

La Voce

newsletter of the delaware valley alfa romeo owners club

Fall 2005



Alfas Dominate the Glen

Alfa Romeo Featured at Watkins Glen Vintage Festival

In 1948, Frank Griswold of Wayne, PA triumphed in his Alfa Romeo 6c2900 by winning the inaugural race at Watkins Glen. This September, Alfa Romeo triumphed at the Glen again, but in a much more spectacular way. With over sixty entries, this was likely the largest gathering of vintage Alfa Romeo racecars in North America. The event was the annual Zippo Vintage Grand Prix.

Alfa guru Peter Krause, along with the SVRA and a band of merry Alfisti put on a terrific show. For four solid days, a symphony of Alfas at full-song pierced the crisp, upstate New York air. In addition another four hundred or more vintage racecars packed the paddocks of the track. Everything from Bugattis from the twenties to formula cars from the eighties were represented. Double-decker, eighteen-wheelers lined the garage areas. In front of them were wonderful collections of toys that most of us only dream about. Some were being readied for a romp, while others were cooling down. More than a few were being wrenched on by focused crew as the sounds of 70's music provided the soundtrack. Many owners and drivers watched the show in civilized comfort, at linen covered tables adorned with cut flowers. For some, life, it would appear, didn't get much better. Actually, for anyone attending the event, life didn't get much better.

The Alfa Romeo paddock was noticeably devoid of the double-decker resorts on wheels. In its place were many grass-roots vintage racers, some making the trek from as far away as California. Overall, it had a much more authentic appearance. Walking through, you got the impression that time had turned back thirty years. While the events at the track were certainly the centerpiece of the event, there was much more to the Vintage Festival than racing.

On Friday, street-legal Alfa Romeos toured the countryside, made a few brisk parade laps at the track and then drove the original street circuit past cheering fans. That event concluded with them taking over the local park creating a lovely sculpture garden.



Nearly 40 Alfa Romeo racecars make their way up the esses in the first lap of the all-Alfa race at the vintage races at Watkins Glen

Down the street, past booths selling all manner of automobilia, a show of other vintage machinery attracted strolling eyes. In the early evening, the Alfa racecars stormed around the street circuit past the swelling crowd. When they finally parked along the main drag, the party was in full swing and would last until the wee hours. And that was just the beginning of the weekend! (More stories and photos on Page 4)

Mark Your Calendars!

October 16 – Fall Picnic – Brookside Farm, Paoli, PA

November 6 – Fall Tour – Bucks County, PA

December 11 – Indoor Go-Karting – Pottstown, PA

Bob's Babblings

Autumn, the best season for Alfas When I inhale the crisp air of autumn, I smile. For me, fall is the best season for Alfas. There's nothing like a spirited drive down a country lane with fallen leaves wisping behind to clear your head. Fortunately, fall is also the season of our premier event, the **DVAROC Fall Picnic**. This year, we'll be holding it on October 16th. As tradition, we'll be filling lawn of Brookside farm with our drives. If you haven't been to a fall picnic, or haven't been to one in a while, you simply must attend. It is our most popular event and no wonder; what could be better fun than an afternoon among friends, turning leaves and Alfa Romeos? Later in the season, we'll head to Bucks County for a final look at autumn. Jack Stoll is organizing this **Fall Tour** and is doing a great job. He has been a huge help and deserves our thanks. I hope you'll take a couple of hours out on November 11th for a drive and lunch.

Finally, our last event for 2005 will be some indoor go-karting. We did this last year and all left with big smiles, and a few shrunk egos. While the karts aren't Italian, they are remarkably fast and don't leak oil. I hope you'll join us.

Thanks First, I want to thank Peter Krause for allowing me to publish the photo of the all-Alfa race that appears on the front page. I also want to thank him, Sam Smith, Paul Spruell, Les Smith the SVRA and the Watkins Glen Chamber of Commerce for putting on an outstanding event. Dare I say it was even better than last year's Alfa Convention? I also want to thank Bill Eastman for allowing me to publish his rant on paint matching of vintage Alfas. I hope you enjoy it as much as I have.

Events Missed – Any Reports? I missed a few events this year. I didn't make the Algar Rally, the Reading Italian Heritage Festival, the Lime Rock Vintage Festival, nor did I make it to any of the September car shows: Radnor, Buckingham and Hagley. If you managed to go to any of these events and have photos or, better yet, a paragraph or two you could share with the club, I'd be delighted to publish it in the next La Voce... hint... hint...

