# Country Motor

## Australia

Issue 76

**Magazine Produced for Pre-1960 motor enthusiasts**

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Back copies of Country Motor are available upon request

**Peter Miller's Alvis 12/50s**

**Country Motor** is a E-magazine created for and by country motor enthusiasts who have passion for ancient motor vehicles, engines, in fact any motor that is curious and old

Please forward all editorial enquiries and contributions to David Vaughan

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# Editor's Entries

***Welcome to issue 76 of Country Motor Australia***

The spring weather has been delightful and excellent for car rallies, many of which are held prior to Christmas.

The first story is not how to build a shepherds hut, but how I built a shepherds hut. A job that took, on and off, two and half years. As Lyne loves it for her hobby room it was all worth-while. Next job is to tidy up the garden, finish painting a few rooms in the house and maybe later a car project.

The focus in this issue is the famous Alvis 12/50. Actually next month will be a further story prepared by Peter Miller on the history of the 12/50 model.

Thanks to 12/50 owners Peter Miller, Andrew and Francis McDougall and Alan McKinnon for their stories. I have even added a piece about the 12/50 I owned sometime ago.

The Alvis theme finishes with a brief review of a new excellent and inexpensive book called 'Alvis Cars in Australia'

A not so well known English car is the Marcos V6 coupe, one is available for sale and its interesting story has been provided by Greg Morris.

The Marong Federation Picnic has come and gone again. It really comes around quick. 250-300 vehicles were present creating a good cross section of older makes and models, several of which I have discussed with their stories. A bit of maintenance work was necessary on the Alvis first.

Roger Thiedeman talks, in reference to Alan Toft's New Zealand story, about old Dinky Toys of which I have include illustrations of the models he discusses.

For the interest of country guys Neil Athorn has provided a story on tractors, this time the Wentworth Tractor Trek that celebrated Ferguson tractors used to reduce the effects of flooding that occurred seventy years ago.

Another new book in the making is 'Sporting Austin Sevens in Australia' written by Tony Johns. The book will be released to in November.

Finally Bits and Pieces column with a few interesting items.

Thanks to those who have contributed to this issue. The next edition will include a report on the Wedderburn Engine Rally and as well as the development of the Alvis 12/50 and a very intriguing story on a vintage Sunbeam restoration by Geoff Hewitt.

## David's Miscellaneous Ramblings

**Electric Vehicles**

I guess it is no surprise that electric and hybrid car sales out number the petrol cars, due to the current high cost of petrol. The high petrol cost maybe a consideration but does not deter enthusiasts taking their old cars out. Needless to say any automobile historian knows that electric vehicles have been in use since the early years. I remember as a child in the 1950s seeing electric milk floats roaming the streets of Bristol, UK.

**More on Alvises**

Peter Miller adds a little more to his 12/50 story. His story in this issue is on the white 12/50 seen on this issues cover. The aluminium bodied car is a very early 192312/40 (side valve) that now has an OHV 12/50 engine fitted. It needed a huge amount of work to get it to a reliable state and has seen little use since it was registered a year ago due to moving house. He will be taking part in it in the annual 12/50 raid in Bendigo in September. Paul Young will be driving the other 12/50.

Peter has almost completed the rebuild of an Alvis Speed 25. He found a complete Charlesworth saloon body of exactly the same type as the original in Vancouver, Canada of all places. Hopefully Peter will send in a story on its restoration.

**Tractor Treks**

According to Neil Athorn tractor treks are very relaxing and at 15kph you learn to take in what is around you. The Central Victoria Tractor Treks have a Facebook where many films can be seen of their treks.

**Events Coming Up**

North Central Vintage Car Club's Car Show is on Sunday 18th October 2026 $10 entry. Markets, music, BBQ and food vans at King Georges Park, St Arnaud. Further details contact: 0418 356 532

Federation of Veteran, Vintage and Classic Car Clubs events -
25th October 2026-Baw Baw Picnic
14/15th November-Bendigo Swap
21st March 2027-Mortlake Picnic
27/28th March-Wunghnu Picnic
18th April-Scoresby Picnic
16th May-National Motoring Day and Murrabit Picnic
website: 'www.federation.asn.au'
President Neil Athorn 040833839
E: neilathorn@gmail.com

**Graham Coupe**

Doug Stevenson writes regarding the photo of a 1933 Graham Coupe taken at Hanging Rock in February 2011 (in issue74)

The car was owned by Graham Club member Noel Godfrey. Photo above when he visited Doug in 2011.

He attended a Graham owners rally in Ballarat in 2014 with his car. He died later in 2014.

Doug is not sure where the car is now, maybe one of our readers might know and get in touch.

**Rusty Relic**

What a glorious sight! A rusting relic. A mechanical shovel recently seen in the middle of a paddock just before Charlton, Victoria.

That's about it for this issue. Although I have few good stories for the next issue there is still room for more. So get pen to paper and lets hear about your restorations or rally experiences.

Happy Motoring,

***David***

# Shepherds Hut

***After a few years of hard graft the shepherds hut is finally finished***

Readers will remember that I bought a rusty 1926 Vulcan truck chassis from local engine enthusiast Trevor Baily. I had dreams of building a truck from it. However it was just about impossible not only to acquire the parts to complete it but no doubt expensive engineering work was needed to restore it into a vehicle.

It had been used as a farm trailer and destined to go to the tip, however it was saved and Trevor bought it. He built a cubby house for his girls.

When I saw it I fell in love with its iron wheels. Trevor was quite happy to part with the chassis and towed it to my place behind his aging Mazda ute.

I neutralised the rust and painted it blue. I sought the parts needed to make it into a truck and chased up leads that eventually came to nothing. The few that did either the owners would not sell the parts or they were the wrong year.

I decided, after seeing a group of shepherds huts at Lake Goldsmith Engine Park that it would be a good idea to do the same with my chassis.

I did some repairs to the front axle. The differential is missing from the rear axle. I never attempted to remove the rear wheels as the smaller front ones just about did my back in when I took them off to paint.

The first job was to fit two hefty

pieces of timber down the chassis to make sure the new body didn't touch the wheels. *(see pic on previous page)*

I had a look on the internet to see how other builders had made their shepherds huts. Having had some amateur building experience I had a pretty good idea how I was going to build my project. At this point we decided to call it a folly.

I made up three frames which I bolted together for the base. I used plywood underneath to support insulation under the floor. To support the overhang I cut up and drilled holes in old bed irons and bolted them along the frame. Then put yellow tongue flooring on top which I painted as I knew it would be a few months before it would be out of the weather.

Having done the base I got Trevor to tow the chassis into a permanent position near the back door of our house. Before any further work I made sure the chassis was level by jacking it up and putting blocks and chocks under the wheels.

I measured up the frame so it would accommodate an antique 2.3m high wardrobe we have. As it is it has not become a bedroom anyway.

I had to build the frame a small piece at a time as it would have been too heavy to frame a wall and lift it a metre onto the chassis. All the work on the project I did myself so considerations had to made on what I could manage.

As I had not acquired any windows or door I framed all the walls with the idea of cutting out the spaces when I knew the size of the apertures.

I anchored the frame with steel

fence beams across so it would not collapse and braced the frame with metal hoop wire bracing.

As I wanted an arched roof line I approached Bruce at Gilmartins Timber Joinery to see what was needed to be done. He said to go the Bendigo Timber Golden City Supplies and purchase the timber and he would cut out the arched shape.

Never be in a hurry when going to a timber yard as service is slow but they are keen to provide the timber what the customer is looking for. Often advising the type of wood suited for the use.

I cut out a template for the arch shape for Bruce. He did a great job cutting the six shapes. The ends were left uncut underneath the arch as seen in the photo for the upper part of the end walls.

Striproll in Long Gully was the next stop where I left a template to shape the corrugated iron roof, which was the most expensive individual item of the build. I needed and they charged me for seven pieces but when I got home I see they gave me eight sheets.

I must state I am not comfortable climbing ladders to such a height so I managed to secure the roof from inside the hut except the very last sheet, which probably could have done with more roofing screws than I was game to screw in, from the top of the ladder.

I have heard of too many people falling off ladders so I tied the ladder to some rolling scaffolding to ensure it didn't move.

Each piece of wooden arch and galvanised iron, being heavy and awkward, I pulled up by rope. Along with the roof installation I included silver wrap.

A local friend who unfortunately was suffering from dementia and later passed away invited me to look through his shed in case there were tools I could find useful. Most of the contents of the huge shed aside from a few tools did not interest me. However I observed a few stained glass windows and asked about them. Years ago he had done a course and made them himself and was happy to part with them. These would go at each end wall of the folly.

I still needed a larger window for the side and we went to a reclamation yard in Dunolly. A huge stock of building materials were spread over several sheds but the owner wanted

a kings ransom for everything. Chances are the full sheds will probably still be there when he passes! However a multi-paned window looked suitable which we bought.

I had a door in my carport which we had in the house but it was very heavy so it was replaced with a new door.

I had to make frames, buy hinges and window winders to complete the windows. I cut out apertures in the frame and installed the windows. Also cut out the door way and put in the architrave ready for a door.

Having sold the Kawasaki motorcycle I restored sometime ago to my son I was able to buy all the weatherboards needed to clad the outside. Not an easy task when doing it myself. Also I tacked on the blue vapour barrier.

I bought a barn door hanger for the sliding door and for the first time I called on a neighbour to help lift the heavy door onto the rail. We found it was best to feed the door onto the rail rather than try and lift it over the rail.

I had some iron handles left over from the railway carriage we restored many years ago. After a lick of paint these were fitted to the door and side to climb up the steps I made to the door.

The spare corrugated sheet was cut up and to make a cover over the door.

Externally it was mostly finished. I painted it Taubmans Woodland Grey and re-painted the chassis black.

Next was fitting out the inside. I used three ply moranti sheeting for all the interior which was flexible enough to bend for the ceiling.

While fitting the sheets I also installed insulation both in the ceiling and the walls.

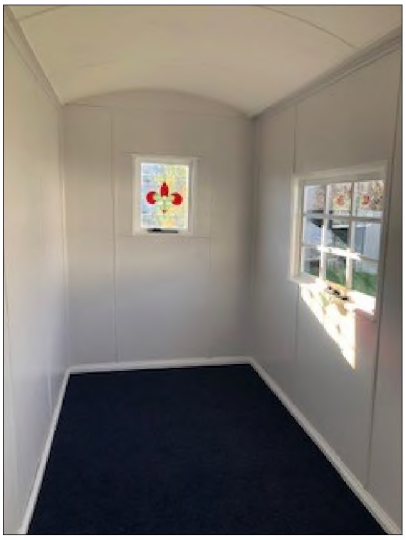
I undercoated the sheets before tacking them up. The interior I painted using Taumans paint as our neighbour is a professional painter and claims Taubmans is the best paint. The colour is Ornamental Pearle. Finally I laid blue carpet from Bunnings and skirting boards to finish it off.

