

OXR 1 by Robin Bendall (a file of correspondence and photographs can be found at the Alvis Archive Trust office at Bowcliffe Hall)



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We are most grateful to Her Majesty The Queen for granting the loan of HRH Duke of Edinburgh's Alvis from the Royal Collection, I have no doubt the venue of our event this year has a substantial benefit in this regard.

Many of you will be familiar with the photographs that have appeared in past bulletins showing the Duke with his car, unfortunately we have been unable to trace the originals of these photographs so have to rely on copies, as you can imagine while we have the car it will be our intention to create a record for our archive, there is also little documentation on the car itself. The Car Record sheet states it's a 'V.I.P' car and a TD21 RHD 'Car finished and tested by Park Ward and delivered to H.R.H. Duke of Edinburgh by Park Ward in June 1961', it has a steel crankshaft, BN7 gearbox with overdrive, (the car went back to Coventry later to be up rated to a five speed ZF gearbox, it has also been fitted with disc brakes all round). The axle ratio is 3.77:1; wire wheels. All the members for the car have been checked as 26600. The only other information on the build sheet states 'many special items fitted to this car details of which are not available' we also know it was completed on the 3rd July 1961 and delivered by Brooklands of Bond Street on the 23rd of that month, there is a note on the delivery instruction that states, 'Laminated Windscreen Larger than standard.' 'Electrically operated hood'. (There was another car built with numbers 26601, which has a similar build sheet, that car was written off in 1967). The Duke must have been pleased with his car as it has a recorded mileage of 56000.

Roly Simmons (who worked for Alvis at that time) tells me 'it was fairly obvious to the lads on the shop floor that something special was being built as there was suddenly a lot more activity surrounding one particular chassis, a lot of highly polished components were coming through for this particular build, however the major differences occurred at Park Ward, a deeper windscreen to give some three inches more headroom, the power assisted hood, a lot more leather work on the interior trim and fascia, the shut plates on the doors are all stainless and even now the doors close beautifully, they are a joy to open and close.

Prior to delivery the car had a compass fitted into the centre of the dash and the Duke's personal mascot was fitted two-thirds along the centre of the bonnet, the mounting is still there. Prior to delivery the Duke appointed a new chauffeur, Jimmy Lee who had just retired from the Metropolitan Police motorcycle display team that prompted Giles to draw several cartoons showing the car going through hoops of fire. Jimmy Lee spent quite a few weeks at the factory seeing how the car was built and driving round the country side to familiarise himself with it.

It was serviced a few times by Red Triangle, Roly recalls one instance when it needed a repaint, they were told that particular colour and paint was no longer available but when the owners name was known a couple of five litre tins miraculously appeared, and when it needed a new master cylinder which had also been discontinued, a letter from David Michie to Messrs Girling suddenly produced a representative and a further supply of master cylinders was produced.

We have created a montage of interesting items, which is displayed along side the car.

Leather covered dashboard





As displayed at Harewood House Alvis Day, showing the higher roof line

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