



Alfesta Stories – The Noughties – 2000-2009

Alfesta 2000 - Western Australia

(By Eric Langdon) Held at Margaret River, Western Australia, Alfesta 2000 was attended by 75 Alfisti, with representation from New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and, of course, many from Western Australia.

Guests began arriving at the venue, The Emerald Colonial Lodge, on Thursday and that evening were treated to a welcome BBQ with plenty of good food and cheery staff to make sure that all were well fed and accommodated to their satisfaction.

Breakfast each morning was in the dining room or on the verandah overlooking a lake with the resident ducks swimming, or 'ducking' for cover from young Alfisti! (when not tidying up leftover crumbs from breakfast).

Friday kicked off with Team games to break the ice and let people get to know each other, with a break for morning tea of hot cross buns. The only complaint received was that there was not enough scope to cheat, but all seemed to enjoy the events and joined in Glen Phillip's silly games.

Lunch at the motel (and an urgent request to open the bar early, despite the Good Friday special licence restrictions) and briefing for the afternoon programme – followed by the group photo.

Margaret River Mystery walk in the afternoon (referred to by one member as 'an interesting trip into the dark corners of the organisers mind') but basically a walk around the town with clues to solve the 'mystery'. The problem solving was a bit difficult and not all participated in the mystery. Bar open from 4:30pm for a well-needed drink. In hindsight, given the advancing age of many Alfisti, perhaps there was a little too much physical activity organised (something to keep in mind).

Dinner included a Bacchanal theme night – a celebration of the God of Wine, the grape harvest, and of course, the obligatory festivities – a strange collection of creatures dressed in some form of their interpretation of 'Bacchanal' with DJ in attendance, smoke, lights and much silly dancing by many silly-looking people who thought they were still back in the 60's and 70's, but who's bodies told them otherwise the next day (many favouring to make a fashion statement in the motel's sheets) – a fun night thanks to the efforts of John and Rosemary Schoen, assisted by Lesley Jackes and Les Mitting.

Saturday's navigation/observation run to Augusta was organised by Tom and Mary Swanson. Lunch provided off-site by a local community group followed by an afternoon of free time to tour the southern region of Margaret River.

After some R and R and the usual bar open in the afternoon, the night's activities began with a bus arriving to transport the Alfisti to Leeuwin Estate for a bush dance and spit roast around a welcoming fire outside the venue. The Happy Hour band entertained us for the night and apart from the below average wine sold by Leeuwin, all went well thanks to the organisation of John Edwards and Helen Trowell. All were returned safely to the motel.

Sunday was the Show and Shine at Busselton, organised by Andrew Murray and Glen Phillips. The committee again supported the local community by arranging the lunch catering with the Busselton Veteran Car Club. The day started with a scenic drive up the coast road to Signal Park on the



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beachfront at the edge of town where we were joined by a contingent from the WA AROC club who were participating in a driver training event held over the weekend at Collie. We were also joined by some WA 'daytrippers'.

After lunch, a wine-tasting had been arranged at the Regional Wine Centre at Cowaramup for those wishing to attend with an alternative of some free time to 'wine taste' at the many outstanding wineries or to frequent the interesting tourist shops and venues throughout the area.

The Presentation night on Sunday evening was hosted by Norm Craven-Kelly with Mike Birks stepping for the absent National President. Joan Lewis donated a book that had belonged to Harry Lewis, asking the WA Committee to raffle this and to direct the proceeds into the Alfesta funds. This was a much sought after prize and we were most grateful for Joan's generous support.

Alfesta 2001 - Victoria

This event was held at the Pinnacle Valley Resort located at the foot of Mount Buller, in the very heart of our high country. Pinnacle Valley is a truly magnificent four-star resort situated amidst breathtaking scenery. The resort is the recipient of many tourism awards and offers a huge range of activities within the grounds – or the environment for complete relaxation.

Guests were invited to bring a tennis racket, sandshoes, togs, towel and gold clubs, to be prepared to use all the facilities on hand.

Accommodation alternatives included a choice of three types of hotel rooms, two types of suites, and chalets that can accommodate up to six people.

Alfesta 2001 – South Australia

Hahndorf is located in the Adelaide Hills about 45 minutes drive from the city of Adelaide. It has rich historical traditions and there are many world class tourist attractions in the area. The Resort has a fishing lake, canoeing lake and a Furry Friends Fauna Park with a range of native animals on display. Alfesta Accommodation choices ranged from two Presidential Suites to Cabins and Caravan and Camping sites, making this a very inexpensive Alfesta.

Included in the activities was a day at Glenelg, an Adelaide beachside suburb full of interesting things to see and do, and you could catch the "Bay Tram" into the city to take in the sights. Another option was to stay on for a day or two after Alfesta and attend the world-famous Picnic Race Meeting at Oakbank on the Monday and the Australian National Motor Museum at Birdwood on the Tuesday. This museum has been completely rebuilt at a cost of over six million dollars since Alfesta participants attended it about ten years ago.

