



# La Voce

July 2002

*newsletter of the delaware valley alfa romeo owners club*

## Planes, Cars and Fun!



### DVAROC Does the New Garden Air Show

What sound could possibly be better than an Alfa at full song? Well, a pair of radial engines attached to a B25 bomber and a V12 Merlin installed in a P51 Mustang are two that come to mind. If you joined us for the New Garden Air Show in June, you would have been able to make the decision for yourself.

Bob Brady's front yard was temporarily turned into a show car ground as a pair of Giulia Spiders and a 164 joined his Giulietta Sprint and GTV. While we waited for the rest of the caravan, we caught up on acquaintances, made new ones, and enjoyed some croissants and coffee together. When the clock chimed nine, we were reminded that it was time to start the parade.

Bob fired up the little red GTV, which has become a bit of a beast thanks to the recent installation of an Ingram-modified Spica pump. Behind him, his father and mother made a fashionable pair as they drove in the Sprint. Tony Bruno was next in his pretty 164S, which he has owned since new. Arthur Jones and Charlie Crothers brought up the rear in their Giulia Spiders, which seem to get nicer each time they come out.

The ride was short, but picturesque, taking us through some tree-lined lanes. When we arrived, we followed the signs for the "modern" cars, those younger than 55 years and parked amongst some American iron and a some lesser

British sports cars. Above our Italian contingent, were Fords, a Sears (yes, that Sears), Ford Ts, As and V8s, and a DuPont, yes, that DuPont. The chemical giant briefly manufactured automobiles. Several Packards from the nearby Marshall collection, which also supplied a number of Stanley Steamers and a very early electric car, were on display. Above them, a number of interesting motorcycles were parked next to the airport museum.

Resembling the Mercer Museum in its display, the New Garden Airport museum is an eclectic collection of motorcycles, cars, airplanes, toys and just about anything else. Some of the highlights inside included a three-wheeled Morgan, two Cooper-Climaxes, a rotary-engined motorcycle, and a human-powered airplane. The rarely open museum opens its doors each year for the show.

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### Mark Your Calendars!

**July 21 – Picnic and Rally – Ridley Creek State Park**

**August 11 - New Hope Auto Show**

# Bob's Babblings

Bob Brady

**This La Voce is Brought to You By:** Not since I started editing/writing La Voce a few years ago have I received such an amazing quantity of material to publish. From photos, to briefs, to full-blown articles, the contributions from the club have been enormous this month. I want to especially thank: Sunny Waters, Charlie Crothers, John Jeffries, Arthur Jones and Bill Conway. Your contributions to this publication make producing it much easier. Thank you, very much.

**Upcoming Events** A few months ago, the social committee of the DVAROC (Charlie Crothers, Dan Scolaro, Arthur Jones and myself) were developing the events calendar for the year. As we did so, it became clear that we did not have an event for July. So, to give everyone something interesting to do, we came up with the idea of doing a picnic/rally. The rally promises to be a great time. We'll be preparing a course that should take about 15 minutes to complete and will take you through some scenic countryside. Each participant will get numerous attempts to drive the course, with the goal of matching your total elapsed time. The winner will get a special prize, most likely a rare and antique piece of Alfa Romeo lore. One of the biggest challenges with this event has been selecting a location. After much haggling, we settled on Ridley Creek State Park, in Delaware County as a reasonably accessible and convenient spot, that also has some interesting roads near it. I really hope you can attend. If you can't, or aren't interested, I'd love to know why, so we can better plan events in the future.

The next event, after the picnic/rally, is the New Hope Auto Show. I've been going to this event for over twenty years, now, and it is always a treat. It is also a great family event, as the towns of New Hope and Lambertville are within walking distance and offer a potpourri of shops, restaurants and entertainment. Last year, the show made an attempt at going upscale and did away with the swap meet. I, for one, was not particularly happy with that direction, as one of my principle attractions to this show is its low-key, friendly atmosphere. In the past, its openness to allowing cars of all qualities, not just concours cars, didn't seem to affect its ability to attract some of the best. In fact, last year's field was considerably smaller and less interesting than in the past. I hope the trend reverses itself this year. At any rate, if you are in town, you should add this event to your calendar. In recent years, Alfas have provided one of the largest contingents of cars there. Give yours a wash, and show it off.

**New Additions** In the last few months, I've received numerous inquiries into the club. This is great. Our survival depends on our ability to bring in new blood. One notable, potential new member is the proud owner of a 1900SS. Regardless of what Alfa you own, however, we'd love to get to know you. Hopefully, we'll see some new faces, and cars at an event soon.

