

CLUB OFFICERS

Hon. President: David Bamford, 30 Fiddes St., Moorabbin, S.20.  
Hon. Vice-President: David Caldwell. Scribe: Graeme Quinn.  
Club Captain: Alister Cannon. Social Secretary: John Larsen.  
Hon. Treasurer: Andy Hannam, "Cron dall", Doveton Ave., Dandenong.  
Hon. Secretary: David Muir den, 116a Kooyong Rd., Caulfield, S.E.7.  
Hon. Editors: David Bamford & Desmond Donnan.

This publication is the official newsletter and journal of the Alvis Car Club, Victoria. It is printed in an edition of approx. 80 copies, by the Hon. Editors, and is issued free of charge to all financial Club members. Contributions and letters are always welcome.

JANUARY GENERAL MEETING

8 p.m., Friday, 18th January, 1963 at the Clubrooms, 21 Edgar St., Glen Iris, S.E.6.

TWO REPORTS OF DECEMBER MEETINGSa) Committee Meeting:

\* Treasurer reported that the Club's account with the bank has been transferred to the Dandenong Branch of the E,S & A, on an Interest-Bearing account, free of bank charges. We had neither of these advantages in the previous account at Tooronga.

\* Moved that the Treasurer issue a receipt for each payment of subs, and that this receipt indicate the year for which the subs are payment. This has been necessary because of doubt as to some members' financial situation, and the need to remove any doubt from future monetary matters.

b) December General Meeting:

\* Visitor: Bon Stewart, of 119 Northumberland Rd., Pascoe Vale, with the ex-Kent, Grey Lady saloon.

\* It was suggested that confusion re subs. payments are due to inadequate centralised Club records. It was accordingly moved that a Master Card Index be gradually established to form permanent Club records on these matters.

\* For Sale Notes: Si Ramsay has all body parts from TA 14 Saloon for sale at very reasonable prices. David Muir den has still a large number of assorted vintage parts (ref. Nov. Alvic) and a Speed Twenty Drophead Coupe in excellent order for £450. David Roberts will sell a Type 23 Bugatti engine and gearbox.

\* Wanted to Buy: 5.25 x 21 tyres by Des. Donnan.

\* Meeting closed with short talk of the Secretary's recent visit to some Alvis enthusiasts in Adelaide. Illustrated with some slides.

19 Powderham Rd.,  
Caulfield North

Dear Mr. Editor,

I have been considering bursting into print for the last couple of years and think that the time is now ripe. Perhaps this will be the beginning of my literary career! This letter will undoubtedly be very long as it is going to be very reminiscy (I like inventing words). In fact, it is intended to be a very brief history of the Club.

As far as I can gather from those wild old sages who were around at the beginning of time and more remarkably are still around today, the initial gathering of Alvis enthusiasts was instigated by Bob Morrow at his home approximately 10 years ago. After a few meetings at Bob's home, the Club was constituted (although whether a constitution existed I do not know) and proceeded to hold meetings each month at its members' homes in turn. This I understand developed in the normal way and resulted in the same few people having it at their home over and over again until even those good people were sick of it.

One of these people was fortunate in having a very large garage, in which were some interesting old motor cars - an Itala, a Talbot and a Fiat (not old, or interesting, but faithful). By pushing the Fiat out, removing the seats from the Talbot (which was a saloon), a natural amphitheatre was formed. You could sit in the dress circle (the Itala), the backstalls (the numerous old chairs, a few of which existed even up to quite recently) or the front stalls (Talbot seats and other miscellaneous cushions). Because of the luxury of this accomodation and the fact that meetings could go on into the wee small hours without upsetting the wife of the house (not much anyway), this was considered the best place for meetings, and Basil Bowes very kindly agreed that meetings be held here regularly. About this time, the scribe who is writing this masterpiece, appeared on the scene in his Silver Eagle and so can report from first hand by calling upon his feeble memory (and mind). Nay, well do I remember those nights when a fire was lit in the centre of the amphitheatre and one was torn between occupying the front stalls and crying (such were the emotions) or the dress circle and freezing. Perhaps it was that those at the front were so overcome with emotion (or smoke, I never could be sure), whilst those in the Itala were so cold that this provoked their obstreperous nature. Anyway, the discussions of the time were very feverish, and the then-President, Ron Allen, had to resort to the strongest language in order to keep control (more or less). For the sake of correctness, it should be recorded that Ron Allen was not the first President, this noble position being occupied by that well-known purveyor of the arts, Graham Thorley.

