

# Alvic

The Newsletter of the Alvis Car Club of Victoria

September 2016





## Alvis Car Club of Victoria (Inc)

A0017202F

CLUB ROOMS: - rear of 'ALVISTA' 21 Edgar St, Glen Iris  
(MELWAYS 59 F8)

Meetings—third Friday of each month [except DEC/JAN] at 8.00pm.

Newsletter Deadline - first Friday of the month.

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### SUPPER The McKINNONS

*The Editor would like to thank all contributors to  
this month's ALVIC*

## 2016 COMING EVENTS

### ACCV 2016 EVENT

- SEP 16 **GENERAL MEETING**  
23-25 **WEEKEND AWAY - MANSEFIELD AREA (ROHAN SWANEY)**
- OCT 21 **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
23 **KYNETON AERO CLUB FLY-IN & CAR DISPLAY—DETAILS TO FOLLOW SEE PAGE 16**
- NOV 6 **PUB LUNCH—DETAILS TO FOLLOW**  
18 **GENERAL MEETING**
- DEC 4 **CHRISTMAS PARTY (RICHARD TONKIN)**

### 2017

- FEB 19 **RACV CLASSIC SHOWCASE**

*Front page:*

*Mark Weller is just back from the UK and these are some of the cars at the AOC East Anglia section weekend*

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I am writing this report early as Frances and I are off to Kangaroo Island in our campervan and only return a few days prior to the next meeting. So if something of interest to report about is missed this time, it will have to wait until October's report.

Sadly we record the passing of Sally McKaige's and Warrick Hansted's father and extend to them condolences for their loss, on behalf of the Club members.

We had a terrific slide presentation at the last meeting by Dale Parsell and Alan McKinnon on their recent Alvis tour of the UK and Shetland Islands. There were wonderful shots of Alvis at the events they attended: the AOC International Alvis Weekend, a large car display on the Shetlands and the Alvis Register Week in Scotland.

These shots were also supported by others taken whilst travelling and also with some movie footage. The movie footage was a little heart in the mouth stuff when trying to fit borrowed Alvises down narrow roads and lanes with blind corners and crests. They had virtually no problems with the cars and overall they were impressed with the quality of the cars that they encountered. The friendship and support provided by the UK Alvis owners was very much appreciated.

Last month I mentioned about the proposed world events to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Alvis. Whilst there is a lot of flesh to be put on the bones for our celebratory rally in 2019 and details for the European and UK events in 2020 have still to be formulated and announced, there are a number of us in Australia already turning our minds to taking an Alvis over to Europe and the UK. Frances and I are planning to take the 12/50 and have this idea front and centre for our activities in 2020. It will be good to get an indication of those people who are interested in taking a car across. If you are thinking about it please send me an email so that we can keep you informed as details of the activities are established.

I mentioned in the last report that I was about to attend an AOMC Delegates Meeting. The main topic was the use of "M" plates for significantly modified vehicles. The VicRoads representatives were keen to emphasise that the "M" plate is equally representative of the classic vehicle movement, but is designed to provide recognition that the vehicle carrying the plate has been adequately checked for safe use on the roads. This way unmodified or vehicles with minor modifications, within the guidelines, will be recognised by being on the H/CH system and will not be confused with modified vehicles. VicRoads are releasing new guidelines at the end of August/early September. All newly modified vehicles will have to undergo a VASS engineering inspection and will then be assigned an M plate. Vehicles which were significantly modified historically and have in the past been accepted for full registration or a club permit will be able to transfer across to the M plate at no cost. This will include left to right hand drive conversions which were not done by the

manufacturer at the time the vehicle first went on the road. There is not to be a wholesale rush to get vehicles transferred from CH to M, however there are three methods by which this can happen:- voluntarily done by the owner; by an order from VicRoads/Police if someone notifies them that a vehicle is inappropriately designated and is on CH plates when it is obviously significantly modified; or directly by the Police when they see a modified vehicle on the road carrying CH plates. The Police will have the power to direct the owner to submit the car for assessment.

In fitting the reconditioned hydraulic brake components to my Speed 25 I found that the rubber grease used by the re-conditioner in 2008 when assembling the wheel and master cylinders had gone solid. It took quite a lot of effort with metholated spirits to get the items clean again for reassembly with Silicon fluid. Even with new steel pipes and flared ends, new flexible hoses and new copper washers I have found it very difficult to get the refitted system leak free. Silicon fluid seems to require greater effort to make sure that all fittings are seating correctly – I have almost got there!

I had a scare in my workshop recently when using an angle grinder with a cutting disc. I was shortening some bolts which were a few millimetres too long. Being aware of where sparks are flying I always look for any evidence of something catching fire, such as paper, wood shavings etc. On this occasion there appeared to be nothing which could catch fire from flying sparks, however after having shortened the bolts I went and changed from a cutting disc to a finishing disc to tidy the ends of the bolts. Upon returning to the job there was no evidence of smoke or fumes, however I could feel radiant heat on my face. Looking around I found that a hank of steel wool on the shelf was glowing red and generating a lot of heat. I picked up the non burning end and dumped it into a trough of water. Other items on the shelf were just commencing to ignite. If the cutting had been the last job for the day and I had gone home then I would have lost the workshop and all the vehicles. Therefore when using angle grinders or something which can generate sparks be aware that even the non obvious can catch fire.

Please let me know if you are coming to the Malvernvale Hotel for a meal, prior to the Friday 16th meeting so that I can ensure that there are sufficient seats.

Andrew McDougall



# 2017 AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL ALVIS TOUR

*"ROSES & RODEO IN THE GRANITE BELT"*

*7 May – 13 May 2017*

*Queenslanders are looking forward to hosting  
the coming Australian National ALVIS Tour and  
welcoming you  
to our wonderful state.*

*Below you can see all the amazing things we have  
planned*

*and know you will enjoy your stay.*

*Come along to Warwick for a week of Queensland  
hospitality, in the company of your Alvis friends and  
the chance to*

*drive your Alvis on pleasant country roads.*

*Two years is a long time to wait for the next one!*

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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## THE PROGRAM

*Sun 7 May - Welcome & register at the  
Coachman's Inn, Warrick.*

*Mon 8th May - Lunch at the Rotunda at  
Leslie Park and welcome by the Lord  
Mayor. Explore Warwick  
Dinner at the Coachman's Inn*

*Tuesday 9th May - Drive to Stanthorpe  
Morning Tea and demonstration at  
Lawdogs. Lunch and tasting at  
Ballandean Winery. Afternoon at  
Anna's candlemaking & Jamworks  
OR visit Dave Ford's Restoration  
Workshop. Return to the Coachman's Inn  
for dinner.*