Drive your Alfa - bob

## Classifieds:

**1988 Milano Verde Parts:** Parting out '88 Verde. Engine, front Recaros and window switches gone. Many good parts left incl: doors, hood, trunklid, flares/skirts, spoiler, etc [Dan Scolaro](mailto:Dan.Scolaro@215-782-1478), 215-782-1478

**1958 Spider Veloce** Matching numbers. A nice driver, but not a perfect car. Priced appropriately at \$12,500. Also willing to trade for a nice coupe. Dave West 610 240 0264, [dave@shootersinc.com](mailto:dave@shootersinc.com)

**1987 Milano Platinum:** good Blue/Grey paint, no dents, slight rear wheel well rust, decent interior (sunroof headliner missing), everything works, 130kmi, tired motor and tired gearbox. Driven daily until recently. \$500 takes it. 610-838-9970 Domenick.

**1976 Alfa Spider:** Restoration in progress. Engine and transmission rebuilt, seats upholstered, body work completed, ready for final paint,

parts rechromed, new windshield. Over \$8,000. invested; asking \$6,000. Call 610-933-7171 or E-Mail: [whiteleila@msn.com](mailto:whiteleila@msn.com).

**1974 GTV:** disassembled, custom cage & flat floors with bars for seats and undercarriage bracing by S&W in Spring City, PA. All parts are boxed and will go with car. 5 new OEM steel wheels widened to 6" with Stahlflex 3011. In storage for 15 yrs. Rebuilt engine (Spica) with maybe 5kmi. Extras available incl: (will not be sold separately until car is sold): pair 45DCOE's w/manifold, Spruell headers (new), Switters close ratio gear box, SAFE fuel cell and Life Line Halogen fire system (both SCCA legal) Sparco seat Brembo lightweight calipers (new), Car is at Nick Falcone's, Bala-Cynwyd, PA, 610-664-0944

**1963 Giulia Spider** bare metal restoration, acid dipped body, all components rebuilt or replaced, completely original and correct, driven in '92 California Mille Miglia, '98 Greenwich Concours award, '98 Lehigh Concours award, \$25K. Josh Landsman (973)334-3360.

**1963 Giulia Spider** whole or parts. Windshield, Parish Plastics hard top, soft top frame and many body panels are in good condition. No engine or trans. Rockers and floor reinforcements shot. Make offers. Bob Brady, 610-924-1837 or [mpbrady@bellatlantic.net](mailto:mpbrady@bellatlantic.net)

**Free:** Duetto/Spider Hardtop to a good home. Contact Bob Brady at 610-925-1837.

**Car Storage:** I have Barn Storage space available for rent. Winter storage for your Spider or that project car you don't have time for. Dry, clean and secure at \$95 a mo. Located south of Bethlehem just across the Bucks County line. Domenick Billera, 610-838-9970

**Multiples:** 1983 gtv/6 19K miles Silver/Blue, 1979 Alfetta 19K miles Ivory/ Chocolate. Bill Conway, 973-839-9239

[Bill.Conway@neclease.com](mailto:Bill.Conway@neclease.com)

**1967 Duetto and Many Parts:** New and used parts inventory plus a very restorable 1967 Duetto. The parts range from some 1300 & 1600 to a good quantity of 1750 and early 2000. There are 500+ new line items totaling over 1500 parts. Most are mechanical including a lot of engine parts and a new fuel injection unit. Included in the used category are 4 engines (mostly torn down)/transmissions, 3 fuel injection pumps complete, alternators, gauges, etc.. Also included are parts manuals for most models and a number of Owner's Manuals. I prefer to sell all as a package. \$3500. Dwight Timm, [dtimm@crosslink.net.214](mailto:dtimm@crosslink.net.214) Piney Point Road, Lancaster, VA 22503

**Wanted:** 1967 GTV, prefer original car. The nicer the better. Will pay market price. Day(908) 686-8236, Evening(973) 635-1932, email [MWSINC2426@aol.com](mailto:MWSINC2426@aol.com)

**La Voce** - is attempted to be published six times per year, in: winter, spring, June, July, September and December

Commercial Ads should be coordinated through Bob Brady.

Rates, per edition, are:

1/8 page - \$	20
1/2 page - \$	60
full page - \$	100

Classified ads are free to DVAROC members.

The DVAROC web address is at: [www.dvaroc.org](http://www.dvaroc.org)

Send web classifieds to: [classifieds@dvaroc.org](mailto:classifieds@dvaroc.org)

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## Events Calendar: \* Indicates DVAROC Event

### \*July 21 – Picnic and Rally – Ridley Creek Park, Pa.

Enjoy an afternoon of picnicking and driving as the DVAROC hosts its first annual summer picnic and rally. We'll meet at Ridley Creek State Park at 10am; drive to the Bishops Mills Historical Institute Headquarters on Sandy Flash Drive, off of the West Chester Pike entrance; from there, look for signs to our picnic site. Once we get together, we'll give each participant a rally map. Each participant will drive the course and be timed. The course is about 15 minutes drive and will take you through some scenic countryside. After the first run, we'll picnic and then do a second run. The winner of the rally will be the driver who most closely matches his/her time. Lunch (sandwiches and chips) and drinks will be available for \$8/person. Please RSVP Bob Brady at (610)925-1837 or [mpbrady@bellatlantic.net](mailto:mpbrady@bellatlantic.net) by July 20<sup>th</sup> so we know what food to order and how many directions to make.

