



## NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 33

ISSUE NO. 3

MARCH 1994.

CLUB ROOMS:- at the rear of "ALVISTA", EDGAR ST., MALVERN. Near Harold Holt Memorial Swimming Pool.  
MEETINGS:- THIRD FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH (EXCEPT DEC./JAN.) AT 8 pm.

### \*\*\*\*EVENTS\*\*\*\*EVENTS\*\*\*\*EVENTS\*\*\*\*

**MARCH. FRIDAY 18TH. CLUB GENERAL MEETING.** Guest speaker will be Steve Campbell of Shell Australia.

**MARCH. SATURDAY-SUNDAY. 19TH-20TH. V.S.C.C. ALPINE RALLY.**

**MARCH. SUNDAY 20TH. KALORAMA VINTAGE CAR RALLY.**

**APRIL. 6TH.-17TH. TASMANIAN RALLY.**

**APRIL. FRIDAY 22ND. CLUB GENERAL MEETING.** Note change of date, due to Tasmanian Rally, Video/Photo night.

**MAY. FRIDAY 20TH. CLUB GENERAL MEETING. G.N.O**

**MAY. SUNDAY 22ND. DAY RUN NEWPORT RAILWAY WORKSHOPS & SCIENCE WORKS.** A combined Ron Wilson/Richard Tonkin extravaganza.

**MAY. SATURDAY - SUNDAY 28TH & 29TH. WINTON HISTORIC RACING.**

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J. Leman-Bates



J. Leman-Bates

PRESIDENT'S REPORT.

Dear Members, It was a mere 40 years ago when Bob Morrow and his band of followers founded the Victorian section of the Alvis Car Club - This gives us good reason to celebrate our 40th birthday. More on that later.

Roy Henderson has compiled an excellent article on the history of our wonderful club which will be published in the A.C.C.V. newsletter in serial form. Many thanks Roy for your efforts in preparing this paper. Perhaps one of the longer serving members would like to take over from where Roy left off so as we have a complete record of club history for years to come. On a similar subject I feel that now is the time to start up a Club photo album of members and their cars. Being a relatively new member to the Club I have no idea what Bas Bowes or Andy Hannan even looked like or what cars they drove. This photographic record may cost the club a few bob but certainly well worth the investment.

REX ROBERTS.

*What an excellent idea. I suggest that a Committee member be made "Pictorial Historian"? He can gather photos (precious originals can be duplicated) and produce a permanent display in the Club Rooms (a sort of Rogue's Gallery!). We can also publish mug shots in the Newsletter .....Ed.*

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VALE SYLVIA CHALEYER.

For more years than most of us care to remember Sylvia Chaleyzer has been a friend of the members of the Alvis Car Club of Victoria. She became ill about Christmas time and died peacefully at home on the 22nd of February 1994. The funeral was held on the 26th of February and several Club members attended. We send our condolences to Andre and to Paul. She will be sorely missed.

Dear John,

Following Alister Cannon's excellent article about this 12/50, I thought I would fill in a couple of details.

I bought my 12/50 DB from Graeme Harder in about 1971 and it was that car that had its body dismembered by Rod Warriner to allow him to make three identical copies, one for Alister, one for Graeme Harder and one for Rod. The Ducksback that I bought had the new frame with it and the car was originally owned by Graeme Quinn and Simon Ramsay amongst others.

I hope the histories of all these cars are being kept by their owners.

DES DONNAN.

The opinions expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Alvis Car Club of Victoria (Inc.), its Officers or its Editor. Whilst all care has been taken neither the Club nor its Officers accept responsibility for the availability or quality or fitness for use of any services, goods or vehicles notified for sale or hire or the genuineness of the advertiser or author. Other car clubs may reprint only articles originating from our members. Acknowledgement will be appreciated.

ALVIS AGNITIONS.

