

December 2004

Alvic

Newsletter of the Alvis Car Club of Victoria (Inc) A0017202F



Congratulations!

3 More Alvises on Australian Roads!

see front & back covers

ALVALACRITY

'Tis the time of year for taking stock. I suppose that is to give us a chance to learn lessons that can be applied in the following year. It has been an interesting year for proper motoring and several lessons have been learnt. During the first major outing for the year, to the Macedon Ranges Rally, in February, the ambient temperature rose to 41^o C but the Speed 20 coped much better than its occupants. It did not object at all but we were a little bit dehydrated after 100 miles! In March a tankful of dodgy petrol ended the fun of a wonderful trip through the Australian Alps in the 12/50. It was a glorious afternoon and the car was going so well before the dirt and water found its way along the system. We got home alright but it was an example of what can happen when you buy petrol from an outlet with a low turnover. That trip was a VSCC "Alpine Rally" but also half of a "proving run" in preparation for next March's ACCV "Summit to Sea" Rally. Of course Alvises go up and down mountains but I thought it prudent to make proof topical. More of the other half of the proof later. Ten days in Tasmania in April was a lot of fun; it is a proper motorist's paradise. Good roads, magnificent scenery and on this occasion, great company and good weather. Nearly always good weather; there was one day at Cradle Mountain when the temperature was more like minus 41^o C – at least with the wind chill factor applying to those of us in open cars! I have to reluctantly admit that the hood did go up on that occasion..... There was a great week end away in June at Castlemaine to which four keen Alviators came all the way from Ardrossan on the Yorke Peninsula in a proper car. The weather was diabolically wet and a 12/50 with a hood with holes in it is not the ideal carriage for those conditions. But we neither drowned nor dissolved so it ended well enough. In October we took the 12/50 up Mt Hotham from the northern direction to complete the "proof" referred to above. Parky wanted to check out some of the Rally arrangements at Beechworth, Mt Beauty and Dinner Plain. On the way to Beechworth he was driving the 12/50 when a strong smell of petrol arose because his size fourteen Mr Plod's left foot had disconnected the petrol pipe from the bottom of the scuttle tank. And during his watch the friction lining on the clutch stop expired. Despite these insults the 12/50 went up and down the Alps without seriously holding up modern cars. That was a good 600 mile mountainous weekend. The last long distance outing for the year ended ignominiously with the Speed 20 arriving home on a tilt-tray truck. We had enjoyed a very interesting trip on a sunny day to "Vintage Wings & Wheels" at Lilydale and were within 30 miles of home when the pedestal upon which the fan is mounted detached itself from the front of the block allowing the fan to chew its way into the radiator, losing a blade on the way. One stripped thread, one broken stud and aluminium weakened by 70 years seems to have been the cause. Perhaps I can make a claim under warranty? So, what lessons can be learnt? At least four: Keep it dry. Keep it cool. Keep it clean. Keep it tight. Oh, and one other lesson remembered..... none of these fabulous trips (and others unmentioned) would have happened without a lot of planning, work, generosity, skill and effort on the part of many enthusiastic volunteers. Sincere thanks to them all. On behalf of the Club: A Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year to all our readers.

John Hetherington

David Elder

It is with regret that we note the death of David Elder, former member of the Alvis Car Club of Victoria.

We extend our sympathy to his family.

KEEPING IT IN THE FAMILY!

It is with great pleasure that we announce the new membership of Warrick Hansted who has recently purchased the ex Geoff Hood Silver Eagle. Warrick is Sally McKaige's brother and we are delighted that such an important car remains in the club and more importantly in Australia. Welcome Warrick!



Merry Christmas



and a Safe & Prosperous New Year to you all
May Santa put an Alvis in every stocking!

We look forward to sharing the National Rally with you in
March 2005

Many thanks for your newsletter contributions throughout the year

John & Marg Lang

THE ALVIS CAR CLUB OF VICTORIA (Inc)

A0017202F



VOLUME 43

December 2004

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 11

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.

POSTAL: ACCV P.O.Box 634, EMERALD, VIC 3782

www.alvis.org.au

Congratulations to David Caldwell, Chris Higgins & Mike Osborne in recently putting 3 Alvises either back on or new to Australian roads. David's after a long spell in the garage. Chris' after a disastrous fire & Mike's as a new import to the country

Friday 21 January. Jan BBQ at the National Aviation Museum, Moorabbin Airport.

**See & hear the Rolls Royce Merlin running!
See flyer inside**

Saturday 12 February. Macedon Ranges Grand Tour

18 Feb	General Meeting
13-19 Mar	National Rally
24 Mar	General Meeting (<i>note change</i>)
10 Apr	Kalorama (<i>see flyer</i>)
15 Apr	General Meeting
17 Apr	Pub Run to Kilmore
10-13 Jun	Weekend Away
17 Jun	General Meeting

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

47 Fountain Drive,
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Dear Ian,

Don't faint when you open this letter, but note that I have dropped a few bob to cover the cost of my newsletter for the past and future couple of years.

I feel a bit guilty receiving it so regularly for so long when not having contributed anything to the club for so long.

Joan and I still get enjoyment from it and congratulate John L on his continuous high production.

We are still reasonably mobile, but nowadays when night falls, the dog is in, the blinds are drawn and that's the end of our day. Best wishes to John H, Dale and all the mob and yourself for Christmas and the New Year.

Keep up the good work

Cheers and beers

Roy Boy and Joanie

Dear John,

This letter to the editor has been prompted by the article in the September issue of the club newsletter from Chester McKaige about the development of the Rolls Royce Merlin engine.

Some years ago I came across, by chance, when I was returning some books to the library, a book called "Not Much of an Engineer," a title which got my interest right away.

It was in fact the life story of one Sir Stanley Hooker who as the book revealed, was involved in the very early stages in the development of the Merlin engine.

He then went on to assist Frank Whittle in the development of the early jet engine after Rolls took over from Rover.

There are some lovely asides in the book, too many to mention here, but hope this letter will urge members interested to seek it out and enjoy it as much as I did.

Yours,

Vic Elliot

BRING OUT YOUR ALVISES!

When John and Annie Link and Pauline and I were in England three years ago, we were loaned Alvises by Martin Boothman for the International Alvis Day. When we were in New Zealand last year, John St. Julian very kindly loaned us his TC 21 for two weeks during the Alvis Rally there. We have, in turn, loaned our car to overseas Alvis owners when they have come here for rallies.

There are five entrants from New Zealand and two from Wales for the 2005 National Rally. It would be nice if we could loan cars to those entrants who would like to have the use of one. We have loaned our TA 21 Drophead to Derek and Gaye Dixon, from New Zealand for the Rally.

If you have a spare Alvis and you would like to offer it to one of the entrants, please let me know and I will be happy to co-ordinate that with the lender and the borrower.

Richard Tonkin

Hallo John,

A friend in England tipped me off that there was an article on the Alvis TD21 vs other cars in "Thoroughbred & Classic Cars", September 2004 edition.

I managed to get a copy and the featured cars are the 1963 TD21 Series 2 saloon, Bristol 406, AC Greyhound and Jensen 541R. The Alvis comes out reasonably well against the others with the writer's personal choice being the Jensen. If anyone would like more details, please ask them to contact me.

