

Driven by Clemente Biondetti, this Alfa Romeo 8C 2900B MM won the 1938 Mille Miglia. The car's elegant superleggera (super light) body is a structure of small diameter tubes covered with thin alloy panels and was built by Italy's Carrozzeria Touring Company.

The Spirit of Competition

Dr. Fred Simeone's Award-winning
Collection of Racing Sports Cars

Article by Stuart Leuthner

Photography by William Taylor

On a Saturday afternoon in November 2013, an energized crowd congregated in an asphalt parking lot in Philadelphia's southwest industrial corridor. Numbering more than 650, they were there to see a group of very special automobiles in action. The cars included a 1970 Porsche 917 in the Martini Racing team's distinctive "psychedelic" livery (paint job), a 1966 Ford GT40Mk II that raced at the 24 hours of Le Mans, a 1964 Cobra Daytona Coupe that won the GT class at Sebring which set 23 speed and endurance records at the Bonneville Salt Flats and a 1963 Corvette Grand Sport, one of only five produced to challenge the Shelby Cobras, (race cars built during the 1960s).

Granted, the three-acre site did not allow the drivers to shift, but the sights, sounds and smells as the quartet of racing thoroughbreds weaved their way around the orange parking cones was enough for those lucky enough to witness the display of racing eminence. "I've read about these cars," one twenty-something enthusiast explained, "but I never thought I would see them running. They sound as good as they look."

Each of the cars, along with a brief history of their racing heritage, was intro-

duced by Dr. Frederick Simeone, a noted neurosurgeon and founder of the Simeone Foundation Automotive Museum. In addition to the four cars tooling around the parking lot, more than sixty other important race cars spanning seven decades are housed in the museum adjacent to the parking lot. Founded in 2008, the Simeone Foundation Automotive Museum was conceived by Dr. Simeone to not only house the collection, but to introduce the public to the major automotive advances generated by the rigors of competing on the world's racetracks.

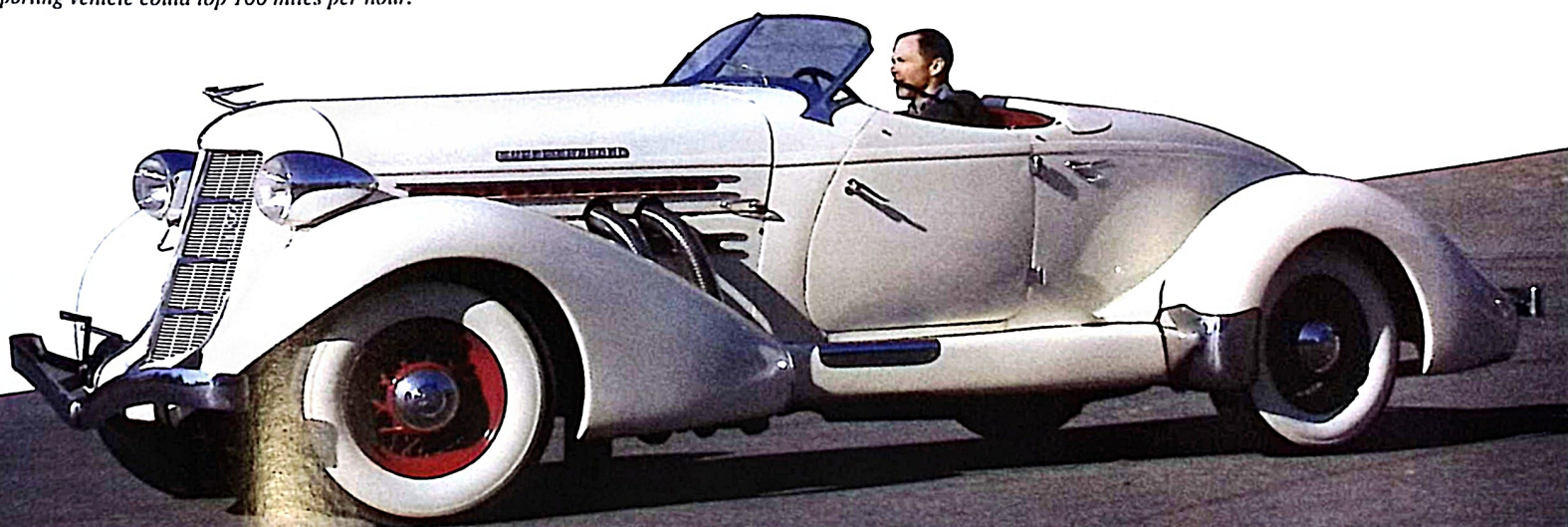
Dr. Simeone's father, also a physician, began to collect cars in the 1950s. Frederick not only helped his father work on the cars, he caught the collecting bug and the elder Simeone acquired a 1949 Alfa Romeo for his son. Even while Frederick was studying medicine at Temple University and the Mayo Clinic, teaching at Harvard and serving as head of neurosurgery at Pennsylvania Hospital, he was quietly adding cars to his growing collection. The cars were originally stored in a garage in downtown Philadelphia. Friends and interested parties would be invited to see them, but Dr. Simeone wanted to create a venue where the cars could be enjoyed by the public in an environment reflecting their history and racing heritage.

