



# Happenings

A publication of the  
Suncoast British Car Club  
February 2015

## From The President's Desk

Well, we ended the year with the spectacular Holiday Party and we began the new year with a picnic on Siesta Key's beautiful Turtle Beach. Our events keep getting grander and our membership keeps growing. Some may say this is the time to relax and enjoy the fruits of our labor, but I say this is time to focus on delivering new events, improving on the regulars, and continue to seek-out new members.

I have begun to build an email list of members who would like to be notified of the club's early morning breakfast runs. The popularity of these events continues to grow. These spur-of-the-moment events are usually announced just a few days in advance. We meet in Sarasota, somewhere just off of the Interstate, and often travel inland in search of winding roads and wood laden bridges. We breakfast in some wonderful small town luncheonettes, specializing in tasty comfort foods. And, we're back home in the late morning, allotting ample time to complete those honey-do lists. If interested, send me an email and I'll add you to this growing list of LBC lovers. Finally, please be reminded that

we are always looking for new places to explore and activities to enjoy. So, don't hesitate to share your thoughts or experiences. I'd love to hear from you!

Jim

## This Month's Featured Car

(written by Fred Cook - this car has a British connection – wait for it.)

Kathleen Cook's 1973 Alfa Romeo  
GT 1300 Junior

The GT 1300 Junior was the entry model to the Alfa Romeo Gran Turismo coupe range and they were produced at the Milan factory from 1965-74. It has a 1290 cc four cylinder twin cam engine with twin Webber carburetors, a five-speed manual transmission and four wheel disc brakes. The designer was Bertone.



At this time Alfa was producing two small coupes: the Gran Turismo Veloce (veloce=fast) with 1600, 1750 and 2000 cc engines and the GT junior, which featured engines in 1300 and 1600 cc. GT Juniors sold in great numbers to people who wanted a sporting, stylish car that handled well, but either did not require the maximum in engine power, or were sensitive to the taxation on larger engine capacities in some markets – most notably, the home Italian market. More GT 1300 Juniors were produced (91,195) than all of the larger GTVs.

The engine produced only 89 hp, however, it had a top speed of over 100 mph, which is very good for only 1300 cc. This model was not exported to the US due to emission controls legislation. Although the larger GTVs were fitted with fuel injection systems in order to export those models to the US, no GT Juniors were ever made with fuel injection.

Kathleen's husband, Fred, was assigned to the US Embassy in Rome in 1985. One day while riding the bus to her Italian lesson, Kathleen saw this Alfa GT Junior for sale at a neighborhood gas station. With just one owner - the proverbial little old lady who only drove it to the Vatican on Sundays, the 12-year-old car had just 30,000 miles. It was purchased for \$1200. The following three years Kathleen drove the car to her teaching job at Notre Dame International School.

The British connection: In 1989, when Fred was transferred to the US Embassy in London, the Alfa went with them to the UK where Kathleen used it to commute to her teaching job in Cobham, Surrey, a daily round trip of about 55 miles.

Due to a change in the US law regarding the personal importation of "non-conforming" (collision standards and emission controls) vehicles, the Alfa had to be exported to the US prior to January 1, 1990. It remained in storage in Wisconsin until Fred and Kathleen returned to the US in 1994 and drove it to Virginia.

In 1998, to repair the ravages of time, not to mention the ravages of Italian and British drivers, the Alfa was stripped to bare metal and repainted to match its original color - *oliva verde metallica* (metallic olive green). The interior remains original and the engine compartment has an unmolested patina.

### **SBCC Attends Vintage Car Races at Sebring**

On December 4<sup>th</sup> SBCC members attended the



Sebring qualifying races. Members enjoyed visiting the pits, talking with drivers and picnicking on a grassy knoll perched above Turn 5. This seventeen turn, 3.7 mile 12 Hours of Sebring layout created much excitement as spectators were able to get up close to this visually exciting and near-

deafening experience.

For those of us not familiar with the raceway's history, it occupies a portion of an airport (currently in operation) which was originally known as Hendrick's Army Airfield. It was built as a training facility during WWII for Army Air Forces supporting B-17 operations. The war's end made Hendrick's Airfield obsolete creating an area conducive to racing use. Approximately five years after the end of the war, the first sports car endurance race was held at what is now Sebring International Raceway, home to the famous 12 Hours of Sebring. This famous "around-the-clock" event is one of the world's premiere sports car races and has been run every year since.

### **Holiday Party - Record Breaking Attendance**

The Venetian River Club was again the venue of choice for this year's Holiday Party. Seventy-five members enjoyed an evening of cocktails, fine dining, and decadent deserts. Lively music motivated members to "cut the rug" and burn off some of those extra portions. Long gowns, holiday festive blouses, and blazers & ties were a dramatic change from the



*Enjoying eachothers company are Duane & Ellen Magnuson, Walter & Joanne Mainberger, Alex Huppe, and Jeryl Schriever*

usual casual southwest Florida attire.

Laughter filled the room as members shared stories, having an opportunity to socialize with those not seen very often. It was truly a spectacular event. Much thanks to Chairperson Debbie Wilson for planning this very popular and well attended seasonal gathering.

### A "Treasure" is found at Turtle Beach

The infamous treasure chest has again passed onto yet another unsuspecting SBCC member. Charged with protecting (or conspiring to giveaway) the chest, Bernie Wood unwrapped the box and took it home, assuring its safekeeping.



The club's annual New Years Day White Elephant Picnic was very well attended, packing the covered pavillion with members, food, and much laughter. A big thanks to Marylyn Aiello for her hard work in making this year's event enjoyable for all.

For those of us new to the Saratoa area, Turtle Beach, on the south end of Siesta Key, is usually far less crowded than other Siesta Key and Sarasota beaches, especially during "off season."

Named for being an active sea turtle nesting habitat during turtle mating season, it is much more low key, as intended, than other Sarasota beaches, namely Siesta Key Beach. In fact, during "low season," you can almost have the half mile (2,600 feet of beach frontage) long beach to yourself! The beach has been wonderfully re-nourished into a wide expanse of sandy beach and sand dunes.

The trees bordering the Turtle Beach Campground and the beach make for a gorgeous landscape. While not the white, baby powder soft sand you'll find on Siesta Beach, the sand here is of a darker, more coarse variety; this is still one of the best Gulf of Mexico beaches; a huge expanse of beach with plenty of room to stake your claim to your own piece of real estate under the Sarasota,

Florida sun.

**Welcome new members** John & Glyn Murray. SBCC members met John & Glyn at both the Cricket and Sebring events. Sarasota is home to the Murrays who can be seen sporting about in their beautiful 1960 Triumph TR3A. There are now nine TR3's in the SBCC.



The TR3A was sold between 1957 & 1962. The "A" and its successor "B" were not official designations, but rather later models of the TR3 made from 1955 through 1962. The TR3A was affectionately referred to as the "TR3 face-lift" model offering a wider front grill. Slightly over 58,000 A's were produced, making it the third best selling Triumph after the TR6 and TR7 models.

#### About this newsletter

Happenings is produced by the SBCC Newsletter Editor and published monthly in the British Marque Car Club News, as well as the SBCC website. Inquiries may be addressed to [cadozois@gmail.com](mailto:cadozois@gmail.com)