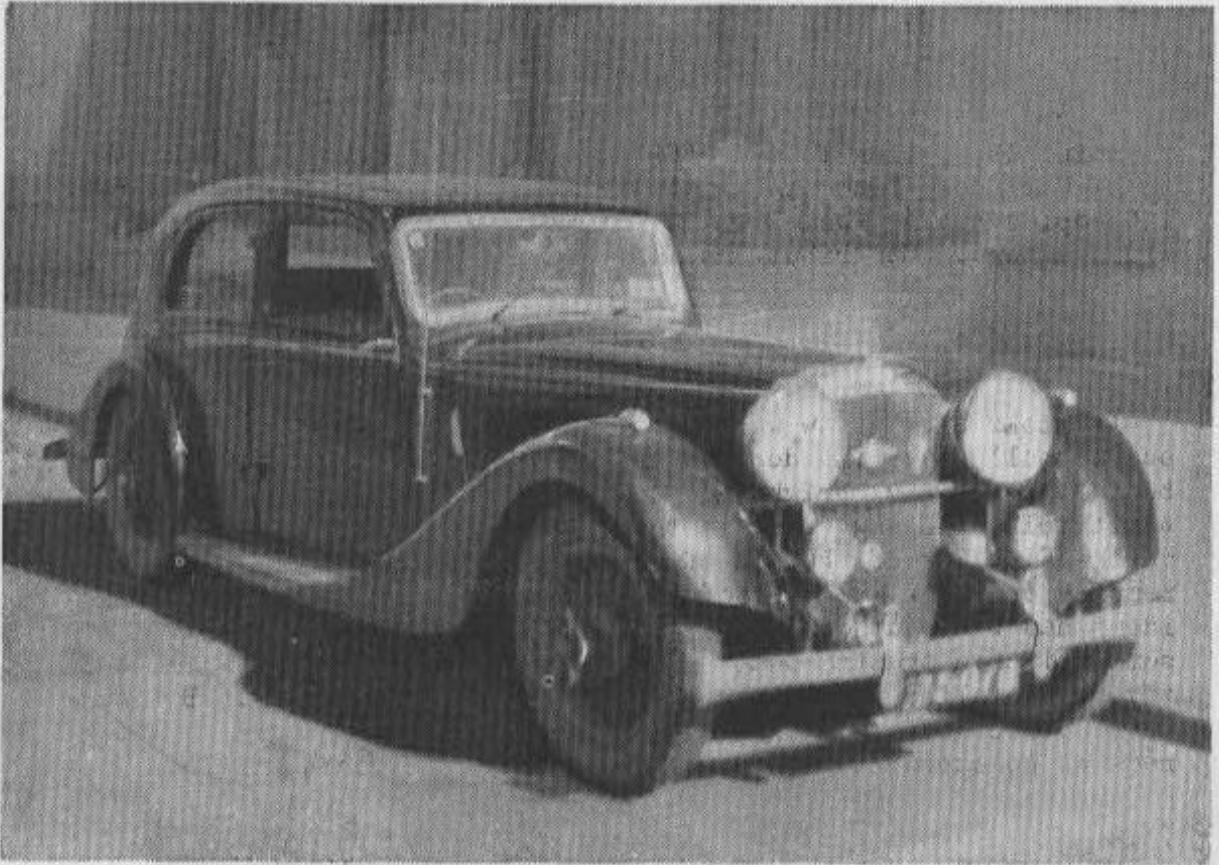




The Austral Alvist's Aide

FEBRUARY, 1961 ISSUED FREE



" A L V I C "

The Bulletin of the Alvis Car Club,
Victoria.

CLUB OFFICERS

- Hon. President: Roy Henderson, 195 Inkerman St. St. Kilda.
Hon. Vice-Pres: Cliff Eaton, 86 McKinnon Rd. McKinnon.
Hon. Secretary & Spares Registrar: Basil Bowes, 21 Edgar St. Glen Iris S.E.6.
Hon. Treasurer: Bruce Czynski, 13 Gladstone Rd. Briar Hill, Vic.
Official Scribe: John Cole, "Firbank", Flinders Rd. Tyabb. Vic.
Hon. Social Secretary: Position pending.
Hon. Editor: David Muirden, 16 Rix St. Glen Iris, S.E.6. Vic.