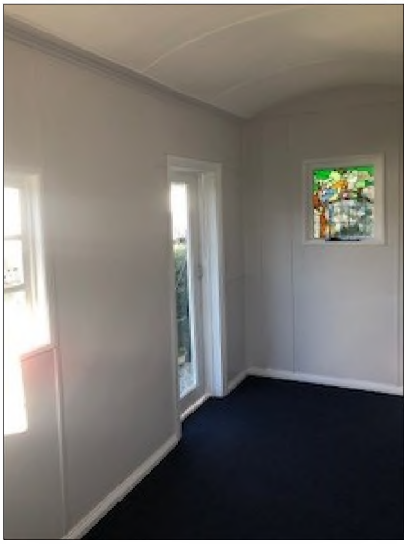
We had not previously decided how it was going to used. Lyne decided it would make a nice hobby room for her quilting and dolls houses. All her furniture was in the front bedroom which we had to move into the folly.

With power out there and blinds fitted on the windows it is a nice cosy place to pursue her interests.

Its approximately 9½ square metres and roughly spent about $8,500 to build it. A spare room built professionally would have been twice that amount.

However it did take on and off two and half years. ***David***





# ALVIS SC 12/50

## CHASSIS 3514

***Chassis 3514, an SC 12/50 dispatched on 6 April 1925, was a special order intended for sporting and competitive events by its first owner, well-known racing driver of the twenties, thirties and forties, Jack Day.***

It has a short (9' 0½") chassis, with a short-stroke L171 engine. It was (according to the factory build sheet) fitted with optional front wheel brakes, high compression engine, BTH Polar Inductor Magneto and 35 mm Solex Type DV carburettor.

It was bodied in Melbourne with a four-seat sports tourer body, finished in red over black with black wheels and unusually was fitted with an external exhaust normally found on the sporting two-seater.

On the 4th September 1926 Jack Day entered the car in the Malpas Hill Climb near Craigieburn, Melbourne, where he came 1st in the open event and Mrs Day came 1st in ladies event. The advertisement *(right)* for Regent Motor Company (the Victorian Alvis agents), shows the car on the actual hill climb competing with a full complement of passengers.

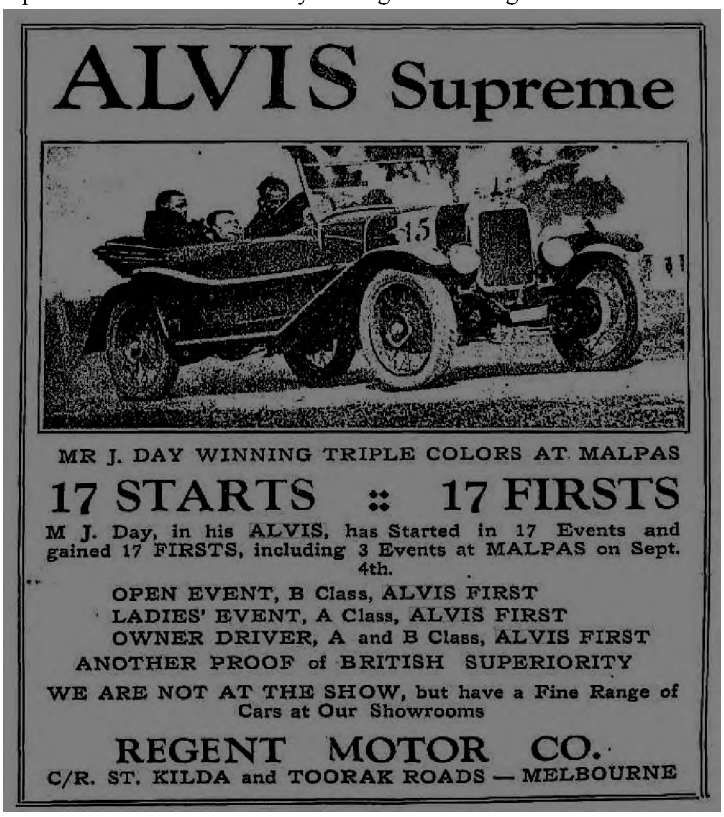
In 1926 The Herald newspaper sponsored the Victorian Light Car Club's first dependability trial. This was a 623-mile test run over three days in October/ November 1926, and attracted forty-two competitors, including five 12/50s.

Entrants had to clock-in at 20 controls along the route, as well as take part in a hill climb and speed and acceleration tests. Rough roads, mud and torrential rain were just some of the hardships the contestants had to endure on the 623-mile course. All 12/50s finished, while Day's Alvis received a special award for the 'most meritorious performance of the trial'.

At this stage, little further is known of the car until bought by Paul Conrad some thirty years later for use as a vintage sprint and hill-climb racing car. In the very early stages of its new competition career it competed in chassis form only, the body having been removed.

During the thirty years of Paul Conrad's ownership it was continuously developed with competition in mind. The original 21" wheels were replaced with 19" closed hub wheels from a Riley Nine. This was a weight saving measure as the Riley wheels were much lighter than the original Alvis ones. It would also have provided more favourable overall gearing for hill-climbing. The chassis was shortened from 108½" to 96" and the radiator re-positioned behind the front cross member. The engine was moved rearwards by about 6". The front brakes were removed, and aluminium covers fitted in their place. The rear axle was replaced with one from a Silver Eagle with single width brake drums, this being much lighter than the original twin-shoe setup of the early 12/50 cars.

The chassis, (as well as many other components) was extensively lightened by drilling and the original 30mm


ALVIS Supreme

MR J. DAY WINNING TRIPLE COLORS AT MALPAS

17 STARTS :: 17 FIRSTS

M J. Day, in his ALVIS, has Started in 17 Events and gained 17 FIRSTS, including 3 Events at MALPAS on Sept. 4th.

OPEN EVENT, B Class, ALVIS FIRST
LADIES' EVENT, A Class, ALVIS FIRST
OWNER DRIVER, A and B Class, ALVIS FIRST

ANOTHER PROOF of BRITISH SUPERIORITY

WE ARE NOT AT THE SHOW, but have a Fine Range of Cars at Our Showrooms

REGENT MOTOR CO.
C/R. ST. KILDA and TOORAK ROADS — MELBOURNE

carburettor was replaced by a larger 35mm barrel throttle Solex.

In October 1988 Des Donnan purchased the car and continued using it in competition until 2000. The focus now was on circuit racing so a later pattern braked front axle was fitted (the original axle has subsequently been re-fitted) and the engine supercharged via front-mounted vane blower driven from a chain sprocket fitted to the generator drive pulley and drawing through a modern SU carburettor. This exercise didn't seem to do much for the performance as the blower was either too small or running at too low a speed.

***Raced in chassis form by Paul Conrad in the 1950s***

In the late 1990's it was decided to rebuild the car in its original configuration, so the chassis holes were filled (their original locations can still clearly be seen) and the chassis extended back to its original length of 9' 0½ ".

A new steel framed body clad in aluminium was built, and Wilkinson reproduction aluminium mudguards from the UK were fitted. A stainless-steel fuel tank was fabricated and new set of 21" wheels of the original open-hub pattern were fitted. The engine was completely overhauled with new pistons, valves, bigend and main bearings and new main bearing caps. The clutch was re-lined with a bonded lining and a complete set of new close ratio gears and new bearings were fitted to gearbox. This work was all completed in May 2001.

In early 2002 Mike Williams of Tasmania purchased the car, following an advertisement in Alvibatics, the Alvis Car Club NSW newsletter. During his ownership, amongst other things, Mike improved the oil supply to the valve gear, and replaced the later, heavier front axle with the car's original axle, retaining the front brakes. The Silver Eagle rear axle was replaced with an original type twin brake shoe axle, with a 4.55 differential.

I purchased the car from Mike in December 2016. In preparing the car for a roadworthy inspection prior to registration I noticed a crack across a front brake drum, so two new front drums were obtained from Alvis Register spares. New brake cables were made and fitted at the same time. The drag link had been incorrectly installed and was contacting the tyre on right hand turns causing wear to the drag link. A new part was manufactured from 4130 Chromoly tube using the original ends and refitted correctly.

At the same time the wedges that had been installed on the front axle were removed. This restored the castor to the correct angle, which together with an adjustment to the toe-in dramatically improved directional stability.

The mixture was not correct either so new main and auxiliary jets and a new choke tube of the correct size were fitted to the carburettor. In addition, the geometry of the throttle linkage was not allowing the throttle barrel to open fully, so a new actuating arm was made which gave a dramatic improvement in performance. At the same time the rubber fuel lines were replaced with copper pipes with silver soldered fittings, essential with a gravity tank in the event of a fire.

Both front and rear shock absorbers were overhauled, which involved making new bushes for the universal block mountings and new wooden friction discs. The ride is now well damped though fairly firm and hard cornering even with narrow 4.50 x 21 tyres gives every confidence.

The car, by this stage was performing very well, though occasionally droplets of water could be seen spitting from the exhaust after a cold start. Initially this was put down to condensation, but when it came to be accompanied by a slight misfire, it was time to investigate. Removing the cylinder head revealed a small crack across the exhaust valve seat of #2 cylinder. A replacement cylinder head was sourced and while the engine was disassembled some other issues that were needing attention were seen to.

The upper thrust washer was missing from the oil pump drive shaft, causing mis-alignment with the skew gear on the camshaft. A new aluminium-bronze washer and spacer were made to centralise the gear and remove excessive end float, which was reduced to 0.002".

The lower end of the shaft had at some time been lengthened to compensate for the lack of the thrust washer. This was shortened to the original length and new gear drive pins fitted. The oil pump was unworn and in perfect condition. The crankshaft and magneto timing gears were worn and very noisy, so new timing gears were made for both of these, though the all-bronze camshaft gear had very little wear and was re-used.

The bores were not measurably worn, so were lightly honed to establish a cross hatch and remove some very slight glazing. Cooper S pistons with a dished crown had been fitted, so new flat top pistons of the same size were fitted to raise the compression ratio slightly. All bearings on both crankshaft and camshaft had no discernible wear.

The oil pressure had been on the low side, especially at low RPM. It was found that the cause was the pressure relief valve was stuck fully open, a situation not helped by a substandard

spring. A new valve of improved design was made and fitted together with a new spring which cured the problem completely. The result is that the oil pressure is now ±55 psi immediately after a cold start, dropping quickly to around 45 psi as the oil warms up, which is maintained at all engine speeds except hot idle, which is now about 25 psi.

After re-assembly and some 50 miles of driving during which time performance was excellent, the engine suddenly lost power and gave all the symptoms of a piston seizing.

Upon disassembly it was discovered #1 Piston was severely damaged by scuffing, while the other three pistons were unmarked. The seizure caused the associated connecting rod to flex slightly, resulting in the Gudgeon pin moving laterally and making contact the cylinder wall. A second set of pistons was sourced and it was decided to have new connecting rods made as the originals had suffered a very hard life after some 40 years of competitive use.