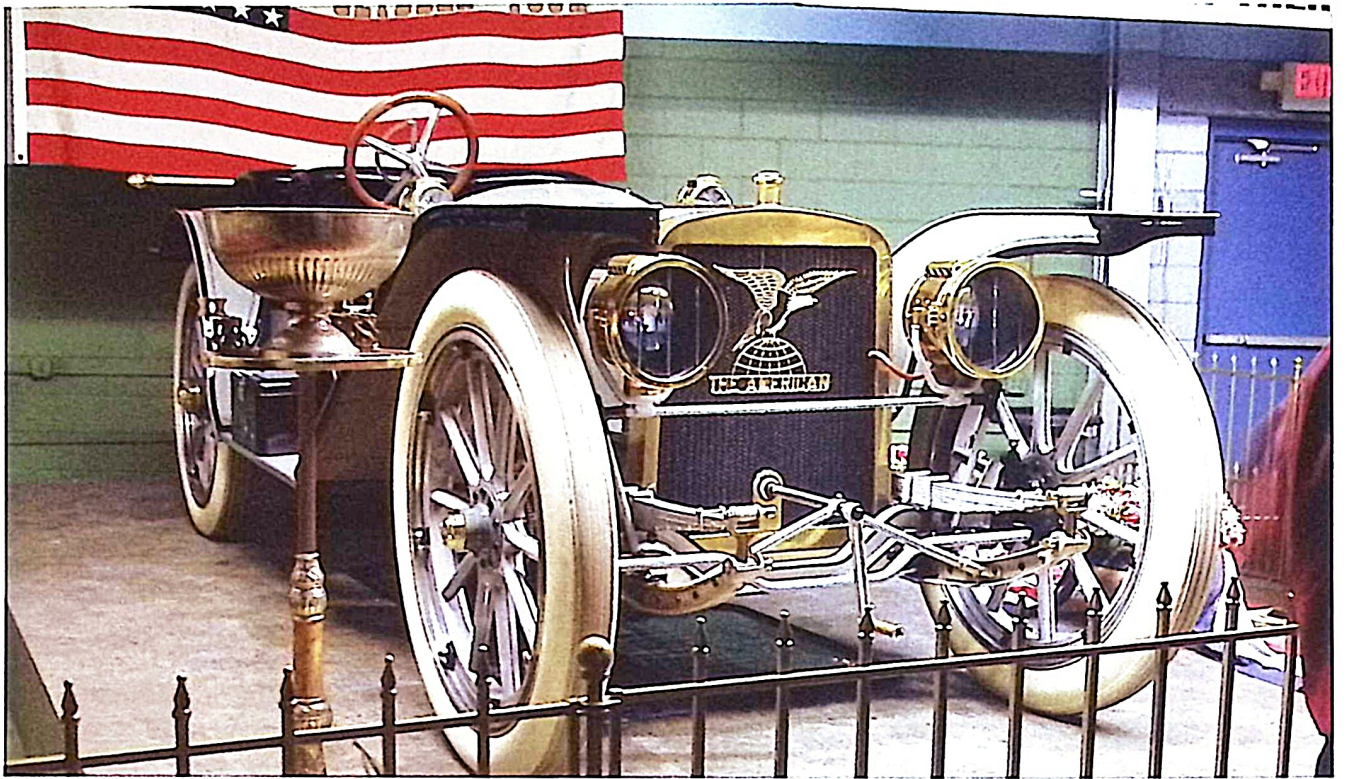
"There are few illustrations of the effects of competition as dramatic and beautiful as the evolution of the racing sports car," Dr. Simeone explains. "This is the theme of our exhibition. Here you can learn how racing improves the breed. You can see the evolution of the race car as the result of seven decades of the "spirit of competition."

