



A recent photo of Maury Hamill's "First Porsche."

# OUR FIRST PORSCHE

By Maury Hamill.

Photos by Maury Hamill and family.

The fiftieth anniversary of the 914 and Norm's recent suggestion for Suncoast members to write articles about our first Porsche seemed to beg a report on the first one we had and kept for so long. On 10/23/1972 we bought a Phoenix Red 1972 914 at Mahan Porsche-Audi in Salem,

VA. Dave Mahan, the owner, told me later that this was one of the first four 914 2.0 sold on the east coast that he, as a new dealer, was able to acquire only by being in the right place at the right time. No serious effort was ever made to verify this, though VIN and engine number are early, no records were found to distinguish the 2.0 displacement from the 1.8 versions or where sold.

The 2-liter 914 four, which replaced the 914-6 for Porsche, came with chrome bumpers, F&R anti-sway bars, forged Fuchs wheels and black vinyl covered sail panels. The U.S. distributor wanted them designated as 914S's, however

Porsche AG vetoed that according to lore. The 2.0 914 four made 91 horsepower. Now our base 2018 Cayman 2-liter four turbo makes 300hp.

From the original invoice, the POE price was \$5,199.00 with \$128.30 for "Transp. & Prep." and with tinted glass for \$84.00 being the only option, totaling \$5,546.30. How times and Porsche prices have changed since. Little did we know then what adventures were in store for us with this 914. Initially, the 914 was a daily driver in southwest Virginia, snow and all, for several early years. Had we known then that we would keep the car for so long, and enter these odd PCA events called Concours de Elegance, the 914 would have been pampered more...maybe.

While aware of something called the Porsche Club of America, probably from reading Road & Track, there was no local presence and no dealer information. A letter to First Settlers Region in the early years was unanswered. After the Blue Ridge Region was formed in 1980, we joined and were soon involved with PCA on many levels—many socials and meetings with regional offices including president for both Sue and me. She was one of the two founding mothers of

Autumnfest, a favorite multiregional event for many years and I topped out as Zone 2 representative from 1990 to 1994. The 914 led us both into virtually all PCA activities from the aforementioned Concours to Drivers' Ed and many autocrosses as well as club racing for me. Too many stories about all this to include here, but the 914 placed third in the full Concours, the only kind back then, at the Ozarks '83 and Down East '86 Parades and won some regionally. Not much to say about rallying other than not conducive to marital harmony. The 914 won many autocrosses over the years with both drivers including a couple of FTDs on rainy days when the open-wheel formula cars stayed home.

We both began DEs in the 914 and later progressed to a 914-6 built by a Werk 1, Zuffenhausen foreman that had a 2.4 S MFI engine, leather-covered roll cage, etc. and semi-fondly known as "The Beast" (916 clone?) about which there are too many stories to include here. One day Alan Friedman, founder of PCA club racing and then Potomac region chief Instructor, jumped in the 6 to see why it was so fast and, after the session, asked if I would like to instruct, leading to many years of track instructing. Sue retired from DE and autocross after our son joked with her about beating some guys who were a lot more serious about it than she was. Though she now says she just "grew up," I think she was looking for an excuse to quit.

The 914 was well used and well maintained over the years, serviced by the dealers when we had one in the Roanoke area, as they tended to phase out after a few years. One story Sue has been known to tell is when there was a recall for leaking injectors that could lead to fires, I sent her off, with a fire extinguisher and instructions for use, to Mahan Porsche-Audi about 35 miles east of our home in Radford while I had to work.

At the 992-mile service for the 914, Sue asked after we left it off, if I thought the mechanic Keith looked old enough to work on our car as his hair made him appear younger than his actual late teens. He was and has been a close friend ever since who has done most of the work on all our subsequent Porsches when we lived in Virginia.

