



THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB

Number 230 Autumn 2011



— DAVID AYRE —



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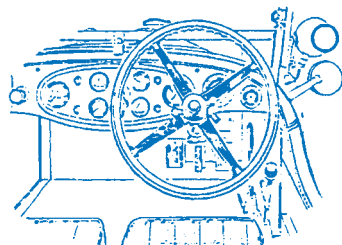
2 litres lined up for the AGM.

Contents

From the Driving Seat	5
A Cautionary Tale	6
The AGM Saturday	8
Lagonda AGM	11
Around the World in 72 Days	17
Battle and Hastings	25
Historic Pictures	28
Letters	31

From the Driving Seat

Ken Painter



ANOTHER AGM HAS come and gone and I can't personally remember one held in better weather. We all owe a huge debt of gratitude to Christopher Hobbs for the enormous amount of work and worry he endured when the plans for our weekend frolics were so suddenly changed by the hotel owners. Happily all was sorted at the eleventh hour, but we wouldn't wish to suffer a repeat in future years!

After a lot of last minute work, caused entirely by other organisations totally failing to deliver work on time, I was able to bring Connie along, albeit on a trailer. To be fair, this is the first time since I began to re-commission the car that I have been let down by jobs not being completed in the time scale promised. I hope it will be the last.

Why, you may ask, did she come on a trailer? Driving a car as slow as this on a motorway would be inadvisable to say the least and it is difficult to plot a sensible non motorway route from Suffolk to Aldermaston that could sensibly be done in less than seven or eight hours and which doesn't involve some fiendish steep hills.

All did not go according to plan though, Connie started as easily as ever after her sleep since April, was driven onto and off the trailer with no difficulty and Colin Mallett enjoyed a very brief drive, just for old times sake, but when it

was time to move her onto the display area, the starter motor failed to work, so she was unceremoniously pushed into place, remaining a static exhibit for the rest of the day. Generous friends pushed her so that she could be driven back onto the trailer for the trip home and, once there, she was pushed into the garage and has stayed there, completely ignored whilst this magazine was prepared.

Apart from this new starting problem, there is little mechanical to be done to Connie now, save for a few minor adjustments. Over the winter I hope to tidy up the wings, the new radiator badge, looking very smart and shiny, has arrived and I will consider having the headlights refurbished. I still need a replacement spare wheel and a proper steering wheel though, what have you former 12/24 owners got hidden away in your collection of unused spares?

I was looking forward to studying so many 2 litres at the AGM at close range, but never actually got the chance to look at a single one, as so many people wanted to chat throughout the day. I suspect I was not the only Board member who had little chance actually to see the wonderful display assembled there this year, perhaps I could try coming in disguise in future years...

***Last date for copy for the Winter magazine is
... SATURDAY 17th December 2011 ...***

A Cautionary Tale

Andrew Gregg gets his hands dirty

WITH THE ONSET of spring each year I make a point of servicing my M45, changing the oil, cleaning the oil and air filters, adjusting the tappets, greasing everything and generally fettling for the oncoming season.

In the belief that she was fit in wind and limb we set off to a jazz festival on a bright Sunday morning.

On the way back, boiling water started pouring from the radiator cap and the temperature gauge went off the scale. Having let her cool down I topped the radiator up with all the water that I had and limped cautiously home.

What could possibly be wrong?

I started by taking the water pump off which, though slightly worn on the dog drive seemed to be perfectly satisfactory although there were signs of internal corrosion.

The next step was to lift the radiator out. At first sight this appeared to have a good flow but I noticed a split in the casing.

I took the top pipe off which holds a crud catcher which was full of light aluminium detritus and the top feed pipe showed clear signs of internal corrosion.

The water transfer ports were in a similar condition and, far more serious, the water rail which one would normally

never take off was badly corroded and had a hairline crack (see photographs).

A call was made to Robin Cooke who, in his usual efficient manner, dispatched all the necessary parts including a new water pump and which were delivered to me the next day (thank you Robin).

Before fitting the new water transfer ports, water rail etc they will need to be drilled and the facings machined since they are supplied as un-machined castings. If you haven't got the facilities to do this, you need to line up your local engineering company to do it for you.

I sent the radiator off to a repairer who put a strengthening bar across the base of the radiator above the trunnions in order to rectify the cracking problem which is caused by the enormous weight of the radiator, particularly when full of water, bearing on the trunnions. With the new water pump fitted together with new water rails and transfer ports the problem seems to have been cured.

The moral of the story?

Every few years apart from the usual servicing it pays to take off those aluminium parts which may be prone to corrosion from the inside and which you can never see until you examine them, or a disaster occurs!





The cracked and corroded water rail on Andrew's engine.



Another shot of the poor state of the rail.

The AGM Saturday, 1st October 2011

Michael Drakeford's story of the day's fun

AS MEMBERS EXPERIENCED one of the warmest and sunniest October days on record at the Lagonda Club's 60th Anniversary, the dreadful weather experienced at the AGM last year was much discussed

Many members started to congregate at midday on Saturday and, after lunch, as has become the custom, a tour of the countryside ensued.

The idea was to leave the Aldermaston Manor hotel, skirt the local roadworks and subsequent diversions, and avoiding the A4 head through most attractive countryside to Donnington castle, north of Newbury, and then back by a different route to Silchester, where Stephen and Rebecca Matthews would welcome us with tea and cakes at their charming residence. That was the plan.

Matters did not go quite as they should. The route map proved too ambitious for most, and this cannot be put down to the lunch-time beverage intake which was, I am assured, minimal

So confused were the drivers that there was what can only be described as a starburst of Lagondas with vehicles going hither and thither in quite opposite directions. Cars were seen darting into vacant lots to turn around and then departing in still varied directions. The outcome was that most battled on with the challenge and those that did not succumb to marital disharmony used more of the A4 than was planned

A hardy six cars managed to arrive at the castle car park and enjoy the splendid view from the ruins.

With a glow of achievement the occupants of these cars made their way to Silchester only to find that car parking spaces were at a premium and the 20 or so less resilient members were ensconced in the enjoyment of clotted cream teas in the autumn sunshine. Well done to Kate Hobbs for the route maps, which gave such amusement - Kate promises something simpler for next year! And to Rebecca and Stephen for a delicious tea and convivial discussions, in the house as well as at the car display on the lawn.

