

THE *Alpine* MARQUE



*The Magazine of the SAOCA*



**ISSUE 5  
SPRING 2003**

**“25% of these sales are donated to the SAOCA”**



**Early Alpine 6-blade fan - \$25**



**NOS Series I-II Alpine Overdrive Speedometer - \$200**



**Nice pair of used Series V back-up lights - \$100**



**Nice pair of used turn signal assemblies - \$100**



**Used tow hitch for Alpine, looks commercially made - \$50**



**TW Automotive - Tom Wiencek**

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Orland Park, Illinois, 60462  
708-361-9350

Please call between 6:00-9:00 P.M. Monday - Friday  
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9:00 A. M. - 9:00 P.M. Saturday and Sunday

E-mail: [tom@sunbeamalpine.org](mailto:tom@sunbeamalpine.org)

***Call today for your Alpine parts!***

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*NEXT ISSUE: More top stowage tips for late series Alpines,*

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## SAOCA Club Officers

Ian Spencer - President  
Mike Phillips - Vice President  
Scott Christie - Secretary & Registry  
Andrew McGraw - Treasurer  
Steve Silverstein - Racing Historian

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*COVER PHOTO: Judy Berghult enjoys here Seacrest Green Series II Alpine.*

# OFFICERS REPORTS

## President - Ian Spencer



Okay, we've made through our first year and membership renewals have been very successful. I want to thank everyone who has supported our efforts with the club and The Alpine Marque!

As you are all aware by this time, Invasion 3 is now set for July 18, 19, and 20 in Dillard, Georgia at The Dillard House. Member Bob Berghult and his wife Judy will be hosting this event and have promised to show everyone a great time! Be sure to register your rooms early and make those vacation plans. This will be the Alpine event of the season, so don't miss it.

Andy McGraw has worked very hard to improve our registration process. He has developed an entirely new database that will greatly reduce the amount of behind the scenes work required to maintain user accounts and registration renewals. You will now be able to log into the members section of the web site to modify your address, pay membership dues, or contact other club members. We will continue to make improvements as we can come up with new ideas and develop solutions and ways to make them happen. I want to thank all the members for understanding while we completed all the development that was needed to make this all work. Andy has spent countless hours of his own personal time to write all of the custom code needed for this project. Be sure to give Andy a great big "THANKS" when you see him at the Invasion this summer.

If you don't remember how to log into the members section of the web site, please try the "lost password" link found on the login page. The login should consist of the 4 member ID (0001) and password provided at the time you joined. If you did not provide a password when joining the club, please contact me at [ian@sunbeamalpine.org](mailto:ian@sunbeamalpine.org) for help.

Keep 'em on the road!  
Ian Spencer

## Secretary - Scott Christie



As I write this, I'm looking out at the most severe ice storm I've ever witnessed. By the time you read this, I'm hoping you find warmer temperatures outside. I can't wait for Spring! With Invasion 3 dates in place I now have a deadline to finish one of my Series 3 Alpines. A freezing cold garage is no place to be, but the time came to pull all my dash gauges for rebuilding. I had no idea my spine could twist in so many ways! Those of you who have crawled under the dash know of what I speak. I don't think these gauges have been out of the dash since 1963!

We've received emails asking when it would be possible to buy parts and regalia from our sister club in England, the SAOC. After speaking with Deryck Johnson, Chairman of the SAOC, there is nothing stopping you from doing this. Simply visit their website, [www.sunbeamalpine.org.uk](http://www.sunbeamalpine.org.uk), check out the merchandise, and if you wish to place an order send them a letter, email, or place a telephone call. Be sure to have your SAOCA membership number handy as they will use this to verify you are indeed a member. For regalia orders, the email address is [regalia@sunbeamalpine.org.uk](mailto:regalia@sunbeamalpine.org.uk). For parts orders use [spares@sunbeamalpine.org.uk](mailto:spares@sunbeamalpine.org.uk).

Prices are not listed on the website as they tend to change, so please be sure to inquire before placing your order.

Happy Alpinning!

Scott Christie

## Vice President - Mike Phillips



As I write this, I'm looking out the window at the snow. It seems where I am in Ohio we've had more on the ground this year than there's been for quite some time. But for those of us here in the Northern hemisphere that yearly period of trying to fill our time with something, anything, British car related is just about over. Before we know it the covers will be off, the polish will be out, and we'll hit the road. There's something about top down

motoring that takes all the worries of work and daily life and pushes them into the back recesses of the mind for awhile. And we won't even get in to the fun of tearing something apart and putting it back together, with that added bonus of "does it work" when you're done..

My Alpine is on the road back to health. Before the weather turned cold I got the motor out and determined my lack of oil pressure was due to a couple of oval mains. I don't know what made me rotate the crank and recheck the clearances, which I hadn't done when first assembling it. Imagine my surprise to find it was fine one way and past max when moved 90 degrees. I'm not really sure how the guys who ground the crank managed that but... well, it WILL get redone this spring with another crank, and it WILL be running this summer. It may still need cosmetic work but I've had the car 29 years and I owe it to the poor thing to get back on the road.

I'm excited about the Invasion this year at Dillard House and I hope you are too. From everything I've seen so far, Bob and his team are doing a great job. Let's all mark the calendar with the date and get our reservations in. This event is a great chance to put a face to that advice or story you got from the website. And there's plenty of things to do for the wife and kids, so make a family vacation out of it. I know some of you guys may be too far away to drive your beam, but come anyway without it. Fly in, bring the family sedan, walk, it's you that we want to have there.

Let's make this the best event ever. So we'll see you then and drive'em even after the roads wear out. - Mike

## Treasurer - Andy McGraw

We are at the end of another successful year for SAOCA. Big plans have been put into motion for the 2003 Sunbeam Invasion. This year's location at the Dillard House makes it easy for everyone to come to the event. It's a family oriented environment and has many scenic area attractions that are close by. So make your plans and even stay a while longer at the Dillard House to enjoy all the nearby scenic attractions.

Our new SAOCA Members section at our Website is nearly completed. We encourage all members to use the new member section to update your personal information. It also provides you with the capability to pay membership dues with either Paypal or personal checks. Many members are now using Paypal.com to pay for Regalia, Invasion fees, and Membership due, so feel free to try it out. Below is the 2002 SAOCA Treasury's Report. It explains last year's income and expenses for SAOCA. Please feel free to respond with any suggestions you may have regarding the club.

