

NATIONAL RALLY- RALLY TO THE RALLY

Days 1 & 2- Smiths Gully-Cowra-Corowa

Karen Heffernan

Friday morning kicked off not with the roar of engines, but with a masterclass in automotive controlled chaos: ten suitcases, countless bags, and three cars. Somehow, through a combination of luck, logic, and possibly a shoehorn, everything (and everyone) fit. With the hard part done, we cruised up to Shepparton for a relaxed lunch with the Hetheringtons and Andersons, who were able to join us briefly before we hit the road again. We left our friend and ACCV member Phil Smith in Shepparton - he was unable to join us as his son was receiving an OAM from the Governor for services to firefighting.

A wander through the Shepparton Motor Museum followed, offering a



surprisingly eclectic mix of automotive history—and an unexpected detour into fashion with Loel Thomson's captivating costume collection. From there, it was on to Corowa for the night. After the ceremonial pre-dinner drinks (a tradition not to be trifled with), we tucked into hearty pub fare, where I stumbled upon one of the best Caesar salads I've ever had. A bold claim, I know—but this one had crunch, zing, and just the right amount of anchovy attitude.

Saturday morning saw Sean heroically volunteering to ferry our friend Alan to Albury Airport for his flight back to England. The rest of us followed Noeline's hand-crafted directions through Wodonga and on to Corryong for lunch, spirits high and engines humming.

Post-lunch, the plan was ambitious: head to Cabramurra, the highest town in Australia. Pauline and I, piloting the modern car in the convoy, followed closely behind the classic TA14 and TA21. Unfortunately, we missed a turn by the lead driver that sent us veering off-plan. Ever optimistic, we rerouted via Google Maps, expecting to reconnect down the track.

A quick pitstop at a servo to restock our oil supplies, we thought we could catch up to the classics—unaware that the rest of the group had already doubled back and successfully made it to Cabramurra. Their report? Cold, quiet, and made memorable by a

military cargo plane soaring past at eye level. Son Liam was enjoying his first Alpine drive in The Duchess (the TA21) through the amazing Snowy Mountains landscape, punctuated by tall, bleached skeletons of burnt out trees standing above the regrowth at half their height. Meanwhile, Pauline

and I embarked on what turned out to be the scenic (and slightly hair-raising) Alpine Way—windy with a capital ‘W’. Our route twisted and turned through stunning mountain passes, the kind of drive that’s equal parts thrilling and therapeutic... for the soul, less so for the brakes.



As we found our rhythm, not all was well behind us. Daisy, the Parsells’ beloved TA14, decided she’d had enough of the hills and politely bowed out near Adaminaby. After a flurry of phone calls and a bit of confusion of behalf of the towing company, Daisy was eventually carried into Cooma, no doubt dreaming of flatter terrain, and the Parsell were rescued by Good Samaritans Don and Jill Bosanquet.

Dinner that night was at the Cooma RSL—another unexpected culinary hit that capped off an eventful day. Great food, great company, and just enough mechanical drama to remind us that adventures like these are never just about the destination. ▼



NATIONAL RALLY 2025 – RALLY TO THE RALLY

Day 3 – Cooma to Canberra

Julian Smibert

The day began in Cooma at the Nebula Motel with an early (and noisy) departure by our motorcycling neighbours.

The Parsell's TA14 DHC, Daisy, who had suffered an apparent head gasket failure the previous day, had to be repositioned pending her collection and return to Melbourne, so we departed at about 0930 for a visit to the NSW Corrective Services Museum, which was a short drive from the motel.

The museum is situated in what was accommodation for prison officers serving at the adjacent Cooma Jail, which is still in service, housing around 250 inmates and is in fact the oldest serving prison in the country, having opened in 1873.

We were shown around the museum by the Museum Manager, Andrew, who is an ex-prison officer, having served 20 years in the UK before moving to Australia. Andrew was a wealth of knowledge on the history of the prison service and servitude from the First Fleet to the current operation of today's prisons.


