

# The Allard Register

No. 39 SPRING 2004 Free

## The Moss Files

delivery.

The Allard Register is pleased to present a special issue dedicated almost entirely to Alan Moss.

E. Alan Moss was the West Coast distributor for Allard during the early '50's. We have recently had the privilege to peruse about 150 pages of business correspondence between Moss and various Allard employees and officials from Jan 1950 - Oct 1951. The following excerpts are from that body of correspondence.

Alan went on to found Moss Motors, which became the principal source of after-market and replacement parts for British cars in the US. He has since retired to Arizona, where he continues to actively participate in vintage racing. Alan caused several heads to turn when he arrived at Monterey a few years ago with his Morgan Trike in tow-behind his MG TC.

We believe that you will find the correspondence most informative and entertaining. - CAW

Feb 7, 1950. Davis (Allard Export Manager) to Moss
We want to thank you for your esteemed cablegram
of the 4<sup>th</sup> February, viz: - SHIP IMMEDIATELY THE
FOLLOWING ONE J TYPE LESS ENGINE GEAR
BOX OTHERWISE FULLY EQUIPPED COLOR
BLACK LEATHER GREEN OR AVAILABLE AT
2297 DOLLARS CIF LOS ANGELES HARBOR
ALSO ONE TOURER FULLY EQUIPPED COLOR
SILVER GREY LEATHER LIGHT BLUE HOOD
MAROON AT 2478 DOLLARS ... and we have
pleasure in informing you that we have called for these

vehicles and will be invoicing and issuing further instruc-

tions within the next few days regarding approximate

We were pleased to observe in that excellent periodical "Motor Trend" that Mr. & Mrs. E. Alan Moss figure quite prominently in the local motor sport, and we trust that the advent of Allard cars in your district may induce either you or your wife to try a larger steed.



My first K Allard at the Santa Ana races, in the pits. This was the first Allard I imported. It was originally maroon and was raced at the first Palm Springs races in 1950. Driven by Tom Frisbey, it was the fastest car there but, due to the extreme heat, blew a head gasket. The car was pictured on the cover of Motor Trend with a feature story in June, 1950. The car is presently being raced in a highly modified form on the west coast. It was a neat car, probably the best of all the Allard's (other than the J2) with a folding windscreen, double-bladder air seat cushions, metal covered spare, etc.



## The Moss Files....

Mar 16, 1950. Moss to Davis.

I wish to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for the excellent prospect list you have sent us. In regards to your request for information relative to the follow-up letters you must write the American public from time to time, if I may take the liberty, I would suggest the letter be just as you normally correspond with the British public. The reason is this: In the United State, sales (I should say "high pressure" sales) through correspondence has been long over worked and the net result is letters of this type are normally filed in the trash container. Therefore, a straight forward sincere letter is the only method which demands attention...

Our demonstration sports two seater will be on April 15<sup>th</sup> entered in a sports road race (for the promotion of Allard Motorcars) and the Cotal gearbox which we ordered on Feb. 9<sup>th</sup> would be of great assistance, please ship immediately. ...

It appears that there is great demand for the J2 type; however, this car must have hood, windscreen, and side-screen provisions because many people would buy this vehicle as an "only car" but will not even consider it without weather equipment.

Apr 12, 1950. S. H. Allard to Moss.

Further to your cables and phone calls regarding the race at Palm Springs, I am very sorry that I am unable to come over, but it is due entirely to one of two factors that I cannot alter.

Firstly, I have already prior engagements to meet people in New York this weekend ... Secondly, I am the only

representative from our firm in New York, and it is imperative that I should be there, to see that the cars ... are all ready, and the third reason, which may not seem very important to you, is the fact that, should I compete in any event that is not of the International status, I should most certainly be barred for any future racing in this country.

I hope you will appreciate therefore the fact it is not through lack of interest that I am unable to accept your generous invitation, but I shall do my best later on in the year to come and see you.

May 17, 1950. T. L Frisbey (Moss Sales Mgr) to Davis.

