

## Remembering Rich Williams

1943 – 2012

By Mike McNabb

It's hard to imagine FOG without its spark plug, Rich Williams. Rich was a founder, past President, East Coast Holiday organizer, FOGlight editor, Porsche promoter, USAF Colonel, and a very good friend.

I'm not sure when Rich and I first met. I had a '57 coupe that wasn't even a very good parts car and in 1981 there was sort of an underground network of 356 owners that traded parts and maybe belonged to PCA. Rich and I both worked in downtown Tampa and we both drove our 356's to work daily, so over a few years we talked at lunch about forming a Florida club for 356 owners. A few other clubs had been unofficially spun off from the Registry and in 1992 we obtained a list of 356 Registry members in Florida and mailed a survey to see if there was any interest. I had been to the Collier Automobile Museum in Naples while attending a conference and talked to a Jaguar club having a meet that day. Rich organized a 356 meet at the Collier Museum in March 1993 and after the collection tour and some BBQ the attendees met to form what became the 356 Florida Owners Group. The museum staff fired up the 4 cam 550 Spyder and exercised it around the airport roads, what a spectacular sound.

There was some concern that we might be called old FOGies, but that same year we incorporated FOG and the first founding officers were Rich Williams, President, Mark Peebles, VP, Mike McNabb, Secretary/Treasurer, and Thom Kyle, newsletter editor. The treasurer's job was easy because we had no money. I remember Rich musing that if we got 25 members that would be great. By 1995 we had more members and a newsletter and a logo, and proposed the insane idea of hosting the 356 Registry East Coast Holiday. There had never been a Holiday in the "Deep South", much less in Florida. Much to our surprise the Registry approved our bid and Cypress Gardens was chosen as the venue. Gatorfest '96 was low key and well attended, with a ride down to Sebring and Bok Tower. Rich, in his quiet and unassuming way, kept all the details and events flowing smoothly. He was always there.

The rest is history; others have joined FOG and taken charge of the club affairs. If you knew Rich, he was a Harvard graduate, Retired Air Force veteran, a patriot, retired Federal Parole Manager, and incredibly honest and humble. His wife Diana and son Morgan were first in his life. Goodbye, my friend, you have left a legacy of good memories and Porsche style fellowship. Keep the faith.