The main topic for discussion (or should I say abuse?) before the chair in those days was why were we still handcuffed to the Sydney Club, and how and when were we going to build the new Clubrooms? Needless to say, many resolutions were passed, but nothing was ever done. (That would have spoilt it because there would not have been anything to argue about at the next meeting otherwise.) In this delightfully informal atmosphere, the Club somehow grew, although never prospered (for it was always broke).

One of the most out-spoken critics of our ties to the Sydney Club was Bob Morrow, who as the founder of our Club, was certainly a person whose opinion was treated with respect and whose personality commanded it.

( It should be explained here for the newer members that we have not always been the Alvis Car Club, Victoria. Before the days of secession, we were the Alvis Car Club of Australia, Victorian Division. In other words, we were just a branch of the Alvis Car Club of Australia, situated in Sydney).

At this stage then, we had grown and were almost as big as the Sydney Club, and just as members of the British Empire broke away from England, so we wanted to break away from Sydney. Bob Morrow was duly elected President and proceeded to instigate the severing from Sydney control. I say severing because it was a severing at the time, and relations were strained for some time. However, time heals all wounds, and I am happy to say that relations with Sydney have since been better than they ever were before, and I am sure they will continue to be good in the future. Unfortunately, the break-away from Sydney also took its toll on our own Club. Bob was determined that a new constitution should be written and that it should be approved in every facet by every member. Members who came regularly to natter about Alvises (and other cars) became bored with the discussions concerning a new constitution, and people's nerves became on edge, culminating in an argument which resulted in the Club losing its then President and founder, and another of the oldest and staunchest Alvis enthusiasts the Club has ever known (this same person has upheld the name of Alvis in vintage races ever since the Club's foundation up to this very day). The loss of these two old members may not appear very grave, but attendances now fell to an all-time low (10 or 12 if we were lucky), and I have never ceased to amaze that the Club weathered this storm. I think it can honestly be said that but for the die-hards, about half of whom are still here today, the Club would no longer exist.

After Bob Morrow, Peter Dale (the younger - not THE Peter Dale!) was President for one year, and then Graeme Quinn for another year. Somehow or another, the Clubrooms were built during this period. As the mind rejects unpleasant things like hard work and the sight of it, I am a bit hazy about this. I seem to remember that Basil and someone knocked down the end wall, and cleared some of the ground at the back. Then one meeting, everybody fell over everyone else and somehow managed to transfer all the rubbish in the garage from one end to the other. The next weekend somebody in Balaclava was demolishing a house, so we went along to help, and carted numerous loads of bricks in Simon Ramsay's Chev. ute. This I can remember was quite exciting, because the front wheels barely touched the ground under load, which made the steering somewhat uncertain. Anyway, on that fateful weekend, the back of the Clubrooms was broken, and the floor put in, the outside walls and roof thrown up. But for the efforts of Basil, it would probably still be like that today, but Basil constructed that marvellous seat on the western wall, and so astounded everyone by his skill at carpentry that the disease became infectious and everyone else wanted to have a go, and so we all bungled the rest to its present state of incompleteness. (If I live to be 100, I doubt if I will ever see the Clubrooms finished completely; there will always be one unlined, unpainted or unlit area somewhere, I am sure.)

Of course, there were many overlaps, and during the Dale and Quinn presidencies, the big step of starting the Clubrooms was made. However, apart from this activity, the Club did not really progress, i.e., grow. The attendances were still poor, and the same gallant band of intrepid enthusiasts continued on. Relations with Sydney were still strained (if not non-existent).

One rather exciting thing did happen, though, and that was that a few people became excited about the lack of 12/50s in the Club. In this fit of excitement, 12/50s appeared from everywhere - Graeme Quinn found two in a paddock, and others appeared from I don't know where. Unfortunately, all the cars discovered at this time (there were 4 or 5) have now disappeared from the Club. This is really a disgrace.

