

July 2007

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



Racing Car Number 1

more inside.....

Also

An Epic Firefly Restoration



Alvis Car Club of Victoria (Inc)

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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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Front page: Alvis Racing Car Number 1 on the track at Brooklands, eight decades after its first appearance

President's Report

One of the great things about a car club or any club for that matter is the friendships that can develop many of which will last forever.

In the UK recently for the 100th Anniversary of Brooklands, a group of four Alvic members and their wives gathered together for the festivities. All of us had an absolute ball, brought together by a common interest, old motor cars.

Not only that, Sal and I were welcomed into the homes of a number of UK Alvis enthusiasts who we had never met, having communicated in the past only by email.

We all met up with many Alvis owners at the various gatherings we attended and made to feel at home almost immediately.

To those people may I say a big thank you, and for those of you coming over here in 2008, I only hope we can offer the same hospitality that you have shown to us.

In my last President's report, I spoke about "magic moments." Were mine fulfilled at Brooklands? In a nutshell, yes.

I had always wanted to see Parry Thomas' BABS in action and was not disappointed. To hear and see the newly restored Blitzen Benz run around the track was a sight for sore eyes and the Land Speed Record Delage was the icing on the cake.

Alvis cars were well represented including the first racing 12/50, the Dunham Speed 20 and the Follett 12/50 whilst the car park was full of 12/50s, Speed cars and TA cars of various descriptions.

Now, a week after our return and with things getting back to normal, we can look forward to the July Run organized by Darrell and Joc Horton and the two day rally in September organized by Alan and Noeline McKinnon. Also a reminder that the Rough Red and Pie Night and Annual Presentation is in August.

Happy motoring

Chester McKaige

SUPPER The PARCELLS

NEWS

John White has purchased Parky's spare TA21 - lots of work to be done!

.....
Don Bosanquet (FWD) and his wife Jill are moving from Adelaide to live in Melbourne early next year.

PLEASE NOTE

*The Peninsula Ramble on Sunday 29th July
Details inside*

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*Due to the Gippsland floods, the September run to Maffra will
now be held in the Bendigo area.*

Details inside

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

MY VIEW

A month or two ago Chester raised the point of being able to buy a brand new Bugatti Type 51 from Brazil. I ask why anyone would want to do this? I am sure the true Bugatti aficionado wouldn't recognise such a vehicle - it couldn't have the correct engine and chassis numbers etc etc. The vehicle builders of today have advantages that Ettore would have lusted after. Much more robust and powerful machine tools, tungsten-carbide cutting tools, even diamond cutting tools, numerical control machines, the list goes on and on.

The people today who own old cars such as an Alvis know the tears of frustration when the "b.....y" thing wont go properly. And then the tears of joy, when, after hours of work, grimy hands and barked knuckles, it goes the way it was meant to.

Just imagine a brilliant modern artist who obtains the right piece of board, grinds his colours in a pestle and mortar (doesn't use an electric grinder) and uses the oils and resins available to Leonardo da Vinci, and proceeds to paint an exact copy of "The Mona Lisa." Why, why on earth would anyone do that?

Paul Bamford said his piece about a friend with a worn shackle-pin who built it up with weld and then machined it to the original dimensions. Rather than machine a whole new part. Why? A few years ago four of the twelve cam followers in my Speed 20 broke their flanges. I could have annealed the broken ones, welded up the flanges, re-machined, re-hardened and re-ground them. But why? When I first assembled the motor I remember thinking the flanges were a bit skinny, but I thought Alvis knew what they were doing and they had lasted 60 years, so I just stoned the faces flat and used them. After they broke I purchased 12 new cam followers, some from our Club and some from Red

Triangle. These new parts were quite a bit thicker in the flange and the radius between the flange and the body was larger and, all in all, the new parts were much stronger than my old parts. These cam followers are common in all Smith-Clarke motors from 12/50 to 4.3 litre. I assume Alvis had a few problems and consequently modified their design. So I am very pleased I bought new items - even though the purchase made quite a dint in the bank balance.

To end the story, we are only the custodians of these beautiful old cars to pass on to future generations and I believe we shouldn't be making replicas. At the same time I feel it is our duty to take advantage of the lessons learnt by the original manufacturer.

R G

BENDIGO RUN 22-23 September *(previously to be held at Maffra)*

Alan & Noeline McKinnon are organising 2 days of interesting touring in the Bendigo area with one overnight at the Gold Fields Motor Inn, 308 High St, (Calder Hwy) Golden Square.

The 11 units have been booked, however you will need to ring them on 5441 7797 to book a room in your name. Tell them you are from the Alvis Car Club and you would like to reserve a room on the night of 22 September. You need to ring them by 1st September as any remaining rooms will be available to the public from that day.

Peninsular Ramble

Sunday 29th July

Darrell Horton and
Jocelyn Coates

24 Johnson Street
Balnarring. 3926

John Lang Esq.
Editor- in-chief
ALVIC.

Dear John,

for your information:

Peninsula ramble -July 29 2007

please ring Hortons on 59832016 before July 22 if you would like to take part. We meet at the Pelican Pantry, Marine Parade Hastings (Mel: 154 X 11) at 9.45 am and finish at the Hotel Sorrento for lunch, approximately three hours later after a ramble of some 112 kilometers.

participants wishing to return home may do so either by way of Beach Road (Nepean Highway) or the Sorrento-Queenscliffe ferry. for those who become entranced by the Peninsula overnight accommodation can be secured at the Balnarring Motel

unlike last years rendezvous at the Pig and Whistle at Red Hill the weather this year will be delightfull and you'd be mad to miss this day out in your favourite conveyance.

regards
Joc & Darrell

100 YEARS at BROOKLANDS

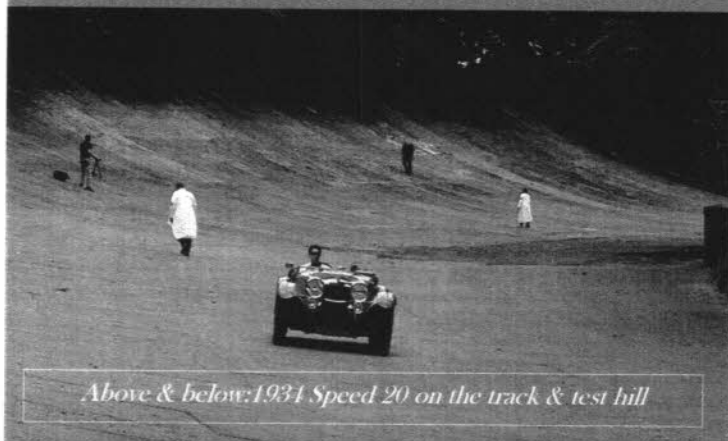
The weekend of 16th and 17th June 2007 saw celebrations being held at the Brooklands Racing Track for its 100th Anniversary. The track is near Weybridge about 20 miles south west of London.