### \*August 11 – New Hope Auto Show – New Hope, PA

The New Hope Auto Show will once again take place on the second Sunday in August. As always, the DVAROC (and NJAROC) will be out in force for this wonderful day in New Hope, among some lovely vehicles. At the time of publication, registration forms were not available. Registration via the web is available at: [www.newhopeautoshow.com](http://www.newhopeautoshow.com). If anyone is interested, we can drive together there. Contact Bob Brady at: 610-925-1837 or [mpbrady@bellatlantic.net](mailto:mpbrady@bellatlantic.net) if you are interested.

### Other Events???

If you have a particular interest, know of an event that might interest other Alfisti, or just want to get involved, please contact Bob Brady at: 610-925-1837 or [mpbrady@bellatlantic.net](mailto:mpbrady@bellatlantic.net)

## Air Show (con't from front page)

Unlike some of the larger air shows, the New Garden show delivers thrills without the huge crowds and traffic that goes with them. In addition, the homey atmosphere encourages getting up close to the birds. Though it is small, it makes up for size with quality. Among the beautiful planes on display were a B25 bomber, a P51 Mustang, the airport owner's Wildcat (the precursor of the Hellcat), a Gypsy Moth and some other British WWI vintage biplanes. Though the planes were beautiful and interesting to view, the real thrills were when they were fired up and flown. The Mustang's V12 Merlin doesn't scream like a Ferrari, but its sound is no less sweet. It's not hard to imagine how enemy troops would have been intimidated by it diving from above. The other highlight was seeing and hearing the B25 fly. Those twin radial engines rap out a unique melody. In addition to the propeller-driven planes, a Czech training jet made some noise as its owner made some low passes over the crowd. A pair of aerobatic planes defied the laws of physics with some amazing stunts. There was even a demonstration of some radio-controlled aircraft. If that wasn't enough, rides in biplanes and helicopters were available.

By the time the B25 took off, marking the end of the show, we had our fill of sun, fun, cars and planes. We'll be back next year



*The B25 fires up its engines as it prepares for flight.*



*One of two Cooper Climaxes in the New Garden Airport Museum.*

# A Montreal Trip

*Sunny Waters*

**The Sighting** I saw my first Montreal in Gary Valant's shop in Dallas in 1982 while they were sorting out the jetting on the 45DCOE's I had recently fitted to my tweaked 1750 Boat tail spider. The looks and the sound, an ITALIAN V8, made it love at first sight! Even then, less than ten years after the last car was shipped, Gary discounted the model as being very difficult to find parts for. If only I had remembered that statement some 16 years later.

It was part of my summer ritual, when visiting my father, to drop in on a local restoration shop and see what they had about. I will refer to this place as the "shop" hiding its true identity for reasons that will become clear later. Anyway, on this particular visit the owners father was around, a nice old gent that was very talkative. We shot the breeze for a while and poked around the show room. As I was about to leave, he invited me back into the storage warehouses to show me some of the other cars. In the second warehouse we visited, as I was looking through the window of a basket case Talbot Lago, I spotted the instantly recognizable rear vent slats of a black Montreal. I had to literally crawl over the hood of the Talbot to get to the car and then had to push back a Riley race engine to create a spot to stand. There was no hope of getting inside the car, as this was definitely the second tier storage (read cram them in and maybe we will do something with them someday.) It turned out that this was not an issue as the rear hatch glass was missing so I could see most of the interior. I looked around a bit but it was difficult to ascertain the condition of the car under the covering of dirt, and anyway it was time to return to my Father's. The owner was not at the shop and the owner's father did not know anything about the car.

I didn't think about the car again until the drive back from my father's, only mentioning it in passing to my wife. The week I got home I called the shop from work and spoke with the owner. He claimed that he had taken the car on a trade in but had worked on the car for several years prior to that. I asked him if he could dig the car out so I could have my father look it over and test-drive it.

**The Acquisition** My father, whose foreign car experience was comprised of the ownership of a Morgan for a few years, went by the shop and test-drove the car. He was impressed with the power, what was probably the noise from the rotting exhaust, and at least I new the car ran. I rummaged around the Internet and found Bruce Taylor's wonderful Montreal home page.

[www.alfamontreal.info/](http://www.alfamontreal.info/). This is the finest single model car site on the web! Well, I read up on the car and was

made aware of the Montreal's archilies heel, more on that later. Ignoring everything I read, I hoped on a plane the next weekend and went to visit the car. As I turned up the street to where the shop was there was a gleaming black Montreal and as I got out of the car I could hear the idle of that glorious little V8. I should have known then the shop was not to be trusted, as a shop on the up and up will allow you to start the car cold. Anyway, I had sold myself the car when I saw it driving up.

