



Gran Turismo

The Official Publication of the
Apollo Owners Registry

Inside this issue:

Editor's Message	1
The Editor Comes Clean	1
Origin of the Apollo Badge	2
Apollo Updates—Need a Grille?	2
Concorso Italiano	3
Market Place	3
Supplier Showcase	5

From the Editor's Desk...

As Summer rolls forward, it is time for another issue of *Gran Turismo*.

With Bob Lee stepping down, due to health reasons, James Taylor and I have volunteered to continue (we hope) the tradition.

And, as Bob Lee mentioned in the last issue, James will focus on the historical records — our historian, if you will. He has a very deep interest in the Apollo, and has been focusing on the very limited — but significant to us Apollo owners — racing history of the car He

is looking to go vintage racing with one of his cars.

I'll continue as editor of this publication and will add publicist to my responsibilities. As I am writing the definitive history of the Apollo, this puts me in a prime position to research the subject, and, via this newsletter, share some of my findings with you, my fellow Apollo owners.

However, there is always more work than two people can do, (Bob Turcios, how did you do it?!) and James and I ask that if any of you want to get involved, we've got a couple of positions

waiting to be filled:

- A concours/ events coordinator?
- A registrar to handle membership

As James has mentioned in an E-mail, he has set up a "chat room" (see story on page 4) on the internet for all of us to share information. And, during the next year, we hope to establish a web page for the Registry. Certainly, good things for Apollo owners.

Bob Northrup

No. 1003

Gran Turismo

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The Editor Comes Clean...

Nearly 30 years ago, as I was beginning to restore an E Type Jaguar, I found the opportunity to share some of my research with other Jag owners via a club magazine. And also to start a freelance career. It was my mother who convinced me

to use 'Robb' as my pen name for bylines. She always liked the name, but everyone else called me 'Bob' (or 'Bobby' — even at work!).

Well, Robb has stuck in the journalism community, but I'm still known as Bob to everyone else.

So, to avoid confusion among my fellow Apollo owners, as well as at home, my wife asks that you please call me Bob!



The Origins of the Apollo Badge...from the designer



“There is little to tell about the Apollo Logo. Apollo's father was Helios, god of the sun. I seem to remember that Apollo borrowed Dad's chariot and caused something important to happen. Whatever.

“My first choice was to do a sculpted profile of a Roman God to be cast in bronze. I doubt that I even discussed that with Milt. We had to have something done quickly. Milt had talked to a company in Oakland that did police badges, but later hooked up with an outfit that did Cloissonne, a very old process where colored glass is melted into a depression in metal. [Usually a design die-struck into brass – Ed.].

“I did a bunch of sketches during lunchtime at work, and tried several different type faces for the “A.” I finally went with a simple geometric “A” that fit well in the space. But it looked dorky, so I tried it without

the cross bar. And it worked!

“The circle of little flames were, of course, symbolic of the sun. Somehow, I had miss-remembered Apollo as being the one who *always* drove the golden chariot through the sky. That's one of my favorite scenes in Disney's *Fantasia*.

“I do not remember any discussion about the design at all. There was none at all about the color sketch of the Prototype that Milt and Ned used to raise money with, either. I do not remember them even blinking!

“In both cases, they just grabbed what I gave them and ran. In my experience, this kind of disregard of what something is going to look like is more often than not the case. I have said before that *deadlines* and *disregard* are the designer's *best* friend! Given enough time, even the most gifted designer can hammer one

of his best ideas into a dull lump, and we all know what group efforts end up looking like. [The Pontiac Aztec sport Ute comes to mind—Ed.]

“At this time, I was working for a consulting design office in San Francisco with five other designers, and we cranked out stuff by the ton. Often, our boss would fly into the office, grab what we had done and rush out the door, usually without looking at what he was going to present to the client. It was the same thing at Lucas Film when I worked on *The Return of the Jedi* for two weeks.

“Don't think, just do!”

Ron Plescia



Grille Update — Some things continue to move slowly...



The new grille surround project really is moving forward...but slowly.

We've finally found a panel beater that not only understands the scope of the project, but he's one of us! (he owns car No. 1020.)

Scott Sisseron is the proprietor of Can Am Con-

structors in Scottsdale, Arizona. And the editor met with him in May.

He has extensive auto metal fabrication experience, and is very interested in developing bucks for Apollo body panels as well, to be pulled from his own car.

Our hope is to create an

Apollo “technology center” in order to provide a resource for body panels and trim. And Scott is interested in doing that.



Intermeccanica Alive and Well

Concorso Italiano Details



A recent visit to Vancouver B.C. (researching my Apollo book) and Paula Reisner Frank's widow, revealed that the Apollo's *carrozzeria* is very much healthy. Currently, Paula and son Henry, along with their staff, are crafting Porsche Speedster and Roadster replicas for an eager world market. It was Frank who started *that* industry in the mid-70s...

Time is winding down for entering your car in the upcoming *Concorso* to be held August 19 in Seaside CA.

Registry members have supported this event for several years, now, and it would be nice to see four or five cars on display this August.

Get more information at www.concorso.com.

Please E-mail Bob Northrup at apolloregistry@yahoo.com if you are planning to attend or display your car.



The "concourse" of Apollos at last year's *Concorso Italiano*. Get your car in this year's event.

Market Place

Our intent is to make this column of the newsletter the first place Apollo owners advertise their cars for sale. We know our cars better than anyone else, and we all seem to receive inquiries, periodically, from enthusiasts looking for an Apollo. (E-mail Bob Northrup at apolloregistry@yahoo.com with details)

In this issue, long-time Apollo owner Harry Hart is looking to — maybe — sell his Apollo to make room for another project car.

