

Monthly Newsletter June 2020

“Flaming June” has certainly been living up to its name with high temperatures and a real shortage of rain, for those lucky enough to have gardens to enjoy the “lockdown” has possibly been easier to endure than if it had rained every day. With the gradual easing of the lockdown there has been much talk by Motorsports UK and the AMCA as to how things will proceed in order for us all to get back to doing things in a sort of “almost” normal fashion.

Make no mistake about it, it is going to be a real challenge, once you think of getting groups of people together it becomes a big headache for the organisers on top of the social distancing issues there are challenges like signing on, scrutineering, provision of toilets, maybe even self certifying that you are free of the virus, the list is endless, then of course who is going to take responsibility for this if something goes wrong ?

A lot of the issues could be overcome by doing things electronically, whilst a lot of clubs now do on line entries this could be extended to certifying that your vehicle is compliant with all the requirements to enter your chosen event, this would certainly sort the scrutineering issue, things like diff testing could possibly be done, although if you declare your diff to be compliant that shouldn't be a problem. Motorcyclists on solo machines would at least not have to worry about the distancing from ones passenger as in cars and outfits, perhaps we could all wear face masks, full face crash helmets with the visor fixed down ! It will be interesting to see how things go at Silverstone for the British Grand Prix, no passenger to consider so that's a start.

My apologies to Robin in last month's offering when I wrongly named the Horstmann car as a Hurstmann. One letter can make quite a difference, I recently saw a car advertised that might be suitable for trialling, one comment was that it would need a bugger engine, I pondered on this for a few seconds and then realised it should have been a “bigger” engine, but it did make me chuckle.

So now it's over to our Club President Robin Moore.

Historical notes – on hold. For the last eight months my contributions to the newsletter have been centred to the centenary of our club and its history, and many interesting facts have come to light. The research is on-going and the story incomplete. The present “lockdown” has presented problems of personal contact with some of those I have contacted for help in verifying facts. So for the moment I am having to put the final instalments on hold. John Turner has kindly agreed that for the time being my contributions will be of another subject.

Alvis, and the other lady in my life.

This year is also the centenary of the Alvis Company and plans were well advanced for a major celebration to commemorate the marque and the company's engineering achievements. Like us, this is now on hold, and these milestones will have to be celebrated at a later date.

The Alvis car and engineering history is well documented, and their reputation for quality in all spheres of testing, in advanced design and manufacture of everything from motor cars to aviation engines and armoured fighting vehicles for the M.O.D., is without question of the highest order. During World War 2 Alvis produced major components for the Rolls Royce Merlin aero engines, also being involved with overhaul and testing of these units.

Car production ranged from 1920 to 1967 with the last car completed on the 29th of September of that year. My Alvis story starts in the 1950's when a young couple came to Trefrew, Camelford on holiday, driving their 12/50 Alvis. I expressed an interest in the car and it wasn't long before I was offered a demonstration run: The performance and roadholding impressed me, and has remained with me ever since. At around the same time another holiday maker had ventured to Cornwall driving an older model, the 10/50 with its side valve engine. Unfortunately, a big end had given up the challenge when reaching Camelford and the car had been left with my local garage to get it fixed, whilst the owner made other on-going arrangements, planning to collect the car, duly sorted, and return home the following week. I had a good look at this early model Alvis whilst it was at the garage, and I could appreciate the quality of this vintage car and its general appeal.

It was not until 1966, some ten years later that I was to purchase my first Alvis, a post war 1954 3 litre. At the time it was considered , that when a motor car was 12 years old and a model of merit, its market value would be at its lowest, after which it would slowly rise in value, and this may have come into the equation at the time, but from memory it was more by co-incidence that I made the purchase of KDL 892 , an Isle of Wight registration. I had read the road test reports of this model, and the style of the coachwork appealed. To my eye it looks right from any angle, so when I spied this motor for sale locally I was tempted to take the plunge, and thus entered another phase of my motoring life.

RHTM to be continued.

Now it's over to our chairman Pete Cooper

I hope you are all safe and well, the Lockdown has certainly decimated our beloved sport. I expect the lockdown is beginning to be a real bore as all those jobs around the garden have now been completed, the house painted three times and finally you can get the car in the garage. I've been busy working for Cornwall Council at Launceston and Saltash recycling centres, at least I am getting some of my council tax back !!

Motorsport UK along with the AMCA seem to have woken up. MSUK intends to start issuing permits soon. Unfortunately some of the paperwork they are proposing is way over the top, the club will need to employ a document manager to keep on top of it.

I hope to finish my work next week and then hopefully we will be able to have a virtual committee meeting via Zoom and discuss how we can proceed in the hope to get our sport back on track, so any committee members reading this can start thinking of any items they wish to discuss. The two main events needing discussion will be the David Ayers sporting trial in September and the Tamar Classic road trial in October. With regard to the David Ayers our first concern is that the land owner is happy for us to return, the land owner David Langley has without question been extremely supportive of our club but these are difficult times and nothing should be taken for granted, assuming he is happy we then need to contact the majority of competitors for their thoughts, we certainly won't be able to provide food as in past years.

The Tamar Trial will have plenty of problems, as the regulations stand at the moment there are several issues to consider:- passengers can only be from the same family or household; will marshals over the age of 70 want to travel; can buildings be used for signing on and off and will we be able to control the spectating public on the sections ?? We may also may be restricted to a "clubman " event.

Torbay MC are hoping to run a few events with a hill climb at Wiscombe but they will all be clubman events. In the foreseeable future I do not see any chance of meetings other than that by Zoom, this will be the way forward. As our governing bodies send us more details of the new regulations we will endeavour to get them out to all committee members.

Please all stay safe and enjoy any good weather.

Best regards to all.

Pete

If anyone wishes to contribute ideas and suggestions as to how the club can move forward with its future events under the Covid-19 restrictions we would be very pleased to hear from you.

At the time of writing this I should technically have made a two wheel excursion to Belgium for the Euro Lambretta weekend along with several thousand like minded enthusiasts/ lunatics but hey ho maybe next year. I did manage to take the Dellow out for a short run last week, but alas the engine despite having had a more than modest amount of tlc is still not completely happy, so it was back under the dust sheets for the time being (car not me). Fortunately the other engine should be back in a couple of weeks, I can then do the rebuild and engine swap, it's a pity Google don't do an app for it, it would save all that tiresome spannering, but then I wouldn't be able to hide away in the garage for hours on end, I'd miss all that oil and grease under the finger nails too.

All for this month

J.T. Please, Please send contributions to billjan299@gmail.com