



Monkey Business

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Written By Chris Taylor

Bunged Together By Simon Griffiths

A truly fantastic night, brilliant summer weather and a record breaking number of cars together with the good food and service at the Bulls Head M-S-A.

21 friends and 6 splendid Alvis cars and one Bentley graced the car park I was in AYF my project Speed 20 which on the night ran superbly, as it did for the next 10 days, of which more later. Peter Lakin arrived in PN his newly refurbished 12/60 saloon following the tumble coming to the meeting at Alderley Edge and the car looks resplendent having had a good freshen up all round. Some settling problems with the charging circuits are being experienced but that is a fairly small inconvenience and only to be expected when recommissioning a car after some months' rest.

Mick & Gez arrived in style in COA Mick's trusty Firebird saloon, and being the most represented model of the night COA was joined by BVC, Simon and Melissa's Firebird DHC; they make a fine pair. On now to a first at our meeting with



Barbara Holmes and John Woodcock in their lovely TC21; this car is also fairly recently put to use, and I know it attended AOC international without any problems, so a very welcome addition. To round off the Alvis participants we welcomed Judith and Charles VanIngen in their TD21 DHC which is a regular at our gathering and a very smart one too.

Last of the mentionables was Mike Fitkin in his superb Bentley, last seen by us at the Deanwater. I think it's a Turbo R, a car that has strong Alvis connections as the suspension



was designed by the Patron of the Alvis Archive Trust, who also designed the improvements to his father's postwar 3 litre cars in the final development of the TF model, this is no other than Mike Dunn. Of course Mike Fitkin also owns King Edward 8th's Alvis so he must have decided to come in the Bentley as a down market alternative to his Alvis!

Dave Culshaw joined us and as usual was full of historic stories although, with so many people at the meeting, I hardly got chance to talk to Dave for any length of time; any more than I did with Eric and Denise Ody. Although of course I do spend a wonderful night at Eric's meeting at the Coach and Horses at Fenny Bentley, the week after ours, as is Duncan Mather a regular at both meetings with his newly commissioned car which, like Peter's, is suffering some wiring related settling in problems.

Andrew Myers brought some photographs of a Derby Bentley that is now his project car. It's a 1939 MR 4 1/2 litre Derby Bentley that has not been used for many years but was stored intentionally so is a car with much promise to come back to life with the minimum of fuss. I did notice that Denise Ody and Claire Blundell were having a fairly intense conversation, which is fine, but that left Norman free to roam and wreak his own form of havoc on the proceedings; which he flatly refused to refrain from so what can I do but encourage him to be our mischievous meeting mascot and carry on regardless.

I am pleased the new venue at Mottram -St- Andrew is proving to be popular and it was really good to see Mike Robinson and Tari Mirza back in the fold and I am pleased to report Michelle has now recovered so much that she was away with the girls somewhere exotic sunning themselves. So, to finish this month's report I am featuring myself, as I mentioned earlier AYF has had a whoopsie. The car was at a very dear locksmith friend's wedding at Wrenbury Hall on the 17th to the 19th where the car performed perfectly attracting enthusiasm from a new young convert to old cars and also took Simon out for a drive round the locale. We all went to bed on Saturday night after the jollities and as I was leaving on Sunday morning I had proceeded about 100 yards and an almighty crunch came and that was it, the car had to be recovered home.

The damage is extensive and is a comprehensive engine

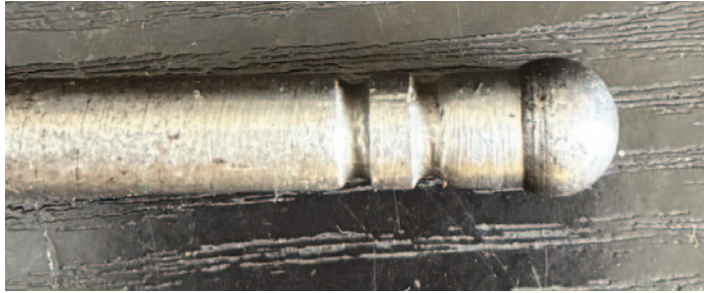


strip down although the crank is remaining in place as is the engine. After extensive investigative work the problem has been traced to faulty workmanship on the engine carried out 14 years ago when I first started the restoration of the project car. What had actually happened was that cylinder No 3 liner fell out - or more clearly must have been slipping downwards until the top ring sprung out above the liner which then dragged it down into the path of the crank which chopped it up into dozens of bits. Here much valued advice from Mick Fletcher has been taken on board, in that firstly liners should



either have a collar at the top (which sits in a rebate machined to take the collar) or, as is the case with the speed 20 engine, where this is not possible then a step must be included in at the bottom of the bore for the liner to sit on then even if it does come loose it cannot fall out. 14 years ago I did not know this but I do now!!!

And of course the next and final blow came as clearly there was insufficient grip between the block and liner which allowed the liner to slip. Upon close inspection, at least three other liners were also slipping and had moved about 0.015" down. If you can call it luck then I am lucky that only one liner slipped as I do feel if more than one had slipped together it could well have written the engine off.



As it is I am certain all will be well and I am working on replacing two push rods that were badly bent by shortening some from a 110mm stroke engine, to do this I have made a die that is crimping the ball end very successfully into the shortened tube, I have a spare replacement piston, as they are the same as GS had, and the valves affected are not bent. The block is away having all six cylinders rebored and lined properly this time. so all in all it could have been a whole lot worse.

On to the future; our next meeting is at the Bulls Head Wilmslow Road, Mottram St Andrew, SK10 4QH on August 4th, from say 18.30 where we will be in the garden room again; sadly I can't be with you but that won't stop a good night being had by all.

Just one final thing, as we used to do at the Deanwater would you please pay for your food and drinks when you order by visiting the bar or asking your server to bring a card machine as it was so good of Judith to pay the excess last month but it involved Simon and a whole lot of mither. Of course Judith is fully recompensed so no problem but so easy to avoid a repeat.

And now we hear from our roving reporter Dean O'Spyder...



Only a couple of things to report – I happened to be at a wedding in Wrenbury in Cheshire and spotted a familiar car parked outside the hall. AYF made a splendid show with several drivers having a go behind the wheel including our very own Simon. Sadly it's trip home wasn't as glamorous.



On a happier note BVC celebrated its 90th birthday last week and Simon and Melissa celebrated with a glass of fizz with the Firebird