There is not much to report this month - mainly because your Editor has been confined by work to Shepparton. My only break-out took place in the Bristol in which we covered 1,000 kilometres in the weekend on a mystery tour of Victoria. I do apologise for my infidelity to the marque but it was a good weekend! **GRAEME QUINN** has donated a collection of old "Alvibatics" to the Club library and you will see elsewhere in this issue the beginnings of a history of the Club written by Roy Henderson. It really is frightening to find how quickly things get forgotten. Not only people and places but reasons. Why were things done the way they were? Who decided? What were the reasons? The Speed 20 is being made ready for Tasmania but before that there is the V.S.C.C. Alpine Rally to be held on the 19th and 20th of March. I have not yet heard how many Alvises will be there but hopefully we will be able to keep the Red Triangle aloft. There has been a deafening silence from France for many months. **PETER BLACK'S** "World Alvis News" had suffered a monumental irregularity - to the point where one had to be concerned about its author's welfare. However another edition did arrive today with the explanation for the delay. The author has moved chateaux! The 3rd International Alvis Meeting in Provence is set for the weekend of the 10th and 11th of September 1994. I know that **ALAN GRIFFIN** plans to attend so it would be nice to hear a first hand account of what sounds like an excellent international event viewed through Australian eyes! May be there will be other Aussies as well? **DEAN PRANGLEY** reported a failure to spark but I hear that the problem has been rectified. There ain't nothin' more useless than a car without spark! It's like a wheelbarrow without a wheel or a boat without a bottom. In this Newsletter is the first information about the 1995 National Alvis Rally. **CARL WHITTAKER** and colleagues are to be congratulated on their early start and their early warning. We look forward to confirmation of the dates so that diaries can be filled in, dogs kennelled, repairs put on hold, mother-in-laws looked after, taxes paid, teeth filled, hair cut, bags packed, Alvises fixed, papers cancelled and attendance assured.

ED.

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### THIS 'N' THAT

**Brierley Investments** - Did you know that Brierley Investments Ltd. (BIL) own at least 30% of Alvis PLC UK, and perhaps up to 51%. In the BIL Annual Report 1993 they say of Alvis :- Alvis, a designer and manufacturer of transmissions, simulators, tracked fighting vehicles and other defence and aerospace products announced during the year a reorganization of its electro-optics business. 51% owned Singapore listed subsidiary, Avimo Singapore, itself a manufacturer of electro-optical components and systems, has acquired the electro-optics business within the group which facilitate greater market penetration and product diversity through its lower cost manufacturing capabilities.

Results for the six month period to 31 March 1993 show an overall improvement at the operating level following a year of mixed fortunes in 1992.

Vital statistics for ALVIS PLC for year ending September 1993:-  
 Net Profit £1,000,000. Sales £92,000,000. Total Assets £129,000,000.  
 Stockholders funds £56,000,000. Employees 1,126.  
 Yes the Red Triangle appears to be alive and well!

*Courtesy Alvis Car Club of New Zealand Newsletter.*

**"In the beginning..."**

*I bought a Speed 20. I found that there was an Alvis Car Club in Sydney, and that there were four members in Melbourne....John Read, O.J. Nilsson, Syd Fisher & Jim May. I obtained their addresses and found that one had gone away and two had sold their vehicles and were no longer interested. The remaining member (believed to be Jim May ....Roy) was keen, but after a short time, ran away to sea to get his Master's Ticket. I wrote to Sydney and asked permission to form a local club as a Branch and offered to pay to the A.C.C.A. one half of all subscriptions as a levy to support such services as 'Alvibatics', the Club Newsletter, which Victoria could not then afford to produce itself. Permission was granted so on Saturday March 27th. 1954 I placed ads. in various Melbourne newspapers As a result, the 'Nucleus of hoary headed decrepit old gentlemen' got together....."*

Thus says Robert B.(Bob) Morrow, founder of the Melbourne Branch of the Alvis Car Club Australia,...Later to be known as A.C.C.A., Vic Div. and some 3 years later again, as the Alvis Car Club, Victoria.

Bob Morrow joined the A.C.C.A. in September 1953, and placed the ad. in the Melbourne "Age" and other papers on 27.03.54. ...It read...

