

August 2011

# Alvic

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

ARCHIVE

RESTORATION

*Two interesting projects*

**EYNESBURY**

*Lunch in an historic home*



**August 2011**  
**VOL 50 ISSUE 7**

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**Alvis Car Club of Victoria (Inc)**

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CLUB ROOMS: - rear of 'ALVISTA' 21 Edgar St, Glen Iris (MELWAYS 59 F8)  
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line - first Friday of the month.

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

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Greetings and welcome to the August Alvic.

We have been back a month now and after ten days getting over jet lag, things are back to normal.

Work is progressing in the garage and both Alvises have been exercised in recent times.

The other day I took the Darracq to do some shopping and luckily for me I remembered to fill out the log book as for part of the journey I had a police car sitting on my tail. He must have had a problem with the divvy van as I wondered why he would sit behind a car going flat out at 40kmh in a 80kmh zone for well over a km. Perhaps he was toying with the idea of pulling me over to check my log book, I will never know.

Whilst on the subject of permits, I hear that in South Australia they have decided to dispense with what was their 30 year rolling year and draw the line at a fixed date. I think it is about time Victoria does likewise. We have a 25 rolling year cut-off that means you can put your Holden Commodore on the permit scheme. There is a bit of a loop hole here in that someone on a low income or who cannot afford to pay full registration can basically join a Holden or GM related car club, pay their subs and put once what was their everyday car onto the new 90 day permit scheme. They can then use the car for whatever they want to do. Certainly a big saving over their once fully registered vehicle! If I had my way, I would take it up to 1980.

The committee of the VSCC has had a very interesting few months of debate in regards to what constitutes a vintage sports car. Unfortunately some people became rather snobby in regards to what they thought constituted a vintage sports car and this was made known to great effect in the club newsletter. I think we are very fortunate that this doesn't happen in our club, one of the benefits of having a one make club.

The last week of August sees myself and John Lang heading off to Traralgon to commence the planning of the National Rally for 2013. We hope to have most of it sorted out during the three or four days away. We have quite a bit of interest from members and visitors overseas so it will certainly have a International flavour. Then there is the Tasmanian Rally next year organised by Noeline McKinnon. This has also been advertised overseas and again we have had some positive feedback.

I must remind you that in October we have our AGM and trophy presentation. Once again everyone gets the opportunity to have their say and elect a new committee. Is it time for a change? Is this old committee getting a bit stale? How about some new blood? Is it time we had a lady President? Come along in October and put your vote to work.

That's it from me, see you at the August meeting.

Chester

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

## FOR THE LONGTIME MEMBERS TO CONSIDER

Wayne Brookes in America has long been the researcher of Alvis cars and history recorder in the country and has posed the following request for information:

Dear Chester,

Do have any information on Speed 20 SD Vanden Plas 3414 Tourer 12991 13441 17652 CRW 804 reportedly once owned by Nevil Shute in Victoria circa 1950s and imported to California by a U.S. Navy Officer? The car, reportedly a barn find in extremely knackered condition, has an Alvis Car Club Victoria badge attached. I know the car was owned by a Stan Davis in California circa 1963. So far I have little other information.

Yours for longer bonnets,

Wayne

### NEW MEMBERS

A very warm welcome to Norman and Claire Blundell from the UK  
You join a growing band of international members and we look forward to meeting you soon in  
Australia

### Supper - the Hetheringtons

## 2011 EVENT CALENDAR

August	19	General Meeting
September	16 24, 25	General Meeting Healesville Steam Rally <b>OPTIONAL OVERNIGHT PLANNED 24th</b>
October	8, 9 14	Birregurra Festival <b>THIS WILL BE PLANNED AS A WEEKEND AWAY</b> Annual General Meeting & Trophy Awards
November	18	General Meeting
December	4	Christmas Party

Front page: Lunch at Eynesbury. The cars lined up in front of the homestead

## REX HARVEY

It is with sadness that I record the sudden passing of Rex Harvey, peacefully in his chair at home in St. Albans, on the afternoon of 22nd July. Rex had not been well for some time last year, but had made a wonderful recovery in more recent months. Many have remarked how well and his old jovial active self he appeared at the Swaffham weekend late last year and more recently at Brooklands and the following Club celebrations this June. He had many friends within our Club, here and overseas, and will be much missed. On behalf of all in the Club and all his Alvis friends, I extend our thoughts to Barbara and their son and two daughters.



Rex, a graduate of Bristol University, was a public school headmaster by profession. His acute sense of humour and lively companionship shone through, but being on the wrong side of "Sir" as an errant small schoolboy would, I can imagine, have been a rather daunting experience. He joined the Club as member 8111 with a lovely TE21 Series III ENJ 100C in which he took much pride. It was in more recent years that Rex rose to prominence in the Club. On Julian Collins' sudden illness in 2006, Rex offered to produce one edition of the Bulletin until such time as Julian recovered. Sadly that was not to be, and Rex found himself in the position of Bulletin Editor, a task he offered to do for three years which he fulfilled with distinction until 2010. I remember visiting him at that time and recall the painstaking efforts he was making to recover all the material inherited from Julian, a racing history of Alvis in the thirties and much more, most of which was later published for our posterity and enjoyment in the Bulletin.

Following on from such a single minded enthusiast as Julian must have been a daunting task, but assisted ably by Barbara, he improved greatly the cost of production of the Bulletin, allowing the introduction of more colour, and produced a fine full edition every two months, striking a balance between the social, historical and technical needs of members. As fine an edition as ever, always. Not an easy task! He contributed to the history of the Alvis Company with his own research which he published into the Company's Wartime activities, including bomb trolley production.

I suspect we have a lot to thank Barbara for in this fine record. It is good to know that he enjoyed life within the Alvis fraternity so much in his final days. As well as being Alvis Owner Club Bulletin Editor, he was also Editor of the German Colonies Philately Club Bulletin, an even more specialist Club than ours.

Rex fought hard for the rights of the Club Officers in representation at Board Meetings in 2009 and much is owed to him for the fine working relationships we now enjoy at Club Senior level.

It was my pleasure to join Rex for a pub lunch in St. Albans on a regular basis, and his company on these pleasant visits will be missed. The attached photograph is of such a happy occasion. Much thanks to Rex, and to Barbara too, for all their talents and hard work on our behalf.

Valete to a good friend.

**Chris Storrar.**

## BOB ANDERSON

It is with regret that we advise the death of Bob Anderson on 17th July following a long battle with cancer.