<b>Income</b>	
Memberships	\$4,000.00
2002 Invasion	\$3,600.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$7,600.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
2002 Invasion	\$3,300.00
Alpine Marque	\$3,600.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$6,900.00</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$700.00</b>

### ASSETS

<b>Current Assets</b>	
Fifth Third Bank	\$173.00
PayPal Online Bank	\$251.00
Total Checking/Savings	\$424.00
Accounts Receivable	
Accounts Receivable	\$720.00
Total Accounts Receivable	\$720.00
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$1,144.00</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$1,144.00</b>

# **CHAPTER NEWS**

## ***Dallas/Fort Worth***

I am currently working away from Texas, in Pensacola, Florida due to changing jobs as my former company is being liquidated. My long-term intention is to eventually return to the Dallas area but this may take up to 6 months or even longer. I am more than happy to continue as the Texas Dallas/Fort Worth Chairman, but due to being 730 miles from home, I would happily step aside if someone located in Texas would like to take on the responsibility. Anyone wishing to do so please contact me at [stevenkirk@mindspring.com](mailto:stevenkirk@mindspring.com).

I have a banner for the Texas Dallas/Fort Worth Chapter, which I would like to see, displayed at events this year. Please contact me at the above e-mail address if you are attending an event and would like to display this banner. British car day in Dallas is usually held sometime around April I will post more information on the clubs website when I find the exact date.

I have also been communicating with Stephen Waybright from Houston, Texas [gswaybright@txucom.net](mailto:gswaybright@txucom.net) who is trying to organize a Sunbeam/Jensen driving tour through the Texas hill country (just West of Austin/San Antonio) some weekend this fall. I know several people are interested in this event. I will post information on this event on the SAOCA website when I obtain more information.

I would like to thank Bob Berghult for organizing this years Invasion at the Dillard house in Georgia. There has been Sunbeam events at this location in the past all of which were a success, I highly recommend attending this event, lets hope for a record Alpine turnout. Summer will be here soon lets get those Sunbeams ready! - Steve Kirk

## ***Sweden***

Still winter in Sweden, plenty of snow and always below freezingpoint. Just helped another friend to find a Alpine. This one, an ex-US series V, is in the registry at [sunbeamalpine.org](http://sunbeamalpine.org). Unfortunately, B 395002148 OD LRO has left us for Norway. - Janne Iggbom

## **Southern California**

Hello to all from sunny and very warm southern California. Our last meeting in November had three cars and about eight people show up at Bob's in Toluca Lake, next to the Burbank Studios. Our planned next meeting will be around St. Patty's day in March. Mr Boris Tillman and myself showed up in December at Speed Zone with the C.A. T. club and the CHP Toy Drive. Our two Alpines and about 8 Tigers were on hand to deliver toys and do some serious racing!!! We had some good local TV coverage and our cars did show up in the Tiger News Letter!! With my new job assignment, Foreman of a Juvenile inmate Fire Crew, I will undoubtedly be Very busy this coming fire season, which in SoCal, really never ends. I have asked Kirk Bowren to take the reins of our events and muster the troops together at various locations etc. So please give him your ideas and support him in this endeavor. Kirks e-mail is Kirk.Bowrem@NBC.com . Thats all for now. Keep safe and happy motoring! - Bruce Davis

## **Arizona**



When it was time for the local Pinewood Derby, Lou Meyers and his children decided to throw in a Sunbeam twist and set a few land speed records of their own.

Two cars mocked up as the 1927 1000HP "Mystery S" driven by Major Henry O. D. Seagrave and the 1930 "Silver Bullet" driven by Kaye Don were put to the test with gravity power at the wheels. Lou's son Louie claimed second overall with a new land speed record of his own.

## **Southern Ohio**

Here in the Ohio Valley, we are getting an unusual amount of snow. This makes it very tough to work on Alpines! So, we have been meeting to discuss ways to improve the club and watch old videos with Alpines! Scott Christie is in the middle of two S3 restoration, one a GT and the other an ST. Andy McGraw and Brian Shilt are both discussing new shocks, while Reed Spencer is finishing his hard top and replacing a clutch. All of have set a goal to be back on the road for Invasion 3. We will be driving to the event as a team from Dayton. Anyone wanting to join in please call! - Ian Spencer

# ***INVASION III*** **SAOCA** **Georgia 2003**



***Don't miss the Alpine event of the summer!***

***July 18, 19, 20 - 2003***

You'll be surrounded by plenty of Alpines, events, and local attractions this year at Invasion 3, in Dillard, Georgia (Near Pigeon Forge, TN). This years event will be taking place at The Dillard House, tucked gently away in the Blue Mountains, a part of the Tennessee River Valley. Come take a break from the summer heat and relax in the cool mountain breeze. There will be more Alpines than you can shake a stick at and maybe even a few other rare Rootes vehicles to gander at while you are there! This will be an event for the entire family to enjoy, so don't miss it! Last year at Invasion II we had more than 40 Alpines, this year we would like to double that number!

***To register, please visit [www.sunbeamalpine.org](http://www.sunbeamalpine.org)***

*or*

**Bob Berghult**  
**2124 Dayron Circle**  
**Marietta, Georgia**  
**30062**  
**770-977-1614**

# MEMBER PROFILE

## *Bob and Judy Berghult*



*Bob & Judy Berghult with their brand new 1960 series I Alpine.*

Judy and I were married in 1960. One of the first things we did when we got home from our honeymoon was to buy a new car. Our customized 1957 Chevrolet Bel-Aire 2 door hard top was wrecked by a gas station attendant while taking the car back to the station to be serviced. You could do that back then. Well, my sister came back from England with a new MGA 1600. That got us thinking why don't we get a new British sports car, too? We were not to excited about her car, but we had seen this sleek little red convertible. We did

some investigating and found out that the car we liked was a Sunbeam Alpine, and we had never heard of one before. So, we finally found a dealer down in Melbourne, Florida that was selling them, a Chrysler/Plymouth Dealer at that. We lived in Cocoa Beach at the time. When we sat down with the salesman we ended up ordering our Carnival Red Convertible, a Series I. We ordered it with a radio, heater, and a tonneau cover. They called us a few days later and said that one had come in. It didn't have a radio or a heater, but they could put an after market heater in it and install the radio, "do we want it, or wait a month or more to get the one we ordered?" Well, you know how young people are; we didn't want to wait, so we got it NOW!

So there we were, the proud owners of a 1960, Series I, Sunbeam Alpine, WOW! It was our only car, so it was our daily driver and we went everywhere in it.

Our first vacation was to Northern Minnesota the last week in October. It was a very cold October, and that little after market heater was fine on the passenger side, but no heat would come over the hump to the driver's side. Needless to say I was COLD. Other than that, it was a great trip. We enjoyed visiting with relatives in Minnesota, and Nebraska.

Another thing that we did with our Alpine was to take our pet cat to the beach. He rode in the cubby box, and loved it! When we got to the beach, he would follow us to the waters edge and beyond, right into the water and swim with us like a little puppy.

As time went by we started to have a family, and decided the two-seater car had to go. L We traded it in on a new Chevrolet Corvair 4 door. I look back at that trade, and YUK! Oh well, that's life and we made it thru that and other poor decisions.

