



ARCC UPDATE

December 2010

Holiday Parties 2010

by George Beston, Cobourg

Over the past month Alma and I had the opportunity to attend two holiday parties: the Ottawa Chapter potluck buffet dinner on November 13 and the Toronto Chapter dinner on November 27.

The Ottawa event was held at Jack and Keri Ann Livingstone's place in keeping with a long-standing tradition. The food and the company were superb – with Dave Semel's rum cake dessert still a fond memory- and the announcement of the 2012 AROC convention in Toronto generated a lot of interest and expressions of support. Thanks to the Livingstones for hosting the event, and putting George and Alma up overnight!

The Toronto event was held at the That's Italian Restaurant in Woodbridge. This traditional Italian multi-course meal was well-executed and good value. The more formal setting didn't last long as we started moving around the room to get to talk to as many people as possible during the evening. We also enjoyed an Alfa Romeo video that was playing throughout the meeting in our private dining room. The dinner was organized thanks to Anthony Tersigni, who had to attend on his own because of the imminent arrival of a second child in the family.

Stranger in a Strange Land

by George Beston, Cobourg

Well, O.K. not really. This fall my wife and I took a long awaited vacation in Italy. From the start, this was to be a retirement celebration with both of us focusing our attention on history, culture and culinary arts. Of course I couldn't possibly leave other interests aside, especially my interest in personal transportation in general and Alfas in particular.

Oddly enough, my first car story is from our flight to Rome. I just happened to sit beside a gentleman from Burlington who was planning to visit

Maranello for a tour of the Ferrari factory and to finalize his order for a new California Spider. It was interesting to talk to someone living the dream of many enthusiasts and to vicariously join in on that dream.

I found both Rome and Florence to be teeming with traffic, all sorts of traffic. By far the most common vehicles on the roads were motor scooters and motorcycles. The scooters were predominately the modern "motorcycle with a step through frame" type, and very few of them were the older Vespa style with small wheels. Many of the smaller scooters had two stroke engines but visible emissions were absent thanks to the use of catalytic converters. The range of motorcycles was very broad with many brands I didn't recognize. Surprisingly, Harley Davidsons were notably present amongst the big bikes.



Street parking in Florence. Photo by George Beston.

The variety of cars on the road was impressive, from tiny micro cars of indeterminate origin to Smart cars, similar sized vehicles from other manufacturers, and on up through small and mid sized cars, topping out with large BMW and Mercedes sedans with the odd Bentley and Jaguar thrown in for good measure. The most common American cars I saw in Rome were Jeeps!

Of course, there were plenty of trucks, vans and busses in evidence. The vast majority of vehicles on four wheels we diesel powered. Low sulphur fuels and emission controls keep the atmosphere clean smelling, at least.

The most unusual vehicles I spotted were what we would call four wheelers, fully equipped and licensed for the road. I only saw two of them.

Alfas are everywhere, mostly in the form of diesel powered 159s which find a lot of use with the Carabinieri, Police and civilians as well. There were also a number of MiTos around looking very much at home. The best look I got at the new Giulietta was when I spotted a bunch of them being transported on a rail car. The styling and proportions of this car and its sister the Fiat Bravo are very pleasing to the eye.

The only enthusiasts' Alfas I managed to spot were a couple of 101 series Alfas, a Giulia Spider and a Giulia Sprint at Piazza Michelangelo in Florence. We were there on a Sunday morning taking in the City view and as we were leaving, it seemed like a cruise event was just beginning.



Photo by George Beston.

Otherwise, older Alfas like the ones we drive are rarely seen. Alfa enthusiasts, on the other hand, are not hard to find. The guide we hired in Rome used a driver who owned a 1750 Berlina and an Alfa 75.

Also, we enjoyed a couple of surprises relating to our own club.

While waiting for a train connection in La Spezia, we came across a fellow Toronto Chapter member, Larry Seager, and his wife Marilyn. We had a very pleasant conversation with them over some McDonald's coffee while we waited for our next train.

Later the same day we were talking to a gentleman from Munich at the bar in our hotel in Montecatini whose name is Alexander Brosch. We were discussing Italian wines, olive oil and truffles. At one point, Alma mentioned that I was interested in Alfas. Alexander expressed some surprise, said that he owns a Montreal and a Giulia SS, and also mentioned that he is associated with Scuderia Bavarese. We were both more than a little surprised to realize that we have a mutual acquaintance in Volker Albrecht who was a member of the Toronto Chapter for a few years while working here in Canada on a short term assignment. He assured me that Volker and Nicole are well, and that their family has continued to expand since they left Canada.



Alexander's SS entered in the Gran Premio Nuvolari 2010. Photo provided by A. Brosch.

This was the first of many conversations that I had with Alexander during the week we spent in Montecatini. He did his best to direct me to a dealer who had some interesting Alfas in his inventory, but sadly, I never made it there during business hours.

I always assumed the popularity of diesels in Europe was based on favorable fuel pricing, but my observations did not substantiate that. Diesel fuel was being sold at 1.20 Euro per litre, and gasoline was going for 1.30 Euro per litre. I'm sure something else is contributing to diesel engine popularity.

This is the familiar Visconti family crest, inlaid in coloured marble on the façade of the Cathedral in Lucca. Our guide said the figure being swallowed by the serpent is an infant. That's the first time I'd heard that interpretation!