Bob and June were Alvis stalwarts in Western Australia and would not hesitate to drive across for the National Rallies in the eastern states.

Recently Bob and June sent me some very interesting Alvis history from WA and in so doing, more pieces to the jigsaw. I suspect the information was compiled only days before Bob's death.

To June and family, we extend our sincere sympathies, with the passing of another of those with a long history of service to the Alvis fraternity.

*June's address is 163 Wellington Road, Dianella, WA 6059*





# Eynesbury for Lunch

SUNDAY 17 July

Bob & Lesley Northey were our hosts for the run.

What a line up of 12/50s were waiting at the Scienceworks dockside parking area. Sands, Burns, McKaiges and Northeys, and, it was going to get better.

Just to spoil the 12/50 party, the Langs arrived in the Speed 25 and then the Links in the TA21 special. Several moderns carried those from far away places. But, AWOL were Chris Higgins in another 12/50 and the Caldwells in the 3½ litre.

On departure we cruised past the now disused British Petroleum plant and through the streets of Williamstown and the esplanade to stop at the memorial to those who died in the loss of the corvette HMAS Yarra, in what is considered one of the bravest acts in Australian Naval history. The vessel was escorting 3 merchant ships to Fremantle via the Indian Ocean, when the watch sighted a complement of Japanese cruisers and destroyers on the horizon. The convoy scattered and the Yarra steamed straight for the Japanese fleet. The lightly armed corvette was no match for the Japanese and went down with the loss of 151 sailors.

On past the Time Ball Tower, where JNBC participants parked on the first day of the event and were accosted by the Victoria Police re-enactment group in their Wolseley 6.90. And where David Little managed to turn the tables on the "Police" by pinching the keys for the handcuffs he was wearing and caused them some anxious moments when they thought the key had been lost.

We then proceeded through the Williamstown foreshore slalom. More speed humps than you could ever imagine. Obviously the local council had stocked up on speed humps and then ran out of somewhere to store them. So where better than the foreshore; pity about the traffic!

More speed humps through the west of Williamstown and on to the Newport Lakes; a reclaimed quarry, for morning tea. The council are not a pack of duffers after all! What an interesting place! We passed the Caldwells on their way into the Lakes entrance which was an alternate place to meet for those who slept in.

On to Altona. The route notes reminded us of the fact that the Prime Minister lives in the area.

Our route notes called for a right turn at the end of Merton St and my navigator freaked out, when, committed to the right turn, she saw the road was blocked off.

The 40 ft turning circle of the Speed 25, once again attracted my attention to the job at hand. Amazing how a three point turn can change into a five point turn! Does anyone have a 12/50 for sale?

We knew best! The Northeys really have meant a left turn. Off we went looking for Burns road on the left, through the shopping centre to be presented with the freeway on ramp to Melbourne. Backup, another 5 point turn, this time with many curious on lookers.

Back to the Melways, as guidance from above was not forthcoming!

Off to the Black Powder Mill. The route notes listed that the building was erected in 1942 and is the only survivor of about 400 buildings of the Albion Explosives Factory, formerly a significant and important defence production facility.

With the gastric juices making their presence felt, we headed for the Eynesbury Homestead to the south of the city of Melton. An interesting satellite city is being built in a rural environment complete with golf course and other amenities.

Unaware of whether we were first there or last, it was not obvious where to park. We took the unmarked driveway on the right and proceeded into what turned out to be the back of the building, not the front! A member of the staff said that we should park on the grass as that is where the limos park when there is a wedding. The grass was pristine and manicured and the idea of a 2 ton car on narrow tyres suggested an alternate park would be more desirable.

Lunch was served in a nice environment and people enjoyed the company.

Chris Higgins was there and told a story of woe and luck. A breakdown in Williamstown, beside the Links car led to a rescue and safe storage for the 12/50 which had failed to proceed. The Links in true Alvis fashion transported Chris & Angus to lunch.

Geoff Ross arrived at Eynesbury as it was an easy drive from Geelong and his 12/50 was on its first club run.

With the sky threatening to open its flood gates, the cars left for Melbourne.

A most successful outing, with many thanks to the Northeys.

Mark & Susan Burns	12/50	Ducksback
Rob & Christine Sands	12/50	Ducksback
Chester McKaige & Don Bosanquet	12/50	
Ducksback		
Bob & Lesley Northey	12/50	
Ducksback		
Geoff Ross	12/50	Ducksback
Chris Higgins & Angus Gibb	12/50	
David & Lyne Vaughan		TA21
David & Margaret Caldwell		3½ Litre
John & Annie Link		TA21 Special
John & Marg Lang		Speed 25
Darrel Horton & Joc Coates		Modern
Sally McKaige & Carol Remfrey		Modern

.....ed

### " North by Northey "

*Who would miss a day's ramble through the near northern plains organised by the inimitable Northeys?*

*Well, some did, and it should be to their everlasting sadness because these organisers do not overlook the minutest thing - even to the little dog who brought it's keeper to the assembly point for a viewing, and chose to pee on an Alvis wheel over some moderns that were as readily available.*

*That's detail!*

*Muster at 0930 on the shore of Port Phillip Bay at Newport on a brisk morning - a brief greeting and coffee for some, and then a bevy of 12/50 's shepherded by a gleaming Speed Twenty and tailed by a couple of dreary moderns, set off on a romp along roads specially constructed for older machines and their mature but, as ever, young-at-heart pilots.*

*At this point acknowledgment must be made of the attendance at the departure point of the locally resident TA21 special, which had come along to greet it's seldom met " siblings ", and had it not brought along it's worthy keeper, the contents of yet another 12/50, that had sadly failed to complete the journey to Melbourne, may have been doomed to an early end to their day.*

*As it was, this misfortune saw not only the attendance at lunch of the broken-hearted but of the generous benefactors as well, the incident serving yet again to demonstrate the camaraderie of the Alvis community.*

*The cavalcade bounced and rolled along the pleasant route to the morning tea break where*

waiting to greet the party was another gleaming TA21, it's conductors, new to the fraternity, being warmly welcomed for the remainder of the event to the luncheon venue. It's a well known fact that old cars, and particularly Alvis's, run so much better after a morning tea break on a cool day, and without further incident, the happy tourists arrived at "Eynesbury", the former grand homestead of a substantial pastoral empire that, at it's peak, comprised over 100,000 acres of prime land. Today, the well-preserved home plays host to groups such as our Club, and to the work-

wearly, who work out their worries and frustrations on the golf course. An excellent and generous meal lived up to the Northey's assurances and by home time all departed in a state of bliss, looking forward to a dawdle home. For the writer, the two and a half hours to the front door was accompanied by a feeling of a day well lived and a warm feeling in the heart for the organisers who have "done it again". Thanks. Leslie and Bob.

