

CHAIRMAN'S RAMBLINGS

Apologies to those of you who attended Oulton Park and found an unoccupied space in our allotted area but I really did try to get there, and even set my alarm clock for some unholy hour so that I could have my old Bentley join you. Unfortunately the old girl had other ideas and her cylinder head gasket, which is nearly 70 years old, decided to let me down within 20 minutes of landing and I was left to return home courtesy of the RAC on a very smart low-loader.

The old girl is still in the garage with about half of the parts removed before I can ascertain the full extent of the repairs necessary to return her to full oomph since I have been somewhat distracted by an event I have been booked into for over 6 months - The 59th Annual Alvis International Weekend.

Since I bought my Alvis TE 21 Saloon from Malcolm Kindell, the Team Leader of their Midland Section, much work has been necessary. Although the chassis is in incredible condition, as are the doors, bonnet and boot lid (all aluminium) this could not be said for the rest of the bodywork and I engaged the help of Jordan F1 to get it sorted. Chrome plating, retrim and attention to the Webasto sun roof are still in the pipeline but I hope to have her ready for November.



1950 Alvis TB14 Tourer graces the front lawn at the hotel

Many of you will already know the Alvis story but for those of you who are a bit vague I will briefly enlighten you. Alvis started at the end of the Great War when Thomas George John, who was probably secretly involved in submarine design before the war, became chief engineer and works manager of Siddeley Diesy Motor Company in Coventry in 1915 and went on to found his own company taking over Holley Carburettors in 1919. In 1920 he purchased G.P.H. Freville's engine designed in 1918 along with the name Alvis which de Freville had registered as his trademark on his aluminium pistons and castings. The first car produced was the side valve 10/30 four cylinder 1460 cc at £600. The last car produced before Alvis merged with Rover producing the TF and car production ceased (1967) was the Alvis TE 21 Series 111 at £2744. Over their 45 years of car production Alvis were never really into volume and produced a total of less than 17,000 cars of which mine is one of their last dozen.

Well over 200 of their surviving cars arrived at the 3 day event down near Oxford and apart from being asked to assist in judging the fashion side of the concours event I took in various seminars on automotive engineering, enjoyed a run out round the beautiful little Oxfordshire villages, a boat trip down the Thames to Oxford, a look round the Ashmolean Museum after the obligatory pint in the Turf Tavern, and needless to say I had a most enjoyable three days with the weather being so kind to us surrounded by all these beautiful motors in the massive grounds of the Milton Hill Hotel. They also hosted a BBQ, Jazz Band, Falconry Demonstration and aerial display by both Tiger and Gypsy Moths all sponsored by various companies with car connections. I was fortunate that I was on the same table at the Gala Dinner as Malcolm who made most of the speeches and

just as with our Club I met lots of interesting car enthusiasts who had their own tales to tell. Why is it that old car owners seem such interesting people? All in all not a bad introduction to the Alvis Owners Club and I just hope we can all try to make our new members feel as welcome.



The Head of the River - well known watering hole in Oxford

With over 3 dozen different models of Alvis they cater for virtually any "type" of classic car enthusiast. In 1924 they were the only team to finish the 200 mile race and took 39 class records in one day up to a distance of 700 miles. They had many "firsts" including the first manufacturer to put a front wheel drive car into production. It is not an "exclusive" club to become involved in and in their newsletter this month (the "pinkun") you could buy a 1949 TA14 saloon for less than £3000!

Out of 200 photographs I took I have shown just 4 to give a flavour of Alvis.



A smart line up of Alvis TD and TE 21's



Aerial display reminds us that Alvis also produced aero engines

Happy motoring,

Tony.