

Front Doors & Interior Restoration of my 1951 Buick, by Charlie Nash

I've had my Buick for almost 4 years now. Mechanically she's sound and very roadworthy. However, It was high time to address the worn, tired front door garnish moldings, upholstery, and weatherstripping. A scratched vent window glass also needed to go.

All this seems like a simple remove and replace operation but of course issues arose that taxed my patience (and pocketbook).

Generally I'm smart enough to leave things alone whenever practical, but apparently wasn't smart enough to realize how arduous this became. But I survived and all came out in good order. Other than the above, the rest of the interior was in very good original condition.

A chronology of steps for both front doors :

Step 1. Order replacement weatherstripping kits from Steele Rubber Products. (steelrubber.com) , not cheap.....but perfect fit

Step 2. Order period correct original auto cloth from Deadstock Auto (deadstockautovinyl.com), great service.

Step 3. Order new vent window glass. I highly recommend Auto City Classic (autocityclassic.com) For \$50 per vent window, an exact fit with setting tape, in original Easy Eye tint WITH correct date code etched in, I was happy with the price.



Step 4. Purchase misc items, fasteners, :)

Step 5. Scrape off and remove all old door weatherstripping and traces thereof. 3M Adhesive Removal came in handy.

Step 6. Sand, prep, and paint both front door jambs. Color matching was easy as a 1972 VW Marina Blue matches my '51 Super paint perfectly. (See photo 1, above right)

Step 7. Attach new weatherstripping. I used 3M double sided tape to attached most of it rather than fight with that nasty 3M black adhesive that drips all over God's creation.



Step 8. Remove door handles and metal door garnish molding pieces. (see photo on prev. page)

Step. 9 Bring above to local auto body shop. I used Slogan Auto Body, Westerly, RI. “Seth” is the man ! He’ll gladly do small pieces. Many shops today don’t. Excellent work. He stripped, primed, and color matched moldings with the rest of the dash.

Step. 10 Disassemble both front door upholstered panels. Horsehair ?, 3“nails, heavy backing mat, and other misc pieces in combination comprise these panels. I brought everything to Andy’s Trim Shop, New London, CT for complete replication using my supplied cloth material. “Mark’s” work was excellent and reasonable. I highly recommend this shop.

Step. 11 Line up new panels with existing nail holes in door’s sheet metal and bang them on with hammer. This was a stressful, exacting step as the nails are immovably embedded in the panel strip and MUST line up with the door’s holes. This design has to be a remnant from the old carriage maker’s days. (See above photo)

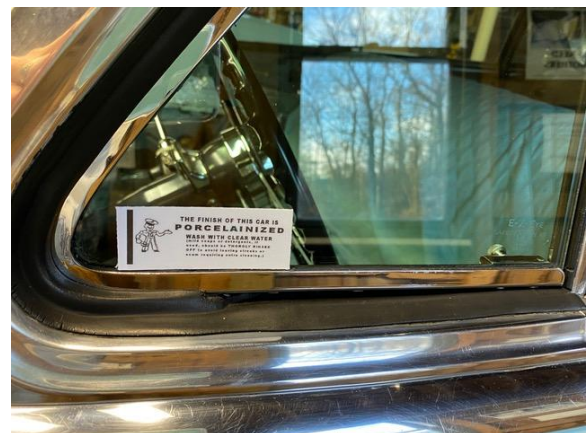
Step. 12 Pick up and install newly painted garnish moldings.

Step. 13 Remove driver’s vent window. I razor bladed the frame/glass joint then gently smashed the glass to coax it out... in pieces.

Step. 14 Inserted new vent glass into frame using a pistol style wood clamp to steadily apply pressure. I soaped the setting tape first.

Step. 15 Applied reproduction window sticker.

I did take some liberty with the new upholstery by choosing a patterned fabric unlike the plain grey and will eventually restore the 2 rear doors someday. For now though, she’s ready for public viewing!



Event Reminders:

-[Calabrese Picnic](#), Sat., Sept. 10, 12 pm. At home of Dave & Pat Calabrese. See calendar for details.

-[YRCC Car Club of Brooklyn](#) annual car show, Sept. 11. September 11, 2022 @ 9:00 am – 4:00 pm
Brooklyn Fair Grounds ,15 Fairgrounds Rd, Brooklyn, CT 06234.

-[Old Orchard Beach](#), Fri.-Sun., Sept. 16-18. Club Event

-[Hershey Eastern Fall Meet](#), Oct. 4-7. Members leave on Mon. Oct. 3 & return on Fri. the 7th or Sat. the 8th.

-[Apple Rehab, Yankee Clipper](#), Saturday, Oct. 29, 3:00 pm. This is fun for the residents and us. They usually feed us too. 161 Post Rd., Westerly, RI 02891. Club Event

Member Car of the Month

The 1968 Chevrolet Impala Coupe is one comfortable car. This glowing sample is one of several rides for members Andy and Chant. The car has plenty of style. This front view is a favorite!



Club Officers

President: Merrill Moone
Vice President: Vacant
Secretary: Ken Carr
Treasurer: Dave Calabrese

Volunteers

Newsletter: Ken Carr
Sunshine: Camille Carr
Trip Coordinator: Dave Calabrese
Webmaster: Ken Carr

Special thanks to Charlie Nash for the article on weatherstripping & glass restoration!

Meetings:

Executive Meeting, Wednesday, Sept. 21, 6:30 PM, Westerly Burger King

Club Meeting, Tuesday, Sept. 27, 6:00 PM, Pizza Party, Westerly Senior Center.

The Original Suburban

