



**THE MAGAZINE OF THE
LAGONDA CLUB
Number 244 Spring 2015**

DAVID AYRE



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FRONT COVER:

*The Editor's 2 litre LC at the top of the Jaunpass in Switzerland.
Picture from Roger Seabrook.*

Contents

From the Driving Seat	5
Algarve Adventure	7
By Appointment	11
A Snippet of History	16
Lagonda vs Bentley & some others	21
Exploits with Lagondas	28
Modelling Classic Cars – Part Three	33
Letters	36-38

From the Driving Seat

Roger Seabrook

"SPRING IS SPRUNG, the grass is riz, I wonder where my windscreen is!"

The Editorial 2 litre has been minus its windscreen since last November, when it was sent away for restoration. Hopefully it will be back in time to be fitted for the Spring Tour. I am lucky to have the Rapier as a back-up, but it is not so popular with Ann, so we shall see.

Last year I decided to look for a saloon car for use in cold and wet weather. I usually lay the Lagondas up after November, but get one out for the New Years Day meeting. However the salt on the roads, and their appalling condition, does considerable damage, particularly to aluminium castings, and those hard-to-get-at areas of the car which are often overlooked. I would have loved to acquire a Lagonda saloon - in particular the lovely CCS recently for sale - but this would have defeated the object, and it would have been even harder to maintain one of these in tip-top condition.

So I decided to go for a cheap and cheerful solution, and acquired a Model A Ford Tudor. My initial impression was not favourable - but the thing grows on you and it is a surprisingly good car. Not comparable to a Lagonda, of course, but a fraction of the price, and you can get any spare almost by return of post! No aluminim or delicate plating to corrode, and tough as old boots! The 3.3 litre engine drags you up most hills in top, and it will cruise at 50mph all day. But for long distances in comfort, and the pleasure of driving, I would always choose my Lagonda. It can now rest easy

in the winter, and the continuous improvement over the last 36 years can be maintained!

I was short of portrait-type photographs, so I hope the cover picture is not too self-indulgent. It was taken in 2013 on our trip to Switzerland, and it rained most of the time we were there, hence the hood! Just as I took this a bullnose Morris steamed by (literally), seemingly unaffected by boiling. Apparently they all do that on steep hills, due to the radiator shape respricting airflow.

In the letters section, Alan Elliott requests a return to competition reporting in the Magazine, and I do agree with him. So if there is anyone who would like to volunteer to collate results, and maybe some pictures, please contact Richard Reay Smith or me. There are a couple of articles in this edition, which cover overseas events.

I have had one response on the Riley-engined 2 litre, and Martin Tinsley's letter is on page 36. However there is no news of OH 9552 (352 GMO), so I guess it did go abroad, and has disappeared. Last seen 36 years ago!

You will know that Arnold Davey has produced his last Newsletter, as he wanted to retire from this job after some 50 years of doing it. It is an incredible feat, and Arnold has this gift of always finding something new and interesting to talk about. He stays on as Historian, and his occasional contributions to the Magazine are always welcome, so he will still be there.

Thank you Arnold.

***Last date for copy for the Summer magazine is
... MONDAY 29th June 2015 ...***



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Algarve Adventure

The 'Knarr Mill Gang' go racing in Portugal - October 2014

FOLLOWING A SUCCESSFUL season of racing Nick Hine's LG45 at Silverstone VSCC and two Donnington Park events, it was decided to sally forth to Portugal for the last hurrah of 2014.

The entry fee seemed good value, as it included two major practice sessions. Two days of racing, and the hotel accommodation, was included as well. Alan Brown couldn't wait to get the cheque off to Duncan Wiltshire's Legends set-up!

Monarch Airways tickets to Faro were booked which included car hire.

Then a blow struck when the chap who was going to transport the car let us down, and we had to use Cars Europe. Cars did provide a perfect service, picking the Lagonda up from Knarr Mill and returning it after the race, but there was no change out of three grand with the dreaded VAT included! Alan cheerfully raised another cheque, as we were too far committed at that stage.

The plan was that Alan and Nick would be the drivers with yours truly as the humble mechanic. It was hard to know what spares to take, as the Lagonda was running extremely well. We had a spare set of valve actuating rockers, because all other moving engine components had been beefed up when I fitted one of Derek Green's camshafts a few years ago. New, replica, pre-war HV8 carburettors were the latest addition to please the eligibility folk, and they did indeed look so much better than the ex-Jaguar ones we had on before.