While this was taking place attention was paid to a number of issues, principally the clutch cross shaft and brake and clutch pedal pivots, all of which were very worn.

Unfortunately, confusion had occurred over the connecting rod order, and delivery date of the new con-rods was only going to be the middle of March 2019. This would have resulted in the car being unable to attend the Alvis Centenary Rally in Albury in April.

The decision was taken to crack test the original rods and re-install them with the new pistons, together with a second, better cylinder head which had been obtained. On initial start all looked promising, with the engine running extremely well. A preliminary test drive proved all the incidental work to the clutch and other controls to be very successful.

However, on the first run of any distance #1 con-rod broke. Upon dismantling the engine, it was found that the con-rod had fractured across the pinch bolt hole, the piston was severely damaged, both by the broken con-rod and also by scuffing around its entire circumference and a hole had been punched through the cylinder wall into the coolant jacket.

The sequence of events leading to the breakage are unclear, but the most probable cause is the gudgeon pin seized in the piston, very likely as a result of the flexing of the con-rod during the first seizure. As the con-rods had been modified to be a press fit in the gudgeon pin, the bending moment at the little end caused the con-rod to fracture at its weakest point, i.e. the pinch bolt hole.

So now a third re-build was on the cards, this time with a new crankshaft, connecting rods and pistons.

Whilst the original crankshaft was perfectly serviceable, it was considered wise to take advantage of a crankshaft of modern design, utilising shell bearings on both main and big ends, which have increased journal diameters.

The bores have had liners installed to restore them to their original 68mm diameter. New forged pistons have been made with a 4mm protrusion into the combustion chamber. Initially I was concerned by forged pistons being too heavy, but in the event they turned out to be exceptionally light.

During re-assembly particular attention was made to eliminating oil leaks and apart from a very slight leak from the magneto drive shaft, this has been very successful.

The engine is now back to its original short-stroke specification of 103mm x 68mm, it is turbine-smooth and the performance is excellent. The end result is a 12/50 that is exhilarating to drive on the open road, whilst at the same time is very tractable and easy to drive in modern traffic. ***Peter***

# TWO ALVIS 12/50 CENTENARIANS

***This year, 2026, provided the opportunity to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of two Alvis 12/50s in the ownership of Andrew and Frances McDougall***

The first is: Car # 9485 Engine# 4519 Chassis# 4163

This car was dispatched from the Alvis works on 5th March 1926, in chassis form, to Tozer Kemsley and then onto Australia. The body is believed to have been constructed in Sydney. Both Rob Gunnell and John Cross from the NSW Alvis Club, have written articles about a series of 6, possibly 7 TE 12/50 Alvis rolling chassis coming to Australia and being fitted with locally made, early form of Beetle Back body.

There is a debate as to where the design of the beetle back body came from – local design or from England, prior to a beetle back body being fitted to a car in the UK. The beetle back bodies constructed in Australia changed in detail as the series progressed.

Somehow the cars were assigned names, by whom and at what time in their lives is a mystery.

The first in the series is: Bullet, Chassis# 3942, currently a complete car, owned by John Wilson in Sydney. It left the works in 1925 and had its body constructed in Australia early 1926.

The second is Lord Allington, Chassis# 4163, which is the car I now own.

The third is Chlorophyll, Chassis# 4354, which, following a steering failure crashed and burned and was destroyed.

The fourth is Kon Tiki, Chassis# 4417, which had a tough life and eventually was reincarnated as Heather Goldsmith's, President of the Alvis Club NSW, "Rough Red" wide two-seater.

The fifth is Mother Goose, Chassis# 4433, which is the car currently owned by Steve Denner, which was his personal luggage, when he was assigned work in England and he subsequently drove it back on his own to Australia. The body has been re-paneled and undergone some modifications.

The sixth was formerly known as the "Moxley Murders" car, Chassis# 4435. This car in the early 1950's was dismantled and used for spares. It would appear that its association with the Moxley murder is erroneous, as now it is believed that the SD 12/50 Carbodies Beetleback, chassis# 5151, being restored by the recently passed Joe Toms and his son, is in fact the car used in the Moxley murders.

Back to Lord Allington: Its early history is unknown. Its first recorded appearance is when it was observed by Ian Polson on an Adelaide garage forecourt in 1959. Ian was from Adelaide and studying engineering at the university. His interest was in 12/50 Alvis, of which a number passed through his hands. At the time Ian considered that Lord Allington was in too poor condition, even for a poor university student. As an aside, Ian went to work for Ford in Geelong, taking 12/50s with him.

Alan McKinnon's first Alvis TE 12/50, chassis# 3786, project came from Ian. This car was subsequently owned by John Hetherington, Warrick Hanstead and now by Dan Jones. Ian left Australia to live in England and became Mr. "Talbot" specializing in the restoration of Edwardian and late 20s/30s Talbots.

Ian has visited my workshop in recent years and seen Lord Allington. His comments were that the car was still

*Lord Allington as collected*

*Current condition of Lord Allington (undergoing restoration)*

*After getting my licence in the 1926 12/50*

much as he remembered it, back in 1959!

Lord Allington was purchased from the garage forecourt, by David Good and taken to his orchard in Loxton, in the Riverland South Australia. For the decade 1960 through to 1970 it occupied a shed with a 1923 SA 12/50 Ducksback, chassis# 2410, currently owned and enjoyed by Dale Anderson.

After the death of David Good, Lord Allington was sold around 1970 to Frank Cain, an academic living in Melbourne.

It is reputed that Frank and his wife towed the 12/50 from Loxton to Melbourne on the end of a tow rope. Subsequently, Frank moved to Canberra and the car went with him. Restoration progress was very slow, with little progress made.

During Covid I was asked, if I could provide a valuation on the car, as Frank, due to old age and health issues, was moving to Adelaide to be close to his family. Eventually after lock downs, I made it Canberra to see a relatively sad car, but fairly complete, missing minor parts, such as linkages etc. and thought that with access to my other 12/50 I could replicate the parts. Therefore, I made an acceptable offer and acquired the car. So far, the restoration has been gradual. I certainly look forward to the day that this car gets back on the road, after languishing for many decades. Its restoration will be the subject of a separate article.

The second Alvis TE 12/50 is: Car# 9569 Engine# 4568 Chassis# 4213 Body# 1169

This car was dispatched from the works on 9th April 1926, to Henlys, with a Cross and Ellis narrow sports four-seater body and painted in maroon and black. It was shipped to Tasmania, with the first owner being Mr. F Peacock at 234 Davey Street, Hobart. Its registered number being 25120. Mr. Peacock was the son of the Manager of IXL Jams. Peacock moved to Sydney sometime in the 1930s, but the car appears to have stayed in Tasmania. Ownership of the car between this time and the early to mid-50s is unknown.

We have photos of the car being driven by a university student, studying medicine, Bob Young, in the mid-50s. My Grandfather, Gordon Fysh, heard about the car from a friend, when it was reported that it was about to be cut down into a farm hack. Gordon thought this would be a shame and so purchased the car, in my presence, in August 1957. At the time the car was painted maroon and black, but with a white vinyl hood and side screens. The car was then used to participate in rallies with the Veteran and Vintage Car Club of Tasmania.

At some stage my grandfather had the car painted white and black, but for what reason he chose that colour I neglected to ask.

One of my first drives of the car was around the Simons Plains race track at the age of 14. I continued to drive the car many times before I got my license. On occasions whilst nearing the end of the school day, I would hear a screaming gearbox, which was either a Morris Commercial truck or the Alvis. Sure enough, at the finish of the school day there would be my grandfather waiting to pick me up, having returned from playing a round of golf.

On my 17th birthday, February 1966, he collected me from school and we went into Launceston, where I got my license in the 12/50. It was also my 17th birthday present from him. This featured in a Launceston Examiner newspaper article.

Since this time, this excellent vintage car has provided us with a lot of joy and camaraderie, with fellow Alvis enthusiasts, driving up into Queensland, across to Western Australia and back, up into the Flinders ranges, as well as many other trips and rallies.

It has had a couple of engine rebuilds and general mechanical fettling, but the body has not been restored, other than to have another coat of paint, some pieces of interior leather replaced and a new hood.

If I had had the works build sheet at the time of painting it green and black in 1991, I would no doubt have returned it to maroon and black.

We feel most fortunate to have two, one hundred-year-old, TE 12/50 Alvis cars, which most likely occupied the assembly shop at the same time. Their centenaries were suitably celebrated with some glasses of bubbly.

***Andrew and Frances***

May 2026

*My wife Frances & me in the 1926 12/50*

# Why Alvis?

Alan McKinnon

***After restoring 4 Alvis 12/50's I have heard this question many times.***

I came to this make as the result of a favour in 1970 when I had a garage/ motor repair business in Northcote.

One of my customers at the time had a very nice ALFA Coupe which was unsuitable for towing. The favour entailed using my work vehicle, towing his trailer, to collect a vintage car project that he had someone working on in Geelong. I then had to store it for a couple of weeks until he made space for it as he had a number of other vintage restorations on the go. The car in question turned out to be an Alvis 12/50.

Some work had been started. The chassis restored and painted, sitting on four wheels which were also restored along with a nice 2-seater fabric body fully trimmed and fitted out with seats, hood and windscreen. There were also quite a few boxes of bits ready for the restoration. After some months I ventured to enquire if any progress had been made in finding a spot in his shed. The reply was that he thought he would sell it. As I had been on the lookout for vintage car restoration project it came at an ideal time. This was around 1970.

My first car was a 1926 2P Swift that I had when I was 16 years old. The Alvis was light years ahead of the Swift but that's another story.

Over a period of some four years the 12/50 was ready for its first rally – to South Australia and the 1974 National Rally of the Alvis Car Club.

It was registered and off to Bordertown on the Saturday – a bit naive or foolhardy! The longest trip the car had done was to the Blackburn Registration branch!

Along with my long-suffering wife and 9 month old daughter off we went. I would no more do that now than fly to the moon. Aah, the wisdom of age.

It was not without some minor problems. Firstly, during the lengthy restoration the painted fuel tank masking, when removed, allowed some paint flakes to enter the fuel system. An inline plastic fuel filter fixed that but not before many stops to clean the main jet.

The first stop occurred on the Tullamarine Freeway just near Essendon Airport. Of course, traffic was nowhere near what it is like these days but it was

a bit unnerving. This Alvis was a two seater with no doors. This is fine if the hood is down, getting in and out merely means being quite agile, but because we had a nine month old baby travelling on my wife's lap, the hood was up.

On the side of the freeway with a decidedly unhappy wife and cars whizzing by was not something I wish to repeat. However, repeat it I did many times, until during one stop when Noeline was coaxing Angela to have a bottle on the side of the road, I managed to fix the problem.

