spanning 60 years, Sir Cliff Richard OBE has amassed many Gold and Platinum discs and awards, including two Ivor Novello Awards and three Brits. Over 130 of his singles, albums and EPs have reached the UK Top 20, more than any other artist. He has had 67 UK top-ten singles, the second-highest total for any artist behind Elvis. He also holds the record (with Elvis) as the only act to make the UK singles charts in all of its first six decades (the 1950s-2000s), has achieved 14 UK number-one singles and is the only singer to have had a number-one single in the UK in five consecutive decades. He remains a popular performer, another of those curiously British institutions, and in 1995 he was knighted by Her Majesty the Queen for his charity work. David Steen (much-respected freelance photographer of film stars, actors, criminals, politicians and Prime Ministers in the 1960's and whose evocative images of Cliff and the Corvette appeared in the Press at the time) recalls: During his series of one-nighters, Cliff drove himself from town to town, gig to gig, in his left-hand-drive Corvette Sting Ray. He was a good driver and loved cars. At that time he also had a Cadillac Fleetwood limousine. I spent three days on the road with him. The fact that most ardent Cliff Richard fans will almost certainly be sporting a fine crop of silver hair is not really relevant as, for many of them, the Corvette and Cliff will be the key to opening a box full of wonderful memories. Take your mind back to the Spring of 1963. You are seventeen, on a Spring Break from college and half a dozen of you are squeezed into an old VW Microbus rattling down the A303 on the way to Dawlish or Woolacombe or Saunton Sands to

watch the surfing, enjoy bonfires on the beach, fall in love and generally relish the freedom of being a hundred miles away from your parents. The transistor radio, wedged in a corner of the dashboard, is only ever switched off for a battery change and, as the charts at the time were topped by Cliff or the Shadows or Jet Harris and Tony Meehan, then that music inevitably became the soundtrack for those magical few weeks of self-discovery. A trip to the local cinema to see Cliffs latest film Summer Holiday about a gang of teenage friends and a big red bus and featuring a number of hit songs including Summer Holiday, The Next Time and Bachelor Boy only serves to enhance that adolescent, were going to live forever, sense of teenage identity. Lets move forward to Spring 2020 and you are considering making that trip again, just for the sake of it, a bit of nostalgia, play some Cliff and the Shadows on the MP4 and maybe take in the digitally-remastered Summer Holiday shown at the Regal in a small Dorset town as part of their Sixties Night programme. What a great idea. Now, imagine that you could make that trip behind the wheel of Cliffs own Corvette, a car in which he probably composed some of his greatest hits and almost certainly sang them to himself on the way to a gig. Wouldnt that be special, an experience you simply cant buy. Well, actually, you can.

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