Best regards
Mike Osborne,
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08 88373158

Home-made Non-Toxic, Bio-degradable, Rust Remover.

No this is not a "secret potion" and has been around for ages. Farmers have been using this recipe for years as they had the ingredients always to hand.

All you need to do is to buy a jar of molasses, pour it into a large plastic container, and pour eight more bottles full of water in on top of the molasses. Stir it up and its done.

At this stage it is so harmless you could drink it but after a few days when it starts to ferment and gets a mould growing on the surface of it you might not be so keen to taste it.

However the mould and the accompanying smell have no effect on the way the stuff works and you can go on using the same tub of it for years.

A neat fitting lid is a good idea because the smell given off, while not really offensive, is one that you probably don't need. I have had a tub of this with a lid, sitting in the workshop at work for about 4 years and there have been no complaints about the smell so far.

I have placed a metal bar across the top of the container and hang the pieces I want "de-rusted" on hooks made of coat-hanger wire.

The advantages of this mixture are many

It doesn't cost a bomb. You can make about 9 litres for about \$5.00 Larger quantities (4 litre plastic containers of Molasses) can be bought from "feed & grain" stores (like "Elders")

It removes rust around corners and in places where you can't even see.

It won't hurt your skin (if you are game to put your hand into something that has mould growing on top.)

It can be tipped out on the ground when you have finished using it.

It lasts so long that you could leave it to grand children in your will! (With any luck you will have managed to have squandered their inheritance, but at least they will still have Grandpa's rust remover!).

And the best part is **it really does remove rust!**

The only price you pay for having such a cheap product is that it is like other old fashioned things, it's slow. Having said that, it works unsupervised around the clock ("24/7" I believe is the latest way to imply this.) It takes one minute to put it in and one minute to pull it out. There just happens to be a week in between. To give you some idea, a work colleague brought a small cast steel vice in to be cleaned up. It was one of those that clamps to the edge of the bench with a "G" clamp type screw underneath. It was covered in red powdery rust that had been there a long time. It went in rusty in one piece on Monday and came out bright clean steel on Friday. All inside the hollow casting was nice and clean also.

My brother had some window sash weights that had been used to lower the "gang plank" for his yacht. They had been hanging on the Williamstown jetty for years with salt water washing over them. The rust was so thick that it came off in flakes about 2mm. thick. After 2 weeks in the tub they came out looking like they were covered in wet mud. After a good scrubbing in freshwater, they came out as bright, white, cast iron. They were then primed and painted to make them like new. You will find it necessary to wash the molasses off after the process. The process does not go on eating away at metal after it is removed from the molasses. Products that have been pulled out, washed, and dried with a blast from the air hose sometimes sit around the workshop for weeks and show now signs of rusting again.

I have heard stories of people who put rolled edge wheels in the mix and then had them spray-painted and the 18 months later found that the rims were rusting out. The story was that the molasses reaction just kept on going inside the rim and "chewed" it out.

The reality is that any chemical reaction only continues as long as there are unused chemicals available. Once the reaction has happened and a new substance is formed, the reaction stops. However if those rims had been rusted inside and the rust was removed then the true condition of the wheels might have been revealed. If the inside of the rims were cleaned of rust and then left unpainted and unprotected then they may start to rust out.

If I wanted to use this process on such wheels then I think that the rims should be dipped into a phosphoric acid mix and when dry, dipped into a metal primer and then finally into paint to make sure that the inside of the rim was properly protected. Dipping so that paint can fill the rim would be the only way to be sure that it was all covered inside. You only need a shallow tray to do this as you can stand the wheel up in the mixture and then move it round to the next section of rim and so on until the whole wheel has been done.

If you have a lot of rusty ironware to deal with this is simple, easy, cost effective, way to deal with it.

Have a go and let the editor know how you got on so that others can benefit from our collective wisdom.

Paul Bamford

SCREWS & SCREWDRIVERS

During my research for my article on the Maudsley, I came across a marvelous little book on screws and screwdrivers. Did you know that the original name for a screwdriver was TURNSCREW?

The first screw had a square head turned by a spanner, or a slotted head turned by a screwdriver.

Following the invention of butt hinges and their mass production in about the 1770's, the need for countersunk screws increased greatly. These screws are obviously slotted. Thus over the years, the use of a screwdrivers increased and also the camming out of the slot increased, scratching the cabinet work and quite obviously drawing blood from the user.

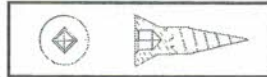
In 1907, a 27 year old Canadian was granted a patent for a socket-headed screw and driver. The recess was a square with chamfered edges, slightly tapering sides and a pyramidal bottom. This shape could be produced by "cold heading."

Craftsmen, cabinet makers and boat builders took to the Robertson screw which could be used without fear or damage. The Fischer Body Company, who made wood bodies in Canada for Ford became a large customer.

The success of Robertson prompted Henry Phillips to design his cruciform-shaped screwdriver slot. The American Screw Company agreed to develop and produce the Phillips screws and General Motors first tested them on Cadillac production lines. The Phillips screws proved so effective that all other automobile makers soon switched to them.

I have never seen a Robertson screw, but I can readily appreciate that it is the better product. However Phillips screws are everywhere today and one wonders why!

A sketch of a Robertson screw



Rob Graham

CHRISTMAS PARTY AT THE PARKY'S

The Alvis Christmas Party is always a good reason to get together and share a bottle of red and see Richard Tonkin don his short reds, jacket, white beard and cap. Strangely this year was no exception! I seriously think it is just Tonkin's excuse for getting to kiss the ladies without questions being asked. My observations were that he puckered up for a couple of the blokes before he straightened out his beard so he could see properly. Richard, Santa's beard is just that, not a set of false eyebrows!

Mrs Claus had gone to a lot of trouble at the Reject Store and everyone came away with a present—many thanks Tonkins, it was good fun but I can't turn the light out on my winking pencil—did it come with a warrantee?

Parkies' front steps caused a few problems for the older cars or was it the gravel road?

All in all it was lots of laughs.

Thanks Parkies!



Darryl Horton struggles under Santa's weight



Left: these two thought they weren't getting a present



Left: the hostess gets here present

Right: minutes before Parkies' patio dropped an inch!



ALICE GETS A YOUNGER SISTER.

With the TA21 drophead giving us so much fun, we felt rather guilty about buying a later car, but as we had owned a TD21 saloon some thirty odd years ago in England and regretted selling the car, it did not take too much encouragement to find a suitable addition to the family. I have to say that there was little encouragement or interest from ten of the dozen supposed classic car specialists I contacted in the UK. Why they bother to have web sites and then do not answer enquiries is beyond me, unless they simply have too much business.

By coincidence, an old school friend told me of a car that was for sale, a 1963 TD21 saloon with the 5 speed ZF gearbox. The car had a reasonable history file and a recorded mileage of 125,000 miles. My only wish was that it had the wire wheels as offered as an option.

Having located a likely car and having had a great deal of assistance from Richard Tonkin, I took his very important advice of getting the car inspected by Earley Engineering. They reported on the car and then arranged the collection, remedial work and delivery to the docks. Whilst this was not cheap, I felt that it was better to get the car checked and sorted before it arrived in Australia. I managed to jump through all the hoops held up by the various authorities, but the advice from Richard and the shippers, Karman Shipping, was reassuring. A drive of Richard's car at the Castlemaine event certainly confirmed that the later model would also be fun to drive.

