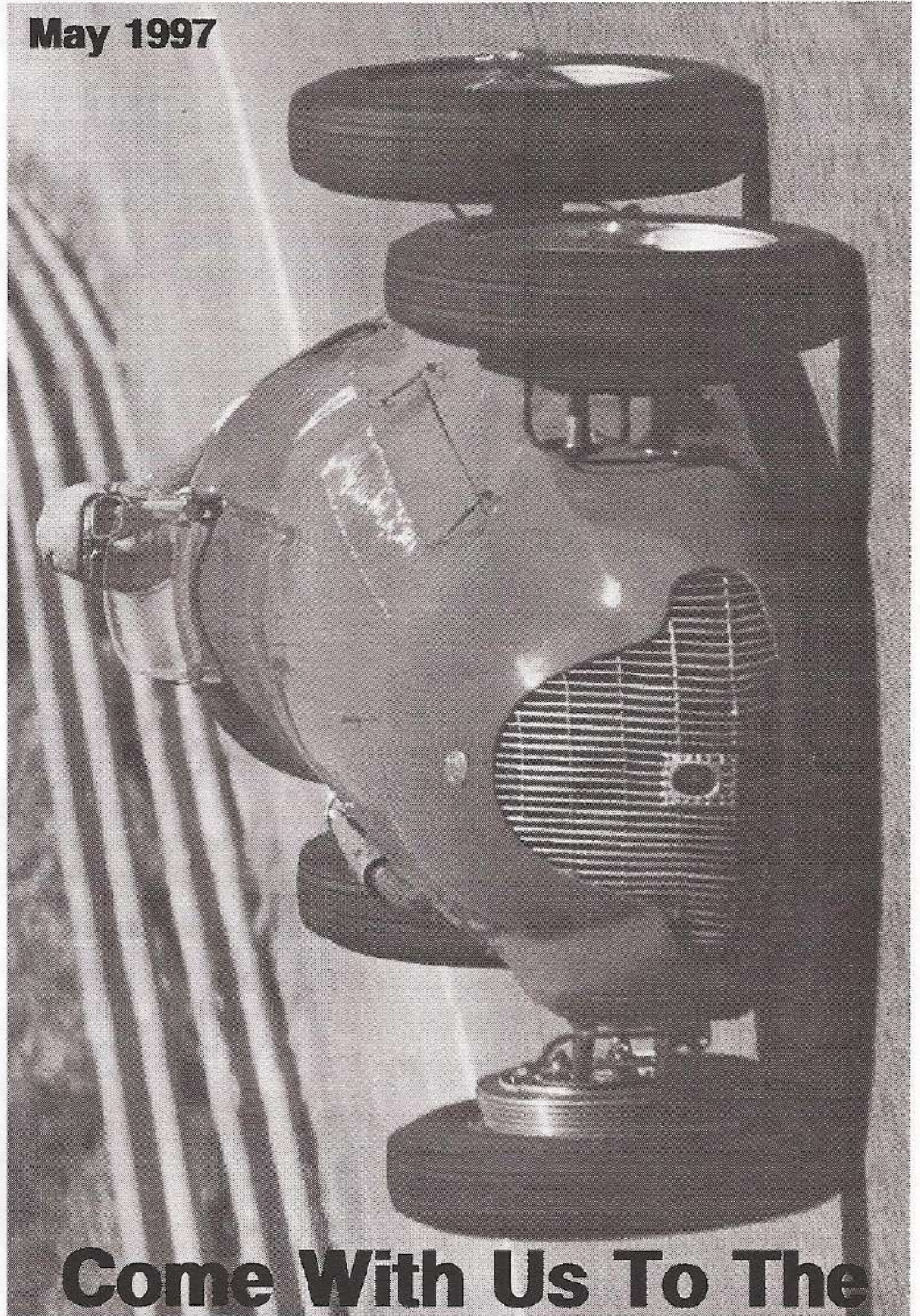


Newsletter of the
**Alfa Romeo Owners
of Southern California**

May 1997



**Come With Us To The
AROSC Driving School
See Details Inside . . .**

Yaccione

Meeting Information

General Meetings are held the last Friday of each month except November and December at 8:00pm in the Kaizuki Room at Veterans' Memorial Park in Culver City. In November the meeting will be held on the last Friday if there are two Fridays after Thanksgiving, otherwise it will be on the Friday prior to Thanksgiving. A holiday party is held in December in lieu of the General Meeting that month.

Numerous special meetings and events are also held throughout the year. Check the Calendar information on the outside back cover for an overview of the year and review *Alfacionada* for details of events planned for the near future.

AROSC Mailing Address

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91394

Membership Information

See the inside back cover of *Alfacionada*.

Important Deadline & Info!

Please send classified ads, articles, letters, and photographs to the Editor in time to arrive before the 20th of the month to permit publication in the next month's issue. Please send only prints; no slides are desired unless submitted by professional photographers. **Photos and manuscripts cannot be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed envelope with sufficient postage.**

General Information

Alfacionada is the monthly publication of the *Alfa Romeo Owners of Southern California*, a Chapter of the *Alfa Romeo Owners, Inc.*, a national non-profit organization of *Alfa* enthusiasts. Subscriptions to this newsletter are included as part of the annual *AROSC* membership fees.

Classified Advertising

Classified (non-commercial) ads are available as a free service to members and for a nominal charge of \$10.00 per insertion to non-members. Ad content must be *Alfa*-related.

Commercial Advertising Rates

Full page \$500 per year
1/2 page \$275 per year
1/4 page \$150 per year
Business card \$100 per year

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What's Coming?

