



## SPRING NEWSLETTER 2025

### CONTENTS:

Page 2	<b>A Word from the Editor:</b>	Keith Mitchell
	<b>Member News:</b>	Keith Mitchell
Page 3	<b>President's Report:</b>	Michael Johnson
Page 4	<b>Vice President's Report:</b>	Warren Buckingham
	<b>EVENTS:</b>	
Page 5	<b>Club Events</b>	
	- Weekend Run No 1: Italian Festival Cars and Coffee: September 20	KM
	- Weekend Run No 2: The Peninsular Cars and Coffee: September 28	KM
	- Weekend Run No 3: Kitchener Park Picnic, Historic Plate Run October 26	KM
	- Weekend Run No 4: Wyong Wetlands Picnic: November 9	Phil Hitchcock
	- Weekend Run No 5: Picnic in Ellebana: November 30	Warren Buckingham
	<b>Mid-week Coffee Runs</b>	
	- Midweek Coffee Run No 1: Paterson Country Café. September 28	Robert Booth
	- Midweek Coffee Run No 2: Jimmy's Cafe, Ellebana: October 29	KM
	- Midweek Coffee Run No 3: The Watch House Cafe: November 19	KM
Page 12	<b>Article of interest: The Busso V6</b>	
	- Craig Phillips	
	- Michael Johnson	
	- Mort Shearer	
Page 17:	<b>Calendar</b>	
Page 18	<b>For the Diary...</b>	
Page 19	<b>Classifieds</b>	
Page 21	<b>Organising an event and writing a report:</b>	Laurel Buckingham
Page 22	<b>Coda: A Fiat Christmas Poem</b>	Laurel Buckingham

## A word from the Editor

Welcome to the 2025 Spring Newsletter. I often get asked the question “Why does the Spring (insert season here) Newsletter come out in the first few weeks of Summer”. The reason is, each Newsletter is a summary of the previous three months activities. Hence coming out in the subsequent season.

In this edition you will read about the various Club Events and the usual Mid-Week Coffee Runs organised by Club members. Sadly, Lago di Mac was cancelled owing to unforeseen issues, however, a picnic was added to the Calendar in its place.

This month's **Article of Interest** on the Alfa Romeo Busso V6 was suggested by Louis Ippolitto, and I appreciate the responses to this by three of our club members who have had experience with this particular engine. If you find an article of a particular Italian vehicle or motor that interests you, please feel free to send it on to me with reasons why it does interest you. perhaps you have owned, or still own, an example.

I am thankful to those who continue to contribute to this newsletter, and to those who have written for the first time, Thank you Warren and Laurel Buckingham, Michael and Deb Johnson, Robert Booth, Craig Phillips, Louis Ippolitto, Phil Hitchcock and Mort Shearer for their written and photographic contributions to this Newsletter.

Keith Mitchell (Editor)

## Members' News.

### CIAO Committee 2025/26.

<b>President:</b>	Michael Johnson	Email: <a href="mailto:president@ciaoclub.com.au">president@ciaoclub.com.au</a> Phone
<b>Vice President:</b>	Warren Buckingham	Email: <a href="mailto:vicepresident@ciaoauto.com.au">vicepresident@ciaoauto.com.au</a> Phone 0428 938 338
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Deb Johnson	Email: <a href="mailto:treasurer@ciaoclub.com.au">treasurer@ciaoclub.com.au</a>
<b>Secretary:</b>	Keith Mitchell.	Email: <a href="mailto:secretary@ciaoclub.com.au">secretary@ciaoclub.com.au</a> Phone 0420 246 835
<b>Membership:</b>	Warren Buckingham	Email: <a href="mailto:vicepresident@ciaoauto.com.au">vicepresident@ciaoauto.com.au</a> Phone 0428 938 338
<b>Events Co-ordinator:</b>	Craig Phillips	Email: <a href="mailto:eventcoordinator@ciaoauto.com.au">eventcoordinator@ciaoauto.com.au</a>
<b>Newsletter Editor:</b>	Keith Mitchell	Email: <a href="mailto:secretary@ciaoclub.com.au">secretary@ciaoclub.com.au</a> Phone 0420246835
<b>Committee Member:</b>	Mark Brown, Phil & Becc Hitchcock	

### Other important contact points:

**Media Liason & Social Media:** Cassie Johnson [medialiason@ciaoauto.com.au](mailto:medialiason@ciaoauto.com.au)

**Public Officer::** Michael Johnson Email: [publicofficer@ciaoauto.com.au](mailto:publicofficer@ciaoauto.com.au)

**Physical mail correspondence and all general enquiries:** PO Box 115, Morpeth, NSW, 2321

### CIAO LIFE MEMBERS

Michael and Deb Johnson  
Colin and Sheryn Goldie  
Trevor Edwards (Deceased)  
Kay Young (Deceased)  
Warren & Laurel Buckingham  
Phil and Becc Hitchcock



Specialists in the service, repair and sales  
of all makes and models of  
British, European and Classic cars.



