

# THE ALVIS CAR CLUB OF VICTORIA (Inc)

A0017202F



VOLUME 43

October 2004

## NEWSLETTER

### ISSUE 9

CLUB ROOMS: - rear of 'ALVISTA' 21 Edgar St, Glen Iris (MELWAYS 59 F8. Meetings—third Friday of each month [except DEC/JAN] at 8.00pm. Newsletter Deadline—first Friday of month.

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## SUPPER The Tonkins

- 15 Oct Annual General Meeting
- 17 Oct Day Run to Yaringa Harbour,  
Sommerville Meeting at Park Golf Club,  
Melways ref Map 60 J3 Time 8.30 for  
9.00am  
Morning Tea at Berwick Old Cheese  
Factory  
Devonshire Teas. Cost \$6.60 per person  
Lunch Yaringa Café at the Yaringa  
Marina, Sommerville.  
Chester McKaige—organiser
- 14 Nov Geelong Sprints—CANCELLED
- 19 Nov General Meeting
- 21 Nov Wings & Wheels—Lilydale—11.00am  
Melways Map 274 J11  
ACCV space for 10 cars.  
Chester McKaige organiser
- 5 Dec Xmas Party at the Parkies



## ALVALACRITY

I'm back. Thank you, Chester for your column last month. Our trip to Europe was not intended to be a "motoring trip" but a few things of interest were encountered. In England we stayed with friends who live near the Sandringham Estate – one of HM's palaces. Visiting is limited (apart from by invitation!) to a few public rooms and the old stables block which has been converted into a most interesting museum. Obviously there is a motor car section which includes mighty Daimlers and RRs of the Phantom ilk. There are more mundane Vauxhall Crestas and even a woody Ford Zephyr Wagon whose woodenness is a couple of fibreglass battens screwed to the sides. These were used for "domestic estate duties". And there is a huge genuine "Shooting Brake". A Vintage wooden body of sufficient size to accommodate a dozen be-tweedeed gentry along with their guns, mounted on a Daimler chassis and powered by a sleeve valve engine. Amongst this collection the Alvis TD 21 of HRH stands out like a beacon. Very smart it is – having just been restored; a venture in which the AOC had a hand. But I did not think that the "high roof" added anything to the outward appearance. If HRH found difficulty in riding in the standard saloon while wearing a top hat I would have suggested a DHC instead of a special body. He could have added a chin-strap to the topper. But that reveals my unsuitability for the position of "Advisor on Royal Protocol! Nautical exhibits include a gorgeous steam driven Royal barge or maybe it is a pinnacle. I will stand corrected by a person with marine knowledge but no matter what it is called, the main midships space is occupied by boiler and engine displaying much brass while space for Very Important Personages is limited to a small area near the stern. As well there are many photos of Dreadnoughts, some at battle stations and others in ceremonial context at Spithead Reviews of the Fleet and the like. There is a photo of the then Queen Mary (wife of George V) launching Cunard's "Queen Mary" in 1935. She was obviously not much impressed for the relevant page from her diary is on view: "..... today launched the world's largest ship. Pity it rained." Later in the trip we were trundling quietly through the west of England when we came across a sign saying "Motor Museum". We obviously turned off and it was a lucky day. It only opens one day a month and that was the day. There are hundreds of cars, many in superb order and some available for wedding hire. Amongst them a SB Speed 20 Alvis Charlesworth saloon. 300 pounds per day. That's about \$A750! It is a car with an interesting history. It started life with a four door tourer body by C & E. For many years after WWII it wore a great big van body but in 1989 was reclad in its present Charlesworth garb. It is not certain where the present body came from or where the C & E one went. After that our motoring encounters took a nose dive. In Eastern Europe there were still one or two Trabants to be seen. Twin cylinder two stroke engines "powering" four seater bodies made out of recycled plastic milk bottles and compressed cardboard and surrounded by clouds of blue smoke. Once there was a ten year waiting list for such a marvel; now one or two of the remaining "Trabbies" should go into a museum before they are all scrapped. After that it was back to Victoria and two Alvises minus starter motors. One has since been fixed and the other with teeth missing from its pinion should be running again today or tomorrow. Just in time for Spring!

JOHN HETHERINGTON

### EDITORIAL

Anyone who was not present at the August meeting, may have wondered what the letter to the editor in the September newsletter was all about. This month there is a confirmation of that criticism and there is now the need for readers to be aware of the issues.

