

APRIL 2009

# Alvis on the Downs

CHESTER MCKAIGE

Preparations for the 2009 National Rally to Toowoomba Queensland, began in earnest about eight weeks prior to the big event when I took the cover off the 12/50 and started cleaning the wheels. After cleaning one wheel, I suddenly realised that the poor old Speed 25 hadn't had a decent run for some time and as I had heard that Brian and Joan Hemmings were thinking of going on the rally, (unfortunately unable to attend) I put my one and only now clean wheel back on the 12/50 and removed the dust sheet to examine the Speed 25.

Back in January I had the springs re-tempered and new rear shocker absorbers fitted after spending a considerable amount of time making new brackets etc. This made a huge difference to the handling of the car and all that remained was to put it on the hoist and go through it from stem to stern. This I did over Easter, tightening up nuts and bolts, adjusting brakes and slowly completing all the jobs on my list.

We had decided to truck the car to Brisbane and have a few days looking around. Also trucking their cars were Richard Tonkin, Parky and John Link with Richard given the task of organising a suitable trucking company, through a mutual friend. This was completed, only to find the day before departure that the truck had broken down and couldn't do the job. At the eleventh hour Richard came good with a company in Laverton who could truck us there by containerised rail which to me was far better than having the cars open to the elements.

On the morning of the 28th April at some ridiculous time in the morning, Richard, Parky and I gathered in Laverton to drop off the cars, all of us wondering if we would ever see them again.

Sal and I left for Brisbane the following day and spent three days doing all the things one does as a tourist and catching up with a couple of friends who we hadn't seen for years, with a morning set aside to make the trip to Acacia Ridge to pick up the car.

On Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May, we left Brisbane to head for Toowoomba, our home for the next week and after climbing the big hill into Toowoomba and negotiating the car park that when built hadn't taken into account the turning circle of a Speed 25 and the lift system that had a mind of its own, we settled back to enjoy meeting old

friends at "Registration" and examining our rally packs.

The opening dinner was held next door at the Burke and Wills Hotel and Dean Prangley gave us a general rundown of what he and his troops had planned for us in the forthcoming days.

The next day after breakfast (with no toast available) we headed out to Toowoomba Airport for an aircraft and classic car show that attracted over seven hundred cars, including our fine display of Alvises. The aircraft, both on static display and flying, provided a great spectacle and I was amazed at the number of people in attendance. It was a great event.

The rest of the day was free. Some prepared themselves for the "Garden Theme Night" dinner whilst



*Stuart Paton's SP20 in the foreground at the airport*

others did a spot of shopping. These theme type dinners have become standard practice it seems on National Rallies and whether or not you agree with them, one is bound to at least look the part.

There were quite a few really good costumes including a number of carrots, a few garden gnomes, a walking watering can, a sprinkler system and various flowers and insects. Prizes were given to the best costume with Parky

dressed as a carrot complete with a very interesting root system attached winning first prize with Geoffrey Farrance (walking watering can) coming second.

The next day we departed for the Jondaryan Woolshed traveling along some interesting roads with amazing scenery. The Woolshed provided us with morning tea followed by a guided tour of the property and the woolshed



*The three flower ladies of Toowoomba  
And  
Geoff Farrance with his version of Ned Kelly's armour*



where we watched a couple of sheep being shorn and a sheep herding demonstration prior to sitting down to lunch. After lunch we assembled 12 Speed Model Alvises for a photo shoot although there was a particular "Noddy car" that wanted to get in on the act.

JFH and I swapped cars for the trip back and it was nice to sample the TE21 after having been subjected to the



*12 Speed models & the Noddy car*

heavier Speed 25. It's nice to be able to view your own car from the rear view mirror of someone else's car and we both overtook each other so we could share the delights.

The dinner that night was a barbeque and it was here that we learned that some of us had won awards at the Toowoomba Air Show the day before. I was lucky enough to receive People's Choice whilst Norman Zylberberg and Norman Webster also won awards. I was also presented with my glasses that I had left behind at the woolshed!

The morning of day four, took us on a longish drive to Ipswich for a tour around the Railway Museum and workshops. This was a very interesting place to visit and the lunch was pretty good as well.

Richard Tonkin had decided to go with John Link in John's TD which is probably why we never saw the pair again until dinner time when it was conveyed that they had gone in the opposite direction and had got temporarily misplaced.

Prior to our evening meal, we were given a guided tour of a recently restored art deco theatre situated within walking distance of the abode. It happened to have a restaurant attached and the staff put together a truly sumptuous meal.

The next day comprised a short drive to view the Cobb and Co Museum followed by a scenic drive to Cooyar for lunch at the local Cooyar Hotel.

So that Richard wouldn't get lost again, Sal and I accompanied him in Mrs. Graber with Sally doing the navigating from the rear. This is a very comfortable car to travel in and I was fortunate to be handed the wheel for the return journey after lunch. Dinner that night was back at the Burke and Wills Hotel.