Don't get me wrong. I am as culpable as the shop owner. At 50 years old and after owning at least 10 old European sport cars, including a few Alfas, I should have known better. But, hey, it sure was beautiful and a 2.6 liter, dual overhead cam V8, a detuned version of the Tipo 33 grand prix engine, I was way past being rational.

The Shop let me look over the car as much as I wanted and I never asked that it be put on a lift. I took the car for a drive and took the engine up to red line. That exercise may very well have been the reason for the impending catastrophe. I asked the Shop owner what he knew about the car and he stated that he had maintained the car for several years and had taken it in as a trade. He said that the front suspension and steering had been completely rebuilt, and that he had done the paintwork several years ago.

We discussed the car several times over the phone and came to an agreement on the car. I bought the car at the top of market value and paid the Shop to recover the seats, paint the wheels and perform some other cosmetic work. I had to wait several weeks to pick up the car as the Shop had to acquire and replace the rear hatch glass.

When the time came to pick up the car I borrowed a good tow vehicle, rented a tow trailer and leaned on a buddy to do a sixteen hour round trip from Philadelphia to Cape Cod and back. We left at 5p.m. Friday driving in the rain towing my wife's 1967 Triumph Spitfire I had sold on the Cape. Got onto the Cape early in the wee hours of the morning. Got up in the morning, dropped off the Spitfire and headed over to the shop. The trip back to Pennsylvania was uneventful and we arrived home just before dusk.

**The Joy of Ownership** Arriving home Saturday evening, my friend and I unloaded the Montreal and I took my wife for a short ride. I took one more short ride before taking the car to the ex Alfa Romeo dealer and having a complete service, refreshing all of the fluids, as well as some drive train components and a brake master cylinder.

Now the fun starts. I picked up the car at the dealership and drove it into center city Philadelphia to my job. As I approached the city in the usual horrific traffic, I began to see the temperature gauge creeping up. Having little practical experience with the car, and given that the increase in temperature was slow and linear, I continued

toward the city figuring that once I got some air moving everything would improve. (Continued on next page)

## Montreal (con't from previous page)

The temperature gauge was creeping towards the top when the car stalled at a busy intersection in the downtown business district. When the car restarted it looked like a James Bond smoke screen. I attempted to make it the last two blocks to my parking garage. About fifty feet from my parking garage the engine locked up. S#@\*!

I spent most of the day waiting for a flat bed tow truck with every other passer by telling me how beautiful the car was.

**Archilie's Heel, Size 13** For those of you who are unfamiliar with the Montreal engine, it shares little with any other production Alfas and is not the combination of two four cylinders. The weak point in the engine is the undersized outer bearing on the water pump shaft. The water pump is internal and the shaft also drives all four cams.

It is exceptionally sensitive to proper tensioning of the cam chain. Not leaving enough slack in the cam chain so that when the engine block and heads heat up and expands is certain to overload the outer casing bearing, causing failure. In my case a catastrophic!

After tearing down the engine to inspect the damage the following appears to be the sequence of events: The outer water pump shaft bearing failed, eventually disintegrating. Once the outer bearing failed the inner bearing followed suite. The casing of the inner bearing ending up in the sump. The oil and coolant mixed with the mixture being recirculated through the oil reserve tank. Once the oil reserve tank filled, the overflow was sent through the breather tube to the air cleaner. This alone should not have exacerbated the situation, as the oil should have run out the fresh air inlet tube. Not so if one of the previous owners has cut down two of the intake ram tubes in the air cleaner so they could rig up a choke cable instead of repairing the thermostatic actuator. So instead of the oil coolant mixture exiting the air intake it flowed down through the cut off intake tubes causing a fluid lock in two cylinders. Catastrophic failure!

**Is the cure worse than the disease?** So here was the dilemma. In paying to have additional cosmetic work performed on the car before I took delivery I was in the position of having 110% of the top value of the car invested and I had a destroyed and worn out engine.

I was fortunate enough to have the former Alfa Romeo and Masserati, and current Ferrari, dealership staffed with knowledgeable people and even a set of Montreal "special" tools left from the Alfa days. That was about all the good news there was to be. Oh, they also charged ten dollars an hour less than Ferraris to work on Alfas.

After a complete tear down the estimate came back at 100 hours labor and an estimated \$7,500 in parts for a complete rebuild. The hardest part of the decision was discussing it with my wife. How do you present that your recent acquisition has you in the position of either writing off almost \$18,000 or investing another \$16,000 being under water on the value of the end result by a factor of two? Uncharactically my wife went along with the rebuild pitch, helped along by a soft loan from a brother doing well in the late 90's.

I was fortunate enough to get the top mechanic, a young fellow, to undertake the rebuild, and, while it did little for my confidence that we could stay on budget, the fact that my engine was being rebuilt along side million dollar vintage Ferrari race car engines did give me assurance of a competent rebuild.

