

June
2011

Alvic

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

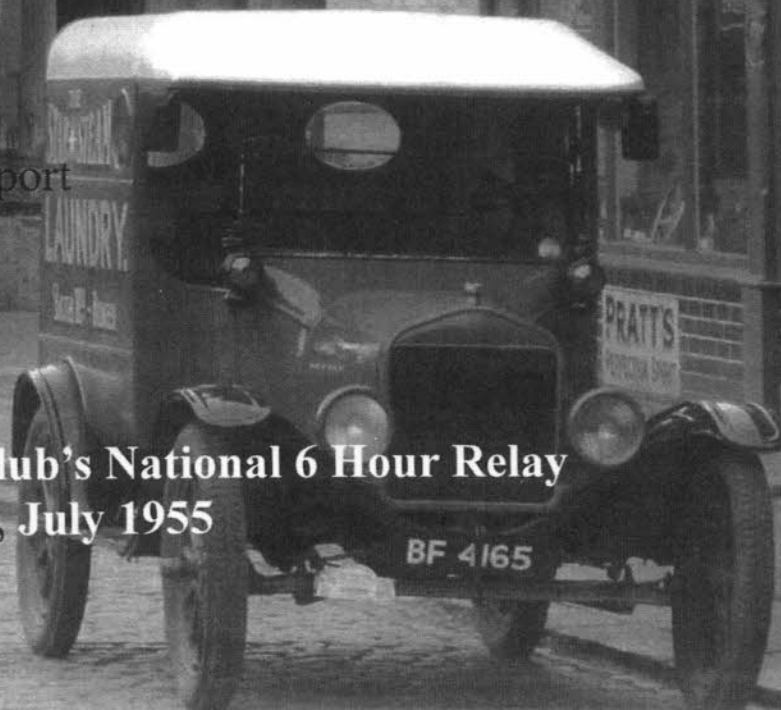
NEWS

The Nick Walker
Memorial Tour Report
Part I

ARTICLES

Five Alvises

The 750 Motor Club's National 6 Hour Relay
Race, Silverstone, July 1955





June 2011
VOL 50 ISSUE 5

PRESIDENT

Chester McKaige,
129 Tucker Rd, Bentleigh, Vic 3204
Tel (03) 9557 1134 Mob 0407 113 516
ericmckaige@bigpond.com

VICE PRESIDENT & Spares Registrar

Andrew McDougall, 424 Wellington St,
Clifton Hill, Vic 3068
Tel 03 9486 4221
amfi@dunollie.com.au

SECRETARY

Dale Parsell 14 Symons Rd,
Avonsleigh, Vic 3782
Tel 03 5968 5170
dparsell@ozemail.com.au

TREASURER & PUBLIC OFFICER

Darrell Horton, 28 Carisbrooke St, Balnarring
Beach. 3926 Tel 03 5983 2016
jocelyndarrell@bigpond.com

NEWSLETTER EDITOR & DISTRIBUTION

John Lang P.O. Box 129,
Gisborne, Vic 3437
Tel/fax 03 5426 2256
jdmelang@bigpond.net.au

LIBRARIAN

Frances McDougall, 424 Wellington St,
Clifton Hill, Vic 3068
Tel 03 9486 4221
amfi@dunollie.com.au

COMMITTEE PERSONS:

Lesley Northey, 2 Orrong Rd,
Elsterwick, Vic 3185
Tel 03 9528 6767
northseys@westnet.com.au

Richard Tonkin, P.O.Box 280,
Greensborough, Vic 3088
Tel 03 9710 1465
rtonkin@tonkinlaw.com

John Hetherington, 71 Hawkins St,
Shepparton, Vic 3630
Tel 03 58216 422 Fax 03 5831 1586
jfh@mcmedia.com.au

Alan McKinnon, 195 Lower Heidelberg Rd,
Ivanhoe, Vic 3079
Tel 03 9497 3414 *alan@antiquityres.com.au*



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 Dead-
line - first Friday of the month.

POSTAL: ACCV P.O.Box 634, EMERALD, VIC 3782
www.alvis.org.au

Presidents Report

The Alvis Car Club of Victoria is alive and well in the U.K.

As I write this from a rather damp Scotland, I must say we have been welcomed with open arms everywhere we have travelled. The hospitality of our U.K. friends is truly amazing. I think we have all met new friends on this trip and we all look forward to someday having them come and see how Alvis people on the other side of the world live.

I overheard a conversation the other day between two English ladies on the tour mentioning how nice and friendly the Australians were and what a delight it was to meet them all!

The Brooklands weekend was fantastic and for me the highlight was a run up the old test hill and along the outing banking taking it all in from the back seat of Mike Hirst's 12/50, driven by Andrew McDougall.

Another highlight was a visit to the open-air museum at Beamish. Here we caught up with a number of our UK members from JNBC days namely the Rankins and the Clarks.

The Australian contingent has I must say have behaved extraordinarily well and the two Aussie cars (McKinnon and Tonkin) have been very well regarded. Richard won a gong at Brooklands for best overseas car and I think if there had been a prize for best 12/50, then Alan would certainly have won that.

I was presented with a plaque from the AOC for our clubrooms and also a trophy in the form of an Eagle mounted on a plinth that would make an excellent trophy.

Trust all is well at home and look forward to boring everyone with the pictures.

Cheers for now, time for a wee dram.

Chester

PLEASE NOTE

IN SPITE OF THERE BEING 5 COUPLES AWAY OVERSEAS ON THE TOUR OF GREAT BRITAIN, THERE WILL BE A JUNE MEETING.

PLEASE COME ALONG AND SUPPORT THE 2 OR 3 LONELY COMMITTEE MEMBERS WHO WILL PLAY HEAD TABLE HONCHOS FOR THE NIGHT.

IF YOU ARE COMING TO DINNER BEFORE THE MEETING, PLEASE RING ME ON 5426 2256 FOR TABLE BOOKINGS

A very warm welcome to **Robert Dawson & Graeme O'Donohue** who have joined the ACCV. We hope to see you & partners at a meeting or event very soon.

Supper - the Hortons

2011 EVENT CALENDAR

June	17	General Meeting
	19	Lunch at the Whistle Stop
July	15	General Meeting
	17	Industrial Heritage Run (Western Suburbs)
August	19	General Meeting
	21	Rob Roy Hillclimb
September	16	General Meeting
	24, 25	Healesville Steam Rally OPTIONAL OVERNIGHT PLANNED 24th
October	8, 9	Birregurra Festival THIS WILL BE PLANNED AS A WEEKEND AWAY
	14	General Meeting
November	18	General Meeting
December	4	Christmas Party

Front page: You're right! It isn't a 12/50. In fact it's not even an Alvis!
Must be time for a new newsletter editor!

The Beamish Open Air Museum - this is a representation of the 1913 town of Beamish and its associated coal mining village and pit. (see NWMT article page 8)

photograph by Frances McDougall

EDITORIAL

At the moment we have 5 couples overseas visiting the UK specifically for the Nick Walker Memorial Tour of England and also the Alvis International Weekend.

Reports from the UK, indicate that they are enjoying a good time and renewing many of the friendships made during the JNBC Tour.

The National Rally is over for another two years and there have been a couple of hard luck stories from those returning home after the event.

Rob & Loretta Simpson in their TA14 special managed to have a head problem which caused more than an Asprin could fix and Rob set out to locate a replacement.

Jon and Lyndal Voller finished their trip in an Avis car rather than an Alvis car and Jon was also chasing major engine components to get the Grey Lady back on the road.

In the space of 24 hours, the wonders of modern communication found replacements in the form of Alan Bratt, who was able to furnish both a head for Rob and a TA21 long motor for Jon. Alan then flippantly offered to fix anyone else's problems. My request for a million dollars has gone answered!

The other hard luck story is from Bob Blacket whose FWD, which had proved to be a little troublesome on the Wagga section of the event, did not appreciate being left out in the cold overnight at Orange. Bob's assessment is that the co-efficient of expansion (& contraction) caused his supercharger to seize and the engine to stop in sympathy.

Coincidentally my FWD supercharger is also in bits with the gear cutter replacing the drive shaft and gears.

It's only money I hear you say!

