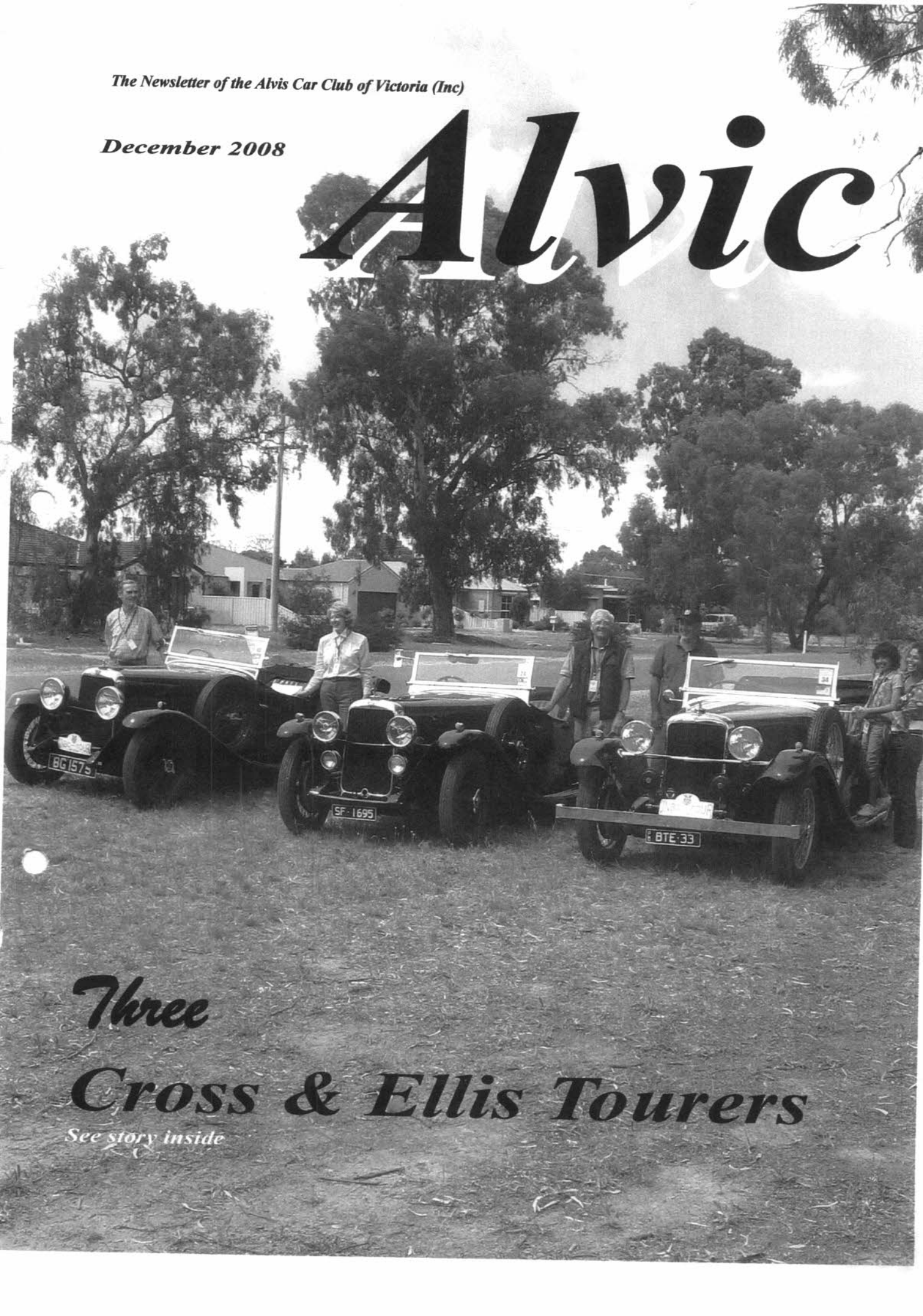


*The Newsletter of the Alvis Car Club of Victoria (Inc)*

*December 2008*

# *Alvic*



*Three*

*Cross & Ellis Tourers*

*See story inside*



*The  
Committee of the  
Alvis Car Club of  
Victoria  
would like to wish all its  
members & special  
friends in the UK,  
A Very Merry Christmas  
and a Safe & Prosperous  
New Year*



# Alvis Car Club of Victoria (Inc)

A0017202F

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](http://www.alvis.org.au)



**DECEMBER 2008**  
**VOL 47**

**ISSUE 11**

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### **PVT**

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Front page: On the JNBC Tour, a brief stop at Elmore found 3 Cross & Ellis tourers and their occupants together. From the left David & Kay Webster, David Head and Tony, Beni & Tasha Hannam. The Webster Firefly, the Head Silver Eagle and the Hannam Firebird

## President's Report December 2008

As I sit at the computer tapping away my last President's report for the year, I can't help but think back over the past 12 months and say to myself, "we had a bloody good year". A big thanks to all those involved.

I would also like to take this opportunity for thanking Ian Parkinson for looking after the fiscal side of the club, a job he did for many years with a minimum of fuss. Our new Treasurer has large boots to fill!

Your committee has not been idle since the last AGM. We have put together quite a comprehensive calendar for 2009 with plenty of activities that I hope you all will enjoy. Three members of the committee have also been given a project more of which will come to fruition in the next couple of months.

The Annual Xmas Party this year held at the Lang's was a great success and I would like to thank John and Marg for opening their house and paddock and letting us run riot.

So what were the highlights of 2008?

Well forgetting the obvious event in October, to me it was the simple things like the walk up Templestowe Hillclimb, the visit to Science Works and the run to Wings and Wheels at Yarra Glen to watch Andrew McDougall fix his fractured oil line!

The Nagambie weekend was also a lot of fun organised by the team of McDougall and Hetherington and even though numbers were down on the Leslie Northey run to Como Gardens, it was a great drive and very relaxing at George and Pat Hetrel's magnificent property.

Next year we look forward to the National Rally to Toowoomba which I'm sure will be a well organised event and with the events that your committee has put together, 2009 will be equal in many respects to 2008.

Finally I would like to wish you all a very happy Xmas and a safe and Happy New Year and we'll do it all again in 2009.

Chester

## 2009 EVENT CALENDAR

Jan	9	Opening BBQ at Kevin Bartlett Reserve, Burnley, Melways 59 A1 from 6.00pm
Feb	15	EMR (early morning run) - Dale Parsell - see inside for details
	20	General Meeting
Mar	20	General Meeting
	22	Kalorama, including the run to Kalorama
Apr	5	Wings & Wheels at Moorabbin Airport
	17	General Meeting
	27 - 16 May	National Rally
May	15	General Meeting
	17	National Heritage Day
Jun	19	General Meeting
	21	Panton Hills Pub Run - Richard Tonkin
Jul	17	General Meeting
	19	Mornington Peninsula run to Beleura Homestead - Darrell Horton
Aug	21	General Meeting
	23	Mystery Tour - Andrew McDougall
Sept	18	General Meeting
	27	Rob Roy
Oct	9-11	Otways and beyond - Alan McKinnon
	16	General Meeting
Nov	20	General Meeting
Dec	6	Xmas Party - Darrell Horton

## FINANCIAL REPORT ACCV 2007-2008

It is with regret that I submit my last financial report for the Alvis Car Club of Vic Inc. I hand over the reins to the next treasurer, after an enjoyable 10 year term, starting with Richard Tonkin, John Hetherington & a committee of energetic members.