*Wednesday 10th May - Morning Tea at  
Private collection of Sulkies, Coaches,  
Wagons and horse drawn vehicles.*

*Lunch at Warwick Golf Club. Afternoon  
Tea at Rodeo Heritage Centre.  
Dinner at Coachman's Inn*

*Thursday 11th May - Bus takes us to  
railway station Steam train to Clifton.  
Lunch at Clifton Arms hotel. Return by  
steam train to Warwick and by bus to  
The Coachman's Inn.*

*"Bushies/Federation" Theme Night*

*Friday 12th May - Morning Tea at  
Mary Poppins house at Allora  
OR Allora Regional Sports Museum  
Lunch at Killarney hotel. Visit heritage  
centre and Queen Mary Falls  
Final Dinner at Coachman's Inn*

*Saturday 13th May - Depart for home.*

We are very fortunate to have amongst our ranks, some very knowledgeable people who have been prepared to carryout the research, provide the articles and to share with us, their findings on the history of the Alvis company and in particular, some of the major players.

Nick Simpson, now resident in Roussillon, France, is one such person and we are indebted to him for permission to reproduce this article that appeared in two episodes in the AOC Bulletins of Jan/Feb and Mar/Apr this year.

The SECOND episode is here for your pleasure.

There is a copy of this article in booklet form in the ACCV Library.

Ed.....



# G.P.de Freville, DFP and the Alvis,



*By Nick Simpson*

**T**eething problems with early Alvis 10/30 cars suggest that de Freville may not have been a formally trained car designer. Although joining with John to bring the Alvis project to fruition, he may not have had sufficient engineering experience to carry out the skilled development required in bringing a totally new product from the drawing board to production.

There was a chassis fault and it was probably because the high performance of the engine could have done with a more substantial frame to withstand the extra stresses when the car was driven hard; it was marketed as a sporting car. A source mentions that the chassis for the 10/30 may have been 'bought out' from a Scottish firm. The only likely source I could find in Scotland was Beardmore of Glasgow who offered off-the-shelf chassis for car manufacturers. This would have been a logical choice for John as Beardmores were associated with his old employers, the Vickers-Armstrong group. Interestingly, Cyril Paul, who later drove Alvis racing cars, was employed as Beardmore's Tester for their cars at this time.

The 10/30 needed quite a lot of engine modifications too. By this time the 'Alvis' had been advertised, there was a lengthening order book and production was delayed by the rectifications. It was an expensive and frustrating time. De Freville and John fell out over it with de Freville departing. John went on to assemble his own skilled design and development team around him; he head-hunted two engineers he knew from wartime aero engine days: G.T. Smith-Clarke, an exceptional development engineer and W.M. Dunn. Both had been with the wartime Aeronautical Inspection Directorate in Coventry. They transferred from Daimler and their brief was to sort out the troublesome Buckingham and the new Alvis. John was known for his preference to pay more for salesmen than engineers; this time he had to bite the bullet, pay the engineers and get the engineering right!

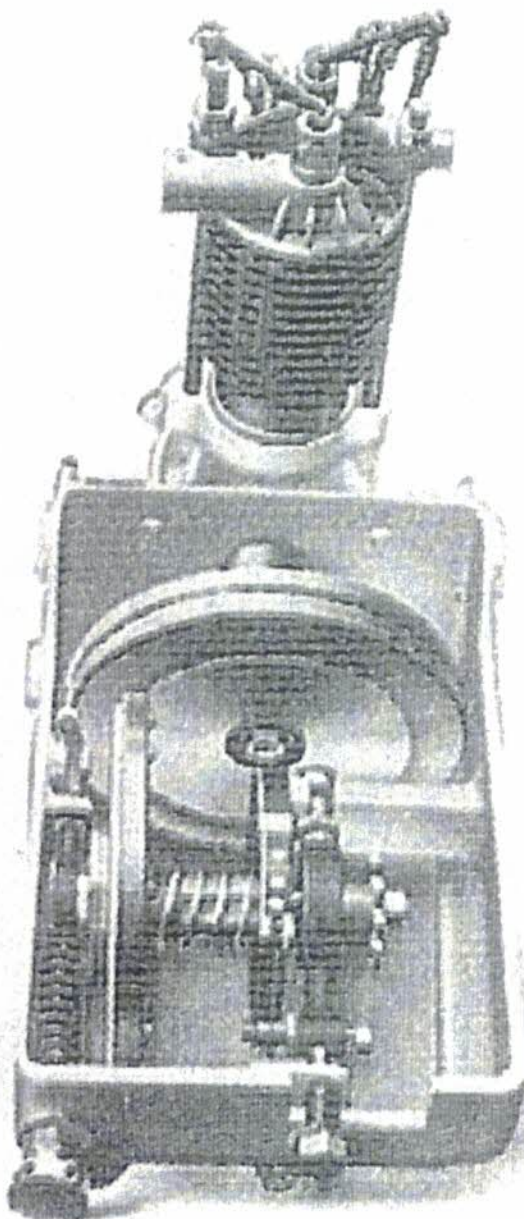
Smith-Clarke was highly inventive and had already constructed his own light car with independent front suspension and later a utility scooter with an infinitely variable friction transmission. It was manufactured for him by Booth bros in Coventry; it was marketed as the 'Kenilworth.' The engine looked very much like a Stafford, (see page 16 Aug ALVIC) already manufactured by T.G.John....

The arrival of the Alvis was the death-knell for the Buckingham as, although quite good looking in its later form, it had not been a success. The later model had twin air-cooled cylinders enclosed within bulges in the bonnet sides. On earlier models the cylinders had been water cooled and exposed in the air stream outside each side of the bonnet.

The later air-cooled engines were unreliable; the cylinders had been enclosed to improve the appearance of the car but they were prone to overheating. Worse, they had a propensity for 'throwing' a complete cylinder/piston/valve assembly if the (alloy!) piston seized after slow progress in traffic... This could be a somewhat spectacular event as, apart from the splash of oil, the piston/cylinder

assembly took the bonnet with it on its trajectory; on one occasion a cylinder was said to have gone through Owen-Owen's shop window in Coventry city centre.... It's little wonder that Leopold Adams, John's new Sales Director and major shareholder stopped production soon after to concentrate development on the much more promising 'Alvis'.....