DVAROC Web In between publishing La Voces, I am keeping the club's website updated. If you haven't been there in a while, go to: www.dvaroc.org. There you will find, among other things, a whole slew of photos I took at the Watkins Glen Vintage Grand Prix Festival, many more than I could ever publish in the newsletter. I hope you enjoy them.

Standard email Address Plea To get up-to-date information on club events, please get on this mailing list. To do so, contact me at: mpbrady@verizon.net Also, don't forget to check out our website: www.dvaroc.org

Get out and drive! -bob

Classifieds:

1981 Spider, runs great, recent inspection, cream with brown interior, no cuts in seats, worn looking...top is good, need window...new tire, new quad rims....118k miles.. call for more info, pics,,, South Phila...Rob Simiriglio 215-380-6143

1991 Alfa Spider Convertible, red/tan interior/black top. 5 Speed, A/C, 71,000 miles. Recent PA inspection, new clutch, almost new tires, and new muffler. Good mechanical condition, excellent paint and body with no rust. Car has been garage kept and driven only 1000 miles per year

during the last 6 years. \$6,900 or best offer. Please call 610-239-0303 or Email ron@lcr-inc.com

'91 Black Spider 23K miles, 2 tops, auto.....\$10,000 **'86 Black Graduate** good condition.... \$5,000 **'84 Black GTV6** good condition...\$3,500 **'91 164L** auto good condition...\$2,500 **'69 Jag 2+2** good condition.... \$10,000 **2 SeaDoo ('89 & '91)** with Trailer...\$3,500, Various Hub caps, Miscellaneous parts – Timing belts, Bearings, Sway bars, Gears, Steering assemblies, Glass, Clutch, Shocks, Emblems Send part number of item needed and I'll look it up. Pat Carzo 302.575.0725 or pcarzo@carzoandassociates.com

1958 Alfa Giulietta Sprint, Excellent mechanicals, rebuilt brakes, new exhaust, decent interior, rust-free body, bare metal strip and now in primer. Some chrome done. \$7500 obo. Randy (609)-261-7547.

1984 Spider Veloce Silver w/ blue leather, 5 spd, 42K miles. Same owner since 1994. Recent full service by Falcone. New canvas top and clutch. Paint good, some minor chips and dings. Some rust on rockers. \$7900 OBO. Call for pictures and records. Tony (610)878-4547.

anthony.villano@zlbbehrling.com

1988 Milano Platinum, 125K miles, auto, limited slip rear, leather etc. Would be a good driver, convert to racer or as a last resort for parts.

\$1200 OBO. Adam: 267-307-8483, adoherty@sas.upenn.edu

1991 164B, 130K miles, tapped in rear but trunk-lid is fine. Right rear door is jammed shut and the right rear quarter is bent, but all other sheet metal is in good shape. Automatic is in good shape. Great for a parts car, can make some decent money on this if you have somewhere to put it to strip... I don't. \$750 OBO Adam: 267-307-8483,

adoherty@sas.upenn.edu

Wanted: A 1962-65 Giulia spider or Speciale. It must be a nice car that I can get into and go for a drive or club activities. I'm too old for another project. This is a very serious inquiry from a Alfa member in N.E.Ohio. Please contact Joe at 440-895-1358 or jjweh@peoplepc.com.

1992 164L, 5 speed, Green/tan leather, 79000 mi. Outstanding example. Two-time 1st Place winner at New Hope Concourse. Original owner; all service receipts; original window sticker. New timing belt and tensioners, recent clutch and Stebro exhaust. Best 164 available anywhere! \$9900 Call 609-683-5794 <gajanssen@msn.com>. NJ

1993 Alfa 164 L, Dark Green/Tan, Auto, 100k mi, Purchased new from Algar, all service done at Algar or Sals w/ recpts, car is in exc shape cosmetically and mechanically, paint looks new, no accidents. Dave 302-993-7800 or davidbeck@sprintmail.com \$7500.00.

