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Full yearly Membership fees:

1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012
Social \$45
Motorsport/Competition \$65
Family \$90
(2 adults + kids under 18 - Family rate allows up to two competition members.)
Note: Applicants who wish to join part-way through the year will be charged a pro-rata membership fee based on the number of months left in the membership year. See the application form for details.

Meetings

Southern members meet on the final Tuesday of each month, February through to December, at the Civic Club, 134 Davey Street, Hobart.
The committee meeting is held between 6.30-8.15 pm and the

social gathering follows at 8.15pm. Drop in any night.
In the North, Italian Car Enthusiasts (ICE) meet informally on the first Tuesday of each month at the Australian Italian Club, Prospect, starting at 7.00 pm. Contact Sabina Toscan at tasuniforms@bigpond.com.au

CMI's AGM is held at 7.00 pm on the first Tuesday of September at the Civic Club, Hobart.

All contributions to Veloce Nota are welcome and when published earn points towards the Clubman of the Year Award.
Please send all letters and contributions to The Editor: Cmi.editorial@gmail.com

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SELENIA

First of all, my apologies for the repetition of the awards page in the last issue. It will never happen again. Probably.

In this issue we have a couple of cars for sale, and reports on recent club social events, which are always more frequent around the Christmas holidays.

There is also a report on the Poatina Mountain Race, which Monty Reading and I assaulted with the OT 1600, and Stephen Pratten's final episode of the rebuild of his Honda S800.

And after years of scratching along for transport, it's nice to be travelling in style to events. Pic by Dave Button.



THERE IS STILL NO CLUB CAPTAIN.

**AND THINK ABOUT IT LIKE THIS:
MAYBE IT ISN'T BECAUSE NO-ONE HAS VOLUNTEERED.**

MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE YOU HAVEN'T VOLUNTEERED.

PRESIDENTIAL PATTTER

Buongiorno.

We're just about to enjoy our first motorsport event of the year, the Collinsvale Hillclimb, yet there have been so many events and festivals occurring that it feels like the Christmas break is well behind us. We've somehow already managed to enjoy a family day at Dru Point, a club trip to Bruny Island, Festa Italia, Rock the Vale and the Shannons Car and Bike Expo, and there are many more events on the horizon.

The Bruny trip was a great opportunity for a group of us to explore the island in a gastronomic fashion (Jetty Cafe, Bruny Island Cheese Co, Berry Farm, Bruny Island Premium Wines), with some great side trips to Warwick and Maree Hughes' shed at Kettering (complete with Italian flag slice for morning tea) and their fabulous shack at Crackatinnie Bay. We also were extremely fortunate to enjoy the wonderful hospitality of Di Wilkinson at her gorgeous property Lumeah, which formed a most convenient and comfortable base for

our activities. In the spirit of the club, Di even arranged to have her GTV6 on the island so that she could blow out the cobwebs, and in the process fell in love with the silver Alfa all over again.

Back home, and I've managed to get the Urraco out a couple of times recently (for Festa Italia and Rock the Vale). I have also been sorting out the cooling system on the 2300S, which has been a bit of a headache. The radiator was in need of a flush and service, but on refitting it both the top and the bottom hose failed. I've sourced some replacements from eBay Italy - the top is a perfect fit, the bottom is still in transit (ie, fingers crossed). I also think I've finally sourced a window

winder mechanism for the Alfetta (thanks Jake), and plan to give the old girl a run at Collinsvale to ensure we have a decent Italian contingent in attendance. Don't ask about the 850...

Future events - well, it's been a while since we ran a Driver Training Day, so block out May 25th as we will run one at Baskerville under Phil Blake's supervision (this will be in place of the regularity).