Housed in a 100,000-square-foot refurbished engine manufacturing plant, the Simeone Foundation Automotive Museum showcases its collection in a series of engaging dioramas. A 1921 Vauxhall is displayed in a scene recreating the popular car trials held in England to test a car's power and durability. Italy's Mille Miglia, a popular race from Brescia to Rome and back again punished cars and drivers. Cars often broke down and a 1924 Lancia Lambda is parked in a scene depicting an Italian rifornimento (refueling), complete with a vintage gas pump and weathered facade. In another impressive display, nine cars beginning with a 1933 Alfa Romeo and ending with a 1970 Porsche 917 are lined up in a recreation of the pits at Le Mans.

Rather than restoring his cars to the better than new condition found at auctions and Concours d' Elegance, Dr. Simeone maintains many of his cars in "as

A 1935 Auburn 851 Supercharged Speedster photographed during a Simeone Foundation Demonstration Day. Popular with movie stars, both Marlene Dietrich and George Murphy owned Speedsters. The handsome sporting vehicle could top 100 miles per hour.





Located in Indianapolis, the American Motor Car Company introduced the "underslung" roadster in 1906. With its frame located below the axles, the underslung car was rakishly low for the time. The Simeone Foundation's 1909 model is fitted with forty-inch wheels needed to provide ground clearance on early roads.

