

**National Rally—Hahndorf, South Australia, 17-23rd September, 2023**



**Sunday 17 September**

This day saw the steady arrival of the Rally participants with fond memories rekindled and acquaintances renewed. A “Welcome Dinner” was enjoyed by all.



## Monday, 18 September

We started the day with a lovely breakfast and then headed to our respective meeting spots for our tour of Hahndorf (there were two groups, the hares and the tortoises). The hare group met at St Michaels Lutheran Church where our guide took us on a tour around some of the landmarks in Hahndorf and she told us of the history of the first people to settle here. We had some spare time until lunch, so Sean and I drove the TA14 and the Armstrong Siddeley down to Totness for a spa treatment (of the cars, to remove a LOT of dead bugs).

Lunch was at Beerenberg Farm, a delicious selection of buffet food at either end of the room. We paused during our lunch to listen to another (almost word for word) history of Hahndorf and the interesting story of the rebellious young man who grew the Beerenberg family empire, fuelled by strawberries.

We then drove to Nigel Steele-Scott's home to admire his picturesque gardens, landscaped around green rolling hills with a dam as the centrepiece. Don Bosanquet expertly navigated several cars through the boggy lower paddock - we were relieved to escape on our second attempt. As well as being an expert gardener, Nigel has excellent taste in fine motor vehicles. The first garage revealed an Alvis 12/50 (I was told it is known as the honeymoon car) and a Riley 9.

While we were content with these two lovely vehicles, Nigel announced there were more sheds up the hill. We wandered across the dam wall, jumped over a few rocks to avoid the mud, and walked up the hill to find sheds full of cars. What we first thought to be a Bristol was an Aston Martin DB 2/4 and a 1908 Speedwell which Nigel drove in the 2008 London to Brighton Rally. The Speedwell required the driver to add fuel to a valve atop each cylinder to prime the engine. The next car was a burgundy 1950 Citroen, this was my pick to take home. A cute little Austin 8hp saloon which had been meticulously restored looked tiny next to the two majestic Rolls Royces.

On the way back to the hotel we passed Peter Fox walking alongside the road looking frustrated. We later learned that he was searching for a part of his car which had fallen off. As we neared Hahndorf we couldn't resist a stopover at the Ambelside Distillery. We weren't the only Alvis owners who were thirsty and we all sat down at a large table to sample their herbaceous spirits. Dinner was at St Pauls Church, provided by members of the congregation, and we were lucky enough to be entertained by several impromptu stand-up comedians. On the way out I saw a lizard standing on a rock telling jokes. I asked him who he was. He kindly informed me that he was a stand-up chameleon. We then walked back to the motel to retire early ready, for the next days adventure.

**Karen Heffernan.**



1908 Speedwell

## Tuesday, 19 September

This was a full day today, first a visit to Gilbert's Motor Museum in Strathalbyn then on to Goolwa for a trip on an historic paddle steamer, and a visit to the mouth of the mighty Murray River.

The 20 mile run to Strathalbyn was through picturesque rolling hills showing off early Spring grasslands and forest. Arriving at Gilbert's, we were given a short history of the museum, which was originally a General Motors dealership. There were 90 vehicles on display, all loaned to the museum by their owners and being a cross section of the sort of cars that would have been "daily drivers" in the district in the 1950s and 60s. There was a good representation of Holdens, Fords, Chryslers, an XK120 Jaguar, an Austin Healey, a veteran Cadillac and even that brave attempt at an Australian mini car, the Lightburn Zeta – they probably should have stuck with making washing machines. There was also an archive room, housing a vast array of magazines and other written material – an ideal place to do some early motoring research. The displays were well laid out and the many museum volunteers in attendance were obviously keen enthusiasts. Richard DysonHarvey arrived in his just-acquired Rover 75, looking splendid but, as Richard reported, not always running on all cylinders.

