



MARCH 2001

Faces in

the crowd

Volume 40

Issue No 2



COMING EVENTS

Friday 16th March — Monthly Meeting at 7.00pm

Sunday 18th March — Pub Run — Romsey Royal Tennis Court
(Cope Williams Winery via Alvis Close, Keilor Downs.

25th March 46th Annual Kalorama Rally

1 April RACV Great Wheels & Wings day. All British Classic
Car Club. Lilydale Airfield.

8th April AOMC British & European Motoring Show.
Members Carpark Flemington Racecourse.

~~20-22~~ April — WEEKEND AWAY See Flyer for Full Details
Incorporates monthly meeting.

21-25th April Shannons 2001 National Motoring Tour to Canberra.

30th-3rd May Return from Canberra

Friday 18th May — Monthly Meeting

Saturday 19th May — Garage Crawl & BBQ.

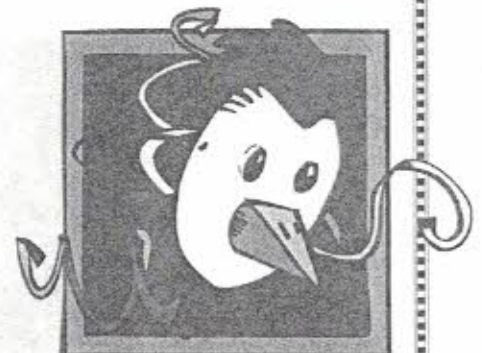
20th May CHACA all makes Swap Meet Sandown Racecourse



NAGAMBIE WEEKEND AWAY

20-22 April

Contact Balls (03)58262518
or Hetheringtons (03)58216422
filling fast!



T O R Q U E

Greetings. Well, summer has gone, at least officially, and daylight saving finishes at the end of this month. So, the March Meeting will be the last opportunity to bring your Alvis, or other fine machine, to "Alvista" in the daylight for a while. Which leads me into this month's Monthly Meeting. Inspired by Club Captain, **John Link**, we are starting the meeting on Friday, 16th, at 7pm, rather than the usual 8pm, to allow time for our special guest speaker, **Chester McKaige**, to talk about his 3 litre Bentley (which will be there as Car of the Month), and about oils (which, of course, ain't oils), from his former position of marketing guru at Penrite Oils. I understand that Chester recently left that job and he may even be persuaded to give us a glimpse into his new occupation which, I hear, is quite unusual.

Anyway, for those of you who wish to partake of Chester's words of wisdom, please be there by about 7pm. The "normal" (yes, I will be in the chair), meeting will start at about 8.15, there will be supper after that, and the usual bonhomie and camaraderie.

Don't forget the day run to Alvis Close, in Keilor Downs, the Cope Williams Winery, with a dash of royal tennis, and to **David and Lynne Vaughan's** home at Romsey for a BBQ lunch on **Sunday, 18th March**. There are full details elsewhere in this Newsletter. **John and Annie Link** have planned a great day for us, so please come along.

Although the First Lady and I could not attend, I understand that the Alvis/Bristol/Daimler-Lanchester Day at **David and Moira Wischer's** at Balnarring on Sunday, 25th February, was a great success, made all the more so by our retaining the Bocce Challenge Trophy. Well done Team Alvis, and a special thanks to **Eric Nichol**, who helped us snatch victory from the jaws, etc, and brought the trophy home. Thank you to David and Moira for, once again, your generous hospitality.

Also don't forget **Kalorama on Sunday, 25th March**.

See you at the March Meeting.

Richard Tonkin
President.

Down Through the Years!

Down through the years Alvis technology has been variously at the fore front of the automobile, military vehicle and aviation industries.

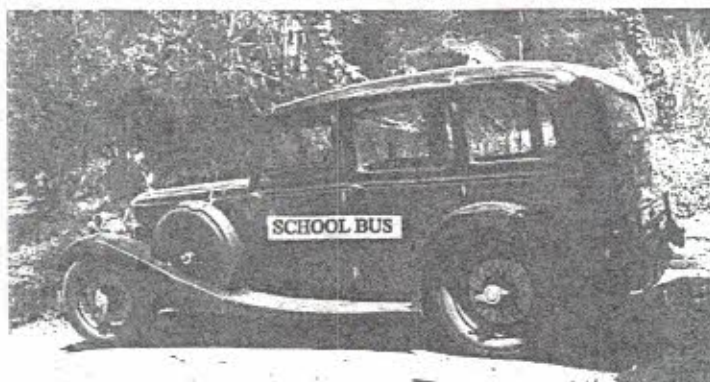
The automobile industry saw the first production front wheel drive sports car in 1928, the synchromesh gearbox and the fully independent front suspension.

The aviation industry saw the Leonides engine power the Bristol Bulldog fighter, the Scottish Aviation Pioneer, Westland Dragonfly helicopter, the Hovercraft and other fine aircraft.

The military vehicle industry saw the Stalwart amphibious load carrier, the Scorpion 90 and Scimitar light tanks and numerous others.

Down through the years these vehicles have been used for their intended purposes and many others not envisaged by the designers.

This rare, and previously unpublished period photograph, was made exclusively available to ALVIC and shows a mid 1930s Alvis Charabanc conscripted for the important task of transporting children to and from school, probably during the war years.



Alvis Car Club of Victoria

Club Rooms:

Rear of ALVISTA
21 Edgar St GLEN IRIS
(Melways P59 F8)

Meetings:

3rd Friday of each Month
(except December/January) at 8 pm.