**02 4933 1185**  
[www.gilbertsmotorgarage.com.au](http://www.gilbertsmotorgarage.com.au)

## President's Report

As I reflect on the last few months of the CIAO club, I am filled with gratitude for the dedication, passion, and camaraderie that continues to drive us forward. Our club is not simply about the cars we cherish. It is about the people who bring them to life, the traditions we uphold, and the community we nurture together.

First and foremost, I wish to acknowledge the extraordinary efforts of our past president George Grasso, thank you for all your effort.

We faced an unfortunate setback with the cancellation of the Lago event. For many of us, the Lago festival has been a highlight on the calendar. A chance to enjoy the beauty of all Italian machinery against a stunning backdrop of Lake Macquarie, and with the Italian festival we could connect with fellow enthusiasts and the community in a spirit of joy and discovery. While circumstances beyond our control prevented us from continuing with Lago, the resilience of our members shone brightly. Rather than dwelling on disappointment, our members rallied together, we are discussing new opportunities and ideas to celebrate our cars and friendships in other settings. This adaptability is a testament to the strength of our club and the enthusiasm that fuels it.

Looking back at member participation in events throughout the year has been nothing short of inspiring. From local drives through scenic countryside to our destination, our members have demonstrated unwavering commitment. Each event has been enriched by the stories, laughter, and shared experiences and food that remind us why we belong to this club. Whether it was a spirited drive in the hills, a casual coffee, or a meticulously planned lunch, the energy and involvement of our members have kept our calendar vibrant and meaningful.

Looking ahead, we are determined to build on this momentum. The cancelled Lago event serves as a reminder that while plans may change, our passion remains constant. We will continue to create opportunities for members to gather, share knowledge, and celebrate the artistry of Italian motoring. Our focus will be on fostering inclusivity, encouraging new members to join, and ensuring that every event reflects the spirit of community that defines us.

In closing, I extend heartfelt thanks to our past president for all his work, to our members for their participation, and to our committee for their guidance, support and tireless work behind the scenes over the last few months. The road ahead is bright, and I am confident that with your continued support, our club will thrive for many years to come.

CAIO, and I look forward to seeing you at our next gathering.

Michael Johnson



- Lake Macquarie's Premier Award Winning Florist
- Same day deliveries Available 6 Days a week
- Member of Interflora
- Phone Orders accepted
- Qualified Wedding Florists

Trading hours  
Monday-Friday  
9:00am-5:00pm  
Saturday  
9:00am-12:00pm

[www.warnersbayflorist.com](http://www.warnersbayflorist.com)

Email: [floristwarnersbay@gmail.com](mailto:floristwarnersbay@gmail.com)



## Vice-President's Report

We have had another few busy months with our ever-popular Mid-Week Coffee Runs and a surprising number of Sunday Lunch runs. These include:

Keith's Coffee Run to Market Street Café Wangi Wangi, the Italian Festival Cars and Coffee at the Nicita Estate and Robert Booth's Midweek Coffee Run at the Paterson Country Café.

Also popular were the Peninsular Cars and Coffee at Gwandalan, the Kitchener Park Picnic–Historic Plate Run, the return to The Watch House Cafe & Pizzeria in Rathmines and the Picnic at Thomas H Halton Park in place of Lago di Mac

Two standouts for me were the Italian Festival at Pokolbin and the Peninsular Cars and Coffee.

We have some **new members** to welcome to the club.

Glen Davis 2001 Alfa Spider

Steve and Sue Mellor 1972 Alfa GTV 2000

Looking forward to seeing you at our next event.

At our December Meeting, over \$120 was raised at our annual **Christmas Raffle**. Three beautiful hampers, prepared by Laurel Buckingham went to the following members:

First Prize: June Stewart

Second Prize: Wendy Rossi

Third Prize: Brent Blackwell.

Congratulations and enjoy the wonderful contents this Christmas.

Warren Buckingham

Vice President [vicepresident@ciaoauto.com.au](mailto:vicepresident@ciaoauto.com.au) Phone: 0428 938 338



**Visit us!**  
Mon - Thurs: 9am - 5pm  
Friday: 9am - 4pm  
**(02) 4052 8288**  
23 Chifley St  
East Maitland NSW

### Your Car Upholstery Specialists

No appointment necessary.

- Trims
- Custom interior work
- Upholstery
- Leatherwork
- ...and more

Proudly celebrating  
**20 YEARS**

### Dean Trappel Upholsterer

At Sew What Upholstery, Our team of **skilled upholsterers** take **pride** in every stitch, ensuring that every detail of your vehicle's interior shines.

Whether you're looking to **preserve the vintage style** or **add a modern twist**, we work with you to source the perfect materials that **match your unique vision**.

From classic elegance to personalized finishes, we bring your car's interior back to life with **care and craftsmanship**.

Your car deserves the best. Contact us today for a consultation!

[dean@sewwhatblinds.com.au](mailto:dean@sewwhatblinds.com.au)



## Club Event No 1: Italian Festival Cars and Coffee: September 20th

On our first Club Run of Spring to the Nicita Estate in Pokolbin we saw a large collection of Italian machinery, both exotic and more 'mundane'.