The evening was the traditional mix of pre-dinner drinks and a fine dinner, laced with wit and laughter.

Christopher Hobbs gave a 'Lagonda' style Grace. After the main course Jonathan Oppenheimer welcomed those present and in particular offered congratulations to people who came a long way - Peter (In a marvellous kilt) and Katy Weir from Oban, Nick Schede from Netherlands with Christine Bruit from Switzerland via Netherlands (although she is French! Got all that?), and Bernard and Francine Pigelet-Lambert with their friends also from France who came in their 1928 2Litre HC!

The Chairman then proposed the loyal toast. The night was enhanced by the presentation of flowers and wine to

Valerie and Colin for their help, it was very good to see Valerie there this year, as well as to Rebecca and Stephen for hosting the excellent tea after the 'fun run' to Donnington Castle.

Never failing to bring joy to the diners at the AGM our President, David Hine, rose to his feet, glass of claret in hand, reminded the assembled throng that it was the 60th anniversary of the forming of the Lagonda Club bringing the 2 Litre Register and the Lagonda Car Club together. Mind you, he retorted, you can still tell the members apart with the 2 Litre following in their flat caps and cravats, and those with the 4 1/2 in

their blazers and handkerchiefs in their top pockets. Apt jokes and the odd reminiscence followed, including the fact that he is forever amazed at the friendliness of the members. He recalled that the club welcomed him when he joined in 1962 and he made life-long friends with Alan Brown and Herb Schofield from the first night. Finishing off a great evening our President provided the popular soliloquy about King Harold and his French foe who civilised the Saxons with the chorus "On his 'orse with his 'awk in his 'and "

What better way to end to a day could there be?



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Just some of the 2 litres lined up for the concours.



Coming or going, they are still beautiful. This is John Brown's 14/60 2 litre Semi-Sports Tourer.

Lagonda AGM Sunday, 2nd October 2011

Roger Seabrook reports on a truly Vintage meeting

IN COMPLETE CONTRAST to last year, the weather for the 2011 AGM at Aldermaston was perfect – sunny, and very warm (around 29° in the afternoon). This year's featured model was the 2 litre, and a good turn out was anticipated. Peter & I set off in our 1929 low chassis car which I bought from Mike Jones over 32 years ago and which I kept in preference to the 30-98 Vauxhall I had for 14 years. Something about the 2 litre Lagonda makes owners stick with the marque – its only real shortcoming is the lack of power on hills, it is otherwise a comfortable and pleasant handling vehicle with reasonable brakes, and a fine view down the bonnet from the driving seat. Ann & I had only returned the previous weekend from a 2½ week trip from Spain, through the Pyrenees, and up through France. The 2 litre averaged about 25 mpg and the only troubles were a puncture and some fuel vaporisation on one very hot day (cured with wet rag, and propping the bonnet open at the bottom)! We covered about 1700 miles in all, accompanied by friends in an Austin 12/4, MG Magna, and Model A Ford.

Arriving at Aldermaston at about 10.00 we were ushered into line with other 2 litres, and the total reached 37 later in the day, with 33 other Lagondas.

We bumped into Mike and Barbara Heins almost immediately – they have covered a huge mileage in their high chassis car, getting on for 200,000.

Typically the engine just keeps on going, and such mileages are not uncommon for a 2 litre. Alan and Jonathan Elliot were in their high chassis – this is campaigned a lot, but I remember Alan set the standard for Prescott in his low chassis car for many years – I was never able to achieve his time of around 60 seconds, always being 2-3 seconds slower!

There was a good variety of 2 litres from the 14/60 saloon of Peter Jones to the immaculate supercharged car of John Walker. Carl Heighington had motored up from Devon in his early low chassis car – the sister to mine, and once owned and raced by Jeff Ody. Carl always has it looking very smart, and it goes well with the downdraught cylinder head now fitted. I spoke to Tim Wadsworth whose well known car is the fastest unblown 2 litre, producing over 100 bhp at the wheels. He is hoping to revive 'Team 2 litre' in 2012, which was quite successful in the Team Challenges with Bentley and Aston Martin from 2004-9. You can win team races with a 2 litre by maintaining or beating your handicap and I can definitely recommend the gentle tour of Oulton Park, which I have done a few times!

The Carlton drop-head coupe which I remember at every AGM I attended, and which was used as the 'daily driver' for around 40 years by the late Dennis Clarke, turned up looking smart in its new livery of maroon & black. Nice to see this car preserved with this unusual coachwork. Jonathan Hartop flew in

from Switzerland and drove the prototype supercharged 2 litre down from Bishop Gray for a short while, and there was also a high chassis car driven over from France.

A couple of 14/60 semi sports tourers were on show – this was the model that first got me interested in Lagondas. The head of the art dept. at my school had one, back in the early 1960s, and he was very enthusiastic about it. His son still owns it (according to the membership list). An old friend owned a saloon similar to Peter Jones's and this was the first Lagonda I ever drove (TU 5922). It was christened 'Leadlag' (a pun on the Goon Show's 'leg-lag') due to its name, and weight. It was rather tatty, but it went surprisingly well and it was eventually restored by the late Dick Sage.

Completing the line up were two Continentals – very handsome, and the final incarnation of the 2 litre, but they freshened up the marque for the early 1930s when even a 1929 car must have looked rather old fashioned in the age of art deco, and more enveloping bodywork.

Other models were well represented - I counted 6 LG45s including a rare limousine – very important this is protected from the 'bodysnatchers' (and turned into another race replica). There were 5 M45s including David Hine's lovely saloon, and Nigel Walder's Abbot sports replica looking resplendent in red. Three 3 litre tourers, and one saloon, all immaculate, were basking in the sunshine, and there was an ultra-rare 16/60 tourer looking very original. This was fascinating – I had never seen one before, and it is a big tall car, like a large 14/60 semi sports with a much longer bonnet.

Three immaculate 16/80s were in attendance, one with the T7 style bodywork and long wings. I noticed the

RAC man attending to one of them later – hope it was nothing serious. There were only two Rapiers – Colin Bugler's drophead, and Peter Cripps's prototype, both cars a real credit to their owners.

One V12 – Jonathan Oppenheimer's magnificent drophead, and two LG 6s – the saloon of Adrian Lead (a very handsome car), and the tourer of Roger Threlfall (recent expensive engine rebuild) finished off the 4 1/2 litre entries.

