



Alfesta Stories – The Nineties – 1990-1999

Alfesta 1990 - New South Wales

The venue this year was the Rum Corps Barracks at Windsor, in New South Wales.

Friday dawned bright and sunny and a Funkhana day was organised with sports in the morning, being Golf, Tennis and a Time Trial Bicycle Ride. In the afternoon a Motorkhana took place in a nearby paddock which was somewhat muddy. A number of intrepid motorists, including a couple of 4WD's, slithered their way around with varying degrees of success. Friday evening saw much preparation for the traditional theme night with the theme being Friday the 13th.

The room was decorated with black cats, spider webs and ghosts with very cleverly made centrepieces of little bats and witches. A variety of characters turned up, from the Good Fairy to Witches, Skeletons in a closet, black robed horrors and persons to whom various misfortunes had befallen, such as being knifed or axed (or both) or being jumbled up in ladders.

On Saturday the outing was to Lithgow in the Blue Mountains for a trip on the Zigzag Railway.

On Sunday an Observation Run went all over the countryside around the upper Hawkesbury Area. This did not require any great feats of navigation but did require keen eyes and some lateral thinking to work out some of the cryptic questions. Lunch was at a sheep station for a barbecue followed by a Concours d'Eleganza. The Sunday night formal dinner dance held at the Barracks with the Bob Gardiner Memorial Trophy going to Phil and Judy Whalley of NSW.

Alfesta 1991 - Victoria

Alfesta this year was booked in a top Hotel in Frankston, but due to misfortunes some few weeks before the event, another venue had to be selected. Maryland's Guest House in Marysville, Victoria, was organised at short notice and became the perfect place for the festivities.

Alfesta started off on Friday with what was described in the program as a games and fun sports day. It was certainly that and more, with fierce competition when husbands and wives opposed each other at Billiards, Table Tennis, Tennis, Volley Ball and Croquet. The fun continued all day and as the day went on participants found more ways of cheating and taking unfair advantage of the opposition. It was considered by many as the most wonderful day that anyone had ever had at any Alfesta up to that time. That evening most Alfisti made the marathon effort of walking the 3 or 4 miles, or was it 30 miles, uphill to the Stevenson's Falls. The flora and fauna on the way was magnificent.

Saturday was a free day which proved to be a really terrific day of socialising and getting to know the rest of the crew. Saturday there was an Easter Bonnet Parade and all meals served in the venue were excellent.

Sunday the Alfesta Bunny came to the children much to their delight. After breakfast there was an Observation Run en-route to Domain Chandon Winery. A concours was conducted in the grounds of the Winery. At the Presentation dinner that evening, the Bob Gardiner Memorial Trophy was won by Andrew and Irene Leithhead of NSW. For the first time this year a new trophy was to be presented, known as "The Spirit of Alfesta". This was presented to Ern and Joan Stock of Victoria.



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Alfesta 1992 - South Australia

Barossa Motor Inn, Tanunda S.A. Friday dawned cloudy, but it didn't dampen the Alfesta Spirit because the day was to be a Bus-tin Loose Bus tour. Participants boarded two Buses and settled back to what they thought was to be a long bus drive. The Buses went a few meters down the road and stopped, next door to the Inn was a Science and Technical Museum, the first stop on the tour. To add to the confusion there was a question and answers sheet to fill in on the trip. Most Alfisti did not read the question sheet properly until after they had left the Museum and half the questions to be answered were to be found in the Museum. The Buses then went to Minglers Hill Lookout, where there were more questions to answer. A sketch was required of one of the many pieces of sculpture scattered around the lookout hill. The drawings turned out to be hilarious because the sculptures were of a very modern style and no one could tell from which side to view them, so they could be drawn as the artist envisaged them.

After lunch in the park we visited Collingrove, a beautiful Historic Home in Angaston. We then traveled on to the Adelaide Hills and the Chocolate Factory, and then to the Toy Factory. Back at the Motel that evening we had a dinner dance and fancy dress party with the theme, your Favorite TV or Movie Star.

