

ALSO, FOR SALE

A previous Member of the Fiat Register, Robert Britcher, has been in touch with a Crown Wheel and Pinion for sale for a Fiat 509, Robert writes as follows:

About 20 years ago I bought a new cwp from Australia and understood that this was one of a batch made in Oz in the 1950's; the vendor was Richard Unkles, so I suspect that the unit is as described.

It never got used as I got old unit welded up and then later sold the car.

I am unlikely to ever have another 509, so would like to sell. It cost me £ 325 then – but would be content to recover half – say £ 160?

I would be grateful if you could put the word out and see whether a current 509 owner would like to buy it.

Robert can be contacted on robertgbritcher@hotmail.com

NEWS OF MEMBERS

New Member # 968, David Reidie of Australia has joined the Fiat Register with the ex-Monica Whincop Fiat Balilla 508s featured in the last edition of the Bulletin.

The Register is sharing the information it holds on this car with Automotive Masterpieces, who will be assembling this onto one of their historical websites, the address of which is below.

<https://automotivemasterpieces.com/cars/AU-9523>

It's so good to hear of a car that was lost to the Register 30 years ago has reappeared, and in such good hands.

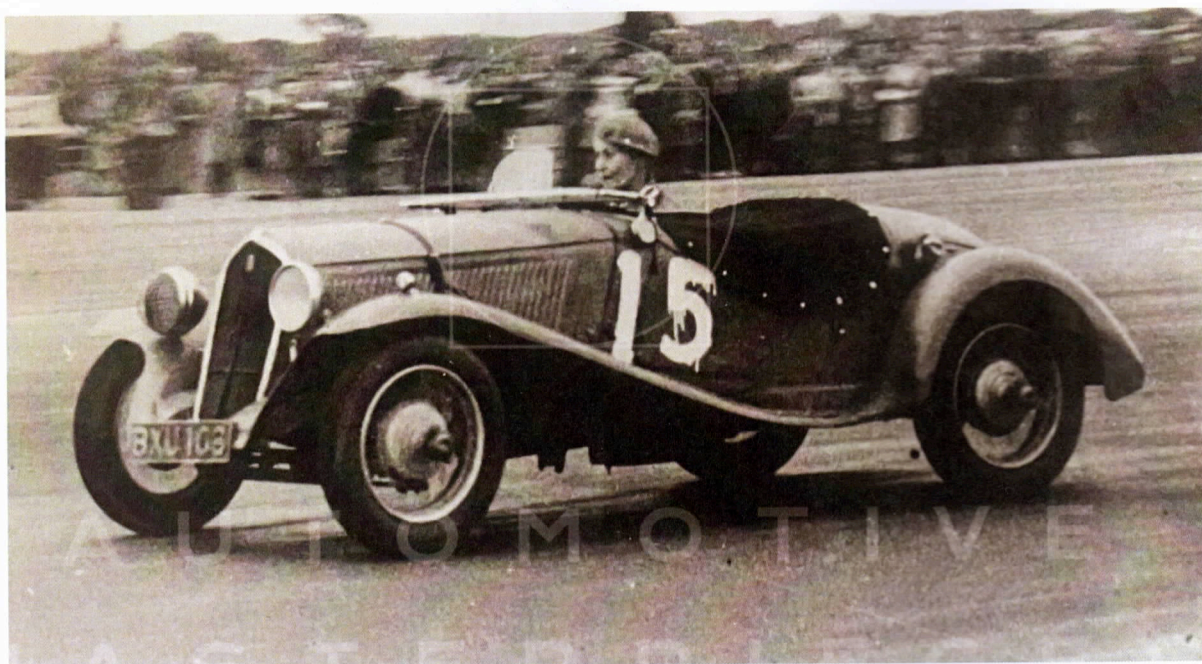
Some of the information on the Automotive Masterpieces site is repeated below, along with a couple of photographs, for which the Register would like to thank for being able to reproduce here:

The Fiat 508 S Balilla Sport with chassis 508s068686 and body by Carrozzerie Speciali Fiat, was first registered in the UK in 1935 with license plate BXU 106. It is believed that around 20 Balilla "Coppa d'Oro" models were imported into England. (Actually more like 40 – 50 Ed).

