Monkey Business
No 180 October 2026

Written By Duncan Mather

Bunged Together By Simon Griffiths

Wow! a busy meeting and an even busier busy month. On arrival at the Bulls Head I enquired where Tari had kindly arranged for us to meet and was shown to the snug by the front door where we held our first meeting at the pub. However they were concerned that it might not be big enough, based on the numbers we usually are, as it can only comfortably seat 10. By then a few friends had arrived and had sat in the garden room, so they decided to arrange the tables to our usual setting; which as it turned out was a good thing as we were 19 once fully assembled.

Having now gained sufficient confidence in AYF following the Netherlands trip and with the failure of the fuel changeover tap washer sorted, I took the car to the meeting where it was joined by Mick and Gez in Tick. Whilst there was some rain it wasn't much and every inch driven was a joy as the car is settling well. It struck me seeing the two Alvis parked together for the first time that AYF 93 and JUR 934 both have 93 in their numbers and that during this season of 2026 both cars have had a foreign adventure!

The journey home, however, showed me that urgent work aligning and focussing the lamps on AYF is a job I hadn't thought of but must be attended to for the dark nights have now arrived. They will be needed as I hope we will have some good weather through winter, notwithstanding whilst sitting here typing this with 50MPH winds rattling the rafters maybe a portent of things to come. The car park was graced with a third Alvis car and no prizes for guessing it was Charles and Judith Van-Ingens TD21. I do think the two photos showing the cars in the light of the car park illumination bespangled with the rain makes them of Christmas card quality.





However, back in the room I heard a discussion between Duncan Mather and Judith about acoustics, as applied to musicians and Duncan even had a book about the subject. I has a very quick browse at the book and it was immediately apparent it was above my paygrade, although I did add a little bit to the discussion about a special lock that was invented specifically for use on a pianoforte, with all its parts spring loaded "so as not to compete with the artist" and at that I shut up! but never let it be said that we don't cover an amazing breadth of topics.

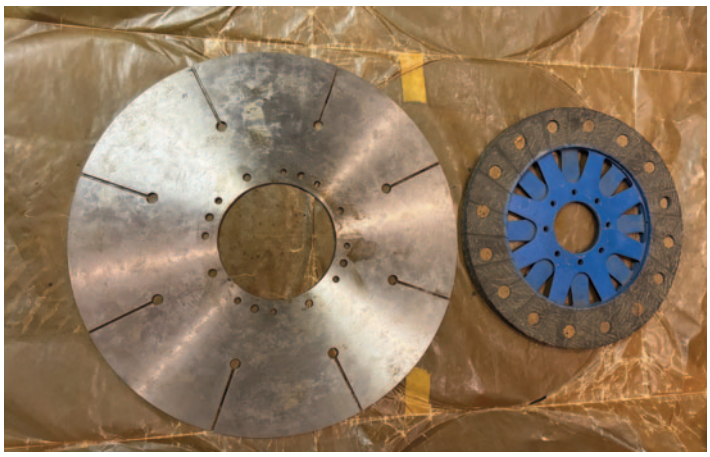


Most Alvis cars are now sensibly away for the winter season as salted roads are a killer to our cars, but nevertheless we still find things to talk about regarding our winter improvement projects. AYF's clutch is mine together with a car lift so WJ can come home as the next in line for attention.

Andrew and Barbara Myers and two dogs this month were with us and Andrew is progressing with his re-awakening of a stored Derby Bentley he has now removed one of the Yale locks from the



nearside door and I have been able to cut him a key on a genuine period Yale blank, sadly the key does not operate either the boot or the dashboard switch box so I am expecting he will have the boot lock off for this month and I can then investigate why they are not a set. With so many people it is difficult for me to be part of all conversations but I saw John Woodcock and Barbara Holmes were busy chatting with Eric and Denise and Claire and Norman. Of course, all this was interrupted with our meals and Peter Lakin and I shared a bottle of wine and discussed his clutch