During the time at Earley Engineering, a number of invisible faults came to light. These included the need for a new clutch, ring gear and various hydraulic brake parts. I also decided that to use the car in Australia regularly, we needed no problems as regards cooling. As a result, we have had an electric fan fitted, plus conversion of the cylinder head to hardened valve seats. All of this work mounted up as regards costs, so my plans to have the wire wheels were put on hold.

In early September, the car was delivered to the P&O terminal in Essex, England for the trip on board P&O Nedlloyd Encounter. About five weeks later, I could see from the Internet that the container had been unloaded at Melbourne. An Adelaide company, I.T.S., dealt with the incoming paperwork and shipment over to S.A. by truck. I.T.S. staff were helpful in that they got the battery charged on the car before we went down to see our new purchase.

The car drove well on the 150km trip to the Yorke Peninsula and with ambient temperature of 30+; I was pleased the electric fan was installed.

Shannon's fixed up the insurance at just \$130 and I had arranged a permit so as to be able to drive the vehicle back to Ardrossan where a Police check was to be carried out in order for registration to be possible. As it was, the usual situation of there never being a policeman around when you want one nearly caused a delay, but the officer in nearby Maitland fixed this matter very easily. Then it was the check by our local club's Historic Registration Officer before I drove 65km to Kadina for the next step of actual registration. In SA, we have the concession scheme for vehicles over 30 years of age, so you have to keep them pretty well original. At \$106 per annum, it is good value.

I began to worry when the Transport SA clerk talked about having to go to Regency Park, Adelaide for a vehicle check, especially as I had just driven past there a few hours earlier! Fortunately, I had checked this area thoroughly on a previous visit and another staff member confirmed all was well. As we had the registration plate ALVIS 1 from the TA21 project car, it seemed wise to use it, rather than let it become invalid.

We now have a few minor jobs to do but we have the car entered in some events already, including a 12 day tour for 2005. The arrival of another unusual "Pommy" car in a small country town such as Ardrossan does not go unnoticed, so we have had a lot of visitors already and I think I will get a printed information sheet ready for handout at the door. All we have to do now is choose a name for the car.

Details:

The new car came with a fair amount of documentation as regards one owner, but a bit scanty on the two others. 26961/ body 19044 was completed on 24.04.63, signed off by J.Taylor.

Delivery was on 01.05.63 to W.J.Skelly Ltd, Airbles Road Motherwell, Scotland.

Original colour was Peony red, P506, with beige interior. +.006 Tappets listed. 5 speed ZF gearbox.

It could well be that the first registration plate was WAG47 as this is an Ayrshire plate but a copy of the log book issued some time after 1971 shows reg. no. WXP 111, a London plate.

The original owner was apparently Mr Harold Shilling, 79, Montagu Mansions, Baker Street, London W1. (An old 1930's London Street atlas shows Montagu Mansions to actually be off Baker St, in Crawford St.)

On 10.10.85, the car was sold to:

Mr.H. Goodgame, Church House, Cloth Fair, London EC1A 7JQ.

I rather believe this to be a business address in the City., near to the Church of Bartholomew the Great.

However, many of the invoices related to parts and service work are addressed to Mr Goodgame, 2, Judges Lodgings, 19, New Street, Wells, Somerset and he had the car until 19.08.89 when the mileage is noted as 111,893

It was then sold to Anthony Charles Whitehead, 69 Swann Lane, Cheadle Hume, Cheadle, near Stockport. (Not far from Manchester).

Tony Whitehead has a unit in a light industrial area where he appears to restore various items including boats and some cars but does not appear in any directory I have of classic car restorers. He appears to have carried out a lot of work on the cars including a retrim of leather to grey. Most of the carpet appears to have also been renewed but there are some areas that look in need of renewal.

A great deal of body work repair has been carried out with repair panels but no invoices for parts provided. A repaint in Imperial Maroon was carried out and this would look to have been done some years ago.

I heard of the car via an old school chum who saw it on eBay and it had a silly reserve, so I contacted the vendor. It seemed that Tony Whitehead is not into computers but he had a friend who had suggested the Internet as a way of selling the car. From some programmes I now have, I believe Tony Whitehead was a member of the A.O.C. for a couple of years at least, circa 1992-3.

Mileage at purchase was just over 125,000 and whilst a tow bar was fitted, I had no reason to believe he pulled anything other than a classic motor boat.

As I have learnt the hard way before, photos can be flattering to the worst of cars, so I was hesitant about buying the car unseen. Given the shortage of TD/TE/TF 21's for sale in Australia, I had contacted various UK companies who I thought might have a suitable car on offer. I was very disappointed with the response I received from the majority of the firms despite them having websites inviting contact. Perhaps they thought the enquiry was not valid it came from Australia.

Having had advice from Richard Tonkin of ALVIC, I followed his advice on getting the car checked. It was going to cost \$1000 for this, but compared to the risks, I thought it was wise. I contacted Earley Engineering as Richard had used them with no problems. An inspection revealed several areas of concern but on discussion, we decided that if the mechanical points were dealt with before shipping, the car was basically a sound vehicle.

As it was, there were some jobs that came to a fair sum. A suspect clutch showed up the need for flywheel replacement. An all too clean sump area made us think the rear main was also likely to leak.

Soggy gearbox mountings were also changed as was a sloppy prop shaft. Knowing that the Alvis unit can get a bit warm, I asked for an electric fan to be fitted and this has proved to be well worthwhile.

Head removal showed the all too familiar sludge build up, so hardened valve seats were fitted at the same time. All this ate into my budget as regards the fitment of wire wheels, so that went on to hold.

Alex Simpson arranged delivery to my shippers, Karman Shipping, with the cost of 1290 GBP being the best quote, plus a very useful set of instructions on how to deal with the importation. I insured the car but the subsequent paint marking I discovered later was likely to be less than the \$750 excess in the small print of the policy. ITS in Adelaide handled matters this end, after arrival on the P&O Nedlloyd Encounter. They unpacked the container and got the car running, prior to collection and the run up to the Yorke Peninsula.

I have spent much of the two weeks checking over the car and have found nothing too worrying so far.

I decided to remove the tow bar as I was unlikely to use it. The set of wheel rim embellishers fitted was rather wider than the original Ace or Horvell type, so I have changed them as the concessional historic registration scheme requires accessories to be contemporary to the car.

With the aid of degreaser and jet washer, the front suspension and engine bay looks much better. The coating of Waxoyl sprayed liberally over everything may be fine for the UK climate, but it makes for hard work over here. With all this work, we have still had the chance to drive the car and confirm how nicely it goes. I also tried the set of wheels on the TA21 drophead to see how that car handles with radial tyres. Other members had told me it would be a great benefit and I can confirm that, so now that's another job to do!

So, 33 years after purchasing our first TD21 (VCL400, 26868), we have finally managed to get back to a similar car to that we had as a couple of newly weds in Hertfordshire, England. What with the lovely TA21 drophead, we reckon we are pretty lucky people to have two such nice cars. Now all I have to do is sort out the multitude of pieces that should make up the TA21 saloon, 24236, but that's another story

Mike Osborne

Fiddling

This is an article dedicated to all those blokes like me who get accused of "fiddling".