Buckingham manufacture ceased in 1923 when 10/30 production was into its third year. The Buckingham had been improved by Smith-Clarke and Dunn but, being a



#### **Kenilworth Scooter power pack**

*I show this only because the motor looks suspiciously like the Stafford, made by T.G..John ...*

cycle-car, it was not what the market wanted as things had moved on and buyers were moving up to proper cars.

A small digression; J.F. Buckingham was a Coventry engineer and had studied chemistry before engineering. He had also produced a cyclecar known as the Chota and competed successfully with it in competitions before the war. He even advertised a smarter coupe version for the ladies known as the Buckingham Palace!

During WWI there was a worrying new threat to good old Blighty: - the Zeppelin airship bomber. These things floated silently at 15000 feet by means of a balloon of inflammable hydrogen gas with aero engines suspended below for propulsion. The motors could be turned off to enable a silent glide to their target....

Britain was traditionally defended by its Royal Navy as historically, a shipping invasion had been the only way of threatening our island nation; manned airship flight changed all that.

The country was in something of a panic with the new threat. The airship was different because it could glide silently and bomb with little or no threat from the Navy and cruised too high for most of our pitifully crude aircraft of the time. (It had taken our War Department a while to move away from cavalry to a motor and air war; most of our country's 'aircraft and motorized war equipment was underdeveloped.)

Our early aircraft struggled from a lack of oxygen at altitude causing severe power loss. There were very few planes that could reach a Zeppelin in spite of their low speed. When they could, the gunner discovered that regular bullets passed straight through the airship envelope with no explosion and little loss of gas. The Germans had cleverly filled the gas container with hundreds of thousands of cows' intestines sewn into small pockets inside to prevent gas loss as Hydrogen molecules seeped through all types of known woven fabric at that time; intestines were a gas proof solution! Each Zeppelin required 300,000 intestines for its pockets; German cow production must have been enormous to keep up with the demand and German citizens were forced to purchase their Bratwurst without the traditional cover...

Buckingham had an idea and got out his chemistry set. He successfully invented the incendiary bullet making use of Phosphorous; it ignited on contact with oxygen as the bullet left the barrel. Buckingham's burning bullets provided the gunner with a visible trace during trajectory. There was enough fire from each one to spectacularly ignite the Hydrogen as the bullets penetrated and fired the gasbags. This was highly effective and Buckingham's firm went on to make twenty-six million incendiary bullets in his Dover Street factory in Coventry for the war effort and the Zeppelin threat was reduced.

NOVEMBER 8, 1919. The Light Car and Cyclecar Supplement xxi.

## The Buckingham Light Car

1920 Model.

During the WAR our Works manufactured and supplied

# 26,000,000

**Buckingham Incendiary Bullets**

The same organization is now preparing for the manufacture in large quantities of a simple light car of the highest possible grade.

**ENGINE.** New BUCKINGHAM Patent 90° twin ball-bearing engine with roller bearing big ends, aluminium alloy pistons and automatic lubrication, etc.

**TRANSMISSION.** Through single disc clutch, 2-speed and reverse gearbox, cardan shaft, to BUCKINGHAM Patent Live-Axle.

**WHEELS.** Detachable.

**LIGHTING.** Dynamo and accumulator.

**J. F. BUCKINGHAM,**  
Engineer,  
DOVER STREET, COVENTRY.

### Buckingham Bullets

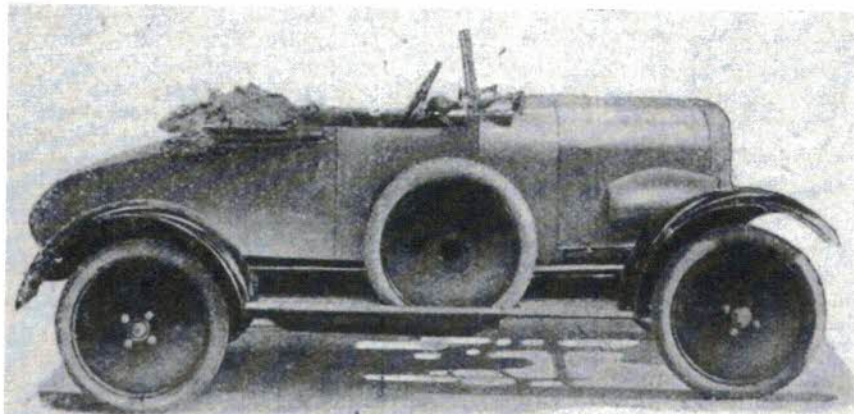
*J.F. Buckingham, using his incendiary bullet reputation as an aid to sales for the new version of his cyclecar, to be made in T.G. John's factory.*

These bullets are still manufactured in more or less the same form today although used as 'tracer.' The Zeppelin raids were reduced in the war as Britain's ability to fight back improved and there was a popular saying at the time (taking a slant on Cockney rhyming slang) to have 'given them a round of Buckingham's' after a hit!

J.F. Buckingham was awarded £10000 and an OBE after the war for his invention.

For his Alvis, John, differently from other engine manufacturers, decided to manufacture his own alloy pistons in line with his policy of making as much of the car in house as possible. He acquired his piston technology by purchasing a Coventry foundry business along with its Welsh manager, Edgar Morse who had his own method of casting alloy pistons. This is what Arthur Varney, the Alvis designer had to say about Morse and his pistons:

"Alvis always cast their own pistons.....and there again Edgar Morse used to cast them at such a high temperature that there was a lot of gas entrapped in the metal and so to some extent it was porous and the pores that were present although they weakened the piston from the strength point of view certainly helped it from a lubrication point of view. It helped in this way as it retained the lubrication and he (Edgar Morse) always claimed that his pistons, the ones that he had cast, were more suitable than any other piston manufactured anywhere in the motor industry. Perhaps he was right, but we didn't do much re-boring and we very rarely changed the pistons, we changed piston rings but not the pistons themselves." This was an alternative piston technology as John's retained lubrication in the porous areas improving the wear qualities and retaining oil for cooling purposes as well as lubrication. Alvis engines were noted for their long-life cylinder bores and ring wear was considered



The Buckingham has been considerably modified since it was reintroduced last year. Above is the 1923 type.

### Buckingham Car

*An advertisement for the 1922 Buckingham – John’s first venture into car manufacture. John was a Director and this was a joint venture with J.F.Buckingham Engineering to develop and market an ‘improved’ version of his existing cyclecar. Production was later abandoned. The picture shows the more sophisticated shape of the later Buckingham with its 1096 cc twin cylinder air-cooled cylinders concealed. The engine was quite advanced in some ways sporting alloy pistons with ball and roller bearings for the crankshaft. As cyclecars went, it was a reasonable ‘looker’ although the radiator was a dummy. Smith-Clarke and Dunn had done some development on it, replacing the belt transmission with a conventional three speed geared transmission and axle with a differential.*

were equipped with detachable cylinder blocks on many models until World War II and similar special tools were still used.

