



ARCC UPDATE

April 2019

President's Letter

by Alex Csank, Vankleek Hill

Alfisti,

Springtime is upon us, with all of its fickle fits and starts. This is the time of year when I get "cabin fever", as I can taste the outdoor fun and fresh air to come. But it's still just a bit too cold to be riding around with the top down and besides, there's still some of that pesky road salt scattered around. I usually wait until the last week of April before venturing onto the roads in a classic car or a motorcycle.

My preparatory Alfa chores this spring include installing new stock shocks and springs on my 91 Spider, repairing the leaky fuel injection hoses, changing the oil and filter, and going over all of the systems to make sure that the car is ready for the season. The work may take a little while, but it's well worth it to have a safe and reliable Spider for the summer ahead.

Another One Gets Adopted

My youngest son Alex J (yes, he is also an Alex) has been looking for a Spider over the past few weeks. Interestingly, a "project car" appeared on the Alfa Romeo Spiders Facebook group for reasonable money, and "Dad" was asked to go and check it out. It was located about three hours away in the Eastern Townships of Québec, near where my mother's family of United Empire Loyalists settled just north of the New Hampshire border, near Lac Megantic – the site of that horrific train derailment and oil-fuelled inferno from a few years ago. So, Diane and I headed off on a little road trip in Bullwinkle (my Volvo XC70 AWD Wagon) to have a look. Arriving after lunch at a small body shop whose parking area was littered with old VW busses, we went inside to find an old Fiat 600 Giardinetta wagon, a stripped-down Mini Cooper, a '53 VW Beetle, a '70 Beetle convertible, a couple more VW busses, a newer MB AMG coupe and a couple of old Alfas. The first Alfa was a 1969 Spider 1300 Junior,

stripped down to just the body and undergoing a full restoration for a client. I helped the shop's owner with a few items and showed him how to check for the engine number, and the type of engine based upon the identification stamp on the front of the head. I also showed him the differences about the 1300 Junior model such as the black-painted lower blade of the front bumper bars, the 2 spoke steering wheel and the non-opening vent windows, and discussed parts access and body panel replacement parts.

But we had come to see the second Alfa, which was a 1971 1750 Weber-carbureted Spider, equipped with a vestigial back seat. The back seat – if memory serves – is not really useable for any actual human equipped with legs, but was supplied as an option in some markets where having a four seat car cost less in taxes than a two seater did. So, for these markets, the Fiat 124 and Alfa Romeo Spiders both had optional rear seats. Interestingly, in order for someone to actually sit in the rear, the top would have to be in the raised position. The Spider was quite the sight. I checked it out thoroughly, and although all the important parts seemed to be present, and the undersides and unibody were not too badly rusted, the lower portions of the outer body panels were quite rotten and full of holes, huge bubbles and lots of old bondo. With the radiator out of the car, I was able to determine that there was no apparent front end collision repair, and the engine compartment held a very original looking and correct 1750 (2nd Series) with original Weber 40 DCOE carburetors, exhaust manifold, air intake and manifold, brake booster and clutch and brake reservoirs, and an Alfa alternator as well. Moving to the interior, the seats and rubber mats all looked original and in reasonable condition. Under the floor mats, the floor pans had been repaired with sheet aluminum crudely riveted in place, and although the dash didn't look too bad, it suffered from cracks in all the usual places. While the older vinyl top was torn and the rear window and rear portion of the top were missing, the top bows all

functioned correctly and the original top boot was in good shape. Moving to the trunk, the original mat was in place and in good condition, with the jack and original spare wheel (complete with a worn, but original spare tire) in place. The spare tire well had only surface rust. The rockers looked solid, the suspension bounced up and down reasonably smoothly and with good resistance and the bumpers and glass were all present and – although imperfect – perfectly serviceable.