"You are always out in the shed fiddling with the car. Why don't you leave it alone, it was all right before you starting fiddling with it, if you want something to do, mow the lawn". I think we have all heard the above from time to time, although I seem to cop it more than others.

When I first got the 12/50, it was fitted with a 35 mm Solex carburetor, and whilst it ran, I was never happy as it seemed to have a mind of its own. The car was a bugger to start, wouldn't idle and would cut-out particularly at traffic lights. On the open road it was relatively ok, most of the above problems occurring in city traffic.

On studying the offending article, I discovered that the jet carrier, jet and jet cap only bore a slight difference to the drawings in the Alvis 12/50 tome, a handy reference book the thickness of a Monier house brick. Where a number five type cap should fit a number 5 type jet carrier, my set-up had a number six cap fitted with a number four jet carrier, with a most peculiar jet. My problem was that the bits and pieces I had weren't numbered which meant it was a case of "show and tell" whilst looking at the pictures in order to distinguish the various parts.

Antony Osborne of "Delage Garage" fame, seems to have a built-in radar when it comes to finding 35mm Solex carburetors at swap meets, and over the years has gathered quite a collection of which I was allowed to purvey in the quest of finding a suitable assortment of jets, caps and carriers that all possessed the correct hieroglyphics and matched the correct measurements as recorded in the tome.

This was the start of "fiddling" stage one in my quest of actually making the car idle.

Another problem was that the Alvis manual contained everything you needed to know about 30mm Solex carburetors out nothing in regard to 35 mm carburetors so we were basically floundering in the dark.

I next set about buying some drills in which to ream the two jets that I had acquired from Antony. This exercise almost turned into a career as I tried to track down someone who could supply a set of metric drills from 1mm upwards in ½ mm increments. I ended up with a set of number drills, that would get me out of trouble for the time being and so we began the task. Later I was able to purchase a set that "had fallen off the back of a truck" and we won't be going down that track I can assure you!

We went up, we went down, we opened up the jet cap, we closed the jet cap, we fitted this, we fitted that making small advancements to the cause in ever increasing and decreasing circles. By this stage the art of "fiddling" was taking on a whole new meaning. Maybe it was better to mow the lawn I sometimes thought!

I was determined to have the car running well for Tasmania and whilst at this stage there was an improvement in the overall running of the car, the problem of starting from cold was a major annoyance particularly when all the other cars I own start instantaneously.

The obvious solution to my problem was to fit a KI-gas pump which pumps raw fuel into the inlet manifold resulting in an instantaneous start. To give you an idea, I could squirt the poster of Jack Brabham on my garage wall from ten feet away when connected to the petrol line but disconnected from the inlet manifold. Old "Black Jack" however has never been the same since. This idea worked well, and on the Tassie rally had little trouble except for a hiccup when I forgot to screw the pump home resulting in one very over-rich Alvis that had a few of us somewhat baffled for a time. "Have you been fiddling again" not one but a few chortled.

Once back from Tassie, the quest for a better running car soon reared its ugly head again and so the gentle art of "fiddling" was once more undertaken this time with a view of competing at a VSCC meeting at Rob-Roy. On the way to Rob-Roy, the car did its usual thing of conking out at traffic lights and having to resort to the pump to get the juices flowing once more. On the day however, it even startled me when I won my class and got a trophy, mind you I was the only one in my class but I didn't let on to her indoors. "Fiddling pays off" I said, but that went down like a lead balloon so I went out and mowed the lawn.

Speaking about the problems of life with Allan McKinnon, he suggested that I should try a 30mm carburetor and promptly handed me one to try.

I removed the offending 35mm Solex and reduced the inlet manifold diameter from 35mm back to 30mm as per original. I also had the inlet ports and exhaust ports of the manifold reduced to the same diameter as the ports on the new head. Did I say "new head"? We won't go down that path at this stage only to say I bought a new cylinder last December but that is another story and contained a lot more "fiddling".

Someone once told me that a rule of thumb way of selecting the right jet is to multiply the size of the choke tube by 5 and from there it is just a matter of further "fiddling" to get it right. So if I have a 24mm choke tube, then I should fit a 1.20 mm jet. This information went into memory bank for later investigation and armed with the "good book" and a Solex catalogue donated by Brian Hemmings I began my quest to have this problem licked once and for all.

Brian also gave me the specifications that he used on his 12/50 and so you guessed it, we had a weekend of "fiddling".

To cut a long story short, the improvement was quite dramatic as I now had something that would idle and would only cut-out at intermittent times and a quick flick of the hand controls would alleviate the problem. Even herself thought there was some improvement although I wasn't yet satisfied that I had won any sort of battle.

The car had lost a bit of top end performance but had gained some significant low speed torque which to me was more beneficial and as I pointed out, Alvis cars never came out with Ki-gas pumps, so the problem of starting cold with the strangler still played a merry gig on my mind.

Word soon spread that I had become a compulsive "fiddler" and the lawn by this stage was approaching four feet height but I was not going to give in just yet.

I wrote a letter to the 12/50 Register Club in the U.K asking for information on what sort of jets and choke tubes should be fitted to 35mm Solex carburetors and got a number of replies, the upshot being to throw it away and fit a 30mm Solex. My next quest was to ask "my new found friends" what jet combination should I use in a 30mm Solex to which I ended up with ten various possibilities!

Whilst trying to find the cat in five feet high grass, it occurred to me that I hadn't read the Alvis "bible" for at least a week and so re-read it and all my notes that I had accumulated over the last six months.

On the subject of jet holders the screed gave a good description making note of fuel flow through the six holes situated at the base of the jet carrier. A nice little picture of a jet carrier drawn side on showing three holes was quite obvious under the text. "Six holes" says I to the cat who was the only "human" still interested in my plight. "It shows six holes" (all the ones I have in stock came with only two holes). I re-read this paragraph making sure I was looking at the right carrier and at the same time thinking whether or not it was a typo or whether whoever drew the diagram of the jet cap had a penchant for just drawing in extra holes to confuse simple minded people like me as some kind of a bad joke. I also noted that to increase the fuel level in the bowl a good trick is to turn the float upside down where it will give you a couple more mm's of fuel height. This certainly had an advantage over the three fibre washers that were placed under the needle valve at a previous attempt of getting more fuel into the bowl. I put this idea into the ever-increasing memory bank as well.

With a spare jet carrier, I drilled the extra-required amount of holes and re-fitted it at the same time reducing the jet from 1.15mm to 1.10 mm just for something else to do. I removed one washer from the needle valve and bolted the carburetor back on the car.

With this done, I double-checked the ignition timing making absolutely sure that all was well in that department and proceeded to start the car. At this stage I made sure that I was home alone as I couldn't bare to be accused of "fiddling" at this crucial stage.

With the petrol switched on and the strangler pulled out, a quick press on the starter button had the car bursting into song after only three engine revolutions, and proceeded to sit there merrily idling away as though nothing had happened. The cat, my only garage companion who was asleep on the hood bag hardly raised an eyebrow as I jumped about in sheer exhilaration at the prospect of finally achieving some sort of success.