Ciao

Tristan



*Alfas at Phillip Island
By Dave Button*

COMING EVENTS

Collinsvale Hillclimb
Sunday 16 March

Devonport Motor Show—Victoria Parade Foreshore
Sunday 23 March

Auto Italia Canberra
Sunday 30 March

I.C.E. Myrtle Park Picnic or Pasta day
Sunday 27 April

Targa Tasmania
6 to 11 May

1972 Fiat 125 Special B Sedan

Reluctantly I have decided to sell my very original and rare Fiat. I am the second owner from new and have had lots of fun in the car since 1992.

- Bare metal respray—two-pack factory olive green
- New 2-litre Argenta motor with new Weber twin-throat carburetor
- Regular maintenance both in Brisbane and Perth (by Kev Crowe)
- As-new Michelin tyres on Cromodora rims
- Body/interior in good original condition apart from usual cracked dash and minor cosmetics

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That's what a young friend said about the Lancia recently. (Even though it doesn't look quite like this at the moment.) Still for sale, still \$4000. Call 62652598





CMI's 2014 social calendar got off to a very laid-back start on 12 January at Dru Point. Club stalwarts were joined by a few new faces on what was a beautiful summer day. As expected there was a lot of talk about Italian cars, plans for the coming year and just general catching up on the Christmas holiday period.

A nice range of newer and older cars were brought out for the day with Chris Edwards's 246 Dino and Michael Clark's Alfa Giulia Spider looking particularly good. Michael Blake's RX8 and John Biernacki's MR2 (rescued from a paddock and brought back to life) also attracted a lot of attention. My two sons were thrilled to sit in both the MR2 and the Dino.

A simple BBQ lunch was followed by pavlova and chocolate cake, which seemed to ease everyone into a lazy afternoon of more chatting.

A special thanks to Fiona, who did most of the work organising the day. It is the second time we have held this event and we look forward to doing it again next year.

Robert Madigan

BARBIE
KEN.N.

Poatina Mt. Race



On 23 February Monty Reading and I took part in the first-ever Poatina Mountain Race.

After a bit of work early on the Saturday (following the discovery that my new ex-NASCAR springs were a little bit large and interfered with the wheels), we set off for Poatina, arriving just in time to check our pre-written pace notes by driving the Vinaka Scudo van up the hill.

After a sighting run next day we set about our first serious run. In a 50-car entry comprised largely of late-model turbo cars and early model muscle cars, we were not taking ourselves too seriously. Peter and Debbie Heron were also there with the GTV6, which had a few cooling problems.

The course is just over seven

kilometres up the Poatina hill, on an excellent road, and includes seven hairpin bends as well as a few moderate straights and some fast bends; and it is quite steep.

We drove alternate runs and had various little issues to sort out along the way. First there was the darting: the car would lurch to one side under brakes, and consistently understeered towards a rock wall on one right-





hander. We worked out that this was loose wheel bearings.

The brakes also drew themselves to our attention. They seemed to need a preliminary tap before they gave of their best (which was very good). This we put down to an air bubble or two in the system. It stayed the same all day.

Among the other older small cars were two Ford Anglias, an early Corolla, and RX2 and a Gemini.

When I was talking to Martin Bulk (Anglia) he gave me a nasty shock by revealing that his highest speed on the hill was 141 km/h. This compared unfavourably with our 111 km/h. We got it up to 118 later, but it is still a long way behind. Marty's car has a 1700 motor, by the way.

The handling was OK, even when we overstepped the limit a couple of times, so the springs were a success.

The shocking shudder on takeoff was still there despite re-welded gearbox mounts. I think it's time the motor came out again.

On the very last run, when we were really steaming up the hill, the motor seemed to go 'flat.' It did not lose a cylinder, but the edge went off it and that run was ten seconds slower. And when we arrived back at the bottom of the hill, the clutch moaned every time I pushed the pedal in. This

confirmed our intention to take the motor out again.

We got seven runs in all, which was a pretty good effort for such a long hill.

Monty's best time was three seconds quicker than mine (which I set on my first run), but I have a long line of excuses for that. Some are very good.

The pics are by Tim Jones, Garry Griffiths and Hobart Imaging.