I had taken "Wotsit" (that's her name) to a rolling road to tune the new carbs and managed to get 172 bhp at 3700 rpm, which was indeed most

satisfactory. The tuning geezer was amazed by the torque, which peaked at 323 lb-ft at 1850 rpm. It nearly busted his machine!

Alan and I flew out on the Wednesday to give us all of Thursday to find the track, find the car, and generally get signed in and scrutineered. It did indeed take most of the day, but all was sorted in the end.

The Portimao circuit is amazing. It is a full spec. Grand Prix venue which was built a few years ago, when there was an unlimited supply of euros for anyone with a bright idea. There is a five mile spur off the new motorway, purpose-built up into the sun-drenched, barren hills. The circuit itself loops and swoops all over the hills with a very fast pit straight, with all the grandstands, seating for literally hundreds of thousands, unlimited VIP suites furnished to the highest standards, pits for teams - all with beautiful loos and piped air and power.....and all deserted and rusting - very sad!

However this classic event really attracts competitors, with over 300 cars and 600 drivers taking part. There are very exciting grids of 60's and 70's grand prix cars, souped-up Minis and Cortinas, C and D type Jaguars, in fact anything classic had its place.

Our grid was pre-war sports cars, only eighteen of us but a good cross-section.

Nick and wife, Emma, arrived in time for a sumptuous dinner at the five star Casino Hotel in Praia de Rocha, where we were billeted.

Friday started early with a voluntary practice, to get to know this tricky circuit



Wotsit preparing in the pit garage



Alan Brown, leaping into the driving seat, takes over from Nick Hine'

with all its twists and blind summits to remember. Then, in the warm and sunny afternoon, was the qualifying session and we got a mid-field position. We were well ahead of most but no match for a Morgan three-wheeler, a fast PVT Aston and annoyingly, two vintage Bentleys ! Not everyone is a fan of WO's heavy engineering, but his original engine design was truly brilliant. The one-piece fixed block, and four valves in a cross-flow head, make these engines perfect for tuning to very high power output indeed.

However 'Wotsit' is no slouch, and in Nick's hands on a damp track the Bentley Boys get a run for their money, with R S Crump's Meadows engine at full throttle !

There was an adequate restaurant on site for breakfast, but on the race days lunch was included for us in the suite overlooking the pit straight.

Saturday dawned overcast with a fine and continuous drizzle. Alan and I had to drive out of the circuit to find some petrol. With no windscreen and Hartford shock absorbers screwed up tight it was a damp, bone jarring experience on Portugal's ancient pre-euro roads!

We looked on with amusement at all the frantic tyre changing that had to take place with those cars normally on slicks. Our Dunlop racing tyres have to be all-purpose!

Nick went out first in our race. However, there was drama when he did not come out with the other cars, but back into the pits. One of the carburettors had decided to flood just at the critical moment. A gentle tap with a mole wrench was all that was needed, but then he had to start from the pit lane just behind the last car. He soon caught everyone up and had a splendid time. The photo shows Alan leaping into 'Wotsit' as they changed drivers at half time. Not bad for a chap five years older

than the car ! Note that there are virtually no spectators at all. The ten euro per head entry fee was beyond the locals, we found out.

The evening back at base was improved by steak, wine and excellent Sea Bass.

Sunday was hot and sunny again, and lap times dropped accordingly. The noise when some of the racing car sessions began, was ear splitting and dramatic.

We were off mid- afternoon, and this time Alan took first driver position with an excellent start. He said 'Wotsit' was quite a handful with its long wheelbase and high ratio back axle, which had been fitted for Le Mans (should have thought of that).

Nick leapt in after a few laps and set off in hot pursuit. Very exciting indeed.

Too soon it was all over, with elation and relief that all had gone well. There was just time for the presentation of awards, before Nick and Emma had to dash for the plane.

Our team got second in the PVT class out of two cars , whoopee !

Cars Europe were on hand to sweep up 'Wotsit' into the covered wagon, and Alan and I drifted back for more Sea Bass and a double check on the local wine. The bill was less in euros than it would have been in pounds sterling .

We treated ourselves to a rest day and went to Cape St Vincent, which folk thought was the end of the world pre-Columbus.

The Monarch flight home nearly ended in disaster as the plane had to abort over the runway at Manchester, due to a huge crosswind gust. As if we needed more excitement !

I have tried to get the carburettor to flood again but it stubbornly behaves perfectly. Who says Lagondas don't have a mischievous character!

