



ARCC UPDATE

August 2011

Alfas in the Bluegrass

by George Beston, Cobourg

This year's AROC convention was a compelling proposition from the beginning. It was close enough to drive to and offered all the primary activities a convention should, with many alternate activities included to provide something for everybody.

The organizing chapter, Ohio Valley, ran into a bit of a snag regarding the location of the track for Time Trials. In the initial planning stages, they were to be held at a new track near Lexington. Unfortunately, that track never materialized, so they were forced to a more distant location just west of Indianapolis, some four hours away from Lexington.

The good news is that the track location allowed the selection of a route that put us very close to two extremely worthwhile spots for any automobile enthusiast to visit. With my son Adam navigating in my Spider Jr. and accompanied by Tony Adams in his 1750 Spider, we set a course for Lexington via Auburn Indiana and the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

So, we left on Monday, crossed the border at Port Huron and followed I 69 west and south to Auburn. On Tuesday morning we went to see the Auburn Cord Duesenberg automobile museum.

This museum is a National Historic Landmark located in what was the headquarters building for the Auburn organization. It has three floors of displays including about 120 vehicles and themed exhibits of automotive history. The main floor is a beautiful art deco showroom restored with its original fixtures and decorating. There are many beautiful cars there. The most spectacular one to my tastes was a huge Duesenberg SJ boat tailed roadster with aluminum cladding on the top surfaces of the body.



Photo by George Beston.

No, there weren't any Alfas present, but an exhibition in one of the upstairs rooms concerning the use of aluminum in automobiles did have a beautiful Cisitalia spider on display. It is a 202 Gran Sport model made in 1952, and was donated to the museum by Indy 500 driver Scott Brayton.



Photo by George Beston.

Other more technical displays include a room full of 1920 - era engines including aircraft engines such as a Bugatti U8 cylinder, and a Duesenberg V16 prototype. The Auburn flat head V8 in both normally aspirated and supercharged

configurations reflects some advanced design thinking for the era.

Later we drove on to Indianapolis and stopped at the Speedway to see the Hall of Fame. This museum has a large area with many of the winning cars from the last 60 years or so. It was interesting to see the progression of Indy car design over time. I was looking for, and didn't find the Alfa that raced there in the 1940's or even the Alfa Romeo powered Patrick racing entry from the 1980's. The separate display of older (Pre-WW II) cars area did include the Maserati from the '40's and two much older Italian race cars, an Itala and a Fiat.

A display that surprised me to see was a collection of trophies earned by Rudi Carraciola during his career. It seems that Carraciola drove at Indy in the late 40's and was injured in a racing incident. The Holman family hosted him at their estate while he recovered and a deep friendship developed. As a result, Mr. Carraciola donated his trophy collection to the family in appreciation of their hospitality.

Unfortunately, the shuttle bus ride around the track usually offered as an attraction was not available when we were there. It seems that Bosch was having a VIP day at the track, and they had arranged for the two seat IRL cars to be pressed into service to provide thrill rides for their guests. We had to settle for observing the two-seaters and then taking a tour of the vast infield area. The tour provided us with a perspective of how large the grandstands have to be to accommodate 400,000 spectators on Memorial Day every year. I just can't imagine how all those people get in and out of there!

From Indianapolis, it was a short hop to our hotel in Cloverdale Indiana, close to Putnam Park Road Course.

The Putnam Park site lives up to the "park" part of its name with tidy fences and lush grass everywhere.



Photo by George Beston.

The track itself was a good choice for the event because it has a smooth surface, some amount of elevation change including a downhill straight stretch, very few threatening structures near the track, and some off-camber corners to make life

more interesting. I managed to participate in the "Touring Laps" during lunch break (no roll bar required for those!) and found myself a little envious of those who were doing the timed event.

Given the distance to Lexington, we left fairly early and made our way to the convention hotel destination via Louisville, Ky. It was an enjoyable drive for the scenery, but we'd had about enough of the 95° F temperatures and high humidity by the time we got there!

At the hotel, it was great to get out into the parking lot and renew acquaintances from previous years.



Photo by George Beston.

Thursday we had decided to participate in the Distillery tour to learn all we could about Bourbon. At any rate, the tour guide filled us with talk about Horse County and the history of the Lexington area. Riding in an air-conditioned coach was refreshing after three days of roasting in a Spider, and everyone who participated seemed to think that the occasion was worthwhile.

The TSD rally on Friday was well organized and gave us a good chance to drive some scenic back roads and to take in the beauty of the area. My navigator and I had listened to the orientation session the day before and puzzled over the advanced default rules used with the expert instructions. We quickly decided to use the beginners' instructions to avoid confusion and to enjoy the route rather than compete for a prize. The beginners' instructions made the event stress free and it seemed almost too short because of that!

At lunch time, we observed the autocross event in a parking lot near the hotel. Mercifully, there was some shade to shelter us from the sun on another really hot day.

The rest of the day Friday was spent getting the Spider Jr. ready for the Concours.

We got up early on Saturday to get to Keeneland (a horse racing venue) and complete our preparations. The Keeneland Concours is an annual event used as a fund-raiser for the children's hospital in

Lexington. As with the last Detroit convention and the Meadowbrook Concours, the concurrent timing of this convention was no coincidence. We had our own area for the Alfas in the Bluegrass Concours and selected Alfas were entered in two unique classes in the Keeneland Concours, not the AROC event.