I was chuffed to learn that Martin Boothman and Peter Glover had chosen our Sp25 Charlesworth Saloon as the car they would most like to take back to the UK.

The choice of a saloon is an acknowledgement of the fact many of them have been rebodied into DHC and they are an endangered species. Certainly there is nothing prettier than a pre-war DHC on a speed chassis, however the Speed model saloons are not far behind.

I think Charlesworth was considered to be the bread and butter Alvis coachbuilder for many years and one must acknowledge that they bodied some very pretty cars.

Long live the saloon!

If you would like to join us for dinner before club of Friday 17 June, please give me a call on 03 5426 2256

John Lang

*Malvernvale Hotel, 1321 Malvern Rd, Malvern -
from 6.00pm*

PEOPLE

Heather Goldsmith reports she has purchased Bob Anderson's 12/50. Chassis number 4417, which had been for sale for a number of years. Called Kon Tiki because of its registration TK 961.

Andrew McDougall has purchase John Langhorne's 12/50, Chassis number 2786. Originally a green and black 4 seat sports with Cross and Ellis tourer body, it was built up with parts from 2 cars. It took approximately 10 years to rebuild the motor and a replica ducksback body.

Ron Allen (former ACCV President), has been providing John Lang with some history information for "Alvis Cars in Australia" and was able to provide a copy of a registration certificate for a Silver Eagle, that had conflicting information about its numbers.

John Mitchell from South Australia passed away some months ago and we express our sympathy to Roma and family. John had been an Alvis owner for many years and when his health declined, he sold his TD21 to Stuart Macdonald. I first met John when he along with Stuart Macdonald and Duncan Scott, organised the very enjoyable Claire National Rally in 1999.

Ilkka Veijalainen has bought the ex Keith Payne TA14 DHC. The car had been advertised widely in Australian motoring journals and had been dry stored by Keith for more than 20 years. The car was complete and drivable and should be a relatively straight forward restoration. It will be good to see the car returned to the road.

Ron Wilson, a former ACCV President and office bearer, now into his nineties, remains well and has been an excellent history resource for your editor. He has also agreed to being interviewed for further history information, once the editor can sort his workload out and make the visit.

Norman Zilberberg has bought the ex Stuart Macdonald Speed 25 saloon with an intention to restoration.

oooooooooooooooooooooooo



VALE FRANK MORNANE

It is with regret that we advise the passing of Frank Mornane who died shortly after his participation in the recent "The Alvis Escape" National Rally.

Frank and Pam attended the Wagga section of the event and it was good to see him enjoying the rally following a significant health set back during 2010.

Pam drove their Speed 25 from Melbourne and return in true Alvis fashion.

Frank had been a member of the ACCV for many years and had been active in the old car fraternity having owned a Bentley and several Alvises.

He was an active member of the VSCC and his loss will be felt by both clubs.

Our condolences go to Pam and family.

Frank is pictured above with Pam as they enjoyed "The Alvis Escape."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear John

We have been thrilled by the response to Rob's book 'An Alvis Motoring Adventure' which you have kindly advertised in your magazine. We now have a permanent record of Rob, Ann and Smokey's trip overland from Bombay to Coventry, which was our primary goal. Many copies of the book went to Victorians, so we appreciate your support. Please let your readers know that no more books are available.

Best regards

Heather Goldsmith and Rob Gunnell

Dear John & Margaret,

Have had a great day today at Brooklands. Andrew was able to go up the Test Hill at Brooklands with me and Sally & Chester on board - great to be able to go up the hill and then return along part of the members banking of the old Brooklands track. All well with the Aus entrants and all having a great time. Good to be able to catch up with JNBC entrants and to meet a lot more people as well.

Frances McDougall

Photos to show you what happens when a front wheel drive doesn't quite make it up the test hill and had to be pushed. (see Alvis People Behaving Badly)

Hi Andrew

Now that we're all safely home from the rally, we've had a chance to appreciate the lovely gifts given to us.

As spokesperson and presenter on the last night, would you please convey our thanks to all who contributed to this most appropriate choice. We both like slurping a good wine and 'to hell with the cholesterol' bring on the cheese!

We've sent our expression of interest and hope to see you and Frances on the 2013 jaunt.

Best wishes

Loretta & Rob (Simpson)

Hi John

THE 750 MOTOR CLUB'S NATIONAL SIX HOUR RELAY RACE, SILVERSTONE, JULY 1955.

I was very kindly invited by Charles Mackonochie to display my SA Speed Twenty VDP saloon AGF 476 in the Racing Alvises display at Brooklands on 5th June at International, by reason of its participation in the above. This car is, to me, rather special, by virtue of its unique status as the only SA VDP saloon survivor (out of 28 built), and also because of previous competition history.

A write up of the Six Hour Relay Race is published in John Wheeley's "Fifty Years of Alvis Enthusiasm," from which the following is acknowledged, from the July 1955 Bulletin, but who wrote the original article is not stated. But thanks is given.

The Relay Race was for teams of up to six cars conveying a sash for as many laps as possible during six hours, and was an enjoyable event run in perfect weather. After a last minute panic with one of the prospective entries (not stated) which was not running properly, the cars were passed by the scrutineers.

The final team was;

B.P. Grenfell (4.3 Special)

L.S. Richards (1932 Speed Twenty VDP Sports)

T.D. Airy (1934 Speed Twenty)

H. Turner (3 litre TB21)

J.C. (Jock) Stephen (1934 Speed Twenty Charlesworth Saloon), whom I remember well from the Fox and Goose, Hanger Lane, of long ago.

R.A.(Roy) Brearley (1933 Speed Twenty VDP Saloon) . My car.

Richards, as one of our drivers with previous race experience, was first off in our team and made an excellent le Mans type start but, with little oil pressure, it was only a matter of eight laps before he ran a big end, although he did one lap at 63 mph. Grenfell, whose car was limited by the handicappers to 35 laps, was next out, and covered 14 laps before reaching boiling point, the best lap being at just under 68 mph. At this time we were in sixth place. Turner took over the running and covered 24 laps before a main leaf in a rear spring broke. He lapped very consistently at around 63 mph, which concealed the fact that his car was one of the most difficult to handle on the acute hairpin which formed a part of the course.

Airy took up the chase, whilst the resolution of the Turner broken spring was considered. However, when Airey came in after 12 laps with a run big end, the position was desperate. Airey had very kindly offered to make up the team, despite the fact that he was suffering from low oil pressure, and, as he was in the middle of hay making on his farm, the loss of time and a motor car was not to be lightly undertaken.

At this stage the race had almost 4 hours to run with only the two Speed Twenty Saloons left, and the 4.3 Special now limited to less than 1 hour of racing. However, this is the kind of position which provides the excitement (and hard work) for the pit staff. It was fortunate that David Michie (the Works Service Manager) had his 3 litre saloon with him and he most kindly offered to let the team have his rear spring to replace that on Turner's car. The mechanics worked like slaves and in about one hour the 3 litre was again ready for racing. A very smart bit of team work.

Jock Stephen had followed Airey into the race and just as it was thought there would be a peaceful interlude, Stephen was reported stopped on the circuit. Roy Brearley was sent out in AGF 476 to pick up the sash. Stephen started again almost immediately but as he was losing petrol through the filler cap he came in and Brearley continued to do 26 laps, several at 58 mph. On one lap he turned completely round at Woodcote Corner, but continued with the minimum loss of time and quite unconcerned. Stephen was next out, covering 7 laps, the best at 58 mph, and was followed by Grenfell who completed 12 laps before his engine boiled once again. The 4.3 was very steady, and remarkably quiet covering one lap at nearly 70 mph and certainly showed up very well against cars of much later vintage.