At the August meeting a member said that he was unhappy about the content and format of the newsletter and that he determined it must be an expensive publication to produce. He commented that many articles have been reproduced and specifically mentioned Richard Budd's electroplating article that had already appeared in the NSW Club's Alvibatics. I accepted the author's offer to reproduce that article, mindful that many ACCV members were not members of the NSW Club and the article was of a technical nature on a subject that few could claim expertise. The member also indicated a lack of contributions on his part and that he put the newsletter in the bin.

The member stated the obvious, that a newsletter is only as good as the contributions, however pride prevents me from sending out a few pages with some vacant spaces.

I have invested hundreds of hours in producing the newsletters for the last 3 years and it is obviously time to step aside and let someone else satisfy the readers. I can invest those hours on my neglected cars.

The AGM is this month and it will be appropriate for one of those who consider the newsletter is not to their standard to step forward and serve the membership.

John Lang

## THE BAY TO BIRDWOOD

On the last Sunday in September, with many South Australians sleeping in their beds, or perhaps still celebrating after the big footy match in Melbourne, we were among a large number of car enthusiasts who made an early start down to the meeting point of the 2004 Bay to Birdwood Run in Adelaide. As we live 150 km away on the Yorke Peninsula, this meant a fair journey in the dark. We had taken part in the 2003 Classic Run, but a change in vehicle age rules allowed us to use the 1951 TA 21 D.H.C this year. One thing I did learn from last year's event was that opting for the Concours allowed you a better starting position and a central parking spot at the Birdwood Mill finish.

In the preceding days we had been entertaining two guests from Holland. Fortunately, they were car enthusiasts and we had taken part in one of the Motorfest events to the Barossa Valley just a few days earlier. Motorfest is a two week program of motoring events culminating in the Bay to Birdwood Run. Entrants come from all over Australia, enjoying a wide range of venues on what is the ideal motoring holiday.

As our guests came from cold northern Europe, I thought we would have no trouble in using the car with the hood down, so I was surprised when they donned three jackets, flying helmets and goggles. I remarked that I was driving on the ground and I did not intend to become airborne!

Concours events are not my scene as I have heard just how fussy it can all be, but the B2B event encouraged drivers and passengers to don appropriate wear to suit their car. Trying to find what the 1951 fashion was in Australia proved difficult but I wore a pin stripe suit with turn ups and Mary had a suitable dress, long gloves and a matching hat. To my surprise she also had some seamed black stockings but I will not dwell on that point.

We spent some time cleaning the Alvis as best we could, fearing that judges would come along with mirrors and white gloves, resulting in us being marked badly. However, although we have done 16,000 km in the car in less than two years, she still looks pretty good. Early morning driving meant we picked up lots of moths and flies, so a quick wipe down was needed.

With a starting time amongst the first few cars out of a total of 1400, we had a relatively easy journey across the city, joining up with the very smart TA21 saloon of Roly Forss. This car has a similar paint scheme, so to see a duo of TA 21's, with their splendid exhaust notes was a fine sight and sound for the many spectators along the way. I can only compare the enthusiasm of the crowds to those along the London Marathon route, but the journey is a lot easier, I can tell you from first hand experience! As we made our way through the northern suburbs, we spotted our friends from Ardrossan and the R & S Valiant Club who had set up their BBQ on the roadside.

The trip through the hills to the National Motor Museum is always a pleasure, winding as it does, past the many reservoirs used by the major sponsors, S.A Water. Before long, we arrived at Birdwood, received our finishing plaque and parked in the specific concours area with over 60 other cars. We were told that we had to stay with the cars until judging but this was very speedily done. Mary and I were sweltering, so we were relieved when the judges said we could relax and go off to do what we liked. Although we have not lived in Australia very long, I was aware that the smiling gentleman who inspected our car had an important role on other days. He was the SA Commissioner of Police, Mal Hyde. I joked about hoping it was the only time a police officer stood in front of me with a clip board, taking notes. Only in Australia would the Police provide such assistance to a motoring event, along the route and at the finish.

Looking around at the other cars in the group, there were such fine vehicles that we knew we could relax, have lunch and then make an early start for home. We moved off to have lunch and a good look around the Museum and other cars. We put all our odd items back into the boot, having removed them for the judging. Returning to the car to get more drinks some time later, we noticed a line of cars heading off to main display area. Apparently, they were the ten cars chosen for the grand final. Then a friend came up and told me that the Alvis was to be amongst that group! Mary and I hurriedly donned the outfits we had earlier peeled off and took our place in the group of cars. We were then marshalled into a fenced off display area, awaiting the judges. At this point, I could see the sort of work put into many of the cars and their owner's attire. Whilst I admired a very fine Jaguar XK120, there was a pristine Austin 10/4 whose owner was dressed as a parson. A 1922 Dodge Utility was set up with the wares of a general trader and was a real star. Other cars included a 1951 MG TD, a 1936 Riley Falcon, 1949 Pontic Silver Streak, and 1926 Chevrolet Capitol Tourer.