Alfa Romeo Milano Verde, I have two that I need to sell. One is black and is somewhat rusty but runs and drives well. The other is gray, and is in better condition, but has not been running. Contact: Domenick Billera, 610-838-9970

1962 Giulia Spider needs total restoration or for parts. \$1000 obo, Jeff Kollar, 610-746-0317

Giulietta, Giulia Spider, Sprint, SS Parts: Engines, Veloce bits, trim, body, interior. Call for details. Jeff Kollar, 610-746-0317

1983 GTV-6 19K miles Silver/Blue, Bill Conway, 973-839-9239

Bill.Conway@neclease.com

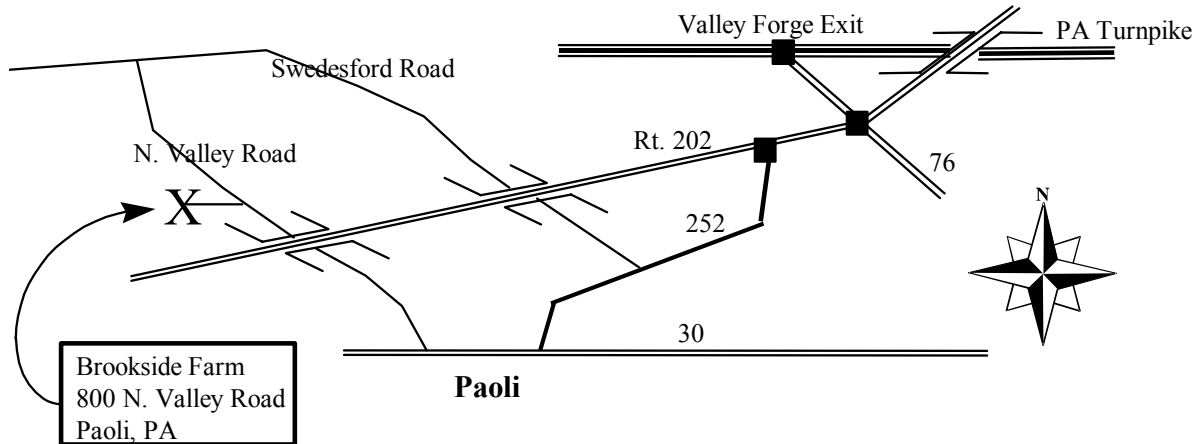
NOS Parts I have hundreds of NOS Alfa parts. Most are 105/115 series parts, but I also some 101, 102 and 106. In addition, I have a couple 1750 engines as well as some spare 5spd transmissions for sale. Contact Bob Brady 610-925-1837, mpbrady@verizon.net for more information.

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

Events Calendar: * Indicates DVAROC Event

*October 16 -DVAROC Fall Picnic - Brookside Farm - Paoli, Pa

Fall is picnic time for the Delaware Valley Alfisti and their friends. Join us at the Wessells' Brookside Farm for a wonderful afternoon among beautiful cars, lovely scenery, and an outstanding group of people. The event will start at 12:00 and finish around 3:00. In addition to gathering our cars together on the lawn and eating lunch, we'll hold our annual elections. Gourmet bag lunches will be available for \$10. Choices are: Ham and Cheese, Chicken Salad, Curried Chicken Salad, or Roast Beef on Wheat, Sourdough, Croissant or Focaccia. Lunches will include a pasta or potato salad and a desert. Drinks will be provided by the club. If you can't bring your Alfa (or don't presently have one), bring a part, picture, or emblem. Or, borrow one of my Alfas for the event. Please **RSVP by October 14** and place your lunch orders with Bob Brady at: (610)925-1837 or mpbrady@verizon.net Don't miss this great event! See directions below:



From the PA Turnpike:

Take Exit 24, Valley Forge. Go South on 76. Exit onto 202 South towards West Chester (not towards King of Prussia). Exit onto 252. At the light, turn left and go under 202. Just after the underpass, 252 veers right. Follow 252 South to Swedesford Road (traffic light). Turn right onto Swedesford road. Drive under 202 again. Turn left on North Valley Road. 800 N. Valley Road is about ½ mile on the right. If you get to another underpass, you went too far.

From Route 30:

Drive to Paoli. In Paoli, turn on to N. Valley Road (the Paoli train station is on this road). Follow N. Valley Road North. Drive through an underpass. 800 N. Valley Road is about 200 yards from the underpass, on the left.

October 30 – Southern Maryland Fall Foliage Tour– Huntingtown, Md. Join the Capital Chapter AROC and the Ferrari Club on a wonderful, two-hour tour through scenic southern Maryland. For more information see: [Capital Chapter Tour](#)

***November 6 – DVAROC Fall Tour – Bucks County, PA** As I write this, Jack Stoll is putting together a great tour of Bucks County and New Jersey along the Delaware river. We'll start somewhere near Yardley and end up at lunch, probably in Frenchtown. Contact Bob Brady at (610)925-1837 or mpbrady@verizon.net by November 4th so we can get a headcount for lunch.