Now, 40 years later, all the children have grown up and have their own families. Yup! We can get another two-seater. So, here we go again, looking for a little Carnival Red convertible. We found a 1964 Series IV, in August of 1999. Well, it didn't have the fins that we loved so much, but, hey! it's a red Alpine. (Georgia Bulldog Red?) And it's in great shape. The previous owner, Ted Stewart, had owned the car for 18 years, and it was hard for him to part with it, but he did. Thanks Ted. J

We have driven it almost weekly since we've had it. We love to go to the Saturday night cruise-ins. We have 3 or 4 Sunbeams in our area that go to the cruise in with us. We have our own little spot with all the big Detroit Iron Muscle Cars and get a lot of comments like "I used to have one of those", or "Gee, I used to watch Maxwell Smart". We have taken it up to the Blue Ridge Mountains on many occasions, and even drove it to "Invasion 2" last summer. We also went to our first "United" this year.



*Above: We found a 1964 Series IV, in August of 1999*



*Above: Judy's series II. She got her fins, along with a first place trophy!*

You would think that one little red car in the family was enough? Well my son Rick was able to use the Alpine one weekend when Judy and I had to be out of town. He fell in love with the car! Next thing we knew we were looking for one for him. Ian Spencer told us his brother was wanting

to sell his Series 3 GT, but it needed a lot of cosmetic work, so up to Tipp City we went, to take a look at it. Ian was rebuilding the engine, and Jan was rebuilding the brakes. Rick and his wife Angela fell in love with it and consequently made the trip back to pick up the car. Back in Marietta we started to strip all the glass, chrome, and anything else on the car to get it ready for a new paint job. It was transformed from a dark blue to, (Yep), Carnival Red. Rick has taken his Alpine to two All-British Car Shows and won 2 third place awards, even with a peeling (not appealing) dash. So now we have two Alpines in the family.

No, I'm not finished yet. Judy said one day, can we get an Alpine for me? Oh, yes dear, would you like one of your own? She said "YES, one with FINS" So here we go again. We found another Red Alpine in the "For Sale" section of the <http://sunbeamalpine.org> web site. The pictures looked great, and so did the price. We called the owner and made arrangements to go down to Florida to see it. The pictures were old and so was the car. It had been sitting for many years; but we got bought it anyway. We brought it home and started working on it, and working on it and working..... After almost a year of restoring, we finally were able to take it to the "United" this year and won third place in the Personalized Class. Judy was ecstatic. I know we are a crazy family, but we not only enjoy our Alpines, but look forward to many fun filled trips with our Sunbeam friends in the coming years. For that's a big part of all this craziness, the fun times and also the (down and repairing the car times) with our friends.

If you would like to see our Alpines, all three cars are in the Gallery section of the web site.

# *The Budget Minded Alpine Restoration*

*by  
Ian Spencer*

## *PART 1: Finding the RIGHT Alpine*

So, you want to buy a Sunbeam Alpine. You've been watching the web sites and reading the magazines, you've even been to a few British car shows. Now, you're hooked! You need an Alpine! So, what's next?



*Above: This poor SII Alpine is crying out to be put back on the road!*

You find yourself asking questions like: How much money will I need? Where do I start? And, most importantly... What do I look for? These are all commonly asked questions that I get asked everyday and still ask myself every time I set out to buy a new car. So, I thought an article about what to look for when buying an Alpine and the best way to go about fixing it up on a budget might just be in order. Take it from me, I've bumped my head

enough times in the past to twenty years to now be able to share my misfortune and hopefully prevent others from making the same mistakes.

To begin with I would like to pass on a simple rule that I have named "Rule #1". It goes something like this:

**RULE #1:** Every project must take two of these three words into consideration. Remember, you can only have two of these words at a time an NEVER all three.

They are: GOOD, FAST, and CHEAP. (You can have GOOD and FAST, but never CHEAP. You can have FAST and CHEAP, but never GOOD. You can have GOOD and CHEAP, but never FAST.)

Remember this rule. It applies to many things in life besides sports car restoration. Now that we have learned Rule #1, we are ready to start looking for an Alpine.

Most people that are looking to buy an Alpine have immediately broken their decision down into one of two categories, EARLY or LATE Alpines (FINS or NO FINS). That's the first thing I hear from anyone looking. If you have made that decision, you are well on your way to buying an Alpine. For those of you that have not been able to decide, I would suggest a later series car. This is simply because there are more parts available for the Series IV and V Alpines. If you need to have fins and want to enjoy the luxury of parts availability, I would suggest the series 3. This series was the transition between the early and late Alpine designs and the last Alpine to have tall fins. I myself prefer the Series II.

We will be working with an EARLY Alpine or a finned car for this article. I feel this is a good decision because there is less available for an early car in the way of parts and it will be good to show the ways to preserve originality by reusing some of the original parts. This will not only help us to stay within budget, but it will also help to maintain the original patina of the car. Besides, there are a lot of parts that should never be thrown away on an early car and I would like to point some of them out along the way.

This Series II was advertised on [www.sunbeamalpine.org](http://www.sunbeamalpine.org). The owner was asking \$3500.00 and the car was represented as an original un-restored car with low miles. Pictures revealed that it had the rare factory radio and speaker console and that the interior appeared to be in very nice useable condition. It also still had its original rubber floor mats and carpet. To top it all off, the owner claimed it to be a rust free car that had been garage kept since the late sixties and not driven on the roads since. He assured me that it had recently been running and that he had also just put on new tires, new exhaust and completely rebuilt the braking system, which made the car ready to drive home if I desired.

Now, these are the kind of Alpines we need to look for. Very little to no rust, one owner, unmolested cars that still have ALL of their correct and original parts. We want to avoid buying parts cars for restoration... Parts cars are just that... parts cars. You are much better off spending a little more money up front and waiting until the right car comes along. Believe me... the right Alpines ARE out there and buying the right car will save you time, money and headaches in the long run. It's not uncommon to find a series II Alpine with series V seats, series IV grill, series I engine, and a pair of series 3 doors! My advice, save your money and during that time take a minute to learn more about the Alpine and what to look for when buying.

Now, this is the very reason I was interested in buying this series II. It appealed to me because it had never been tampered with, it had some very hard to obtain bits and it was pretty much ready to drive down the street. I didn't feel the price was too out of line, but decided that I would make an offer of \$2500.00 and bring it home. After a bit of bartering back and fourth, I realized that this guy wouldn't sell this car for a penny less than his asking price. I had examined the pictures and felt that I should just go a head and buy the car. I also decided to just have it put on a transport truck and delivered to the house. My time is important to me and taking a weekend to drive there and back seemed like a greater expense than spending the \$350.00 to have it delivered. This put me at \$3850.00 for the entire deal. I made all the arrangements and put the plan in motion. Now, what did I really get for my money?

RULE #2: Always take the time to inspect the car with your own eyes if possible! Remember, pictures often lie and so do DPO's!

A few weeks later, I receive the Alpine. It arrived on the back of a flat bed truck and was looking pretty sad. The hard top was missing the rear window and I saw that the body had a little damage to the front valance that didn't really show in the pictures I had been sent by the DPO. The driver greeted me and said, " Do you know that this thing doesn't run?"



