

The Life and Times of 220818 As told to Lee Fowler

Allow me to introduce myself. I am a Porsche 356C. I go by my serial number, which is 220818. My original engine number was 716162. I get confused sometimes since some of my owners have called me "Irish" and "Danny Boy". One of my current owners refers to me as "she". But that doesn't bother me since, in reality, I own them! I let them pamper me and, to satisfy their egos I smile and pose at the events they take me to. They brag about the trophies they have won but in fact, I won them.

I rolled off the assembly line on December 3, 1964 as a 1965 model. My paint code is 6406 – Irish Green. The same color as the one millionth 911! I share a garage with a 1967 912, also Irish Green. We have a cousin (Carrera) that we live with but it's color is Porsche Racing Green Metallic. Not quite as pretty as the two of us but we're a happy family.

But I've covered a lot of territory before I got to the place where I now reside. The trip to the United States was not all that pleasant down in the bowels of a large ship. At this point I had no idea where I was going or who would take care of me when I got there. I arrived in the U.S. on January 29, 1965, and was transported to P. C. Import of Northbrook, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago.

It was there that I met my first companion, Harold James of Portland, Oregon. I was looking forward to traveling across this huge country as part of my "breaking in" period when Harold saw a sign pointing to a Porsche Club of America (PCA) rally. He had never been on a rally but entered us in the event anyway and we won. He then joined PCA. We had a good time together. We were active in rallies and Concours and had extensive vacation trips to Mexico and the East Coast.

Unfortunately, information sometimes gets lost and to this day I don't know why he decided to part ways with me. I was a good, loyal companion. In June 1973 Harold sold me to Robert W. Hess, Jr. Bob was in the military and stationed in Key West, Florida. During this phase of my life I was mainly used for touring. Together we traveled across the country to attend the PCA Parade in Monterey, California and on the return trip to Florida we attended Peachstate Region's Rennfest.

The following year Bob was transferred to Norway in support of NATO. We were having a great life together and Bob did not want us to part ways so I went with him, on a separate voyage of course. I departed the U.S. in June, 1974. The laws in Norway require that cars have a "right side" mirror. Most U.S. bound cars did not have those mirrors installed in 1965. So Bob had one installed on my right door in the same position as the left mirror. Perfect symmetry. The only problem is the mirror can't be seen from the driver's seat. But I look good.

This was a great time for me since I got a chance to travel the roads of Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and my homeland Germany. I wasn't as unique as I was travelling around the U.S. but I had fun visiting with others of my Marque. Unfortunately, all this travelling around took a toll on my heart and soul. My four little cylinders had all the combustion explosions it could handle. I was due for a replacement. Don't know why Bob didn't just replace the worn out parts and let

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me keep my engine case. Maybe he exceeded my rev limits and there was little to repair. I just don't remember. I'd only traveled 98,000 miles so I don't know why my engine wore out so quickly. On October 10, 1975 I paid a visit to the Porsche factory in Zuffenhausen. There I lost a part of me and as a replacement received a complete factory 356C engine, Werkauftrag NR. 210 25223. That's the plant order number. It cost Bob 4,655.56 Deutsche Marks (DM). My old engine brought 360 DM in trade but that was offset by a 457.44 DM value-added tax. But I'm worth it. My new engine was built with the European heater system and a black fan housing. My companions are now kept much warmer on cold winter days so I guess that's some consolation. My new (and current) engine number is 732113).

My current stable mate, the 1967 Irish Green 912 has been with the same family for it's entire lifetime, fifty years. I guess I'm a little jealous. But I'm not complaining. Travelling around Europe with Bob was great and I wasn't even homesick. He took good care of me and we enjoyed each other's company

I don't know if I did something wrong. Maybe he decided that I was getting too old, or maybe not quite fast enough. Bob decided to buy a 912E directly from the factory. Maybe he saw one when I went in for my replacement engine. I'll never know. He sold me to another Marine Corps officer, W. H. Barnard on May 18, 1976. Bob and I had only been together for three years. I hate having to break in new companions, letting them know when I'm sick or when I need to be cleaned. But life with Barnard turned out to be pretty good. After having travelled about 20,000 KM in Europe, he shipped me back to the U.S. in August 1976. The trip back was a little bit easier since I was fitted with Bull Rings on my bumper brackets to tie me down for the ocean voyage. Much less chance of me getting seasick.

