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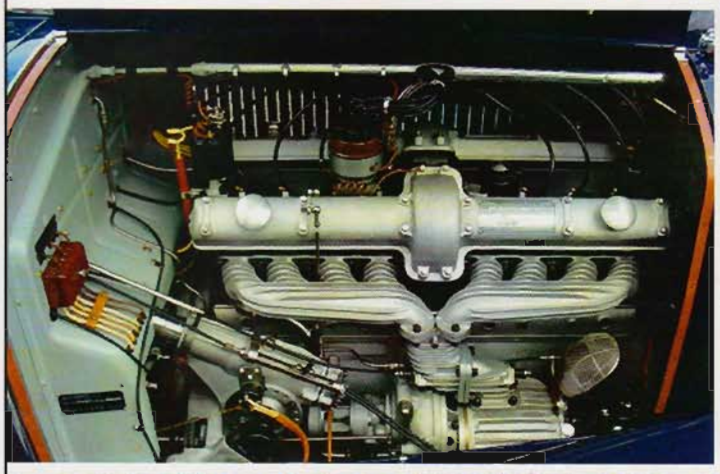
Bud Lyon's 1933 Alfa Romeo 8C 2300 Catagna



Alfa Romeo

Alfa Romeo

ALFA ROMEO RESTORATION

1933 Alfa Romeo 8C-2300 Castagna Cabriolet, Chassis # 2311214

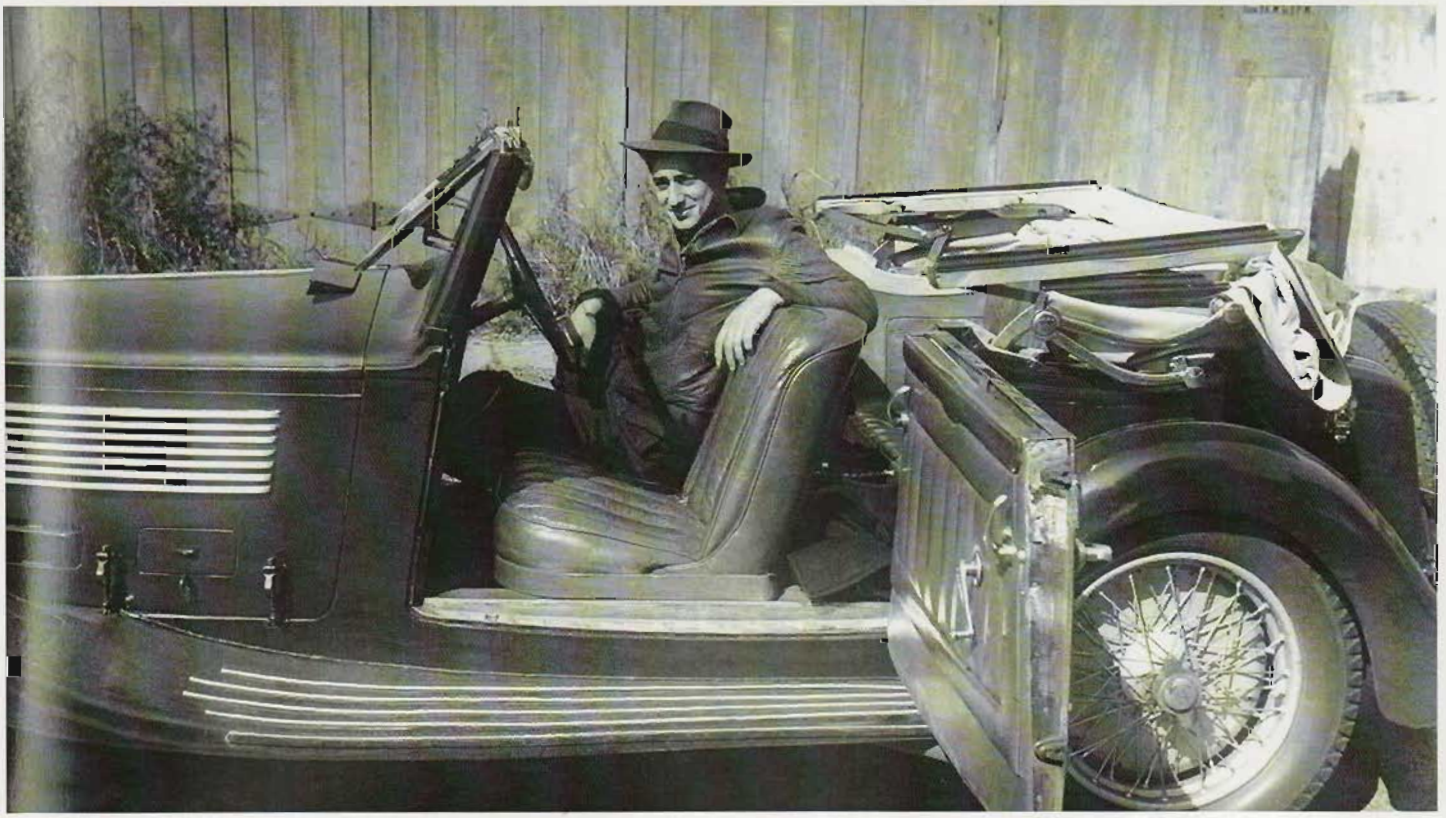
Information and pictures
provided by Gil Steward and Paul Russell & Co.

