



# *Owners Club of Australia*

With State Divisions in QLD, NSW, VIC, SA and WA

## Alfesta Stories – The Eighties – 1980-1989

### Alfesta 1980 - South Australia

This was the second Alfesta held in South Australia and the venue was the Old Adelaide Inn, in the City of Adelaide. About 100 people attended from the east coast States and South Australia.

The event started on Friday started with a train trip to Strathalbyn and a lunch in the park. A terrific idea, as lots of eats and drinks were provided on the train on the way home and the South Australian girls really did a fine job of the catering.

On Saturday an Observation Run to and from Hahndorf in the Adelaide Hills was punctuated by lunch. A dinner/dance was held that night back at the venue.

On Sunday a convoy of Alfas drove to Yalumba Winery at Angaston with lunch in the grounds. A concours by popular choice was held. The weekend was brought to an end with another dinner/dance at the Hotel.

### Alfesta 1981 - Queensland

Held at Broadbeach Hotel on the Queensland Gold Coast, all states were represented and once again about 100 people attended.

Friday dawned fine and the event started with a Launch Cruise to Stradbroke Island and a barbecue lunch. On the way to and from, participants water skied and aqua-planing behind the Launch.

Saturday brought an Observation Run and Motorkhana and a Dinner/Cabaret, and Sunday there was a Hill Climb event at Mount Cotton, and a dinner/dance at the Hotel.

The inevitable party started by collecting furnishings from all floors and along with some sound equipment assembled on the 4th floor lobby near the lifts. This was short lived because of noise and the party shifted (was shifted ?) to the top floor, where a convention room was made available. The night that followed (or should that read morning) is what Alfesta is all about.

### Alfesta 1982 - New South Wales

Held in the National Capital at the Canberra International Motor Inn.

The rooms surrounded a courtyard which had an unusual setting with an indoor-outdoor atmosphere, having a large tent-like plastic roof. This is where participants congregated around their own bar, and a podium was erected alongside to display Ernie Stocks T33. This setting created an ideal atmosphere of Alfesta camaraderie.

Friday and Saturday activities included a visit to a Sheep Station, a Cruise on Lake Burley Griffin, and an observation run taking in historic Lanyon Homestead. An interesting comment came from seven year old Alana O'Sullivan from the New South Wales Division, who said "we just ignored the silly questions" involved in the observation run.

Sunday started with a spit roast and funkhana, followed by the Presentation Dinner that night where Damian Darby of South Australia won the Bob Gardiner Trophy.



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## Alfesta 1983 - Victoria

Held at Ballarat in Victoria and the venue was the Old Sovereign Hill Motel.

To quote Ann Beck, “we could give a full report of Motorkhana and Observation runs and trips around Ballarat by Tram to various venues, but we prefer to briefly mention what we saw as being the high points of a great Alfesta.

The Friday night Mardi Gras was a classic, full of fun and merriment which is synonymous with Alfesta. Queensland’s “Helen” Darch (alias Peter Brown) was crowned Queen of Mardi Gras. Somebody made the comment at some stage that no Alfesta would be complete without the likes of “Helen”. Who could ever forget a certain unplanned “performance” on stage by Dale Crisp at Saturday nights Theatre Restaurant. To try and describe what happened would never do it justice, suffice to say that the actress who invited Dale and Ernie to join in a song never knew what hit her.”

The Presentation night on Sunday saw Brian Horman of Victoria winning the Bob Gardiner Memorial Trophy.

## Alfesta 1984 - South Australia

Held at Hazlemere Estate in South Australia’s McLaren Vale area, with accommodation at both Hazlemere Estate and the McLaren Motel, at the other end of the town. A Bus was provided to transport those staying in the remote location to the Venue for meals etc.

On Friday participants enjoyed a relaxed cruise on the M.V. Aroona along the Coorong and the mouth of the Murray River. The highlight of Friday night was an unforgettable “Toffs’n’Tarts” party. To mention just one or two names will have to be forgiven in this instance as Brenda Stone and Chris Birks of NSW, made the “tartiest tarts” ever imaginable. Among the Toffs there was one unmentionable named man wearing “work boots, stubbies & dinner jacket”.