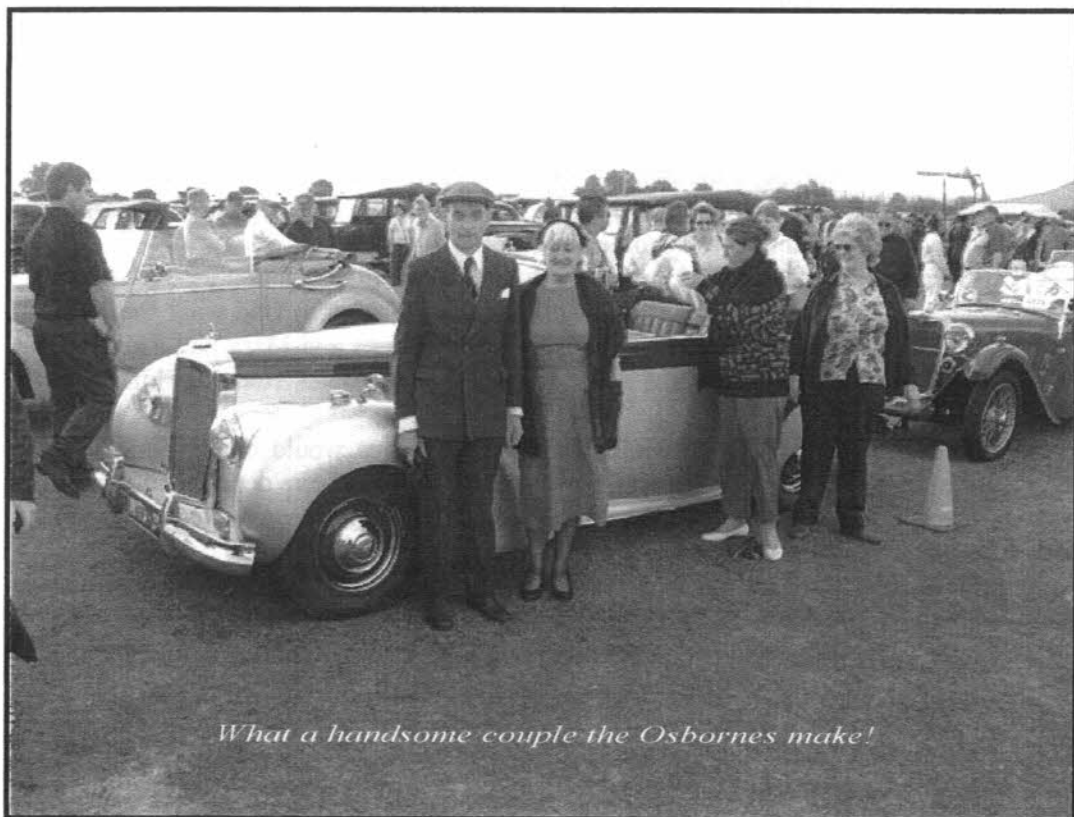
However, an impressive 1929 Packard 640 Limousine was matched by its owners, with the smart chauffer and lady passenger. This proved to be the worthy and popular winner. The Alvis attracted a great deal of interest and praise. I already knew where the odd detailing was required, with little points such as a perished windscreen rubber and the odd stone chip, so I have a list of these, but the car is still a fine tribute to the chap who originally restored it.

Just before we left for the journey home, our Dutch friends came up with copies of the photograph taken by Adelphi Studios along the route. These showed the two TA21s in line and really captured the fun of having a great car such as an Alvis. As they say, there's only one thing better than an Alvis and that's two of them! It

was a splendid day out and Channel 2 showed the Alvis in the evening's news programme, but I was too busy to giving the car a quick wipe over after her day out see it.

For those of you who have not taken part in the B2B events, I can heartily recommend them as regards scenery, organisation and fun. Next year is the B2B Classic Run, for cars 30 to 50 years old, so how about joining us with the TD21?