Near-term events for AROSC Alfisti

- May 30 AROSC General Meeting at 8:00 pm in Culver City. Details on page 2.
- 5/31-6/1 AROSC Driving School at "Streets of Willow". Details elsewhere in this issue of *Alfacionada*.
- June 6 SMSCC First Friday rally. 7:00 pm, B of A at Sepulveda & Devonshire in Mission Hills. Call Jay Negrin for details.
- June 10 AROSC Board of Directors meeting. Call a Director for time & place details.
- June 19-22 AROSC National Convention, Columbus, Ohio
- June 27 AROSC General Meeting at 8:00 pm in Culver City. Details on page 2.
- June 29 Picnic and Tech Session at Veteran's Memorial Park in Culver City. Details on this page in this issue of *Alfacionada*.
- July 4 SMSCC First Friday rally. 7:00 pm, B of A at Sepulveda & Devonshire in Mission Hills. Call Jay Negrin for details.
- July 8 AROSC Board of Directors meeting. Call a Director for time & place details.
- July 25 AROSC General Meeting at 8:00 pm in Culver City. Details on page 2.
- July 26 Tour of the Nethercutt Collection in Sylmar. Details elsewhere in this issue of *Alfacionada*.
- August 1 SMSCC First Friday rally. 7:00 pm, B of A at Sepulveda & Devonshire in Mission Hills. Call Jay Negrin for details.
- August 12 AROSC Board of Directors meeting. Call a Director for time & place details.
- August 29 AROSC General Meeting at 8:00 pm in Culver City. Details on page 2.



AROSC Previews

What to expect at our coming events

AROSC General Meeting - May 30th

Along with the usual meeting activities such as tech questions, "For Sale" announcements, etc. we will have a several video tapes of the AROC events both here and elsewhere in the country. Come on down to the general meeting and see what you've been missing in the way of club activities. Meeting time and location on page 2 of *Alfacionada*.

AROSC Driving School at the "Streets of Willow Springs" - May 31st and June 1st

Want extensive and expert training in car control plus lots of track time? Think that the AROSC Time Trials sound like fun, but you don't want to jump into that scene without preparation?

Have we got a deal for you! Come to one of the best bargains in driver training you can find anywhere. Read more about it in Paul Blankenship's article elsewhere in this issue of *Alfacionada*.

AROSC Picnic and Tech Session - June 29th

What a combination! Only AROSC would combine a picnic with a live demo by Charlie Thieriot of how to rework your bottom end (of your Alfa's engine). You can come for the food and socializing, or you can come to learn more about the guts of your Alfa's engine, or you can do it all. Bring your family and friends and join us at Veterans Memorial Park in Culver City (That's outdoors at the same location where we meet indoors for each month's General Meeting.)

Tour of the Nethercutt Collection - July 26th

Come with us to a special tour of a special collection of automobiles and other items. Attendance is limited to only 45 people and the museum enforces a dress code, so you'll want to contact Paul Blankenship as early as possible to make sure you'll be able to get in. Read Paul's write-up elsewhere in this issue of *Alfacionada*.

One For The Road

Some thoughts about the reputation of AROSC

by Jay Negrin - AROSC President

Gather up the children, and make the house secure, this one may end up being a bit of a tirade. I thought it would only be fair to warn those who are too sensitive to deal with a bit of ire now and again. The warning may also go out to those with literary sensitivity, as it may ramble a bit from place to place.

I hear the muttering-under-the-breath, "What's got the old man teed off now?" Well, I'm not really angry, mostly, but somewhat amused and baffled over several items and attitudes I've seen. I don't know whether I've seen them more now, or I'm just taking exception to them.

The attitude to which I am referring reflects the thought, "If you don't drive an *Alfa*, you ain't s**t." Of course, that always begs the questions, "If you do, does that mean that you are?" I won't be going there, thankfully. Suffice to say that we all engage in a little braggadocio every now and again.

And the pride in the marque is one of the things that keeps us ALL together. That is one of the areas of this attitude where we might want to more closely watch what we wish for. Another cliché, "Be careful what you wish for, you may just get it."

The old line about "mine can whip yours any day" or "mine is bigger than yours" may be OK for short bouts of pride, such as when the honor of the whole marque is on your shoulders. It can be destructive when used too seriously, for too long, within the confines of the club.

I am not talking of the healthy pride in proclaiming that "True *Alfisti* Drive Sedans." We all have to admit that *Alfa* virtually created the sports sedan. Who can argue with the performance and functionality of the *Giulia Super*? Ask any proud owner, and he will be glad to sing its praises.

Where I get my dander up is when one club member, or other alleged *Alfa* fanatic, proclaims that someone else just went out and bought the worst excuse for an *Alfa Romeo* since body work covered up the frame rails.

That's the attitude of a superiority complex. I don't buy it,

although I do recognize it. I see it in putting down others for not having the wisdom, foresight, knowledge, to have made the "obvious, proper, informed" decision to see things as our pseudo-authority does. Superiority-based attitudes are also present in calls for making The Club open only to the "serious enthusiast", whoever she/he might be.

If you bought your '81 *Spider* because it was cute and affordable, I guess that means that you don't need the help and networking that a strong club can provide. Or worse, does it mean that you don't deserve to have the help of others willing to lend a hand?

Is knowledge the basis of being a separator for those "who are worthy" and the great unwashed? I hope not, because I would be out on my ear PDQ. The only reason I know the difference between a *Strada* and a *Corsa*, is that those were the two flavors of *Ducati 851 Quattrodesmo* produced. (As an aside, the *Strada* (street) was never legit for sale as a street bike in California, so all the Italian squids in this state bought the *Corsas* (racers) and put license plates on them.)

Knowing, or claiming to know, more than the next guy is as bad as having, or claiming to have, more of anything else than your neighbor. This flaunting of "I am better than you because I say so" is detrimental to the club as a whole, and to each of our members who represents the AROSC.

We must remember that our reputation as a club precedes us, and that it is up to all of us to share our pride of ownership in the marque without disparaging others.

There is no one "best" *Alfa*. There is no one, single best car, for that matter. This last item is something that I learned while selling high-end audio speakers, working my way through school. There are some good reasons for buying Chevies and Volkswagens (GASP!! Did HE say THAT?!) rather than having a stable of *Alfa Romeos*.

Quantity of marque cars is no excuse for the quality of the heart of the owner. The attitude I show above, the haughtiness and superiority, is present within our chapter, but in admittedly small numbers. I, for one, do not want that percentage to grow, but I am also willing to admit that it may never go away.