The club is in a sound financial position & has shown a profit of \$934.25 for the financial year 2007/08.

Our books have again been audited by Susannah Hazelden & her report is attached. I have no record of the accounts for the JNBC Rally as this was recorded by an independent treasurer & a committee set up for the rally.

The club is unable to submit the necessary reports to the Consumer Affairs Office until these books have been reconciled up until the 30/6/08.

The club is registered with the ATO with an ABN 36 118 172 771

Both Pat & I would like to thank everyone for their friendship & support particularly over the last couple of years & trust the new treasurer enjoys this position as much as I did. We will miss our mates but will no doubt catch up with you all on some outings – see you on the National Rally in Queensland.

As we now mostly reside on Bruny Island, I will be unable to attend all meetings.

Ian Parkinson.  
Treasurer.

### **Alvis Car Club of Vic Inc. Profit & Loss Statement for the period ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008**

<b>Cash balances</b>	<b>2008</b>
<b>General Account</b>	<b>\$ 6126.21</b>
<b>ANZ Term Deposit</b>	<b><u>\$16237.16</u></b>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>\$22363.37</u></b>

#### Income

<b>Interest Term Deposit</b>	<b>\$ 1184.73</b>
<b>Interest Gen A/c</b>	<b>\$ 1.62</b>
<b>Subscriptions</b>	<b>\$ 5315.00</b>
<b>Suppers</b>	<b>\$ 248.00</b>
<b>Sale of Spares</b>	<b>\$ 337.00</b>
<b>JNBC Rally funds</b>	<b><u>\$ 4548.00</u></b>

#### Expenditure

<b>Newsletter</b>	<b>\$ 1431.10</b>
<b>Newsletter Post</b>	<b>\$ 1004.80</b>
<b>Aus Post</b>	<b>\$ 210.95</b>
<b>Trophies</b>	<b>\$ 416.00</b>
<b>Auditor fee</b>	<b>\$ 200.00</b>
<b>Rent Mrs Bowes</b>	<b>\$ 800.00</b>
<b>Public Liability</b>	<b>\$ 538.00</b>
<b>AOMC Fees</b>	<b>\$ 187.00</b>
<b>Website</b>	<b>\$ 157.00</b>
<b>PO Box Rental</b>	<b>\$ 70.00</b>
<b>R R &amp; Pie night</b>	<b>\$ 122.20</b>
<b>Federation Fees</b>	<b>\$ 40.00</b>
<b>Xmas Hamper Mrs Bowes</b>	<b>\$ 74.95</b>
<b>Printer Cartridge</b>	<b>\$ 34.40</b>
<b>Life Members Dinner</b>	<b>\$ 124.50</b>
<b>TV/DVD Purchase</b>	<b>\$ 753.20</b>
<b>Trfr to JNBC</b>	<b><u>\$ 4536.00</u></b>

**Total Income** **\$11634.35**

**Total Expenditure** **\$10700.10**

**Profit** **\$934.25**

Avonsleigh 18<sup>th</sup> August 2008

To whom it may concern

I, Susanna Hazelden of 145 Phillip Rd Avonsleigh, find the books [Main Acc & Spares] of the Alvis Car Club of Victoria Inc. being kept in accordance with accepted accounting principles. The recorded information presents a true & fair view of the income & expenditure for the financial year ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008.

Sussana Hazelden  
Bachelor of Business [Accounting]  
[Original signed]



# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Hi Marg and John,

At last the computer is sending emails again.! When we returned home on the 5th November I had over 500 emails!! mostly asking me if I needed viagra! I turned them all down but they did something to my emails and wouldn't let me send any more. All is sorted now--thank heavens.

We had a fabulous time with our family from New Zealand on North Stradbroke Island, and our little grand daughter twisted us round her little finger and was in complete control of us all. We miss them so much and it is never easy saying goodbye.

So ended a holiday of a life time. We just could not find fault with anything. You really are a fabulous club. You were like a breath of fresh air and I wish we could have bottled some and brought it home with us to uncork when the weather is bad. We will have to resort to opening a bottle or two of wine instead and live on happy memories and photographs. Nearly four hundred of them in all!!

Life is back to normal now chasing our tails and trying to fit everything in. It will soon be Christmas with our daughter in laws parents coming over from America. Please give our very best wishes to all your members and thank them for the massive amount of time, energy and hard work everyone put in to make this tour so successful. We made many new friends and forward to greeting you in the U.K. next time we meet, Keep in touch, all best wishes Bryan and Elin Pooley

Dear John,

I am writing to say a big thank you to all the people who organized the wonderful JNBC tour, what a great time we all had and such scenery and weather ! Kay and I were amazed at the personal effort which you had all so obviously put into the preparation and organization, I am sure that it was this effort even down to the smallest details, that ensured the resounding success of the event .

From a purely personal point of view may I also thank all the Aussies for choosing our car as the best UK car, I was really surprised and thrilled, I have a special place for the trophy which I will treasure.

We loved Australia, hopefully we will be back one day to see you all again, please pass our thanks and a copy of this email to all the organizers and participants

Very best wishes

David and Kay Webster  
(Firefly BG 1575)

Thanks for the magazine John – terrific as usual.

We'd both like to put on record how much we enjoyed the Tour even though we were

relegated to a "modern". The organisation was superb and sets a daunting standard for those that follow. The combination of great roads, fantastic doco, excellent accommodation and food, and of course the cars, provided a wonderful backdrop to new friendships made and older ones cemented. What's a dose of the lurgy in amongst all that! Our thanks to you and Marg, Sally and Chester, JFH, and all the others who put so much effort into the event over such a long time.

Subsequent to the rally we've been able to catch up for a meal with Peter and Sue Holmes during their week in Tassie and are looking forward to John Harvey and Gill Murphy visiting this weekend. I browsed John Layzell's excellent blog on the AOC site and noticed a reference to a rumoured tour of Tassie in a couple of years time – if this is on the cards, I'd like to offer our help in its organisation should that be of use. As you know there are enough interesting roads and places here to provide weeks of interest and entertainment. The geography also encourages the use of hubs for accommodation to provide opportunities either to recover (personally – although God forbid we get struck by another lurgy) or repair (mechanically, in the extremely unlikely event of an Alvis failure).