A number of Victorian Alvis Car Club members were lucky enough to be able to attend. Early on the Saturday the McKaiges, the Hetheringtons, the McDougalls and the Hortons arrived at the race track and the first person they saw was Duncan Scott from South Australia - it is a small world!

There were cars going around the tracks as well as ones on display. The group scattered across the site to meet up again at the end of the day. There were various events staged on different parts of the old circuit as well as a track out the front of Mercedes World. It was wonderful to see the famous racing cars from the 1920's and 1930's like the Napier-Railton, BABS, the 1909 Blitzen Benz, a 1923 V12 Delage, 1923 12/50 Alvis - the Works Number 1 Racing Car, Mother Gun, the Napier-Bentley as well as the famous Bentleys Old Number 2 and number 8, part of the Bentley Boys Racing Team. It was great to see them out on the old parts of the track - the Members Banking and Byfleet Banking.

There were various runs up the Test Hill by the cars during the day. During the afternoon we were treated to a flying display by a biplane with a lady wing walker - she performed some incredible feats as the plane dipped and soared overhead. Both days had similar programmes but on the Sunday there were many more cars on static display and this included a large number of Alvis cars from the various eras. It was good to talk with some of the owners. A great weekend was had, made even more special by being able to share it with others.

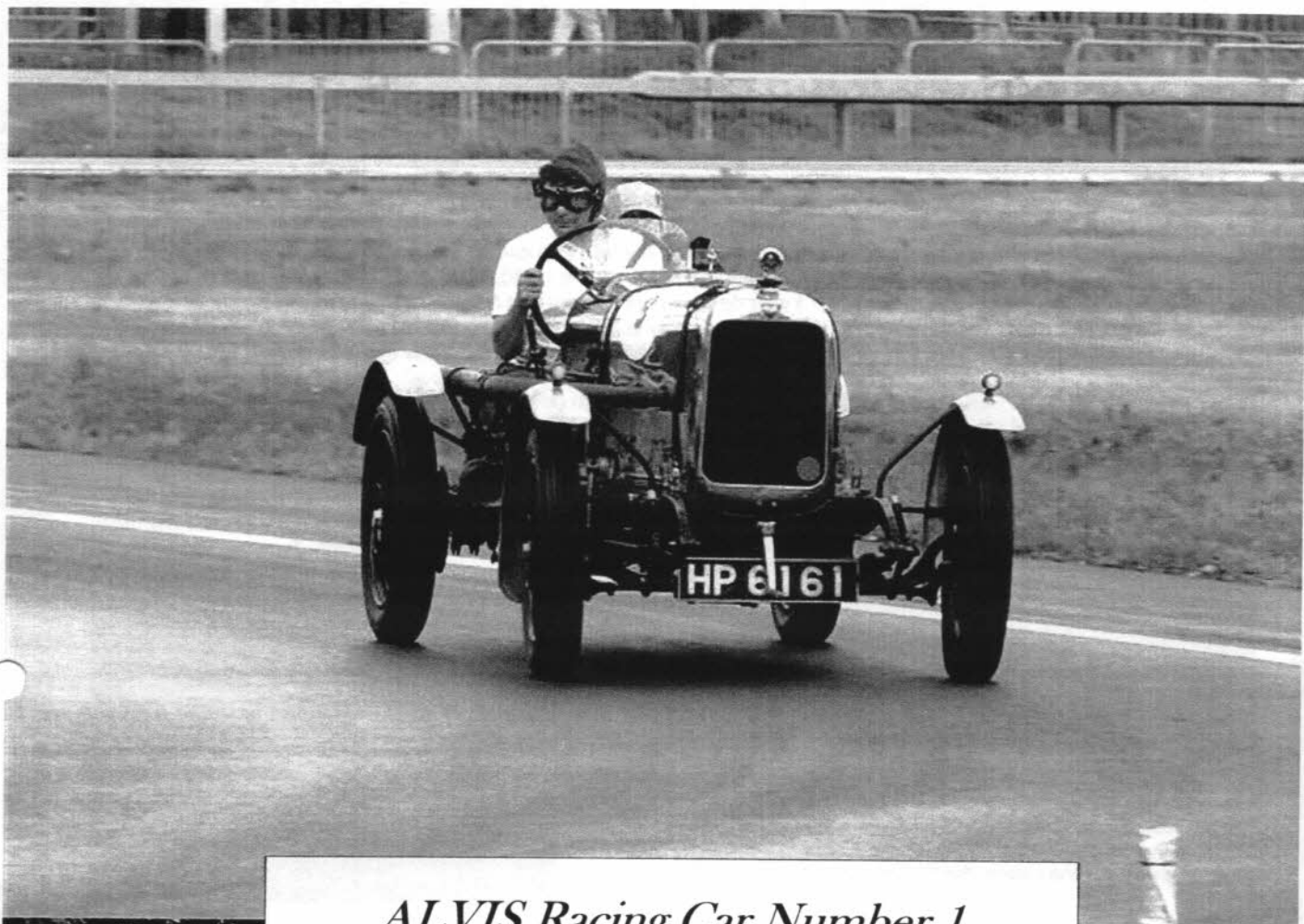
Frances & Andrew McDougall



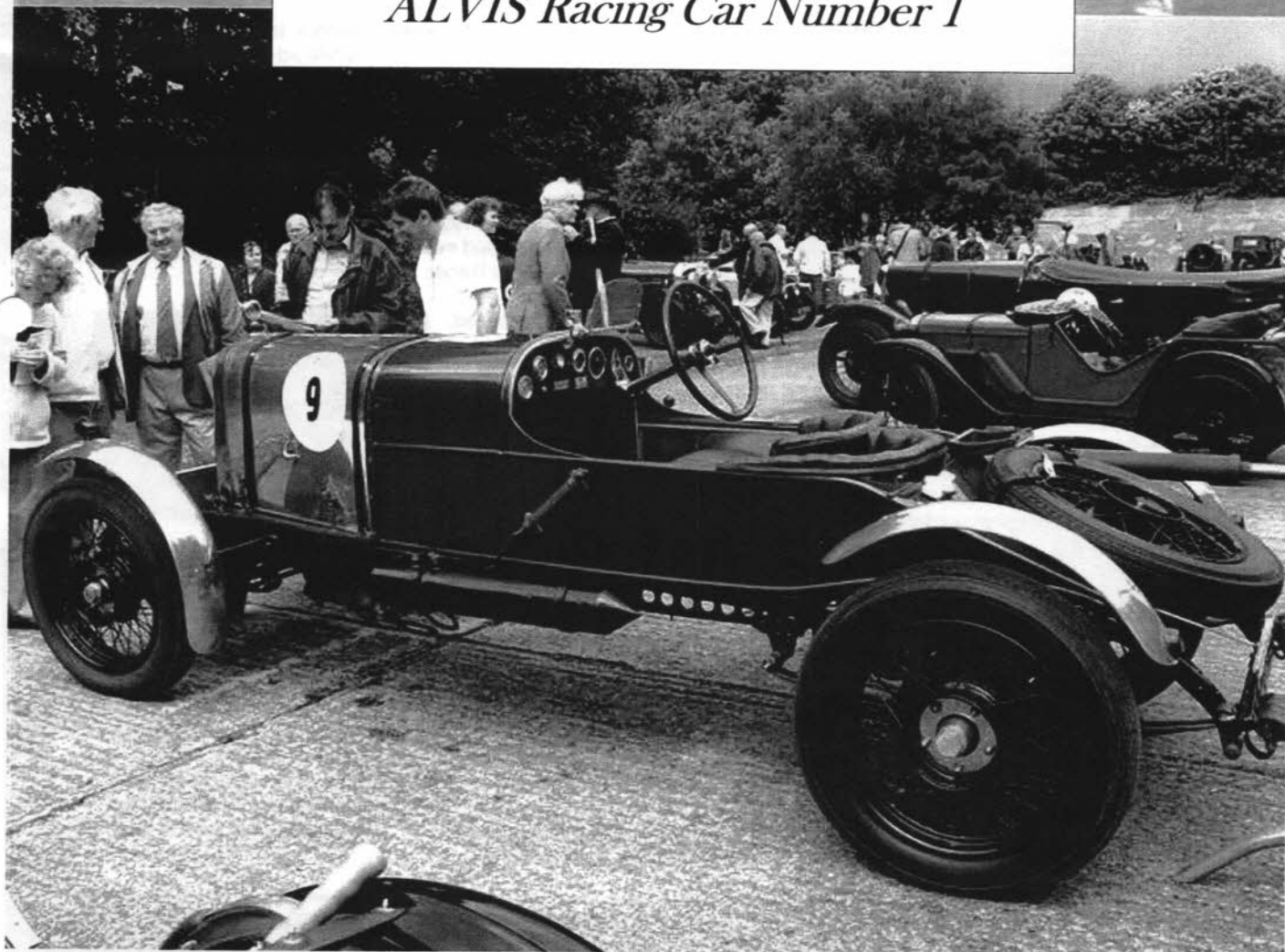
Above & below: 1934 Speed 20 on the track & test hill



12/50s in the paddock



ALVIS Racing Car Number 1





ALVIS WORKS RACING CAR No. 1



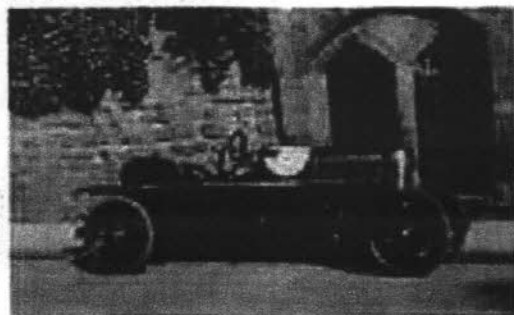
Chassis 2091, Engine 2454EX, Car N° 7577 Alvis 12/50 SA, HP6161