We continued on towards Bordertown arriving there about 5pm where we were met by the South Australian members who had constructed a Welcome banner across the road.

It had been quite an eventful trip and we were so lucky to have a baby who was quite content to consume cold bottles and fill up on anything to hand including packets of potato chips. As the family grew the need for something other than a two seater became more apparent.

As luck would have it an advertisement for a 1926 Alvis Martin and King Tourer appeared in the Alvis Car Club of Victoria newsletter. I jumped at it.

The gentleman who was selling it had not done much work on the restoration before falling too ill to continue. The Alvis was a 1926 TH Series 12/50 and was one of four in this

***Back from the Coach Builder, mechanical assembly around 2004***

series and the only one to come to Australia in chassis form to be bodied locally by Martin and King.

This TH Series is the rarest as it allowed the purchaser to select various options from the more sporting variants and only 19 of this series were built. It sounded like I had acquired quite a rare 12/50.

After collecting the car from Warrnambool, I found that over the years, some of the desirable components had been added to various other cars as the chassis was not the original number, even though it was the same year, plus the engine was out of a much earlier model. As the Alvis had spent most of its years in NSW, mid 30's until late 50's, I contacted a very helpful and knowledge-able Alvis Car Club NSW member who unearthed the man with the engine who was not interested in any sort of swap.

*This is how the 12/50 looks now and how it looked when it left the factory in 1925*

The original chassis remained a mystery so I punched on with the restoration using an engine and chassis from the same year, 1926.

The ACCV held monthly meetings is an old garage in the back yard of the gentleman who had founded the Alvis Car Club of Victoria and even, on his passing, allowed the continued use of the premises.

Whilst attending one of these monthly meetings, the reading of the incoming correspondence included a request from a NSW Alvis Car Cub member to join as a member of the ACCV. The request came with a list of vehicles and spares including a spare chassis. Sure enough it was my original chassis.

One phone call the next morning sealed a deal to swap a blasted and painted chassis for a rusty painted but correct chassis. Restoration continued, with my father who was good at almost everything, repairing and re-wooding the frame where necessary.

As my dad was a shift worker, he could only carry out the body frame on his time off. As a result, one of the ACCV members suggested a skilled cabinet worker he had employed would get the job done in a couple of weeks which was substantially quicker than the time being taken by my dad. This was done and the frame was returned to me at my business premises.

I was locking up after work one night and as I was descending the stairs from our upstairs office and looking down on the newly completed frame sitting on the chassis, it looked odd as the rear quarter looked shorter on one side than the other. I thought my eyes were playing tricks and it could not be. A tape measure proved my eyesight was correct. It was almost 1½ inches shorter on the Left-Hand side. Back to dear old dad to correct, which he did without saying a word!

During a visit to the friend from whom I had purchased the first Alvis, I noticed an unfinished project in the form of a pre-war overhead cam MG 'P" type. As I had seen the MG in the same state on a previous visit, I questioned the lack of progress and the answer was "too many projects". I suggested I could help by purchasing the unfinished project and this was met with an enthusiastic YES.

Now two projects on the go!! Those not familiar with the MG P Type – they were the last of the overhead cam engined cars prior to the T Type.

Restorations proceeded more quickly on the MG as it was much easier accessing the parts required. At this stage, negotiations were under way with the man in Sydney who was holding most of the original engine parts for the Alvis. Eventually a deal was struck with him getting an assembled engine and me getting the bits.

The P type was finished around 1979 and the Alvis was completed in time for an Alvis car rally to Tasmania in 1982. Over the years it has been a consistent and reliable performer with numerous trips to Tasmania, three to Queensland and several to South Australia.

As a point of interest, a company in UK (Red Triangle) secured the remaining spare parts and rights and continue to supply parts and information for all Alvis cars.

As a results of this I have been able to secure a number of my vehicle Build Sheets. These are quite informative as to the build date, engine, chassis and component numbers.

My next Alvis, 1925 TE 12/50, came about after a complaint over Hobart City Council's Refuse Collection.

My friend in Tasmania, Geoff Cuthbert, responded when a rate payer demanded to see "someone in authority" to sort out the problems he was having. The man's property was in a very picturesque and quiet area of Lauderdale with some 3 to 4 K of unsealed road. Having solved the problems, the man suggested to Geoff that he should "live down here" in this pleasant area to which Geoff replied that he would have a constant job cleaning his vintage cars because of the road.

The gentleman replied that he also had a vintage car but would like to sell it as it needed a full restoration which he had intended to carry out and had purchased a lot of parts to do so.

Unfortunately, his health had deteriorated and he was not able to continue.

He also said he had not advertised It because he did not want a lot of tyre kickers on his property so if Geoff knew of anyone who would be interested it would be appreciated.

As it was not a Model A Ford, Auburn or Cadillac, Geoff was not interested but said he may know of someone who was. This was in September 2000 and I was the person Geoff had in mind. Due to his work load Geoff forgot to mention it to me. It was while catching up at the Bendigo Swap in November that Geoff remembered to mention it.

A quick trip was arranged and the Alvis had a new owner. I had purchased a 1925 TE Series Alvis that had left the Alvis Works on 20th October 1925 complete with Polished Sports Aluminium Body No. 1086 by Cross and Ellis.

The polished body had given way to a yellow painted exterior that had been repaired and welded in numerous places. As this had taken place in situ it resulted in a burnt timber frame in some places. As the Alvis had its original components, chassis, engine, gearbox and running gear it was decided for the restoration, after the burnt frame repairs, to repanel as original in polished alloy.

To repanel, as original in polished alloy, my choice of tradesman to carry out this very specialised work was Steve Bodrog in Brisbane. Steve had carried out his apprenticeship with the famed English coach builder, Rob Jolley in Lymington UK. As with polished panelled body works it needs skill and care as obviously no filler can be used to correct any errors. It was well worth the trip to Queensland as the end result is stunning.

***The TH being used on one of the many rallies it's been on***

After all the mechanicals were over-hauled using many of the spares that came with the purchase of the car, next trimming. This was carried out by Geoff Davies in Merrijig, Victoria. Geoff had already done three complete re-trims for me and is known for his excellent work and attention to detail.

This car has given us many miles of enjoyment. In 2011 we took the car to UK and included a trip to France. It has run in the Shannons Targa in Tasmania numerous times and performed perfectly on many rallies and day to day running.

I did mention, at the beginning that I had restored four Alvis. The forth restoration is another polished aluminium body, again by Steve Bodrog, and it is a 1924 TC 12/40 Ducks Back.

It too is another great Alvis although, due to circumstances which have prevailed, it has not been used to the same extent that the two tourers have.

As an aside, the first two seater restoration is owned by a gentleman in Victoria and is seen out and about regularly including a rally around Tasmania which we organised last year.

***Alan***

# 1926 Alvis 12/50 Tourer

## Previously owned by David Vaughan

***For several years I experienced owning a restored 12/50***

Back in 1999 I had a longing to buy a vintage sporting car. I had become a member of the Vintage Sports Car Club (Vic) and some how felt my Austin 12/4 just didn't seem to fit in. I sold the Austin after 32 years of ownership and bought an incomplete Austin 20/4 to restore. That along with another 20/4 in pieces went to SA Austin enthusiast. In the mean time I bought an MGB which I enjoyed for a few years.

I studied the cars for sale columns and club magazines. There was nothing for many months that I could afford or appealed to me. I asked other car blokes I knew and was told of 12/50 for sale in East Murchison by John and Kay Ball. I motored out to see the Alvis and immediately fell in love with it! Beautifully built by Geoff Hood and Richard Stanley. Other motor workshops also had a hand in its restoration.

It appears that John had not experienced vintage cars when he commissioned the rebuild of the Alvis. He didn't realise they were rugged, unrefined and more exposed to the weather conditions than modern cars. All of which I love about old cars! He was keen to sell the 12/50 and some months later he offered me a low mileage Alvis TA21 saloon, as be had his eye on an Alvis TA21 drophead coupe. I was happy to oblige to buy the saloon. Later both were sold when we moved to a house which had no garage accommodation.

The 12/50 was not cheap as it was in exceptional condition. It had a replica body that did not feature a driver's door. The other three doors had relatively small apertures which made it difficult to get in and out for Lyne who had damaged knees. Also I had to climb over the side or come through the passenger door to land in the driver's seat.

Quite often veteran and vintage cars don't have drivers doors as the spare wheel is mounted on the running board, however the spare was on the back of the body in this car. The hand brake was positioned outside the body but that wouldn't have caused any problems with a fitting a door.

It also featured a butterfly windscreen which presented a few problems on those rare occasions when attaching the hood.

It was well equipped by vintage car standards, even a tonneau and a cover for the folded hood and cover for head lights.

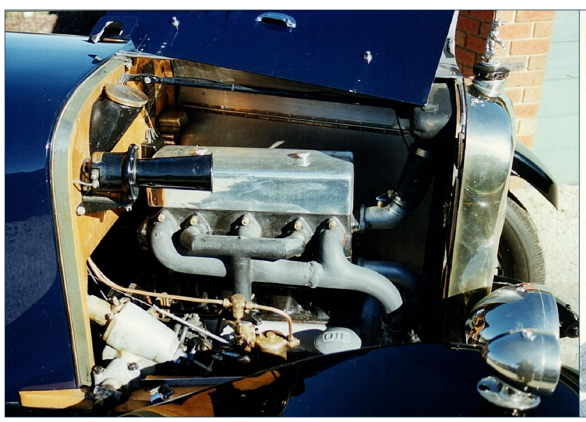
As much as I liked owning the car I had great difficulty changing gears without grating them. It helped once the gearbox oil was warm. It had a right hand gear change and centre accelerator pedal. Both I had to get used to. The Austin was more civilised having a central gate gear change and usual pedal positions.

My only other gripe was the lack of power when approaching hills. I surmised that the engine had only just been rebuilt and was still tight, so it needed running in. On very hot days it actually boiled when put under strain. After sometime it did improve. Subsequent owner Ric Furlong found that the exhaust manifold leaked and a few tweaks with its running and it became better performer.

In comparison to the Austin 12/4 I found the Austin travelled far better on local gravel roads even though it never had shock absorbers. Also I felt more secure on corners in 12/4. The 12/4's top cruising speed was 45mph while the Alvis could happily travel at 55mph, so that at least was an improvement on the Austin.