We must remember that our reputation as a club precedes us, and that it is up to all of us to share our pride of ownership in the marque without disparaging others.

Several years ago, I was lured to the *Alfa* club by a friend who was time trialing a *Giulia Spider*. I was taken in by the fact that there were true car enthusiasts here, not namby-pamby wannabees. These were people who had made, for the most part, a conscious decision to buy an automotive work of technical merit. Performance of the spirit, as well as the car, were spoken.

THAT is what drew me to this club. The spirit is well and still alive, although perhaps dormant in some. I want to see this club remain a bastion of positive attitudes for all those who love the marque, and continue to keep their *Alfas* alive and well, with pride and dedication.

Still Searching For Wild Flowers

by Jay Negrin

Yes, there was a Wild Flowers tour. Yes, the weather was near perfect. Yes, it was well attended. Yes, it was well received, if I am to believe those who came, saw and conquered some new (to them) mountain roads. That is all as it should be, that these fine Italian sports coupes, sedans and spiders be driven on nice roads, on a nice day, with all enjoying the company of nice people.

We had twelve cars, and about twice as many people out to enjoy some fresh non-city air. The car vintages ranged from *Guillettas* to *Milanos*. We had a very good assortment of *Spiders*, several sedans, and coupes from different vintages, from *GTV* to *GTV-6*. A good assortment, showing the diverse tastes in our club.

"So" — you may ask — "what is there for anyone to complain about? The roads were fun and sparsely populated, the weather was wonderful, and all who came had a good time. Who could possibly ask for a better way to spend a beautiful day with friends?" To be honest, I could ask for more. I have been asking for more since I have been organizing these spring time forays to the high desert.

I want to see the flowers blooming like I have all but a few of the times. More, I want to share that splendid display with others. There just happen to be some mountains and some exquisite mountains roads between here and there, that's all.

This was the third time that I have tried to combine two different and distinct forms of pleasure for the cultural good

of Southern California *Alfisti*. Well, if the flowers didn't bloom because they had too much early rain, and not enough late season rain (or whatever the reason was THIS time) at least those delightful, empty canyon roads were there for us to play upon. And we did, too, didn't we?

There were the go-fast boys, enjoying the roads, and the others whose primary goal was to enjoy the scenery. In the first group we stopped frequently enough so that no one got lost, and everyone could hear what stories I had to tell this year. I'll keep you in a bit of suspense, and force those who are interested to come to a meeting to ask what pearls of history and lore I laid on the waiting masses.

What I will let on though, is that near the end of our trek we did stop at a nice little park in the suburbs (is this redundant?) of Lancaster. We spread out in the shade and enjoyed what we had all packed for our picnic lunches.

I had intended for those victuals to be devoured among the poppies and lupines. Instead, they were consumed amid friends of the marque. That can't be THAT bad, can it?

Next year? I suppose that someone could flog me, and force me to find different ways to get from here to there. I think I could be persuaded to organize another "Search for Wild Flowers", in 1998. If nature (that mother) can be convinced that all we want to do is look, then perhaps she would allow us to revel in her beauty and her bounty then.

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THE NEW COMPREHENSIVE HISTORY OF THE ALFA BADGE

An irreverent account of the origins of the Alfa Romeo badge

by Paul Buckley

WARNING: Contents fictitious. Use with caution.

The Alfa Badge is an adaptation of the arms of the ancient and colorful Italian city of Milano, which is named after a delicious Pepperidge Farm cookie. The badge is divided into two fields. One depicts a serpent chewing on a small red person. The other is a red cross on a white field. These images have their origins in ancient and colorful European history.

The red cross was used as the flag of England during the period before the Crusades, about 5 million BC. Shortly after 5 million BC., probably around the time of the Crusades, England made a union with itself by combining the postal codes of Wessex with those of Northern Ireland, whereupon Saint George decided to name the cross after himself, probably to confuse Biblical scholars who thought that the cross had something to do with the New Testament. The "Cross of Saint George", as it is now known, was later adopted by medical institutions, because it made them think of X-rays.

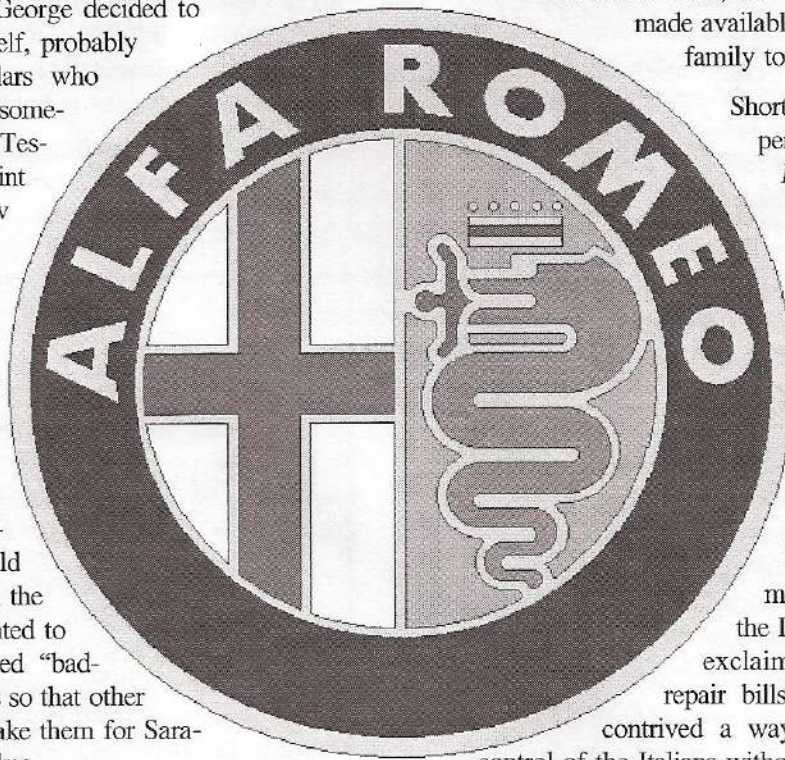
After the invention of the Crusades by people known as "Crusaders", the Milanese ruling families held a caucus to determine whether they would participate. Membership in the "Crusaders" was only granted to those families who adopted "badges" to identify themselves so that other "Crusaders" wouldn't mistake them for Saracens and feed them to snakes.