The museum houses a varied

collection of exhibits from the curious to the macabre, including convict ball and chains, whips and whipping triangle, stocks, death masks of executed convicts and an original hangman's rope along with gallows from Bathurst Prison, which is still operational, and was demonstrated (without an occupant) as a finale.

All in all, a most interesting visit with a guide who really knew his subject.

Next, we had a short drive to the Snowy Hydro Visitor Centre where we were treated to a very informative display and presentation on the history and the future of the Snowy Hydro, followed by lunch in the Centre canteen.

After lunch we departed north towards Canberra via the Monaro Highway, in at times drizzling weather, arriving at the East Hotel in the mid-afternoon, where we were greeted by Heather Goldsmith her sister, Gill Gane and David Whitem, with rally packs full of goodies.

In the evening welcome drinks and dinner were enjoyed in a private room at the hotel. 

NATIONAL RALLY – DAY 1

NASA Tracking Station, Cuppacumbalong and Lanyon Homesteads.

Richard Tonkin

Day 1 of the National Rally dawned bright and sunny, as did the rest of the week – congratulations to Heather Goldsmith and her team for arranging such beautiful weather.

After a hearty breakfast at Agostini's Restaurant at our rally headquarters in the East Hotel (their fried eggs – “turned over please, and runny,” with bacon and mushrooms were quite delicious), we motored off to our first destination, the NASA Deep Space Network tracking station at Tidbinbilla, a pleasant hour or so drive through rolling farmland, after we had negotiated Canberra's peak hour traffic (yes, they too have traffic jams, despite all those roundabouts).

After a 3 mile drive up the station's access road, dominating the landscape is the main, 70 metre “dish” – like the one at Parkes, but bigger. We arrived in good time, to be met by our guide

for the two hour tour, a lady who already has a bachelor's degree in Astrobiology and is studying for her Masters – she knew her stuff.

Once inside the Visitors Centre, we were given a briefing on the station and its part in transmitting commands to, and receiving data from, the many American and European spacecraft that are exploring the Moon, Venus, Mars and the outer planets. Tidbinbilla, along with similar stations outside Madrid and at Goldstone, California, keep in contact with these spacecraft and will be the lifeline for the upcoming NASA Artemis crewed Moon missions. The Canberra station is unique in that it is the only one that can keep in touch with Voyagers 1 and 2, the craft that were launched in 1977, explored the outer planets and are now sending back science data from interstellar space.



We were then ushered into the auditorium where one of the engineers from the control centre gave us an entertaining Q & A about the station and its activities. Interestingly, the “dish” is so automated that only one engineer is on duty overnight, and their role is to just watch and make sure everything is working.

We were then entertained by our Astrobiology guide to a session on “Are we alone?” in the universe. There was much Q & A, but the question wasn’t resolved. But there are so many galaxies, with so many suns and so many planets that, statistically, there must be intelligent life out there somewhere. But are they so far away that we will never meet them? I once read that a Christian theologian suggested that God placed planets with intelligent life so far apart that they could never interact – who knows?

Then, from the 21st century to the 19th. We travelled some 20 minutes to the Cuppacumbalong homestead - a mouthful, I know – it’s aboriginal for “meeting of the waters” – the

Murrumbidgee and Gudgenby rivers. The area was a meeting place and camp site for First Nations People for thousands of years, they enjoying the vast variety of flora and fauna and the abundant water from the two rivers.

Cuppacumbalong Estate was established by James Wright as a sheep run in 1839. In 1855 Wright sold the property to Leopold de Salis who produced fine merino wool and draught horses. The property expanded to cover some 90,000 acres. By 1954 it had passed to Frank Snow and his wife who added extensions to the California Bungalow homestead and created the beautiful gardens. By then Cuppacumbalong had been reduced to about 7,500 acres but was still magnificent enough to host Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh on the afternoon of Sunday the 14th of February 1954. That must have been a very special day for the Snows.

Fast forward to 2017 when Karim Haddad and Ali Wass acquired the Homestead and provided a space where people can meet – a hub for artisans and an environment to inspire





Using convict labour, he built a house in the main courtyard, as well as the old kitchen and cellar, the barn and stables. By 1841 59 people were living on the property.

