

SUMMER



1998

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF THE ALVIS CAR CLUB OF VICTORIA (INC)

[Incorporating The Newsletter Volume No. 37. Issue No. 12. December 1998.]

THIS MAGAZINE
is published quarterly, in March,
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THE NEWSLETTER
is published separately in February,
April, May, July, August, October
and November



IN THIS ISSUE:-

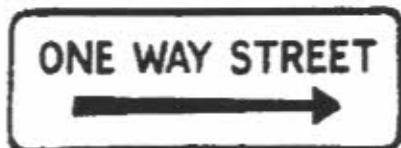
- Hare on Barber
- For Sale & Wanted
- Blast from the Past
- 1999 Provisional Calendar
- Graham on John.
- News from France....

*Andrew McDougall's 12/50,
still on Tasmanian plates, with
John White's TA 14 reflected in
the window behind. Lunch at
Yellingbo. (Photo: FM)*



*Your Editor (left) being berated by Ron
Wilson for attending the ACCV Annual Lunch
in a MORGAN. RW said the Ed. "would never
report the crime...."*

(Photo: FM)



TORQUE OF TONKIN

Greetings again. I mistakenly assumed that the November Newsletter was the last for the year, forgetting that our illustrious (or "lit up"?) editor had another edition of ALVIC waiting in the wings. So, the salutations, seasonal greetings and "we had a good year" stuff in Torque last month was a bit premature. "Well, what has he got left to say this month?" I hear your ask. Dear readers, you should know by now that people in my trade are rarely short of a word or three.

I was in Sydney on the weekend of Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th of November and The Alvis Club (you know, the proper one) invited me to join them for their Alvis Day at Del Rio, a delightful venue on the banks of the Hawksbury River, near Wiseman's Ferry. Although I wasn't able to be there for the actual Alvis Day on the Saturday, I spent the late afternoon, the evening dinner and the next morning with the Club. They made me most welcome and I was honoured to be asked to say a few words after their annual trophy presentations on the Saturday night. Of course, the few words became a few too many and they eventually had to ask me to sit down - you know how it is with us natural orators. But seriously, the NSW Club is in fine shape, looking forward to the National Rally at Clare and to their own 50th anniversary Rally in 2000, more news of which in the New Year. Thank you to NSW President, **Richard Budd**, the Committee and members for your hospitality and to **Alan and Margaret Russell** for going out of their way to drive me back to the airport on the Sunday morning in their delightful TA21. Yes, I did manage to con my way onto the next Ansett flight and was home for afternoon tea.

The Calendar has sold like the proverbial hot cakes. The 30 we sent to NSW, the 20 that went to New Zealand and our own 50 have all gone, and still the orders are flooding in. **John Lang** has therefore run off another 30, but nearly half of those are already spoken for. So, if you want one (or more - they make an ideal Christmas present), phone **Calendar Editor Lang** now on (03) 5426 2256.

There was a good turnout of people and cars at the November Club Meeting, with **Peter Fleming (Firebird)**, **Bob Graham (Speed 20)**, **Ian Parkinson (TA21)**, **Richard Tonkin (Crested Eagle)** and **John White (TA14 Drophead)** gaining points for the **Andy Hannam Trophy**. The scores, after two rounds, are **Bob Graham (2)**, **Richard Tonkin (2)**, **John White (2)**, **John Ball**, **Mark Burns**, **David Caldwell**, **Peter Fleming**, **Andrew McDougall**, **Eric Nichol**, **Ian Parkinson**, **Dale Parsell**, **Rex Roberts** and **Rob Sands** on one point each. This is a great time of the year to get out your Alvis, so dust her (the car) off and come along to an event!

Speaking of events, the **January Informal Meeting** will be held on **Saturday, 16th January**, starting at around 7pm on the lawns at the rear of "Alvista", in Malvern. We have changed the date to allow VSCC members to attend their BBQ the previous evening. BYO food, drink, utensils, tables and chairs. And, of course, your Alvis (good weather is guaranteed by your committee).

The NSW Club are arranging to stay at Renmark on the night of Saturday, 1st May, on their way to the National Rally at Clare. Any ACCV members who would like to join them, call **Kendall McSkimming** on (02) 4625 8354. For those going from the Melbourne area, and wishing to stop overnight, Bordertown looks the most convenient watering hole. Call me on (03) 9710 1465 if you want to overnight there and I will organise a group booking.

There, you see, I managed to fill up most of a page after all! Seasons Greetings and look forward to a great New Year we have planned for the Club.

RICHARD TONKIN



Now lemme see...

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NEWSLETTER

DISTRIBUTION

John & Kay Ball
Address as Above



(INCORPORATED IN VICTORIA - No. A0017202F)

General Meetings are held at 8.00 pm on the third Friday of every month (except December & January).

Club Rooms:- Rear of "Alvista", 21 Edgar Street, Glen Iris. (Melway p 59 F 8)



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A MERRY CHRISTMAS

AND A

HAPPY NEW YEAR

TO ALL ADMIRERS OF THE

ALVIS MARQUE

COMING ATTRACTIONS

JANUARY Saturday 16th Informal Sausage Sizzle on the lawn behind the Club Rooms. Yes, it is a Saturday night but the VSCC Opening Event is being held (again!) on "our" third Friday. Come at 7.00pm. Bring everything.

JANUARY Tuesday 26th. Australia Day Historic Vehicle Display in the Fitzroy Gardens. Details from the President.