Built the late spring of 1923, the first of three works racing cars created to publicise the launch of the new 12/50 sports car. A new OHV engine was developed to replace the side valve unit from the 10/30, 11/40 and 12/40 predecessors and revive the fortunes of the struggling Alvis factory. N° 1 was designed as a sprint and hillclimb car, and used as a mobile testbed for the N°s 2 & 3 cars, and featured a heavily drilled chassis, dry sump lubrication and a big port head. N° 1 first appeared at South Harting on 28th July, where it scored two firsts at the hands of works racing driver Maurice Harvey.



The photograph (left) shows Harvey at East Harting, Bedford, on 18th August 1923, where he is about to set up second fit and take the 1 1/2 litre class. This is the earliest known photographic record of the car.

The car is pictured below right outside the Alvis service manager Percy Joseland's digs in Middleborough Terrace, Coventry, in October 1923, prior to setting off for the historic 200 miles JCC race at Brooklands, which the Alvis team won.

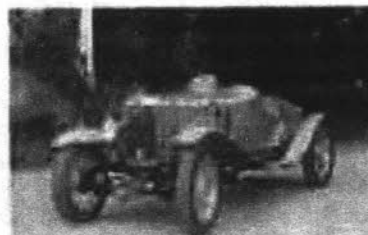


Harvey's car (N°2) had caught fire during practice and was being hastily rebuilt. As insurance, Alvis put a long range boiler tank and knock-on wheels onto HP6161 in case the repairs weren't completed in time. In the event they were, the N°2 car won, and the rest is history.



Alvis removed the knock-on wheels before transferring N° 1 to privateer Tommy Smyster to act as a mobile advertisement for the new 12/50 sports cars based on these early racers. Of the three 1923 works racing cars, only N° 1 survived. The car was sold in late 1924 to Jack Linnell for £250, who used it regularly both as a sports car, and in competitions. The photo taken at Brooklands (left), shows racing driver and then outer circuit record holder Kaye Don starting N° 1, driven by Linnell in the first of two timed heats at the Henly's Rally on 15th June 1929. N° 1 won the heat and went on to win the final, which included many younger cars, one of which was a 1927 Front Wheel Drive Racer.