***Above: Pictures often lie and so do DPO's. If the car you want is too far away to go see, check if a local club member will do it for you.***

# *“Closer inspection revealed that the car was rusting from the inside out.”*

“No”, I said to him feeling very surprised. I had been told that I was buying a running car. As we began off loading the Alpine, I immediately started looking the car over. The body did appear to be very solid. The underside was clean and didn't show any sign of the usual Alpine rust in the inner quarters and lower sills. There were a few small bubbles in the lower rear quarters, but it really did appear to be a good body. The front valance had been damaged and would require some repair. All in all, the body wasn't bad. As the car was finished being unloaded, I started to look inside. It was all there and in good shape. Nothing was broken and everything was correct, as it should be, for a mid production Series II Alpine. The original scarlet interior was not too bad, but what impressed me the most was the condition of the seats! They were perfect! However, some of the other panels would require recovering, which might prove to be a challenge for me to match the same scarlet color.

We had now pushed the car inside my garage and the transport had gone on to its next destination. So, I did as many of you would do and began playing with my new toy! I opened the boot and found the new exhaust system, UNINSTALLED! It was just a few bent pipes and not a “new” system like the ones sold by Rick or Curt. I also discovered that the brakes were not correctly rebuilt. The master cylinder was only held on by one bolt and when you pressed the brake pedal, everything locked up! I was beginning to realize that I paid too much for this car. My heart was sinking into my feet and I began to get upset. Basically, what I had just purchased was a car that had not run in over 25 years.

Closer inspection revealed that the car was rusting from the inside out. Mice had made nests in the rear fender wings. Years of urine had eroded it's way through until the lower rear wings had become paper thin. Visually, they looked solid, but with one gentle tap, I managed to put my finger straight through!

Due to the amount of money that I have invested in this car, I decided that I would need to make this project as inexpensive as possible. This project would require the same amount of work to restore as much less expensive project car that we see for sale on a regular basis. So, it will be important to save as much money as I can on unnecessary items so the money can be spent on paint, body and mechanical repair.

RULE #3: Never throw anything away!

The first thing I decided to do was to make a list of positive things about the car. I had a great interior that would allow me to reuse the original carpeted tunnel hump, the original rubber floor mats and the original seats. All of these items would require a little cleaning and detail to make them useable. The dash and gauges were in great shape and would require little to bring them back to original condition. Preserving the cars interior will be a big step in saving money on the restoration of this car. It will also help to maintain the original patina that this Alpine so needingly deserves. I will also try to save money by not re-plating any of the chrome. I'm hoping that it will all shine up to a presentable state of shine and finish that won't be too unacceptable. Chrome plating can also be very expensive and cost a lot of money that I would much rather put into the body repair.



*Above: Rare items such as this factory radio console should NEVER be thrown away. This complete unaltered Alpine is nice for a project.*



*Above: What clues do you see in this picture that may lead you to believe this car wasn't stored properly for the past 30 years?*

So, I'm ready to begin my project. I've found an early Alpine that I paid a little too much for and I think I have a good plan on how to carry out the project. I'm going to preserve the original interior and as much of the original chrome as possible. I will have to purchase the patch panels for the necessary body repairs, and I will need to inspect the engine and drive line to see

what I will need to do to fix or repair it. Now, the question is, "Where do I begin?" My first step will be to clean the Alpine up and get it running. The clean up process is a good time to really learn about the car you have just bought. If you are lucky, you might find a little extra change in the center console to help pay for all the parts you will be needing to buy over the months ahead. Remember, NEVER throw anything away! If you suspect it's an important part, it probably is. Put it in a box and take it to the next Invasion. I'm sure someone will be more than happy to help you identify it.

Items like rubber floor mats, cantrails, tools, radios, and accessories should be saved to put back into the car. I have been working on the concours section of [sunbeamalpine.org](http://sunbeamalpine.org) to help owners identify these rare parts. Please check the site for future reference on originality and accessories.

Part 2 of my project story will cover the clean up process and what I encountered when I was able to get this car running again. I'm sure you won't be surprised to learn that the DPO had lied to me about how long it had been since the car had been driven. Old engines never lie and bringing an old car back to life again can reveal many clues as to why an old car like this had not been used for so many years.

Join me next issue...

# Sunbeam Word Search

G O Q L E E M V N W Q Y T X N  
P R B M K S C Y V S P N L E H  
C O A I C P J H K B T Y R X J  
S O E N N O A Y C C T A F K F  
S T V X D R N L W B P B L L M  
Z E O E T T I V X I B L W P A  
O S C W N S U U E P U O C Y H  
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J N H A R R I N G T O N C T E  
O P C S N R I G P J A B T I F  
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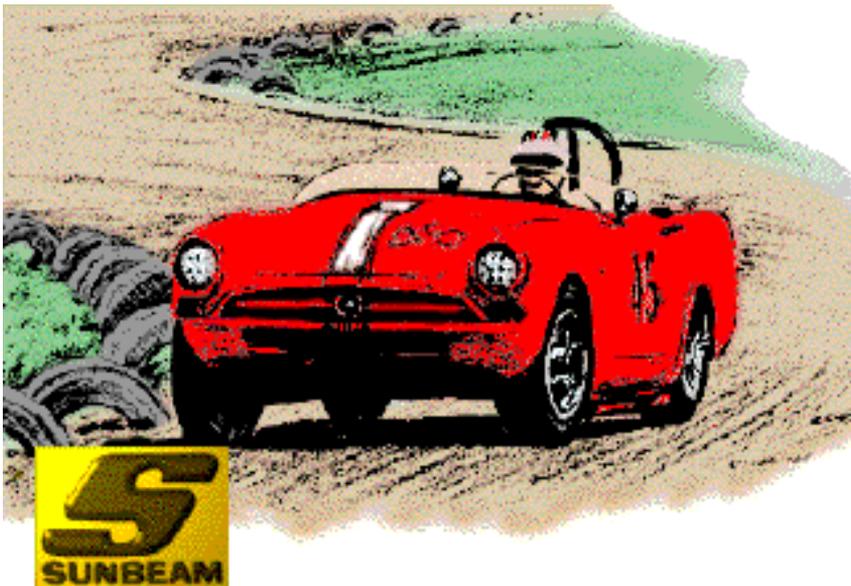
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# **RACING ALPINES**

## **Steve Silverstein - SAOCA Racing Alpine Historian**



Our feature racing story, The Le Mans Classic, comes from Steve Alcalá. Steve has been a long time enthusiast of Sunbeams and he was a major influence in getting me involved with vintage racing whether he knows it or not. Nobody can forget his beautiful Seacrest Green Alpine which he races on the west coast. It certainly left an

impression on me when I saw the pictures of the car racing years ago. Interestingly, our paths crossed when I found my Alpine and once again when I located the 1962 Sebring Car in New Jersey.

