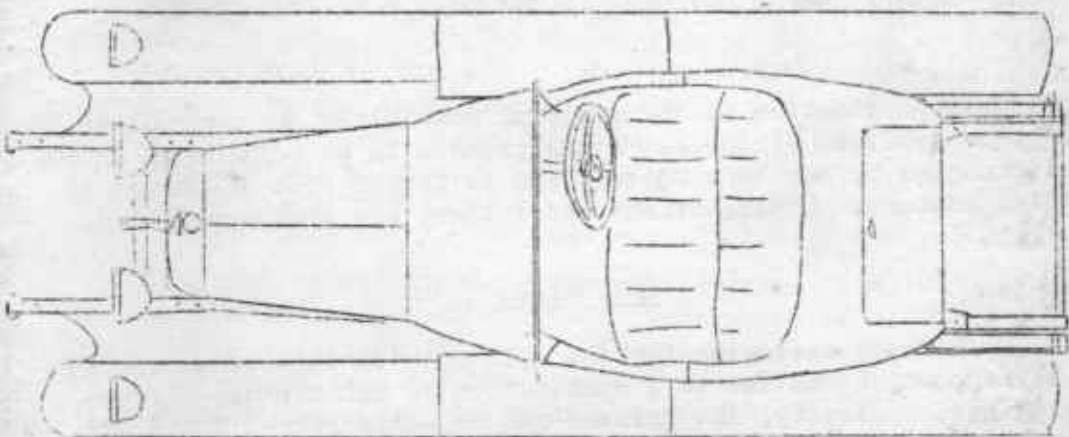




The Austral Alvist's Aide

MARCH ISSUE 1961

ISSUED FREE



10/30

" A L V I C "

The Bulletin of the Alvis Car
Club, Victoria.

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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 welcomed.

EDITORIAL.

We have to apologise for the hold up with this issue of "The Alvic", which was due to a combination of unfortunate circumstances. Firstly, the printer was on holidays and could not print the cover, so we have had to make do with a roneoed version. Secondly, the Editor was smitten by a bug of some sort and was unable to do anything after he had completed "Alvistory". The net result was that the issue was very late - too late for the March Meeting. You may notice that the issue is not as large as usual, but we hope that this only happens with this issue.

THE MORNINGTON GYMKHANA

Sunday, 19th February saw the annual Club Gymkhana under way at Sy Ramsay's home at Mornington.

The organisers, John Cole and Roy Henderson, arrived there at about 10 a.m., and together with Simon Ramsay, who had already spent most of Saturday on the job, proceeded to swing a somewhat blunt scythe in an attempt to clear the long dry grass on the course.

From 12 a.m. onwards the contestants began to arrive. led by Basil Bowes and John Larsen in Bas' 3 Litre.

By 1.15, events were under way and by 2.30 quite a crowd had assembled; 5 Alvises, 2 Morris Minors, an Austin A/40, and a Ford 10, to be joined much later by the Axelsonn's in, of all things, a Holden!

The Alvises were John Cole's 16.95 rattle-trap, Roy Henderson's Silver Eagle "Bertha", David Muirden's 12/50 b.b., Basil Bowes 3 Litre, and Bruce Czynski's Silver Crest.

The others were Sy Ramsay's Morris, Derek Holyoake's Morris, Barry Gough's A/40 and Graeme Quinn's Ford 10 heap. The only non-competitors were Basil Bowes, who is still running-in the 3 Litre, Graeme Quinn (the Ford 10 is notoriously top-heavy) and Bruce Czynski, who had earlier reported strange noises from the clutch area. Bruce had to be forcibly restrained from entering events to build up the numbers.

Most contestants brought their families or girls along, and it was most gratifying to the organisers to see the day develop into a real family gathering. One noticeable item was the enormous quantity of liquids consumed (strangely enough not alcoholic) in an attempt to ward off the terrific heat, which one of the organisers swears reached 120 degrees in the sun. However, the weather failed to dampen our spirits and the events went with a swing, with all members thoroughly enjoying themselves.