Our Central Coast convoy consisted of Gladys and me in the Alfa GT Junior, Rocky Caputo's Fiat 124 Spider with passengers wife Andrea and hound Monty, and Lance McKenzie Murray's Fiat 124 Coupe. In Cessnock we sighted the Buckingham Convoy just ahead of us. Their



Tom Heard, accompanied by wife Narelle, the 1800

Grande Luce driven by Warren, accompanied by Laurel, and son Mick, driving the 1200 Spider, accompanied by his wife, Theresa.. A red light stopped us from joining them in what would have been a quite impressive grouping of cars, but we did finally catch up with them at the destination itself.

Already in place were a number of cars, including Rob and Katie Sbrana's lovely little Lancia Fulvia coupe and Craig Phillips Alfa Romeo 159. Next to the 159 was Sherwyn Goldie's Fiat 500.

Later arrivals include the AR Mito belonging to Deb and Michael Johnson, the Fiat Tremont of Phil and Becc Hitchcock and Steve and Sue Wines' immaculate bright yellow Alfa Spider. It was great to see relatively new members Andrew and Kylie Rankin with their blue Spider. Unfortunately I was able to get a photo of these two beauties together.



As always, George Grasso's Lambretta attracted a lot of attention and Dave and Barbra Royston's Abarthe added a fourth marque to our collection of cars. As you can see from the photos there were also a number of cars that did not belong to CIAO, but the placement of a few of our CIAO cards will hopefully see a few more new members join the club.

I have to say it was one of the best turnout of members and their cars I have seen, possibly with the exception of last year's Lago. At the event was a coffee van, gelato, cakes and pizza.







Finally, I found it good to see new (and newish) members attend this event..The Hunter Valley offers some great roads for our Italian cars, the drive home was great (until we got to the M1, my least favourite road!).

CIAO

Keith Mitchell



### **HINTON MOBILE MECHANIC**

**Club member Robert Sbrana, a qualified local mechanic with over 40 years experience, offers his services, with special attention given to CIAO members. No job too small, servicing and repairs. He also offers break down service; he comes to you!**

**Phone 0403 379 767**



## Club Drive No 2: Peninsula Cars and Coffee, Gwandalan September 28



Our trip to the Peninsula Cars and Coffee in Gwandalan was the first for CIAO although individual members have been previously. The situation is perfect, right on the banks of Lake Macquarie, in front of the Gwandalan Bowling Club.

We were lucky: we had been leading a few Holdens, but I pulled over to let them pass, as I had no idea where the entrance to the ground was. Therefore we were able to follow them in. A number of people commented that the event needed to be better signposted.

It was the MGs turn for a drive so until Carlo and Wendy Rossi arrived in their beautiful Jaguar XK, poor 'Shirl' (the MG) was the only British car there. Up until the Italians arrived, it was



mostly American and Australian cars.

The queue for coffee initially was long, but it was good and there were quite a variety of cakes and cooked meals available. Just as I got mine the Italians arrived, The Fiat 2300S Coupe of Warren and Laurel Buckingham and Col

and Shewyn Goldie in their Alfa Romeo 164. Also there was an Abathe 695 and a Fiat 125.

By about 11am most of the cars had left, but we had been joined by June and Col Stewart and Carlo and Wendy Rossi. Wendy came well prepared, with corn chips and dip. Not really very Italian but very welcome! The group decided to go to the Bowling Club for lunch, which was reported as good. As Gladys was not a member, we had to head home.

All in all it was an enjoyable event to be a part of, offering a little variety to the show. However, I think it works best as an occasional weekend drive, if for nothing else the beautiful position and the Bowling Club nearby for a good meal.

CIAO

Keith Mitchell





## Club Drive No 3: Kitchener Park: October 21



Poppet Head Park is the site of a now disused coal mine, which still features part of the machinery used, as well as a dam. The mine was closed in 1961, and the park remains as a popular site for picnics and group activities. One of the drawcards (although not to CIAO members) is the Flying Fox!

One of the reasons Warren organised this event was to get photos of the cars on Historic Registration, so he could update his records.



The facilities offered are excellent: covered tables, clean toilets although possibly more than one BBQ could be useful.

Members present were Warren and Laurel Buckingham, Becc and Phil Hitchcock, Col and Shewyn Goldie, Carlo and Wendy Rossi, Col and



June Stewart, Deb and Michael Johnson, John Leeks, Robert Booth, Brett Blackwell, Gladys and myself.

Warren was able to get a few photos for his records, but there are still quite a number of cars and bikes he still needs to photograph. Members are encouraged to speak to Warren to arrange this.

CIAO

Keith Mitchell





## Club Drive No 4: Wyong Wetlands, November 9.



Phil and Becc's Coastal Run to Wyong Wetlands/Old Wyong Dairy.

Just six Club members left from Freeman's Waterhole at the specified time of 10AM, travelling on Freeman's Drive via Cooranbong and Wyee, then via the Hue Hue road to the wetlands. It was a nice Sunday morning cruise.