I never have met Steve in person and I have to be honest when ever I talk to Steve on the phone I feel like the "boy who cried wolf". I'll call Steve when I have discovered a key piece of information regarding a race car we have run across. Without hesitation I'll blurt out, "I bet this was so and so's car!" based on virtually no evidence whatsoever. Sometimes it will pan out but usually it is a stretch of imagination for the best of dreamers. Then I stop and think... Mr. Alcalá must think I am crazy.

Fortunately, he did believe me when I told him about the Sebring Alpine and a few weeks later the car was relocated to California with Steve being the new owner. I know the car is in very good hands and we will be fortunate to see it racing again in the next few years.

As for his adventure to Europe what an experience. This would be a great trip for any Sunbeam enthusiast. Maybe we should start to plan a group trip for one of the upcoming events?

Steve Silverstein

# *The Le Mans Classic September 2002*

By  
Steven Alcalá

On September 21-22, three Sunbeams participated in the first-ever Le Mans Classic, a vintage race at the historic race track in France. This should not be confused with the Le Mans Legends, a support race before the big 24-hour race in June. Both races use the full eight-mile circuit, but the Classic runs classes day and night over a 24-hour period. The three historic cars were two Le Mans Tigers and Keith Hampson's 1962 Le Mans Alpine. I joined about 35 Sunbeam enthusiasts, mostly from England who traveled to Le Mans, France for four days of fast cars, great weather, and plenty of food and drink.

There were over 300 sports cars entered in the five classes, made up of pre-war to mid-70s. The British racing green Alpine was in Group 4 with competition coming from the likes of Porsche 904s, Ford GT40s, Ferrari 275 GTOs, Jaguar E-types, MGs, and AC Cobras, to name a few. Saturday morning's practice was tough on cars as well as teams. England's Tony Eckford's Tiger lost a motor in just two laps and was out for the weekend. The U.S.'s Darryl Mountjoy's Tiger coupe, the car I was with and had just spent the past eight months restoring, had rear suspension problems. Hampson's '62 Alpine co-driven by Tristan Bradford, had a fuel leak around at the carburetors and did not get a lot of practice time.



Keith Hampson's Alpine, with English registration no. 9201RW, first went to Le Mans in 1962 as a "works reserve" entry for Keith Ballisat and Tiny Lewis. As with the other two 1962 "works" Alpines, Peter Proctor/Peter Harper's 9202RW and Paddy Hopkirk/Peter Jopp's 9203RW, Hampson's car had a special aluminum trunk lid giving the car a Kamm tail for better aerodynamics and many other development modifications. In 1963, 9201RW returned to Le Mans, this time driven by Peter Proctor and Peter Harper. The car went six hours, then retired with head-gasket problems.

So now fast-forward 39 years. It's September 21, 2002, 7:30 Saturday night. The sun has already gone down. It's twilight. Group One, the pre-war cars, took their start at 4:00 p.m. Then Group 2, cars from the 40s and early 50s, ran from 5 p.m. to 5:45 p.m. Then Group 3, late 50s sports cars, would get their 45 minutes of track time. Now Group 4, 1962-1966 GT cars, was ready for its Le Mans start. Keith was no stranger to Le Mans. He had driven the car in the Le Mans Legends race in 2001. With a shot of the starter's gun, Keith carefully executed a Le Mans start—where the driver's line up across the track and then run to their cars and jump in, hit the starter button and take off from a dead start. A hundred feet up the front straight, Peter Proctor, now in his early 70s, was co-driving Darryl Mountjoy's Le Mans Tiger, the same car he had raced in 1964. Peter passed five cars at the start and had all the Sunbeam faithful ecstatic. The two Sunbeams motored around the track with the 50 or so other competitors in Group 4. It was 8:20 p.m. now, lights on, a GT40 was in the lead, followed by a Cobra. The GT40 was going 180 down the back stretch. The Alpine was lucky to see 115, maybe 120. The over-taking speeds were crazy, but the Alpine took the checkered flag and made it through the first stage of Group 4. Unfortunately, the Tiger blew a motor on the Mulsanne straight. It was heartbreaking. We were now quickly down to one Sunbeam.

The Alpine kept soldiering on just as it had forty years earlier. Hampson's co-driver, Tristan Bradford, ran the night practice without a problem. But when the Group 4 race resumed at 3:00 a.m., things got tough. I had walked down to the corner of the track where the Mulsanne straight begins, which is as far as a spectator can go to see what the cars look like going on the back straight at night. Group 4 came around for one practice lap, then the flying start. The cars went by with the GT40 and Cobra leading the way. But that was it for just one lap. I stayed there for 30 minutes, cold and in the dark, just watching safety vehicles and flatbeds come charging by. For the night session, the P.A. announcer was only broadcasting in French.

I finally found someone who could translate. They said seven cars had gone off course in the first lap and that a 1963 Alpine was on fire in the middle of the Mulsanne straight. My heart sank. I asked again which Alpine, and was told it was the French, not the British Alpine, and that the driver was out of the car. I walked back to the front straights where the surviving cars waited for the red flags to end, and saw Tristan and the Alpine in one piece. Group 4 finally got three laps after a 45-minute delay. God only knows what would have happened had the two Tigers been out there.

Group 4's next time out on the track was at 8:00 a.m. Only 25 cars were still running out of the 60 that started in the 1962 to 1966 class. But the Sunbeam Alpine motored on. The warm sun was back and the crowd was huge by vintage-race standards. The only problem I was having was staying out of the infield bar where the Tiger team was drowning their sorrows and talking about the good old days. It was a great group: Peter Proctor, Jimmy Blumer, Claude Dubois, and Rosemary Smith, all Rootes factory drivers. There were also ten hard-core Sunbeam enthusiasts having a grand time.



*Above: This rare works racer has a unique cam tailed boot. It's great to see such important racing Alpines back on the track today!*

By 2:00 p.m., it was time for the last stage for Group 4. Just another forty minutes, or six laps more, and the Alpine would make it home. The blue GT40 was still out in the lead at 180 mph without missing a beat. I think there were 20 cars left running. The British racing green Alpine was holding its own, this time with owner and Sunbeam car restorer Keith Hampson behind the wheel. With just 10 minutes left, the Alpine pulled into the pits; something had come undone. But Keith's team got the car running and out it came for one more lap and the checkered flag. The Alpine had finished the most grueling vintage race I had ever seen.

That night there was a grand dinner for the big group of Sunbeamers. Lots of French food, lots of wine, and lots of thank-you speeches. The Friday night before the race, there had been a gala dinner with 500 people at a 12<sup>th</sup> century abbey where Richard-the-Lion-Hearted's widow once lived. I think it cost \$350 a plate.

The first Le Mans classic was a tough vintage race; it was expensive, a long way from home, and we got lost many times just trying to get to the hotel. Not speaking French didn't help matters. The race was grueling. Cars ran day and night, and most of us had just four to six hours sleep a night over the long weekend. The whole thing was crazy. Sixty cars started Group 4, and only 20 or so made it to the end. So congratulations to Keith Hampson, and Tristan Bradford and their team for giving the Sunbeam Alpine another great showing at Le Mans.

