



AROC - Wisconsin Wishes All Alfisti a Prosperous and Happy New Year

AROC - Wisconsin Hosts Tour of Famous Auto Restorer

By Robert Ludwigson

On December 9, our club assembled at the site of Cooper Technica, in Bristol WI, to tour this famous facility. Once inside, host David Cooper spent over 3 hours showing his facility and explaining in great detail the stories surrounding the cars being restored. Thirty-three people attended with the group split approximately evenly between Wisconsin and Chicago members.

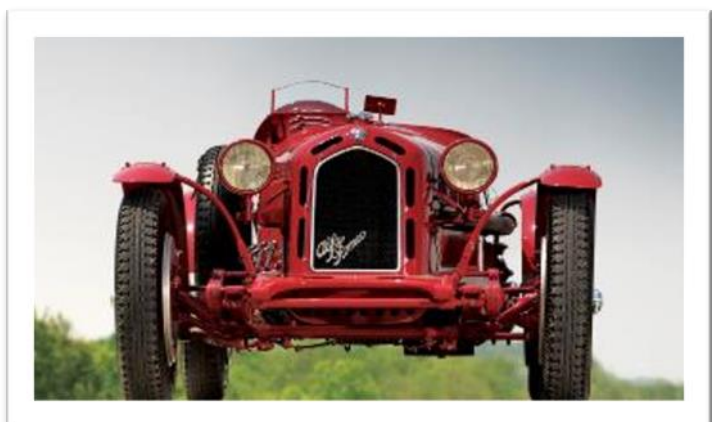
There were several cars already restored, including a beautiful 1930's Bugatti. David took the time to explain how he came to restore each car and also how he researched the background of the car. Dr. Gundula Tutt, visiting paint conservation expert from Germany, was also on hand to discuss her work.

There were also several cars undergoing restoration, including another Bugatti, a Talbot Lago, and two Alfa Romeos. David explained that his specialty was restoring cars from the 1930s to late 1940s. In order to accomplish these restorations, there was a complete machine shop with vintage machine tools, a woodworking shop (which made me jealous as I am a wood worker), and complete welding facilities.



Owner David Cooper

After the tour, the group traveled to the 75th Street Inn, in Salem, Wisconsin for a delicious lunch.



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Alfa CEO Imparato Optimistic

According to [Automotive News Europe](#), the Alfa Romeo brand is poised to post an operating profit of “several hundred million Euros” in 2023. Jean-Philippe Imparato wasn’t more specific because Stellantis does not report the financials of individual brands. If true, this is a big deal, as Alfa Romeo was losing money prior to being brought into the Stellantis fold in 2021.

Worldwide 2023 sales are projected to exceed 70,000 units, a gain of 30% over the 2021 and 2022 volume. According to the report, 60% of those sales will be from the Tonale line, “which delivers the level of profitability Alfa needs.” While the U.S. gets only the PHEV version, the rest of the world can buy a turbo gas-powered, mild hybrid, or diesel option. (Interestingly, the article mentioned that the gas turbo model was dropped from the U.S. Tonale lineup to help meet federal fleet fuel economy targets. Apparently Dodge didn’t require the same help, as the Hornet is gas-powered, with the PHEV yet to come.)

Next up for Alfa is the Milano (nee Brennero) small SUV. The Polish-built small SUV, sister to Jeep and Fiat models on the same platform, won’t likely be sold in the U.S. 🍀

Can’t Get the Giulia or Stelvio Color Combo You Want? Blame the Boss.

The same *Automotive News Europe* article (see left) offers some insight into the methods Mr. Imparato used to achieve profitability. As a part of his campaign to improve quality, he set the Casino plant (home to the Giulia and Stelvio) on the path to reducing complexity. He said, “The first time I went to Cassino, I discovered there were about 4,000 options – including 47 wheel rims – and I cut them to 1,500 to reduce complexity.”

This is why in 2024, upholstery colors are but three—black, red, and chocolate brown—and their availability is limited by model variant and exterior color. I understand why this makes sense as a manufacturing strategy, but it’s a bit of a disappointment after the broader color palettes offered for the first few years. A minor quibble, I know, but we saw this Giulia at the national convention, you see, and we couldn’t duplicate the color combination in a 2024 model. Oh well.

