

# ALFACIONADA

JULY 2021



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NEWSLETTER OF THE

*Alfa Romeo*  
Owners of Southern California

# Alfa Romeo Owners of Southern California

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## *About This Newsletter*

*Alfacionada* is the publication of the Alfa Romeo Owners of Southern

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## *Meeting Information*

While events and meetings have been on a pandemic hiatus, now that Southern California is re-opening, we are planning a return to live events. Please watch the website [www.arosc.org](http://www.arosc.org) for updates on meetings and activities. Email your questions, comments or concerns to [info@arosc.org](mailto:info@arosc.org) and a Director will respond.

## *On the Cover This Month*

*We are back live and in-person for drives, collection visits and concorsi. The colorful scene on the cover is from a past Huntington Beach Concors and we will be returning there on August 1st for our Club Concorso #1. Elyse Barrett photo*

# AROSC Board of Directors, 2021

Your entire Board is available at one point of contact: [info@arosc.org](mailto:info@arosc.org). We welcome and encourage your thoughts and feedback. This central email address will allow us to respond, at home or on the road, through our computers and smart phones. Leave your telephone number and request a call-back if you wish; we will be happy to contact you personally.

Don't forget to check our website: <http://www.arosc.org>

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# Previews ...*What's coming up and when.*

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**July 17** - Bob Funari Collection and lunch at Gladstone's; info on page 10.

**July 24** - Angeles Crest Day Drive; see page 12 for details.

**August 1** - Club Concorso #1 at Huntington Beach Concours, info on page 14.

**August 12** - Monterey Car Week Thursday Welcome Dinner, see page 23.

**August 21** - Board of Directors Meeting via Zoom

**August 22** - San Marino Motor Classic.

**September 4** - Santo's Anniversary Open House, Northridge

**September 5-12** - AROC National Convention, Colorado Springs, Colorado

**September 11-12** - HPDE School, Streets of Willow, Willow Springs International Raceway.



Note: Board of Directors meetings are held quarterly. Dates are posted in the Events Calendar. Anyone with business to bring before the Board is requested to please contact II Presidente Jim Barrett.



*Something old, something new at Ojai drive: Blankenship Giulia and Cano Spider. Photo by Steve Edelman.*

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# *Avanti e Verso l'Auto!*

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Oh, my goodness, where to begin?

To overuse a cliché, we are OUT OF THE TUNNEL! You know, that tunnel with the light at the end, right?

We really hope you feel the same. And we hope further that the past 15 months of seclusion has provided everyone with a perspective on how lucky we truly are to be connected by this Club and the opportunities provided by the culture of sportscar ownership. Those less fortunate around us, sadly, can't feel this way, so we must support anything that can help our society get through to the end of this nasty sickness.

It has been especially pleasant to digitally connect with everyone on our monthly Zoom Happy Hours, but this has been nothing like the real “standing around in a parking lot and talking about cars” experience we're used to. That is about to change because your Alfa club is ready to rumble. The 2021 calendar of righteously fun events has already been sent to you, with invitations for everyone to come drive with us! This calendar reflects only a small portion of our pent-up energy to go and do. Next year will be even better (hint: Wine Tour, Gimmick Rally, Progressive Dinner). The calendar also reflects the results of our first two-part AROSC survey, and the second version's results will help plan more future events. Thank you to those who participated; your input is invaluable.

By the time you read this, we will have been on a spontaneous day drive to Ojai and another fabulous day at Highway Earth. July will present two more events: a visit to a Long Beach car collection, followed by a lunch on July 17th, and then (hooray!) a drive on the Angeles Crest Highway on July 24th. More information is included in this newsletter. These will be an opportunity to sign the AROSC annual COVID release form, too. You can sign it electronically in a PDF, or traditionally on paper, and it will cover all the activities you attend for the entire insurance coverage period (until April 2022).

Looking toward August, there is still time to register for the first 2021 AROSC concours on August 1st which will be staged as part of the Huntington Beach Concours (<https://www.hbconcours.org/>), and you should do so as soon as possible; this previously two-day event has been condensed into a one-day show, and display space is limited.

Next in August is the esteemed AROSC Monterey Car Week Thursday Welcome dinner on August 12th. If you are going to Monterey, be sure to RSVP to Evelyn Silverman at [normanbev@msn.com](mailto:normanbev@msn.com) for this annual and informative event. Same place (Ambrosia), same price (\$25)!