ACCV PROVISIONAL CALENDAR 1999

January	Saturday	16 th	Informal sausage sizzle and natter (code for telling lies) at the Club Rooms. NB. Note this is a Saturday night. The VSCC opening event for the year will be held on Friday the 15 th .
	Tuesday	26 th	Australia Day. Historic Vehicle Display. By the time you read this entries will have closed but several members have said that they will attend.
February	Sunday	14 th	Classic Car Meeting at Hanging Rock. Cold radiator event. Wide selection of cars.
	Friday	19 th	Club General Meeting.
	Sunday	21 st	Pub Lunch Run. Pine Grove Hotel. Organiser: Alister Cannon.
March	Sunday	7 th	Australian Grand Prix at Albert Park.
	Friday	19 th	Club General Meeting.
	Sunday	21 st	Kalorama.
	Saturday	27 th	Edington Sprints.*
	Sunday		Hoped for: return BOCCE match with the BOCA at Merricks North.
April	Friday	16 th	Club General Meeting.
May	Sun/Sat	2/8 th	ALVIS NATIONAL RALLY. CLARE VALLEY SOUTH AUSTRALIA.
	Sunday	16 th	VSCC Day Navigation Trial.*
	Friday	21 st	Club General Meeting.
	Sat/Sun	29/30 th	Historic Winton.
June	Sunday	13 th	Vintage Rob Roy Hill Climb.* The Tonkins are providing arvo tea.
	Friday	18 th	Club General Meeting.
July	Friday	16 th	Club General Meeting.
August	Friday	20 th	Club General Meeting.
	Saturday	28 th	Winter Film Night.
September	Friday	17 th	Club General Meeting.
	Sunday	19 th	Garage Crawl.
	Sat/Sun		VSCC Two Day Rally.
October	Sat/Sun	9/10 th	Country Weekend Away. Based upon the Mt. Tarrengower Hill Climb. The Monthly General Meeting will be held during the weekend.
November	Sat/Sun		Geelong Speed Trials.
	Friday	19 th	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. Club General Meeting.
	Sunday	21 st	Annual Lunch and Trophy Presentation.
December	Sunday	5 th	Summer Barbeque.

FAMILY MEMBERSHIP.

To be able to vote at a meeting of the ACCV you must be a FULL member. Because your spouse/partner is a Full Member, it does not mean that you are. You must pay a second sub. in order to VOTE. However, ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP exists for \$15.00 p.a. If you are an Associate Member you can take part in all other Club activities except voting at meetings. Importantly, you can USE THE RED PLATE SYSTEM and WIN TROPHIES! The converse says "beware". If the car is in your name and your only relationship to the Club is that you are the spouse/partner of a Full Member, the car is NOT ELIGIBLE for the Red Plate Scheme.

DRIVE ON THE LEFT.

Archeologists working on a Roman quarry in southern England have come across proof that the Romans obeyed "KEEP LEFT". The wheel ruts made by the wagons leaving the quarry laden are deeper than the ruts made by the empty wagons arriving. Previous digs have revealed ruts in the centre of the road or ones of equal depth on each side. It is thought that wagon and carriage drivers liked to keep left so as to give their right, or "whip" hand more room to move. In the 14th Century Pope Boniface VIII advised pilgrims to Rome to travel "sword arm to sword arm" to protect themselves against attack. Napoleon seems (again!) to have created the confusion when he ordered his armies to change to "TENEZ le DROIT" in order to baffle the enemy.
The (London) Times

ALVIS AGNITIONS**LIBRARY FUND.**

Our new Librarian, Alister Cannon has requested that a sum of money be provided for upgrading the library. Presently it lacks some books which would seem to be crucial to the needs of the Club e.g. the third edition of Ken Day's book. A sum of \$340.00 for this year was agreed to at the last meeting.

BAS BOWES TROPHY.

At last the Club is able to reinstate a competitive event. Because of administrative and insurance reasons this trophy has not been awarded in recent years. Now, with the kind co-operation of the VSCC, the ACCV is able to announce that the following events will carry points for which members may compete to win the **Bas Bowes Trophy**:

Edington Sprints	2th March
Day Navigation Trial	16th May
Vintage Rob Roy H.C.	13th June

If you compete in one of these events you will not be eligible for any VSCC loot unless you are a member of the VSCC and drive a VSCC-eligible car. But if you are a Full or Associate Member of the ACCV and you drive an ACCV-eligible car you could WIN! Basic CAMS licence is necessary. Further info. from Dale Parsell.

ALVIS CALENDAR.

The initial print run of the Calendar has sold out and a further thirty have been ordered. Fortunately, today's technology allows this to be done without there being extra cost. If you still want one - be quick! Orders to John Lang.

UPGRADING THE CLUB-ROOMS.

A subcommittee has been formed to refurbish and re-equip the Club Rooms which are presently shabby and in poor repair. However, our lease is not a long term one, so it is hoped that greater comfort and use can be obtained by acquiring equipment rather than spending much on the structure. Some funds are available from the proceeds of calendar sales. Watch this space - or, better still - come to the Club Rooms to experience the "before and after" (and possibly one of the working bees between those two situations?)

KALORAMA.

Remember the date:
21st MARCH 1999.

There have been difficulties in recent years due to clashes with other events and also due to problems with insurance. It seems likely that the insurance problem may have been resolved, making the event easier to stage and more attractive to competitors.

SO MARK IT IN YOUR DIARY
AND COME ALONG. DETAILS IN
FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER.

Appreciate me now and avoid
the rush.
(Ashley Brilliant, per "VicMog."

AUDITOR.

The Club has decided to have the Books audited by a professional accountant. This has not been done for several years and a change of Treasurer makes for an appropriate time.

FREE TRANSPORT.

Well, nearly free! You may have noticed that what you thought was a receipt for your final payment for the National Rally does in fact show \$10.00 outstanding. The organizers have laid on bus transport for some of the evening events. GOOD THINKING, SOUTH AUSTRALIA. A good ten bucks worth.

In London a lady drove the wrong way up a one way street. She went only a short way before realizing her error and trying to reverse out. A taxi had to take avoiding action and the driver yelled out "Wyncher give a signal?" Came the sweet reply "There is no signal for what I am trying to do!"
"The Automobile"



1999 RALLY

2nd May 1999 to 8th May 1999

In the Clare Valley

South Australia



It is amazing sometimes what can be dredged out of the memory of times long past upon reading a record of events of the time. Whilst perusing ACCV Newsletters of 30 - 40 years ago. I came across comments and entries now forgotten but very evocative for me. How about this for a statement?:

"How much would I give to hold that rather ugly steering wheel again - to sing to the urge of old but crackling power - and to know just once more the feel of a thoroughbred: solid, road-square and personal. I miss that 12/50: who-- wouldn't? It was real motoring - motoring which was an end in itself."