**The Rebuild** Well, as these things go it wasn't that bad. The list of surprises, read cost overruns, included one bank of cams needed re-profiling done by WEB cams but having to pay to create the profiles, two of them. Once the cylinder heads were cleaned they revealed small cracks between seven of the eight exhaust valve seats and the spark plug holes, and while we were at it, I asked for hardened valve seats to be installed, intake valves no sweat but exhaust had to be machined from scratch. The cylinder heads took six months due to the fact that the vendor, Quicksilver Racing, had an across-the-board failure of the heads they supplied to CART. In the end the heads came back in phenomenal shape. Other ditties included the reconstruction of the air box, flawlessly done but ludicrously expensive.

After fourteen months of work the engine was back in the car and ancillary systems were being installed in preparation for initial fire up. We had the Spica fuel injection pump rebuilt. For the un-initiated, the fuel injection pump is an in-line eight cylinder mechanical pump that shares little if any components with the Alfa four cylinder Spicas. The pump was sent back to the re-builder twice, once for the number three pump cylinder not producing adequate flow at low RPMs and then for the naive thought that the fuel delivery curve should not produce a lean spot under acceleration. I am still living with both idiosyncrasies as there were three different pump cam profiles in three years as Alfa unsuccessfully chased this flat spot.

The next obstacle was the thermostatic actuator. Unbeknownst to us, the Montreal TA has a bend in it so it will fit under the air box. After purchasing a \$400 four cylinder TA and finding out it did not fit, we had to design our own "Choke" using the accelerator lever cable. Years later I located a used Montreal TA and had it rebuilt and calibrated, completing the engine restoration.

I should stop here and explain a little about the Montreal home page and Forum. When I first began this project the Montreal Home page was not nearly as complete technically as it is today and the Montreal Forum did not exist.

(Continued on next page)

## Montreal (con't from previous page)

Today, the home page carries more information than originally was available from the factory and the forum is a source for reasonably priced parts and free advice from around the world. So far I have gotten air cleaner nuts from Great Britain and a used TA from OZ.

**One last surprise, and a BIG one** At one of my twice monthly visits to the repair shop and as the mechanic is struggling with the engine setup he nonchalantly makes a statement 'if I had known what I know I wouldn't have suggested you rebuild the engine', and when I hear this it just doesn't register. Months later when the car is home and I am cleaning up the fuel pump connections under the car and I notice that the frame rail on the forward section of the driver's side is bent. It turns out bent bad enough that even though the car tracks straight the left front tire wears badly enough to only last a few thousand miles.

**Start it, debug it and take it home** Much discussion was had regarding how to break in the engine and it was decided that the engine would be started without prelube. A solid decision given that the engine pulls past redline and has yet to use a drop of oil. The Montreal has had several substantial visits back to the dealer for various non-related component failures and has just recently become truly sorted out.

**Epilog** So, as best I can piece this together the Shop that sold me the Montreal had repaired a left front-end crash without straightening the frame. The car was driven for some time after that as the rocker panels were fairly chipped. The owner must have realized the car was not straight and either given it back to the Shop or traded it in as claimed. The Montreal had brand new tires on it when I saw it so the Shop owner had attempted to cover up the frame damage. The Shop owner gave me every opportunity to inspect the car and me in my exuberance I failed to follow through on having the car inspected by a third party as I have learned to do over the years of buying old sport cars. My only complaint is that this Shop clearly was playing me by not offering a true assessment of the car, a fact I should have gathered when I drove up for my first inspection and the engine was running.

In the end the engine rebuild and associated work exceeded \$21,000 and that with the repair shop eating over 100 hours of labor.

**Would I do it again?** No, I would spend the \$38,000 on an Alfa vintage racecar. I intend to see this through and get the frame straighten as I am so far under water on this investment (can a Montreal ever be classified as an investment) that I'm going to be buried in this car.

Now to if it is worth it when you set aside the finance. When I am driving down a backcountry road playing tag

with my friend in his 512 BBI (I have more nerve, he has more horsepower) and the engine is signing at or near redline . . . hey, its an Italian V8 Hemi in a Bertone coupe body. Of course it is worth it!



*Sunny Waters' Labor of Love – His Montreal*

## The Return of The Hershey Hillclimb

*Arthur Jones*

During the glory days of amateur sports car racing, one of the popular local events was a timed hillclimb up the back road to the Hershey Hotel. This one-and-one-half mile run up a paved drive through the woods has been resurrected by the Susquehanna Valley Vintage Sports Car Club. Promoted as a lavish two-day affair with car show and club parking and display areas this, its first running since 1970, turned out to be much simpler and perhaps more fun.

About 60 pre-1973 cars showed up for the run. Most of the competitors were sports cars and small sedans, but since no restrictions were placed on modifications, the opportunity for improvements was taken advantage of. Minis were much in evidence as well as two-stroke Saabs and various Formula Junior and FV open wheel cars. A few fine restored vintage sports cars participated, an AC Bristol, Cadillac Allard and Aston Martin DBS, but these valuable investments tended to approach the tree-lined course with circumspection. Fastest time went to a Sunbeam Tiger at 47.9 seconds, slowest to a 1930 Ford sprint car at 74.

