

## 1974 FCA Annual Meet, Stone Mountain, GA.

By Jim Weed

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Photo forensics always seem to draw a number of comments. While I have been slack in writing articles under the new website, I have not been wasting any idle time.

The stack of information I have never seems to get any smaller no matter how much time I put into it. There are many days I have added nearly five hundred new scans to the growing file of images on the computer.

I scan articles from old *Road & Track* and *Prancing Horse*. Staying current with *Cavallino* and *Forza* is always a challenge. The wealth of information and history available with just a few clicks of the computer is amazing. Few people around the globe are as immersed in Ferrari history as I am on a daily basis.

As I dig through old boxes of photos, unmarked, and unloved, because they never got identified at the time with dates, or place, or event, or serial number, today with the vast information available at my fingertips, many can now be identified.

Case in point. I came across this one.



It didn't take but a moment to recognize the car. Clearly it is a 275 GTB. The lack of drip rail and the extra vents on the rear quarter panel identify this Ferrari as S/N 06885, one of three special lightweight GTBs Ferrari created for racing. The three cars are 06885, 06701 and 07107.

Of these three, only one was raced in period. S/N 06885 was developed as the replacement for the 250 GTO which by 1965 had been fully developed. The newest street car, the 275 GTB could have become the next racing weapon for gentleman drivers.

As it was, racing had changed, the money and effort required to go racing squeezed out the weekend racer. Ferrari had built a fast, lightweight, automobile that stretched the homologation rules so far that even the ACO could not ignore. This new car was clearly a prototype in street clothes, and few were fooled.

This new Ferrari was raced at Sicily, and Nürburgring to get sorted out but it was at Le Mans where this car made its mark with a third overall and a first in GT class. Clearly this car was fast, and reliable, but it was not going to become the next GTO.

Brought to America and successfully raced, it ultimately found its way into Preston Henn's hands by 1971. This unidentified black and white photo clearly shows a Florida license plate which indicates it was street driven and owned by Henn at this time.

The Ferrari is in a field along with several other Ferraris scattered about. Next to the GTB is a 330 LMB. Across the road is a 166 MM and barely seen is what looks like an early formula one car.

What an amazing group of Ferraris all in one place!!

Where? When? What could have caused these interesting cars all to be together? Off to the computer files to track down this mystery.

Hair styles and bellbottoms place the date in the 1970s. In the background standing next to the Formula car is a man that looks like Dick Merritt. If that is Merritt, then the Formula car can only be the 375 Indy, S/N 02, Merritt brought to many FCA Annual Meets.

I go to the computer to the FCA Events folder. I scroll down the list of Annual Meets recorded until I find a location that looks promising. It can't be one of the early meets at Bloomington, or Indianapolis. Nor do the trees appear to be northern and certainly not Florida palm trees. Right in the middle is Atlanta, Georgia, 1974.

The 1974 FCA Annual Meet was held at Stone Mountain Park. Stone Mountain is a large dome of exposed granite rock. It has a large carving on the side of Confederate generals, Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson, and Confederate president, Jefferson Davis. Needless to say, that history has made Stone Mountain controversial today, but in 1974 it was a lovely place to hold a concours.

It was also near John Apen's home. Apen and Ewing Hunter had recently started FAF Motorcars. This would be a great way to get with other Ferrari owners and promote the new business. Gerald Roush was also there to record serial numbers.

Back to the photo. Of the few pictures in the 1974 file, none show S/N 6885 in the background. Then I scroll down and find the report of the meet in Prancing Horse 40, detailing the event along with some of the class winners.



The list is what dreams are made of. Class one is the previously mentioned 166 MM (S/N 0342 M) of Gerry Sutterfield and the 375 Indy. Class two is even more impressive with three GTOs, the 330 LMB, the 275 GTB/C and a 250 GT SWB Spyder California.





The other classes are filled with 275 GTB/4, 330 GTC and GTS, Lusso and a number of Daytona in both Berlinetta and spyder form. There were even several Dinos present.

The most interesting car in the list was a 250 GT Drogonecchio brought by Hugh Ruthven. If you don't know this car, it is still owned by Ruthven and regularly driven, as all Ferraris should.



Within the report there is a photo of the 275 GTB/C and the 330 LMB side-by-side exactly in the same position as the mystery photo. Verified placement!!

