

In 1990 we were moving our ad agency, Fallon McElligot in Minneapolis into new space high atop an office building under construction.

Since we were the agency for Porsche in North America, the art director in charge of decor in the new offices proposed that we should have a Porsche in our new lobby on the 31st floor. The general contractor said it would be a piece of cake as long as the construction cranes were still in place, and the windows weren't in yet.

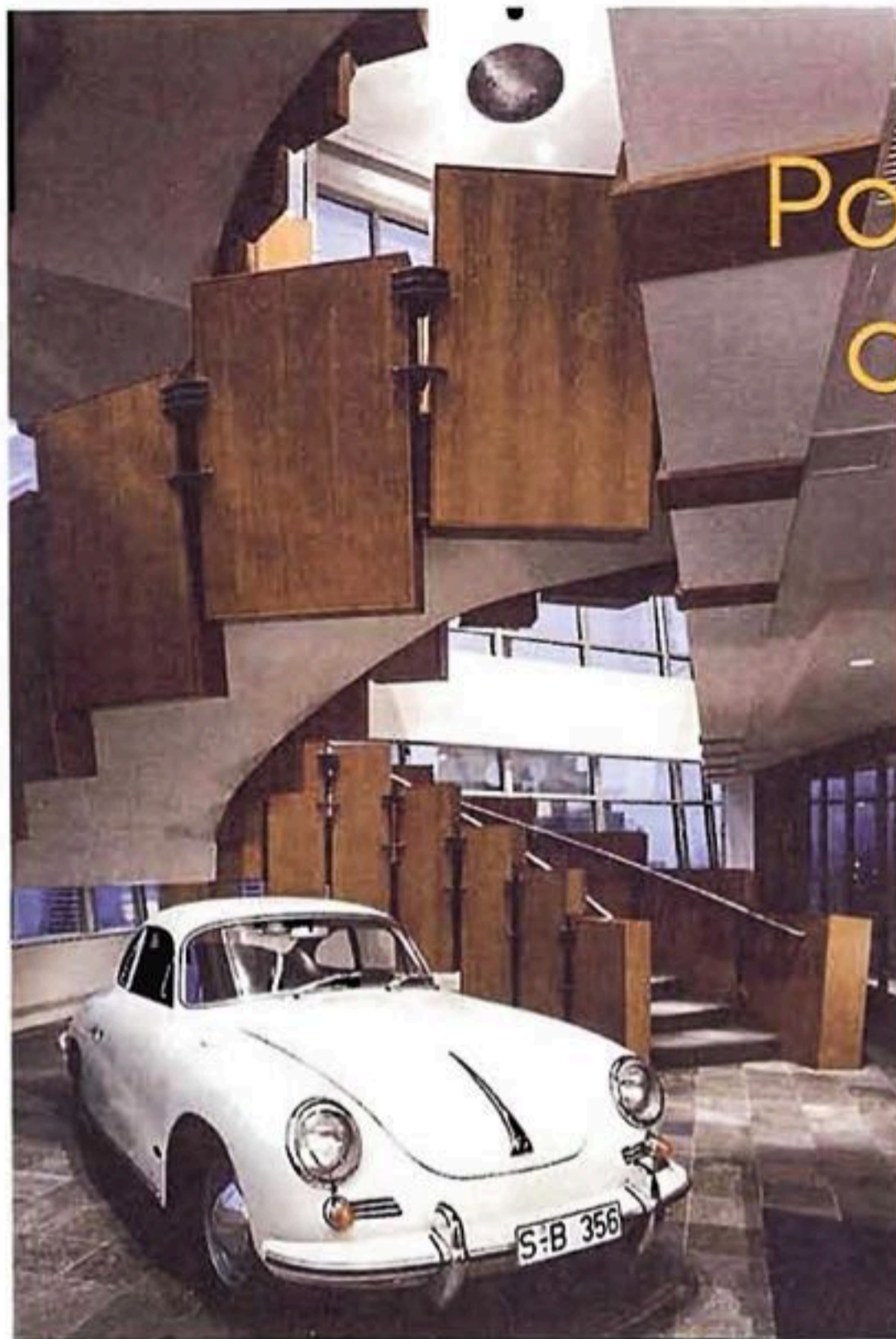
Kevin Jeanette of Gunnar racing in West Palm Beach, who always helped us find historic cars for our photo shoots, found us a very clean 1963 356B (sound familiar?) in Memphis. We paid \$15,000, rationalizing that it was both more interesting, and more relevant than a nice Persian rug in the lobby. It was early November, but the cheapest way to get the car to Minnesota was to give young Porsche mechanic Bill Schneider a frequent flyer coupon to Memphis, and have him drive it straight back. The weather cooperated and the old car drove superbly, even though Bill had packed a big tool kit, just in case. It was about as cold and windy as November gets in Minneapolis when the crane took the car up on an open platform to the 31st floor of its new home at the corner of 9th and Marquette. We built a plywood garage around the car to protect it while the building was completed.