So, after engaging in some small talk and some negotiations, we reached an agreement and I left a deposit for the car. That was on Wednesday. On Friday, Diane and my son and I jumped into a friend's 2018 MB Sprinter ¾ ton 4WD diesel van to which I hitched a nice lightweight aluminum trailer and off we went for another day trip to pick up the Spider.



Photo by Alex Csank.

With a bit of luck, the weather cooperated for us and we got the Spider back to my son's office building (it has a shop and a lift in the back) and pushed the little rusty jewel into a sheltered place. The next day, my son called me and told me that he was able to get the engine to fire on all 4 cylinders and it sounded pretty good ... Success! So, over the next few months (maybe years), he will be fixing up this new project to use as his summer driver. I guess I'll have to pony up and get him registered as a club member again. I guess I infected the poor guy with the Alfa virus ... Oh well!

Events 2019

As I wrote last April: "I love almost nothing better than getting out on the roads at the controls of a fun machine!" I sure hope that you do too, and that you take the opportunity to enjoy some fun drives, terrific get-togethers, car shows and other Alfa activities in your area over the coming driving season. Of note, the Italian Car Day, normally held annually in Woodbridge, has been cancelled this year, but will return in August 2020. Be sure to check with your local club and the back page of this monthly newsletter for

events in your area. Just a few highlights for this exciting year include:

4 May (Montréal) Laurentian Fun Rally (CARM and other local Italian car clubs). A fun rally through the lower Laurentian hills ending with a nice lunch in St. Sauveur.

11 May (Ottawa) Spring BBQ (ARCO). Enjoy a springtime BBQ just north of Gatineau.

15 June (Ottawa) Italian Car Parade (multi-club event). The annual Italian Car Parade and Display in Ottawa's charming Little Italy is a very popular family-oriented event, filled with Italian music, food, and a great display of terrific Italian motorcycles and cars.

14 July (Montréal) Fiat Breakout (multi-club event). Montréal's largest Italian Car event, this car show is held in Montréal's Little Italy.

12-21 July (Pittsburgh, PA) Cortile Della Corsa AROC USA National Convention. Hosted by the Three Rivers Alfisti chapter of the Alfa Romeo Owners Club. This convention is being held in conjunction with all the festivities of the huge Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix week, with hundreds of historic racing and other cars of all kinds nearby. Registration is open at <https://www.threeriversalfisti.org/cortile-della-corsa.html>.

26-28 July (Belleville, Kingston, Gananoque) AMICI Raduno Estivo 2019. (multi-club event). Beginning with supper in Belleville on Friday, the next day includes a scenic drive through Prince Edward County and a tour of Fort Henry in Kingston. Then on to Gananoque for the night. On Sunday, we'll head to the 1000 Islands Tower for a Car Show (*Concorso*) and an awards lunch. Total registration is limited to 80 people, with an allocation for each participating club.

18 August (Embrun ON) Country Roads Drive and Picnic. ARCO and CARM members will drive separately to a meeting point at a member's home and car collection in Embrun.

29 September (Montebello, QC) AMICI Raduno Montebello (multi-club event). The annual gathering of Italian cars from all clubs on the beautiful grounds of Chateau Montebello, on the north side of the Ottawa River, east of Gatineau.

Please folks, write up your events. Take photos and share them here. George Beston and I and your many fellow club members will be very thankful to read your stories and see your photos!

Rev high!
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Alfa Romeo Tonale

by George Beston, Cobourg

I'm continually amazed at how the world turns and car manufacturers adapt. It's no secret that the automobile market has been ruled by utility vehicles over the last few years. I suppose it should not be a total surprise that the next Alfa Romeo vehicle to be launched may well be a compact utility vehicle or CUV.



Photo from Alfa Romeo.

The Geneva show was graced by a prototype of the Tonale, named in the tradition of the Stelvio for a mountain pass and the road through it. One unique aspect for the brand is that the Tonale is being presented as a hybrid that allows three driving modes; "advance E" for full electric operation, "dual power" for maximum output from both engines, and finally "natural" optimizing performance and economy using both motors.