In regards to the K2 which I personally took delivery of in New York .... A large improvement over the K.... We are very pleased with the exception of two items. First and foremost is the fact that the tires rub, rather badly, on both rear fenders. I would suggest a change in fender design or different tire sizes. ... Also, as a matter of comment, I found the hood was rather poor, in that, the side screens would not keep out the wind and worst of all rain. ... I found the car wandered very badly at speeds over 65 mph and suspect the front end may be at fault. ... The K2 is meeting with very fine acceptance here by the sports motoring public and we have high hopes for this model here.

Jun 25, 1950. PS of a letter from Davis to Moss.

We trust that you have received our cablegram in respect to the Le Mans race. We consider that Tom Cole and S.H.A. did very well bearing in mind that the French Talbots which took 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> places were thinly disguised



My first K2 Allard. this was the first (hand built) K2 and was brought over for the New York Motor show in '51. My sales manager and close friend, Tom Frisbey, arranged to purchase the car from Sydney Allard, who was at the show, and then Tom drove it back to California. We installed the Edelbrock-built Mercury engine from the K1 and raced it unsuccessfully at the Santa Ana race. It was light blue in colour. I subsequently sold this car to a fellow by the name of Gil Ralston, who worked at 20th Century Fox. The car has two red wheels borrowed from the K1 as the airport surface was a bit hard on tires.



The first J2 on the West Coast. Michael Graham in the driver's seat. On his right is Al Torres, the famous starter. On his left is Jarvis Williams.

Grand Prix racing cars, and that we came 3<sup>rd</sup> having beaten record breaking Ferrari's, Jaguar XK 120's, Bentley, Cadillac, and the rest of the formidable opposition over a course in which we covered approximately 2200 miles, lapping at 93 mph in our J2 Cadillac Allard. ... We would be interested to hear whether this race was well publicised in the States, and also whether General Motors have taken any notice of the Cadillac-Allard win or used this success to boost the qualifications of their excellent motor in their advertising media?

#### Aug 14, 1950. Davis to Frisbey.

We thank you for your letter ... and have pleasure in informing you that although your two orders ... are not yet completed, we are endeavoring to arrange for shipment of these cars on or about the 25<sup>th</sup> August, and we will forward you fuller details of the name of this vessel and precise sailing date at the earliest possible moment....

We are pleased to note that you have fallen in line with the retail selling price, and we will be interested to hear whether you actually hold a car in stock; we mention the latter by reason of the fact that the delay in shipping, plus the time taken for production involves a considerable waiting period, which might be partly obviated if you could sell from stock.

#### Oct 10, 1950. Moss to Davis.

...We are very happy with the improvements made on both models, such as the bumpers (which could be heavier still) the cut away front seats and door locks on the K2, and the better finish throughout on the J2. Also, the additional hinges on the hood. Our customers have been

very dis-satisfied, however, with the paint jobs. We would suggest that you use a good primer first and also put more paint around the edges of all the body panels.

I have been working night and day preparing a Cadillac engine for our J2. We have a dual manifold and are running two Zenith carburetors, a Mallory dual point distributor, a specially ground cam shaft along with mechanical tappets, light pushrods, and adjustable rocker arms.

... I have made the generator pulley as per blueprints, but am in the dark as to how to mount the generator.... The race is November 5<sup>th</sup> and the *SS Gracia* is not due to arrive until October 22<sup>nd</sup> you can see that we will not have much time for the installation, road testing, etc.

... Mr. Allard mentioned to me some time ago that he is planning a visit to California this fall, is there any possibility

that he could be here to drive our car in the Pebble Beach race on the 5<sup>th</sup> of November.

#### Oct 13, 1950. Moss to J. R. Bullen at Allard.

Perhaps you have heard from our mutual friends at Motor Trend Publications of their great forth-coming motor show "MOTORAMA"... in Los Angeles November 16<sup>th</sup> through the 19<sup>th</sup>, and gives evidence of being the largest and most significant show of its kind ever held on the Pacific Coast.

I have already contracted for a single booth space in this show.... In the event that ... [they] have not already solicited your companies participation in the show, my intention is to interest you in such a consideration. I believe the Allard name can benefit tremendously. Therefore, if the company could find it agreeable to match my space investment of \$120 and thus double the space of our Allard representation, I believe we can make a dramatic and lasting impression.

