



# *i Saluti*

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**Note Bene**

by Phil Dean, Pres

**Evolution**

The "when will ALFA return to USA" question evolves in the motorhead magazines. *Alfa Owner* says 2010. *Road and Track* Jan 04 issue says on page 54 it will be 2007 with a 168 sedan type. Artist rendering looks like a 164 with a big ALFA grill (triangular shaped) and huge 22 inch wheels with hidden rear passenger door handles. They say "work continues apace" and the 168 will be a FWD platform. (I guess they "got over" the oriental culture" bad luck of number 4" scenario by changing to a 168-numbered sedan.)

Prez Day event will be SATURDAY this year. Hermann is alleged destination, so bring passenger as a cup holder as we know our Alfas have no official Perrier-holding devices.

Brings to mind old speed races on road courses...

America's first speeding ticket was handwritten in 1902. Fine was \$10 for exceeding 10 mph in an automobile in Minneapolis. (Socialist state..whadya expect?)

First RADAR ticket in UK was made Aug 19, 1959 in Lancashire. Offender was told by copper: "who do you think you are..Fangio?" The old *continues on page 11*

*Next Event . . .*

**Presidents' Day Drive  
11 am Saturday Feb 21**

There's no question that among our best-attended events each year is our midwinter open road romp honoring Presidents' Day weekend. This year it will take the twisting blacktop across the scenic hills and valleys of the Missouri River to a charming country restaurant where we'll dine. We'll arrive there for lunch around 12:30.

**Don't Miss Out!**

To be part of the low-speed, high-revving fun, meet us Saturday, February 21 at the commuter parking lot on the outer road just east of Hwy. 94 at Hwy. 40 (Weldon Springs exit) at 11:00 am. And don't let a cantankerous, nonstarting Alfa keep you on the sidelines. Anything that drives is OK. Heck, in the past we've had a BMW and a Triumph TR6 that added considerable to the sporting nature of the event. Be there, no excuses!



*Coming in March . . .*

**Alfa Swap Meet/Model Car Display  
3 pm, Saturday March 13**

Steve and Sherri Coldewe's, Imperial MO  
 RSVP (636) 464-4019, [alfa57@sbcglobal.net](mailto:alfa57@sbcglobal.net)

What do you need for your car . . . and what do you have that someone else needs . . . grill piece, a special tool, wheels, books, manuals, magazines, literature, thermostatic actuator, headlight cover? Well, this is your opportunity to sell your spares and pick up some goodies for your special car. So come to the flea market and be prepared to buy, sell, or swap car parts, tools, literature, and other goodies.

After all the buying, selling, and swapping is done, we'll have a casual dinner and view some of Steve's extensive model car collection. The flea market starts at 3pm. We'll have cold cuts, sandwich fixings, and soft drinks. BYOB. Bring a side dish to share.

**Directions:** Take Hwy 55 South to Imperial Exit (#187). Turn right on Outer Road on right. Follow Outer Rd to Seckman Rd on left. Follow Seckman to Seckman Lake Estates on left (Driftwood Dr). Our house is 5221 Driftwood Dr on right. 636-464-4019.

*i Saluti* is the official publication of the Alfa Romeo Owners Club of St Louis (AROCSL). Articles, photos, and classified ads should be sent to newsletter Editor. Classified Alfa-related ads are free to members. Please inquire for commercial rates.

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## 2004 Calender

Feb	21	Presidents' Day Drive, 11am, commuter parking lot on the outer road just east of Hwy. 94 at Hwy 40 (Weldon Springs exit).
Mar	13	Swap Meet at Steve and Sherri Coldewe's home
April	11	Easter Car Show, Forest Park
April 30 - May 2 Spring Fling weekend, Washington MO		
June		Herman MO outing (Chuck Workman)
June		European Car Show
July	17	Alfa Day at Lake Tishimingo
Aug	21	Formal Party -- Jon Rhodes and Nancy Scoggin
Sep	11	Picnic at the Hatchers' home
Sep		Tech session at Volpe's shop
Oct		Fall Tour to Crown Valley Winery
Oct	29-31	Eureka Springs AR weekend
Nov		Planning meeting
Dec		Christmas Party at the Housers' home



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## A Classic Prewar Alfa from Clarksville MO?

### *The Recreation of 1938 Alfa Romeo Tipo 8C 2900 B, Chassis No. 412021*

[This article is based on information from the Symbolic Motor Car Company's website. It has been edited for brevity. Clarksville, Missouri is about 40 miles north of St Louis on Hwy-79 and the Mississippi River.— RHH.]

Without question, the 8C 2900 will always remain one of the single most sought after production vehicles ever completed. Noted authority, Simon Moore has made the wise observation that the 8C 2900B sport car was the progeny of the postwar Grand Touring coupe and spyder, a form refined postwar most notably by Ferrari.

At the beginning of the Second World War, Alfa had reached a level of achievement which was unmatched by any other marque, including even arch rival, Bugatti. While the Type 55 and 57 Bugattis were fabulous sport cars, Bugatti was a private company hard hit by the Depression. It virtually ended its existence as an auto producer with the war. Alfa, on the other hand, was a bureau within the Italian government and a favorite ride for Mussolini, so its future was assured. Consider the other sporty continental manufacturers of the prewar era. In Italy, Lancia was dedicated to passenger cars and Maserati to grand prix cars. A few Fiat Balillas received bodies from Zagato, but offered puny performance by comparison. OM offered some sport cars but was generally undistinguished.

