



ARCC UPDATE

January 2009

Message from Toronto Chapter President by Anthony Tersigni, Richmond Hill

Buon Anno Nuovo, Happy New Year! By this time we should all have had our fair share of holiday treats, cakes and candy and of course a few drinks in between! It seems that every year, the holiday season just flies by, and next thing you know, we are planning our calendars for the year ahead.

Having said this, it won't be long until I sit down with the board of directors in late February to plan out the club season that awaits us. I'll take this moment to thank our directors for a job well done in 2008. We had many fun filled events, which they all made possible. I also want to thank Ken Lee, George Beston and Adam DiCarlo who each make us aware of all the events and Alfa related topics, either by emails, ARCC Updates or Web Site correspondence.

The directors are always looking for new ideas and comments from any of our previous events in order to make them even better than they already are. So please do not hesitate to send a message to me directly at gtv_veloce@hotmail.com. All your ideas and comments will be addressed at our upcoming meeting. Also, if you have a desire to be a board member please let me know as well.

In the meantime, try to keep active during these next few winter months by working on your cars, lining up parts or accessories that you want to add come spring time, join Alfa chat groups like the Alfabb (we have a Toronto Chapter thread), log on to www.alfabb.com, or just sit back and wait for our AGM in about three months time. Whatever you do, have fun.

Toronto Chapter Holiday Dinner by Anthony Tersigni, Richmond Hill

Ever since my involvement began with the ARCC, there was never an end of season dinner party, so this year I decided to organize one.

On the evening of Saturday, December 6, 2008, a fair number of Toronto Chapter members braved the snow storm that was hitting the GTA, to join the group that was gathering together for the Toronto Chapter Holiday Dinner. The venue was Marino's Italian restaurant in Woodbridge. We all arrived safely and enjoyed each other's company along with the fine Italian cuisine that had been served to us. We each enjoyed our own favourites off their menu, along with a glass of wine. It was nice to see some distant faces such as Bruce and Dorothy Wilkie, who had brought along a few pictures of their Alfas. John and Christine Pickering were also among the group. We all had a great time sharing Alfa stories, looking back on the 2008 season and looking forward to what the 2009 season will bring. Happy Holidays!

Membership Renewal

We don't dwell on the business affairs of the Club very often. As a means of consuming a modest cash surplus, only new members have been charged a membership fee for the last two years. The news is that the dues holiday that we've all enjoyed for a while has come to an end.

The cash surplus accumulated over a number of years as a result of the efforts of our newsletter publisher to keep printing and mailing costs down, and the strength of the Canadian dollar.

Our membership year runs until the end of February. Please use the form enclosed with this newsletter and renew in good time, particularly if you wish to receive the Alfa Owner magazine through our club. Those who have recently joined are already members through to the end of the 2009/2010 membership year. If you don't get a form, that's probably why!

An Illuminating Experience

by Fabio Venier, Holland Landing, Ontario

This is a recounting of my experience on my “surrogate Alfa Romeo”... my Lancia Fulvia. My Giulia Super is still incomplete as the restoration has slowed down. But that’s another story ...



During the warm (non-snow) months, I drive the Fulvia as much as I can. Often times I end up driving at night – especially on the way home from Club gatherings in Woodbridge. The visibility at night was pretty lousy. The high beams, on the other hand, were pretty good. Unfortunately, one can’t drive around with the high beams blasting in regular traffic. So I had to do some investigating to figure out what was causing the poor night vision.

Step one: Check the aiming. I knew it was off as the light patterns didn’t look proper. I rolled the car up to my shop one night and pointed the lights at the garage door. From days gone by I remembered that light aiming was typically done at a distance of approximately 25 to 30 feet. Sure enough, the patterns were way over to the right and pointing at the ground about 10 feet in front of the car.

The other thing I noticed is that the low beams were dim and yellow. These were GE sealed beams. The high beams were Carello units with H1 bulbs and they, on the other hand, were bright and vivid. No wonder that the high beam lights were quite good thus far!

Step two: Make sure that the light mountings were not rusted. Fortunately the car had not seen any winters so this was not an issue. I did notice, however, that once I removed the low beams, there was an extra wire hanging in the bucket not connected to anything. How odd I thought. Out came the wiring diagram and after some careful study I noted that there was supposed to be a “city light”. Hmm. Off we go to the internet and do some searching. In short order I found out that this is a small 5W bulb used on some European cars that is

nestled into the base of a low beam headlamp. As it turns out, some time ago the original lamps were replaced with sealed beam units and the extra wire was simply snapped off. A quick check revealed that there was power there when the “parking lights” were turned on. Ah ha! I always thought that was odd with my Fulvia ... turn on the parking lamps and only the rear of the car lit up!