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*Steve Silverstein's*

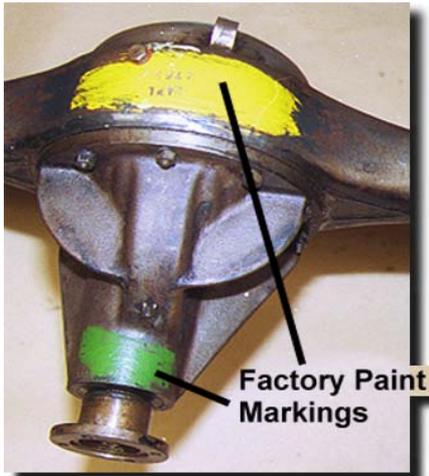
***www.racingalpines.org***



# TECHNICAL TALK

## Mechanical Work - Proper Care for the Alpine Rear Axle

by  
Jan Servaites



The Alpine Marque gives me a great chance to compile "how-to" information, for other Alpine owners. I have seen many emails containing questions on how to conduct repairs on the rear axle assembly and in this quarter, I will talk about some of the finer points of rebuilding the Alpine rear axle. Some owners have rear axles that have never been maintained in some 30-35 years, so it's time to consider a complete overhaul, to fix leaking seals and loose ring gear bolts.

I am currently rebuilding Bob & Judy Burghault's Seacrest green seriesII Alpine rear axle, so I thought this would make the perfect choice for this quarter's Technical Talk feature. This axle assembly is an excellent, unmolested example that I want to bring to your attention because firstly, it still shows the original Rootes paint markings. Apparently, yellow & green paint, dabbed on with a paintbrush, designate some meaning to the Rootes workers. Perhaps it meant to distinguish between gear ratios (green = 3.89 ratio)? Perhaps the yellow brush paint is to designate where to stamp the axle numbers on the housing? Anyway, whatever the significance of the colors, I plan replicate the same paint markings after the rear axle is painted & reassembled. Secondly, the rear end has a damaged gear set because the gears were howling over a certain speed range. They are likely worn due to lubrication failure, the pinion preload has loosened or possibly other causes. The whole differential will be rebuilt. Helping me with the technical information/skill requirements is a long time Alpine & Tiger expert, Doug Stockman. *(Doug Jennings, Tiger Auto Service and Doug Stockman autocross a race prepared Midnight Blue Sunbeam Tiger that you might have seen at the last TE-AE United event in Charleston SC and other past events).*

## Secure the Proper Tools

Here is a suggested list of tools that you will need to conduct rear axle repairs:

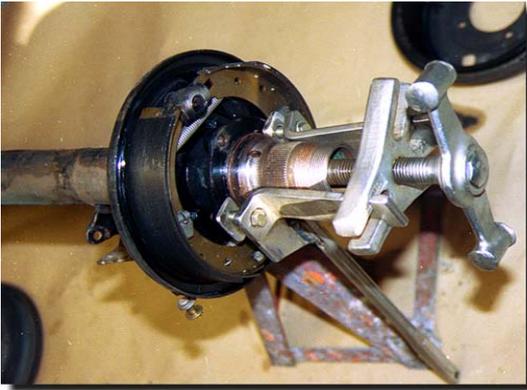
1. Heavy duty hub puller, (Made by "Proto", model 4001)
2. Axle handle (Fabricated from  $\frac{1}{4}$ " steel plate & Sears breaker-bar handle)
3. Pinion flange removal handle (metal plate mounted to the above axle handle)
4. 1.125" socket to remove the axle & pinion nuts ( $\frac{1}{2}$ " or  $\frac{3}{4}$ " drive)
5. 2ea jack stands to hold up the axle assembly for repairs
6. Torque wrench
7. Brass rod
8. Mechanics hammer
9. Dial indicator to measure gear lash and axle end play



*Securing the proper tools is half the battle when pulling rear hubs.*

## Pulling Wheel Hubs

Secure the axle from turning and remove the axle nut with a 1.125" socket. I fabricated a tool that bolts to the hub and has a handle that I can grab on. Sometimes a  $\frac{1}{2}$ " drive is too flimsy and may require an impact wrench or a  $\frac{3}{4}$ " drive handle. There is a washer behind the axle nut and remove it. Now, one can reinstall the axle nut or use a  $\frac{3}{4}$ "-16, grade-8 nut and install it



*ABOVE: It will take a tremendous amount of pressure to release the hubs from the taper joints. Care should be taken to minimize mushrooming the threads on the shaft. Although, a hydraulic press could be used, this is the procedure recommended by Rootes.*

on the axle. I do this to minimize the mushrooming of the end of the axle and to stop the hub from flying off the axle when it lets go. Apply a sturdy hub puller, grease the threads with a high-pressure grease (a ball joint grease will do) and start applying pressure. I use a little heat from a propane torch and wait the next day to apply more pressure and heat. If the axle threads are deformed, I use an adjustable  $\frac{3}{4}$ "-16 threading die to clean the threads.

After the hub is removed, I remove the brake back plate with all brake components still attached. Notice that some of the bolts have a shoulder on them. They act as alignment pins to align everything together. These bolts must be installed back in the same holes. The other holes will use the regular 5/16" bolts.

Next is to remove the axle from the housing. To do this might require the propane torch again to heat the housing around the bearing end. Sometimes the bore can weep in moisture and some surface rust can develop on the later series V, double sealed bearing. I recommend mounting the hub and axle nut in place and rap it with a brass rod and hammer to drive the axle out. Once it is out, then repeat the whole process to the other end.

After all the axles are removed, the differential housing can be removed using a  $\frac{1}{2}$ " socket wrench. There are studs inserted into the axle housing and sometimes these will unscrew with the nut. If they do, the studs need to be cleaned and reinstalled with a thread-locker (Loctite) so that they don't back out again. I usually replace the hardware with new grade-8 lock washers & nuts.

## Cleaning

I prefer to have the complete axle housing derusted by a metal cleaning (dipper) business. I have sandblasted a housing before, but it took a lot of flushing to get rid of the grit inside the housing. The differential housing (or "pumpkin") could be tanked at your local machine shop. I also tried this myself, but I just can't get the results that the professionals achieve.

## Painting

The whole axle assembly should be painted a satin black. I used a PPG DPLF-90 (black) epoxy primer to prime the metal. Sometimes, the deeper rust pits would be filled with a surface putty, sanded, reprimed, sanded and then topcoated with a single stage urethane paint (with flattener added). I matched the colors that Rootes brushed on the housing and a small can of each color can be purchased at a local art store. The paint is made by "1 Shot" and the numbers are 134-L (Chrome Yellow) & 142-L (Emerald Green).

