

## **The History of RMR Part I**

### **By Dottie Russler**

*(The following article was written in 1961 by Dottie Russler and provides an interesting retrospection of how the Rocky Mountain Region came to be, used to be, and how things have changed in the last thirty-five years. Tom Scott-Historian)*

Back in the days when PCA was very young, Porsches in the west were few and far between. You could drive for days through the mountains and deserts and never see another sports car, much less a Porsche. Those who owned one of the little beauties from Stuttgart didn't know that an organization existed which was made up only of Porsche owners. But sometime during the summer of '57, Fred Blume in Cheyenne heard about PCA and wrote for information. And just to show that minds often run in the same, direction, Jim Pickens in Denver heard about it too at about the same time and National put Cheyenne and Denver into contact.

Twenty-two Porsches made the jaunt, mostly from Denver, to the first organizational meeting at Warren Air Force Base in Wyoming on October 13, 1957. By November, suggestions were rolling in from National on what to do to make meetings interesting and to get participation from the members. They were also sending names of people here and there throughout Colorado who had heard of PCA and wanted to join. Because the members and potentials were scattered over a few thousand square miles, meetings were planned at various points in northern Colorado so that the distance wouldn't be too great for anyone to travel, and holding meetings on Sunday afternoon facilitated attendance. However, as time went on, more and sports car clubs became active in the Denver area and there were soon too many events scheduled on Sundays to plan to have regular meetings on that day.

As of November 1957, there were 14 members to carry on the activities of the embryonic and uncharted Colorado-Wyoming region. 35-40 people regularly attended meetings.

As early as January 1958 the germ of idea for having our region host Parade was planted in Fred Blume's mind. When he returned from the third Parade with all the interesting commentary of the doings, the seed ripened for the whole group. He also wanted to be on the list for having the factory representatives visit the region when touring the United States. The appearance of Wolfgang Raether and Eric Filjus at the April meeting was the high point of the year's activities.

Meanwhile all the big and little details of the organization went on. The Charter was granted to the Rocky Mountain Region in May 1958, signed by Blume, Key, Donner, Pickens, Current and Sarsfield. Already our territory had grown including all of Colorado, Wyoming and Utah and eventually we added the northern part of New Mexico. This presented special problems since those in and around Denver wanted to include the people at such far-away points as the Western Slope and Salt Lake City.

In order to draw the group more closely together, President Alan Drew published the first Newsletter in September 1958. He must have used some magic charm, because he was able to get articles from many of the members. The Porsche Patter was issued monthly and distributed to RMR members, all other Regions, to prospective members, and to almost anyone else who wanted it.

1959 was a rather unsettled year for the Region. In the spring our President was transferred out of the area, and in the fall our Secretary-Treasurer had to resign because of the pressure of other duties.

Internal flux notwithstanding, the delegation that went to Nippersink was able to convince all and sundry that RMR should host the Parade in 1960. The first organizational meeting clued us in on the amount of preparation that was necessary.

In January 1959, a regular membership meeting day and time was established and valiant effort was made to have a regular meeting place. Since the vast amount of the members lived in the Denver area, the meetings in Cheyenne and Colorado Springs faded into memories of the good old days.

In February, the First Annual PCA Rally was held and immediately gained the reputation of being one of the most accurate rallies in the area. Starting at noon, there were a total of 67 cars entered, about three times the number we had been able to before. Denver was a rally town in those days with rallies on 42 weekends, some below zero and others in the snow.

In May, RMR had its first annual Hill Climb - which also turned out to be the last. Working on the philosophy that our events should be primarily for the pleasure of our own members, and for other sports car drivers in the area, we discovered that too few of our cars were equipped with roll bars, etc.

Continental Divide Raceways opened a few miles south of Denver in the summer of '59, and it proved to be a Porsche track. We had our own RMR version of a Tent at some of the meets, ten square feet of shade for chairs, beer and picnic lunch. 1960 at CDR was more hospitable to Porsches. We had a special parking lot for Porsches only - not having to fight fenders with the Detroit Iron and other sports cars big and little. During the noon break at one of the July meets, all the Porsches in the lot - about 80 of them - paraded twice around the track. A most impressive sight it was.

The early part of 1960 is pretty much lost in the confusion and work of preparation for the Parade. By March, we had stopped having business meetings as such. Business of the region was now handled by the Governing Council. From the rather modest number of members in '57 (14), the roster had grown steadily to 106 at the end of '60. Most of the early members were still very active.

That year, a concerted effort was made to assign responsibility to the youngest members. The more working members we had, the better the Region.

As a region we had an enviable reputation of putting on good and accurate events. Individually, we had many good and enthusiastic rallyists, and perhaps erred on not having more events of different kinds to satisfy those who don't care to rally. We had some highly proficient technical skill in the group, and those who had it were always more than willing to help the members with ten thumbs. A few of us could afford to race. Some of us had never entered a Gymkhana and wouldn't have known an Autocross, if we'd found ourselves in the middle of one. As in every organization, we had a few hardy souls, who worked at everything and a few who worked at nothing. Collectively and individually, we had a lot to learn about our Porsche, PCA, RMR and the people in it. We were proud of our Region, but not complacent - which gave us lots of growing room