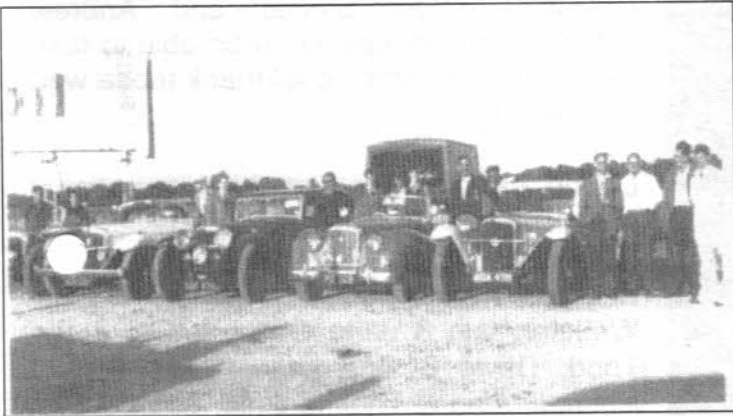
With a little over one hour's racing left Turner went out again. At this stage the 4.3 could run only another 8 laps, and there was nothing to be gained by making a further sash change. The 3 litre therefore finished the race covering 33 laps, the best being at 64 mph. Out of 31 teams, we finished 22nd, beating our nearest rivals the Invicta team, and completed 142 laps in the six hours.

No wonder AGF 476 was so clapped out when I bought it in 1987. But that is another story.

At present, the car is on its way up to Oban with Mike and Liz Williams from Tasmania as part of the Nick Walker Memorial Tour. If he doesn't come back wanting an SA Speed Twenty, I will be surprised.

The photo shows AGF 476 at Brooklands along with the Wadmays's well known SB VDP Sports.

Chris Storrar



The AOC Team for the 1955 Six Hour Relay Race. Left to right: Mr & Mrs Grenfell, G.B.Stokes, R.E.Brearley, H.Turner, J.C.Stephen, K.R.Day, A.James, C.Chase and J.W.Duggleby.



NICK WALKER MEMORIAL TOUR OF GREAT BRITAIN

PART 1



Alan McKinnon on the Brooklands Test Hill

It is a week since we, Chester & Sally McKaige and John & Margaret Hetherington joined the Tour and what a wonderful week it has been and we still have over a week to go on the rest of the Tour. Alan & Noeline

McKinnon, Dale & Maritta Parsell, Mike & Liz Williams, Richard Tonkin, John Link and David Stagg started the Tour at the beginning down in the South West in Devon.

The reason for this Tour of Great Britain is to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Alvis Owners Club Ltd. It is named in honour of Nick Walker 1936 - 2010, a former AOC Chairman and a true "Alvis Man," who in his time, had organized many Alvis International Days and was the author of "Alvis: The Speed Models in Detail." He was a very active AOC member.

The Tour is truly an international event with cars from Australia, Denmark, Netherlands and Belgium and this shows the strength of the Alvis Movement world wide. McDougalls, Parsells, Williams and Hetheringtons have all borrowed Alvis cars, respectively, from Mike Hirst, Iain Galloway, Chris Storrar and Andrew Storrar. It is very special to be able to take part in an Alvis and we all thank those who have lent cars.

During the Tour and at the International Alvis Day at Brooklands, we have been able to catch up with a lot of the JNOC English Participants - David & Kay Webster, Iain & Jane Galloway, Jo & Ian Todd, David & Sue Little, Peter & Sue Holmes, Alan & Thelma East, Brian & Elin Pooley, Chris & Helen Storrar, Martin Boothman, Bob & Marie Clark and Bill Rankin & Terri Alder. It has been wonderful to renew friendships and to maintain the link with that was established during the JNBC Tour. Prior to the Tour we were also able to catch up with David & Sally Woodburn and Mike & Ruth Hirst when we picked up their car.

The NWMT Tour is covering all sections of the AOC and each section has arranged the activities for the days that the Tour is in their section. The Tour book is



Catching up with some of our overseas members. L to R. Aussie members Alan & Noeline McKinnon, Dale & Maritta Parsell, Andrew & Frances McDougall with Jo & Ian Todd, Sally & David Woodburn

comprehensive with information about the places we are visiting as well as detailed route directions - very necessary for the visitors. The Tour started in the South West and was based in Exeter and the narrow lanes of Devon. The weather was lovely and the scenery was quite spectacular over Dartmoor and around the coast. There were some hair raising stories of having a large farm tractor coming towards you on a very narrow lane - the farmer was apparently never in doubt that he would get past!

There was a driving day to the IAD at Brooklands which gave people the opportunity to visit the Haynes Motor Museum on the way. The Friday was a very hot day (for England) and the cars & passengers felt it while stuck in non moving traffic on the M25. We were very lucky as we were driving down from the north and had a pretty trouble free run into Brooklands. The International Day saw some 260 Alvis cars on display - it was a magnificent sight. The weekend was well organized with an old red double decker bus to take us to the Brooklands Track for a BBQ on the Friday night. It was quite atmospheric to walk around the cars in the Museum in the evening. On the Saturday there were a number of activities and the Australian contingent chose the 70 mile run around the

Surrey countryside - up and down the Downs, a visit to a private collection of cars and a chance to climb Leith Hill Tower which gave you a 360 degree view towards London in one direction and Gatwick Airport and the south coast in another and lunch in an old water mill that has been converted into a pub. Back to the Hotel in time for the Gala Dinner - lots of chatter and a very entertaining after dinner speaker.

Sunday saw all the cars at Brooklands where unfortunately during the day the showers came and went. There was a display of Alvis cars that have been competition cars as well as the All model display - one car representing each of the Alvis models. There were driving tests that Andrew and Dale took part in. This involved a timed run up the Test Hill as well as associated backing and stopping tests - one with a bag over your head. Later in the afternoon there was the chance for a drive up the Test Hill and back along part of the banked track with passengers. The 12/50 went up the test hill with us and the

McKaiges in the car and it did it easily. There was plenty of opportunity during the day to catch up with people.

Sunday night the heavens opened - much needed in southern England as there hasn't been any significant rain since March. The rain continued for most of Monday morning which made for interesting driving conditions heading north out of London.

As our base was in Newmarket we were surrounded by racing horses. There around 2000 horses in training in and around the town. Horses have right of way when using the footpaths or crossing over the roads.



Avis cars lined up at Sandringham

The organizers had picked a wonderful route that took us around the western side of London via Windsor and Slough and there was hardly any traffic going our way. We were heading for the Shuttleworth Collection which is a fascinating collection of planes and cars that was started by Richard Shuttleworth in the 1920s and 30s. The planes range from very early machines like the Bleriot to the bi-planes of WW1 and then the development through the 1930s. The cars ranged from early veterans to 1930s. You could spend hours in the collection. Our stop for the next section was in Newmarket.

Here the East Anglia Section took over and we had a great days run out into the Fen country with a visit to the Prickwillow Drainage Museum and Ely Cathedral. Originally Ely was an island before the Fens were drained. The land created could then be used for intensive vegetable farming. Most of the Fens are below sea level and so the water had to be pumped out of the Fens and into the rivers. The museum showed how this was done and they started up two of the huge pumping engines for us. It was a very interesting visit. At Ely Cathedral we were allowed to park on the Palace Green with the Western front of the Cathedral as a backdrop for the cars. It made for an impressive sight. The Cathedral was started in 1090 and finished about 100 years later. The cathedral continued to be added to over the centuries. Some of our party went up the Octagonal Lantern Tower which was built of wood and there are still to be seen the carpenters marks made in the 14th century.

We did go down early one morning to see the horses being put through their paces in what is known as the Gallops - a hillside that the horses gallop up. David & Sue Little put on a BBQ at their house which is a converted railway station and station masters house. This was a great way to get to meet more of the East Anglia section members.

Then we were off to visit the Queen at her house at Sandringham - unfortunately she and Philip weren't home so we had to make do with a visit around the ground floor of the house and out to the garage where amongst the cars was Philip's TD21. Sandringham is the Queen's private house and she generally comes for the winter months. The grounds are extensive and it was a great visit. That night we were at a hotel in Woodhall Spa that was the officers mess for the Dam Busters crew, so there was lots of memorabilia around, especially in the Squadron Bar. The hotel was built as a country house in the early 1900s. There was a sight to see in the car park when we had 3 Grabers lined up - Richard was in Graber heaven!

