

Where's Wally?

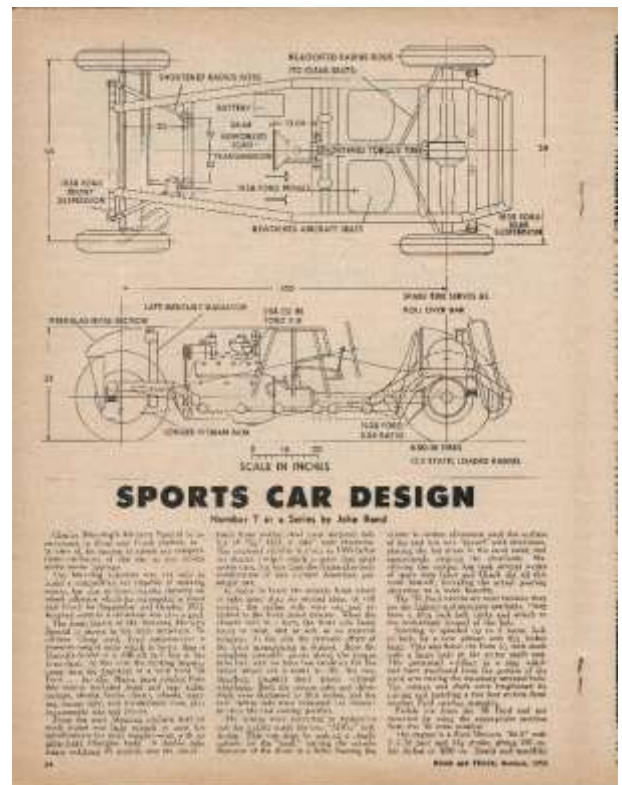
The man who made the Manning

One of the most characterful, pugnacious and hot-roddy of Rob Manson's various California Road Race Specials is the 1952 Schaghticoke Streets Manning Special. The race car has delighted its drivers - John Streets, Chris Hart, Marcus Bicknell, Jay Streets and Skip Streets - and historic Race fans over the years.

Chuck Manning's design for his race car were a popular feature of Road and Track magazine, 1952

The Manning Specials – a set of plans

The very essence of Manning Specials is that the plan set was made available by the creator so that others could build their own Manning Special. That is what happened, in numerous cases of which two survive; thank goodness... otherwise there would be no Manning Specials showing and competing today.



Rob Manson's Manning Special #3 born in New York state

The origins of Rob's example have been but a footnote in the otherwise copious documentation...

"The third Manning Special was built in about 1955 by the man who worked with Chuck Manning on the first car, Wally Chapman (image, right). He took the plan set home from Manning's to his upstairs back bedroom at his grandmother's house in Schaghticoke, New York. John Streets, then a young engineering student from England helped him finish it."¹



"Chapman fabricated the car but realized he couldn't complete the welding. John Streets was a kid fresh out of engineering school who said he could do the welding. And from that day forward Streets has had a hand in the car to this day."²

The Wally's Manning at Menands³ speedway, Albany, 1956. John was racing. Test laps with the hood off, probably Wally driving.

Since the 1970s the car has been known as the Streets Manning Special because of John Streets'⁴ involvement with Wally in the initial build in 1955 and the rebuild in



¹ Dan Davis in www.victorylane.com Aug 10, 2021

² Dave Zurlinden in www.santacruzsentinel.com/2017/08/14/

³ Read <http://www.speedwayandroadracehistory.com/menands-raceway.html> and watch some racing at Menands Speedway <https://youtu.be/h0KaCjtpDs?si=dnd7JRLmImEbK-xG>

⁴ John Streets died in March 2025 and his obituary is at <https://dmtrg.com/2025/05/09/john-harold-streets-1933-2025/>

the late 80s. John bought the car off Wally in about 1956⁵ and raced the Manning on the East Coast and Canada for a few seasons.

[There had been no details of this photo in Rob Manson's archive.](#)

[In October 2025 Dan Grogan found a video and entry list of the meeting where this Lotus IX, driven by S.E.Ward, was also racing⁶.](#)

[John Streets is driving his Manning Special in the Tuppence Cup races on the Connor Airfield near St Eugene, an hour west of Montreal on Sunday August 10, 1958](#)

In 1958 the car was the invited Canadian entry in the Bahamas Speed Week. However, they lost the tow car in Georgia and never made it to the Bahamas. John sold the car and moved to California in 1959; the Manning was almost immediately destroyed by the new owner on a ¼-mile local dirt track. Some of the special engine and speed equipment was salvaged and saved.