After WW2, the car was rescued from a field by Linnell's friend Robert Wicksteed, and restored. Over the following 20 years, N° 1 had a series of bodies (the one shown on the right is a 1950 incarnation), before being finally reunited with the original for the 50th anniversary of the founding of Alvis, in 1970.



Robert Wicksteed actively campaigned the car in both circuit and hill climb competitions during the seventies and early eighties, and is well remembered for his races against the 1924 200 miles car, as well as his spirited ascents of both

Shelsley and Prescott. It is at this latter circuit that he is pictured (right) on the exit from Pardon in 1976, recording his fastest ever ascent of the hill in 53.48 seconds. It was returning from one such hill climb in 1984 that the car suffered a fit and failure, causing massive damage to the engine.



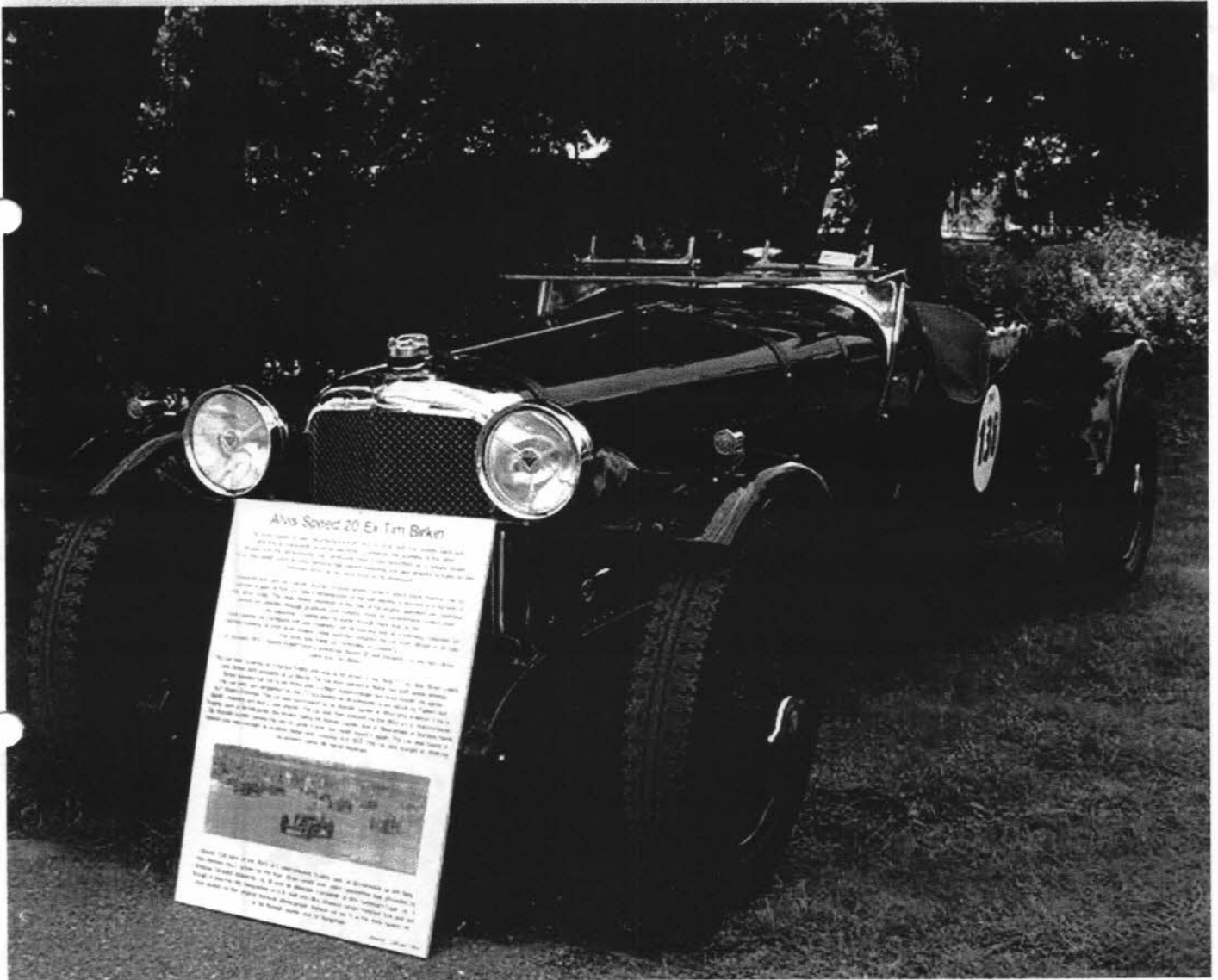
Due to other commitments, repair was delayed until 2003, and sadly Robert Wicksteed passed away shortly after starting it. Since then a full nut-and-bolt restoration has been completed by his son-in-law, Robert Hunt. This included new crank, rods, pistons and cam as well as reinstating the original 1923 block, which had been cracked in 1941. The new body, an exact copy of the original, has been built with an inboard petrol tank to the 1923 sprint specification.

The "Sir Henry (Tim) Birkin" Speed 20 SA

This SP20 Racer was ordered by Sir Henry Birkin, chassis number 9900, registration JJ3233, specially bodied by Carbodies with a streamlined tail and featured an enormous petrol tank taking up virtually the whole space behind the rear axle.