Thursday saw the driving day into the Northern Section. This was a route that took us over the Humber Bridge - this



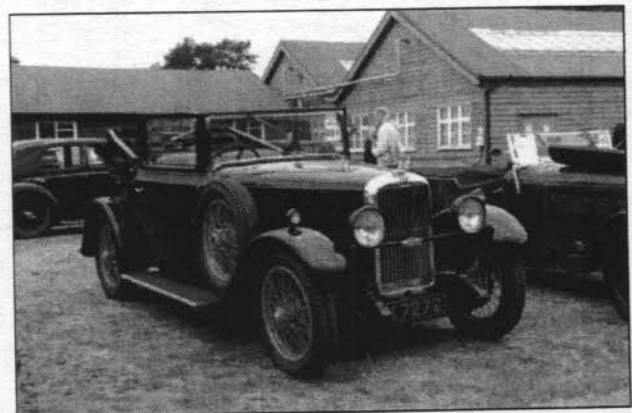
Richard Tonkin (centre with John Link) and insert ,receiving his trophy, in Graber heaven with English owned Grabers on either side.

was a skit about Cinderella put on by four gentlemen: 2 from the UK and 2 from Australia. It was very funny especially as there was a fair bit of adlibbing going on. There was much laughter from the audience. This followed by an Alvis quiz, where The McDougalls and the McKaiges managed to get enough correct answers to win a prize. It was a great night.

To be continued

Frances & Andrew McDougall

spans the Humber River as a single span suspension bridge that is 2,230m in length. The countryside was very pretty. Once over the bridge we were into Yorkshire and heading for the Yorkshire Moors made famous by the TV series Heartbeat. We had the chance to visit the area in which it was filmed. The trip over the Moors was quite spectacular with twisting roads, lots of stone walls, stone houses and vistas over hilly countryside. We also passed between Stockton and Darlington - site of the first rail journey by Stephenson's Rocket. We were welcomed at the hotel by a number of the Northern & Scottish section members.



Martin Boothman's stunning Silver Eagle

Friday was a day spent at the Beamish Open Air Museum - this is a representation of the 1913 town of Beamish and it's associated coal mining village and pit. It is one of the best museums of this type that we have visited and there was a lot to see in the garage, the bank, the Masonic Hall, the co-op shop, the dentist, the pub and the sweet shop. There are trams and buses of the era that take you from part of the site to another. In the Colliery village you realise just how small the houses were - in one house that was basically one room wide over two floors 14 people lived and the grandparents slept in a fold out bed in the kitchen. We had a visit down the mine where the tunnel height was 4ft 6in because this was the height needed for the pit ponies. It made things a bit difficult for the miners and especially for much taller people of today. At the end of the day the cars were allowed to be driven up the main street which made for a great photo opportunity. The day was finished off with a dinner where the entertainment



The McKaiges & the McDougalls driving Mike Hirst's 12/50

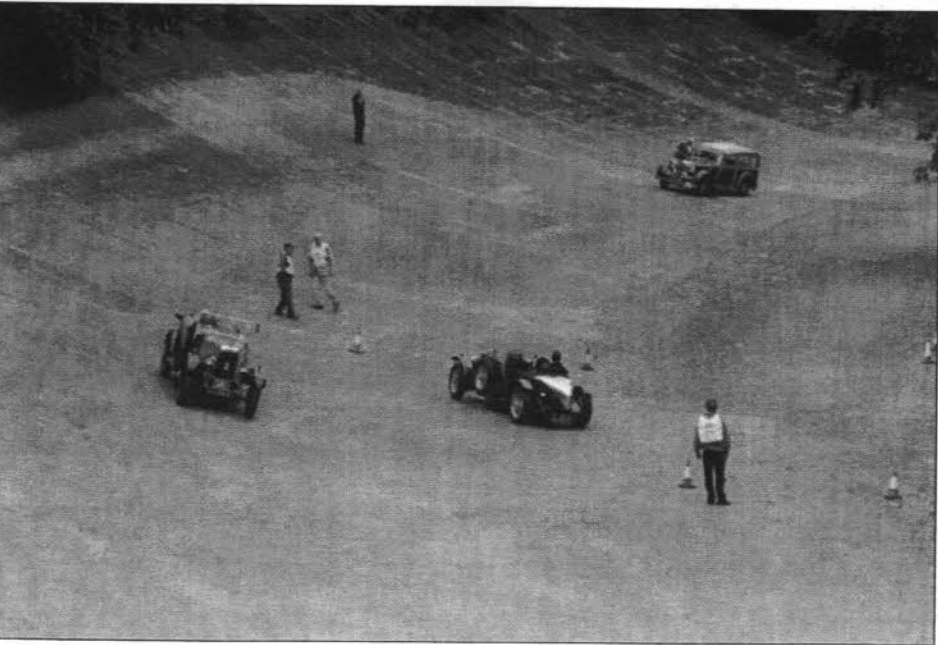


L to R: McKinnon's in their own car. Hetheringtons in Iain Galloways TE21 & the Williams in the Storrar SP20 VDP



Photograph by Sally McKaige

Beamish

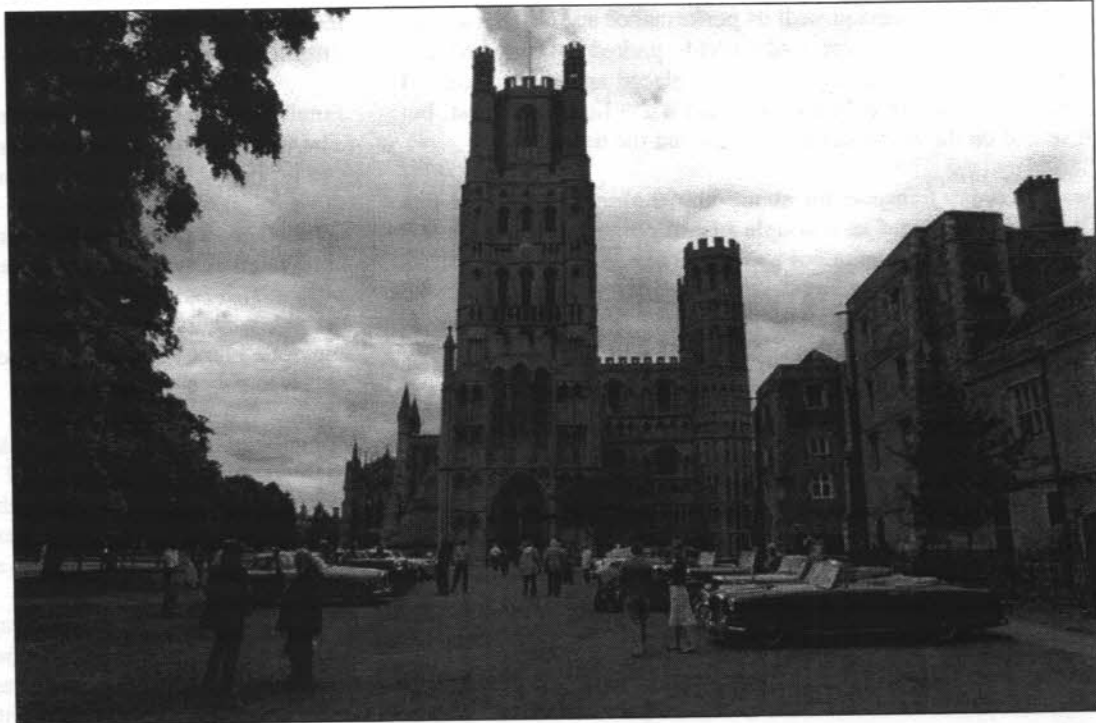


*Pandemonium at Brooklands!
No, very orderly in fact!
Following a run up the test hill, the cars were permitted onto what remains of the banked track.
Andrew McDougall 12/50, Peter Holmes TA14 Woody & a Speed 2 special*