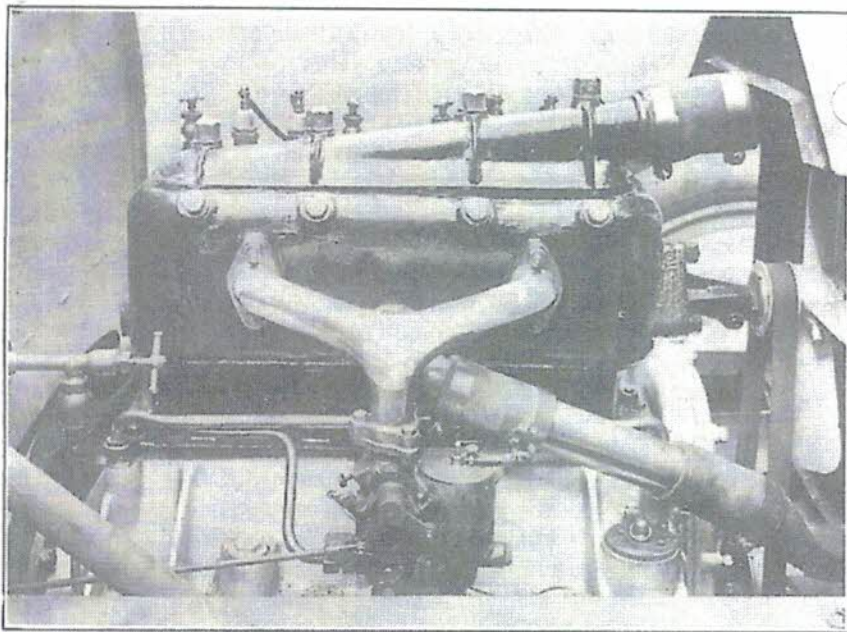
Visually the engine of the early version of the Alvis 10/30 was a copy of the D.F.P. 12/15 hp. The rear axle is not and it is possible that it may have been a carry-over of the one introduced by Dunn and Smith-Clarke for the Buckingham to replace its belt-drive transmission. Taking a closer look at the engine, the water inlet to the cylinder block, the curious inlet manifolds passing through the block, the engine mounting bearers, the shape of the cylinder block/head and the removable tappet chest cover show close similarities with the DFP engine.

Theoretically progressing John’s words from his Motor Sport interview, it looks as though he and de Freville had “experimented” by re-engineering the DFP 12/15, 70 x 130 mm 2000cc engine knowing the success it had been before the war. They reduced the bore and stroke down to 65mm x 110mm to give 1460 cc. With a shorter stroke, the rev range could be exploited much more with the alloy pistons and pressure oil feed to the crankshaft. This, in a lighter chassis giving the fast performance mentioned by John in his interview at Motor Sport magazine.

The early 10/30 engine required modification in service: the water inlet to the block was moved to the front of the cylinder block and the crankshaft was further drilled to enable pressure

preferable to bores and piston wear. Alvis engines had detachable cylinder blocks with hardened cylinder bores; piston ring replacement was less expensive than a re-bore. Lower strip-down and re-build costs contributed to economy; a strong feature of Alvis publicity. A re-boring would remove the hardened surface of the original bores making their ‘second’ life less durable as the original hardened surface could not be retro-repeated.

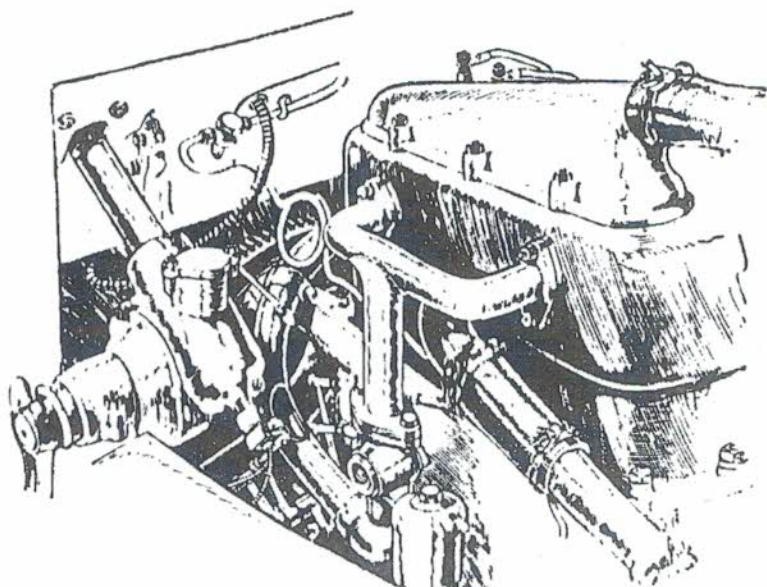
To carry this through economically in service, the Works and some of the dealers were equipped with sets of clever Special Tools of circular and coned format with long handles. When inserted in sets, they compressed all the piston rings as they entered the bores. The block complete with head and manifolds was lowered over the pistons on their connecting rods onto the crankcase. There was an opening in each tool to allow it to be withdrawn at the last moment past the connecting rod under each piston. This avoided engine, sump and big-end removal, saving time and expense. This operation may be seen illustrated in the late 12/50 Instruction Book on page 12, fig 7 with the young Arthur Varney shown on the right! In an extension of this policy, Alvis engines



DFP 12/15 engine, right side

The many similarities which may be compared with the early 10/30 engine page 25.





*From the 'Vintage Alvis' by Hull & Johnson, a drawing of the right side of the 'early' Alvis 10/30 motor before re-design. It appears very similar to the DFP 12/15 although reduced in size. The 12/15 design was probably adopted in preference to the DFP 10/12 because of the more advanced design and its suitability to tuning.*

lubrication to the connecting rod big ends. A new chassis was designed to avoid the fracture fault; existing cars with faults were patch repaired in service. Knowing a little of Smith-Clarke's ways, it is possible that a new chassis was designed in house and production moved to John



Thompson of Wolverhampton, a little nearer to home and the subsequent supplier of most of the Alvis chassis up to World War II.