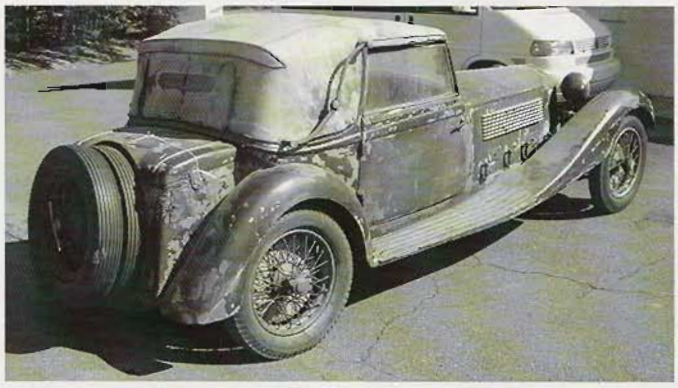
This is the story of a 1933 Alfa Romeo bought by Bud and Thelma Lyon of Kensington, NH in 2005 and completely restored by Paul Russell and Co. of Essex, MA. The restoration was begun in 2006 and completed in August of 2008. This beautifully restored car won First in Class at Pebble Beach in 2008.

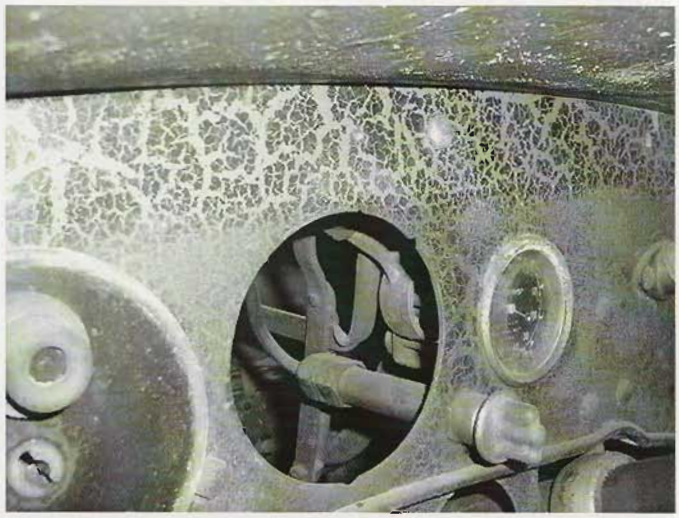
Despite having been built in 1933, the car's first registration doesn't show up until 1939, when it was purchased by Olivero Olivieri of Florence. Archival research indicated that the car went through a succession of changes to the original Castagna body before being purchased by Mr. Olivieri. A few of the older photos of the car show some of these modifications on the front fenders and hood louvers. During the paint-stripping process in restoration, the original body lines were confirmed by the clear weld lines found on the original fenders and hood moldings, as well as the modifications evident in the wood coach frame. In the restoration, these were cut and modified to the original front fender line and louvered hood of the Castagna body.

A New Jersey bill of sale in 1941 shows a Lt. Frederick MacHugh as the owner. In 1942 Haig Ksayian purchased the car from George Rand's garage in Manhattan for $1,500. It was still wearing its pre-war Italian license plate from Florence. David Sydorick bought the car for his collection in 2001 and sold it to the Lyons in 2005. When purchased by the Lyons, it appeared that the car had not been on the road since the mid-1950s.

