



# ARCC UPDATE

September 2010

## *Registro Italiano Alfa Romeo Centenary Celebrations*

by Oliver Collins, Toronto

These pictures were taken at the back of the Fieramilano (convention centre) in Rho (North Milan) on the day of the unveiling of the sculpture designed by Alfa Stylo, the in-house Alfa design department.



*Photo provided by RIAR.*

All the vintage Alfas like mine were parked out front by the sculpture so are not in this photo.



*Photo provided by RIAR.*

I received a letter from Giancarlo Massolo (RIAR board member) thanking me for my participation, and providing the following comments and requests for input, which I am following up on.

“The centenary celebrations in Italy have been a great success, thanks to the participation of many clubs coming from all the world, and having its apotheosis with the unveiling of the monument. It is quite difficult now to list all the countries and all the participants, but we may say that we had attendants from the Far East, North and South America, South Africa, Near East; in short all European countries, forming therefore a true multi-national meeting, all linked together by the same passion. Even more, most of the participants had similar meetings in their own countries, multiplying the celebrations exponentially.

Just for that we thought it wise to publish a sort of “*We were there*” document where all the clubs are represented with their own celebrations and their logos. For this reason I am asking you to send me:

- a short memo with the celebrations in your country (participants, cars, authorities attending, etc.)
- the logo of your club in a form to be printed or reproduced on the web site
- pictures of your and/or Italian celebrations.

I thank you for what you can send me, and I wish this will contribute to create more opportunities for meeting again.”

# Alfa Bonneville Speed Trials 2010

by Bill Lightfoot, Vienna, VA

**Editor's note:** *Bill is one of the drivers for speed record attempts in "Bonnie", the well-known Alfa Spider converted for the purpose. This is actually a letter written immediately after the event and sent out to a number of friends. It comes to us via Oliver Collins, who is acquainted with Bill through his vintage racing activities. – G.B.*

I just got back from the Bonneville Salt Flats late Thursday (19 August) night. We had the usual trials and tribulations that go with racing, although it was great fun overall, as is always the case when we take the amazing yellow Alfa Spider ("Bonnie") to compete at that unique and exotic locale.

Under previous agreement, I was the "first and primary" driver at this year's "Speed Week" and, due to the team's meticulous car preparation, we came right out of the box with a good run that put us in the record qualifying territory. But we got a little greedy and decided to forfeit that first run in hopes that we could get a better one. That looked like a bad bet for a while because, in the middle of my next run, the car cooked its AEM electronic ignition module and I was forced to pull off the course. It looked as if we were going to be down for a couple of days waiting for a replacement. In the process of making a frantic search in the paddock, I tracked down a guy who is an engineer at AEM and miraculously, he had an extra 4 cylinder module with him which he gave to us AT NO COST! That's part of the Bonneville experience, lots of sharing.

Soooo, we were back in business. The car was really running great although we weren't getting the boost that Jim Steck, our brilliant engine builder, thought we would get. We had hoped for 28 lbs of boost but the most we could ever muster was 25. Also, we were having problems with our data collection system so Jim wasn't able to get enough data to figure out what the boost problem was. It turned out that although neither Jim nor I could feel it, we were bumping up against the rev limiter and this limitation wasn't allowing the turbo to spool up to where we wanted it. But we didn't figure that out until after speed week was over on Friday and Jim could get the data recovery system working.

New for this year was a streamlined fairing that Jim fabricated to go behind the roll cage. Jim and I both think that the fairing bought us a few miles per hour. Unfortunately, there was a downside to the fairing. On every run I made, the car started

porpoising at about 200 mph, bobbing up and down as if it was going over waves. Incidentally, you will note that my wife Elena is NOT on this distribution list...Elena is not a fan of Bonneville-type racing and the less said to her about issues such as car handling, the better. Anyway, both Jim and an aerodynamics type I spoke with thought that this periodic movement was caused by the new head fairing. In any event, this sort of oscillation gives one pause and I was anxious to get rid of it. The guys were finally able to do this by dropping the nose of the car about an inch.



After changing the ignition module and making some other changes we got back out on the salt and made a REALLY good run. I had an average speed for the 5th mile of 233.841 (which is about 8 mph more than needed for a new record and the fastest that I have gone) and an "out the back door" speed of 233.891 mph. We decided to put that run in our pocket and we took the car directly to impound. The way it works is that you have to leave the car in impound overnight after a run which qualifies for a record and then make a back up run the next morning. This process is suppose to help cancel out the effect of the wind. The average speed of the two record attempting runs is then calculated to see if you have broken a record. If the average is high enough to qualify, the engine is torn down to see if it is legal.