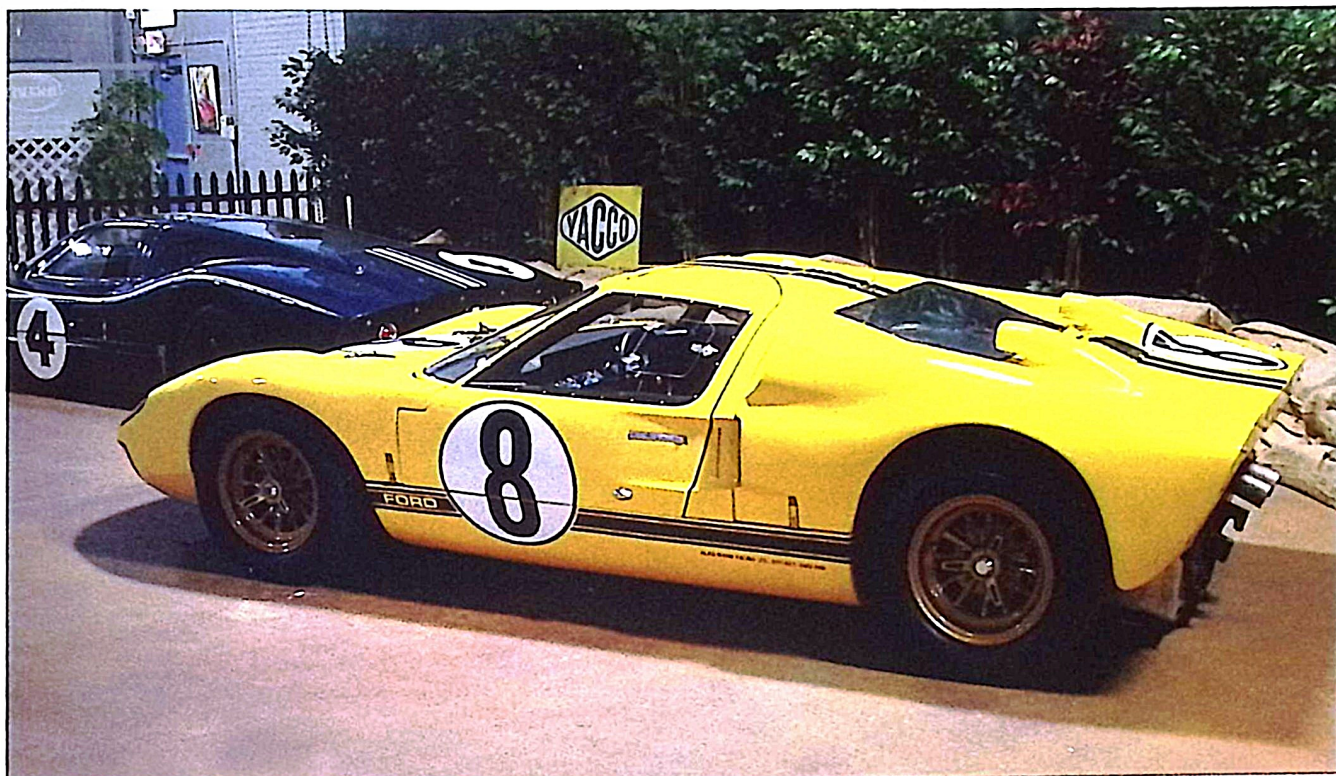


Six Shelby Daytona Coupes were built between 1964 and 1965. This example has an extremely colorful history. The car won the 12 Hours of Sebring in 1964, set 25 world speed records at the Bonneville Salt Flats, disappeared for 30 years and was just selected as the very first automobile to be designated as historically significant by the Department of the Interior.

