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Porsche mourns Peter W. Schutz

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Peter W. Schutz, CEO of Porsche from 1981-1987 (ca.1984)

Dr. Ing. h.c. F. Porsche AG this week announced the death of Peter W. Schutz. The former President and CEO of Porsche AG passed away on 29 October 2017 at the age of 87. Schutz is perhaps best remembered for his decision to preserve the iconic 911 sports car.



Peter Schutz stands with his wife, Sheila (left), while in front is a white 911 SC 3.0 Cabriolet (MY1983) and a metallic silver 911 Carrera 3.2 Cabrio Turbolook (MY1986)

When Peter Schutz took over as President and CEO of Porsche AG in January 1981, the company was experiencing a difficult period, as the company had recorded its first ever losses in 1980. But in just his third week as Porsche CEO, Schutz reversed the company's earlier decision to cease production of the 911. The car's success continues to justify this move, as the 911 has been regarded as an iconic vehicle and the ultimate sports car for more than five decades.



Standing on the grid ahead of the 1981 Le Mans 24 Hours is, (from L-R): Ferry Porsche, Manfred Jantke, Peter Schutz, Norbert Wagner and Dr Wolfgang Porsche

During his tenure, Peter Schutz not only changed the company's strategic direction. The German-American was also largely responsible for increasing the appeal of Porsche's range of models, helping to successfully introduce the 911 Cabriolet. In addition, Peter Schutz furthered the expansion of the transaxle model range with the introduction of the 944 Turbo, 944 S and 944 S2 as well as their equivalent convertible variants. In 1982, Porsche set new records in motorsport, winning almost all categories and special rankings at Le Mans and achieving positions one to five in the race. When the Porsche 959 was unveiled in Frankfurt in 1985, it was dubbed the *Über-911* by the press and it underlined the sports car manufacturer's technical expertise at the time.



Norbert Singer (left) explains the intricacies of the Porsche 956's aerodynamics to Peter Schutz (with glasses) at Weissach in 1982

Peter Schutz trebled the company's sales and restored Porsche's status as a profitable

enterprise and for five consecutive financial years, the company set one record after another. However, the economic crisis in the second half of the decade brought the 'golden 80s' to a close. The declining export revenues and corresponding drop in sales in the USA signalled the end of Peter W. Schutz's tenure as President and CEO of Porsche, and he left the company in 1987.



Peter Schutz stands alongside a Porsche 944 at Zuffenhausen in 1982

Schutz retired to Naples, Florida in 1988 and became a renowned motivational speaker, and remained popular in Porsche circles. Schutz is survived by his wife, daughter and two sons.

Edited by: Glen Smale

Images by: Porsche Archives