In fact, after practice for the 1986 Sebring Firehawk 6-hour support race the day before the 12-Hour, Keith pulled out the page and a half squawk list I had given him for the 914's first service so many years before. Apparently, he

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had never had a customer who noticed so many details and he filed it away. Keith told me earlier that I had been autocrossing long enough and it was time to do some real racing. Since a 944 won the first Firehawk series in '85, he proposed doing all the prep and maintenance for a share of the driving, if I got a 944. Seemed like a good



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idea, so we went ahead with that plan. He, our son Ty, and I all drove about 2 hours each. We finished 6th of 96, 3rd 944 at Sebring in 1986.

That first Porsche led to many others fortunately. After it, the next was an '82 911 SC that Sue ordered as a surprise 50th-birthday

present for me that was delivered timely in December of 1981. Chiffon white with full-leather in tan and brown, it was a great travel car that we took to the Chicago '84 Parade. Our pre-departure Concours prep was wiped out by thunderstorms on the way to the Appleton, Wisconsin, site making a good excuse for mediocre results, no recall on our rally finish. The driving event at Road America was delayed until last for our group due to noise restrictions. One of the loud modified cars in the group ahead of us rolled in the last corner—end over end and sideways within our view, prompting Sue to decide not to drive that year.

One of the advantages of owning a car so long is that whatever can go wrong with it has usually happened before. On the way to the Ozarks in '83, the 914 refused to start at the first gas stop in a small town in Kentucky on a weekend. The attendant told us to call a VW place for suggestions. They said to reach under the left side and tap on the starter to release the solenoid while someone turned the key, and it worked. This happened another time before replacing the starter, at the check-in parking in front of the Ritz Carlton Buckhead (Atlanta). An embarrassing site to crawl under the car, but it worked again. We were there for Peachstate Region's Rennfest, it may have been the year the 914 won the Out-of-Region Best-Overall trophy with firsts in Concours, rally and autocross, thanks to son Ty's navigation for the rally success.

What happened to the 914 you may ask? After many years and over 200 autocross events, most with SCCA, the 914 was still competitive winning A/S in '85, '86, BS in '98, '01 and C/S in '87, '88, '89, '91, '93, '94, '95, '02 and '03. By then, Miatas and their drivers were getting better and the 914...and I...were getting older and slower. We also had a '98 Boxster that was giving the 914 some intrafamily competition until we moved it to Florida full time to AX at MacDill with Suncoast.

For the 50th Parade (Hershey 2005), entry was limited. At 337 on the wait list, we thought we would pass—until they came up with a display of Porsches that had been owned for over 25 years by the original owners. This inspired me, I detailed the 914 as well as I could and, having just sold mine, borrowed a trailer and tow vehicle from a good PCA friend and away we went to Hershey.

Since we wanted to move to Florida full time,



Downeast Parade Concours.



like the Boxster, there was limited garage space for the 914, it was too clean to AX and would be too far away for Keith to maintain, we came to the sad conclusion that it was time to sell if it would bring a price we could not refuse. In August 2006, John W. a former 914 owner, who had lost his to a fuel-leak fire many years before offered \$16K, so we let it go. No seller's remorse and I have been able to follow the car now with the fourth owner. I had asked John W. to let me know if he ever wanted to sell it back. Another PCA and AX friend saw an ad that he thought sounded like our 914, so I asked John why he didn't call me. His excuse was that he didn't think I would be willing to pay what he was asking. Understanding he got in the mid-twenties for it, he was probably correct.

Sadly, that buyer got rear ended by a cell phone user's SUV while stopped for a red light only a few miles from where they bought it. That was the 914's third time being hit while parked. The first time the right front was hit on the Mahan lot, the second time the left door was dented at a professional building's lot at night while I was at a study club meeting. No note was left. Neither of the repaints matched the original exactly so around '95, the entire front and left door were done again with a good match. When I sold the 914, the right door and all aft were still original

paint. It was never damaged while being driven. The third buyer had the 914 in his collection for a few years, then sold it to the current owner Tom B. who drives it and with whom I occasionally communicate. There is some hope that he may bring the 914 to Werks Reunion in March at Amelia Island, where we are looking forward to seeing our old friend again. ■

Concours awards.

