

Rural Wisconsin's prime farmland just west of Lake Winnebago is hardly where you'd expect to find North America's foremost Ferrari restoration facility, a cluster of shops totaling 68,000 sq. ft. called Motion Products. Its staff of 30-plus artisans is guided by company partners Wayne Obry, John Kies and Bill Murphy. Their customers are many of the most recognized and winning entrants on the exclusive Concours d'Elegance circuit headlined by Pebble Beach, Villa d'Este, Cavallino, Meadow Brook, Amelia Island and, of course, the Ferrari Nationals. In a pastoral region where the iconic leaping deer logo is a frequent sight, the prancing horse has found a unique home.

"We're fortunate we're here in the country,"



Dustin Wetmore re-installs Le Mans stone guard on this 1959 LWB Ferrari 250 GT Spyder California alloy Competizione, most famous for surviving Cal Spyners for its '59 Le Mans 5th overall and multiple Concours wins.



In CNC machine room, Jim Wallner (left) and Wayne Obry inspect Borranis' improved hub strength 15-inch Record 3690 wheel for 250 SWB Ferraris. MPI recently became sole distributor for Borranis in North America.



Customer Jack Thomas' 100-point Ferrari 340 America alloy Ghia-body Berlinetta. Note purposely dissimilar driving lights, one for fog, the other a spot.

Obry tells me, stepping into MPI's office lobby where sit a gleaming Ferrari GTO and revered 8C 2300 Alfa Romeo. He explains that siting in Wisconsin, far from our crowded coasts, helps with making his services affordably attractive. Besides, Obry grew up in these non-hectic environs. Physically, he's tall, slow-gaited, and speaks in an affable Wisconsin tone. Emotionally, he's all about automobiles and how to bring them back to original life. "I was a car nut since I could walk," he says. Qualifying the idiom as kind of tongue-in-cheek, "Automotive Archeology" is what he says they do here. Five minutes with this guy and you've gotta' love him.

Hanging out at Motion Products' shops is like living the answers to my questions of how on earth a 100-point Ferrari ever gets done. Underlying all is the hard-earned bedrock of it. Says Obry, "We developed what I call 'intellectual assets and experience'—paid for in time, study, sacrifice and mistakes."

What Obry and his partners have learned of late is the importance of being able to make parts no longer available at any price. Implementing this, MPI has adopted the wizardry of laser scanning, rapid prototyping and CAD and CNC technology, along with software-driven machinery to carry out the processes of creating from scratch a part scaled precisely to the either unavailable or unreliable original. Case in point: the timing cover on a Ferrari 340 America. "When we got the car," says Obry, "the timing chain had torn up, and somebody had tried to weld the magnesium front cover. Well, try to buy a timing cover for a 4.1 Lampredi engine! There aren't any, and welding attempts were futile. So we used our digital scanner to scan a good cover, made a Styrofoam cover to prove the program, and, after this was proven dimensionally and everything was sound, we used the program to make a cover out of billet magnesium—and you can't tell the difference."

New technology can and does serve the restoration industry in marvelous and accepted ways, but there are still the old panel beating, hand polishing and other painstaking tasks absolutely essential to the trade. In my two days





FROM IMPECCABLE VINTAGE SHOW CARS TO ELEGANT DAILY DRIVERS, THIS FERRARI RESTORATION ENTERPRISE MASTERS THE ART OF PERFECTION YEAR AFTER YEAR.

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY WILLIAM EDGAR

MOTION PRODUCTS, INC.



MPI personnel, left to right: Jerry Koepsel, Debbie Lambie, Jim Wallner, Wayne Obry, Dan Maas, David Jensen, Jim Seelow, Dustin Wetmore, Rod Evers, Chip Pelnar, Bill Murphy, Nick Yost, Mike Yingling, John Kies. (Not Pictured: Bruce Beatty, Mark Buhler, Christ Dietz, Cliff Ebben, Dale Erickson, Dave Kettner, Chris Kies, Kris Knutson, Dan Maes, Bill Maske, Bryan May, Steve Mondloch, Travis Pire, Dan Rhodes, Phil Sasman, Dan Schultz, Aaron Stauber, Ryan Vandenberg.)