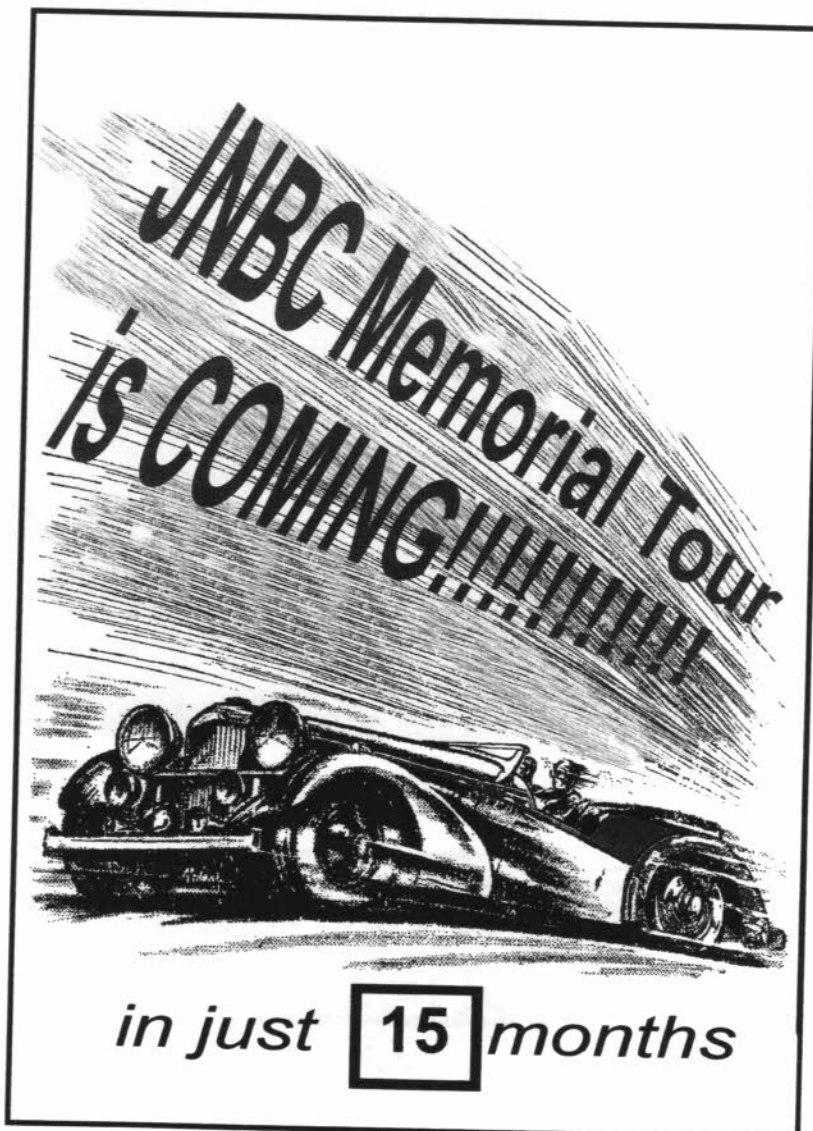
Sir Henry and T.G John apparently had a disagreement about Sir Henry's requirement to have a Villiers supercharger fitted and the car was never delivered.

Subsequently it was purchased by Sir Ronald Gunter and raced at Brooklands and had a long post-war racing history.



COMING EVENTS

- JUL 20 General Meeting
29 "Peninsula Ramble" (organised by the Hortons)
- AUG 17 General Meeting "Rough Red & Pie Night" (organised by the Parkies) and
Trophy Presentations
26 Rob Roy Hill Climb—pack a lunch and come and enjoy the action.
- SEP 21 General Meeting
22 Bendigo Run (organised by the McKinnons)
- OCT 19 General Meeting
- NOV 2 Camperdown Weekend Away. Due to the intransigence of our former
Camperdown landlord, the event will be held on the **Bellarine Peninsula** and
organised by the McKaiges & the Langs. More detail to follow. **KEEP THIS
WEEKEND FREE**
16 General Meeting
- DEC 2 Christmas Party at the Tonkins, Smiths Gully



DON'T OVERLOOK THE OBVIOUS!

Many of you will know that through the generosity of Francis and Andrew McDougall, Maritta and I attended the recent SA National Rally in a "proper" car, namely their black SB Speed 20 special.

On the way back from SA we had the misfortune to break the starter motor shaft causing some minor inconvenience as we had to push start the car for the trip home (I tried the crank handle but decided it was easier to have Maritta and the Parky's push).

Andrew had also generously suggested that as he and Francis are away for a few months we might as well hang on to the car. Back at home I fitted the starter from my Crested Eagle (it will be a few years before the CE needs it,) whilst Andrew went in search of a replacement for his. Maritta and I then continued to enjoy Speed 20 motoring.



A few weeks later I drove the speed to work planning on taking it to the VSCC meeting. Around mid morning, the car needed moving and much to my surprise the starter wouldn't work. I removed it suspecting that the pinion gear had failed to retract but alas this was not so. Eventually the problem was diagnosed as a faulty starter solenoid, this was replaced and hey presto we are in business again.

That evening I drove into Melbourne, after picking up Geof Hood, then returned home, no starter problems.

The next morning I discovered the starter was again non functional so I once again removed it to investigate. Unable to find any problems and after dismantling, refitting and removing several times I took the offending item to work with me to have it checked. It

was discovered that a bare wire between the field coils may have shorted against the case and this was repaired.

Once again I fitted the starter but still no action.

Off again and this time I removed both the starter and new solenoid to have the system checked, I would have taken the car to work but it is very difficult to extract a non functioning car from our front driveway.

Back at work it was found that the "new" solenoid was sticking but the starter appeared to be working fine.

Once again I fitted the starter, 2nd new solenoid, wiring etc, press button expecting all to be fine, no action !!!%#@& etc. etc.

It was dark and mid week so I decided to leave any further investigation until the next weekend.

The following weekend I again removed the offending starter, checked its operation, checked the solenoid, checked the wiring, finally checking the battery (I had previously checked its level of charge which was fine) and discovered that one of the battery clamps had decided that as the starter was getting so much attention it should get into the act by rattling loose. On tightening up the offending clamp (and checked all the others), wonder of wonders its all working again.

The moral, when things go wrong it all happens at once, and always check for obvious solutions no matter how unlikely they may seem at first.

Dale

ALVIS PARTS AND REPAIRS DATABASE

Newsletters over the past year have carried a note to the effect that your committee has offered to create a database of useful parts information, to capture those useful parts equivalents that most of us hear by word of mouth or discover ourselves. With the notable exception of a lot of 12/70 & TA14 items from Bob Graham the response to date has been modest, but continues to trickle in.

