

# Book Reviews for Porschephiles

by Bruce Herrington, Orange Coast Region

## 50 Years Porsche 912

by Jurgen Lewandowski, published in 2016 by Delius Klasing Verlag, Bielefeld, Germany



The outstanding photographs and *European* layout are bound to make this book a classic. Originally published at \$110, the quality of the presentation makes that price seem reasonable. Now available on-line at a considerable discount, any 912 enthusiast would be well advised to snap up a copy while they are still available. With many references to, and even quotations from (even many illustrations of) internal Porsche memos and minutes of meetings, this book is almost as much about corporate management history and politics, as it is about the cars.

The genesis of the 901/911 and the 6-cylinder engine, the political infighting involved and the development of a more inexpensive alternative are dealt with in almost tedious detail in the first few chapters. It is made clear in this discussion that the 912 was an after thought, and not a welcome one at that. This, despite the fact that a great deal of the development and testing of the 911 car was conducted using four cylinder engines.

Though it presents a very complete story of the creation and development of the 912 and the 912E, and the many complications and conflicts in its development and marketing, this is not a reference book. There are no charts and only one table (of serial numbers, which the text indicates is of questionable reliability). Not even an index is provided.

Gems of wisdom are there, such as when and why the 911 dash panel was made three dial for the 912 and then changed to five dial. These gems are hard to find unless one reads the entire text. *50 YEARS PORSCHE 912* is an interesting, arguably fascinating story. But be advised that the first half of the book is devoted only to the eight year period from 1957

(the initial concept of a replacement for the 356) to commencement of 912 production in 1965.

The *912: Year by Year* chapter provides a very detailed description of the changes made as the model evolved. Other chapters in the latter half of the book detail the complexities and multiple false starts for the 912 E program. There is a review of the USA only 912E by a German journalist, and a commentary on the restoration of a 912 prototype by Rick Becker, 912/912 E Advocate for PCA.



Of particular interest to this reviewer is the documentation of the thought processes leading to the 912E, which are totally devoid of any hint of the conventional explanation: to use up leftover 914 engines.

The final photo spreads of this well illustrated book show very Germanic backgrounds for four 912s with California license plates and their drivers. Who are these lucky guys?

*50 YEARS PORSCHE 912* is a hardcover book with 178, 9 x 10-1/2 inch heavyweight, glossy pages, with many color photos of 912s and their features. It

should be available for less than \$40 from [www.amazon.com/books](http://www.amazon.com/books). Even enthusiasts of early 911s should have a copy because of the information given about the design and initial development of the 901 cars.