Once the cat had been extracted from the hood bag, I took the car for a spin around the block noting its performance. It took a while to warm up but after some two km's seemed to come into its own. It certainly had lost its hunting characteristics and pulled away quite well from stationary. It idled, didn't stall and would quite happily run at about 400rpm. "Better than sex" I said to myself.

The proof of the pudding was whether or not it would start instantaneously after it had been switched off for half an hour. It did.

The Delage President's run held on the 10/10/2004 was the cars first outing with its new set up. To me it was the best it had ever run and apart from a cough and splutter coming home due to a bit of dirt it ran exceptionally well.

The upshot of all of this is that we now have a man to come and mow the lawn, the cat has resumed her place on the hood bag, the car runs well and I'm no longer accused of fiddling.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking a number of people who have guided me through this maze.

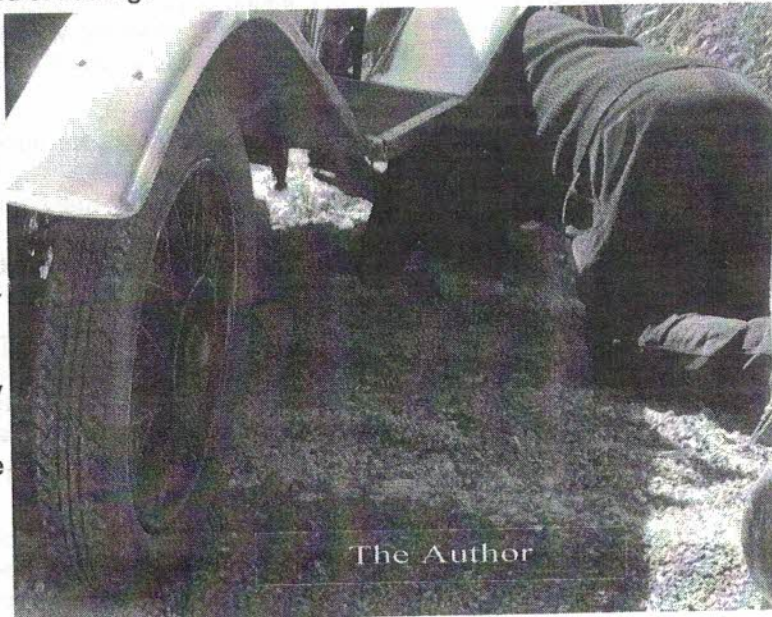
Allan McKinnon for loaning me a 30mm carburetor in which to achieve success. Geoff Hood for encouragement. Brian Hemmings for providing me with a Solex instruction book.

The members of the 12/50 Register in the U.K for providing added information.

All you lot for having to put up with me and my problems.

All I have to do now is find something else to fiddle with!!!

Chester McKaige



The Author

WINGS & WHEELS

For anyone who missed "Wings & Wheels" you missed a good outing!

Interesting cars, interesting aeroplanes!

If anyone thought for one minute that the interest in old motor cars was flagging—there were hundreds if not thousands—those that blew your socks off and those that didn't—they were all there.

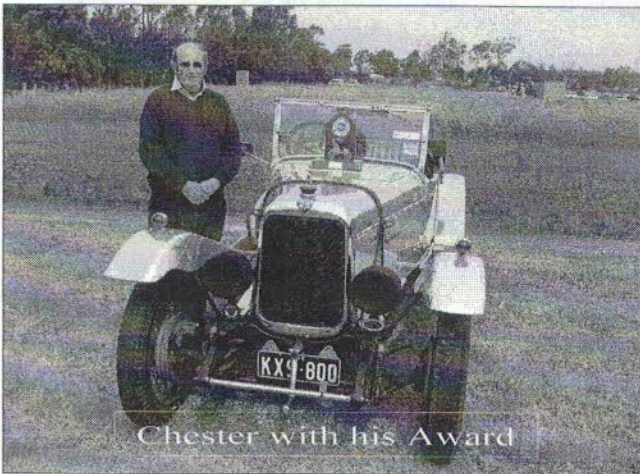
Maybe the only downside for the day was problems with access. Lilydale Airport and environs were not designed for the entry and exit of several thousand cars and many more thousands of people.

The weather was fine and the 13 Alvises in the paddock were even better. Unfortunately we only had 10 car spaces booked on the movement area proper and the other 3 cars were some distance away. The group consisted of one 12/40, four 12/50s, one 12/70, one Silver Eagle, two SP20's, one 3.5 litre, one SP25, one TA14 and one TA21 Drophead. Not a bad representation of the Marque!

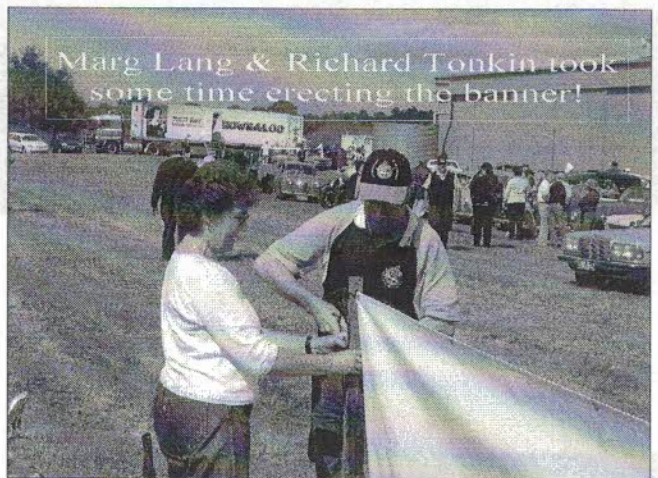
Chester McKaige came back to his car during the morning to find a note indicating that he was in the running for a prize at the end of the day. With some skepticism he fronted up to be awarded Best Vintage Car at the meet. We all fronted up for the presentation and made more noise during his presentation than all the others put together.

Sadly on the way home John Hetherington had a catastrophic failure of the SP20's fan pedestal and suffered significant damage to radiator and fan.