Outside Italy, the Mercedes-Benz SS sport cars were huge compared to Alfa, yet hardly faster. The Mercedes and Horsch sedans of the late 1930s were all, as one journalist has coined the term, "peasant-crushers." The striking Touring Spyderys and fastback coupe form was not limited to Italy. There was a 540K Mercedes Autobahn Tourer which had the same general configuration as the 8C 2900B coupe, and in France, the Type 57 Bugattis were also similar. England was filled with sporty cars but few offered performance which approached Alfa and certainly none the reliability.

So, in the 1930s, if you were wealthy and wanted a sporty car, the proper marque was Alfa Romeo. The 6C 1750 is still (arguably) one of the most desirable sports cars in the world, and it was followed by the even more exotic 8-cylinder cars, the 8C 2300 and 8C 2900B. These Alfas were more than just fabulous: they were also fabulously expensive. Exactly how expensive is hard to say. Though we know how much the chassis cost, the relative value of the money is

hard to establish. What exactly was a dollar worth in 1930? In the early 1930s, a 1750 Alfa, sold new for about \$3500. In today's terms, the 1750 would have cost about \$150,000, and an 8C 2300 about \$200,000. At 115,000 lire, the 8C 2900B would be well over a quarter-million of today's dollars!

The Alfa Romeo 2900B clothed in the elegant Carrozzeria Touring Spyder coachwork represents the absolute extreme in all of Alfa Romeo's classic designs. Not before, since or ever will there be a car of equal!

More than just the super car of its day, the 2900B featured a straight eight, twin camshaft supercharged engine which was directly descended from the race winning Alfa Romeo 8C 2300, P3.

Extremely advanced in construction, the 2900B also featured a gearbox in unit with the back axle, a feature we refer to today as a transaxle that was then decades ahead of its time.

In 1939, a race was held at the famous Brooklands Speedway in the United Kingdom to determine the fastest car

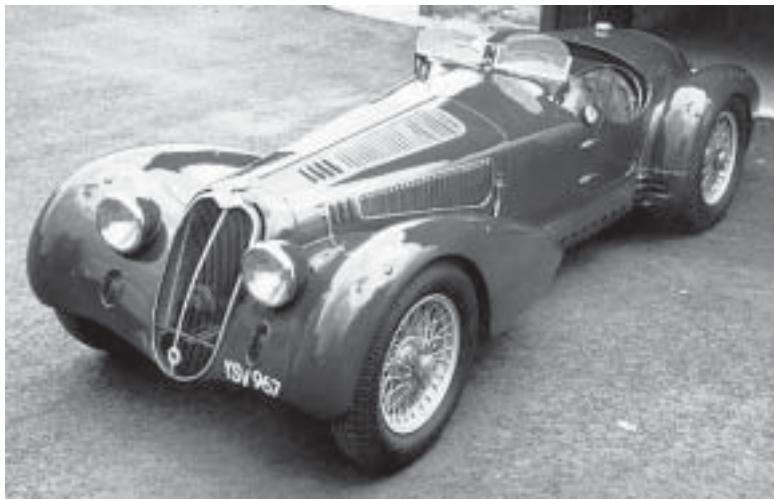
of the day. One of these extremely rare (around 30 built) cars won the event, averaging over 131 miles per hour.

The performance of these prewar cars was so great that their acceleration, top speed and handling would not be matched until 1954 when Ferrari developed his 4.5-liter 375 Mille Miglia sports cars.

Today, the fortunate few individuals who have had the opportunity to drive Alfa's 8C 2900 are stunned by the car's completely user friendly operating characteristics. While most were clothed with rather heavy coachwork, acceleration from the twin-cam supercharged eight remains phenomenal even by modern standards. After just a short drive, one realizes that these amazing vehicles are easily able to out-brake, out-handle and out-accelerate many modern machines!

This is the story of one 8C 2900B, specifically chassis no. 412021, which was documented in Simon Moore's book, *The Immortal 2.9*. This car moved from Rome to Berlin and later, in the late 1940s was owned by a Mr. Hodgman in California.

In the early 1950s this car was purchased by a Mr. Dave Biggs of Clarksville, Missouri, who acquired the car from a Buick dealer in Santa Barbara after an advertisement appeared in Road and Track. Biggs used the car and,



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**388-1181**

10617 New Halls Ferry  
St Louis MO 63136  
(1/2 mile south of I-270)

## Get Ready for Spring Fling 2004

Spring Fling 2004, Apr 30-May 2 in Washington MO, is an event not to be missed. Walt Hatcher has been busy making all the arrangements and here's the scoop:

We have a block of rooms reserved at the Lewis and Clark Inn for the nights of April 30 and May 2 at special rates. Be sure to mention the Alfa Club when you call and make reservations early. Call Lewis and Clark Inn at (636) 239-0111.

Spring Fling activities include a rally/tour through Missouri wine country, an autocross, a people's choice concours, and art exhibition/open house/swap meet at Hatchers' in Washington, Missouri.

The theme for this year's Alfa Art Exhibition is *Spark*. All media are welcome. And you don't have to create something based on the theme, you can enter any automotive art you create. Previous years' entries have been sculptures of metal, plastic, or life-size fabric objects, watercolor, oil, and computer paintings, jewelry, photographs, and quilted jackets and wallhangings.

Join in the fun and let other "Flingers" enjoy your creative efforts. Start now and create your masterpiece, and remember, *Spark*.

For more Spring Fling information contact Walt Hatcher, (636) 239-2690. We'll print the registration form next month.



from just-auto.com

## Fiat rules out partners other than General Motors

by just-auto.com editorial team

Fiat Group chief executive Giuseppe Morchio reportedly said on Thursday that the Italian group would not consider linking up with any partner other than General Motors, which co-owns its Fiat Auto car unit.