As we now have four years of modern Alfas on the roads in this country, what can we understand about current values of the “before Alfas”? Already most ’60s, ’70s and ’80s cars have become too valuable to race (and damage), or too precious to be daily drivers, so what are current values for our favorite marque?

From our personal perspective, the greatly maligned Russian steel transaxle cars are jumping in value at auctions in this country; they remain two to three times that value in Europe. Will the value of “Needlessly Complicated Italian Cars” class title from Concours d’Lemons finally gain recognition for their over-engineered existence? Admittedly we’ve benefited from the depressed values of this class of cars, but what’s next? A GTV-6 recently sold on Hemmings for \$43K ...

In our own particular realm here, we found an excellent resource for those Alfa owners with fuel-injected cars: RC Fuel Injection in Torrance rebuilds injectors and includes documentation showing before and after performance data. Our latest follow-us-home Alfa is set to seriously benefit from this resource. (Clue: its first public outing in 10 years will be at the Huntington Beach Concours).

Your next Board of Directors meeting is on August 21st, and we encourage you to offer any suggestions you have for future events. Don’t be shy!

*Ciao, Jim and Elyse  
Copresidenti*



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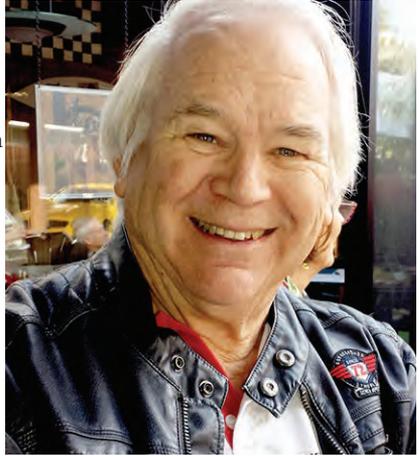


# Tech Guy – Solving Puzzles

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I have spent the last 50 years working with electronics and computers and really enjoy troubleshooting all sorts of problems, both electrical or mechanical, but the first time I took on a problem with the dash switches in an Alfa I was really puzzled.

Take, for instance, the windshield wiper switch. Push up: high speed; push down: low speed; center: off. It is a really simple three-way switch. Not in the Alfa. That switch has eight connections, four of which are jumpered together. So I took out my trusty ohmmeter and tried to see how the connections were made in the switch. I still couldn't figure it out. I finally had to take the switch apart. Thankfully that can be done without destroying it. After I disassembled the switch, I determined how it worked but I was left with the question of why they made it like it is.



The switches are made by the Italian company AnSor, located northwest of Milano. They have been around since 1952, and are still in business today. Their catalogue lists all of their products, old and new, along with circuit diagrams of the contacts. They supply switches for Fiat, Lancia, Alfa Romeo, Marerati, Innocenti, Seat, Ferrari and Piaggio. If you desire to see their catalog it can be found at <https://www.ansor.it/>

The switches are well-made and can take a lot of current, but after 50-some years they can become dirty and need cleaning. Since they are not sealed you can spray them with contact cleaner which may solve the problem. If that doesn't work, then the switch can be disassembled and the contacts cleaned up. You can find instructions on how to open and clean them here: <https://www.alfamontreal.info/Montreal/Switches.html>. Since the switch does contain spring-loaded parts it is best to take care when disassembling and reassembling. If you have a spare switch, it would be good to practice on that first.

These switches are very versatile and are made in a number of configurations for various needs and the parts are common for all switches except for the contact strips which can vary based upon the particular need. They are also available with rocker and lever type actuators.

Fig. 1 shows a view of the typical switch contact numbering. A particular switch may have anywhere for four to eight contacts, but the operation is the same. In addition, all contacts can be separate, or they can be internally connected in pairs; 1-7, 2-8, 3-5, 4-6. A switch can have any combination of internal connections. This

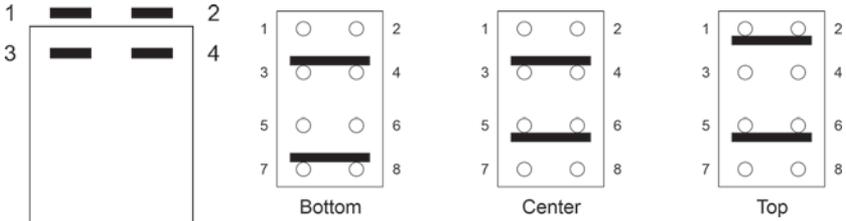
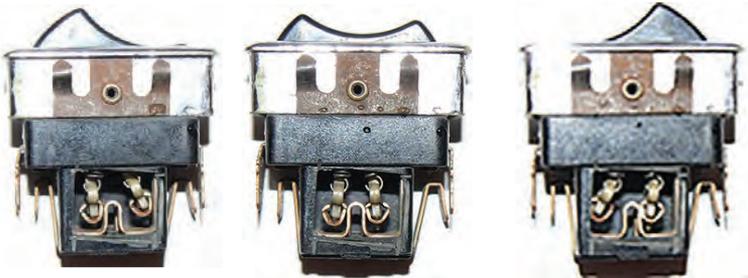