Saturday's Motorkhana in the dirt around Mallala also provided the added pleasure of a Historic Race meeting on the race circuit.

On Sunday we enjoyed an Observation Run which terminated for lunch at Seppeltsfield Winery. The Alfas were assembled here for our Concours d'Alfesta. In the evening our Presentation dinner was held at a restaurant in town where the Bob Gardiner Memorial Trophy was presented to Andrew Papadopoulos of NSW and the Spirit of Alfesta to Harry and Joan Lewis.

Alfesta 1993 - Western Australia

Fremantle, Western Australia – Freo Frolic. As each Alfesta comes and goes there are many memories that flash through your mind. I am sure when many of us recall Alfesta 93, two very hairy, very smelly, four legged animals will come to mind. Yes, incredible but true, we had the pleasure of two camels to put us in the spirit of the Arabian Nights evening on Friday night.

Let's set the scene. Imagine spacious rooms with separate lounge, kitchen and bedroom, modern pleasant decor, overlooking yachts and boats moored to a marina whilst the Swan River gently flows by in the background. These were our rooms at Pier 21. In the car park a large silk lined marquee had been erected for some of our activities.

Alfesta traditionally commences on Friday morning, however as each year goes by more and more people are arriving earlier and leaving later, so the fun started on Thursday afternoon. Norm Craven-Kelly, principal organiser of the event, welcomed all Alfisti and formally declared Alfesta 93 open. A light meal had been organised by the efficient and hard working WA Alfesta committee in the marquee, and tall tales were exchanged about convoys across the Nullabor, Trains across the Nation and other adventures in getting to Alfesta.

Also on Thursday night the National President, Mike Birks, called on Ernie Stock to say a few words about our late great friend, Harry Lewis. Mike then dedicated the Spirit of Alfesta Trophy to the memory of Harry. The trophy is now known as The Harry Lewis Spirit of Alfesta Trophy.



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After breakfast Friday morning we boarded pseudo trams for a sightseeing tour of Fremantle, then a cruise down the beautiful Swan River viewing the many riverside mansions of well known WA tycoons. Once aboard the trusty trams again we continued sightseeing of Kings Park, Perth City and its environs, then back to Pier 21. The day was very interesting and relaxing.

After a short rest, well a few drinks, we all made our way to our oasis in the car park and were confronted by our two camel escorts for the night. They really did steal the show and it was pleasing to see the effort so many Alfisti had made to join in the fun and dress up in Arabian Nights theme.

Saturday morning saw us climb into our vehicles and head east to find the historical town of York some 100 Kms from Perth. Of course the mandatory Alfesta Observation Run was the reason for this excursion. After lunch at the Castle Hotel in York, the afternoon was at everyone's leisure to look through the well known Car Museum, antique fair, art & craft shops etc.

Saturday night proved very interesting with Karaoke in the now infamous marquee. As usual on these nights there are some stars, and some who should definitely stick to driving motor cars. I think John Shoan from the WA Division deserves special mention as one of the stars.

As well as the cars driven to Alfesta, many other Club cars from WA turned up for the display held in the park in Fremantle. A superb lunch was provided by the organisers and the weather continued to be sunny and mild. The afternoon offered the option for enthusiasts to compete in Go Kart racing or have a free afternoon to explore in detail, Fremantle's many museums, hotels, markets and shops. Our formal evening of the weekend was held in Pier 21 restaurant which was a lovely setting for a pleasant night. The prestigious Harry Lewis Spirit of Alfesta Trophy Award was won by Rick & Sue Hardy of South Australia and the Bob Gardiner Memorial Trophy was presented to Allan & Glenda Wheeler of ACT.

Alfesta 1994 - Queensland

The accommodation was in the Noosa International Hotel at Noosa Heads, Queensland.