"Alvis Owners, For technical information and assistance, join the Alvis Car Club.  
R.B. Morrow, 52 Morotai Ave., Ashburton".

The first meeting took place at Morotai Avenue and was attended by Bob, Basil (Baz) Bowes and "Horrie" Morgan.

The early meetings slowly gathered members and were held monthly at various homes, including that of Graham Thorley, a well known Melbourne artist. Graham later became famous in motoring circles, not for his artistic achievements, but for his ability to leap from ground-level to the seat of his vintage Bentley in two mighty bounds whilst encased in a chaff bag. This took place at the Kalorama Vintage Rally, 1958, and gained him the unofficial title of "Best Performer" of the meeting.

In 1955, Baz. Bowes offered the use of a large garage on his property at Edgar Street Glen Iris as a permanent home for the Branch. This was agreed to and the members set up shop there. The setting was perfect, a huge metal shed, brick and dirt floored, cluttered with vintage machinery, a Talbot with a great hole in the sump, most of which was piled up in it's own back seat; and "Blue-Bird", a 12/50 Alvis adorned with a rather revolting blue racing shell, probably made from an upturned bath. Most of the remaining space was filled with an interesting array of vintage 'innards and outards'. In the smallish space in the middle - as central heating? - stood a split 44 gallon drum, in which smouldered some of the most obnoxious semi-combustibles known to man. Through this evil-smelling haze, an odd face would appear, toss in a - usually inane - contribution to the proceedings, then disappear back into obscurity, never to be seen again

At one meeting in 1957, nine motions were put without notice, discussed, accepted and promptly forgotten, as no one had thought to record them.

They were the good old days, when we went out to a hill-climb, and couldn't find the hill. And coffee was often served in cups we'd forgotten to wash the month before.

In the closing months of 1957 came - to quote Bob Morrow - "Ten minutes that shook the World". This was probably a somewhat overly dramatic statement, but at least it provoked a shaky event for the Melbourne Branch.

Due partly to the 'tyranny of distance' the two groups had been drifting apart for some time. Communication and financial arrangements were deemed unsatisfactory by the Victorian members, so after much argument and soul-searching, a motion was passed that the baby strike out for itself.

A constitution was drawn up and voted on at a special meeting, and the Melbourne Branch of the A.C.C.A. became an autonomous club, to be known as "The Alvis Car Club of Victoria".

Then the rot set in! Whether because of our sins, bad management, lack of experience, or whatever... For the next three years, membership attendances fell off to a point where only a hard core of a few stalwarts presented themselves at meetings and the future looked rather grim.

Two factors emerged during this period which proved the point that any Club must have a focal point to survive. The were...

- 1. The availability of a permanent address,
- 2. A regular monthly news-sheet to keep members aware of club affairs and provide a forum for debate

We had the former, and to implement the latter, a monthly Newsletter went to all members - financial or otherwise,(mostly otherwise!) with information on meetings, coming events, chatter and technical advice.

During 1958 Baz Bowes decided that we were no longer Colonials and were now civilised enough to warrant a decent club-room, so over the next 2 - 3 years walls were moved, ceilings lined, proper seating and lighting installed, a small kitchen and spares store constructed and the brick floor re-layed and covered so that by 1962 the club-rooms were set up much as they are today, with only minor alterations to meet current needs. These efforts had a revitalising effect on the Club and prospective members began to arrive seeking admission to this "dynamic little group".

Events grew from totally disorganised fiascos such as the 1957 Hurstbridge Hill-climb, where, after negotiating, at great risk to life and limb, a decidedly dangerous home-made bridge with every fourth or fifth plank missing, eager competitors found the 'hill' unclimbable due to wash-aways.

