

Austin Wood has been recently voicing opinions that many other members also hold, with regard to the state of the Clubrooms. Now that the interior has been mainly painted, the dowdy and decrepit old furniture shows up in a very ill light, and it is certainly about time that something was done about it. New or reasonable second-hand furniture is needed to make the Clubrooms more inhabitable.

There are several ways this can be achieved.

Firstly, some philanthropic member could donate to the Club a new set of furnishings etc. Secondly, members could each search their own houses, offices etc. for no-longer-needed but sound seating, and give them to the Club. Thirdly, the Club can buy the necessary equipment from Club funds, or as Austin suggests, from a special 10/- per head levy raised this financial year.

The first of these alternatives appears to be out, for lack of such a patron. The second might be feasible, if members did the unexpected and lived up to their promises. The third is at least a sure way, but can the Club afford to spend say £20 from its yearly budget for this purpose?

Let us work on a Club membership of about 50 (it should be more than this), each paying approx. £2 to Club funds. This gives a total subs. income for the year of £100, if the Treasurer is able to extract dues from all members.

Our expenses are likely to be:

Mailing for Alvics ( 12 issues )	£24
Alvic expenses ( 12 issues )	£12
Stationery, postage etc.	£10
Miscellaneous expenses	£20
Trophies, suppers etc.	£10
Total	£76.

These expenses have, if anything, have been very generously allowed for, and should actually be less. All the same, this leaves nearly £25 that could well be spent on much needed improvements to the Clubrooms. These improvements should help to attract new members, especially from the Three Litre ranks, who may well look down the nose at seats with no covering and

couches with no seats.

Perhaps a working bee of members with the necessary know-how could get to work and repair the existing chairs, couches etc. If this could be done, and clean serviceable covers put over them, then this might suffice, although the present arm-chairs and couches are cumbersome and inefficient as far as the limited space is concerned.

There has been much talk of buying a row of theatre seats of the Dunlopillo variety to be placed along one wall. This is a very good idea, and should be amply worth the expense, especially when theatre furniture can be obtained so cheaply these days.

Plans are afoot for an increase in size of the Clubrooms as soon as the SG Silver Eagle is roadworthy and in the hands of its new owner. When the wall has been moved out the final painting will be done, and then the new furniture will be badly needed.

In late February sometime the Registrar of the English Alvis Register will be visiting us on a sort of Alvis holiday, and it is to be hoped that we can present him with a clean looking and very attractive Clubrooms, so that he can take back to his English members tales of this facility which is so unique among the world's Alvis Clubs.

Finally, should it be decided to spend portion of the Club funds on the Clubrooms, the lot of the Country member may well be raised. While it is true that Country and Interstate members do not usually use the Clubrooms at all, it is because of this that they only pay half the membership fee, and are furthermore at liberty to come to the Clubrooms whenever they are in town. In any case, the great majority of members live in, or very near, the metropolitan area, and do come to meetings as often as they can.

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#### "ALVIBATICS" PRICE CUT IN '61

We hear rumours from the N.S.W. Club that the annual subs. for "Alvibatics" will be cut this year from 18/- to 10/-. It is hoped that this move will increase the number of subscribers.

ADJUSTING SPEED TWENTY BRAKES

from the Technical Editor, Alvis Owner Club.

The remarks below apply to any of the 1932 - 1939 models except the 12/70 and Silver Crest cars.

The object of correct brake adjustment, assuming that cables, linings, cross shafts and pins are all in good condition and properly lubricated, is to adjust the brake shoes to fit as closely to the drum as possible.

1. Slacken off the central foot and hand brake adjusters to their full extent.
2. Taking each wheel at a time, move the eccentric cam adjuster until, with the maximum amount of slack taken up on each cable, a further slight movement of the cam will result in the shoes rubbing the drums (slight movement = approximately  $3^{\circ}$ ) The wheels will, of course, have to be jacked up starting with this step.
3. Apply the hand-brake one notch, having screwed up the centre adjuster as necessary, until the front wheels need some effort to turn them. With the hand-brake on three notches, the back wheels will be much harder to turn than the front and the cables should be slackened to the point where equal effort, front and rear, is necessary.

The task of adjustment is not done in five minutes, but with care and trouble you will have good brakes with equal stopping power and the approximate percentage between front and rear.

On cars fitted with these brakes pre-war road tests gave stopping distances from 30 m.p.h. of between 28' and 34', according to the weight of the particular model.

It should be noted that the procedure given in the Instruction Manuals for adjusting brakes can result in the shoes being left in a position where they are fractionally further away from the drums, and this will result in a very considerable loss of braking power.

Melbourne-New Zealand run steam-packet, S.S. Rotomahana invariably berthed at No. 1 Queen's Wharf, with her bow-sprit protruding over the footpath of Queen's Bridge. As near as dammit to where Melbourne's founder John Batman ( Ah, so that's the quay to the Ashes) spouted those immortal words "This is the village for a spot", obviously spoken before the 6 p.m. closing of our pub bars.

As No. 1. Berth was set at a tangent to the flow of the Yarra, to get under way on the ebb tide was easy - all they did was to cast off the bow hawsers, whereupon the bow would swing out into mid-stream and she would turn about on her stern, at the right moment the stern hawsers would be let go, and then, under steam, she would head downstream.