November 18-19 – COMSCC Time Trials – Lime Rock, CT While racing in November in Connecticut can mean changing track tires for snow tires, this might be the last chance to get some track time in 2005. If you're interested in going, contact Bob Brady at: (610)925-1837 or mpbrady@verizon.net. That might be just the incentive I need to get the race car put together!

***December 11 – Indoor Go-Karting – Pottstown, PA** This was a great success and a lot of fun last year. Contact Bob Brady at (610)925-1837 or mpbrady@verizon.net by December 9th for times, directions, costs and more information.

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@verizon.net

Alfas at the Glen

Since a picture is worth a thousand words, I'll let the photos do the talking for a change. Look for an article, or two about Bob's harrowing adventures getting to the event as well as some behind the scenes stories about some heroic competitors. For more photos of the event, go to:

www.dvaroc.org/Alfasattheglen.htm - bob



Bernardo Martinez' '69 GTA rips up the course on Thursday's practice session. His GTA was one of at least **four** in attendance.



Sam Cummings is the current steward of this famous Trans-Am GTV. It originally raced at Watkins Glen with Horst Kwech driving.



Robert Willis readies his Super (formerly owned by Mike Valant) on Thursday, as GTA owner David Rivkin stands by. The engine had only a few street miles on it to break it in. Unfortunately, it broke after a few laps; not the only causality of the weekend.



Scenes from the high rent district. Prototypes galore!



This beautiful Sprint was formerly a DVAROC local car



Here it is again, on the original road course during Friday's festivities.



DVAROC member Willem van Huyestee gives the crowd something to cheer about with his 6C1750, the oldest Alfa in attendance.



The start of Friday's Tour d'Marque, for street-driven Alfas.



Eliot Shanabrooks GTV blasts past the crowd, going through town, as his crew hangs on inside.



The tour stopped at the track for brunch and then a couple of spirited laps of the race track. The SS led the tour which ended with a car show in the park, in town (below).



Lots of hands pitch in to help Wil Painter get his GTV back on the track. He drove across the country to make the event and was put out of commission on Thursday when he put a rod through his block. A "frozen" engine from Rochester, NY came to the rescue as did the heroics of fellow Alfisti, including Charlie Crothers. By Sunday, he was back on the track, racing, without incident!





After the Alfa race cars did some laps of the original, street circuit, they parked on the main drag where the party continued into the evening.



Ho, Hum, just some other Prototipo 33s in the paddock. This could be the only place on earth where Alfa 33s could be considered ubiquitous!



Rick Davis's Giulia Spider in its proper position on the track, in front of the Porsche. While GTVs certainly were the dominant Alfa Romeo on the track, there were more than a few Giulia and Giulietta Spiders being driven in anger.



Tom LaCosta's Giulia TI rips past the English tractor (ahem, I mean Triumph)



Mike Lawton's Giulia Spider (formerly owned by Jim Hayes) blasts down the boot straight. By the end of Sunday's enduro, it would need a nose job.



Scenes from the Alfa paddock area. Onlookers check out Bob Brady's GTV on the trailer (more on that later) and contemplate buying it. Willem VanHuystee looks on. His 6C1750 is in the background. Next to it is Dave West's Giulia Veloce Spider.



Willem VanHuystee at speed in Sunday's race. Peter Giddings won the race in his 1926 Bugatti. Willem commented that his Alfa could gain on the Bugs in the turns but couldn't keep up in the straights.



Bonnie, the land speed record holding Alfa led the pace lap of the all-Alfa race on Sunday. What a show!



Will Painter is back in business. The engine he's running was frozen not 24 hours before taking the track. Here, he's passing a Giulietta going around turn 11 and leading on to the main straight.



One little, two little, three little... FIVE little GTVs go down the straight. This is clearly something you don't see every day. Note Eliot Shanabrook using every bit of track in his GTV.



The beautifully prepared former Dick Davenport GTV returns to the paddock. Since Dick's passing, his son Rob has been campaigning it as tribute. Rob gave a short talk about his father at Friday's dinner at the Glen Club. Horst Kwech was also on hand to share some reminiscings of his Trans-Am days.

Summer Rally Yields New DOY

Bob Brady

Our annual summer picnic/rally was another smashing success, this year. Despite regional rain, the area around Ridley Creek State Park, where the event was held, was remarkably dry. Only a hint of drizzle moistened the paint on participants' cars.

The format of this year's rally was a bit different than in the past. Two versions of the directions were handed out, one going one way, the other the reverse. The object of the drive was to match the "target" time. Along the way, bonus points were earned by answering clever questions about the surrounds. This format made it a bit more difficult to follow the person in front, as people were going in different directions!