To recap the intention, we are seeking to record;

- Equivalent parts for specific Alvis models (examples might include alternate magnetos, radiator hoses, valve springs, pistons etc etc)
- Sources for various general items
- Parts repair hints or techniques

If and when this database starts to reach a critical mass it will be published on the internet – for now however there is not enough information to warrant it. Please think hard and see if you can contribute one or two gems...

Information please, to Bob Northey (northeys@westnet.com.au, or 2 Orrong Rd, Elsternwick, Vic 3185).

An Alvis Firefly Story

.....by Ray McKenzie

Let me start at the beginning to tell you about it.

The car first came to my notice sometime in 1972, when I was told about it by a workmate, who was a member of the local Vintage Car Club of Queensland. It seemed that that a couple of members had recovered it in many pieces from a backyard in Hawthorn, here in Brisbane. The story was that if they didn't take it away, it was to go to the tip. They diligently gathered up anything that looked remotely like part of it, and added it to the boxes and tins of bits and pieces. I do take my hat off to these people, as I believe they did a marvellous job.

One of their number, at that time was building a house in The Gap, a Western suburb; and as many houses are in this fair (but sometimes warm and humid) city, it was built on about 7'6" stumps to allow for air circulation below the floor for cooling. As soon as this build reached floor level the Alvis body, chassis and the multitude of containers of who knows what, were deposited under the house, along with the owners own collection. The house was completed around it, and the Alvis stayed there until the day when that homeowners wife developed an aversion to having so much old car stuff around. To keep the peace on the home front, something had to go, and that something was decided to be the Alvis. So the next thing was to find someone foolish enough to take it on.

When I was told that an Alvis was available for restoration, I couldn't believe my luck. I had an interest in the make for many years, but being raised in the back country, where such makes are rare, I did not know of anyone with one.

As a youth, I had helped a friends family with the rebuilding and reinstallation of the engine in



their Volkswagen Kombi, which was used in their business. I wanted nothing in return, but they presented me with a copy of Philip H Smiths book "the Design and Tuning of Competition Engines". While I had read of Alvis in *Motoring Histories*, the illustration in that book of the 3 litre motor, with its timing gear immediately against the flywheel, seemed such a good design, that I was driven to find out more about them.

Shortly before hearing of the Firefly, I had bought the remains of a Dodge Fast Four, dragged out of a fence of wrecks from a farm near Imbil, behind the Sunshine Coast only about 60 miles to our North. This proved to be useful only for parts, as chassis, the "uted" body and the majority of the sheet metal was too far rusted to be reclaimed. The value at the time was that my own wife, on seeing the Alvis, which had its Martin and King body stuck together and placed back on the chassis, compared it favourably against the Dodge, so easing its entry into our fair domain.

Having got the car home, not a lot of progress was made for some years, due to the necessity of building my garage/ workshop at our then home at Northgate. I was offered, and accepted the use of a garage a couple of streets away to store the Alvis body and chassis. That was great except that it was below the level that the 1975

flood reached, but that didn't do much damage that was not already done. Fortunately I kept the mechanicals and the boxes of bits etc. at home.

Having taken on the Alvis, I did not continue with the Dodge, but having restored a few parts and started the engine, I sold it on to an enthusiast on the Gold Coast who had a number of others.

Quite a lot of time was spent in determining

which bits in the tins and boxes were actually part of the car, and what could be dispensed with. The bracket that supports the lower end of the pre-selector gear lever shaft spent a long time in a pile of rubbish that I intended to throw out, before I recognised what it was. Pieces of Austin A40, old bits of cisterns, and various similar items were removed, which helped reduce the bulk.

As I had the time, I rebuilt most of the mechanicals, including the pre-selector gearbox (or so I thought). The rear axle had suffered damage when the right hub had hit something immovable, as evidenced by a deep dent in the knockoff and was bent, with the two side differential mounting stud holes torn out. This was repaired and straightened. The differential pinion had three broken teeth, which were built up and the whole unit sent to specialists for lapping and reassembly.

The engine had thrown a conrod, which fortunately had not damaged the crankcase, but had taken the side out of the oil pump. A foreign conrod of the correct length, but obviously different weight, had replaced the broken one, and the engine apparently run again. I was able to obtain another conrod from the Alvis Car Club of Victoria, and an old oil pump from England, which was rebuilt with parts of the original.

There was a small aluminium

casting among the parts, which appeared to be the same material as other aluminium parts which were incorporated into the vehicle as work progressed. I was concerned that this had been left out of something. One weekend my Brother-in-law took me to visit a friend of his. This chap boasted that he had never paid more than \$25 for a lawn mower. I looked under his house at a vast sea of lawn mowers, and immediately spotted my elusive part on the top of one of them; case solved.

In 1982 the ACCV ran a tour of Tasmania, which a friend and I resolved to attend in the car. He looked at the body sitting on the chassis, and decided that "we just need to get it off, do up the chassis, and we can doctor up the body good enough for the trip". I had reservations, but a time and people were arranged for separating the body from the chassis. When the body was lifted, a large portion of the woodwork fell out in powder, and the chassis was noted as being twisted at least six inches out of line. That was not going anywhere, anytime soon. We finished up doing the trip in his MG J2, which was quite an experience, but we met some wonderful Alvis people and had a great time, but that is another story.

When the body was found to need a complete rebuild, I agonised for some time, considering whether I should scrap it completely, and build a light touring body. This would certainly have improved performance, but I decided to rebuild the Martin and King body as it was. Most of the metal skin was there, and also enough woodwork to provide patterns. It also appeared likely that there was not another similar vehicle surviving, so overweight slug or not, I would put it back the way it was.

Before starting any bodywork I had to straighten and repair the twisted and bent chassis. When the body skin was removed, it was obvious that the car had been involved in a number of accidents, including a rollover.

I had noticed that the mounts had been moved up on the radiator frame. When the chassis was examined further, it was found that it had sagged in the middle. This explained the radiator modification. The radiator had been set lower in

the chassis to maintain the bonnet line.

I eventually got the chassis straight and bolted on brackets, and bolted down to the floor, with the straight portion of the rails level both ways. This was used to build the body on. I used silver ash for the frame, reproducing the original as closely as I could. The reskinning and painting was given to a professional restorer.

A deadline was established to finish and register the car in time for our eldest Daughters wedding, with the car to be used to transport the bride.

