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To: Emanuele Collo | Kidston SA

Subject: 01931 history.doc

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Emanuele,

This is my recollection of how Alfa Romeo SSZ 1900 01931 came to be stored in a barn outside of Myrtle Creek, Oregon, USA. This is based on what I was told by the long time owner Mr. Bill Ebling.

There was a gentleman who was sent to Europe to cover the 1955 race activities by a sports car magazine here stateside. I don't know the name of the magazine he was reporting for. He and his wife were following the races, traveling from circuit to circuit, when they happened upon this Alfa for sale. It had just completed competing in the Mille Miglia. They purchased the car to provide themselves with their own means of transportation to the remaining races that season. After the conclusion of racing that season, the couple decided to have the car shipped home to San Francisco. The plan was the wife was going to use it for a second car. After a short period of time of her trying to stop and start around the very steep streets that make up the city, the car was traded in on a Jaguar at a local British Motor Works dealership. Mr. Ebling saw the car advertised for sale by the dealership in the local newspaper. Incidentally, when I first inspected the car in 1997, there was a page of news adverts with this car for sale in the door flap or glove box, I don't recall which. He negotiated a deal where he traded in a MG-TD and gave them \$800 in exchange for 01931. This was sometime in 1956 or early 1957. The photos clearly show the year 56 on the license plates. Bill drove the car regularly for several years around the bay area. He told me he would race the car on rural back roads, and it was quite fast. On one occasion, he lost control and the car was rolled. He said there was quite a bit of damage to the roof area, but he found a body shop that was well versed in aluminum and they put it back as before. I think this is when it became one solid color, red. The pictures of it sitting in the driveway are from 1961. In the mid sixties, Bill relocated to the Roseburg, Oregon area. The car was not driven much up here, he did not say why. Eventually it went into storage in an outbuilding on a rural property East of Myrtle Creek, Oregon that he had purchased. I was displaying my 1959 Sprint Veloce at a local car show in 1997, when Bill introduced himself to me. We talked Alfas for a while, and he mentioned he had one stored in the area. I asked if I could take a look at it, and we met a few days later to do so. When the door to the barn slid open and I saw this car, I new it was special. After recording the Vin and engine numbers, I learned it was very special! After getting the history of the car pieced together, I met Bill at his home to see if I could purchase the car. Upon entering into his living room, I see an oil on canvas painting of this car hanging above the fireplace mantle. I new then that this was not going to be an easy buy. After being turned down in my attempts to purchase the car, I shared with Bill the history of his car as I had learned. He was very surprised, he had no idea of its provenance. I don't think it really impacted his decision whether to sell to me or not, he just loved that car. After he and his wife had passed, I contacted one of his sons, hoping still to get a chance to purchase it. He made the comment that it would not mattered how much money I had brought to the table, his dad would never have sold it.

Vern Liesinger
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