## Checking the Ring Gear Bolts for Tightness

One serious problem with the Alpine axle is that Rootes used the wrong material in fabricating the locking tabs for the ring gear bolts. Jim Leach (Pacific Tiger Club, Seattle WA) conducted some metallurgy tests on the steel tabs and found that the material will become too plastic under the pressure of the ring gear bolts. The steel tabs will flow out from under the bolt heads and all the bolts will lose their tightness. With the bolts



loose in the carrier holes, they could fatigue from the shear forces exerted on them and possibly break off and then get wedged between the gear teeth resulting in a catastrophic failure. I recommend to remove the metal tabs, install a grade-8 lock washer and further apply loctite thread locker to the threads. If your bolts look damaged, Jim Leach says that grade-8 bolts will work fine.

## **Differential Unit - Gear or Bearing Noise?**

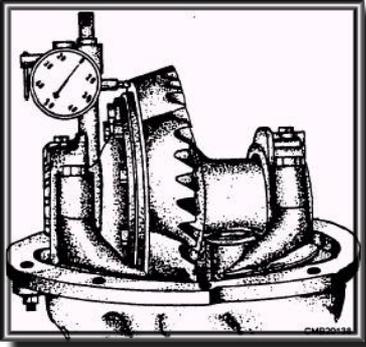
Abnormal gear noise can be recognized by its characteristic loud whine, and will tend to peak in a narrow speed range (appearing under either drive, float or coast conditions), while bearing noise will tend to remain constant in pitch. Abnormal gear noise is rare and usually originates from the scoring of the ring gear and pinion teeth as a result of improper break-in, insufficient gear backlash or improper ring/pinion gear alignment. A normal gear face should look like it was polished and this is one good characteristic to look for when critiquing an unknown differential. Defective carrier bearings will always produce a whine that is constant in pitch and varies with vehicle speed. Wheel bearing noise may be confused with rear axle noise. To differentiate between the two, drive the vehicle sharply right and left on a smooth road. If noise is caused by wheel bearings, it will increase in the turns because of the side loading.

## **New Ring & Pinion Settings**

Although proper ring & pinion setup can be accomplished at home, I recommend that you hire a professional to do the job. However, if a Do-It-Yourselfer really insists on trying it (and that is the only way to learn), then here is some information that should be helpful. When setting up a ring & pinion there are four critical settings that need to be correct in order to get proper setup and good gear life.

They are: 1) Pinion depth (how close the pinion is to the ring gear), 2) Backlash (how close the ring gear is to the pinion), 3) Pinion bearing preload (how much bearing drag is on the pinion bearings), and 4) Carrier bearing preload (how much bearing drag is on the carrier bearings). Given enough time, just about any approach will work when setting up a ring & pinion. However, I suggest adjusting the four settings in the following order so that the job goes faster with less frustration.

First, set the backlash using only light carrier bearing preload. The proper preload can be added closer to final assembly. Next, check the pinion depth by way of the contact pattern. Make sure you use only real gear marking compound (available from GM as part # 1052351), as other marking substances are difficult to read. There are many theories about how to read the contact pattern, but I won't open that can of worms now. After checking the pattern it is usually necessary to adjust the pinion depth. After changing the pinion depth, the pattern should be rechecked. The backlash may have to be readjusted as the pinion depth is changed. It should be close to specifications in order to get a good pattern reading.



*“I recommend setting the carrier bearing preload tight without damaging the shims during installation.”*

Once the correct pinion depth is established, the pinion bearing preload can be adjusted. When setting the pinion bearing preload it is always necessary to use new shims. When installing the carrier, the same shims that are used to adjust the backlash are also used to set the carrier bearing preload. Rather than trying to change the backlash and preload at the same time, I recommend getting the backlash correct and then adding preload for the final assembly. If the carrier has to be moved to set the backlash it is easier to remove if the preload is not too tight. Once the backlash has been set, the carrier bearing preload can be added. Some books give exact specifications of how much preload to add to the carrier bearings. I find that the given specs are not always easy to measure or

achieve. If they call for 0.015" preload, a zero point must first be established, and that is not easy either. I recommend setting the carrier bearing preload tight without damaging the shims during installation. Now that these four settings are correct, the installation is almost complete. Remember to use good high quality oil and follow the manufacturer's break-in procedure.



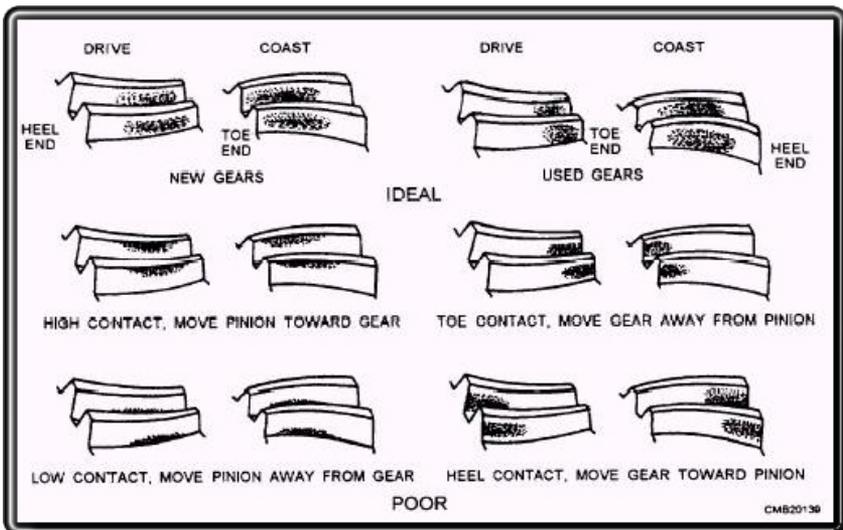
## Axle Bearing End Float

Now that the differential unit is rebuilt and installed in the axle housing, it is time to reinstall the axle shafts and set the end float with paper shims. Apparently, the wheel bearings extend slightly out of the end of the axle housing. The Tiger Workshop Manual covers this in more detail, while the Alpine Workshop Manual doesn't cover this at all. On the average, the early Alpines require about 0.015" of shims (approximately 3 gaskets per side) and the later seriesV Alpines require about 1 paper shim per side. I set the end float to (.006"-.008"). Next are the brake components and I usually install the wheel cylinders into the brake back plates while they are still off. Lastly, the wheel hubs are replaced and the axle nuts are tightened to (60-70ft-lbs).

