

# ROMEO & GIULIETTA



The Newsletter of the Alfa Romeo Owner's Club of San Diego

February 2010



*Dedicated to the Memory of  
Ernest "Pat" Garrett*

*1928 - 2010*

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## THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ALFA ROMEO OWNER'S CLUB OF SAN DIEGO

This issue of Romeo & Giulietta is dedicated to the memory of our dear friend and fellow Alfisti, Pat Garrett.

I first met Pat in 1989, just after moving back to the San Diego area. Fellow Alfisti, Ralph Moorhouse, said that if I was interested in becoming active in the club, there were two people that I needed to meet. We hopped into his Spider and took a ride up to Fallbrook. Pat and Glenna were such warm and welcoming people that I couldn't help but feel that this was a group that I could really belong to.

One of my earliest experiences with the club was the 1991 National Convention. Pat was the Convention Chairman and I was the technical help committee. I was in awe watching him manage all the various committee chairs and their individual personalities. The result was an extraordinary event. We had Alfisti from all over the world attend, along with some of the rarest Alfas from Il Museo Storico dell'Alfa Romeo in Arese at our Concorso; how he managed that I don't know, he just knew the right strings to pull. Perhaps his crowning achievement was the gymkhana event and the teeter board. He delighted in watching the drivers negotiate the course and then try to balance their Alfa off the ground long enough for him to give them the "thumbs-up".

Over the years Pat has been a mentor to me and at times a student. When my GTV6 needed a fresh set of doughnuts installed and I didn't have the funds to take it in to have them installed, he helped out. I found out after we started that he had never done a set of doughnuts on a transaxle Alfa before, but that didn't stop him from guiding me through it and by the end of the day, the GTV6 was back up and on the road again.

We shared many a glass of wine and I never tired of hearing his stories. When the club needed a newsletter editor, I convinced Pat that he should use the new computer in the garage to produce some articles and I would publish them. He readily took to the new technology, even to the point of learning to use a scanner to convert printed material into digital. Pat could always be counted on when an article was needed "From the Desk in the Garage".

I will very much miss his dry humor and his puns. We always knew we were in for a story when Pat would say "Did you hear about ...?"

Fair winds and following seas, Pat. We will meet again, when I lay down to rest.



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Jocko, Dennis and Pat



## *How I met Pat*

The year was 1957; I met Pat in a bar in downtown San Diego. It wasn't as bad as it sounds. We were introduced by a mutual friend who told Pat that he knew a girl who could "blow the doors off" his 1957 Giulietta Spider. I was driving a 1952 MG-TD equipped with a Schorock blower. I don't remember if he and I ever had that race; I don't think the MG could have won. We drank a lot of beer, played a lot of shuffle alley and I loaned him money to make a car payment. He was racing a Formula III Cooper Norton and needed his money for racing. We dated for a few months before the Navy sent him to the Philippine Islands. He wrote me a permission slip to drive the Giulietta while he was gone. That was a powerful sign of how he felt.

Pat was lucky to draw duty at the air station in Naples, Italy and Michelle and I followed him there in December of 1958. We went to Formula One Grand Prix races around Europe, Pat did some local hill climbs and club racing at Pomigliano d'Arco airport in our 1960 Sprint and he made a few

laps of the Targa Florio in Sicily in a friend's 1100cc Stanguellini sports car. We learned to camp (because we were too poor to afford hotels) and saw a great deal of Europe. We were instrumental in establishing a branch of the AFFCC (Armed Forces Foreign Car Club) in Naples. Pat had been one of the organizers of AFFCC in Honolulu in the early 1950's

After 4 years in Italy, he was stationed at Patuxent River Naval Air Station in Maryland and he raced on the old Marlboro track just south of D.C. There we revived the Southern Maryland Sports Car Club (SMSCC). In 1965 he went to Viet Nam for

13 months and he said good bye to the USN in December of 1966. The Navy had promised him another tour of duty in Italy but by that time Pat was disenchanted with the USN.