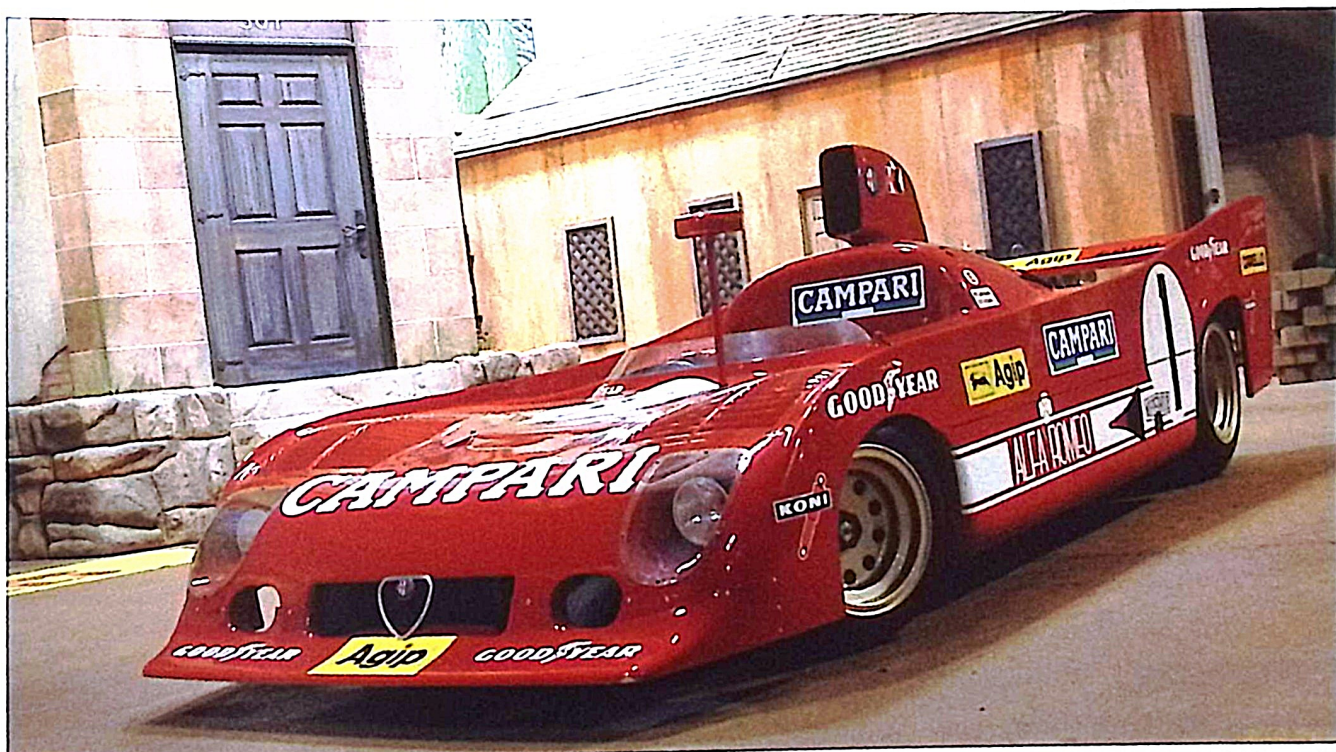
found" condition, or as one writer put it, "a patina of honest accomplishment." In an effort to explain his thoughts on restoration versus conservation, Dr. Simeone, along with

other noted contributors published *The Stewardship of Historically Important Automobiles*, a book that won the International Historic Motoring Awards "Publication of the Year."

In 2011, the Simeone Foundation Automotive Museum won another award when it beat out Europe's major racing car museums and was named Museum of the Year by



Built to challenge Ferrari, the Ford GT40 dominated the 1966 running of the 24 Hours of Le Mans, crossing the finish line in first, second and third places. The Simeone Foundation's 1966 Ford Mk II was put through its paces during the museum's demonstration day in November 2013.



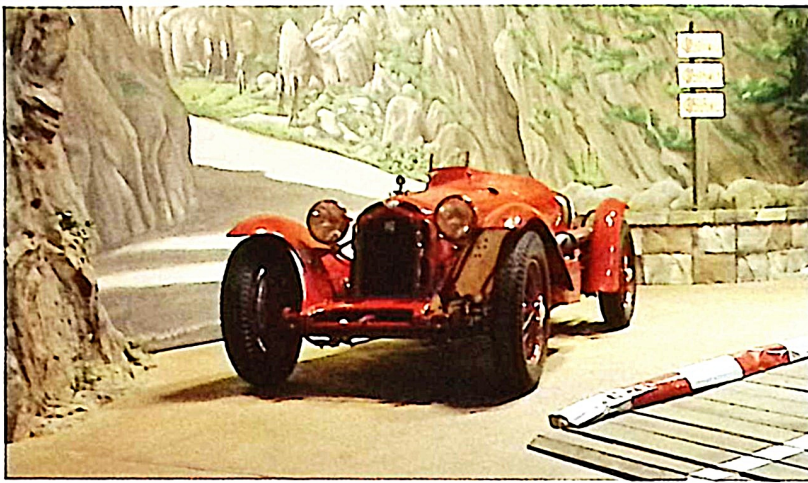
Introduced in 1973, the Alfa Romeo 33TT 12 was an extremely successful race car. Driven by Nino Vaccarella and Arturo Merzario, a 33TT 12 won the 1975 Targa Florio, a grueling endurance race run on public streets in the mountains of Sicily.