PRESIDENT:

Richard Tonkin
(03) 9710 1465
rtonkin@eisa.net.au

VICE PRESIDENT:

John Hetherington
(03) 5821 6422
jfh@mcmmedia.com.au

SECRETARY:

Dale Parsell
(03) 5968 5170
dparsell@ozemail.com.au

TREASURER & PUBLIC OFFICER:

Ian Parkinson
(03) 5964 8307
camcast@cyberspace.net.au

NEWSLETTER EDITOR:

John Lang
(03) 5426 2256
jdmelang@netcon.net.au

CLUB CAPTAIN'S CORNER

We hope to have Chester McKaige's Bentley on display at the club rooms at 7.00 pm Friday 16th March and hear about the car and its history.

I will try to get the new RACV Car Club liaison officer to talk to us and in the balance of time, before the meeting begins, to get members to tell us what they are doing with their cars.

This month I have been talking to Red Triangle via fax and trying to get brake parts and king pin bits for my TD, the most important parts "suspension pin and sleeve" is in production. Cost is 85.20 pounds, about \$243.00 and carriage and packing \$43.00/ The disc brake seal kits for the front are \$100.00 per pair.

Interesting cars for sale at Shannons Grand Prix Auction. There is a red Speed 20 Drophead with wire wheels and white upholstery, which looks very nice, could have been the one in the Brooks-Goodman sale 2 years ago - lets hope we can attract another new member.

The Locomobile is up for sale again. Shannons bought it last time, supposedly for \$180,000.00. It is a stunning motor with all its brass work. When I was racing against it in the 1998 Targa Tasmania it had lots of problems with the wheels cracking and no sparks, so I was never able to try it out. The driver said that in any event the two wheel brakes were inadequate for the Targa.

I had worked this out some time ago and converted my 15 litre American LaFrance to 4 wheel brakes and have managed to bring its three tons to a halt satisfactorily. Annie is unimpressed both with my driving and the brakes.

Annie and I drove the Alvis Close to Romsey secret route last Sunday and prepared some questions including some general knowledge ones. I have also indicated where on the route the answers can be found as personally I find it irritating to be looking for answers, miles after the spot is passed.

You can do your homework on two questions.

1. What is the origin of the phrase "Hell for Leather"?????
2. What is the most common grass in the world. Found on every continent and in a creek you will pass on the way?????

At the committee meeting we were shown John Hetherington's lovely Bristol and had it explained to us. I continually get surprised how modest our members are as well as their hidden depths.

The Balls' are another example and I found a kindred spirit in John, who also enjoys car books, brass work, oil cans, old machinery and of course has the delightful TA21 drophead. Annie and I had the pleasure of overnighing at the Balls and really appreciated their mud brick house and the extensive number of trees they have planted. It was the inspiration of what is in front of us on our 5 acre paddock at Romsey. We have just put the drive in and are saving up for the electricity which is next door.

I spent two afternoons in Singapore with the AOC newsletter editor Julian Collins in who's company I can spend hours listening & learning about the latest books he has read. Alexander Graham Bell (who was an Englishman) was his latest find. We are currently sharing a 1989 book "A Technical History of the Motor Car" by Newcomb and Spurr. I'm finding it fascinating.

John Link

WE WOULD LIKE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS!

The secretary would like a list of email addresses. It is for ease of communication and is not for publication.

Please contact Dale.

dparsell@ozemail.com.au

HOT GOSSIP!!

Marcia Barber has been unwell. Best wishes for a speedy recovery

Word has it that Paul Bamford's FWD is at Richard Stanley's Lancefield establishment having a replica TT body fitted. We look forward to seeing the car on the road soon.

Enjoyed Chester & Sally McKaige's company at the Grand Prix.

Also to catch up with Rod Amoss and Frank Murnane at the GP.

Not Gossip! But fact—7.00pm start for March meeting.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear John,

Maritta and I attended the recent Historic Racing register Phillip Island meeting and had an excellent weekend. Unfortunately it clashed with the Bocce match, however a number of Alvisi were seen either competing or spectating (next year we also hope to regularly, however we have not decided which of us will drive).

The racing class for our cars saw the J/K & L groups combined to form a large grid with quite a large variety of cars. In spite of the speed difference some excellent racing occurred within several small groups. Geoff Hood (12/50) was showing Trevor Eastwood (over from WA with the ex Andre Chaleyer Speed 25 special) a clean pair of heels for a while until Trevor became used to the track and the hugely superior power of the Speed 25 allowed Trevor to pull away. Geoff was still managing to keep him in sight most of the time and Trevor was most impressed by the 12/50s performance. We hope to see Trevor in the future and he may even make the National Rally.

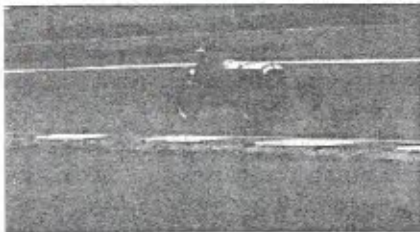
In the Pre War Regularity, both Steve Denner (12/50) and Mark Burns (12/50) were having a great time and plan to return next year. Both cars performed extremely well and although I do not know the results at this time, I don't think it mattered to either of them as they had so much fun.

Amongst the spectators we found Frank Murnane (there with David Rodd) hunting for Speed 25 bits (Trevor was guarding his closely). Austin Tope and Rob Sands were also seen enjoying themselves.

