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TRUE SURVIVORS: 356B ROADSTER AND 1966 911
TWIN-ENGINE INDY RACER • THREE PORCE

Classic PORSCHE

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A few weeks ago, I spent a very enjoyable day – albeit a bitterly cold one – at Bicester Heritage, in the company of John and James from Sports Purpose and a pair of unrestored early Porsches. The day was spent chatting about the pros and cons of restoration compared to preservation, followed by a lengthy photo session with two cars of which they are currently custodians: a 1960 Drauz Roadster and a 1966 911.

Both cars are what have come to be referred to as ‘survivors’, having spent much of their lives in storage and managing to

“DRIVING THE TWO CARS WAS AN ENLIGHTENING EXPERIENCE...”

escape the attentions of less than sympathetic restorers. Too many such cars have had their character hidden under a shiny paintjob, original interior trim returned to ‘as new’ when, in fact, it was perfectly serviceable without work, thank you.

Driving the two cars back to back was an enlightening experience – most cars we get to drive have been restoration projects and, as good as they are, they never quite feel the same as a car that has remained unmolested since the day it left the production line. As long as any rust isn’t structural and likely to spread, leave well alone if possible. Well, that’s what some people believe. What do you think? Repair, restore and repaint, or protect, preserve and enjoy? Answers please...

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Words: Keith Seume Photos: Andy Tipping, with additional photos from Lee Maxted-Page and Richard Papy

SURVIVAL INSTINCT

Preserve and protect, or restore and rebuild? It's the eternal question when the subject of a survivor car arises. And by 'survivor' we don't mean a car that has merely sat in a barn for many years but one which remains largely untouched since the day it left the factory, a car which has survived the sticks and stones of amateur (and all too frequently, professional) tinkering, upgrading or restoration...



T rue survivors are a rarity these days. As our beloved early Porsches advance in years, the chances of finding a diamond in the rough are getting slimmer by the day. The internet means there are fewer hidden gems secreted away, out of sight and mind, known only to a select few locals –

now, no sooner does someone spot a car under a pile of junk behind a half-open door than a photo appears on Facebook or Instagram. The hoards descend, the car dragged from its slumber, its history all too easily wiped away in the careless waft of a sanding disc or soak in a dipping tank.

There is an old saying that an object – in this case, a car – is only original once, and it's true. But the period of time represented by the word 'once' lies largely in the hands of fate. It appears to be only relatively recently that a growing number of classic car enthusiasts have come to appreciate the importance of preserving a car rather than restoring it to within an inch of its life.

Imagine owning a piece of Chippendale furniture – a table, say. It's a fine craftsman-made piece that might bear marks denoting a life of domestic use, stains that show it once served as the dining table of a long-forgotten family. The table is still beautiful, still has stories to tell. Now subject the same table to restoration, sanding away the marks, polishing out the stains – removing the very soul that makes an antique a thing of beauty. Nothing you can do will ever be able to restore that soul...

There is a fascinating – dare we say, seminal – work on this very subject, published by the Simeone Automotive Foundation, entitled *The Stewardship of Historically Important Automobiles*. It sounds like a very dry title, and for some it undoubtedly will be seen that way, but its content – written by several luminaries in the antique automotive world – strikes at

the very core of the 'preservation or restoration' debate.

In a piece written by Miles Collier, founder of the Revs Institute in Florida, included in the above work, there is a telling paragraph: 'It seems axiomatic that somewhere in the life of a great historic object the very qualities that make it extraordinary also expose it to the potential for disastrous intervention in the name of preservation.'

'That such well-meaning attentions by laymen, or for that matter, committed knowledgeable amateurs, seduced by the thing's beauty and presence can wreak incalculable damage is a sad reality.'

The two cars shown here are currently available through Sports Purpose, located at Bicester Heritage, and are great examples of survivors that, through circumstance, have avoided the perils of poorly-executed restorations – or, indeed, any restoration, good or bad. Refurbishment in certain areas, yes, but no repaint, retrim or extensive rebuild. They are as close to being time capsules as you can get short of going back in time, loading one in your Tardis and fast-forwarding to the present day.