Dave Burroughs and rent-a-navigator Matthew Brady managed a perfect score. Henry and Nancy Wessells also turned in a perfect score. Both teams displayed outstanding driving and navigational skills, but the rally official decided to award the Driver of the Year trophy to Henry and Nancy as Matthew Brady helped develop this year's course.

After the drive, we all enjoyed a picnic lunch and some excitement as a horse broke loose from its hitch. Fortunately, it didn't spook and was quickly corralled. Dave West also brought some excitement, his new Lotus Elise. While it isn't an Alfa, it certainly has to be one of the most fun cars currently available. Special recognition has to be given out to the Jones who made the trek from the Stroudsburg area in their Duetto. Bill Conway also should be recognized for subjecting his ultra-low mileage Spider to some spirited exercise.



Henry and Nancy Wessells pose with the new DVAROC Driver of the Year trophy.



The Joneses check out the directions and contemplate strategy before starting their run.



Quinn deMenna synchronizes his watch as he heads out on the rally run with his son. Note Bill Conway's "new" Spider next to him.



Dave Burroughs and Matthew Brady make their triumphant return.



Charlie Crothers returns with his navigator Emilie Brady who has learned to read since the last time they teamed up.

Concours "Correct"

Putting It Into Perspective

A few weeks ago, there was much banter on the Alfa Romeo 750-101 email newsgroup about getting the exact, "correct" color when restoring Alfas. One thing I've always appreciated about the Alfa Romeo community is their lack of obsession with making their cars perfect. Unlike the Ford Model A or Corvette folks, most Alfisti don't spend much time comparing serial numbers of components or pouring through factory build sheets to prove that their alternator is what was installed in February's production run, but in March they switched to a different style. No, Alfisti generally understand that their cars are best enjoyed when driven.

What follows is a response to the debate on the proper color silver to be used when restoring vintage Alfas. The author, Bill Eastman reminds us all to put things in perspective.

Color of 750/101 Wheels: WAY TOO LONG!

In regard to the correct color for respraying Alfa 750 and 101 wheels... Well, this issue has been hashed about for years and I suppose that it will continue as there probably never was, nor ever will be a conclusive answer as to What is Correct! The short answer must be, "Silver!" OK, that is the easy part. But for the purist who cares, or perhaps the timid and clueless, this is unsatisfying. More than one of us has tried color matching an old wheel. Strangely, or perhaps not strangely at all, we all seem to have slightly different results. What is going on?

For most of my adult life I have been fooling around with old machines. It is in my nature to fix things. In addition, I have been clinically diagnosed as being touched with a minor condition shortened to OCD for those that have to share the kitchen with me. I am kinda picky. So, when my curiosity about fixing things degenerated into old sportscars, I was in hog heaven -- or so I thought at the time.

My first "real" restoration was completed in about 1983. Up until then, I had just repaired and repainted things to work and look good enough. I wasn't a slob or anything, but I had an alarming tendency to paint everything red and send parts to the chrome shop by the ton. Of course, that is back when red paint and chrome were relatively cheap. I'll spare you the commentary on exposure to toxins, for now...Anyway, the completed project was a '58 Porsche 1600S. It was Ruby Red, of course. I had rejected the notion of returning it to Aetna Blue, naturally. I was only 32. The difference was that I had become cognizant of the notion of correctness, whatever that might mean, and it plugged directly into that OCD slot in my brain. Thus, red was no longer just red. This time it was Ruby Red, the only red that was correct for Porsche that year. The chrome shop made less money on that car, too. The engine tin and the wheels were sprayed silver, but that was before the disease had advanced to the stage where I researched wheel paint authenticity, and probably before the public obsession with originality had reached the point of mass hysteria.

The car was driven to a local car show in Forest Grove, Oregon where it placed third in class as I remember it. I could

probably have won if I had known that the tires were supposed to show any dirt and if I had purchased new glass. Oh well, third was bad enough! It did, unfortunately, encourage my misbehavior. After an auction in Seattle that terminated my Porsche ownership and produced relative wealth, I stumbled upon a '63 101 Sprint. Since it was only \$750, I rationalized it as a daily driver.