A fine example of the new professionalism was the Clarkfield Gymkhana, where someone had buried a number of domed basalt out-crops in the long grass aeons ago. Contact with these primaevial traffic humps caused one cracked chassis, several near decapitations, and volumes of foul language ! Notable survivors of this disaster were the outright winner - Neil Cuthbert (VDC) in an M.G. TF, Barry Gough, winner of the vintage section in 'Emma', a 14/75 Alvis sedan; and Roy Henderson in 'Bertha' a TA 19.83 Silver Eagle took PVT honours. Another survivor was the Organiser, one Roy Allen, disqualified in the slow-run for laying along the running-board of his Oldsmobile and tinkering with the carburettor in an effort to make it go even slower. Naturally, it stalled, hence the disqualification. Mr. Allen was last seen running for his life, dodging air-born lumps of domed basalt out-crop!.

.....To be continued

Dear John,

Valve seat recession in civilian cylinder heads seems chicken feed compared to the engine problems on the R.A.A.F. F111's TF30 Turbofan. Maybe there are different reasons but the two problems seem to have a lot in common. The R.A.A.F. is doing something about it, whilst we whinge to the oil companies.

### MILITARY

• **F-111 ENGINE COMBUSTION SYSTEM LIFE EXTENDED:** The Aeronautical Research Laboratory of the DSTO is currently researching life extension of the combustion chambers in the F-111's TF30 turbofan.

Currently the combustion chambers on the F-111 warp and crack after as little as 750 flight hours. When the can is cracked the whole engine needs to be removed from the aircraft prematurely, causing a drop in availability and extra maintenance work. Prolonging the life of the combustors will save the RAAF an estimated 4700 maintenance manhours of work each year.

ARL researchers are using a perspex model to monitor the simulated fuel flow through the combustors to determine if the flame is too close to the combustor wall where the cracking occurs. DSTO aims to modify the model to see whether or not altering the airflow through the combustor can extend the life of the combustor.

Australian Aviation March 1994

No doubt all the faults presented by Mr. Robert Graham in "Global Warming ET AL (page 2 Vol 33 issue) are correct. One of the great pleasures of my life these days is that I do not own a T.V. set, I listen to the radio only to check the time and I have only read one newspaper since the middle of September 1993. My reason for reading the newspaper was to check the exchange rate to see whether my ration of Wadsworth Best Bitter would be 2 or 3 pints per day whilst in England. Glancing through the general news section, nothing had changed - same dreary faces, same muck fights, same ethnic trouble spots etc., etc. - I had not missed a thing.

Conclusion:- It is better to be not informed than misinformed. There is no law to say we must listen to the radio, read the newspapers or watch T.V. If more people pursued other methods of spending their time by being not informed, suddenly politicians and newspaper magnates would get the message.

ALAN GRIFFIN.

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### ROB ROY HILL CLIMB.

There was a good roll up of Alvis cars and owners at the Rob Roy Hill Climb on the 20th. February.

Competing were Geoff Hood in the 12/50 S/C racing car, Rob Graham in the T.B. 14 and Paul Chaley in the Speed 25 Special, while Austin Tope was trying hard in the delightful and historic Ballot - Oldsmobile. In the Classic Car Park were Rex Roberts in his 12/40, Rob Sands in the 12/50, Frank Murnane in the great 4.3 litre Tourer and Ron Wilson in the Firefly. Other members spectating were Dale Parsell in his MG.B., John Kent and Murray Fitch down from Wangaratta in the G.T.V. Alfa and Roy Henderson in the Roy Boy. Later in the day the Tonkin entourage appeared in the T.A. 21 from their lodgings on the top of the hill.

The racing was excellent with the existing track record being lowered to 27.7 secs. by Robin Bailey in an MGB V8 while Geoff did very well with 30.36 seconds. I did not get Rob's time but no doubt he will tell you if you ask. The heavy metal of Norm Beechey in the Chevy Impala - Craig Shannon in a 6 litre engine E.H. Holden and a Chevy Nova with left hand drive certainly stirred the blood of the watchers. At the other end of the scale there was a gaggle of Austin Sevens most recording times in the low 30's (how they do it is a mystery) some desperate Mini Coopers through to Healeys - T.R.3's - dozens of M.G.TC Specials - you name it. If it was fast you could find it in the pits or screaming up the hill.

It was a great day and very well organised by the M.G. Car Club and if you haven't yet ventured up to Christmas Hills, get along to the next event there - you will certainly enjoy it.