Figure 1 at left, Typical contact numbering. Figure 2 above shows contact connections at three different switch positions. Photos below show a typical switch at each position. The window regulator switches in the Milano would be a good example of this kind of switch.



makes them very programmable, and the manufacturer can provide any combination that is needed for a given use. If that is not enough, wires can be used to jumper the contacts external to the switch.

Fig. 2 shows how the contacts are connected based upon the switch position. So with all these possible combinations it is easy to see how it is difficult to determine switch connections with just an ohmmeter.

We all know that Italian cars have very reliable electrical systems and very rarely need to be worked on. But when you are dealing with 40- to 60-year-old cars that have survived several owners there may have been people working on them who are not master craftsmen and sometime the wiring begins to look like a bowl of well-mixed spaghetti. Put this together with wiring diagrams where the wire colors are sometimes just a suggestion and switches that are just plain weird, troubleshooting electrical problems can be a bit of a challenge.

Hopefully this explanation of the construction and operation of switches in Italian cars can help a little in your endeavors (and help prevent mental breakdowns).

– Gene Brown

# Touring the Funari Collection

Our whirlwind summer officially kicks off on July 17th with a trip to the beach!

We are invited to a special viewing of member Bob Funari's collection of high-performance machinery in Long Beach, followed by lunch at Gladstone's (who remembers our 2009 Alfapalooza?).

Bob has been a chapter member for a decade and has a fabulous GTV 2000 to see, among other unique vehicles. He and his wife Pam Kredell will be on hand to escort us through the two-dozen cars present when we visit

The garage is decidedly low-key on the outside – a converted industrial building that was perfect for his starter kit of four cars in 2006 – but Pam transformed it into the showpiece it is today. While the collection totals 24 now, only 12-14 can be on display at the garage at one time. It also houses his library, office, and automobilia while serving as a space for meetings of the professional and charitable organizations he supports.

Bob has collected some fabulous examples of automobiles of different genres and he groups them as follows: Automobiles that are the product of the Ford-Shelby partnership; Corvette milestones past and present; V-12 Ferrari; cars that can reach 60 mph in less than three seconds; 1960s and '70s icons; grand touring cars; and two completely unique automobiles.

We will be seeing the iconic '60s-'70s cars.

So, save the date now, RSVP early (space is limited) and get your signed waiver to us so you're covered for the year!

**When:** Sunday, July 17th. Tour: 10:15 AM to 12:30 PM. Lunch: 1:00 PM

**What:** Funari Collection, Long Beach and Lunch at Gladstone's (driving instructions will be provided when you sign up)

**Must-dos:** RSVP to both Tour and Lunch by July 14th to [emb.editorial@gmail.com](mailto:emb.editorial@gmail.com). Sign & Return Waiver/Release by July 14th to [emb.editorial@gmail.com](mailto:emb.editorial@gmail.com)

– Elyse Barrett





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# ANGELES CREST DAY DRIVE JULY 24TH



## *Save the date for a San Gabriel Mountains sojourn!*

On Saturday July 24th, Alfas will take to the hills – on a tour up Angeles Crest Highway (State Route 2) from La Canada to Wrightwood. This should be a spectacular run through our nearby mountains. It is not a race, but there should be fun chances to give your car an Italian tune-up. It is also a good time to make sure your cooling systems are up to the task.

The run is approximately 68 miles and will end at the Grizzly Café in Wrightwood. At the present time, Newcomb's Ranch restaurant is closed and there are emergency repairs being done on portions of the highway, requiring one-way controls. We will have stops along the way to consolidate the group and enjoy some great views.

Closer to the event date, I will make a scouting run to confirm the conditions and provide the latest information. We will have a lead car and a trailing car to maintain our group, though there aren't many opportunities to make a wrong turn.

Put this one on your calendar!

