

# BOB PETRI

35 YEAR RMOC MEMBER – PONTIAC, OLDSMOBILE & DODGE GUY

Bob is a Colorado native. He was born in Denver and moved to Southwest City, Missouri for a short time with his family where he attended a one-room school. He returned to Colorado (Edgewater) in 1952 and later attended Jefferson County High School. Bob and his wife, Dianne (also a RMOC member) lived in Arvada until 2017, when they moved to Lake Havasu, Arizona where they plan to stay. He has a daughter and grandson who live in Aurora. In addition to being an avid car guy, he is a serious WWII model airplane buff.

Bob's first car, which he bought in 1962, was a 1951 Flathead V8 Mercury 4-door – Alpine Green and white with "manual everything" except the Merc-O-Matic transmission. With the help of local mechanics and friends, Bob tinkered with this old car, starting with adjusting points with a matchbook flap, ultimately becoming a good shade tree mechanic. Bob said the Mercury was the first car he painted. He had just waxed the car, then bought a case of red spray paint and went to work. Before long, much of the paint chipped off and he had to scrape off the rest. That's called learning the hard way.

Bob had a number of interesting jobs after high school where he learned a variety of trade skills, including carpentry. After enough time working construction outside in subzero temperatures, he decided to take a different path and entered Denver Automotive and Diesel College, graduating second in his class. He worked on diesels for a while then got a job doing body and paint work, first as an apprentice then painting cars on his own. Each of Bob's career moves were interesting with lots of humorous anecdotes. Bottom line: he worked his way up through a succession of challenging career moves that resulted in his becoming an expert mechanic, capable of any job *and* one of the best auto body/paint men anywhere, renowned not just for the quality of his work, but also the creativity in color combinations and unique enhancements he brought to every project.

Bob became interested in Pontiacs at an early age from the time he saw a 1955 cruise by his house. Sometime later, he took a ride around Sloan's Lake in a 1958 Pontiac which made a lasting impression – a Star Chief with a Bonneville engine. Bob also liked Oldsmobiles, his first of which was a 1953 2-door hardtop model 98 with "power everything" including a Wonder Bar radio. The exterior was silver with a black top; the interior was green and red. Bob then bought a 1957 Oldsmobile (J2) followed by more than 70 cars over the years, mostly Pontiacs and Oldsmobiles (and a couple Buicks GSs). Among the 70 cars, were eight 442 Oldsmobiles ranging from the 1965 model year to the 1970 W30.

Bob joined RMOC in 1985, the same year he married Dianne. He has done some drag racing at Bandimere, but his cars were mostly used to just drive and enjoy and sometimes display at car shows, where they were award winners. Of all the cars Bob has owned, his favorite Pontiac was the 1958 Bonneville, painted a beautiful Mallard Turquoise and Stardust Silver. His favorite Oldsmobile was the Bright Teal and Silver 1957 (J2) Fiesta (see pictures, below).



1958 Pontiac Bonneville



1957 Oldsmobile Fiesta J2 Rocket

Bob is now a Dodge man. He always admired the look of the Dodges since the 1957-59 models long ago. In 2005 he bought a Dodge Magnum station wagon which is still in his corral. He and Dianne also have a couple 2019 Dodge Hemi Charger RTs, one of which (his) is the Scat Pack version with nearly 500

horsepower (see picture). The last Petri Oldsmobile – the 1969 Cutlass S convertible – is on consignment and will be gone soon.



The Petri Dodge Collection

Bob has remained a member of RMOC for 35 years for the same reason we hear all the time: *great people*. He made special mention of the late Al Russell, one of the key “movers and shakers” in the club who helped all of us along the way. He said one of the reasons it was hard to leave Colorado was because he and Dianne would miss their Oldsmobile “family.” He compared RMOC to other clubs and RMOC comes out on top!

Thank you Bob and Dianne for being part of the family for 35 years.

---

© 2020 Timothy C. Hall. All rights reserved.