David Hine



The happy crew celebrate a great performance

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A close-up photograph of three different tyre profiles standing side-by-side, showing their tread patterns. From left to right, they represent the Lucas, Dunlop, and Firestone models mentioned in the text.

A black and white photograph of a classic Lagonda 525X21 car. A woman with dark hair is sitting in the driver's seat, looking towards the camera. The car is shown from a front-three-quarter view, highlighting its distinctive grille and headlights.

By Appointment

Or how we came to be filming Margaret Rhodes - the Queen's Cousin - in our Lagonda. By Rob Austin

DEPENDING ON WHEN you read this, you may have full knowledge of the final outcome; a retrospective on Channel Four of the 1945 VE night out enjoyed by Margaret Rhodes, Princess Margaret, and of course the then Princess Elizabeth.

Like so many unsolicited exploits, it started with a random telephone call, which went along the following lines:-

“We are looking for a vintage car, and haven’t found what we are looking for with the flexibility we need. We see you have an Austin for sale- would it be available for hire?”

This was a surprise to me since I had pulled the ad some days previously as, like many of us, I am reluctant to part with anything that may come in handy. A day later and the link to us had, indeed, disappeared. So I delivered my often repeated phrase:- “We don’t really do that sort of thing, our cars are mainly for family fun, and I choose to avoid the stress and hassle of being responsible for anything other than that”.

What I heard next irreversibly flicked emotive switches – VE night – The Royal party – Central London, the persuasion needed to go no further. I was hooked!

Back to the request for our ‘scruffy’ Austin; known to the family as the Christmas Tree Car, due to its annual pilgrimage to acquire said artefact, tied to the roof. Great for that sort of thing, but you know how photos seen on the likes of E-bay etc., paint a desirable picture...well, we are all guilty of showing our best side to some extent.

I suggested that, for such an occasion, a different car could be more appropriate as well as being in more

presentable condition? My offer was met with an open mind - I’m starting to like this film director in the space of a 3 minute phone call! A celebratory night to end all nights for three twenty-something Royals? A car more suited to the role might be a Lagonda. After a brief conversation to make the case, I forwarded pictures of our 2 litre Low Chassis tourer which we had purchased from Phil and Beryl Pyne, and which needs no camera tricks to show its good side. The response was: “We’ll get back to you”, and a week or so later - “They like it - can you put us in touch with the owner” “Yes, that’s me as well!”

Fast forward to the week before the shoot with the proposed route now identified, and I’m thinking - clutch, cooling, polishing and do I really trust the replacement magneto after all the tweaking I have been doing? Arriving at the preparation mnemonic ‘if it ain’t broke don’t fix it’, along with pit-stop tests to practice my floor quick release system, for fast jammed starter rectification, and we’re ready.

So how did the Director miss the date-clash, and importance of the Cheltenham festival to Princess Margaret? There was only going to be one outcome – postpone. Then the weather window played its part, putting us on a 24hour notice. By Tuesday 17th March all the Oranges and Lemons were in place for a winning line!

Then we were off! Slight drizzle but with the artistic requirement of keeping the roof down, I decided to call on my colleagues at RAF Northolt for a final check over before entering London traffic – polish off the road spray and, of course,



Meeting the film crew



A pensive Margaret Rhodes awaits the preparation of the rear seat by her Chauffeur

a visit to the mess for 'personal prep', including two lunches for my technical support son William.

The traffic was as kind as it could be, the Lagonda was rising to the challenge and behaving impeccably, the selfies from passing motorists, all blended into an arrival time at The Mall within two minutes of schedule, a feat I suspect many London taxi drivers would be hard-pressed to match!

To work, and the production crew were some of the nicest people you could meet anywhere - no 'luvvies' here. Production Coordinator Steph - who had been my main communication conduit - greeted us with refreshments and detailed arrangements we had little expected. The director, film and sound crews were instant fans of the car; somewhat tempered when working out how to make the 'screen invisible' crew and equipment coincident with a relaxed Margaret, never mind the driver. I was heartened to find that William had developed expertise through his vast array of Go Pro cameras and fittings, that excelled the Crew's and put a more favourable perspective on his parents' scepticism of his camera gadgetry spending. He was duly tasked with their attachment to the car to capture 'infill', as well as becoming the 'stills' man on the camera lorry.