"Toad" Horton



*Geoff Ross and his 12/50*

*Alvis 1924 SA 12/50 Ducksback Car # 8460; Chassis # 3096; Engine # 2722*

*Short wheelbase 9' 2" despatched in August 1924 .*

*In 1981 Denis Rule purchased this car in boxes, complete with running gear, from Ian Guthrie of Wodonga. There were no mudguards or body panels.*

*The body panels, wooden frame and mudguards were built by the late Dave Gittings. Karl Richardson of KJR Coach Building completed the restoration.*

*In 2003 it was trailered to Orange NSW and driven in the George Green Rally, honouring 100 years of Vauxhalls. The Alvis was driven for a week, keeping up with the big Vauxhalls and doing some 500 miles.*

*Geoff purchased the car in late 2010.*

*Geoff has been an ACCV member for many years and it was good to see him on this, his first club run in the car.*



# The Whistlestop Run

Sunday 19 June dawned chilly and the occasional shower, which in no way daunted a gathering of Alvises at the car park of the main runway at Melbourne Airport.

just north

Those present were the Caldweells in the 3½ litre, Northeys in the Ducksback, Chris Higgins and Cliff Langs in the Speed 25 and Remfreys, Bosanquets with friends the Tilleys, and the Heads, all in moderns.

present were the Caldweells in the Ducksback, Chris Higgins and Cliff Langs in the Speed 25 and Remfreys, Bosanquets moderns.

The intent was to travel through Wildewood, New Gisborne for morning tea. It is amazing for a short distance and be in a rural environment.

Konagaderra, Riddells Creek to the Langs in how quickly around Melbourne you can travel

greeting us on the roadside through Wildewood and virtually no traffic at all to Riddells Creek. Then patchy traffic until entering the wilds of New Gisborne where again the kangaroos and the wildlife were the only observers.

Thus was the case today with a couple of geese traffic at all to Riddells Creek. Then patchy traffic until entering the wilds of New Gisborne where again the kangaroos and the wildlife were the only observers.

It was difficult to get people to leave the fire when we headed off for lunch at the Whistlestop. The route took us onto 7km of gravel road - a sin I will live to regret! I had driven along the road on the previous afternoon and the surface was firm with no dust. The rain during the night changed that and the Northey's car was at home in the wet. The route took us through Heskett, around Hanging Rock to Straws Lane, Woodend and onto Black Forest Drive and back to the suburbia section of New Gisborne.

Eighteen diners enjoyed the fare and a very pleasant lunch was had by all.

Fortunately the run back from the Eynesbury outing a few weeks later, was in rain and the mud from Whistlestop was washed to oblivion.

.....John Lang





# MOTOR SALESMEN'S WIVES

## Lures at the Show

(By a Correspondent)

Idle curiosity took me to the Motor Show. I didn't intend buying a car. I merely wanted to see them; but that is where I made my first mistake. I also took my wife Muriel with me. In both cases I reckoned without the motor salesman.

My attention was attracted by a single seater coupe. Certainly it was a very natty car, but there was nothing to mark it out from other cars of the same class. Muriel, however, thought otherwise.

"Oh, John, what a lovely little thing!" We immediately became fair prey to a dapper young man in the latest in toothbrush moustaches. He sauntered over, and addressed himself to my wife almost exclusively.

"It's a neat model, isn't it? Quite the latest thing in the car line. Absolutely all the latest improvements and an entirely new stream line design. Beautifully fitted and guaranteed to do 10 to the gallon on any road. Easily handled, and answers the wheel like a bird. Self-starter and separate lighting and ignition, and new cooling, makes it absolutely the best thing on the market at £500. The easiest of terms if you want them. It is a car that would arouse the envy of your friends. An absolute snap at the price. Believe me, there is nothing in the show that can touch it."

To me the recital sounded like the advertisements that grace the motor pages of our papers. But Muriel was impressed.

### LURE OF SPEED

The salesman became too eloquent for my safety, so with a muttered apology I moved on. I incurred the displeasure of my wife, who reproached me for taking her away just when the man was getting most interesting. However, she soon became lost in admiration for the next car, a creation of shining aluminium of the approved racing design. By the time I had listened to the story of its good points I was convinced that all other cars were so much scrap-iron.

"What you want these days is a car that has speed. The days of the old lumbering family coach have gone for ever. What is the use of a car that can't travel. You don't want to be passed on the road by any bus that comes along do you? Of course not. Well, this is the car for you. Speedy, light, quick. It will pass anything on the road. Snappy design, well sprung, wire wheels and spares. It is easily the pick of the show. Only £350 cash, or a quarter down, the balance over three years."

I almost fell into giving him an order then and there. From that Muriel saved me by urging that there were other cars to see.

### THE OLD-WORLD AIR

Leaving the light car section, we looked at the heavy and more luxuriant models. We stopped to admire the giant "Superb." As we were admiring her trim lines from the top of its highly polished bonnet to its gleaming wheel hubs, another salesman approached. This man was sedate in his attire. There was nothing showy about him. He might have been taken for a doctor or a lawyer. Like the model he was selling, he was built more for comfort than speed. With

an old world courtly air he addressed us as though we were some highly placed dignitaries.

"We have a fine range of models here from £1500 upwards. May I have the extreme pleasure of demonstrating the car to you?"

I know why he had that old world air. If I had a car that price to sell I am sure I would have the same air, too.

We made our way towards the exit doors, and there fell into temptation. There it was, a thing of beauty, the prettiest little car in the show. I felt that I would like to own it the moment that I saw it. Muriel evidently had similar ideas, too.

"I am not going to make a policy speech about this car, nor even tell you it is the best on the road. It isn't," said the salesman. "There the car is, you must judge for yourselves if you like it. It must sell itself. Choose for yourselves, but I will answer for the engine."

That man was a psychologist. He got the cheque.

