

MAY 1985

So you want to know all about convertibles eh??? Well I'll tell you what I'm gonna do
(Sound familiar?)

First off I want you to understand I really didn't forget to get this information...it just took a long time to get any information like names, places, dates, numbers, who, and how. I'd like to believe that at this time I am the world's leading authority on the subject but you know what will happen if and when any of this gets published...someone will write you or me a nasty note and say "it ain't necessarily so."

I also have excellent copies of the only photos that seem to have ever been taken by those involved...all in black and white. Most of the pictures were Polaroid's and have not fared well over these many years. Everyone was most cooperative with their time and pictures and asked only that they be sent a few copies of anything printed about them or the convertibles. Before I bought my present P1800, I had seen the ad I'm enclosing a photostat of...for the P1800 convertible and had taken one for a test ride. Needless to say I loved it and went back that evening with my dad to purchase it. The original price (w/the few extras that I wanted came to \$4150. plus \$300. for the A/C (made by Fridgiking) and \$400. for the convertible plus tax, etc. I found, being a new teacher this was too rich for my blood or pocketbook or whatever and settled for the coupe...no air and no fresh air. I'm still driving it today with 874K+ miles on it daily to work and wherever else. I guess it wasn't such a bad decision after all. Anyway, enough rambling.

No one is exactly sure how many convertibles were made, as the first couple were for experimentation. The first one was a 1964 model which had the roof cut off and no other modifications were made. This car was taken for a ride during which time it was discovered that every bump in the road caused the doors to fly open. Obviously something had to be done. Various ideas were discussed and tried. The final modification was an L-shaped piece of 1/4" steel plate welded to the inner rocker panels and front of the rear wheel arch. This was then primed, painted and undercoated so that the modification was difficult to see unless you knew what to look for. (According to Mike Lazarus at Volvoville and his brother Brian who are now running the business, there never was such a thing as "jigs" for this car hidden in their attic as I have heard some members speculate.)

There were several body shops involved in this operation (which is why the problems with exact numbers of cars made) but the shop that made most of the convertibles and perfected the process was International Auto Painting, Inc. located at 425 East John St., Lindenhurst, NY 11757. International Auto Painting is still in business and is still owned and operated by A1 and Vito Tandoi. A1 invited me to his shop and went thru a detailed explanation of what the process entailed...where he started, the problems he had with the first few, the finishing process, etc. They eventually got the process down to the point where they "cut, weld, grind and leave the rest of the body untouched". The entire process could be done in a few hours with minimal aggravation. It was A1 who welded in the L-shaped supports to stiffen the body. All welding was time consuming as only gas torches were used at that time. A1 still does much of Volvoville's collision work and has many old customers (old cars...ahem!) with P1800s and 122s. The shop is very large as body shops go and super clean. A1 isn't interested in making any new convertibles but could probably help with anyone having a problem. He says that he is not interested in doing any complete restorations any longer but...(it wouldn't hurt to ask...PH# 516-8843366).

Once the top was chopped and finished the cars were taken to Forean Kustom Auto and Marine Upholstery, Inc. on the opposite side of Long Island. They also are still in business and located at the same address for the past 20 years: 25 New York Ave., Huntington, NY 11743.(PH# 516-5499489.) Arnie Howitt is still the proprietor and remembers that they got the job as others that Volvoville had dealt with could not design a top and bows that were free of flaws. They made the last 20 or so cars and had the process down to the point that they could complete the car or replace a

top for the P1800 in UNDER AN HOUR from beginning to end. Arnie still has the measurements and maybe a set of bows in his storage area and can still replace a top for anyone in need today...even though they only do marine upholstery these days. He made the best fitting pattern and can have one remanufactured today. The original material was canvas but later on a vinyl/canvas material was used that had electrically welded seams. The roof on the convertible was approx. 6" higher than the standard coupe allowing an adult to sit in the back seat upright (if you weren't too tall. I sat in the back of one I took for a test ride and it was a lot more comfortable than the coupe.) The tops were offered in a choice of colors, depending on the color of the car, such as; tan, white and black. Arnie was kind enough to supply me with 3 Polaroid pictures. Nobody took a lot of pictures then as all those involved seemed to think they would be producing lots of these cars...and there was always tomorrow. (Sounds like a great title for a song--Tomorrow,_tomorrow, I'll love.

While talking with Brian Lazarus, who provided me with the rest of the pictures (with his brother Mike and father Stanley), I got a lead on a P1800 convertible which has received (supposedly) a great deal of T.L.C. I'm going to call and see if I can take some pictures. The gentleman who owns the car is supposed to be the son of one of the salesmen who sold the car many years ago.