Good Friday morning, after a splendid breakfast and briefing by Queensland's very efficient committee, the Alfisti headed to a local riverside park to have a forenoon of hilarious sports. Coloured caps which were provided in the Alfesta packs in each room along with T shirts, a towel, 15+ sun screen cream and various other goodies, designated which team each participant belonged to. Red, Green and White teams competed valiantly at Volley Ball, a Triathlon and a questionable event involving large inflated bananas, floating on the river.

After the games lunch was provided at Dilozos Restaurant and after lunch, there was an Economy and Observation run through the Sunshine Coast Hinterland. In the evening a poolside barbecue was enjoyed by all.

Saturdays Breakfast was at Le Monde Sidewalk Cafe and all but Ern Stock walked to the Cafe. Ern Stock was pushed in a wheel-barrow by Mike Birks. A free morning followed breakfast, Mike needed it to recover from transporting Ern. After lunch at the Resort, another Observation Run was held and went through some more delightful countryside in the hinterland. The fancy dress theme for the evening dinner was Eureka and some of the costumes were stunning.



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Sunday started with a Show and Shine held in the local Lions Park. After lunch at the Resort there was a Funkhana at Kin Kin an excellent venue with large grounds where three circuits were set up and every driver had three runs on each circuit.

The Presentation Dinner was held at the Resort and the winner of the Harry Lewis Memorial Spirit of Alfesta Trophy was Jason Doyle of New South Wales and the Bob Gardiner Memorial Trophy was won by Steve and Di Jones of Queensland.

Alfesta 1995 - New South Wales

Held at the Country Comfort Inn, in the Hunter Valley New South Wales, the venue was excellent. It was the former Monte Pio (or Holy Hill) Sacred Heart College, situated in 10 acres of gardens and everything for Alfesta was able to be held in house.

Friday dawned wet so activities were confined to indoors where fun games were played by all. The participants were divided into six teams with folk from all States intermixed. The games played were Bocca (without steel balls), Quoits, (plastic rings had to be thrown over plastic sticks a nearly impossible task) and butt-head (throwing a soft ball at a person wearing a Velcro skullcap. In all games the camaraderie of the mixed teams and the intense rivalry between teams ensured the start of the most wonderful weekend that any group could ever have.

After lunch, still organised in the teams from the morning, the task was to build replicas of a Guilia TI from timber and cardboard, with a couple of rolls of masking tape and a few nails to hold it together. The cars built were excellent in the eyes of the builders, but they took about an hour and a half of assembling, disassembling, sticking up, falling to bits, re-erecting again and so on. The cars were supplied in KDK form but it was difficult to establish which parts of the cut-out cardboard fitted where. After building the cars they had to be decorated as a Polizia Car and this provided quite a bit of scope for individual expression with little Policeman cut-outs sitting in and on the cars and even a Police Dog looking out of a window.

The culmination of the afternoon's work had to be decided by a race of the cars four times round the car park. This involved six people, two inside the car and four outside carrying the car. We weren't told of this eventuality beforehand and even just lifting the cars over the drivers caused some of the bits to fall off. The flag was dropped to start the race and on the first bend there was a coming together of all cars which promptly caused most of them to lose vital pieces and the crews then ran around the car park four times holding bits of wood, cardboard, sticky tape and nothing at all. This event was one of the funniest things that has happened at any place, anywhere at any time.

After an excellent dinner at the venue, the fancy dress theme was The Blues Brothers which brought out costumes such as The Great Alfesto, The Four Trumpets lots of Blues Brothers look a-likes, Nuns, Police, Sheriff, Nazis etc. A good night of wining, dining and dancing was had by all.

Saturday started with an interesting Observation Run followed by a sumptuous lunch and then a free afternoon to rest. This was followed by the Wine Maker's Dinner. There were up to six different types of wine to have with every course served. It was presented by a young Wine Maker from a local Winery.