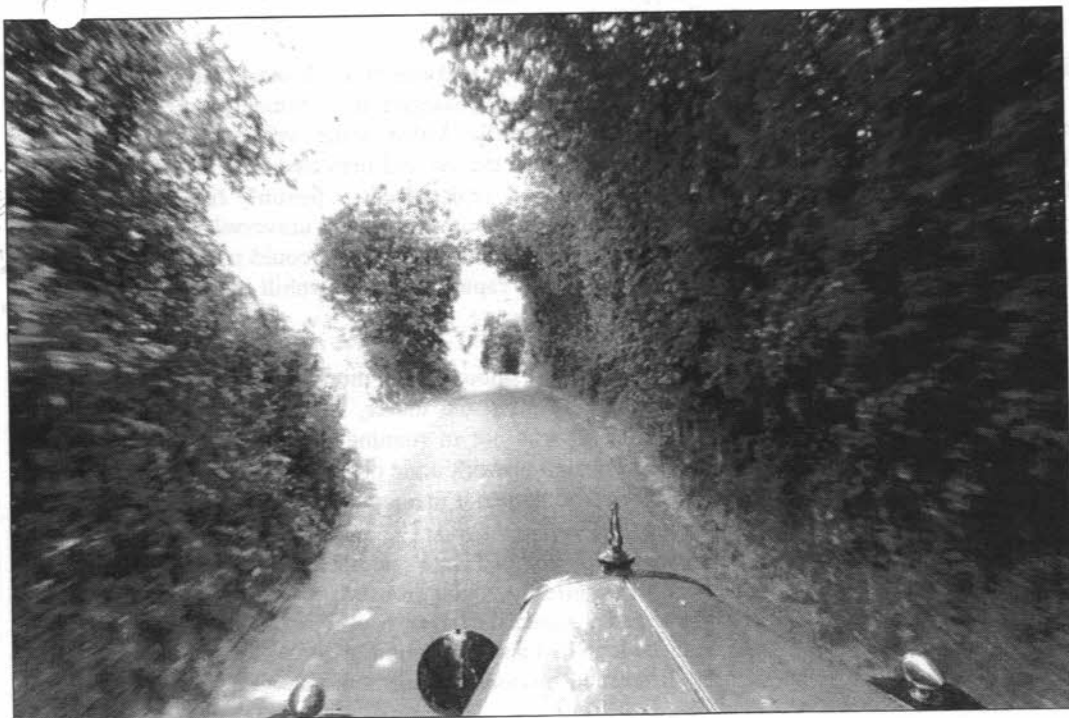


*Chester presenting the ALVIC Award to the organisers of the
Alvis International Day*

Photography by Frances McDougall



The cars at Ely Cathedral



One of England's country lanes

FIVE ALVISES

It seems that I may be a little different in that it was not the 12/50 which first aroused my interest in Alvises. Right at the end of the war - or just after it - my father acquired a particularly handsome Speed 20 with a pillar-less saloon body by, I think, Martin and King. The only jarring note was the door hinges which stuck way out from the body.

I have no record of this car, not even a photograph, and all I can remember is that it had I.F.S., so it wasn't an early one. My father was most impressed by its performance, but not so impressed with the way it, one night, it emptied all its coolant into the sump. So it had to make way for an SS Jaguar.

I, too, was most impressed with its performance and when, one day in 1948, I saw a Drophead TA14 parked outside Myers, recollections came back with a rush. I placed an order for one. I did have trial runs in a Bristol 401 and a 2½ litre Riley first, but still settled on the Alvis and never regretted the decision.

It was everyday transport for about 40,000 absolutely trouble-free miles. It was entered in a couple of hill climbs at Rob Roy and returned times which were not a disgrace to any standard car of its capacity. However when comparative weights were also taken into consideration, it was outstanding.

Its performance was only a little short of that of the TC M.G. which it replaced and yet it had 65 bhp to move 24 cwt against the M.G.'s 54 bhp and 15 cwt (all figures from memory only) and only a fraction of the frontal area. It always seemed to me that Alvis used draught-horses and M.G. ponies in their calculations.

I sold it to Maurie Monk, a very close friend, who gave it a particularly hard life largely connected with trials, for another 250,000 miles. It was then still going well enough for a friend of his by the name of McMillan to buy it. It was not a case of palming off a bomb either, because McMillan worked at the same place of business and had seen the car every day for years. The knockers of TA14s need not look to me for support.

Incidentally Maurie told me sometime after he bought it, that he had checked the valve timing as quoted on the plate under the bonnet, with other TA14's and found them all to be different. His car had the least overlap of any yet went the hardest. The original registration number of this car was NC 61 and the engine number was 22924.

About 1950, I saw in the Autocar a write-up of the new 3 litre Alvis. At that time a friend was the Alvis agent in Perth. I ordered one from him and arranged to fly to Perth when it was ready and drive it home to Melbourne. By the time it was 8 days old it had done 3000 miles. I have always understood that this was the first 3 litre to come to Australia. When it was eventually registered in Victoria it had number VO519.

As delivered it had a single Solex carburettor, with a very bad flat spot. Doug Whiteford modified it with an air bleed and improved it considerably but I still wasn't happy and I wrote to Alvis to tell them so. In reply they agreed that the Solex left something to be desired and offered to send me the latest factory modification which had not then been put into production. This was a pair of

S.U. carburettors complete with manifold and all operating gear and the price was ridiculously low even for those days - about £8 if I remember rightly. Naturally I jumped at the offer. At the same time I had asked for advice on raising the compression. They told me that they were using 8 : 1 on an experimental car X. I concluded later that this must have been the prototype Grey Lady. Doug Whiteford fitted the carburettors and raised the compression. The car was transformed.

It competed in a hill climb at Rob Roy in the sports car class. Naturally It didn't win, but put up one of the best times to that date for a saloon car. It also started in a standing I mile sprint at Fisherman's Bend where it was electrically timed at 18.2 sees, from memory. Very creditable for a 3 litre saloon then and not a disgraceful time even today.

Finally it started in a 1 hour standard car race at Fisherman's Bend. The track was on the airstrip and consisted of five short straights connected by one bend of about 60°, another of about 120° and three of 180°, all unbanked. During the race there was a compulsory pit-stop when a rear wheel had to be replaced with the equipment supplied with the car. In the 3 litre class it was well beaten by a DB2 Aston Martin but I seem to remember we came second, well ahead of a 2½ litre Riley tourer and quite a few cars in the open class. The distance covered was around 60 miles - 62¼ seems to ring a bell.

All of which was very creditable but it was a disaster because the drain plug had dropped out of the gearbox and it was a wreck. When the factory heard of this they sent out a complete set of gears free of charge - a handsome gesture typical of the company. But the gearbox was never quite the same again.

Eventually the 3 litre made way for a Daimler Century and the association with Alvises dropped for nearly 20 years. But, the memory of the Speed 20 was still there and I developed a determination to acquire a 4.3 litre, preferably an open one, to join my two Napiers.

One day Alister Cannon told me of a 4.3 short chassis tourer near Dandenong which had belonged to a young chap named Cox before he was tragically killed some years earlier. He had completely dismantled the car and imported from Alvis everything he considered needed replacement - pistons, rings, valves and guides, engine mounts, timing chain, universal joints, gearbox gears etc. etc. Unfortunately his parents could not be persuaded to sell the car and it was rapidly going downhill in a leaky shed with an earth floor.

Then I heard of a 4.3 saloon which might be available in Adelaide. So despairing of getting the tourer, I managed to buy it from a Percy Dixon. It was not in running order but had had a lot of mechanical restoration work done on it. The arrangement was that I was to fly over to collect it in a few weeks time.

The few weeks dragged into months. In the meantime I had managed to acquire the tourer from Mr. Cox. But I had heard that the tourer had a standard exhaust manifold and a low ratio rear end while the saloon had a sports manifold and a high ratio diff. from a tourer. It seemed obvious to buy both cars and swap bits before

parting with one of them.

The trip from Adelaide in a thoroughly un-roadworthy car is a story in itself but, nevertheless, my wife and I were so taken with the potential of the car that there is no way that we shall ever sell it. Nor shall I ever be induced to part with the tourer. When our present home building project is completed, they will both be given the full restoration treatment. The tourer will be first - at least the saloon is in one piece.