He tried wrenching for a living at the old TNT (Toyota and Triumph) Motors in El Cajon but couldn't make enough money in that job, so he signed on with Lear Sigler, a company that reworked all the landing gear on the Air Force C-141 Starlifters. Two years with them and we were living up near Sacramento when we got word that they were thinking of sending him to Rapid City, SD. Being southern clime habitués we were inclined to decline. Fortuitously, our old friend, the one who introduced us 21 years earlier, called and offered Pat a job at Reynolds Toyota in Escondido as a Service Manager. He jumped on that and we moved south although he

changed hats and managed the parts department. Nine years later he quit Reynolds and we went on a 10 week camping in England, Scotland and Wales. When we came back home Pat worked for Doug Garton at the Triumph dealership in Escondido for 3 months then switched back to Toyotas and signed



on with Toyota Carlsbad.

Pat retired from the salaried life in January 1991 and never looked back. We had more time to travel so we did. We took long off-road trips into Baja, visited friends in England, Australia and New Zealand and visited many places in the US of A. His most memorable trip was a motorcycle tour to the Isle of Man with his brother, John, to see the moto races.

He was 81 when he passed away; we had been married 51 years and 8 months. He was a poet, a joker, a wonderful, loving husband and a great friend.

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## *How Pat Became Pat*

The name on Pat's birth announcement is E.A Jr. He was named after his father, Ernest. His parents called him 'Sonny', however, and he says he didn't know he was Ernest until he signed up with the USNavy. He had never seen his birth certificate before then.

In the early 1950's, the USN sent him to Albuquerque, NM attached to the Naval Air Special Weapons Facility. These guys were charged with developing a way of delivering atomic warheads from carrier based aircraft and they perfected over-the-shoulder bombing and loft bombing methods.

Apparently, this wasn't exciting enough for the enlisted men and a bunch of them decided to try car racing. They bought and prepared a jalopy coupe to race and several tried out as drivers.

The fastest man would be designated driver. E.A. was the fastest driver and at registration they asked him his name. When he said Garrett they said, "OK, Pat".

He told them that his name was Ernest and they said "OK". He won his first race and when he picked up his winnings, the check was made out to Pat Garrett. He wasn't sure the bank would cash it, but they did, without question, and the name stuck for 58 years. My sister-in-law, Carol, gave the name Patrick to one of her sons, as an honor to Pat. Just 2 or 3 years ago she learned that she should have named him Ernest. LOL☺



## *From Jon Dooley*

The best story I heard Pat tell was of someone starting a car, that may have been the twenties Chevy(?), that didn't have a crankcase breather in place. The spark (starting handle induced?) ignited the mixture in the sump, blew the sump off down into the ground and the cylinder head upwards, through the roof. It was a good story, heard in the gloaming of the orange grove.

Sadly, the Carlsbad race meeting was affected by the Cobra accident and fire.

Glenna can tell you about the trip out in the South African GTV6. I gather she remembered it for a while. So have I.

BW, Jon

## *Richard Ballantine* *Colorado*

"I first noticed Pat's name on the informative how-to column about Giuliettas that he wrote for the Owner in perhaps the '70s or '80s. I hadn't purchased a Giulietta yet, but knew that support might be lacking and Pat's insights seemed to be good ones.

I was to see Pat - and Glenna - at the AROC conventions. Pat was easy to talk to and I quickly learned the breadth of his Alfa and auto experiences:

I'd begin a conversation about Giuliettas, and he would make a comparison with 1900s. He had a 1900! Or, to a JuniorZ. And then to a Stanguellini - and then to the Targa Florio and the 10 second pre-race medical exam that he and the other drivers, all in a line, went through.

Pat was always good natured and his stories, one-of-a-kind and entertaining. I'll miss seeing him."

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## *From Bill Biggs*

I first met Pat at an Alfa Club meeting in 1969. Pat and Glenna had offered to host an event at their home. I bought a new Spider and this was the first event I took it to. I remember being impressed with Pat's friendliness, his sense of humor, and especially his way with words. I liked the cars, his SS and the older spiders, all the parts and the special tools. Pat made everyone feel welcome and part of the group. I liked him.

Over the years, I enjoyed seeing Pat work on many cars and not all his. It was great seeing his talents finish a car.

Pat was one of the people who introduced me to SCCA and working races. We spent time together at Ontario Motor Speedway and my first national meeting in 1971. He also gave me a ride in his SS.

Pat wasn't afraid to take on projects. I had a 1900C SS. I found another 1900, a later model



Pat, Bill Nagy, Fred Zimmerman

and I knew Pat liked that model; I gave him the information and he bought it.