Thanks also for the shot of the DHC – I'm still trying to track down the problem – I've done the core plugs in question and the issue hasn't recurred but I won't be satisfied until I've done a couple of decent runs without a recurrence of the disease.

On the lighter side, I was pulled up by the "breatho" last night to find to my horror that the RX8's rego had lapsed! Our tour was undertaken in an unregistered vehicle... \$300 later .... Bugger...

All the best to you, Marg, and our other friends in Melbourne,

Mike and Liz Williams  
(Tasmania)

Dear John and Marg,

Well, it's hard to believe it's all over! Even harder for you no doubt. I can't begin to imagine how much time and effort you have put into organizing the event but I would like to offer our congratulations to you for what you and your team achieved. It was a remarkable effort and we thoroughly enjoyed every aspect of the tour. The route was delightful, the roads (particularly the back roads) a revelation - the Brits must have been astounded with the variation, the lack of traffic and the ever changing landscape (not to mention the temperature!) - and the sheer enjoyment of just driving Alvis cars in such good company. Memory flashes - in Western Victoria, motoring along deserted roads with a Firefly or a TD 21 ahead: the approach to Halls Gap revealing a FWD in the mirror snarling past with a convivial wave or an inviting shady roadside impromptu cuppa stop suddenly swarming with wonderful cars and like minded crews!

Marvellous photo and video opportunities abounded, thankfully captured, ensured lasting memories will not fade. We are so pleased to have been a part of it and in fact felt sad to head north after Beechworth as the group turned south - unfinished business almost!

The 'Firebird' flew home to the Sunshine Coast in 2 days without a missed beat and in fact we drove from Mittagong at 9:00 am Tuesday to Montville at 3:00 am Wednesday in one drive - 1150 kms and Tasha even went to school 5 hours later! That's one journey that will probably be our own 'personal best' and unlikely ever to be challenged! All up, around 3500 miles of Alvis heaven!

We are very grateful to all the 'stage managers' for their very detailed directions and delightful activities. The whole event surpassed our expectations so please, Chester and the ACCV teams, take a bow!

Every time we engage in an Alvis Tour we have a truly wonderful experience and even though this will be a hard act to follow, we know that another adventure is just around the corner and we will look forward to that occasion with great anticipation thanks to the efforts of people such as yourselves.

Well done indeed!

Very best wishes from,

The Hannams, big and small!

### **CLUB (RED PLATE) PERMITS**

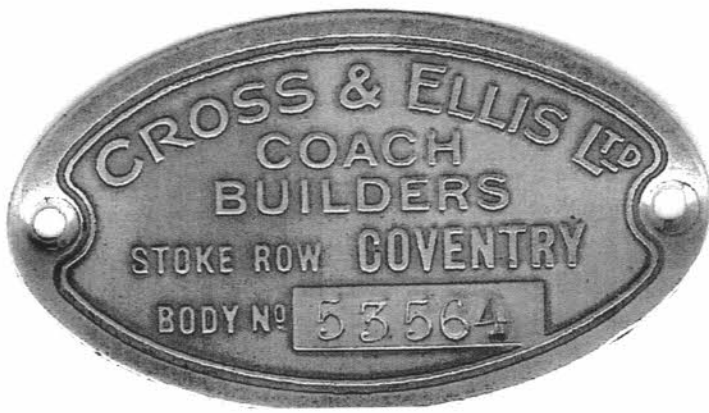
It is vital to the continuation of the Club Permit scheme that members do not use their Club Permitted Car (actually a permit for restricted use of an unregistered vehicle) other than on club events or with a Special Use Permit. Failing to follow these simple guidelines may result in an infringement notice for using an unregistered vehicle and a \$500 fine.

The majority of members include a stamped self addressed (or forwarding) envelope when sending their permit papers for signing by the Secretary. To the small number of members who do not, in the future your signed permit will not be posted back, but will be available for collection at the next Club Meeting.

Dale Parsell  
Secretary ACCV

### **THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH**

***IF YOU CAN'T FIX IT WITH A HAMMER, YOU'VE GOT AN ELECTRICAL PROBLEM.***



## CROSS & ELLIS Tourers

*What a pretty body!*

It was during the recent JNBC tour that one of those unplanned but significant events occurred. We were motoring between Bendigo and Echuca when Martin Boothman, who was driving my Silver Eagle, and I decided to stop for a coffee break by the side of the road.

As we parked, other cars on the Tour decided to join us and then during coffee John Layzell said, "do you realise that we have three Cross and Ellis tourer bodied cars parked together...that's a rare sight." So we rearranged them slightly and numerous photographs were taken.

One for the Album I thought until John Lang phoned and asked whether I would write a few words about the cars and Cross and Ellis for this month's Alvic.

A few years ago Richard Tonkin gifted me "The Story of Cross and Ellis" by Gillian Bardsley. Because the time available to write the article was only a few days, it is this publication that forms the basis of what follows together with input from David Webster and Tony Hannam.

### The cars

## The 1933 Firefly – owner David Webster

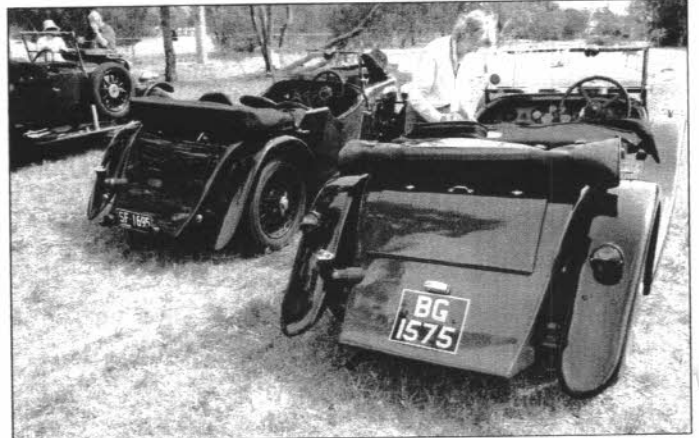
Chassis No 10565  
Engine No 11020  
Cross and Ellis Body No 53522  
Despatched on 17/03/33

Registration number BG 1575 (UK)

The original engine is in David's workshop being rebuilt and is No 11015

David has owned his Firefly for 41 years having purchased it when an apprentice at Dunlop in Leicester. Like many other young people, it was purchased as his everyday transport. It was used as such for a number of years, including summer camping holidays in Wales searching for "laid up" vintage cars.

In this role, the Cross and Ellis Firefly



*Above: bodies 53564 & 53522. Even pretty from behind!*

was always seen as an attractive car and a good talking point in the conversation with locals who would point him in the right direction for his searches. Several cars were saved from being scrapped including a Crossley, several Bullnose Morris, a Bean and a variety of spare parts.