Leopold Adams, the Sales Director had a clear vision forward as to the way the motor selling business would work; annual updates were relatively unknown for the smaller manufacturer at that time but he introduced them. The 10/30 was updated to 11/30 in 1922 and followed by the 12/40 the next year. (The cylinders were simply bored out to the original DFP capacity). Adams' other great idea was that as a small producer, it was possible to re-market the old model and run it alongside the update at low cost; so the 10/30 became the 10/30 'Junior' to satisfy clients who had perhaps saved for one and wanted no change whereas those who could afford the update went for the more powerful model. This policy was adopted many times throughout the life of Alvis car production until the final cars in 1966. Although at this time the 150 bhp TF21 was the current model, the 130 bhp TE21 was available at the same time.

was available at the same time.

De Freville claimed that he had designed the Alvis himself, but did he and if so, how much of it did he design? Did he, ever the opportunist, come away from France having done a deal with Doriot, with DFP's postwar engine drawings tucked under his arm at the eve of outbreak of the war or just after? The business drive of the man is not difficult to see; his life was a series of exploitations of commercial opportunities. He progressed from poultry farmer, through car selling, piston sales, piston manufacture, selling a car design, engine designs and ended up translating a book on rocketry and space travel after World War II; quite a career!

De Freville seemed to fade away from T.G. John around 1921 although he frequently mentioned "the Alvis car I designed." Later he moved on and announced a design for an advanced OHC racing engine, but nothing more was heard of it and he moved to the USA and later to France. It was reported that his wife sued him for committing her to a lunatic asylum as insane after the birth of her child.

In the early 1920's the Rapson Tyre was announced. This created a lot of interest as motorists in those days suffered innumerable punctures until tyres and road surfaces were improved. The Rapson was advertised as un-puncturable and created a lot of correspondence in

*Leopold Adams, the Alvis Sales Director. He possessed a large block of Alvis shares and held considerable influence in sales policy. He influenced John and stopped production of the Buckingham so that resources could be diverted into the Alvis 10/30; a car with much more potential than the outdated cyclecar.*

the motoring press. Mr Rapson would not allow his tyres to be removed or inspected to see how they worked! In correspondence following a magazine article, de Freville was among Rapson's supporters asking for more information and suggesting to wait and see if the detractors really worked; perhaps de Freville was eyeing up his next venture! He faded from view after this, even through WWII when one imagined he might have appeared with something useful to sell? Nothing, and then, all of a sudden, he popped-up again in the 1950s.

De Freville, always onto the next opportunity, even late in life in 1957, using his linguistic abilities, translated an extremely complex book from German to English. The book was Herrmann Oberth's "Man into space; new projects for rocket and space travel," a work of 240 pages of serious theory and technology. It must have been quite a feat to translate with all the technicalities. This is a big work, standard in many technical libraries around the world and still available. Being the business-man he was, presumably he made something from such a complex work! This was the period when, following rocket experiments toward the end of World War II, rocketry and space travel was beginning to look like a commercial possibility.

De Freville died in Chelsea, London in 1964 just a very few years before the first moon landings. Lots of questions – a few answers! Does a branded piston from an 'Alvis' aero engine or tank piston survive? Does anyone know which makes of tank may have been fitted with de Freville's Alvis pistons?

Over to you, the reader as there will probably be more bits of the puzzle out there....

Nick Simpson

*This article having originally been published in the AOC Bulletin earlier this year, gained several responses & Nick Simpson provides that follow up.*

.....ed

*There have been two responses to the de Freville article; one from Ken Day, already published in the Bulletin and the second from John Boswell of Llantwit Major who has had a lifelong interest in Vickers Armstrong. Ken's response enabled me to apply a more positive date to the drawings that became the Alvis car and John Boswell's opens up more questions about Alvis pre-history.*

*Ken mentions that the drawings for the design that became the Alvis 10/30 engine were on headed paper inscribed Aluminium Alloy Piston Company. This firm was registered in January 1916 and re-registered as Aluminium Piston Company Ltd, (a Limited Company) in 1917. This may date the drawings and thus the birth of what was to become the Alvis to 1916, not presented to T.G.John until 1919.*

*John Boswell has a fantastic memory! He remembered two photographs that appeared in 'Photo Discoveries' in the Automobile Magazine in 1993! These pictures had been developed and printed from an ancient plate camera*

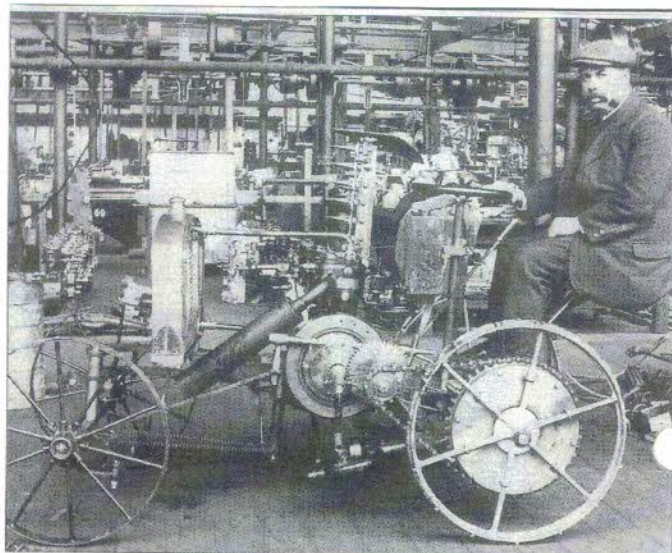
*discovered in a cupboard at Birmetals of Smethwick. No one responded to the enquiry.*

*What John Boswell remembered from that 1993 article, although he did not know it at the time, was an Electra Reaper, one of T.G. John's early products. The machine appears to be in newly assembled, unpainted condition with numerous Electra engines in view nearby. It is not the same reaper as that shown in the article (from T.G. John's Catalogue); there are minor mechanical differences, so there must have been more than one produced! Could this be an early photograph taken inside John's (ex-Holley) factory and can anyone identify the driver?*

*The second picture shows an unknown car with the same person in the passenger seat. The pictures are undated, but maybe from around the March 1919 period, the date of John's Electra Catalogue. Could the car be a D.F.P? Can anyone identify the driver?*

*More questions – ideas, theories, answers?*

Nick Simpson.



and from Peter Miller  
John,

Thought the attached advertisement may be of interest in view of Nick Simpson's recent article on Geoffrey de Freville. Ware and de Freville was part of the Aluminium Alloy Piston Co.. (Peter suggests some time in 1920)

xii.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

# AUTOMOBILES

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Telegrams AUTWARVILL PHONE LONDON Telephone MAYFAIR 6513 (3 LINES)

# A DOG FIGHT BUT NOT OF THE CANINE VARIETY

Just for the record, "my dog fight" was the way Dean Prangley referred to my altercation with a Roadtrain, on a joint VCCQ & Alvis CC NSW Rally earlier this year.