Unlike any of my previous cars, it came red. Imagine that! I really liked that car, and drove it everywhere for over two years. It got "fixed" as only cars that are driven daily by mechanics can be fixed. I drove it with a milk crate for a seat while the interior was apart. A note to the inexperienced: tie the crate down and use the seat belt! It turned out nice, eventually. In the meanwhile, I had discovered a 1967 Duetto in the garage of some neighbors. This car became my first Alfa restoration. By then, I had figured out to follow strict methods that allowed disassembly of a car and reassembly without destroying and/or losing many parts. I think I color matched those wheels before sandblasting. Pontiac silver, I recall.

A succession of Alfas followed, almost all of them 750 and 101 cars. In the mid eighties I made a living doing it and had three cars going at a time. All at home and all out of a one and a half car garage. It was at that time I decided to settle the wheel color issue. I remember thinking, naively, that it would be simple. I had, after all, about 20 steel wheels hung in the crawl space where my wife would make them ring like bells when she hit her head on a rim while leaning over to get the laundry soap.

Both I and the dog would hide. I dragged them all out in the bright sun. I rejected any that had been repainted. I scrubbed them clean and then used light rubbing compound in an attempt to remove dirt and oxidation. Oddly, they were mostly different colors. Some were a little goldish and some greenish. The gold was put down to aging but the green (excepting a spare that had been a garden for moss and weeds) needed investigating. I found that the more I rubbed and polished, the greener they got! Finally, I rubbed through to the green primer and the dim bulb went on over my head. Silver can be pretty translucent...Finally, the majority voted and I went to get some paint.

Having made the first match and sprayed a sample I found it didn't match very well. I repeated the experiment several more times, getting closer and then further and then closer to my homogeneous group. It was time consuming and expensive, but mostly it was frustrating. An older and smarter me would have called it close enough much earlier in the game, but I can be stubborn -- er, persistent, I mean. This went on for a couple of weeks with the neighbors beginning to question the small silver spots that were being deposited on their downwind tomatoes and zucchini. Then, one day I ran into this strung-out lunatic at the paint supply place. He was ranting about a poor color match of his own and raining insults right and left. Were they blind? It had too much yellow! He wanted the old woman, the wife of the owner. He claimed only she could see the right color. She shuffled out of the back office and after a glance declared it was too yellow. (Continued on Next Page)

Concours Correct (con't from Previous Page)

I could hardly believe she was defending this Charles Manson guy. I didn't see any difference. Neither did the "professionals." I later found out the nut case was an infamous wacko who had gone to Mecca in the 60s and worked with Big Daddy Roth as his protégé for a decade until Big Daddy's death released him to come home to Portland. If you could stand to put up with his s***, he was capable of amazing custom jobs. That was the story, anyway. So I got friendly with this old lady.

She was from Germany, originally. Her father a tailor and mother a seamstress, and that was back when you had to dye some of your own cloth to match repairs and alterations. She had the talent and experience to see and do what I, and most others, can't. Concurrent with this introduction, I happened to find a horde of obsolete parts in an old repair shop in NE Portland. The owner was coughing and hacking in an ominous way and had decided to close shop after 40 years in business. Among the things I brought home happened to be a Fergat wheel wrapped in crepe paper, in its original box. This was an NOS piece that had been kept in the dark, out of harms way, on an unheated parts shelf, at about 50 -- 60 degrees F for 25 years. This was the Rosetta stone of early 101 wheels.

I trotted this thing over to the old German Lady and begged her to perform her magic. She said that old silver paint was no longer used. That it wasn't good enough for modern machines and that a PERFECT match was impossible because the old and new materials were just plain different. Still, I did charm her into doing what she could, assuming all the product limitations. After a couple of test wheels were sprayed, she picked the winner. Frankly, I couldn't tell the difference, but she sent me away with a liter of Glasurit MS 21 Polaris Silver as was used in 1979 on BMWs. I painted a dozen or so wheels and compared them to the pristine Fergat and the homogeneous group and decided that was as close as I was going to get. The dispersion of metal in the new paint was more even and a clear coat gave it WAY greater depth and sheen than was original, but the tone and warmth of the color was true.

Unfortunately, I clearcoated the NOS wheel. Later it was sent off to Japan as part of an old Sprint. As a note to this story, that clearcoated NOS wheel was for all practical purposes identical to the fresh Polaris batch. For all of you that want an answer, now, today, that is probably was good as any. You can write it down with some assurance that there might be a legitimate cause for relief. Stop reading, now!