Post war cars were represented by two saloons and two tourers – there was a time when none of these models attended, but interest in these cars is now on the increase (largely thanks to Peter Heard). Unfortunately no V8s or DB Rapides turned up – perhaps Peter can persuade some of these along next time.

Finally I was delighted to see Ken Painter's 12/24 in the flesh, and I had an interesting conversation with Colin Mallett on how he resurrected this car over 30 years ago, fitting it with a body from a Hillman. The work was very well done as it looks original to the car.

In the marquee the regalia and literature desks appeared to be doing brisk business, with many Buglers in charge (nice to see Valerie back again this year), and Robin had a display of recent additions to the spares portfolio on display.

On to the AGM itself, which started at 11.00 prompt, and the room was packed, with several members having to stand. David Hine welcomed everyone to the meeting explaining that this year is the 60th anniversary of the formation of the Lagonda Club (from the merger of the 2-litre register and the Lagonda Car Club). He mentioned that the Monk Fryston annual Northern Dinner would be part of an extended weekend next year. In 2013 there will be a North Yorkshire Tour, so get fettling the cars for that.



Another 14/60 2 litre Semi Sports Tourer, this one owned by John Hugh.



John Foulsham's racy 2 litre Low Chassis Tourer.

Chris and Kate Hobbs were thanked for organising the AGM weekend and making it such an enjoyable occasion (enthusiastic applause from the floor). The Almighty was thanked for the wonderful weather (Chris must have been offering up prayers after the rain last year!).

Jonathan Oppenheimer introduced new members Tim Clarke (3 litre), David Bricey (LG45) and Len Cozzolino (16/65). John Sword suggested informal networks of model groups, the aim being to widen the input of new spares. He explained that the healthy bank balance of the club would be used to improve spares coverage over the next two years. The bad debt write off of £4,600 cleared up differences that went back many years, and were not recoverable as people had left the club. The accounts were approved. Under the three year rule, Jonathan then resigned, but was unanimously re-elected as Chairman.

Robin Cooke reported very positive news about the spares organisation, with several new projects completed or underway. The DB cars were now being included in the spares scheme, and maybe even the light cars could be covered if there is enough interest! Robin's excellent management of the spares scheme was given appreciative applause.

Richard Reay-Smith reported a poor start to the competition season, but things picked up following the excellent performance by Lagonda Team 1 (John Waterson, Nick Hine, Stephen Matthews, and Trevor Swete) who won the AMOC Team Challenge. He recommended the handicap races with the staggered start for next year, and I for one will be hoping to be back on the grid in 2012 (after my Rapier's engine rebuild).

Peter Gilkes reported on the post-war scene, with cars changing hands at increasing values as interest has

broadened. A Technical Information Manual has been produced for the 2.6 and 3 litre cars. Spares stocks are starting with 'perishables' such as track rod ends, gaiters, brake cylinders, and other items that might affect the MOT. Some new old-stock electrical material is available, along with some body panels.

Arnold Davey explained that the Lagonda Heritage Trust is largely paper-based, and that he was looking for someone who would assist with updating this to an electronic medium.

Tony Loch, a founder member of the Lagonda Club offered congratulations to the club and the committee members who have served over the years putting their efforts into making it a great organisation to belong to. He commented wistfully on the fact that in the early days the membership was much younger on average than it is now. Reading some early magazines, I see Tony's name coming up regularly in competition successes. Interestingly he came to the AGM in a Morgan!

Colin Bugler had a few copies of the first Lagonda Club membership list – unfortunately it does not record the registration numbers of the cars, but some of the names and addresses are interesting (quite a few people being in the military at that time!)

Michael Drakeford tasked himself with creating an index of previously published technical articles. Tim Clarke mentioned he had some full sized blueprints of the 3 litre engine, gearbox and clutch which could be reproduced if required.

Colin Mallett started to mention some enhancements to the spares ordering system on the club website, but the site came under some very strong criticism from the floor for inconsistencies and errors. Colin answered this by explaining the difficulty of database configuration, and welcomed some positive feedback on how this might be improved.



Another view of the line-up.



The proud award winners line up for posterity.

The committee was requested to bring forward the publication of technical manual that the late Phil Ridout had started to compile. Apparently it is still in the hands of the executors.

With the meeting closed, members moved back into the warm sunshine and things quietened down over lunch – the concours judges moving around the field inspecting carefully for condition and originality.

At 3.00 pm the results of the concours results were announced as follows:

Vokes trophy- marque of the year:

John Walker 2 litre supercharged
PL 7016

2 Litre:

John Walker 2 litre supercharged
PL7016

16-80:

Malcolm Burgess KY 5813

Rapier:

Peter Cripps BPC 44

3/3 1/2 litre:

Philip Neate GX 1762

M45:

Patrick Daniel BEV 508

LG 45:

Stephen Matthews/Alec Downie
GPD 117

LG6/V12:

Adam Gilchrist MVS 552

Post-war cars:

Alan Heard SMX 10

Car Club Trophy:

Alan Heard SMX 10

Ladies Choice:

Peter Jones 14-60 saloon KO 6393

Award of Merit:

Len Cozzolino 16-65 tourer
NF 7381



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Around the World in 72 Days

Ken Painter has an adventure holiday

THE EDITORIAL ALASKA and New Zealand trip was, not surprisingly, the holiday of a lifetime, with a fascinating selection of vintage cars thrown in for good measure. My Alaskan hosts, Harry and Marianne Robinson, treated me to some unique Alaskan sights and activities, watching moose in their garden, photographing a black bear cub in the wild just eight feet from me, watching salmon fight their way upstream to spawn, taking a boat trip to see glaciers dropping huge pieces of ice into the water and watching seal and sea otters cavorting in the icy water, riding behind a team of huskies, a tour around the Alaskan Transport Museum, viewing the Alaskan pipeline that transports oil hundreds of mile from the far north to the sea (this was Harry's last assignment before he retired). visiting a new and fascinating motor museum in Fairbanks, where a superbly restored selection of cars tell the story of the development of the American car, taking part in local vintage car events and finding myself the guest speaker at a meeting of Toastmasters.

