

the village

Voice

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James Baldwin on Krim's Essays—p. 5

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Voice: Gin Briggs

AN IRISH WOLFHOUD WAS AN ELEGANT ONLOOKER AS RALLYE MASTER JEAN SHEPHERD LAUNCHED THE ANNUAL EVENT

No Chateaux for Checkpoints
In Rallye 'Round the Arch

by Peter Gessner

Voice automobilist Dan List has said in these columns that there are, Virginia, rallyes and rallyes. This delicate distinction never entered my pedestrian mind until I rolled out of bed last Sunday morning and took in the Fifth Annual Village Voice Sports Car Rallye.

Reaching Washington Square, I found assorted rallye vehicles and their masters juggling for parking places along the east side of the park. It was a decidedly eclectic array of cars, ranging from a 1929 BMW to a 1958 Plymouth station wagon. The important crowd around the cars meandered into the street, buying Good Humors, snapping pictures, and asking policemen for directions to water fountains.

Hapsburg Princes
Hitherto, the intriguing numerical-like names of sleek sports cars had always seemed to me like mysterious toothpaste ingredients. The whole hupcap and crash-helmet set existed for me as some kind of phantasmagoric make-believe world of decadent Italian counts and Hapsburg crown princes. A kind of modern form of outdoor relief for bored aristocrats, I thought (the keep-the-nobility-out-of-the-bars sort of thing).

My sequestered notions about the fast-car set had been bolstered recently by a letter I received from a former young lady friend. She was in France and described to me

something called "le rallye." It turned out to be an elegant chase from villa to villa, with chateaux as checkpoints and vineyards for pit-stops. An expensive pastime for the rootless European nobility with hours on their hands and no titled land under their feet, I opined.

For Desert Campaign
Still firmly set in my romantic convictions (despite my confrontation with the motley-looking crowd), I managed to swing a ride for Jocelyn and myself in an English Land-Rover (the official course car for the rallye). Now a Land-Rover, Virginia, is like nothing you have ever seen. Jocelyn was both thrilled and frightened. The "car" doesn't actually belong in a race of any kind, but somewhere on the African veldt. It was developed by the British during the war and used against Rommel in the desert campaign.

Rallye Master Jean Shepherd was describing each car as it passed in terms of what its design indicated about the "character" of the nation in which it was built. As the Rover rolled up to the line, he

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Village Visitors Given
Lemonade and Petitions

A couple of hundred weary visitors to the area were treated last Sunday afternoon to lemonade and cookies at Patchin Place and then, predictably, for the Village, handed petitions to sign. It was the hospitable conclusion to their tour of historic places in Greenwich Village under the guidance of architectural historian Henry Hope Reed, Jr.

The petitions and the lemonade were thought up by Margot Gayle, who is deputy chairman of a committee that is fighting for the preservation of Jefferson Market Courthouse, on Sixth Avenue and West 10th Street.

Most of the visitors signed the petitions and many from less community-centered parts of town commented favorably on the *esprit* of the Village.

The tours, which take place in various parts of New York City, are sent out under the aegis of the Museum of the City of New York.

City Okays Skyscraper

The city's Board of Standards and Appeals on Tuesday upheld a builders' claim under the zoning law that he could construct an 18-story apartment house in the area of McCarthy Square. Save the Village had been spearheading a drive that would have restricted the height of the building to 12 stories.

Independent Democrats:

Levitt Draws Blank Here,
Push for Reform Candidate

Arthur Levitt's selection this week by the regular Democratic organization as their standard bearer for the office of Mayor has won little sympathy from the reform-minded politicians in this area. There is every indication, however, that the local Tammany organization clubs will fall in line behind Levitt.

James S. Lanigan, who will face Carmine DeSapio in the September primary for district leader of the Village area, asserted this week that Levitt's candidacy has been arranged by DeSapio as a "desperate maneuver to save himself and the machine from political extinction."

Lanigan's views are generally shared by all the reform leaders in the area. The anti-Levitt feeling has not yet aroused any significant enthusiasm for Robert F. Wagner among the group, but there are indications that the Mayor's "boss-killing" role is gaining some public sympathy for him.

In the Village area, the Mayor has gained the backing of Patrick Sullivan, the third man in the local race for district leader. Sullivan is backed by a group of dissidents, not in any way associated with the city-wide reform movement, who were formerly members of DeSapio's Tamawa Club.