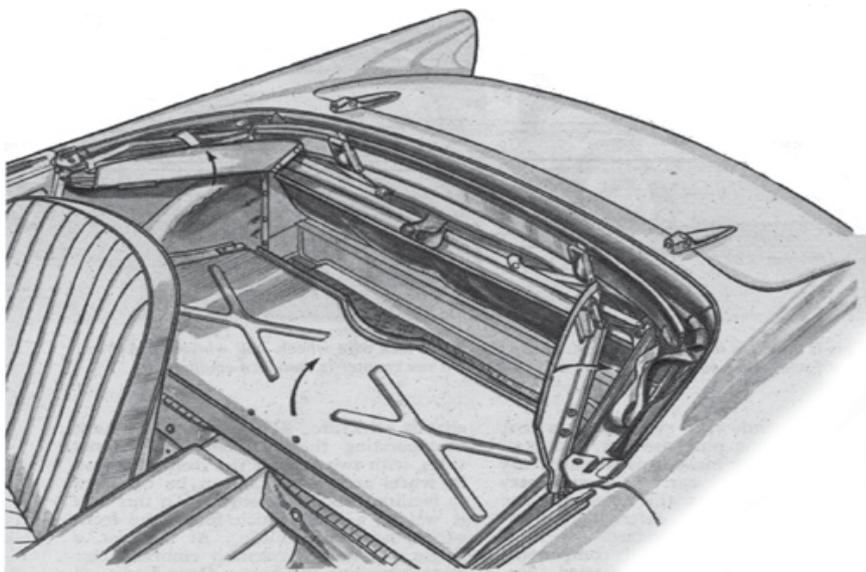
## General Data

Pinion nut (105-115 ft-lbs)  
Ring gear bolts (45-55 ft-lbs)  
Bearing cap bolts (50-55 ft-lbs)  
Axle nut (60-70ft-lbs)

Gear back lash (.005"-.009")  
Axle end play (.006"-.008")  
Pinion bearing preload (new 6-12 in-lbs, used 4-8 in-lbs;  
0.001" shim changes 4 in-lbs)  
25 splines – "E"very late seriesV  
17 splines – "B"early



# ***Taking down the hood...***



## ***How does it all fit in there?***

Many Alpine owners look at that small amount of space found behind the side panels and backrest on early series Alpines and scratch their heads. You cuss and scream everytime you have to put down your hood to enjoy a nice summer day. Well... believe me, we have all been there before. "What's the secret?" many of you may ask... Well, that's what I'm here to tell you, but you have to promise to keep it under your hat!

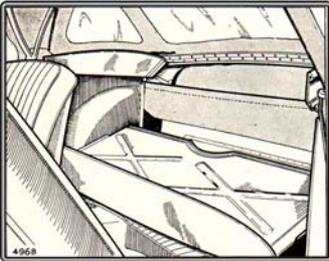
First, you must understand that the original material used on the Alpine convertiblehoods was much thinner than the material used on the after-market ones purchased today. Because the material is much thicker, it makes hood stowage a much bigger challenge because the thicker material won't fold and tuck away as nicely as the thin original stuff!

Original factory hoods were made from a material called Everflex, which was black on the outside and grey on the inside. This material is still available today and can be used to make your hood. It is very expensive and can be special ordered through Rick at Sunbeam Specialties, or Curt at Classic Sunbeam.

There are six basic steps out lined in the factory owners handbook for lowering the hood. If you don't already have an original factory owners handbook, I would suggest that you find one. I would also advise that you read it! There is a ton of valuable information to be found in the owners handbook, including the hood operating instructions reproduced on the following pages. I have modified these instructions to cover both SI and SII Alpines. - Ian

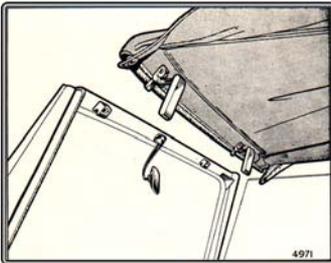
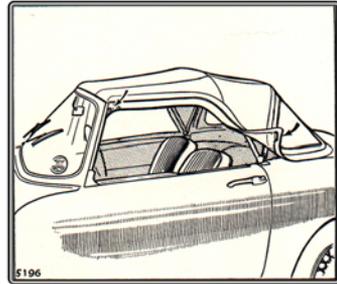
## ***HOOD (TOP) OPERATING INSTRUCTION***

### **TO LOWER THE HOOD (Series I & II)**

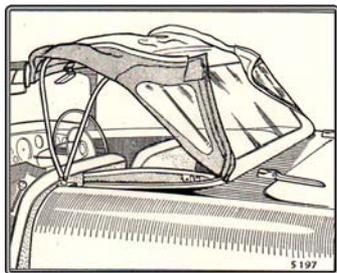


STEP 1: Slide seats forward, swing occasional seat backrest forwards, and open side covers inwards.

STEP 2: Undo two snap fasteners at corners of windscreen and release loops from tongues on body sides. (NOTE: Series II must remove CANTRAIL at this point.)

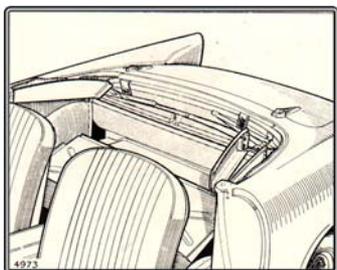
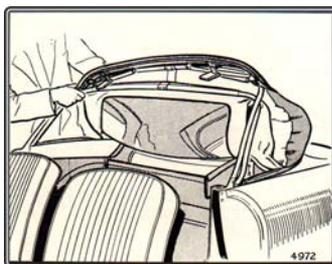


STEP 3: Unfasten hood catches from top of windscreen.



STEP 4: Open two zip fasteners and fold flaps released over top of hood. (NOTE: Series II Alpines have a snap located inside the side covers to replace zipper.)

STEP 5: Close front hood rail to rear supports by folding the side links inwards, holding hood material clear.



STEP 6: Neatly feed window and hood material down as far as possible into well, followed by supports and front rail, and press firmly home.

These instructions are of course followed by: Close side covers and backrest, and Adjust seats to normal position.

It should be pointed out that Series II Alpines were equipped with an additional brace that helped to support the top around the side window glass. These braces are called CANTRAILS and are a very important part of the Series II hood frame assembly. NEVER THROW THESE AWAY!

One important step not shown in the handbook is to detach the vinyl slingfound in the boot prior to taking down the hood. This will unclip from the inside of the stowage well and lay out flat in the boot. Series II Alpines have a pocket sewn into this flap for storing the CANTRAILS while the hood is down. This step will create more room for the hood and make it much easier to get the side and back panels closed.

There you have it! So, now that the secret is out, be sure to tell others!

# NEW MEMBERS

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Jerry Hooton - Stockton, California  
Adriano Manocchia - Cambridge, New York  
Larry McKenna - Deer Isle, Maine  
Ted Reese - Sherwood, Oregon  
Richard Comfort - Stanardsville, Virginia  
Dennis O'Neill - Evergreen Park, Illinois  
Ronald Clinton - Sevierville, Tennessee  
Timothy Drury - Port Orchard, Washington  
Stephen S. Wood - Kent, England  
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Are you interested in providing material for the *Alpine Marque*? We are interested in hearing from you. Articles or letters can be sent by snail mail or electronically via e-mail to the editors. Please submit any written stories in Microsoft Word format. Feel free to contact our editors if you need help or have questions. **Deadline for next issue is May 15th 2003.**

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