#### Nov 10, 1950. Moss to Davis.

I am enclosing several pictures taken of our Cadillac Allard at the Pebble Beach Road Race last Sunday. Considering the fact that the car was less than a week old and had only 500 miles on the speedometer, I think we did exceedingly well. The car was driven by Michael Graham, one of your own countrymen whom Mr. Allard may have known. We won our class heat against Jaguar, etc by one complete lap over the two mile course composed of macadam and decomposed granite surfaces. In the main event, which was only 50 miles, the fan belt fell off in the race and the car was out for two laps. The driver made this up and

finished in fourth position. We were lapping consistently at ten seconds faster than the next fastest car. When we finished the race there was absolutely no lining left on the clutch disc. Another Mercury powered J2 driven by Basil Panzer went out in the last lap with clutch trouble.

Col. Steinmetz was unable to run due to not having the proper gear shift. Even though we did not win this race, we have succeeded in showing thousands of people what a really fine car we had and received a great amount of publicity for the Allard motor car. ... We have found that an MG 12 volt generator makes a much more satisfactory installation on either the Ford or Cadillac engine, if you are able to obtain the proper reduction gear reduction unit for the tach drive. ... Have you done any experimenting with lowering the camber of the front wheels, please let me know. Have you found out what makes the J2 whistle at high speed? This is very impressive in the race!!

... Col. Steinmetz is threatening us with a law suit due to the non-delivery of his gear shift lever. I would suggest you write the Col. a letter of apology and explanation. Even though he did order his car without engine and transmission, all other cars ... were shipped with complete gear shift controls....

The many people who have looked at Dr. Ure's K2 Allard and the Dr. himself were very dissatisfied with several things about this car. ... the windshield has a terrific vibration at any speed over 40 mph, the top (hood), while better than the preceding cars, is far from being water proof, rain just pours in, especially around and through the windshield. The lighting system was improperly wired and head-lights impossible to focus. We all feel that on a car selling for this amount of money a little more attention could be paid to details.

... As you may know, automobile sales in general through-

out the United States have fallen off about 90% in the past month due to new credit regulations. I do not feel, however, that this will effect the class of people who are buying sport cars.

Nov 27, 1950. Moss to Davis.

First I would like to tell you that I have discontinued handling the Rootes line of Motorcars ... I now feel that by cutting down on my staff and overhead that I will do better handling nothing but Allard. I am now handling all sales contracts and customer followups myself and I have several firms in mind for Allard dealerships. My biggest problem is finding competent mechanics to handle the shop work and engine installations in Allards, some of which I must occasionally do myself.

Regarding dealerships, have you at the present time, any dealers in the western part of

the US, outside of California? If not, with your permission, after the first of the year I would like to establish at least one in the state of Texas. Thus far, no one has exploited that territory and I feel that with all the wealthy "oil men" living there, it is a great potential for Allard sales.

... I will enclose or forward to you some pictures taken of our booth at the Motorama show. I had many people comment that our's was the best looking car and display at the show. I was the only dealer to have a display there, ... and we did nothing for five days and nights but to spread Allard goodwill and literature. I have at least ten people who are going to order cars in the near future. There will be another motor show held in Oakland next February and if I am able to establish a dealer for that area I expect to display a car there.

... From all comments, I would suggest a change in the Saloon model. The people who have seen it have all been very dis-satisfied with the design, but all agree that the interior is very beautiful. All agree that the body is too high and "boxy" and the "K2" front end would help.

... Is there any way of increasing the seat and leg room a few inches? I have actually lost two sales because the person was unable to fit! Find a person about six feet four inches and build the car around him!

...The November 10 issue of *The Autocar* just arrived, showing some photographs of your display at the Earls Court Show. Very nice. I wish we could have a chassis to display. I do not care for the windscreen pictured on the K2. Why not install a vee-type, similar to that used on the XK?

... My Cad J2 is meeting with approval wherever it is seen. I drive it to work every day and go for a ride almost every night. Yesterday I did a standing start quarter mile in 15.21 seconds. The car was in standard trim and completely untuned.



Carroll Speedway in LA. 1/2 mile dirt track - Panzer's J2.

... Have you had any experience lowering the camber and increasing the castor angle in the front wheels? I plan on doing considerable experimentation with this, as I think it should improve the handling ability of the car, especially at sustained high speeds, where it tends to wander. I will let you know on what results I get.