This is perfectly attuned to my own feelings of nostalgia. I have owned 4 12/50s, and later models of Alvis but none of the post-vintage cars provide such a union of man and beast. Why else would I buy (and sell) the same TE 12/50 b.b. three times? Because it was part of me then! When mastered, the 12/50 becomes a part of the driver's being (something like a marriage made in heaven). But it takes time for this symbiosis to evolve, and many (and probably most lady drivers) never achieved it. Maybe the crash-box and the niceties of clutch timing, engine revs, and selector gate require too much judgment, and the later synchro boxed pampered the driver too well. And none of the later cars could provide that glorious vintage exhaust burble.

The Dec. 1968 Newsletter reports in its Jottings column:

"A person vested with authority had the smirk removed from his face a few days ago. Andre Chaley's most impressive 1932 SA Speed Twenty went along to be registered, and the tester chappie made a few rude remarks about the deficiencies of mechanical brakes. 'The new cars can barely make 60 on the Tapley meter, so this has no hope.' When the man told Andre on the test run to apply the brakes NOW, imagine his surprise to find himself draped over the windscreen with 100 on his meter."

Andre's brakes, having been completely restored must have been in AI condition, but my Speed models also decelerated massively even when quite badly worn. I recall being tested by a young policeman almost exactly 40 years ago. He stopped me in the 3½ Litre because I was driving at night "without headlights" as he opined. I pointed out that the "fog lights" were in fact the low beam lamps and the high beam P 100s should not be illuminated in town. Disbelieving, he parked his nose an inch or two from a P100 and dared me to "turn them on if you can". When I did, he staggered back, temporarily blinded and muttering: "Bloody searchlights!" Not to be outdone, his colleague in the patrol car - a Ford Customline (remember them?) - seemed determined to revenge this insult and find fault with brakes. He asked me to drive along the road and to apply my brakes when he sounded the horn. So, at approx. 30 - 40 m.p.h. I heard the horn sound behind, and dutifully threw out the anchors. I next heard the unmistakable sound of tyres being dragged protesting over the bitumen. The Ford clipped the rear left bumper of the Alvis (no damage except some blue paint addition - police cars were sky-blue then), and proceeded across the footpath to end up in the front garden of a house which was fortunate enough not to possess a front fence. Enquiring as to the well-being of the young man after this contratemps as they flopped dazed in the bedraggled Ford, I was told to "clear off. We've had enough of Alvis cars for tonight."

The Dec 1968 issue gives a handy suggestion:

"A workshop needs a grinder but a hand-operated stone has the big drawback of needing one hand to work it. Now there are many jobs that need both hands free when grinding. You can convert a grinder to foot-operation using odd junk that collects in the workshop. What is needed is an old cycle hub fitted to the grinder spindle - one with the free wheel incorporated in it. With this hub fitted pass a cycle chain over the sprocket and attach one end to a long spring fitted to the floor. The spring must be long enough to return the chain to its original position after every 'stroke'. The other end of the chain is fixed to a suitable plank of wood with wire cable as a treadle. The plank is hinged at one end with a spring under the other (a valve spring will do) so pressing the plank with the foot turns the grinder."

Wow! Imagine being bothered these days when an electric bench grinder can be obtained so cheaply. Nonetheless, in early 1960, I found such a grinding wheel (large, about 3 feet across) from some industrial application I know not what of, and had a 12/60 chassis (no body) with an engine in situ. Thinking that Heath-Robinson was to be emulated, and since the support trestle of angle iron for the wheel chanced to fit neatly onto the chassis flange, the two were bolted together, and bicycle sprockets (with connecting chain) were fitted to the grinder axle and the gearbox output flange. When the engine was started and the gears engaged, the grinder began to spin and with some effort and much discomfort a blade could be sharpened on it. However, this did not last long after a great increase in revs. which produced a vibration in the grinder assembly so great that the chassis was lifted off its blocks and the whole caboodle tipped -sideways, - resulting in a large piece ground out of a wall where the stone came to rest and cracked through. Following this dangerous escapade, I took the only sensible action. I bought an electric bench-grinder.

(Thank you for that contribution, David. We look forward to more blasts in the 1999 issues of ALVIC. Ed.)

Dear John,

Thanks for your letter addressed to me in France. We arrived there in May and returned to England in October. This timetable meant that I was unable to attend any of the Alvis Register activities during the summer.

Your mention of the Alvis Club de France and its meeting in Mondragon was duly noted. I heard of the tragic death of Peter Black from British ex-pats. in the south of France. Then I read the news in the English VSCC Newsletter that a meeting would be held this year as a tribute to Peter. My very good friend Barry Edgerton, who had attended the 1997 event, wrote me that he and his wife, Chris were going and would I be going? Barry owns a rare 1930 SE Silver Eagle Beetback. It is really a 12/60 but with a six cylinder engine. Peter Black had started on the organisation and made the necessary bookings before his death. Nick and Patricia Simpson and Ron King picked up the pieces at very short notice and put together a great weekend.

We arranged a booking at "Le Manoir" in Mondragon for the Friday and Saturday nights. We drove there through the Lubaron ("One Year in Provence" area) and on arrival in Mondragon surprised the Edgertons who had no idea that we would be there. We did not attend on the Sunday, due to a previous appointment. The meeting was organised by a local Frenchman who drove an immaculate XK 140. The "sweeper" was another Frenchman who was in a Citroen DS 21 with a broom hanging out of the back window. He said that he did the job for a lot of one make rallies and that Bugattis and Ferraris cause the most trouble! It was all tremendous fun. I thought that the most desirable Alvis was a Belgian owned Speed 20. In it were also travelling Hugh and Royna Guthrie who are Stutz enthusiasts from Melbourne. In the car park it was my great joy to meet Nic. Davies again, after all these years. We were able to have a long chat

France is becoming the Mecca for vintage motoring events. The roads are better and less crowded than those in the UK and the ambience is superb. The events are called "Demonstrations" and in Angouleme in September, they close the roads and around the town you go - in any sort of vintage car. And Montlhery is also becoming deservedly popular.