A Reuters report said GM bought a fifth of Fiat Auto in 2000 and set up vital joint ventures with the Turin-based group that should save the companies €1 billion each by next year but tensions have since strained with GM last year refusing to pay its share of a €5 billion recapitalisation of the sputtering vehicle unit, diluting its stake, and saying an option for Fiat to force the rest of Fiat Auto onto GM was now void.

Reuters noted that the start of the "put" option has been delayed by a year to January 2005 to give the companies time to sort out the spat and Fiat's chairman Umberto Agnelli has said he could seek compensation if GM annuls the "put". Asked if Fiat would now look to set up an alliance with any other carmaker, Morchio bluntly told Reuters: "No."

"Our partnership with GM is an industrial partnership. That is how both GM and Fiat are defining it and the results are giving us both great satisfaction," he told Reuters on the sidelines of an employers body meeting in Rome.

The news agency noted that Fiat and GM have joint ventures to develop platforms and buy parts, saving vital money for GM's loss-making European arm.

"The other issues are under discussion, a work in progress.

We do not underestimate the difficulties but we are determined to move forward," Morchio added, according to Reuters.



## For Sale

I have two beautiful red Alfas and sadly I must sell one. When one is sold the other will not be for sale:


- '86 *Spider Veloce* 78,000 miles, purchased new, red / black leather with red stitching - Factory A/C - Power Windows - Ziebart when new (not a speck of rust) - never hit or repainted. Black Top is original (faded), but back window is clear. All original except Momo steering wheel, shift knob and a new Ansa exhaust. Looks, runs and drives perfect. A rare opportunity - \$6,900.

- '95 *164 LS*, 4-cam V-6 Sport Sedan, purchased used in '98 after I logged 75,000 miles on a '94 164 LS that I bought new. The '95 is red with black leather, stick shift - 150,000 miles (my everyday driver) - engine rebuilt at 115,000. Original except for a Stebro exhaust and chrome Moda wheels. Excellent condition. \$11,500.

Both cars listed above offered by Terry McGavern, Kansas City, Mo 64114, (816) 363-7763, [tmcgavern@networksplus.net](mailto:tmcgavern@networksplus.net).



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# One Good Car

by Peter Egan, *Road and Track*, June 1989

I hadn't talked to my friend David Rhodes for a while, so last weekend I gave him a call. David is an author who lives on a farm in Wisconsin with his wife, Edna, and their daughter, Emily. Like me, David collects electric guitars and blues albums and has a fatal weakness for hopeless old cars that nobody would touch with 10-foot pole, so we always have a lot to talk about.

David told me he was looking for a "new" car. He's been driving around for several years in a 1973 Buick Electra with 455 V-8. He works on the car a lot, and it has that sort of chugging, drink-a-gallon idle that makes you wonder if he's running moonshine on the side. While we both spend considerable time on project cars, our tastes are slightly different. I've always been drawn to sports cars, the kind built to humiliate 'em in the comers, and David prefers American big-block stuff, the kind that humiliates 'em everywhere.

"I've got to get rid of that Buick," he told me. "It's finally failing apart."

"What kind of car are you looking for?" I asked.

"Well, I've been looking at all kinds of cars lately, mostly on used-car lots. Last week I looked at an old Dodge Diplomat with a 318. It was only a thousand dollars, but it had a pretty poor paint job—they forgot to mask off the chrome and the tires. I asked the salesman why it had been repainted and he looked me straight in the face and said, 'What makes you think it's been repainted?' 'Also, it had a couple of collapsed lifters that were clattering so loud we had to shout, and he said, 'They all do that.'"

"Any other leads?"

"Not really. My friends keep telling me I'm not going to find anything good for a thousand dollars. They all say the cost of reliable basic transportation is more like three thousand now, but I just can't bring myself to spend that much money on an old car. So I don't know ... What would you do?"

Now there's a question nobody can resist. (To do good, Twain tells us, is noble. To advise others to do good is nobler still, and no trouble.) So predictably, I summoned up the force of my considerable experience and proceeded to unleash one of my pet theories on David. I told him to sell off a couple of his vintage guitars (maybe a '59 Gibson ES335 dotneck and a pre-CBS Strat), take the resulting large chunk of money and go out and get himself One Good Car.

"Buy yourself a brand-new economy car," I said, "or a minivan or an ordinary low-mileage sedan or a good used station wagon. Get a normal, rational, sensible car that you and Edna can drive when you have to get to the dentist's office or visit the family for Thanksgiving. Something you don't have to work on. Then, once you've fulfilled your responsibility to society, you can buy any piece of junk that strikes your fancy, and you don't have to feel guilty. A good car sets you free."

David said that he had considered such a plan but could never bring himself to sell any of his 41 vintage electric guitars and added that the thousand-dollar-car habit might be hard to break. I wished him luck.

It took me a long time to develop the One Good Car concept myself, but it's an idea that has gradually come to be embraced by most of the car-mad people I know. When most of us were a little younger, we managed to resist the appeal of the sensible car even if it was cheap. Instead, we went out and bought fun cars that were all worn out. In my case, this car was a 1957 TR-3. Likewise most of my friends had such paragons sturdy utility as Mini-Coopers, Healeys, MGs, VW Microbuses, Corvair Monzas and so on. Great cars, all, but they were old when we got them and not getting any younger. When they broke, we walked. Or parked them in the driveway on jackstands and rode bicycles to the parts store.

