



# THE SMUGGLER'S BOX opened by Randy Stolz

## The Sixties

*"... different strokes for different folks"*

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**W**hile sports car racing grew in Oregon and likely helped boost Porsche sales; those same owners were drawn to membership in the sanctioning clubs. Some members were racers or part of a crew; others were volunteering their weekend hours to be race workers. Rallying, a less strenuous form of automotive competition, was also gaining favor with club members. A popular phrase of the day, coined by Mohamed Ali was, "*... different strokes for different folks*".

### THE MOSS EFFECT

It was perhaps 1956 when Orville and Jeanne Moss (Oregon Region PCA charter members) packed up the family Chevy and attended a hill climb at Maryhill Loops for the first time. Maryhill was just down the road from their place in Hood River and was one of several early racing venues in the Northwest including the airports at Tillamook, Madras and Newport. Sports cars had become quite the novelty for many young men who now were enjoying success in post-war America. The Moss family, including young Stuart, had been going to sports car races since 1955.

In those days there were nearly a thousand people at Maryhill watching the likes of Lew Florence, Tom Carstens,

Jerry Grant, and Dave Tatom lead the charge up the course. Following the big cars were the Porsches of Larry Claverly, Wade Carter, and Milt Davis. Orville soon purchased a new '59 356 Cabriolet hardtop from Trachi & Sons West Slope Motors (Dolph Trachi was a PCA club member). The Mosses continued going to the races and joined SCCA and Conference (ICSCC) as race workers. Meeting other "Porsche Pushers", they became involved with PCA's Oregon Region (see "Coffee in the Basement" *Anzeiger* Dec/Jan '25). At one point, they traded in their '59 on a '60 Super Roadster and took off for the 5th Porsche Parade in Aspen CO. with Stu in the back seat. Later, he would take his driver's test in it.

The Mosses were friends with Wes Fague (a board member from '62-'69) who worked with Orville and owned a '55 Coupe. Stu remembers Larry Caramella, an early KATU-TV personality, having events at his place. Meetings were not always good. Stu says, "You have to remember I was a 14 year old kid in October of 1960! Sometimes a meeting was at a pizza place with a bar inside. In those days, I had to stay in the car! ... I remember that there were only about six or eight families in the club when it started ... I used to baby sit the McGill's kids (Peter was the second

club president). He had a very nice '57 coupe ... Gary Long (fourth club president), Stan and Olive's son was active as well, but soon got involved with club races as did Dick Steif and my parents ... We were out of the club by '63 ... Then nothing until we bought our first Boxster in '08. Now we have a white '15 (Boxster) base". While Stu is an unabashed 'Alfisti' and seems to change them out with the weather, the Porsches seem to remain.

## THE RACING EFFECT

On the other side of the country in 1958, I was attending my first races at the old track in Vineland, New Jersey. Sports cars were BIG in those days. In his book "Long Straights and Hairpin Curves", author Martin Rudow describes the racing as being of "...a different era, one of innocence and toughness, of friendship and fierce competition, of slower but more dangerous cars, of men and machines racing for nothing more than a small trophy or a dash plaque. But it was glorious, it was wonderful, it was exciting beyond anything." We were all kids then, and we loved it.

It cannot be overstated how much enthusiasm was running through the American sports car community in the early 60's. Californian Phil Hill was on his way to becoming F1 World Champion. Professional sports car racing was blooming under the United States Auto Club (USAC). Luminaries such as Dan Gurney, Carroll Shelby, and Roger Penske were winning. Ken Miles, who won the USAC title in 1961, drove a Porsche RS-61. New tracks at Portland's Delta Park; Kent, Washington (Pacific

Raceways), and Westwood, British Columbia held races in front of local crowds in the thousands. Cascade and SCCA were trying to outdo each other with ambitious event calendars.

Portland-based clubs like Team Continental and the Touring Club of Oregon were also on the rise. In the ensuing years, any enthusiast would devote most of his attention, apart from his car, to being part of the action; be it as a driver, crew member, or race worker or rallyist. Publications like Road & Track and Autoweek (then titled Competition Press) tried to cover it all. As a kid, my brains fell out just reading about it.

## DONN REMEMBERS DOWN SOUTH

1961 saw the creation of Cascade Region PCA which included Eugene and points south to the Oregon/California border and east of the Cascades to Idaho. Besides distance, the separation was likely cemented in '63 by the launch of yet another track near Goshen called, Oregon International Raceway (OIR). Opening in 1964 before it was really complete, this short-term enterprise was long on enthusiasm but short on operating cash, which led to its premature closure. Our own Donn Snyder remembers ... "One of the things I remember was off the paved track was sticky Gumbo mud. It was the kind that sucks your boots off. We camped at the track in the pits. At night we walked around the track. (Still new) there was a continuous baling twine line used to guide the asphalt machine. ... The lack of adequate

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foundation on the gumbo and under the asphalt was what spelled the doom of the track. It was talked about being wavy even at the first race. There was no money to ever fix it right.

I think I was at the first race ... I remember Mike Eyerly showing up in his then brand-new (Porsche) 904 along with Monte Shelton; then racing his Healey. ... The 904 was so impressive to me because it was road legal with turn signals and finished interior. Mike won the race and used his turn signals to enter the pits. ... Too cool! ...The whole thing was in another league altogether than anything around here at the time."

## THE STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE

All of the competing interests above were tough for a new single marque region in its infancy. Too, there were normal teething pains of a few members in discord with the national office. They wanted more exposure in Panorama yet never submitted material. More rebates on dues were another gripe. Worse, board members came and went with such frequency (some less than six months) that getting things done was frustrating.

Growth in the club was flat to down. Finding members willing to devote the time necessary to develop the club activities and a newsletter were left wanting. A look at the Region's annual reports tells the story. Through 1962 the club seemed busy with 15-20 events per year with an average of 25 members. Then in '63 membership fell to just 9; with 15 events. There was no report for '64; and '65 shows a member increase back to 22 but no events! It was a sad state of affairs compounded by external factors not to mention the toll that began from 1965 on with the Vietnam War.

Another factor was Porsche's transition from the 356 to the 911. In '65 the MSRP of a 356C coupe was a little over \$5000; a hefty sum then. The 911 was about \$1500 more. The possible thinking at the time could have been, spend a lot of money for a soon-to-be obsolete model or even more money for a new unproven one? This seems irrelevant for collectors nowadays.

In retrospect, enthusiasm alone could not buoy the region. Dick Steif had left, never to return. In a letter to the Region dated February 1, 1961; Bill Scholar, founder and PCA Executive Secretary at the time wrote, " ... In a number of Regions, nothing has happened 'till someone came along who had the gumption or talent to get the group off the ground. Then, it has turned out that this was their ONLY talent... they've conked out and someone else has come along to really get the Region on the move ..."

Below are some links to video clips of early club racing in Oregon:  
**Delta Park in 1963** - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wctnXDvkGAY>  
**Newport in 1966** - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wXudi60YhBk>  
**OIR in 1965** - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MFTu9CobbMU>

Fortunately, those club members that were left made a commitment. Charter member Don Kemmerich was one of them; putting in 3 years as president while trying to grow a BAP parts distributorship. Ken Charters was another with two years as president; also trying to find his footing in business. Together they managed to salvage the club through consistency and continuity until the '70's came with better times.

*NOTE: I wish to thank ORPCA members Stu Moss and Donn Snyder for their contributions to this story.*

If you would like to contribute to the history of the club please contact me at [historian@oregonpca.org](mailto:historian@oregonpca.org) . ■