Don't get us wrong, these cars are not perfect: neither gleams like the day it drove off the production line, or smells like a new car when you open the door, but they each possess that certain 'something' which one has to experience to fully understand. One of my biggest bugbears with restored cars is that they lose the 'tight' feeling that a survivor possesses – few (if any) cars which have been stripped to a bare shell, restored and reassembled are free of rattles and squeaks, no matter how minor. Dashboards are notorious for this, with rerouted wiring tap-tapping against a panel, padding gently rubbing against adjacent bodywork.

And then there's the paintwork. Most older cars were

They may not have the shine of concours-ready, fresh restorations but the '66 911 and the 1960 Drauz Roadster have character – and history – in spades...





painted back in a time when cellulose-based materials were the norm, possessing a certain quality that cannot be replicated with modern two-packs or, heaven forbid, new-era water-based paints. The beauty of old factory-applied paint is that, in most cases, it can be 'rescued' – paint bleached by exposure to the sun, or suffering from bloom from years of polish-free neglect, can more often than not be brought back to life with careful application of the right formula of compound and good old elbow grease.

Take the 1960 356B Drauz Roadster shown here, chassis number 88121, one of just 1529 built that year and shipped out to Hoffman Motors Corporation in New York. The car is a perfect example of a rare model which has been freed from captivity following several years in storage in the Los Angeles region of California.

With just two owners, and having covered a little over 81,500 miles since new, the Ruby Red (5702) Roadster was rediscovered in 2015 and purchased by a UK-based classic car dealer who anticipated it becoming the subject of a full restoration. After all, its apparently sound bodywork would surely lend itself to a relatively straightforward strip and repaint?

Fortunately, once in the UK, and before anyone had the

chance to tear into it, the Roadster was spotted by marque specialist Russell Edmond-Harris who identified it as a worthy candidate for preservation rather than restoration and was able to acquire the car as it stood. Although the Roadster was extremely sound in terms of body and trim, it was felt it would benefit from being refreshed mechanically in deference to its long period of hibernation. The dulled paintwork was also considered worthy of attention, not from a paintshop but someone with the skills to revitalise the factory finish.

For this task, who better than Lee Maxted-Page and his team in Essex? Noted purveyors of significant early Porsches for both road and track, they were well-equipped to carry out a sympathetic recommissioning that would include, if it proved necessary, an overhaul of the engine and gearbox, and tackle the dull paintwork.

'The vehicle arrived in our workshop for an inspection and discussion with the owner on how to proceed,' says Lee. 'Despite a multitude of dents, scratches and visual imperfections beneath years of ingrained oil and dirt, crucially beneath all of this, the car showed no signs of any serious previous damage or structural corrosion.'

'We were all, therefore, motivated to work on an approach to

Above: Yes, there's evidence of minor damage to the front wing but that's par for the course after 58 years' worth of use. Does it detract from the car's appeal? We don't think so...

Below left: Only small sections of carpet on the sills have been replaced, but otherwise the interior remains untouched

Below right: Engine was treated to little more than a service and, after proving to be sound in wind and limb, given a clean bill of health





Above left: All body panels carry the Drauz-applied stamp to show they match the chassis number – thin strip in front of the fuel tank is intact, suggesting tank had never been removed

Above right: The car sits 'right' and drives beautifully



Below (top row): Before, after and during shots show how the flat paintwork responded to some fine wet'n'dry – and plenty of expert attention. End result is most impressive

Below (bottom row): The 911 had spent 20 years in a crowded garage before being rescued and given a new lease of life

respect and preserve the cosmetic condition of the car and its many years of natural patination, whilst simultaneously ensuring that mechanically it was put back into serviceable and beautiful driving order, opting only to replace parts considered to be worn out and preserving all those which were still wearing in.'

The initial inspection prior to taking the car for its MOT test revealed few problems other than leaking carburettors and a couple of minor electrical gremlins, all a consequence of the car having stood unused for so long a period. Once back in the workshop, the decision was made to overhaul the suspension and braking systems where necessary, along with paying attention to sundry pieces of rubber trim, bushes and sections of carpet on each sill where the original material had rotted away. The old pieces have been retained with the car.

As far as the 1600 engine (the original to the car, naturally) was concerned, a leak down test suggested it was sound, requiring little more than service attention to the exterior – replacing a leaky oil cooler, changing sundry gaskets, oil and fuel lines, and freeing off a seized distributor. With the original tinware cleaned, but not repainted, the engine was built back up ready for reinstallation.