The Antique Automushers Club of Alaska rally was held on the Saturday, two days after my arrival. Harry and Marianne no longer have Lagondas, so we took part in Harry's 1930 Model A Ford. All of the cars taking part were American and ranged from early vintage to post-war classics. One was a 1930's Ford that had been driven from Tierra del Fuego to Alaska some years ago, the crew then couldn't afford to drive home, so a local enthusiast bought the car from them and has maintained it in its trans-continental livery. At the rally venue they regularly drive around the tiny settlement where the event is held each year. The club members all made me

very welcome and I was invited to ride in every car there. Even by changing cars half way around the route, I couldn't manage the entire selection, but did manage a very interesting variety, from an early 1920's Dodge tourer to a 1950's Ford convertible. Unfortunately, we had to leave the rally early on the following morning, but it was an experience not to be missed and one I shall treasure.

Before I left Alaska, the club held a party in my honour, where I had been asked to give a short talk on the history of the family Maserati. Many of our fellow competitors in the rally were there, plus other club members who had been unable to take part. They are a great crowd and by the end of the evening I felt as if I had been a fellow member for many years!

All too soon, I had to leave on the next leg of my journey, flying to Auckland. It is a long flight and, because you cross the International Date Line, the flight arrives two days after it began. Two hours later, I began a rail journey to make a short visit to Mike, an old school friend who lives in Ohakune, mid-way down North Island. The train ride was fascinating and took me through some wonderful sights, over dramatic viaducts, through wild mountain valleys and, most impressive of all, up a long spiral of track and through several tunnels to climb hundreds of feet. The track here runs for 11 kilometers to cover a point to point distance of five kilometers. It is an engineering masterpiece and something not to be missed.

Mike and I had last met in 1956, but as is so often the case with old friends, we simply picked up where we had left off all those years ago. He is not a vintage car enthusiast, but very generously gave

me a video of the International Vintage Car Rally held in New Zealand in the early 1990's and had found some back numbers of the NZ Vintage Car magazine for me in a local shop.

From Ohakune, I moved south by coach to Wellington, another surprisingly beautiful trip. The road runs through a valley about 40 miles long, at times along the valley bottom, next to a river rushing from the mountain slopes and, at others, hundreds of feet above the river, offering wonderful views at all times.

In Wellington, Sue, a family friend, loaned me her car to visit the Sir Len Southward Motor Museum about 30 kilometers north of the city. It was not the best time for a visit, they were repainting the floor of the huge building and all the cars were crowded together on one side, so photographing the cars was not easy, but I took pictures of the 11-9, the V12, the DB 2-6 and the Aston Martin Lagonda Special that are a part of the huge and fascinating display of cars that are on show and these are shown in later pages.

Sue is a New Zealander and made sure I saw the best the Wellington area has to offer. There is no better way to explore a city than to be shown around by someone who knows it well and I was taken to some places the average visitor would never see. There are beautiful natural parks within the city where the native trees and plants grow in profusion and there are places along the coast that are stunningly beautiful. She also took me to a local classic car garage and restoration shop when they were holding an open day and to the Wellington Museum, the most interesting museum I have ever visited.

From Wellington, I flew to Christchurch, where Ruth, my younger daughter lives. The once beautiful city has been seriously damaged by the two large earthquakes earlier in the year and the aftershocks continue. They have now

suffered over 8,200 and we averaged three or four a week during my stay. They were nothing like as strong as the two major earthquakes that caused so much damage, but the largest rocked the entire house like a boat on a choppy sea, quite an experience! In June, the city endured 167 aftershocks in a single day. Ruth's house is badly damaged and is one of the thousands that will have to be demolished and a new and 'quake-proof house built to replace it.

There is a 12/24 in Auckland, but I wasn't there long enough to make contact with the owner, so I telephoned him and had a long and very informative chat. There is, however, one in Christchurch, just six miles from Ruth's home. I had the owner listed as Ian Hedgman and tracked him down via the Internet, only to discover that he lived many miles from Christchurch, but had given the car to his son, Michael. I rang him and, as luck would have it, his father was visiting him, so I was able to talk to both of them.

Michael invited me to visit him and have a ride in his car, we arrived to find the car ready for us outside the house and Ruth and I enjoyed a long drive with him. To suit the very hilly conditions in much of New Zealand, the car has been modified in ways that the VSCC would not accept, but are perfectly acceptable to the NZ club. It has a higher ratio rear axle which may not be an earlier Lagonda 4-7:1 unit and it has a post-war SU carburettor and electric fuel pump, with the carburettor fitted directly to the inlet manifold, rather than low down below the exhaust manifold. The biggest change from original is the very well engineered fitting of a Ford Cortina four speed all synchromesh gearbox. This has been done using the original Lagonda gear lever and a clever new gear change gate made, with five slots instead of the original four. It takes someone who is familiar with the model to notice the change. I think the car has higher compression pistons as well.



Alaska, Ken visits the seven glaciers visible at Whittier. This one is $\frac{3}{4}$ mile wide, $\frac{1}{4}$ mile high and 7 miles long.



New Zealand, the 11-9 Lagonda in the Sir Len Southward Museum. Note how closely packed the cars were as the floor was painted.



The elegant V12 in the Museum.



An unfinished attempt at creating a Sports Lagonda.

The car is bodily as it left the factory, except that it has side lights on top of the wings and not either side of the windscreen. It is beautifully restored, but traditionalists might comment on the paint colour, called Chestnut by the makers, but which the local tax authorities insist on calling Orange. Since you could have a 12/24 painted any colour of your choice I see no reason to criticise it!

A few days after our visit, Michael invited me to go with him on the club's Spring Rally on 17th September. There were some 60 vintage cars taking part, with a high percentage of American origin. As well as the inevitable Ford Model T's and A's, there were some I had never seen before - how many of you have seen a Jewett? Graham Paige, Hupmobile, Rugby and Essex were well represented, as well as Chrysler, Chevrolet, Studebaker and Buick. European cars were in the minority, but Austin, Morris and Standard were taking part as well as a Renault model I had never met before. The route followed roads so quiet we hardly saw another car and we enjoyed rural New Zealand at its very best.

The drive certainly showed the soundness of the modifications to the Lagonda, it performed like no British example and was a very practical and useable car as a result. The rally route covered about 50 miles and the return run around 40 miles, so I have now covered more miles in Michael's car than I have in Connie! As a bonus, I was presented with one of the rally plaques for the event, a valued souvenir of a wonderful day.

