

## THE COMPLETE STORY

### 1959 Fiat 600/Derivazione 750 Abarth

Call it serendipity, or coincidence, or “meant to be”, or the “circle completing itself”, or bizarre, or maybe call it spiritual. Maybe it’s best to call it all of the above.

The story is primarily about Joseph Michael Dwyer, who owned it for 40 years, and how very possibly he and I were magically connected just days before those 40 years started. First there were the similarities in background between Joseph Michael Dwyer and myself. He was born 16 months before me, he was drafted into the US Army, he served in Vietnam, he was an avid skier, and he loved and lived in mountains.....and then there’s our love for cars! Sadly, we never met, and Joseph passed away in 2005.

Both of us appreciated the Fiat 600 (and of course the Abarth version), I having purchased a normal 600 in 1965 and he having purchased this little Fiat 600/750 Abarth in December 1966. This purchase was his first of a foreign made automobile, and glaringly out of character for Joseph since he was a fanatical hot rod and American car enthusiast. He was, not surprisingly, an avid reader of “Hot Rod Magazine”, and an article that appeared in the December 1966 issue, released in November 1966, most certainly caught his eye and influenced his decision to buy this car. The car featured in the article was very unusual for that publication, but clearly of interest to the hot rod and drag racing oriented communities. It was about a Fiat 600 with a Porsche 356 engine (but retaining the Fiat transaxle) that regularly ran the quarter mile in the 12.84 second range at drag strips in S. California. It was a crowd pleaser, a “Giant Killer”, and so impressed the editor of Hot Rod that he decided to feature it, despite the fact that foreign cars were for the most part non-existent in its pages. Both Mary Louise Dwyer (Joseph’s widow) and I are convinced that it was the inspiration for his acquisition. For me at that time, the Abarth version would only exist as a dream, and my \$75 budget at least enabled the purchase of a ’59 Fiat 600 with a blown engine.

Fast forward to October 2008, and a very dear friend (no relation to Joseph Dwyer) decided to present me with a surprise gift, an opportunity to re-live a magical time in my life, and now Joseph Michael Dwyer’s Fiat 600/750 Abarth was mine.....and the dream was fulfilled. As for the Porsche 356 powered Fiat 600 in the December 1966 issue of Hot Rod Magazine.....start the “Twilight Zone” music.....it was mine too! I built it, I drove it.....and eventually sold it, but I never forgot it. I don’t think Joseph Michael Dwyer forgot it either, instead I think he pulled a few strings from “upstairs” to make sure that his “baby” would now be mine!

Click here to read about Sam Cabiglio's Porsche 356 powered '59 Fiat 600 <http://user.tinet.se/~xn969f/htmlfiler/articles.html>