The gearbox required a little more attention, the need for which only came to light when the oil was drained: broken differential bolts in the oil suggested all was not quite well

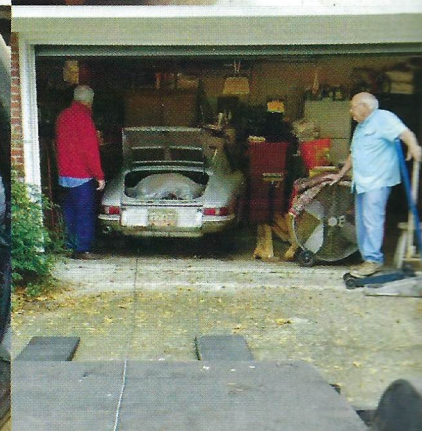
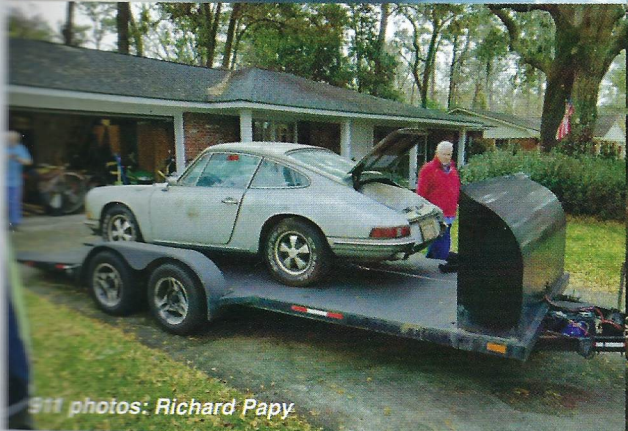
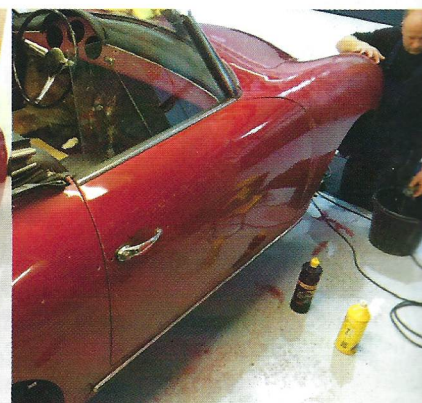
internally! However, with the unit stripped down, it became clear that there had been no longterm damage caused to other components, so the unit was rebuilt (with new differential bolts...) and installed along with the engine.

And that's where the real fun began, as Lee's team turned their attentions to the paintwork. 'The exterior paintwork was incredibly dull and dirty,' recalls Lee, 'and had over time become covered in a bloom, which was ingrained onto the surface of the car, probably after many years in the dry Californian atmosphere. The paintwork simply wouldn't respond to any type of cutting, mopping or polishing, but ultimately responded well to a very fine-grade wet and dry sand-paper technique, applied evenly in sections over the whole bodywork after all the lights, door handles and fittings etc had been removed so as to obtain an even finish to all edges.

'As we began to remove the age-old bloom and grime, the colour of the paintwork beneath began to be revived and polished into a beautiful burnished finish. We built up several layers of carnauba wax to feed all the years of surface scratches, rather like french polishing an antique oak table.'

The overall result is wonderful, resulting in a car that carries the scars of a lifetime of fun in the hands of a not necessarily always careful driver – there is evidence of the occasional meeting of Porsche and immovable object, or a door carelessly

256 photos: Lee Maxted-Page



911 photos: Richard Papy



Above: Two cars which prove that restoration isn't always the best course of action – bearing genuine patina, they each drive better than many cars which have been the subject of a complete rebuild

opened against a wall, for example – yet it feels like a beautifully run-in early Porsche that is ready to take a new owner on many memorable adventures.

Whether it will get the use it so deserves, given its value and rarity, remains to be seen. I for one would like nothing more than to jump in and drive it to the south of France, or on the empty roads of central Germany, for that is what it was it was built for. A museum piece it must never be...

The silver 1966 911 shares a similarly fascinating history. It, too, spent several years in hibernation in the hands of its third owner. The car was delivered to Brumos Porsche in Jacksonville, Florida, in May 1966, one of only 1709 911s built that year and fitted with the revised Weber-fed 901/05 engine, which produced 130bhp at 6100rpm, along with 174Nm of torque at 4200rpm.