Margaret was delightful in every respect, and we were soon chatting away on topics many and varied. None of my strategies for effecting entry to a Lagonda for an 89 year-old, so carefully rehearsed with my mother, were needed. Our conversation was noted, such that we were requested, in the best Director style, to refrain from talking on film - he did not want to arrive at the editing stage to find a distracted driver and passenger meandering their way around central London.

With the camera vehicle remaining at base, I had the task of remembering the

route for the first circuit whilst being somewhat compromised by matters beyond navigation, namely driving-seat advancement, sound recording equipment at my feet, and the occasional thwack to my head from the large camera, controlled by the even larger cameraman sitting behind me.

We were underway, down Pall Mall, up St James's, past the Ritz, round Piccadilly, up Constitution Hill, past Buckingham Palace, down The Mall, through Admiralty Arch and back to Pall Mall again. Our base was in Waterloo Place, where we regrouped and changed for different set-ups. This became the *modus operandi* for our afternoon's sojourn and a few hours went by in a flash, with observations as follows:

If you require courtesy in London traffic or a re-modelling of fast-response urban vehicles, look no further than a Lagonda on a Royal mission with a film truck in advance. Your passage will be eased, where even the pushiest of cyclists and delivery van drivers fail. The selfies and assisted selfies accompanied us all the way round with, at one point whilst halted at Piccadilly, a young lady tourist, encouraged by her beau, stepping onto the running-board for a picture!

An un-planned interlude, courtesy of the MET, took place outside Buckingham Palace where, when met with a siren and blue lights, my reaction was, 'surely it can't be us they want', but indeed it was. The thought that an anti-social act could be this contrived escaped me, but obviously not; we were 'worth a pull'. However, quick thinking gave me the opportunity to photograph the ensemble from a driver's perspective. Once the boys from the MET had seen who it was in the Lagonda, and had examined the permissions given, they cheerfully waved us on our way for more laps.

During the tour we conjectured on what may have been going on with this car on the actual VE night. The provenance is perfect, owned at the time by Ivan Forshaw as his first Lagonda, and an army Captain who was invalided out of the war in 1945. Maybe it was on an outing that very evening, I guess we'll never know!

In all we did some seven laps of the circuit such that I will always reflect on the legacy whenever I visit that part of London.

As the 'shoot' (practically a luvvie myself by now) came to a close there was one last request; to do some PR shots just off the Mall, providing some excellent stills opportunities, complete with the props of the film industry.

As darkness fell there was a de-brief and look at a few previews, exchange details for the next time, then homeward on a considerable high. The adoration from the early night-owls was as

vociferous as their day-time counterparts. Many a photograph was taken and the tooting of horns, with one finale (aided possibly by my semblance to James May) of a white van man leaning full length out of his window yelling, 'Reinstate Clarkson' !

Lagonda ownership thus far has been a fairy tale, from the last minute decision to go to the H&H auction that would, in all probability, result in a nil return, but did not; to finding the family we bought it from had the same ethos of use rather than covet as we have; the provenance and the originality of the car itself, but above all the reality of what we can do with it surpassing expectations.

I was delighted to have had the opportunity to be part of a splendid occasion and, whilst the result will almost certainly be a fleeting moment of the final programme, the enjoyment will remain as a landmark for both us and the car for a considerable time.



Cruising past Buckingham Palace



Approaching Oxford Circus at night, after a special day

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A Snippet of History

Arnold Davey sent in some interesting correspondence between him and Peter Walby

Dear Arnold,

Lagonda – PJ5814

I ENCLOSE EIGHT interesting photos of this low-chassis supercharged 2-litre Lagonda T2 tourer.

The story is this. The photos were in an album found in the basement of a house in Bristol, by its new owners some years ago. The photos in the album were all considered to be pre-1941, and the Lagonda pictures may all be from 1939, as noted on one album page. There were Frazer Nash items as well and, as I am friendly with a trustee of the Nash Archives, I was provided with a copy of the Lagonda photos utilizing their scanning facilities.

My copy of the Lagonda Register of January 1949 shows PJ 5814 was owned by J Norris (No.29) living in Nairobi, with an accommodation address in Southampton.