We lived in Virginia for a while and this was also an exciting chapter in my life. We were a good team and were very active in Porsche events. I took Barnard to the very first 356Registry West Coast Holiday. We also attended the twenty-second and twenty-third PCA Parades. But with us being in the military, relocation is to be expected. With orders in hand I took Barnard to the Twentynine Palms Marine Base in California. Aww! No more snowy winters. I was hoping me and Barnard could retire there together. But I wasn't quite ready for a sedate life. Not yet! We travelled together to the twenty-fifth, twenty-sixth, and twenty-seventh PCA Parades plus the sixth 356Registry West Coast Holiday in Monterey. Life was good! By now I'm getting a little ragged around the edges but I still have a good outlook on life. After all, the year is 1982 and I'm about seventeen years old and fit as a fiddle. As of October of '82 I'd covered 132,177 miles (212,805 km). I've had the opportunity to travel the roads of the U.S. and Europe so I have no complaints.

But life isn't fair, is it? It's during this period of my life that things get a little hazy. I'm missing about eighteen years of my history. It's not my fault. My companions during that time period just weren't too good about keeping up with my records. I simply cannot recollect who I lived with during that time period. I do know that in the year 2000 I lived with Steven and Susan Tietz in Arcadia, California. I still

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have my registration slip in my glovebox. My license plate number was "TIETZC". It was registered to me on February 22, 2000. Nice of Steven to put a personalized plate on me! We stayed together for a few years but then they sold me to Jose Gochez. Jose took me to a body shop in Thousand Oaks, California and had me stripped, body work done, and repainted. That made me feel real good about myself. After all, with my first companion I was a Concours winner. Sure, I've been a touring car since then but that's what Porsches are designed to do, right? Jose had been looking for a 356 for George McMurtry and called him after I got my new beauty treatment. This was in 2002. I took George for a spin to let him get to know me but I also wanted to see if he deserved a fine looking 356C named 220818. We got along pretty good on that trial run and he bought me on the spot. George is the one who named me "Irish". My new license plate was "65CCPE", issued to me on March 4, 2002.

George took real good care of me by replacing worn parts and decals that had faded or come off. I didn't object to him installing three-point seat belts since that was for his safety. He spent over five hundred dollars on those belts and they're still in use today. I know he liked me because he bought me my very first car cover.

With me being bright and shiny we continued our Southern California fun right up until George parked me next to another Irish Green Porsche. It just didn't look right! I'll admit I did a little gloating since my new paint looked a lot better than the car sitting next to me. Then people started talking about the difference in our paint. Sadly, I came to the realization that I was the one with the wrong color. The body shop didn't get the color mixed quite right. By myself I look great, but next to a true Irish Green car the difference is obvious. What a downer!

In 2005 George decided to relocate to South Carolina to start his sixth high-tech business. What the heck? Works for me! I've been across this great land so many times I could probably take him there without his guidance. And I don't have any of those sophisticated GPS things. And no idiot lights or seat belt warning horns. I like that 'cause it makes my companions very happy. Well, sometimes they're not happy. Like when the temperature is ninety degrees in the shade. That's not a problem in California but my new home will be a little different. I can cruise all day long at eighty-plus MPH but the air coming in my windows is still ninety degrees. Thankfully, I have wind vents, something my newer brethren are lacking. Helps with the airflow into my interior.

South Carolina is a great state for a Porsche to live in. The nearby Appalachian Mountains make for some fun roads for a weekend of touring. But as I've come to expect, this comfortable life was about to end and a new chapter begun. For personal reasons George decided that we had to part ways. Sigh! He said that he was reluctant to drive me anymore since an idiot had already backed into me when we lived in Camarillo. I've resigned myself to changes like this but still approach them with some trepidation. Where am I going and what's life going to be like? The potential new owners that George found turned out to be very thorough in their approach to buying a car. They had me inspected by renowned restoration specialist, Ray Morgan, of Jasper, Georgia. Ray gave me a "thumbs

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up” and I was purchased by Jeff and Nancy Frye of Atlanta, Georgia. Now I can tell you first hand that Atlanta is not a happy place for a touring car like me. But I shared a very comfortable home with three other much younger Porsches. I came to realize that Jeff and Nancy intended to take very good care of me. I knew that they truly loved me after they invested over \$6,000 sprucing up this tired old forty-year-old machine. I’m thankful to George for finding me another very good home.

What little German I learned while in Europe now escapes me after so many years in California. Since it appears that I’m going to be residing in the Southern United States for a while I decided that I should try to develop a Southern accent in my exhaust. I needed a subtle roar with a drawl. Like “varoom y’all”.

Jeff and Nancy took me out occasionally for a romp in the North Georgia Mountains but mostly I stayed in my nice cozy garage secure under my car cover. They are truly caring Porsche people. Unbeknownst to me the Frye’s made a decision to downsize their living accommodations. Even had I known that I wouldn’t have been too concerned since I was the only really unique car in the garage. I was comfortable in my belief that I would reside there for many years to come. After all, I’m a classic and I never once overheard them talk about selling any of their cars. Peachstate Region’s Rennfest is an annual event held Labor Day weekend. I felt confident that they would take me to the 2013 Rennfest. I’d attended one back in the 1970’s and had a lot of fun. I’m all spruced up and ready to roll. But they left without me! The Porsche they took was a consistent Concours winner but darn, I was also a winner albeit many years ago.