Other profitability-increasing measures? Imparato raised prices by €5,000 and the quality improvements reduced warranty costs dramatically. The brand also benefitted from the Covid-era chip shortage which raised selling prices for off-lease vehicles. 🍀

Local, Regional, and International Events Calendar, 2024

Something missing? Send dates for events we’ve missed and we’ll include them in the next calendar. email: rabhalter@att.net

2024

February 3-4	AROC Board Member’s Retreat, Coachella Valley, CA.
February 3-4	Motorcar Cavalcade Concours d’Elegance, Miami, Florida
Feb 29—March 3	Moda Miami 2-day Concours event
March 3	AROC-USA at The Amelia Concours d’Elegance, Amelia Island, Florida
May 3-5	AROC-WI, Das Kurze Klausenrennen, New Glarus, WI
May 17-19	SVRA Vintage Festival Weekend, Road America
May 29-June 2	AROC-USA, Alfas by the Lake 2024, Petoskey, Michigan Sold Out
June 5-15	AROC Goes to Italy Tour (See AROC-USA Website)
June 6-9	NTT Indycar Series, Road America
June 14	Viva Italia Concorso , Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
June 15-16	Le Mans 24 Hour Race
June 21-23	WeatherTech Chicago Region SCCA June Sprints, Road America
June 28-30	Trans Am SpeedTour, Road America
July 11-14	WeatherTech International Challenge with Brian Redman, Road America
August 2-4	IMSA SportsCar Weekend, Road America
August 16-18	Fanatec GT World Challenge
August 18	Pebble Beach Concours d’Elegance
August 25	Geneva Concours d’Elegance , Geneva IL
Sept 13-15	Ariens Art on Wheels Vintage Weekend Featuring VSCDA

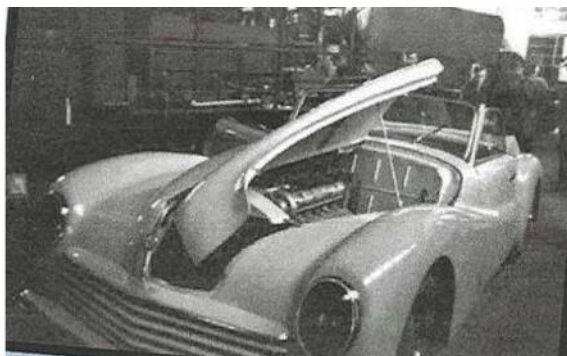
Restoring a Famous Alfa Romeo

By Robert Ludwigson

The amount of research that goes into one of David Cooper's jobs so impressed me that I thought I would provide more detail with one of his projects. That project is a famous Alfa Romeo.

The car is a type 6C2500 SS constructed in 1943, during World War II. The car, bodied with a one-off two seat cabriolet body by Pinin Farina, was built for Wolfram Von Richthofen, a Field Marshall in the German Luftwaffe (remember Italy and Germany were on the same side for much of the war). He, however, did not get to use the car very much, having been diagnosed with a brain tumor in 1942. He was hospitalized in 1945 and died shortly thereafter.

After the war, racer Spartaco Graziani of Livorno, Italy, purchased the car and entered it in the 1948 Mille Miglia where he finished 3rd in class. The car then competed in several other races in Italy. The car was then sold to an Army officer stationed in Livorno who imported it to the United States. Currently the car is being restored in David's shop. The photos below show the car in various stages of its life.



The car as delivered to Von Richthofen



At the 1948 Mille Miglia



Alpine A110 (rear) and Peugeot Darl'mat roadster at Cooper Technica (Bob Ludwigson photos)



Bugatti Type 57 Atalante rebody at Cooper Technica



The restoration in progress at Cooper Technica

Photos from the Cooper Technica Open House

Photos by Bob Abhalter



A British woman owned and raced this Peugeot Darl'mat Roadster. Host David Cooper explains its history.



The shop has a complete woodworking section, needed for this Bugatti sliding roof (above and left), and this Talbot Lago door frame (below). Woodworker Bob Ludwigson was impressed.



Visiting consultant Dr. Gundula Tutt (foreground, above) is an expert in paint conservation. She also has the skills and patience to reclaim torn and damaged leather like the seat at left.

More from Cooper Technica



David Cooper explained how the French used this Swiss-made metal former (above) to create shapes like the fender of the Talbot Lago coupe (left) in only a few passes. It was the French body builders' "secret weapon," allowing them to create complex shapes more quickly.



Extensive research is performed before work can start on cars like this Alfa 6C2500, first owned by a German Luftwaffe officer and later raced in the Mille Miglia.



David Cooper discusses the racing history of this Alpine A110



The other wartime-built 6C2500 under restoration at Cooper Technica was bodied at Pinin Farina in 1946. It is said to have influenced the design of the Jaguar XK150.

“Wartime Alfas” Article Available

Visitors at the wonderful Cooper Technica open house may remember that host David Cooper offered copies of an article he co-authored with Michele P. Casiraghi, titled “Lightweight Ahead: Alfa Romeo Design Innovations During WWII,” published in *Rare and Unique Vehicles*, Vol. 2, issue 7. The article explored design and technical innovations by Alfa, Pinin Farina, and others before, during, and immediately after the war, including the two 6C2500s we saw in his shop. The illustrated eight page article is a great overview of the ongoing design activities that continued despite the war.

