

Our Story

AutoWerks was launched in January 1990, by partners and spouses, Charles (Chuck) Dinkel and Lorraine Laslett. By that time Chuck had years of experience both as a shop owner and as a technician working on import automobiles. Lorraine had years of experience working in art museums but had also developed a love of fine automobiles from the driving and aesthetics point of view.

Chuck was born in Wisconsin but his stay there was short lived. The son of an Air Force officer, he moved many times before settling in North Carolina where he attended North Carolina State University. Lorraine was born and grew up in Fayetteville, NC. The daughter of an architect she grew up with an interest in art and received a degree in Art History from Vassar College. Work at the North Carolina Museum of Art brought her back to the state.

Chuck's love of automobiles really began during his college years. In high school and in college Chuck was on the other side of the counter - trying to describe what he needed and to understand what work was being done. Since he was in college pursuing a degree in Aerospace Engineering with a minor in Chemistry, he had an advantage over most repair shop customers. Not surprisingly, he began to look at his Volkswagen Beetle with an engineer's eye and discovered a real interest in how it worked.

Chuck completed his degree but by that time he was immersed in the study of the automobile and did not want to leave Raleigh. He helped establish a sports car club while at State and was a member of the Sports Car Club of America and Tarheel Sports Car Club. He participated in and designed time/distance rallies as well as autocrosses. He opened his first repair shop, AutoTech, in Raleigh in 1979 specializing in the service and repair of Italian cars.

After a sojourn in Connecticut, Chuck and Lorraine relocated to Moore Co. in 1987 where Lorraine's Mother was living. They opened AutoWerks and welcomed their daughter Julia to the world a few years later. While the area has changed significantly since then, it remains a welcoming community and a wonderful place to live and work.