



ARCC UPDATE

December 2020

President's Letter

by Alex Csank, Vankleek Hill

Alfisti,

Winter's here again, and as we head ever closer to the end of 2020, I believe that most of you would agree that we will be glad to see it go. The challenges of the fewest hours of daylight, the cold, the snow, and the sometimes icy, slippery conditions are further complicated now by the pandemic and its effect on our health, the economy, and our social behaviour. Luckily, we as Canadians have gotten used to many challenges, including our annual rituals as we face winter's arrival.

Many of us enjoy winter activities like skiing, skating, tobogganing, snowshoeing, snowboarding, snowmobiling, etc. However, there are also many Canadians who enjoy traveling to warmer places over the colder months. This year's travel plans have been restricted and many have had to cancel or postpone them.

I'm hoping that this winter will be kind to us all, that 2021 will bring us some relief from the virus and that by next autumn, we will once again be able to get back to the activities and socialization that we used to take for granted.

Planning for 2021

Although we don't know what the future will bring us, we **do** need to begin planning for events in 2021. Local clubs should be preparing for whatever activities may be available to club members for the next driving season. Based upon last season's limited, but successful activities, it is certainly possible to organize small-scale drives and outings, always respecting local guidelines and regulations regarding gatherings and safety. Hopefully, as the coming new year progresses, we will be able to get back to a more expanded schedule of activities. I encourage club leaders to hope for the best, and begin planning the usual full calendar of events.

Virtual ARCC Holiday Party

Although a meeting via one of the virtual meeting platforms online could never replace the fun and enjoyment of an actual party, I now have a Zoom account to use for gatherings of an unlimited number of participants, and without any time limitations. As I wrote last month, I propose a Zoom Holiday Season Meeting, to be held on Sunday, 20 December at 3:00 PM, Eastern Time. I'll be sending out the link to the invitation to your local club leadership to pass on to each club's email list, but have also included the invitation link below. Please join us!

Alex Sandor Csank and the ARCC are inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: ARCC Holiday Party

Time: Dec 20, 2020 03:00 PM Montréal

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88689701885>

Meeting ID: 886 8970 1885

If joining by telephone find your local number:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kbr5WjDZY9>

Join by Skype for Business:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/skype/88689701885>

Holiday Message

This time of year will hopefully bring you, your family and friends happiness, health and hope. But, for some it can and will be a very difficult time of year, here in Canada and elsewhere around the world. If you need help, please reach out, and if you can offer help to those in need, please contribute where and when you can.

Diane and I wish each of you all our very best for a terrific Holiday Season and a wonderful year ahead!

Rev high!

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Santa Alex. Photo by Diane Taylor.

'Twas the Night Before Christmas... (with apologies to Clement Clarke Moore)

by Merkel Weiss, Sun Valley, California

'Twas the night before Christmas, and out in the shed

Sat a tired old ALFA, its battery dead.
Its fenders were rusted, the floor pan had holes
The seats and the carpets had been eaten by voles.

The tires had dry rot, the gas tank was leaking,
A turn of the wheel sent tie rods a-creaking.
So I put on my coat with a weight on my heart,
And went out to the shed to get it to start.

The engine turned over — there arose such a clatter!
I knew from the sound it was water pump chatter.
From under the dashboard there came a bright flash —
The wiring harness had just turned to ash!

"I've had it with Spiders!" I finally swore
"Enough is too much! I can't take any more!"
When what to my red, teary eyes should appear
But a little Italian (heck, I need a beer!)

"Buon giorno," he said, poking me in the belly.
"You needa my help? I'm Gianni Agnelli."
"This one can be saved; there's no reason to grieve.
All you need is some faith — Man, you gotta believe!"

"A hammer! Some duct tape! Get me more tools!
When you work on these cars, just make up-a da rules!
We'll get her cranked over-no way that she'll stall
(But stand over there wit' you back to the wall.)"

A cough and a sputter, the cacophony stunning —
I couldn't believe it! The darn thing was running!
The ghost winked at me and said, kicking a tire,
"Whatever you do, **do not touch this wire!**"

The old man then vanished amid sneezes and farts

But when the smoke cleared he had left me some parts.

So I opened the shed door and let the top down
Put pedal to metal and went out on the town.

And I thought to myself as I missed second gear
Merry Christmas to all and a Happy New Year!

Provided by Steve Pachin of the Mid-Atlantic Alfa Romeo Club.

'91 Spider Finally Rebuilt

by Gord Zimmerman, Bobcaygeon

Finally, I have driven my '91 Spider home from *Tre Colori Motori* where I had taken it for Pino Chiaravalloti's expertise. Originally, I had sent it there for a suspension rebuild after 125,000 miles (200,000 km) on the odometer with no suspension work so far. It was time for a check.

We have driven the car to Newfoundland, numerous times to New England, various conventions and lots of tours in Ontario over the last 30 years. I knew the wheel bearings, trailing arm bushings and front end linkage joints were getting worn and the parking brake shoes were worn out. All normal wear for a thirty-year-old car.

Pino called with the bad news that the compression was low in two cylinders and poor in the other two so it looked like it was time for an engine rebuild. So, we bit the bullet and proceeded with a full engine rebuild. The exhaust cam lobes were worn and as new cams were unavailable Pino had the cams parkerized (lobes plated and reground). After the block and head were cleaned, machined and polished and all the new pistons, liners, valves, bearings, seals, timing chains, gaskets, water pump, rebuilt alternator, starter and dear knows what else was changed, the engine was re-mated with the transmission in the car. It seems to be running just fine even though there are numerous squeaks and rattles but they can be sorted in the spring. I have only driven it up from Woodbridge to Bobcaygeon and

a short run before it was put away for the winter season. The break-in will have to wait until spring. The head will be re-torqued and the break-in oil changed.

Now it is back in my garage with rebuilt suspension engine waiting for spring and the Covid crisis to be resolved.

It was quite a project and our plan is to drive it to Vancouver Island next summer so we can say we have driven from coast to coast.

Following are some pictures, all taken by Pino during the rebuild.



Some old parts; pistons, valves, a liner and a wrist pin. Note the scoring on at least two of the pistons.



The crank shaft in place waiting for main and rod bearings.



There are always a lot of Alfa "bits" to keep track of during a rebuild.



Here, the pistons and connecting rods are assembled waiting for the liners to go in.



And here, the "short block" is done.



The last lap involved getting the engine back where it belongs.

Alfa Romeo Club of Canada

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