The faithful Firefly has an amazing reputation in David's family for utter reliability, if the battery will power the coil then she will start.



*Above: body number 53522*



## The 1934 Silver Eagle – owner David Head

Chassis No 11770  
Engine No 12221  
Car No. 16587  
Cross and Ellis Body No 53564  
Despatched on 20/07/34

Registration number WP 6681 (UK)  
SF 1695 (Aus)

This car was bought the car in on the Isle of Wight in 1961 and used there as everyday transport. It was taken off the road in 1964, stored and followed the family to Australia in 1979.

One of the reasons that I have kept the Silver Eagle is that I always wanted to restore the car and my wife, Carol always said she thought it was a pretty car. Not exactly the Engineering term I would have used but, with Carol expressing that sentiment, it made it easier to justify not selling the car when the annual school fees came around.

We didn't realise then just how rare the car actually is...only six SF touring models built with the Cross and Ellis body and only three known to have survived.

Even though the car has only done 60,000 miles, a complete body off restoration was completed in 1999 because salt air had attacked some of the body whilst in storage and the leather had deteriorated beyond repair.



Above: body number 5564

## The 1936 Firebird - ('Lady Betty') - owner Tony Hannam

Chassis No. 13630  
Engine No. 14180 (original)

Car No. 18367  
Cross and Ellis Body  
No.53610

Registration Number.  
BTE 33 (1st Jan 1937 -  
UK) also BTE 3  
(Aus Qld)

Date of Despatch - This is listed by the AOC Firebird Register as 21/12/1936, but in the introduction to the Register notes, the comment is made that "The model was not a great market success when new. The last car was bodied at Cross and Ellis in June 1935 but not sold until December 1936, which meant that when Alvis announced the Firebird as the continuing 4-cylinder model for 1936, every car



Above: body number 53610

as the continuing 4-cylinder model for 1936, every car

they were able to sell through that year was at least 6 months old!"

These dates do, however, match with notes made by Andy Hannam ( Tony's father) who, having completed his apprenticeship in 1935, went to work for Barton Townley, the major Lancaster distributor for Austin, Ford, Alvis and Lagonda.

In mid 1936, two Alvis Tourers were delivered to the showrooms, one a 6 cylinder Speed 20 (at £695) the other a 4 cylinder 14HP Firebird (at £495), both Cross and Ellis bodied, with deep rich maroon with matching upholstery.

Because these cars sat in the showroom for month after month Andy Hannam and his uncle Ted Hannam did a deal in December 1936 on the grounds that the Firebird (which Andy said 'had the prettiest tail end you could imagine!') was now an obsolete model.

72 years on the car has done a total of 136,000 miles and countless memories in the hands of Ted, Andy and Tony Hannam!

Cross and Ellis bodied 126 of the 450 Firebirds produced, of these, 25 were tourers.

## The Story

Cross and Ellis (Clay Lane, Coventry) was an independent coach building Company set up in 1919 and liquidated in 1938 when it seems all records were destroyed. The Company was set up by two young coach builders who had worked together at the Daimler Company of Coventry.

Alfred James Ellis was born in 1887 and grew up in London. He left school at 11 years of age and served a seven year apprenticeship with the LMS railways By 1913 nearly one third of all Britain's motor vehicles were being produced in Coventry and, due to the shortage of labour, Alfred moved there from London

Henry Cross was born in Banbury in 1891 and moved to Coventry to join his brother who was already working there. This must have been during World War 1 as he worked with Ellis in the Daimler body shop at that time.

During WW1 Daimler's body shop produced the bodies for armoured cars and aircraft. On the cessation of hostilities Daimler reverted to vehicles but, due to the economic situation, had to lay off staff.

Henry Cross had obtained a personal order for some motorcycle sidecars and asked Ellis to join him to set up their own business. This was in 1919 in premises in Godiva Street. Interesting that they should be "clothing" chassis in a street with the opposite connotation

Orders then came in from Triumph and others and soon they were producing 10 sidecars a week and had taken on extra staff. Once established they received orders for army trucks and charabancs. In 1920 the Company had outgrown the Godiva premises and moved to 29 Stoke Row/130 Clay Lane, where more staff was taken on including members of the two families and old colleagues from Daimler.

By the mid 1920's the company was prospering and in 1923 extensions were made to the premises. They specialised in

sports and racing bodies but also made bodies for other vehicles.

Cross and Ellis became suppliers for smaller engineering companies who could not afford their own body shops. The company became regular suppliers to Lea Francis and Alvis. Amongst their products was the body trademarked by Alvis as "Alvista" and where have you come across that name before??

It is interesting to note that in 1925 when Alvis took bodies from Cross and Ellis, Carbodies and Charlesworth, they still blamed the short supply of bodies as being the reason for their low production. At the time Alvis were producing 15 to 20 chassis a week.

From the minutes of meetings at that time Alvis were complaining about defects in coachwork and finish although they do not specify which supplier was in fault. Not Cross and Ellis we assume. Between 1925 and 1930 Alvis did investigate the building of their own bodyshop but decided that the cost could not be justified.

In 1932 T.G. John defended the coachbuilders stating that he recognised the problems facing the whole car making industry at that time. The minutes also state that Alvis believed the coachmakers were not making much profit and that the price Alvis was paying could not be bettered in house especially in view of the infrastructure cost to set up the facility.

Cross and Ellis maintained their relationship with Alvis and Lea Francis although they did make some bodies for Vulcan, Calcott, Dawson, Humber, Hillman, Wolsely, Daimler, Armstrong Siddeley, Triumph, Bean and Bean Harper.

The business cycle was driven by the annual motor show held at Olympia in October. From 1934 to 1937 Cross and Ellis had their own stand and in 1934 they won a medal for their coachwork.

Business between the two world wars was tenuous and many companies failed. Alvis was surviving quite well and the car which won the 200 mile race at Brooklands in 1923 at a speed of 93.29 mph was fitted with a Cross and Ellis body. The following year Alvis was in financial crisis and Cross and Ellis lodged a petition against them for payment of a debt of £6640

Together with other creditors the total owed by Alvis was some £184615, which was not resolved until the mid 1930's. In 1931 Lea Francis went into liquidation and that crisis lasted throughout that decade.

So Cross and Ellis's two main customers were in financial strife and to add to their problems several employees left to start up their own workshops.

At the end of the 1930's new methods of producing bodies began to appear. The track system, mass production and all steel bodies began to dominate the industry so that the coach built body was replaced by assemblies of steel welded together by systems specifically designed for each body style. This called for large investments and staff retraining which Cross and Ellis could not afford.

Alfred Ellis formed a new company, C and E Motors in conjunction with Cross and Ellis to trade as a main agent for Bedford Commercial Vehicles and, after the war, for Vauxhall motors.

In 1938 Cross and Ellis finally closed its doors.