The car was sold to first owner, Edgar H Rogers Jr, also of Jacksonville on 13th June that year, with Brumos looking after the servicing and general maintenance during the five years of Mr Rogers' ownership. In February 1971, the coupé passed into the hands of its second owner, Ralph Novak.

He continued to rely on

Brumos to look after the car, including carrying out a full service in October that year which, according to the service documentation that remains with the car to this day, included a 'leak test, brake testing, replacement of rubber fuel lines, balancing and alignment of all four wheels, fitting of stock stabilisers, checking of shock absorbers and a complete engine service, including full disassembly, replacement of rod and main bearings, rebuilding of chain tensioner, regrounding of valves and cleaning of clutch disc and pressure plate' – this was at a cost of over \$1200.

Then, with the odometer showing a total of 41,125 miles, the 911 moved with its owner to Newport News, Virginia, where

minor work and oil changes were carried out by Hilltop Porsche of Virginia Beach.

On 29th March 1972, the car was registered to Gustave Anderson Jr of Savannah, Georgia, but, with a mileage of just under 52,000, it returned to Brumos Porsche in June that year for further regular maintenance. The car then remained in the ownership of Mr Anderson for the next 46 years, although it is believed it was placed in storage sometime around 1990.

There the car sat for approximately 25 years, covered in dust, squeezed into a crowded double-width garage, sharing space with regular household cast-offs. And this is where Richard Papy, another Georgia resident and longtime Porsche enthusiast, enters the car's life.

“THE CAR WAS DELIVERED TO BRUMOS PORSCHE IN MAY 1966...”

'I can honestly say that I owned that 911 for the least amount of time of any car I have had,' smiles Richard. 'I ran in to an elderly gentleman one day whom I knew from church while at a car function in Savannah. We struck up a conversation and he revealed to me that he had a 1966 911 that had been sitting in his garage since around 1990. Needless to say, I made arrangements to visit him and take a look.

'As usual it was covered in garage junk and, after haggling with him on the price for a few months, we finally came to an agreement. My friend Charles Coker and I went over to his house and pulled it from the crowded garage and loaded it onto my trailer. It was a little more of a project than I wanted to tackle so we proceeded to call Don Ahearn (of Porsport in Long Island, New York) and made a deal right then. I unhooked my truck from the trailer and Charles hooked it to his truck and took it to his shop to get it running so we could ship it up to Ahearn. So, in fact, I only owned it for about 30 minutes!

But the important thing is that the car had been rescued – and fallen into the hands of somebody who appreciates better

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than most the significance of a sound, unmolested early 911.

Don Ahearn worked on the car to bring it up to scratch, but without destroying any of its originality through unnecessary paint or body repair. Ahearn went through the car mechanically but there was no need for a full mechanical rebuild, more a case of carrying out work necessary to recommission the car so it could be enjoyed by a future owner.

Don enthused about the car in his sales description: 'The 911 is completely numbers matching and is mostly all original throughout. The body is dead straight with perfect gaps and is rock solid throughout. There have been no repairs to the body tub. The undercoat is original and flaking off in places revealing only solid metal. There are no rust issues.'

Ahearn made a couple of changes to the car in his brief tenure: 'It is certainly a great car. When the car was found it did, in fact, have scrawny 14-inch Fuchs wheels and a stock steering wheel, which was sub-par. The car already had a sports purpose attitude with the race-type safety belts, faded silver Spyder-like paint and Marchal rally lights.

'I'd found those amazing magnesium American Racing wheels just when I found the 911, and with their similar patina, I

thought it was a no brainer to finish painting the picture of what that car needed to be. Same thing with the steering wheel. I felt the car just needed these couple of little details to be perfect. Obviously my attitude to cars such as this is that they should be enjoyed as they are. Anyone can restore a car at any time, but let's face it most of the time they're not done properly anyway...'

When John Brewer of Sports Purpose went to visit Don Ahearn with a view to purchasing a Speedster, his eyes fell on the silver 911 sitting in all its patinated glory. It was, frankly, love at first sight. 'It's the kind of car that, if you see it on the Internet, you might never be quite brave enough to buy it – you have to stand next to it, shut the doors, lift up the carpets. You have to sit in it and feel it, experience it.'

At this year's Luftgekühlt gathering at Bicester, the coupé proved to be something of a star, with a number of industry 'names' spying the car and asking if it was the one they'd seen on-line for sale at Ahearn's shop. All agreed that they hadn't realised what a great car it was in the metal.