Overall, there was a tremendous range of beautiful Alfas to peruse and compare. The one I enjoyed the most was a Keeneland Concours entry, none other than the Alfa Romeo 308 that was not present for our visit to the IMS Hall of Fame.



Photo by George Beston.

It was manufactured in 1938, brought to the USA in 1940, and entered in three different Indy 500's – 1946 through 1948. Finishes were 6th, 7th and 8th in the hands of Durant, Brown and Mauro. It got my people's choice vote, for whatever that's worth.

Later in the afternoon, I attended one of the best convention tech sessions I've ever experienced. Herb Sanborn and Wes Ingram teamed up for an extremely informative session on the Spica fuel injection system. Attendees were all handed samples of the pump cams that control fuel delivery to ponder during the session. The depth of knowledge and expertise available on these systems strengthened my belief that anyone using Spica injected engines should continue to do so and rely on Herb and Wes for pump rebuilding when or if necessary.

The second part of the tech session was a presentation by Daron Walker of Vintage Customs in Burlington, Washington. He gave an overview of the restoration process, and provided examples of work his company has done in restoring Alfas that I would have guessed were beyond recovery. It really is disappointing to see the initial stages of these restorations. The cars in question come in looking passable, but as layers of filler come off and the true condition of the chassis and body is revealed, it must truly give the owners extreme difficulty in

deciding whether or not they should proceed. One thing Daron brought up was a strong case against acid dipping body shells. Apparently there are metal blocks built into the chassis sections where the steering box and idler arm are mounted, and acid dipping can dislodge these blocks, significantly weakening that area of the chassis.

The banquet speaker this year was Keith Martin, the publisher of Sports Car Market magazine. Keith is an individual with a long history of enthusiasm for Alfa Romeo. He made a very entertaining address, regaling us with stories from his early Alfa days and making some amusing light-hearted comparisons to investing in automobiles with investing in equity markets in these turbulent times. At any rate, his sponsorship of the event and the inclusion of a copy of Sports Car Market magazine in the registration package were much appreciated.

Sunday brought the awards brunch. We had to leave before it was over because somebody had to be back at work on Monday morning. One highlight of the awards was that Toronto member Brian Crockatt earned a second in class with his well-prepared and very original 1750 round-tail spider. Congratulations, Brian!

The ride home from Lexington to Toronto was a twelve-hour marathon, again in sweltering conditions. With a couple of hydration breaks and a long supper stop including a last minute fill-up of relatively economical American premium gas, we crossed the border at Windsor and made it to Adam's place in downtown Toronto about a half-hour past midnight on Monday morning.

ARCC Classified

For Sale

1976 Spider Veloce. Parting out entire car. Low mile car stored over 20 years. All parts available including: engine, transmission, differential, exhaust, radiator, calipers, suspension, electrical, body panels, top frame, seats, wheels, tail lights, side markers, chrome bits, glass, etc. Call me with your parts request at 647-295-2532. Can deliver or ship parts if requested. Anthony Tersigni.

Upcoming ARCC Events

Toronto Chapter

Date	Time	Event
Feb. 5	9:30 am	Directors' Meeting
March 31	7:00 pm	AGM
May 5	7:00 pm	Cruise Night
May 15	TBD	Sunday Drive
June 2	7:00 pm	Cruise Night
June 5	TBD	Sunday Drive
June 17-19	TBD	Vintage Festival/Drive
July 7	7:00 pm	Cruise Night
July 12-17		AROC Convention
August 4	7:00 pm	Cruise Night
August 6-7		Toronto/Detroit Party
August 21	TBD	Winery Tour
Sept. 1	7:00 pm	Cruise Night
Sept. 25	TBD	Europa Rally
Oct. 6	7:00 pm	Cruise Night
Oct. 16	TBD	Fall Tour
Nov. 8	7:00 pm	Pub Night/Directors' Mtg
Nov. 26	6:00 pm	Holiday Dinner

Ottawa Chapter

Date	Time	Event
May 7	3:30 pm	Where are all the Italian cars?
June 18	10:00 am 1:00 pm 1:30 pm 2:30 pm	Italian Day - register Parade Lunch Fiat New & Retro show
June 21	7:00 pm	Annual General Meeting
August 21	TBD	Magical Mystery Tour
Sept. 13	TBD	Pub Night
Oct. 13	3:00 pm	Italian Car Christening Party

Alfa Club of Edmonton

Date	Time	Event
April	TBD	Tech Session – Ron G.
May	TBD	Apple Blossom Winery
June	TBD	Historic Road Solstice
July	TBD	Race event
August 3-7	TBD	Rock-N-August Concours / Viva Italia
September	TBD	Mid-southern tour
October	TBD	Amber Brewing Oktoberfest
November	TBD	Italian dinner
December	TBD	Christmas tree hunt
January	TBD	After Christmas party

Other Events of Interest

Ferrari Shell / Historic Trans Am Challenge,
Mont Tremblant, July 9-11

Italian Car Day, Boyd Park, August 27



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

Alfa Romeo Club of Canada

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ARCC Update

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