My Alvis TC 21/100DHC developed an electrical problem on route to Inverell, northern NSW. I called the RACQ after the car just stopped on a corner in Toowoomba, whilst parking for morning tea with Frank & Ann Corbett, owners of the oldest Alvis in Australia. A loose wire behind the dash board was diagnosed as the problem & both cars set off for our first night's stop, Inglewood. Unfortunately twice on route my car just died on me; pulling over on country roads, Frank's nimble fingers worked magic & got me going again. My worries really started when we had to drive a short stretch on the Cunningham Highway about 40 kms out of Inglewood. Looking in my tiny rear view mirror, with the top down, I could see a 4WD plus caravan right on my tail & directly behind that, what looked like the front loader of a truck of some kind. This was not a happy place to be in the beautiful Alvis that my husband John had spent 4 years of his life restoring, so following VCCQ etiquette, I saw a layby looming up & decided to pull over. I was probably travelling at about 50 mph & the Alvis brakes were doing their very best to slow the car on the gravelly surface. The end of the layby was marked with a white stick in rough grass & I was rapidly running out of space. I saw the 4WD towing the caravan pass, I saw the Roadtrain frontloader go past & I counted the "dogs" ( the name of the individual trailers being towed ) ONE; TWO –thank goodness I can start moving back onto the highway. Little did I know that this was a three dogged Roadtrain !!

These are only allowed on certain outback roads & not near large towns, so I had never seen a three dogged vehicle before. Now, whether the sway on the last dog was sufficient to hit the front bumper & bounce off the driver's side wheel arch or whether I was too close to the road edge, I do not know. All I do know is that there was an almighty BANG, the heavy Alvis bounced about, then continued along the long straight stretch of highway in front of me. The Roadtrain was long gone, I doubt whether the driver even knew of the accident. Ahead the 4WD & caravan had also pulled over into the next layby, after experiencing the menacing presence behind. I pulled over to exam the damage to find the bumper had been torn as far as the overrider, at almost right angles to it. The wheel arch showed scrapes where tyre marks had dented the panel & the wing mirror was broken. Seven years bad luck or just in need of replacement??

Alvis are amazing vehicles. My family, with driving experience in outback Queensland, tell me that if I had been in a modern, the force of impact would have thrown me up in the air & probably turned the car right over. Inglewood is a small Queensland town on the major highway, one could hear the Roadtrains passing all night

long. The town services the passing trade but not the RACQ garage attendant. He did not even get out of his comfortable seat when I asked for help so it was only when we reached Texas the next morning that assistance was available. We'd arranged to meet John & Wendy Wagstaff there & just on the corner of the main street, where their Motel was situated, the Alvis stopped once more. Frank's nimble fingers would not tickle it back into firing mode. A helpful local drove me to the other end of the main street to the RACQ garage & a tow truck picked up ALV154 for further assistance.

This is the story of wonderful people, the support of VCCQ club members & maybe a few contacts for Brisbane Vintage Car Club drivers so my thanks to:-

John Wagstaff, who took off the damaged bumper & carried it in his trayback Rolls for the rest of the Rally & back to Brisbane.

Eric Smith for assisting the Texas Auto electrician, by pointing out the most likely offending loose wire – Eric & Irene also own a 3 litre Alvis.

Brian & Doug for stopping as they drove through Texas – their moral support & the crowd gathering around my damaged Alvis, brought pressure to fix the problems & get all of us moving again.

Derek Dixon for his assistance as my Alvis developed an oil leak which sprayed all over the engine bay & caused anxious times as to the severity of the problem. Ron Thorpe who kindly put my Alvis on his hoist & to the gathered mechanics for their assurance, I could continue the Rally.

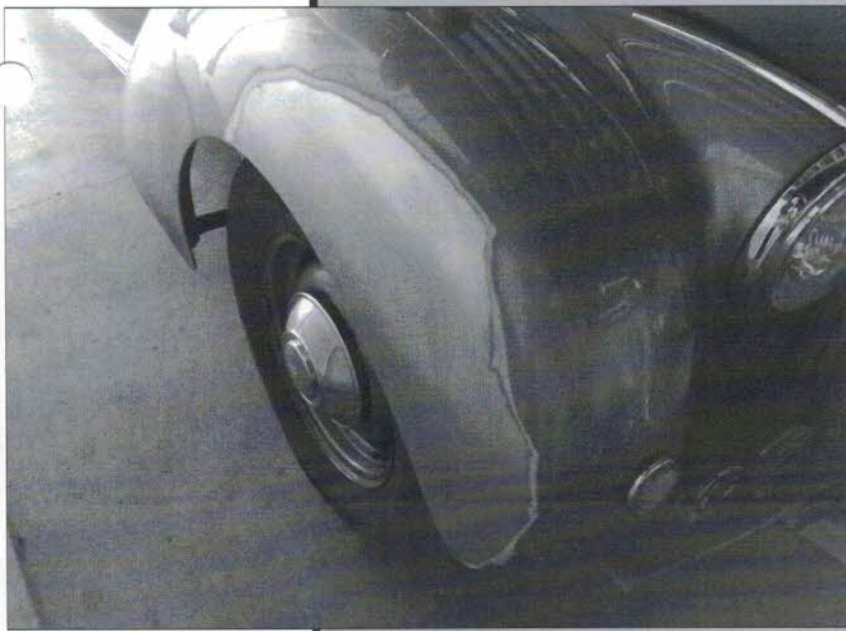
Once back in Brisbane, Graham Singer suggested I have Steve Bodrog repair the bodywork & Tony at Pacific Plating (3260 2121) to dechrome, repair & rechrome the bumper. Paul at Rolscar Smash Repairs in Sumner Park ( 3378 5554 ) did a magnificent job of respraying the wing, taking off the whole section so as not to damage the trim.

I suppose most of all, my thanks to Shannons Insurance, who although I had to deal with three assessors over the three months it took to return ALV154 to her former self, allowed me to choose the repairers I identified as being the best people & what's more paid all the bills. Quite an experience!!