Photo by George Beston.

I found it interesting to travel on the A1 Autostrada, even in a tour coach. I thought that the 130 km per hour speed limit was rather high considering the narrow lanes, occasional tight turns and the lack of any shoulder area beside the road except for pull-off areas every few kilometers. If we had comparable roads in Ontario, the posted speed limit would be less than 100 kph. Traffic seemed to move at a sensibly moderate pace. The only excitement we had on our trip occurred when two Ferrari Testa Rossas passed us in quick succession. They were obviously travelling together and having fun. I was hoping there might be more of them, but things didn't work out that way.

The Rime of the Ancient Spiderer

by Dave Willis, Ottawa

The Alfatross flies again, after 13 years! It wasn't always called "The Alfatross". First, it was a 1974 Alfa Romeo 2000 Spider Veloce; then, like most family Alfas, 'Alfie' or, in this case, Alfie-II, the '-II' because our late lamented 1750 Berlina was the first of that name. It became 'The Alfatross' only in March or April of this year, 2010, to reflect the burden it had become.

The red sticker on the Ontario owner-choice licence plate 'NOT TR2' expired Feb 98. That means it was October 1997 when the starter seized 'on'. I took that as a sign; had the body restored and lightly customized by Miniman and rebuilt the engine and transmission. That was last century, when I was Editor of this journal and my motto was "I will print

anything I don't have to write myself". Maybe George has the same motto?

First I tried to finish it for our European adventure in October 2000, but there have been many deadlines since. I stopped going to Alfa Romeo Club events because I hated to hear myself lie about 'progress' and what needed to be done. It took the sale of our house last August to get The Alfatross back on the road. On the day of closure, it was flat-bedded from my former house to Bruce Pratte's garage (a Corvettista); to Blue Tent upholstery; and then to Frank's blessed Auto Centre.



Photo by Bruce Pratte.

I drove it home from Frank's on October 25th 2010. It's not yet quite street legal – for one thing it doesn't have a gas tank – but I was fortunate that licence stickers are again red this year. Now I just need to find somebody to cast and chrome The Alfatross.

Thanks to: Bernie Betzema, Greg Connolly, Jim Duncan, Bruce Pratte, Dave Semel; and of course everybody at Frank's, especially my mentor, Giovanni Centofanti, home from Rome just in time.



Alfa Canadese, June 17-24, 2012

The 2012 National Convention for the Alfa Romeo clubs of Canada and the USA.

Early details: <http://alfacanadese.ca>

Volunteers wanted: info@alfacanadese.ca

Upcoming ARCC Events

Toronto Chapter

Date	Time	Event
April 24	10 am	Tech Session Pinarello Motori
May 6	7 pm	Cruise Night La Paloma
May 16	10 am	Canadian Automotive Museum / Sunday drive
June 3	7 pm	Cruise Night La Paloma
June 19-20	TBD	Vintage Festival/Drive
June 23-27		AROC Alfa Century
July 8	7 pm	Cruise Night La Paloma
July 11	TBD	Sunday Drive
July 17-18	TBD	Toronto / Detroit Rendezvous - Camlachie
August 5	7 pm	Cruise Night La Paloma
August 8	TBD	Sunday Drive
August 22	TBD	Wine Tour or BBQ
Sept. 2	7 pm	Cruise Night La Paloma
Sept. 10-12	TBD	Alfas at the Glen
Sept. 26	TBD	Europa Rally
Oct. 3	TBD	Fall Tour
Oct. 7	TBD	Cruise Night La Paloma
Nov. 2	TBD	Director's Meeting & Pub Night - Cam's Place
Nov. 27	TBD	Holiday Dinner That's Italian

N.B. – Unofficial cruise nights happen every Thursday at La Paloma during the season.

Ottawa Chapter

Date	Time	Event
May 8	3:30 pm	Where are all the Italian Cars?
May 30	TBD	Oxford Mills Car Show
June 18	6 pm	Weekend Fest Registration – Frank's
June 19	10 am 1 pm 2 pm 3 pm 6 pm 7 pm	Italian Day parade registration – Frank's Lunch Parade Italian Car Show Banquet

Alfa Romeo Club of Edmonton

Date	Time	Event
May 8	10:30 am	Tech Session - Lionel's
May	TBD	Spring road trip
June 19	TBD	Rally / Road Trip
July 13	6 pm	Gold Dust Casino
August 3-7	TBD	Rock-N-August
August 29	1 pm	ACE Concours & BBQ
September	TBD	Fall Road Trip
October	TBD	Annual Italian Dinner
December	TBD	Christmas tree hunt

Calgary Alfa Marque Society

Date	Time	Event
May 6	7 pm	Cruise Night
June 3	7 pm	Cruise Night
July 8	7 pm	Cruise Night
July 17	10 am	European Classic Car Show
August 5	7 pm	Cruise Night
September 2	7 pm	Cruise Night
October 7	6 pm	Cruise Night

Events of General Interest

- AROC National Convention. Frederick, Maryland, June 23-27.
- Alfa Romeo Centennario. Milano, June, 26-27
- Ferrari Shell Historic Challenge. Mont Tremblant, July 9-11
- Pittsburgh Vintage GP. July 24-25
- Vintage Grand Prix. Watkins Glen, Sept. 9-11

Alfa Romeo Club of Canada

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ARCC Update

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