## Conclusion

As Gillian Bardsley concludes "the story of the firm shows the skill and effort of the people who made these cars, many of which are still in existence and run on as a tribute to their craftsmanship."

I completely agree with Gillian and with Carol, of course...Cross and Ellis did produce pretty bodies for well Engineered cars.

David Head  
Batesford 2008

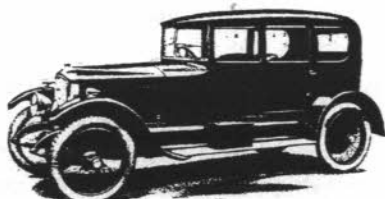
The reference for **The Story of Cross and Ellis** by Gillian Bardsley is ISBN 1 85858 011 0. It is published by Brewin Books, Studley, priced at £8.95

Phone—3021 (Private Branch Exchange)  
Grams—"Crossis, Coventry"

*Cross & Ellis Ltd*

Clay Lane, COVENTRY

MOTOR COACHBUILDERS  
PANEL BEATERS



OUR MOTTO  
"SERVICE"

SALOONS                      LANDAULETTES  
SPORTS BODIES              RACING PANELS



10

### Editor's Note:

Many thanks to David Head who prepared this article with very little notice and to David Webster (UK) and Tony Hannam who willingly provided information about their cars, also at very short notice.

## LOST & FOUND

Following the Christmas Party, I found three items that may have been left to me by an absent Father Christmas or forgotten by their owners. If it was Father Christmas thank you so much, but could I have a Barbie doll next year!

One is an Alvis mug from a "Summit to the Sea" picnic pack. Also a plastic wine glass from a similar pack - they will be complementary to my picnic pack and gratefully received!

Second is a long knife suitable for me to take to King St next time I go to an "Over Sixties" night club! It came from an Op Shop. How do I know? It still has a \$2 sticker on the handle.

Third is a very nice Tupperware rectangular container with a blue ring around the lid. If I put a white stripe on it, I can take it to the footy next time Geelong is playing!

JL



## A TIME TO REMEMBER

The other day my mind was taken back to those days in the seventies when I used to read the English monthly, "Thoroughbred and Classic Car." It was a time when my life had no time for a hobby or pastime and I contented myself with reading and reliving my earlier days of driving sports cars and the occasional vintage machine.

The magazine carried a regular column under the title "Harry's Hints," in which Harry Carter touched on a variety of topics and proffered good advice relating to them, which he had acquired over years of mucking about with cars old and new.

As someone whose life had only been lightly grazed by mechanical matters and whose knowledge of same amounted to even less. I decided to copy Harry's hints and compile them for future reference. Many I found to be useful and still do and so when the three litre power source suddenly declined to continue turning the other day while my riding mechanic and I were scooting along a local freeway, my mind tuned into Harry and how he might approach this unexpected problem as I found a safe landing area where I could give an impersonation of someone who knew what he was doing while avoiding being skittled by passing traffic.

I recall Harry making the point that sudden engine failure was more than likely going to be due to an electrical malfunction rather than a fuel one, although I once had to execute a forced landing in a Comper Swift due to carburettor icing and clearly recall the Pobjoy dying without warning.

On this latest occasion I thought I could safely assume that since we were at ground level the problem was unlikely to be carburettor icing and so began to eliminate one by one the likely cause of our dilemma.

After an hour or two a passer-by, out gathering mushrooms, suggested I investigate under the cover plate enclosing the high tension leads and would you believe, she was right.

During my recent attention to this and that on the engine I had fitted new solid core high tension wiring and after running the engine to make it malleable had attempted to fit the cover plate without immediate success. Being an impatient sort of a chap I thought "I know, I'll oversize the holes in the plate so it will just slip on. .. and it did.

We recently covered some considerable mileage on the JNBC without any hint of trouble and I had no reason to think that my solving of the cover - plate attachment had been anything but successful, but what I had done was to allow it sufficient movement to come into rubbing contact with the distributor cap which subsequently suffered wear to the point where an electrical leak was occurring - - something I quickly found out when I accidentally brushed the cap after firing up the engine.

Our homeward journey without the cover - plate in position was without incident - - in fact if anything the old darling behaved as if pleased to be rid of the un-necessary attachment. A simple repair to the distributor cap will see the problem solved and further modification to the plate - larger holes and rubber grommets perhaps? - -will maintain originality.

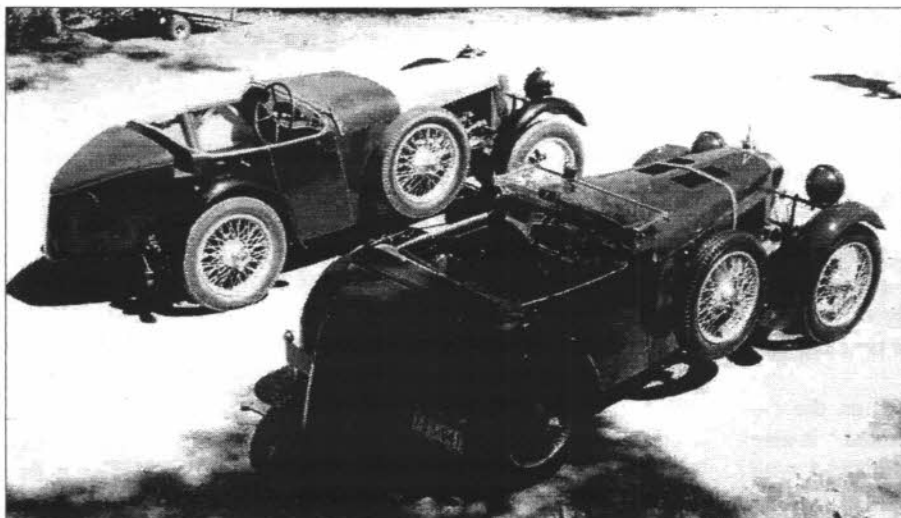
I don't know what Harry would say about it all but it is rather his method of reasoning that I had neglected to bear in mind - once having solved your problem take one more step to consider any possible negative outcome to your action. I wonder where Harry is now?

Darrell Horton





# A Tale of Two FWDs



Those of you with good memories will recall that the August ALVIC carried a story entitled "A Tale of Two FWDs."

It was to be followed up with another article in the September ALVIC.

We were swallowed up by the JNBC Tour and the story remains to be told.

Chassis 7257 had been bought by the previous owner in 1973 with its original 10ft 6in FE chassis shortened and wearing a homemade body built from materials purchased by a previous owner from his local hardware store. His intention was to replicate the Martin and King body on chassis 7231, a car he had been given custody of without any hope of purchase.

In the years to 1997, he had shortened 7257's chassis to 8ft 6in, the standard length for a SWB FWD. The old body had been discarded and a new body had been constructed to accurately replicate that on 7231.