Ronnie Brown



*Dog fight damage*



*Steve Bodrog's repair—no bog!*



*A 3 dog Australian road train  
(12 dogs have been recorded)*



## FOR SALE

1929 SILVER EAGLE

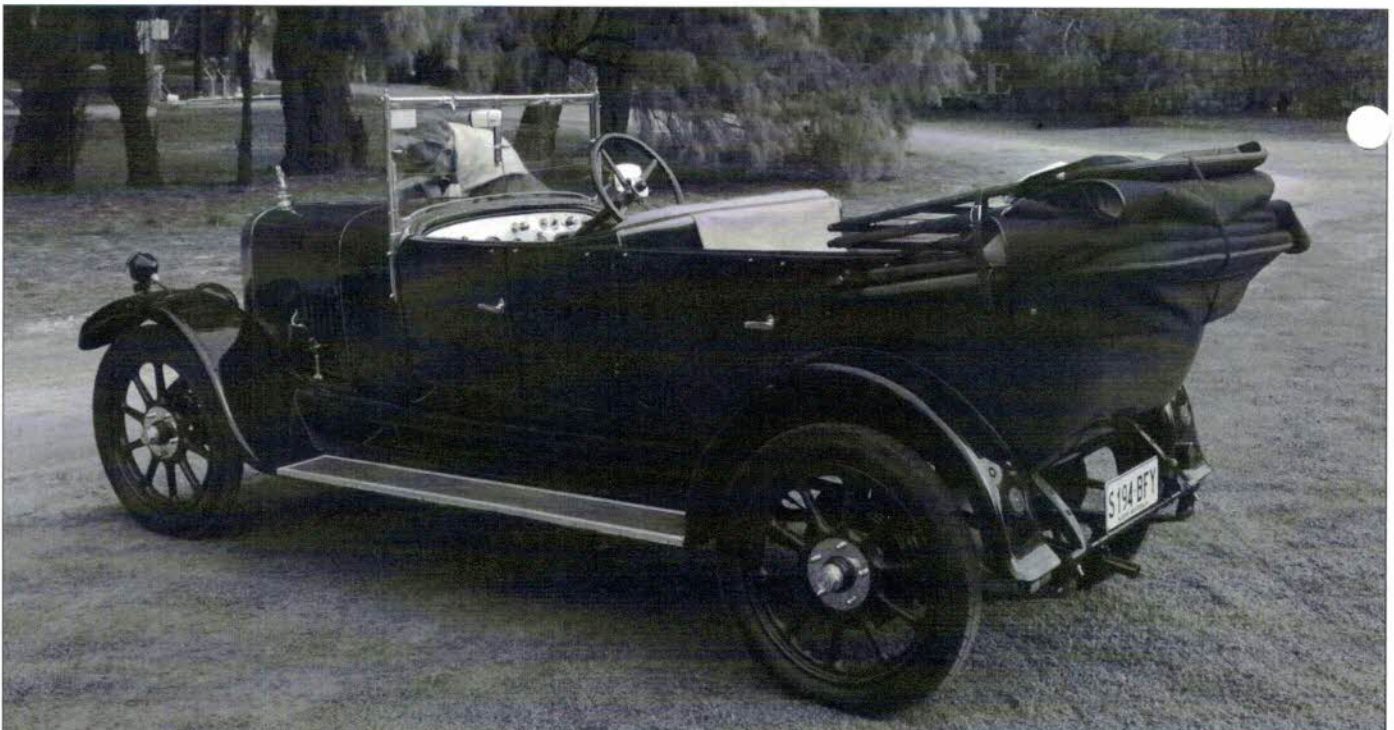
Engine Number 7926 Three brass carburettors

Re-bodied with Beetle back type

**\$40,000**

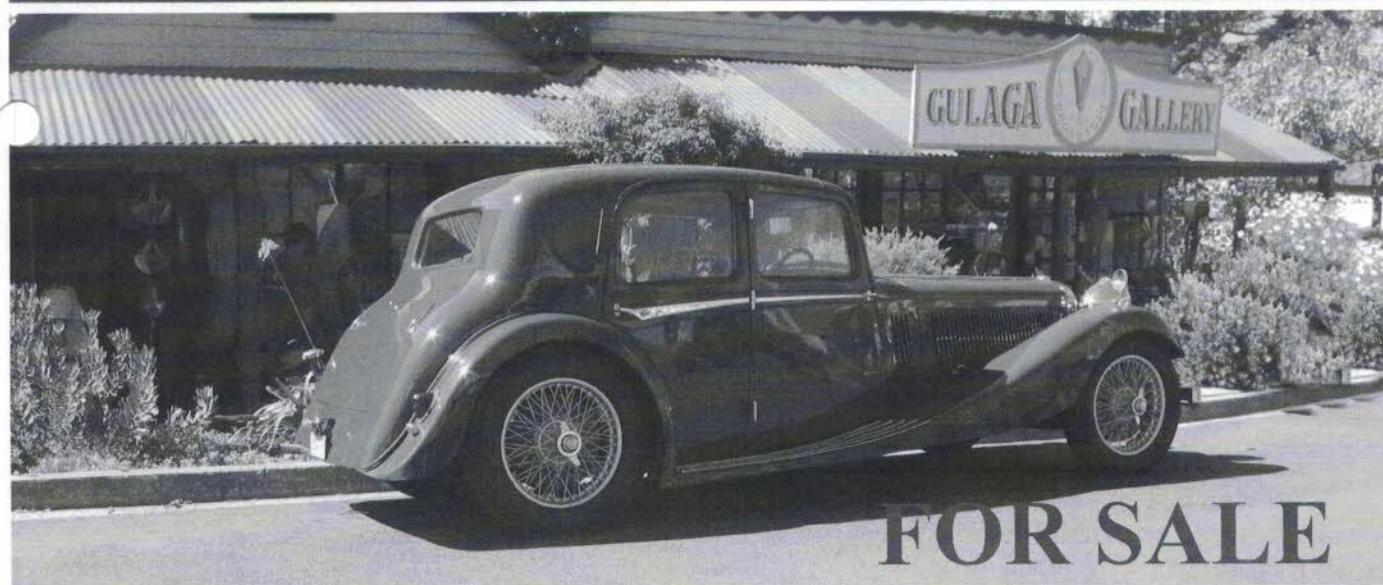
Stuart Paton

Tel: 07 5441 5437.



Noted on [carsales.com.au](http://carsales.com.au) (Sep16) a time warp low mileage 12/40. Seen at the 2015

# ALVIS PEOPLE BEHAVING BADLY



1935 Alvis SC Speed Twenty Chassis No. 12502, Car No. 17297.  
Despatched from the factory: 27th March 1935.  
Body by Charlesworth, Body No. 13502, asking \$70,000 or near offer.  
Ring Nigel Spragg is on: 0417 106 564

# SPREAD YOUR WINGS



KYNETON AERO CLUB 50th ANNIVERSARY

# AIR SHOW

SUNDAY 23 OCTOBER 8.30AM - 4.00PM

## ALVIS vintage 1475 tourer

## FOR SALE

Chassis # 5963

Engine # 6739

Cross & Ellis body # 1392

Complete car more than 50% restored.