Saturday morning an Observation Run was to be conducted in two stages before and after lunch, which was held at the Middlebrook Winery. It was the highlight of the event because the Alfesti showed their true navigational skills, half turned the wrong way at the first turn out of the Motel thus eliminating any chance of success for those competitors. Those who went the right way at the first observation point, the dead centre of town, (they did not tell us it was the Cemetery) eliminated most of the other half of those who did go the right way out of the Motel. Only 17 cars completed the course.

An early start on Sunday found some people driving to Mallala Motor Sport Park for Sprints. The sensible ones did sightseeing of Wineries around McLaren Vale and a tour of the City of Adelaide by bus. They were sensible because it was blowing a gale at Mallala and at lunch time it was difficult to separate the gravel from the sandwiches.

The Presentation Dinner was on Sunday night and Jeff Harrison of Victoria won the Bob Gardiner Memorial Trophy.



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## Alfesta 1985 - Queensland

The Greenmount Beach Resort was the venue, in the State of Queensland.

Friday morning was spent relaxing on the beach and a barbecue lunch at the Resort was a very pleasant way of starting off Alfesta. In the afternoon the Alfisti drove in convoy to the Currumbin Bird Sanctuary which was a great place for the kids, and the big kids as well. By the way there was no shortage of toast at breakfast with the automatic toast machine popping out toast which ended piling up on the floor. There were numerous attendants trying unsuccessfully to turn it off.

That night we went by bus to Pam Tamblyn Restaurant at Palm Beach and on the way home the bus driver was bent on showing us how a double decker bus can handle like an Alfa. The louder the passengers cheered the more Italian spirit came out in the driver.

Saturday involved a navigation run through the hinterland of the Gold Coast ending up at Ern and Joan Stocks property for a magnificent gourmet barbecue. That night was spent dancing the night away to the strains of the magnificent Bush Band, The Wayfarers.

Sunday after lunch at Fisherman's Wharf, there was a cruise of the Nerang River and Canal, passing the homes of the rich and famous. Fisherman's Wharf just happened to have a collection of Boutiques and Gift Shops where the ladies could shop to their hearts content. After the cruise the Alfisti made their way back to the Resort, once again by double decker bus, this time however the company must have stripped the driver of his famous name – Nuverlari.

Mark and Wendy Edmonds of Queensland won the Bob Gardiner Memorial Trophy, presented at the Trophy Dinner on Sunday night.

## Alfesta 1986 - New South Wales

Based at the Northbeach International in the lovely City of Wollongong, New South Wales.

The highlight of this Alfesta was the 159 Room where all briefings were held and most importantly the site of a bar manned (personed) by rostered NSW members. Every session saw very special mixed drinks, very popular particularly with the ladies.

Friday started off with a drive in convoy up MacQuarie Pass to Parmy's Woolshed at Berrima where lunch was served and a Funkhana was enjoyed by all. Friday night's Fancy Dress party with the theme Neptune in Tasman, brought out many different costumes, the most outstanding of which was Phil Walley from New South Wales who dressed as an Octopus. When the formal gathering was finished, most participants were anxious to go off to the 159 Room for a night cap.

Saturday started with a tour to the Rocks area of Sydney by Bus, partaking in an armchair observation competition on the way. The questions brought many serious and humorous answers. From the Rocks the procession continued on by Ferry to Manly for lunch at Rolfes. Busses returned the Alfisti back to Wollongong and then they dined and danced the night away and retired afterwards in the 159 Room for another night cap.

The Observation Run on Sunday went from Wollongong to Nowra and the Fleet Airarm Museum where a wonderful lunch in the Officers Ward Room was waited on by the Navy. Some would say that the highlight of the day was the drinks prices, they were extremely cheap. Tough luck for the drivers who had to get the cars back to Wollongong, they had to take it easy to avoid being over the



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limit. At Sunday nights Presentation Dinner, Les Mitting from Western Australia won the Bob Gardiner Trophy.

## Alfesta 1987 - Victoria

Held at Mount Beauty in the Victorian Alps.