In 1849 Wright sold the Lanyon to Andrew

creativity. The owners reengage with the local aboriginal community for knowledge and advice in sustainable land management, planting of native tucker and trees to bring the country back to health and productivity.

Cunningham, a Scottish banker. The property prospered and Cunningham built the present homestead of timber and locally kilned brick, with its grand entrance and carriage turning circle. The gardens were planted with exotic, productive and flowering plants.

Inside the homestead, we enjoyed a relaxing lunch before heading off on the short drive to another historic site, Lanyon Homestead. Following European settlement, squatters moved into the area, adjacent to the mighty Murrumbidgee River. In 1834 (remember, this was two years before the settlement of Melbourne), another James Wright, and John Lanyon leased adjoining blocks of land. They were assigned convicts from Sydney (cheap labour – they only had to supply rations and housing). Lanyon returned to England after a short time and Wright took over the properties.

When Andrew Cunningham died in 1887 his two sons took over the property, by which time it was running 60,000 sheep. Lanyon remained in the family until 1926, by which time it was suffering from neglect at the hands of Andrew's grandson, who was living what the brochure about the property describes as an "exuberant lifestyle." - as so often happens with the third generation.

In 1930 Thomas Field bought the Lanyon and retained it for the next 40 years. While they did not live there,



employing managers to run and improve the property, the Fields used it as a holiday home, but they always respected and preserved the historic buildings.

In 1974, the Australian Government resumed the property for urban development. The museum precinct, covering 80 hectares, is operated by the Museums and Galleries Unit of the ACT government. It was with their guide that we were shown through the old homestead, preserved in fine condition and with period furniture. The extensive gardens provided a



delightful backdrop to this historic site.

After a busy but most interesting day, we motored back to our hotel to enjoy dinner at their Agostinis Restaurant – included in the Rally fee! ▼

NATIONAL RALLY – DAY 2

Lake Cruise, Pompeii Exhibition, National War Museum Chris and Peter Fox

Our group was welcomed with another perfect weather day for the day's activities. We had a light lunch and enjoyed a cruise around the artificial Lake Burley Griffin, named after Walter Burley Griffin, the architect and winner in 1912 of the new Canberra Capital city plans competition.

Long before the area was dammed and flooded in 1963-1964, it was a meeting place for the local indigenous peoples who enjoyed the Molonglo river's abundance. The lake is surrounded by many treed hills and mountains, giving the viewer

spectacular Canberra vistas from several prominent peaks. At the eastern shore is Jerrambomberra creek Wetlands Reserve, a significant wildlife refuge and migratory bird habitat which is adjacent to the exclusive Kingston suburb and it's stunning water view apartments.

The Lake's entire foreshore is blessed with many parks and pathways leading visitors to significant capitol buildings and memorials, of which our tour guide had extensive knowledge. One lesser-known monument on the south bank close to Commonwealth Bridge is for 12-year-old Katie

Bender, who unfortunately lost her life in 1997 as a result of flying debris from the implosion of the old Royal Canberra Hospital on Acton peninsula, now the site of the National Museum of Australia. We then floated past the giant Australian National flag at Parliament House on Capitol Hill, which watches over us 24/7, and too soon our laker cruise was at an end.



Once safely back on shore, we headed for the boldly designed National Museum for the Ancient Pompeii exhibition. While we admired all the Alvis cars that had pride of place out front, we were treated to an extremely noisy fly-by of military helicopters. Many joked about the extraordinary lengths the NSW Alvis rally organisers had gone to!

The highlight of visiting the Pompeii exhibition was the surprise eruption of Mount Vesuvius multisensory immersive display. It was easy to imagine the fear and surprise of the citizens on that terrifying day nearly

2000 years ago.

With the time that was left, some of us viewed other permanent installations, before moving on to the National War Memorial for the 4:30 pm 'Last Post Ceremony'. Each night the ceremony shares the story behind one of the names on the Roll of Honour. This proved to be a very respectful and moving experience for those that attended.

