

# The 1935 Chevrolet Story

by David Bruce

Photos Provided by Bill Pankow

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If you lived in the Tri-State area during or before the 1990s, you probably remember seeing this old black Chevrolet on the streets of Ashland, Kentucky. It was Bill Nolte's 'daily driver' for years and could be seen carrying him to the bank, the grocery, or the hardware store on any given day.

William (Bill) Nolte, born in 1909, was one of seven children of Heinrich and Fredrika Nolte. He and his siblings were raised in the Summit area of Boyd County, Kentucky. They later purchased a farm at the intersection of what is now Diederich Boulevard and U.S. Route 23, just east of Russell, Kentucky. Bill worked at



Armco Steel, just a short distance from the family farm. All the Noltes were quiet, thrifty people and were members of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Ashland. As far as we know, Bill only owned one car in his life, this 1935 Chevrolet Standard sedan, which he purchased new.

Bill Nolte was one of the last two surviving siblings. He broke his hip in the late 1990s and was not able to drive after that. Bill and his sister Augusta ('Gussie'), the last survivor of this branch of the Nolte family, both passed away in 2001. They left their estate, including the family farm and the 1935 Chevrolet sedan, to St. Paul's. The car then sat in storage for three years. In July, 2004, the congregation at St. Paul's decided to evaluate the condition of the car. Some of the members volunteered to try and start the car, but they found that the engine wouldn't turn over, much less run. The congregation was notified that the Chevy would probably require extensive repairs. Funds were allocated for some basic work on the car and the project was started with the efforts of six members of the congregation.



This small group of volunteers went to work on the Chevy and shortly found that it had a cracked cylinder head, which allowed coolant to leak into one of the cylinders. The standing coolant caused the piston rings and cylinder wall to rust and the engine to seize. The engine was disassembled, the cylinders honed and a replacement 'new old stock' cylinder head was found. New

**piston rings and other internal parts were installed, the engine was reassembled and the carburetor was rebuilt. The car had also suffered an electrical fire at some point so all the wiring was replaced. There were lots of crossed fingers, but the old Chevy came through, and in June 2005 it started for the first time in quite a while and ran fine after only a little tuning.**

**Since its return to the road, the Nolte Chevy has participated in several parades and car shows and was part of one wedding. The volunteers who worked on the car have agreed that it should be treated as a 'survivor' and not turned into a show car. The congregation at St. Paul's has welcomed the car as a reminder both of the generosity of the Noltes and of the idea that sometimes it's the simple things in life that make it most enjoyable.**



**This 1935 Chevrolet Standard was built in Norwood, Ohio (near Cincinnati). It has a 207 cubic inch six cylinder engine with 26.3 horsepower. The transmission is a three-speed manual.**

**St. Paul's Lutheran Church is located at 1320 Bath Avenue in Ashland, Kentucky. Please visiting our web site at: <http://www.stpaulsashland.org> The church telephone number is 606-324-3515. We also invite you to worship with us on Sunday mornings at 10:45 A.M.**