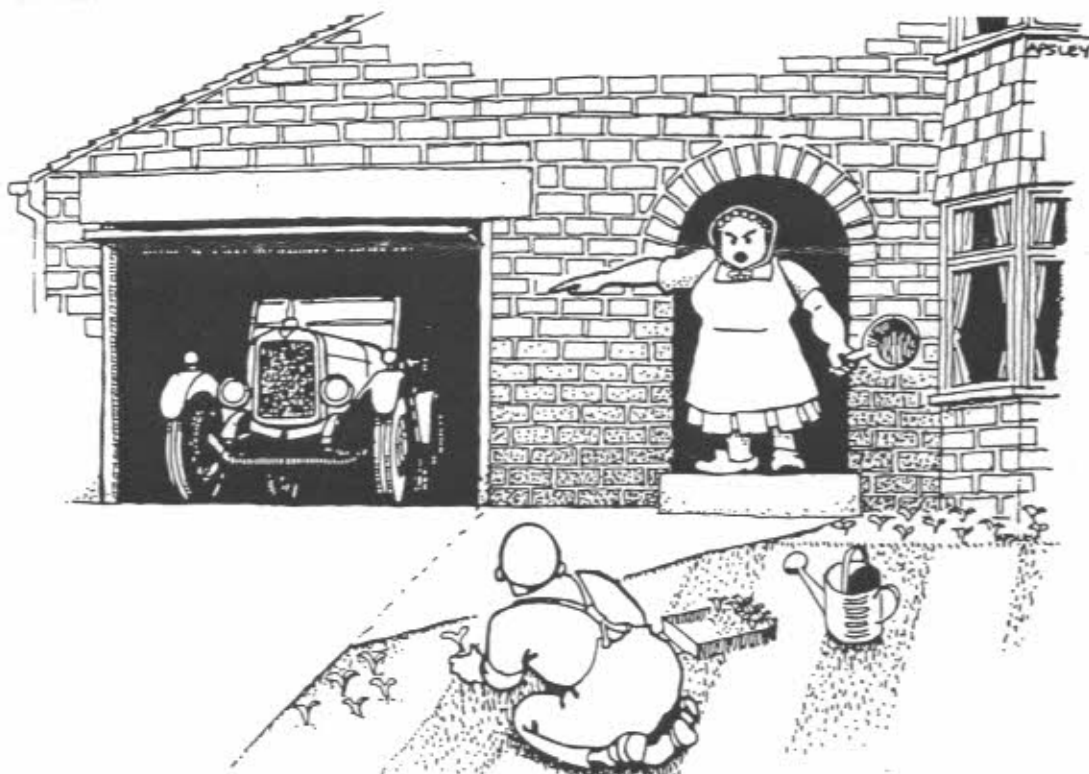
I am returning to Australia in November, to spend a short time in Canberra, mainly to sort out my immigration status. While in the country I will contact Richard Tonkin; thank you for his address.

My Silver Eagle tourer is now nearly ready for registration and inspection. This is an involved process as it has never been registered in UK before. It was originally exported as a chassis on 6/9/28. Next year I will have it sorted out and then I may take it to France for the summer.

Regards.

ALAN GRIFFIN.

from John Mitchell:



"STOP MESSING ABOUT AND GO AND DO SOMETHING USEFUL IN THE GARAGE!"



*L: Geoff Hood's
S/C 12/50 at
Geelong Sprints.
ABOVE: Bob
Graham's Speed
20 waits its turn
behind Mike
Bishop's Alta.
(photos: DP)*



*LEFT: The Hare on Des Donnan's
12/50. Note broad paws
(photo: MC)*



*ABOVE: The "Low wing" Eagle produced by the
Club this year.
(photo: JFH)
LEFT: One of several hares seen at "Camelot
Castle". Quite different from Des Donnan's.
(photo: FM)*





ABOVE: Dale Parsell's Firefly mixes it with the big boys. Keith Raper in his 4½ litre Bentley.
(photo: DP)
ABOVE RIGHT: Vice Prez John Ball seeks guidance from on high.
(photo: FM)



SUMMER CENTRESPREAD

RIGHT: The hard work of choosing Pictures for the calendar was shared by Pauline Prez & guest Adjudicator Bryan Thomson.
BELOW RIGHT: Margaret Ed, Kay Ball, Margaret Lang, Prez and John Lang share the load. (photos: JFH)



ABOVE: Simon Ramsay's delightful Speed 25, recently re-acquired. (photo: DP)
RIGHT: The Sp 25's dashboard. Any comment?
LEFT: The Ed is long thought to have a crack in the head. Here is the proof. Note welded up welsh plugs.
(photos: JFH)

ALVIS AT GEELONG SPRINTS.

No Alvis owner has more doggedly challenged the clock at Geelong than **Bob Graham**. In his "Little White Car" (his terminology, not ours) he chased the 20 second barrier for several years until finally, in 1993 he turned in 19.89. Quite a fuss was made of that achievement in the Nov 93 Newsletter. Now the TB 14 has been retired to the back of the carport and pride of place goes to the "Lean Green Machine". What joy must have twanged the heart strings when its first run down the new sprint track was timed at :

16.27

secs.

Alas, it was an error of the timing mechanism (course, not ignition!) and the subsequent 22.13 and 22.32 were taken as reality. We hope that Bob has recovered from the emotional roller coaster. Well done, Bob.

Geoff Hood: 16.4, 16.47, 16.17. **Maritta Parsell:** 22.26 - but she ran out of brakes and went much further than the quarter mile intended. **Dale Parsell:** 22.12. **Peter Briese:** 17.74, 17.75, 17.95. The record for the old course was 10.4 secs.



At a Bristol Club/Daimler Club meeting recently I met **Robert Penn-Bradley**, who is, among other things, an author and Armstrong Siddely aficionado. He told me that he has been commissioned to write something about Alvises in Australia. Hopefully he will obtain good info and produce something that we will enjoy reading. Watch this space for where and when.

ED.

TWELVE-FIFTY MAGIC.