RON WILSON.

## THE PETROL PAGE.

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We are now all aware of the debate about leaded and unleaded petrol and the Government's decision to increase the cost of leaded petrol to the motorist. Some cars can run successfully on unleaded petrol but I doubt that any Alvis can run, without harm to the engine, on unleaded petrol.

Lead and the amount used per litre, octane rating and the need for lead, pollution caused by exhaust gases, alternative additives and so on will all be explained at the March meeting.

Come along and hear Mr. Steve Campbell of Shell Australia talk on these subjects, which are vital to all Alvis owners. Be early as it looks like being a full house.

BOB GRAHAM.

*Bob included a copy of the letter occurring in "Popular Classics" referred to last month by Peter Glover but the letter does not appear to add very much to the debate.*

Eric Cunningham has sent me several pages of advertising bumph put out by a commercial organisation called "Fuel Star Australia Pty. Ltd." purporting to have an additive to petrol which will take care of all our woes. Thank you Eric.

There is a letter in the current edition of "Australian Classic Car" in which the writer claims that not only is modern fuel in Australia short on lead but it is also short on octane rating as well. He claims 93.7 RON has been found on independent testing of purportedly 97 RON

Last weekend I was in the hills just outside Beechworth and came in to conversation with a cocky who was telling me how petrol used to be carted around in two gallon tins, four of which were packed in a wooden crate. He had a set of opening tools. Basically the kit consisted of a copper hammer and a copper chisel with a triangular point. The copper was to prevent sparking and ignition/explosion which he told me happened fairly often. "In those days it was proper petrol and would go off at the drop of a hat - not like this modern muck. You could drop a match in it and nothing would happen!"

I got the point even although I am not prepared to accept his challenge and certainly do not recommend that anybody else does!

ED.

**APRIL NEWSLETTER COPY DEADLINE  
WEDNESDAY 30TH MARCH 1994**

## A BORING SUBJECT.

At present there is a lot of interest in the threatened demise of leaded fuel which could curtail the use of Vintage and Classic cars or lead to very expensive engine modifications to suit what will be available at the pumps. But recently I found another problem that could also make it difficult to keep our cars mobile.

Sadly I found a hole in the top of a piston in the Firefly which under learned scrutiny was found to be caused by pre-ignition, but one would have to have extra sensitive hearing to hear "pinging" while driving an open car.

That was enough bad news but when the block was taken to a reputable engine re-conditioner to be bored to suit new pistons, I was informed that their equipment to do that sort of job didn't suit my engine. Reason being that since the 50's no long or even medium stroke motors have been produced so the modern machinery today only caters for the short stroke engines. Fortunately the Company still had the now "obsolete" equipment stored in a corner of the workshop and carried out the work on my 100mm stroke block - and incidentally did an excellent job.

I'm no engineer and have never professed to be one and there well may be another way to do these jobs if all else fails but it is something to think about.

I did like it when I asked the engine re-conditioner what sort of engines they worked on and he replied "They're generally boring Ford's and Commodores". And I agreed!

RON WILSON.

National Alvis Spares offers:-Vintage:

Geoff Hood,  
37, Thomas St.,  
E. Doncaster  
Vic 3108.  
Tel. 03 942 2181.

P.V.T.

Austin Tope,  
8, Wimba Ave.,  
Kew, Vic. 3044.  
Tel. 03 917 5163

TA 14

Bob Graham,  
15, Clarke Ave.,  
Caulfield,  
Vic. 3182.  
Tel 03 571 3888.

THREE LITRE

John Ball,  
P.O. Box 26,  
Marshfield,  
Vic. 3610.  
Tel 058 262 518.

There is no separate listing of parts from our extensive range of Spares in stock this month. If you have a requirement ring your Spares Registrar for help. If we can't supply you off the shelf from our stock, we can arrange to buy castings or manufactured parts so as to spread pattern or set-up costs so that you make a saving and we have stock for the next person.