There comes a point, however, when you no longer want to depend on a Car that never stops needing work. It suddenly dawns on you that it would be refreshing to have in your driveway at least one newer, more reliable car, preferably one so complex and full of black boxes that only the dealer could work on it and you'd have a good excuse to concentrate on more interesting projects. The Good Car should be a hands-off, non-project piece of pure function. If it's fun to drive, so much the better, but its main purpose is to not break down.

Just about everyone at this office has finally managed to buy a car that really works. Richard drives his CRX while the E-Type is being restored, Tom has a MB 190 to drive when the 356B is in the shop having four or five of its elusive six volts brought back into the fold, and I have a reasonably sound Chevy van that allows me to sneer at minor setbacks in the Lotus Seven project.

Trying to enjoy life when you have only a single, worn-out unreliable car, I told David, is like trying to have a party on a lifeboat. You may have a few good laughs, but you can never forget, in the back of your mind, that you are lost at sea. The parties are always a little better when you've found solid ground. In any collection, that One Good Car is the granite-hard island you can always return to after making strange voyages in dangerous automotive waters. It's the car that doesn't break down on the freeway, overheat on the mountain pass or force your wife to call you late at night from a borrowed phone at a crack house to tell you the alternator burned up.

A car that works is a kind of special freedom. It leaves you free to buy Mini-Coopers with bad synchros, Lotus Sevens with bent frames, convertibles in the middle of winter, Beetles with frozen heater flaps, Big Healeys with three weeping carbs that sizzle and drip on hot exhaust systems, and even Dodge Diplomats with lifters that drown out the soothing voice the used-car salesman. It's the automotive branch of what Roosevelt called freedom from fear.



from Sports Car Market, July 2003

## 1967 Alfa Romeo Duetto Spider -- An Analysis

by Keith Martin

Last month, we wrote "How to Get Bottom Dollar for your Alfa" and described a pathetically written eBay auction that resulted in the sale of a nasty Duetto for \$2,651. As chance would have it, as that issue went to press, we came across another Duetto on eBay. Beautifully presented, the car, even though in a generally not-sought-after color of ivory (cream), brought a top-of-market \$15,950.

Below are excerpts from the listing, with our analysis following.

Alfa Romeo produced the so-called Roundtail Spider from 1966 to 1969. The Spider was called that due to the sloped shape of the decklid, which differentiated it from later Spiders. Roundtail spiders have a most beautiful design which makes them among the most desirable everyday Alfa Romeos to own. They were from a period of Alfa manufacture that represents the best of times, just prior to major emissions and safety changes, yet benefiting from any of the modern advances of the mid-to-late 1960s.

Powered by a twin-cam four cylinder of 1570 cc, the Duetto offered good performance and an attractive "Spider" body. The body featured bumpers that were set into the front and rear wings as well as a front grille set below the front bumper.

The Duetto came with twin carburetors and four-wheel disc brakes. Production of the Duetto finished in 1967 after only 12 months and only 6,325 were ever produced, making them a rare collector's car.

The example offered here is a very straight and unmolested survivor. It had lived in Southern California most of its life and the last owner enjoyed her for the last 18 years. The exterior has recently been refinished to its original luster, painted in its original ivory and is free of dents or scratches, showing only minuscule imperfections (i.e., chips). The black interior has also been recently updated. It still retains the correct engine and transmission in their stock configuration.

The form of the entire front end is completed by the still-intact headlight covers. From the direct front and rear, one can see the integrated design of the bumpers for the car. These bumpers were much more style than substance, serving to protect the car little from actual damage. A lot of money has been spent to enhance its already stellar performance. It is not a show car, but a very beautiful and powerful driver.

After 58 bids, this Duetto sold on May 8, 2003 for, as mentioned above, \$15,950. First, let's start by trying to learn a little something about the car from the photos. Unfortunately, neither the chassis number nor the engine number were listed in the description, perhaps the only thing I could

fault the seller for. However, there is a photo of the chassis tag, and it reveals that this car was originally built for the German market. The orange, Euro-spec turn signal lenses, rather than US-legal red, support this.

However, since the speedometer reads in miles rather than kilometers, this instrument was clearly changed out at some point. The seats appear to be redone in leather, an acceptable upgrade from vinyl. The standard rubber floor mats have been upgraded to carpet, and the vinyl

pattern to the top appears a bit too smooth. Finally, the Alfa Romeo script on the trunk appears to have been bent and then painted black, which is strange, as this script is widely available in the aftermarket. The engine bay itself appears correct but isn't detailed, which is unfortunate given the way the rest of the car is presented. The unusual clips used to fasten the air-cleaner crossover tube are missing. Finally, the engine cam covers appear to be painted with a black-crackle finish, which is incorrect but common.

But at a computer monitors 72 dpi, everything else on the car looks scrumptious. It appears to have all of its dainty stainless-steel bumpers intact, and the headlight covers that came in the trunk of the 1967s (they were illegal by DOT standards) have been properly installed, with the headlights "frenched" into the fenders.

The little raised area behind the grille is still in evidence, a detail that is often lost when Duettoes get their inevitable Bondo nose jobs following the equally inevitable collision.

The wheels and tires appear to be the correct 15 inches rather than the 14 inches that followed in 1969 (there was no 1968 model year for Alfa in the US due to smog and safety issues), and the dash top doesn't seem to have any cracks.

\$16,000 is all the money in the world for a Duetto, and for this amount one might expect a car with a detailed engine bay. But good Duettoes are hard to find, and ones that aren't painted red even more difficult.