Ruth's neighbour, Alastair, has a 1915 Hupmobile, a 1915 Buick, a 1920's Chevrolet, two WW2 Jeeps and several beautifully restored early Minis and took me for a short drive in the Hupmobile tourer. Like all the early cars I saw in New Zealand, it was impeccably restored and ran beautifully.

At the local Club Headquarters, set in a large area of parkland, they have a

huge parts shed, filled with spares that have been donated by members and are sold to raise funds to maintain their splendid Club building. The shed is open to all every Wednesday afternoon, so I called in on the hunt for 12/24 parts.

The spares are stored in a very logical way, with all the carburettors in one part, starters and dynamos in another, wheels in a third and so on. It would take days to search the entire stock. The first thing I saw was a set of five three stud artillery wheels, would they fit Connie? Since I had no idea that such Aladdin's caves of parts existed, I was unprepared for this, so brought no essential measurements with me. I checked that they were 19 inches diameter, but nobody knew what car they had come from and I needed to know the pitch circle diameter of the stud holes. The team of volunteers who staff the shed had the solution though.

They took a rubbing of the wheel centre for me to bring back to the UK and put the wheels to one side, reserved in my name. If they were correct, all I had to do was to let Ruth know and she could collect them on my behalf. Unfortunately, they were not the correct PCD for the Lagonda, so my search for more wheels continues.

The NZ Vintage Car Club is organised on a regional basis and every Regional HQ has a similar set-up, so if you plan a trip to New Zealand and need some parts for a vintage car, be sure to take the fullest possible details with you, you never know your luck!

There is much more to New Zealand than vintage cars. We visited the Christchurch Museum just after it was re-opened, following repairs after the last big earthquake. One very moving exhibit was a room displaying 'hearts of sympathy', embroidered hearts sent to the city from all around the world after the earthquakes. These are arranged in patterns all around the walls, demonstrating how the world has shown its sympathy and concern over the city's plight.



The DB 2-6 Lagonda, looking very attractive in its two-tone colour scheme.



One of the highlights in Ken's holiday was navigating for Michael Hedgman in his 12/24.

Another great attraction, both for adults and children, is the Antarctic Centre, which tells the story of the explorations and the scientific work undertaken there. It offers you a very realistic experience of that inhospitable region, with a cold room, where you can experience life as it really is there. A 'must try' is the hair-raising Haglund Rides, tracked vehicles that transport staff and equipment in Antarctica. Groups of eight or ten are taken around a course that demonstrates its versatility. It climbs incredibly steep inclines, can be driven along at terrifying angles, crosses surprisingly wide gaps resembling crevasses and 'swims' in water deep enough to come well up the outside of the windows around the sides. The ride is taken at speed, is very uncomfortable and enormous fun! The passengers were roaring with laughter and excitement at the unlikely positions the machine took in its stride, another experience not to be missed.

The New Zealand armed forces have served with great distinction around the world in many conflicts and I visited both the Army Museum on North Island and the Air Force Museum in Christchurch. The displays of bravery medals including many VCs are a testament to the heroism of their troops over the years and both museums were filled with interest to a former RAF man like me.

The Christchurch Transport and Science Museum was a disappointment after the outstanding displays in the other museums, it is cramped, very down at heel and expensive for what it offered. It is much smaller than the Alaskan Transport Museum and doesn't show as wide a range of exhibits. There were no aircraft or boats and only a few agricultural vehicles on display.

Ruth and her husband Justin took me to many local beauty spots - and New Zealand is full of them - where we could enjoy stunning scenery, or the peace and quiet of the coastline in the winter, all in

glorious sunshine. Christchurch is on an ancient flood plain, but the mountains are very close and the roads over and along them are a driver's delight. The views across the city are wonderful and once you have crossed the peaks, the views of the coastline are no less impressive.

Everyone urged me to take a train ride on the "Tranzalpine" from Christchurch to Greymouth on the west coast, so Ruth, the two boys and I took a three day trip to experience what has been described as New Zealand's own transcontinental railway. It is only 231 kilometers long but takes you past snowy peaks, wide alpine river valleys, through some amazing rugged gorges, through temperate rain forest and over some incredible viaducts crossing deep valleys.

The journey takes 4½ hours and the train needs two huge diesel electric engines to haul it up the steep inclines. There are many tunnels along the route, including the 8.5 kilometer long Otira Tunnel, which took ten years to complete and which was the longest in the southern hemisphere when it was completed in 1923.

For much of its route, it follows the ancient Maori track across the mountains, which became the road between the east and west coasts when gold and coal were discovered along the west coast. Before the railway there was a stage coach route between the two towns and the journey then took four days. There is a more modern road route now and that too runs alongside the rail track for much of the journey.

The Tranzalpine service runs once a day in each direction, east to west in the morning and back again in the afternoon, but the route is used heavily by trains carrying loads of coal from Greymouth to Lyttleton, a port just outside Christchurch, where the coal is exported to Japan and South America.

We had hired a car in Greymouth, because Ian Hedgman had invited us to

stay with him 'just a little way' from the town. The road journey was around 190 kilometers and took 3½ hours, but was worth every second of the trip. The road follows the coastline for many miles and then climbs through the lower reaches of the mountains. It is a scenic delight, swooping around many bays along the coast and driving through bush country for much of the hillier parts. Then the countryside levels out and the route passes through miles of farmland.

Ian and Ruth Hedgman live a few miles south of Karamea and run a guest house, but we were treated as their guests and an offer to pay was politely and firmly refused! The two boys loved their house, the family have grandchildren of their own, the house was packed with toys and the garden full of surprises for them. Ruth keeps a few cows and one had given birth to a bull calf the day we arrived, so the boys were too busy to have time to misbehave!

Ian and I stayed up very late talking Lagondas and I learned a great deal about 12/24s in general and his old car in particular. His and Ruth's generosity and kindness was typical of many of the people I met on my trip and made it all very special.

On the way back to Greymouth the next day we visited a seal colony where it was impossible to count the numbers present, then moved on to a strange geological feature called Pancake Rocks. Over many millennia thin layers of limestone were deposited and are separated by a thin layer of silt. Each layer of limestone is just a few inches thick and years of erosion by wind, sea and weather has created some incredible shapes in the rocks. They really do look like huge stacks of pancakes, often with blowholes eroded through them, creating huge spouts of water as the waves hit them.

