



# Monkey Business

## No 166 - August 2025



*Written By Chris Taylor*

*Bunged Together By Simon Griffiths*

Another great meeting with 16 joyous friends gathering to chat on all subjects. I had received apologies from Elizabeth Bennet, Eric & Denise and Shaun Donnelly,

I was in Norweb based trips down memory lane with John Woodcock and Barbara Holmes, who also worked for the electricity board at the same time I was there and many mutual acquaintances and experiences were spoken of.

Three Alvis cars graced the car park namely Peter Lakins' Firefly tourer, Tim & Jayne Browns TD 21 and Charles and Judith Van-Ingens' TD21 DHC which was spotted by D O'S

and photographed in Kyle recently, that car really gets around.

One disappointment that I know of was Simon and Melissa were really hoping to be in BVC 46 but not to be for July as lighting problems had surfaced which prevented the car coming out to play this month BUT there is always hope for August just watch this space! Norman and Claire are stalwarts of the meeting and didn't disappoint by adding to the conversation and overall gaiety. Duncan Mather was our only Staffordshire raider this month and we had a pretty in-depth conversation about our respective restoration projects; and all the things we are going to do when our Alvis steeds are ready for action.

I have received a text from Shaun Donnelly to say he is receiving medical treatment and was hoping to be with us but sadly did not make it on the night - we all wish you well Shaun and look forward to seeing you when you are recovered. It is always good to see a vintage Alvis owner in our midst and Mike Robinson came along a little later. Mike has owned many Alvis cars from all periods and has a wealth of knowledge and memories he is always willing to share.

Mike Fitkin arrived and we were able to put the finishing touches to the AOC stand at Tatton Park, of which more later. Last but by no means least was Dave Culshaw where he and I had a fascinating discussion regarding some research he has been doing in the Shenton Archive donated to David by Nina on Ernest's passing. This piece of research, in particular, was Ernest's connection with the Lotus/Turner racing car; for which Ernest was the mechanic. It seems the engine blocks for the car were cast in Aluminium at Lea-Francis and high domed pistons out of a David Brown DB2 were fitted. This information has placed another piece in my jigsaw of bits gathered from all corners, which just happens to be one of the pistons out of the Lotus/Turner car

with a valve head deeply buried in it which I was given by Nina and until now I had no idea of its significance or history, as David himself puts it "Research remains fun" !

So, on to the activities for the month; which has been a busy one. One week later saw us gathering at the Coach and Horses at Fenny







Bentley for Eric's meeting which is the continuance of Ernest Shenton's Caverswall meeting, where Philip Wood parked his Silver Eagle next to young Stephen Wallbank who had arrived in an Albion lorry with a 'tent' on the back. This was the first leg in what I can only describe as an Epic test of endurance and fortitude on Stephen's behalf, in that he was taking the lorry to the Albion reunion in Biggar (Scotland) near where the Albion factory was located. Bearing in mind the lorry doesn't do more than 40 MPH and therefore is prohibited from motorways so has to use all the old roads which are now well hidden or with restricted access, like the A6 through Manchester city centre (which has been pedestrianised for I bet about 25 years or more) so a through route on the old roads simply does not exist. However he made it to the show via Shap bank and back, calling on me in Disley on his return journey for a meal and then home, having completed 633 miles using 193 litres of diesel, at a cost of £277.31, which is an average of 14.7 MPG. All this, in a rattley coachbuilt cab, sat next to a clanking engine, with a gearbox that doesn't take kindly to being interfered with and steering that would make an SB speed 20 in a supermarket carpark seem power assisted is a feat worthy of mention.

On the 31st of the month the Alvis Archive Trust was honoured to be invited by Johnathon Turner to form an important part of the Bowcliffe day shared, for the second year, with The National Motor Museum at Beaulieu. Our involvement was to be invited to give a presentation about the Alvis cars in the ballroom, where we followed a fascinating talk from the current Lord Montague about how the museum came to exist and its future development plans to keep the museum relevant for the 21st century. We also were given the unique privilege of making a display of cars outside the main front door of the Hall.

My final excursion of the month saw me driving a Firebird into the Tatton Park AOC stand, nothing remarkable there I'm sure you are thinking as I have been doing that for the past 39 years in GS; except that I wasn't in GS but BVC as Simon had kindly offered me the tiller to take her into the show. Something I did with glee and I can report BVC is settling down very well - the car steers nicely, the suspension is pliable and the brakes are getting better as they bed in. At the Autojumble I made some wonderful purchases, at rock bottom prices, but sadly that was not to be for Huw Morris

Jones who had joined us, with Alison, from Hull in the hope of finding some shiny bits for his SD 20 project - but this was my year not Huw's!



On the Saturday stand was Elizabeth Bennett with her prototype 3 litre, Mike Fitkin with his TD 21, Simon Griffiths with Firebird C&E DHC, BVC 46, (together with a lovely lunch provided by Melissa) and finally the Gaskell brothers in the family TD 21. I cannot give any details about the Sunday participants as, with no eligible car, I didn't attend but, hopefully, this will be rectified for 2026 as work on my now fully road legal AYF speed 20 VDP 2 door saloon continues.



The latest discovery was the steering box mounted lighting drum switch when moved from pass lamps to P100's kept the pass lamps it. So, off came the drum switch to be fully refurbished, only to find, at some time in the car's history (pre 1962), the drum had been swapped for the one found on an SA 20 and the continued power to the pass lamps was

in fact the power required to operate the dipping solenoid which the SB does not have; another two days gone sorting that out!

So it is now time to sign off reminding you of the next meeting at the Alderley Edge Hotel & Restaurant on the first Tuesday of August which falls on the 2nd of the month from 7..00 PM postcode SK9 7BJ

I am working in Rugby that day so will be arriving a little later than usual so please start without me!

## ***And now a quick message from our Roving Reporter Dean O'Spyder***

Out and about as usual and holidaying in Scotland I was less surprised to see the Van Ingen's in their lovely TD21 in Bute than I would have been to see Simon's Firebird - ***bloomin' cheek; you wait 'til next year! B'er T'er***



I also happened to be in Disley and, seeing the garage door on Taylor Towers was up, managed to snap this pic of the sp20 with the bumper in place - maybe it'll be in Scotland next year too!