Dec 4, 1950. Davis to Moss.

...Yes, we are interested in getting further distributors in States adjacent to California, especially in either the key points of Houston, TEXAS or New Orleans, LA; and we would expect such a set-up to be completely distinct from your present agency ... We anticipate that the coming spring will pay big dividends for this year's Allard successes at Watkins Glen, Pikes Peak, Santa Ana, Palm Beach, and other road races ...

The L-Type 4 seater Tourer model is definitely out of production - the small write-up which you refer to as appearing in "*The Motor*" was no doubt a confused description of a special hybrid K2 cum Tourer body which was manufactured to order for one particular client to whom expense was no object - this car was in fact a custom built job and we would not be interested in a repeat order.

...We agree with your remarks concerning the Saloon and it is to be imagined that we may in the near future withdraw that model for redesigning ...

To conclude, we are confident that (comparing the two businesses) your outfit is far better equipped than that of our principal East Coast distributor and consequently should have every advantage to grab the bulk of Allard sales in the States.

Please keep up the good work, Mr. Moss, continue favouring us with your confidence and constructive criticisms, and we feel sure that events will move fast in the next few months towards ever increasing Allard sales and mutual prosperity.

Dec 8, 1950. D. R. Hume, Designer Draughtsman to Moss. ... We have had considerable experience of various combinations of camber and castor angle, as might be expected and we have found the best results are obtained with 2-3 degree Camber angle and 2-3 degree Castor angle and 1/16 - 1/8" toe in. Unfortunately however, as we have to send out cars intended for Cadillac engines without road testing them we are not able to check these points. Further,



After the GMC engine was installed (by my mechanic and old friend, Al Hruska), Basil Panzer, Al, and Phil Hill loaded the J2 up and hooked up to a rental Hertz Ford and went out Pikes Peak, where Phil drove the car in the Hill climb.

we were originally given excessive weight figures for the Cadillac unit and from these a calculation was made which indicated that, to maintain the desirable castor and camber angles, a total of 1/2" packing was required for the front coil springs. As we have since found out that the Cadillac unit is actually a few pounds lighter than our standard unit, this packing should be removed. We think you will find on performing this operation that you will experience no more trouble with wander at any speeds.

Mar 8, 1951. W.A. Hare (Spares & Facilities Manager) to Moss. With further reference to that above mentioned Allard car, we wish to confirm the tail section of the J2, which we will supply to your goodselves, will be \$129.50, less usual distributors discount of 25% ... Whilst writing we would like to mention there is an element of doubt as to exactly what you require, when you requested a "Right hand Front Fender." A fender so far as are we aware is a bumper, and bumpers as you doubtless know are not fitted on the J2 model. In the circumstances would you be good enough to notify us by return Air Mail, exactly what you require...

Mar 14, 1951. Moss to Davis.

I hope you will pardon the stationary and typing in this letter, but am as yet unable to use my left arm at all.

On Sunday, February 25, we held a race at Carrell Speedway, a one-half mile dirt track near Los Angeles. In the main event I started in last position (inverted start) and by the first turn I had passed about eighteen cars and was in first place. At the beginning of the second lap I hit a soft



### **ALLARDS AT THE GLEN - SEPTEMBER 2004**

Plans are shaping up for the upcoming Allard gathering at the vintage sports car race and show weekend at Watkins Glen for Sept. 10 - 12 2004. The event is being put on by the SVRA and the VSCCA. Our own Pete McManus is Chairperson of the Prewar Sports Car Race at the event. So far, 18 Allard owners and their cars have registered to attend, with several also on the "hopeful" list. We plan to develop special Allard groupings in the events that any of you choose to enter, and hope to organize an Allard breakfast or dinner during the event. Also, Bill Pollack, noted Allard pilot, will be attending as guest of the MG Vintage Racers.

Please visit www.grandprixfestival.com to get a full view of the activities for the weekend. There is also a page on the site to request a Festival information package. Allard attendees will be expected to sign up directly (see web site) for Festival events that they wish to participate in.