Pat had a brown 1957 Spider race car that he raced in SCCA for a couple of years. It was exciting to know he also raced one when they were new and one of the first modern Alfas in this country.

Pat loved Glenna and supported her efforts as the national executive secretary of AROC. They both gave willingly as officers in the local club. Pat also served his country and retired from the Navy. They were a great couple to be around and I value my time with both of their extended families.

I've known Pat for over forty years. We could always enjoy a party and time in each other's garage to show off a new project. This was true right up to this last year even though we now lived far apart. Pat helped with my Alfa 4R Zagato.

To sum this all up, Pat Garrett was a straight up guy. He was kind, generous, a loving husband and friend, a knowledgeable resource, loved life, his friends, and cars. Combine that with his quick wit and you had a real terrific guy.

God be with you Pat. Your many friends miss you.

## *From Cheryl Braden*

Pat and Glenna were a joy to know over the years. I first met them when I married Pat, for clarification, Braden, and was brought into the tight-knit community of Alfisti so many years ago.

My sincerest condolences to Glenna and to their extended families on Pat's death.

For many years they had Oktoberfest at their home in Fallbrook. It was a place to go to celebrate, squeeze fresh limes, let the kids see real chickens that wandered the property freely, exchange Alfa memories, put a piece in the on-going jig-saw puzzle that was on the table awaiting completion, and to catch up on the latest experiments or innovations in Alfadom that Pat was always willing

to share with those in attendance. I'm sure this is the way that Pat would prefer to be remembered.

I also remember the San Diego Chapter hosting a convention with the teeter-totter as part of the gymkhana and the amusement on Pat's face as the various cars tried to balance themselves on it. I ran across a picture of it recently thumbing through one of the books I was looking at.

Another great loss to Alfisti everywhere. The Alfa community has been hit hard within the last few years by a significant loss of members that have had long-time relationships with Alfa and have been a wealth of information, expertise, and above all a willingness to share, some of it technical in nature and others, historians of the marque.

Rest in peace, Pat; you are among wonderful company.

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## From Ed Aenlle

I am writing this to put down in words, my experiences with Pat Garrett over the past ten years. I got to know Pat when I bought a 1957 1900 Touring bodied CSS Alfa Romeo from him in 1999. I was in Phoenix with a horrible desire to have an Alfa project but didn't have any choices that piqued my interest. I thought that Southern California would be a much more fertile hunting ground for my search. I looked at some ads on Hemmings and found several cars to look at and made arrangements to see them (Giulietta spiders and GTV's). Before I left town, I borrowed a small trailer from my neighbor and hooked it up to my Bronco and got set to go. Somehow, I got wind of Pat's small ad wanting to sell his 3 window '57. Being a novice, I had no idea what this car looked like and called Charlie Fife, in Phoenix, for advice. He thought a 1900 would be a more interesting car and mentioned, that it had an aluminum body. Wow, I thought now that's really interesting!

I got to LA and then San Diego, looked at the other cars but said to myself, "you will have to go see this 1957 1900 and find out what it's all about."

I called Pat on the phone and got directions from him, coming down I-5 to Oceanside then on to Fallbrook. I had to stop in town to find out where Gum Tree Lane was and luckily the little telephone directories in town had a small map.

While driving in, I was entranced by this charming, little hidden town that appeared to be completely different from the rest of southern California with a small town atmosphere, and wonderful, great, dizzily curving, country roads surrounded by lush avocado trees, just made for sports cars.

Pat and Glenna met me down at the garage. Pat told me the story about the 1900's history, on how it had been partially worked on over the years, how it came from France and was reputed to be owned by Brigitte Bardot at one time. Well, I will have to say that last detail sold it to me. Pat went over in detail of what else he knew about the car and helped me get the car onto the

trailer and secure everything for the trip back to Phoenix.

I had to call him a couple to times in intervening two years with questions regarding the registration ( it hadn't been registered in years) and sources of parts.

Finally, we had sold our practice in Phoenix and decided to move to southern California to be closer to our families and find a place to live in a small town. I took Nora, my wife, to Fallbrook and introduced her to Pat and Glenna.