My family and I had been looking forward to the Bruny Island weekend for quite a while. It had been a few years since we were last there and we had been meaning to go back for ages. Unfortunately as the date got closer I got more and more overwhelmed by my new job as a teacher and we had to cut our planned overnight stay back to a day trip. This actually turned out to be no bad thing but more about that later.

We met with other club members at Warwick Hughes's man cave at Kettering and enjoyed looking at his cars, bathtub racers and other memorabilia. His Targa videos also keep us enter-

tained while we waited for the 11 am ferry. Fears about long ferry queues were unfounded as we all got on the ferry very easily and the service was running to time. The ferry trip was enjoyed greatly by my two boys and Jasper Roberts and was the first of many great events for the day.

Tristan and Emily had planned things out so we would enjoy great food and experience the natural beauty of Bruny Island. Our first stop was Dennes Point for lunch at the Art at the Point Gallery/Jetty Cafe. The food was excellent and the venue itself was very inviting and relaxing. Following lunch we went

down to the beach which was just beautiful. The water was warm and crystal clear – and, besides the odd noise from a outboard motor, very tranquil. The kids had a great time playing in the water and were a bit reluctant to leave, but leave we did.

Our next stop was “Get Shucked” where we sampled the local oysters. This was another inviting and well-run venue and the oysters were extremely good. My eldest son John adopted an Italian vehicle and was disappointed it could not join our convoy when we left.



Our culinary tour then took us to the Bruny Island Cheese Company and to be honest I was a bit underwhelmed by it. It may have been that the kids were getting a bit restless or that I had imagined it would be quite different but something didn't gel for me. On another day I might have enjoyed it as much as other members of our group appeared to, but not today.

At this point my family and I split with the main group. We were curious to see the jetty at Alonnah, which we had recently discovered was the last part of the old floating bridge that used to span the Derwent. After this we went to Adventure Bay for a quick swim, then raced back to the ferry. I was half hoping to miss the ferry and be forced to stay, but that didn't happen and

we headed home. The kids were a bit more subdued on the ferry ride back but still enjoyed it a lot.

It would be fair to say that we were disappointed not to have stayed over – until the wild weather set in. The windstorms that hit on the Saturday night made a real mess of parts of Southern Tasmania and Bruny Island copped its share. Apparently it was a pretty wild night and there were blackouts across the Island. That aside, I believe the afternoon at the pub and the breakfast at the Berry farm were highly enjoyable.

Thanks to Tristan and Emily for organising this event. I am sure that everyone who came along this time would do it again in a heartbeat and for those who did-

n't come along I would encourage you to do whatever you need to do to make it next time.



Let it be known that the 15th of November 2013 is now to be known as “rego day”. It was on this day, that Mr Steve Caplice of Fogarty Automotive Services undertook the rego inspection of my newly completed Honda S800. Since the last instalment in Veloce Nota, the first major job was rebuilding the engine and gearbox. The gearbox is not the original one for this car; I believed it to have done a very low mileage and so I simply replaced the oil seals, first gear synchro-ring, and two of the three ball bearings. This was on the assumption that it was probably better not to disassemble further given some S800 gearbox main-shafts, as this one is, were assembled with a force of 400 tons in a press.

The engine was a bigger job but having done several S600 and S800 engines in the past, nothing too difficult. Setting the valve clearances, shims under bucket followers under the twin OHCs, was probably the slowest and most frustrating task in the rebuild. New pistons, rings, gudgeon pins, timing chain, cam chain rollers and guides, valve guides, valves, flywheel, pressure plate, diaphragm spring and clutch friction disk, gaskets and countless O-rings etc., all purchased in the early 1980s when still available from Honda, went into the engine. I chose to use a “Sports Kit” optional extra cylinder head and cams that I had collected years ago and sold the stock original head to a fellow in South Australia to pay for some repairs the modified head needed. More on this later.