The 2 litre Register of 30th June 1950 shows him still in Nairobi with an

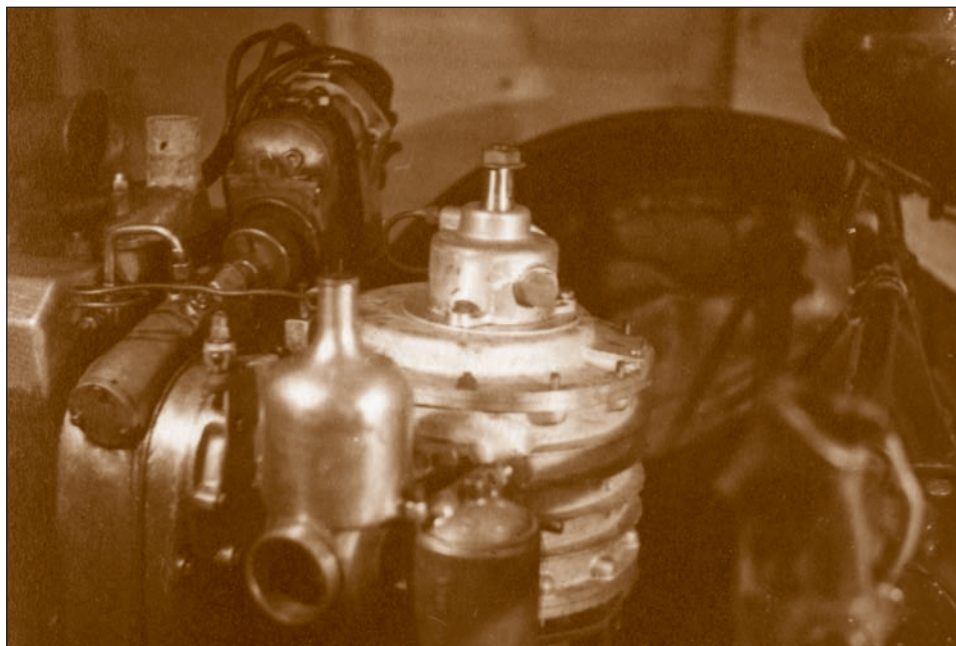
accommodation address in Ivybridge, Devon. The Lagonda Club list of members for 31st August 1952 shows J Norris in Mombasa.

He does not appear in the Lagonda Club Register for 1960, which is the next one I have, but I cannot be sure the car is not there with a change of owner, as there is no registration number index. I plan to make one out for future use and will let you have a copy, unless you already have such an index. There seems to be a pagination problem with my copy, as pages 9,13,17,21,25,29,33, and 36 are blank – maybe intentionally? A complete copy of that Register would make a registration index more useful.

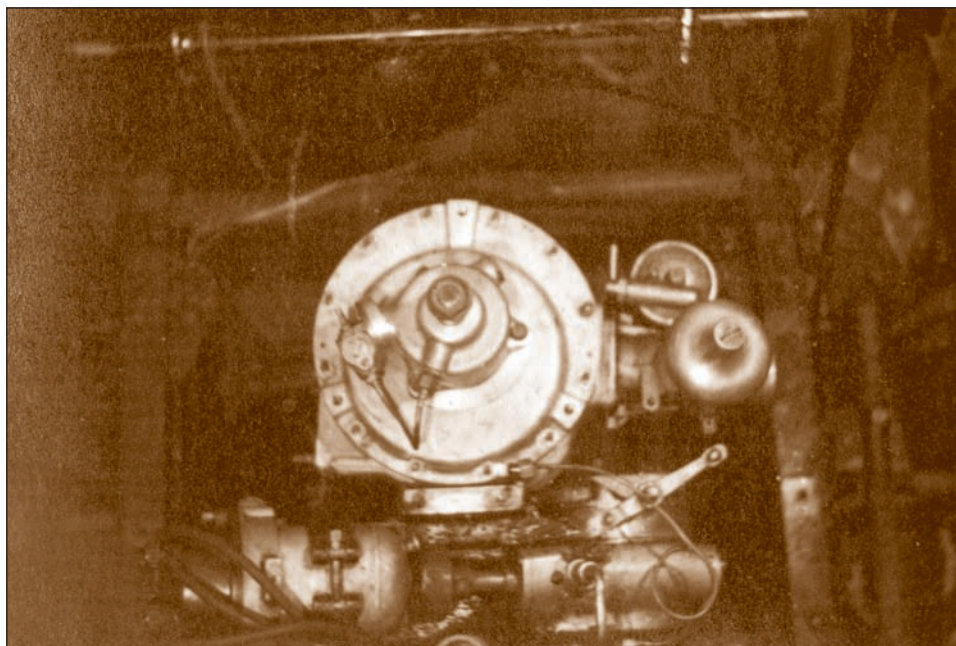
I would be interested in any history you have on this car which is not in any of the later Registers I have, either. If you want to offer some of the pictures to the magazine I have ascertained from my source that there is no copyright issue.