Mike Osborne



I am interested in Engineering and the history of engineering and the history of machine tools. Just glance at this list of names – Macadam, Telford, James Watt, the Stephensons, the Brunels and Naysmith. These giants of the engineering profession were the energy and the driving force behind the Industrial Revolution in England. However, this article is not about them but about the father of the modern machine tool, Henry Maudslay.

Woodscrews are, and were, an important means of fastening wooden frames together. Forged nails were the first fasteners but tended to work loose unless clenched at the back, while woodscrews do not have this failing. Woodscrews have been around for about 1000 years and were originally hand made which caused them to be scarce and expensive. Quite a few machines were designed and built over the years to make woodscrews mechanically, with varying degrees of success and these designs are the progenitors of the Maudslay lathe.

Henry Maudslay was born in 1771 and was apprenticed to the Royal Arsenal at Woolwich, near London. He was a big strong lad, very clever and he became very proficient as a metal worker. Joseph Bramah, a manufacturer and inventor, designed an unpickable bank lock. It was very complicated, too complicated for the best craftsmen of the time. Bramah selected Maudslay, who was 18 at the time, to build the first lock and the machines and tools to produce the lock commercially. By the way, the lock remained unpicked for 50 years and took a locksmith 16 days to crack it.

After some years with Bramah, Maudslay struck out on his own, gaining the reputation of “the greatest mechanic of his age”. This brought Marc Brunel (the father of Isambard Kingdom Brunel) to Maudslay’s workshop. Marc Brunel had designed a method of making ships pulley blocks and he requested Maudslay to make models of the block machines. Brunel won a commission from the Royal Navy to provide these machines and for six years Maudslay laboured on the job before the machines were installed at Portsmouth. Now six men could produce what needed sixty men before and when it is understood a frigate needed over 1000 blocks it can be realised the advantages of the machines.

recision and accuracy was the main aim of Maudslay. He cut screw threads in tin and brass mandrels of ever increasing accuracy before finally cutting his steel lead screw for his lathe. This was the key to the success of his lathe and planer. Maudslay incorporated all the best ideas from the earlier Woodscrew machines in his lathe. This had a headstock with a spindle with change gears to the lead screw enabling different pitches of thread to be cut. Two steel triangular slide bars mounted in the headstock carried the tailstock and the saddle with a cross slide to carry the cutter. Here was the ancestor of the modern machine tool.

Maudslay made a micrometer with a 16 inch long screw that could measure to one ten thousandth of an inch. It was dubbed “the Lord Chancellor” as it settled any dispute.

Maudslay standardised the taps and dies in his workshop so that the bolts and nuts were interchangeable. Previously nuts and bolts were not interchangeable which created havoc during reassembly of a dismantled machine.

Whitworth took this standardisation a step further and proposed a national standard which was adopted by British Manufacturers. Incidentally, the size of Whitworth bolt heads was the largest hexagon which could be made from the standard round bar from which the bolts were made. The Americans had to be different and devised their own standard. The French being French made their own metric standard,

We should all give three rousing cheers to Henry Maudslay! He was the father of the modern precision tool. Without him the world would be very different today.

#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I am writing to say that I concurred with the criticism of the newsletter expressed during the August meeting.

I also concur with Chester’s remark that the editor can only print the articles submitted for publication.

Now I would like to congratulate the Editor for the September Newsletter. I enjoyed very much the article written by Alvis Chief Engineer, Captain George Smith-Clarke. The technical side of the article and the English grammar used, appealed to me particularly.

Captain Smith-Clarke blurred the origins of the four speed all synchromesh gearbox somewhat in the article. In fact Smith-Clarke was of the opinion that it was not possible to produce such a gearbox until A A Varney designed that magnificent gearbox in his own time at his home. He submitted the design drawings to Smith-Clarke for approval and that is how the gearbox came about.

Incidentally, Varney was also responsible for the design of that other star in the Alvis line up - the TA 14.

Rob Graham

## The Buckingham Cyclecar

Whilst T.G John was establishing his business, in the early 1920's, one of the things he realized apart from establishing the name Alvis and its products was the need to explore the lower end of the market, in particular the cycle car industry, which had been gathering momentum in popularity prior to WWI.

The cycle car industry in Europe, was akin to what Henry Ford was doing in the U.S, namely providing people with a cheap means of transport that was easy to use and required little maintenance, however the birth of the Austin Seven in 1922 promptly killed off the cycle car business in England and only a few small firms continued building them in France and other parts of Europe.

In terms of quality and I guess value for money at the time, a number of manufacturers stood out including G.N, Baugham, Bleriot-Whippet and the French built Bedelia, although firms such as Peugeot and even Bugatti had experimented in producing small engined cars which were to be given the title "voiturettes" as a means of complementing their model range.