We got our preferred undercover spot at the beginning of the walking trail where some points of interest about the birds and dairy history were displayed. Attending the event were Becc, granddaughter Sian and myself, Warren and Laurel Buckingham, Brent Blackwell and Dave Roysten.



The Wyong Wetlands' Pioneer Dairy was a large dairy farm established in 1897, marking the beginning of large-scale commercial dairying in the area. By 1921, 200 dairy farmers were supplying milk and cream to the local Wyong Butter Factory, which was established in 1907.

Today, the Central Coast Wetlands is a 155-hectare reserve which retains historical elements, including the Dairy Cottage, one of the oldest homesteads in Wyong. Visitors can enjoy nature walks, picnic areas, and observe the diverse birdlife and other wildlife that now inhabit the

wetlands.

The weather was great until a cold southerly came up but that did not stop us from cooking and eating lunch until we left around 1pm. Laurel won the large bottle of wine lucky door prize. It was a pity no other members turned up for the day, they missed a good drive and an interesting destination.



CIAO

Phil Hitchcock



## Picnic at Thomas H Halton Park: Sunday November 30

Michael Johnson, Tom Heard and myself arrived early to claim the shelter and be there in case cars or people came along thinking Lago di Mac was still on. A few cars did show up but quickly moved on when they realised the event had been cancelled. The park regulars where disappointed that the Italian festival had been cancelled.

Carlo and Wendy Rossi arrived in their recently purchased black Maserati, a beautiful car. I was especially taken by the signature Maserati clock.

It was a beautiful day weather wise and members attending enjoyed a picnic lunch with good company. The following 13 members attended, mainly in Italian cars.



Dave Royston, Mort Shearer, Elaine Dunn, Deanna Achurch, Tony Cassaniti, Brent Blackwell, Phil and Becc Hitchcock, Michael and Deb Johnson, Warren Buckingham and Carlo and Wendy Rossi.

CIAO

Warren Buckingham



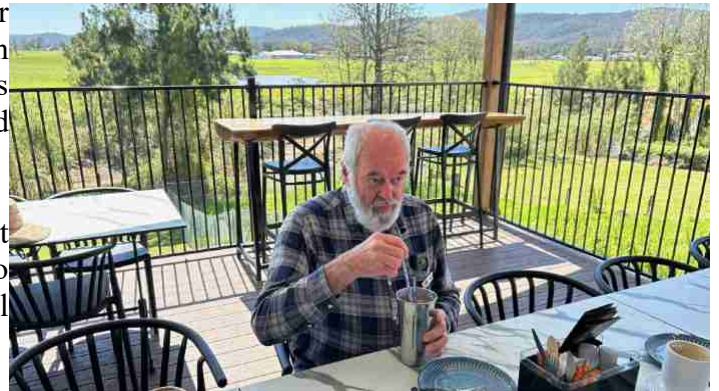


## Mid-Week Coffee Run No 1: Paterson Country Cafe, September 24.



A beautiful sunny day enticed CIAO Italian motor enthusiasts to enjoy the centrally located café in Paterson. The deck, located at the rear of the café has panoramic views of the Paterson River and surrounding rural farms and residences.

Paterson township has a population of 320, a Post Office, IGA, Butcher, Medical Centre, Chemist, two Hotels, a Courthouse (which is now a Historical



Museum), Pre-School and a Public School. And, of course, a Police Station. The town forms part of the "HorseShoe Run" which is a popular route in the region for car & motor bike enthusiasts to charge their batteries.

Our group comprised myself (Robert Booth), Warren and Laurel Buckingham, Brent Blackwell, June and Col Stewart, Dave Royston and Col Goldie. We enjoyed the cuisine and swapped car details each of our experiences and expertise. It is surprising to hear the knowledge that each member has of their marque. Midday saw us make a move to return to our cars and journey home after a pleasant meeting.



CIAO

Robert Booth





## Mid-Week Coffee Run No 2: The Watch House Cafe, November 19



This was my third time to the Watch House Cafe and Pizzeria with CIAO, and every visit has been an enjoyable experience. It was a good turnout of our regular retirees who are lucky enough to be free on a weekday morning!

There was a good turnout of Italian machinery also Greg and Sharon Crow's immaculate Alfa Giulietta (see Classifieds on page 16), my Alfa 1600 GT Junior and the Fiats: the 500 of Sheryn and Col Goldie, the Dublo of Dave Royston, the Freemont of Becc Hitchcock and the 1900 of Warren and Laurel Buckingham. They all added a little colour to the main street of Rathmines. Also in

attendance were Col and June Stewart. We all look forward to seeing their Ferrari back on the road!



The cafe has a balcony for those who wish to sit outside or have dogs. Because of the relative heat, Gladys was left at home. It would have been hot for her sitting outside. Inside the airconditioning kept everyone comfortable. There is a counter, always overflowing with cakes and cheesecakes as well as a pizza oven to compliment the more traditional cafe fare. A special thank you to Laurel and Warren for organising this event.



