

THE COMPLETE STORY

My 1959 FIAT 1100, Millie, came to America in 1959 and settled in Utah. She spent her early years there before moving to Seattle. Almost all of her time in the Pacific Northwest was spent stored away with a large collection of vintage Wurlitzer juke boxes. Her keeper decided to give her to his daughter but she found Millie unattractive and chose a Mustang instead. It was at this time, in 1987, that Millie was placed in Autotrader for sale.

I spotted the ad and like any car crazy high school kid I borrowed the money from my dad and brought Millie home. She was in fine shape with less than 15k miles and the original tires still on her. I drove her to school every day and then she went with me to college. After graduation it was time to drive something else so I tucked her away in my parents garage for a good rest.

In 2000 I was married. During the planning of the wedding it was decided that Millie would make a great drive away car. With a wash and wax and a fresh tank of gas she performed her job perfectly. After our wedding Millie moved in with my wife and I into our little house. Three years later she moved into our much larger home with my very pregnant wife.

After my son was born and grew through his toddler years he took a great interest in that old car tucked away in the garage. In 2008 we learned that FIAT was the featured mark at the Seattle Italian Concours so it seemed a fitting time to get Millie on her feet again. After rebuilding the front suspension (the 50 year old rubber had crumbled) and cleaning and polishing top to bottom she was looking pretty good. It was at that time that I had the bumpers fixed and re-chromed. It was the car I drove to college after all, there were dings galore. We also found some modern tires that fit and then we were ready to go.

After packing the car I headed to the concour not knowing what to expect. There were many beautiful cars there but the judges did take notice of my old car. I couldn't believe it when at the end of the day I received the Preservation Award. It was an honor to be recognized and twenty one years of love and ownership (and a lot of scrubbing) paid off.

I hope that this little narrative wasn't too long but I wanted you to get a feel for this very original little car and how she is a member of our family. Take a look at the link below, scroll down to the little car big victory article for some pictures. You can see the look of satisfaction on my then 5 year old son's face.

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