Some of the members after the afternoon went off to the beach, and a party made a trip to Macrae to the Quinn's place, where they were treated to a marvellous swim, and a most enjoyable tea rustled up in an amazing manner by Jane. Those present wish to record their appreciation.

The actual events held at the meeting were a ^Bending Race, Lancing Race, Acceleration and Braking Event, and an extremely hilarious final

event - A special sort of Sack Race - with bodies sprawled everywhere (or so it seemed). Not only that but hurtling cars at the finish nearly piled into a wall and fence just past the finish as the entrants' feet were tangled up with the sack and the pedals. The Hon. Editor in particular was in such a state, and had his foot jammed hard on the accelerator, and had to execute a great slide to extricate himself.

FASTEST TIMES.

	<u>ALVIS</u>	<u>OTHERS</u>
Bending Race	D. Muirden. 35.2 secs.	D. Holyoake. 33.4 secs.
Lancing Race	D. Muirden. 37 secs.	B. Gough. 33 secs.
Accel & Brak.	R. Henderson. 10 secs.	B. Gough. 11 secs.
Sack Race.	R. Henderson. 50 secs.	S. Ramsay. 58.2 secs.

TOTAL POINTS.

<u>ALVIS.</u>	<u>OTHERS.</u>
D. Muirden. (18)	B. Gough. (18)
R. Henderson (17)	D. Holyoake (18)
J. Cole. (12)	S. Ramsay (12).

Outright winners: "Alvis" - D. Muirden.
"Others" D. Holyoake (on run off
with Barry Gough.)

Two prizes will be suitably engraved and presented at the March General Meeting, to those who put up such sterling efforts - and many thanks to all who helped to make the Sunday's sport a great success.

The Organisers.

ALVISTORY

Also published on April 20th, 1928 is the road test by "The Autocar", which we reproduce below:

FRONT WHEEL DRIVE

What it Feels Like to Handle a Front Wheel Driven Car for the First Time. Sampling the New Alvis Sports Model.

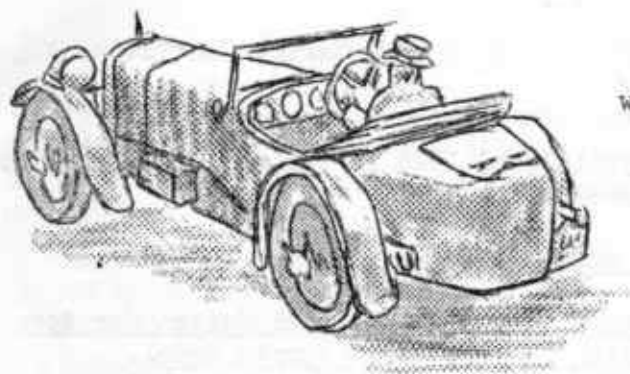
by Montague Tombs.

Today I have realised an ambition and experienced a new thrill. I have actually handled on the road for the first time a car which has the drive on the front wheels instead of the back - one of the new Alvis sports models. Like every other motoring enthusiast I have long wanted to find out at first hand whether front wheel drive felt any different from the orthodox rear wheel drive, if it were any more difficult for the average sort of man to handle, and how it behaved on corners and curves.

Although the Alvis is not a large car, or a heavy one, because of the front wheel drive and the independent springing an occupant has the sensation of riding in a large car of exceptional steadiness and comfort. The car feels unusually safe, as if it would be most difficult to make it skid or overturn.

Corners, and particularly curves, can be taken at phenomenally high speeds without giving rise to that tense feeling which suggests that a car is on the verge of becoming uncontrollable. The steadiness is remarkable.

In the hands of the ordinary driver progressing at ordinary speeds, the front wheel drive exhibits absolutely no new vices, there is no tendency to wobble when cutting out or braking, or when doing both while half-way round a corner. Manoeuvring to and fro in a garage yard is just as easy as with an ordinary car with light steering.



