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**Advertising rates**

1/4 page \$7.50 per issue  
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**Full yearly Membership fees:**

1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015  
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 8.15 pm. 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](mailto: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](mailto:Cmi.editorial@gmail.com)

**Disclaimer**

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**Parafly™**

**SELENIA**

This issue is a tad late as a result of February sneaking up on me when I thought I had a couple of days left in the month.

Main items of interest are that Steve Wade takes a look at the delicious Alfa Romeo 4C, Geoff Storr answers the question I am often asked about the OT 1600—'What's it like to drive?'—and Dave Mitchell has supplied photographs of a couple of our social events.

On the immediate horizon is the

Longford Revival Festival, returning in revised and improved form on 20/21/22 March with a much better variety of events and a higher level of engagement with the town itself. Unfortunately I can't be there, but I am trying to make sure that my car gets there.

Monty Reading and I have done Targa Hellyer Gorge since the last issue, and survived.

## Blakey's bit



*Pic by Erik Rathmayr*

The year has started with a delightful lunch at Dru point with Chris Edwards's red Maserati notable for appearing in an attractive blue on this occasion.

Club members have also shown up at Festa Italia in February, held on a very hot Sunday this year, and at the Shannons display at Rosny on 1 March. The usual terrific assortment of cars and bikes, old and new, proud owners everywhere.

Your President has been hopping mad for the last couple of weeks after an altercation with the rear step on a Volkswagen campervan... didn't walk into it, lowered it too far, too quickly with a hydraulic jack, catching my knee on the way down. Maybe others can learn from my mistake and treat heavy things with all the respect that they deserve...

Pic below for anyone's interest is an Afasud/Sprint 5-speed

## Presidential Patter

gearbox I recently dismantled. Noteworthy details are that you can see the bearings that sit in the main case and 5th gear is outside the case. Note also the broken bits bottom right.

This won't be repaired; synchro lously on 3 of 5 gears.





If you're into tapestry or cross-stitch, the patterns in the pics above may appeal to you.

Mary Blake discovered them in a junk shop, in various stages of usability; but in every case the patterns are all there.

Whether you fancy a mini, a BMW motorbike or a stylised Lamborghini Countach, we are happy to let the patterns go to whoever wants them. And if more than one person wants one, I am sure we can work something out. Perfect occupational therapy for a President with a broken ankle, for example!

They take a long time to do, but look good on the wall of a den or man-cave (or woman-cave).

Just to show what the finished product looks like, the examples shown right and below were done by the editor's wife and mother respectively.



**Australian F1 GP**

12-15 March

Free to air unless Rupert Murdoch buys that too

**Longford Revival Festival**

20-22 March 2015

A different experience from previous years, with three different events: Flying mile, standing quarter on Tannery Straight, and a short 'targa-style' stage over part of the original Grand Prix track.

\$395 entry fee.

**V8 Supercars Tasmania**

Symmons Plains

29 March

**Targa Tasmania**

27 April—2 May

**Lancia Beta Coupe for sale**

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**KEN.N.**

## Alfa Romeo 4C

January is a pretty relaxed month for most automotive journalists in Australia. There aren't many vehicle launches and if you *are* covering one, it probably involves a summer breeze, a nice coastal road and plenty of refreshment.

OR.....

You could be freezing your proverbials off in one of the ugliest cities in the world - Detroit - in the middle of a Michigan winter. Your compensation? The North American International Motor Show.

After twenty-something years and a fistful of false starts, Alfa Romeo are now back in the US market. That's exciting for American Alfa fans but it's exciting for us, too. Car companies don't spend millions on events like Detroit merely to make up the numbers. They schedule their vehicle launches to suit and that means there's some real Alfa news to digest!

### Alfa Romeo 4C Spider



The big news is the unveiling of the 4C Spider to accompany the hardtop coupe. The Spider was painted in *Giallo* for Detroit, but will also be

available in two versions of *Rosso* and a handful of other irrelevant colours (two whites, black and grey).

Like the hardtop, the 4C Spider has a 1750 turbocharged four cylinder producing 177kW and 350 torques, which will push the 905kg car to 100km/h in just 4.1 seconds. There are lots of impressive numbers surrounding the 4C Spider, actually.

The windscreen is 10% thinner, which saves 15% of its weight (go figure!)

The entire carbonfibre monocoque weighs just 107kgs.

There was a time not long ago when 100hp per litre of displacement was impressive



performance. The 4C Spider delivers 136hp per litre.

80% of the car's peak torque is available at just 1700rpm.

The 4C Spider comes with a dual-mode titanium exhaust, Alfa's flappy paddle TCT automatic transmission and an enhanced version of Alfa's 'DNA' selectable control system. D is for Dynamic, N for Natural and A for All-weather. The enhancement comes by way of an additional 'Race' mode, which tightens everything up even more and lets you pull up to 1.1g's on the lateral test and 1.25g's when braking. Confused mechanics can rearrange the DNA and R modes to read DARN if they wish. OK, not really.

The interior is spartan, with lots of visible carbonfibre. The seats are black with several choices in contrast stitching. A tobacco coloured interior will be available later in the year.

The hardtop is available for order in the US starting at \$53,000. The Spider will at-



tract a premium over that but it's neither here nor there for we Aussies, as the cars will cost a lot more here anyway.