The evening meal was an 'alternate serve' dinner across Giles Street at the Kingston Hotel, where we

enthusiastically discussed all things Alvis.



NATIONAL RALLY – DAY 4

Yarralumla, National Arboretum

Don and Jill Bosanquet

Thursday dawned again as a bright and sunny day. We are quite sure that Heather and Jill must have been very good little girls because they were certainly rewarded with excellent weather throughout the Rally!

After a delightfully planned meander along the southern shore of Lake Burley Griffin, we motored past the International Flag Display. These 96 flags are dedicated to the United

Nations and represent every country with which Australia has diplomatic relations. They are flown 24 hours a day and are lit at night.

We wound our way up to Yarralumla, the official residence of the Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia. While Her Excellency was unfortunately tied up with affairs of state, her delightful staff helped with parking at the side



was the Queensland Maple Marquetry Collector's Cabinet (with secret drawers!) which was hand crafted by Geoffrey Hannah in 1991 - taking a total of 1600 painstaking hours.

After touring the rooms, many Alvis owners took the opportunity for a 'red carpet' moment - having their precious vehicles photographed at the State Entrance. What a privilege!



We then motored to the National Arboretum - a 250-hectare (620-acre) garden created after the area was burned out as a result of the Christmas 2001 and 2003 bushfires.

entrance, and they encouraged our self-guided tour of the ground floor. The rooms abounded with delightful art works, artefacts, clocks and furniture and it was an honour to be able to walk through the various rooms at our leisure and have our many questions ably answered by the staff on duty. Whilst it was interesting to be in the actual office in which the Prime Minister had, just last week, sought permission to dissolve Parliament to enable a Federal Election, the absolute highlight for us

With over 44,000 rare and endangered trees the Arboretum is a place of beauty, conservation, science research, education, tourism and recreation.

We enjoyed a delightful lunch in the Margaret Whitlam Pavillion with panoramic views in every direction. Some of us even mastered the sophisticated coffee machine!

After lunch, some chose to amble around the extensive plantings, a highlight being the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia



which housed some absolutely stunning bonsai plants.

As we departed for our afternoon destinations, we were delighted to watch young children rolling down the hills between the Margaret Whitlam Pavillion and the Arboretum Café. Oh, to be 10 again!

We headed to the northern side of Lake Burley Griffin and passed through Duntroon to climb to the Mt Pleasant Outlook and Memorial which afforded a more rural view across Lake Burley Griffin. As we were becoming more familiar with the geography of Canberra, it was great to be able to identify various landmarks and significant buildings.

And then to Ollies' Garage in Fyshwick which houses a private rotational car display and is the Canberra showroom of the Sir





His enthusiasm and pride in his collection of vehicles and memorabilia was obvious and the visit was well worthwhile.

And then back to our hotel for a well-earned rest – all participants were ‘tired but happy’ after a very full, memorable and enjoyable day.

Henry Royce Foundation. Our host was the passionate owner, Ian Oliver, and he has meticulously developed a very fine display of interesting vehicles. He encouraged us to subscribe to his YouTube site and that can be found via the Ollies’ Garage website - olliesgarage.com.au

Hearty congratulations to Heather and Jill and the team for the hours of work that go into curating a day filled with such a variety of superb and unique experiences. ▼



NATIONAL RALLY – DAY 4

NSW Alvis Club Anniversary Dinner - Old Parliament House Canberra

Bruce Cunningham

After another wonderful day of touring Canberra and environs, we assembled in the foyer of the East Hotel and boarded a bus to the Old Parliament House for dinner. A short trip of about ten minutes. We assembled in the Member's Dining Room, after receiving a complimentary drink and after a lot of chit chat and admiring the various headwear and costumes, we sat down to eat.

A main meal of (alternate serve) Sichuan-glazed barramundi with chilli-garlic rice and Asian greens or sticky pot braised pork belly with rice cake and sweet and sour cucumber salad.