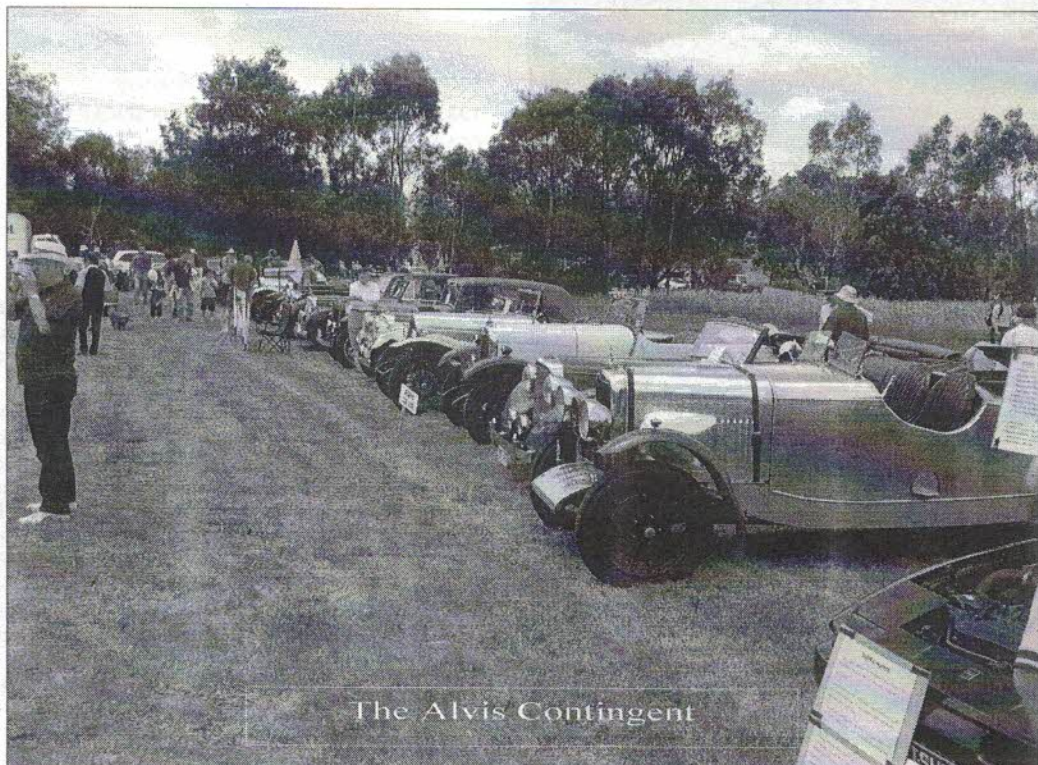
Thanks Chester & Sally for your organisation.



Chester with his Award

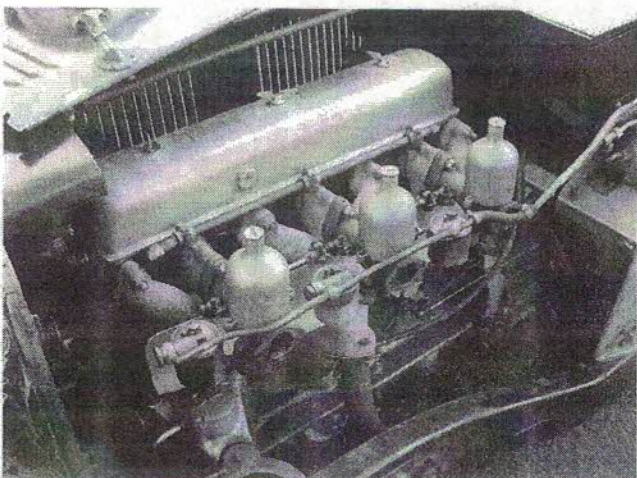
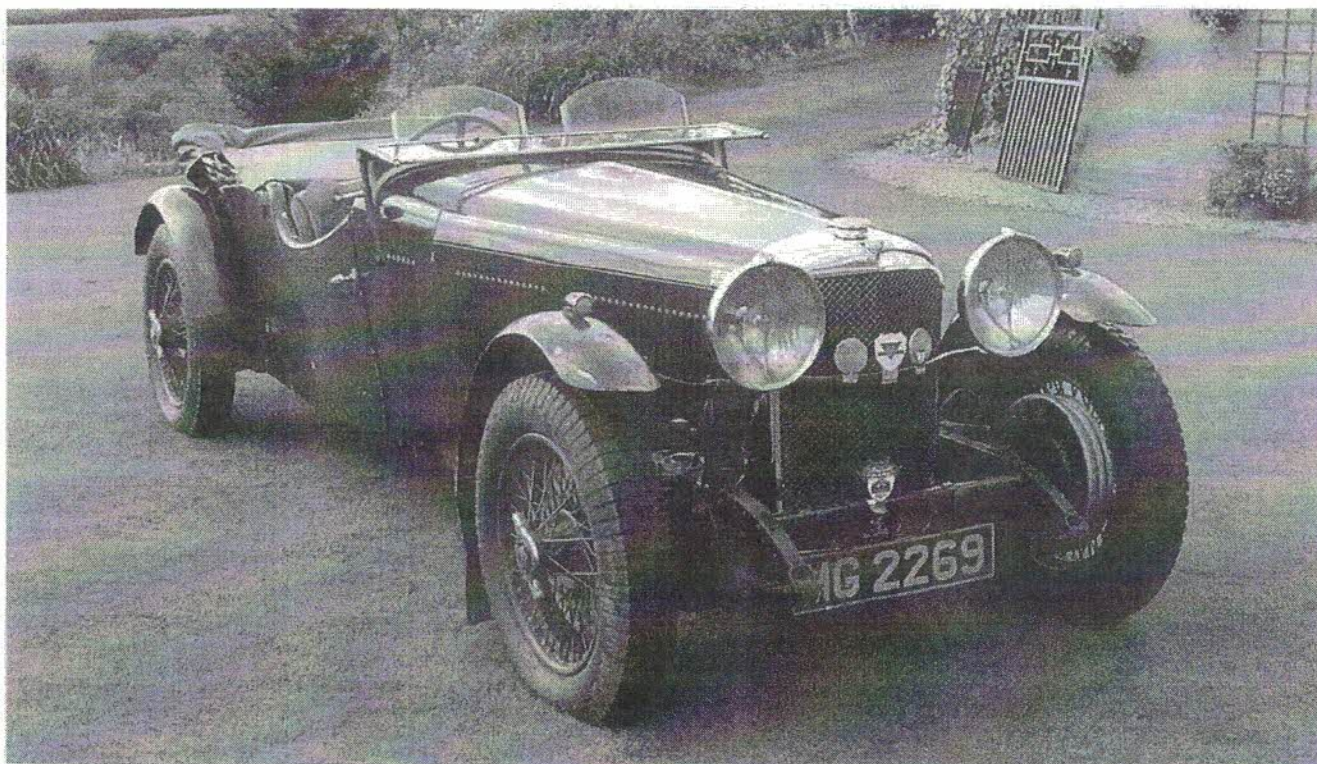


Marg Lang & Richard Tonkin took some time erecting the banner!



The Alvis Contingent

Ken Cuming sent the Christy Auctions information on a very pretty SP20 for sale in its December Auction