Let me summarize the facts at this time and give you some more names for those involved:

1) The original idea was Stanley Lazarus's who was then president and owner of Volvoville. He was assisted with ideas and suggestions as well as mechanical advice by the following: MARTY BERMAN - then service manager of Volvoville. BOB GAETO, RONNIE AWE AND ROGER MAY then mechanics (and very good ones). WILFRED STURMANN and BUD TUCCI -then salesmen. (Wilfred is now in charge of all auto sales. He is very knowledgeable and helpful. Bud sold me my car and handed me the keys to the convertible when I wanted a test ride. Ronnie, by the way, just left Volvoville on good terms to open -a repair shop of his own.)

2) International Auto Painting, Inc., East John St., Lindenhurst, New York 11757. Ph# 516-884-3366. Owned and operated by A1 Tandoi and his son Vito. They were very helpful with the details and history. This is the shop that made most of the rag-tops and perfected the process... and never took a picture.

3) Forean Kustom Upholstery, Inc. 25 New York Ave., Huntington, NY 11743. Ph# 516-549-9489. Owned and operated by Arnold Howitt and Roy Schoendorf. Arnold was very helpful in explaining how the top fit, the color choices, and fabrics used. The ones that people didn't complain about were done here in an hour or less. Arnie provided pictures and hope for the future for those who may still have a convertible and need help.

I hope you find all this helpful. If you need anything further, call me anytime...preferably late...11:00pm or later at 516-289-1157.

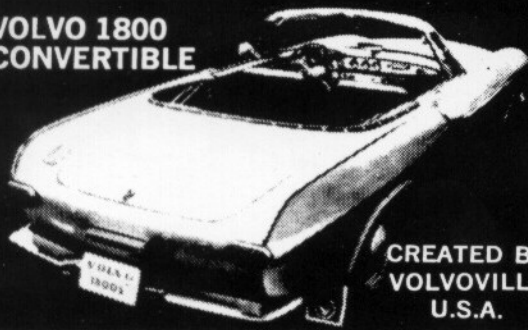
Best wishes, IRVIN GORDON, Patchogue NY

P.S. A special thanks should go to Brian and Michael Lazarus who put up with my twice weekly visits for the last 5 months trying to get some names, addresses and/or pictures. Without their help none of this would have been possible. Now, if I could only get them to offer a discount on parts and service to club members. Maybe another 5 months of visits!!! Did you hear that Brian and Mike!?!?!? ANOTHER 5 MONTHS OF VISITS! Anyway, they still offer the best service around on Volvos. Thanks fellows! Thanks VOLVOVILLE.

And THANKS to you, Irvin, for all your hard work in putting together this information for the club! JON.

PICTURES ON NEXTPAGE

**VOLVO 1800
CONVERTIBLE**



**CREATED BY
VOLVOVILLE,
U.S.A.**

AMERICA'S LARGEST EXCLUSIVE

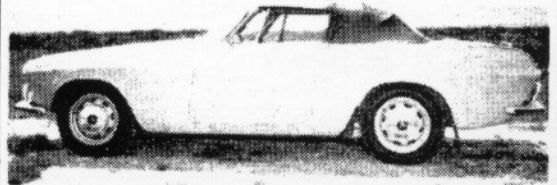


DEALER

**MERRICK ROAD
AMITYVILLE, N.Y.**

516-798-4800

**THIS IS THE VOLVO 1800
CONVERTIBLE
CREATED BY VOLVOVILLE, U.S.A.**



Now you can have all the advantages of the GT coupe *plus* six additional inches of headroom in the rear.



Volvoville, U.S.A.