This was another great weekend in the fine tradition of Alfesta. Ern Stock brought the 1947 Golden Arrow all the way from Galgum, and Brian Horman brought his Giulia SS, another rare example of Alfa Romeo machinery. At the other end of the timeline a wide range of GTV 6's and a few 90's featured.

Friday's activity was a bus trip up to the beautiful Kiewa Valley, definitely a place to be revisited.

Saturday morning saw some drive off to Winton to try their skill on the Race Track, whilst the more cautious indulged in a Bus tour to Brown Brothers Winery and Drages Air World. After lunch everyone participated in a Funkhana.

Sunday kicked off with a display of the cars before the start of an Observation Run to Wahgunyah, near Rutherglen. The evenings were full of dancing and merriment all of which topped off another great Alfesta. At the Presentation Dinner, Brian Horman of Victoria won the Bob Gardiner Memorial Trophy.

## Alfesta 1988 - South Australia

The venue was the Marineland Village Caravan Park at South Australia's West Beach, only a short distance from the City of Adelaide.

Accommodation was in well appointed Villas housing two couples and Vans and Units, each housing one couple. These were in a lovely park setting alongside the beach adjoining the Surf Life Saving Club Rooms in which all meals were had and most functions were held. The event started on Thursday night with registration and a welcome, followed by a light supper.

All day Friday there was a Magical Mystery Bus Tour to Victor Harbour which included beautiful views of the Adelaide Hills. That evening there was a Black and White dinner-dance in the Surf Life Saving Club Rooms. The theme was derived from the fact that Adelaide was the Grand Prix City and checkered flags were the main theme for the night.

The next day there was a Funkhana at a farm in the Adelaide Hills with a picnic lunch sitting on hay bales, a truly beautiful setting, where one could witness the workings of a farm. That evening there was a barbecue dinner served at the Surf Life Saving Club Rooms.

Sunday's Observation Run was to the Birdwood Mill where there was a lunch and a Concours d'Elegance. The afternoon was free to view the wonderful display of cars, motorbikes and memorabilia at the Mill. That evening a bus took the participants to the Hilton Hotel in the City of Adelaide, where the dinner-dance and Trophy Presentation took place. Les Mitting of Western Australia won the Bob Gardiner Trophy.



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## Alfesta 1989 - Queensland

Held at Noosa on Queensland's Sunshine Coast with accommodation at the Quality Inn Terrace Gardens. This Alfesta was an International event with John and Chris Pickering from Canada and Mike Zimblar from England attending.

On Good Friday a Water Bus provided transport up river to the Everglades and a picnic spot, stopping on the way for Morning Tea, and a walk through fern glades. A barbecue was supplied after which the return trip was done by 4WD vehicles, through the bush to Rainbow Beach then 50 or 60 kilometres back along the beach. Half of the participants did the trip in reverse. Dinner that night was in the venue.

Saturday was a free day but many choices of activities were offered for those who could not sit around and do nothing. Water skiing, ski boat riding, catamaran sailing, tennis, surfing, swimming and sun bathing were available and there was also the option of a quiet bit of shopping. Saturday night was dress night. The dressed up Alfisti assembled in front of the Motel at 6.30PM and where we were taken by coach to an old hotel, built in 1916, at Eumundi, about 20 kilometres from Noosa. This pub had its own brewery and of course served its own beer. Those who were interested were taken on a tour of the brewery downstairs.

The theme was anything beginning with a P and a mention of some of the novel ideas that appeared in the costume line-up are in order. Three NSW members were Three peas in a pod, a puppet and puppeteer, a policeman, pirates and politicians. Les and Lesley from Western Australia came as Politicians waving the flag for the Australian Bullshit Party, distributing fake money, empty promises and balloons full of hot air.

On Sunday an Observation Run through the scenic Noosa hinterland finished in a park where a picnic lunch and informal concours was held. The formal Alfesta dinner was the final event for the weekend held in the River Room at the Motel. Formalities included the Presentation of a Plaque by John Pickering to John Cotter (AROCA National President) from the Canadian Alfa Romeo Owners Club. The Bob Gardiner Trophy was won by Mark and Wendy Edmonds of Queensland.

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