



ARCC UPDATE

August 2013

Driving “Miss Alfa”

by George Beston, Cobourg

No, it's not a speedboat. Miss Alfa is the name that's been given to Cunliffe Clare's Montreal V8 powered Alfetta GT. It (she?) was given that name by Cunliffe's wife, perhaps as a result of all the time and attention that this project has required.

An article appeared in the April 2012 edition of the ARCC Update, chronicling the union of a Montreal V8 engine and an Alfetta GT to create an intriguing combination with a lot of promise. Since then, this amazing Alfa appeared at Alfa Canadese, impressing all comers and without doubt sending many of us back home wondering if we could ever accomplish something like that.

To summarize, the project began with a Montreal Cunliffe acquired that was too far gone to restore, and a clean 1980 European Alfetta GT that Joe Canella had in his shop. With an agreed goal of powering the Alfetta with the Montreal's engine, these two individuals persevered for about ten years to see this project through. Miss Alfa has been executed with great attention to detail and in almost every way looks like a factory-manufactured product.



Miss Alfa with Builder and Owner. Photo by George Beston.

Recently, Cunliffe invited me to go for a drive with him on the country roads north of his hometown of Burlington. I had the great fortune of driving Miss

Alfa for at least an hour, covering a lot of territory including the climb up Appleby Line at Rattlesnake Point.

For someone who has driven four cylinder Alfas almost exclusively, this experience was a revelation. The first thing that struck me was the exhaust sound. The exhaust system on this car is custom from the cylinder heads back, starting with headers fabricated by Joe and ending with a substantial single tail pipe emerging from under the rear valence. Surely minimizing flow restriction was the primary objective in this system, but what the driver will notice is a glorious V8 sound ranging from a quiet burble to a harmonious song to a slightly subdued roar as throttle opening is increased. There is a good radio in this car, but it probably won't get much use when the engine is on and Miss Alfa is moving. There's not much point in competing with those great exhaust sounds.

So, exactly how fast is it? I honestly can't say. It's certainly powerful enough to push occupants back into their seats under acceleration in the first two gears, and the power just keeps on coming at higher revs. Unfortunately the performance is such that the driver can effortlessly move through "Ticket Territory" and beyond. Back in the day, performance data reported for the Montreal was 0-60 mph in 8 seconds and a top speed of 132 mph. Miss Alfa is most certainly at least that fast. It's probably best to say that it's plenty fast and leave it at that.

My most lasting impression is how refined and balanced Miss Alfa is. The engine is smooth and does its work without stress. The ride is firm but not jarring, cornering is flat and neutral, the steering is lighter than I would have expected and the gear shifting experience with this Milano 3.75:1 transaxle is light and precise.

It was also a pleasure to again experience the Alfetta GT's roomy cabin with tall windows all round that provide excellent visibility. Miss Alfa's Milano-sourced Recaro seats are comfortable and supportive.

Miss Alfa is a real treasure and I hope it provides Cunliffe with years of satisfaction. It's all Alfa Romeo and it gives us *Alfaholics* something to dream about. This is definitely a car that should have found its way into production somehow!

Kingston Rendezvous

by Alex Csank, Ste. Anne de Bellevue

On a rainy, but soon to become sunny Saturday morning the 20th of July, six couples in six Alfas loaded with overnight gear met just west of Montreal at a popular coffee shop chain named after a departed hockey player to get underway westward towards Kingston, Ontario-ario to meet up with other Alfisti from Ottawa and Toronto. Our initial group from C.A.R.M. departed just after 10:00am, staying off the 20/401 highway, preferring instead to weave along the quaint rural roads of western Quebec and eastern Ontario.

Stopping to take advantage of the lower fuel prices across the Ontario border, we ambled along through to our lunch stop at the Upper Canada Village Golf Course, where we met up with Dave Semel of the Ottawa Alfa Romeo Club, who arrived in his very nice 1968 Fiat Dino Coupe. Apparently, his 1964 Giulia SS was busy undergoing some restoration work. Just as we were finishing our meals, we were joined by C.A.R.M. members Bruno and Linda in their red Spider so now, our cars numbered a total of eight. After having our fill of Upper Canada's version of 'Pulled-Pork' and other assorted treats, we managed to manoeuvre our cars for a short photo shoot before blasting back down the road to our next stop in historic downtown Brockville.



Photo by Alex Csank.