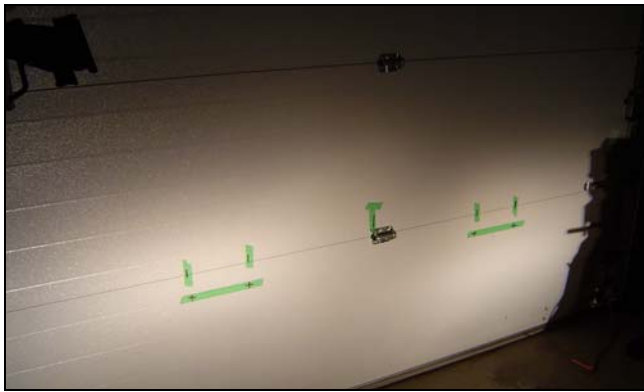
Step three: At this point I decided to see what I could do to improve night time driving. Back to the internet for some more searching to see what was available. My requirements, according to the factory specifications, were to use 5.75” lamps with H1 bulbs in both high and low lamps with the low beam lamp being equipped with a city light.

In North America there are few choices. Hella makes a low beam lamp with a city light but with an H4 bulb. That might suffice but I was not totally satisfied. The price was around \$80 each. Pricy considering sealed beams are \$20-ish. So I kept looking. I came across a site called Daniel Stern Lighting. As it turns out, the fellow is located here in Toronto. I studied his literature and found that he was selling Cibie lamps. The ones that fit my requirements were the new CSR models. They were the latest offering from Cibie and the more expensive than the Hella models...of course. Also notable is the reported light output of these lamps using only 55W H1 bulbs. Interesting. I studied the graphs on Daniel’s site and after some more deep thought decided to give them a try. What the heck? I thought that it would be a really good idea to be able to see well at night on the back roads so I decided to order the CSR high beams as well. I can use the Carellos on my Super. I placed my order and waited a week or so.

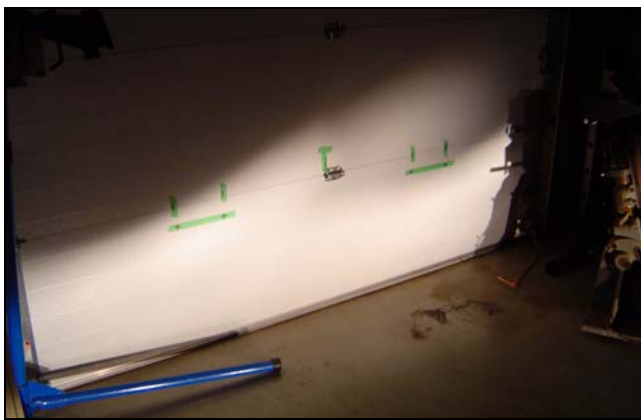
Step four: After they arrived, I installed the lamps and corrected the wiring. I did not use aftermarket relays at this time as the Lancia already has a relay set-up for the lights. Besides, I was anxious to “see” the results. I set-up some tape lines on my garage door and started the aiming process as described by Daniel Stern. I couldn’t wait to try them out on a night drive. When I took a drive around the back roads, all I could say was WOW. What a difference.

These lamps are “E-code” which means that there is a distinctive horizontal cut-off with a rising ramp to the right which is meant to illuminate road signs.

As mentioned above, there are many country roads near my home and the illumination is noticeable when there aren’t any street lamps. Once again, WOW ... what a pleasure it is to finally see at night! My day-to-day vehicles are not even close to being this good!



This photo shows the sealed beam light pattern. I adjusted the aim as best as I could given that I couldn't see the pattern all that well. The patterns are just light "blobs"



This photo shows the CSR's as installed replacing the sealed beams. The light is much brighter and sharper. Note the crisp horizontal cut-off and the ramp. They still needed to be aimed properly.

I am not selling anything for Daniel Stern although I must say he was very helpful. I just want to inform others that are driving old Italian cars with crap 5.75" lamps. You don't need 100W bulbs. I use regular, high quality, 55W bulbs and they are MORE than adequate. That's a good thing! Not only that, but the power draw is the same on my electrical system so I don't have to worry about cooking wires...or my car. That's also a good thing! The optics of the Cibie lamps are very impressive ...and they are NOT made in China (a pet peeve of mine). I tried to capture this with a bunch of "before and after photos" but my photographic skills and digital camera just don't capture it as well as the human eye. The two photos above are the best of the bunch and hopefully illustrate the differences. As they say, you have to see it to believe it.