– Steve Cole

## *2nd Survey Says: It's Time to Have Fun!*

We circulated a second survey in early June loaded up with 18 activities that your Board was trying to shoehorn into the final seven months of 2021. You were asked what if you interested, wanted to go or could just pass on these events.

Here is a synopsis of the results of this Calendar Survey, to which 31 of you (among a 255-person membership) contributed. THANK YOU!

And nine of you commented or put forth ideas for other events. We will be responding to all of you. Again, THANK YOU.

- Q1: Attend Highway Earth Show - Interested 27.5%. Want to Attend 24.1%. No Thanks 48.2%.
- Q2: Private Collection Tour in Long Beach - Interested 44.8%. Want to Attend 37.9%.  
No Thanks 17.2%
- Q3: Drive Angeles Crest Highway - Interested 35.7%. Want to Attend 35.7%. No Thanks 28.5%.
- Q4: Huntington Beach Concours/Concorso #1 - Interested 28.5%. Want to Attend 46.4%.  
No Thanks 25%.
- Q5: Monterey Welcome Dinner - Interested 37.9%. Want to Attend 6.8%. No Thanks 55.1%.
- Q6: San Marino Motor Classic - Interested 24.1%. Want to Attend 24.1%. No Thanks 51.7%.
- Q7: September AROC Convention - Interested 21.4%. Want to Attend 14.2%.  
No Thanks 64.2%.
- Q8: Santo's Anniversary Party - Interested 37%. Want to Attend 40.7%. No Thanks 22.2%.
- Q9: AROSC Driving School - Interested 25%. Want to Attend 10.7%. No Thanks 64.2%.
- Q10: Willow Springs Race Weekend - Interested 10.7%. Want to Attend 10.7%.  
No Thanks 78.5%.
- Q11: Willow Springs Spectator Experience - Interested 16.1%. Want to Attend 12.9%.  
No Thanks 70.9%.
- Q12: Yanks Air Museum/Concorso #2 - Interested 43.3%. Want to Attend 36.6%.  
No Thanks 20%.
- Q13: Antique Gas & Steam Engine Museum Visit - Interested 44.8%. Want to Attend 17.2%.  
No Thanks 37.9%.
- Q14: Sonoma Time Trials - Interested 13.7%. Want to Attend 3.4%. No Thanks 82.7%.
- Q15: Best of France and Italy Show - Interested 35.4%. Want to Attend 61.2%.  
No Thanks 3.2%.
- Q16: Petersen Museum Visit - Interested 3.2%. Want to Attend 45.1%. No Thanks 6.4%.
- Q17: Gimmick Rally/ Drive - Interested 63.3%. Want to Attend 16.6%. No Thanks 20%.
- Q18: AROSC Holiday Party - Interested 39.2%. Want to Attend 50%. No Thanks 10.7%.

# Take Your Alfa to the Beach ... Huntington Beach, That Is!



*Gorgeous Duetto at 2013 Huntington Beach Concours. All photos Jim Barrett*

The first, post-COVID AROC Club Concours will take place at the 35th Annual Huntington Beach Concours d'Elegance on Sunday, August 1st.

Once again, this event will be held on the picturesque lawns of Huntington Beach Central Park in Huntington Beach. Central Park lies adjacent to the Huntington Beach Public Library and Cultural Resource Center at Talbert and Gothard.



*This was GTV Row at the 2013 HB Concours.*



*Relaxing and conversing with old and new friends is maybe the best part of these events!*

This year's show will include a salute to Chevrolet Impala, Studebaker Avanti, cars designed by Bill Mitchell, vintage Toyotas, Royal Enfield motorcycles and of course, some great Alfa Romeos.

The Alfa classes are:

- 26B Alfa Romeo open cars through 1995
- 26C Alfa Romeo closed cars through 1995
- 26D Alfa Romeo all cars 1996 and up
- 26E Alfa Romeo all cars race and competition-prepared Alfas

If you plan to exhibit your car, you must register by noon, July 28th. But don't wait: we recommend registering early, because the event could fill up. Visit the HB Concours website at <http://www.hbconcours.org/> for more details, including online registration forms.

You can request that your Alfa not be judged, but you'll still need to register through the Concours website and pay the \$40 fee. Two people (driver + passenger) can ride into the event with each car registration. You are still welcome to join the fun even if you don't bring an Alfa; spectator entry is \$10 per person plus \$1/car for parking at the adjacent Sports Complex.