"Two days ago," says Harry, "I became the owner of a very pretty 1974 XKE jaguar convertible, so now stuffed into my three-car garage are five cars!

"My Apollo is No. 1027, one of the three original IMC cars that has the auto-

matic transmission. This car is a great driver and is doing a fine job getting me to and from the golf course about three times a week.

"I had a real pro rebuild the transmission about a year-and-a-half ago. The car has never boiled over on me, but the water temp gauge runs near the high end, so the radiator should probably be re-cored. And the fuel gauge needs to have the tank send recalibrated with the fuel gauge.

"The car drive great and looks good; the engine bay is nicely detailed, and the interior was redone with gray leather."

Harry is thinking of taking the best offer over \$35,000.

You can reach him by phone at 760-836-3400 or e-mail at:

harrynragshart@aol.com

Wanted

As the collector world awakens to the charms and practicality of the Apollo, we continue to receive enquiries from hopeful prospective buyers.

Two such suitors are John Clucas of Australia and Kevin Blount of Portland, Oregon.

Kevin would love a convertible (wouldn't we all!) while John has a more general interest.

If you are looking to sell, you can contact Kevin at 503-221-5808.

For John, e-mail him at jclucas@topspin.com.au



New E-Mail Group Service...and it's FREE!



One of our goals is to provide greater communication among Apollo owners. We are a loosely-knit bunch, and some sort of formal mechanism for communication would help us all.

Additionally, we look create a web site to provide better resources for both owners and enthusiasts alike to conduct more research on the car and it's unique history. (It would help the press immensely, seeing what misinformation is out there on

other sites—the myths keep being perpetuated). More on that in the future

Meanwhile, our historian James Taylor has organized a free email group service provides owners and enthusiasts resources And a communication vehicle to restore, appreciate, and enhance the owners experience. We wish to provide information concerning the history and vehicle specifications of these amazing sports cars. Think of this as a group email address. Once you join you can send an

email to the entire group by simply sending an email to apollogt@yahoogroups.com. Additionally, I have posted some pictures and restoration information on this site as well.

To join the yahoo group please go to this site: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/apolloGT>

Subscribe: apollogt-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

To post a message: apollogt@yahoogroups.com

Art and the Apollo — The Cartoons of Guy Allen

Recently, our historian, James Taylor, commis-

Classic & Sports Car and *Thoroughbred & Classic Car*



sioned well known British cartoonist, Guy Allen, to create a series of car-toons centered on the Apollo GT.

As a resume, Guy has been published in many motoring publications such as *Octane*,

magazines. Certainly, he's a top-drawer cartoonist will a world-wide following.

The first cartoon plays on the Italian-American theme of the Apollo's heritage. Guy used Italian-American

Mafiosos, smitten by the beauty of our beloved Apollo. The main character is Felix Petrol, Guy's ever present lovable, yet sometimes misguided, protagonist. [Sounds like most of us! Ed.]

Of course, as illustrated in the second cartoon, with the

Apollo, old Felix gets his share of female admirers. Actually, this recalls an experience at the Universal Pictures lot when actor Tony Curtiss saw an Apollo driven by Ned Davis and asked (with his Brooklyn accent) : "Whaat caaar is dis?"



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Supplier Showcase — Italia Reproductions

In our latest review of suppliers of Apollo parts and accessories, we visited John Fournety of Italia Reproductions, located in the

John, “I found that old Corvettes were much cheaper in Arizona than in Cincinnati, Ohio where I was living. I then got into

hard, try this one! I couldn’t buy any parts at all. So I figured I should go ahead and start producing the things I couldn’t get. The business continued to grow as owners of Italias found out about us, and kept asking for different items.



sleepy town of Atascadero, California.

Italia Reproductions forms a part of Everything Corvettes, a manufacturer of vintage Chevy Corvette components, which has given John access to manufacturers of components for Apollos. The Italia part, of course, comes from his interest in the Intermecanica Italia sports car, which Frank Reisner produced after the Apollo. But first to the beginning...

“In the early 1970s,” says

buying and selling old Vettes. Later, I moved west and got into Corvette restoration in 1976. I started a mail order parts business, for Corvettes, in 1980 as it was tough to find a lot of old stuff. We moved to central California in 1982. But what’s interesting is that 95% of our wholesale business is east of the Mississippi. Go figure!

“What got me into the Italian-American hybrids was my purchase of an Italia in 1996. If you think finding parts for old Corvettes is

“Of course, once you get addicted to one of these cars, it’s not hard to get another. I found an Apollo, car no. 1038, in 1998. It was a Pasadena car, and had no front bumpers – just tubular “nerf bars” on the front. That got me to investigate the manufacture of front bumpers for Apollos. When I found how much it would cost to produce them in steel (a couple of thousand dollars), and knowing that only one bump would force the owner to pull off the bumper to have it rebuilt, I settled on a composite molding that we could put a perfect chrome finish on. The technology is so good today that it is impossible to tell the difference, except that our bumpers are perfectly smooth and ripple free. A set sells for \$795. [Believe it or not, these are very nice repros; they’re almost as heavy as steel and even produce a metallic ring

when you tap them – Ed.]

Because John has contacts in Italy for his Italia parts, he’s located a number of items used on the Apollos as well: interior door pulls, front turn signal light assemblies, rear light lenses, and the little stainless steel clips for the windshield and rear window trim. He has even produced the *Carrozzeria Intermecanica* script badges so often missing on the front quarter panels of our Apollos.

“We can get anything made. If there’s enough of a demand, just let me know.”

Apollo owners, start putting together your lists.