The car probably suffered more damage as a piece of art than it had on the road in its first thirty years. First, a door fell on it during the final rush of interior finishing. Then, the trunk was used to hold the keg during an office party, and of course, lid was bent and sprung.

The most commonly asked question was, "What are you going to do if you lose the Porsche account?" Wrong question. The question should have been, "What will you do if you get another car account?" We parted ways with Porsche in early 1993, but the little car stayed, because it was sort of a mantra for our company. We had a chance to actually meet Professor Porsche and film him in his home when he was eighty years old. He was a wonderful man, and there was so much history on the walls of his home it gave us goose bumps. Our 356 was a perfect symbol of what a little company could do if it was creative, dedicated and stuck to its knitting.

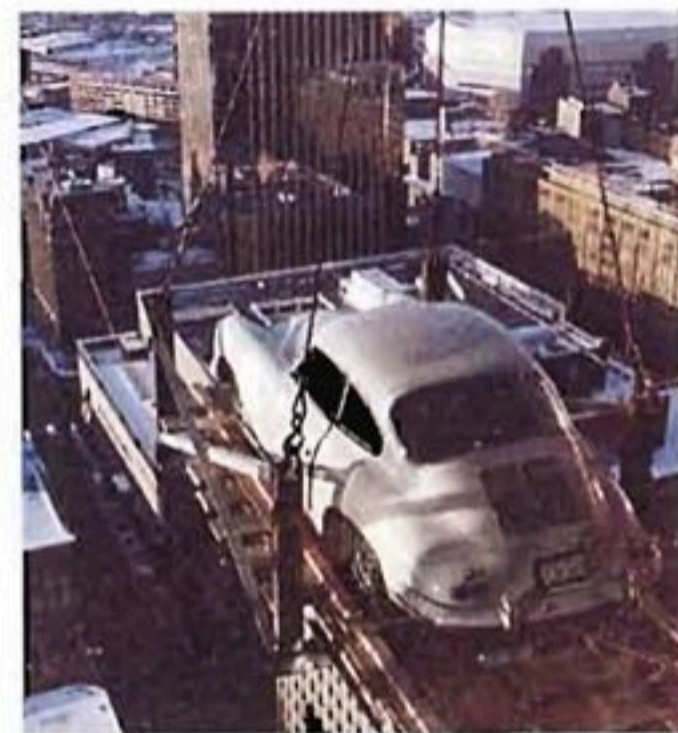
But then in March of 1995, we were in the hunt for the BMW account and the national dealer council was going to visit us in

The strange tale of a 356 that made it to the top... and how it returned to the road