The lines of the front wheel drive Alvis three-seater are such as to appeal to the majority of enthusiasts.

Besides these main impressions there are one or two comments to make. Although I have always appreciated that the adoption of front wheel drive must offer big possibilities of increased comfort in coachwork, allowing a centre of gravity that comes inside a reasonable wheelbase, since there are no obstructions down the centre of the chassis to prevent the use of low floor boards, hitherto I have been rather uncertain in mind as to the value of the front wheel drive arrangement per se. This uncertainty has now vanished, and its place is taken by a definite opinion that the front wheel drive is really an improvement. It renders the car so very steady, and it seems actually to improve the steering.

Another point is that the distribution of parts places more weight on the front wheels. So long as the drive also is on the front wheels this is an evident advantage, for the front of the car sits very steadily on the road. This type of weight distribution affects the braking as well, or appears to do so, for the brakes on the Alvis are amazingly powerful. They take hold at high speeds for all the world as if a giant had seized the car and brought it quickly and smoothly to rest.

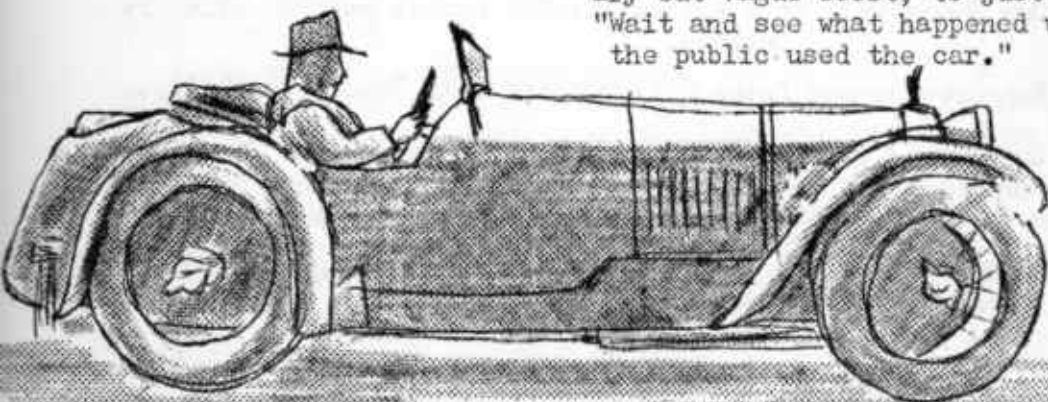
The car which I was fortunate enough to try is one of the first of a batch now coming through the Alvis works. It is, as they all are, a sports model, but fitted with a three-seater body suitable to the regulations for the twenty-four hours' race at Le Mans. Regarded piecemeal, the mechanical details are full of interest, but their summing up results in a car truly remarkable for its individuality on the road.

Combined with the front wheel drive and the general low build, the independent springing of the wheels - there are no axles in the usual sense of the word - renders the Alvis wonderfully comfortable.

I do not say this idly, for I drove the car over a stretch of road where I have known every pot-hole for years, and have names for the whole family of them. "his road is steadily going to the dogs. A badly sprung car feels as if it was about to shake to pieces or jump off the road if driven over my stretch at all fast. But the front wheel drive soared over it as if it were a billiard table, and took me round the corners and curves about 20 per cent, faster than I have ever been round before. "

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It seems to be fairly obvious that the motoring press of 1928 regarded the Alvis F.W.D. as a sort of novelty and are very wary of making statements that would commit them to the F.W.D. as an ordinary car, in preference to the rear wheel drive convention. They seem to confine themselves to discussing the unusual features of the car, to wit the unorthodox transmission and the independent springing. These are rightly considered to be a distinct improvement on contemporary design but it could be noted that no attempt or even suggestion was made to incorporate these features into orthodox car manufacture. They apparently decided, after an initially complimentary but vague boost, to just "Wait and see what happened when the public used the car."