The Archbishop of Milano maintained a library of diagrams, copied by monks from original service manuals, illustrating proper methods of feeding Saracens to snakes, and based on the logic that such a diagram would be the last thing a Saracen would wear into battle, one of Milano's

two ruling families decided to use the biggest diagram they could convince the Archbishop to give them as their badge.

The other ruling family, having already rejected the idea of using a three-pointed star and a horse prancing atop a bow tie, was faced with the obstacle of not having a "badge" at all until an apprentice noticed an abandoned Crusader's shield, bearing Saint George's Cross, at a tram stop. As it turned out, the shield had belonged to one of the millions of English Crusaders who were forced to forfeit the First Round of Crusading because of the Bubonic Plague.

The apprentice convinced Crusade officials to disqualify the remaining, healthy English from further participation, on the grounds that they might mistake the serpent on the first ruling family's crest for a mere snake and catapult rocks at them. Thus, the Cross of Saint George was made available for Milano's second ruling family to use.



Shortly after the Crusades, in a period known as *The Period Following The Crusades*, the Crusades ended. To celebrate, the two ruling families of Milano decided to give Italy to the Austrians, on the condition that Austria would take over the cost of repairing and maintaining Italy.

After the Austrians realized that Venice was in Italy, and that its roads were more than, "a little damp", as the Italians had represented, they exclaimed, "Jesus Christ! These repair bills are eating us alive!" and contrived a way of returning Italy to the control of the Italians without seeming ungrateful.

They told the Milanese ruling families that they could call themselves "The Powerful Visconti Dukes" if they would just take back their unquestionably elegant but prohibitively costly-to-maintain nation. The two Milanese ruling families liked the sound of "The Powerful Visconti Dukes" better

than "The Family With The Big Snake On Its Castle" and "The Family With The Red Cross On Its Castle That Causes People To Mistake The Castle For A Hospital", and they accepted the Austrians' terms.

To commemorate the severing of ties with Italy, the Austrians built the Alps, which soon became a popular tourist attraction for the "nouveau riche" nobility of Milano, but only after "The Powerful Visconti Dukes" discovered that the two emblems of their constituent families, when fastened together, made an excellent toboggan. "The Powerful Visconti Dukes" decided to call their special toboggan a "Sforza" because of the sound it made when it hit a rock.

During the War of 1812, which pitted the Milanese against the Venetians, "The Powerful Visconti Dukes" formed the "Anonima Lombarda Fabbrica Automobili", whose primary duty, in spite of its name, was to build submarines. *ALFA* was given the badge of the "Sforza" toboggan surrounded by the "submariners' knot", a knot formed by shaping a piece of rope into a wavy line. Unfortunately, the Venetians were far more advanced than the Milanese in the area of maritime combat.

The Milanese had counted on their *ALFA* submersibles to give them a distinct advantage in the watery battlefields of Venice, but they were surprised to discover that the Venetians, in anticipation of a submarine attack, had cleverly equipped their entire city to sink below the surface of the water, where it could meet the enemy directly.

The Milanese disadvantage was compounded by the discovery that the "submariners' knot" was frustratingly ineffective, in spite of a mammoth research and development budget. The Venetians immediately sank the entire fleet of *ALFA* submarines, but in an ironic twist of fate, they were forced to surrender to the Milanese anyway, because they couldn't get their city out of the water.

Scientists still aren't sure when the *ALFA* submarines first began crawling back out of the canals to evolve into air-breathing, land-dwelling *ALFAs*, but fossil evidence suggests that it predates the emergence of land-dwelling *Acuras* by nearly a century. In keeping with the tradition of "The Powerful Visconti Dukes", these new *ALFAs* were entered in Alpine Toboggan races, resulting in a championship in 1910 that inspired the addition of the Alpine Trumpet to the *ALFA* badge.

It wasn't until 1920 — when a decorated W.W.I flying ace named Nicola Romeo pointed out the functional seeming wheels and generally automobile-like shape of the *ALFAs* — that they were recognized as cars and disqualified from further Alpine competition. *ALFA* was forced to remove

the Alpine Trumpet from their badge, but they replaced it, in a brilliant gesture of defiance that is impossible to translate, with an ashtray over the serpent's head.

During W.W.II, shortages and rationing forced "The Powerful Visconti Dukes" to discontinue their use of scarce adhesives to affix their badges to their *ALFAs*, and they resorted to tying them on with laurel wreaths. The small, stylized wreath in use on the badge today is supposed to function as a back-up badge affixing system should the adhesive, which has been in abundant supply since the end of the war, fail. The effectiveness of this system has never been accurately tested.

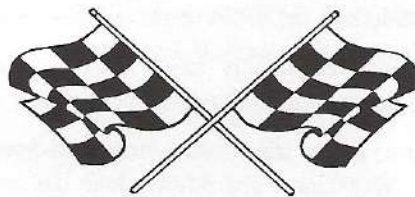
The badge has remained relatively unchanged since about 1950, but its size has "yo-yo-ed" up and down in order to retain favorable weight distribution of the various cars to which it has been affixed.

Currently, an arbitration panel is reviewing the Toboggan Championship of 1910 to determine whether the Alpine Trumpet should be restored to the badge, although purists have argued that the Trumpet never made sense anyway, because no serpent has ever been observed playing an Alpine Trumpet without first dropping the Saracen in its mouth.

It is important that we recognize the long, rich heritage of this most treasured of emblems, keeping it sacred in our hearts, and, above all, insuring that the true history is not forgotten.

Paul Buckley asked the members of the Italian-cars e-mail list on the Internet to send him any and all versions of the "real" story behind the Alfa badge and the preceding article is what came out . . .