I was lucky that we decided to live in Fallbrook. We fell in love with the beautiful scenery and planned our future home while we lived in a "small" older house.

Somehow, the progress on the 1900 has been slow with starts and sputters but I have been lucky to have had Pat handy. Whenever I was stumped by a particular part to be identified or where a piece of trim went, I dragged the part or a picture up to Pat's garage and picked his brain. He would look at the part and identify. Pat was particularly good with identifying errant pieces of trim or mechanical part and where it went. "That trim goes on the back seat, that goes by the door, this goes on the hood" and so on.

His stockpile of Alfa parts was deep, and he could be depended upon to have little bits for the 1900 or some other Alfa.

He surprised me last year when after getting the 1900's engine back in the car, I tried to fit the generator that came with the car ten years earlier and it didn't work. I was worried and went to see Pat for advice. He looked at the one I had and I said I was looking for a two belted one and described the mounting points. "Just a minute", he said with a leprechaun's smile on his face. He went to a



shelf and found the right generator for the 1900. Just then I realized, Pat was the best friend that an Alfa fanatic could have.





# IL PRESIDENTE

I'm excited to serve as President this year and want to thank the 2009 Board, (Glenna/President, David/VP, Annie/Sec., Hillary/Treasurer, Carl and Lance/At Large). I know the incoming board (Glenna/VP, Lenora/Sec., Jennifer/Treasurer, Hillary and George/At Large) will work to support the activities that the membership is interested in. It was great to see some old and new faces at the Kick-Off meeting and I hope we can keep attendance up at general meetings throughout the year. This is where our brainstorming ideas generate. If you are unable to attend a meeting but have some ideas to share, please be sure to contact me or any board member. We want to hear from you!

We have a fairly ambitious calendar this year. Some of the activities we are planning include an overnight to Idyllwild, a Pasta & Sauce cookoff in addition to our chili and cornbread cookoff, a poker run, our Oktoberfest and auction, and many more fun excuses to get together. Be sure to watch the calendar section of our Romeo & Giulietta as we firm up the dates.

Looking forward to seeing you there!

Ciao,

Bill



## Romeo & Giulietta Advertising Rates

Size	Six Months	One Year
Business card	\$35.00	\$65.00
1/4 Page	75.00	140.00
1/2 Page	130.00	235.00
Full Page	225.00	410.00
Back Cover	155.00	275.00
Flier Rate	50.00	100.00

Rates are for camera-ready artwork.

Typesetting and design available at an additional fee.

The **deadline** for all ads is the first of the month prior to the AROCSD general meeting, which is on the first Wednesday of every month. Romeo & Giulietta is mailed to members, prospective members, and all nationally affiliated Alfa Romeo Owner's Club chapters once each month, 7-10 days prior to the AROCSD General Meeting. Total mailing (including advertisers) averages approximately 175 copies per month. For information regarding advertising in Romeo & Giulietta, please contact: Lance Dong (760) 798-1652 or Hillary Galkin-Griffith (760) 787-0301.



We want to hear from you! Submit your experiences, stories, and/or musings for print in the AROCSD newsletter. Please forward content to araknd@cox.net



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CEO

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858 668 2808 Office  
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Poway, CA 92064

erik@europeanautomotiveconsultants.com



AROC-SD wants to keep members up to date with chapter club information by issuing a monthly newsletter, our Romeo & Giulietta. Over the years, sponsorship from advertisers has decreased as costs for printing and postage have increased. As the club is not-for-profit and maintains minimal funds to support some hospitality functions, the monthly R & G has begun to be a drain on the treasury.

At the 2010 kick-off meeting, the membership discussed an "electronic" version of the R & G as an option for continuing the newsletter while greatly reducing our operating expenses. An e-mail will be sent to members as a notification that the newsletter has been posted on the website and will include a link for direct access.

The plan is to allow members to "opt in" for a hard copy version if an electronic version will not work for them. We will begin this transition by first asking everyone to provide their e-mail address. We will begin sending the e-mail notification and link while continuing the printing and mailing for a period of time in order to allow everyone the opportunity to confirm their address. Once we are ready to complete the conversion we will also send out "last call" reminders/notices.

Please take this opportunity to provide your current e-mail address to Lance Dong at [araknd@gmail.com](mailto:araknd@gmail.com).



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