

# AMSOIL Helps 1960 Porsche\* Run Like a Dream

Owning a pristine 1960 Porsche 356B is rare enough. But how about one that played a small role helping astronaut Scott Carpenter become the second American to orbit earth, in 1962?

Such is the case for AMSOIL customer and retired aerospace engineer Ron Gibb of Rancho Palos Verdes, Calif. His résumé includes work on the Project Mercury and Apollo space missions. “I designed the oxygen regulator for the LEM (lunar excursion module) vehicle,” said Gibb. “If you saw the movie ‘Apollo 13,’ they went into the LEM vehicle to survive coming back to earth.” Gibb’s work also contributed to the February 1962 Friendship 7 mission, during which John Glenn became the first American to orbit earth.

## Carpenter’s flight up in the air

Just three months later, astronaut Scott Carpenter was set to duplicate Glenn’s feat as part of the Mercury-Atlas 7 mission. However, the spacecraft was running out of liquid oxygen (LOX) propellant prior to reaching orbit. “They were going to postpone Carpenter’s flight because they didn’t know what to do,” said Gibb.

## Porsche plays role in space race

One of Gibb’s coworkers at General Dynamics, where he worked at the time, had the idea to change the LOX pressure valves to solve the problem. “I was given the job to go make the change,” said Gibb. “So, I had two valves shipped from Cape Canaveral, Fla. to LAX (Los Angeles International Airport) and went over and picked them up in the Porsche,” he said.

Gibb drove them to the supplier to complete the necessary work. “Then I took them over to a big test facility out in the desert,” said Gibb. They finished all the testing at 10:30 p.m. on a Saturday night. Gibb then drove the valves back to LAX for the return flight to Cape Canaveral, where they were installed Monday in time for Carpenter’s pre-launch testing the next day.

The mission was a success, and Ron Gibb’s Porsche was partly to thank.

## Discovered AMSOIL in 1973

Nearly 60 years later, Gibb’s prized car is still in excellent condition thanks to AMSOIL synthetic motor oil. Gibb started using AMSOIL products in 1973 after one of his co-workers at Northrop Grumman, where he spent most of his career, became an AMSOIL Dealer.

“I bought the oil and put it in the car. A few weeks after I put it in, I couldn’t believe it,” said Gibb. The dipstick, which had been nearly black due to deposits, was clean. “The dipstick was nice, bright, shiny and just as clean as a whistle,” said Gibb.

“They recommended changing oil every 2,000 miles (3,220 km) because of the high temperatures of the air-cooled engine, and I did that for quite a while,” said Gibb. But when he drained AMSOIL synthetic motor oil, it was still clean. “So, I gradually shifted to going a year before changing oil.”

## 300,000 miles (482,800 km) and counting

Today, he uses Signature Series Synthetic Motor Oil in the Porsche, which he thinks has close to 300,000 miles (482,800 km) on it.

“My odometer stopped for quite a few years and I couldn’t find anyone to fix it,” he said. “I think I’ve got at least 300,000 miles on it.”

Some of those many miles include trips to Colorado’s Mt. Evans, which features the highest paved road in the contiguous United States, and California’s Death Valley, the lowest point in the country. Gibb once drove his Porsche 31 straight



hours from a class reunion in Iowa back home to Los Angeles – 1,900 miles (3,058 km). “It ran like a dream,” he said.

AMSOIL synthetic motor oil has delivered flawless protection all these years. The only major engine work done was due to a zealous parking-lot attendant at the airport back in 1976 who couldn’t resist taking Gibb’s Porsche for a spin.

“Someone at the parking lot took it on a joy ride and almost separated the flywheel from the crankshaft,” said Gibb. One new crankshaft later, the car was back to normal, and it’s run smoothly ever since.

## Uses AMSOIL products in everything

Gibb has used AMSOIL products in all his cars over the years, including two different Corvettes\* and a 1997 Toyota\* Avalon\* with a V-6 engine notorious for sludge issues. “I’ve never seen any sludge in the Avalon. [AMSOIL] has kept that engine running excellent.” Gibb’s nephew owns the car today, which has 270,000 miles (434,500 km) on it.

It’s just one more reason he keeps using AMSOIL products and telling others about their excellent performance. “I talk to them about it all the time – they ought to try it,” said Gibb.