

Ferry Porsche

From the day he was born, Ferry Porsche seemed predestined for a life shaped by the world of sports cars.

Ferdinand Anton Ernst Porsche was born in Wiener Neustadt on 19 September 1909, the son of automotive engineer Ferdinand Porsche and his wife Aloisia. It was clear from the moment he was born that cars would play a central role in his life: that same day, his father Ferdinand took part in a race and achieved a class victory. The younger Porsche was given his nickname by the family's nanny, who was the first to call him 'Ferry'. When his father moved to Stuttgart in 1923 to take up a position with Daimler, Ferry was educated at the Gottlieb-Daimler-Realschule. Ferdinand Porsche continued to involve his son in his work in Stuttgart, just as he had done in Wiener Neustadt. Having received special dispensation to obtain a motorcycle licence at the age of only 14, Ferry Porsche went on to acquire a full driver's licence when he was 16. This enabled him to drive all the prototypes that his father brought home with him from the Daimler plant. As a result, it was no surprise when Ferry Porsche stated his intention to follow in his father's footsteps as an automotive engineer once he had finished his school studies.

Having completed an apprenticeship at Bosch and education at a private school, Ferry supported his father's work from the very start at the Stuttgart engineering office that was founded in 1931. He was soon put in charge of test drives and became head of the Porsche testing department in 1938. Although he was released by the French authorities in March 1946, his father remained in prison. Ferry therefore assumed overall responsibility for the company, which had relocated to the Carinthian town of Gmünd during the Second World War, in June 1946. The 356 'No. 1' Roadster he had designed was subsequently completed in 1948. Following the construction of the first 52 units of this model, he returned to Stuttgart along with the majority of the workforce and commenced series production of the 356 there in 1950. After Ferdinand Porsche passed away in 1951, the fledgling company experienced rapid growth and became an important employer. Ferry Porsche was awarded a range of honours over the decades, receiving the German Federal Grand Cross in 1959, an honorary doctorate in 1965 and the title of 'Professor' in 1984. He served as Managing Director of the family firm Dr. Ing. h. c. F. Porsche KG up to 1972, when he retired from the operational management of the company. Ferry subsequently headed the supervisory board at Porsche AG and remained its honorary chairman until his death on 27 March 1998. His ashes were laid to rest alongside those of his wife Dorothea in the private chapel of the Schüttgut estate in Zell am See.