Since I didn’t attend the event with the Frye’s I wasn’t aware that Jeff, Allan Cox and another attendee were having a casual conversation in the Concours parking area. The other guy made an off hand remark that his one real regret was that he didn’t keep the ’65 356C or Speedster that he had owned a number of years ago. The 356C was green with a tan interior. Jeff informed him “Today may be your lucky day.” When asked what he meant by that, Jeff said “I have a 1965 C coupe for sale and he’s Irish Green with a Fawn interior. We call him Danny Boy”. I would have been horrified if I’d heard that comment. I didn’t want to go anywhere. I’d come to like living in Atlanta. Jeff and Nancy took really, really good care of me, making me feel like I was a member of the family.

The other attendee looked a little stunned, according to Jeff but then turned and walked away. Jeff asked Allan, “What’s up with that?” Allen replied, “I guess he’s not interested”. Allan resumed cleaning his 1979 911SC and in a few minutes the other attendee returned and started requesting more detailed information about me. He said that his wife wanted another 356 and her favorite color is green. He told Jeff that once his wife found out about my availability it was a done deal. What choice did he have? To heck with him, what choice did I have? None! Shortly thereafter, on September 21, 2013 I was loaded onto a trailer and transported to Huntsville, Alabama. Are you kidding me? Alabama?

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This is what nightmares are made of. I can't help but wonder where my next home is going to be, or even if there will be a next one. Am I destined to end my days relegated to a junkyard and torn apart to restore another car. The worst nightmare is the dreaded recycling machine where I'll be shredded and mashed into a small bundle to be melted and made into something else. I can't imagine coming back to life as a kid's tricycle.

Fortunately my worst nightmares were for naught. My new companions are Lee and Suzanne Fowler. I didn't know what to expect but when I learned that they had owned Porsches since 1966 I began to be a little less tense about moving to my new home. Lee became a Porsche enthusiast quite a number of years before I was assembled by the skilled German craftsmen at Zuffenhausen. I soon found out that Lee and Suzanne regularly provide TLC to their cars. They even gave me a special license plate that reads "65 356C".

They sent me up to Montville, Ohio to spend some time with Mike Immarino for a little "refreshing". I remember that Mike recently had an article in Panorama about his restoration work. Mike had also completed the total restoration of my big brother, the '67 912. While up there in Ohio Lee and Suzanne took me to the 356Registry East Coast Holiday in Akron. I thoroughly enjoyed being around so many of my close kin.

I'm a member of PCA, 356Registry, and the 356 Southern Owners Group. And I'm pleased to have attended many events put on by all three groups. I plan to continue showing up at these events.

I'm still doing a lot of touring and guess what. I'm a Concours winner again! Am I proud or what? You bet I am! In the last two years I've won 1st in Class, People's Choice, and Best in Show awards. I'm driven, not trailered to all these events, which is the way it's supposed to be for a car like me. One of my concerns about being on the road a lot is that I have a six-volt electrical system. With all the traffic on the roads these days I was in constant fear of being rear-ended. Thankfully, my new companions installed LED tail and stoplights. They fit in the same factory housing so nobody can tell the difference. I'm a lot less nervous about driving to events. Also, just as my companion's eyesight diminishes as they age I was having the same problem. But that was solved when they gave me a brand new pair of phosphor based SMD headlights. Just like them having cataract surgery, I now can see great in the darkest of nights. I'm old but I'm also somewhat hi-tech. And the Concours judges can't tell the difference. I'm now over fifty-two years old and have covered a lot of miles on two continents. I don't look too bad for a car my age. Through all these changes in companions I still have my original tool kit, owners manual, keys, and two original key fobs. I have a couple of switches on my dash that weren't put on by the factory. They look good but the problem is they don't do anything. There's no wires attached to them! Obviously, one of my prior companions installed them for a good reason but that reason escapes me. I'm glad I don't remember why they felt it necessary to drill holes in my beautiful dash panel for a couple of switches. They look okay but they're completely non-functional.

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As I sit here remembering the “good ole days”, I’m content that I have many good days ahead. I’ve been assured that I will remain with this family line for many years to come. Lee and Suzanne have three sons with families of their own. I like them all and am looking forward to living with one of them in the future. But for right now, I have a happy home and “life is good!”

Finally, I want to thank George McMurtry and Jeff Frye. I asked Lee to contact them both to get help reminding me of some of the details of my life when they were my companions.

Hope you enjoyed my story,

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