A NEW ALVIS BOOK. \* \* \* \* \* SPECIAL OFFER

The Club has obtained several copies of a new book:-

ALVIS - The Post War Cars  
(John Price Williams)

This book outlines the history of Alvis cars and production from 1945 right through until the last TF 3 litre in 1967. It has many new photographs and includes the Issigonis connection, keeping the car on the road, technical specifications and so on. It should be included on the library of all Alvis owners of post war cars.

The book is available to Club members at the discount price of \$55.00 plus postage & packing. Bob Graham 03 5713886 or Richard Tonkin 03 7101465.

**\*\*\*\*\*HURRY. ONLY TWO LEFT\*\*\*\*\***

ROYBOOKS.

Spares catalogues. Silver Eagle 1930 - 1933 approximately. TD 16.95, TB - TC 19.82 and a 12/70. SB 13.22. New productions by the acclaimed Roybooks Press. Telephone Roy Henderson. 03 7047549.

PRIVATEERS:

FOR SALE. Alvis F.W.D. Two cars for sale. Both have been in my possession for over 20 years and both are originally factory super charged. One is an original Martin & King roadster with only 62,000 miles from new and the other has been the subject of a long restoration but is still not finished. Further details from John Ham. Tel. 054 261476.

FOR SALE. Alvis TA 21. Older restoration. Looks and goes well. Replaced leather looks good. Books. Receipts for major expenditure on brakes. Ex Geoff Ross (Albury) for many years and has had another three owners recently. 1951 model. \$15,000.  
Kevin Field or Darren at Vintage Auto Parts. Tel. 08 2975197 or FAX 08 2970283.

FOR SALE. Lucas points. L9A. Lucas distributor caps. BD 26A. Suit 1935 - 37 Silver Eagle among others. Lucas R 67B headlight. Good order with vacuum dipping reflector. Not restored. Suit late 12/50, 14.75 or early 16.95 Alvis. \$65.00.  
Kevin Field or Darren. Tel. 08 2975197 or FAX 08 2970283.



**FOR SALE :** Lucas generators. C 5A-2. Type BU-0 12 volt. 2 off. 1 water pump to suit with drive between. These may suit Speed 25 or 3.5 litre cars. They do not suit 4.3 litre cars nor Speed 20's but they are definitely Alvis as the system is the same as my Speed 20, but bigger. I would like to swap them for a Speed 20 generator and water pump or will sell. Offers invited. Des Donnan. Tel. 074 459 981.

**FOR SALE :** Alvis TA 21. 1950. This vehicle has been garaged since 1967, awaiting restoration. It is now offered for sale. The vehicle is complete and has some spares. The motor, engine compartment and front guards have been disassembled but the car is towable. Garaged in Melbourne. Tel. Len Cousins. 059 862 305.

**FOR SALE :** Alvis TA 14 Saloon. Needs restoration. Can be seen at Mac Mechanics, Main Street, Corryong. \$4,000. Tel. David Caldwell 03 729 5821. (Re-advertised)

**CARBURETTOR SERVICE :** Ron Wilson reports excellent same day service upon his S.U. Precision Carburettors and Fuel Pump Service. 734 Waverley Road, Chadstone.



# **ALLEZ TO THE**

**N.S.W.**

# **RALLY**

**\* 1995 ALVIS NATIONAL RALLY \***

The 1995 National Rally is to be held in New South Wales.

After considering several possible areas and consultation with other States, the NSW Rally Committee has decided to hold the Rally based in Mudgee area. The Mudgee area is known for its wineries, historic towns such as Gulgong, Wellington Caves and Western Plains Zoo at Dubbo.

It is also approximately equidistant from Melbourne and Brisbane and can be reached via the Newell Highway avoiding some of the heavy traffic areas.

The Rally date is tentatively set for arrival of all participants at Mudgee by the evening of Sunday 19th March and with departure from Mudgee on the morning of Saturday 25th March 1995.

Further details will be available for the March issue of the various Club magazines and final details including itinery, cost and application forms should be ready during March / April this year. Meanwhile any enquiries may be addressed to the Committee Chairman, Mr Barry Turner  
Phone: 045 712028.

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