For all you scab pickers, that may prove unsatisfactory. I continued to work on old cars and after a two year sentence to graduate school, I was persuaded to buy an established, if a bit dilapidated, auto repair business. That was in '88. It was a sportscar shop. Just because I had a fresh degree in Business, there was no reason to believe I was capable of learning. I kinda figured that I'd fix it up as we went along; you know just like that old Sprint. So, we did what you do with old cars. And it continues...Along the way, I was restoring an MGTD for a guy who insisted that it be painted BRG (British Racing Green).

Well, well, well, now! Just what was/is BRG? Had to be original, authentic and correct, too. Trouble was that the MG purists hadn't quite rallied around any particular shade of green, yet. After painting all my yard furniture slightly different shades

of green, we were no closer to the truth. At a regional GOF (a "Gathering of the Faithful", and I am not making any of this up), I happened to run into some old scudder who claimed he spoke English, though he was awful hard to understand. He further claimed that he worked in the 'shops' for years and eventually on the "works" team.

Whoa now, I thought this chap might actually have seen real BRG and shed a bit of light into the shadows. As it turned out he had at one point, in his long association with MG, fetched paint from the supplier to the painting facilities. I asked him all about that. They mostly used one supplier but sometimes had to use another if the first was busy or had exceeded capacity. The paint was sprayed on bare metal sometimes and on primer where it really mattered. It all "depended." And by 'depend', I took it to mean on the whims of the guys squirting paint. He began describing how you had to take the weather into consideration. It wouldn't do to dally when there was a lot of rain and wind, now. Would it? He said that the paint came in metal barrels, and made circular hand movements that implied something not unlike our 55 gallon drums. When he was pressed for details, he seemed kind of flustered by my interest in what was for him unimportant. He said the barrels were on an elevated rack and the painters drew off paint as required and then thinned it to meet their needs. When I asked how often they stirred the barrels, he screwed up his face and looked at the sky and said after a pause, "When it needed it." I don't give full weight to that answer. Anyway, he was of the opinion that if the car was green, and it was raced, then it must be British Racing Green. I have since heard this from many sources so I guess it is a stock answer.

If made with the right chuckle maybe it chases the question away. I don't know. So if you pick the scab, you are bound to see things you don't really want to. But then I guess some people just thrive on complications. England isn't Italy; and MG isn't Alfa. However, I am willing to bet that this story has relevance to our discussion of wheel paint. I think the similarities far outweigh the exceptions.

Consider a possible scenario where the R&D dept, whoever that was that year or month, decides that certain wheel specifications are adequate for the Giulietta series. There might be a minor turf war between the stylists in the design department and an engineer, but at some point they declare the cars will have steel wheels and they will be silver. Then they send some lackey out with a sample, or invite bidders to lunch. Fergat and Borroni get the orders. Each has their interpretations of the original design, and each will evolve over the years. Nonetheless, Alfa accepts the wheels and sends a check in the mail after each delivery. Alfa told them to paint the wheels silver. In fact, lets suppose, just for fun, that the order sheet specified "Alfa Wheel Silver 750." They have a wheel on the table in front of them.

They have the paint code and they have the sample. What could be easier? So, they order up some paint. Maybe the two companies use the same supplier, probably not. That doesn't often occur in business competition. (Continued on Next Page)

Concours Correct (con't from Previous Page)

They try real hard to follow the recipe and deliver Alfa Wheel Silver 750. It comes in barrels and is applied in assembly line

fashion, almost continuously as the wheels come down the line (who wants to be a painter? Anyone?). Break for lunch, maybe a glass of wine, and then back at it. Painting wheels, all day long, every day, all week long. The wheels come and the wheels go. Alfas get made and drive off to the dock. In a perfect world, the wheels might be the same color. That isn't the world we live in though. The paint was probably bought in bulk -- maybe a hundred barrels at a time. The purchasing dept swung a nice price break on volume. It may, or may not have been stirred every once in a while, probably less than more. The paint at the bottom of the barrel might well have been thicker and darker than the top. The painters sprayed what they got. Suppliers might have, and probably did, vary depending on price and availability. The accuracy of the guys who mixed the paint also varied, as did the consistency of their ingredients. The guy pulling the trigger might put a lot of paint on, or a little. Maybe he just had a fight with the boss who told the line to stop wasting so much material. That would guarantee maximum paint coverage.

Remember the green wheels? Well, at some point green primer was used. It affected the final color. Sometimes they used gray primer, and like at MG, I bet sometimes they pushed the limits and used none. That affected the color. So, what with settling solids, ambient humidity, human mixing error, interchangeable suppliers, and a work environment that breeds indifference, there had to be variants of silver that hit the market. And that is the best case scenario, where they all agree to make the same color. What if the Alfa rep said, "Paint them silver!" and walked away? And just where does all this philosophical rambling lead?