This publication is the official newsletter and journal of the Alvis Car Club, Victoria. It is printed in an edition of approx. 150 copies by the Hon. Editor, and is issued free of charge to Club members. Contributions and letters are always welcome.

EDITORIAL.

It looks like a few well chosen words in "The Alvic" occasionally have the desired effect. The Clubrooms have already been considerably brightened up, and more may yet be to come. Admittedly, the new couch is the gift of the Hon. Editor, and not of the Club itself, but the first step has been taken, and it remains only for the rest of the Club to follow suit. The President has been authorised to investigate the position of buying some suitable theatre seats up to £ 15, and with any luck these may be installed before the all-important March meeting. But even if they are not, there are one or two things that can be done that require no expenditure of anything but a little hard work. I

refer in particular to a really good and overdue clean-up. An afternoon with brooms, vacuum cleaner and paint brushes would do wonders. And then, of course, there is one wall to be moved out one rafter before final interior decoration can be completed. It looks rather like a working party one day during February, say, is definitely in order to do all this. (By the way, if someone has a serviceable table cloth of any material that they could spare, the Club badly needs one.)

Latest information reveals that 8 theatre seats have been procured by the President, and have only to be installed, so that the wheels of improvement have started to turn. Let us hope that they turn sufficiently far.

Alister Cannon's gesture of a cheque towards Clubrooms improvements is an extremely generous one and very greatly appreciated. Other members could, I feel, manage to hand the Treasurer a few shillings at the next meeting, or when they pay their Club fees. A donation of 2/- is surely not too much to ask in return for a future of comfortable seating, and what is more important, seating for all. It is hoped that some will be able to donate more than this amount. Sounds a bit like the ole Editor trying to become a perpetual money-grubber. True, on this occasion he is. However, once the Clubrooms are more habitable, he'll be off your backs. Nuff sed.

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MYSTERY PHOTO COMPETITION

Although temporarily forgotten lately, the Club is still running a photo-guessing competition. This consists of a series of photos of various Alvises, and the object of the game is to guess what each photo represents - eg., what year and model, what body if possible, or anything else significant or unusual about the car pictured. These photos are lettered, and all you have to do is fill in the list available at the Clubrooms and hand it in. There is no limit to the number of lists entered, but each list must be accompanied by the entry fee of 2/-.

The prize for the winner is a case of freshly-picked apples donated by John Cole, and valued at approx. £1 - £1/10/-.

NEXT CLUB EVENT.

BARBECUE AND GYMKHANA AT MORNINGTON.

This event will be held on SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19th, which is the Sunday immediately after the February Meeting.

The event will start with a barbecue lunch (bring your own) which will be held at 12 noon. The first event is scheduled to start at 1 p.m.

Get in some practice for the Kalorama Rally in April.

The events will be:

	<u>Prizes.</u>
Bending Race.	
Potato Race.	(2 to be awarded.)
Siamese Race.	1 for 1st Alvis Car.
Flag Race.	1 for 1st Other Makes.

Other Clubs are invited to attend, and one of the prizes is thus available for them.

The entry fee of 7/6 per car is payable at Mornington.

Directions:

Proceed to Mornington, then along Beach Road to the Dava Lodge Hotel. Sy Ramsay's house is the next house past the hotel. Enter the gate with the sign placed outside, and drive to the rear of the house where the barbecue will be situated.

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ALVIS SERVICE DATA SHEETS

Thanks to the kind offices of Peter Menere, the Club has the loan of two copies of the Alvis Service Sheets issued from 1938 - 1946. Those service sheets still applicable will be re-printed gradually in "The Alvic".

Several of these are re-printed on the next page.

DATA SHEET NO. 2.

9th August, 1938.

FRONT SHOCK ABSORBER BRACKET BOLTS

There is a slight tendency for the front shock absorber bracket front bolts on the 1938 Speed 25 and 4.3 cars to work loose, and a careful inspection should be made to see if this is the case. If so, nickel chrome bolts, part number N. 15850 should be fitted and will be supplied free of charge when ordered.

When fitting these bolts a plain washer should be fitted under the bolt head inside the chassis member, and the nut should be split pinned after tightening dead tight. Number required per set - 4.