There, we took the opportunity to wander up and down the town square, but lost Sam and Lucy for a while, as they were intent on finding a coffee at the local *Timmy's*.

The early morning rain had given way to a beautifully sunny afternoon as we continued along the water's edge along the very smoothly paved

Thousand Island Parkway, past small, wooded islands adorned with abandoned castles, amazing mansions old and new, historic estates, marinas and inns and a huge gathering of music lovers at some sort of festival in a park by the river, and on into the picturesque little town of Gananoque, the "Gateway to The Thousand Islands". From there, we continued along the King's Highway (old Route 2) past the Canadian Forces Base, Royal Military College and Old Fort Henry and across the bridge into old downtown Kingston.

The Toronto group met at the Newcastle exit from the 401 at 1:30pm and took a back road route through Northumberland County, the "Loyalist Parkway" from Carrying Place to the Glenora Ferry near Picton, and then followed the shore into downtown Kingston. They took a rest stop at the Murray canal and then a break at the ice cream store in Bloomfield. A last minute route change was imposed on them by a tanker train stopped at a level crossing along Lakeshore Road, resulting in a slight delay. The Glenora Ferry service was down to one boat in action, but they were able to get on the next boat once they got in line, so there was no prolonged wait.



In line at the Glenora Ferry. Photo by George Beston.

Mino's restaurant requested that we delay our reservation by 30 minutes, so we decided to check in to our hotel before dinner. Unfortunately, as sometimes happens with groups of 'older' cars, when preparing to leave for dinner, Bruno's Spider decided it wasn't going to start unless pushed. Once started, Bruno opted to get his badly behaving Spider back home so as not to face a breakdown so far away. This delayed our group's arrival at the restaurant a bit further, and the majority of our C.A.R.M. members did not arrive until almost 7:30pm.

Finally seated and having met with five couples from the Toronto Chapter, we did our best to demolish the T-Bone steak specials, tzatziki, spanakopita and other fare, finishing up sometime just before 10:00pm.

While at Mino's, the latest ARCC newsletter was handed out to the attendees, saving on the postage. Later in the parking lot on a wonderful summer's eve, Toronto and Montreal Alfisti gathered to check out each other's rides. Once the handshakes, hugs and goodbyes were completed, the Toronto folks headed westwards towards home, while the Montreal group made their way to the hotel.

For most of us, the drive away from the restaurant proved uneventful. However, there was an exception! Proceeding out of the parking lot and up the street, one C.A.R.M. member in a very nice GT Jr. was pulled over by the local constabulary for driving erratically (the passenger door was opened and shut again, occupants had a conversation with the driver of the car in front at the previous stoplight) and was offered the opportunity to blow into a little box. Thankfully, two glasses of wine with dinner was not going to set off any alarms, and after somehow convincing the authorities that his driver's licence was 'back at the hotel' because a wallet would have made his pants less aerodynamic, he was given a break and allowed to proceed directly back to the hotel, where he was able to enjoy a fine after dinner cigar and tell the tale.

Editor's note: I was just ahead of the GT Jr. driving my Alfetta when the cruiser lit up behind us. I pulled over to the curb figuring that the cruiser was on a call and wanted to get by. I was amazed that they wanted to investigate something about the car behind, so I just waited where I had stopped until it was all over, 20 minutes or so. It was quite a show with a total of four police vehicles there at one point. It seems that the officer was on the lookout for anyone "Driving Under the Influence", and a couple of relatively innocent observations led him to react. My wife pointed out to me that there are a number of bars in that area, which might explain why the police were looking for indications of DUI. It certainly didn't take much, and any of us could have aroused suspicion under the circumstances. Food for thought!

The following morning, our intrepid C.A.R.M. members loaded up, checked out and headed east along old highway 2 back through the beautiful Ontario countryside and historic towns dotting the shoreline of the St. Lawrence River to Brockville.

Somehow the planets lined up correctly, and we were able to locate a nice, quiet little golf course restaurant by the water's edge at exactly 1pm, where we took a short break and re-fuelled our bellies. In typical Italian style, Sam had packed a nice, fresh watermelon to share, so we had a delicious summer fruit dessert to end the meal! Leaving the restaurant, the two black Spiders went

on ahead and then we all hit the highway eastward towards home, getting back in time for Sunday dinners and preparations for the week ahead.

This was a fun weekend! I hope we can do it again next year and perhaps even make it into an annual ARCC event.