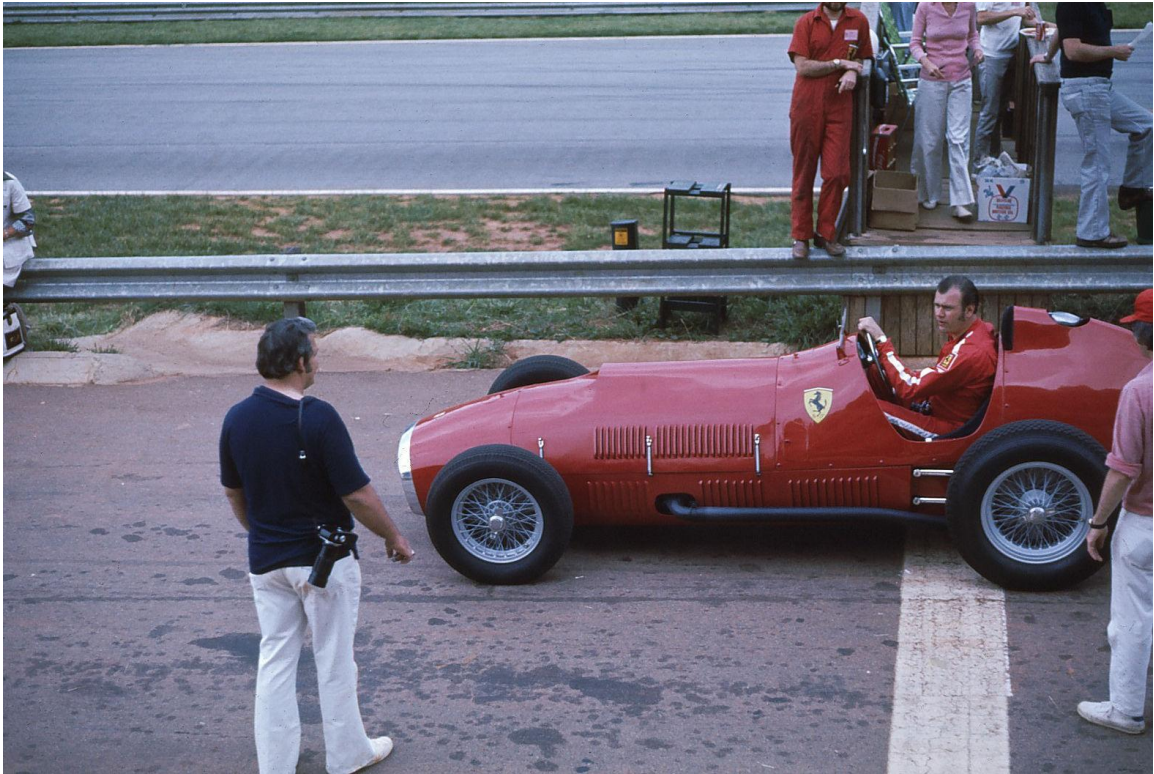
Now we know what car, the location and the event.

This led me further down the rabbit hole as I now went to the file for S/N 06885 and found other photos taken by Gerald Roush at the event. These had been coded as 'unknown event' around 1970. I could now re-identify the photos with the correct date, May, 24<sup>th</sup>, 1974.

While looking at some of the other Ferraris, I was able to find even more unidentified pictures and re-label them to the correct date. The photo file for the 1974 FCA Annual Meet continues to grow.

But the meet was not just a Concours. The group then moved onto Road Atlanta for some laps around the then, fairly new track. The track held its first race on September 13<sup>th</sup>, 1970. The twelve-turn track with elevation changes made a grand way to exercise the Ferraris.





I could not determine how many Ferraris participated, nor could I find the serial numbers of every car, but it was a very popular day with many photos showing Ferraris at speed. According to the report in *Prancing Horse* the day was cut short with rain and some of the track photos show a wet grid.



There is always more to discover and record. When it comes to Ferrari history there is no telling what each day will bring. If you have photos from that event or any other you would like to share or add to the archives, please feel free to scan them and send them to me at [ferrarmarketletter@gmail.com](mailto:ferrarmarketletter@gmail.com).

Among all of the photos I found an interesting observation. It would appear things were less serious and more social. It was about the cars, and not about the appearance. There were also many children milling about. It doesn't seem we find as many children at events.

At many of the track events I went to in the early days, it was all about giving the kids a ride. I know my own daughter has more time in a 512 BB/LM than most grown adults. Why don't we see the next generation being plopped down and strapped into seats at track events?

Owners would go out for three laps and then come in to trade passengers. Children got first priority; adults could jump into any empty seat and experience many different Ferrari models. Have we lost that comradery?

Many want to explore the limits on the track, and there should be time for that, but there should also be a reasonably low-speed touring session where all could get to experience the track and different Ferraris. Nostalgia? Maybe, but how do we develop the next generation without giving them direct experience?