We stayed in Greymouth overnight and, before we took the afternoon train to Christchurch, we took the boys to

Shantytown, a re-creation of an early settlers' township. Many original early buildings have been moved to the site to give an impression of what life would have been like then. They have houses, shops, a school, a hospital, the local jail, a fire station complete with original equipment and many other examples of period buildings.

There is a short railway track, with steam engines from the 1800s that take a pair of period carriages along the track, through two stations, one with a period sawmill and a track to a 'gold mine', where they demonstrate how the hillsides were blasted away with high pressure water pumps to release the soil and rocks, which were then panned for gold.

Visitors can try their hand at panning and they guarantee that you will find some gold in your pan. They actually buy the flakes of gold from a local mine, but even so it is great fun to watch the tiny specks of gold appear as you wash the stones and soil away.

One of the old stagecoaches is on display and one has to admire the fortitude of those who endured the four day journey across rough and steep tracks between Greymouth and Christchurch. The rail journey back was pure luxury in comparison!

Soon it was time to fly home again. I returned with wonderful memories of new and exciting experiences. Everyone I met in Alaska and New Zealand were welcoming and generous and I have made many new friendships that will go on for years to come. It was hard work, my total flying time was around 80 hours, but worth every second to achieve those three ambitions that had sparked the trip in the first place. I stayed with Harry and Marianne Robinson in Alaska, after some 37 years of urging by them to visit, I visited Ruth in New Zealand and I finally achieved a trip all around the world, crossing the equator for the 50th time on the way home!

Battle and Hastings.

August 2011

David Hine was there

THIS YEAR THE Continental Section of our Club took the bold step to leave the Continent and come to England.

As in 2010 the rally was organised by the Laqueur and Arentsen families and they did a brilliant job indeed. The advance information was especially informative and exciting.

We all gathered at the Powdermills Hotel in Battle and Alan and I were teased that we did not have to come far. I tried to explain that we had probably had a longer journey than most, but to no avail.

Macko Laqueur made a wonderful welcome speech in a bright sunshine gap between the showers. He warned folk of the pitfalls in this foreign land. These included the washing of hands where one tap has boiling water issuing and the other freezing cold water. Not always obvious which it's going to do either! The other major warning was to drive on the near side rather than the off side of the road!

Tea stop the next morning was in Litlington and we were greeted by a bemused Richard Mann. He was walking his dog thinking he had never seen another Lag in his village when suddenly

he saw 40 roaring past.

Lunch was a great surprise when we arrived at the Bluebell Railway to find that superb vintage carriages had been reserved for us as we travelled up and down the preserved railway track with fine dining.

The evenings are always great parties with sing songs and a host of other musical instruments.

Our second and last day included more hidden single track roads following the incredibly detailed road book through hills and river fords. Tea at the spectacular Bodiam Castle, lunch at amazing Brattle Farm auto museum and afternoon at Great Dixter mediaeval house and gardens.

More was to come when we were astonished to have a beautiful double decker Routemaster to convey us on a high speed, white knuckle, ride to the historic town of Rye, with dinner in the Old Mermaid Inn to round off a great gathering.

Farewells, the next day were made more pleasurable by the presentation gift of a photographic souvenir from Fiona Richardson, each with our own car displayed.





The Powdermills Hotel puts the flag out for the rally.



David Hine takes the ford in great style.



The unusual venue for lunch.



The cars park in front of Bodiam Castle.

All rally pictures by Fiona Richardson.

Historic Pictures

Arnold Davey plays detective again

TWO PHOTOGRAPHS OF historic interest have come my way lately. The Foden steam lorry picture came from Jeff Ody although the original tiny 'snap' is with Malcolm Jeal of the Society of Automotive Historians in Britain (SAHB). The original is tiny, so what you see has been blown up and then photocopied, to the detriment of quality. From the original print we know the lorry was first registered in 1912 and the fact that it carries 'Lagonda Limited' signs means the photo was taken after 1913, when that company was set up. But what was this monster used for and where was the picture taken?

Steam lorries in the 1920s and 1930s were commonly used for heavy haulage, where the flexibility of steam, enormous torque at zero revs, was particularly valued. But Lagonda did its own foundry work, the traditional source of heavy lumps of iron, in-house, so had no need of heavy haulage to bring in castings from elsewhere. My own speculation is based on the Foden's rather unusual bodywork, neither a flatbed nor a sided truck, but halfway in between. The major raw material needed to build 11 or 12 HP Lagondas was flat sheets of tinned steel, and I suggest that the steamer was used to collect these from the steel stockholder, wherever that might have been. A six-inch layer of 8 ft by 6 ft steel plates would be pretty heavy and would need a powerful truck to carry them. About 5.2 tons, since you ask.

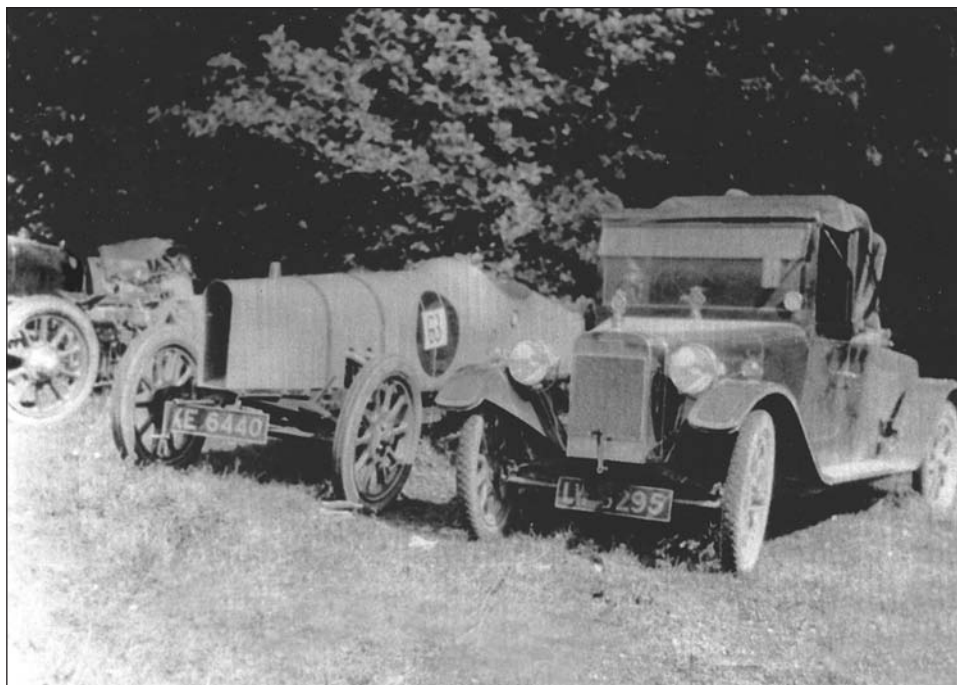
The photos were certainly not taken in the Lagonda factory, which was almost entirely corrugated iron and certainly had nowhere so lofty or so well built. The brickwork is at least 13½ inches thick below the windows in what is clearly a very large building.