Detroit Rendezvous on September 14

by **Elio Comello, Camlachie**

Please join us for *al fresco* lunch in the vineyard – just like in Tuscany – or join us at a convenient event or time. Here's our schedule for the day:

9:00am: Toronto group departs.

9:15am: Detroit group departs.

10:15am: Detroit group: Ferry from Marine City MI to Sombra ON, Up river drive, (OR cross Bridge at Port Huron) to Hwy 402 E, then N at exit 25.

Toronto group; Hwy 402 W, then N at exit 25.

11:45am: Meet for an *al fresco* lunch in the vineyard at **Alton Farms Estate Winery**, 5547 Aberarder Line, Forest ON 519-899-2479. Lambton County's first Winery growing 25 different grape varieties. Estate wine store. \$15.00 per person, reservations required.

www.AltonEstateWinery.com

1:45pm: Visit **Twin Pines Orchards & Cider House**. Sweet and hard ciders, apple wines, preserves, pies, art, garden accessories, farm produce/fruit; tour of the gardens. 8169 Kennedy Line, Thedford ON, 519-296-5556.

www.twinpinesorchards.com

3:00pm: Scenic lake drive through **Kettle Point**.

3:45pm: Afternoon tea and garden tour at **Forest Glen Herb Farm & B&B**. Organic décor, teas, potpourri. creams/cosmetics. 8333 Glendale Drive, Lambton Shores, ON, 519-899-4372.

<http://www.forestglenherbfarm.com>

5:00pm: Take a break and garden tour at the Comello's, 3383 Lakeshore Rd, Camlachie, ON.

6:15pm: Group dinner at **John's Restaurant**, 1643 London Road, Sarnia ON, 519-542-9821.

<http://www.famousbacon.com>

After Dinner: Drive home or wine by the campfire *chez Comello*.

Reservations required for *al fresco* vineyard lunch by September 6!

For more info or directions contact Elio at ecomello@xcelco.on.ca or 519-542-7699.

Upcoming ARCC Events

Regional representatives are requested to send your 2013 events calendars to the secretary or the editor for inclusion in the next issue.

Alfa Club of Edmonton

Date	Time	Event
March 12	7:00 pm	AutoObsessed
March 19	7:00 pm	Go Kart Racing
May 25	11:00am	Lift Day
June 9	8:30am	History Road - Reynolds

Toronto Chapter

Date	Time	Event
May 2	7:00 pm	Cruise Night – La Paloma
May 4	9:30 am	Pinarello Tech Session
June 6	7:00 pm	Cruise Night – La Paloma
June 14-16	TBD	Vintage Festival / Drive
July 2	7:00 pm	Cruise Night – La Paloma
July 20-21	TBD	Montreal/Ottawa Rendezvous
August 6	7:00 pm	Cruise Night – La Paloma
Sept. 3	7:00 pm	Cruise Night – La Paloma
Sept. 14	9:00 am	Rendezvous with Detroit
Sept. 29	TBD	Europa Rally
October 1	7:00 pm	Cruise Night – La Paloma
Nov. 30	8:00 pm	Holiday Dinner

Club Alfa Romeo de Montréal

Date	Time	Event
April 20	7:00 pm	Supper Seminar
May 18	10:00 am	May Flower Fun Rally
June 15	TBD	Introduction to Autocross
June 22	10:00 am	Summer Driving Tour
July 7	TBD	Fiat Breakout
July 20-21	TBD	Toronto/Ottawa Rendezvous
Sept. 15	TBD	Introduction to TSD Rally
Sept. 29	TBD	Italian Car Day
Oct. 19	10:00 am	Autumn Leaves Tour
Nov. 30	Noon	Holiday Party Lunch

Other Events of Interest

- Members' Tech Sessions
- Sunday Drives
- Exposition de Voitures Anciennes, Laval, May 26
- Italian Car Day Parade, Ottawa, June 15-16
- Italian Car Day, Boyd Park, Woodbridge, July 6
- Grand Prix of Mosport, ALMS, July 18-21
- Unofficial Cruise Nights occur every Thursday evening at La Paloma, May to October
- Italians at the Julep, 2nd Tuesday, May to October, 7:00pm



In the realm of Alfas, there's not much that's nicer to behold than a freshly restored and detailed engine. This Montreal V8 is a show-stopper. Image from robthompson.montreals@augmail.com.

Alfa Romeo Club of Canada

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ARCC Update

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