*Included in a feature on the 1927 Melbourne Motor Show*

THE HERALD  
FRIDAY  
MAY 13 1927

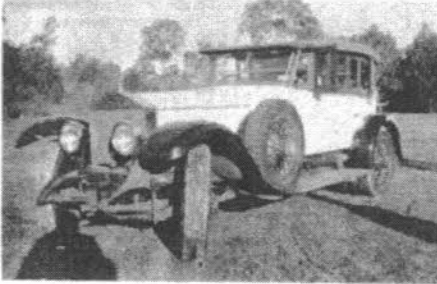
ARCHIVE

Another gem from the late Bill Barber.  
This time from the now defunct "The Vintage" of April 1971.  
Due acknowledgement to this publication.

## "WATTLE"

by Bill Barber

A connoisseur of Vintage wines judges a Vintage wine by rolling it around his palate. A connoisseur of Vintage motorcars should beware of judging one by rolling it around Cecil Clutton. Those readers who have had the perseverance to read these effusions in earlier issues will remember the writer's warning to not always accept the dogma of certain overseas experts as a matter of faith. A motorcar should be judged against its contemporary background and vis a vis, its competitors of that time.



Silver Ghost.

As Vintageism, as we know it, took its rise among the sporting fraternity and as a majority of those Vintage cars that have survived to be so lovingly preserved today are used, more or less regularly, in events where measured performance is the criterion, let us first consider this aspect. Those two mines of information to the curious — "Autocar" and "Motor" have conducted road tests since time immemorial and reference to a carefully selected random sample of these shows just what was expected from various types of cars during this period. Let us consider some of these examples.

The Austin Seven has never been a base from which the special builder could work and when one looks at the performance of Austin specials of later years or considers Waites' time in the first Australian Grand Prix it is a sobering thought that the standard version has a maximum of 47 M.P.H. and took 11 seconds to accelerate from 10 to 30 M.P.H. in 2nd gear. Ex-Austin drivers will not be surprised to find a stopping distance of 48 feet from 25 M.P.H.!

Before we become too derisive about Herbert Austin's masterpiece let us compare this with what the opposition has to offer. The Swift, which was aimed higher up the small car scale, remember, belied its name by a maximum of 50, and a 10 to 30 time of 9 seconds. This at a fuel consumption of some 35 M.P.G. as against the Austin's 42!

Similarly that universal motorcar the ubiquitous Ford T tended to run out of puff in the late 30's. Not that this is to be taken as denigration of the Ford's other virtues. One may suppose that the American equivalent of the Austin could well be the Whippet which in return for a fuel consumption of 26 M.P.G. could be worked up to a resounding 53 and would accelerate from 10 to 30 in some 11 seconds in its second speed. It is perhaps significant that the "Motor" did not publish a brake test figure for this car.

Not that the American customer was denied reasonable performance. The Chrysler 65 had a maximum speed to match its name and took only 6.2 seconds to proceed from 10 to 30 M.P.H. in the second of its three gears. This made its consumption figure of 21 M.P.G. seem reasonable. By the same token its use of the Mr. Loughheed's newfangled hydraulics gave a braking figure from 25 mph of 24 feet.

One could suppose that an English car intended for a smaller class of customer could be the Alvis Silver Eagle. This in single carburettor form, returned a maximum of 71 together with a 10 to 30 times in third gear of 9 seconds. Fuel consumption was not quoted, but personal experience of one of these cars fitted with three S.U.'s suggests some 20 M.P.G. Braking from 25 M.P.H. was recorded as 30 feet.

The natural rival to this car would have been the 16 hp Sunbeam. This dried up at some 60 M.P.H. and recorded 10 seconds for our acceleration test, and stopped in 24 feet. The fuel consumption of 20 M.P.G. was typical enough but one feels that a fifty foot turning circle was excessive.

Frenchmen, then as now, tended to drive with more vigour. The two litre Ballot, again aimed at the same sort of customer who would probably buy a Fiat 125 today, would exceed 70 M.P.H. and went from 10 to 30 in second gear in six seconds. Its brakes were also good and particular mention was made of its ability to maintain high speeds over long distances.



Riley 9.

The Alvis 12/50 is frequently regarded as typifying the lighter type of Vintage sporting car. It was however more generally a touring car and it is in this context that its 61 M.P.H. maximum and 10 to 30 time of ten seconds should be regarded. This may be compared with the Bugatti type 40's 75 maximum and 10 to 30 time of eight seconds. It should be remembered too that the type 40 was Ettore's slowest model. This could well be compared to the Frezer Nash's maximum of over 70 and 10 to 30 time of five seconds in FIRST gear (or first chain to be precise!).

Speaking of sports cars; the performance of the sporting version of the Bentley is well known and it is significant that the 4½ litre Lagonda which won at Le Mans in 1935 did so at a lower speed than that achieved by the 4½ litre Bentley in the previous decade. Truly, the period of from say 1928 to 1934 was one of stagnation in design. After all, the two litre Lagonda had improved from a 65 M.P.H. car in 1926 to a more respectable 80 by 1929, and this was guaranteed by the makers!

As has been suggested in an earlier article, the luxury car was no sluggard either. The 30 hp Minerva was good for over 75 with acceleration to match, although its turning circle of 50 feet would not have endeared it to the chauffeur. The Silver Ghost was also possessed of a fine performance although it could be beaten by an energetically driven Lanchester, and the Hispano-Suiza was in a class of its own.

This business of sheer performance is of importance to us today in two ways. As has been mentioned earlier most of us like to drive in competitive events and, as these produce such mixed fields, some form of handicapping is essential. This can be done in several ways. The easiest is to establish handicaps based on practice times but the writer submits that this is

unfair in as much as a car which is in poor condition and runs on only four cylinders in practice can then blow the foreign matter out of its tonsils and fire on six in the event itself and so win, even though it is in such poor condition that it never fires on all eight cylinders! At Shelsley in the Vintage days a formula was used and the writer has tried applying this to cars running in V.S.C.C. events but without any positive result. One feels that something equivalent to the "Portsmouth Yard Stick" system used in yacht racing is indicated wherein one can equate capacity, age, body size and so on into some mathematical form. After all, in golf we have a handicapping system so that anyone can play with anyone else and have an enjoyable game.



*Frazer-Nash.*

The aspect of competition in speed events is important and the writer would urge all vintage owners to compete more. After all, one can use some discretion and observe reasonable rev. limits and even if one has a slow car it is still a lot of fun. It might be pointed out too that the V.S.C.C.'s Vickery Trophy for the years aggregate has been won on numerous occasions by slow cars sensibly driven!