Program of events: Registration started at Noon on Thursday and an informal Aussie BBQ dinner got proceedings under way. We did away with the traditional ice-breaking games on Friday morning and invited the guests to explore Hahndorf while competing in an Observation walk of the town. After completing the Observation walk they were free to visit attractions such as the Hans Heysen Gallery, Beerenburg Farm or just wander around the many shops in the main street like a typical Hahndorf Tourist. As Alfesta 2002 was in a town with a rich German heritage, Friday nights theme was "something German".



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After breakfast on Saturday and a quick wash of the car we headed down the South Eastern Freeway to Glenelg for the car display that was an event combining the Alfesta display with our Clubs Annual Alfas in Clover. Lunch was provided at a nearby venue and then the rest of the afternoon was free to wander around Glenelg, Adelaide's prime beach side suburb and a popular tourist spot. The evenings activities included a Buffet Dinner and a Table Top Rally back at the Resort.

After breakfast on Sunday morning we held a Driving Skills session in the car park followed by lunch at the resort. After lunch there was a choice of activities including a visit the National Motor Museum at Birdwood. Dinner on Sunday night was the usual formal Trophy Dinner at the resort.

Alfesta 2003 – Queensland

(By Lyn Wetzig) It was one of those times that you wished could go on a little longer – and all thanks to the Queensland AROCA Committee who not only organised Alfesta, but had kept the Club running with functions, outings and meetings as well. I bet they were the only ones who were glad to see the end of that Easter weekend!

Rydges, Caloundra was the venue, and we arrived there on Thursday evening for a Club barbecue, followed by a brief run-down on the weekend. Bright yellow tee shirts, along with our nametags, were passed around, so we introduced nametags to each other and then retired to our rooms to unpack.

After a good night's sleep, we flocked into the meeting room and faced the first of many buffets – cereals, fruits, croissants, bacon, eggs, hash-browns, sausages, baked beans, toast, juices, tea and coffee! Suitably stabilized by the food, we wandered off to the beach to make our kites.

After being divided into groups, given instructions, sticks and fishing line, (hook, line and sinker), we scattered to make our kites. Passers-by were greeted by the sight of groups of people, head down and tails up! over blowing sheets of paper lying on the ground, discussing angles, stick length, saddle size, and decoration. Young Cameron drew faces of happy Alfistis for our decoration, while other groups came up with the quadrofoglio, and several variations on the cross and serpent. Leigh and Kim were the first to fly their kite, followed by others, all of which soared effortlessly up to the clouds. Ours, on the other hand, seemed to be possessed by a Kamikaze spirit, leaping briefly, before spiralling madly earthwards again. Cest la rotten vie! The group beside us had a kite which seemed determined to attack them, rising encouragingly, and then hurtling nose first directly towards the nearest person, resulting in screams and people diving for cover.

After morning tea (back at Rydges – great biscuits!) we then set out on our navigation run to The Big Pineapple. Lloyd and Leigh Muller joined us, and were relegated to the back of the 156. Lloyd wisely kept his mouth shut and allowed Leigh and Lyn full rein (or reign) with navigation. Through lovely green valleys, rain-forested hills and peaceful pastures the Alfas swooped, that familiar note of the Sporting Heart echoing from hill to hill. We met up in the car park of the Big Pineapple, and proceeded to Lunch, which was a... buffet, so we buffeted (and you can take that as "buffey-ed" or "bufte-ted") our stomachs with food.

After lunch, the committee checked on the items that had to have been collected and carefully measured sticks, shininess of rocks, things that dogs do (besides the obvious) and so on.



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The afternoon was free, so we headed back for a nice longish walk along the beach, ready to face... the evening meal which was another... buffet at Rydges, followed by a “driver’s roast” with Peter Wherrett and Kevin Bartlett. A wealth of memories, with a generous helping of humour, poured out of these two gentlemen, who showed such a willingness to share them with us. A very relaxed and friendly evening!

Saturday morning saw us devouring the breakfast... buffet, before being handed our morning tea and map to get to the Eumundi markets. This time we threw Jan into the back seat, and headed north. Eumundi was overwhelmed (to say the least) with Easter weekend shoppers, so we took a deep breath and plunged into the crush heading up the ramp and didn’t emerge until we popped out like corks onto the street. After a restorative coffee at the CWA hall, we piled into our vehicles and headed out on the Pomona nav run. Jan remained tight-lipped about anything to do with the run, but as we proceeded over hill and dale, her voice came, at intervals, from the back seat, saying, “Go on Pete, you can take him – go, go, go!” but another voice spoke gently from the front seat, saying “no, no Peter, keep to the speed limit.” We did have one close call in passing two Camrys on a narrow road with crumbling shoulders. As we hurtled past, the lead Camry moved into the middle and put his brakes on. Bless his little cotton socks! With a flick of his wrists, Pete steered past him with the 156 in full song, and left him in a cloud of dust. Yes!