Amongst the other types of car present on the day a spectacular display of Ferraris included 3 F1 cars and was made possible by the Ferrari owners and The Prancing Horse. Amongst the racing, probably the most spectacular would have to be the over 3 litre Group N cars (Mustangs, Torana XU1 etc). Despite these cars now approaching 30 years old the enthusiasm they bring to the race track is just the same as when the cars were new.

Phillip Island is an excellent circuit for both the competitors and the spectators and this meeting is well worth attending.

Dale Parsell



Left: Geoff Hood in the super-charged 12/50

Below: Mark Burns following a 30/98 ahead of John Felder, Oakland



Dear John,

I have long thought of the meritorious idea if our club had a record or a potted history of Alvis people who are no longer with us. If such a project were undertaken it should be commenced quickly and carried out expeditiously as those with the memories of the past are also, unfortunately getting a bit long in the tooth. Two people who helped the Club very much in the early days were F.C. Brown of the Alvis Service Department and also David Michie, who was Alvis Service Manager and later co proprietor of Red Triangle Services.

I will start the ball rolling with Charles Percy Joseland. I met Charles only a couple of times and thus my knowledge of him is not great. He was in the British Army Expeditionary force which went to Russia in 1919 and fought alongside the White Russians against the Bolshviks. Charles said he was very pleased when he arrived home in England.

In 1921 he took up the position of first service manager with Alvis, a position he held for about 3 years. He always spoke highly of Captain Smith-Clarke and held his engineering ability in very high regard.

The Junior Car Club held its annual 200 mile race at Brooklands for cars up to 1500cc in 1921, Maurice Harvey being the top driver for Alvis in a specially modified 10/30. Charles was the second driver in a similar car but had dreadful trouble with the floorboards and also with leg cramps and only managed to finish 20th at an average of about 56 mph. Mind you, Harvey only finish 17th. Of special note, Charles obviously had a soft spot for Alvis as that is the name of his daughter.

He eventually migrated to Australia and when I knew him he was service manager at Worrels Motors of Toorak, the Mercedes Benz dealer. Charles is no longer with us and passed away some years ago.

Robert Graham

ACCV COMMITTEE PERSONS

The responsibilities of being an Alvis Car Club of Victoria committee person are soul destroying when one looks at the long hard hours of work, the need for after hours meetings in hot steamy wet conditions, in cramped amenities without food or sustenance. Having given you the background to the last committee meeting, it is only right that in presenting the minutes you will see the hardship the position demands. The photographs herein will attest to this statement!



Committee persons braving the elements under the Shepparton Federation Arch. (Ed note: the Arch failed its test in keeping the occupants dry. The two indigenous conscriptees in the foreground were on hand for lifeguard duties)



Three inches of rain fell during the course of the meeting. Here is the treasurer treading water while trying to indicate the state of the finances, or was he ordering 5 beers????????????



The President, in standard family court attire welcomes the committee.

COMMITTEE MEETING: 4/1/01 Held at the home of John & Margaret Hetherington, Shepparton.

Present, Parsells, Links, Balls, Tonkins, Eric Nichol, John White, Hetheringtons, Langs & (John & Kay Balls TA21).

Apologies McDougalls (Andrew's father is ill).

Tonkins will do supper in February at the MMM

Feb 25 Bocce Challenge at the Wischers.

Suggested we start an occasional meeting at 7pm and have a guest speaker on a technical subject. Approved, this will take place at the March meeting, possibly with Chester McKaige from Penrite.

March 18 Cope Williams Winery visit and day run. David Vaughan to be contacted as a possible helper. Royal tennis will be available.

20th April weekend away. Nagambie. NSW people very interested. Need 50 people to keep price down (later revised to 30).

JFH to contact Eric Cunningham about an add in Alvibatics.

May 19 Eric Nichol and John White to organise Garage Crawl.

Pt Lonsdale Weekend Nov. 17-18

Pub Run Trentham Daylesford area 22/6

Annual Lunch, a new venue is required, Parky to look into this.

Auditing has been completed and will be certified next month.

Calendar Sales. Around 17 left out of 70. Possibly we need to look at someone looking after distribution in the other states. Also contact Charles Mackonochie and Julian Stirling re sales to the UK.

Queensland Rally. Are we going to travel together.

Suggest printing a list of attendees and then they can get together.

John Link. The Automobile Quarterly printed the history of Alvis a few years ago. Suggest we contact them & request permission to print the article as a service to members.

Reported in Alvibatics. Carl Whittaker recently passed away.

PVT Spares, Eric Nichol will take over, RT to confirm with Austin Tope that he has stood down.

Mailing of Alvic. Can we post it flat. Yes and if subs have to be raised next year to cover the cost, so be it.

Meeting closed at 16:30 (when we had a magnificent storm before most retired to the pool).

Thanks Hetheringtons—Great Afternoon!





ALVIS HONOUR



above: a game for young & old alike
below: Eric Nicoll accepts the trophy from David Wischer

Members of the Alvis Car Club successfully defended the Boule - Bocce Trophy. The garden of David and I have a BBQ, along with the members of the Bristol Club.

After lunch, we assembled on the side paddock to watch the careful placement of the cochonnet (jack) to avoid the ball. It was the Bristol Club we had to beat. It all got very high, spectators were holding their breath but Eric Nicoll won the boule and snatched victory from the jaws of defeat before - he was *the* Alvis secret weapon.

The scores at the end were - Daimler/Lanchester Bristol Club and the WINNERS ALVIS CAR CLUB

The Alvis members: Bob & Bev Graham in the G... David & Margaret Caldwell in... Bob & Lesley Northey in the... Andrew & Frances McDougall... Eric & Barbara Nichol, John...