We'll come back to the heading in a minute but this is really about the **ANNUAL BARBEQUE** which was held in magnificent sunshine on the first Sunday in December, in the garden of **JOHN & MARGARET LANG** tucked beneath Mount Macedon. There were eleven Alvises present, including the two resident FWDs. We have seen the green one on many Club outings recently and the red one looks magnificent. It is nearly running. There were three 12/50s - the Editorial carriage and the **McDougall** and **Ball** machines. **Geoff and Helen Hood** brought **Martin Boothman** who is a visitor from UK, in the Silver Eagle. Martin owns a 4.3 saloon and a 12/50. **Simon and Aileen Ramsay** in Speed 25, **Bob and Beverley Graham** in Speed 20 and the **Prez and Mrs Prez** in Crested Eagle represented the PVTs. The post war cars were represented by **David and Margaret Caldwell's** TA 14 Saloon and **Maureen Adnam and Richard Kellock's** TA 14 Tourer. **Murray and Claire Fitch** attended in Alfa. In tin: **Royboy** brought **Merryl and Valda**, **Eric and Barbara Nichol** because of gear box problems in the proper car and **Ron and Gwen Wilson**. Speeches were kept to a minimum, the sun shone but there was plenty of shade for everyone. The bbq sizzled and the conversation flowed freely. A good day out and a great venue. Our thanks, as a Club, to John and Margaret Lang. May we come again next year? Oh, and the magic bit? Our journey home on a lovely warm evening in the 12/50 which was truly "on song". Two hundred km. In just over two hours including a fuel stop. Near empty roads going up and down and round and up again. If that ain't magic I'll buy me a Toyota!

ED.

HOW BIG IS BIG?

The London "Times" reports that vehicle excise ("rego.") is likely to rise to approx A\$650.00 for cars with large engines. This is to discourage pollution. By "large" is meant engine capacity in excess of 2 litres. Small is beautiful!

Dear John,

Thank you for your friendly note, and I have to admit that it is about time that your ever vigilant treasurer removed my name from your membership list, since I don't believe I ever was a member in the first place.

This is not to infer that I don't like your club or the members. Quite the contrary, I think you are a great club and many of your members past and present have been great friends over the years. Heather & I always look forward to the rare occasions we visit your State or attend interstate rallies and can socialise with the Victorian Alvis blokes (that also means the sheilas these days, I'm told, though some amongst us insist on calling them "Guys" - Ugh!).

Proof of the above affection is the occasion that I drove down from Sydney some years back in my 1923 Ducksback 12/50 just to give an after dinner speech at your annual dinner, then returned to Sydney - AND suffered the company of Alan Griffin both ways! We enjoyed John Twomey's very kind hospitality whilst there, and also Noeline McKinnon's dreadful sense of humour - just as I was about to rise nervously to make my speech, she shattered me with "This had better be good - I gave up a good TV show to come here tonight!". I don't think it WAS very good, but Noeline still sometimes talks to me, so she is also forgiving.

On the way back, we took in the Mt Tarrengower Hill Climb, since it was on our way home. Griffio removed the nice steel valve caps from the Clerk of Course's tyres to replace the NON-U plastic ones on the 12/50, and we were race ready, but we were then advised that we couldn't compete, because we hadn't practiced! I said I'd been practicing all the way down the Hume Highway, and in the best sporting spirit they accepted this.

On this trip we made a wonderful and unexpected discovery. On the way down, an attempt was made to stop at Wangaratta for lunch, but the parking meters put us off. It is all right to have such things in a BIG city, but Wangaratta?! So we drove on to the outskirts of the town where we found a fast food shop. Here we bought pies and sat in the gutter to eat them. As we munched we noticed a Jag parked outside the motel on the opposite side of the road. By the time the pies were consumed, and after considerable argument, we worked out that it was really a Graber Alvis. So we enquired of the Chinese lady at the reception desk, who said it belonged to her husband, indicating a coolie hatted person gardening across the way. Imagine our surprise when he came over and instead of a "Chinese gardener", a fruity RAF accent greeted us.

And that is how we first met Bill Propert and the wonderful Helen at the Malaysian Motel. We stayed there on the way back and Griffio and Bill talked endlessly of the RAF and the war. We always stayed there for Winton meetings thereafter, when for our lunch at the circuit Helen always packed a pile of her famous curry puffs - delicious!

I also had the great pleasure of accompanying Ron Wilson and a full cast of Victorian Alvis followers to New Zealand for the International Rally in 1980. I was certainly outnumbered, but we had a lot of fun.

But to get off the reminiscences and back to the point, I first began receiving ALVIC when Norm Adams & I were editors of Alvibatics. After 10 or so years of that, your club was advised of the new editors, but somehow the magazine still came my way. Then a few years ago Peter Glover expressed interest in receiving the Australian Alvis mags, so I joined him up in both clubs. However, lately he has been very busy with the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs in UK, and asked me to cease his memberships. So I stopped paying for him, and as I was never a member it seemed that I would be dropped off too.

Had I known that this would make me, as you suggest, a "non-person", it might have been a bit of a worry. However, I rationalised that in the early days of the NSW club, when I was always a rather tardy at getting to the start of events, and they started calling me "the late Rob Gunnell", nothing too serious ever happened, so perhaps I'll cope with "non-person" too. I hope so!

So why an ACCV non-member? Its just that I have always believed, perhaps forlornly, that in this great country, with like minded Alvis members and with the wonders of modern science, it should be possible for us all to be in one club with one magazine.

Cheers,

ROB GUNNELL.

(Thanks for your contribution, Rob. But I guess that as a now "non person" you will not read it in print - unless you look over someone's shoulder! This editor wonders who "they" are. In this case they refers to those people who do not wish to pursue closer co-operation between the Victorian and NSW Clubs over the matters of spare parts and publications. Closer co-operation has been mooted for fifteen years to my knowledge yet every time it is raised "they" scuttle the notion so we all carry on in our own little separate colonies imagining that alone we are capable of supporting the Alvis marque. It is very tedious, very wasteful and as out of date a concept as that of "winos", "refos" and "old bangers".

MALAYSIAN MEMORIES - THE CONCLUSION

[The first part of David Caldwell's article on his experiences, motoring and otherwise, while living and working in Malaysia in the early 1970s was published in the Spring number of ALVIC. This is the conclusion, as edited by Richard Tonkin, who apologises to David for any errors, omissions or faulty precisings.]

Soon after arrival in Penang, I had hopes of acquiring a BMW 2800, and let that be known. I arrived home from work one day to see a BMW 1800 parked across the road. My then (and still) wife, Margaret, ran to meet me and whispered in my ear, "If you shut-up and insist on four new tyres, we can have it for (about \$A1,100)." So the deal was done. With this, I joined the RAAF Motor Club. Annually, they conducted a hill climb on a public road in the Vale of Tempe. This was a winding stretch, perhaps a mile long, with armoured embankment on one side and a two-foot high stone wall guarding a drop on the other. So, I entered and found I was competing in class against a tuned Ford Zephyr with lightened bonnet, doors and boot lid. The only preparation I did was to drive down to Wah Dan's garage and change plugs.