Clearly, the bidders interested in this car were attracted by the professional and thorough presentation of the car in its online venue and were prepared to pay up to own it. Assuming the car is as good as it looks, I would call this deal a good one for the seller and buyer both.

Years produced: 1966-67

Number produced: 6,325

Original list price: \$3,950

Tune-up/major service: \$250-\$275

Distributor cap: \$12-\$18

Chassis #: Stamped on the engine firewall

Engine #: On a boss under the distributor

SCM Price Guide: \$10,000-\$13,500

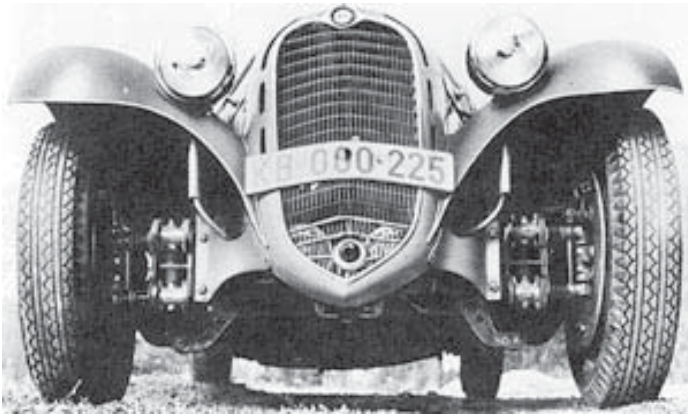
SCM Investment Grade: B



*8C2900B in Clarksville MO, continued from page 3*

amongst other events, attended the concours at the Elkhart Lake races organized by the SCCA.

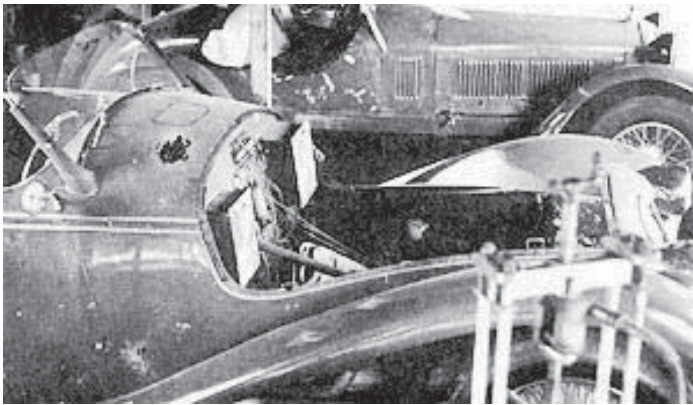
Then in the late 1950s Biggs suffered a disastrous fire which virtually destroyed a whole barn full of classic cars,



*Front view of Carrozzeria Touring's spyder body as originally fitted to chassis 412021.*

including the 2.9 Alfa.

A few pieces of the Alfa were rescued, including a few waterpipes, a pair of exhaust manifolds, and a camshaft. The manifolds still had the studs in them but with a coating of resolidified aluminium from where the heads had melted



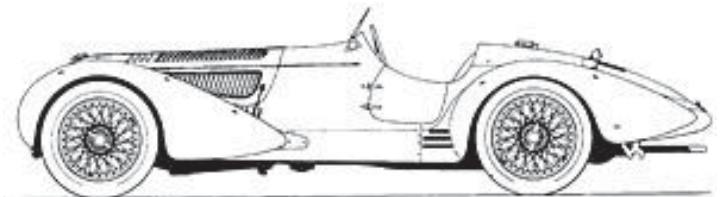
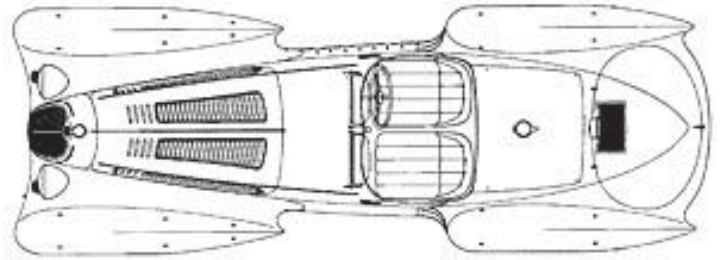
*412021 photographed in David Biggs' barn near Clarksville, MO, in the late 1950s. Shortly thereafter a disastrous fire destroyed the barn and all its priceless contents, presumably including what appears to be a 6C 1750 Alfa shown in the*

in the fire. It really must have got very hot indeed! The camshaft was so bent from the heat that it could never be used again. Whether these engine parts came from the engine in the car or from the spare engine that Biggs had is unknown.

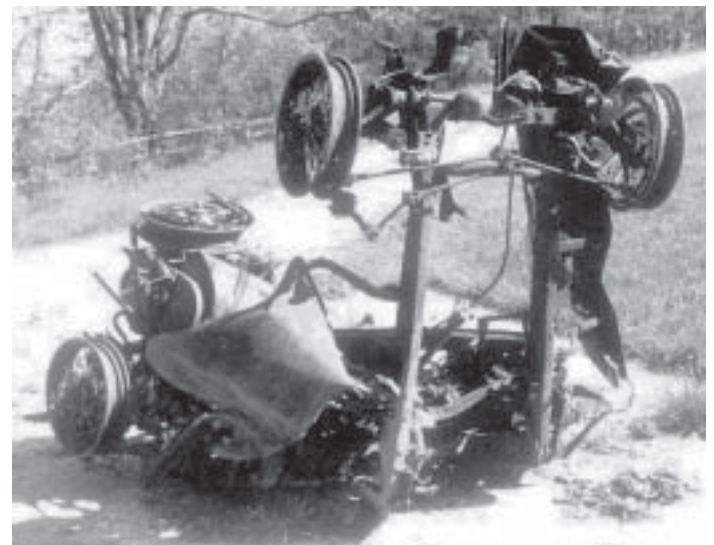
Fortunately, one photograph was taken in the barn before it burned down which shows some of the 2.9. The body is almost certainly by Touring, as evidenced by the brightwork stripes on the side and the fitting of the upper door hinge between the two stripes, a common Touring detail. However, the car has a unique treatment to the leading edge of the front wings, which end at the top of the

wheel and leave the front suspension completely visible from the front, rather like an earlier 8C 2300. The tail is also somewhat different from other cars.