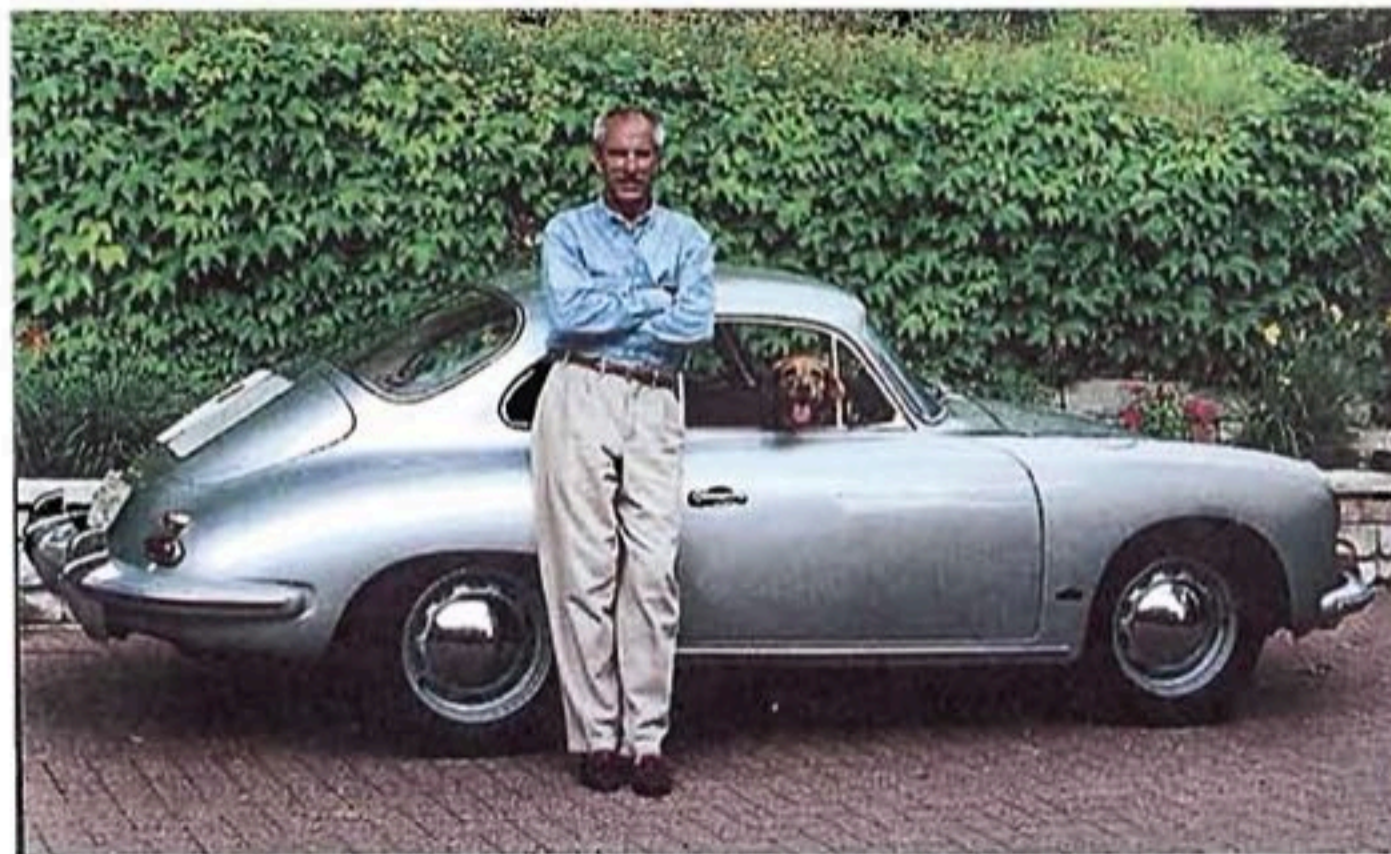


# The Porsche in a Gilded Cage

By Fred Senn



In the 31st-floor lobby of Fallon-McElligot, the 356B spent four years as a corporate centerpiece. **Right:** On its way to the top, via crane in November, 1990.



Fred Senn and the car today: "Although the 356 B is not particularly rare or valuable, it's still a classic. And this one is unique and has special meaning to me."