On my first run I came around a bend to find local people spread across the road and, of course, I backed off. They leapt off the road onto the wall. I told the Clerk of Course who said, "Don't worry, they'll get out of your way." On the second run, I kept my foot down and, sure enough, the local spectators melted away on my approach. After three runs I was getting to within two seconds of the Zephyr's 50.2 seconds, but my final four runs were all exactly the same time - 52.0, so obviously I had reached my limit and had to settle for second place.

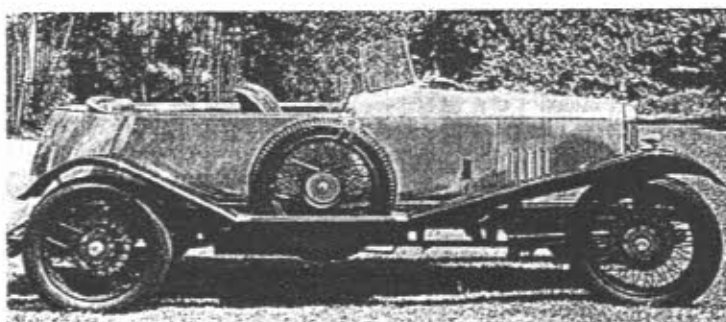
In 1972 I was invited to act as check navigator of the tulips (for the uninitiated, the navigator is given a list of clues, that look like tulips), for the North Malaysia Rally, organised by the RAAF Motor Club. The course dived through rubber plantations, following rubber tappers' bicycle paths, out onto the main road and back into another plantation, with occasional sections of jungle in between. My job was to read the tulips as navigator to a RAAF engineering officer driver, whose name escapes me. The principal organiser, Mike McGuin, remarked that, if I could read the tulips, anybody could. "Thanks for nothing", I replied. So, off we set. Following the tulips was not always easy, as leaf fall in the plantations had obscured the bicycle paths in many cases. At one stage, we came across a Malaysian Army detachment checking for terrorists (they were still about, but on the wane). Later still, we were pulled up in a valley, lying on the grass to eat our lunch, when artillery opened up in the next valley. The Corolla got us out of there in a hurry!

An hour or so after the start, we came across two cars which had collided - one, a Mazda, was driven by the Prince of Negri Sembilan. As we stepped out of the Corolla, the Prince introduced himself and asked, "Will you have tea, gentlemen?" So we sat down to thermos tea on a jungle track with a Malaysian Prince! This over, we jacked up his car, removed a wheel which was in contact with a rear 'guard, fetched the axe from our boot and relieved the wheel arch enough to give clearance and sent His Highness on his way.

The incident with the Prince recalls the time we were on leave on Pangkor Island, about 80 miles south of Butterworth. On a particular day we woke in the hotel to see a frigate anchored in Emerald Bay in front of us. We were informed that the then Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tunjku Abdul Rahman was water-skiing behind the frigate's cutter. Margaret said, "I'm going to make his acquaintance," and she walked off along the beach and did just that. After some minutes' conversation she was invited to ski behind the cutter with the PM which (of course) she did!

DAVID CALDWELL

Thank you, David and Richard. David's memories were, of course, stirred by reminiscences of Malayan life by Henry Stonor, reprinted from the Malaysian and Singapore Vintage Car Register's "The Magazine" The March/April edition of that august journal contains much Alvis material. There is another reminiscence by Henry Stonor - this time about a SB Speed 20 called "The Firework" after it lost its body by fire and acquired a pretty replacement made locally. The issue carries an advertisement from an Adelaide (Australia) dealer who had for sale "a 1928 Alvis 'Le Mans' Sportscar. Supercharged front wheel drive, aluminium body, cycle fenders, wire wheels. This particular car raced and won Brooklands in 1929. Race programme available. Restored and ready to enjoy. Price: A\$65,000." And the front page of the issue is graced by a colour photo. of a very pretty 12/50, photographed in profile by JNBC. The car belongs to Lorraine & Bruce Fell Smith. ED.



THE TA 14

Tom John must have been a wily old bird with an ability to see the future of the specialist motor car. Not only did he take Alvis into Armoured Fighting Vehicles in 1936, he also opened negotiations with Gnome-Rhone to produce aero-engines in the same year.

But also look at motor-car production: In 1927 he introduced the first 6-cylinder Alvis of 1870ccs. Then in 1929 he developed the Silver Eagle of a slightly larger capacity (2148cc). Silver eagles were produced in parallel with a smaller car, the 12/50 and 12/60 (approx 1500cc). Then came the Speed 20 of 2511 cc which went in parallel with the Firefly (1496 cc). And so on. The larger cars always had a smaller car to accompany them. The luxury limousines were a bit of a side issue to this theory but no doubt were a welcome addition to the sales figures.

The year 1936 must have been a year of innovation at Alvis as that was also the year of the introduction of the Silver Crest. This car was substantially designed by George Lanchester brother of the much-respected Dr Fred Lanchester of original- thinking renown.

The Silver Crest chassis was a very simple but effective structure with Alvis IFS at the front and a bought-in hypoid differential at the rear, while in the middle was the magnificent Alvis 4-speed all-synchro gear box. But the engine was a new design! Gone was the separate aluminium crankcase, now the block and crankcase were all one piece in cast-iron. The triplex timing chain was located at the front together with a vibration damper and the crankshaft was massive with journal diameters of 65 mm mains and 53 mm big ends. The head design was original Alvis but the rest of the engine was state-of-the-art modern best practice. To go with this large car was a smaller car, the 12/70, the engine of which was basically a four cylinder Silver Crest.

And from the 12/70 was developed the TA 14.

Just consider for a moment the condition of England at the end of the war. The country was impoverished with all assets sold to pay for war materials: Everything was rationed, all materials were in short supply and the people were very tired after 6 years of war.