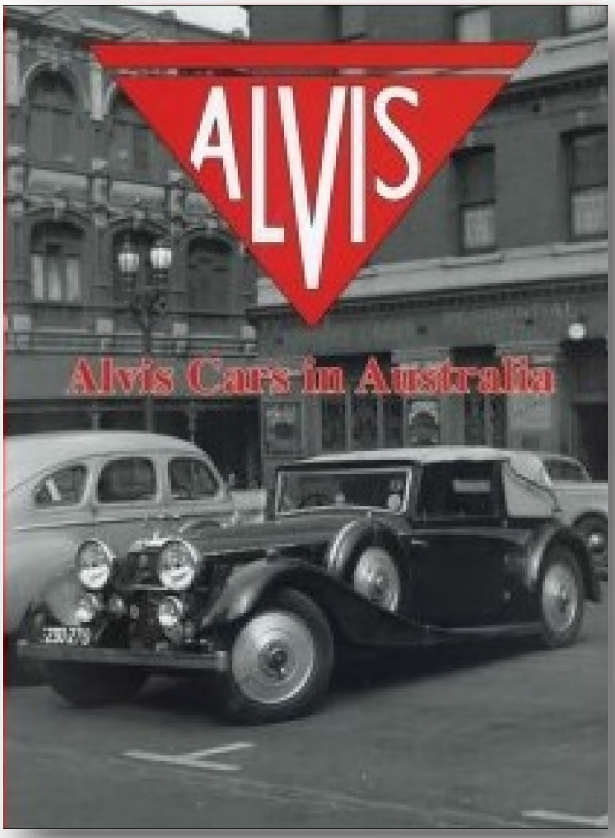
Sorry there was one other annoying thing the petrol tank is under the bonnet in the scuttle and only holds 8 gallons. The 12/4 had a 10 gallon petrol tank, however that was inconveniently placed under the driver's seat. I enjoyed numerous rallies in the 12/50 and TA21.

***David***



*New Book*

# Alvis Cars in Australia




There have been several books logging makes or models of specific cars that have landed on the shores of Australia. Each well researched and generally very informative.

A twin volume book on Alvis cars has now been produced. The first edition is now available and the second will be arriving later in the year.

Chester McKaige is the prime mover of the books along with Dale Parcell; both Alvis owners.

The books are available through the Alvis Car Club as shown below.

For the size and weight they are of great value and essential for anyone keen on Alvises or motor book collectors alike.

The amount of time compiling and researching material for the books was considerable and is reflected by the excellent content that is included in the 327 pages.

The chapters progress through the models Alvis made from the early 1920s to the last cars produced in 1967.

Each model has a description of the specifications and examples of cars which were or are currently in enthusiasts hands in Australia.

The stories of numerous Alvises from around the country make the book more unique. It is not just a history book but a commentary on when and how the cars entered the country, as well as their individual journeys through a progression of owners and physical conditions.

Like most old cars Alvises were wrecked when their values plummeted or survivors were discarded wrecks before restoration. Fortunately they were cars of quality and interest that appealed to enthusiasts through the years. Consequently many are in beautiful condition and are great cars for events of any description; motor sport or touring. Alvis clubs cater for owners and parts are available from Red Triangle, UK.

The book ticks all the boxes. It is very readable, well presented, good quality and full of both contemporary photos and recent pictures of Alvis cars still in use by enthusiasts.

It is a book you can pick and open to any page and enjoy reading a story about a particular Alvis model or car.

It has taken the authors three years to compile, organise stories into a logical sequence and format each page.

When it comes to motor book publications it is up there with the best and well worthwhile acquiring a copy.

***David***

Unfortunately, this book was written 30 years too late.
It should have been written when Eric Cunningham, David Manson and Rob Gunnell were still alive. The same could be applied to Victoria with Robert Graham and Bill Barber also deceased. These dedicated Alvis enthusiasts wrote extensively, their articles well researched and entertaining.

Our job was not to re-invent the wheel but to re-discover the many articles that appeared in ALVIC and Alvibatics over the years and incorporate them into this book.

We are still blessed with several Alvis historians throughout Australia who have all contributed to this exercise that has taken three years to produce.

**VOLUME 1 IS AVAILABLE NOW with VOLUME 2 COMING SOON:**

**Please deposit $50 per volume (or appropriate) into the NSW club account (Alvis Car Club NSW; BSB: 082-528; Acc: 894986066) and email the NSW President with your details (Alvibatics@optusnet.com.au) to let her know that you have placed an order and what you have ordered (volume 1, volume 2, both, with or without postage).**

**You will receive a confirmation when the funds are credited and your copy of the book when available.**

# THE HISTORY: 1970 MARCOS 3 LITRE V6

Greg Morris

***Built in England. Confirmed by Rory McMath at Marcos Heritage, it was built as a 3 Litre V6 in 1970. It has a "Marcos 1600" brass ID plate under the bonnet like a few other 3 Litres have.***

The original paint colour was what Marcos called Tangerine. It had rectangular tail lights (Lucas L782) which were introduced in March 1970 according to Rory.

**Before 2000: Owned in New Zealand** by long time owner Alan Stott of Wellington, who got a replacement engine under warranty from UK that arrived in a wooden crate. It was the updated post October 1971 engine; that was installed along with a Toyota Supra 5 Speed Gearbox. It was also repainted British Racing Green.

**2000: Sold and goes to New South Wales.**

Sold to Alan's friend Warren Barnard who worked in the film industry and took it to New South Wales. Licensed in N.S.W. as "MY 1971".

**2006: Sold in N.S.W. to Western Australia.**

Warren Barnard was living in the Blue Mountains and advertised the unlicensed car on eBay. Robert Bodkin who lives in Perth, Western Australia and owns a 1972 Marcos Volvo saw this and told his long time friend Greg Morris who bought it and had it trucked to Perth. Much work was done at Cooper Triumph in Bayswater. The steel tubes under the sills were replaced and brakes, suspension, steering overhauled. With new tyres and battery it was made road-worthy.

**2009: Licensed in W.A. and used.**

Licensed as "1DBY 527" it was driven and much enjoyed for about nine months as is in the by then, worn out BRG colour and sans bumpers.

**2010: Prepared for re-painting.** It was given over to Spoilers & Flares in Bayswater for re painting in the original Tangerine in April 2010. The car was quickly stripped but then progress was slow.

**2015: Re-painted and back on the road.**

With the preparation about 90% complete the car was back at Cooper Triumph in April 2015 to go over the mechanical things again because it had been so long since the car had run. Luckily the engine was ok.

Stripped but road worthy once more it was given to Steve Bova's "Jewel's" in Bayswater in May. At this stage I'd been looking for the earlier type oval tail lights for years. I much preferred them to the original rectangular ones; to such an extent that it over-rode by desire for originality, especially when I found out they were original to early 1970 cars. I got some from a Vauxhall owner just in time so the holes could be re-done to suit before painting.

Jewel's did a fabulous job to finish the car in the original Tangerine in about three weeks, finishing in June.

Then it was back to Cooper Triumph for fitting the numerous bits back on - like doors, bumpers, lights, rubber trim etc. The oval tail lights (Lucas L684) were fitted instead of the original rectangular type (L782). I also had to get a new steering wheel made as

the original aluminium one broke where it had been repaired before. So I got it made in stainless steel.

Some trim work was done by Jim Lucas at Lucas Trimmers, also in Bayswater in August. This included a new headlining, re-covering the dash top, making up boot carpets and also sun-visors, using Mini ones as per original. Covers were made up for the petrol tank and spare wheel.

Then back to Cooper Triumph where the final work was done including the two screens re-fitted with new rubbers by Mario of Prestige Windscreens. The rego was changed to "1970 V6". October 2015 and the Marcos was finally at home and "finished". Since then of course I've sorted out lots of problems and the car is getting better and better.

**THE STORY: 1970 MARCOS 3 LITRE V6 3M5719**

I live in Perth, Western Australia and first saw a Marcos like mine in about 1969 when I was 21. It was for sale with a grainy, very small, black and white photo at the back of the UK Motor Sport magazine. There were often ones for sale and the photo always showed the car from the side and taken low down. So I knew about them and thought they looked absolutely fabulous.

At the time I still had my first car, a 1955 Jaguar XK140 Drophead Coupe. They were cheap then. After the XK there was an MGB, TR2, Rileys RMA, Blue Streak Adelphi, Blue Streak Kestrel, 2½ Litre Roadster (RMC) and RX7 Series 2 Coupe, RX7 Series 4 Cabriolet Turbo. I still have the last four.

There were other sundry ancillary runabouts like a 1959 Singer Station Wagon, 1964 Morris 1100 and a 1968 Humber Super Slurp 5A. But you're probably not interested in those right now. A met a guy called Rob Bodkin selling a racing MG TC in C1969 and we became friends (still are). Rob bought a red 1972 Marcos 3 Litre Volvo in C1982 and I got a ride in it a few times. His wife had an accident in it in the late 1980s and it's now been partly restored but is still in his shed.

Rob emailed me in February 2006 to say that a Marcos V6 was for sale on ebay for little money and no one was buying it. He was indignant! Well it wasn't that cheap as it was in the Blue Mountains in NSW, unlicensed and scruffy British Racing Green. Anyway, I got a Riley friend, ex W.A. to look at it and he said it's pretty good. He didn't notice that the steel tube frames under the sills had rusted, but it was not too bad. So I took the plunge. Not often these chances come up. 3M5719 had spent time in it's early days in New Zealand where a new engine was sent out from UK in a wooden crate as a result of some warranty claim.

It was post Oct. 71 so the new engine has 144bhp instead of 128bhp and the dip stick is on the driver's side. The original gearbox and overdrive were replaced with a Supra 5 speed all syncro box, which I'm told is a Getrag made under license. I'd prefer the original set up of 4 speeds and overdrive, having loved the overdrives on the XK and TR2. But all the contemporary tests said the only part that let the car down was the gearbox, it coming from and more suited to a big saloon. So I decided I could live with the 5 speed. I got it trucked to Perth and then the fun started.

It was great to drive, I loved it! I got special permits to drive it and got new tyres and a battery. New tyres, that's like shoes, should I call it Emelda? Probably not, it strikes me as masculine anyway. Then it went off to Cooper Triumph run by Peter Cooper who had looked after my TR2 back in the 1970s. I knew the front end was all Triumph. He replaced the tubes as required, did up the front end, the brakes etc; I had one of the original alloy wheels repaired. Then I tried to get it licensed.

It still looked scruffy BRG but the problem with getting it licenced was the 100mm clearance required underneath. It failed. So back at the workshop they could not get it much higher, can't remember if they did anything at all. Ah yes, took Vz" out of the sump and re-welded.

I pumped the tyres up to c50psi, took absolutely everything out: spare wheel, glove box contents, road map, minimum petrol etc. I went back with no breakfast, no undies, just lightweight tennis shorts and singlet; nice look. I left sandals and petrol can out of sight by a wall and they re-checked. It just passed. I've got to hate speed bumps ever since though! So three years spent on it so far.

I drove it around still scruffy for a about five months including going to the old Caversham Racetrack on the day they named the park there after Jack Brabham. I saw the old man and a few of his cars. The Marcos created lots of looks wherever I went: "Noice wheels maaate! What is it eh?". People waved, laughed, took videos as I drove along the freeway. I saw a fat boy of about 12 by the high-way and I pulled into a garage to fill 'er up. I noticed he was running flat out the 100m towards me. By the time I'd filled up he came panting into the garage and asked "What is it mate?". A Marcos.