Built 1928

### Chassis

Brakes: replaced

Diff: new crown wheel and pinion 4.5:1

Bearings good. Tyres: new

Engine restored: bored and sleeved,  
new pistons, new bearings,  
new improved cam.

Head original have new valves and  
guides.

Gearbox: OK. Tail shaft:  
needs new bearings.

Clutch plate: new

Suspension: original

### Body

Guards: new aluminium

2 radiators

Body work: completed needs paint

All lights OK

Gauges: original.

Steering: original

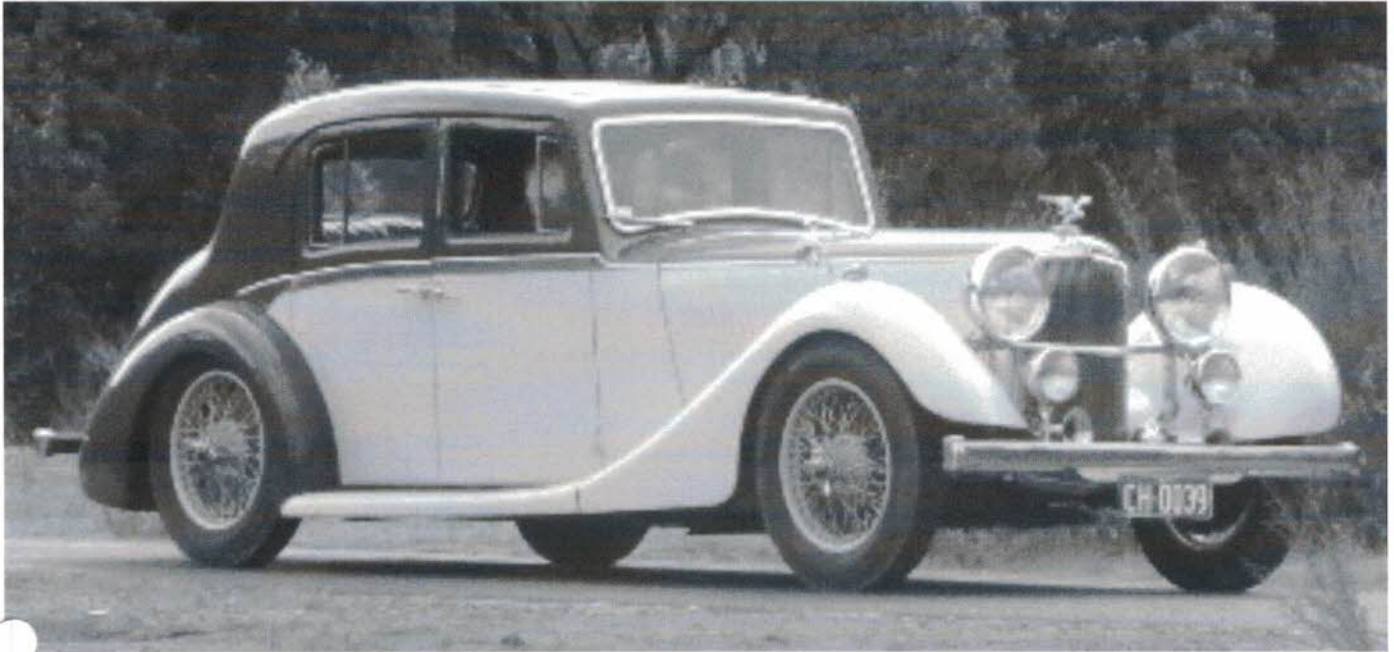
Have all necessary workshop manuals.

Asking price \$25,000

Call Geoff (Caves Beach) 0419 976978







## OFFERS INVITED

### AS IS, WHERE IS:

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

The car has significant mechanical problems and would be sold AS IS, WHERE IS.

Initial contact should be made to Andrew McDougall who is assisting the owner.

Andrew McDougall 0427 220 249

## FOR SALE

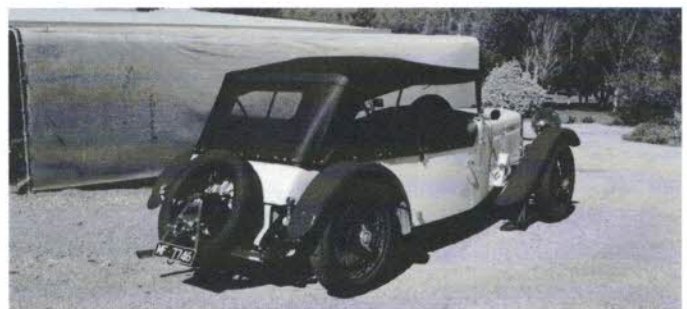
**SG Silver Eagle Sports Tourer**

12,000 miles since complete restoration including new body & full weather equipment & tonneau. Chassis No. 12684 Original books & full history available

Restoration details available on request.

\$82,500 negotiable

Murray Fitch Telephone: 03 5766 2529



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**WANTED**



A club member is looking for a 12/50 Ducksback in good condition to use on club outings while his other Alvis restoration project vastly overruns its projected completion date. Anyone with any leads please contact the editor.

**OF INTEREST**

JULY ALVIC CONTAINED A BOOK REVIEW ON THE RECENTLY PUBLISHED "ALVIS CARS 1946 - 1967" BY JOHN FOX.

THE BOOK HAS BEEN OBTAINABLE THROUGH THE PUBLISHER FOR AROUND \$30.

IT WAS RECENTLY NOTED THAT THE BOOK HAD BEEN HEAVILY DISCOUNTED THROUGH SOME AUCTION SITES & IN FACT ALONG WITH OTHER TITLES ADVERTISED FOR FREE.

ENQUIRES MADE THROUGH THE PUBLISHER SUGGEST THAT THE VENDOR/S ARE SIMPLY COLLECTING EMAIL LISTS & THE LIKEHOOD OF A TITLE BEING DELIVERED IS REMOTE!

**CAVEAT EMPTOR**



**FOR SALE.**

1936 Alvis Firebird Holbrook sedan. Three owners from new. Imported in 1955.

\$45,000 ONO. Peter Fleming 03 9729 3440



**FOR SALE**

**TB14**

As sighted on the Just  
Cars website (Sep):  
[justcars.com.au](http://justcars.com.au)