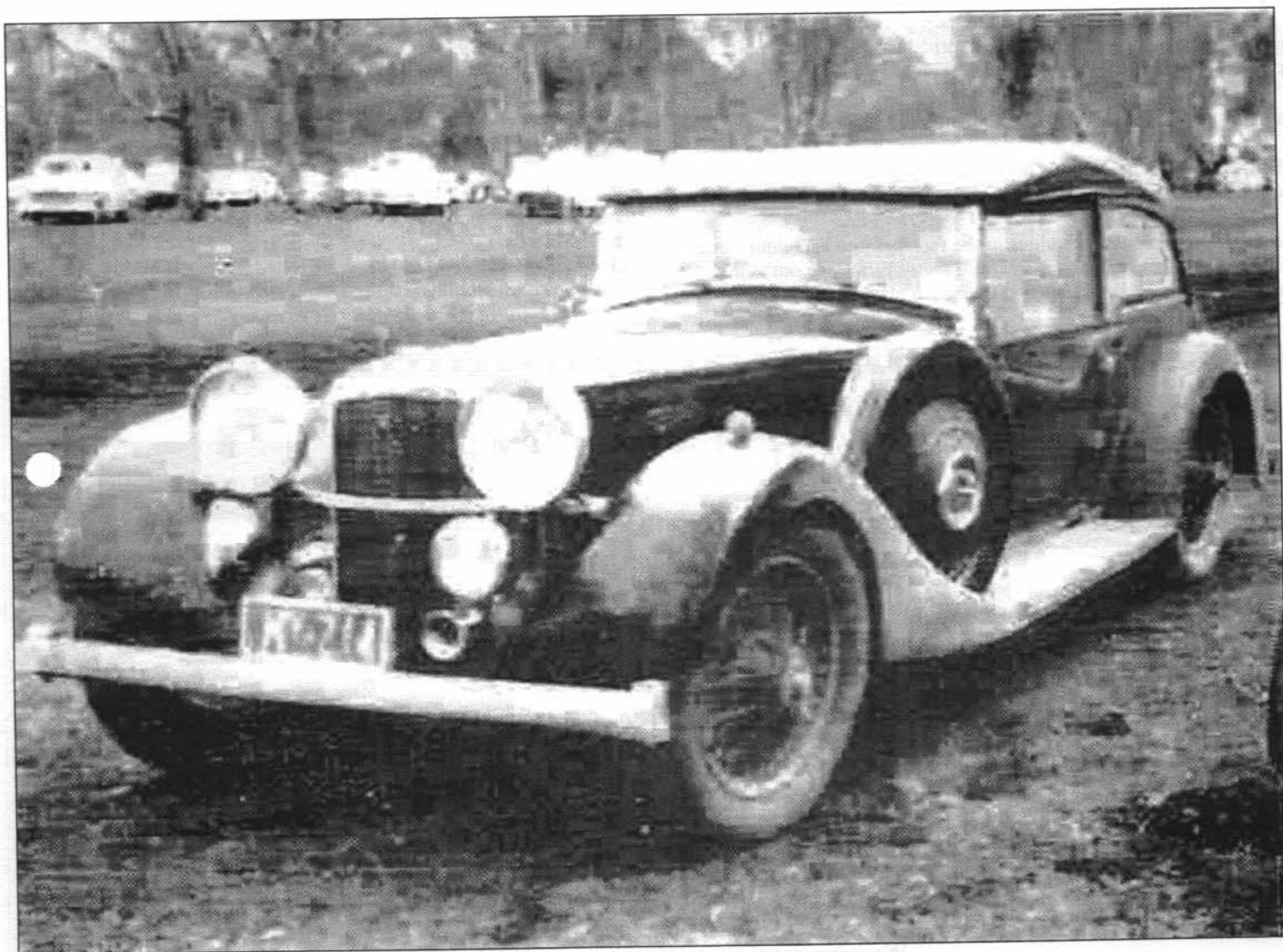
The tourer is Car No. 18928 and I am told that it was once owned by Terry Plummer when it was well known in Melbourne. I have a letter from Alvis to the Late David Cox dated 30th April 1963. It reads in part :- *"There is little positive information about the early history of your car on our records. Our conclusion that the vehicle was an experimental of the short chassis 4.3 litre was based on the fact that it left the works as a chassis only at least 12 months before any other 4.3 litre short chassis car, but we cannot trace that there were any similar (presumably) experimental models produced in early 1937. The fan blades in aluminium were current practice at that time. Our records show that the vehicle was first fitted with the 4.1 - 1 rear axle ratio. There is no indication as to why this particular chassis was exported to Australia, but it was not unusual for chassis only to go to Australia and to be fitted with Australian bodies."* I have been told that the body was made in

Ballarat but there is no sill plate to prove or disprove this.

The saloon is Car No. 18406. I have a letter from Alvis to Percy Dixon dated 8th. April 1952 which reads in part:- "This car appears to have been fitted with a special Mayfair body and we are not sure regarding the design of the rear lamps." And later:- "as regards the actual history of your car, our records show that it was first put into service in February 1937 and it does appear to have been back to the works for the incorporation of the dual exhaust silencer system, raising of compression ratio, copperising of cylinder head etc. in the years immediately pre-war. Apparently, however, it was not fitted with the Servo assisted braking system which was a feature of the later 4.3 litre cars."

The sill plate confirms that it is a Mayfair body, but I must confess that I had never previously heard of the firm. I still do not know if it is a feature to be prized or deplored. I can see no feature of its construction which one would not expect to see on a 4.3 body and the only point that is out of the ordinary is that the rear window slopes the "wrong way" anticipating that feature on the little Fords (Anglia?) of the early 1950's. However, I have seen a For Sale advertisement in a recent issue of English Motor Sport referring to the only Mayfair bodied 4.3 litre Alvis to survive. Obviously the owner did not know of my car.

Russell Stapleton. August 1977



The 4.3 litre tourer car no 18928 when owned by Terry Plummer

Apologies for the quality of the photograph

There must be many told and untold stories that come from the halcyon days of the Alvis Car and Engineering Company Pty. Ltd, and this is another. It was published in the Alvis Owner Club Bulletin in the 1970s and acknowledgement is made to both the author and the AOC for this reprint.

.....ed

REFLECTIONS IN RETIREMENT

From: Robert Humber

I was an apprentice at Alvis in 1932 - 1935 and admired the skill of the best test drivers who occasionally got 90 mph out of a better than average Speed 20 in chassis form. As you will know, Alvis sent their chassis out to specialist body builders such as Carbodies, Cross and Ellis and all chassis we tested were driven fiat out before they had bodies fitted. Ninety was quite a bat in those far-off days; nowadays any bright young man who can afford a second hand 3 litre Ford can exceed 100 mph but not as safely as Jack Clarke, the Alvis tester.

One day I was out testing a Firebird, a rather tame Alvis chassis, with Jack Clarke as driver. We saw the Warwickshire Hunt passing over the fields and Clarke, who was a real Warwickshire country lad at heart, said "Let's watch the hunt." We left the Alvis tucked up against a hedge and stood watching the Hunters go by. There was one rather portly gent, dressed in very fresh hunting gear, who had very little idea how to ride a horse and Jack started laughing at him and saying some loud uncomplimentary remarks about his riding ability.

The poor fellow was rolling about on the unbalanced horse like a pig on a pony. "Give yer 'orse its head and let it go man, bawled Jack, and then he suddenly stopped bawling and turned to me. "Come on, let's get back - it's Tommy John, trying to ride an 'orse".

Tommy John in the mid 1930's was the managing director of Alvis!

In between struggling with his poor nag, he kept glancing towards the Firebird chassis - and we made record time back to the Alvis factory!

The Alvis firm was almost unique in the fact that iron and alum came in at one end and, eventually, hand built motor cars came out at the other end. In those days the men at the bench made the best job

possible.

I remember a time they were making a special racing engine for Brooklands. I was going through the foundry and, to make the best possible mould for the pattern shop, it was considered that horse muck mixed with oily black sand was well worth while for a special racing job. As I was looking out of the window I saw a railway horse and flat -cart come in the central throughway. The horse obligingly produced a nice evacuation of droppings steaming on the floor and immediately two hefty Welshmen from the foundry shop rushed out with shovels and nearly fought each other to be first to collect the horse muck. I thought it was highly amusing, and later I realised that these tough Welsh lads were bent upon doing the best possible job of work for the experimental and racing shop, knowing that their work would eventually be translated into a racing car carrying the Alvis banner at Brooklands. Apparently horse manure mixed with the moulder's special sand helped to make the perfect mould free of blow-holes. That was the loyal spirit of a small British car factory in the good old days.