The remains of the car, along with a number of others, were bulldozed under the ground by Biggs after the fire. It seemed likely that some of the steel parts, including the chassis, would have survived the heat of the fire, even if somewhat affected by it. It was therefore suggested that an expedition should be mounted to "exhume" the remains on the site to see what is recoverable. However, Biggs had long since moved away and the new owner was not amenable to such an exercise unless he was sure the exhumers were digging in the right place!



*Carrozzeria Touring of Milan, Italy produced four bodies for Alfa Romeo's 8C 2900 B short chassis. Mr. Rodney Felton used these drawings during the restoration and fabrication of the new body for chassis 412021.*



*The ex-David Biggs 8C 2900B Touring Spyder as recovered in Clarksville, Missouri.*

Avid English motoring enthusiast, Rodney Felton obtained a copy of Simon Moore's book *The Immortal 2.9* shortly after its publication in 1986. His interest in acquiring an example to add to his collection led him to contact his

*continues on page 9*

## Restoration vs. Recreation

by John Hertzman

Symbolic Motor Car Company's website describes the "restoration" of the Missouri barn fire 8C 2900 B which had, many years previously, been so completely destroyed that the remains, from which nothing was salvageable, were bulldozed into a ditch (along with a comparably nice Ferrari which was equally unsalvageable and since equally "restored"). The fire was pretty hot- all of the aluminum parts, including most of the engine, were melted, and all of the steel parts, like camshafts, were warped by the heat, and the warped frame members were then folded up by

*Of the original three  
8C 2900B Mille Miglia  
cars only four survive*

the bulldozer. Warped or not, some identifiable parts were left to be dug up, and the paper trail (the "provenance") was safe in a safe. The two cars were eventually acquired and restored by one of the very best of the fabled British restorers, a supremely skilled craftsman who could probably restore any car ever built out of any warehouse full of metal stock. Hooray for him.

There is a special twist to the backstory. If you ranked all of the 8C 2900 B bodies by sheer visceral appeal most of us would place the Mille Miglia cars at the very top of the heap, the several mostly similar road Spiders in a cluster behind them, the few berlinettas close behind the Spiders, and, trailing, a gaggle of Spiders which were not quite as nice as the first and second rank cars. Each car was unique, a variant in a range extending from the best and/or most desirable to the tail-end car, not bad but certainly least best, distinctive but cursed with a few awkward miscues. The car destroyed in the fire was the car most of us would consider the least attractive of the lot. Its unique fender line, in particular, probably looked pretty good to the builder and the customer in the thirties, but in the end evolving tastes said it just wasn't as right as the best ones.

So (couldn't see this coming, could you?) the remnant of the ugly duckling was 'restored' with a 'replica' of the most desirable Mille Miglia bodies. Now of the original three Mille Miglia cars only four survive and, on average, the 8C 2900Bs are more attractive (to our eyes) than they were when built. Same story with the Monzas; many of the long wheel-base 8C 2300s have been shortened to the more sporting Cortos, and many of the cortos have been modified into Monzas, while many of the most distinctive bodies (the Viotti coupe, for example) have been removed to be replaced with "Zagato" copies. Same with other makes; 'S' Mercedes have been cut into pseudo SS, SS into SSK, SSK drilled to make SSKLs. Same with Bentleys; most were originally sedans or coupes, a few were fabric-bodied lightweight Le Mans tourers; now most of them are Le Mans 'replicas'.

There have been several interesting posts on this range of subjects. Joe Garcia wrote "Personally, I'd rather see, say, a GTA at speed than a 6C 3000 CM rotating slowly on a museum turntable." With all due respect, that is a false choice at both ends; a GTA at speed is faster, but otherwise not a lot more interesting to watch, than a prepared GT Veloce at speed, and none of the 6C 3000 CMs I've seen (half of the ones built) were close to what they were when they were built; they were all either rebodied or overrestored. It doesn't really worry me I have bigger things to worry about but something has been lost, and I'm afraid it will stay gone.

*8C2900B in Clarksville MO, continued from page 8*

longtime U.S. friend, Henry Wessels. Wessels was no stranger to the tragic fire in Mr. Biggs barn. The last known photo of 412021 which appears in Simon Moore's book shows a 1750 Alfa in the background. Shortly before the fire, Wessels purchased the 1750 directly from Biggs.

Wessels was therefore both familiar with the Biggs property and the family in general. After being contacted by Felton, the two entered into an agreement where Felton would underwrite Wessels expenses in researching and conducting an expedition to recover the remains of the ex-David Biggs 8C 2900B, short chassis, Touring Spyder as had been suggested by Simon Moore in his book.

