

# like father, like sons

**road scholars | Durham**



Father and son, Bob and Cameron Ingram pose for a photograph with some of the family's world-renowned Porsche collection in Durham, Friday, June 10. Bob Ingram's passion for Porsches rubbed off on his children and now all three sons are in some way involved in the family's priceless collection. On top of managing the cars in the collection, Cameron runs Road Scholars, an automotive company specializing in Porsche restoration.

PHOTOS BY EAMON QUEENEY | NORTH STATE JOURNAL



**W**HAT'S MORE important than the 40 plus Porsches, a handful of which are worth millions of dollars, for the man with one of the most envied car collections in the United States? For Bob Ingram, a former GlaxoSmithKline executive, the answers are the simple and priceless parts of life: his wife and three sons.

And his sons have not only acquired that "car gene," but they've run with it in the form of successful, family-based business ventures.

Take his youngest son, Cam Ingram, for example. After his father started dabbling in the Porsche world by buying his first 911 in the '90s, Cam graduated from high school and earned an art degree from Guilford College before pursuing a career as a metal sculptor. Following nearly three years of apprenticeship in a car restoration shop, in 2003 he bought in on the automotive venture that is today incredibly well known in the Porsche community: Road Scholars.

Bob's middle son, Rory Ingram, today manages the Ingram Collection as well as the family's newest venture: the Ingram Driving Experience at the Virginia International Raceway. His oldest son, Michael Ingram, has a small but substantial collection of original Mazda RX7s and is currently in the process of moving his family from California to rejoin his parents and his two little brothers in N.C.

To put the situation into context, Bob and Cam met with the North State Journal at Road Scholars' Durham location to flesh out the long journey that started with one businessman's car hobby and turned into not only a substantial appreciation of automotive assets but also a family business.

"I didn't know what a Porsche was," Bob said, looking back to 1971 when he drove his then-mentor's new 911.

"He let me drive the car, and I came home that day and said to my wife, 'someday, I'm going to own a Porsche.'"

Fast forward 21 years. After successfully establishing himself in the business world, 1992 marked the year that Bob finally pulled the trigger on his first Porsche. Since then, his collection has reached as high as the 60 plus mark, but today rests in the "more manageable" 40s count range.

And that collection, which Bob has cultivated by utilizing Cam's extensive Porsche knowledge and Rory's organizational and interpersonal skills, is today worth more than they ever would have imagined.

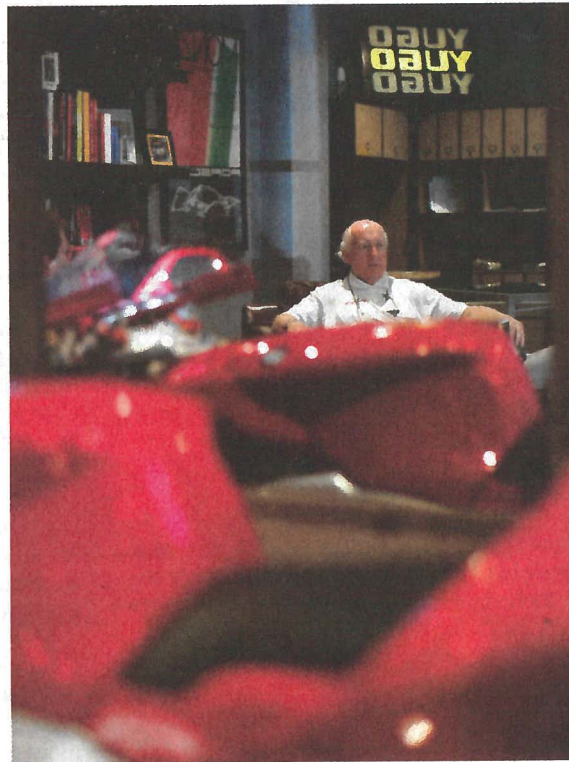
"Now people say, 'boy, you were really smart to buy these cars,' because they have turned out to be a good investment," Bob said. "We didn't do it with the thought that this was going to be a good investment. We bought cars that we really enjoyed, that we admired. And, candidly, because of the appreciation, I think if we were to start now it would probably be almost impossible for us to do this."

In the spirit of Father's Day, we asked Bob what it means to have his sons not only share his passion for cars but also the fact that they've taken that passion and made successful businesses out of them.

"I think, like most fathers, I would guess all fathers, you want to see your children be successful," Bob said. "But beyond however you measure success financially, I think you want to see them enjoy



Mechanics work on vehicles in the shop of Cameron Ingram's business Road Scholars in Durham.



Bob Ingram speaks with reporters in the reception area of his son Cameron's automotive shop Road Scholars in Durham.

what they do. And I've observed over the years that people who really enjoy what they do tend to do it well. And what a wonderful cycle to be in where you enjoy what you do, improve in your skills, and get more enjoyment?"

Looking back, Bob shared one of his proudest memories as a father: when Hans-Peter, of the

Porsche family, bought an ultra-rare 1949 Porsche Gmund Coupe that Cam found in an estate sale, and then turned around and asked him if Road Scholars would take on the restoration project. Porsche then requested, in what Bob calls "a very Germanic way," for Cam to take the restored vehicle to the Pebble Beach Concours — and win.

"I remember vividly, until the day I leave the earth, our family, Jeanie, I, Rory, Cam, Cam's team — they unloaded the car a couple of days before the show for Hans-Peter's brother to see," he recounted. "he and his adviser, who's for over 40 years managed the Porsche Exclusive department, inspected the car. And they were speaking in German as they inspected the car. When they finished, he walked over to Cam and he said, 'better than we'd ever do at the factory.' That was a proud moment."

Road Scholars took that Gmund to Pebble Beach in 2011 — and won first in class in the O-2 Postwar Sports Closed. According to Bob, it was the first time Porsche had ever won such an event.

Since then, the family has shown and won at Pebble Beach three times, at Amelia Island seven times, and at the Porsche Club Concours dozens of times. Bob is also a chairman for the relatively new Pinehurst Concours event, which he says is, from a quality perspective, just below that of Pebble Beach and Amelia Island.

"I'm so proud to see all three boys, and they're all different," Bob said. "I didn't say, 'I'd really like for you to do this.' They chose to do this."

In the Ingram family, the Porsche love isn't just a male thing, either. His wife, Jeanie, participates in family driving events and has her own cars among the Ingram Collection, including a 1955 Porsche 356 Pre-A Speedster that was originally purchased by Humphrey Bogart for Lauren Bacall.

"She never gets upset when we buy a car," Bob said, grinning. "She doesn't like us to ever sell them."