Photo from Alfa Romeo.

The Tonale is as attractive as one could expect for a CUV but in today's market, it doesn't stand out for being sporty or exotic. I hope it generates enough sales so that FCA is emboldened to keep coming up with new Alfa models including a sports coupe GT and/or a Spider.

Wheeler Dealers do Alfas!

by George Beston, Cobourg

This program appears on YouTube and the Discovery Velocity channel. Others have recommended it to me, and I have taken a liking to it. It stands out from the field of formulaic car fix up shows by its broad range of automotive subjects, its lack of artificial and annoying

tensions and drama, and for getting into significant details on repairs done.

The plot never varies. The two principles (Mike and Ed, or Mike and Ant) take an interest in a certain make and model, purchase one example, repair any problems, clean it up and then resell it.



Mike does the buying, supervision of any outside work, and the selling. The mechanic takes the audience through the work that he is doing. As a gear head, I'm most interested in the mechanical work either at the Wheeler Dealer's shop, or at the locations of suppliers.

There have been three episodes involving Alfas, an Alfasud Sprint, an S4 Spider, and a 164L. Just do an Internet search for Wheeler Dealers Alfa Romeo and they should pop right up. If you have Discovery Velocity through your television service, they broadcast their episodes on Mondays at 10:00 pm, Tuesdays at 5:00 pm and probably other times as well. My PVR is set to record them so I can watch on rainy days.

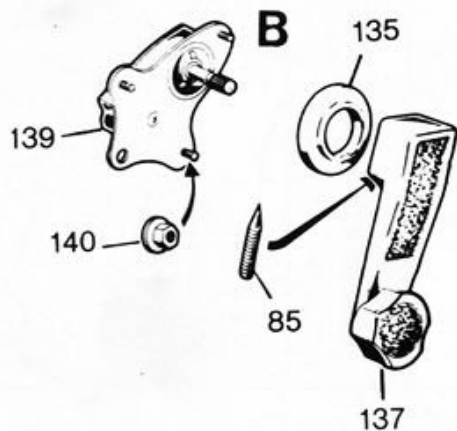
Alfetta Window Regulator

by George Beston, Cobourg

After many years, the window mechanism on the driver's door of my Alfetta simply quit working. The window itself just sagged to the bottom of its travel and the window crank seemed disconnected as turning it had no effect on window position. My first resolution was to take the door panel off, prop up the window in the closed position and put up with the inconvenience for a while. I have contemplated a permanent change of upgrading to power windows but I have found no information on doing that and don't wish to buy any more hardware without some idea that I might be able to fit it to the car and get it to work. The usual sources such as the Alfa BB and other forums are devoid of any threads that I could use as a guide in such a conversion.

It is inconvenient to drive my Alfetta with the driver's window inoperable, so I have been looking for a fix. The first problem is that Alfetta window regulators don't seem to be available, period. The ones in my car are very similar to those used in a contemporary '70s 105 series GTV, but the length of the cable is unlikely to be the

same, given that the Alfetta regulators have a 116 series part number.



For what it's worth, this is what they look like. Image scanned from Alfa Romeo parts manual.



Image from Classic Alfa website

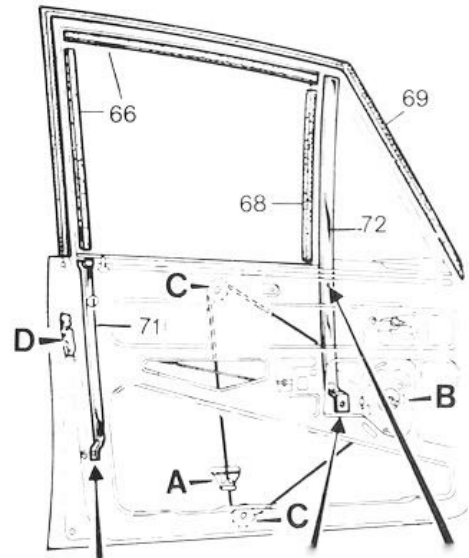
The wire forms a loop with the ends winding on the regulator in opposite directions, so that turning the shaft results in wire being fed out at one end and simultaneously taken in from the other at the same rate.