The engine had been "reconditioned" by an Alvis "expert" in NSW. The hubs damaged by drilling to fit Vauxhall wheels had been replaced or repaired (I could find no evidence of repairs to the hubs) and a first engine run had been carried out in 1995.

When we purchased both cars in 1997, the intent was to find, fabricate or source the missing parts, utilising 7231 to identify what we were looking for and how various assemblies worked. 7231 had been operating on full registration for many years and was a very original car.

At this point I must acknowledge that my handson experience in automobile mechanical work was minimal and my lack of experience in dealing with service providers and traders was to become all too obvious later.

Prior to purchasing 7257, I had asked to see the engine running. The run was brief as only a thimble full of fuel was made available and looking back I should have taken more notice of the owner's relief, that the run was successful.

I immediately committed the cardinal sin of accepting that the engine had been reconditioned and that it required no further work. I accepted that all the bearings in the front hubs had been replaced along with any others in the car that were worn.

Work continued on the car and we had the pleasure of driving 7231 and I eventually learnt to deal with its crashbox like no other I had used.

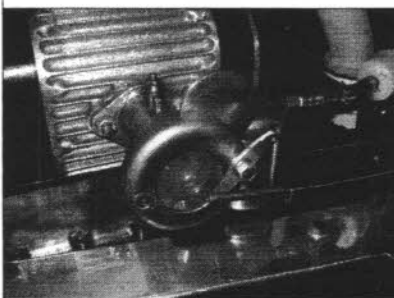
On arrival, 7257 wore a coat of Brunswick green paint. No bonnet sides. Incorrect headlamps. No seats or upholstery. No brake cables or fittings. No exhaust. No choke assembly. No instrument panel surround. No oil pressure or temperature gauges. No windscreen. A four spoke steering wheel from a 1930s American car. No radiator cap or rearview mirror. No tail lights. No wiring. The radiator surround was battered and the honeycomb insert was missing. Two pieces of honeycomb were provide to make an insert. The radiator core needed to be replaced. The front springs needed to be reset as the car sat several inches higher than its stable mate. No deck boards. New mudguards had been made and only the rears had been fitted. No speedo or rev counter cables.

These were the obvious things! Again I question my sanity in its purchase!

The bonnet sides were found to have been left with a panel beater who found the job impossible due to the stretching of the metal.

The seats in 7231 had been replaced with mini minor seats, but fortunately the original shells came with the car and in refurbishing them a new set for 7257 were fabricated and upholstered. Leatherette was original in 7231 and we used it again in 7257.

Living 60km from the services of metropolitan Melbourne, I was fortunate to find a fitter & turner recently retired from the Aeronautical Research Laboratories who was keen to continue and he created some of the missing components as



*Replica parts: the choke assembly and the rear view mirror*

exact replicas. The ability to remove components from 7231 for patterns, was paramount in their replication.

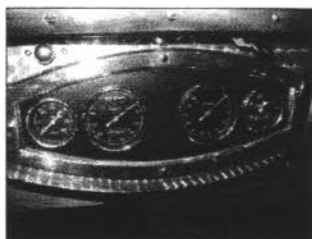
The brake cables and fittings were easy to fabricate. During the life of the car, someone had extended the front brake actuating lever by about 50mm negating the need for the small guide pulley normally fitted at the rear of the engine. The modification does not seem to impact on the operation of the brakes as those on FWDs are more than adequate. I will

leave the mod in place unless there becomes a good reason to restore.

I had an exhaust system made that replicated the two branch system on original cars although I added a small sports muffler as it otherwise barked too loudly on the lady navigator's side of the car.

I was surprised how good a jigsaw with the right blade was at cutting aluminium plate for the missing instrument panel surround. Shaping with a file and then polishing, provided a replacement that would be hard to pick from the original on 7231.

I was able to source temperature & oil pressure gauges but their faces were in poor condition and were scanned and replicated. Their background colour is slightly different to the main instruments but will be tolerated for the time being.



The first major job on the car was to have it painted. It also heralded my first contact with the painting and panel beating trade. It was approaching Christmas and I was keen to get the job done before the trade went on holidays. I

found someone in Woodend who certainly had the capacity to do the job - he had only one other car in the workshop and I found out later it was his.

The job progressed and I asked him if he could get the deck boards made. Martin & King had used a hardwood timber of the correct shape, sheathed in aluminium sheet. The goods arrived several days later and I was impressed by the workmanship. The panel man told me that the bonnet tops were pretty poor and if I wanted a good job I would need to have them replaced. I could see the sow's ear and the silk purse scenario being played out and decided to have them made. It also gave me the chance to get louvres put in the tops as per 7231. They duly arrived and were fitted to the car.

I had told the panel beater that I did not want a high gloss paint finish as it would have originally had a more subdued finish than those being put on modern restorations.

At this stage I had not visited the other panel beater who had the bonnet sides as he said they were not finished.

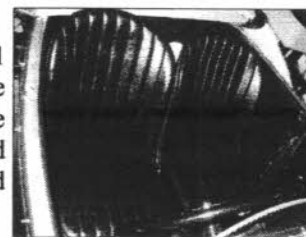
The day came to pick up the car and it was then that I learnt the panel beater was going out of business and this was his last job. But if there were any problems I could deliver the car to his residence for rectification.

The paint work was a disappointment! Scratches from the sand paper were evident under the final coat and there were places where the spray putty had not been finished properly and slight waves were evident.

Lesson number 1 - a busy shop is probably more likely to do a good job. But, I had the car back and could get on with other things.

I went to retrieve the bonnet sides to find that they were not repairable and had to have another set made.

I had some issues with the scuttle fuel tank and decided that it needed to come out. What a diabolical job that was for someone with a bad back. While it was out I replaced the fabric universal joint on the steering shaft as the original was no longer up to the job.



I had earlier had 7231 reupholstered and the same upholsterer was able to do the second set of seats that I had made, in the same style and material.

I made the interior panels in the same leatherette as the seats.

A professional auto electrician who specialised in old motorcars made the new wiring looms and fitted the electrics up.



The car came with only one of the wee willy winky tail lights that 7231 had and I found someone on the other side of Melbourne who said he would sell me a mate for it, when the car was about to go on the road. No amount of persuasion would get him

to part with it earlier. He lived an hour and a half drive from my home so I had eventually to fib about the progress being made.

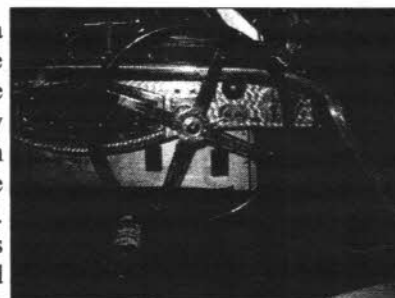
When I got to his property and offered to inspect his cars I was stunned to see what he had. What may have been animal farms sheds were full of Delages, Rolls Royces, Rileys, Humbers, you name it! All with bits taken off and decorating the floor and benches. What a shambles!