The second point that arises from all of this dipping into the archives is that one can see how one's own car fitted into the contemporary scene. Sheer speed is only one facet of a car's virtues. To say that a car is fast for 1500 cc's is rather

like saying that these underpants are very warm for nylon. None the less, is your car faster or slower than its contemporary rivals? Has it better or worse brakes? Does it drink like its owner or is it frugal? How attractive are its handling qualities? How comfortable is it? How roomy and so on.

If we are going out to buy a new car today we compare the virtues of cars of similar type and in relation to their price. We try to decide whether to buy a Silver Shadow or a Mercedes 600; a Volvo or an Audi; a Morris 1500 or a Cortina and so on. We should do the same sort of thing with our Vintage cars.

To return to our opening paragraph, a certain Vintage sporting car gained a reputation for performance because it had a 4½ litre engine and a light body, and it was unfairly compared with cars of 1200 cc with peculiar gear ratios. A famous Italian fast tourer was regarded as a sports car because the excellence of its running gear enabled it to stay in front of poor types of sports cars, and the owners then complained because overdriving resulted in cylinder head trouble.

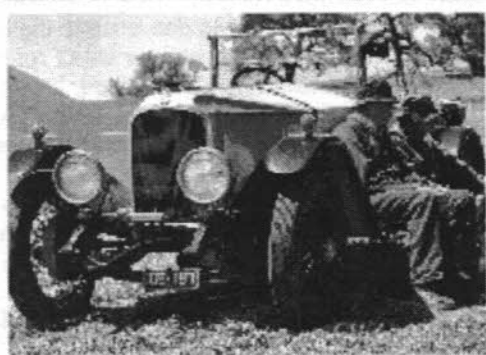
No, let us consider our cars each in their own frame of reference. If you are fortunate enough to own a Phantom 1 then think - Does it handle as well as an Hispano? Is it as easy to service as a Lanchester? Is the sleeve valve Minerva quieter? Don't condemn the Isotta for having a rather poor gearbox - it was intended as a top gear car anyway! Should you be the proud owner of a Bentley 4½ ask yourself whether it handles as well as a Stutz. Is your Amilcar as reliable as a Riley? Is your Delage rougher than a Sunbeam and so on? It is only by delving into these questions that one can really appreciate one's own motorcar let alone those of one's friends.

Perhaps after answering all of these questions, the next time you are pottering about your car and someone comes up and asks "What'll she do mister?" you will be able to answer "Everything - and very perfectly too!"

W.B.

HILLCLIMB INVITATION

# VINTAGE COLLINGROVE



**1st & 2nd October 2011**  
**Barossa Valley, South Australia**



# TA21 Celebrates 60 Years With A Makeover

David & Lyne Vaughan

## Preamble

I love to read inspiring restoration stories that highlight the restorer's difficulties and eventual triumph over adversity. I cannot read enough of them.

Along with many enthusiasts I like to record the work I have undertaken on classic cars, to remind myself of the creative process. Not being in the trade or endowed with brilliant skills, I may never achieve such perfection as professional restorers. However, I do what I am capable and due to my inadequate workshop and abilities often it is necessary to employ services of experts.

The restoration story of our Alvis started with an Alvis enthusiast who lived in Canberra, continued by classic car owner in Mildura and finally I (with help) finished it off in Sunbury.

## Known History of 24238

Malcolm Kindell tends the Alvis T series Register in the UK and has been very helpful providing a few facts about our Alvis TA21's history.

The Mulliner saloon body Alvis was completed on 14<sup>th</sup> August 1951 in maroon (now silver) and delivered to Tozer, Kemsley & Millbourn on a/c Devon Motors, Melbourne. Registered WT962 later BTH021.

According to Eric Cunningham (January 2003) it was owned by the late Horrie Morgan in June 1983 and later a David Fewster in South Australia.

A June 1986 Registration Certificate shows it was owned by John White of Box Hill when registered BTH021.

Subsequent owners included the late Laurie Buckland, Geoff Hall and myself.

The spare car is 23879 (eng no: TA 23338) was also originally maroon (now black). It was delivered to the same Melbourne dealer in 1951, whose customer was Prof Harry Wardlaw. In 1983 it was owned by Kevin Bruce. It was reported by Eric Cunningham that Kevin Bruce lost TA21 Saloons 23838, 23840 and 23879 in Victorian bush fires. However it could not have been the case for 23879.

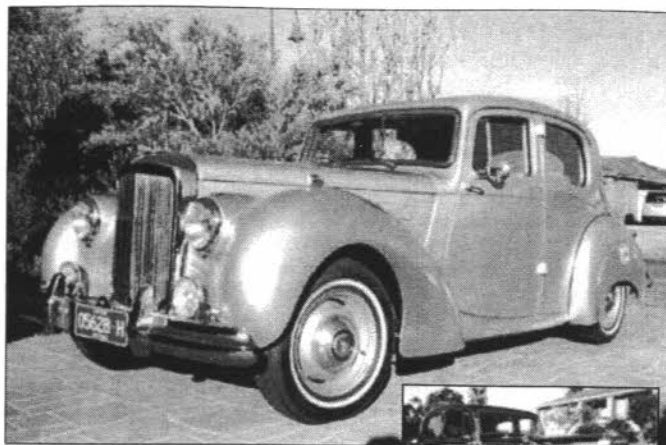
The TA21 is very original but well worn and its sliding roof has been sealed up rather badly. Sadly many external parts have been removed which would add to the challenge should anyone wish to restore the car.

I believe David Seath sold the Alvis to Geoff Hall.

## Restoration Progresses Through Three Owners

The restoration of our 1951 Alvis TA saloon appears to have started around 2004 by the late Laurie Buckland, an ACCV member who lived in Canberra. Evidently the car was getting rather tired and shabby. Like most old cars they labour on and on until every part expires in unison.

From old photos it appears the chassis was tidied



Above: Registered  
Inset: original colour scheme



up but it is evident that the suspension and axles got very little attention, maybe he had worked on them over the years preceding the restoration. Several suspension bushes and steering ball joints had to be replaced recently, plus steering box repairs indicates it was not a priority during this restoration.



Above: Chassis following repaint  
Below: Body awaiting paint removal



The body appears to have had a bare metal spray job. The paint job is fair and presentable. The subsequent owner had to have the mudguards re-sprayed as they got knocked about when the parts were handled and car transported.