Desserts: Green apple mousse, (not mouse as printed on the official menu) apple compote and vanilla sponge or chocolate vegan raspberry cake,

chocolate ganache, buckwheat crumble and raspberry compote.

After dinner, secret judges were in attendance to judge the caps and costumes.

Organiser Heather Goldsmith gave a Paul Butler Bequest lecture about Racing Alvis drivers, predominately in NSW, to satisfy the requirements of the bequest. The lecture included several early photos of Alvis' and their drivers.

Victorian ACCV President, Mark Weller, toasted the 75th Anniversary of the Alvis Car Club – NSW.

Winding up of the evening was Andrew McDougall's presentation for the 2027 National Rally to be held in Beechworth, Victoria. ▼





NATIONAL RALLY – Day 5 – Cooma Cottage, lunch at Murrumbateman, (detour to see a Jowett) and Final Dinner

Cathy Ferguson

Friday began with a continuance of the glorious weather we had had all week (much appreciated by our open top drivers). In the Tonkin cavalcade we negotiated the Canberra exit making the most of modern technology, using three phones, Google maps, 2 Sat Navs and 5 brilliant minds, communicating between all three cars at once (we still managed to stray off course). However did we manage it in the past?

Once back on track and all following the magnificent directions in the Rally guidebook, we enjoyed scenic tree lined roads abundant with wildlife, evident as we dodged the permanently resting native fauna. The views coming into Yass were spectacular.

At Cooma Cottage we were greeted by a delicious morning tea spread in keeping with the era of the cottage, home baked by Fran Higham. No wonder she had been too busy to attend the previous day. Then, with satiated appetites, we were given a tour of the cottage and an insight into the lives of its previous owners. Low drop doorways had some ducking and a 150 year old Olive tree in the back yard was the largest I have ever seen. Hamilton Hume, the explorer partner of William Hovell, bought the

property in 1839 and lived there until his death in 1873.

After seconds, and thirds for some, of the delicious morning tea we were off to Murrumbateman Country Inn for lunch - afraid we did a lot of eating, drinking and just enjoying the company of likeminded friends on this rally. To get to lunch, some took the low road but those more adventuresome went for the high road, via Dog Trap Road, a scenic ridge top drive.



On the way back to Canberra the Tonkins took a detour back through Yass to visit a Jowett Javelin once owned by Richard. What a treasure trove awaited us. Nestled around the Jowett was an eclectic collection of cars, each with its own fascinating providence. From a 1928 Willys to the



JBA Falcon built in Scotland, an Austin Healey, the only surviving Tasmanian racing car and a Fiero GT Pontiac. Clearly, old racing cars were a passion along with the more mundane classic cars.

That night was our farewell dinner at the hotel along with award presentations, a zoom catchup with the McKinnons and drinks courtesy of the Hetheringtons who were unfortunately unable to attend the Rally.

A fitting end to a very successful Rally. Thank you, NSW Alvis Car Club and especially Heather and Jill. And thanks to Heather for providing the list of award recipients. ▼



2025 NATIONAL RALLY – AWARDS

Best cars – awards of New Zealand wine, courtesy of Les Westoby.

Postwar	Julian Smibert – TD21
Prewar	Andrew McDougall – Speed 25
Vintage	Geoff Ross - 12/50

Oldest car to the Rally

Geoff Ross 12/50

Theme night awards – judged by Sue le-Leu and Delwyn Goldsmith.

Mad Hatters	Pauline and Richard Tonkin
Capitolists	Sean and Karen Heffernan
Silver Hares	Peter and Chris Fox
Fireflys	Stuart and Rhonda Barnes
Humber Snipe	Victor Nash
“Cap on a cap”	Bruce Cunningham

International Guests

Les Westoby and Joanne Cleary, Derek and Gaye Dixon

Driven furthest in an Alvis

Phil Dadd and Ronnie Brown
John and Nicky Payne

Local Hero

David Lemberg

Rally to the Rally organizer

Noeline McKinnon

National Treasure

Alan McKinnon

Best non-Alvis motor vehicle

Terry Wills-Cooke