There is no information about its very early years, except that the specimen had as distinctive features the windscreen, Rudge knock off wheels, and right-hand drive, but, thanks to the information in the letters preserved by the Fiat Registry, UK, we have access to useful documents on the car and we are able to confirm Mr. Hull as the owner in the year 1939. Thanks to the same source, we know that Mr. Marcus Hunter was the owner in 1947 and that, that same year, he transferred it to Muriel Monica Whincop, who had remarried Alfred Clarence "Twink" Whincop in 1939. The two Whincops were passionate amateur drivers; Twink was a well-known figure in the Bugatti world before and after the war and, unfortunately, took his own life in 1952.

Monica is described as "a strangely attractive woman, whose appearance was quite different from most women on the Bugatti scene at the time." She was a very influential woman in aircraft production and a Prescott paddock marshal. She competed shortly after World War II, in the UK, with several cars, hers and her husband's, but became known thanks to her small and fierce Balilla "Coppa d'Oro." Motorsport in May 1947 reads: "Monica Whincop now has a most intriguing little car, in the form of a 1935 sports Fiat Balilla with a 1938 1,100-c.c. Balilla engine. She contemplates things like twin S.U.s, raised compression, stronger clutch springs, etc., so as to go even quicker than at present." It seems that the original 995 engine blew up, and that a 1100 was fitted (probably from 1947 to 1950).

Monica Whincop, with the Balilla Sport, chassis 508s068686, participated in the first post-war racing car event in the UK on July 13, 1947: the Joint Invitation Race Meeting, where they qualified 1st in class.



On August 30, 1947, they were again 1st in class at the V.S.C.C. Prescott Hillclimb, earning the "Fastest Ladies' Time." As reported in Motor Sport Magazine of October 1947, Monica had a red outfit matching the car, which carried a terse political notice on its tail, referring to the coming motorless regime due to fuel shortages.

Monica Whincop also raced with the Balilla in 1948, appearing at the Prescott Speed Hill Climb where, as reported by Motor Sport Magazine of July 1948, the car was penalized in terms of engine displacement and at the Brighton Speed Trials. And, on September 18, 1948, she participated in a historic event: the First Goodwood Motor Race Meeting. On the inaugural day of the Goodwood Circuit, Monica Whincop presented a bouquet to the Duchess of Richmond and Gordon, then the Duke opened the event. Unfortunately, she did not start the race due to gearbox problems.

The Balilla Sport, chassis 508s068686, was sold in 1950 and was found 10 years later in Christchurch (UK) in the hands of Miss England. On July 11, it was described as follows by the person who examined it: "it is red on bald tires, arrow screen has at some time being fitted, framework restorable, body structure very weak and requires complete renewal..."

Again, the correspondence found helps to reconstruct the history of the specimen, its owners, and the care they took of the car, which in 1966 was purchased by the well-known collector Giulio Vignale, who brought it to Italy and began its restoration. Among the Italian owners that followed was Pietro Vergnano, Journalist and author of several books on aviation and motoring including "La Sport e I suoi artigiani" together with Andrea Curami. The Balilla Sport, chassis 508s068686, participated in its first Mille Miglia re-enactment in 1988 and is featured in many automotive publications.

In 2007 it obtained the FIVA Identification document for the first time. From 2010 to 2013 it belonged to Daniele Turrisi, then passed into a private collection. From 2014 to 2024 it has been a regular presence at the most important races, from the Mille Miglia to the Gran Premio Nuvolari, to the Targa Florio. An interesting note: with the new owner, the car has once again been listed by the UK Fiat Register, after a hiatus of over 60 years