A new door panel is fitted to the SWB Ferrari Comp Berlinetta, replacing the old panel damaged beyond repair by metal corrosion.



David Jensen buffs an aluminum quarter-window perimeter trim for the Ferrari 212 Touring competition coupe.



Mike Yingling water-sprays 1951 Ferrari 212 Touring competition coupe during wet sanding process of car painting, which takes up to three weeks from bare metal to gloss finish.



Customer Chris Cox's 1962 Ferrari GTO had been crashed and re-bodied, and finally restored to original along with Swedish livery it was raced on at Le Mans and Targa Florio.

spent at MPI, I watched these jobs performed on a mouth-watering array of vintage Ferraris—SWB Berlinetta to historic Le Mans Cal Spyder and “double-bubble” Zagato Tour de France, to mention but a few examples. All are being either refreshed for customers or nut-and-bolt restored in preparation for the upcoming Pebble Beach Concours d’Elegance, where the efforts of MPI have characteristically fielded 100-point class winners, though have not, rather unbelievably, won a Pebble Best of Show. Not yet.

The story of one such Pebble Beach class winner—Peter and Kacey McCoy’s Ferrari Series I Pinin Farina Cabriolet s/n 1075 GT—is not only illustrative of MPI’s most difficult restoration to date, but fascinating in Oby’s recounting. “The car,” he tells me, “as result of a California wildfire, was significantly damaged when the building’s overhead beams came crashing down on top of it. Everything was smashed and burned.” While much of the car survived—chassis, engine, running gear, seat frames—the body itself was so ruined that the most efficient fix would have been to build an entirely new metal skin. But then it would be a “re-bodied” car and suffer the lowered esteem and value that goes with it. The McCoy’s wanted their Ferrari to be the real, er, thing.

“The whole car,” Oby continues, “was a combination of a lot of help from a lot of people. John Clinard let us digitize the sister Cabriolet by surface scanning his entire automobile. Steve Beckman then made a wooden buck in California from the scans. So, at great length and with great difficulty, we cut body sections off the McCoy car along their original seams, re-shaped and re-fitted them to the buck from Clinard’s car, and welded them back onto the McCoy chassis. To serve as an invaluable guide, Hilary Raab loaned us his matching PF Spyder for a whole year. All in all, we saved 70 percent of the original metal on the burned car, so it’s technically not a re-body.”

The McCoy’s fully restored s/n 1075 GT was judged 100 points at Pebble Beach on August 17, 2008, to win its Ferrari Grand Touring Class. Ironically, another 100-point Ferrari in the same class, Jack Thomas’ 340 America Ghia Coupe s/n 0148A, also restored by MPI, occasioned a rare tie-breaker. The draw was broken—it couldn’t have been scripted more dramatically—by a ruling that the degree of difficulty for the restoration of the McCoy’s crushed Cabriolet was greater than that of the Ghia coupe, which had been a drivable rally and track car when it arrived for its Motion Products resto.

From MPI headquarters out on State

Road 76 in Neenah—Winnebago tribal word for “running water” that refers to the area’s Fox River—it’s a short hop in Oby’s Cadillac sedan to the other two MPI locations. There’s the engine and collision repair facility on Main Street in which MPI’s 3D scanning also takes place, and the Extreme Performance division on Kuehn Court that houses their chassis dyno, a “must” for Wisconsin’s snow-laden, highway-salted winters.

Says Oby, “The cars here don’t get on the road until after at least two spring rains to wash the salt off, and our chassis dyno has been an enormous tool. We use it to set wear patterns, for example, on a new ring and pinion, and we check transmissions, vibrations, and so forth. We get carburetion tuning under load driving conditions even better than with our engine dyno.”