It was a great day and many thanks go to David & I will be back next year to defend the Trophy!!

Frances McDougall



left & right: the two Margarets show their style



above: Bev Graham & David Caldwell discuss the finer points of the game

right: the post mortem is conducted



JFH



Eric



TH

R DEFENDED!



and won for a second year the Petanque - La
a Wischer at Balnarring was a delightful spot to
e Daimler /Lanchester Car Clubs.

ay for the Trophy. Ground conditions required
e cracks. After a number of games it was clear
e down to 5th and final game. The tension was
ichol had nerves of steel as he threw his last
Eric is a complete novice never having played

- 1 game and 11 points
- 2 games and 23 points
- 2 games and 27 points

n Machine
e TA14

/50

n the Citroen Light 15

margaret Hethington and Bill Barber - Modern.

ira for providing the venue and the Boules. We

Photos by John Hethington & Frances McDougall



above: the hardware. The Northey's ducksback,
the Graham's Mean Green Machine & the Caldwell's
TA14



above: Bob Northey shows his style
left: Lesley Northey looks on
below: Andrew McDougall's practiced
engineering eye at work with the meas-
uring tape



winning
ss



shot



Bill Barber stands
within the battery ca-
ble throwing circle



A Gallic interloper at an all British function.
The McDougalls 1948 Light 15 Citroen

ALVIS. PIONEER OF PULL!

... by J. RUSSELL HART and "WHEELS" EDITORIAL STAFF

Mention of front wheel drive immediately brings to mind the great name of Citroen, as well as other lesser-known cars such as Dyna-Panhard, Goliath and Lloyd. But how many know that the first serious attempt at marketing a front-drive car came from an English manufacturer — staid Alvis, no less!

AS one of the great front-drive supporters once told us, you can push a thing in a straight line, and you can push it very well—but when you come to pushing it around corners, "m'sieu, you push him sideways!" Whereas, as he went on to point out, if you pull that same article instead of pushing it, it doesn't really matter very much which way you navigate, the thing follows along very nicely all the while.

And that, broadly speaking, is the premise on which the theory of front wheel drive is mostly based.

There had been, through the years, a few abortive attempts at manufacturing front-drive, and even four wheel drive, cars before Alvis came up with their solution, it is true; but all had wrecked themselves on the rock of extreme unorthodoxy or else had foundered in the depths of extreme mechanical complication.

And then one day the Alvis car company came up with a front wheel drive that not only was a whizz—it

was also practical. Moreover, it had the merit of being simple and reliable; dual virtues which the company proceeded to prove by running the bristles off some of the world's hottest opposition on international race tracks.

Unfortunately, advertising and sales promotion, in 1928, lagged far behind the propaganda level which it has attained today, and—probably because the Alvis folk were unable to tell the buying public loudly enough and convincingly enough that f.w.d. was the safest and most practical drive on the road—their one and only attempt at marketing an unorthodox-type car brought them quickly to the verge of financial ruin; so that they eventually pulled their necks in again and went about offering the always-fickle public a conservative car which would not be regarded askance.

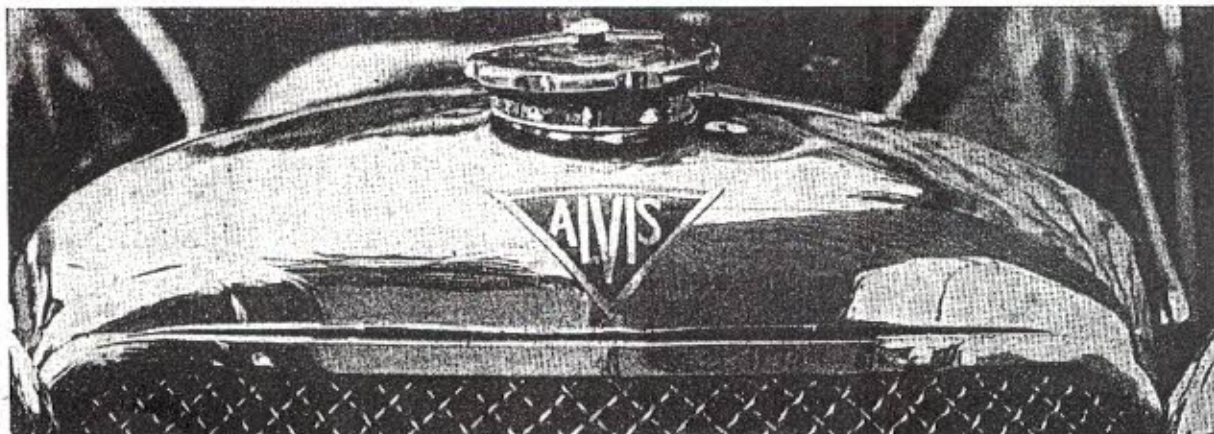
How those Alvis engineers must have flogged the factory jeline when, a few brief years later, Andre Citroen

not only made a front-drive car but also shoved it down the public's unwilling neck so forcefully that even today, nearly twenty-five years later, his company still makes no other kind of car!