A blank look of disappointment; he'd obviously never heard or them. With Marcos tyre valve caps I have "Marcos" 11 times on the exterior but they still ask.

It was originally Tangerine, a reddy -orange, same as a Porsche colour in 1970. There was some left under the door entrance upholstery; I have a thing about originality. After getting run off the road by a truck and stopping only lm from a post I thought maybe a bright colour would be a very good idea.

I gave it to a chap who had a business making and fitting fibreglass wheel-arches, skirts, flares and the like. I'd also seen a Triumph 2500 he'd painted; he had a small and large paint booth. He had it for about 5 years and

eventually got about 90% of the prep done. I threatened to take it off him twice; each time he'd start a flurry of work on it. His wife got cancer etc, so I'd given him leeway. He lost half his premises including the only paint booth that the car would fit into. So I gave it to a gung-ho Italian and he got it beautifully finished in three weeks.

Everyone had said "Oh no, not orange!" Well it's not orange, it's tangerine. That didn't change anybody's view. The first painter had spent 5 years trying to talk me out of it. When I first saw it with the top coat I thought bloody hell, it is bright. But I loved it and so has absolutely everybody else, even those who'd begged me not to have "orange!".

Well actually there was a bloke with a red Stag who didn't like it, but he's been the only one. After another few months it was finally finished.

New rubbers etc. and the glass put back in. Oh yes that was interesting. There was a guy famous for working on old windscreens, but he was a wanker, and I'm sure he lied about almost every-thing. He told me he'd done a Marcos out in the country before but I was sure that car had never existed. I was told there is only one other guy who will do it. Ok, he came to the workshop, took one look at the rear window and said "No way Jose!".

Oh hell, what to do now? It was ok because he suggested Mario who no one had heard of. He was great, but it did take him most of a day to put both screens in with the new rubber. I'd got all the numerous new bits from Marcos Heritage (MH) of course.

*"On the road again"* now tangerine and all shiny. Wow! It's been worth all the time, trouble, money and anguish. It's just so beautiful and so lovely to drive. First "Big Day Out" I drove to see Rob Bodkin down at Fremantle and parked right in front of his shop. Come on mate, get that red Marcos 3 Litre Volvo finished!

Now it's been on the road about 3 years and I've had to do numerous improvements. First it was great to drive until you got to 80kph when the front end started shaking wildly. Getting things balanced again, toe in etc re-done made no difference. But four new springs and four new adjustable dampers from MH fixed that.

At the same time I got two new adjustable radius arms from MH so the back end now has all four adjustable. Then I heard about timing gears giving up, so got new ones from a Ford Specialist in UK, steel for the main one. Then old British Ford guru Roly Waters fitted a new Weber, new valve seals (that stopped all the smoke and soot our the back!), new accelerator cable and a choke.

Next the diff started complaining more than before, so a reconditioned taller 1:5.2 as used on Lotus Cortinas was fitted. Then the clutch stopped working. It was the slave cylinder push rod. But the engine and gearbox are untouched except for cleaning, painting the engine and the engine bay. The exhausts manifolds are white and the rocker covers Ford blue. The yellow plastic fan looks a bit out of place. Can you get Ford blue ones, tangerine ones? Black would suit but I worry about not seeing it and losing a few fingers. Not funny: my 1938 Riley nearly took 5 fingers off a workshop manager. They still look mangled, and that fan is silver!

It's hard to believe. After nearly 50 years I've actually got a shiny Marcos parked here. Am I in heaven? I can see it from my bedroom window, I can drive it to the shops if I want to. But I live up in the hills and it's just glorious driving it around here: with little traffic, no traffic lights and lots of lovely corners. With that big lusty donk in such a light body you don't need to stir the porridge much unless you want to, like an E Type especially the 4.2s. I'm invariably in a gear or two higher than I would be in the same place and speed in the RX7 Turbo. It sounds glorious and even though I've driving, the handling is a revelation.

And it goes! I'm not too sure how it would go against the only other Marcos on the road here in the 2.5 million square miles of Western Australia.

Ray's 1989 Martina has the Ford Pinto 2 Litre four with EFI, but it's 19 years younger, so I think he should defer to age. Anyway the only time we've been on the road together I passed him with ease. And the E Type in front! (But were they trying?) Ok it is a bit hard to get into; that's why I had to get it finished

before I turned 70. But having had sports cars all my driving life, it's fine with me. Also once ensconced I find myself in the most comfortable and best driving position of any car I've driven. I have a contemporary road test of my model in a UK magazine and that is a comment that you would not get today: ***Greg***

**https://paulblank.com.au/2026/08/21/1970-marcos-gt-3-litre-v6-47500/**
Paul Blank is selling the car on behalf of Greg's estate $47,500
check the above link

# 35th Marong Federation Picnic

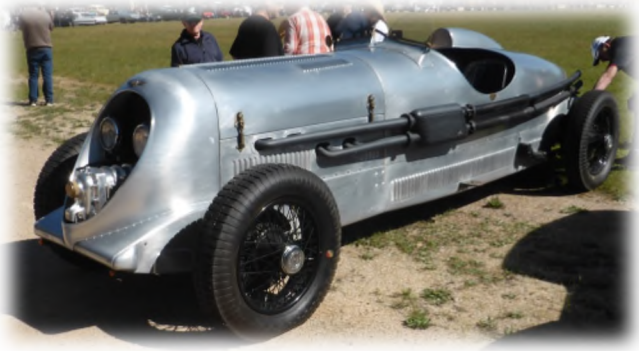
***The Federation Picnic is always a pleasant day out to see several hundred cars and enjoy the company of like minded enthusiasts who are always amenable to having chat***

Having been busy with finishing the shepherds hut and some work on the house I had not driven the Alvis for months. At the back of my mind was the exhaust noise that needed attention. For the second time in six years I needed to change the manifold exhaust gasket to the exhaust pipe. I recalled it was horrible job as below the carburettors is a heat shield that makes it impossible to reach the manifold nuts from above so it is a grimy under the car task. This time after removing the bonnet side I took the inner guard off too.

As the old gasket had completely disintegrated the nuts were inevitably loose. When I purchased the last gasket from Red Triangle (UK) I had the foresight to buy a spare.

Replacing the gasket was fairly easy and it all went back together on Saturday prior to the Sunday event. The car was thankfully noticeably quieter.

I have great difficulty getting out of a cosy bed these days so my arrival at Marong was after all the cars had settled. Just a few more cars came after me. Rather than being parked next to a Falcon 4WD ute I stopped away from the modern but I was upstaged by a Rolls Royce special.



***Rolls Royce special based on a 1931 RR chassis with a RR eight cylinder engine that was typically used in a truck or tank with a supercharger. The case of which was made from the moulds used to supercharge three vintage Hudson specials that were created by Wolfgang Reiben. The racy body was crafted by Steve Barnett at Harcourt***

***The wheel, bonnet side and inner guard removed to gain access to the manifold***

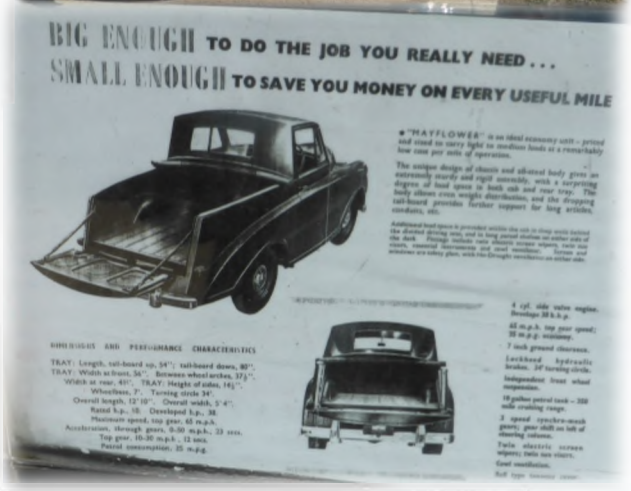
***The new gasket compared to the disintegrated remnants of the old gasket***

As usual there was a great range of makes and models, possibly over 250 vehicles or more were on display. The Vintage Drivers Club started the Golden Oldies tour motoring around the district.

Glen Bennett often attends in either his 1929 Model A Ford tourer or he transports his little Commer truck to the event from Bacchus Marsh.

Along side his car was a Holden ute owned by Barry Agg which had badges of the Western Vehicle Restorers Club based in Melton. He is Vice President of the club.

Myself and Barry Harrison formed the club back in the 1970s which currently has over 60 members. I designed the club badge which represented various vehicles club members owned.




**Triumph Mayflower 10hp Utility**

Little is recorded relating to the Mayflower Coupe Utility. It is known that 150 were made from Mayflower CKD kits sent from the UK to the Port Melbourne plant of Standard Triumph (Australia).

The Saloons were not cut down to form the Ute. Moreover, a very neat cutting job was undertaken on the roof parts before assembly, bringing the rear dome and window forward. All other body panels were used and modified to form the utility rear load area except for a timber floor and timber capping on the side panels.

For reasons unclear the existence of the Ute was kept from other markets where it may have faired better.

The sales pitch for the Mayflower Ute was its' cheap running costs and compact size. Not much use when you consider the vast distances travelled in Australia and so it couldn't compete with the likes of the Standard Vanguard Utility, which was bigger and faster.

The engine was four cylinder. Side valve, 63 mm bore, 100 mm stroke, 1277 cc. Compression ratio 6:8. Chrome iron cylinder block - split skirt aluminium alloy pistons. Three main bearings on robust crankshaft with integral balance weights. Precision bearings, four bearing chain driven cam-shaft with harmonic cams. Transmission had three forward speeds and reverse. Syncro-mesh on all forward gears. Gear lever on steering column. Body all pressed steel construction, seasoned hardwood floor. Screen and windows fitted with Triplex toughened glass.

Its been a long time since I meet up with Paul Young previously of Gisborne now of Maldon. He was a keen Overland Whippet owner but now owns this nice 1928 Chevrolet tourer that was restored many years ago by Peter Miller of Gisborne, where he restored several vintage Chevrolets but is now keen on Alvises.

We have read numerous tractor stories submitted by Neil Athorn, this is his Massey Ferguson FE35 tractor in a line up of the model celebrating 70 years of its release.

Austin Atlantics are not a common sight, but as it is they have a keen following with the Austin A90 Atlantic Car Club running a national get together that attracts up to 15 of the model. It was evident this car had participated in the events by the number of rally badges on the board. It is currently owned by Robyn Simons and partner from Echuca.