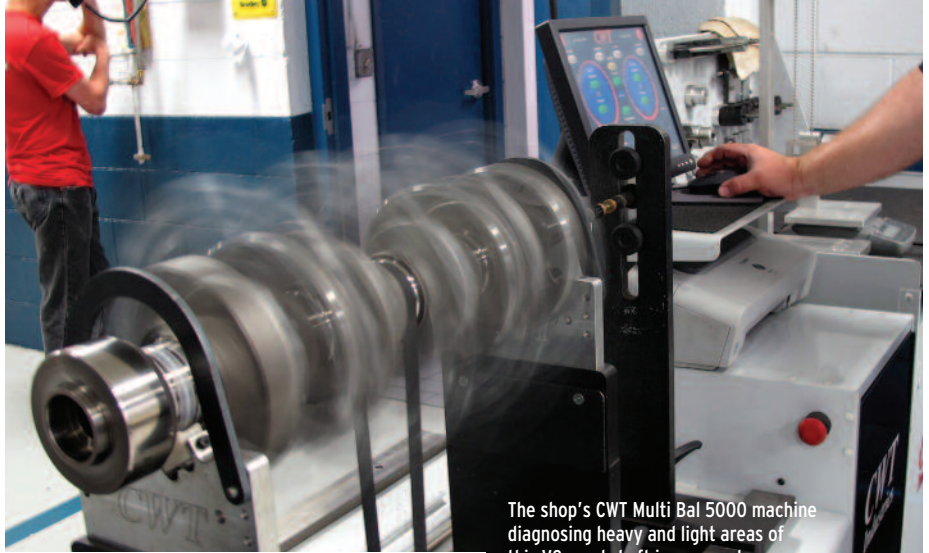
Back at hq, I have time to spend with company partner John Kies working at the industrial Juki sewing machine, stitching up leather upholstery sections going into a Ferrari coupe. It’s his own business entity here—Kies Upholstery—in addition to John being the cloth top and leather interior master he is for MPI.

Third partner Bill Murphy is just back from Italy where, with MPI’s Jim Wallner, they signed a contract with Borrani, making Motion Products sole North American distributor of the vintage car world’s “gold standard” wire wheels. Along with MPI’s 3D and CNC applications made available to the industry, the Borrani deal adds to MPI’s profile and revenue, a.k.a. forward-thinking good sense. “This diversity,” says Oby, “gives us greater and greater in-depth capabilities that most shops in the world, certainly in the United States, don’t possess. So, to maintain and continue to gain our market share makes us more and more attractive. We have guys who can run software and talk to computers, and they’re nothing short of brilliant.”

I have to marvel at the number and caliber of Ferraris and Alfa Romeos that have received the Motion Products touch, whether mild refreshment or complete restoration. An entire wall is devoted to framed photos of the company’s show world triumphs. One is the first of Ferrari’s 166 MM series Barchettas to come to America (s/n 0002 MM). “We got the car disassembled,” Oby tells me, “and put it together for Pebble where it won class with 100 points.”

There’s also the one-off 375 America built for Fiat head Gianni Agnelli. “When we got this car the paint had flown off in chips,” Oby chuckles, “so in-house we called it ‘The

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The shop’s CWT Multi Bal 5000 machine diagnosing heavy and light areas of this V8 crankshaft in a procedure to achieve zero balance.



▲ Cabin interior of David and Ginny Sydorick’s 1985 Pebble Beach “Best Ferrari” winner during MPI’s 2010 full restoration of their 1957 Berlinetta Zagato-body “Double-Bubble” for Special Display at this year’s Pebble Beach.



MPI’s three company-owning partners, left to right: Bill Murphy, Wayne Oby, John Kies.



Nick Yost TIG arc welds an aluminum door bottom for a customer’s competition SWB Berlinetta being restored for the 2010 Pebble Beach Concours d’Elegance.

Chipper.’” And there’s a 410 Sport—“An absolute monster,” Oby affectionately adds. And more. There’s the gorgeous Alfa 2.9 Corto Touring Spyder that had belonged to the Maharajah of Indore, and a T33 Stradale shipped over from Japan. The Ferrari 342 Cabriolet Belgium’s King Leopold III had owned wound up a drag racer before MPI restored it and won triple with the car at Villa d’Este. Not to forget the Geneva salon star of 1953, a 212 Inter

Pininfarina coupe whose preferably understated resto by MPI years later was honored in 1993 as the first 100-point Ferrari at Pebble Beach.

Bidding my fond “see-ya” to Wayne Oby at Neenah, we had our parting parking lot chat about what Motion Products means to him. “Personally,” he told me, “I relish enjoying my partners and all the staff we have here, a great bunch of guys that makes it fun—and I think we are doing the right thing for our customers.” Score that one another big win. 