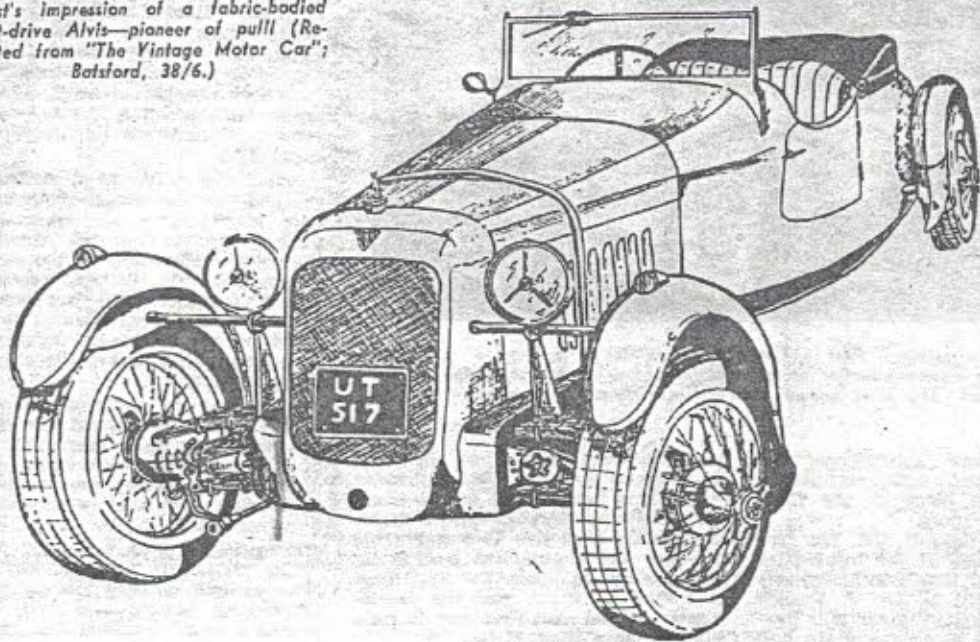
Sporting Natural . . .

Alvis, a smallish company, had always made very good cars of a distinctly sporting nature, ever since its original emergence in 1910 as the brainchild of T. G. John, once Siddeley-Deasy's chief engineer. First there was the Ten-Thirty, which had a long stroke sidevalve engine giving 30 b.h.p. and a top speed of 60 m.p.h. The 10/30 remained in production until 1923, and the 250 cars made during that time gained an enviable reputation.

In 1922 the bore of the 10/30 was enlarged to 68 mm., and the car became the 11/40 sports model—which in turn became the 12/40 later in the same year. Pushrod valves and a detachable head were added in 1923,



Artist's impression of a fabric-bodied front-drive Alvis—pioneer of pull (Reprinted from "The Vintage Motor Car"; Batsford, 38/6.)



= 200 B.H.P. PER TON. 9 1/2 CWT PER 100 B.H.P. 1 1/2 LITRES.
 60 B.H.P. " Holden 20 TON CWT PER 60 B.H.P. 2.2 LITRES

and thus perhaps the most famous Alvis ever, the 12/50, was born.

For a 1 1/2 litre car the 12/50 was outstanding by any yardstick, and it continued in production in several different sporting and touring forms right up until 1932.

Front Wheel Drive . . .

In 1925, however, the firm—always experimentally minded—brought out the car which forms the subject of this story. This was a front wheel drive, four cylinder, overhead camshaft car which was supercharged to give nearly 100 b.h.p. Its weight, a mere 9 1/2 cwt., contributed to a power/weight ratio that, for its day, was phenomenal; and, as can be imagined, the car's performance was shattering.

On its very first appearance this unorthodox little Alvis swept up Shelsley Walsh hill in 54.2 seconds, gaining a class win. Several other similar successes followed, and then came the 1928 Le Mans, in which two of the cars, driven by Harvey and Purdy and S. C. H. Davis and Dykes, were entered in the 1,500 c.c. class. Both ran most reliably, and finished winning first and second places in their class, in addition to being sixth and ninth, respectively, in the general classification. When one recalls that the opposition on this occasion included such redoubtable racing giants as Stutz, Chrysler, Bugatti, and Bentley, the performance of the little 1,500 c.c. Alvises is shown as being little short of staggering.

That very same season a team of

three cars was entered for the Ulster Tourist Trophy; and these were driven by Harvey, Purdy, and Leon Cushman. It was a teeming wet day, and throughout the race fortunes were constantly changing. Right from the start the little Alvises did very well, and were nicely placed for what looked like being an almost certain win. One, however, later holed a piston; while the second, negotiating a turn in a downpour, ran clean out of the road and was so badly damaged that it was withdrawn.

This left the honour of upholding the Red Triangle in the able hands of Cushman, who, so as to leave little doubt about it, immediately punched hard on the throttle and bolted out into the lead. The f.w.d. Alvis, however, was notoriously a tricky car to handle—possibly due to its long wheelbase and unduly low centre of gravity—and Cushman, pounding hard into one difficult corner, lost his car completely, spun out, and stalled his engine.

It was some time before he managed to get restarted, during which time Kaye Don, driving his blown Lea Francis like the very devil, had built up a lead of 40 seconds. There then ensued a terrific duel!