DATA SHEET NO. 3.

9th August, 1938

12/70 CARBURETTOR INSULATING WASHER

To prevent overheating and consequent vapourising in the carburettor, an insulating packing, part no. N. 18842 can be fitted between the carburettor and the induction pipe. The thickness of this packing washer is approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ " and this will be supplied free of charge to your requirements.

Where cases of difficult starting when hot are experienced it is suggested that you promptly make sure that this packing is fitted.

DATA SHEET NO. 4.

9th August, 1938

CHASSIS LUBRICATION PUMP

The 16.95 cars delivered up to about July 1937 are fitted with a single action chassis lubrication pump on the off-side of the sump, and this type is inclined to deliver insufficient oil to the various points. It has been replaced by a double action pump which can be fitted in place of the single acting type.

The single acting type is recognised by having two metering valves on the top of the body, whereas the double acting type has four metering valves. If you observe any of these cars receiving insufficient lubrication, please order the double-

acting pump and we will convert them free of charge.

It is also a good plan, in the case of cars being used for long distance work where the clutch is not operated too frequently, to pump the clutch pedal, say two dozen times each week over and above its normal use.

DATA SHEET NO. 5.

9th August, 1938.

TAPPET CLEARANCES.

It may possibly be found on certain cars that the tappet clearances called for on the Instruction Plate on the top of the valve cover do not correspond with the figure given in the Instruction Book. It is important that tappet clearances should be set to the Instruction Plate figure and not necessarily to the Instruction Book.

Care should also be taken in the method of adjusting tappet clearances, and this should be done in correct rotation, namely : 1, 12, 2, 11, 3, 10, and so on. In the case of the 12/70 four-cylinder engine, the order is 1, 8, 2, 7, and so on. The necessity for this action is that the larger clearance camshafts have a quietening curve, and although the valve may be on its seat, the tappet may not be on the base of the cam. If the above rotation is adhered to, however, there can be no error.

DATA SHEET NO. 6.

9th August, 1938.

VALVE MATERIAL.

When decarbonising, or for any other reason removing the valves, care must be taken to replace the valves in the correct positions. It will be noted that some valves are marked KE. 965 and possibly some KE. 241. In these cases KE. 965 must be fitted in the exhaust side.

Your attention is specially called to this as in one case a valve head was found broken off due undoubtedly to it having been fitted in the incorrect position.

ALVISTORY

compiled by Bas Bowes.

1928 ALVIS Front Wheel Drive.

In the early Twenties, the name Alvis, had good cause to be respected in racing circles, and as far back as 1925 the firm had produced a straight eight Grand Prix car with front wheel drive. In 1928, however, they abandoned the eight cylinder engine and produced a front wheel drive sports car with a power unit based on the famous 12/50. The engine, which was turned the "wrong" way round in the new model, was basically similar to that used in the earlier Alvis sports cars and was of a similar $1\frac{1}{2}$ Litre capacity.

The valves were operated by an overhead camshaft in place of pushrods, and although this model was first introduced in an unsupercharged form, a Rootes type supercharger was fitted before the end of the year and the car catalogued in blown and unblown form.

The gearbox was bolted directly, with the final drive unit and inboard brakes, to what was now the front of the power unit, and the half shafts taking the final drive to the front wheels were given full universal movement.

A deep section chassis frame was provided with fully independent springing all round - in front by four transverse quarter elliptics acting on swing stub axles which ran in bushes and later ball bearings. Rear suspension was of the trailing arm type with reversed quarter elliptics.