This nostalgic event offers excellent opportunities for picnics on the course and close observation of the machinery. The only Alfa present was a solitary 1933 6C1750 spider in the parking lot. Can we do better next year?



A 1933 6C1750 Alfa Romeo Graces the Parking Area of the Hershey Hillclimb.

## Off The Track and In The Garage....

Bob Brady

**A Successful Summit Point** The day after the Jefferson 500 Vintage races, at Summit Point, I made it to the COMSCC time trials in my little red GTV. Since my last event, at Lime Rock, I decided that I'd had enough with cracking fuel injection lines and installed the "race" Spica pump, modified by Wes Ingram. For my basically stock GTV, I wasn't looking for more fuel. What really interested me about this pump was that it used Bosch CIS injectors that operate at about 45psi, as opposed to the diesel-derived Spica injectors which pop at around 350psi. The lower pressure injectors allow plastic fuel lines to be used which are: 1. less likely to break and 2. readily replaced. Neither of those attributes can be said for the stock Spica metal fuel lines. Of course, there's no such thing as a free lunch. What I sacrificed in the bargain is street drivability. The car idles and runs well at wide-open-throttle, but anything in between is no fun at all. It makes for a great track car, but a lousy street car.

Summit Point is a race track, however, and the pump performed flawlessly. The engine now pulls strong into the 7000+rpm range. It allowed me to shave five seconds off my previous best, and take first in class. I just edged out a well-driven BMW Z3!

**Planting That Rear** While power and reliability were not problems, getting power to the ground continued to vex me. I found myself lifting the inner rear wheel and spinning through turns 2, 6, 9 and 10! I finally managed to stop the spinning in turn 9 by driving up on the curb. I figured that if the wheel was pulling away from the road, I might as well bring the road to the wheel. While that worked out fine in that instance, I really needed to do something more substantial.

The root of the problem seems to stem from the rear roll center being high. (The roll center on the stock suspension is located where the trunion attaches to the differential housing.) As the car leans in a turn, the moment acts on the rear axle and consequently the rear wheels. With the high roll center, that moment tends to lift the inner rear wheel. Lowering the rear roll center reduces the tendency to lift the inner wheel.

Autodelta solved the high roll center problem with the famous, or infamous sliding-block rear. For those unfamiliar with this device, the trunion arm is replaced with a bracket containing a slot. The differential housing has a pin attached to it, located at the same height as the axle centerline. The pin slides up and down in the slot, locating the axle laterally. The roll center becomes coincident with the pin location, about ten inches lower than the stock unit. While this set-up solved the problem (as can be witnessed by the classic pose of a raised front wheel in a turn) it is not very practical for the street as the slot and pin wear. The more conventional solution is to install a Panhard rod.

The Panhard rod suspension consists of two links. An upper link mounts to where the trunion would normally mount, but allows lateral

movement of the axle. This upper link only keeps the axle from rotating about its lateral axis. The other link attaches the body to one of the trailing arms. The roll center then becomes the point half way between the body and trailing arm mounting points. The only real disadvantage of the Panhard rod is that the rear suspension moves slightly laterally as the suspension moves through its travel. It makes up for that minor disadvantage with its simplicity.

Several people make Panhard rod kits, including Alfa Heaven and Jack Beck. For me, of course, buying a kit and installing it would have been far too simple. No, I had to design, fabricate and install my own.

I started down this path nearly a year ago, when I took some dimensions from Bill Shields' GTV's Panhard. Over the ensuing months, I drew up some plans and began buying parts. The most difficult part to source was a 7/8" i.d. rod end. Eventually I found them, but went into sticker shock at their \$75 cost! The most pleasant surprises were the rods themselves. I sourced these from Bud Olsen Speed Supplies in Bridgeport, NJ at a very reasonable price. BOSS is a circle track supply shop that also fabricates complete cars. For whatever reason, they seem to be amused about sourcing parts for little Eytalian cars and are more than helpful. Then, after I had all the parts ready to go, they sat in a box in my garage for about nine months, next to the boxes of all the other Alfa projects waiting to come to fruition. Finally, after Summit Point, I took the plunge and became determined to have it in place before a July Watkins Glen time trial.

**Laying the Runway while Landing** I spend much of my time at work chiding others for diving into projects without proper planning. Taking a cue from the "do as I say, not as I do" school of thought, I plunged into this project with a less than complete plan. There's nothing like some "engineering on the fly" tribulations to convince one of the beauty of a good plan.