CIAO

Keith Mitchell





## Article of interest: The Busso V6

This article from the March 2025 edition of Car Buzz was sent to me for inclusion in this newsletter. The author had some complimentary comments regarding this engine and its designer. However, he also was less complimentary regarding its reliability. I asked three club members who own, or have owned cars with this engine to read the article and to comment upon it. Their contribution comes at the end of the article and make very interesting reading. I suggest you read the article first, and then their well-considered comments. KM

### Alfa Romeo Busso V6

For as long as the automobile has been around, it has needed some sort of engine or motor to power it. Much like the vehicles they inhabit, some of these engines throughout the years have been as famous — and even more famous, in some cases — than some of the actual models using them. Take the original Chevrolet small-block V8, for example. Virtually everyone knows of the famous mill, but some models that have used it in the past are quite obscure by comparison.



One of the most glaring examples of this unequal engine-to-model popularity ratio, especially in the US, was the Alfa Romeo Busso V6. Here in the States, it's an extremely rare sight, as just a couple of Alfa models sold new in the US actually offered the Busso as an option. However, over in Europe, the Busso V6 is much more popular, not to mention iconic. *Of course, being an Alfa Romeo engine, it wasn't very reliable by any stretch.* (my italics). It was, though, one of the best-sounding engines ever produced, and packed quite a punch when outfitted properly.

#### A Few Facts About The Alfa Romeo Busso V6

Introduced in 1979

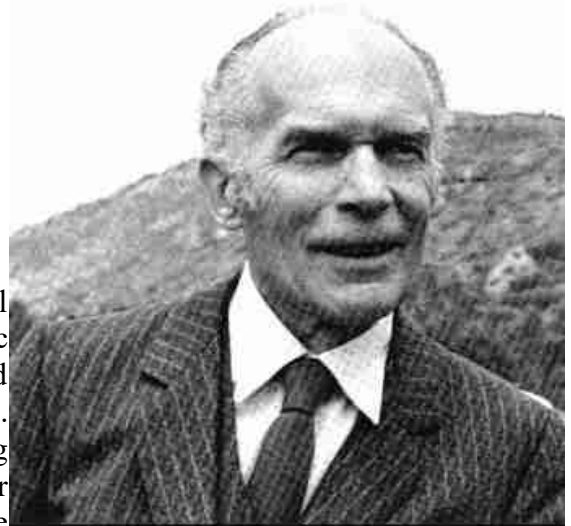
Originally offered as a 2.5-liter

Widely considered to be the best-sounding V6 ever made

Saw a wide range of applications, including racing

Axed following the 2005 model year

Born in 1913, Giuseppe Busso started his career in mechanical engineering following his 1937 graduation from the Polytechnic University of Turin in Turin, Italy. Two years later, Busso landed a job with Alfa Romeo, just as World War II broke out in Europe. However, even with the war on, Busso was hard at work rising through the ranks at Alfa Romeo. Under the tutelage of engineer Orazio Satta Puliga, Busso learned the ins and outs of engine design. His specific assignment was to help develop racing engines.



Following a brief tenure at Ferrari, lasting from 1946 to 1948, he returned to Alfa in 1948 and continued to work there until 1977. One of his final projects was designing the Busso engine, which was instrumental in cementing his iconic status within Alfa Romeo, and throughout the motoring world. Despite the completion of the engine in 1977, the Busso V6 wouldn't be featured in a vehicle until 1979, when it was installed within the Alfa 6.



## 1980s

Once the Busso V6's sporting prowess was widely known, nearly the entire motoring world began pining for one of their own. The Alfa Romeo GTV6 began appearing in numerous racing series', including the European Touring Car Championship. Beginning in the early 1980s, various tuning companies began to revamp Busso V6s and tune them to their exact specifications, as the motor's bones were considered fantastic for this endeavor. A 2.0-liter entry-level version of the Busso V6 was introduced in 1983, but was only produced for four years.

The first company to produce a tuned, mass-market version of the mill was a German Alfa Romeo dealer and tuner called Gleich. They took the powerplant, bored it over to 2.8 liters, added in some lightweight pistons and other go-faster bits, and installed it within the 1982 Alfa Romeo Alfetta GTV6 2.8 Gleich. It produced 188 horsepower and was, reportedly, a well-done upgrade, both in its sound and performance. Another tuner based in South Africa called Autodelta produced a 3.0-liter version of the original 2.5 Busso V6 to be used in the 1984 and 1985 Alfa Romeo Alfetta GTV6 3.0 SA producing 174 horsepower.

Busso variations introduced between 1980 and 1989:

- 2.0L
- 2.5L
- 2.8L (Gleich)
- 3.0L
- 3.0L (Autodelta SA)



The Busso V6's popularity continued to expand into the 1990s. In addition, many new variations were introduced

during the decade, most important of which were the 2.0-liter turbocharged version and a 24-valve iteration. As for the turbocharged Busso V6, it was first introduced in 1991 as an optional upgrade for the Alfa Romeo 164. At the time, the turbocharged iteration was only meant for use within the Italian market as a way to get around a domestic tax. The tax placed a higher percentage on engines boasting over 2.0 liters, so instead of making the mill larger to produce more power, Alfa simply fitted a turbocharger.