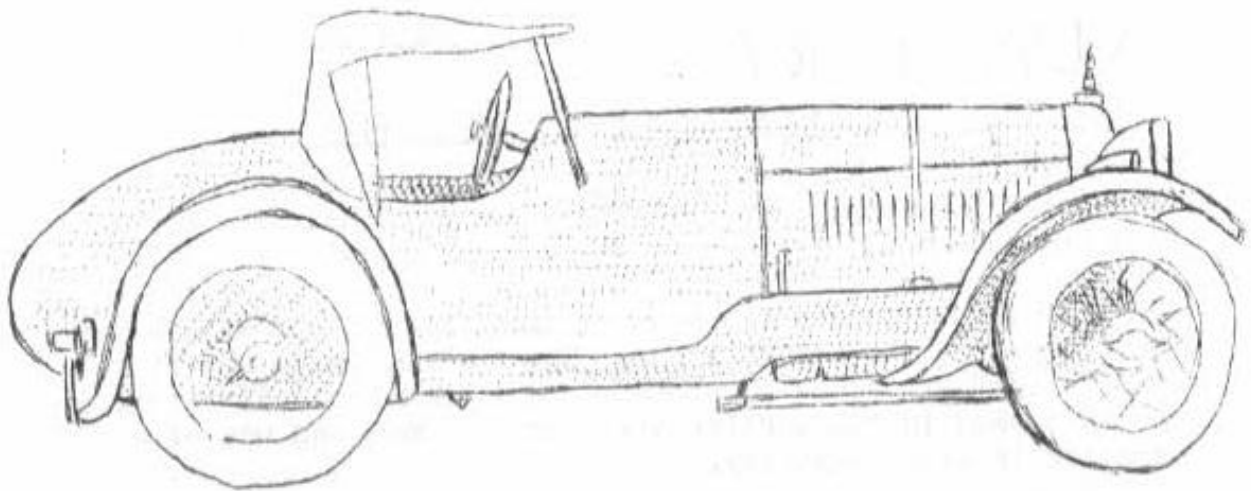
There was a two seater with an 8ft. 6in. wheel-base and a four seater of 10ft.

We reprint below a road test conducted by the "Light Car and Cyclecar" and first published on April 20th, 1928.

" WE TEST NEW FRONT-WHEEL-DRIVE ALVIS "

Exclusive details and first test run report of one of the most interesting 1,500 c.c. sporting light cars of the present day.

(please turn over)



When Major C. M. Harvey first drove the Alvis front-wheel-drive racer at Shelsley Walsh everybody present realised that, apart from other beneficial characteristics, the road-holding qualities of the car were of distinct advantage to the driver when negotiating corners at high speed. Few people, however, anticipated that those early tests would lead the sponsors of the design to place a modification of the racing car on the market.

Although this newcomer may - at least as far as the British market is concerned - be termed a pioneer, there is nothing in the handling of the controls and the manner in which the car sits on the road that would suggest the slightest suspicion of freakishness. The reverse is the case, for we were able to set out with the car on winding roads and straightaway drive at both high and low speeds without any concern whatever, and without having to "learn" the controls, different though they are from the orthodox.

Every regular reader of *The Light Car and Cyclecar* is familiar with the general behaviour and speed capabilities of the $1\frac{1}{2}$ -litre four-cylinder Alvis engine, so there is no need to dwell upon the performance of the power unit of the car. It should be pointed out however, that it embodies an overhead camshaft instead of push-rods and rockers, and that its revving capabilities are better than the push-rod type, with a proportionately better maintenance of power at high speeds.

The most obvious feature of the car is, of course, its low build.

Actually, the floor is but 13 ins. above the ground, whilst the top of the seat cushion is only about 10 ins. higher than the floor. The centre of gravity is, therefore, very low indeed, a characteristic which enables fast cornering to be indulged with safety. As might be expected with the engine reversed, i.e., with the clutch, gearbox and differential all placed in front of the power unit, a long bonnet becomes a sine qua non, but this adds to the sporting appearance, whilst, in addition, everything forward of the dashboard is very accessible.

In the Driving Seat.

The Alvis engineers know how to make a car "fit" the driver. The provision of a long seat cushion and high squab promotes bodily comfort, whilst a light clutch, a light, easily handled and conveniently placed gear control and a large-diameter steering wheel set at just the right angle, make the driver feel at home immediately he takes his seat. The long bonnet and scuttle - high up relative to the seat - give one instantly that big-car feeling, yet the engine has a capacity of less than $1\frac{1}{2}$ litres, the wheelbase is only 8ft 6 ins. and the overall length of the complete car only slightly more than 13 ft.

Immediately the engine fires it "feels" powerful, a fact that is borne out as soon as the car gets under way. The clutch takes up the drive smoothly, silently, and without the slightest suspicion of snatch, the free or spinning member being of sufficiently low weight to enable the gears to be changed quickly and without noise.