If you would like a .pdf copy of the article, drop a line to rabhalter@att.net, and I’ll send you one.

Russ Whitford Remembers Dave Uihlein's P3

Hi Bob,

I sure enjoyed reading Bill Hall's story about Dave Uihlein's P3. I'm attaching my connection with that car and great times I spent with Dave.

I'm sitting here in Martinique on Uproar with way too much time on my hands. I just bought a 2003 Maserati Spyder and will have it shipped to Reina's for my return in May.

Cheers,

Russ

S/V Tumultuous Uproar

www.sailblogs.com/member/tuproar



I read with interest Bill Hall's article about the Don Lee Special P3 Alfa. I have a bit more to add to the story. I met Dave Uihlein during an Alfa club tour of his race car museum in the old Turner Hall building in Hamilton. When I mentioned I worked for SKF bearings, Dave asked me about the wheel bearings on his newly restored 1917 Mercer, the first car to win a Grand Prix race on American soil (California).

That week, I returned to Dave's shop and was horrified to see that the wheel hubs were retained only by the friction of the outer rings in the hub! A moderately hard corner could send the inner wheels flying! I made a drawing for modifications and sent him some new bearings. Dave's Banner Welder company had very competent machinists and engineers. They fixed the problem. That led to a thrilling ride in the Mercer and great friendship.

The next project Dave asked me to help with was his 1925 Duesenberg that won the Indy 500. It had twin camshafts with ball bearing intermediate supports. It is impossible to slide a bearing past cam lobes. The solution was to slide the outer ring over the cam lobes, the inner race ground into the cam shaft itself.

Then balls and cage were inserted. All of this was hopelessly rusted. We found some outer rings to fit, reground the cam shaft races, and selected balls to give proper clearance. It worked.

I remember seeing the shell of the Dan Lee Special arrive in Dave's shop. "Russ, I have a P3 Alfa." I couldn't believe it. I remember sitting my son Steve in the seat and taking his picture. He was two or three, the year 1983 or 1984. Steve still remembers it. There wasn't much left of the original car. The body had crude fairings over that beautiful radiator shell to direct more cooling into the radiator. Strangely enough, there was an additional instrument panel over the original one. The original one remained buried below.

Worst of all, that magnificent split drive shaft and independent suspension differentials were replaced by a live axle. That car sat like that for quite awhile. Dave and I discussed installing a 2600, straight 6. The intake and exhaust were on the wrong side but we were sure we could change valve seats and time the cams to pump through the head the other way. But that plan was dropped.

There was a proper, original engine owned by a collector in California. He would part with it only in exchange for a fully restored Duesenberg! Years later, Dave told me he got the engine. He outlived that collector and bought the engine from his widow!

Someone else had commissioned a company in England to make patterns for the drive gear castings and machine the gears. Dave dovetailed on that project and bought a proper, reproduction drive system. But he kept the original patina of the Dan Lee Special bodywork. It was stunning! It looked ready to put back on the track.

Years later, MM, Dave's wife told me Dave sold the 8C 2300 Touring-bodied Alfa and the P3 to a collector in England. Dave seemed to regret letting them go.

A few years later, Dave decided it was time to liquidate much of his collection. He had a friend, who had restored quite a few of his cars, stay for a few months, getting them to run as best possible. I spent a lot of time helping out when I could. OK, I was there almost every day, being self-employed. I've never filled so many leaky radiators or charged so many dead batteries. When we got one running, we would all jump in and ride around hooting and laughing. Sure was a lot of fun! 🍀

The Alfa Milano Returns

In name, at least

Last month, Alfa Romeo's CEO Jean-Philippe Imparato revealed the name of the new compact SUV to be introduced this coming April. The **Milano** will be produced alongside the Jeep Avenger and Fiat 600 at Stellantis' Tichy, Poland, plant. Apparently, the scheme of naming the marque's SUVs after Alpine mountain passes has been put to bed. The pre-Stellantis name for the subcompact was said to be Brennar, or Brenner in English.



Although the PSA-designed CMP-2 platform upon which the Milano and its sisters are based is capable of handling both gas and electric-powered vehicles, the intent is for Alfa's Milano to be BEV-only. The Jeep and the Fiat will offer a mix of gas and BEV models. It is unlikely that any new Milanos will come to the U.S. Apparently the smaller model doesn't fit into the North American marketing plan. But never say never. The B-segment SUV market is hot in Europe and could possibly sell well in the urban U.S.

Alfa Romeo Sales Up 9% for Quarter, Down 15% for Year

Alfa sold 3,308 vehicles in the 4th Quarter of 2023, up 9% from the same period in 2022. The bulk of the sales were split between Stelvio and Tonale SUVs, while only 787 Giulia models rolled out of the dealerships, roughly half the previous year's 4th quarter sales.