If memory serves me right, Alvis made a 1500 cc 8 cylinder supercharged front-wheel-drive racer that lapped Brooklands at 118 mph in the 1928- 32 era, Good going for that time. I believe it was an overhead camshaft engine that looked very much like the modern Jaguar engine.

You will know that they made a four cylinder FWD car for public sale, that never really made the grade, but it was way ahead of its time. They won a long distance 200 mile race at Brooklands with a front drive model and barrels of beer were rolled out in the machine shop for all those who worked on the car to celebrate.



24 Hour Team Trial

June 25th & 26th 2011

at Kyneton Vic.



Advanced Notice

The **VSCC** invites members of the **Alvis Car Club** to form a team and participate in the 2011 **24 Hour Team Trial**. This is a Multi Club Touring event, incorporating a series of come and try activities on public roads throughout the weekend of 25th and 26th June 2011, around the Kyneton area of Victoria.

Spanning a total of 24 hours, the trial consists of a six events requiring a range of skills and driver abilities. Events include: Transport Section, Day Trial, Economy Run, Night Trial, Scatter Run and Treasure Hunt. Cabin style Accommodation and meals are provided for all competitors.

A team would ideally consist of 4 to 6 vehicles with at least one navigator to assist each driver.

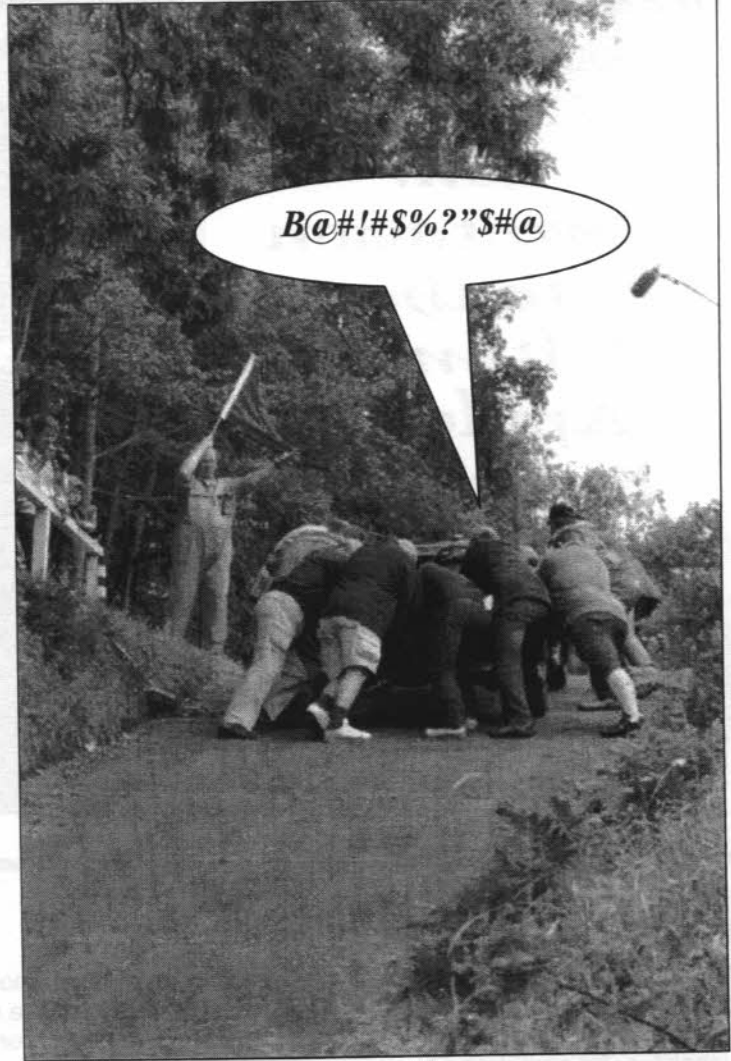
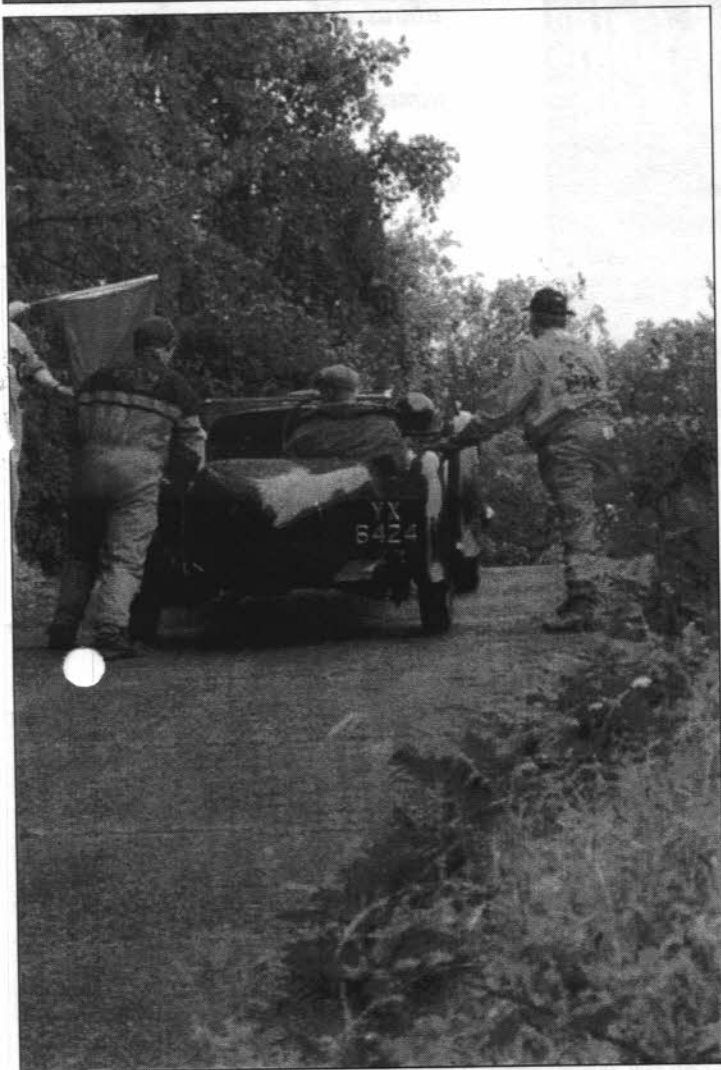
The event is open to all pre-war vehicles.

We encourage you to organise your own team.

Register your interest by contacting the event organiser now.

John Balthazar (03) 9728 8614 or email: vscc24hour2011@internode.on.net

ALVIS PEOPLE BEHAVING BADLY



How embarrassing to have your FWD stall on the brow of the Brooklands Test Hill. Was the microphone brought in to capture car sounds or the driver's comments about his pride and joy?

Photography by Frances McDougall

FOR SALE

1952 TA21 DHC. Chassis and engine number 24639.
Black duck over original maroon body. Interior, tan leather with unusual walnut veneer dash in exceptional condition. Interesting provenance.

The car has been in the ACCV ownership for many years and in the hands of its present keeper, has undergone steady improvement to the point where it is delightful and reliable vehicle ready to participate in club activities.

Offered due to circumstances beyond my control.