Unfortunately due to being moved around and recently being in workshops there are many scratches, chips and disturbed panel fit due to mechanics not been very careful. Laurie had the seats and door cards reupholstered in red leather. The engine was rebuilt in

Canberra by Queenbeyan Engine Service at a cost of \$4,500 plus \$800 for parts from Red Triangle. Pistons were provided by JP Pistons(SA), valves and lifters from Auto Spares Galore (Ferntree Gully) and gearbox rebuilt by Tuggernong Transmission & Brakes.

A note in the file from David Fewster states, "vehicle 60% restored, engine and gearbox, new wiring loom, bodywork prepared for final paint and assembly. Many spares with car, including gearbox, guards and books." Possibly he was helping to sell the car along with Clive Buckland when the late Laurie Buckland's estate was being processed.

In 2008 the partly assembled car was advertised in Just World Cars for \$12,000 and Geoff Hall of Mildura purchased it.

At the point of sale, the car had the body removed

and reattached, chassis painted, motor and gearbox rebuilt and returned into place. The upholstery and numerous overhauled parts were ready to refit. The wheels were equipped with new Cooper 195/75R15 WW tyres from Alan McKinnon, Antique Tyre Supplies.

Geoff Hall acquired a second unrestored 1951 TA21 (No. 23879 last registered in 2001 UO644) from David Seath, as many parts were missing, possibly they were still laying under the bench at the Canberra address.

Geoff has owned numerous classics, as observed by the photo board in his garage. In his late retirement he decided he needed a project to work on. Geoff's family owns the Jayco Caravan Distributorship in Mildura, so there is no doubt he was a very busy man.

I suspect that when he owned previous classic cars, he farmed out the work, as if he did the remaining work when he took over the restoration it was not too good. He had a mechanic who helped complete assembling the mechanical parts and got the engine running.

At a cost of \$2,257 the rear bumper was restored and re-chromed in SA. Wiring, re-painting the mudguards, fitted headlining plus numerous small items all added to completing the restoration.

When I inspected the car I concluded that it did not require much work or expense to finish final jobs and it could be on the road in a few months. After all the car was complete and going. He did say in his advert that the exhaust, steering and brakes needed work.

The cars were delivered on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2010 by a tow truck and trailer. I had to rearrange my workshop to make room for the spare car.



I am restoring a 1930 Austin 16/6 roadster and have a spare tourer plus many parts that had to be condensed into one area, as well as relocate shelving. A few large friends helped push the spare car down the driveway into its new home.

Not having a second family car there is a car space in the front garage for the silver Alvis. I had to cover the back wall with shelving to accommodate dozens of boxes I have in the garage. A clue, I have never thrown a motor magazine away since I started buying them in the 1960s!

Initially I was unhappy with the way the interior had been returned into place. I began stripping out the seats and progressed to the floor. Nothing was put back securely and the crumbling underlay and torn carpet needed to be replaced. I am an amateur restorer, but I do have a good idea how things should look, even if I cannot perfectly achieve it myself.

The front seats were sitting on 'C' section steel to elevate them. The original spare car was a great reference point to see how things should be fitted and from examining it, I was able to correctly fit the seats back. Lots of time consuming jobs were required such as the rear window card aperture was too small and had to be removed, trimmed and re-stuck. Behind the floppy armrests was daylight, a piece had to be made and inserted.

All the wood and door trims were held together by a

variety of inappropriate screws, which I replaced with more appropriate screws. Some floor boards had to be replaced, especially around the pedals as it was made up of six separate pieces.

The front door would not close and the fittings were wobbly. The door striker was not the original. It required filing and holes re-tapped for larger screws.

The rear number plate light had broken lenses. As it happened Lyne had given me some Tupperware containers and one was in opaque plastic. The corners were identical shape to the broken lenses and pieces cut out to fit worked perfectly.

The under boot spare wheel carrier had to be fitted. A very awkward job for one person. However with help of a trolley jack I managed to fit it, after removing some missing brackets from the spare car. The new exhaust was in the way and I had to relocate the pipe brackets on either side so the tray would lift up.

The bonnet did not close properly as the slots for the catches were either out of alignment or dented. I laid some nice black car carpet in the boot. Touched up paint the best I could with silver paint that I asked Geoff to provide.

It took three months in my spare time to refit the inside. The mechanical issues were next for attention. I took the car around to Sunbury Exhaust to have a new stainless steel exhaust system fitted and as they do mechanical repairs I asked them to check and make good any road worthy problems. On a fortnightly basis I phoned to see how things were progressing. It appears my car had the lowest priority as weeks on end nothing was getting done.

Eventually a new twin exhaust system was fabricated. As the radiator was an under-bonnet water feature they sourced and replaced it with a new core. I noticed the heat shield was missing from behind the twin SU carburetors (unoriginal) and acquired one from Chris Prince, the UK Alvis secondhand parts man. I acquired a master cylinder brake overhaul kit from Auto Surplus, which they fitted. They replaced a few bushes in the steering and suspension. At last three months later they issued a RWC just before Christmas 2010. I was so pleased. Using trade plates I drove it home thinking I could at last attend a few rallies in the New Year once I had a permit.

With the RWC and certificate from the Vintage Drivers Club I historic permit registered it at VicRoads in Sunbury. They promised to post the red plates within 4 weeks, surprise I got them a week later.

My ecstasy was short lived as not only was the steering useless, the brake master cylinder leaked and speedometer did not work.

I drove the car around the block and found the steering had almost a complete turn play and virtually impossible to turn around corners. Sunbury, being roundabout city that was a complete disadvantage! Also the speedometer did not work and the brake master cylinder was leaking. I was not happy!

I phoned Bill Elridge Restorations in Dandenong and he was keen to rectify the problems with the Alvis. I arranged with a local tow trucker Peter Pinner, Sunbury Towing, who has collection of Buicks and specialises in transporting classic cars, to take it to the other side of Melbourne.

Over the months I checked in with Bill Elridge and John Rhodes on its progress. The steering column was removed by John Rhodes who reported that the steering box was stuffed. An incorrect bearing had been fitted at some stage that wrecked the gears.