Paul prefaced the article with the following introduction: "Thank you for all of your responses about the Alfa badge. I've synthesized your responses into a succinct history of the badge which I believe both accurately documents the facts and meaningfully interprets their significance."



Alfacionada Nord

Miscellaneous rumblings from the Editor

by Tom Suter

Apologies Are Due

It is not my intention to insert my own writing efforts into *Alfacionada* unless there is something which needs mentioning that has not been covered by one of the other members. However, it seems appropriate to start this column off this month with an apology for the arrival time of last month's issue, since all of you received your *Alfacionada* later than our goal of arrival just before the General Meeting.

Part of the reason for that situation rests with our friends at the Postal Service. *AROSC's* encounter with the bureaucratic behavior and "logic" of the Postal Service left us with a tale truly worthy of use in the Dilbert comic strip.

This having been said, the blame for the late arrival of April's issue must rest with me. In an attempt to make *Alfacionada* as timely and up-to-date as possible, I've been operating on a production schedule which left zero room for unexpected problems.

New News About the National Convention

As we draw near to the National Convention on June 19th-22nd, some additional information has come to my attention about events at the Convention which I do not recall seeing mentioned elsewhere, so I'll include it here.

First, if you have been planning to go to Columbus with the intention of running the Time Trial at the Mid-Ohio track, but haven't gotten around to sending in your registration yet, you can forget about running Mid-Ohio. The Time Trial "sold-out" in March, within a few days of the appearance of the registration forms in *Alfa Owner*.

However, unless the only thing you live for is running your *Alfa* in Time Trials, you definitely want to plan on going to the Convention for all of the other activities. From all reports, you can expect to see an outstanding set of classic *Alfas* from both the pre-war and post-war eras in the Concours, including the 1750 shown on this page.

Also, the event organizers have recently released the following announcement regarding the Banquet speaker:

"I just received a note from Jean Lindamood-Jennings from Automobile Magazine. Thankfully, Jean has agreed to be the keynote speaker for the banquet on Saturday night. For

those of you unfamiliar with Jean, she is an extraordinarily vibrant personality with enough automotive anecdotes to fill an encyclopedia.

Our family had the pleasure of loaning Jean my dad's '63 2600 *Spider* for the 1200 mile Automobile Magazine *Perfect Ten* tour last fall, about which she devoted her Dec '96 column. She will also be attending the Mid-Ohio Time Trials on Thursday, tentatively driving the family '72 *Montreal* or one of our *GTV6* track cars.



This will be an excellent opportunity to meet and have fun with one of the most colorful personalities in automotive journalism today. Automobile columnist and AROC member Jamie Kitman is also considering attending."

And one final bit of news which I haven't seen properly publicized elsewhere. In addition to Tech Sessions there will be roundtable seminars held on Chapter operations and Chapter newsletter production during the Convention. Check the announcement boards at the hotel for details on time and place for each of these.

What Car Do You Drive?

In the Apri issue of *Alfacionada* we ran a tongue-in-cheek article with this title. At the end, we observed that among

all of the various makes and models "defined", there were no *Alfas*.

To correct this omission, we mentioned that there would be a contest with prizes for the best *Alfa* "definitions" with the same attitude as those we published for other makes..

So far, we have received exactly one (1) entry, which doesn't look like we have much of a contest at this point. Therefore, we've decided to set a specific deadline of the Fourth of July for *receipt* of all entries.

If you have an appropriate *Alfa* definition, get it in right away for a chance at one of our fabulous prizes.

In Memoriam - Vasek Polak

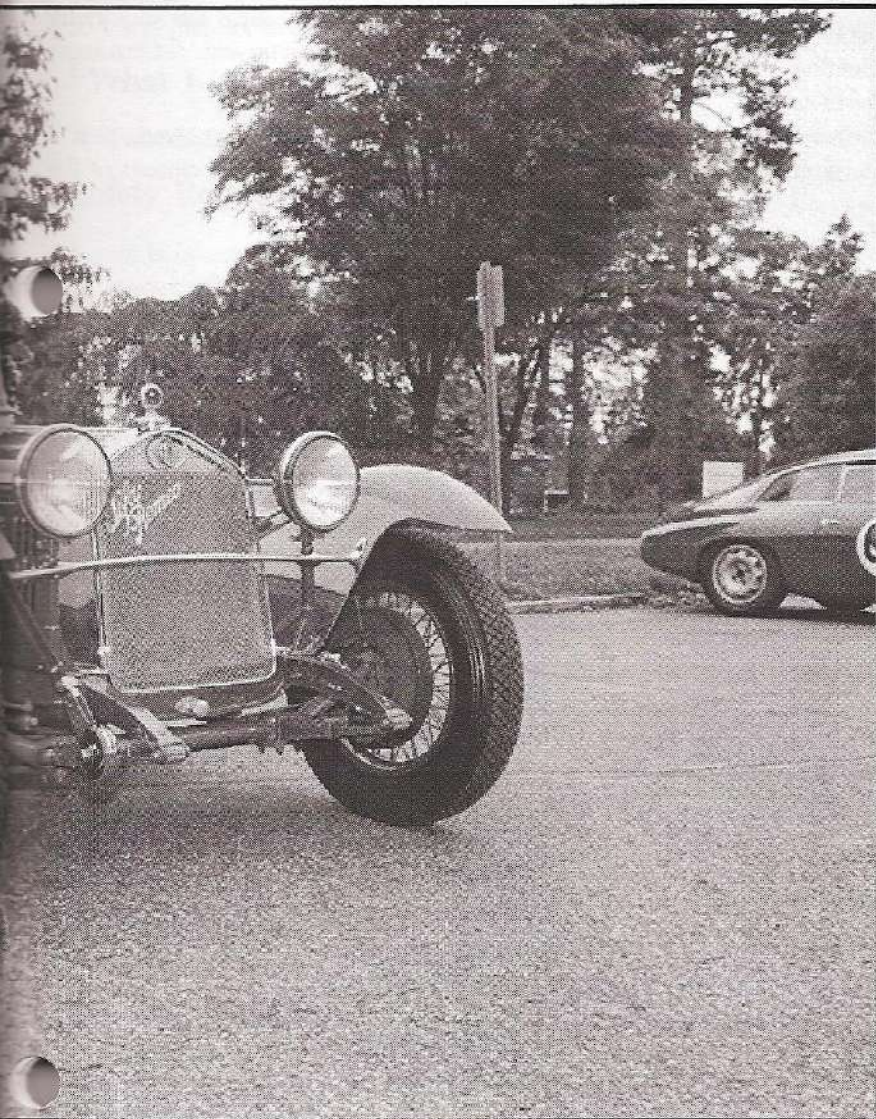
The community of automotive enthusiasts recently lost one of the landmark figures on the Southern California scene. Although Vasek Polak was never associated with *Alfa Romeo*, he was a friend to everyone in the Southern California sports car community for five decades.