He died not long after and I imagine the new owners of the auctioned cars must have swapped names and numbers so that they could eventually get all the parts for their individual cars into their garages.

I had the tail light I wanted, and it went on the car!

The wheels were next and became the only one of three sets I have had trued and painted by a Melbourne wheel specialist that had been done properly.

At the time I was a member of the Vintage Drivers Club and one of their monthly newsletters had an advert for a 4 spoke sprung steering wheel. I was on the owner's door step in a flash and the car now has a



period steering wheel. Maybe the only difference between it and the one on 7231 is the slots in the 4 spokes. The wheel was refurbished and plated.

The radiator that came with the car was like a colander and even then some of the peas would have still got through!

New honey comb radiator core was fitted and duly returned to the car.

Now we were making some progress and not that far away from an engine start.

The oils had been replaced in the engine and transmission and I said to my wife. You get some water for the radiator and I'll get some petrol and we'll start the engine.

The petrol was the easy one!

The water went into the radiator and straight out and all over my wife's feet.

Rang the radiator "specialist." "Just rip it out mate and bring it in." Mate there is about 3 hours work in ripping out and I am totally peed off." "Oh I'll fix it for you."

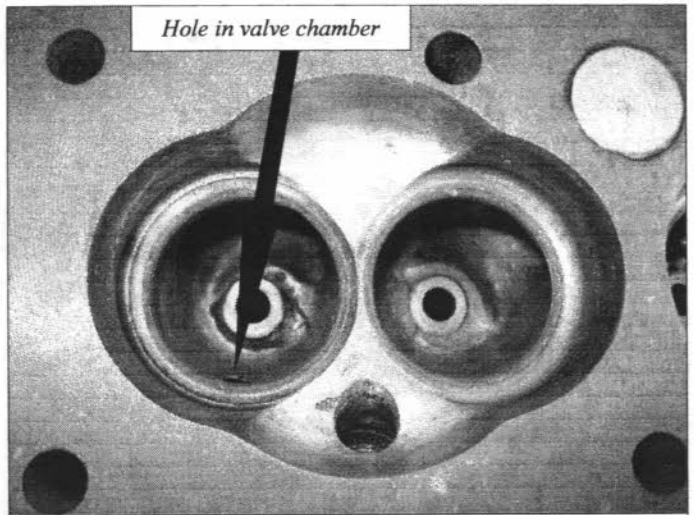
A week later he delivered it to the house, very apologetic and understood the reason for my angst.

The following day we were ready again and started the engine which promptly ran away due to the throttle flinging open and jamming. Had I checked the ignition to make sure it was grounded - NO!

Fuel off - quick stop. Glad it wasn't full throttle!

The car was duly inspected and then issued with its club plate and we carefully began to get some miles up on it. There were a variety of problems with the engine that brought me to the realisation that all was not well. In between while we were still happily driving 7231.

It was several months before I took the bull by the horns and got a professional to look at the engine. The camshaft was badly pitted and worn. The cam buckets appeared to have



been put on grinder to adjust the clearances. A piston had nipped up in one of the bores and was not reusable.

But the biggest hurdle was that there were some cracks in some of the valve chambers in the head and a tap with a screw driver produced a hole into the water jacket. The use of blue kero showed that other marks were cracks and not casting marks. Some of the ports had been ported and polished to within a whisker of their life.

Nobody wanted to touch the head! The art of cast iron welding seems to be dying.

Next month we will look at the mechanical restoration and why the car was off the road for another 7 years.

John Lang



*For those of you who were not at the JNBC Closing Dinner at Healesville, you may be unaware that our international friends presented us with a Port barrel, suitably inscribed as a thank you for organising the Tour.*

*Chris Higgins & John White seem to be more engrossed in discussing an engine part than what's in the barrel.*



# ALVIS PEOPLE BEHAVING BADLY



*No doubt the Alvis Marketing people would have considered all possible uses for Alvis cars in their advertising, however I wonder if they ever considered advertising a 12/50 in the role of, Chinese Laundry. Here we see Martin Boothman's laundry hung out to dry. We understand the jocks and sox were on the other side!*

## **(NOT SO) EARLY MORNING RUN 15 February 2009**

Start Spotlight/Good Guys carpark, (on the left and opposite Bunnings) ~300 Metres  
East of Bayswater Road on Canterbury Road, East Ringwood  
**8am for 8:30 start.**

Come for a short drive through the Dandenong Ranges to a BYO breakfast at  
R.J. Hamer Arboretum, Chalet Rd, Olinda.  
BBQ's, toilets and shelter available, BYO everything else.

We expect to arrive at the Arboretum around 10:30am  
After breakfast, for those who haven't had enough of nature, enjoy a walk through  
the Arboretum or visit nearby Cloud Hill Nursery and Garden (\$5 entry fee). You  
could also visit the craft and antique shops in nearby Olinda or Sassafra.

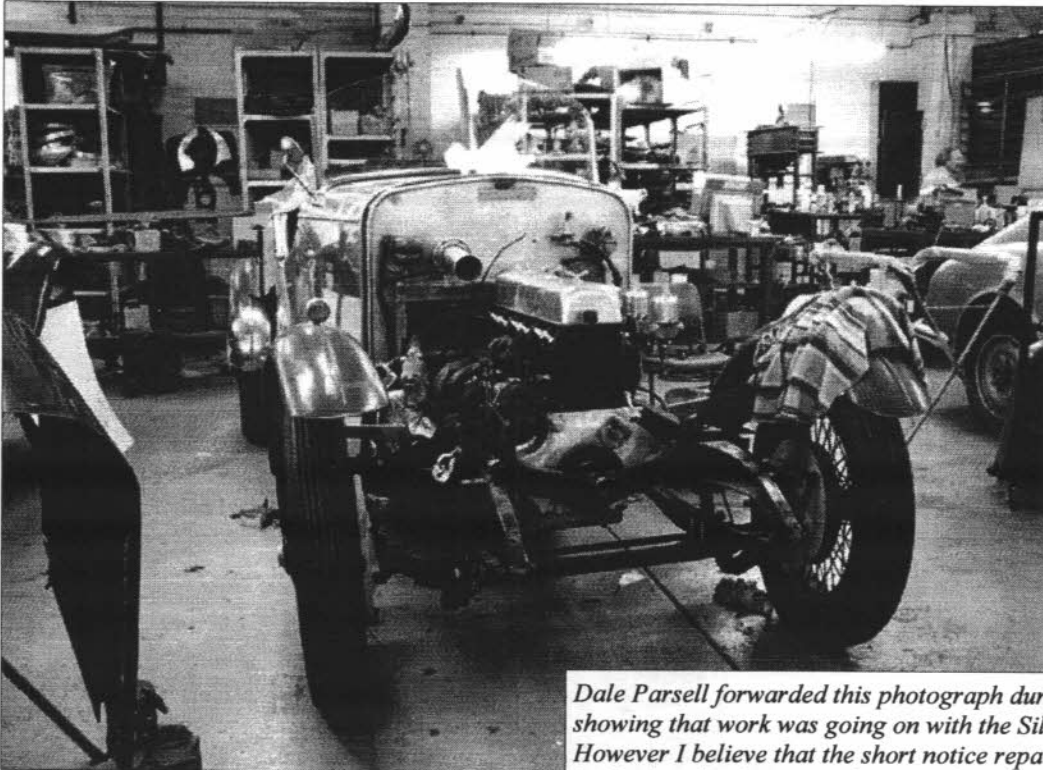
If you need more details (not that there are many more), contact Dale, 03 59685170