For the nervous folks who want THE answer, I guess it leads to nail biting, or denial. Even if careful sleuthing reveals the one, definitive memo that specifies AR Wheel Silver 750, and specifically documents the required mixing formula, there are

could, would you want to? That would now be considered substandard work. If you want to go there, Krylon Dull Aluminum does a fair job of capturing the past and it dries in 12 minutes.

One of the really great things about these old cars is the individuality that becomes apparent upon close inspection -- all that evidence of having been produced by guys like us, by hand. Seldom, if ever, are any two exactly alike. That may be disturbing for some. This isn't about coloring outside the lines. The search for facts sometimes distracts us from the search for truth. If we manage to preserve the character with which these things were built, and continue to use them, then we have succeeded.

Bill Eastman
Stumptown, Oregon

Not an Alfa, But....

After the summer Picnic/Rally I had a chance to drive what could be the most exciting new car available on these shores, a Lotus Elise. For years, I've been reading how this lightweight (175 lbs.) rocket (187 hp.) has been wowing enthusiasts in every part of the world, except the United States. It seemed to have everything going for it: low mass, a high-revving, four-valve engine, six speed transmission, and a svelte body. When I finally got a chance to drive one, I wasn't disappointed.

At first, I wondered what all the fuss was about. Sure, it had go-kart like responsiveness, but as I shifted at 6000 rpm, it just didn't seem as quick as it was billed. Then, I let it rip to the redline. Between 6000 and 7800, it utterly changed character. It felt turbocharged, even though it isn't. Not since riding a sport-bike some years ago have I had so much fun on public roads. Every turn became an opportunity to plaster my body against the well-bolstered seats. In between the curves, the engine behind me screamed into triple digit territory. And, when called upon, the lack of mass helped the brakes pull it down effortlessly. And, if that weren't enough, it comes with air conditioning, an excellent sound system, and a warranty! The only possible drawback of this four-wheeled motorcycle is its lack of luggage space. Want to play golf, don't take this toy. Ditto, if you need to pick your kids up from hockey or want to take anything more than a weekend trip. But, if you want to have more fun than is legal in most states, this is your ticket.

For the record, in case my lovely spouse is reading this, my birthday is coming up. And, given that it's about time for my mid-life crisis, this would be the perfect gift. No, it doesn't sport a cross and serpent, but it **is** available new in the U.S. Heck, it doesn't even leak oil, although it might drop a bolt from time to time... it is, after all, still an English sports car.

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still too many flies in the ointment for anyone to say, in truth, that there is one correct color for the wheels -- or even the cars, for that matter. Moreover, the materials that are used to create paint have evolved to the point where going backwards in time is now nearly chemically, and legally, impossible. Even if you

*Mark Your Calendars! (**bold** = DVAROC Event)*

<p style="text-align: center;">July</p> <p>9-17 – Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix Festival – Pittsburgh, PA 8-10 – Italian Car Festival, Canton, OH Contact: Lee Contie (330)471-9980 or lcontie@neo.rr.com TBD – DVAROC Event 28-31 – AROC National Convention - Seattle, WA www.alfapotlatch.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">August</p> <p>** – New Hope Auto Show – New Hope, PA – CANCELLED 6 - Glenside Car Show - Glenside, PA 7 – DVAROC Summer Picnic and Rally 14- Algar Italian Car Rally 21 – Reading Italian Car Show TBD - CTAROC Driver School/Time Trials - Lime Rock Park, CT... don't hold your breath!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">September</p> <p>2-5 – Vintage Racing Festival – Lime Rock , CT 8-11 – SVRA Vintage Grand Prix – Watkins Glen, NY (www.grandprixfestival.com) (www.alfasattheglen.com) 9-11 – 100 Cars of Radnor – Radnor, PA 11 - Buckingham Concours d'Elegance, Holicong, PA 18 – Hagley Museum Car Show – Wilmington, DE 30 - 2 – New York City Concours d'Elegance, Central Park, NYC</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">October</p> <p>16 – DVAROC Fall Picnic – Brookside Farm, Paoli, PA 30 – Southern MD Fall Foliage Tour with Ferrari Club – Capital Chapter AROC</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">November</p> <p>6 – DVAROC Fall Tour – Bucks County 18-19 - COMSCC Time Trials - Lime Rock Park, CT</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">December</p> <p>11 – DVAROC Indoor Go-Karting</p>



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