After Graeme Quinn, Roy Henderson was elected President. Roy was President for three years, and in my opinion, the Club consolidated and grew to its present strength, mainly due to his quiet leadership. Early in Roy's reign, a most historic event took place. Much to everyone's surprise, we received a letter from the Sydney Club asking us to visit them at the Bathurst races, and hold a conference with the idea of a possible re-union of the Clubs. Five intrepid Melbourne enthusiasts piled into this author's 4.3 litre and motored at high speed to Bathurst. This trip was, I think, the most exciting and eventful one in my small life. On the way up, the 4.3 was cornering at about 65 mph when a rear tyre blew. Miraculously, we stayed on the road. A few miles after changing this wheel, we were going around a blind corner also at 65 mph, only to find the entire road packed with sheep. Remarkably enough, the sheep seemed to part, and only one was killed. The only damage to the car was one driving light turned askew. At Bathurst, the delegations could come to no agreement and it was wisely decided that the Clubs would continue to operate entirely separately, but on the best of terms with each other. I think the Interstate Rallies had been started before the Bathurst meeting, but after this they were undoubtedly better attended. Relations with Sydney are still very friendly today as a result, and subsequent rallies have been almost purely social. It is unfortunate however, that of recent years the attendances at Interstate rallies have declined. To me, these rallies are the best Club events, and I would hate to see them cease, as may well happen if more people don't come.

With the consolidation of the Club under Roy's rule, the Club grew. However, before passing on to the rosy prosperity of recent years, another factor nearly changed the whole character of the Club. This occurred when it was at its lowest ebb and moves for revival were debated. Most of the original members were mainly interested in the vintage and P.V.T. Alvises. This meant that they were also interested in other equally reputable makes of vintage and P.V.T. cars. Graham Thorley owned a Bugatti, then a Bentley, as well as a 12/50. When the committee at the time was considering how to raise membership, consideration was given to the formation of a vintage car club. This was well before the formation of the present "Vintage Drivers' Club Ltd.", and it is interesting to speculate what the outcome might have been had this been done. We might today have had 200 to 300 members.

Well, reverting to the Club history again, the Club did not grow immediately Roy became President. In fact, in the first year, attendances were still very low (about 15 or so). At this stage, the committee made a big decision, and that was to scrap all formality at meetings and carry out all business during committee meetings. Also, a decision was made to permit members to bring drinks of their own selection to meetings. There is no doubt in my mind that these decisions saved the Club. The attendances grew and also perhaps, the Club changed its emphasis. The Clubrooms were bigger and flasher, succumbing to coats of fresh paint.

The vintage Alvises disappeared and were replaced with TA 14s and Three Litres. Some of the old members dropped out, some changed to newer model Alvises, and more 3 litres appeared. David Muirton joined the Club, and soon began publishing "Alvic". From a relatively humble beginning, "Alvic" has been through many forms and is now one of the best Club magazines in Australia. This is entirely due to the efforts and hard work of David Muirton.

Unfortunately, Roy was unable to continue the good work and I became President. Now with the new Clubrooms and "Alvic", the Club could not help but continue to prosper, provided it was left to chug along in the informal way adopted by Roy. The adoption of the informal type of meeting was in my opinion, the main factor which had earlier saved the Club, and I was determined to retain it at all costs. Perhaps I overdid it a little, and some materialistic things which should have been done were not done. However, the Club did continue to prosper. It became obvious that some members were supplying drinks consumed by others. Because of this, it was decided that the Club would provide the drinks in the future. This was done and was highly successful and very profitable for the Club. It is unfortunate that this practice has had to be stopped, and so we have had to revert to the former system.

The present committee are mostly new blood (relatively speaking, that is) and this perhaps explains why the first meeting held this year was very formal. I hope they will read this history and not say what Hitler said of Napoleon - "History will not repeat itself." The decline of the Alvis Car Club was due to introduction of too much business at general meetings; the revival of the Club was due to reverting to the very informal type of meeting of the very first years.

I wish the new President and committee every success and hope they will preserve a Club which is very dear to me.

TERRY PLUMMER.

#### HELPFUL HINTS

\* David Caldwell did this recently, and was very glad he did when it paid off. Next time you take your wheel discs (nave plates) off, scribble (logibly) in paint your name and address. It is possible that a finder will be kind enough to return it to you. Your telephone number would be a considerable help too, but make sure it is the current one!

\* On those dark dreary nights when the throttle spring invariably decides to break, you can often avoid that horrible racing engine by hanging a heavy spanner on the throttle linkage. Even a rubber band made from an old inner tube can be pressed into emergency service on these occasions -- if you carry one in the tool kit.