the International Historic Motoring Awards. Judges included musician and vintage car racer Nick Mason, Pebble Beach chief judge Ed Gilbertson, five times Le Mans winner

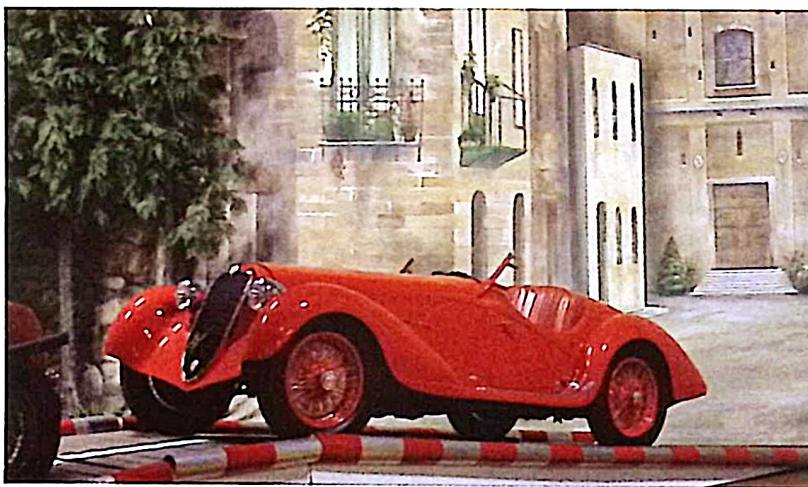
Derek Bell and design director of Jaguar cars Ian Callum. Commenting on the award, Dr. Simeone said, "This is an enormous honor for the Simeone Automotive Museum, espe-

cially considering the quality of the other institutions that were considered."

Dr. Simeone believes it is imperative to show the cars in action.



Piloted by Franco Cortese, this 1933 Alfa Romeo 8C 2300 Monza, took second place at the 1933 Mile Miglia. During the evening before the race, the car caught fire but a heroic effort by the driver and his team had the car ready to go the next morning.



Powered by a supercharged inline eight-cylinder engine, this 1937 Alfa Romeo 8C 2900A raced in the 1937 Mille Miglia. Driven by Giuseppe Farina and Stefano Meazza, the car finished a very respectable second.

"If you have a clock museum," he explains, "you want the clocks to work". Introduced in 2009, the Driving Demonstration Days (known to fans as Demo Days) are held on the fourth Saturday of each month, weather permitting, at twelve noon. A group of cars are selected to reflect a theme or represent a specific marque. The November 2013 event, titled the *People's Choice*, was unique in that the cars were selected by email voting. Demonstration Days scheduled for 2014 include *LeMans Rules* on March 8, featuring five cars that ran in the pre-war years at LeMans. On April 26, *What was the Mille Miglia?* will showcase three Alfa Romeos and a Maserati.