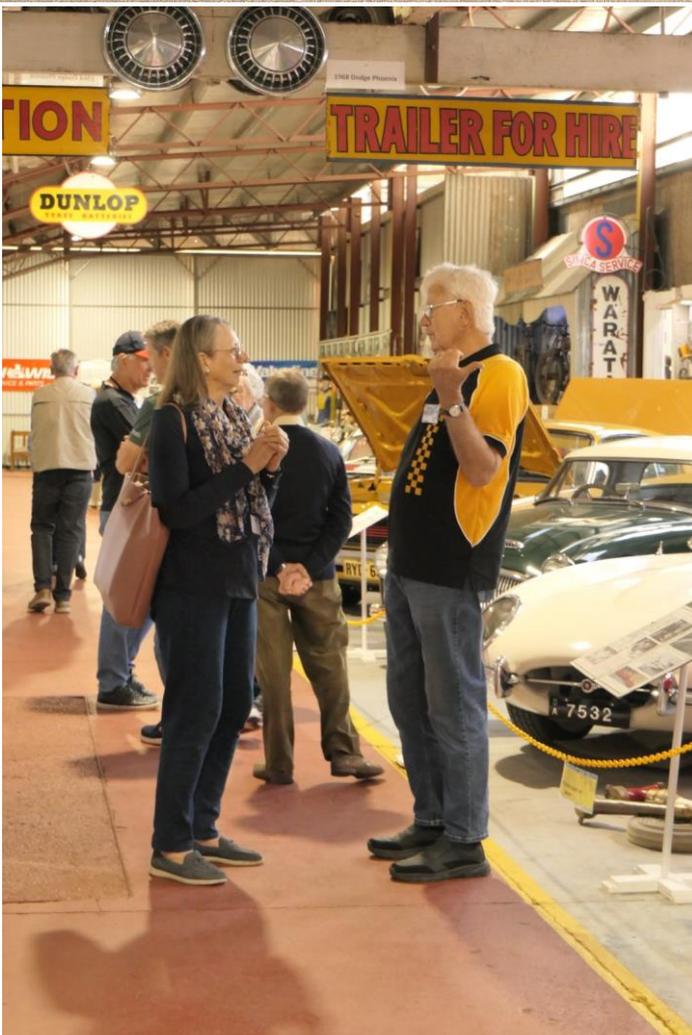
We then adjourned for a get your own lunch in one of Strathalbyn's cafes before heading off through more rolling countryside on the 21-mile drive to Goolwa, near the mouth of the Murray. We were the second Alvis group to take the cruise and spent a pleasant hour over a snack and a glass of wine at the riverside Hector's Café. Then we boarded the paddle steamer Oscar W, built in 1908, which spent most of her life working on the river. 103 feet long, she was driven by a 16hp English-built Marshall steam engine, whose boiler was fed by local timber logs. We had a most enjoyable hour cruising up and down the Murray which, the captain told us, is navigable all year round because of barriers at the mouth of the river, controlling its flow into the sea.

After the cruise, there was time to cross the Hindmarsh Island Bridge onto the island and motor a few miles to see the mouth of the Murray River. Then the 35 mile return journey to Hahndorf via a different route, skirting Mt. Barker, with more delightful rolling hills, forest and farmland. Dinner that night in the Heysen Room at the Haus restaurant, featuring large prints of Hans Heysen's Flinders Ranges landscape paintings capped off a very pleasant day. **Richard Tonkin**



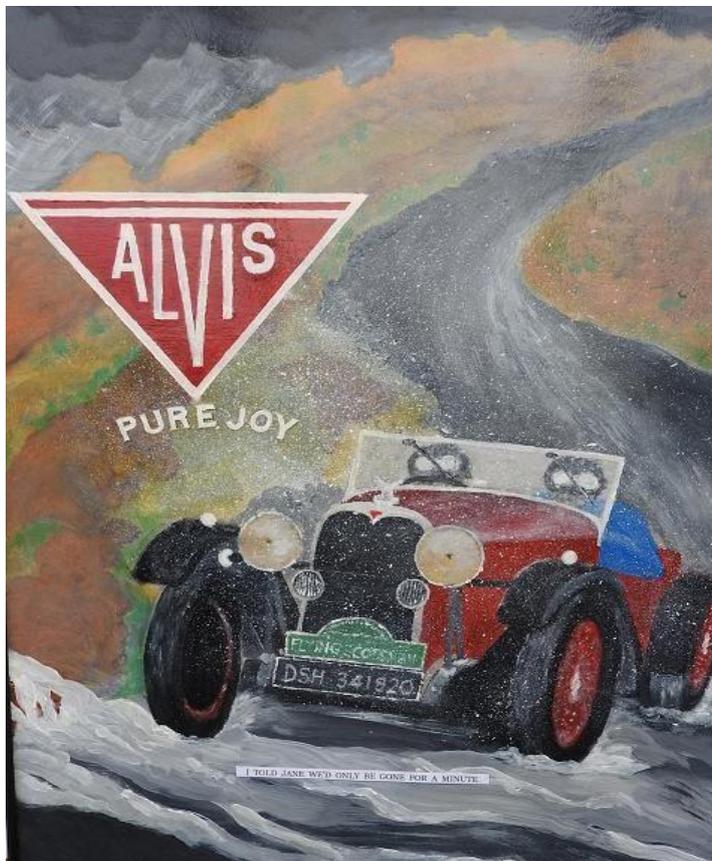


A nice line-up of ALVISES at Gilbert's Motor Museum



Jill Bosanquet complimenting the museum volunteer upon a great display.