We must digress here to make mention of the "restoration" of the ENV 75 Pre Selector Gearbox. I had read up as much as I could find on the operation and repair of this device, before I did any work on it. When I started, I was convinced that I knew what I was doing (I read once also that those the gods are about to destroy, they first drive mad, and I believe my experience with this box proves it).

When I got the car the gearbox had been treated harshly, to say the least, but at least it was together, and did not appear to be missing any major part. The brass selector shaft (or camshaft) had been broken and repaired with a piece of copper tube and a couple of rivets. The gear change lever housing was sloppy and had been broken and repaired by brazing. Some wear was evident on the Input and output shafts.

A new selector shaft was turned up, with phosphor bronze discs replacing the cam sections. The change lever shaft was trued up and the housing bushed. Worn shafts were built up with hardchrome, and all bronze bearings were renewed. All bearings and seals were replaced with new ones. I did not have much to go on in deciding how much wear had taken place on the band linings or the top gear cone clutch. All of them seemed to have material well clear of their rivets, so appeared to be suitable for further service. The cone lining had the lip removed to allow the cone to seat firmly. After reassembly the gearbox selected and changed gears properly on the bench, and appeared to be ready to go.

At the time I was working on this

gearbox, I was contacted by a Talbot enthusiast and asked to do some work on his Roesch Talbot 105 box for him. After the ENV, this was a delight to work on.

Eventually the day came when the Firefly again took to the road, and I felt immensely proud of my achievement. Temporary seating was installed and the car performed quite well.

I had the car registered but did not have much opportunity to drive it any distance.

The day of Daughters wedding came, and a house where a bride and her entourage are getting ready is just no place to be. The car was cleaned and polished fit to thrill; no more to do than add ribbon at the right time and go. Friend and self decide to take it out so he can get a haircut and show it off to a couple of others. Haircut done, and none of the people we went to see were home, so came back.

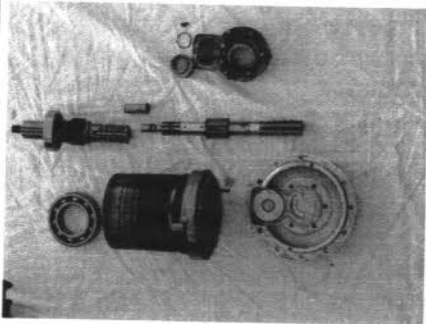
By now we were living at the above address, which is approached by quite a steep rise in both directions. I do not remember why, but we stopped at the foot of the rise before going on, and when I selected and engaged low gear - no movement, only slipping. I tried pumping up the band to make the automatic adjuster take up but to no avail. We said "no problem, we will just tow it up and adjust it in the garage". Tow it up we did, and off came cover and gearbox top plate. But the problem was that the band could not be adjusted any further. Less than a hundred miles since the rebuild and first band at its limit - it really made me feel silly. Daughter went modern, and I was a shattered heap for the rest of the day.

The box was removed and disassembled once more, and the Talbot man took all bands and the cone clutch to a specialist Brake and Clutch Shop that he had used, to have them all relined. When he picked them up, some of the bands had gone missing. When he went back and spoke to all and sundry, of course, no one knew anything about them. As he was walking out, he spotted them on a bench with a pile of litter, which was about to be tossed out. When he reclaimed them the reaction was "We wondered where those came from". Clearly this was not their core business.



As part of the reassembly I had to machine the cone clutch material slightly to fit it to the cone. When it all went together it seemed that this material was now too thin, and the clutch was not going to last very long. I need not have worried; a couple of weeks after getting it going, I was working on a Saturday, and decided to drive the Firefly to work. Not far from home (as I later found) the spring in the middle of the cone came adrift, lodged itself between the cone and lining, and locked the whole thing up. This time I had to get a tow truck to get it home. More embarrassment!

Eventually, when I could face it, out came the box once again. First thing was to get the cone clutch relined again with slightly thicker material, so (other) Brake and Clutch specialists were approached to do the job. No way! you can't get the asbestos based material for that any more, so sorry can't help you. Tried a number all over town, with the same result.



Went on the net, and under "cone clutches", found an engineering works, only a couple of hundred meters from where I work myself, who do cone clutches for industrial equipment. They took the job, and touch wood, their material seems OK.

Once when in England, I struck up a conversation with a gentleman at the Beaulieu Autojumble, who had also worked on these boxes - "Oh yes, ENV 75" he said "Evil little bastards". I concurred wholeheartedly.

This time the rebuild was more extensive, even remaking the aluminium blocks, which hold the bands in place and replacing all their springs, just to ensure that no band can touch a drum when not engaged. I now believed that I had beaten the hoodoo. Drove the car a few times, and all seemed well in the transmission department.

Time had marched on by now, and our son's turn to get married had come around, so as the car was now going OK, we would use it for this wedding.

His wife is from Noosa, on the Sunshine Coast, so that was to be the place for the wedding. To drive up there would be the longest trip the car had made since going back on the road, but I was now reasonably confident that the gearbox would behave.

A few days before the event, my son-in-law and myself headed off to drive it to Noosa. This is a popular resort town so we had decided to have a few days there before and after the wedding itself. Took back roads to avoid the main highway, so not to hold up other traffic. This in hindsight was a mistake, as it meant many more gear changes at the many roundabouts, which had to be negotiated. About half way there, the box missed top gear. The "hook", which pulls the top gear cone in to engagement missed its toggle, and try as I might, it refused to be reconnected. Just to prove that you cannot hide, no matter where you go; while on the side of the road trying to rehook this device up, along came Dale Handley, another Alvis owner from Brisbane.

We decided to go on, using third gear, and that is how it went for the whole time, and no one really noticed. It looked great and it is the star of their wedding photos (at least in my own mind).

Once home again I sorted out the adjustments needed to ensure that the top gear selector is properly held in place. The car has been driven a few times since and the gearbox has been

satisfactory. It has even done a couple more weddings for friends. Great while it lasts, but I am not holding my breath.

Several have suggested that I should change the pre selector for another type of box, but I feel that it would change the nature of the car, or perhaps I really am a masochist!

A footnote to the story was a meeting with a friend of the previous owner.