Members living outside Orange County may wish to drive to Huntington Beach on Saturday. John Britton has researched area hotels and has three to recommend:

- Courtyard By Marriot, 3002 South Harbor Bl., Santa Ana, 714.545.1001
- Ayers, 17550 Brookhurst St., Fountain Valley, 714.861.5170
- Sonesta Select, 9950 Slater Ave., Fountain Valley, 800.766.3782

John reports that there are myriad eateries around all the hotels, so if you need any recommendations feel free to call him (he is local) at 714.493.6054.

The AROSC section of the Huntington Beach Concours has historically been an integral part of this very large, friendly event, and 2021 will continue that tradition (with your help, of course!). So, bring your Alfa, a picnic lunch, comfortable chairs and comfortable shoes, and sunscreen. See you there!

*– Jeff Srinivasan, Jay Mackro and John Britton*

# ESCAPE TO OJAI



*Alfisti gather at Flying J Travel Center for the run to Ojai. Paul Blankenship photo.*

We're back live, not virtual! As the first in-person event for AROSC in over a year, the drive to Ojai and after-party was a true celebration of summer where members were finally able to meet and drive and eat together, as in the "Before Days".

We gathered at the massive Flying J Travel Center on Frazier Mountain Park Road in Lebec, where our group of seven cars was met by Paul Blankenship who stopped by to say hi, show us his sparkly, new-to-him, Misano Blue Metallic Giulia, and sample some truck stop donuts.

Leaving Paul to contemplate his food choices, our group set off through the scenic pine tree-lined twisty mountain roads through Lake of the Woods and Hudson Ranch to Hwy. 166 and Hwy 33. As the pines thinned out and the temperatures rose to 100°, most of the group was glad to have brought their newer, non-Alfas with better air-conditioning. Mario Cano however, not only brought his 1988 Red Spider Veloce, but also drove with the top down in true sports car enthusiast fashion. Bravo Mario!

Upon arriving at our first stop at the Santa Barbara Pistachio Company we discovered that the BMW of Roberto and Cheryl Quadrelli had sustained a cut tire. Although they had been able to drive on it for many miles because it was a run-flat tire, it was deemed too risky to continue. Out of cell phone range, the nice employees at the Pistachio Company let them use their phone and they were able to make arrangements to have the car towed to the dealer in Bakersfield for repair.

After making sure the Quadrellis had a rescue plan of action and loading up on pistachios, the group set off south on Hwy. 33 through more forest-covered mountains to our restaurant stop in Ojai. After arriving at Jim & Rob's Fresh Grill Ojai, the group picked up some delicious Mexican food to take to our picnic site.



*The orchard at the Santa Barbara Pistachio Company. Steve Edelman photo.*

Our lunch stop was Soule Park where we had almost the entire place to ourselves. We adorned our picnic tables under the huge shade providing open-air structure with red and white table covers secured by accents of green duct tape. Then dined in the pleasant, breezy, mid-80s climate.

Following lunch, we took Hwy 150 and Hwy 126 through Santa Paula's orchards and a llama farm to our after-party location at Jan and Chuck Cline's spacious, comfortable home in Camarillo. There we were joined by more club members and had a nice reunion with Alfa friends whose company we haven't been able to enjoy for so long. Thank you Jan and Chuck, and thank you everyone, for joining this somewhat spontaneous celebration of summer. Here's to many more!



*– Steve Edelman*

# More Ojai Drive photos ... AfterParty in Camarillo



Clockwise from bottom center: Chris, Bruce, Pat, Jan, Pat, Cindy, Steve, Mario, Mike. David Waelder photo.



Left, Warm at the start, low eighties by the end. Steve Edelman photo. Above Right, Catherine Jay, Mike and Chris catch up. David Waelder photo.



Left, Susan shares photos with Jan. Right, Pat and Chuck talk driving tours. Both photos by David Waelder..

# DIY DAY DRIVES...

*There is a long, bright summer ahead to enjoy with your Alfa!*



In our Surveys of March (42% want to go) and June (44% interested, 37% want to go) about half of us wanted to exercise our Alfa and day drives of two, four or six hours duration.

We collected three convenient drives and posted them to the website. Here are the notes that accompanied the posting. Go to the website, and use the links posted there to access driving instructions.