Vasek Polak died at the age of 82 as a result of injuries sustained in Germany last month in a high-speed crash while testing a Porsche prototype. He suffered what is described as a massive coronary while being flown home in a Lear Jet whose cabin had been turned into an intensive-care unit.

He had been born in Prague in 1914 and was wounded while fighting the Nazis in 1945. Fleeing to the west in 1948, he initially worked as a mechanic in a U.S. Army motorpool before moving to the United States in 1951, where he opened a repair shop in New York. In 1958 he moved to Hermosa Beach and soon opened the first exclusively Porsche dealership in the United States.

Polak was very active in sports car racing, competing successfully over the years with several drivers in cars he had prepared.

His Porsche dealership was very successful and has been joined by Audi, BMW, Saab, Subaru, and Volkswagen dealerships.



At the Convention, look for Jim Ibold's 1750 GS

ALFANET

This Issue: The Alfa Digest

by Rob Poetsch

To some, the phrase "*Alfa Digest*" is the long process of your wife (or significant other, to be P.C.) adjusting to your passion for Italian automobiles. To those with an *Alfa*, a computer and a modem, the *Alfa Digest* is one of the most informative and entertaining sources of *Alfa Romeo* information on the Internet. (If you fall in the former category, it's time you cough up \$500 for WebTV and get yourself on this free service. It's worth it!)

The *Alfa Digest* isn't really a Web Site, although they do have one (<http://www.wizvax.net/rwelty/alfa/>) for administrative purposes. Think of it as an e-mail address book of 1,000 *Alfa* owners around the world. It works something like this: by subscribing to the list, you'll receive e-mails from the Digest that contain e-mails from subscribers. Anyone on the list can send questions, musings, advice, classifieds, etc. to the Digest where it is combined with all other e-mails and redistributed back to the list.

You don't have to contribute, but obviously that's where the Digest content comes from. And it's amazing to see how many people contribute. Some days I'll get five *Alfa Digest* e-mails with 15 or so postings. If the Digest message is too long, some e-mail systems (like America Online) will automatically convert it to a file, but still allow you to see the table of contents before you download it.

The *Alfa Digest* is maintained by Richard Welty, owner of Krusty Motorsports which handles a variety of Automotive and Motor Sport related web pages and mailing lists including the BMW and Italian Car Digests (for additional information, go check out the Krusty web page at <http://www.na-motorsports.com/krusty/>). Judging from the quantity of messages, Richard must spend hours each day answering e-mails and keeping the system up and running. It's quite impressive.

Content on the Digest ranges from extremely technical posts on fuel injection, to suspension modification advice to questions about the fate of AROC. Looking for a K&N filter for your 164S but don't know where to start? (This seems to be a hot topic lately.) Simply post a question and watch the responses roll in. I found some inexpensive parts for my *Milano* from a subscriber who was parting out his car.

Since there are a lot of knowledgeable *Alfisti* on the Digest,

many subscribers use it as a technical helpline. I don't consider myself a technical advisor, but often I will read posts of problems or questions that I've dealt with (like changing donuts), so I'll reply. That's what makes the *Alfa Digest* so intriguing — anyone can participate. But remember, the information provided is free and not everyone is an expert.

Like any organization, the *Alfa Digest* does have some policies. Postings must be *Alfa* related. Spam (*Mass unsolicited e-mail advertising messages - Editor*) is strictly prohibited. Personal classifieds are fine; just don't send them out over and over and over. Business ads are strictly prohibited except by prior arrangement with list management (rwelty@wizvax.net).

Sound interesting? Here's how to get involved, plus a couple of tips to help newcomers to be good citizens of the Net community.

Subscribe to the *Alfa Digest* by sending an e-mail message to majordomo@mailgate.wizvax.net with the words *subscribe Alfa Digest* in the body of the message. You should receive a notification within less than a day that you're a subscriber, and you'll start getting loads of *Alfa* e-mail.

Never forget that ALL CAPS is the equivalent of shouting on the Net.

If you reply to a message, quote enough of the original message to make it clear what you are responding to, but don't waste bandwidth by copying several screens-full of text into your message just to toss in a remark such as "I agree".

Have a favorite *Alfa* Web Site? Please e-mail me at rpoetsch@aol.com.



AROSC Drivers School & Time Trials

"What's it all about, Alfie . . ."

by *Paul Blankenship*

"What is a Time Trial, Paul?"

"It is about the most fun you can have with your clothes on." You get to drive your car on the big road courses such as Willow Springs, Laguna Seca, Buttonwillow and Las Vegas. By making some very small safety improvements to your car you get to drive as fast as you want around these great race tracks.

In addition to being the Director Of Tech & Safety for Time Trials I also teach at the Drivers School Time Trials, so I will attempt to explain my addiction.

"What Kind of Car Must I Have?"

A 4-wheeled automobile, any make, any model.

Safety Requirements

- * Closed cars do not require roll bars. Your *Spider* requires one.
- * A proper helmet is required with a Snell 90 or later safety sticker.
- * A 5 point safety harness (just like real race cars).
- * Fire extinguisher fastened securely.
- * You must wear clothes (see the first paragraph). You do not have to have a Nomex fire suit. Cotton/wool shirt and pants, leather tennis shoes, some type of glasses, and gloves without holes are all that is required.