172

Former VSCC Pomeroy Trophy Winning

1933 ALVIS SPEED TWENTY SA FOUR SEATER SPORTS TOURER

COACHWORK BY VANDEN PLAS, No. 1884

Registration No. MG 2269

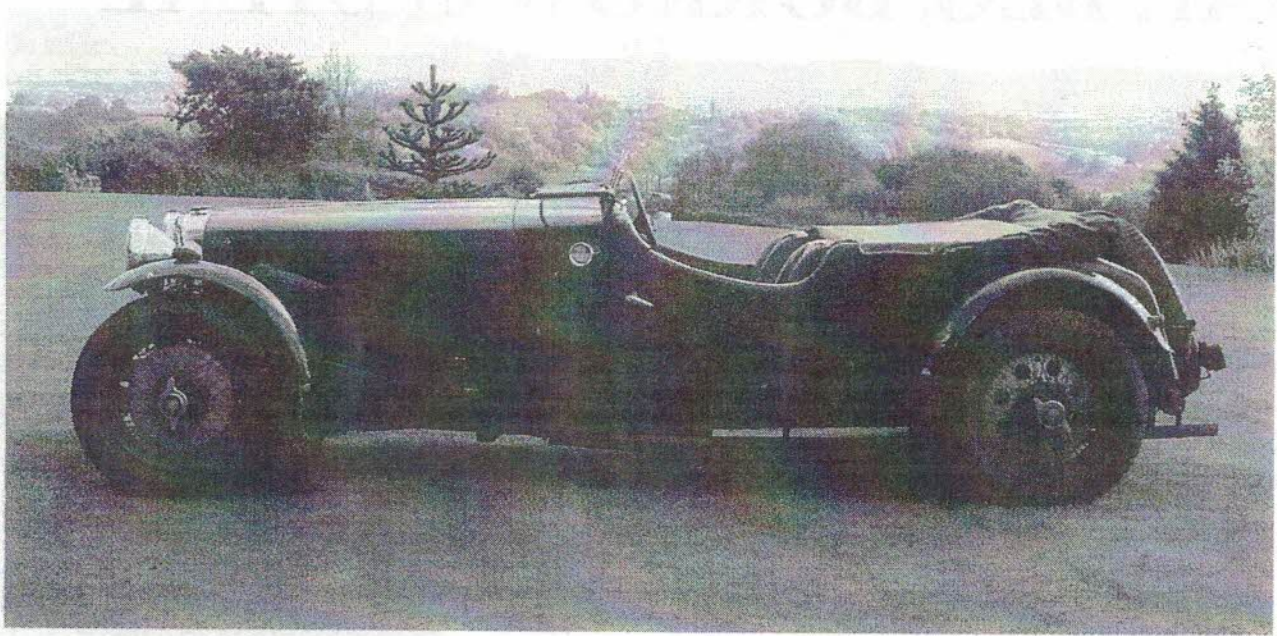
Chassis No. 10074

Engine No. 14120 (see text)

Green with red upholstery

Engine: six cylinder, overhead valve, 3,571cc, 106bhp at 3,800rpm (see text); Gearbox: four speed manual, all synchromesh (see text); Suspension: front and rear semi-elliptic leaf springs; Brakes: four wheel hydraulically operated drum. Right hand drive

Alvis already had a range of solidly well engineered medium sized straight sixes to its name when the Speed Twenty was introduced in 1932. But now, its smooth overhead valve engine rode in a massive low-slung frame. To match this chassis Charles Follett, a much respected car dealer and a brilliant salesman for Alvis whose showrooms were in the heart of London's exclusive Mayfair district, commissioned drophead coupes, saloons and open tourers from houses of the renowned Charlesworth, Mayfair and Vanden Plas. Each design was long and low, luxurious and wonderfully turned out, and being well connected and a gentleman racing driver well known at the old Brooklands track, Follett was exactly in tune with the tastes of his wealthy customers. Between the salesman and the chassis, they hit upon a winning formula, which continued through their subsequent models, the Speed 25 and 4.3 Litre.



Speed 20 chassis 10074 was despatched from the Alvis works 72 years ago precisely to the sale date, on 7th December 1932, to Follett. The car was one of four that month that he submitted to Vanden Plas of Cricklewood to be fitted with Sports coachwork for which the price of this car only is quoted as £110 in their records. The completed car was ready by 10th February 1933 when its one year guarantee was issued by Alvis for first owner L.J. Bentley, c/o Coutts & Co. on the Strand, London, the car being registered with the Middlesex numberplate 'MG 2229'.

The subsequent pre-war years of history remain unknown, but in 1943 it came into the ownership of Leonard Richards of Solihull. Mr. Richards actively campaigned the Alvis in Vintage Sports Car Club events and other club circles, with some success, this included the distinction of winning the famed Pomeroy Trophy in 1956. In this period the car was a competitor at Silverstone, Oulton Park and other race circuits as well as Prescott and Shelsley Walsh speed hillclimbs. During this time, for enhanced performance a later Crested Eagle Alvis engine, unit 14120 was fitted, as well as the desirable all-synchromesh gearbox, and improved brakes.

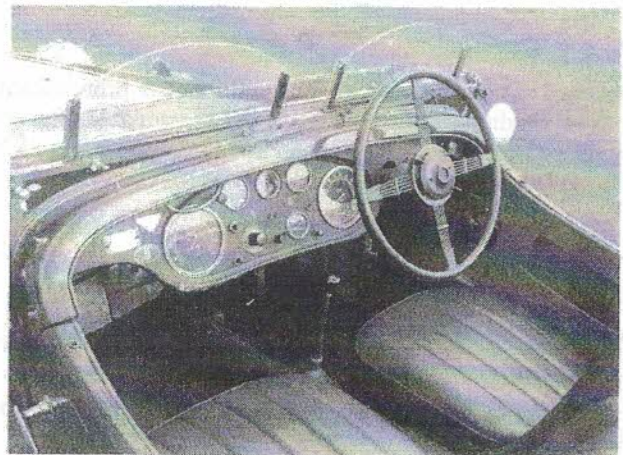
Copies of various photographs on file depict the car in action at these venues, as well as a report in *The Motor* showing a slightly over-enthusiastic attacking of a hill at the Colmore Trophy Trial in April 1947! On Mr Richards death in 1991, the car passed within his family to his daughter and son in law with whom it remained until this year.

Today, this sporting Alvis still wears its original rakish two door Vanden Plas coachwork, and remains substantially original, even to its coachbuilder's plaque on the base of its door. Although somewhat scruffy in appearance, its performance is incredibly sporting and it would make an ideal and usable entry for appropriate club racing, rallying or simply road touring.

Estimate: £35,000-50,000

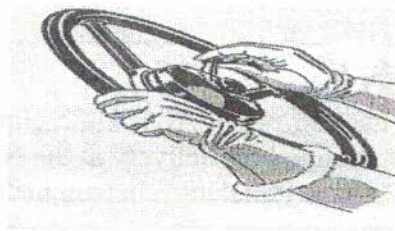
US\$65,000-93,000

€51,000-72,000



1947 Colmore Trophy Trial

Credit: LAT



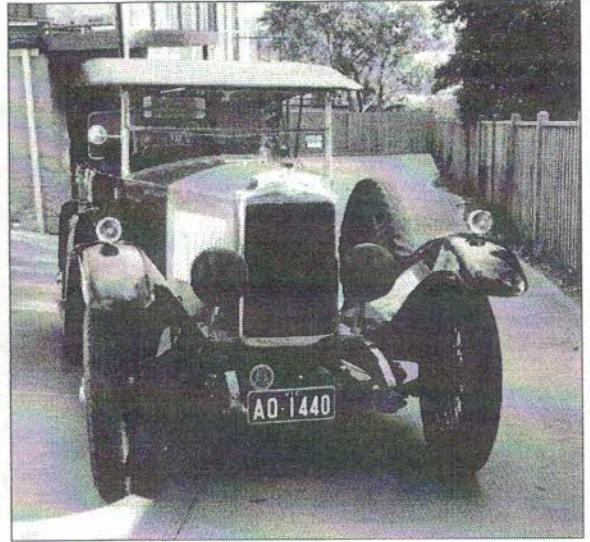
SWAP, BEG, BORROW or STEAL

FOR SALE

1926 Vauxhall 14/40 Princeton
Tourer.

Excellent condition with matching engine & chassis numbers. 12 months registration. Excellent tyres, an Auster screen, full set of tonneau covers, hood & side curtains.