Come 1997, Alfa introduced the 24-valve version of the Busso V6. The first model to employ the use of the new iteration was the 1993 Alfa Romeo 164, with the engine itself measuring in at 3.0 liters. Thanks to the new valvetrain, the 3.0-liter Busso V6 could now produce 208 horsepower. A 2.5-liter version of the 24-valve Busso was introduced in 1996, but was only used by the Alfa 156 and 166. However, the most famous, and most powerful, version of the Busso was introduced in 2002: the 3.2-liter 24-valve iteration.



This 3.2-liter version became the most powerful Busso V6 ever mass-produced for the civilian market. Immediately upon its introduction in 2002, the Alfa Romeo 147 and 156 GTA models began to utilize it, both of which could produce nearly 250 horsepower without the help of any sort of forced induction. In addition to those two sporting models, the 3.2-liter iteration was also featured in the Alfa Romeo GTV, Alfa Romeo Spider, Alfa Romeo 166, Alfa Romeo GT, and even the Lancia Thesis for a time.

We'll outline the 3.2-liter, 24-valve Busso V6's detailed specs when installed within the 2002 Alfa Romeo 156 GTA in the table below:

### The Busso's Achilles Heel

While the Busso V6 is universally loved for its performance, well-balanced nature, and lovely exhaust note, it also housed a not-so-savory secret underneath its chromed intake runners. It was, in some cases, woefully unreliable. However, it wasn't due to poor design entirely, although there were aspects of its mechanical make-up that were partly to blame, like a relatively weak block, and leaky heater matrices. Instead, most of the finger-pointing can be directed to the Busso V6's strict maintenance schedule.





For example, most Busso V6 engines require a very rigid maintenance schedule for its timing belt service. It was recommended that the engine's timing belt be replaced every five years or every 60,000 miles, whichever comes first. If this schedule was deviated from even slightly, catastrophic failure was likely to ensue. In addition, the engine was complex and hard to work on, which meant using a specialized mechanic or shop was necessary. However, when it comes to gearheads, many of us like to do things ourselves, and the Busso V6 didn't look kindly on DIYers.

It has been reported, however, that the Busso engine is a very reliable unit so long as its maintenance schedule is strictly adhered to, and professionals are employed to carry out the engine's necessary maintenance and repairs. So, if you've got the pocketbook to support that, go ahead and find yourself a Busso V6-equipped Alfa for yourself.

### Three CIAO Members' Experiences

We have been asked to write about our experience with our Busso V6 engined cars, we had two, our 1982 GTV6 with the split dash. We owned it for around 4 years from memory. What a great car, fantastic to drive quickly or equally along distance touring car with lots of torque. And the Busso engine transformed it, the 4 cylinder was great but the V6 was fantastic and oh what a musical, magical exhaust note.



The other car we had was a 1989 164 purchased from Paul Skewes in Newcastle, (Alf Jones) it had 160,000ks when purchased, when we sold it with around 275,000ks from memory and was still going strong. On the reliability side we had no issues with any of them, just normal service and maintenance, (belts, water pump on both cars), no large bills. The GTV6 used some oil but completely within specs, no visible exhaust smoke. The 164 was much the same but not quite as much oil usage.

My two brothers have Busso engined cars, Mark has a GTV6 and Rick a 164 QV. Both love their cars with no problems again from normal service costs.

I have noticed some articles on the reliability of the Busso highlighted. For example, oil leaks, what engine that contains fluid and goes through extreme hot and cold cycles over time does not leak. Timing belts, just normal maintenance on any car, not the engine's fault. Overheating, water pump as above maintenance on any car. and the same with the fuel injection problems.

Overall, our experience with the Busso engine was very positive: no problems. As with anything, keep up the maintenance and that will reduce your mechanic's bills.

CIAO

Michael and Deb.Johnson

### The Busso V6

Having been a fan of Italian vehicles since learning to drive in my father's Alfa Romeo 1600 GT Junior, I have been very lucky to have sampled some wonderful engines: Lancia Beta HPE Lampredi twin cam jewel, Lancia Fulvia quirky 1.3 45 degree V4, Lancia Flaminia super smooth 2.8 V6 and Fiat 's surprising 1100



With Alfa Romeo I have had the Nord motors 1600, 1750 and 2000 in various state of tune from clapped out to 200HP avgas tarmac rally special.

When my son Wade was looking for his own Alfa and asked me to come along to check out a 1998 GTV V6. I was interested to see what the fuss was about the famous Busso motor. We looked over the GTV and took it for a drive. Well, I was impressed. Loads of torque and when pressed it does sound fabulous all the way to 7000 RPM.

After haggling on the price, Wade drove home in the pouring rain from Sydney. Wade's major task was to fix the Thermo fan hacked wiring to ensure these are cutting in at the correct temperature. Having driven in 38 C and seen the temperature gauge refusing to move above half shows how well the cooling system works in Australian summers.