BRIEF REPORT ON KALORAMA.

The Kalorama Organising Committee met again on February, 22nd at Ian Parfitt's home (of the Vintage Drivers Club), and Jim Kelso as the President of the Combined Vintage Car Clubs was presiding.

All the Clubs were ably represented, and our Club was represented by B. Bowes, D. Muirden and Roy Henderson. Various matters concerning the forthcoming annual rally were discussed.

Various duties were assigned to committee members, and on Jim Kelso's shoulders has fallen the enormous task of assembling and collating all the information brought in by members, and of organising people to do various jobs.

A break up of some of the jobs are:

Nicky de laVatine of the Bentley Drivers Club is in charge of the publicity angle and speaker system.

David Muirden of A.C.C.V. is in charge of printing entry forms receipts and programmes.

Ian Parfitt and Roy Henderson are events marshalls.

Jim Cooper (Rolls-Royce Club) is the Sec-Treasurer.

Fred Robinson is handling all legal and insurance matters.

Laurie Rofe will be the commentator at Kalorama.

Bas Bowes will be a ground marshal and is getting stickers printed.

Ron Grounds and Peter Rollason are both Ground Marshalls.

Events and car marshalling have been revised and finalised. Much printing has been done and large window stickers advertising the Rally are now available from the various Clubs.

Fred Robinson has checked on insurance coverage to protect the committee and has come up with a group scheme which will cover all clubs in the C.V.C.C. against outside claims up to £50,000 for a period of 12 months for a minimum of £50, worked out at £3 per meeting per club.

Our costs per annum if we join the scheme , and if we elect to insure all our Club events, will thus be £18 (6 calendar events.) There is apparently no compulsion on a Club to insure all its events so it would be possible to insure say, the Interstate Rally and the Annual Day Trial only, and this would only cost us £6. However, this expenditure must be brought to a General Meeting, so members are requested to turn up in large numbers to the next Club meeting to authorise this important item.

If you call in at the Clubrooms at any time, please pick up a few window stickers advertising the Kalorama Rally and use them.

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CLUB CALENDAR.

Following some enquiries from members who have lost their "Alvic" of last year listing the 1961 Club Calendar, a copy of the Calendar has now been posted on the Clubroom wall. Members can thus peruse this and check it for future meetings of the Alvis Car Club for 1961.

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NORMAN JOHNSON'S VISIT

Norman Johnson, and his fiancée, Erica Browning, arrived as planned from Sydney on Sunday, March 5th and were met by the Editor, Secretary, Social Sec, Graeme Quinn, Les Lee and brother. After amicable exchanges at Essendon, it was decided to make a trip to Paul Conrad's place at Montrose. Norm Johnson and Erica thus set off with David Muirden and John Larsen in the Speed Twenty, followed by Basil Bowes, who was still running in the Three Litre. After a pleasant journey to Montrose, which was distinguished for hitting a rather large bump at about 60 m.p.h., and which catapulted Norm and Erica a few feet into the air, the party was very hospitably welcomed by the Conrads. After the preliminaries were over, our guests settled down to a hearty discussion with Paul on matters Alvis, Holden and vintage in general, which was broken up at 7 p.m. very reluctantly, but the appointment had been made to be at the Quinn's for tea at that time. On arrival at the Quinn's the best part of an hour late, the assemblage was treated to a enjoyable meal, and afterwards stayed up late discussing many matters.

Arrangements had been made for the visitors to be accommodated at Austin Wood's and Roy Henderson's, but as Norm and Erica both had

to go into town early the next morning, they accepted the kind offer of Graeme and Jane Quinn to stay there for the night. The Speed Twenty was thus left with Norm, and David Muirden and Basil Bowes headed off home.