[A rare photo of the Manning that Wally Chapman built, on its way to the Bahamas, the trailer lost, in 1958.](#)

Years later John recovered those parts and in Redwood City CA, he worked together with John Buddenbaum on a total rebuild – still using Chuck Manning's original blueprints. The restored car made its debut at the Monterey Historics in 1991. Yes, that's the same John Buddenbaum who today sees the Manning in the mirror of his Parkinson Jaguar in our Del Monte Trophy Group races. John B continues to help maintain the car in race condition, as recently as August 2025 when he diagnosed an overheating problem and replace the right-hand head gasket in time for the trip to Lime Rock.

So Manning #3 is not a pure California road racer either; maybe just in spirit and by adoption. We knew little about Chapman. The idea of the grandmother's house has been rather exotic; one of the little puzzles that old race cars set for us.

[The Schaghticoke Streets Manning Special at home in Carmel Valley with owner Rob Manson, 2020](#)

In search of Wally Chapman's home

So the pilgrimage I made to a distant corner of New York State on Tuesday, 2 September 2025 was the culmination of months of research by a small team into the origins of a much-loved 1950s race car.

In the last few years there has been some support for the idea that the car should be called the Schaghticoke Manning special and not the Streets Manning special; should be named after its original builder? The Chapman Manning? Or is the name of its birth place more "characterful and pugnacious". When Rob entered his Manning for the Lime Rock



⁵ John said in an interview "In time I moved to Canada, and as circumstances did not allow Wally to race, I bought the car and entered it in Quebec and upstate New York through the 50s".

⁶ <https://dmtrg.com/2025/10/16/a-manning-photo-identified/>

Historic Festival 43, August 29 to September 1 Labor Day 2025, a race event on the East Coast just one hour 40 from Schaghticoke, he wrote “1952 Schaghticoke Streets Manning Special” but the organisers abbreviated it to Streets on the printed program. “Schaghticoke”? How do you spell it? “S-c-h-a-g-h-t-i-c-o-k-e”. How do you pronounce it even? “SKAT-ih-coke “. But then you knew that didn’t you, if you have taken the time to read this far in this article.

[An appeal for information](#)

In advance of the Lime Rock event I put out an appeal for further information about the place it was built. I asked the Lime Rock folks including Skip Barber and the long-time track-announcer Greg Rickes, “the voice of Lime Rock”, if they knew where Wally Chapman’s house in Schaghticoke was exactly. I wondered whether we could model a commemoration event and PR photo while we were there. Steve Knoll, race archivist on the East Coast and co-founder with Rob Manson in 2005 of the Scuderia California, made enquiries. Joel Driskill, Manning expert, whose archive of 1950s race videos is without equal and who is himself building a Manning Special to the original plans, came up trumps. By web research and Google Earth, comparing today’s images with black-and-white photos from the time, Joel was able to pinpoint an address of the birthplace of the car. He sent me by email what he had found out.

[Marcus Bicknell drove the Schaghticoke Streets Manning Special to 2nd place in the final of the Group 3 “War Era featuring the Del Monte Trophy cars” at Lime Rock CT, September 1st 2025, just the day before our meeting with Dana.](#)



[Our links with Schaghticoke](#)

On our first day on track at Lime Rock, practice and qualifying on Friday 29th August 2025, a cheerful intelligent young-looking man came up to us in the paddock. Instead of the usual ‘what is this overgrown Lotus 7’ question, Dan Grogan said ‘Is this really the Schaghticoke Manning?’ He was delighted that the answer was yes. He lives in Schaghticoke, knew about Chapman’s Manning and had been looking forward to seeing it for years. “Because Wally Chapman did not make a big deal of it, probably a lot of people didn’t hear the story. So the more I dug into it and read about it, the more intrigued I got about it because it was local history of my hometown that connects with something that I’m kind of passionate about with the historic racing”.

[The Schaghticoke Manning Special at speed, John Streets driving, c.1956](#)

When I said I’d like to visit Schaghticoke and pay our respects to the birthplace, Dan says he had some contact with the family of Wally Chapman and would make enquiries. And so it was on Tuesday, 2 September 2025 that I travelled to Schaghticoke, in my rental car not the Manning (which was loaded Monday night back onto the transporter to get it and 7 other cars back to California), to have lunch at Chrissy’s Cravings there with Chapman’s daughter Dana Masters. On perceiving our interest to be genuine and respectful, she was extremely communicative and warm. We learn much about Wally Chapman’s life and family and she agreed to



have a look in the archive, presently deep in storage, to see what papers or photos of Wally might be of interest today.