On this occasion, however, it was almost deadwater. The incoming tide was losing its battle with the flow of the river, so a line had to be carried via Queens Bridge to the other side of the river and placed over a bollard on Yarra Bank Wharf. I had a box-seat view from the half-way line on Queens Bridge.

Well, after the bow hawsers had been let go, the winch up forward in the bow went into action winding up the manila attached to Yarra Bank Wharf. As she slowly swung around, still held up aft by the poop hawsers, all seemed well, when suddenly there was a splash, PLOP! The winching manilla had slipped off the bollard and then, seeing the poop hawsers slacken, the lubbers over on Queen's Wharf, had cast them off. The Rotomahana was adrift with not many fathoms clearance on the bow, larboard or stern, and all this upon come-and-go, will-of-the-wisp-like waters of the change of tide. Here, indeed, was a pretty kettle of fish.

He, of notorious renown, the Skipper of the Rotomahana, then let fly with his full repertoire of nautical and naughty phraseology.

He mistakenly accused the two innocents, over on the steam-crane foundations, of deliberately casting off the manilla with foul intent, and for the ensuing fifteen minutes or so, non-stop, he proceeded to trace their antecedents back to the days before Noah.

With exquisite clarity, and in glowing terms, rather akin to the Aurora Australis, he covered their respective pedigrees and their ramifications with infinite care, coupled with extremely lucid

descriptions, both physical and vocal, of what he should do or what he would like to do to the hapless pair, if he could only lay his bare hands on them.

As the Old Man danced around on his bridge, he punctuated the tirade with curt, and evidently correct, orders to the engine-room, and the helmsman, to give the man his due, was above all, a Master Mariner in the true sense. Had served his time before the mast on square-riggers. Slowly but surely, he manoeuvred his vessel, in spite of the vagaries of wind and water, into position to enable the interrupted voyage to proceed.

Meantime, a crowd had gathered on Queens Bridge attracted, no doubt, by the commotion, as the row the Old Man was kicking up may quite well have been heard above the noise of the city traffic. Among the crowd were a fair number of Deepwater men and, as time marched on, it was very noticeable that each and every one of them doffed his cap, and stood bareheaded in open mouthed awe and reverence as the Master exhibited his skill.

Whether their tribute was in deference to his vocal efforts or to his manoeuvring, I really couldn't say, but occasionally they whispered with bated breath, "He hasn't repeated himself once."

Eventually, the Old Man got her underway, and as she slowly made her way downstream, his stentorian voice, still ranting the tirade of abuse and pedigree tracing, floated back to us across the waters, and we realised that he had passed through the Iron Age and was then about mid-Bronze. Judging from the enthusiastic timbre of his voice, he had every intention of proceeding through to before the Ice Age. Unquestionably, this man was no piker.

My reactions to the exhibition can best be illustrated by quoting the words Arty said to Dad, in Steele Rudd's "On Our Selection" (Pioneer Farm). The Rudd family were gathered together, helplessly watching the destruction of a year or more's sweat and toil, as the harvest went up in flames. Arty turned to Dad, whose heart was nigh on breaking, and said, "But ain't it a glorious sight.!"

What has all the preceding natter got to do with this Club, you may well ask? Well, in view of the news at the head of the rigmarole, I thought, or rather, hoped that perchance we could run a press gang around our members and shanghai enough to man Austin Wood's coracle ( actually the equivalent of "Alvis" ) and we could cut the blue water northward to a spot off shore 200 miles north of Cairns. After all, it might not be the bally old Pandora - it could be an old Spanish galleon. Of course, Mr. Donald Smith might not be an Alvis car owner and therefore might take a dim view of our butting in, but what's wrong with flying the Jolly Roger! NO! NO! Don't hit me on the head with that bottle! BONG!!

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Blow the man down. Blow the man down. Yo. Ho. Blow the man down. Avast there. Shiver me timbers. Now then, you lubbers, bend the mainsheet. Port your helm. Splice the mainbrace. Of course, I'm in good form this fine morn. And why shouldn't I be? Here be I, the skipper of this good ship "Awry". The only man aboard, as the crew are all wenches of the female variety, Booty from the Bounty, and we're loaded to the Gunnells ( I know, but don't Rob me of my moment ) with pieces of eight, doubloons, Spanish dollars and suchlike. By wist a moment, what are all those women ganging up on me for? Mutiny! So that's it, eh?

I had smelt something rather high of late, but innocent lad that I am, I had thought it was merely the seas. Was this to be the ignominious end to my nifty scheme of outdoing one certain William Marsters by, using some South Sea Island paradise, to create a Super Palmerston Island. Nay, I would fight unto the death to resist.

Avast there. Call out the watch. Dispatch the distress rockets. Stand back you lousy lubbers, or I'll belay you with this marlin-spike. Oh why, instead of birds and bees, hadn't Daddy warned me about rats, the State of Denmark, and the fact about the female of the specie being . . . ?

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Fifteen maids on me hairless chest. Chest, me beauties, not stummick! Yo. Ho. and a bottle of rum! Yo. Ho and a . . . Yes, Miss Christian. No, Miss Christian. Swab the decks, it is, Miss. Bend over as you wish to kick my ischium? Certainly, Miss Christian.