Please reply today by E-MAIL to David Watson at: DanDee@ptd.net AS TO WHETHER YOU:

a. DEFINITELY WILL ATTEND b. PROBABLY WILL ATTEND c. WILL NOT ATTEND

spot in the track and partially lost control. I had almost regained control when I slid into the second place car. Somehow the impact knocked my car into the air and it flipped end over end several times. The car landed upside down and I was unconscious. Believe me, I was a very lucky chap not to have been killed. I got a broken collar bone and a very badly wrenched back and shoulder. My safety belt and crash hat are what saved me from worse damage. Please tell me why in your country and on the continent they very seldom use crash hats or safety belts. Besides extensive body damage the car came through in great shape — no engine or frame damage at all. Do I have the distinction of being the first person to roll an Allard over?

#### Apr 11, 1951. Moss to Davis

...I was very glad to hear that your new M2 Convertible met with such success at the Geneva Show. I am very anxious to see this model, which should be a very good seller, especially here in the US. When do you expect to ship one Mr. Roy Richter has on order? I spoke with him today and he has no idea when it will arrive here...

We had a 150 mile road race in Palm Springs on April 1. I imagine you have seen Jimmy Chapman by this time and he will have given you the details. A 2 liter Ferrari won, followed by a Cad J2. Basil Panzer is experimenting with a very "hot" [in-line 6]GMC truck engine in his J2 and it seems to have great possibilities, although the number five rod bearing doesn't seem to think so. In the latter part of the race it left the crankshaft and came out for air. The next scheduled race is Pebble Beach on May 27. The limit there is 4 1/2 liters, and instead of sleeving the Cad engine, I removed the No. 4 and 5 pistons and rods, and am running a V-6. It seems to run very well with no vibration over 1200 rpm. As I am breaking in a new driver and don't expect a new body in time, I will probably run my old body for this race.

P.S. Can you obtain MG parts from the MG Company or another source for me. I am having great difficulty obtaining them here and have to pay extremely high prices for them. Please look into this and let me know. I would certainly appreciate this.

Jun 14, 1951. Davis to Moss.

...The results obtained by Allard cars at Pebble Beach was indeed very gratifying and should assist materially in developing further sales in California generally. Incidentally we are quite worried and indeed puzzled by the absence of any sales volume in your territory and would be interested to hear exactly how you are covering this territory, and also what facilities you possess in respect of sales and service at your new address?

We appreciate that deliveries are not all that could be hoped for, but on the other hand we feel that a little intelligent anticipation is called for, either in the ordering or what would be better, the retention of one or two cars in stock from which you could make immediate delivery bearing in mind that production from scratch takes say eight weeks plus perhaps another six to eight weeks in transit to Los Angeles - making roughly four months delivery to client which is naturally not conducive to good business or sales promotion. We are convinced that an area distributor must essentially be in a position to supply cars from stock to either private clients or his dealers .... We do not think that a distributor can have too many dealers in a given territory. Please let us know how many dealers that you have appointed, their location, and also whether they hold any Allard cars in stock?

We sincerely trust that you will not misinterpret these comments as a censure or anything other than general sales talk designed to benefit our mutual business interests...

N.B. Our statistics prove that the greater the number of Allard cars entering and circulating in a given area - the greater must be the chances be of obtaining repeat orders.



The first golden Gate Park road race (San Francisco)Bill Pollack in Tom Carsten's #14 and Michael Graham in Jimmy Chapman's #30.

We obviously appreciate this shipping handicap must with present arrangements be responsible for the poor comparison in sales between East & West Coasts, although this is in direct contradiction to factual automotive sales in relation to the whole country - which indicate that Southern California has for many years held a tremendous lead in new car purchase and registrations. Can we do something to remedy this defect?

Oct 11, 1951. Allard (writer unknown) to Moss.

The J2X, whilst [illegible] its predecessor the J2 has, nevertheless, certain mechanical advantages, eg it is fitted

## The Allard Register

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Cyril Wick Yvonne Turner John Harden with a parallel axis-split axle-front suspension. This eliminates the constantly changing castor angle when the wheels deflect - which occurred on the previous arrangement. The new arrangement simplifies alignment, and it does not vary geometrically thereby ensuring correct steering at high speeds.