The next day saw us picking up lunch packs after breakfast as we were going on a picnic to Spring Bluff. Spring Bluff happened to contain a railway station in a very scenic little area up the side of a steep hill. A large picnic area complete with seating and tables was put to good use and with lunch finished it was but a short trip back to base camp where we could do what we wanted for the rest of the day. Dinner that night was in a restaurant next door to the previously visited theatre.

Our last day of rallying saw us with Parky on board and



Pat Parkinson savouring the delights of the Hetherington's TE21. Our morning tea stop was Glengallan Homestead, a country mansion that had a rather unusual history in that it had spent most of its years unoccupied and had recently been restored to its former glory. Our tour guide was quite eccentric and explained the history of the homestead by using a number of children's wooden toys to highlight various points. These, she had made herself and probably made the multi-coloured wig she wore as well.

From Glengallan we had a 60 km drive to Nobby where we had lunch in Rudd's Pub named after Steel Rudd the author of Dad and Dave etc. Apparently Rudd frequented the pub and wrote many of his stories whilst propped at the bar sipping on a glass of beer. During lunch we were treated to a chap reciting poetry by Bango Patterson and Henry Lawson .

The dinner that night was our final one before setting for home the following day. As is traditional, Presidents of NSW ( Paul Lunsmann deputising for Rob Blacket) and Victoria had a few words to say and we presented the organisers with a suitable gift on behalf of both clubs. We were then addressed by Heather Goldsmith about the 2011 National to be held in Wagga and Orange. Dean Prangley sang a few songs accompanied by Parky on the keyboard and the Victorian Club also got to sing a song as well.

Thus ended the 2009 Alvis National Rally.

The next morning saw the car park a hive of activity with people packing cars and saying their good-byes. As we were leaving later than most people, I endeavoured to help Chris Higgins load his 12/50 onto its trailer and offer help to David Pearse who was having difficulty starting his 4.3. After a new battery and some sorting out of cables etc, he managed to get going a couple of hours later.

Richard Tonkin, Norman Zylberberg, John Link and I traveled in convoy back to Acacia Ridge to drop the cars back to the transport company, Richard then organising us transport to the airport and then back home.

It was a great rally and very well organised by the tag team effort of Prangley and Singer. There were a couple of gremlins to do with meals etc, but these things are out of the control of the organisers. The route instructions were well written and accurate and from the feedback, everyone seemed to have a most enjoyable time.

Don't forget 2011 for the NSW National, and 2013 for our turn.

Those in attendance were as follows:

Bill and Kath Austin TA14  
 Greg Berkman 12/50  
 Richard and Ann Budd TC21  
 Bill and Rosemary Chapple 12/50  
 Frank and Anne Corbett 12/50  
 Derek and Gaye Dixon 12/50  
 Des and Edna Donnan FWD  
 Bill Ewing and Joanne Sherwood Speed 25  
 Geoffrey Farrance TA21  
 Roger and Christine Fry  
 Rob Gunnell and Heather Goldsmith FWD  
 Tony and Beni Hannam Firebird  
 John and Marg Hetherington TE21  
 Graham and Anne Hesse Speed 20  
 Chris Higgins and Eric Nicholl 12/50  
 Geoff and Helen Hood Modern  
 Max and Judy Houston 4.3  
 Vic and Marg Jarrett Speed 25  
 Fred and Betty Jones TA21

John and Annie Link TD21  
 Paul and June Lunsmann 12/40  
 David McDonald and Ken Shaw Speed 25  
 Stuart and Clair McDonald TD21  
 Chester and Sally McKaige Speed 25  
 Alan and Noeline McKinnon 12/50  
 Kendall and Joyce McSkimming TA14  
 Peter and Anne Mott Speed 20  
 Ian and Pat Parkinson Noddy  
 Dale and Maritta Parsell Silver Eagle  
 Stuart and Mirium Paton Speed 20  
 David and Elizabeth Pearce 4.3  
 Dean and Christine Prangley Speed 20  
 Graham and Dorothy Singer 12/50  
 Eric and Irene Smith TA21  
 Richard Tonkin Mrs. Graber  
 John and Lynda Voller TC21/100  
 Ross and Janet Walker modern  
 Norman Webster TC21/100  
 Mike and Liz Williams Speed 20 (Donnan)  
 Richard and Jutta Williams modern  
 Doug Young and Roger Payne Speed 25  
 Norman Zylberberg and Tony Lister Speed 25



*Would this be messrs McKinnon & Parsell in drag?*



*Mike & Liz Williams arrive in the Donnan SP20*

*Photography by Dale Parsell and Chester McKaige.*

*LOTS MORE CAR PICS IN JULY ALVIC*