Wally Chapman

Wallace H. Chapman was born in Troy, 15 miles from Schaghticoke, on January 10, 1927, son of the Wallace E. Chapman (1899-1967, an insurance salesman) and Aurilla Chapman née Horton (1904-1996, devoted to sewing and needlework).⁷ Wally had a sister named Gwendelyn (1928-2014 in Avon Lake, Ohio) and a brother named Roy. His cousin Howard Rutherford lived with them as well.

Wally H. Chapman graduated from the Hoosic Valley Central Schools and went on to serve in the US Army from 1945-1946 as an 18-year-old field medic in the Medical Corps. He taught at Manpower Inc., of Albany and then taught automotives at Hudson Valley Community College in Troy and owned and operated Wally's Tune Up on Schaghticoke Hill, which later became Greg's Bike Shop. He was a very intelligent person and had endless hobbies; muscle cars, machining, bicycles, glass-work, bird-watching, nature, etc.⁸ A life-long environmentalist, he was also involved in numerous photography, bicycle and automobile clubs. In 1950, he co-founded the Automobilists of the Upper Hudson Valley, Inc. and was a member of the C.A.M.E.R.A. Club in Glenville.

He passed away on Monday, October 6, 2014 at Evergreen Commons in East Greenbush, Rensselaer, from the effects of Alzheimer's. He was 87. Survivors include his son, John T. (Diane) Chapman and his daughter Dana L. Masters, grandchildren Steven J. Masters and Dominick G.A. Masters, cousins Betty Innamorato and Catherine Rutherford. In addition to his parents he was predeceased by his brother Roy S. Chapman.⁹

After separating from his wife in 1977, Wally lived with Dana's grandfather John Moss until John's death in 1991. Then he moved back in with his mother Aurilla until her death in 1996.

Researcher Joel Driskill writes "Wally moved out west for about a year in 1953-1954 after graduating with a mechanics certificate, but he did not work with Chuck Manning on the first car because Chuck was already done campaigning his car by the time Wally got out there. Also, Chuck was in another part of the state while Wally was there working as a mechanic at a relative's garage." So any thought that Wally worked with Manning on the first Manning Special is without foundation. "Wally had attended sports car races with his cousin starting in 1950 (Bridgehampton¹⁰) and likely knew of Manning's car if he read *Road and Track* magazine, which was highly likely because he was in two car clubs at the time. Wally more likely saw the Sparks and Bonney Manning Special running, but I have no record of him working on that car either."

⁷ Joel Driskill writes "Wally's grandmother's name was Mae Moss (maiden name was Richards) and his grandfather's name was John Moss" but it is difficult to place them either as Wally Snr's parents (wrong family name) or as Aurilla's parents as she was born Horton

⁸ Letter from Dave Dickinson, owner of the shop which was Chapman's, 2025; "It was clear Wally was a very intelligent person and really had endless hobbies. We found stacks of magazines ranging from muscle car, bird watching, glass work, bicycles, machining, nature, etc."

⁹ Details from his obituary issued by Chase-Smith Family Funeral Homes

¹⁰ The Bridgehampton Race Circuit was located on Long Island. While the original raceway closed in the 1980s, many of the original track features, like the Millstone Turn and Chevron Bridge, are still present, incorporated into a golf course's layout and design.

Wally Chapman built his Manning race car in the upstairs back bedroom at his grandmother's house in Schaghticoke, New York. His daughter Dana has verified that this photo was taken in the house.

Wally moved back to NY in November of 54. Starting in 1955 his sports car club listed some of their events as being located in the field at his house on "Route 40 in Schaghticoke". This was likely Wally's grandmother's house." On this basis one can assume the fabled gymkhanas (a motorsports competition that tests a driver's precision, car handling skills and speed on a tight, obstacle-filled course) were in the land behind the house.



