

ALFA ROMEO OWNERS CLUB Mar 2011

COTSWOLD SECTION

NEWSLETTER



Last month saw our AGM and Quiz and we've already had our visit to Prodrive at Banbury. Thoughts are turning to Spring Alfa Day and Prescott which will soon be upon us. The improving weather and lengthening evenings mean it's time to remove the dust covers and get those cars out of hibernation! - MB

AGM & Quiz

Last month we held our AGM and annual Quiz. A big thank you to all that attended and for the feedback during the various discussions.

Matt as treasurer reported we are currently financially stable and over the past 12 months have been able to subsidise our events in an effort to keep costs down. We have purchased a better printer now that we are regularly producing our own newsletter and also in an effort to cut down on costs of having to use professional printers for things like the route plan for Cotswold Alfa Day. If anyone requires a copy of the treasurer's report please just ask.

We have a full calendar of events which is available from the website but we are also keen to find out what people wanted to do at the events and monthly meetings, so in addition to the discussion at the meeting we asked for responses on a questionnaire we had devised. We have had a number of replies to the email to augment those from the AGM and we will be using your feedback in helping to plan and focus our events. As always if you have an idea for venues, events or something different you'd like us to consider please do let one of us know.

The current committee were duly re-elected, and I'd like to reiterate the thanks to all who have supported us and the section over the past year.

And then into the fun part, this year's quiz with some interesting and varied photo extracts to be identified. Thanks to or inspite of Microsoft's finest we had 3 rounds to get the cogs whirring with a close run set of results won by The Brazilians (Richard Rees, James Wheeler & Rich Morris). Runners up were The Old Buzzard and His Apprentice (Rod Ashton & Dave Hood).

P.S. Nobody correctly guessed Alvin the Chipmunks car ☺ - MB

Alfa 4c @ Geneva

At the 81st Geneva International Motor Show, the Alfa Romeo 4C Concept made its debut, a compact "supercar" which represents the true essence of a sports car, according to the brand's values: performance, Italian style and technical excellence aimed at maximum driving pleasure in total safety.

The new concept presents the classic formula of the two-seater, rear-wheel drive coupé with its engine at the centre, a length of approximately 4 metres and a wheelbase of less than 2.4 metres: dimensions which serve both to emphasise the compact size of the car and to accentuate its agility.

On the Alfa Romeo 4C Concept technology and materials derived from the 8C Competizione find a home - carbon, aluminium, rear-wheel drive - and technology derived from Alfa Romeo models currently on sale: the 1750 turbo petrol engine with direct injection, the "Alfa TCT" twin dry clutch transmission and the Alfa DNA dynamic control selector.

This car is not simply an exercise in style created for the Motor Show. It will be on sale in 2012 and is set to reinforce Alfa Romeo's global growth.

Turin, 1 March 2011 -

Source:
AlfaRomeoPress.com



The Brazilians ! Quiz kings 2011



The Alfa 4c , mmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmm !!!!!!!

Prodrive Visit



Sunday 13th March saw us visit Prodrive in Banbury to gain an overview of the company, it's history and the motorsport facilities at the Banbury headquarters. Our tour was led by Jackie Irwin who after a coffee and a look around the heritage centre gave us a brief history of Prodrive and how the company was founded by Dave Richards.

Prodrive is the world's leading independent motorsport business. It has won six World Rally Championship titles with Subaru. In circuit racing, Prodrive has won five British Touring Car Championships (BTCC) and in 2003, 2007 and 2008 took GT1 class honours at Le Mans as well as the Le Mans Series title in 2009.

In touring car racing, Prodrive has worked with BMW, Alfa Romeo, Honda, Ford and Volvo, winning BTCC titles in the 1980s, 90s and in 2000. In 1994 Prodrive took the BTCC title with Gabriele Tarquini in the Alfa 155.

Prodrive was behind the Subaru World Rally Team's rise to fame and helped make Subaru synonymous with rallying, turning it into an icon on the rally stage and respected performance marque around the world. However, Prodrive's rallying history is far more than just Subaru. Today it is working with MINI to take the iconic British car back to the stages of the World Rally Championship in 2011, with an all new World Rally Car based on the MINI Countryman.

After a hugely interesting insight into both the Richards and Prodrive philosophy we were given the chance to take a seat in any of the cars in the heritage display other than Jenson Button's Honda F1 car and two cars that were currently on sale, including the Aston Martin Le Mans winning GT car up for a cool 1.5million, (cash and credit cards accepted !!!!!).



Iconic Subaru, Honda F1 and Aston Martin GT 1 cars in the heritage centre



Matt in touring car champion mode.



John Mills looking far too at home in the Aston Martin Vantage GT 4 Car.

But those cars aside the choice of Group B Metro 6R4, Aston Martin Vantage, Ferrari 550 GTS Maranello or an array of the world conquering WRC Subaru Impreza's, allowing us to sit behind the wheel of an ex Colin McRae WRC car was a truly wonderful opportunity.

Then we had a tour of the various units on the site, looking first at the gearbox and engine build areas with a customer Subaru box being rebuilt after a little light rally use! (a cool £15k for the rebuild). This was followed by a sneak look at a rally engine on the in house dyno which allegedly may have been from the new Mini WRC entry due for formal launch next month. Behind closed blinds on the other side sat an Aston Martin engine that would have been magic to hear under test. After that, a visit to the Aston Martin Racing section with Vantages at various state of build and through to the machine shop which highlighted just how much is manufactured in house along with various other related engineering solutions for aerospace, submarine and other car manufacturers.

Then a fascinating look at the preparation of the WRC mini, stripped to bare metal and an impressive roll cage fabrication to the basic shell transforming them from the standard road car starting point. Finally the chance to see a race ready version for the Brazilian team entering a mini in rallies during 2011.

All in all a tremendous tour and highly recommended, allowing a rare chance to see behind the scenes and fulfil a few dreams of sitting in some very historic and rare vehicles. Thanks to Dave Townsend for the suggestion, Matt for organising the visit and to Jackie for an informative and enthusiastic tour.



Who can resist a V8 ????

- MB