The “Oscar W” paddle steamer at the Goolwa Wharf on the Murray River.



**Acrylic on Board by  
Rellard Throon  
(Darrell Horton)**

## Wednesday, 20 September

The first cool, misty day on our rally came on Wednesday, when we drove to Oxenberry Farm for lunch and a wine tasting.

I had a late start, having to fix a tyre problem, but had calculated that we had plenty of time to make the 12:30 deadline we had been given, when I picked up my 'driver for the day', Geoffrey Farrance, and Danielle Rambourg, who handed the navigation over to me (a decision we later regretted).

We headed out of town travelling along beautiful country roads lined with Eucalypts that arched over the roadway. These arched thoroughfares looked magical through the mist. When we arrived at the small pretty country town of Meadows, we had the opportunity to partake of morning tea and visit a local gallery.

It was here that I discovered that the 1 hour journey I had planned would in fact take 1½ hours and the leeway I had included would now be needed for the journey. So no morning tea for us. Geoffrey rose to the occasion and drove the TD21 expertly, keeping the speed up where possible but still managing the wet roads and poor vision.

Our next town, Ashbourne, also tempted us with a café and gallery, but we had to plough on, appreciating the excellent directions from Don and Jill and the beautiful route they had chosen for us.

By the time we arrived at the 'very steep descent with extensive views' the road was wet and the atmosphere misty, but Geoffrey had done his job as we were now within spitting distance of Oxenberry Farm with a few minutes to spare.

Devonshire farmers William Colton and Charles Hewett journeyed to Australia in 1839 with their families and established Oxenberry Farm in 1840, making it the oldest establishment in McLaren Vale.

We sat down at a table with a selection of five wines: 'The Sermon Tree' Chardonnay, 'Settlers Spring' Sauvignon Blanc, 'Doringo Valley' Grenache, 'Star of Greece' Shiraz and 'Scarpantoni Brothers Block' Cabernet Sauvignon. Our host described each one, the history of the wine, the reason for its name and the method of creation as we tasted them. Our table debated the merits of each wine, but my favourites were the Sauvignon Blanc and the Shiraz. The lunch was a choice of Green Curry Chicken or Beef Ragout, both excellent dishes, and Jill and I had a Lemon Sorbet for dessert, which was scrumptious.

After lunch we spied Nigel Steele Scott, who had brought his Citroen. Roland Bartlett, who was deeply involved with the Oscar W ferry we had enjoyed the day before, came with his son and his blue TA14, another lovely Alvis to examine. There was the compulsory "Let's have a look at everyone's car, even though I saw it yesterday" and plenty of swapping passengers and fixing minor issues before we headed off.

On the way back we had an opportunity to visit the d'Arenberg Cube, which incorporated a Salvador Dali exhibition.



The Cube, an Avant Garde de-sign, has five levels, each with a theme which is more or less related to wine-making, culminating in a d'Arenberg wine tasting room at the top level, which also offered extensive views over the countryside.

The grounds displayed sculptures and paintings by local artists. This unusual precinct was worthy of the time we spent there.

We headed home only occasionally having to backtrack when the inattentive navigator missed a turn. The extensive views we missed on the way out were evident on the way home, when the weather had improved considerably.

When I dropped Geoffrey and Danielle back to their room, we all agreed that it had been a delightful day.



The evening was left for us to entertain ourselves, so Jill and I joined up with Jenny, David and Peter (my 'family') and we found our way to the German Alms Hotel which had far too much food for us to eat and beefy beers for us to drink.

Of course it is unnecessary for me to say the day was wonderful and the rally a great success, but I don't think you can say these things too many times when you think of the amount of effort that has gone into making this day so enjoyable. So thank you, once again, Jill and Don. You have succeeded in your aim of giving us a great experience.

**Heather Gold smith**

**Thursday, 21 September**

As with most days in this well-run rally, Thursday comprised two very different but excellent events. First was a visit to the Hans Heysen house and studio, situated in attractive gardens and surrounded by the eucalypts that he clearly loved. In the studio, we learned that Heysen won the Wynne landscape prize no less than nine times and that he was knighted for his services to art. Also, that his daughter, Nora, who was the only one of his eight children to take up painting, became the first woman to win the Archibald portrait prize.