*Malvern Star auto byke c1948 used on the mail run from Waanyarra to Tarnagulla from 1948-1950. It has had only two owners.*

*1953 Packard Caribbean convertible. Engine choices included: 327 ci (5.4 litre) 185bhp 1953, 'Thunderbolt' 359 ci (5.9L) 212bhp 1954, 352 ci (5.8L) 275 bhp 1955 and 374 ci (6.1L) 310bhp 1956. Transmission either Ultramatic automatic or 3 speed manual with overdrive*

*1940 Cadillac La Salle roadster. 346ci, side valve V8. Rare model only 5989 made. For sale contact Dale 0401229414*

*1938 Oldsmobile sloper coupe one of 150 made by Holden down from Ballarat.*

*Austin A70 Hampshire saloon made from 1948 to 1950*

Most first generation A70s were Hampshire 4-door saloons, though some estate and utilities versions were also produced as the A70 Countryman and A70 Pick-up respectively.

The 2.2 L (2199 cc) straight-4 pushrod engine provided the same power output, at 67bhp (50 kW), as it had when installed in the earlier Austin 16hp.

The new car was nevertheless lighter and published acceleration and top speed figures were correspondingly brisker. Accelerating from 0-80 km/h (50 mph) took 14.5 seconds and the maximum speed was 83.3 mph (134.1 km/h).

The Hampshire used Girling hydraulic brakes which operated on the front wheels only; the rears being mechanical, a setup which was shared with the earlier (GS2) A40 Devon. The A70 Hereford and Devon had hydraulic brakes on all four wheels from 1950

Production of the model ended in 1950 with 35,261 being built. In 1950 the UK price was £648, which included the heater. The Hereford was produced from 1950 to 1954 and 50421 were made, replaced by the A90 Westminster. Both models were assembled in Australia with Australian unique ute and van options.

*A70 Austin Hereford. My father had an identical colour A70 when I was a lad in England. A very comfortable car (photo from the internet)*

# From: Roger Thiedeman on Dinky Toys

Congratulations on the 75th issue of the always informative and entertaining *CMA*, as well as the 75th year of your beautiful Alvis TA21. Well done!

There is a lot of material to unpack and drool over in this issue, which I plan to revisit over the next day or so.

However, during a quick, initial skim-through I paused to read the piece on the Hillman Californian and Alan Toft's delightful account of his visit to New Zealand's gorgeous South Island.

The Californian article reminded me of the car, in the same colours, owned by a family friend in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). He was an executive at a British trading firm in the capital Colombo, and bought the car from an expat' British manager of the same company who had previously served with a branch office in Africa.

Consequently, the Hillman Californian arrived in Ceylon with an international 'EAK' touring plate – for East Africa, Kenya – on the boot lid.

Our friend was known by everyone as 'Bunty', although his given names were Kingsley and another starting with 'A', while his surname also began with the letter 'K'. I was very young at the time, already a car-crazy kid but still with lots to learn, so when I asked him one day what 'EAK' stood for, he mischievously replied that they were his initials, specially put onto the oval plate to 'honour' him!

As for Alan Toft's superbly illustrated report, it was a nostalgic 'tour' of my own erstwhile (sadly) collection of Dinky Toys and Supertoys, reviving happy memories of toy lorries (yes, that's what we in Ceylon called them too, not 'trucks'!), vans, etc.

For example, my Leyland Comet lorry with red cab and chassis fitted with a bright yellow stake-bed body (which I would often unscrew, detach, and then reattach, just for extra play value!). And yes, Alan, your Dinky Comet was indeed the yellow flatbed Cement Wagon with Portland Cement 'Blue Circle' livery.

I had two versions of the Trojan van: one branded 'Chivers Jellies' with dark green body and picture of a 'wobbly' red jelly; the other 'Esso', in bright red.

Another favourite Dinky Toy was that brown-and-green Commer breakdown lorry, with 'Dinky Service' signage, based on the chassis of a late

***Commer breakdown lorry made 1950-53***

1940s/early '50s version of what Rootes Group called the 'Superpoise' model (as seen in one of Alan's photos).

Back then Dinky Toys were our playthings – not 'collectibles' for displaying behind glass with their original boxes – so the string on the Commer's tow-hook winding mechanism, operated with the aid of a 'crank' handle, would often break from repeated use. That would send me on a dive into my mother's sewing kit in search of a replacement length of sturdy thread or cord.

The Austin Loadstar K9 4x4 lorry formed the basis of another prized Dinky Toy, the Army water tanker I received

***1958-1964***

along with other Christmas gifts in 1958. This had a detachable spare wheel tucked into (not attached as such) a recess behind the cab, with the considerable gap between cab and water tank allowing easy removal and replacement of the wheel again, just for something to keep my imagination and fiddly fingers active!

Finally, the grey 'Big Bedford' S-Type seen in Alan's penultimate photo was represented in my Dinky Toys/Supertoys 'fleet' by the Heinz '57 Varieties' Van (yellow 'box' body with opening rear doors on red chassis/cab).

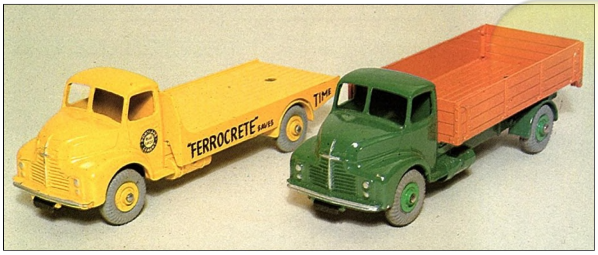
Before wrapping this up to return to the other 'goodies' in CMA #75, I must say that I couldn't agree more with Alan Toft's comment on the Chinese 'MG Motor Since 1924' claim. That is not only "stretching a point", it's downright dishonest and deceitful. ***Roger***

*I have shown illustrations of some of the Dinky Toys Roger owned from the excellent reference book 'The Hornby Companion Series - Dinky Toys & Modelled Miniatures' by Mike & Sue Richardson revised edition 1993. Another good reference book is "Dinky Toys" by Dr Edward Force 1996*

There are over 1,000 Dinky Toys without considering major casting or colour variations and without adding in the number of boxed sets that were produced.

Virtually all Binns Road, Liverpool-made Dinky Toys are visibly marked underneath with at least 'Dinky Toys made in England by Meccano Ltd' except those made in France which say '—made France' or 'Fab en France'

Frank Hornby invented Meccano and began manufacturing it in commercial quantities in 1901. The 'Meccano Magazine' was published to encourage collecting Meccano sets. Hornby tin plate trains were introduced in 1920. To complements the train 'O' gauge scale in 1933 the first set of road vehicles was issued which sold very well. In the 1934 Meccano catalogue they became known as Dinky Toys. ***David***




***Leyland cement wagon and Leyland Comet with hinged tailboard. Made 1952 –1959***

***The Big Bedford van 'Heinz' made 1955-1959. Initially issued with Heinz Bake Beans can on the side, later with a Tomato Ketchup bottle on the side after 1958.***

***Various Trojan vans were introduced from 1951 to 1957, by 1960 they deleted from the range.***

# WENTWORTH TRACTOR TREK TO CELEBRATE 70 YEARS OF THE FLOODS JUNE 2026

***The town of Wentworth has celebrated the largest floods in that area in many ways since it all happened in 1956***

This was the year the second highest flood level was reached. Other years of floods have been in 1870, 1931, 1974 and 2022. As part of those celebrations since the 1990's and every 5 years the owners of Ferguson TEA20 and other makes of tractors go to the town and celebrate tractors roles in saving the town in 1956.

It was the Ferguson TEA20's and lots more machinery that took up the challenge of man, machinery and pure public grit to save the town from being flooded completely.

I have been fortunate enough to be part of the celebrations in 2006, 2011 and 2016. We could not hold the event in 2021 as it was COVID time. After waiting since 2016 our chance came to go to Wentworth again to celebrate the floods this year.

The event was arranged as usual by the Wentworth Shire staff and it was a special one for 70 years (1956 to 2026).

In 1956 with the rain belting down for months and parts of NSW and Victoria being impacted by floods along the Darling and Murray rivers it became a concern that at Wentworth both these rivers, in flood, would merge together and create an inland sea. The waters were rising and rising. It was decided to build a large levy bank around the whole town and at least to save the hospital. They had already done something similar with shovels and horses back in the 1870's.

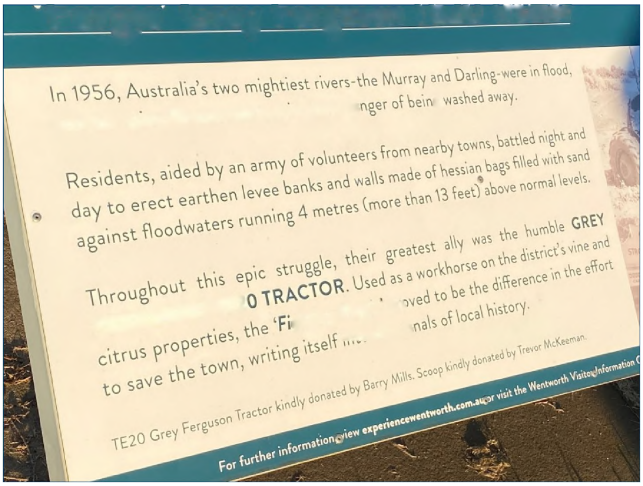
The Ferguson tractors were very common on the fruit blocks around the district and a number had the special Ferguson 3 point linkage scoops.

These tractors were light enough to travel over the top of the newly formed banks and drop the load of soil where it was needed. Some of them slipped off the bank and into the flood water. They were taken to a garage and oils, fuel and water etc drained and renewed before going back into the battle.

The Fergy's were used 24 hours a day on this job to beat the water. Other tractors from the district were also used. Tractors like Fordson, Nuffield, International were used to pull trailers loaded with the sand to a space where the Fergusons could scoop it up and drive along the bank.

The local trucks were used to bring the sand in from the sand dunes and mines in the area. There were a lot of loaders to do some of the work and then teams of locals with shovels where loaders could not be used.

Teams of others made food and refreshments for the workers. Others brought in supplies and took away citrus crops which had been picked using rowing boats.




After weeks of work 24 hours a day the water started to drop and the town could then get back to normal.

One of the Fergy drivers drove his tractor into the front door of the Royal Hotel and ordered a beer to celebrate the end of the long battle.

This year there were eight members from Central Victorian Restoration Group and another 5 other trekkers who come on Central Victorian Treks Group booked in to be part of the event.

I started off at 7:45am Friday for Marong where I met up with Tony, Peter and Craig. We set off from there at 8:30 and at Wedderburn John joined the procession.

We were making good time and arrived in Ouyen at Midday. There we met with Gordon, Geoffro, Bruce, Peter and David who all had travelled on other roads to this point. From there Craig led the eight cars and two trucks towards Mildura.

***The Floods Monument***

We turned just before Red Cliffs and wound our way around to the river and crossed that just Mildura side of Wentworth.

Our first stop was at the Motel to book in and drop off our bags. There we met with Alan and Bradley who had gone up Thursday. Then off to the show grounds which are a little further on the same street. We all unloaded the tractors quickly and then went and collected our rally bags and entry numbers.