\* We all know that members drive rather fiercely on Club trials and rallies, but the way you drive in normal use should not be the same. Squealing round corners ruins tyres fast, fierce braking and acceleration wears out brake linings and is tough on the transmission. If you drive your car hard all the time, don't complain about your repair bills. The two things go hand in hand.

## SERVICE DATA SHEET

### SPEED 25 & 4.3 Litre STEERING BELLCRANK LEVER ASSEMBLIES.

The arrangement of the mounting of these levers is that a pin retains a sleeve between the upper and lower flanges of the chassis frame, and this sleeve in turn passes through the bushes in the steering lever.

To deal with the wear which has taken place, it will be necessary to remove the steering joints from the lever and take out the pin which passes through the chassis member when it should be possible to remove the lever complete with the sleeve. After removing the sleeve, the old flanged bushes must be driven out of the lever. There is a space between the two bushes in the centre of the bore and a suitably shaped tool can be made to drive out one of the bushes. Failing this, the flange can be chipped off one of the bushes and both bushes driven out in the same direction.

After pressing in the new bushes, these should be reamered out with a 22 m.m. diameter reamer.

It is a good idea to make a trial assembly of the lever, sleeve and pin on the bench. The assembly should be inverted with the head of the pin in a vice, but with the head face just clear of the vice jaws. The sleeve, bushed lever and steel distance-pieces should then be mounted in position and next, as a temporary measure, the old distance pieces as well (these in effect takes the place of the chassis frame bottom flange) Finally, the nut and plain washer should be added and the whole tightened up hard, when the lever should just move comfortably by hand pressure.

The sleeve must be just proud of the lever and bush assembly by about .004", so that when the pin nut is finally tightened up underneath the chassis frame on refitting to the car, this can be pulled up hard to prevent any up and down movement of the sleeve, but still not interfere with the free movement of the bushed lever. The nut must NOT be slackened off just to give freedom of movement to the lever. If this should bind when the assembly is tightened up, then it must be dismantled and a re-assembly made on the bench until the correct fitting is obtained, which usually involves reducing the depth of the bush flanges.

(Courtesy Alvis Ltd. Service Dept.)

### KANGAROO TACTICS

\* Have you ever driven with a man who has apparently been bitten by a kangaroo? The Soc. did a few days ago and is still trembling. This driver roared up to lights and stamped on the brakes at the last second - that's the kangaroo landing.

As the lights changed, he let in the clutch with a bang and the car shuddered forward in a huge bound - that's the kangaroo leaping. The driver did not seem in the least concerned about his treatment of the car, but the expected payoff came the very next day. The car was in the garage with the clutch and back axle shattered. He'd dropped in the clutch that hard once too often and torn his whole transmission out. Then he complains that they don't build cars the way they used to!!

Further to my article some months ago on Fabric Couplings, I omitted to mention one fairly important modification required on the Gardner Waern No. 66 discs before they can be fitted to Vintage & Post-Vintage Alvises. This disc is the best ready-made disc readily available in Melbourne. However, it has one drawback. Although all other dimensions are right, the diameter of the fixing bolt holes is not correct, as the hole is one size too large for the Alvis size bolts. The size of bolt hole required in the Alvis disc is  $\frac{3}{8}$ " , but the GW 66 discs are  $\frac{7}{16}$ " . This difference has to be made good when fitting.

There are two alternative ways of doing this:

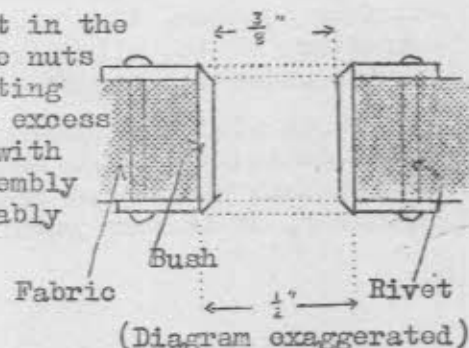
- 1) Drill out the spider holes to  $\frac{7}{16}$ " and fit a new set of bolts and Nyloc or castle nuts. The only trouble with this is that it will not be possible to fit the original pattern thereafter without re-bushing the spiders to suit and reverting to  $\frac{3}{8}$ " bolts. The second method then is generally better (and cheaper) -
- 2) Drill and bush the discs themselves to reduce the bore to  $\frac{3}{8}$ " . This has the advantage that original discs can subsequently be fitted if desired without any trouble.