Wessels already knew the location of the ex-Biggs farm in Clarksville, Missouri. It had however been sold and was at that time owned by a retired Air Force officer, Major Michael T. Lilley. The new owner was very understanding and agreed to allow Wessels entrance onto the property.

Wessels first contacted a lawyer to clarify ownership rights to anything that they might discover. It soon became clear that upon his purchase of the property, all items contained there in, both described and not described at the time of purchase, were thereafter, the right of the new owner and were legally transferable as such.



*Recreated 8C 2900B chassis 412021.*



## ALFISITI COOKS!

by Sue Houser, St Louis AROC

Happy Presidents' Day. It was great to see everyone at T. J. Muggs for dinner in January. I hope everyone is staying warm, dry and right side up. The ice can be a bit treacherous. Mike and I have been very busy these last several weeks working on the SCCA Club Rallies down in Salem MO. Mike has been gone 4 weekends in a row to help set up the rallies and I have been embroidering vests and trophies. This past weekend was my St. Louis Collie Club shows. As always I run the Food Booth. I'm tired.

Walt Hatcher was gracious to answer my plea for a recipe for this month's column. He is a gentleman, scholar and a damn fine cook.

### Walt Hatcher's Pollo alla Cacciatora

1 3-pound chicken (cut up and skinned)  
8 ounces fresh mushrooms, sliced  
1 medium onion, chopped  
2 cloves garlic, chopped  
1 14-oz can diced tomatoes or 3 to 4 fresh tomatoes, peeled & chopped  
½ teaspoon Italian spices (Herbes d' Provence)  
olive oil  
½ cup dry white wine  
2 slices bacon (optional)  
Salt & pepper to season chicken before browning

Heat oil in a large skillet. Add chopped bacon and chicken. Brown well. Remove chicken. Fry onion until transparent: add mushrooms and cook until they are well colored. Return chicken to skillet and add remaining ingredients. Cook over medium heat until chicken is tender, about 30 to 45 minutes. Serve with crusty bread or on a bed of spaghetti or linguine.

*Nickel Knowledge Note:* "alla Cacciatora" means "Hunter's style" in Italian; Chasseur in French; Jaeger in German and denotes a dish that includes mushrooms. Thought you'd like to know.

Walt

Once again, my thanks to Walt. I think I'm going to fix this for dinner tonight. We won't see you for the Presidents' Day run, but we'll be thinking of you. See you at the Swap meet.

Woof and Meows,  
Sue



## ALFISITI COOKS! -- the book

Sue has published a brand new collection all the recipes she's gathered over the years for the Alfisti Cooks column. They are all together in the new **Alfisti Cooks! Cookbook**.

Order your copy today. Send your check or money order for \$4.50 to

Sue Houser  
12736 W Watson Rd  
St Louis MO 63127-1325

from <http://www.robinsautotopco.com/>

## Convertible Top Care

- Always Leave a new top and glass or plastic window in the up position for a minimum of 24 hours for vinyl tops and one week for cloth tops, after installation. As convertible top frames age, links and joints wear and top frames do not have the same alignment as when tops were new. Leaving tops in the up position after installation allows them time to relax and become "seasoned" to the top frame.

- Always Follow instructions in your Owner's Manual for lowering and raising Top. Always keep the top-well area free of objects. Even harmless looking objects such as beach towels can cause glass windows to break.

- Objects in your top-well can further cause unnecessary wear and stress on top frames, plus cause damage to your top and plastic windows.

- Always Unlatch Top at front before unzipping, or zipping window closed before latching for any convertible Top, Glass or Plastic Window, unless different instructions appear in your owners manual or Robbins brochure.

- Always Try and keep your Top, Tonneau Cover, Glass or Plastic Window, etc., clean.

- Do not Raise or lower convertible tops, glass or plastic window assemblies when the temperature is below 40 deg F. This can damage the topping and plastic windows.

- Do not Lower your convertible top, glass or plastic window when the top is wet, to avoid discoloration or other damage to the topping or inside backing.

- Do not Store away wet top boots or tonneau covers, to avoid discoloration and shrinking that can cause these products to no longer fit.

### Cleaning

Glass Windows: Clean Glass Windows with water-based glass cleaners only. Be extremely careful when cleaning Heater/Defroster glass windows not to scratch the defroster lines or to break the power source connector wire. Cleaner should never be allowed to drip into seams or heat seals.

Plastic Windows: Clean plastic windows frequently. Hose or blow off loose dirt particles from surface first, then use either plain water or mild soap and water solution. Apply with a soft cloth or tissue to gently clean window. Always clean in side-to-side or top-to-bottom motion, **NEVER in a circular motion**. One good plastic cleaner is "Meguiar's Mirror Glaze Formula 17". Never use harsh brushes or abrasives on plastic windows.

Use of Vinyl Preservatives: We do NOT recommend use of penetrating vinyl preservatives, conditioners or dressings on any of our products.

Cleaning Cloth or Vinyl Tops and Tonneau Covers: Hand wash only. Vinyl products can be cleaned using Malco Vinyl Cleaner.

While Car Washes generally will not harm Tops made in Cloth or Vinyl, NEVER allow a car wash to apply spray

*continues on page 11*

*Note Bene continued from page 1*

MG-TC (1947) my Dad and I restored still had its Lancashire AFB window sticker in place, so maybe I had the offending car!

The longest solo marathon car run on record (Top Gear mag Nov 99 reference) was made in a Traction Avant Citroen. From July 23, 1935 to July 22, 1936 Monsieur Francis Lecot drove 248,500 miles at an average speed of 40 mph. He drove in daily sprints of 19 hrs. His resume also included Monte Carlo Rallye de 1936, he finished 50th overall. No audio book tapes back then either!