Dana Masters

Over lunch at Chrissie's Cravings in Schaghticoke with Wally Chapman's daughter Dana on Sept 2 2025, she gave us more background to her father and the Manning race car. I took a Coke Float (get it? Schaghti-Coke) with my Caesar Salad. The wasps enjoyed it but less than I. She knew nothing about the car in her lifetime as it had gone to John Streets and then to California before she was born. Wally had never made a big deal of it and Dana did not know till Dan and I met her that her dad's Manning Special is still a celebrated race-winning car. After Wally passed, Dana found out about "Mr. Streets"; she refers to him today as Mr Streets not with his first name, a mark of respect and of distance in time. She always knew they were friends, so when she was going through Wally's things after his death she found John's phone number and phoned him to tell him the sad news. John sent to Dana a whole bunch of documents and photos, regaling her with the car's tales of derring-do. Dana believed Mr. Streets had been a local for a while and that they met at college.

Lunch at Chrissie's Craving in Schaghticoke NY, Sept 2, 2025.
Dana Masters, Marcus Bicknell, Mr Wasp (on the coke float) and
Dan Grogan.

John Streets wrote in his 1992 leaflet (promoting his Zephyr Enterprises and John Buddenbaum's work) about his Manning Special "The Schaghticoke Manning Special was the first motorsport venture I encountered when I came to the USA from England as a student at Rennselaer Polytechnic Institute [in Troy]. I worked with Wally to complete the car." How did they meet? Wally was teaching automotives at Hudson Valley Community College in Troy, a couple of miles from Rennselaer Polytechnic; their common interest would have brought them together in class or on a racetrack.



Dana remembers that her dad's car was green; it was green in the photos she found. She recalls that Wally built a small racetrack behind the house where he lived in the woods but feels that lots of neighbours did that and she could not be certain that the "gymkhana" was there. They would drive old T4s or field cars, cars that weren't street legal, maybe out of a junkyard. Wally ran *Wally's Tune Up* from the workshop then when the NYS inspection laws changed he turned the enterprise into *Greg's Bike Shop*. Dana used the word reckless in describing her father's later years and the property

was sold when his grand-mother died. He lived with Dana for four years as Alzheimer's progressed, then he moved into a nursing home.

Following the lunch meeting Dana intends to find the archive and to let Dan copy those that might be interesting to Manning fans worldwide. She and Dan will be in contact with local media and race clubs like the Automobilists of the Upper Hudson Valley which Wally co-founded. Watch this space.

To Wally's Workshop

After bidding my adieu to Dana and Dan, I took Joel's maps and drove to the site – not in the village at all but closer to Melrose down the Route 40. The first reference point he defined was "opposite the pond"; the pond was being visited by two huge deer paddling and drinking, a romantic and auspicious start to the visit. Indeed, just across the busy Route 40 there was Wally Chapman's workshop now a woodwork shop with bird-nests and other garden furniture on sale from a wooden wagon.

[Woody's Wagon next to Wally Chapman's workshop from the 1950s. Schaghticoke NY](#)



As I completed the purchase of a couple of bird-nests (\$20 bills in an honesty box) there was the proprietor of Woody's Wagon, Dave Dickinson Jr. We fell into warm conversation and he introduced me to his father Dave Senior, his wife and son at their house (which did not exist in Wally Chapman's time) 100 yards behind the workshop.

[Wally Chapman's shop and home in 2007. ¹¹](#)

They knew nothing of the car but they were able to point out the site of the third building, to the north (light-coloured roof, to the right seen from the road), which Wally built in the 1950s to live in. Dave had been told it was an army surplus hut which Wally intended to install 3 feet lower than the surface of the ground to benefit from ground heating.; the pressure of the earth buckled the structure and it had to be abandoned.

[Wally Chapman's shop and home in 2007.](#)



¹¹ With thanks to Dave Dickinson for the two Google Earth photos.

Wally's grandmother's house Schaghticoke Sept 2025,
the Manning's birthplace

50 yards to the south (left seen from the road) of the workshop, set back from the road and in trees, is Wally's grandmother's house, a neat white-painted clapboard two-storey house. Dana had mentioned that the present occupants might be rather private people so I did not knock on the door there. I didn't need to. One of the upstairs windows lit, in the 1950s, the room where Wally built his Manning.



I felt my pilgrimage to the birthplace of my favourite race car was complete. And we can look forward to further revelations about the building of the car when Dana finds the materials in storage.

Marcus Bicknell, 19 October 2025

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Primary research by Joel Driskill, for which we thank him

With thanks to Rob Manson and John Buddenbaum on the Monterey Peninsula, to Dan Grogan, Dana Masters and Dave Dickinson in Schaghticoke and to Steve Knoll for their input.



Owner Rob Manson at speed in the Schaghticoke Streets Manning Special approaching the Corkscrew at Laguna Seca; Rolex Monterey Motorsport Reunion 2011.