The next morning (Thursday, 19 August) we were out on the salt at dawn (incidentally, it is absolutely breathtakingly beautiful out there at dawn and dusk) and, as soon as they let us, made a run that yielded a 5th mile speed of 230.590 mph. Not fantastic, but more than enough to sat a new world record. The old world record, which I set last year, was 225.839 mph and the new one (the average of my last two runs) is 232.215 mph. This is the fastest record the car has ever posted. The car was torn down for post record run inspection this morning and, early this afternoon, the SCTA (Southern California Timing Association) declared that the car was legal and announced that I (and the all important car and engineering team!) were now the holders of the new world record for the

G/BFMS (Blown Fuel Modified Sports, under two litre) class.

I need to note here that the engine/car is of paramount importance in this type of racing. The driver is of some importance, of course, as even a slight error in shift timing or steering input will ruin a run, but the engine/car combination is critical. In road racing, for example, a brilliant driver can make even an ordinary car a winner but that certainly is not true in world speed record competition. Even a Michael Schumacher or Mario Andretti isn't going to make a slow car go really fast in a straight line. So, keeping that fact in mind, I would like to once again thank Jim Steck who built upon the earlier work of the Besic Brothers, Richard Kreines, Craig Bilat, Eric Storhok and a number of others to put together a world record car and engine combination.

Under our agreement, as soon as I had completed my record runs, Jim Steck took over as driver. Also by agreement, Jim and I run in different classes. This arrangement keeps Jim from dialling down the boost when I run or me pouring sugar in the fuel tank when he runs. Just kidding, of course! In truth there is actually surprisingly little inter-team rivalry and lots of mutual support. Jim made an extremely fast first run and put the car into impound. However, on the later back-up run even the exceptionally reliable Alfa gave up the ghost, suffering some sort of mechanical failure, so Jim was not able to set a new record in his class this year. But we did come away with one new world record and the whole team (and certainly me!) feels great about that.

In summary, I say again that the Bonneville race week is really a ball, whether or not you set a record or even enter a car, and I recommend the experience to all true car nuts. But watch it! If you ever go out there you'll get the bug and want to keep going back.

## ***Tech Topics:*** ***Four-way Flasher Fix*** by Oliver Collins, Toronto

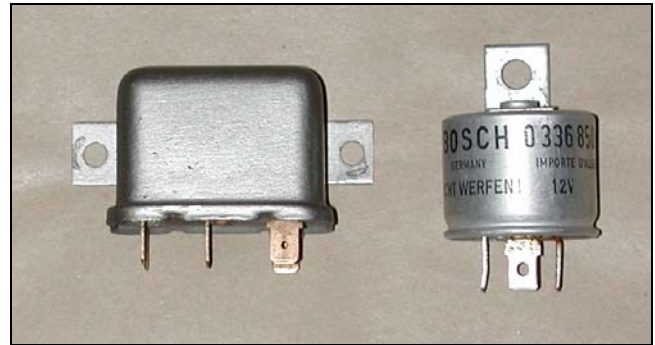
My Spider Jr. came equipped with 4-way flashers which appear from the switch, wiring, and overall installation to be original equipment. This is not common, but I have seen similar setups in other S1 Spiders not intended for sale in the U.S. market.

The long and short of it is that at the best of times, this system has only just been able to function, giving long stretches of "lights on" followed by a

brief off period, and this for only a minute or so until flashing stopped and the lights just stayed on.

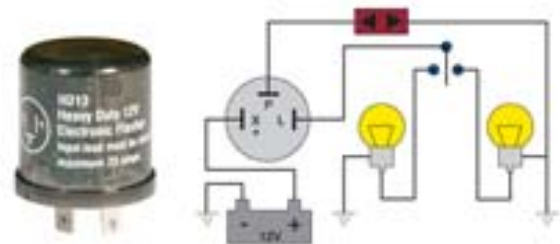
I recently had to change a tire on the shoulder of Highway 401 in a rain storm, and unfortunately, had to do it without functioning flashers. I don't plan on letting that happen again!

The OE system for these 4-way flashers includes a small flasher unit that is used to feed trigger current to a relay which in turn provides power separately to the external lights and to the dashboard indicator. Presumably the purpose of this set-up was to lighten the electrical load on the thermal flasher so that it would function properly while feeding trigger current to the relay.



Of course, modern electronic devices are built to cope with the current required, so this degree of complication is no longer necessary.

After a little surfing, I identified a Tridon flasher unit (HD13) intended to light both a dash indicator and the external lights.



It took only a few minutes with a test light and a jumper wire to identify the power line from the dashboard switch to the OE flasher, and the wires at the OE relay that power the dashboard and indicator lights.

From there, it was a small matter of hooking up the three connectors on the Tridon flasher to the switch, the dash indicator, and the external lights. Now, my Spider has reliable 4-way flashers that work at an even tempo and will last as long as current is available from the battery.

## 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 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	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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