But at what point, I wondered, did the balance tip from being a candidate for preservation to a car that needs restoration? John Brewer: 'What you can't ignore is something

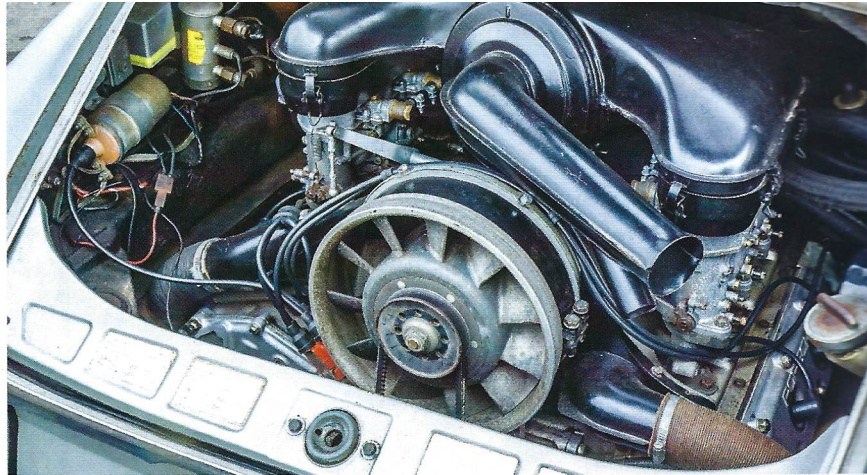
Above: What's not to love about the 911? Following two decades in storage, the paintwork has lost its shine, but the factory-tight panel gaps more than make up for that. We love it!

Below, left and right: Interior is wonderfully original, with only the addition of a suitably period Momo steering wheel deviating from stock. Wood dash inserts and the 'green' gauges are especially nice





Above left: Highly desirable magnesium American Racing wheels suit the car to a 'T', as do the Avon tyres



Above right: Two-litre engine pulls strongly – it was rebuilt by Brumos in October 1971 and shows no signs of needing further attention

that's only going to get worse. If you've got real rust inside a car, that will spread so you have to remove it otherwise your car is going to end up a pile of dust. But if you have surface rust, you can probably stabilise it, but you may have to turn to somebody who has experience in that field. If the car has been repainted already, then I don't think there's a problem about painting it again...

The 911 has clearly suffered a minor mishap at some point in its history, which has resulted in one front wing being repainted. Now, as most people know, silver can be a difficult colour to match, and in this case there is a slight difference in hue, along with a variation in the way in which the paint finish has aged. What do you do? There are only two options: leave it alone or repaint it in the hope that whoever carries out the work is skilled enough to be able to match not only the hue but the ageing process.

John Turner explained that Sports Purpose has approached one of the leading restoration houses to seek their advice. Yes, came the reply, we can match it – not necessarily 100 per cent, but sufficiently well to make a significant improvement. So, what do you then do?

'It's one of those instances,' explains John Brewer, 'where you need to prepare the groundwork and then be able to tell the customer we've invested the money and the time to the

point where a decision can be made on which way to go. It is then up to them to decide whether we carry out the work prior to sale or leave it as it is for them to sort later.'

Driving the 911 is a real pleasure – of course, on a bitterly cold morning, it coughed and spluttered a little (as all the early carb'd cars do), but then settled down to an idle, whiffs of condensation curling up from the tailpipe. Settling behind the aged Prototipo wheel, you have the feeling of sliding into your favourite leather sofa. Close your eyes and listen – the purposeful beat of the 2.0-litre 'six' is full of promise. A promise which isn't broken as you pull away and begin to enjoy life as it was in 1966 – sorry, as it is in 2018, and has been for the last 52 years...

Writing in *The Stewardship of Historically Important Automobiles*, renowned photographer Michael Furman sums this up well: 'The restored car may give the impression of long ago, the thought being that this is how the car would have appeared in period. But that period has long passed and in an original car we have the continuous story of a long and worthy existence... The best cars also have a story worth telling...

'And if through its experiences, its design and mechanical prowess shine through, then we have the Holy Grail – a timeless artefact deserving of our undivided attention.' **CP**

Below: Documents with the car show that it was well looked after, largely by original supplying dealer Brumos. Out on the road, it's tempting to say that it drives like a new car...