So what was Alvis to do for a new car in 1945/46? Could Alvis afford to retool and build a luxury sports car such as the Speed 25? Was there a market which could afford to pay for such a product? I believe that Alvis took the only option available and up-graded the 12/70 into the TA 14. Wider track, longer wheelbase, slightly larger engine capacity and more spacious coachwork were the results of that up-grade. The car was still suspended on cart springs while the steering ratio was lowered to four turns lock-to-lock. But it was a modern post-war car to drive and gone was the "vintage" feel of the pre-war cars. And that motor was unburstable - I have never heard of a broken crankshaft! The gear box was all Alvis and I have never heard of a failure in a TA 14. The back axle was bought-in from ENV and I have never heard of a failure in a TA 14.

Gone are the days when I have any joy in a "Rally Restoration" on the side of the road. One of the things I treasure most in a car is reliability; and that is what the TA 14 provides in abundance.

A simple basic robust design is the major attribute of the 12/50 and those parameters are still there in the TA 14 together with outstanding reliability. Maybe the basic design of the TA 14 was laid down in 1935/36 as the 12/70 but it is a totally different car to drive compared with the pre-war 4-cyl and 6-cylinder cars. And I am firmly of the opinion that it is a very worthy car to wear the badge of the Red Triangle.

BOB GRAHAM.

WHO'S BUNNY?

For many years the writer has been asking the question "Every one knows that the Rolls Royce "Silver Lady" was the work of Charles Sykes RA, but who was responsible for the Alvis bunny?" At last all can now be revealed.

The hare was actually the work of Emile Lejeune, a Frenchman who came to London with his wife Augustine in 1904 and set up in business repairing bronze ornaments and clock cases. In 1917 a sculptor friend sold them a small statuette of a naked woman with arms outstretched. Augustine immediately registered the figure as a car mascot. This was a great success and further mascots followed. The Lejeunes very wisely sold these through the contemporary "speed shops" such as Dunhills (Now famous for their pipes but then with the slogan "Everything but the motor") and Shaw and Kilburn. Later in the 1920s they had even expanded their proprietary mascot business to include Harrods and the quality of their sculpting was such that their work was to be found in Aspreys.

The firm engaged a number of French sculptors such as Frederick Bazin (who was responsible for the Hispano stalk and Charles Paillet who was a specialist in animals -and thus one suspects, the Alvis hare and later the eagles.)

The prosperity of the firm was such that by the end of the 20s they employed a staff of thirty men at their Kensall Rise foundry plus another twenty in their Great Portland Street Offices.

The Lejeunes separated in 1929 and Emile returned to France but Augustine carried on the business with great success. Their son Louis was born in 1908 and he participated in the running of the firm. However he died in 1969. By that time the organisation was rather moribund but when it was sold in 1978 it was still using some of the original moulds.

BILL BARBER.

HOW TO PROLONG BATTERY LIFE.

Modern batteries are not the same as those manufactured decades ago, when our cars came off the assembly lines.

The older battery was more robust with its hard rubber case, antimony-lead plates and rugged construction. It held its charge and with proper maintenance a service life of 4-5 years was the norm..

The modern plastic battery is a workhorse. Its one failing is that it doesn't like being left idle (everyday use is ideal). Unused over a period of two weeks or so it will go flat and if left in this condition rarely comes back to a fully charged state.

The battery charger inbuilt regulator only responds to the rising voltage of the battery and effectively limits the charging current as the battery approaches full charge. Should the charge continue and the current is not reduced because the battery is only half charged, plate damage can result. The modern battery with thinner and more numerous plates and generally lighter construction will not meet the current demands in a half charged state.

But not any more. By chance, I cam across two new developments to solve this problem. When looking in an auto accessories store for new ideas, I found:

- a new float and charge automatic battery charger in lieu of the current charge and boost model
- a lead-sulphate dissolving agent which aids the chemical process of the lead-acid battery.

There are two grades of lead-acid battery:

- low-maintenance - warranty 12 months
- no-maintenance - warranty 24 months

The no-maintenance types are a higher grade battery and are worth the extra outlay.

Use only distilled water to maintain the correct level of electrolyte above the plates (do not overfill especially if discharged). Check the SG regularly. Use an automatic "float and charge" charger. Add 15 ml INOX battery reconditioner per cell (preferably from new), and refer to the various instructions, descriptions and useful information concerning lead-acid batteries and your battery will serve you well.

(by Laurie Mackay - reprinted, with thanks, from the Rover Club's "Freewheeling", April '98. Has anyone else any experience of these two seemingly very useful products? ED.)



IGNITION Accumulators.
Best British Manufacture.

6 volts 12 amps	11.9
6 " 20 "	13.0
6 " 30 "	14.1
6 " 40 "	15.2
6 " 50 "	16.3
6 " 60 "	17.4
6 " 70 "	18.5
6 " 80 "	19.6
6 " 90 "	20.7
6 " 100 "	21.8

Price for delivery, including application, postage extra.



FOR THOSE OF YOU INTO DO-IT-YOURSELF BATTERIES, THE FOLLOWING WILL BE USEFUL:

Table for Preparing Electrolyte of Any Specific Gravity¹

The following table gives the proportions of pure water that are to be mixed with the sulphuric acid (1.835 sp. gr. 0.319% H₂SO₄) to obtain electrolyte of any desired specific gravity.

The first column gives the specific gravity of electrolyte.

The second column gives the proportion by volume.

The third column gives the proportion by weight.

Either the second or third column may be used, depending on whether it is intended to measure by pints or by weighing in pounds.

Specific Gravity of Electrolyte at 70° F.	(By Volume) Pints of Water for Each Pint of Acid	(By Weight) Pounds of Water for each Pound of Acid
1.100	9.70	5.35
1.110	8.70	4.80
1.120	7.93	4.30
1.130	7.25	3.80
1.140	6.63	3.35
1.150	6.09	2.95
1.160	5.67	2.60
1.170	5.25	2.30
1.180	4.90	2.00
1.190	4.60	1.75
1.200	4.30	1.50
1.210	4.03	1.25
1.220	3.80	1.00
1.230	3.60	0.80
1.240	3.40	0.60
1.250	3.21	0.45
1.260	3.04	0.30
1.270	2.90	0.15
1.280	2.76	0.00
1.290	2.60	0.15
1.300	2.50	0.33
1.320	2.25	0.75
1.340	2.03	1.10
1.360	1.88	1.40
1.380	1.70	1.65
1.400	1.55	1.85
1.420	1.40	2.00
1.440	1.30	2.10
1.460	1.20	2.20
1.480	1.10	2.30
1.500	1.00	2.40

Proportions of Water and Acid to Mix

For the proper proportions in which to mix full-strength concentrated acid and pure distilled water, in order to make a mixture of 1.400 specific gravity (or any other gravity) electrolyte, reference should be made to the table. It shows the proportion by weight and also by volume.