The evening meal was at the show grounds in a new pavilion. Very nice indeed and lots of information and fun. Several of our group were lucky enough to get lucky door prizes.

Up early Saturday and there was fog everywhere. Breakfast was at the show grounds at 7:00am. Some of the tractors took a bit of encouraging to start after sitting in the cold and heavy dew. John counted 90 tractors in the lineup. Soon we were off on the trek and the first challenge was to get the 90 tractors over the bridge.

There were many locals out to see the procession. Next stop was at the jail as we waited for the others to join in. Then off again in one long line for morning tea at Pomona. Off again for our lunch stop at Fort Courage Caravan Park.

On the way we were entertained by two helicopters who travelled along some of the way taking films of the event. Lunch was excellent.

Peter's and Geoffro's tractors had both decided not to keep running. Gordon tried his hardest to get the diesel Peter was on going but it would not. Geoffro with Craig's help changed the fuel filter, condenser and checked the points on the other one. It would start and idle but would not rev up. So Bradley and Peter were called upon to do the towing the rest of the way.

We passed some of the local sand dunes and swamp areas. All these places would have been under water in 1956. We were nearly in Wentworth when another Fergy stopped on the side of the road. As I was the last tractor I stopped as well and he said it ran out of petrol. I hooked the tow chain on but a resident in the house we were outside of helped out with some spare fuel.

Going again we were a little behind the others. Shire staff were still on the street corners though to give us a good run around the town. Lots of locals out again to watch the procession.

Back to the show grounds and time to load the two tractors that were not able to run. By the look of the amount of fuel left in the Fergy tank I would estimate we travelled around 70k's for the day.

Our meal Saturday night was at the Royal Hotel. This is the one I mentioned before. It was extremely busy in there and just as well it was booked for us a few months ago. Our meals were excellent.

Sunday morning and breakfast at 7:00am and an update on the day's activities which was a short run into the middle of town and park all the Fergy's in the main street.

There they selected a few tractors for prizes. Allan from our group was lucky enough to win "Fancy Fergie" prize. A $100.00 fuel voucher. Well done.

In total they had 110 Fergy's in the display. There was a large crowd to view all the tractors.

Trips home were uneventful. We all had separate roads to go after a while. Tony, Peter and I were the only ones coming back into Bendigo.

We were all really impressed with the weekend, the organization by the Shire staff was first rate. The meals all very good. The motel excellent and it was good to catch up with fellow Fergy enthusiasts from all over.

I wonder if it will be on again in 5 years? ***Neil***

***One of the breakdowns being towed***

***Ready to move out Saturday morning in the fog***

***Central Vic Trekkers at the event***

# Sporting Austin Sevens in Australia

TONY JOHNS

***Pleased to report that my book project is getting closer. The design is complete, 420 pages, 76000 words and nearly 500 images. Dust jacket and a sneak preview of a couple of sample pages attached. Cheers, Tony***

Tony Johns' great-aunt has much to answer for! It was annual Christmas holiday trips with his parents to Brisbane and constant exposure to her 1931 Austin 7 Tourer — a car she owned throughout her long life — that fired his interest in the marque and in motor sport. Before turning 18, he acquired his first Austin 7, a 1928 'Chummy'.

The Johns family backyard soon looked like a used car lot; some of the Austins came and went over the years, with spare parts smuggled home under the cover of darkness.

He built his first racing car in 1965, followed by a very competitive super-charged Ulster in 1977. He joined the Austin 7 Club in 1960. High office beckoned with committee membership, then elevation to the presidency in 1973 before the inevitable work stint in London.

He was honoured with a life membership in 1977.

The 1981 'UK Raid' was the high point of Tony's competition career before retiring in 1999, after 34 years behind the wheel of his racing Austin.

He won the Colonel Arthur Waite Trophy four times, the Pommie Shield (for the fastest lap in an Austin 7 at Historic Winton) on 13 occasions from the 16 times the trophy was presented.

He spent two decades as Porsche Cars Australia's accountant from 1978, playing a key role in the exponential growth of the Hamilton family's business and helping weather the occasional storm.

In 1990, he established a boutique bookshop importing specialised motoring books to Australia. The Johns coach house was both a subtle retail outlet and a convivial place for Australian enthusiasts to gather on Saturday afternoons for over 25 years.

In more recent years, Tony and his wife Christine have participated in many Bentley Drivers Club rallies, both in Australia and overseas, in their 1924 Bentley 3-litre. Tony was a co-author of *Vintage Bentleys in Australia*, a limited edition book published in 2019, and now sold out.

This century-old story has finally been told. Austin 7s have been around since 1922, first arriving in Australia in 1923. This book relates compellingly their important role in the history of Australian motor sport from the early days of amateur owner-drivers competing in trials and hill climbs to Captain Arthur Waite's victory in the first Australian Grand Prix held at Phillip Island in March 1928 aboard a factory supercharged Austin 7 ahead of a classy field including Bugatti, Alvis, Amilcar and other sporting cars.

Drawing from historical documents, including original programs, the pre-war era is well researched and has a place in the bookshelves of Austin 7 enthusiasts, motor racing readers and automotive historians. The book is now at the printers and due to be released in November, the A7Club is taking orders.

***A few sample pages from Tony's up and coming A7 book***

Tom Davey behind the wheel with Bill Scott in the passenger seat at the RACV Heidelberg Hill Climb, 15 August 1925. Davey and Scott would often compete at the same event driving Scott's Standard Sports. They both won their respective classes. Note the Austin is still fitted with the original mudguards. *Bill Sheehan Collection.*

The trial was well reported in the daily press, *Herald* motoring correspondent M Miller wrote:

With WH Scott's reappearance, the team of Austins is again complete. His efforts are lauded on all sides. By working nearly all night on the car at Bega, which town he limped into after a precarious run from Braidwood, the damaged frame cross-member was repaired in a temporary but serviceable manner at Eden last night.[10]

Scott lost 171.5 dependability points en route in total; all but four were related to time lost repairing the damaged cross-member. All three Austins completed the trial.

## Corporate Manoeuvres

The Baby Austin was playing a transformative role in making car ownership possible for middle-class families, bridging the gap between aspiration and reality in both the UK and its various export markets.

Herbert Austin was aggressively growing his company, expanding the Longbridge plant to meet soaring demand, marketing and via the strategic expansion of dealership networks to ensure the Seven was accessible to urban and rural driver markets. An important change to the Austin agency in Victoria/Riverina, NSW, resulted from a meeting held at the Cocoa Tree Club in London in 1926 to do just that.

There, Sir Herbert Austin introduced Sydney Cheney (SA Cheney) to Ralph Falkiner, the owner of Austin

Heading up the hill on the exit out of Lanes MG Corner, Henry Short leads John Bowring, Doc Grosvenor, Jim Orr and Murray Lewis. This was the order in which they finished the race. *David Lowe photo. John Bowring Collection.*

Austin 7 Formula race, Phillip Island, 26 December 1958. There was some confusion as to who was driving the Ulster with factory bodywork and full mudguards, although Wilson may have been the driver. Behind him Neil Johannesen and Mick Bellair round Lanes MG corner. *David Lowe photo. John Bowring Collection.*

# Bits & Pieces

***More on the Hillman Californian***

The Californian was an attractive, stylish vehicle described reasonably accurately by its manufacturers in their sales brochure as .....
"Style-setter for the future ... the high performance Californian. Smart and fashionable, in attractive dual colour schemes – the sunny Californian! Maximum visibility, maximum light. Windows up, it's a draught proof saloon. Windows down – almost an open car! Wrap around window, narrow pillars and wide Opticurve windscreen are smart and practical. Light, bright interior, wide range vision – parking and reversing made easier!" The Californian was originally offered with a side valve motor which was replaced with the overhead valve unit in 1955, presumably leading to the claim of 'high performance'.
The sales brochure warms to the subject when discussing this aspect of the car's specification. "Hillman steps up the power – and pulls way out in front! Here are the three new luxury models ... with the new ohv engine. Thrill to the effortless flow of concentrated power ... feel the easy surge of acceleration ... enjoy faster cruising speeds, higher top speeds up to 75 mph ... with quiet smooth operation. The new ohv engine develops 16% more power, is sparing on fuel ... costs no more to run. Road holding and stability is greatly improved and high efficiency brakes give complete control at all speeds."

## The Moxley Murders

On 5 April 1932, Dorothy Denzel, aged 21, and her boyfriend Frank Wilkinson, 25, were out for the evening in Wilkinson's red Alvis 12/50.

They were sitting on a rug in a secluded spot at Strathfield, a semi-rural area 9 miles west of Sydney.

William "Mad Dog" Moxley confronted the couple and demanded money. They resisted, Moxley knocked Wilkinson unconscious, forced Denzel into the passenger seat of the Alvis and manhandled Wilkinson into the dickie seat.

Moxley drove the 12/50 24 miles to an abandoned house at Moorebank, then to a deserted place near the Holsworthy Army Reserve. Avoiding the more gruesome details, Moxley raped Denzel, murdered them both and buried their bodies in shallow graves. He was arrested 15 days later in French's Forest in the northern beaches area of Sydney.

At his trial, he pleaded insanity, claiming that metal lodged in his brain from an old wound had impaired his mental capacity. His plea was rejected and Moxley was hanged at Long Bay Jail on 17 August 1932 – exactly 4 months after the murders – swift justice in those days.

## Out to Lunch with the Petrol Sniffers

As reported in previous issues I go to lunch with a group of car enthusiasts called the Petrol Sniffers at the One Tree Hotel in Spring Gully at 12am on the first Thursday of the month. Anyone interested in old cars are invited. A Ballarat group have a lunch get together should anyone in that area be interested. Also there is a coffee group in Castlemaine who meet on a regular basis.

Usually a few old cars attend. In August Alan Thomson brought along his TVR. Jon Mandley came down from Ballarat in his 2013 Morgan which features a Zetec Ford engine.

I couldn't help myself but ask Brendon Dillon for brief ride in his mighty Minerva. He happily obliged. Having no doors it was a matter of climbing into the spacious interior and be impressed by the long bonnet that houses the 6.3 litre sleeve valve engine. It rumbles along itching to open up and demonstrate its mighty speed potential, which of course was not possible in an outer suburb of Bendigo. I would not like to hazard a guess on its fuel economy at any speed. You really have to admire Brendon for piecing together this vintage monster and delighting observers who appreciate classic machinery.

## Bits & Pieces

**Saturday 14th November 2026**

Not competing? Come along anyway to see an elegant, iconic, eclectic range of race vehicles—many of which you would not have seen up close before. While you're there watching the cars and bikes flying up the hill, enjoy a coffee and lunch at the Food Court, or browse the trade stalls. Bring a chair and claim your prime spot on the fence. *There will also be a Period Dress Competition*
Spectators $10 each, or $20 a car load

Trevor Ryan [Emailto:tctr50@outlook.com]