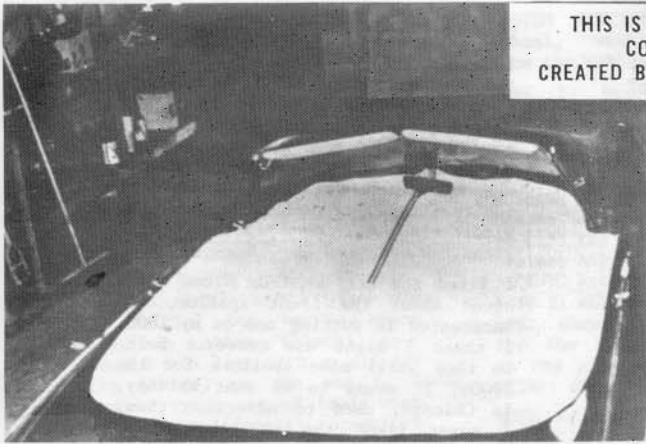
Amityville, N.Y. 11701

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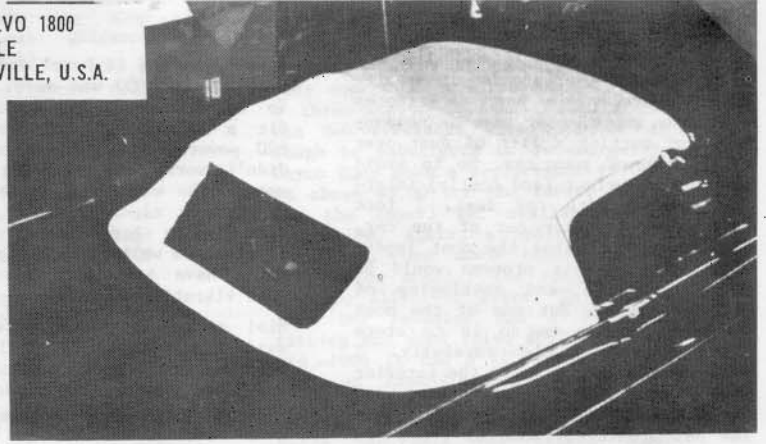
It was only a matter of time before private firms transformed the P1800 coupe into a convertible. The Harold Radford Coach building firm in England completed an attractive conversion in 1965, while Volvoville, a dealer in New York, converted approximately 29 cars. Other private owners have also opted for roadster versions. Perhaps the cleanest owner-converted car here in the United States is a 1963 Jensen Model owned by Jan Harde.



THIS IS THE VOLVO 1800
 CONVERTIBLE
 CREATED BY VOLVOVILLE, U.S.A.



--TONNEAU COVER-- Picture courtesy of Foreign Custom Auto Upholstery.



--TOP UP-- Courtesy of Foreign Kustom Upholstery.



Stanley Lazarus -- 1967 P1800. Picture courtesy of Volvoville.



--TOP DOWN-- Courtesy of Foreign Kustom Upholstery.



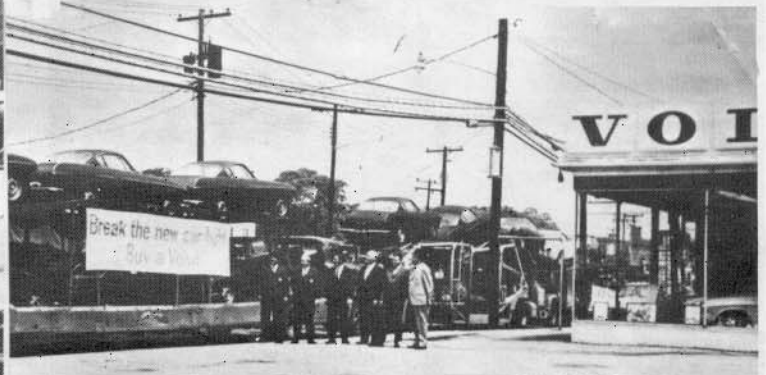
Volvoville, U.S.A.
 Amityville, N.Y. 11701
 516-798-4830



Jan Harde's '62 Convertible P.



Left side, Stanley Lazarus. Right side, Mike Lazarus. Picture courtesy of Volvoville.



From L to R: Mike Lazarus - Wilfred Sturmann - Stanley Lazarus - (last 3 unknown). Picture courtesy of Volvoville.

CONVERTIBLES, ANYONE?