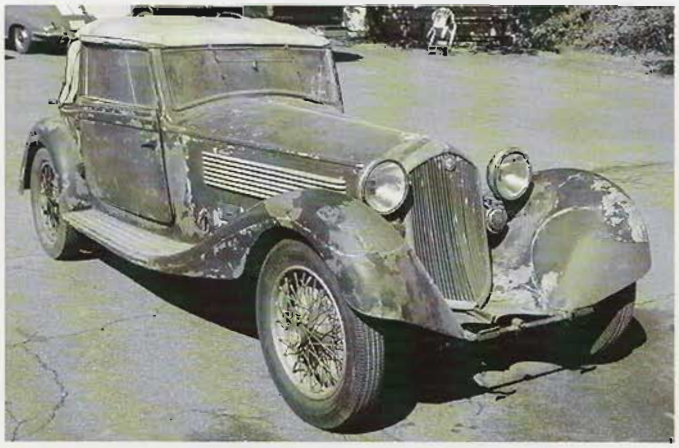
Chassis # 2311214 with owner Haig Ksayian
Photo courtesy of the Gordon Barrett Collection







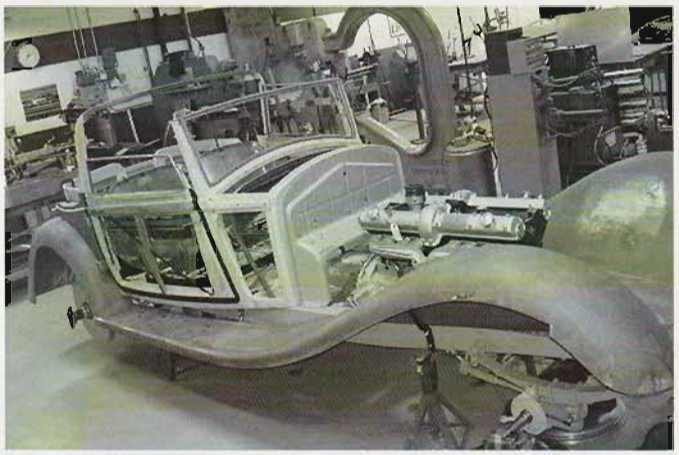
Some photos of the Alfa Romeo before it was restored.



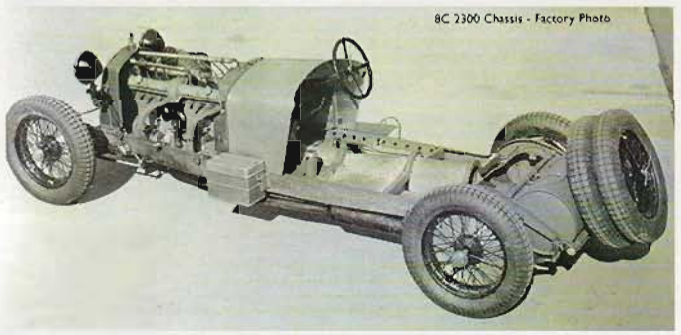
PAUL RUSSELL AND COMPANY

by Garth Story

Paul Russell and Co. started in 1978 under the name Gullwing Service Co. and was dedicated to the service of and the preservation of Mercedes-Benz cars of the 1950s, particularly the 300 SLs. It soon moved into the restoration of prewar coach built European cars and is now a 30,000 sq. ft. facility which does almost all of the restoration process completely in-house. The previous article shows how one car, an Alfa Romeo, was brought back to its original form and was recognized for that at Pebble Beach with a First in Class. Paul Russell and Co. have graciously hosted a couple of our New England Region Tech Seminars. It is always interesting to visit restoration shops like this to see what they are working on and realize that there are craftsmen out there who can still do the mechanical, upholstery, and body and coach building, just as it was done in the 1930s.



Restoration in process



Factory photo of the 8C 2300 chassis

ALFA ROMEO

by Garth Story

Alfa Romeo is one of the more rare marques in the Classic Car Club of America. Over the past couple of years I've been made aware of the marque in several ways, not the least of which has been the opportunity to see several beautiful examples of the cars themselves. The Classic Car Club recognizes all Alfas built during the Classic Era. There are 27 of them listed in the latest Handbook and Member Roster of the CCCA.

The Alfa Romeo company was founded in July of 1910 in Milan, Italy. It was originally known as Anonima Lombarda Fabbrica Automobili (A.L.F.A.), or in English, the Lombard Automobile Factory. In August of 1915 the company came under the ownership of Nicola Romeo. At that time all work at the plant was directed to the war effort. After the war the company's name changed to Alfa Romeo, and they were off and running in the car business. Enzo Ferrari became involved in the company, and his efforts lead Alfa Romeo to the inaugural world championship for Grand Prix cars in 1925. Alfa Romeo produced some really great racecars and was instrumental in the development of many advanced engine features, like variable valve timing.

Alfa Romeo is now part of the Fiat Group. This includes Fiat, Alfa, Maserati and Lancia automobiles. Recently, Fiat was involved in the rescue of Chrysler Corporation from bankruptcy.