The three studs mount into curved slots in the inner door panel to allow for some tension adjustment on the cable. In the driver's door, the unit is rotated counter clockwise to tighten the cable.

This winter, I decided to deal with the situation and to attempt a repair. After pulling the door panel again, I discovered that the problem was a frayed cable that became dislodged from the mechanism.

My understanding is that some regulators can be taken apart, and the cable can be replaced. In the case of my Alfetta, I could see no way of doing that without cutting the backing plate apart. That would render the whole unit useless.

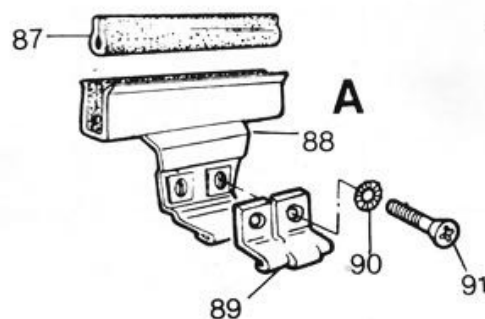
So, I removed the regulator and cable to attempt to splice some fresh cable into the system.



This image from the parts manual reveals that the cable routing is fairly straight forward. I'm thankful for that; some of the later 115 Spiders have six different pulleys in the path of the cable.

Handling the cable and regulator assembly is somewhat difficult. The metal in the cable has a bit of 'spring' to it and is more than inclined to unwind itself a bit and appear to be tangled within the regulator. I had to cobble the ends together, apply tension to the loop and carefully wind the regulator back and forth to get the cable to be orderly enough to work again.

Splicing cable together was a challenge. Sections of the old cable had to be discarded, so I used two sections of bicycle cable, joining them at the window's cable clamp, "A" in the images above and below.



Another major challenge was that the crimp-on cable clamps I found to join the cables were far too large to pass through the pulleys. One of those “forget about it” situations.

The regulator has built-in travel stops somehow so I used that feature to help a bit. With the regulator in the fully lowered position, clamps were set as close as possible to the regulator on the lower B-C leg of the cable, and as close as possible to the upper pulley on the upper C-B leg in order to maximize window travel.

This arrangement does not allow full travel because the lower B-C leg is too short for that.

With an extra pair of hands applying some mild tension to the cable ends and the regulator turned clockwise in its mounting slots, the clamp was tightened down on the cable. Rotating the regulator counter clockwise provided an appropriate light tension on the cable.

It took a couple of attempts to get the window in the right position relative to the cables so that it would go up all the way. I’m left with about four inches of window above the sill at the end of its travel.

At the end of the exercise, I’m better off than when I started, and still looking around for either a new regulator or some hardware for a power window conversion.

“Did George Buy It?”

by George Beston, Cobourg

I received an email from fellow member Bob Davy this past month alerting me to the fact that a 1969 Spider located near my home town of Cobourg was being offered for sale on Kijiji. Well, this is a pretty small community with more than a few car nuts residing in it, but I had never heard of or seen that car. Asking around got me nowhere which was very puzzling. So much for the usual suspects!

I looked at the Kijiji ad and found it a bit puzzling. It is obviously a SPICA version, with a few pieces missing in the interior and there was no clear shot of the rear end of the car. Notably, it is painted in a metallic purple colour.

Last week I got a call from the owner. It seems that he had gone to the local Service Ontario office to get the required “Seller’s Package” in preparation for the intended sale. The woman serving him took a look at the paper work and immediately asked him – you guessed it – “Did George buy it?”

In typical small town fashion, he had encountered a friend of ours who is pretty good at quips and conversation. Dee then proceeded to tell him about me and informed him that there was an Alfa Club that uses up some of my spare time and has us going on adventures during the warm weather months. He took the time to look up the Club’s web site and call its President, and then me.