The J2X has its engine mounted 7 1/2" further forward as opposed to the mount of the old J2 model - giving more leg room to the driver and greatly improved handling qualities. The thirty-six Imperial gallon(s) tank is fitted as standard equipment. The spare wheel (in view of the size of the new tank) is now mounted on the side of the car, forward of the windshield. The DeDion rear end can now be modified (\$28.00 extra) to facilitate the installation of the familiar "Pat Warren" quick change rear end should the client desire same to be subsequently fitted in the States.



Note the GMC Inline-6 in Panzer's J2

#### PLEASE NOTE

- 1. We appreciate the fine submissions from members of the Allard Register. Just a reminder – our publishing an issue depends heavily upon our having interesting, original Allardrelated stories, articles, and photos. We depend on you to provide us with those items.
- 2. Allard-focused articles and photos are always welcomed. Please direct submissions to the Publisher, Chuck Warnes. MS Word submissions by disk or E-mail are appreciated. Due to space limitations, we may have to do some editing.
- 3. Please direct any additions or charges to our Mailing List to Bob Lytle at cottonwoodbob@wildapache.net

4 CARS, PARTS, AND SERVICES listings will be listed in TWO ISSUES. If you want us to continue running your itembeyond then, you will need to resubmit. We appreciate notification if an item is no larger for sale.

Jim and Chuck



### WILLOW SPRINGS - APRIL 2004

A couple a months ago Bob Girvin, Allard GT coupe, made the long haul out to California from Massachusetts. He had heard of the Willow Springs racetrack as being the oldest sports car track still in operation and wanted to run it just to garner more bragging rights.

Well, as luck would have it, the weekend he chose to be there, there were also four other Allard cars in attendance. The owner of the track Mr. Bill Huth, had planned a great weekend of racing in celebration of the tracks 50th anniversary.

Two of the original designers of the track were on hand to explain why they picked this hillside spot 125 miles North of Los Angeles. One of them was Bill Pollack, the very same guy that cleaned house on the Sporty car crowd back in the early 50s in Tom Carsten's Black Allard #14.

Besides Girvin's famous Coupé were: Bernard Dervieux J-2, George Myers K-2, Jack Anderson K-3 and Bob Lytle's J2X. Is that a mix or what? Several other Allard owners showed up but left their cars at home preferring the air conditioning in their wives car, I guess?

Without boring you with a race result let me just say Bob Girvin blew everyone's doors off including some really fast much newer cars. Many younger drivers had never seen an Allard much less the only Coupé in the USA and the last one of a production run of Two!!!! This car is thot to be the very last Allard built by the factory, in 1957.

I overheard Lytle to remark, "We won't invite him again." -Spurgear

## PARTS FOR SALE

One set of Allard knock-offs that I believe are unused. Recently plated and polished. \$250/set. Photos available. Howard Hogg. New Mexico. Tel (505) 344-3421. hohogg@attglobal.net

1948 K1. 50,975 miles. Restored and painted in pale yellow with tan wings. RHD, brown leather interior. 239 CID Ford with Offy heads and dual carbs. Bruce A. Elder of Antique and Classic Automobiles, 114 South New Street. Staunton, VA 24401. Ph (540) 885-0500. Asking \$45,000.

Ford flathead speed parts (manifolds, heads) for sale. Also a T-10 four speed transmission with an adapter to a flathead. *Robert Whitehead - Arkansas. Tel: 479-855-0471.* 

## The Allard Register Via Email

Join the growing list of Subscribers that also receive the Allard Register via email (with color pictures), please contact Colin at: cwarnes@adcomfg.com

## www.AllardRegister.com Should be online by the time you receive your next

Should be online by the time you receive your next issue. Our new web site will feature a brief history and summary of the models manufactured, as well as space for owners to show off their cars



From left to right: Jack Anderson's K3, Bob Girvin's GT, Bob Lytle's J2X, George Meyer's K2, and Bernard Dervieux's. J2



## More Photos From the Moss Archives



This is Jimmy Chapman's J2 Way y y y out in the desert sand at Palm Springs.



Panzer in his J2 at Palm Springs



The J2 loaded up and hooked to a rental Hertz Ford for the trip to Pikes Peak  $\,$ 



Santa Ana Blimp Base: June 1950



The first golden Gate Park road race (San Francisco) Bill Pollack in Tom Carsten's number 14 and Michael Graham in Jimmy Chapman's #30



## Additional Pics from the 50th Anniversary Race at Willow Springs