The first order of business was to completely trash the plans I made months before. I wanted to make the Panhard rod adjustable, and the simple L bracket that Bill's car had on it just wouldn't do. Instead, I designed a triangular mount that bolts to the trunk floor, just ahead of the spare tire well, with holes in it for locating the rod at three different heights. I actually dusted off some cobwebs in my head to make sure the design could handle the stresses.

**Mistake #1** I had planned on using 3/8" bolts to attach the bracket to the trunk. I figured that it would be easier to mount if I tack welded all the nuts to the bracket. Laying out the hardware I purchased from the Sears Hardware in Newark, DE, (This place has one of the most extensive selections of nuts and bolts I've ever seen; It's definitely worth the trip) I noticed that some of the nuts were a bit larger than the others. Figuring this to be just a style difference and figuring that the larger ones could take more weld heat, I tacked them on. The next night when I went to bolt it to the car, I realized that the "different style" nuts were actually the M10, metric nuts I bought for another application. At least the hardware store was on the way home from work. (In the end, it didn't matter since I wound up removing the welded nuts anyway. I found it easier to mount the bracket without them welded in place.)

**Mistake #2** The next item that needed fabrication was the trailing arm. It needed to be boxed in and extended so that the rod could mount to it. Fearing that welding would damage the rubber bushing, I decided it was wise to press it out. At around 10pm, one night, I came to the realization that I didn't have any tools to press the bushing out. I did have some tubing, some threaded rod and a welder, however, so I proceeded to build a press. My new tool worked like a charm, until I noticed that the stubborn bushing wasn't coming out... but the brazed-in sleeve was!! Fortunately, I had a few sets of spare trailing arms lying about the garage. I was still worried that the bushing would be damaged from welding, so I went into a state of panic and rush ordered some polyurethane bushings. At this point, the event was two weeks away. (In the end, it didn't matter anyway. The trailing arm bushings had no problem with the heat from welding.)

**Mistake #3** Finally, after many long nights of fabrication, the Panhard mounts were ready to be test fitted. At this point, I realized that

the rod I had fabricated by BOSS was about two inches too short. With the event coming ever more close, I took off from work early one day and drove to BOSS for another. When I arrived, I found out why they hadn't been answering their phone. They were on vacation, with no indication of when they would return. Panic set in again. This time, I finally was able to get through to Hank's Performance Parts in York, PA. They agreed to sell me a rod, though they don't normally sell direct. Amazingly, it was at my doorstep in less than 24 hours!

**Mistake #4** Another casualty of my lack of planning was the beautiful mount I made for the upper link. This one attaches where the T arm normally goes. (Continued on next page)

## In the Garage (con't from previous page)

For added strength, I made lovely, oblong bosses, which I found hit the body when I went to bolt it into place. A little grinding later, I had the clearance I needed, at the expense of the bosses' aesthetics.

**Mistake #5** One of the last mistakes I found was with the 7/8" rod end which mounts to the differential. I took some crude measurements to come up with the need for a 7/8" i.d. end and had expected to have to turn down the mount on the differential in order to fit it. What I found was that the rod end was a little too large. So, I had to make a sleeve for it to fit snugly, which worked out well.

**Redemption** Finally, after making several more mistakes, the Panhard rod was installed. A quick road test at 11pm yielded impressive results. My attempts at getting the rear wheel to lift all failed. Those tires are now planted, where they should be. Better still, nothing broke! Of course, there's no such thing as a free lunch. While the rear is now firmly stuck to the pavement, the car now understeers a bit more than I'd like.

The real test will be on the track, where the car can be pushed to its limit. As I write this, that is only hours away. Stay tuned to see how it went.

## On The Road.... Jefferson 500 Vintage Races at Summit Point

*Charlie Crothers*

My sons and I attended the Jefferson 500 at Summit Point in May. The weather proved cold, but at least the rain had stopped. The number of interesting cars was down from two years ago when I last attended; but I like that the sponsors encourage the spectators to visit the pits and talk to the drivers. We took photos of all the Alfas present, some of which are shown on this page.

I know you will like the string of GTV's... the first says its a GTA Junior (1300) but I'm not sure its an original as I did not see any rivet lines on the roof drip rail, but maybe the Juniors were all steel?



## *The Krause and England Vintage Racing Stable*

I was more interested in the white Veloce Spider. We spoke with the driver...Steven Lehman. He's driven this car vintage for the past seven years. You can see he has not transformed the car much beyond driving on the street. All the original gages, windshield, wipers and motor, heater and rear license plate are still in place. You can see the roll bar only has a single diagonal fore and aft brace to the passenger side front foot well. He has installed a racing seat, boxed the radius arm attachment brackets, and installed a set of lovely aluminum wheels @ 5.5 x 15 (4.5 was original) (love the wheels). He said his mechanic purchased them in California for \$300 a piece but does not know the brand. (He made the change when he heard of weld breaks with the original steel wheels.) Class rules require him to still run with drum brakes all around. Unfortunately, he also said he can pass only one or two cars in his vintage class.... but he is smiling all the same!