Your car must pass a simple safety inspection to see if the wheels won't fall off, the brakes are in good condition, stuff like that.

Time Trials

We have practice sessions of about 25 minutes: Each driver will participate in 3 on Saturday and 1 or 2 on Sunday morning. Here we learn the track, our car and our own abilities as we drive on with 10-15 other cars on the track at the same time. Passing is only allowed on the straights, where it is safe. Accidents are rare. I tell my students that if you are concerned about crashing your car then just don't crash it.

On Sunday afternoon we have the "Time Trial" part. Here we are put into groups of 5 - 6 cars of comparable lap times. One group is on the track at a time, spaced apart, where we drive 5 laps against the clock. The best lap time is counted against other cars in your class.

I have been doing this for over 10 years. I guess I am addicted to it. So — come out some time. You don't have to enter, just come out to watch.

Driving School

We have 2 Schools each year, one in the spring and one in the fall, at a place called "The Streets of Willow Springs". It was created several years ago to train the celebrities who race each year in the Long Beach Grand Prix Pro-Celebrity Race.

There is a track of about 1 mile, an indoor classroom and THE SKID PAD. You rotate between the three several times during your 2 days. You are divided into one of 4 groups according to your ability: Beginner, Novice, Advanced, and Race.

You can expect to put up to 40 race-track miles on your car during the weekend. That's quite a lot.

We teach safe car control, shifting, braking, how to read the race track, all of the stuff you would get in the more expensive schools.

Caio, Frequently Sideways.

**AROSC Drivers School
May 31st - June 1st
at
"Streets of Willow"**

**For Additional Info,
Call Paul Blankenship
(818) 883-0266 (home)**

Coordinated Events

Advance notice on a special and limited AROSC event

by Paul Blankenship

So who wants to go look at a bunch of old cars, hood ornaments and old musical instruments?

We have made a reservation at San Sylmar, *The Nethercutt Collection*, on Saturday, July 26 at 1:30 pm. It's been several years since we have been there. For you old timers, the old name was the Merle Norman Collection. Same place, new name.

I encourage you to attend this event. This collection was put together by J.B. and Dorothy Nethercutt, "A product of a lifetime dedicated to beauty". Some highlights are:

The Grand Salon, where some 30 working automobiles are displayed. There are no ropes or barriers. If just one of you touches a car Mary or I will slap your hand.

Cloud 99 on the fourth floor holds one of the world's finest assemblages of mechanical musical instruments, including the Mighty Wurlitzer Theater Pipe Organ.

San Sylmar is a "class" place so we gotta look like we got some of it.

Specifically their rules are:

Cameras without flash are permitted. (Randall).

No video taping.

No children under 12 years. (AROSC Board Members excepted)

No smoking. (Charlie T)

No jeans or shorts. (Paul B)

The tour is about 2 hours long. We should be there at least by 1 pm for the 1:30 tour. As it starts in the early afternoon I suggest you have your own lunch before we meet. The tour is at no cost. J.B. made enough money from the cosmetics.

Normally parking is on the street but I think I can talk the Nethercutt people into letting us park *Alfas* in their employee parking lot. Just in case, I suggest that you clean up your *Alfa*. We won't have a formal Concours, but we will have our own "Car Show". We always have a "Car Show" when ever more than one *Alfa* is parked together.

The number of people is limited to 45 so Mary and I will

ask you to call us to make your reservation. No reservation, no tour. Our number is in the front of this newsletter. Do not call San Sylmar. They'll tell you that the *Alfa Club* has that tour booked.

If you haven't been there before I know you will be impressed with the collection. Mary has been on the tour over 500 times.

Date: Saturday, 26 July
Time: 1:00 pm
Address: 15200 Bledsoe ST
Sylmar, CA 91342
Directions: I-5
East on Roxford St.
South on San Fernando Rd.
East on Bledsoe St.

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A Special Invitation for *AROSC*

The reason that entry form is inserted in this issue of Alfacionada

TOURING CAR CLUB
388 De La Fuente Street
Monterey Park, CA 91754
818.284.2183

May 1, 1997

Mr. Jay Negrin
President
Alfa Romeo Owners Club of Southern California

Dear Jay,

Please accept our congratulations on the success of your April 26-27, 1997 time trial and race event at Laguna Seca Raceway, and our thanks for being invited to share the event with you. Everyone from our club had a great time, enjoying not only the track and beautiful weather, but the pleasure and camaraderie of joining with so many of the Alfa Club members again. I think it can safely be said that a very good time was had by all.

We would like to reciprocate by extending our warm invitation to all Alfa Club members to join with Touring Car Club for time trials and racing at Buttonwillow Raceway on June 21-22, 1997. We will be using the full track this time which will offer us all more fun and challenge.

As was done with us for your Laguna Seca event, we will send you one of our entry forms for distribution to your members, using your club logo if you wish, to facilitate their sending of the entry fees directly to us. We will be happy to honor all pre-tech inspection performed at your usual shops, or will offer tech inspection at the track for those requiring it there.

I am sure there are other details to be resolved, but this ought to get the ball rolling and enable you to notify your membership as early as possible.

Thanks again for a great weekend.

Best regards,

Creighton Turner

Creighton Turner
President

cc: John Cote

The Wet Foot Syndrome

How to keep your feet dry in a Spider

Courtesy of I Saluti, St. Louis Chapter, AROC

- Q:** I have a 1987 *Spider Veloce* that leaks when it rains. The leak is on the driver's side near the pedals. The passenger side also leaks, but less severely. Why? -- Mark R
- Q:** My right foot gets drenched when I make a right turn. Any ideas? -- David R.
- A:** Assuming the leaks are not coming from the convertible top (a common source of water ingress) you should probably check three areas:
1. The windshield sealing rubber: Remove the metal trim piece at the base of the windshield and make sure the windshield sealing rubber isn't pulling away from the frame or glass. If it is, seal it with windshield sealer. Use a silicone sealant since it will stay flexible longer.
 2. The drain tube coming from the air conditioner: If the A/C is running and the tube is clogged or loose, your foot will get drenched from a right turn. Clean out the drain using compressed air or a piece of wire. Make sure the drain tube is firmly affixed to the A/C nipple; use a cable tie if necessary.
 3. The hoses that drain the air grate (the slotted metal piece mounted directly in front of the windshield). In theory, rain water that enters the air grate drains out two drain hoses that are routed into the front wheel wells. When either or both drain hoses get plugged, water instead pours out of the eyeball vents on either side of the dash.