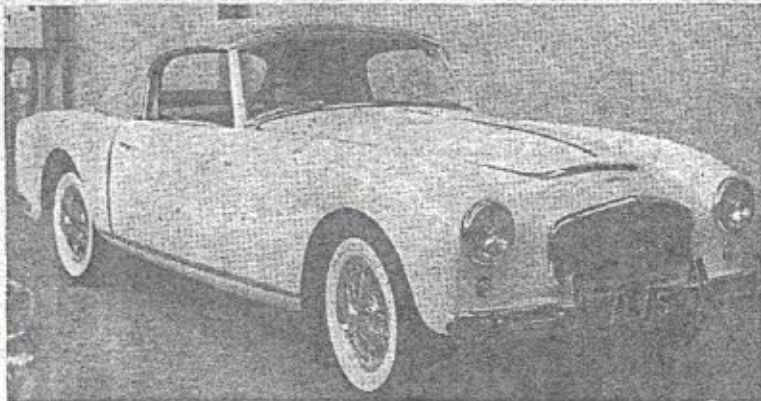
Cushman, driving like a man possessed, slowly but surely chopped Don's lead down to minute proportions, and over the concluding laps practically nothing separated the two screaming cars. The crowd, on its toes, surged forward until they were actually swarming all over the pits and even standing, tense, on the very counters! The effort was just too

much, however, and Don received the checkered flag—the Alvis finishing a close second at 64.6 m.p.h.

Eight Cylinders . . .

Meanwhile, in 1926, yet another revolutionary f.w.d. car had made its appearance. This, also a 1 1/2 litre car, featured a straight-eight, horizontal valve engine, and was reputed to develop 125 b.h.p. This Alvis was designed to comply with the then 1 1/2 litre Grand Prix formula, and it was undoubtedly very fast; but it posed many mechanical problems and does not appear to have ever been very successful. Like the four cylinder f.w.d. Alvis it had inboard brakes, and was supercharged by means of a Rootes-type Cozette blower delivering through a large Solex carburettor. There was much talk of pitting this car against the successful four cylinder model in a special match race, and this was actually attempted; however, the straight-eight was perpetually beset with mechanical derangements and it never managed to get away from the starting line.

Many other successes fell to the lot of the four cylinder car before, finally, it was reluctantly withdrawn from production. The company had, in fact, been imbued with so much confidence in the f.w.d. design that they had concentrated on it to the neglect of their other, well tried, models; and when eventually it was abandoned as a last resort to save the company from ruin, and such highly attractive Alvises as the "Speed Twenty" and "Speed Twenty-



Today, Alvis have retained their well-earned reputation as builders of splendidly engineered, sedate limited-production sedans—but the occasional Alvis sportster can also be seen. This sleek beauty with Italian bodywork is example.

five" made their appearance, the name of Alvis never again reappeared in its erstwhile place in the forefront of motor sport.

Fortunately, one of the few remaining examples of the front-drive four cylinder car is now in Melbourne in the possession of Mr. J. Russell Hart, and the following columns present Mr. Hart's own description and impressions of this most unusual car. We regard with interest his comments on the car's handling, especially since this particular model had a distinct reputation in its day for its "habit" of remaining on full lock when on a bend, in direct opposition to the wishes of the driver. Probably, like so many other rumours, this so-called "vice" has been grossly overrated.

My Alvis . . . (Mr. Hart)

The Alvis engineers knew well how to make a car "fit" the driver. The provision of a long seat cushion and high squab promote bodily comfort, whilst a light clutch, an easily handled and conveniently placed gear shift lever, and a large diameter

steering wheel set at just the right angle make the driver feel at home.

The long bonnet and scuttle—high up, relative to the seat—give a driver the feeling that this is a really big car—yet the engine has a capacity of less than 1½ litres, the wheelbase is only 8 ft. 6 in., and the overall length of the complete car is only slightly more than 13 ft.

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

The suspension of this Alvis is beyond reproach. No matter whether the road is rough or smooth, or the speed high or low, hardly a tremor is transmitted to the chassis. On long wavy surfaces the car pitches slightly, but there is no reciprocal action whatever. And as with any front drive car, cornering is superb.

Bends and corners can be taken at extremely high speeds—as soon as one has become accustomed to the capabilities of the car in this direction—and almost without sensation. Acute bends, usually considered to be barely safe at forty, can be taken at a good 50 or 60 m.p.h. with ease; the fact that the car is accelerating or decelerating seeming to make no difference whatever to its road-holding capabilities.

When the point of breakaway is reached, the car simply slides on all four wheels, and still maintains a perfect line through the corner (or the hedge, according to the driver's judgment!). It is this cornering ability, together with the powerful braking and the excellent ride provided by the all round independent suspension, that makes the car such a joy to handle.

As far as the performance of the Alvis f.w.d. is concerned, the super-charged racing model had a top speed of 100 m.p.h. at 5,000 r.p.m.—guaranteed when leaving the works—and in touring trim they were good for a guaranteed 85 m.p.h.

Technically Speaking . . .