In the family house itself, the knowledgeable guide pointed out the interesting features that Hans and his wife Sally incorporated, as well as the sundry paintings and drawings lining the walls – including a Rembrandt.

It was interesting to see how Heysen's style changed along the way, from realist depictions of landscapes to slightly Impressionist ones and even almost Cubist depictions of Stirling Ranges scenes.

I had made this visit quite some years ago, finding it the best art experience I have had – and this was a worthwhile reprise.

We next took a scenic drive down from the hills into Adelaide, to the impressive premises of the Sporting Car Club of South Australia. Here we were served a plentiful lunch, ending with the cutting of a large cake to mark the centenary of the 12/50 Alvis. The cake was cut by Clare McDonald, the widow of keen 12/50 man, Stuart.

Then we were into the hotly contested Rocker Cover Racing. The range of designs for the entrants was very broad, including various covers for valve gear with quite varied suspensions, ranging from sophisticated axles with ball-bearing wheels to a skateboard with a rocker cover simply taped on top. There were also entries using the alternative of a Tonka Truck. The well-deserved Champion trophy was awarded to Peter Miller, who actually removed the (hot) rocker cover from his car after driving it to the venue and attached it to his prepared suspension! A seriously au-thentic competitor.

Other trophies were awarded to Janet Juttner (a local member) for the 'other wheels' competition; Peter Fox for the disc-wheeled class (using a borrowed car from the Club); and Mark Weller for the 'shiniest' racer.

We then returned to Hahndorf, many via the more scenic 'Eagle on the Hill' route.

**Mark Weller**





John Lang's "Rocket Cover" contribution and below...



A selection of the entrants in this competition.



**The Hans Heysen house**





**The winner of the Stuart MacDonald Trophy Peter Miller**



Claire and son, Duncan MacDon-ald, with the Al-vis 12/50 100th anniversary cake.

## Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September

Another crisp clear morning in Hahndorf heralded the beginning of our final day of the 2023 National Rally.

Following breakfast the cars were readied and we set off for a leisurely motor through the beautiful rolling hills that seem to be the only type of country that exists in this part of the world.

Travelling in a loose and variable convoy, that departed Hahndorf consisting of the 12/50s of Peter Miller, Dale and Judy Anderson and Geoff Ross, Mark Weller's Speed 20 and my TA21 for a very comfortable 73km journey to Graeme and Diane Pinney's property, "Munetta Farm". Along the way we were separated from the 12/50s, arriving at the farm however with the addition of the Mackinnon's MGA, which we met during a very pleasant coffee stop in McLaren Vale.

Cars continued to arrive for the next hour or so during which time Graeme showed us the very interesting contents of one of his garages (he said there were two more), cars restored and being restored included a lovely Lancia Fulvia, a Vauxhall 23/60, a number of Rileys, including Peter Anthill's 1928 Riley Nine which set the Perth to Sydney record of 5 days 18 hours in April 1929. I would be a good time even today!

Lunch consisting of a delicious "Pie in a Paper Bag" followed by Portuguese tarts, fresh fruit and tea or coffee was laid on in the garden in perfect weather. At the completion of which we moved to the "paddock" where the Gymkana course was set out. With entrants from the 5 decades of Alvis production and a couple of modern Minis (including one electric) the events were hotly contested and despite the "hanging out the washing" clothesline being too high for some contestants and the liberal interpretation of the rules by some contestants and judges, a good time was had by all, particularly Poppy, the Pinney's "short-tailed" border collie who tried hard to muster every contestant, with the sole exception of the silent electric Mini in which she showed no interest whatsoever. I think she liked the noise of internal combustion engines, preferably Alvis engines, and felt that all other forms of propulsion beneath her dignity!

The overall winner was Peter Miller, with assistance from John Lang, in Peter's 12/50, announced during the Friday evening of the Bavarian themed dinner in Hahndorf.

The Bavarian themed evening in the Bier Hall was suitably Germanic, consisting of pork, a variety of sausages and sauerkraut, and topped off with the largest strudel that I have ever seen! Although a little early for Oktoberfest, the spirit of the festival was upheld with liberal consumption of the fine selection of German beers. Many dressed for the occasion with prizes awarded for the most authentic and the most imaginative costumes, as well as the various trophies for the Rally.

All in all a very pleasant conclusion to the wonderful week so well organized by Don and Jill Bosanquet.

**Julian Smibert**





**Three Little (Maids)  
from Hahndorf**