An easy test is to get out the garden hose and run water into the air grate. Water should pour out of the drain hoses. If not, the hose is blocked and needs to be cleaned out. The solution is to remove the air grate and clean out the drain hoses to make sure they are free of debris.

Reinstalling the air grate can be a real pain, but I think

the following procedure helps:

To help install the air grate, cut a thick metal coat hanger into eleven two-inch sections and bend each section into an "L" or hockey stick shape. Place an "L" between the prongs of each attaching clip (the prongs of the clips are difficult to separate during installation and the "L" pieces do that for you).

Install the panel with two prongs above and one prong below the grate (the upper prongs also hold the stainless trim strip in place).

When the grate is properly positioned with respect to the clips, pull out the "L" pieces and push the grate into place. Next fit the trim strip. Carefully lay the strip on top of the grate and gently coax it under the clips on the driver's side until the first screw can be inserted.

Tighten this screw enough to allow the trim piece to pivot, then carefully press down and back on the trim strip to engage the remainder of the clips (WD-40 may help).

Finish by placing a small wood block on the grate and carefully striking it with a rubber mallet to seat the trim strip, working from the driver's side.

Tighten both trim screws. Next, insert the rubber seal, adjust the grate's alignment if necessary, and install the four mounting screws.

Lancia

Alfa Romeo

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Northridge, CA 91324

(818) 701 - 1614

Classified Ads

Free advertising for members

Wanted - ANSA dual tip rear muffler for 1970-1990 Spider (ARO927).
 Charlie Slayman (408)223-2390

1974 Spider. Club race car. Light weight, roll bar, nearly new race-prepped engine and transmission, W&D suspension, Yokohama race tires plus new Michelin street tires. \$5500. Must sell. . . too many cars.
 Janie (760) 375-5045 days

74 GTV 2000. Burgundy/tan, dual Webers, headers, long range gas tank, Koni shocks. Very quick. California car. Well maintained, very clean inside and out. Photo available. \$8900, will negotiate.
 Bud (619)727-0515 Tues-Sat, 9AM - 5PM

1964 Giulia Spider. Very nice every day driver with newly rebuilt engine and trnas. Only serious flaw is that this original white car is now red. Older laquer paint looks great on the freeway, but fails close inspection. Buy this good-running car and just drive it, or, refresh some chrome, take out a few dings, repaint and have a presto restoration. Willing to sell at \$12,000 - unwilling to consider lower offers.
 Jeff (818) 249 - 9512

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Membership Application Alfa Romeo Owners of Southern California

Dues for 1 year membership in the *Alfa Romeo Owners of Southern California (AROSC)* and the national organization, the *Alfa Romeo Owners Club (AROC)* **\$55.00**
 Member of another *AROC* Chapter wishing to add *AROSC* affiliation **\$22.00**
 Please fill in the following information and mail to:

Alfa Romeo Owners Club - Membership for AROSC
2468 Gum Tree Lane, Fallbrook, CA 92028

Name _____ Spouse _____

Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone () _____ Work Phone () _____

AROC Member Number (if applicable) _____ Alfa(s) Owned _____

Check enclosed in the amount of \$ _____ for _____

Make checks payable to "Alfa Romeo Owners Club".

*Alfa Romeo Owners
of Southern California
P. O. Box 3621
Granada Hills
CA 91394*



Dan Ritter
936 Monterey Blvd
Hermosa Beach, CA 90254-4207

Our 1997 Calendar

| January | February | March | April |
|---|---|--|--|
| 14 AROSC Board Mtg 25-6 Time Trial - Las Vegas. 31 AROSC Annual Meeting - 8pm, Culver City | 11 AROSC Board Mtg 28 General Mtg - 8pm, Culver City | 8-9 Time Trial - Willow Springs. 11 AROSC Board Mtg 28 General Mtg - 8pm, Culver City | 4 SMSCC Rally 6 Tour "In Search of the WildFlowers". 8 AROSC Board Mtg. 25 General Mtg - 8pm, Culver City 26-7 Time Trial - Laguna Seca. |
| May | June | July | August |
| 2 SMSCC Rally 11 Swap Meet-Tustin Alfa 13 AROSC Board Mtg. 18 Concours at Pomona VARA meet 30 General Mtg - 8pm, Culver City 31-1 Driving School - "Streets of Willow" | 6 SMSCC Rally 10 AROSC Board Mtg. 19-22 AROC National Convention - Columbus, Ohio 27 General Mtg. - 8pm, Culver City 29 Picnic & Tech Session - Culver City | 4 SMSCC Rally 8 AROSC Board Mtg. 25 General Meeting - 8pm, Culver City 26 Nethercutt Auto Museum Tour - 1pm, Sylmar | 1 SMSCC Rally 12 AROSC Board Mtg. 29 General Mtg. - 8pm, Culver City |
| September | October | November | December |
| 5 SMSCC Rally 9 AROSC Board Mtg. 20-1 Driving School - "Streets of Willow" 26 General Mtg. - 8pm, Culver City 27-8 Wine Tour to Temecula | 3 SMSCC Rally 5 Concours - location TBD 11 AROSC Board Mtg. ?? Time Trial 24 General Mtg. - 8pm, Culver City | 7 SMSCC Rally 14 AROSC Board Mtg. 16 Swap Meet at "Under 3 Liter Meet" at Woodley Park 21 General Mtg, Elections, "White Turkey Auction" - 8pm, Culver City | 6-7 Time Trial - Willow Springs 13 Christmas Party ?? AROSC Board Mtg. |

Details Inside Aficionada