Here are some notes to help your decision-making. Enjoy

## **Valencia to Ojai**

Steve Edelman just led a similar run in mid-June. You are welcome to go again! The Google map of the route (won't give real time navigation instructions): Ojai Tour 13 - [https://drive.google.com/open?id=19Sun49uwLdVr5IKT0HE1iT\\_ZSFs&usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/open?id=19Sun49uwLdVr5IKT0HE1iT_ZSFs&usp=sharing)

Drivers could do half of the tour if they don't want to drive so far. Either come up from Valencia and conclude in Gorman, or start near Gorman at the Flying J Travel Center, 42810 Frazier Mountain Park Rd, Lebec and conclude in Ojai. It's not in the instructions, but we also stopped at the Santa Barbara Pistachio Company, 3380 CA-33, Maricopa, CA 93252, which has a restroom. The restaurant we visited prior in Ojai has evolved into Osteria Monte Grappa, 242 E Ojai Ave., Ojai, CA 93023.

## **Orange County**

The route is not complex, but there are not a lot of specifics on mileage of the segments or rest stops, so you need to drive mindfully. Eateries at the end point in Dana Point harbor cannot be guaranteed - they may have changed format or changed ownership - but Jon's Fish Market indicates online that they are open. We suggest researching before your drive. If you want someone to grade your trivia paper, send it via email to [info@aroc-org](mailto:info@aroc-org)

## **Malibu Coast**

The restaurant we dined in at the conclusion of the drive, Giannfraco's Trattoria, indicates on their website that they are open for patio and indoor dining, but please check with them before arriving.

# Member News

## BLANKENSHIPS JOIN THE 21ST CENTURY

To celebrate spring and getting back on the road, Paul and Mary Blankenship took the big leap and acquired a gorgeous blue CPO (certified pre-owned) Giulia and sold their venerable Milano.

“Well, the White Milano (which I bought off a used car lot in Pacoima) now has a new owner. It has moved south down by Julian to a new San Diego chapter AROC member. This will be in addition to his 164 and a newish Giulia. He needed a ‘project car’ which I gladly supplied,” Paul said. “To get Mary to OK the sale, the buyer had to also come up with a Julian Pie Company apple pie, which he graciously did!



Next, I was able to talk Mary into us getting a newish Giulia, which I was able to find as a Certified Pre Owned unit from Puente Hills Alfa Romeo! The CPO deal is not bad; it is a very friendly dealership, and I got some time with Jorge Clue the general manager and his finance manager, Freddy Berzunza, who is a total car guy.”



## THE CLINE SS INCHES TOWARD COMPLETION



Above, Chuck takes a look at Alberto's handiwork in the resto of the Sprint Speciale. Below, the Cline SS on her way back to driving trim.



## BRINKERHOFF-JACOBS SPIDER IS BEAUTIFIED



The beloved 1958 Giulietta Spider Veloce of Julie Brinkerhoff-Jacobs made good use of her pandemic downtime by getting a thorough refresh at a shop in Newport Beach. These shots are from December, so we are sure the Spider is ready for summer now.



**Auto Metal Works**

2312<sup>1/2</sup>R W. 2nd Street, Santa Ana, CA 92703

714-953-3020 GARY TODISCO



## SO-CAL ALFISTI? NEW OWNERS ARE OUT THERE!

Folks, there is a whole other group of Alfa fans out there. A little younger than most of us, they own Giulias, Stelvios and 4Cs, and they have the same enthusiasm for our Italian cars as we do. Many do not know there is a national Alfa club.

I tagged along on one of their spontaneous day drives. We met at the *USS Iowa* in San Pedro (free parking early on a Sunday before the ship opens) then took a drive up Palos Verdes Peninsula, ending at Roessler Park. They had 25 Alfas, mostly Giulias including five Quads. Interesting to see what people who are half our age are doing and thinking. Required for these things are several ace photos and a drone. Post on Instagram ASAP, like within a few hours of the event.

Stalk them on Instagram and Facebook: [socialfisti](#) and [social\\_alfaromeos](#)

– *Paul Blankenship*

### **23rd DINNER WITH AROSC – CELEBRATE IN MONTEREY**

You are invited to join us on Thursday, August 12th at 7 PM for a group dinner at Ambrosia Indian Bistro, 565 Abrego Street, Monterey. The buffet-style menu is half-Italian and half-Indian, and still \$25 per person. Final details are being arranged as this newsletter is going to press. This is a fun dinner for those arriving on Thursday. RSVP: [normanev@msn.com](mailto:normanev@msn.com) for sign-up information and details



# 2021 Calendar

Welcome AROSC Members to your emerging 2021 Events Calendar. Here are seven months of possibilities – activities you indicated you liked in the surveys this past March and June. This is a living document, nothing is etched in stone, and we want you to make it the most relevant it can be. Contact your Board via [info@arosc.org](mailto:info@arosc.org) and let us know your thoughts.

