

## **WHEELS - Artifacts Provide Link To Glory Days Of Auto**

*By Robert Morrison - THE OTTAWA CITIZEN*

*Friday, November 27, 1998*

Our links with the glory days of the automobile become ever more tenuous with the passage of time and the passing of people connected with those days. Those who revere the automobile's history realize the importance of finding artifacts that connect us to this past.

Men such as W.C. Durant (founder of General Motors), W.O Bentley, Ferdinand Porsche and Ettore Bugatti, whose names sometimes live on in marques available today, are gone.

The heroic racing drivers such as Hawthorne, Villoresi, Fangio and Sir Malcom Campbell, who added colour to the automobile's history, are gone.

J. Ditlev Scheel was an automotive historian who had contact with all these men. He amassed a considerable body of historical automotive artifacts such as photographs, drawings, paintings, patent documentation and models.

Mr. Scheel used these contacts and his own experience in European endurance racing (driving his own Bentley or Bugatti) to write about and photograph the period of automotive history in which he lived. An adroit writer and draftsman, Mr. Scheel wrote well-researched and illustrated articles for such periodicals as *Automobile Quarterly*. His exhaustively researched and copiously illustrated book, *Cars of the World*, was published in English in 1963 and 1964. While now out of print, it is a real find for any student or collector of automotive history.

Mr. Scheel, born in Copenhagen in 1918, entered the Danish foreign service after taking a law degree at Copenhagen University. He was Danish consul general in Montreal in 1961 and commissioner general for Danish participation at Expo 67. He later received other ambassadorial postings in South and Central America but Canada had captured his heart and he retired here in 1979.

Mr. Scheel is now gone, having died in 1992, but links he forged with the automobile's past will not suffer the darkness of storage, which would attenuate their significance over time. Rather, this vast wealth of historically important assets will be made available at auction tomorrow at the Martintown Community Center near Cornwall. The auction begins at 10 a.m.

Included in this lifetime collection of automobilia are postcards, illustrations and paintings, many of them original and signed by such personages as Sir Malcolm

Campbell. (Campbell established the land speed record of 276.82 m.p.h. at Daytona Beach in 1935 in his car Blue Bird.)

There is an original program from the 24th Italian Grand Prix (Sept.13, 1953) bearing the signatures of Mike Hawthorne (Formula One World Champion. 1958), Alberto Ascari, Gigi Villoresi, Nino Farina, Juan Fangio (F1 World Champion, 1951, '54, '55, '56 and '57), and Felice Bonetto.

Other items of automobilia include models of American and European automobiles by such renowned manufacturers as Dinky and Corgi, most still in their original boxes. There are vehicle badges of such makes as Jaguar, Lotus and Maserati as well as a collection of Bugatti steering wheels.

Items may be viewed at the auction site starting at 8:30 a.m. Additional information can be obtained from Theresa E. Taylor and Associates Auctioneering by calling 1-613-347-2804 or 1-613-933-6210.