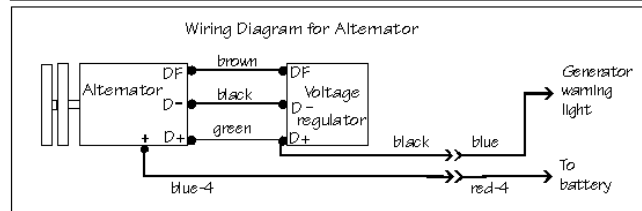
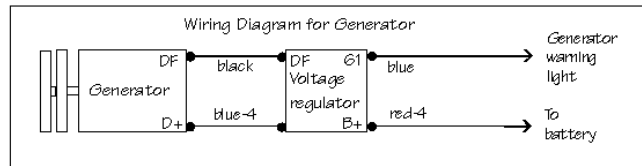
Next question is: How much? Each lamp is \$110. That's a 40% premium over the Hella lamps. Is it worth it? I think so.

Next time it is dark and we are together I can show you in person and then you can be the judge.

Generator to Alternator Conversion

by George Beston, Cobourg, Ontario

As part of the ongoing project scroll on my Spider Jr., I decided to upgrade the electrical system by replacing the OE generator with a suitable alternator. A quick search of Alfa web sites found a very clear and concise article in the St. Louis club's iSaluti newsletter archives which included useful wiring diagrams and some detailed instructions.



Suitably encouraged, I dusted off an Alfetta alternator from my extensive collection of old Alfa stuff (someone else might have other names for it) and had it totally rebuilt by a local shop. Fortunately, whoever was living in it for a while was long gone, leaving only a pile of sunflower seed hulls stuffed inside the cooling shroud.

Since a specific goal in this process was to maintain a stable voltage above 13V, I also purchased an electronic regulator. From the outside it's almost indistinguishable from an OE Bosch regulator as used by Alfas of the '70's. A bracket was fabricated from aluminum bar stock so that it could reside in the same spot as the original regulator.

I had the alternator and regulator combination bench tested before installation to satisfy myself that the rebuild was done properly. All painted up, it's obvious it won't hurt under hood appearance.



Installation proved to be an entirely different kettle of fish. I am so used to swapping components around, I never thought to check how the alternator might fit into my Spider. After numerous attempts, it became clear that there was no way that the alternator was going to be located in the correct position without removing something, either the radiator, the oil filter canister and base or the 1&4 exhaust header. The only other option was surgery to cut a corner off the battery tray. Since the exhaust system had some very minor leaks that I wanted to address before fitting an oxygen sensor downstream, I decided to drop the exhaust system and remove the headers. With that done, I was able to locate the alternator and bolt it up in the correct position.

The next and equally unexpected hurdle was that the alternator pulley was out of alignment with the water pump and crankshaft pulleys. It was sitting forward of the other pulleys by about 0.1”.

This problem was addressed by having some metal milled off the back of the boss on the alternator that bolts up to the engine’s front cover. The alignment still not absolutely perfect, but an “executive decision” was made to tolerate this and get on with life. The lesson here is that an Alfetta alternator doesn’t exactly fit on a Euro 1750 engine, but can be adapted fairly easily.

Of course, the generator’s belt was ‘way too short and an Alfetta belt was a bit long, so it took a few tries and some trips back and forth to an auto parts store, to come up with a Gatorback belt of suitable length.

Finally, the headers were bolted back in place and the exhaust system was carefully installed with some oxygen sensor friendly sealant between the headers and the front exhaust section.

A combination of road test for the new alternator and “last drive of the season” for 2008 demonstrated the benefits of the overall exercise. All of the electrical components seem to be working with more vigor given the steady 13.9 V output of the new system. Lights are brighter, blinkers work a little more quickly, the OE 4-way flasher system finally operates at a normal speed, and the oil pressure gauge reads a little higher. I’m left with the suspicion that the generator and its regulator were putting out less than adequate voltage, but since I didn’t measure it, there’s no way to know for sure!

What is a "GIUBO"?

by Elio Comello, Camlachie, Ontario

We hear this exotic Italian word; example, "That driveshaft noise means you need to change the GIUBO!"

GIUBO is Italian slang for the "Flex Joint".

Ingegnere Boschi is credited with inventing this flexible joint (Giunta in Italian).

Hence GIUBO (GIUnta BOschi).

Upcoming ARCC Events

Alfa Romeo Club of Edmonton

Ottawa Chapter

Toronto Chapter

Watch this space! Clubs reps should send 2009 calendars as soon as possible.

Alfa Romeo Club of Canada

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ARCC Update

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