We started our test run over good roads, where, of course, the suspension of the car was beyond reproach. Our run took us over road surfaces which became gradually worse until eventually they were thoroughly bad, but the suspension did not appear to suffer at all; indeed, one might go far as to say that all road surfaces are alike to this new Alvis.

There is one point in the suspension which certainly deserves very special mention. The action of the springs is sufficiently stiff, yet at the same time the car rides humps and pot-holes in exactly the same manner as an excessively softly sprung car, but without any pitching, rolling or other undesirable characteristics.

When negotiating a hump-backed bridge on a bend in the road at high speed, the car settles down after the rise in an unexpected manner, while at the same time there is not the slightest sign of skidding as the front wheels, or the back ones for that matter, negotiate the hump.

High-speed Cornering.

This is where the characteristics of the front-wheel-drive system become of advantage for racing purposes and, consequently for fast touring. Bends and corners can be taken at high speeds - as soon as one has become accustomed to the capabilities of the car in this direction - almost without sensation. Acute bends, usually considered barely safe at "forty", can be taken at 50 m.p.h. or 60 m.p.h. with ease, the fact that the car is accelerating or decelerating making no difference whatever to the road-holding capabilities. We were unable during our run to get to the point where one of the driving wheels could be spun, even if the steering was positively wrenched round on a high-speed turn.

The steering, incidentally, is comparatively high-g geared, yet extraordinarily light. At all speeds, whether at 5 m.p.h. or 70 m.p.h. the car goes where it is "put" and stays there. With front-wheel-drive there is no need for any caster action to be given to the steering wheels, so that the control is very slightly different from a rear-wheel-driven car. When travelling at really high speeds one can steer to within a few inches, even though the surface of the road is very uneven.

The brakes are not only efficient but smooth. Ribbed drums are attached to the rear wheels in the normal manner, but at the front the drums are mounted on the differential casing, with the driving shafts running outwards to the wheel hubs. This has been done in order to avoid the braking torque reaction being taken through the eight quarter-elliptic springs which form the suspension for the two front wheels.

Interesting Rear Suspension.

The rear-wheel suspension is of particular interest in that each wheel is individually sprung. Quarter-elliptic springs

are mounted on the rear extremity of the frame, the channel section being continued to form a large circular flange. On the outer face of the flange is a substantial bracket which carries the spring pad, also a tubular arm which takes care of the transverse bending moment occasioned by the side thrust of the wheels.

The engine has four cylinders with a bore and stroke of 68 mm and 103 mm. respectively, which gives a capacity of 1496 ccs. The cylinder block and crankcase are separate castings. A three bearing crankshaft is held in substantial journals, which are fed like all other major bearings of the engine, by oil under high pressure from a gear-type pump. Distribution is by a train of gears at the front of the engine (equivalent to the rear on a normal layout) the dynamo and magneto gears being arranged in such a manner that the instruments - one on each side of the unit - point in a forward direction.

A particularly neat job has been made of the overhead-valve assembly. Actually, the valves and the springs are shrouded by what might be termed hollow cylindrical tappets of exceptionally large diameter. These tappets have flat tops on which the cams bear; adjustment is affected by shims fitted between the inner face of the tappet and the end of the valve.

Provision is made for a supercharger to be fitted on the near side of the engine, to be driven from the rear of the dynamo.

Priced at £575, the car represents a most interesting proposition, for it is beautifully made, of original design and, withal, a fine performer."

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It would appear from the above enthusiastic report of the FWD that the motoring press of 1928 was rather struck by the then unusual features which this car provided. The suspension must have really been something "out of the box" at a time when most other cars had beam axles and cart spring "vintage hard" suspension, and along comes the now-famous FWD with its most modern feature of independent suspension on all four wheels. Not only that either, but also the idea of inboard brakes and divided rod steering - the very features which impressed the road testers of the day, and gave legendary superb roadability.

FEBRUARY GENERAL MEETING

8 p.m., Friday, February 17th, 1961, at the Clubrooms.

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NORMAN JOHNSON'S VISIT

A event of great importance to the Alvis movement in Australia is to take place at the end of this month, when Norman Johnson, the Registrar of the English Alvis Register, will be visiting us for a few days. He will arrive in Sydney at the end of this month, and will be with us here in Melbourne in the first week or so of March.