He also sensibly updated the standard open diff to the stronger Q2 LSD unit.

Apart from the usual service, cam belt & water pump change, he has not had to do any other work on the motor. Since then we have taken the GTV on Tour D 'Course rally where we could really appreciate the tractability and performance the Busso provides.

When I get to drive the GTV, I always come back impressed with that motor, it's not the most powerful but its very willing and rewards you with that sound track. For a 27 year old car it always raises a smile. Thank you Giuseppe Busso!

CIAO

Craig Phillips

### **Is a Busso unreliable?**

As an Alfista for over 40 years I feel I must comment on the article in this current edition of the CIAO Newsletter which accuses Alfa's Busso engine of being unreliable.

Among my range of 9 Alfas over that time there have been 7 'Nord' engines and 2 Bussos. The Nords were, in my experience, totally reliable and tough provided that they were religiously serviced. My experience of the Bussos and of my other Alfas, MGs, Jaguars, Bristols, Lancias et al was similar and from those experiences I had to learn the hard way that maintenance is the key to a happy motoring life with reliable machines.



The accusation that a Busso is unreliable must, in my view, only be valid when considered in context of design purpose, initial cost, maintenance cost, intended market and the ruling technologies of the time. I leave it to my reader to consider the facts surrounding that assertion.

No reference is made to these critical factors when evaluating the Busso, nor any reference to the experiences of owners. The only references made in the article are to

- a weak block – considering that it went from 2.0 to 3.2 litres without issues should raise a very large question about that statement.
- several vague issues about heating – Bussos (and other Alfas) rarely overheat as they were designed for the hot Italian climate.
- high maintenance concerning cam belt replacement- this is a maintenance issue and a reliability problem only if the owner ignores Alfa's more than clear warnings against ignoring this critical maintenance item. (The article didn't even get the numbers right amongst various other inaccuracies)



Alfas have always been designed with an eye to competition where high performance combined with reliability are the keys to success. To be first, first you must finish.

The only difference the writer appears to not understand is that high performance designs of many years ago like the Busso only produced their performance by complex designs which required careful manufacture followed by strict regular maintenance if they are to continue to be tough and reliable in their old age. It is interesting that this article written in March 2025 for Car Buzz is in total contrast to another article written 15 months earlier in December 2024 for the same Car Buzz which is strongly in praise of the Busso with absolutely no reference to unreliability.

It is also interesting to read the comments from readers also shown following the “Unreliable” article. I expect that most Alfisti will, like me, find this “Unreliable” article contains many incorrect facts and an incorrect and unsustainable conclusion about the real reliability of this iconic engine.

CIAO

Mort Shearer

## Calendar

### January 2026

- Wed 14<sup>th</sup>      **Mid-Week Coffee Run: Jimmy's At The Esplanade .**  
568 The Esplanade. Located at The Esplanade Motel.  
Enjoy a chat, coffee and a bite to eat. Overlooking the lake.
- Sun 18<sup>th</sup>      **New Year Picnic and General Meeting** at the Lion's Park Macquarie Road, Eleebana.  
Come and enjoy morning tea, a coffee and linger through until lunch. Enjoy the company and view of our beautiful Lake Macquarie.  
As usual please bring your own everything and some raffle money

### February 2026

- 6,7 & 8      **Gnoo Blas Classic Orange.** Fabulous weekend, four people confirmed so far.
- Wed 11<sup>th</sup>      General Meeting: 6.30 Dinner (optional) Meeting 7.30 Beresfield Bowling Club
- Sun 22<sup>nd</sup>      **Lexie's on the Beach** for lunch. 128 Mitchell Street Stockton Beach.

### March 2026

- Wed 11<sup>th</sup>      General Meeting: 6.30 Dinner (optional) Meeting 7.30 Beresfield Bowling Club

### April 2026

- Wed 8<sup>th</sup>      General Meeting: 6.30 Dinner (optional) Meeting 7.30 Beresfield Bowling Club
- 10 – 12<sup>th</sup>      **Fiat Nationals Australia:** Goulburn, NSW
- 12<sup>th</sup>      **Auto Italia**

### May 2026

- Wed 13<sup>th</sup>      General Meeting: 6.30 Dinner (optional) Meeting 7.30 Beresfield Bowling Club

For the Diary....





## Classifieds



For sale is this 1953 FIAT Nuova Millecento 1100-103 Sedan (Australian assembled) Owned by Glen Phillips (2006-2023), previously owned by Charlie Gugliotta, Ken Taylor....both Italian car enthusiasts.

Milage is an indicated 54,000 miles and the car underwent an engine overhaul in 2004, brakes, clutch, waterpump, wheel bearings and new tyres in 2007.



The car was originally grey but was repainted in sage green at least 30 years ago. Some rust repairs were carried out before a major repaint in 2010, The interior is in good condition and is largely original.

The car is on Historic Registration and has done very few miles since 2007. The car was located in Albany by Charlie Gugliotta around 1994 where it was part of the Ken Taylor collection. Before then it was possibly in Perth.