I had him over to look at my Alfas and talk about the Spider he has for sale. He then took me over to his place to see it.

It seems this Spider has been in the same family since the 1970s, and was passed down from father to son about ten years ago. It hasn’t been driven much in recent years. At one time prior to the ownership change it had some fairly extensive bodywork and rust repair. At that point the mother of the current owner decided that she preferred the Aubergine Alfa Romeo colour in the book over the original 514 red, so the colour got changed to the body shop’s version of 025 Aubergine.



Photo by L. MacRae.

I’ve taken a liking to the story and the car. It is still fueled by the original SPICA system and has fairly low mileage, but is in need of rear bumpers. Otherwise it’s almost complete and has potential. It seems to have attracted a fair amount of buyer interest and may already be sold. I can only hope that the new owner spruces it up and puts it back on the road soon.

Upcoming ARCC Events

Regional representatives are requested to send your 2019 events calendars to the secretary or the editor for inclusion in the next issue.

Club Alfa Romeo de Montréal

Date	Event
May 4	Gimmick Rally in the Laurentians
May 18	Drive to Québec City
June 1	Espresso and Biscotti, Des Sources Alfa
June 8	Grand Prix Barbeque
June 9	Veterans' Salute, Ste Anne de Bellevue
July 7	Supper at Tre Colori
July 16-21	Cortile della Corsa 2019 , AROC Convention, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
July 26-28	Amici Raduno Estivo, Prince Edward County & Gananoque
August 3	Espresso, Biscotti and Driving Tour, Des Sources Alfa
August 17	Shriners' Fundraiser BBQ, Des Sources Alfa
August 18	Adventure with ARCO to Embrun ON
September 15	Eastern Townships Drive
October 5	Espresso and Biscotti, Des Sources Alfa
October 19	Autumn Leaves Drive
November 23	CARM End of the Season Supper

Alfa Romeo Club - Ottawa

Date	Event
April 16	AGM
May 11	BBQ chez Marc and Liz
June 15	Ottawa Italian Car Parade
July 16-21	Cortile della Corsa 2019 , AROC Convention, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
July 26-28	Amici Raduno Estivo, Prince Edward County & Gananoque
July 28	Capital Classic Car Show, Kanata
August 18	Picnic with the Lotuses
September 29	Raduno Montebello

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Alfa Romeo Club of Edmonton

Date	Event
May 14	Meeting and Pub Night
June 22	Solstice Rally
July 16-21	Cortile della Corsa 2019 , AROC Convention, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Calgary Alfa Marque Society

Date	Event
July 16-21	Cortile della Corsa 2019 , AROC Convention, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Toronto Chapter

Date	Event
April 11	AGM
May 2	Cruise Night, La Paloma
May 5	ICD Go-Kart Event, Downsview Park
May 20	Victoria Day Pancake Run, Cookstown
May 26	Tech Session & Swap Meet, Pinarello Motori
June 2	Rattlesnake Point Run, Milton
June 6	Cruise Night, La Paloma
June 16	Drive to VARAC Vintage Festival , Mosport
July 4	Cruise Night, La Paloma
July 16-21	Cortile della Corsa 2019 , AROC Convention, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
July 21	J Bird's Spider in the Garden, Ancaster
July 26-28	Amici Raduno Estivo, Prince Edward County & Gananoque
August 1	Cruise Night, La Paloma
August 10	Niagara Drive & Wine Tour
September 5	Cruise Night, La Paloma
September 8	Fiat on the Forks
Sept 13-15	Bancroft Weekend Tour, Bancroft
October 3	Cruise Night, La Paloma
October 6	Fall Colours Drive, Creemore
November 23	Holiday Dinner, Woodbridge

Unofficial Cruise Nights are held every Thursday evening from May to October at La Paloma in Woodbridge.

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