It was originally intended that he would be here in time for the March General Meeting, then news arrived that he would be one day too early for this, and the Club last month, was making plans to move the Club meeting next month forward to the Thursday night in order to make it possible for him to attend. However, his plane bookings have been altered and he is coming at the beginning of March. There will thus not be a General Meeting held that Mr. Johnson can attend, but we are sure that interested members will be able to meet him at some time when he does arrive. The next "Alvic" will advise of more up-to-date details.

Norman Johnson will be accompanied by his fiancée (we think this is right), and plans have been made for attending to their comfort while they are in Melbourne. The Hon. Editor has offered them the use of either his Speed Twenty or 12/50 while they are here, and Basil Bowes intends taking them for a tour of Victoria in his newly roadable Three Litre. Les Miller may be putting them up for a night or two, depending on their tour commitments.

What is more, Norman Johnson happens to come at a time when expansions to the Clubrooms are in progress so that he should see this famed facility of the Alvis Car Club, Victoria at its best. It is intended that Mr. Johnson will be asked to give a few words on Alvis Clubs in England, and in return, receive our first hand comments on Australian Alvis Clubs to take back to our English Alvischums. Mr. Johnson has a delectable 14.75.

ALVINATTERY

Bas Bowes.

★ Is there anyone in the hunting for a Speed 25, Charlesworth Saloon ? 1940 model. Perfect steering. Tyres N.B.G. Reg. till end of April. Interior tatty but seats good. The machinery ? Well, it's reputed to be really good - and is factory guaranteed to do 115 m.p.h., and 123 m.p.h. has been claimed for it. It is supposed to have done the Adelaide to Melbourne trip (don't know whether on the Princes Highway, 582 miles, or on the Western Highway, 464 miles, but either way it must have had steam up alright) in 6 hrs, 22 mins. from G.P.O. to G.P.O. The price is £450. This is a genuine sale and no sharkery is guaranteed. The owner is shifting camp, and although he is not a member of this Club interested bods can contact me and I will explain how, why and where. A photo is available for view.

★ Simon Ramsay's latest 12/50 proves to be about the same age as Derek Holyoake's 12/40. The former left the Works on the 24th January 1924 for export to Australia, and is type SA 12/50. Car No. 7631. Engine No. 2762. Chassis No. 2408. Derek's car left the Works on 29th January 1924 fitted with a four seater body finished in pastel blue for export to Australia, and is a type TC 12/40. Car No. 7796. Engine No. 2802 of short stroke type 68mm x 103 mm. Curiously enough the Works have no records of any Alvis cars being equipped with the type of open-hub wire wheels such as those on Sy's 12/50, and we also know of two other cars so equipped.

I wish we had someone in the Club who could manage some good flash-light photos of these hubs, as they are rather hard to explain in print. The hub centres approximate the thickness of Sankeys, but they are definitely open-hub, spring-ring wire wheels of production manufacture. The spokes have a curious grouping of 4 - 2 - 4 - 2 - 2 - 4 - 2 - 2 - 2 -, round both sides of the open hub, the 4 - 2 - 4 on one side being opposite the 4 - 2 - 2 - 4 of the other side. (My 12/40s wheels are very similar to these wheels certainly as far as the hub is concerned. Ed.)

