



# ARCC UPDATE

September 2011

## *Radunno Cent'Uno*

by George Beston, Cobourg

Following success of last year's gathering for the Detroit and Toronto Alfa Clubs, Elio Comello planned a similar gathering in this, Alfa Romeo's one hundred and first year of existence. We had an agenda with a full slate of activities for the weekend of August 6 and 7.

On Saturday, we started out with three cars in an early morning rendezvous in Waterdown. Our plan was to drive along the 403 to Woodbridge, take the 401 to Hwy 402 towards Sarnia, and then head south through Petrolia to our brunch location at the Black Creek Golf Club near Oil Springs. We met up on time and headed west with Richard Diver in the lead and Deni Bellai as a passenger in Richard's new-fangled Korean wheels. I was following by myself in the Spider Jr. with Rob Dovigo bringing up the rear in his S2 spider. We got separated in the improbably heavy three-lane traffic through Hamilton, and I was sure that Richard was up ahead wondering how we could be so slow. We almost made Brantford before Richard caught up wondering why on earth we were going so fast. It seems we passed him early on without noticing what had happened. We made the rest of the trip without incident and arrived well before the eleven o'clock target.

We met up with other attendees from Toronto, Sarnia and Detroit at the golf club and enjoyed a generous brunch together, sitting at one long table.

After lunch we visited the Oil Museum of Canada in Oil Springs. We all tend to lose track of history so it's really interesting to hear about what a nuisance this black material was when it just oozed out of the ground contaminating springs and creeks and making agriculture difficult. Then someone figured out that if you just boiled off all those light components it made a pretty good pitch for sealing the hulls of wooden boats. When the creek frequently caught fire because of the other components getting dumped in the water, someone decided that perhaps those liquids might be a good

substitute for lamp oil derived from whales. As demand picked up, the practice of scooping the tarry crude from dug wells lost its appeal, so the very first drilled oil wells in the world were called into play. Of course the story goes on from there. Suffice it to say that this part of Ontario still has many producing wells, but is no longer the focus of any exploration activity.

The expertise that developed in the Oil Springs area resulted in the creation of a cadre of skilled professionals who were able to travel and put their expertise to use in initiating the development of oil fields in South America, the Middle East and in the Philippines. Many of the Museum's displays include exotic artefacts brought back home by these individuals.

On the museum grounds there were a number of wells set up with an old-fashioned "Jerker Line" pumping system that we were able to peruse at leisure. The display pictured below is a primitive still for separating light and heavy components of crude oil.



*Photo by Lucie Collins.*

Our next attraction was a tour of the Monroe Meadery, an establishment that gathers and produces many honey products for sale in their facility including mead, an alcoholic beverage analogous to wine in alcohol content and use of the finished product. After sampling a number of

different mead products, I concluded that I couldn't do without a bit of sourness in the mead, and opted for a version made with some cranberry juice added to the must.



*Photo by Lucie Collins.*

We drove on to Petrolia and enjoyed a few minutes looking at the Victoria Concert Hall, a grand 19th century building that has been restored at great expense despite a fire that nearly ruined the building as the first restoration was being completed.

The final activity of the afternoon was a visit to Baines Machine Shop & Repair Works in Petrolia. This shop has been in business for about 100 years. In the beginning, it fabricated hardware for oil wells and pumps. Today some of this hardware is still made at Baines, but the work is now augmented by machine work on parts for farm equipment.



*Photo by Lucie Collins.*

It's fascinating to see such an old shop still being used, complete with overhead shafts that provide power to the individual machines via canvas belts. For what it's worth, many of the machines in this shop proudly bear "Made in Canada" casting marks. Sadly, the dates of manufacture go back to the early 1900's and beyond.

After freshening up a bit we then went to our private dinner in the Bread Man location in Sarnia. Elio's friend Bruno put on a fine Italian dinner for us with five courses for us to enjoy. Everything was excellent, but the baked lasagne pasta course was

really outstanding. I could have quit eating after that, but I soldiered on for the Involtini and dessert courses. This was as good a meal as I've ever enjoyed, served in a relaxing atmosphere.



*Elio serving our after-dinner Sambuca. Photo by Rob Dovigo.*



*Group photo taken after dinner. Photo by Rob Dovigo.*

On Sunday, we started with a drive around the beach and waterfront park near the Blue water Bridge, and then drove to late brunch at John's Restaurant on London Line – another fine place to dine in Sarnia. On the way there, Pat's GTV was having a fuel delivery problem, but as you can see from the following picture he wasn't short of help in checking it out! Deni deserves some praise for getting under the car to make sure the fuel pump was operating.





*Photo by Lucie Collins.*

After brunch we gathered at Elio and Luciana's elegant home for coffee and discussion of our upcoming Alfa Canadese convention.

For the drive home, Rob and I headed out in our Spiders a little early because rain was in the forecast. A few kilometres down the road we encountered rain. Rob and I found out that you can stay fairly dry by going a little faster, BUT, spray started settling on the inside of the windshield., and oddly, the back of my neck was getting wet. Just as we were about to pull over, the rain let up and we both made it all the way home without putting the tops up despite lots of rain ahead of us and behind us on the highway.

This was a truly memorable weekend. We owe a huge vote of thanks to Elio and Luciana and to Pat O'Reilly for their work in organizing the weekend and hosting most of us overnight.

## ***Toronto Chapter Wine Tour*** **by George Beston, Cobourg**

For this year's wine tour on August 21<sup>st</sup> we opted for a simple approach to the tour, with only one winery on the agenda.

Much to the joy of the organizer everyone showed up well ahead of our planned departure time from a Tim Horton's location in Oshawa. We had a pleasant drive down the 401 Eastbound to Newtonville Rd., north to County road 9 and then east towards Warkworth and the Oak Heights winery, Northumberland County's only winery- so far! This turned out to be a unique drive, as only Spiders came along for the day. Let's hope it wasn't the threat of inclement weather that kept the GTs and Berlinas at home.



*Only Spiders! Photo by George Beston.*

The Brunch created by chef Steve Sherman was enjoyed by all with most of us opting for a glass of the fine wines that came from the vineyard we could observe from the dining room. An unexpected bonus along with the meal was some live music from an entertainer on site for the day.



*Photo by George Beston.*

After lunch we had a tasting of a range of red and white wines and an opportunity to view the winery facilities. Many of us took advantage of the occasion to buy a bottle or two of these wines to take home.

Our next part of the tour was a visit to Warkworth. By coincidence, we landed there at the height of an annual civic event know as "The World's Longest Lunch". A series of tables was laid out along two blocks of the downtown street and sheltered with canopies. We parked our Alfas on a side street without difficulty and spent an hour or so soaking up the atmosphere, perusing the stores and visiting the Farmer's Market.

The last stage of a tour was a scenic drive towards Cobourg via some twisty back roads, and a pit stop at the Bestons' prior to heading back to the city.

August 21 was a stormy day, with flooding in many places and the tornado disaster in Goderich. Luckily, everyone managed to get home without incident.

## Upcoming ARCC Events

### Toronto Chapter

Date	Time	Event
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. 17	8:30 am	Creemore Drive
Sept. 25	8:30 am	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
Nov. 12	7:00 pm	30 <sup>th</sup> Annual Potluck

### Alfa Club of Edmonton

Date	Time	Event
May 7	11:00 am	Tech Session – Ron G.
May 29	1:30 pm	Apple Blossom Winery
June	TBD	Historic Road Solstice
July	TBD	Race event
August 3-7	TBD	Rock-N-August
August 28		Viva Italia
Sept. 11	1:30 pm	Concours
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](mailto:info@alfacanadese.ca)

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