S800 (and S500, S600, T360,



and T500) crankshafts use needle roller big ends and main bearings and come as one assembly; they cannot be easily and successfully rebuilt. The crankshaft for this car is its original and has done about 80,000 miles. It looked and felt OK. Lowering the crank with pistons together into the block is a little tricky and I broke one piston ring but fortunately had one spare ring set. The workshop manual specifies 18 foot-pounds for the head retaining nuts with a recommended check after 500 miles. Rather than the work involved, and risk of stripped threads in the alloy, of re-torque after 500 miles, I took a slightly different approach; namely, use of copper head-gasket spray and torque down to a bit under the specified torque, let sit for a week, and then re-torque just a smidgen higher than spec.

Test running the engine briefly on the floor with no exhaust was as much for the fun of making a loud noise from what not much

earlier was a pile of inanimate objects, as it was to check oil flow to the cylinder head and a compression test. The cylinder head has a bolt that can be removed to check oil flow to the top of the engine. (An oil pressure gauge can pick up from this point. When warmed up an S800 engine runs about 2 to 4 psi as the roller crank needs volume rather than pressure.) Two oil filters are used in these engines, a conventional replaceable paper element and a centrifugal oil cleaner that can be cleaned out whenever the engine is rebuilt.

Installing the engine and box into the car is pretty straightforward; however I nearly had a heart attack when my ancient Morris chain blocked started skipping a few links at a time when lowering. This shook the steel girder above and the entire house. If the engine and box had dropped onto the body-work I don't know what I would have

done. I continued lowering the drive train into the car as smoothly and quickly that I could with the chain block still skipping every second chain link. What a relief when the engine was resting on its mounts! The chain block had a broken roller guide that had no impact when lifting but let the chain jump when lowering.

Numerous hours later, with exhaust, carbies and radiator installed, things were ready for another more lengthy engine test-run. The b***** starter-clutch was slipping, so out comes the radiator and on goes another starter-clutch. Once this problem was fixed and the radiator re-installed, I then noticed that the water pump that looked almost brand new on the outside was leaking coolant. So then the water pump came on and off several times, including installing my only spare new bearing and seal, until I figured out that the water pump seal had to be assembled in a very particular and precise manner.

Then another problem: why was green coolant appearing around #1 spark plug? The machine shop had welded up a previously leaking plug on the alloy head. The weld was weeping coolant. And they billed me for a pressure test! I could not cope with the prospect of taking engine and box out to remove the head to take back to the machine

shop. Out came some industrial quality metallic epoxy that a fitter in the Newcastle Steelworks Blast Furnace department had given me in the early '90s. Once thoroughly mixed it appeared to set ok and I had just enough left so I could knead a lump of this material over the leak. So far, touch wood, it appears to be holding. Then another problem becomes apparent: I had the machine shop remove two broken spark plugs from this head; they were B***** ***** leaking. The size of the threaded holes for the "Helicoils" that the machine shop had used was such that the plug washers were not sealing and one looked as though the new hole was not perpendicular to the hole-face. Again I could not cope with the prospect of taking engine and box out to remove the head to take back to

the machine shop so I have been experimenting with an additional copper washer on these two spark plugs with success, mostly.

The rest of the overall assembly of the car was simply a matter of doing a bit each week until she was ready for rego inspection.

So how did it feel to drive the car for the first time since 1988? I am afraid it was initially a bit of any anticlimax. The only car anything like an S800 that I have driven since '88 has been my "Toyonda" club Hillclimb car with at least 100 bhp more than the original S800, a 5-speed CR box, a smaller steering wheel and 2 inch wider road wheels. The diff sounded and felt terrible. The wooden S600 steering wheel felt fragile, and anything less than 5,000 rpm felt



Honda S800

like no torque at all compared to the Toyonda. Removing the diff, that was from the same low mileage wreck that the gearbox was from, was a frustrating job as the rear axle bearings were a very snug fit to the rear axle housing and did not want to come back out. The crown and pinion gears looked as new but there was no free-play between them. From the fact that the diff had a silicone material on the gasket, (not invented in 1967 when the car was built in Japan) someone had obviously had a tinker with it.