For the year, 2,092 Tonales were delivered, while sales of Stelvios and Giulias were down by 30% each. Total units sold were 10,898.

It's worth noting that Dodge delivered 9,314 Hornets, almost 4.5 times the number of Tonales sold.

Happy 55th Birthday, 1750 Berlina



While U.S. Alfisti could be forgiven for thinking of the handsome, if boxy, Giulia Berlina as a replacement for the earlier Giulia sedan range, this is not quite the case, as the 1750 Berlina, later the 2000, was instead developed as a replacement for the 1900 and 2000 series, last produced in 1962. When the 2000 sedans went out of production, Alfa Romeo exited the "executive class" market until the 1750 Berlina's 1968 introduction.

While the Berlina was based on many of the same mechanical bits as the Giulia range, it had a longer wheelbase and more contemporary and comfortable interior styling and design to go along with its more powerful engine. Bertone smoothed out and refined the three-box shape. The Berlina was intended as an up-market move for the marque. The Giulia Sedan continued in production in 1300- and 1600-engined versions through the '70s, but export to the States ended in 1967.

We often speak of the "1750 motor," but at 1779cc, the engine's displacement is much closer to 1.8 ltrs. The 1750 designation was chosen for the models to be evocative of the famous 6C 1750 series of the thirties, not because of the engine's displacement. According to Wikipedia, just shy of 192,000 1750 and 2000 Berlinas were produced through 1977. Perhaps 5,145 came to the U.S., but Andrew Watry opines in the [Berlina Register](#) that a higher percentage of these still survive, compared to those in other parts of the world.

Links to Like

Here's an interesting video taken at an abandoned Pininfarina assembly factory which once produced the Ferrari Testrossa and the Alfa Romeo Brera, among others.

<https://youtu.be/sWee3IoSrK0?feature=shared>

Classifieds

Alfanatic will post brief non-commercial classifieds for members and friends at no charge. Email the [editors](#) to make a submission.

Wanted

Your classified ads! Posted free! Let us know.

For Sale



NEW LISTING - 1965 Giulia Spider Veloce, chassis AR390787. I am the original owner and received delivery on 10/08/1965 at Alfa Romeo Milano, Italy. I have the Delivery Certificate,

Italian License plates, delivery instruction book and the original Pirelli tires (not on car). The Alfa has original paint, black interior seats, red carpet and floor mats. Many other extras collected over the years. In August 2023 a valve job was performed, head gasket replaced, drive shaft flex coupling, transmission mount, tie rod boots, tune and sync carbs and a complete mechanical inspection. Alfa is located in Texas and current mileage is 40,629. Price \$97,000. Contact Frank Klune at franklune@sbcglobal.net or 972-216-5396, please leave a message if no answer, I will return the call.

1957 Alfa Romeo Giulietta Spider. Originally a California car. No Rust, all body panels believed to be original and straight. Detailed engine bay, excellent white paint exterior, red interior with black piping on seats, and new black canvas top. Everything works: lights, gauges, heater etc., etc. 1300 Engine starts easily and runs smoothly. Tunnel Case transmission with very early Giulietta bent gear lever that shifts smoothly up or down.

To discuss, receive a concise summary of work done, and receive photo documentation - please Call or E-mail: Rich 773-620-1898 robrien220@yahoo.com

Minnesotan **Tim Parker** is selling an engine and block. The engine is "a pretty clean 2-liter **Alfetta engine/bell housing** with some ancillaries." The block is a "clean, washed 2-liter **Alfetta GTV block**." Both are ready for pickup at the Anoka, MN, airport and can be easily lifted into a pickup. Tim will provide photos and serial numbers and can be reached at 651-235-2776. When you call, tell him Tom Heinrich referred you.

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Jim Thiel is looking for a new home for his red **1982 Spider**. He's had it since 1989 and is the third owner. The car has traveled a little more than 67,000 miles and has always been garaged during Jim's ownership. The paint is original and the top in good condition, with a clear back window. According to Jim, the tires are in good shape. He says the leather seats and the dash have no cracks. If you're interested, you can contact Jim by email at jthiel28@wi.rr.com

Gary Tree is still trying to clean out his garage. He is parting a **1980 Spider** and has many other parts to sell, too numerous to list. An S2 Windshield, fiberglass bumpers, engine, transmission, door latches, etc. Just ask! Contact Gary at 608-209-2352, or gjtreehouse@gmail.com

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SUBMISSIONS

Do you have a story you'd like to share? Have a restoration in progress or finished? Taken a memorable road trip or have a funny car story? Pictures, lessons learned, maintenance tips? Whatever. The *Alfanatic* is always looking for material to publish. Email your submissions to the editor at rabhalter@att.net and share with your fellow Alfisti.

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