### Upmarket Intentions

The 4C range is the beginning of an upmarket move for Alfa Romeo. Fiat's cardigan-loving CEO, Sergio Marchionne, told the press in Detroit that Alfa will release a mid-size sedan later this year and will be "within shooting range" of BMW and Mercedes Benz in terms of quality and performance. If you've

been keeping up with the news then you might know that a convertible being designed in conjunction with Mazda's new MX-5 was supposed to be an Alfa, but was siphoned off to Fiat, or possibly Abarth, instead. The feeling is that the Italian-Japanese collaboration was not refined enough for the new bar set for Alfa Romeo.

Punters are tipping that mid-size sedan to be called Giulia but that's not been confirmed as yet. It's scheduled for a

debut in late June at an event in Milan.

### SUV

Every car company has to have an SUV these days and Alfa Romeo will be no different. In fact, the five-year plan includes two SUV's for Alfa. One of them is scheduled to arrive in 2016 and will be built on the same platform architecture as the mid-size sedan we'll see in June.

(Pictures: Autoblog and Caradvice)

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Dave Mtchell's pics of Festa Italia



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## Impressions of an OT 1600

Philip said that he had written many articles about his car of the moment, from the Piglet to the Lancia and now the Fiat-Abarth OT 1600 replica, some for the club magazine and some for presentation in wider forums. However, now he thought it would be interesting to have someone else drive the OT and provide a more objective appraisal of it. I was fortunate enough to be that someone.

On arrival at Philip's place on the appointed day I was surprised to find the house and sheds all open, but deserted. No Philip and no car. I waited around for a bit and had just decided to try again another time when the man arrived with the car. He then proceeded to pack a comprehensive toolkit on the basis that previous test runs had resulted in awkward running repairs being necessary so it was best to be prepared.

The first impression of the car was a bright yellow body covered with more stickers than most competition cars, a short wheelbase and a wide rear track. Once inside the car, the overall space dedicated to the accommodation of two people became very apparent – it is limited. The seats are narrow but sufficient to accommodate my 83 kilos and once belted in, to feel secure and supportive. The pedals are fairly close together, and wearing walking shoes I almost had space to



use each one separately; racing shoes would have been a better option. The wheel is well placed as is the gear lever, although the latter has a long travel, even more than the Alfetta GTV, which at first I found disconcerting.

There are a myriad of switches and indicators for various functions across the dashboard, the interpretation and management of which I left to the owner who accompanied me on this test run. The only features that I needed to know about were the indicators (which did not return to centre automatically) and the electronic speedometer which was located in front of the co-driver. Philip did say that he sometimes puts a GPS with speed indicator on top of the binnacle which houses the tachometer and (inoperative) original speedometer.

The motor started readily and with the driver's window down there was the joyous combination of exhaust note

and air induction noise as the intake hose is immediately next to the window. Clutch needs to be depressed to the floor (problem with wide shoes) before first gear can be engaged and with a gentle release we shudder away. At the second attempt at take-off, and following the owner's advice, I gave the little beast 'some more welly' and we set off quite smoothly.

Travelling through the shopping traffic of Sorell, the car was quite tractable even at low revs. The restricted speed limit was extended due to roadside mowing, so it was not until we approached Brinktop Road that the 100 km/h came up. At that point we joined a group of motorcyclists heading north and I think they were a bit surprised that the little car was happy at their road speed. Turning onto Fingerpost Road was the first chance to sample the acceleration, and I have to say it was sensational and unexpected.

With only four speeds and being fairly low-g geared, the 2-litre engine pulled like a train from a little over 3,300 revs up to 6,500, with an additional power lift coming in at about 4,500. As with the assertive approach required of the clutch, the long gear shift felt better as more 'welly' was applied. The sense that the little car was lifting the nose and almost dancing on the front wheels in acceleration contributed to the sense of speed, as did the induction noise in the right ear.

With the capacity to take some corners at higher speeds, but conscious that traffic may be coming from the other direction, my first impression was that the car was easily unsettled and the tendency to oversteer needed to be controlled. In addition my sense was that the Fiat was not directionally stable and needed constant attention to remain where I wanted to be on the road.

After a coffee at Richmond we set off for the hill north of Campania rising to the Craighourne Dam, which some years ago was used as the Colebrook Targa Tasmania stage. As we travelled along the transport stage, I became more accustomed to the car and realised that the impression I had of it being unsettled was incorrect: as long as I didn't micro-manage it, the directional stability was really quite satisfactory and

the tendency to oversteer could also be readily accommodated.

Indeed as we undertook our practice run up the Craighourne hill, the car really came into its own and relished the acceleration and the wide open corners. Under power the suspension started to work and provided greater confidence that the car would respond as expected, and the uncertainties I had experienced earlier seemed less significant. The same sense that the car worked better under pressure than when simply cruising was also evident on the downhill run.

Serious braking had not been required on either run, so I tried the brakes hard several times on the transport stage back to Philip's. Initially I experienced a lack of directional stability under hard braking, but again when I became used to the car's responses, a good line could be maintained quite readily.

On the approach to Brinktop Hill out of Richmond we tried a 0 to 100 acceleration test. The first run was aborted as my big feet didn't clear the clutch properly. On the second run we managed 12 seconds, although Philip was sure that with more stick in each gear we could have improved on that. However, I was driving someone else's car and did not want to break things.

All in all I think the OT 1600 is a credit to its creators (Philip Blake and Tony Gray, with 61 helpers at last count), and really does undertake the role of a sporting rally car pretty well. It has a brash appearance, plenty of noise both inside and out and has the capacity to provide plenty of competitive fun in most forms of tarmac motor sport.

I have to say that the strategy of taking a good toolkit was effective, as the Fiat did not miss a beat over the entire test run!



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