We all settled down at the Pomona Pub like a flock of birds – some on the veranda, some out the back and some in the dining room, but a head count showed that two people were missing (not mentioning any names, but they were in an Audi!!!) whom we had passed some miles back. We were just at the stage of searching for their mobile number when they came in, after discovering half of the North Coast hinterland, it appears. I think the fact that they actually ended up at the Pomona Pub was amazing! After lunch, which we devoured in our usual enthusiastic manner, we walked over the railway tracks to West’s Majestic Theatre – the oldest authentic silent movie theatre in the world, established in 1921. Mr. Ron West welcomed us, and we straggled into the theatre, clutching our supply of jaffas, which pretty soon were starting to hurtle around the room and rain down on the floor. Mr. West had selected *The Speed Spook* for the movie, and he sat at the pipe organ and accompanied in fine fashion. We booed, cheered, hissed, laughed, ate jaffas and generally enjoyed ourselves. We’ll all remember the “town that was automobilious”! (Actually, Jan felt quite jaffabilious after finishing up a pack of jaffas.) After a restorative cuppa and cake, we drifted off back towards Caloundra.

Ettamoggah Pub was our meal-venue for our fancy dress night. Different interpretations of the Sporting Heart emerged one by one. We had gone as the Sporting Hearts – King and Queen, Kim came as the Queen of hearts, the McKeon family came as an Ace, Jack, King and 10 of hearts, so between them they had a Royal Flush; Phar Lap appeared and galloped around the room; a dapper gentleman and his gentlewoman, dressed for driving in their Alfa, were there, Tony and Jude were dressed in boxes with photos of their vehicles – every one in their stable has a sporting heart, and another Phar Lap turn up. (I think this version won by a nose!) Denis Sando turned up as the all-round sportsman whose heart belongs to Alfa, which one First Prize (men’s) and the Dale Doyle dressed as the boxer which is the heart of the Sud won the women’s costume. First prize (group) went to the Royal Flush, and then they invited Pete and I to join them and we shuffled the deck and then played Snap! The band played, the buffet was demolished (we were getting quite good at this by now!), dancing, wine, laughter... a group of people also clustered around the games at the back



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of the room, and raced on cars and bikes. After a boisterous night, the bus collected some of us and we headed back to our beds to recuperate while others partied on.

Sunday dawned, and yet another... buffet breakfast – with an Easter Bilby beside each plate. A frantic washing and polishing of cars followed for the show and shine, and Ken and Lloyd scrutinized each Alfa minutely, whilst the owners stood nervously by. After show and shine, some toddled off to church, while the rest took off on another navigation run. What a pretty drive it is through the green rolling hills from Palmwoods, climbing up towards Montville! Pete, much to his chagrin, was trapped behind a NSW ute, which proceeded cautiously up the hill, but we eventually arrived in Montville, and parked our 156 along with the rest of the stable of Alfas. It was wonderful to see the 64 cars, including four classic Montreals and five future classic 156s, lined up around the school oval.

Lunch was supplied by Monkey Business – and what a picnic! As we finished, clouds rolled over ominously, and we had a brief, sharp shower later in the afternoon. Some of the ladies scattered to the craft shops, while some of the men stayed and chatted about cars. (Have you noticed how guys stand around in a semicircle, with their arms crossed, or hands in their pockets, all gazing at the car in question, and chatting? Then one or more will walk up and down, checking out the tyres, the interior, or the paint job, or the lines... They can do this for hours! It's called an assemblage of alfistis, a clump of car lovers, an ensemble of enthusiasts, a run of racers – can you come up with any more?) A few of us had a coffee and then bravely faced the ice cream shop in Maleny. Folks – it is fabulous! We then headed back to Caloundra driving along the ridge, watching rain greyly veil the coast.

Attired in various interpretations of the word formal, the Alfistis clustered together for our final dinner. It was a lovely meal – prawns, Caesar salad, salmon, steak, cheesecake and 5 huge profiteroles (alternate drop). A Highland kilted NSW committee were piped in, and the location of Bowral in the NSW Southern Highlands was announced for the 2004 Alfesta. Trophies were awarded (the Ray Sharp Observation/Navigation Run Trophy was won by el presidente, and the social secretary, ooouuuurrrrrr ooowwwnn [drum roll] Ken and Kim Percival!; The Bob Gardiner Memorial Trophy went to Alan and Glenda Wheeley, and the Harry Lewis Spirit of Alfesta went to Jason & Dale Doyle), and then some retired (perhaps waddled off might be a better way to put it!) to bed, while others retired to Legends to watch the San Marino Grand Prix.

It was a bleary-eyed bunch of Alfistis who straggled in for their last breakfast together on Monday morning. The buffet breakfast was attached with gusto, even as we were all complaining of shrinking waistbands on clothes. The final unraffle was drawn and then thanks were given to the committee for the outstanding success of this Alfesta. Goodbyes were said, packing done, and then we surged out onto the highway for the trip home, after four days of fun, food (!), fellowship – and driving.

It was one of those times that you wished could go on a little longer...

Alfesta 2004 - New South Wales

Held at Bowral, New South Wales



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Alfesta 2005 - Victoria

No official Alfesta was held this year, being replaced by "Carnavelle", Milawa, Victoria

Alfesta 2006 - Victoria

Held at Ballarat, Victoria

Alfesta 2007 - South Australia

Held at Berri, South Australia

Alfesta 2008 - Queensland

Held at Mooloolaba, Queensland

Alfesta 2009 - New South Wales

Held at Orange, New South Wales

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