Sunday. A "how and shine in the gardens at the Resort started off Sunday's activities and this was followed by lunch at a Winery. After lunch the party was split into about eight groups to tour the



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various wineries and attractions around the Hunter Valley. At the Presentation Dinner which was held at the resort, Colin and Terry Densley from Queensland were presented with the Harry Lewis Memorial Spirit of Alfesta Trophy and Anne and Colin Beck of Victoria were presented with the Bob Gardiner Memorial Trophy.

Alfesta 1996 - Victoria

Held at Echuca, on the Murray River in Victoria.

Alfesta 1997 - South Australia

(By Pat Garrett) Participants arrived all day Thursday, many having travelled vast distances from the far corners of Australia. The official program started with simple BBQ dinner on Thursday night. The event ended Monday morning, after a hearty breakfast.

The venue for Alfesta, the Paxton Square Cottages are different from the usual holiday accommodation found at past Alfestas, and were allocated on a “first in” basis. A nearby Motel was also used and those who preferred more traditional accommodation were booked into there instead of the Cottages.

Paxton Square cottages, originally built in the 1850s, are situated next to the picturesque Burra Creek, just a short walk from the town centre. Each of these 32 self contained cottages , complete with its own kitchen and bathroom, offers accommodation for couples, families or groups, and provides 20th century comfort in a charming 19th century setting.

The cottages are built on a whole town block, and enclose a large private grassed area. A marquee in the Square was the centre piece of the Alfesta programme.

All meals were provided and there was plenty of wine, beer, soft drinks and tea and coffee, supplied free of charge with the meals. Most meals and some indoor events were held in a vast Marquee, erected in Paxton Square, between the Cottages. The Burra Hotel operated the Bar in the Marquee at convenient times, and prices were quite moderate.

The programme included a tour of the town of Burra and old mining sites, an Observation Run, a Show and Shine, a Theme Fancy Dress Dinner Dance, and a formal Presentation Dinner.

Drawing on the heritage of the location in historic Burra, the theme for the Fancy Dress Dinner Dance, on Friday night, was Australian Folklore.

Plenty of time was allowed for exploring the surrounding area and to mix with the other Alfisti for a quiet drink at the bar. There was ample leisure time and participants could take it easy and recover from the journey to the event. The famous Wine producing areas of the Clare Valley, and a little further afield, the Barossa Valley are not far from Burra. Those interested in the “fruit of the vine” had time to take in a trip to some of the Wineries in these areas.

Alfesta 1998 - Queensland

(By Keith Faulkner) Based in the City of Brisbane at Rydges Hotel, South Bank, this was the first time an Alfesta had been held in the heart of a capital city, however the location of the hotel, overlooking the expanse of South Bank Parklands and the Brisbane River, proved ideal.



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As usual, there were attendees from all over Australia and Thursday kicked off with an informal BBQ in the parklands, just a short stroll from the Ridges Hotel.

Lunch after the Observation Run was in the Mt Coot-tha Botanic Gardens and the Gala Dinner was hosted at one on the riverbank restaurants, again a short stroll from the hotel.

The theme for the Gala was “Couples” and there were some interesting interpretations of the theme!

Alfesta 1999 - New South Wales

Held at Batemans Bay, South of Sydney. Batemans Bay is the jewel in the Crown of the Eurobodalla Coast, Land of Many Waters, where the lush greens of the south east forests meet the rolling blue thunder of the Pacific. Romantic beaches are flanked by rugged head lands, rock pools teem with life and the backdrop is the spectacular escarpment of the Great Dividing Range.

There are unique art galleries and historic villages crammed with arts, crafts and provincial fare brought to you by local artists and traditional village artisans, their work featuring throughout the region from quaint village stores to sophisticated galleries.

Accommodation was at the Country Comfort Inn Batemans Bay, situated overlooking the Clyde River with sweeping views towards the heads and up river, and just a short walk across the bridge to the town itself.

The Alfesta program showcased this beautiful and intriguing area with many of the usual activities associated with Alfesta but with a few surprises as well. The theme for the Theme Night was also be in keeping with the area with costumes to start with the letter B.

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