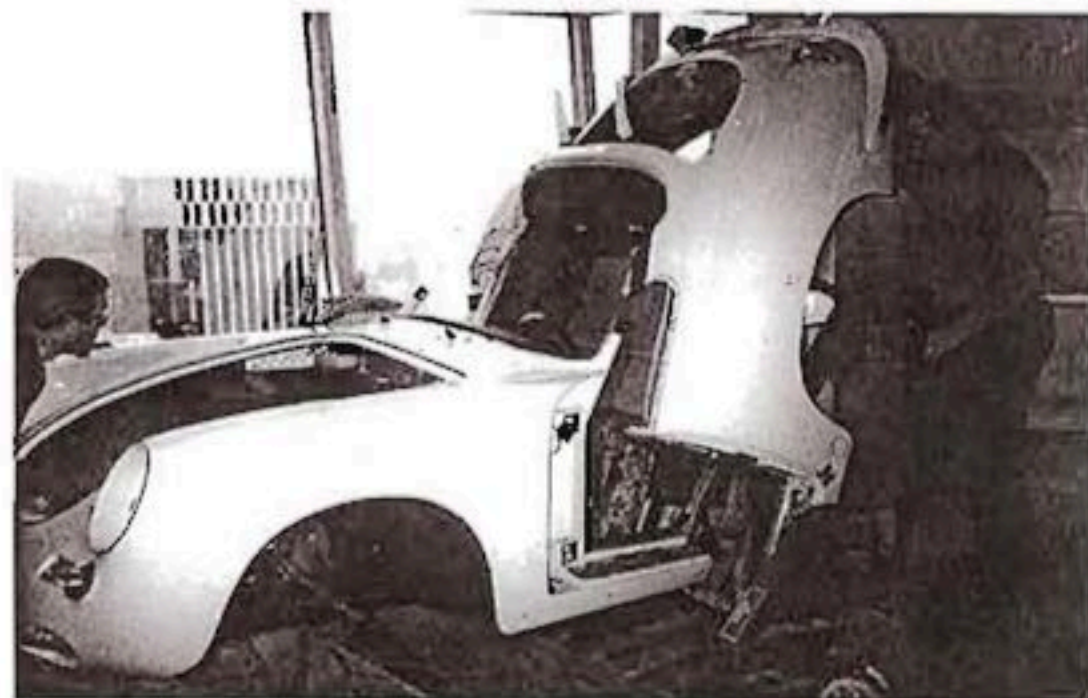




Rolling into its new home on the 31st floor. **Below:** The process of disassembly and loading onto a truck. The car spent much of the next year stacked in pieces in the back room of a body shop—a space-efficient way to store a car, but not recommended.

two weeks. What to do with the 356? Chairman Pat Fallon said, "Fred, get it out of here, before the BMW guys get here. Probably a good business decision, but difficult both emotionally and logistically. The economics of the rescue were not good. Could it go out the same way it came in? Actually, the window cleaning rigs on the roof would support the weight of the car, but the building insurance people wouldn't even consider the possibility of taking out the window and

scheduled to meet them at the office at 7:00 on a Saturday morning. They brought a tool kit and a Milwaukee heavy duty Sawzall. First, everything that could be removed got removed; seats, doors and glass, engine, wheels, wiring, etc. Then they cut the top off. Then, they cut the body in half right through the floor. The kids took the small stuff down the elevator in their wagon. The rest of us man-handled the carcass. By noon, there wasn't even an oil stain on the floor.



lowering it down the side. Even if you took off the bumpers and turned it on its end it was six inches too tall for the freight elevator. But it was family now—and it wasn't going to the parts bin, it was going back on the road.

I called Bob Johnson at Johnson Autosport in Northfield, Minnesota who specializes in vintage and racing Porsches, to get his advice on how to extract the car. He enlisted his specialists Tony Sharp and Mike Breckenridge and their kids, along with Todd Hoelt of TJR Collision Center. We

My wife (who grew up just one hundred kilometers from Stuttgart) and two college-age kids were ecstatic. By summer, they'd be driving a very cool little car around the city lakes. But summer came and went, and then another summer. You know how that goes. Johnson's shop was overwhelmed by urgent work for the local Porsche club racers. The heap of parts that used to grace our lobby sat under a cover in the corner. I can't fuss much, because I'm one of those racers, but my wife had her German patience tested. This was going to be her sports car. Every time she saw Bob she grilled him on when her car was going to be ready. He was always encouraging, but evasive.

This car project wasn't even a distraction, it just happened to me. Circumstances simply forced me to adopt it. This December, I get the call. It's ready. The temperature was ten below, with twenty inches of snow already on the ground. We decided to wait until spring.

Finally, summer came to Minnesota. My 19-year-old son and I picked up the car in Northfield and brought it home like a new puppy. It's been six years since this 356 has been on the road. And in that time, it's been through what no other 356 has been through. Now it's back where it belongs—on the road.

## FALLON McELIGOTT

PRESS RELEASE

### VINTAGE PORSCHE HOISTED 31 FLOORS TO FUTURE OFFICES OF FALLON McELIGOTT

MINNEAPOLIS, November 28 — Fallon McElligott, a Minneapolis based advertising agency, reached new creative "heights" today when it hoisted a 1963 Porsche 356 roadster to its future lobby on the 31st floor of the AT&T Tower in downtown Minneapolis.

Today was the last day that the classic Porsche could be lifted by crane: tomorrow work begins to install the windows in the upper floors of the new Minneapolis skyscraper. Fallon McElligott is expected to move to its new offices in the top three floors of the AT&T Tower at 901 Marquette Avenue in July 1991.

Chairman Pat Fallon explained that the car is being placed in the lobby of the agency's new offices to serve as a daily reminder of the Fallon McElligott mission. He said, "Fallon McElligott embodies many of the same qualities and characteristics as Porsche, especially its commitment to creative excellence. The people who build these cars are uncompromising and passionate about their work. The timeless, innovative design and quality-minded craftsmanship, which are the hallmarks of Porsche, will be an inspiration to us all."

Fallon added, "Instead of the usual Oriental rug, we're making both our own unique statement and a timeless investment for our new lobby."