The second picture came from former member Nic Portway, also from the SAHB, and is a reprint from an album which had been broken up by a dealer. It shows Bill Oates's single-seater Brooklands 1919 beside his then current rally car in the paddock at the Chatcombe Pitch hill climb, near Cheltenham on 21st May 1921. (Oates came third fastest at 46 seconds to Archie Frazer-Nash's 34.4 seconds). The car is road registered and I have no doubt was driven to the event with no mudguards or lamps or windscreen. The XE registration is odd, since these were all issued between September and December 1920, so either work started on the car earlier than we thought or, more likely, the racer was a rebuild of an earlier car and took its registration.

The two-seater 11.9 was the car Oates was using for trials and rallies. Built in mid-1919, it started life as an 11.1 two-seater, to which he added an 11.9 engine and flat radiator and, eventually, as seen in the picture, the longer 11.9 wheelbase. By May 1921 it was looking considerably care-worn. The following year he campaigned a different 11.9, XK 4990.

Just a thought, the lorry doesn't look new and could well have been purchased second-hand in 1914 or even a little later. A lorry like this would have been very useful during the Great War, when the factory was busy with war work. It would have been ideal for delivering crates of munitions to wherever they were stored and those side panels would have been a suitable height to secure them, provided they were stacked only one crate high - and, like sheets of steel, each crate would have been very heavy.

K.P.P.





Brian Savill's 16/80 on the rolling road.



Brian Savill sent this picture as well. Is the Spares service missing a trick here?

Letters

Dear Ken.

I thought you might like this photo and the following information.

Chris Hallett and I had our cars, both 16/80's, tested on the rolling road recently.

It was shown that setting the twin SU's up by the normal method resulted in a slight richness at idle revs.

The performance test showed the following results.

3rd Gear at 3000 revs	60 BHP
3500 revs	70 BHP
4th Gear at 4000 revs	77 BHP
4200 revs	79.5 BHP

At higher revolutions BHP reduced.

In fact one engine was about 1 BHP less at 4200 revs. Both engines are built to the same specification the only real difference being the camshaft profiles.

I hope this anorak information may be of use.

Best regards,

Brian Savill

Dear Ken,

Ref. The Lagonda Number 229

In the Letters in The Lagonda Magazine number 229 Peter Weir inquires about a Lagonda M45 bulkhead purchased by Mike Truter thought to have come from a car owned by Dr. Arnold Young (Doc. Young) in Malaya in about 1980.

I knew Doc Young quite well in the latter ten years of his life, corresponding with him often and visiting him at his delightful home overlooking the bay in Torquay. He died on 30 August 2001 aged 84. He was truly one of nature's gentlemen.

Doc Young was a Commander in the 6th Airborne Division in Europe in the latter stages of WW2. After the war he established a medical practice in Ipoh Malaya and in 1947 he took his 1928 2L

HC SM Lagonda from the UK to Malaya. Soon after the 2 Litre was joined by a 1934 M45 dhc Freestone and Webb Lagonda. These cars were driven around Malaya and down to Singapore covering about 1500 miles/month in the doctor's medical practice

In the early 1950s Doc Young who was a competent motor mechanic undertook a major rebuild of the M45. A photograph taken at the time shows that the engine bulkhead was removed, but there is no reference to its damage or replacement. Doc Young was a notable Lagonda enthusiast, over time he owned eight Lagondas :- a2L HC SM, a 16/80 VP 2seater, a 3L, two 3.5 Ls, two LG45s and an LG45R as well as three Bentleys, an Alvis and a Bristol 406.

I am not aware of Doc Young's membership of The Lagonda Club, but he was a member of the Malaysian and Singapore Vintage Car Register. Maybe as a later editor of the Register's Monthly Magazine you may know of the more recent owners of the Doc Young M45 who could confirm the origin of the M45 bulkhead that Mike Truter refers to.

Doc Young returned to the UK in 1958 leaving both the 2L and M45 in Malaya or Singapore.

For the past 30 years I have owned Doc Young's 1928 2Litre HC SM Lagonda, the car is in excellent condition and driven frequently in and around New South Wales. It is still a great car to drive. I am enclosing a copy of a letter that I received from Doc Young in May 1995 which I am sure you will find historically interesting in regard to his Lagonda ownership etc..

I hope that you enjoyed your recent round the world holiday, we would have been pleased for you to have stayed a few days here if time had permitted, perhaps next time. Keep us up to date with the

Saga of Connie it is a very interesting project.

Kind Regards

Peter Docker

Arnold Young's letter, written in 1995, appears below:

Dear Peter,

I was delighted to have your letter - it reached me eventually! - and your pictures of the 2L; my first Lagonda and the best car I have ever owned, narrowly beating a Bristol 406. Alas, now old and decrepit, I have nothing Lagonda in the garage, except the bicycle trouser clips hanging on the wall, denoting the 2L owner - stops the gear lever getting up one trousers when leaping nimbly over the side!

Ian Metcalfe was an ex naval type, just demobbed, who had a mainly vintage old car emporium in a mushroom farm in Shepperton; its low sheds prevented his stocking anything but fold flat windscreens; the 2L hadn't; its original screen was horizontally divided - sluicing gallons on one's knees - and with, if I recall, a mechanical wiper. I was on leave from 6 Airbourne Div. - we finished the European campaign in Wismar, on the Baltic to which we beat the Russians - prior to going out east for a crack at the Japs. We had a month to reinforce and re-equip; the powers that be saved vehicle issues by allowing unit commanders and 2 i/c's to use their own cars on army petrol; this must be the only Lagonda with a Service history! After a month's blissful belting around Wiltshire, I toted my wife and toddling twins overnight 430 miles to Edinburgh. Heavily sedated, the brats sang heartily in the back all night. I left the car with Gordon MacAndrew for the rest of the war, for a very competent engine rebuild; it followed me out to Malaya - I must have been based in Penang at the time.