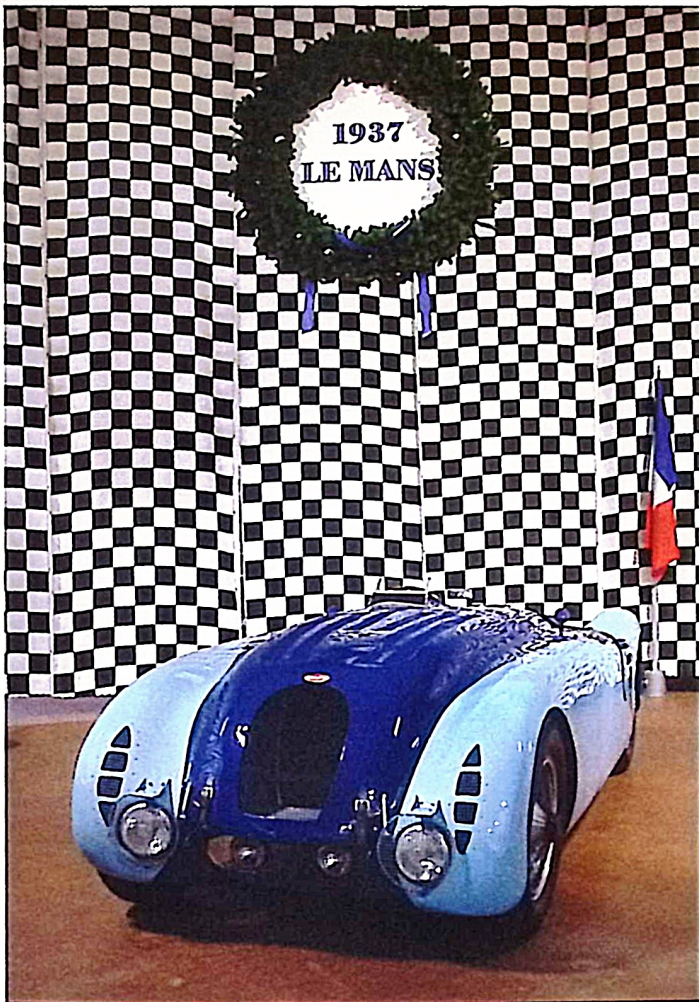
"You can go into a museum and see things that are untouchable," says Kevin Kelly, the museum's curator, "or you can read about them, but these cars were designed for a purpose – to drive them."

Please note that in addition to the Demonstration Days held on the 4th Saturday of the month, the Simeone Foundation Automotive Museum has added in 2014 a second series - Racing Legends Days - on the 2nd Saturday of most months. Please visit the website www.SimeoneMuseum.org for the full schedule.

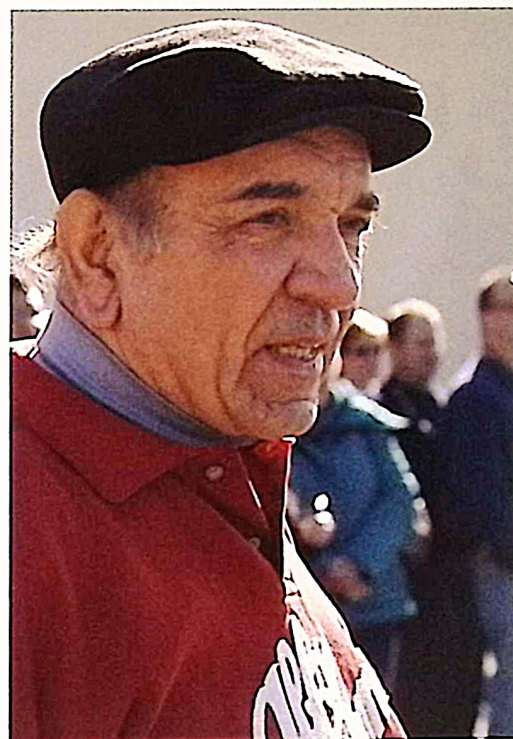


Founded in 1947 by Bill France, the National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR) is one of the most popular sports franchises in the United States. Included in the Simeone Foundation's NASCAR collection, a replica of the 1938 Ford Coupe driven by Louise Smith, an early competitor known as "the first lady of NASCAR."