CARS & PARTS FOR SALE AND WANTED

THE CLUB CARRIES A SELECTION OF SPARE PARTS WHICH ARE AVAILABLE TO FINANCIAL MEMBERS OF THE CLUB AND TO MEMBERS OF THE ALVIS CAR CLUB OF NEW SOUTH WALES. ONLY REPRODUCTION PARTS CAN BE SUPPLIED TO NON MEMBERS AND A SURCHARGE WILL BE APPLIED. MEMBERS CONTEMPLATING THE MANUFACTURE OF SPARES ARE ASKED TO CONTACT THE CLUB TO SEE IF OTHERS NEED SUCH A PART OR IF IT IS FEASIBLE TO ORDER SOME FOR CLUB SPARES.

Enquire about spares to the appropriate SPAREPERSON listed on p. 3.

CLUB

Handbooks, technical data etc. See full listing published in September "ALVIC".
SPECIAL THIS MONTH: 12/50 TE OWNERS' HANDBOOK \$20.00
Details from ROYBOY Tel. 03 9704 7549

Spares Catalogue. Stocktaking of Three Litre Spares is complete.

TA 14 STEERING BOX. The bearings for this box consist of a CUP (race) and a CAGE with ball bearings at each end of the steering worm. These bearings are no longer available from bearing suppliers in Australia. Fortunately the Club has managed to obtain four sets - enough for two steering boxes and these are now in stock

1 Cup (race)	C 2576	Must be sold as a set
1 Cage with balls	C 2575	@ \$90.00 each

TD 21 Radiator Grille and surround. Pristine.

TA 14 Headlamp Glass. Worth \$50.00. Kindly Donated by Barry Gough.

The Office of Fair Trading requires that advertisements for cars for sale must include the cash price of the car and its Registration number (or Engine Number if unregistered.)

PRIVATEERS

FOR SALE

Alvis 12/50 special build by the Late Geof Hopkins. It is beautifully finished, and needs the pistons produced and engine assembly. Otherwise, it is build to the standard that we came to expect from Geof, with great attention to detail. Equipped with a FWD roots type blower, short chassis and quarter elliptic springs at the rear, KO wire wheels, new everything! Inquiries to Graeme Steinfort, as Executor of Geof's Estate - telephone 03 9459 5566. This is a preliminary announcement, and there is already some indication of interest, but the directions to the Executor are that it is to be advertised Australia wide.

FOR SALE

Front bumper bar from circa 1949 Humber Hawk. Suit early Alvis 3 litre. \$100. Frank Smith Tel (Adelaide) 08 8264 3488

NEW MEMBER

John Link. Williamstown.
TA 21 1951. Rebodyed to a four seater Sports Tourer with aluminium body. Five speed gearbox fitted giving it overdrive. The standard top gear only gave 74 mph before the power curve dropped off. Engine No. TAZ124097. Reg No. DIZ159.

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

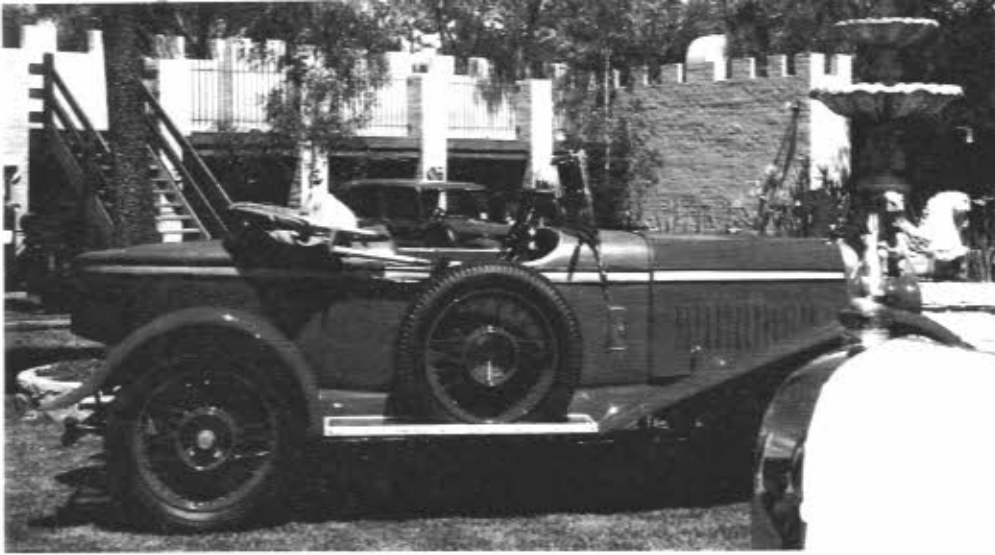
COPY DEADLINE

WEDNESDAY

27th JANUARY 1999

NOTE: The Newsletter will not
be published in January.

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*Rob Sands' 12/50
(photo: FM)*



*Bob Graham receives the Andy
Hannam Trophy
(photo: JFH)*



*TA 14s. David Caldwell's saloon and
John White's DHC.*



*Il Padrone (aka Rex Roberts) with minder Andrew McDougall comes
down from on high to mingle with the crowd. (photo: JFH)*



**ANNUAL LUNCH & PRESENTATION OF
TROPHIES. 1st NOVEMBER AT
CAMELOT CASTLE.**

*ABOVE: David Caldwell receives his
Award of Merit. and
RIGHT: Dale Parsell the Simon Ramsay
Trophy.
FAR RIGHT: Pauline Tonkin, accompanied
by Ian Parkinson, fiddles for us.
(photos: JFH)*



PHOTOS IN THIS ISSUE:
FM: Frances McDougall.
DP: Dale Parsell.
JFH: Editor.