Not far from the Alvis works was the Buckingham Engineering Company, which apart from other things manufactured cycle cars utilizing engines of either 746cc or a V twin of 1096cc.

The early cars were fitted with dual cone clutches each with its separate chain drive to the engine. A double belt drive took the power to the rear wheels. Gear changing was achieved by pushing down the clutch, engaging low gear whilst neutral was engaged by moving the pedal half way. A catch was brought in to keep it in neutral and when released brought the high gear into play. This method did away with a gear lever.

Whilst most engines used in cycle-cars were air cooled, Buckingham used water as a means of cooling, something that he had experimented years before on a Riley. J.F Buckingham was an interesting character who got a job after leaving technical college with the Riley Motor Company working there for six years and spending his weekends campaigning a Riley in trials and various competitions. In 1912, he decided to set up his own business, establishing a garage in Coventry, but rather than servicing cars, he designed and built his own, a cycle car powered by a V twin water-cooled engine. These cars became popular and kept him busy right up until the outbreak of war.

In 1913, he entered one of his cars in the first cyclecar handicap race held at Brooklands. The car was called "Chota" which is Hindustani for "small." A field of seven cars assembled for the race including two GN's, Lester, Carden, Peugeot, Arden and the Chota. The race was held in appalling weather conditions and the winner Archie Frazer Nash completed the distance in his G.N with a top speed of 42.25 mph with the GN of Whithead second and the Chota of Buckingham third.

Car production was suspended when war broke out in 1914, and Buckingham who had studied chemistry and mathematics at college immediately put his inventive mind towards other matters.

The use of balloons, or dirigibles had first been used by the Americans during the civil war and the French had also used them in the siege of Paris in 1870. The technology of these flying machines improved dramatically and soon they were fitted with multi-engine engines that meant that they could be flown in any direction without having to rely on the wind.

Germany had two dirigible manufacturers, the Schutte-Lanz Company, and the larger Zeppelin Company. In 1914, Germany had seven dirigibles and used them successfully in bombing Liege and Antwerp, although anti aircraft fire cost them three airships. More were built through 1914 and proved successful for reconnaissance work, but the German Admiralty was pressing for permission to use them in attacks against England.

The first raid on England happened in January 1915 and continued at a rate of about two per month, but when France attacked a number of German cities with aircraft, Germany soon made the decision to use their airships to bomb London, beginning in May 1915.

In order to combat these large and ponderous machines, the British and French had very little firepower that could be used against them and the fact that airships could attain a higher altitude than a conventional fighter plane meant that they were almost immune from attack. It was only through surprise and through low-level attacks that an airship could be in trouble but their superior fire power in the shape of machine guns still meant that they were a force to be reckoned with.

It was obvious that something needed to be done in halting these menacing machines, the first step being to use barrage balloons as a means of protecting London and its various cities although a serious attempt of protecting London with barrage balloons came a lot later in the war. The other much-needed requirement was for a projector that had the means to penetrate the skin of the Zeppelin and be able to inflict sufficient damage to bring it down to earth.

Buckingham, with a schooling of mathematics and chemistry immediately addressed the problem and in 1916, developed an incendiary bullet containing phosphorus which ignited when exposed to air. When exposed to hydrogen, the effect was even more dramatic and as Zeppelins and other such airships relied on hydrogen to keep them aloft, one could only imagine what the effect would be. It is said that from 1916 onwards, Buckingham had produced over 26 million incendiary bullets and so contributed

greatly to the demise of the Zeppelin as a fighting machine.

After the war, Buckingham resumed his business interests in manufacturing cycle-cars producing a more conventional vehicle with transmission and tailshaft and in 1922 Alvis took over the Buckingham Engineering Company as a means of getting into the small car market. Unfortunately at the same time, Austin released the Austin Seven on the market, which saw the demise of the Buckingham and its phasing out in 1923.

The photograph shows a 1913 Chota cycle car owned at the time by Allan Chamberlain of, tractor, Chamberlain 8 racing car, and piston fame who restored the car from a pile of bits in the early 1970's.

The writer remembers having a short ride in the car as a youngster, the car having quite a turn of speed considering its rather crude transmission.

The Chota is now owned by Peter Briggs and is on display at his museum in York.

Chester McKaige.