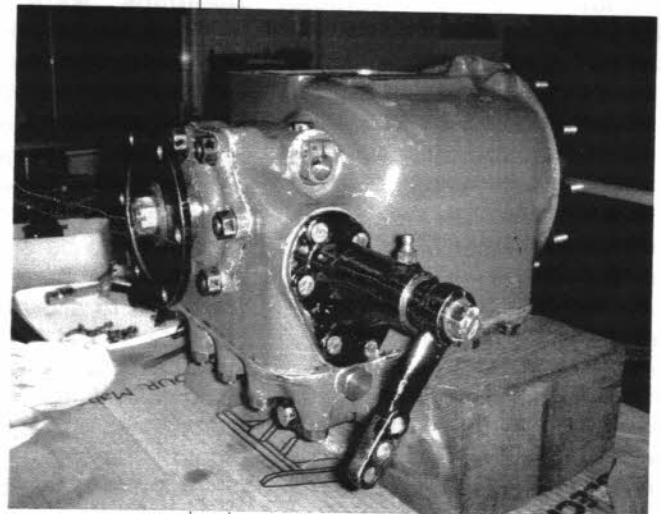
The Talbot man invited me to accompany him on a Veteran rally a couple of years ago. The rally started near Newcastle, and finished at Dubbo. At the final social gathering after the run I was introduced to several people from Brisbane and nearby, and asked what my interests were. On mention of the Firefly, one recognised it as formerly belonging to his late friend.

The car had been used in VCCQ events in the fifties. I had thought this, as a 1956 VCCQ Banana Rally badge was still on the dash when I got it. I am told that this event was run annually for some years, and went from Brisbane to the Tweed area of Northern NSW.

The chap had lived at the address in Hawthorn, where the car was recovered in bits. He was dying from liver cancer, and when he had a good day, would get out on the veranda, in his pyjamas and have a play with parts of the car, apparently the gearbox was often his choice.

I do hope that he is resting in peace now, and enjoying a good chuckle to himself every time that I go near that infernal device.

Ray McKenzie



SWAP, BEG, BORROW or STEAL

FOR SALE

FOR SALE

1951 ALVIS TA21 partly restored.

Original 3 litre engine. Body newly sprayed silver. Red seats and interior lining. Gearbox, radiator etc.

Car located in Maiden Gully, engine in Queanbeyan awaiting head gasket for completion of total rebuild.

\$12500 or offer

Clive Buckland, 9 Patricia Court, MAIDEN GULLY 3551 Victoria, Australia.

Ph: +61 (0) 354496127 Mobile: 0421344527



FREE

Items are for free to whoever can collect them!

TA21 body tub, with good sills and new woodwork for side members provided. Some rot under boot panel.

Complete with 4 doors. No wings bonnet or boot included.

Bare chassis and I mean bare - no axle or front suspension as that has all been removed. No rot or repair in this chassis - wish my other cars were as clean. Metal was all stripped and painted.

40-6.70 tyres- a selection of used tyres, cross ply in varying makes. Most would be OK for road use or putting on rims during a project.

Front seat, rear cushion.

I will have some other items such as door trims, dash, wheels and hub caps for sale once my TD 21 is back from a makeover but in the meantime I simply wish to get shot of the TA21 bits in the next couple of weeks. It seems a shame for them to go to the scrap metal man. Previous enquiries have been for the whole car with all the bits that I wish to retain as spares for my Tickford.

Location - Ardrossan, Yorke Peninsula SA 5571, approx 150 km from Adelaide.

Ring Mike Osborne 08 88373158.

WANTED

Wanted, Tall 12/50 or Silver Eagle radiator, core condition not important. Shell (measured at the back), 425mm wide x 675 high (core 370 x 548mm). Can swap for a standard 12/50 radiator if required (~25mm shorter).

Contact Dale on 03 5968 5170 or 0428 832 126

FOR SALE

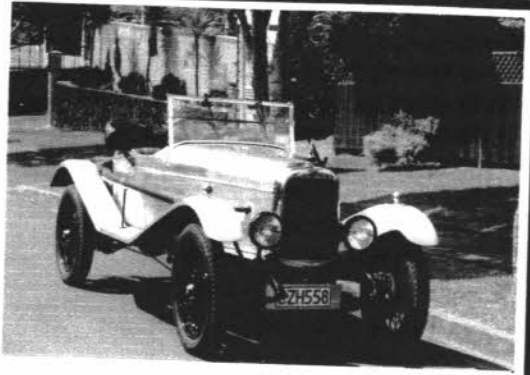
1925 TE 12/50 ALVIS DUCKSBACK.

The car has been built from a ground up restoration over the past 4 years. The following work has been completed.

New Radiator core, all Alloy pipes and housings are new, mag. overhauled, motor has been fully reconditioned including the head. full flow oil filter . new clutch components flexible joints all new bearings and close ratio gears in the gearbox, fully balanced driveshaft new bearing in the diff and new crown wheel and pinion high ratio, all new wheel bearings and new wheels (centres and rims) new wooden body and skin. New upholstery. and windscreen.

This car was on the ALVIS NATIONAL RALLY IN APRIL in Sth. Australia and went well. the car has travelled 1350 miles since being restored. I am selling the car as I have bought another 12/50

Price: \$70,000



Contact Derek Dixon on (07) 5443-4320 or on email d_g_dixon@bigpond.com

WANTED

Wanted, generator for flange frame 12/50 engine. Frank Corbett, 07 3378 7280.

FOR SALE

SPEED 25 ENGINE PARTS

Crankcase / crankshaft / block / conrods & pistons / cam shaft & bearings / chain tensioner & sprockets / distributor drive shaft & casing / distributor magneto / generator / water pump / harmonic balancer / clutch housing / jack shaft / fly wheel / main bearing oil gallery / cylinder head—unserviceable \$8000

1936 3½ litre radiator / 2 brake drums / L & R hubs - rough but serviceable / left & right knock ons / 4 x 19" rims / Andre telecontrol shockers & gauges / 6 jelly moulds - offers invited

Frank Mornane (03) 9592 8320

WANTED SMITHS 0-80 mph speedo, black face, white figures, to use in my 1928 FWD Alvis. It would have to match my Rev counter which is shown in the photo. I have for sale (or swap) a 0-80 mph JAEGER speedo, beezel face, excellent condition.

Cheers Des Donnan 07-5445 9981



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