You must forgive me if these ramblings are old hat or already known to you - I expect most are.

I suspect Lagondas produced a sporting machine quite accidentally; the

first 14/60s were rather stodgy; the designer, one Oates, may well have drawn the engine with malice aforethought - he produced the Speed model - later dubbed the High Chassis in 1927 and personally raced it in things like Brooklands handicaps. The Speed Models, of which you have one, (I think I can still remember engine no, OH910, chassis was 9124 ?) were always black fabric bodied, red frame, mudguards and wheels; succeeded by the low chassis with blocks lowering the rear axle and a different front axle forging, plus chassis bracing; a kingpin below the bulkhead foot and tie rods as far as the spring anchorages. Sidelamps were on scuttle; they were all green. These changes spoiled the handling and the looks and introduced front axle tramp! The 2Ls were always overshadowed by the 3 litre Bentleys; a few, if I remember about 30, were given blowers, mostly Zollers, but all this did was increase the incidence of cracked heads. It was decided - the company was still in Staines and run by General Metcalfe - that the 14/60 was too expensive to make anyway and it was succeeded around 1932 by the 16/80, also a 2 litre, with a bought in Crossley pushrod engine, This was a flop.

From your remarks on gear ratios - you're absolutely right! The car must have its original gearbox still, with capital L shaped top cover, this was succeeded by the Z type box, rectangular top cover, same size fitting, same mountings, stronger internals, used on the 1932 3 litres and 3 ½s.

During the 1950's the car had a busy life; I was doing 1500 miles a month on two Lagondas - one on, one in the wash - based in Ipoh in general practice, which included medical supervision of 64 rubber estates and tin mines, among three partners through the guerilla- attempted takeover by the old rascal Chairman Mao.

By this time; Lagonda Ltd had been taken over by David Brown, and the old cars were looked after by their ex-service manage, a nice man called Davies and his formidable wife Vivienne, whose voice

could crack windows at 100 yds. Davies Motors were also in Staines; every time I flew in the Heathrow on leave, they were waiting for me with another one.

The car competed in rallies and speed events all over Malaya while in my hands; eventually passed on to finance a 4½ Freestone and Webb dhc from Davies Motors, which joined the throng in Malaya. The 2L used to do the 400 miles Singapore-Ipoh in about 9¼ hours; the M45 did it in 8 hrs. I was always amazed that the 2L seemed to be known throughout the country; invariably greeted by Malay policemen manning road blocks and waved through!

My rich Chinese patients, on the other hand, would lean out of their latest American models and enquire "but doctor, why don't you buy a new car?"

A lovely life, but it couldn't last forever. I returned home in '58 - a mistake; best for children, perhaps and it did enable me to sample Lagonda's 16/80 VdP (wrapped around a tree by my eldest son near Kidderminster; he climbed from the wreck resolved to leave the country), a 3L, 2 3½s, 2 LG45s and an LG6R. Besides a Bristol 406, 3 Bentleys, an Alvis TD 21, a Reliant Scimitar, among others.

So here I am, on the last lap I fear; no regrets; it's been tremendous fun. I will try to extract some early portraits of the 2L from the family archive, which are in Newcastle with my younger daughter (also a medic - she's just back from 6 months locum in Townsville, Queensland and diving on the reef) and send them to you.

I'll write again when I have them; meanwhile my thanks for your most welcome letter, and news of what is still my favourite car!

With best wishes,
Sincerely,

Arnold Young

The last owner of the M45 was Harry Robinson, who now lives in Alaska, where he is known as Robbie as there

were two Harrys working on his final assignment with Mobil! Tragically, the car was totally destroyed on a massive fire when the car was away, being restored. As he and I were joint editors of the MSVCR Magazine I spent a lot of time at his house and remember the car as a very crudely bodied example until he persuaded a local body builder to create as accurate a replica of the team cars as he could. I contacted him after my recent stay with him, asking if he could add anything to the story. His reply is printed below:

Hello Ken,

Doc Young took my M-45 out to Malaya in about 1952 as a DHC and had the body chopped/modified quite a bit in the 1950's. He sold it to a British army fellow whose name escapes me. He, in turn, sold it to another Army officer who took it over to Borneo where it was virtually abandoned behind a Chinese shop. Apparently, the engine was undergoing an overhaul that was aborted as the head, pistons, etc., were in buckets of water when found by a Chinese contractor, Tony Koh, that I had hired to do mechanical work on the new Mobil refinery.

After some "negotiations", Tony Koh arranged to ship it to Singapore where it was smuggled in as "welding equipment". It was delivered one dark night to our house in Binjai Park.

Regards,

**Robbie and
Marianne Robinson**

I can add a little more to this saga, after having trawled through my incomplete collection of MSVCR Magazines, Harry joined the club in the latter half of 1966, after he had taken delivery of the car. In the October edition of the magazine the following appears: "Harry Robinson has recently taken delivery of the 4½ Lagonda M45 (ex Mike Searight) Some of the

"admiration" was a little unusual taking the form of comments such as - "What a queer looking thing!" and "People must have had very small rears in those days" but on the whole she was most well received'

The Lagonda is looking just a little sad since she arrived with half the engine rattling around inside her body. The body itself has been slightly altered in the rear seat area...."

A month later Harry wrote a letter to the Magazine, where he describes the car as "The ex-Butterell, Searight,??? Young M45 Lagonda.

" So we have a possible gap of at least three names, all after Doc Young's ownership and, to be frank, I doubt if any of them could add any new information as to the history of the bulkhead.

KPP

Hello Ken

A pleasure to meet you at the AGM! You'll be pleased to know that I now have a copy of the Lagonda Magazine in my hand as we speak...

If there's room in the 'Letters' page - perhaps you might include this;

I wish to thank all Lagonda Club members at the AGM for giving me such a warm welcome as a new member to the Club. I thoroughly enjoyed myself - learning much about all the foibles and idiosyncracies - and those of the Lagondas as well...

The enjoyment and enthusiasm surrounding these great cars has encouraged me to redouble my efforts to commission my 1934 3 litre T7 as soon as possible.

Best regards

Tim Clarke



Yes, there really was a bear cub! It completely ignores Ken, who is standing just eight feet away from it.

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