\$75,000

For further details contact Darrell Horton on 5983 2016 or by emailing jocelyndarrell@bigpond.com

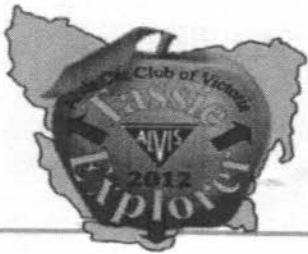


"Tassie Explorer"

Alvis Car Club of Victoria (Inc)

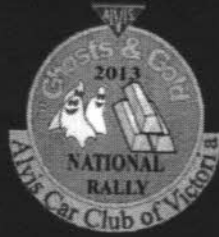
22 April - 6 May 2012

Your
Invitation
to the
Ultimate
Apple Isle
Experience



"of Ghosts & Gold"

4-13th - 15th - 22nd of 1970-1980



Your
Invitation
To have fun

If you would like information
about either event, please
contact John Lang
jdmelang@bigpond.net.au
or
PO Box 129, Gisborne 3437
or
03 5426 2256

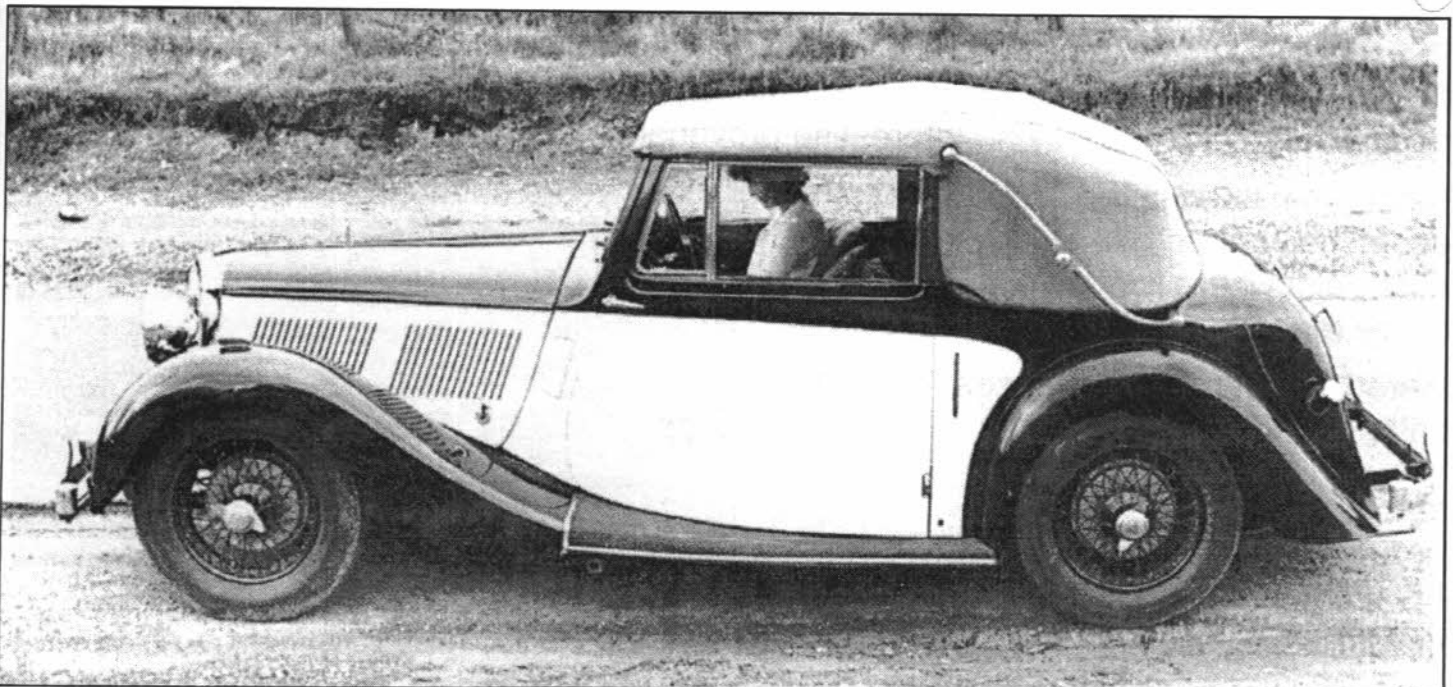
WANTED

TC21 (100) brake
drums & hubs

Ring Alan Bratt
0427 405 573

FOR SALE

Alvis 12/70 drophead coupe, which is currently under restoration at the Central Coast (NSW) workshops of Woods & Woods, phone no. (02) 4342 5581, is being offered as is/where is for a quick sale. This SB series 12/70, Car No.19306, Chassis No.15305, Engine No.15790, has its original Mulliner coachwork and requires only re-painting, a new hood and new upholstery for completion to showroom condition again. It is currently on full registration, ZMC-000, and is on brand new tyres. The engine has been thoroughly overhauled so the car is in excellent mechanical condition. This actual car is illustrated in Kenneth Day's book, "Alvis: The Story of the Red Triangle" when possessed by the previous owner, Marc Pain. It can be viewed on page 380 of the current (4th edition) with Marc's wife, Bette, at the wheel. This photo also was published in the 2nd and 3rd editions of this book (at p.240). Reason for sale: owner is beyond restoration to a similar robust condition. Enquiries in first instance to Eric Cunningham, phone (02) 4625 1381 or email to alvisaccessories@hotmail.com, or write to PO Box 105N, Campbelltown North, NSW 2560, for further details. Offers around \$43,000 are invited.



FOR SALE

1936 6 light TF Crested Eagle saloon -
chassis number 13197 "Mrs. Simpson"

This totally unmolested Crested Eagle saloon is offered for sale for the first time since being purchased from Brian Hemmings in 1996. She has been a much loved member of the family and is being offered for sale reluctantly because of lack of space following another purchase.

She has recently had the benefit of a full service from Historic and Vintage Restorations in Blackburn, Melbourne.

\$75,000 ONO

Ricard Tonkin 0407 944 987



WANTED

Wanted 25HP engine (ie 3.5 litre) in any condition or Crankcase for same and complete diff assembly for a six cylinder car.

Contact John Rowe, Perth

email: jarowe@westnet.com.au

mobile: 0412 348 246

WANTED:

Pair of bucket seats to suit 1934 Speed 20, (ex Austin Tope).

Peter Mott. 08 8327 3323.

mottpa@bigpond.com

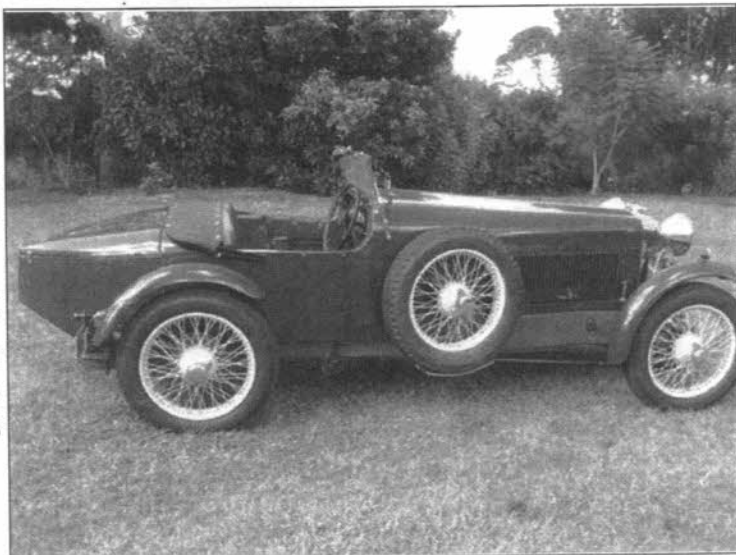
FOR SALE

1928 Alvis FD FWD is for sale. Chassis # 7190 Eng # 7653 Car # 11982. Major restoration was recently completed which included a replica TT body and engine work including new conrods with slipper bearings, new main bearings, new pistons, valves, new gearbox gears, etc. The supercharger has new gears and the lobes and interior casing have been built up using teflon. The front hub splines have been re-made. Full details are available to serious parties.

Des Donnan

dedonnan@bigpond.net.au

Price is \$100,000 firm.



FOR SALE

FOR SALE

1958 TD21 (red)

Chassis # 25996

Manual gearbox, wire wheels, front disc brakes, electric fan, sun roof.

Re-built front suspension. Re-painted

Full History available

Recently restored. Repainted in red. Rechromed, new

carpets & tyres. Clutch & brake seals

Mechanicals restored—clutch & brakes

\$37,500

Ring Tery Hurst 0438 689 544



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



FOR SALE

SC Speed 20 magneto—good condition. Diff centre. Alloy waterway for SA Speed 20.. Starter cover. Magneto to coil change over switch. New head gasket. Push rods. Alistair Clarke ph (02) 4447 8340

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

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Alvis Car Club of Victoria (Inc), its officers or its editor. Whilst all care has been taken, neither the Club nor its Officers accept responsibility for the availability, quality or fitness for use, of any services, goods or vehicles notified for sale or hire or the genuiness of the advertiser or author. Other car clubs may reprint only articles originating from our members. Acknowledgement would be appreciated.