*A Nice Veloce Spider Vintage Racer... Still Streetable*





## Letter from New England:

*John Jeffries*

It was good to see Bob Brady at the Connecticut AROC event at Lime Rock. His GTV looks good, on and off the track, driven with greater aplomb now that it can be hauled home intact or in shards by that ominous Suburban. Bob was clearly taking things seriously. He asked me to record his lap times, passing me a notebook in which he'd recorded such pertinent information as ambient temperature, amount of sun, position of the moon, etc. Tire pressures, exhaust gas oxygen content: you've got to admire the empirical approach of the true engineer. I probably performed the requested service quite unworthily, using the second hand of my Seiko and my painfully ill-developed arithmetical skills.

My GTV was in sufficient fettle to have participated in said event, but my own moon phase was not properly aligned on that time/money continuum along which we all so precariously lurch. That said, I wasn't too disappointed, since I took my older son, Hugh, with me to cheer-on Bob and remake some acquaintances. I had moved to the Philadelphia area with my wife Abigail, who is from Connecticut, in 1992. We had lived briefly in Albany, NY before settling down in Paoli for seven very pleasant years. Kids were not part of our vocabulary at that point, so there was ample

opportunity for pastimes. I had one of those great unsupervised jobs at the time, which allowed me further opportunity to indulge my Alfa habit and avoid hard-work. That came to an end in 1997 when I took a "more challenging" job in Wilmington, DE, at which point the eleven hour workdays began.

We moved to Kennett Square in 1998, but by 2000 decided to do the right thing and return to Connecticut to keep grandparents and grandchildren (we had reproduced in the ensuing years!) close to one another. Pity, since Bob and Marie Brady had moved their clan to within a quarter mile of ours in The Mushroom Capital. Two neighbors with red '74 GTV's: pretty cool.

I found a job with an automobile dealership in the Hartford area and was to start Monday, December 4th, 2000. I was to get a demo car to drive once there, so I drove up the GTV on Sunday the 3rd. It was a predictably fun ride, mostly completed in the dark, gobbling favorite unhealthy snacks as I journeyed North in my naughty, noisy little red car.

I had arranged to store the GTV in the large garage of a friend's even larger house. Carved into a hillside, this parking space could easily have contained six generously proportioned vehicles. I put the Alfa just about in the middle, disconnected the battery and kissed it goodnight till Spring. A week later an awkward e-mail arrived: the son of my generous friend had backed his Nissan truck into the Alfa's rear end. I can't say anything bad about this, since I was the one receiving the favor in the first place.

The right rear quarter was pushed in about three inches and the trunk lid was buckled. Long story short, I was able to hammer out the quarter, resurrect a nasty old trunk lid I had kicking around, and not lose any sleep over the matter. Those who have seen my car know it is a rather dented, bondo-ed, survivor-type of Alfa, so one more trauma did not really degrade it too much.

Mechanically, it has required little. Other than a new fuel pump, it has demanded no significant repairs, proof of the concept that a fresh valve job, a properly calibrated SPICA pump and a good set up by Vince at Nick Falcone's will yield an easy starting, driveable and efficient Alfa. To the pathologically frugal car-club types, these words should be heeded: spend the money, have a professional get it right and then leave it the hell alone.

My little story ends with another job change, to a different car dealership group in Hartford. This new gig includes a Harley Davidson franchise: an interesting proposition. I'm not a motorcyclist and I don't have any tattoos, but I am learning to like not only the machines, but also the way we deal with them. Most car dealer service operations are pretty boring places nowadays, since a), the cars themselves are mundane and b) the science of running an efficient shop is well established, so the focus is on getting the cars in and out rapidly. As much time is spent puckering up to the cars' owners as is spent on working on the cars themselves.

Our Harley operation is different, in that they are rather splendid, if archaic, bits of kit, and the mandate is to do craftsman-like work on them. Lots of attention to detail, avoiding

damage on all that high-dollar chrome. We do a fair amount of performance work, putting on big-bore cylinder/piston kits and verifying the results on the dyno.

It's all rather cool, probably more akin to a 1950's European car workshop than today's automobile dealership. I guess that whether its Alfas, Harleys, steam trains or Merlin-powered WWII aircraft, the appeal of neat machinery is not constrained by brand or genre. Or as a friend with a 600BHP Camaro likes to tell me, "It's all nuts and bolts, baby".

I hope you are all well in that great city of Philadelphia. We miss it not inconsiderably. Keep up the great work with that fun and civilized AROC chapter and its unique members.



*Mr. and Mrs. Brady (Senior) discover Italian Cars*

In this issue: New Garden Air Show, Life with a Montreal,  
Events Calendar.... and more



*Bill Conway's latest time travel machine, a Sprint Veloce.... with 16,000 miles! Bill might be most famous for his low-mileage Alfas, but he also owns a Milano with over 350,000 miles on it... with the original engine, clutch, and waterpump!!!*



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*First Class Mail*