# ALVIS ON THE DOWNS

Saturday 2nd to 9th May 2009

2009 National ALVIS Rally  
Contact: Dean Prangley  
[dcprangley@bigpond.com](mailto:dcprangley@bigpond.com)



*Dale Parsell forwarded this photograph during September showing that work was going on with the Silver Eagle restoration. However I believe that the short notice repairs on the two UK cars in the days leading up to the JNBC had to take priority. It will be good to see the car on the road again.*

**For Sale**  
**1931 Alvis**  
**12/50 TJ**  
Chassis No. 9145  
Engine No. 9626

Supercharged two seat roadster in excellent condition. Full wet weather equipment in Mercedes cloth with leather upholstery. A well known Alvis Club Car with great performance, reluctantly offered for sale. \$70,000

For more information contact Ray Newell 03 9755 3280 mob. 0428 558 228



# SWAP, BEG, BORROW or STEAL

## FOR SALE

Alvis 12/50 subframe project for sale.

1 x standard chassis, 1 x shortened chassis (8'6"), 1 x crankcase, (subframe needs repair), 1 x front axle complete, 1 x back axle complete (no differential), 5 x rebuilt wheels with new tyres (21"), 1 x gearbox, 1 x steering wheel, 1 x foot plate, 1 x set of springs, 1 x fuel tank, 1 x brake cross shaft, 1 x starter motor, several boxes of engine and chassis parts including new castings, 1 x radiator (original honeycomb). \$15,000, contact Paul at HVR on 03 9877 0666

## FOR SALE

4 x Avon Turbo Speed 6.00 x 16 Tyres

Extend your TA14 to its limits. Rated to 140mph.

Bought several years ago for a special that was never completed.

Never seen the road.

Best offer over \$300

Don Bosanquet 9568 0397 or 0415 556 053

## FOR SALE

1926 Alvis 12/50 TF Tourer  
Chassis 4553, engine # 5884

In good running order

Recent new radiator core, reground camshaft, new valve springs, pistons and rings.

Alternator fitted, running off the jack-shaft between clutch and gearbox.

RWC provided to a Victorian buyer.

Registration : DV 1926

\$55,000AUD

Ring Si Ramsay (03) 5472 4321 or fax (03) 5472 4081



WANTED bronze bodied 1 3/8 SU carburettors, any condition.

Contact Dale 03 5968 5170 or [dparsell@ozemail.com.au](mailto:dparsell@ozemail.com.au).

AVAILABLE; Silver Crest Hypoid crown wheel carrier (the alloy part) includes crown wheel & pinion, swap for speed 20 one or something else useful.

Contact Paul Chaley 03 9877 0666 or [historic@historicvintagerestorations.com](mailto:historic@historicvintagerestorations.com)

## FOR SALE,

### AS IS, WHERE IS:

**3.5 Litre Alvis 25.63 Pillarless Sedan**, Car No. 17827, Chassis No.13115, Engine No.13566.

Chassis and engine particulars all as the factory 1936 build sheet.

Body by Bertelli Ltd., Feltham, Middlesex, Sussex, England.

This car is very rare, being one of the only two SA.25.63 3.5 Litre Alvis cars to have been fitted with a

Bertelli body. The other was purchased by the late Henk Widengren, a Swedish racing driver

of the era, and is, I believe, currently being restored in that country. However, Widengren had his car upgraded to 4.3 Litre specification pre-W.W.II., so strictly speaking it is no longer a 3.5 Litre?

History as far as is known:

The factory build sheet shows that the car left the works on the 2nd. of January, 1936 as a chassis consigned to Messrs. G. Hartwell, Bournemouth, U.K. The Alvis service card for the car, dated the 25th. of March, 1936, identified the owner as Mrs. F.E.Wells-Melbourne, 'Silverdale' Fair Oak Lane, Oxshot, Surrey. Nothing is known of the car from then until 1959 when the log book was issued to David Wood, landlord of a pub in Litton Cheney, Dorset, who used it daily until the magneto drive sheared around 1964, after which it stood in his shed for a year or so till the son of a Dorset farmer, Mr. Allan N.W.Percival, bought it around 1965 and from whom I bought it in 1971.

The car was shipped out to Penang, Malaysia in 1971, where I began its initial restoration. It was shipped to Australia in mid-72 and completed in 1978. Its second bare-metal restoration was begun in 1990 on my retirement and completed this year. The process is described in an illustrated article prompted by the late Julian Collins, editor, and serialised by him in the Alvis Owner Club Bulletins Nos. 491, 492, & 493.

**The Price: \$100,000**

David Caldwell 6, The Outlook, Heathmont, Victoria 3135, Australia. Ph.0011 61 3 9729 5821 e-mail [caldwell8@optusnet.com.au](mailto:caldwell8@optusnet.com.au)



## FOR SALE

Car badges \$30.00 each

Lapel badges \$10.00 each

Cloth badges \$5.00 each

Key rings \$16.00 each

'fridge magnets \$3.00 each

collectors memorabilia :- 1991 National Rally coasters \$ 1.00 each ( rare & sought after )

1991 National Rally cloth badges \$ 1.00 each

Ring Darrell Horton (03) 5983 2016

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

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**PLEASE NOTE YOUR MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR 2009 ARE  
NOW DUE & PAYABLE**

**ALVIS CAR CLUB OF VICTORIA (Inc)**  
AO017202F  
**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TOGETHER WITH YOUR CHEQUE FOR THE COMING YEARS

MEMBERSHIP TO:

The Treasurer, ACCV, PO Box 634, Emerald 3782.

Cheques payable to the "Alvis Car Club of Victoria (Inc)"

DATE ..... NAME .....

ADDRESS ..... PHONE NUMBER .....

EMAIL ADDRESS .....

CHANGES TO CAR DETAILS .....

.....

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP:

METROPOLITAN (Within 30km of Melbourne GPO)..... \$60 .....

COUNTY - INTERSTATE ..... \$60 .....

OVERSEAS ..... \$75 .....

The club prints a membership list from time to time, if you do NOT want your details included please tick here

rev020406

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