Ring Darrell Horton (03) 5983 2016



FOR SALE

Jaguar crankshaft harmonic balancer—reconditioned & professionally engineered to suit SP25 shaft (or equivalent) at a cost of \$1582.08. New condition—any reasonable or unreasonable offer considered or swap for Amilcar C4 starter motor. 6 used pistons with gudgeons pins in good usable condition. Ex SP25 sized 83 mm + 20
Enquiries Brian Hemmings on (02) 9484 7491 or (02) 9484 7857

FOR SALE

1932 SA Speed 20 drophead. Full ground up restoration.
Around \$200,000
Contact Historic & Vintage Restorations (03) 9877 0666



FOR SALE

1937 SA 4.3 litre Saloon by Martin & King
Car # 18890
\$90,000
Ring Paul Chaleyzer (03) 9877 0666

FOR SALE

2 X Bendix drives for 12/50. Ring John Kent (03) 5721 4393

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Several people have expressed interest in another run of Alvis Umbrellas. Not really the time of the year to need one, but let's be prepared. Could be arranged for delivery at the National Rally.
If interested notify John Lang (03) 5426 2256 or jdmelang@netcon.net.au

FOR SALE:

1937 12/70 Alvis Sedan.

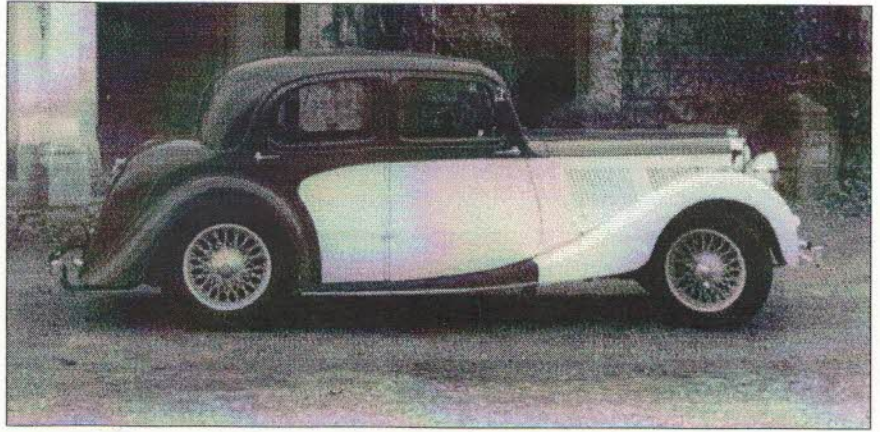
Grey and white. Mechanically checked over & in good order. New rings fitted. Fully registered, completely re-trimmed, re-painted and re-chromed. Under 1000 miles since work carried out. 12 months full Victorian registration

\$33,000 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:

Rear brake cross shaft for a late 12/50. Can swap for an early two wheel brake car.

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:

For a 12/50

Crown wheel and pinion 4.55 ratio.

Ring Rob Sands (03) 9534 5957

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

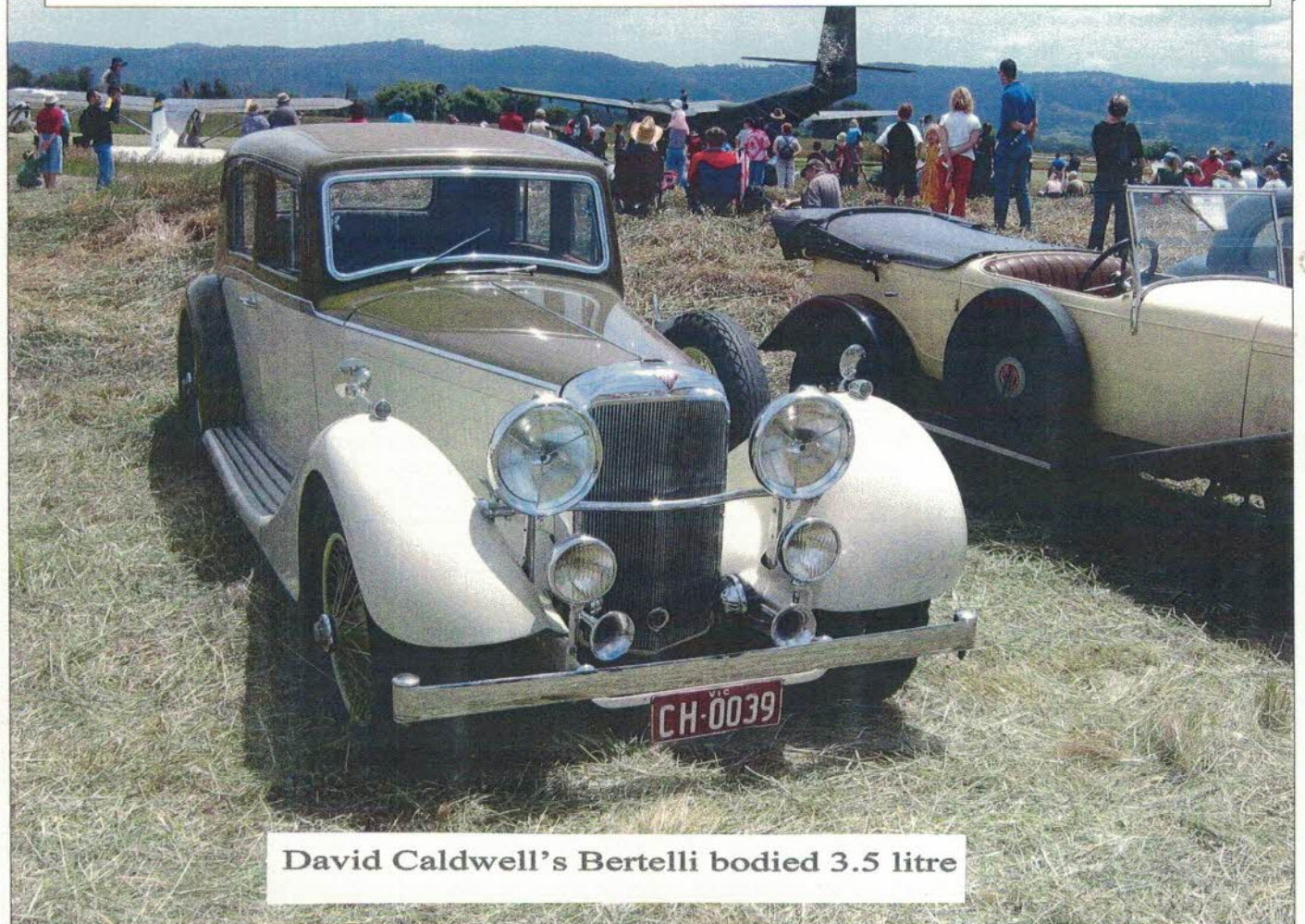
John Langed

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Chris Higgins' ex Kendal McSkimming 12/50

TWO MORE ALVISES BACK ON THE ROAD



David Caldwell's Bertelli bodied 3.5 litre