Please contact **Craig Phillips** on **0429970207** for more information and photos. The car belongs to his father,

Asking price is \$15,000.



## **For Sale: 2012 Alfa Romeo Giulietta QV**



**This beautiful 2012 Alfa Giulietta GV has only travelled 138K kms. It has full leather interior with red stitching, black glass sunroof and is registered until March 2026.**

**It's in great condition, recent work includes new timing belt and water pump in March 2025 and it runs on Pilot Sport 5 tyres.**

**\$9,500**

**Contact Greg (longtime CIAO member) on 0423 324 744 for more information.**





## Checklist for organising a CIAO Event

With more and more people organising CIAO events, the following list of 'dos and don'ts' is based on a document previously devised by Laurel Buckingham to assist in this.

There are three types of events: permanent calendar items, eg Auto Italia, Euro Motofest, Lago di Mac  
Mid-week Coffee Runs  
Weekend drives

### Mid-week Coffee runs:

- select a venue for the event, usually Wednesday and check with the Event Coordinator for a suitable date.
- check with the proposed venue that they are open on Wednesdays, and if so, make a tentative booking for around 12 people
- confirm numbers closer to the actual day
- the editor of the Newsletter appreciates a written report, preferably more than 3 sentences and remember. It earns 5 points towards the end of year trophy, presented at the Birthday Lunch.

### Weekend runs:

- select a destination and discuss with the Event Coordinator a suitable date
- if there is a drive (convoy), where is the meeting place and time, and is there ample parking and toilets
- what is the departure time and estimated arrival time at the final destination for those who are going straight there
- event destination:
  - if a **picnic area**, is there a BBQ, and if so, is it electric or gas and does it need money to operate.
  - are there chairs and tables, or do we need to bring our own and are there toilets
  - if a **restaurant or café**, it is best to make for an initial booking for 12, and confirm a more exact number closer to the day
- what is the state of the roads ie sealed, dirt and road conditions to take note of.
- the editor of the Newsletter appreciates a written report, preferably more than 3 sentences and remember. It earns 5 points towards the end of year trophy, presented at the Birthday Lunch.

## Suggestions for writing a report for the Newsletter

If you are writing a report of a CIAO event, some of the following suggestions I found in Amatori Alfa (the AROCA magazine, who borrowed it from their Victorian counterparts) may help. They have been modified somewhat to suit our events and you don't need to answer all questions. They are suggestions only and don't worry too much about spelling, punctuation or continuity. You have to make the Editor earn his huge salary.....

- Event name and description (eg Club run, Mid-week coffee run)
- Place, destination (if applicable), date, time and duration of the event
- Weather details
- Food: menu, cuisine eg Italian, seafood, coffee and cake
- Most interesting car/cars in your opinion (why, model, colour, type, year, features)
- Did anything interesting, funny, noteworthy happen during the event?
- What did you like about the day/event?
- Tell us about your car and the day (the drive there, did you get lost, run late, get booked, company etc)
- Photos: of people (if seated at tables, better with plates of food, rather than the mess of finished meals and drinks)
  - : plates of food only if interesting
  - : menu, the view, the building and external signs
  - : of the cars (very important!)

KM

Remember: organising an event give you 5 points towards the Perpetual Trophy, a report (of more than 3 lines) also gives you 5 points.

## CODA: A Fiat Christmas Poem

'Twas the night before Christmas, and out in the shed  
sat a tired old FIAT, its battery dead.  
Its fenders were rusted, the floorpan had holes  
The seats and the carpets had been eaten by voles  
The tyres had dry-rot, the gas tank was leaking  
A turn of the wheel sent the tie rods a-creaking  
So I put on my coat with a weight on my heart,  
and went out to the shed to get it to start.  
The engine turned over – there arose such a clatter!  
I knew from the sounds it was water pump chatter.  
From under the dashboard there came a bright flash:  
The wiring harness had just turned to ash!  
“I’ve had it with spiders!” I finally swore  
“Enough is too much! I can’t take any more!”  
When what to my red, teary eyes should appear  
But a little Italian (heck, I need a beer!)  
“Buon giorno,” he said, poking me in the belly.  
“You needa my help? I’m Gianni Agnelli.  
This one can be saved, there’s no reason to grieve.  
All you need is some faith – Man, you gotta believe!  
A hammer! Some duct tape! Get me more tools!  
When you work on these cars, just make up-a da rules!  
We’ll get her cranked over, no way that she’ll stall  
(But stand over there with your back to the wall,)”  
A cough and a splutter, the cacophony stunning-  
I couldn’t believe it! The damn thing was running!  
The ghost winked at me and said, kicking a tyre,  
“Whatever you do, DO NOT TOUCH THIS WIRE!”  
The old man then vanished amid sneezes and farts  
But when the smoke cleared he had left me some parts.  
So I opened the shed door and let the top down  
Put pedal to metal and went out on the town.  
And I thought to myself as I missed second gear  
Merry Christmas to All and a Happy New Year!  
(Apologies to Clement Clarke Moore)