# SPEED 25 WINDOW CHANNEL REPAIR

(CHARLESWORTH BODY)

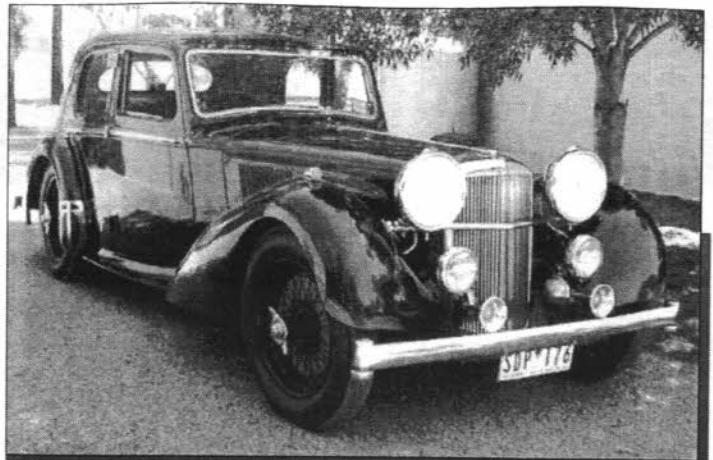
For some months now I have been promising myself that I would replace the window channels in our Speed 25. I must admit that I tend to avoid the car going out in the rain so the sealing was not a problem, however the number of rattles seemed to be increasing and I was aware that some of them were window related.

Prior to the Eynesbury run I decided that I would do the front doors and see if I could notice a change. Obviously obtaining the materials was the first step and I set out to buy within Australia. The first Melbourne business I rang was having a bad day and showed no interest in what I wanted other than to bring in sample and he would see what he could do. The second call at least reached someone who was happy to discuss my requirements and with his website open I could see exactly what I wanted. I was quoted about \$50 per length and would have needed 4. However there was only one length in stock and was advised that there was little demand for that size and he didn't know when they would get more in.

Next step was to check my website favorites and came up with the "Complete Automoblist" in the UK. Website listed many channels, including the one I wanted. The price was per metre and the total was a half the previous quote. My email order was answered within 2 hours with a £9 postage and that the item would be posted that day. Within the hour I was advised by email that the goods were on the way. The channel was in my PO box within 7 days.

The Charlesworth body has the same channel in all 4 doors with the exception of the vertical at the rear of the front doors. When the windows are wound up, further winding causes the glass to move to the rear to open a gap at the front, for fresh air. To permit the glass to move backwards, the rear channel is much deeper and appears to have been specially made for the purpose. I found a local felt supplier held stock appropriate for the job.

I removed the door lining from one of the doors and was surprised to see the use of 5 ply timber that was obviously subject to the water that entered the door when it rained. There was also 3 ply used as packing for the cover that hid the nailing of the aluminium skin to the lower door frame. The 3 ply was also used as a spacer inside the door to pack the screws that held



the chrome flash down the outside of the door.

All this 3 ply had to be replaced and hopefully the eradication of more rattles.

The lower doors were full of rubbish that over the decades had not been washed out the drain holes. Fortunately the door frame timbers had not deteriorated. The window winding and door latch mechanisms appeared to still have the original, now solidified, grease on them.

One front door still had its map pocket in place. This consisted of a thin steel box arrangement that was nailed to the frame. Due to alterations to the door lining panel, access was no longer available to the box. However if it were accessible, one would need to open the door first because the flap was held closed by the seat. The metal box is now entertaining other similar parts that will accompany the car to its next custodian.

I painted the inside of the doors, replaced the channels, regreased the mechanisms and reassembled the doors. Amazing how well the windows now wind and how little effort is required to close the doors.

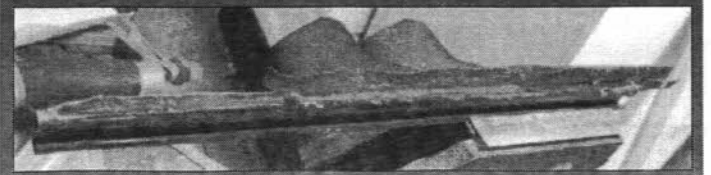
The rollers that operated in the lifting rails were seized solid with rubbish, which would be another reason for the stiff operation of the windows.

There was a motley lot of door handles and window winders in the car and following my success with the "Complete Automoblist," I purchased a full set that matched at least one set of handles in the car.

Off to Eynesbury with far fewer rattles!

Well having mastered the front doors, the back doors should be easy as they only go half way down and will have had far less use than the fronts.

Pulled the lining off the first, to be presented with more mess and a significantly deteriorated mounting panel for the hardware. The window glass is supported in a metal channel which is attached to the rail (see below) within which the winding mechanism operates. This channel was rusted and had actually fallen apart. See photograph. Another





problem to resolve!

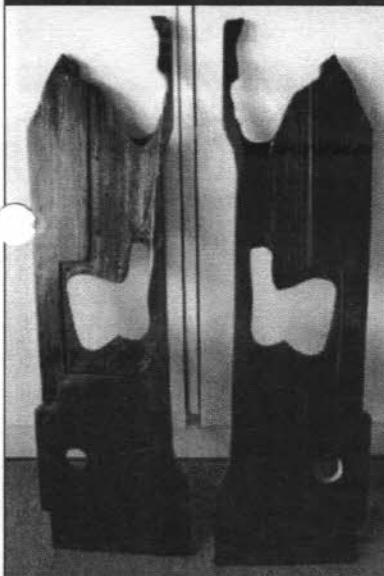
In the bottom of the door cavity rested the remains of a section of 5 ply that many dear departed woodworms had munched their way to eternity. The vertical pillars in the door frame had also deteriorated in the last 50mm and things were not looking easy any longer.



*The contents of the lower door cavity and the steel map pocket*

I have no expertise in removing aluminium skin and it was, fix it another way or call for help!

Firstly the hardware panel was replicated in KD Mountain Ash and provided an interesting exercise for the jigsaw, router and me. The photograph shows the pigeon pair with various holes and indentations appropriate for both the doors.



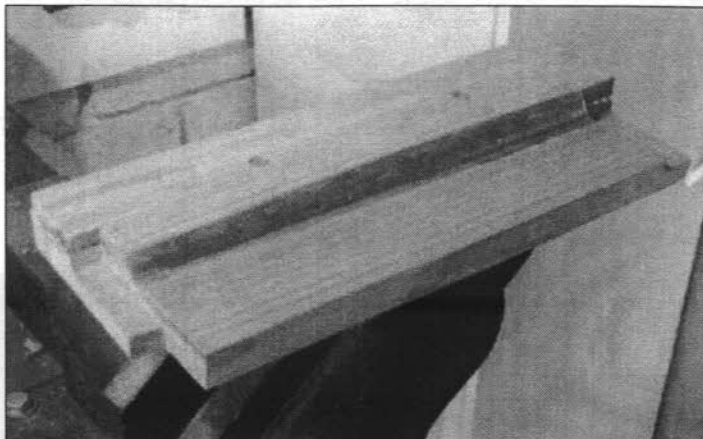
The door section that held the 5 ply was boxed in and was easy to remove. (see photograph above of the timber that for some reason the wood worms found indigestible) and the base plate was also in very poor condition.