## JUNE

- 27** Highway Earth Car Show,  
Franklin Canyon Park, Beverly Hills



## JULY

- 17** Bob Funari Collection visit,  
Long Beach
- 24** Angeles Crest Hwy. Day Drive



## AUGUST

- 1** Huntington Beach Concours +  
AROSC Concorso #1
- 12** Monterey Car Week Welcome  
Dinner
- 21** AROSC Board Meeting
- 22** San Marino Motor Classic



## SEPTEMBER

- 4 Santo's Anniversary Open House, Northridge
- 5-12 AROC National Convention, Colorado Springs
- 11-12 HPDE School, Streets of Willow



## OCTOBER

- 9-10 DE, TT & Race, Willow Springs
- 9-10 Spectator Track Experience
- 16 Yanks Air Museum Visit + Concorso#2, Chino Airport
- 24 Antique Gas & Steam Engine Museum, Vista



## NOVEMBER

- 2 Election Notice & Balloting
- 6-7 Sonoma w/ NCRC
- 7 Best of France & Italy, Woodley Park, Van Nuys
- 20 Petersen Visit (TBD)
- 21 BoD Planning Meeting

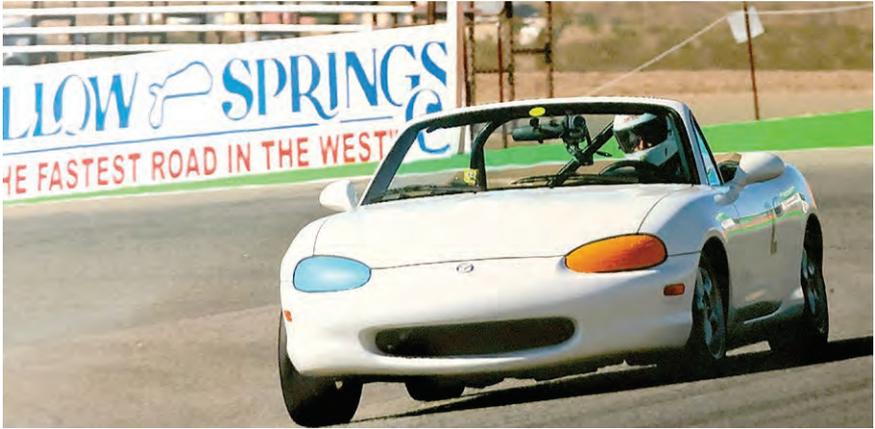


## DECEMBER

- 11 The Holiday Party!!
- TBD Gimmick Rally or Day Drive.



# Track Day Memories *by Fred Firschein*



*The Alfa Guy's track car a Miata Modified. From Tina Firschein's phone*

Some time towards the end of the last century, I became a member of the Southern California chapter of the Alfa Romeo Owners Club. The meetings were held in a community room in a park in Redondo Beach. Halfway through the meeting we would take a break and adjourn to the parking lot to look at and discuss the foibles of each others' Alfas. It was a time when we all drove our Alfas to events and used them as daily drivers.

We had tech sessions where advice was freely given – access to the black arts needed to keep these special cars on the road. We were lucky to have the expertise of Mike Sperry and Dave Vehger and many others who shared their knowledge of the marque we loved. We had tours, concours events, and of course track days. Being in Southern California, we were lucky to be surrounded a lot of different racetracks. To the south we had a small track at Carlsbad, to the north we had Laguna Seca, Willow Springs and Buttonwillow, and of course to the east we had Riverside Raceway.

Track days were then under the leadership of Charlie Theriot and Phyllis Gaylard. My curiosity led me to an intro session at Riverside. My GTV and I arrived with a borrowed helmet and ready to take on the track where so many racing heroes used to run. It was my first time on any racetrack, and it was truly a learning experience.

The Intro Group started off with classroom theory followed by a lead-and-follow during the lunch break. Again, let me emphasize that this was my first time on any racetrack, and when we lined up I was at the tail end of the line. At the lead was the instructor who we were supposed to follow and learn the proper way through the turns, when to brake, and where to hit the apex. Following the instructor came a Corvette, a Maserati and then me in my GTV.

Apparently the people in front of me had some experience and easily stayed with the instructor as he kept upping the speed. With the instructor not seeing me I was

quickly left behind, trying to figure out for myself what I was supposed to do. After slipping and sliding around, scaring myself and those watching, I was shown a black flag and a checkered flag to make sure I got the message to get off the track. I guess my time on the track was over.