The cost of bushing the discs is a matter of a few shillings and an hour's work. A one foot length of suitable copper, brass or bronze tubing is required. Each of the 6 bushes is just over 1" in length, so 1 ft. is ample. The tube should be  $\frac{3}{8}$ " I.D.,  $\frac{1}{2}$ " O.D.

- a) Without cutting into the fabric itself if possible, open out the bore in the six metal plates to  $\frac{1}{2}$ " on both front and back of the disc. Gentle pressure on the drill will enable this to be done.
- b) Cut the tube into suitable lengths, making bushes just a fraction longer than the combined thickness of the plates and fabric. Slightly chamfer one end of the bush to allow it to 'lead-in' in the next step.
- c) Using a vice, or suitable drift, press in the bushes as a tight press fit until they just protrude on either side of the disc. If they protrude more than about  $\frac{1}{8}$ " file down until almost flush with the triangular plate.
- d) Using the  $\frac{1}{2}$ " drill tip gently, or better, a countersinking bit, make suitable lead-ins on each bush as in the diagram below. This helps the bolts feed into the bushes without undue difficulty.

N.B. Note that the bushes should be very tight in the disc, and the bolts tight on the bushes, and the nuts tightened up very tight on the spiders when fitting to the car. The essence is for the very slight excess length of the bush to pinch onto bolt and disc with this tightening pressure and lock the whole assembly solid. For this purpose, copper tubing is probably the best.

DAVID MUIRDEN.



## S I L E N C E R S

Condensed from "The Book of the Motor Car" by Rankin Kennedy (1913)

The silencer on a motor is an example of the principles of hydrodynamics. When the exhaust is discharged from a simple pipe, the gases at considerable pressure suddenly expand at the orifice of the pipe, producing sound waves of great amplitude; in other words creating an explosive noise. If a gas under pressure is compelled to pass through a succession of large and small passages and is at the same time deflected in its flow every time it emerges from a narrow to a wide passage, and from the wide to the narrow passage, it falls rapidly in pressure without noise, and finally escapes noiselessly.

In elementary hydrodynamics we learn that a fluid flowing suddenly from a pipe into a larger pipe loses "head" or pressure, and that it also loses "head" on passing round a sharp bend.

In designing a silencer we introduce these principles; we provide a series of passages and cause the gases to take a circuitous route with sharp turns, making it follow a "labyrinth course" in which its pressure is destroyed.

In the silencer we want the gases to escape freely, therefore we make the passages at their smallest area in section as wide or wider than the exhaust pipe, and the wide passages many times wider than the narrow ones.

A good silencer does not cause back pressure on the engine. It has been noted that an engine can run faster on full load with a silencer than when there is none. There are many forms of silencers - all silence the engine, but all of them do not improve the running of the engine, being designed without regard to hydrodynamic principles. Therefore they cause back pressure.

A very long Venturi tube expanding gradually makes the best silencer, as it has no back pressure at all, delivering the gases slowly and at atmospheric pressure almost. But a long Venturi is not practicable on a car, therefore we adopt the labyrinth construction to destroy pressure in a small silencer.

That an engine should give more power with a properly designed silencer is quite in accord with hydrodynamics. An open exhaust pipe offers a very considerable resistance to the escape of the exhaust gases, because of their enormous velocity. They strike against the air at the mouth of the pipe and drive it violently out of the way. It is this high velocity blow, struck against the air, that causes the explosive report at each exhaust opening. Air is not heavy, but still it has inertia, and offers resistance to any extremely sudden motion.

If, however, the gases are gradually expanded into a conical exhaust pipe or into a well-designed silencer, there is little resistance and no noise.

The main point is to expand the gases at once into a chamber, and then into another chamber, thus reducing their velocity gradually before discharge. The structure of the silencer should be designed so that it does not vibrate or rattle under the impact of the gases.

It is also often advantageous to attach the silencer by a flexible or sound-deadening medium such as asbestos, rubber, webbing or leather, to stop the chassis picking up and transmitting any resonance or vibrations from the silencer, or in turn passing engine vibrations from chassis to silencer.