*Bob Chamberlain and the writer's mother with the Chota Cyclecar.*

## **Macedon Ranges Grand Tour** Saturday 12th February 2005

**IT'S ON AGAIN!**

It is likely that the November committee meeting will put the event on the 2005 club calendar. Several members are going & have booked some of the limited accommodation at the Cope-Williams Winery, the location of the Gala Dinner. This overcomes the drinking & driving situation! If you want, I can book for you at a special rate of \$140 per night including cooked breakfast. The Grand Tour is \$160 per car, more details will follow or see:

[www.mrgt.com.au](http://www.mrgt.com.au) or email [info@mrgt.com.au](mailto:info@mrgt.com.au) or phone 0419 552 892

John Lang 5426 2256

## FOR SALE:

1937 12/70 Alvis Sedan.

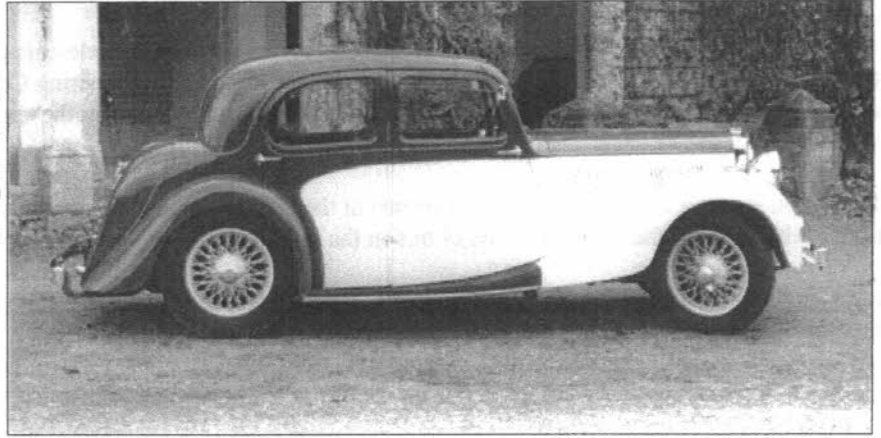
Grey and white. Mechanically checked over & in good order. New rings fitted. Fully registered, completely re-trimmed, re-painted and re-chromed. Under 1000 miles since work carried out. 12 months full Victorian registration

\$38,000 ONO

and

Good petrol tank for a 12/50 \$150

Contact Eric Nicholl (03) 9754 5412



## FOR SALE:

TC 21 formerly owned by Barry Turner as featured in October 2003 Alvibatics. Rego ADD45V. Red over silver \$20,000 ONO. Patricia Turner 02 6361 7739 or mob 0404 466 881

## WANTED:

Differential centre carrier or any parts for a mid 30's six cylinder car. Crown wheel and pinion condition not important.

Dale Parsell Tel (03) 5968 5170

or dparsell@ozemail.com.au

## WANTED:

SP 25 Hand Brake lever arm

Generator louvered band to cover brushes

2 x 1/2 Ball and wing nut as located on threaded brake rods

Pass light Glass--2 of

Gear Box mounting brackets--offside, nearside and rear

Likely, models other than the SP25 will share the componentry.

Cheers, Michael Lavender, NZ Alvis Club

Call Collect 0064 33255704 (New Zealand)

## FOR SALE:

1928 Alvis SWB FWD supercharged. Car #

11982 Engine #7653 . Rolling chassis.

Engine restored some years ago. Front splines

worn. No Body, radiator surround or bonnet.

Originally carried a Le Mans 2 seater.

\$30,000

Call Graeme Cooke (03) 51271401

## FOR SALE

ALVIS TD21 2-door saloon by Park Ward. Chassis & Engine # 25996. Body # 18025. One of 783 built. 11 in Australia. Car suitable for restoration, straight body, good interior, pretty polished woodwork. Very original. Factory extras include sun roof, front disc brakes, wire wheels, original radio. Engine, gearbox, radiator, brakes & tank not fitted but with car. A/H manual gearbox. Comes with new water items, extra 4 outstanding Alvis wire wheels and most history since day 1. Unfortunately, spinal problems dictate selling. Price \$9500. Contact Robert Penn Bradley, phone (02) 6386 4348 or fax (02) 6386 4349

## WANTED:

Pair Bosch 10 inch diameter Headlamps JG 240 or JG280 and a pair of Bosch side lamps J120.

Ring Geoff Hood (03) 9842 2181

## WANTED:

Head light reflector for a 14.75

Eric Nicholl (03) 9754 5412

*If your advertisement appears on this page and is no longer relevant, please notify the newsletter editor.*

*John Lang .....ed*

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