Rolls Royce clutch on the left and what Chris thought was a large Alvis clutch on the right!

job on the Rolls P2. I have drilled it for him to suit the stud pattern on his car, which differs from the only plate now available. Even here it is not as simple as just drilling 8 new holes in a different place as I had been issued with an original drawing which called for the holes to be 0.245 inches + 0.001 inch tolerance. It was clear that the bolt is arranged to be an interference fit, so eliminating any journal slippage. Which is all very well but the cost of having a drill made would be prohibitive, however a 3.2mm carbide drill was purchased which is 0.244 inches and, as most drills do, drilled slightly oversize; this has given me a perfect fit to a sample diameter I have turned to size so I am very pleased for Peter that has turned out so well, I only hope I have as much success with AYF's horrible clutch.

To round off the meeting it was good to welcome Johnathan Reeves and David Combey as I don't think we've seen them since Deanwater days. I regret to report there is no progress on the Reeves family TA 14 and David still does not yet own an Alvis.

Other work this month saw me at Ian Francis's home as a slight weep was occurring from the top hose connection from head to radiator header on Ian's beautiful SA 20 C&E tourer. So it was bonnet and radiator off (not a one man job) then the radiator was upturned and stabilized by to timber supports - one from each of Ian's very conveniently spaced vices- and with some Grade D plumbers' metal, 2 blowlamps and my Uncle's massive solid copper soldering iron the job was made watertight once more.

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 3rd of November where we will be in the garden room at the Bulls Head, Mottram St Andrew SK10 4QH from say 6.00pm on, we will start a bit earlier through the winter months.

Please may I remind you that at this month's November meeting I wish to hand in our numbers, payment and menu choices for the Christmas do on December 1st at the Bulls Head, the menu will accompany this report for anyone who has lost it.



Drummers' Christmas at the Bull's Head

Two courses £34.95 - Three courses £39.95

Starters

Shredded brisket, thyme and roast shallot croquette, cauliflower cheese purée, red wine jus (gf)

Celeriac, cider and caramelised apple soup, crispy sage, chive oil, seeded roll (v, gfa)

King prawn cocktail, buttered seeded bread (gfa)

Pheasant, mallard and pigeon terrine, clementine and cranberry chutney (gfa)

Bell pepper and tomato posset, black olive crumble, basil crematta, toasted focaccia (vg)

Crispy halloumi, pomegranate, orange and mint, Greek yogurt, hot honey (v, gf)

Mains

Roast turkey, sage, onion and bacon roulade, duck fat roast potatoes, gravy, cranberry sauce (gf)

Parsnip, butternut squash and spinach Wellington, fondant potatoes, cranberry jus (vg)

Roast porchetta (slow-roasted belly), ham hock and grain mustard fritter, Sangiovese sauce

Venison and beef shin pie, horseradish mash, bourguignonne sauce (gf)

Pan-fried salmon fillet, crushed caper and lemon potato cake, shellfish bisque sauce (gf)

Wild mushroom, goat's cheese, black garlic and tarragon Kiev, celeriac purée, Sherry jus (vg, gf)

8oz dry-aged sirloin steak, peppercorn sauce, portobello mushroom, tomato, truffle and Parmesan fries (supplement £8.50) (gf)

Puddings

Christmas pudding, brandy sauce (v, gf)

Iced chocolate fudge delice, honeycomb, salted caramel sauce (v, gf)

Cherry pie, Kirsch-soaked cherries, vanilla crème anglaise (v, gf)

Clementine, Cointreau and gingerbread trifle (vg, gf)

White chocolate and cranberry cheesecake, dark chocolate sauce (v, gf)

Selection of British and French cheeses, spiced apricot chutney, biscuits (instead of dessert £5pp extra) (gfa)

This menu runs alongside our Daily Menu. Please note there may be alterations to some dishes.
v - vegetarian, vg - vegan, gf- gluten free, gfa - gluten free adaptable.