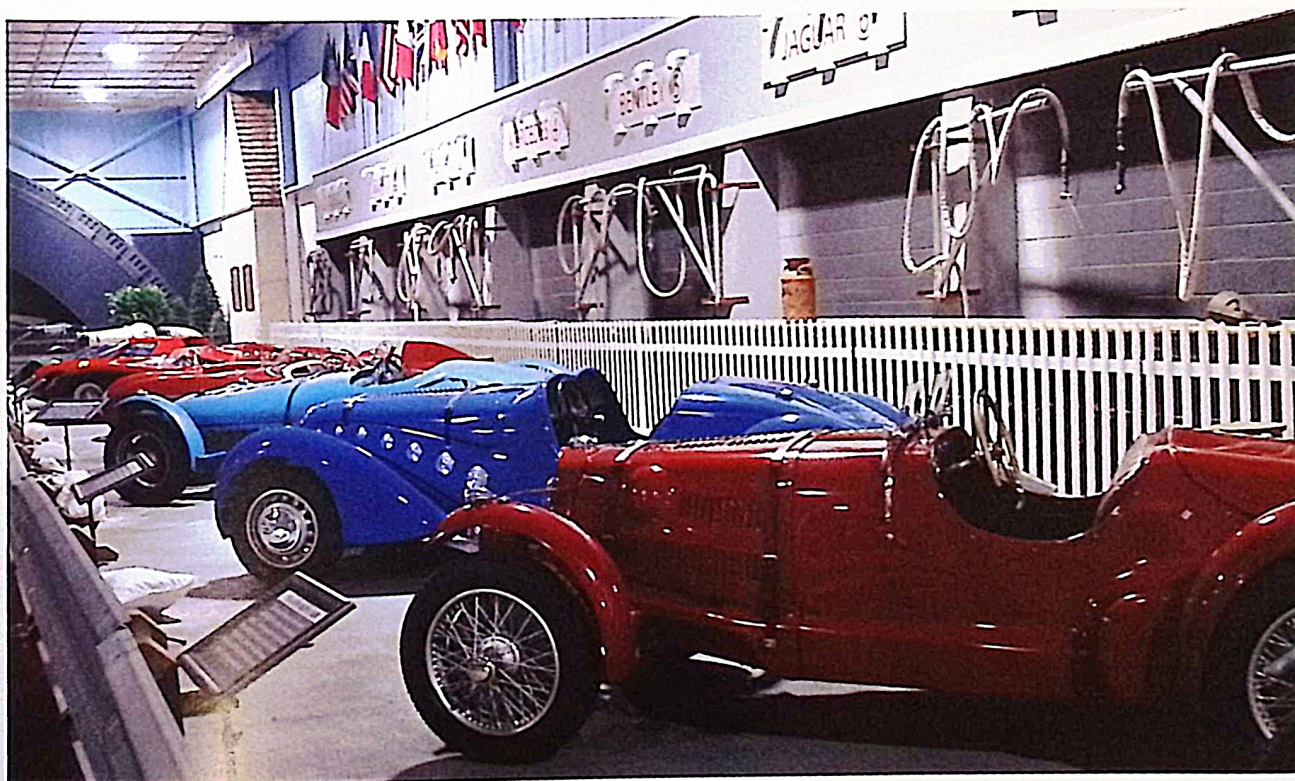
The Spirit of Competition



Designed by Ettore Bugatti's son, Jean, the Bugatti 57G was nicknamed "the Tank" due to its fully enclosed body work. Only three of the cars were built and their streamlined bodies provided them with better fuel economy and higher speeds. Winner of the 1937 24 Hours of Le Mans, the museum's example is the only surviving 57G.



Dr. Frederick Simeone, a prominent neurosurgeon, caught the car collection bug from his father. The Simeone Foundation Automotive Museum was created to share Dr. Simeone's collection with the public. "There are few illustrations," Dr. Simeone explains, "of the effects of competition as dramatic, and beautiful, as the evolution of the racing sports car."



The 24 Hours of Le Mans is the most prestigious endurance sports car race in the world. Displayed in a recreation of the pits at Le Mans, this line up of racing thoroughbreds demonstrates how technology changed the race's contestants between 1933 and 1970.

CHARMOS



Winter/Spring 2014

\$6.95

Rolex 24

A Window of Time
The Galapagos

Simone Foundation Automotive
Museum of Racing Sports Cars

Hermès Arceau Lift