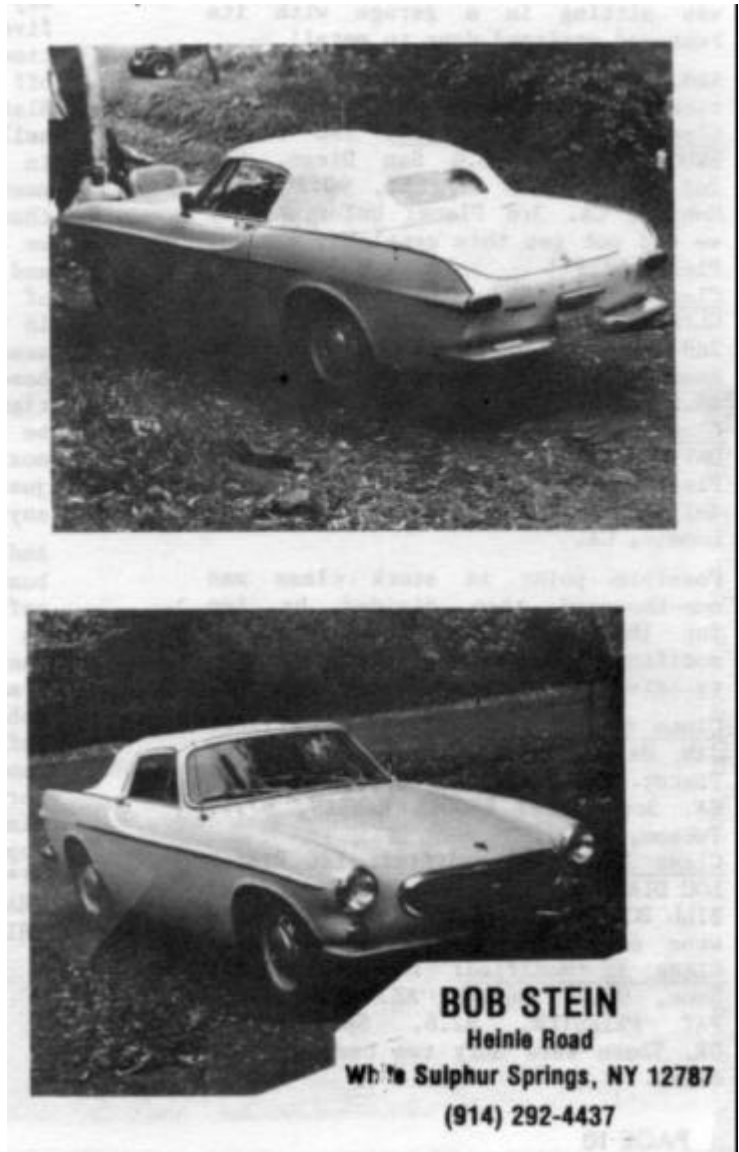
Dear Fellow Members,

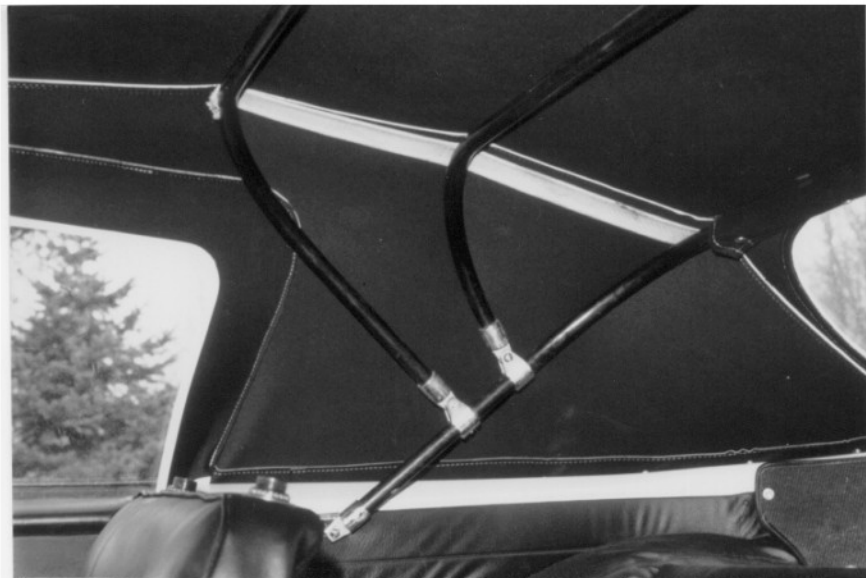
I now have close to forty 1800's and have been written up in the Swedish 1800 club Newsletter, thanks to Bo Lenten. I'm flattered! But having a friend in Sweden can be hazardous to your phone bill!

It seems I always have too many projects going on to get anything done, BUT... I think I'm going to take a shot at making convertibles. I hope to make the first one by July. It will be identical in appearance to my Volvoville original, but may be reinforced differently. Do any of you guys out there want a CONVERTIBLE? Please let me know. Price for the conversion on your car will be around \$3,000. I'll know better after I've done one. I may complete one or two of my own and offer them for sale.

Thanks to all of you who have called and written for parts and advice. I guess I've sold parts to at least a thousand members over the years, and the number may be closer to fifteen hundred. Thanks to all of you who have contributed to The Newsletter, and very special thanks to Irv Gordon for his outstanding research and fine article on Volvoville Convertibles.

Eighteen-hundredly,
Bob Stein 914-292-4437
Heinle Road
White Sulphur Springs, N.Y. 12787





See second file for more convertible information.