

Monthly Newsletter February 2021

So here we go again. Late again, but I've worked out why, I'm retired so one day is the same as another added to which the "lockdown effect" does the same, so a double whammy I don't stand a chance! It's been a month of not much happening in competitive form anyway. The committee had a zoom meeting on the 28th of January which was well attended, most of the conversation centred around the membership. A £10.00 fee will cover the member and spouse/partner with 2 cards issued, an annual membership fee for passengers will be £1.00, under 17's free of charge. It's a bargain so head on to the club website (LNCMC.co.uk) on the home page look for event entry/membership, click on membership and you're away, fill in your details, pay by Paypal (you do not need to have a Paypal account) and it's all done in a couple of minutes. Joe Caudle will then send your new cards, couldn't be simpler.

Whilst on the subject of Capitano Caudle he is still waiting for you people to send him anything that could be of interest for inclusion in the proposed club book. It can be a slightly unusual motorcycle or car that you do or have trialed, a story of why you didn't make it to the finish or like me not even to the start (on more than one occasion). This could be your chance of 15 minutes of fame. joe.caudle@btinternet.com

In addition to the list of things that are either postponed or cancelled, the club AGM will happen sometime, but we're not quite sure when, but once we know so will you. This time of year our Nigel would normally be busy arranging for trophies to be engraved, and frantically polishing those that are ready, not this year though, another non event I'm afraid, there were just too few events last year to celebrate.

A few of us took part in the MSUK Webinar on the evening of the 9th of this month. The talk was basically about promoting motor clubs on social media to gain extra membership and to broaden the scope of those people who might find motorsport of interest even if only from a spectator perspective. Full credit to MSUK, social media is a tool that is being used more and more and as that rather large supermarket says, "every little helps"

For those of you who may not be aware our club has its own Facebook page, even this newsletter will end up on there, give it a visit, even tick the “like” icon or leave a comment and become a member of the group.

I will now hand you over to our club President Robin Moore

Alvis and the other lady in my life Part 9

My ownership of KDL 892, was a very special period of my lifetime involvement with motorcars, enriched by the friendship of so many other Alvis enthusiasts whom we met along the way. This series of articles covering my involvement with the marque is only part of the story. There is no longer an Alvis in my stable, and although it is 55 years since the last Alvis made rolled off the production line, enthusiasm lives on, and owners are well catered for in regard to maintaining the breed.

When the Alvis Co, ceased car production it was not the end of the story, more like a new beginning. The company perceived there would be a market for spares, maintenance and restoration facilities, and that the demand would be significant. Alvis wisely made the move to form a new company in order to accommodate and provide a reliable and continuing service for their products, and this was done without delay. This venture, to be named Red Triangle Services was set up in Kenilworth just south of Coventry. Management and the workforce from the car division transferred to this new facility, with David Michie being in overall charge. Therefore there was no vacuum created and no overall change, - to all intents and purposes it was business as usual regarding spares, which the parent company continued to manufacture and supply. Servicing, restoration and sales were things that naturally evolved over time as this new enterprise developed. In recent times this has led to an expansion of the premises, with a large showroom added to display a good selection of Alvis cars for sale.

I have of course not seen these later developments, but I once did visit Kenilworth in the 1970's when I was using my 3 litre for general use, and I remember receiving a very cordial reception and meeting a number of the very experienced workforce. The spares despatch department I recollect, was extremely busy - a mine of industry, and it opened my eyes to see and learn

*how this side of things are done, , to ensure customer satisfaction.
It is a comforting thought for the Alvis enthusiast to know that this excellent service continues in the present age, when so often it is found to be lacking. I will conclude this potted history of my involvement with “the other lady in my life” in the next newsletter.*

RHTM to be continued



The Conundrum.

When I started this what is sometimes looked at as a strange kind of sport things were very simple compared to today. Once you found your chosen vehicle to get splattered in mud, in my case a car, you did whatever modifications and tweaks as you thought necessary, joined your local club and entered an event. The fact that you didn't have a passenger/navigator was a minor issue, you collared anyone who fancied a bit of motorsport fun and that was it, off you went.

No more, it just ain't that simple now. First you have to work out what class your chosen fun jalopy can run in, next there's the tyres jungle, then make sure it complies with all the regs, including appearance etc. Now that you've done that it's join a club time and get yourself a competition licence, in many

cases the competition licence is free but you still have to have it. Once you have done this you think you are ready for that big event, all you need now is a passenger. Next hurdle : Does your passenger hold a competition licence and relevant club membership? If not they will have to do so, no longer can you opt to changing your lucky accompanying victim at the last moment it all has to be planned well ahead of the event.

These days my own competing activities tend to be with the MCC and the long distance events, so I have been a long standing MCC member, box 1 ticked; I have a comp licence box 2 ticked; but we now come to the rather tricky passenger situation. I have up to four different possible passengers to call on so you would think what's the problem. Well one of them has a competition licence but not a MCC member, one of them is a MCC member but no competition licence as he doesn't normally do four wheel trialling. The other two passengers have neither licence nor membership, so in order to what is basically do me a favour they have to get the said documents, one of these two people has no interest in motorsport whatsoever, purely doing me a favour. Ok I am not unique in this situation there must be quite a few people out there in the same boat (or even car). There is also as I said earlier no last minute changes, if your passenger's wife decides to have her baby two weeks early , or their work shift pattern has been changed, tough, you will not be going on your chosen jolly no matter how well the vehicle is prepared, or how many flasks you have filled.

Yes all the organising committees and official organisations have very good reasons as to why it's like it is (honest) but for the grass roots competitor it can take some of the fun out of entering, and spontaneity has gone right out of the window. Be organised !

On a lighter note, a little while ago I decided to sell one of my scooters, a chap from Ilminster arranged to come down and view the dream machine, arriving at my place around 10.30 am. Within an hour he was happy with what he saw and the deal was done, scoot loaded into his van and off he trundled. I went indoors, made a cup of coffee and went on line to the DVLA and filled in the necessary change of ownership form, that's it I am no longer the registered

keeper. Around 3.45pm of the same afternoon I get a text message from the new owner, on arriving home he had also gone online and registered himself as the new keeper, insured the bike, taxed it and had been out for a ride and commented on that he was pleased with the performance (performance in regard of this particular machine is not a term I would have used), all done in the space of about 5 hours.

In my younger days I lived in Plymouth and when it was time to either tax your vehicle or perhaps register yourself as the new owner my heart would sink. This meant I had to make the journey to the Tax office at Duke St, Devonport. The office was actually upstairs of quite a large , slightly antiquated building , if you timed your visit badly (on a Saturday morning at the beginning of the month) the queue for this theoretically simple experience could start outside of the building. Somehow when watching a black and white film, set during the Cold War my mind drifts back to this building! Slowly you would make your way up the grubby, cigarette smoke filled stairs, often freezing cold and eventually into what in some ways looked like a great hall. Here you were greeted with a full width counter at which the staff would sit behind with an imposing set of railings running down the middle just to keep public and tax office employees separate. To be fair the staff were usually quite helpful, they just wanted to get you out of the way and to see the end of the queue.

The modern equivalent of this is definitely preferable, although I expect some people might argue.

All for this month.

J.T. please send contributions to billjan299@gmail.com