Adjusting the crown position to give some free-play did improve the engineer's blue pattern, but on reinstallation, while noise and feel were improved, it was still not right. So out again and this time completely stripped down. One half of the flat bear-

ing surface that the pinion roller bearing runs on was a mess. Presumably having no free-play resulted in the crown gear pushing an excessive sideways force against the pinion thus damaging the bearing. The original diff for the car, with about 80,000 miles on it, with slight adjustment to reduce its crown to pinion free-play, went back in and now I cannot hear or feel any drive-train noises whatsoever.

She has now done 500 miles and had her first oil-change. Using the modified head and cams has taken away the grunt that a stock S800 has, (yes, unlike the S600, a S800 does have some grunt), but once 5,000 rpm is reached she picks up. Between about 5,500 and 7,500 the engine is almost unbelievably smooth and the exhaust note, (a new original Honda system, extractors, muf-

fler and tail pipes) is pretty impressive. It sounds different to a stock S800 and perhaps is a bit more like an S600 in nature. I guess that given the stock engine of 792 cc producing 70 bhp is already fairly highly tuned, altering cams and ports would inevitably have had a cost.

On a winding road, especially if not going up a steep hill, and getting one's mind into accepting that it is a 45-year-old, relatively heavy car with a modest engine capacity, the sense of anticlimax is now replaced with a feeling of delight in a spectacular little car. The Dunlop "formula R" tyres on the light-weight magnesium wheels have ample grip. The disc-drum brakes are more than adequate, and the steering and roadholding excellent. She can be driven along at 8,000 rpm in third and



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still be under the speed limit! In fourth gear, the sweet spot of the engine corresponds to about 80 mph, so care will still need to be taken with speed limit compliance.

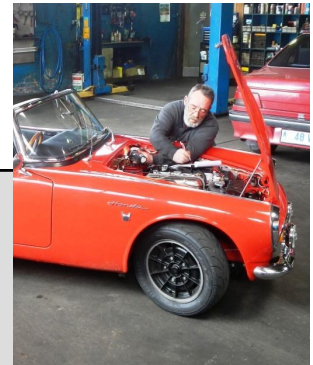
What would I do different next time? The money spent on the body and paint by Matthew Fletcher of Kaizen Autocraft was worth the second mortgage as the quality of the body restoration set the foundation of the entire project. Taking three decades to complete the restoration was probably not such a bad thing as if I had done it 20 years ago I would have done the body and paint myself and the end result would not have been as good as it is now. Acrylic paint; most definitely the right choice compared to two-pack in my view.

But, never ever again will I see Helicoils as being satisfactory

for repairing spark plug threads in an alloy head.

What next in my garage? In time I hope to replace the original points and centrifugal advance with a more modern system so the advance curve can be optimised to suit the modified cams and ports, and the rear springs could be lowered an inch or so. She who must be obeyed asked,

now that it is finished you won't need to spend so much time in the garage, why don't you do some work on the house? The next project has already started with the disassembly of a 1978 Kawasaki 750 twin motorcycle!



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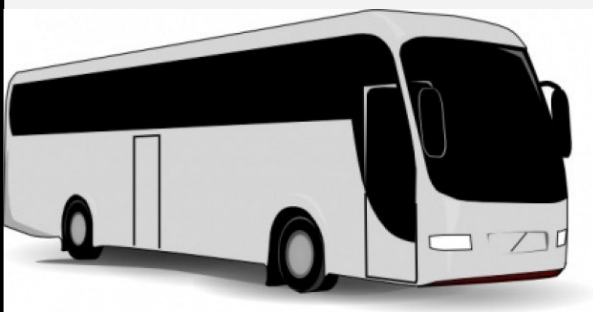
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