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I mentioned last month that it was my 100th SVW contribution, forgetting the fact that there was no January edition of Safety Fast!, so in actual fact it is this edition, which happens to be our Newsletter. Not that it makes much difference other than a personal milestone.

David Rivett (1937 – 2023)

Dave died a few days before Christmas. He was a keen collector of vintage cars, owning and restoring many, including MG, Vauxhall, Humber, Lagonda, Triumph Roadster and Ford. His favourite was evidently his VA Tourer which he kept whilst other came and went. In recent years he owned a pair of Ford Model A cars which he drove extensively to vintage shows.



Dave with VA 953 as acquired in the 1960s

My first contact with Dave was in the early 1980s. I had had my VA Tourer rebuilt in 1979 but, as I was working in Belgium, my brother Ian kindly looked after it for me until it could be accommodated elsewhere. There were some minor parts required and Ian made contact with Dave, who had owned his VA Tourer (953) since the late 1960s, around the time I bought mine. I think contact was probably made through Peter Ratcliffe, who spotted that Dave's home in The Surrey Hills was not far from us. I know Dave also had two VA Saloons over the years.

I was fortunate in my timing when I published a photo of Dave and his wife Linda with VA 953 in the February 2023 edition of Safety Fast! The photo was taken in August 2022 and I include it again here. Dave's son, Mike, also sent me a couple of photos of Dave with his VA Tourer in the early days of his ownership.



Shortly after rebuild



One of the last photos of Dave with wife Linda making good use of the VA Tourer

I'm pleased to report that Mike and his wife Emma plan to keep the VA, which has become a family heirloom.

We send our sincere condolences to Linda, Mike, Emma and all the family.

David Griffiths



I received the sad news that David died on 23rd February following a period of ill health. David, a real MG enthusiast, ran several MG groups in West Sussex over many years, notably The Sussex Wanderers of which I am a member. In this group alone he and his wife Ursula raised many thousands of pounds for Riding For The Disabled. We enjoyed many fun and well-organised MG gatherings, meeting at a pub for coffee, enjoying a drive and ending up at another pub for lunch. They took us all over the county with occasional forays into East Sussex. David will be sorely missed and we sent Ursula our sincere condolences. More about David in the April edition

Clive Sayer is a member of the same Wanderers group as me and used to own VA Tickford 2214. In 1988, someone at Brooklands did a charcoal sketch of part of his VA, which decorated his office until retirement. In January, Clive was seeking a new home for it in return for a charitable donation in memory of his good friend, the late Geoff Wodge. I decided to give it a new home.

When I met up with Clive, he also offered me several prints of artworks created by James Dugdale in 1980 which appeared as cards in packets of Grandee cigars. There were 28 paintings originally and the provenance of the prints is documented on the reverse as having being commissioned in 1980 to mark the golden anniversary of the MGCC. I can only imagine these were offered to members and a full set no doubt resides in the Clubhouse. Clive's was a set of 20 and numbers 16 and 17 depict an SA Tickford and WA Saloon respectively. Interestingly, there was not a VA in the set. It then reminded me that I have a set of cards somewhere and indeed I found the full set of 28. I've included photos of the WA print here as an example.

The SVW Register holds good quality, double-sided copies of the SA and WA prints – go to Shop on the website where they are available at a very reasonable £5 each.



1988 sketch of Clive Sayer's VA



A2 'MGCC Golden Anniversary' print of WA Saloon – see Register shop

In Jim Andrews' Chairman's Jottings, he mentions the documentation received from Tony Margel. I was able to pass everything to Jim via his son, who met me at my local railway station. It smacked of some sort of covert operation handing over a brown envelop to a stranger! Happily, it found its way to Jim who must have spent a lot of time cataloguing everything and cross referencing with what the Register already held. Jim said "It was a little sad reading some of the listing of cars for sale many at £40 to £60 (they were classed as old bangers in the 1960s), plus cars being given away or they would be scrapped". It was most interesting to read the names of new members as they joined the Register, together with SVW cars for sale.

Chairman's Jottings

Last year one of our very long-term members, Tony Margel, passed on to the Register a large bundle of historic documents that he had kept from the inception of the SVW Register in 1967. We have now read and catalogued the documents and what a treasure trove they are.

The SVW Register now has issues of the first News Letters sent out by Martin Brent to Register members, plus the gaps in the copies of the subsequent News Sheets sent out by Frances Adam have been filled. Any technical information or items of interest will be included in the list of 'Articles of Interest' that we maintain on the Register website and also in future articles in the SVW Review and/or Safety Fast!

The growth of the Register was quite dramatic from its inception in May 1967: it had 22 members by October 1967 and 50 by May 1968. Tony was member number 4 and, when I joined the Register in October 1968, I became member number 67. A big thankyou to Tony for donating the documentation.

Our annual SVW Register event is being held in Holland this year on 24th – 26th April 2024. As you are all aware we always plan to hold our annual SVW Register event in Europe every third year, which benefits our European members who support our UK based events so well. Hopefully many of you will be in attendance at our Annual General Meeting of the Register being held at the event. I look forward to seeing you all in Holland.

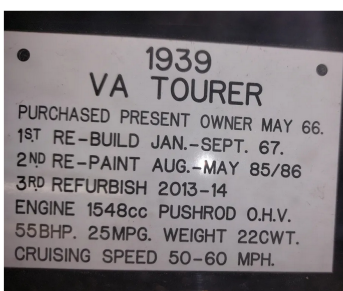
Enjoy your SVW motoring
Jim

Selling your SVW!