Not wanting to remove the door skin, I approached the local hardware store with the problem and asked what tool there was to cut the vertical posts down to solid timber in a confined space. After some discussion he presented me with a "multi-tool." It didn't look too

different to the electric clippers my mother used to cut my hair with. Fortunately Bosch was not making the multi tool all those years ago as I have memory of not enjoying the haircut experience and it was a couple of decades before the Beetles arrived on the scene making long hair fashionable.

There are a variety of blade widths and purpose, that provide restricted access for cuts at any angle the unit is held and it achieved all that I wanted. Using KD hardwood I made a

base plate that incorporated the section formerly made out of 5 ply and neatly picked up the truncated posts in the door. I made it in two longitudinal sections expecting to have to insert one then the other, but found the assembly dropped into place. Glued and screwed, I am now happy with the job.



Now the rusty window lifting channel and rail. The pair were welded together and the job looked messy to separate them however those lovely people at Charlesworth had only spot welded them making their separation much easier. I settled for aluminium channel for the glass to sit in and bonded both the channel and the rail together.

Between the window glass and the lower window frame there was a piece of thin aluminium covered in leatherette that shielded the eye from looking inside the door. The deterioration of the material presented an eyesore and had to be replaced. The screws that located the aluminium strips had corroded and were welded into the strips making it impossible to remove them without damaging the strip. The mighty jigsaw cut the aluminium and a hair dryer persuaded the leatherette into the required shape.

Both the rear doors required the same restoration strategy and were then reassembled complete with their new handles and winders.

As with all restorations, one makes a start and more and more jobs appear soliciting a decision on how far to proceed.

I suspect that the original walnut timber in the internal window surrounds, was French polished and having had 70 years of getting wet and 6 years of Marg's long nails, they were looking very tatty. At the expense of over restoring part of an interior that was showing its age, I stripped and varnished them for longevity. If I find the finished product is too shiny, I will use 0000 steel wool to take the shine off.

If the long nails again become a problem on the newly restored door finger slots, I might just find another use for the multi-tool!

*John Lang  
(Editor in drag)*

*(for the computer savvy, the Title is in CHARLESWORTH font)*

# ALVIS PEOPLE BEHAVING BADLY

*What do yah mean we're  
lost!  
We haven't left the motel yet!*



*Dale & Marrita Parsell about to depart for Tumbarumba on this year's Alvis Escape*

## FOR SALE

1952 TA21 DHC. Chassis and engine number 24639.

Black duck over original colour 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.

\$75,000 negotiable

For further details contact Darrell Horton on  
5983 2016 or by emailing  
[jocelyndarrell@bigpond.com](mailto:jocelyndarrell@bigpond.com)



## 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

Richard Tonkin 0407 944 987



## "Tassie Explorer"

Alvis Car Club of Victoria (Inc)

22 April - 6 May 2012

**YOUR  
Invitation  
to the  
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If you would like information about either event, please contact

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PO Box 129, Gisborne 3437

or

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## "of Ghosts & Gold"

2013 Australian National Alvis Rally  
28 April - 3 May 2013



*Your  
Invitation  
to have fun*



## FOR SALE



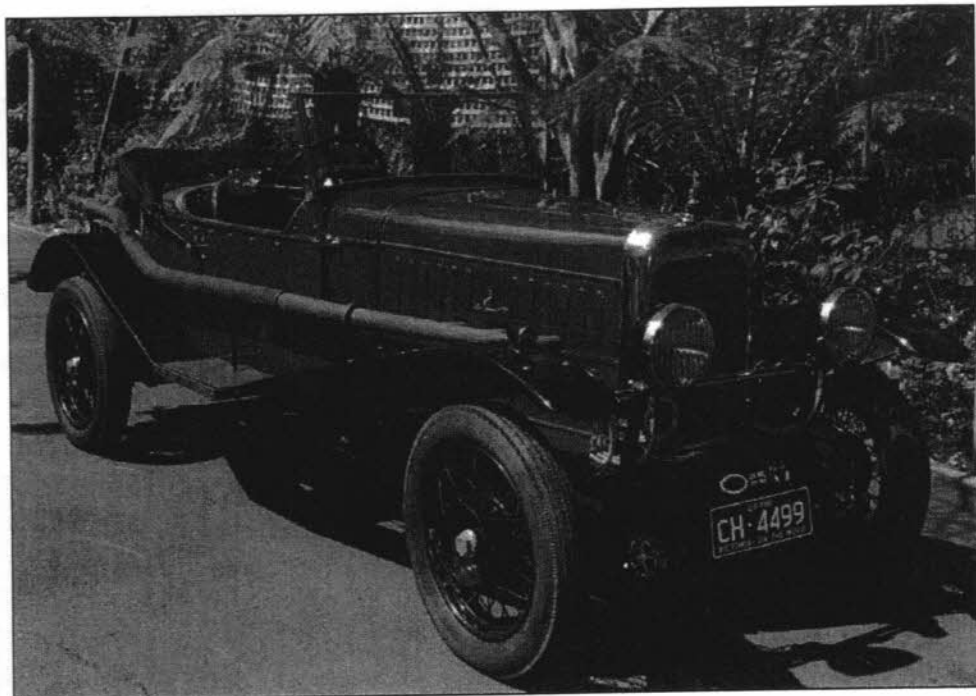
1958 TD21 (red)  
Chassis # 25996  
Manual gearbox, wire wheels, front disc brakes,  
electric fan, sun roof.  
Re-built front suspension. Re-painted  
Full History available  
Recently restored. Repainted in red. Rechromed,  
new carpets & tyres. Clutch & brake seals  
Mechanicals restored—clutch & brakes  
\$32,500  
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



## WANTED

MAGNETO BTH CE4 for my SA 12/50, ideally, or one of the following -  
SCINTILLA MN4,  
SCINTILLA GN4  
or BOSCH ZU4.  
Geoff Ross 0419 212 657.

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