A number of the leaders of reform clubs, including members of the Village Independent Democrats,

the New Chelsea Club, and Tilden, have been canvassing the possibility of projecting a reform candidate of their own into the Mayoralty picture.

Despite the commitment made to Wagner by former Senator Herbert H. Lehman, there is apparently considerable grassroots sentiment for such a move. The two names that have repeatedly come up in this connection are Congressman William Fitts Ryan, of Manhattan's West Side, and Arnold Fein, an attorney and civic leader.

One exception to the general trend in this area against Levitt, especially, is the support he is getting from Harold T. Schnurer and Rose Rubin, co-candidates for district leader in the Middle First Assembly District (East Chelsea and Gramercy Park). Schnurer and Mrs. Rubin have endorsed Levitt. Actually, they are running in opposition to Alan Finberg and Ann Kennedy, who are associated with the city-wide reform movement known as the Committee for Democratic Voters, and who have the backing of the major reform forces.

No Chateaux for Checkpoints In Rallye 'Round the Arch

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began coming on about how the British really like to suffer when they do things. Shepherd may have been right, but somehow I felt annoyed that he was putting down a vehicle the company describes as "capable, gutsy, and as rugged as a cement casket."

Another indication that there are rallyes and rallyes hit me when I looked down from the high back seat of the Rover and saw throngs of people in Bermuda shorts, straw hats, and at least one pith helmet crowding around Dan List to get their car numbers. I turned to Jocelyn, who was trying to get into a pair of hunting boots the ad agency men must have put in the car, saying that I thought this could be Le Mans. "It looked that way to me in Paris Match," she replied, tugging on a boot.

A gypsy-like family of three was pushing a motorcycle and its sidecar by our window. Somebody told us that that was the Hal Zucker family who had installed a telephone in their sidecar for navigation purposes at last year's rallye. I must have been staring, perhaps looking for the phone, for Hal looked up, reading my mind. "This year I'm getting a voodoo radio," he beamed. Startled, I asked what he hoped to hear over it. "Cozy Cole," came the reply as he pushed on out of sight.

The next shock to my aesthetic sensibility came with the announcement that this rallye was for the "average driver." That is, the most dashing, flamboyant driver would not come out on top at the end, for the top prizes would go to those drivers whose time most nearly approximated the computed average time. There are rallyes and rallyes, Virginia.

When the rallye began (an hour late, more or less) and the Rover started off trailing the pack, straining in the second of her eight truck-like forward gears, I felt mildly disappointed. I knew that we were supposed to be the official car and all that, but why must we behave like a bloody tank, I wondered? Jocelyn and I began to hint

to our driver that it would be ripping if we actually WON the Rallye. Gradually, our rallye mood mastered the day and we began to miss a few turns here and there, shortening the 15-mile course significantly.

Other "real" contestants would see us roaring ahead making wrong turns. Some became quite confused. I saw a Turner stop when we made one of our wrong turns. As I looked back, it was still there, uncertain as to which was the REAL turn.

A red Triumph flashed by us, filled with young college-types, and tried to pass us. We gunned the Rover into what must have been a hairpin turn in the financial district. Later they tried it again. This time, one of them shouted to us, "Is this the way to do it?" They evidently did not understand that a rallye is not a speed-race. But I suppose the sight of a gunning Land-Rover did not help to bring home that point.

The Zuckers and their motorcycle rolled by us, unconcerned. This happened several times, and they became in my mind a kind of significant leitmotif, a recurring image of steady, purposeful motion (I learned later that they finished second, only a few fractions off the winning time).

By now, we were well ahead of the pack. We whipped by the three devious checkpoints at a bumpy 15 m.p.h. (dangerously above the winning speed). Somebody tried to stop us each time, demanding that we give them our number. But as we had no number, we felt somewhat uneasy about slowing down.

When the Rover cornered back to the Washington Square finish line, we found that we were the first car to return. Accordingly, we demanded the first prize. Dan List looked at us and said: "Are you kidding?" or words to that effect. We were deadly serious and when no prizes were forthcoming, we made it to a nearby bar for lunch, disgruntled with the whole affair.