The second longest drive was probably Mike and Kara's drive to and from John Ryman's house in central Illinois (Leonard Nimoy will portray their details in upcoming TV episode of "In Search Of."). Average speed was alternating between 110 mph and ZERO mph..significantly lowered by IL Cop investigation into "a certain speeding matter". Alfa 164 L with S cams had no cupholders.

One mile land speed records held by Brits with their Rolls Royce Spey 205 pair of jet engines and Andy Green, pilot, did 765.035 mph in Oct 1997 at Black Rock Desert, Nevada.

Each engine developed 50,000 lbs of thrust.

Fastest "buyable-off the shelf" road car record is with McLaren F1 supercar doing 231 mph at Nardo circuit in Italy. Same car did 195.3 mph on Brit road test. Second and third place held by Jaguar XJ220 (one won the Plaza Frontenac- St Louis Euro-Car show 2 yrs ago) and Ferrari F-40,(drooled on/worked on by Bob Volpe at INDY 2002 event and was owned by former St Louis couple). Each of the latter clocked over 200 mph on public track/road.

Fastest Formula 1 race was 1971 with average speed of

wax to your top.

Hand wash our products with Ivory or other mild soap flakes in a bucket of lukewarm water. In hard water areas add Calgon (not the dishwasher detergent) or other water softener until the water feels slippery.

ALWAYS Wash Tops, Tonneau Covers, etc. in the shade, never in direct sun.

ALWAYS Wash entire Top. Never spot clean to avoid rings or bright spots.

ALWAYS Wet entire car before washing Top. Use sponge or soft bristle brush to apply suds. Do not use a chamois or cloth since these will leave lint on Cloth Tops.

ALWAYS Rinse well with hose making sure to remove all traces of soap. Wipe off excess water with sponge. Hose down entire car to prevent soap from streaking paint.

ALWAYS Install Tonneau Covers and Top Boots after cleaning while still damp to preserve fit and shape.

ALWAYS Try to move Tops into direct sun after cleaning and thorough rinsing to dry. Chamois all excess water off body of car.

DO NOT Use detergents, bleaches, harsh cleansers, cleaners or abrasives.

DO NOT Use dry-cleaning solvents, etc.

DO NOT Use hot water.

DO NOT Lower down or cover convertible tops when wet or damp. This can lead to mildew growth and in extreme cases can cause discoloration or rotting of topplings to occur.

150.671 mph at Monza. Rules made since then to slow the pack down a bit. BRM was fastest machine, driver was Gethin.

Most prominent WOMAN driver in F-1 was Italian Giovanna Amati. She entered three Grand Prix in 1992, but never actually STARTED any of them. She sprinted down pit-lane at Hockenheim to KICK a Formula 3000 rival.

Why? "He blocked me off!" She was employed by Brabham team. "One could argue that her energies were not always channelled in the right direction", is what CAR mag from Sept 1998 said..NOT ME!

Evolution again..Darwin Awards? Heard of them? A certain Salto, Uruguay thief learned his lesson. He used a blowtorch to break into a car-trunk, unbeknownst to him, which was filled with 5 lbs gunpowder! The police had to question him at the hospital bedside, chained to the bed, no doubt.

Another Award. Maurice in Connecticut was evading police on semi-high speed OJ-like run when he abruptly pulled into parking lot of MacDougall Correctional Institution. He lept from the car and ran inside the prison lobby whereupon the automatic doors trapped him. He said he thought he was running into a shopping mall!

Portsmouth Rhode Island Coppers were searching for a vending machine robber. They found a guy LOITERING around a soda machine and brought him in for questioning and "book 'em Dano" routine. Suspicions were confirmed when after he was issued a \$400 bail, he proceeded to pay it with four hundred dollars worth of quarters, dimes, and nickels!

Bridge Bonzai in Phoenix. One evening in Sept 1998 an intoxicated driver and passenger hit another car, as they were "exchanging insurance info" then the cops come. The offending driver guy suggests.."Let's run!" The passenger was unable to get outa the VW Jetta. The Driver sprinted for the newly constructed bridge over the labelled "Salt River", then flung his legs over the bridge to fall 48 feet to his death. Unfortunately, that river-bed is dry about 11.5 months of the year! Oh jeezs, we can't end on that one..

Three burglars arrested in early morning hours around Hamburg Germany when police noted a safe was sticking outa the trunk of their car. When questioned, their story was.."they had merely FOUND the safe and was driving around looking for its owner."

Reminds me of the adulterous, lipstick stained and dishevelled husband who when asked by the wife what he was doing getting home late last Saturday night, he replied "I went to get your bicycle fixed at the repair shop." When told by the wife that: 1) she sold her bike last month and 2) the bike shop closed one year ago...the hubby replied.."well, that's my story and I'm sticking to it!"

Happy Valentines Day and See ya at Prez Day Rally on SATURDAY this year!

P.S. Italian couple in May 2000 were naked having moving "relations" in a small FIAT along the Abruzzan roads at "a high rate of speed." In Italy, young couples still forced to use their cars for date activities. Anyway, Mr. Germano lost control in the bend, and flipped off the road at 80 mph, both paramours killed by the impact. Happy (belated) Valentines Day again!

'67 Alfa Romeo Duetto



*!Saluti!*  
Alfa Romeo Owners of St Louis  
470 Belleview  
St Louis MO 63119

Feb 21 Presidents Day Drive

## Feb 2004 AROC St Louis

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	<b>21</b>
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29						