- ★ David Muirden's (ex Ron Allen) Sp 20. should finish up being really immaculate, as David has already paid out considerable sums fixing most things up, and this judiciously and at trade rates. Being a Tech. School teacher he got the Cabinet Making Class at Preston Tech. to make and french polish his woodwork - they did a good job and for free. He had the misfortune, however, the other day, to crush in the rear bumper bar badly whilst manouvering sans brakes (the brake pedal shaft was out as a pattern for the new one he was getting made up) and little brother made a bungle and failed to chock the wheels quick enough while the car was on an incline, resulting in a rearward runaway which finished up with the partial demolition of Pop's garage. The bumper has been bent back since, but the woodwork at the boot, previously unsound but still just clinging together, now lifts up to 3" off the chassis on decent bumps.
- ★ John Larsen indicates that he is willing to take on the post of Hon. Social Secretary, and I presume his offer will be duly accepted at the February meeting.
- ★ Work on my SG 16.95 is proceeding, though not exactly apace. The braking system has been renewed throughout with new drums, shoes relined with bonded Mintex and new inner and outer cables front and rear from the Works. The engine has new valves, guides and springs, likewise a new set of piston rings together with the last Invar Steelstrut pistons the Works had in stock, and as the cylinder bores are standard 67.5 mm, and showing no sign of wear, she should be in fine fettle when all is completed.
The road springs were completely rebuilt by Evans Springs to the tune of £24, the steering joints reconditioned and the front badge-headlamp mounting bar chromed. It is intended that the sliding sunshine roof section be replaced with a new aluminium covered one (which will make it a complete aluminium body), the unfortunately removed valance of the boot, along with the running boards will be replaced, and the interior lining redone with PVC, and the exterior repainted. The whole car should be magnificent when all this has been done. New owner John Larsen will really have something that can out perform the new Holden he was thinking of buying in every way, with the possible exception of fuel economy and modern lines. Should be reliability, plus !

- ★ Meanwhile my Three Litre is running like a top. There are still a few odd jobs to be done before she's A 1 at Lloyds - trivial odds and ends - but the engine is par excellence, and until the running in is completed, I glide along at around 30 m.p.h. It's certainly very hush hush. Should be superb.
- ★ By the way, anyone interested in purchasing a Three Litre, I heard of one owned by a Servie Station Prop, who has just had the engine overhauled, and the car is claimed to be in very good order throughout. Is for sale, but don't know the actual price, but I can put you onto the owner. (Literally ? ED.)
- ★ It appears that my original idea of the International Alvis Trophy (or Alvis International Trophy) has born fruit and is now an accomplished fact, and is included in all the calendars of the Alvis Car Clubs, Sections and Groups throughout the world. It is thought that this will be another Alvis First in the World, albeit this time not of Factory origin. It took quite a lot of organising etc., and I would like to place on record the invaluable help given to me by the Hon. Secretaries of all the Alvis Clubs, and in particular, Frank Robinson, D.F.M. Hon Secretary Northern Section A.O.C., whose sterling work resulted in the Master Plan of the Tests Layout. My original layout was a trifle too involved.

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OUR COVER PICTURE

This is a 3½ Litre, Martin and King Saloon, 1936 model. The picture was taken 2 years ago when the Hon. Editor had the car. He subsequently sold it to Roger Richardson when he acquired his 12/5 and 16.95 fleet. The car has recently been sold to John Gray, who has sold his Silver Crest. It still runs very well, but the body has been let go badly in the last year or so, and needs considerable re-wooding. This car, or rather this model (the SA 25.63) is considered by the Editor to be the best thing Alvis has ever produced, present model included.

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The taxi stopped with a jerk
Who got out.



VICTORIA

Club Rooms, "Alvista," 21 Edgar Street, Glen Iris, S.E.6, Victoria, Australia

Meetings at 8 p.m. on the Third Friday of every month.

ALL ALVIS OWNERS AND ENTHUSIASTS WELCOME!

Those wishing to become Members please forward

Entrance Fee: 10/-

Annual Subscription: £2.2.0.

Country, Interstate and Overseas Annual Subscription: £1.1.0.

Please make cheques, etc. payable to **ALVIS CAR CLUB, VICTORIA.**

...

The Club prides itself on its **SPARE PARTS SERVICE** which besides having increasing stocks on hand, also imports genuine new and secondhand Alvis parts for Members at cost price.

The following items are usually kept in stock:—

- Rubber Mounting Cones for Vintage Engines and Gear Boxes
- Simm's Vernier Couplings — complete.
- New Water Offtakes also Rear Water Transfers.
- Corrugated Driving Plates and Studs.
- Hub Grease Caps (Cast Aluminium External Thread)
- New 12/50 Radiator Caps.
- Latest Type Alvis Valve Spring Compressor Tool.
- Timing Gauges for all 6 Cylinder Engines.
- Wiring Diagrams for most Pre-War Models.
- Service Data accumulating rapidly.
- Electrical, Magneto, Speedo Repairs — 18 months' Guarantee.
- Club Car Badges: 30/-. Lapel Badges: 7/6.

Please make these cheques payable to **A.C.C.V. SPARES ACC.**