Hubcaps

ALL RIGHT, ALREADY

Last Sunday's Rallye, after which some participants hazarded an opinion that perhaps the time factors involved were developed by Mr. Magoo using a genuine pre-war Mickey Mouse watch, are slenderous and largely untrue. I'm sorry to say that I really have no idea what became of the Greenwich Village Motor Sports Club, and George Spinning, the clock man of 19 Christopher Street, a hero who weekly winds our Jefferson Market Courthouse timepiece, called me Monday morning and said we were off by 10 minutes; and the Levittown man that won the scene went to Brooklyn by mistake and returned to come in at right time to the second; and there was a Muntz Jet there and a Facel-Vega, and two B. M. W.'s, only one of which, I swear it, is mine; and thank you to Rover for the use of a Land-Rover as a rescue truck; and to Tuli Kupferberg, poet without peer, for manning the Wanamaker checkpoint; and to our French lady Madame Josette Faguet, who happily spelled out the identification placques so that everybody had a Frenchified name; and to the two kooky chicks that womaned the Grove Street checkpoint and, so help me, work nights at The Voice; and last but not least, to Uncle Wally Ballew, out of Bob and Ray, who made the whole thing pay and keeps the publisher smiling.

I have made a study of the dead-last-but-finished set, and have come to the conclusion that it takes a very practiced hand to come in after everyone else. If you follow the course and have a low car number, there is always someone you can follow. However, we had two dead-last prizes this year, a Chevrolet Corvair and Plymouth Wagon that followed each other and arrived easily an hour late.

The Rallye

In a factual area, The Village Voice Rallye was a scheduled meander through a large section of downtown New York, and ran for approximately 15 miles. Forty-two registrants, of which three, a Volvo among them, didn't show, and two others that never left the parking area. The field of 37 cars started off after some delay shortly after 2 in the afternoon. Jean Shepherd gave a running commentary on each machine, as to its pedigree and potentiality, and by almost 2 the field was clear and the spectators returned to their Sunday pursuits in and around the park. Although the rallye had a scheduled average time of 1 hour, 34 minutes, time scores turned in by the cars at the finish back in Washington Square varied, from a short of 1 hour, 16 minutes to a long of 1 hour, 50 minutes. The two dead-last American-made cars came in approximately an hour late to find the timekeepers gone and the rallye participants long away to the Versailles Café on Sixth Avenue to hear the results after scores were calculated.

Last Checkpoint

After much restless drinking at the Versailles, the Master of Ceremonies of the Rallye, meaning Shep, returned from a matinee that had unaccountably cropped up in his schedule and addressed the by

turns surly and jovial rallyeists. The first-place winner, Fred Alpern, had already returned home in his MGA, and was retrieved over the telephone at the home of his navigator in Levittown and given the good news. Second place went to a perennial Voice rallyist, Hal Zucker, mounted on of all things a huge Harley Davidson sidecar rig. Third place went to another MGA, but a fourth went to a jazzy blue Jaguar XK150 that had left the starting grid as if it were Le Mans. The big surprise was the Jag; at the rate he departed, he had been expected back in something under an hour.

One new feature of the rallye was the inclusion of identification cards for each car for the edification of the general public, other rallyeists, and small boys.

—Daniel List

McReynolds in Talk On Jails

David McReynolds, of the War Resisters League, will discuss "New York Jails—Revenge and Barbarism" at a meeting of the American Humanist Association, 224 West 4th Street, on Sunday, July 16, at 8.30 p. m. Contribution is \$1.

McReynolds was recently jailed for his refusal to take shelter during an air raid drill.

CANNONBALL AT VANGUARD

Julian "Cannonball" Adderley and his quintet are currently appearing at the Village Vanguard. The limited engagement will run through July 16.

Rallye Winners

The three top winners of last Sunday's Annual Village Voice Sports Car Rallye turned in times within a fraction of a second of each other. The first place winner, Fred Alpern of New Hyde Park, driving a 1960 MGA, came home clocked at 1.34.15. His time was exactly the computed average for the 15-mile rallye course. Hal Zucker, a New Yorker, was second in a 1961 Harley-Davidson motor-



Voice: Dan List

WINNER FRED ALPERN

cycle and sidecar, and Villager Jack Holtzberg finished third with another 1960 MGA.

The course wound through downtown Manhattan, the financial district, and parts of the Village. Afterwards, the winners received their prizes at the Versailles Restaurant on East 9th Street from Rallye Master Jean Shepherd.





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