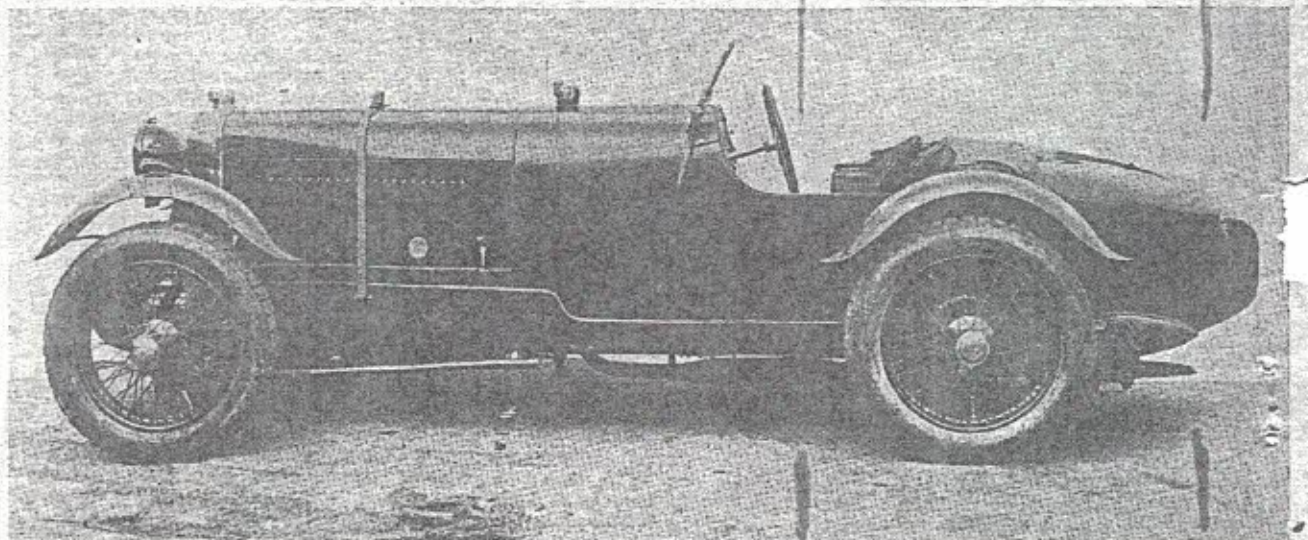
The chassis is very sturdily constructed and is very low slung. An extra long bonnet and wide track give it a squat, business-like appearance.

The suspension is fully independent on all four wheels. The rear wheels are mounted on massive quarter-elliptic springs and rather elaborate radius arms, which turn in huge ball races.

The front brakes are one of the many features which, in their day, were well in advance of the period. They are inboard, being bolted direct to the differential casing, and are of the two leading shoe type. The two leading shoe mechanism is external, and is easily adjusted.

These front brakes are operated by a single cable to a compensator which, although most effective, is also exceedingly vulnerable, being low and

Rugged looking and purposeful, the FWD Alvis was a fast, roadable car, and looked attractive in the classic sports tradition of its day.



right out in front. The braking system is very powerful indeed, and is fully up to modern standards.

The engine of the Alvis is a development of the original 12/50 engine. It is a single overhead camshaft engine of 1,482 c.c. (R.A.C. rating 11.5), and is of 68 mm. bore and 102 mm. stroke. It has a valves-in-line type of cylinder head, with highly polished ports, and siamesed induction ports—as also is the centre exhaust outlet to the manifold. A cylinder head gasket of .020 in. solid copper gives a compression ratio of 6 to 1.

Valve clearances are obtained by means of a dashpot fitted over the valve spring, inside which a small cap resting on top of the valve stem itself carries a number of small steel shims of varying thicknesses; and as the dashpot is always in direct contact with the lobe of the camshaft, no adjustment can be carried out without the camshaft's removal.

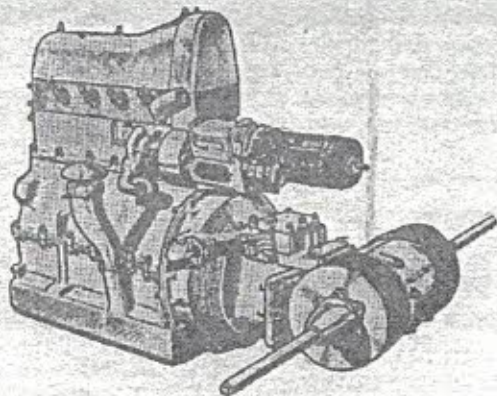
The cylinder block, also detachable, carries the alloy pistons and dural con rods. Pistons are secured by gudgeon pins retained by circlips which prevent any side movement towards the bore. A cast aluminium crankcase encloses a finely balanced machined crankshaft held by three white metal bearings, with the flywheel and timing gears placed at the front of the engine—a reversal of normal procedure owing to the car's design being F.W.D. The supercharger is of the Roots type, and is incorporated in original Alvis design. Boost is about 6 lbs. P.S.I., and two spring loaded flame arresters deal with the possibility of spitting back.

A mixture of 50 per cent pure benzol and 50 per cent petrol, or an alcohol mixture, is required for competition work, with 1 pint of Castrol XL per gallon of fuel to lubricate the blower bearings. Surprisingly enough my engine is quite economical, giving 30 m.p.g.!

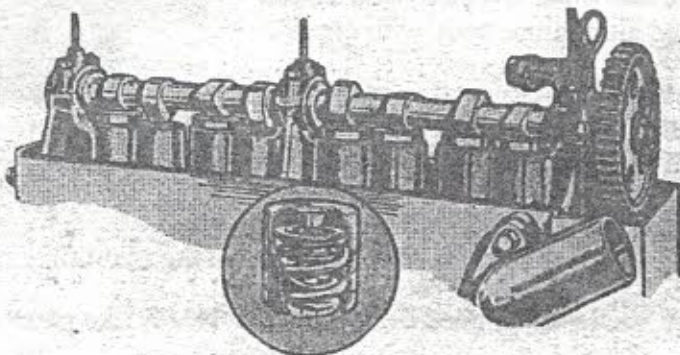
Clutch and gearbox are mounted forward in unit construction, as is the differential. A single plate clutch is fitted in which a steel centre disc is gripped between two Ferodo faces—one attached to the flywheel, the other to the plate carrying the withdrawal toggles. A non-adjustable clutch stop or clutch "brake" is fitted, which comes into operation automatically when the clutch pedal is pressed fully down.