Those who keep an eye on these things may have seen SVW cars, generally VA Tourers, sell at rather less than their perceived market value as I mentioned last month. As people often say, the value of anything is only what someone will pay for it. However, that relies upon selling at the right time through the right medium, with good market reach. Alan Dakeyne's VA Tourer was a case in point. Following Alan's death last year, the VA ended up at a general auction house not known for car sales, so bidding was disappointing and I suspect there was no reserve. The hammer fell at £13,200 plus buyer's commission, which is probably about half what should have been reasonably expected. Selling at the right time probably means not selling in mid-winter when there is also a cost-of-living issue. Selling through the right medium means using a recognised dealer and/or respected auction house, especially if it is part of a deceased estate when the knowledge of the car's history may have disappeared as well. I think few SVW enthusiasts will have known about the sale until we reported it on our Facebook group after the event. In any case, it was bought by someone who is already selling it on at an auction estimate of £22-24,000, which is closer to its true value, even given the currently depressed market. The interim owner is actively marketing the auction with a good historical perspective on the car on prewarcar.com. It will be interesting to see what it achieves, but it won't happen until after the copy date of this March edition.



VA Tourer 2356 of the late Alan Dakeyne at auction again



Many of us have owned our MG for many years and would not wish to part with it. I think we're all hopeful that a son (or in fact daughters, as has recently been the case) will take on the custodianship when the time comes. Sadly, that is not often the case; it's even less likely when considering grandchildren! So it does beg the question of whether and when to sell our prized possession.

Left: Plaque showing the history of VA 2356

Many of us are reaching that stage, often when we reach our 80s and find it difficult to drive the car very far for one reason or another. Some owners have already said that the trip to Holland in April will be the last time they will attend an SVW event abroad, given it generally takes place on the Continent every three years, so after our trip to Holland this April, the next one is likely to be 2027. Some of the founding members of The SVW Register have already decided, understandably, to sell their SVW. It's also a fact that several owners reach that stage around the same time and buyers are spoilt for choice when buying an SVW that has been in long-term ownership.

It is also inevitable that, in our older years, cars do not receive the attention they once did and so they become a bit more difficult to sell. People are often prepared to take on a project, but of course that is reflected in the price. So, it seems to me we have three options: keep the car whatever the implications because we cannot bear to part with it; sell when we can no longer continue to enjoy what we've been doing for the past decades; or sell before we reach that stage and when we are in a position ourselves to manage the sale. This all assumes that our family heirloom is not destined to pass down the generations!

Whatever plans you have (and I'm sure there are many of you thinking the same thing, not only SVW owners), it's important to maintain the history file as this sometimes gets lost in the turmoil of our later years. Assuming it remains insured, the agreed value should be an accurate representation of the market value, which also gives the seller an idea of what it should achieve. We are all the best salesmen for our cars as we generally know all of its history and have the photos to prove it. Entrusting the sale to someone else means finding a dealer or auction house that shares your passion and can present the car in its best light.

I would be interested to hear your own thoughts on this delicate subject.

On a lighter note, SVWs are frequently changing hands at the moment with some going to 'next generation' owners. Some are under full restoration and occasionally a car surfaces for which we previously held few details. A good example is SA Tickford 1735 that was hidden away in storage for the past 70 years after the owner migrated to Canada after WW2, taking the SA with him. It is now with a new owner in the USA in its original condition with plans for a full restoration.

Last call for Holland

Lots of us SVW owners are heading to Holland in April for the annual SVW event, earlier in the year than is usual to take in the tulip fields. A large group of us will be taking the night ferry from Harwich to Hook of Holland on the 23rd April, some staying just for the event and others staying on for King's Day, a national party celebrating King Willem-Alexander's birthday when everyone is encouraged to wear orange. Expect lots of music, dancing, flea markets and fun fairs. The large number of SVWs on the same ferry should make a very nice photoshoot even before we reach the venue near Alkmaar. There are still a couple of rooms available at the hotel.

Steering Play Control Adapter

Some months ago, Charlie Plain-Jones polled owners with the intention of compiling a list of those who would like a steering adapter for their VA or SA. The take-up was brisk and I opted for one too. I think many of us experience wander, often caused by wear in the Bishop Cam steering box, which can be accommodated by this spring-loaded side plate. Richard at Vintage MG Parts received a list of 24 people who would like one of which 20 were confirmed orders at that time. In mid-January, Richard let me know that the machine required for these castings had broken down, so none had been made by that date. It's a pity about the delay, but the good news is that you still have time to add your name to the list, bearing in mind that this is likely to be the last batch he will make. You can contact Richard directly at enquiries@vintagemgparts.com.

The Vintage MG Parts website says: 'For cars which suffer play in the steering and where it proves difficult to adjust, this part significantly reduces play in the steering wheel by as much as 50% with

amazing results and also helps to maintain a straight line position without wandering. We have received so much positive feedback with this product that we guarantee a reduction in excessive steering wheel play'.

MG Centenary Finale

The South-East Centre is hosting this important event, which has been labelled the 100th Anniversary Brooklands/Fairmile Celebration, that takes place on May 18-19.

The event on the 18th will be centred on The Fairmile in Cobham, Surrey with road runs converging there by mid-afternoon, culminating with what I expect to be a large display of MGs and a party atmosphere on the large lawns where there will be a hot and cold buffet.

May 19th is the Brooklands part of the event and will include competition cars, timeline, live music, traders, MG talks, pride of ownership, concours and clubs, all amongst the usual museum exhibits. Full details can be found at <https://www.mgccse.co.uk/mg100-south-east/mg100se-brooklands-show/>

This is a perfect opportunity to gather SVWs at the birthplace of British motorsport. I'm already in touch with several owners who plan to be there. Please contact me if you plan to attend so we can plan space in the timeline. It's bound to be a highlight of our MG year following closely after the SVW event in Holland.