Apparently, the next day was spent in motoring around Melbourne seeing various people and visiting the Melb. B.O.A.C. Office (Norm is an Executive in BOAC). On Tuesday, Norm and Erica filled up the Speed Twenty with best Australian car juice and headed off 'into the country', and ended up at Eildon. Somewhere along the road they were very thrilled to see a snake on the road. They were amazed at the powdery dust that we Australians have to put up with, and thought the day to be a very hot one. They arrived back at the Quinn's at about 9 p.m., having had some tea in the Mordialloc area.

The original plan was now for Basil to take Norm and Erica down to San Remo and Philip Island, spend the night at Basil's place there and come back for the Club meeting on the Thursday night. However, Norman and Erica were travelling on a concession fare arrangement with the airline, and had to take what seats were available to them for the trip back to London. They regretfully informed the Quinns, the Editor and Basil Bowes, that they were unable to fly off on the Friday morning as planned, because the flight that day had been cancelled, and they had to go on the Wednesday morning at 10.00 a.m. So there was nothing anyone could do about the situation, and they left the next morning. Graeme Quinn and Basil Bowes both offered to drive them through to Sydney to catch their plane back to England from there on the Sunday, but Norm and Erica were unwilling to put any of us to that much trouble, and very graciously refused these offers. So that we might have something to remember their visit by, Norman left a series of slides of English vintage and Alvis cars and rallies, to be shown at the Thursday night meeting. These were duly shown and very well received. After all the great clean-up and brightensing of the Clubrooms, the visitors did not see them after all!

However, Norman said that he had had a great time in the few days he was here, and that he hoped to return again in a few years time. We hope that he can make it.

REMOVAL OF REAR CROSS SHAFT

-by Derek Holyoake.

While checking over the chassis on the Firefly, I noticed that the rear shackles and the ends of the cross shaft on which they pivot, were very badly worn.

Then I remembered reading in *Alvibatics* some time back the article by Rob Gunnell on this very same problem. Out came my stack of this magazine, and there it was in Vol. 5. No. 7. March 1956. Rob tells how, after experimenting on the rear half of a 12.50 chassis, the cross shaft can be fitted. His method was to press a $\frac{5}{8}$ " rod into the chassis, or to shrink the chassis onto the rod, with an 11/16th I.D. and 13/16th O.D. tube acting as a spacer between the two rear chassis extremities.

My Firefly is similar to the 12/50 in this regard, so, armed with my new-found knowledge, I decided to have a go at removing the worn shaft. First, I made a rough sketch, taking down all vital measurements. The old rod and spacer centre section was then cut out with a hacksaw close to the inside of both ends of the chassis.

While the blowlamp was warming up, I cut a section of the spacer approx. $2\frac{7}{8}$ " long, and this, with a flat washer and $\frac{3}{4}$ " nut and spanner was placed handy to the job. The blowlamp was directed at the end of the chassis on one side, and with a hose in the other hand playing a steady stream of cold water over the outer section of the rod, enough heat was applied to expand the eye, while not expanding the rod as much. The spacer was then slipped over the shaft, followed by the washer and nut. Tightening of the nut drew the rod out of the chassis.

The same treatment was given to the other side, but unfortunately the threads on the end of the shaft were worn, causing the nut to strip what little thread remained. A new approach was needed, so with a 14 lb hammer held on the inside of the chassis end, a few sharp blows with another hammer on the outer end of the rod, succeeded in knocking the rod out.

The whole operation only took an hour, and included time out between ends to dismantle and clear a blockage in the blowlamp. As yet I have not fitted a new rod, but when I do, an account of this operation will appear in a later edition of "*Alvic*".

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BE IN THE SWIM WITH YOUR VINTAGE OR POST - VINTAGE
ALVIS CAR

our Next Club Event is the annual

KALORAMA RALLY

run by the Combined Vintage Car Clubs.

held on Easter Monday, 3rd April, 1961 all day.

Entry forms and any further details will be available
at the March General Meeting.