Front wheel steering is arrived at by a large cast aluminium steering box carrying a worm shaft supported on taper roller bearings at each end. This shaft engages with another shaft which is in turn attached to bell crank levers. Thus the tie rod is beneath the clutch and brake pedal shaft, operating two long steering rods independently to each front tractor housing; and between the raked steering column there is a Hardy Spicer disc, the driver sitting at an angle in the corner of his compartment.

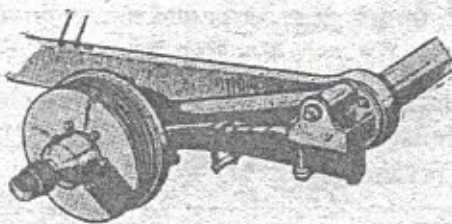
Unless quite well off financially, one needs to be an engineer to maintain and run one of these rare and most satisfying cars. But then it is not very likely that you will ever have such an opportunity, as there were less than one hundred cars manufactured altogether.



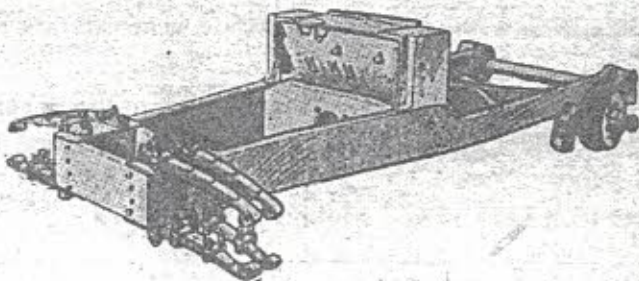
This drawing of the neat 4-cyl. o.h.c. engine shows the placement of magneto and dynamo, as well as how the gearbox, together with final drive unit, is mounted in one at the engine's front end. Note ribbed inboard brake drums.



The overhead camshaft layout, showing the large cylindrical flat-headed tappets. (Inset shows tappet cutaway.)



Showing the quarter-elliptic rear suspension and torque arm location of the wheel.



The strong, simple Alvis frame with foot ramp fitted. Note how immense rigidity is carried through into the front spring mountings.

Cars for Sale

The Club carries a selection of spare parts that are available to financial members and to members of the Alvis Car Club of NSW. Only reproduction parts can be supplied to non members and a surcharge will be applied. Members contemplating the reproduction of parts are asked to contact the Club to determine if others need such a part and whether it is feasible to order some for club spares.

and spares.

Alvis 12/40 & Spares.

Contact Les Miller, Unit 10 45-47 Salisbury Rd, Hornsby, N.S.W. 2077
(*editor has photocopies, car appears to be without body and partially disassembled*)

TA 21 Special

Very reliable rebuilt engine with 5 speed (overdrive) Rover gearbox, power brakes, new hood, custom made trunk with drawers, a head turning polished aluminium body with green mudguards.

A real bird puller! Record so far 3 sparrows, 2 pigeons. Full registration \$36,000 OBO.



Parts

TA21 Gearbox—good order, but falls out of top in the traditional manner. \$480

TA21 Radiator Shell—quite good order, no rust. Needs like panel beating and plating to make “as new.”

Contact John Link. Mobile 0419 361237 Home (03) 9391 2011 Fax (03) 9391 3691

WANTED

12/50 Cylinder block, timing gear cover and rocker cover.

FOR SALE

12/50 clutch plate springs, new sets of 12, \$NZ50 including sfc postage & packing.

Patricia Bren, Woodhurst 29 Poriati Rd, RD2 Napier, Hawkes Bay 4021 New Zealand. Fax 64-6-8444265
Phone 64 6 8442971 (evenings)

FOR SALE

Set of five 12/50 wheels, 23” open hub wire wheels, lock ring type in service on the SD until Geoff’s alloy wheel centres inspired the building of a set of 21” (better on the SD, and cheaper tyres) The wheels are ready for the road, painted red, fitted with tyres, 3 of which have some legitimate miles left. \$1800.

FOR SALE

Silver Eagle? Front and rear axles. These are similar to the SD axles in details such as hubs, brake shoes and drums, but have wider track. Some brake parts are retained as spares for the SD. Half shafts are included for sale. \$400.

Warwick Barnett (07) 3375 3742 Mobile 0411 881 278

LIBRARY

Club meeting nights are not always the best time to peruse the library and make a choice. Frances has provided a catalogue of items held, for your selection.

Please find enclosed!

SUNDAY 18 MARCH 2001

DAY RUN

- 10.00am meet at Alvis Close, Keilor Downs
melways map 14 A7
byo tea & coffee etc
sticky buns will be provided
- 10.45am leave on observation run to Romsey
instructions/questionnaire provided at morning
tea.
- 12.30pm view Royal Tennis at the Romsey Royal Tennis
Club Glenfern Rd. A chance to taste/purchase
local wine.
- 1.30pm lunch at David & Lyn Vaughan's home 316
Knox Rd, Romsey. (look for the Alvis Car on
the left in Knox Rd—near junction of Glen Fern/
Romsey-Woodend Rd.
(BYO BARBECUE LUNCH)
- 4.00pm may be a chance to play Royal Tennis. Bring
your gear. Racquets & balls provided.



CHECKLIST: MELWAYS, MORNING TEA, PEN, LUNCH, TENNIS GEAR, SUNSCREEN, MOBILE PHONE.
PHONE NUMBERS: LINKS 93912970H 0419 36123 M. TONKINS 0407944987, ROMSEY ROYAL
TENNIS CLUB 54296222 or 0417518502. VAUGHANS 54295721