Fast-forward to the next century. (Damn, that makes me feel old.) I am still driving an Alfa, still a member of AROSC. All of a sudden that itch that needed to be scratched again. I took a drive up to Buttonwillow for an AROSC track day. While there, I got Norm Silverman to take me out for a ride-along. Well that was exciting! His Guilia sedan was fast, noisy and scary as he flung it around the track, leaning over 'till I thought we would be scraping the door handles off on the pavement.

Well, the needle with the “speed” drug had been put into my arm, but not yet injected. That would have to wait for another day.

I attended another track day at Willow Springs as a spectator. Norm cornered me and wanted to know if I was ready join the group and hit the track. I had numerous excuses for not joining such as, “My Alfa is too nice to put on the track.” And, “It has been years since I was on a racetrack.” And, “You all know what happened at Riverside.” The clincher, I thought, would be the excuse that I was too old. Norm said to me, “See that guy over there?” as he pointed to a gentleman named Fred Hamilton. “He is 86 years old, and still driving his Buick Regal at track days, so what is your excuse now?”



*Spongebob says, “Catch me if you can!” From Tina Firschein’s phone*

At this point I had run out of excuses. The drug was injected, and I was hooked on the need for speed. However, when walking through the pit area I did notice that the racers who were running old Alfas were spending more time fixing their cars than driving them on the track. With that in mind and not wanting to molest my old Alfa to prepare it for action on the track, I purchased a Miata to use as my daily driver and as a track car.

Tina [Fred’s darling wife] went along with my plan, even after the rollbar went in, a five-point harness installed, and new helmet, gloves tires, suspension upgrade, were purchased. After all, it was all needed because it was a “daily driver”.

I attended the world-famous AROSC driving school held at The Streets of Willow. From classroom theory of car control, to putting the theory to work on

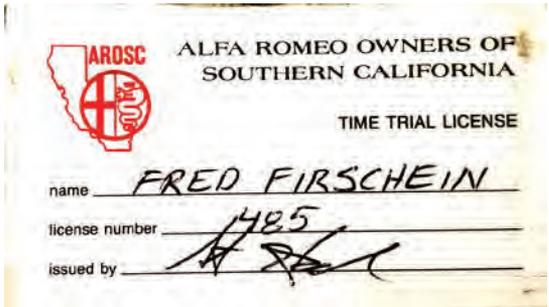
the skid pad, I can still hear the instructor sitting beside me encouraging me to go faster, faster, faster, until we were truly spinning and I was trying to remain in control. I have to take my hat off to those brave instructors that strap themselves into cars with drivers who don't always know what they are doing. I would highly recommend the school to anyone who wants to better understand the dynamics of car control wherever and whatever they drive.

With newfound confidence, I entered Time Trial events as a novice with the goal of achieving an under-two-minute lap time on the Big Track (Willow Springs International Raceway). AROSC is very fortunate to have a group of accomplished track people who volunteer as instructors to give direction to the newbies. One time, I was lucky to get Phil Guirial to ride along with me and give me pointers as I drove the track. After a few laps, Phil asked if he could drive my car with me as passenger. What a revelation that was! At the end of the session, all I could say to Phil was, "I didn't know you could drive the car like that." Funny how at the end of the drive session, with the adrenalin flowing, you always get the feeling that given one more lap you could do better.

AROSC has been holding track days for many years now, organizing safe track experiences for all of Louis Hamilton wannabes.

I would recommend to anyone with the curiosity for what it is like to drive at speed, in a

safe learning environment, to take the plunge and dive in. There are always great people around you to help and give advice on how to get started.



*TT License well-earned! Tina Firschein photo.*

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# Join Us At the Track!

Just starting out, experienced or a racer?

We have a run group just for you!

All marques are welcome.

You don't have to drive an Alfa to run with us!

*Alfa Romeo*  
Owners of Southern California

## *2021 Schedule*

Sept 11-12 Streets of Willow, HPDE Driving School

Oct 9-10 Willow Springs, Big Track, TT & Race

Nov 6-7 Sonoma Raceway, TT & Race w/NCRC



You can sign up for our track events at

[www.alfaclubracing.com](http://www.alfaclubracing.com)

or at [motorsportreg.com](http://motorsportreg.com)



*Alfa* *Miglia*



**ALFA 2021**  
looking back / moving forward

The *Alfa Romeo Owners Club* National Convention  
Colorado Springs, Colorado - September 7 to 12, 2021