Regards,
Peter





The Supercharger (type?) and large SU carburettor. Radiator has been removed



The supercharger from above

Dear Peter,

Many thanks for the photos which I have looked at and enjoyed. A lovely bit of nostalgia, with the traditional bald tyres and half rebuilt car.

We have quite a bit of background to this 2 litre, Chassis OH10315, first registered in May 1932 in Surrey, so probably sold direct from the factory. It won its class in the Concours at the Guy's Hospital Gala Day at Brooklands in July 1932, the class being: Open cars between £600 and £900. Then the September of that year it won the same class at the Eastbourne Rally. In both cases the driver was Mrs. P. Andrews.

Later in 1932, Dobson at Staines Bridge Garage bought it from the factory for £400, and he sold it to P.N.Glazebrook, The Lidiate, Willaston, Wirral for £525 on 26th September 1932. Glazebrook traded in 2 litre OH9217 (GU 7564) for which Dobson gave him £85. Dobson spent £25 on repairs to 9217 and

sold that to S. Pearce at Chestnut Lodge Garage, Weybridge for £215 on 12th October 1932. The logbook of 9217 still exists, but the car seems to have been scrapped in 1936.

As you know 10135 was owned by Norris in Mombasa in 1949, when he was a member of the 2 litre Register and he still had it in August 1952. But then we have a note that the car had gone to a non-member called Hodgson, for whom we have no address. It hasn't been heard of since.

Your 1960 Register is normal to have blank pages. The idea was to leave these spaces so that members could update with new members as they joined. Nobody did, of course, but I have Hartop's copy and, as Registrar, he did do it and these pages are filled with handwritten notes.

Best wishes,
Arnold





Need a tow rope mister?



On a quiet rural road



The driver appears to be really enjoying the car in these photos



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Lagonda vs Bentley & some others

My first two years of ownership, and a report on the Algarve 24 hour event. By Andrew Howe-Davies

AS I DROVE away from Alan Hancock's Lovely Doomsday house in Surrey, with a big smile on my face, sitting in what was now my very own 1929 Lagonda 3 litre UW 6690, one could easily ask: "Why does anyone buy any old car?"

I think I trace the start of my interest to around 1977, when my parents used to disappear to France in a 1926 KZ Renault, with members of the Renault Freres Club. Their return was always to report that a splendid jolly outing was had by all. The moment came when they expressed an interest in owning their own Renault, and would I go and look at one they had shortlisted? I said yes, in spite my total lack of vintage car experience. Well we went and bought a 1923 Renault NN. It broke down on its first trip but, lo and behold, one discovers that there's a loyal fraternity who like to help you and, despite all adversity, everyone had a good outing.

Of course the pattern of the old car disease moves quickly- "Ah, what you need is a Brighton car. Don't you do the Pioneer run? That NN's a bit small, why not buy that huge 1908 Renault limousine instead. Now, surely, a racer is what you need for VSCC Edwardian events etc!."

'Well I now have this lovely collection of things that need constant repair', was perhaps where the brilliant idea of owning a Lagonda came from. Long weekends away with brakes and lights instead of the darkness curfews, and sporting looks, so I start to ask around. My good friend tells me Alan Hancock owns one. Now Alan I know very well, having first met him in a bar

(of course), and by the end of that evening had invited him to join my wife and I on a tour of New Zealand in the Renault Limousine on a VCC event. Well ,despite the fact my wife thought I was insane, it all worked out and we became close friends. To be told he had a Lagonda came as quite a surprise, so off I went to view it and, sure enough there it was, all rather splendid! Did he want sell it? His answer was, no not really but I could borrow it , which I did, of course.

Alan had discovered the car in America whilst reading a car magazine, waiting for a flight for the return journey from Hershey, so he changed his plan and flew down to view it!

Alan was the spares officer for Lagondas at the time, so he knew his cars. He bought the car as an incomplete restoration which, to date, had been about 40 years! The car was originally sold out of the UK after the disposal of Cecil Vokes' estate. It turns out that UW 6690 was one of six Lagondas Cecil used to try out Filter designs.

The car had gone to America in 1961, bought by a lawyer, Mr Gerald Openlander of Ohio. It was he who decided to overhaul the car, and took it apart. During this process the head was lost, along with all valves etc. The garage concerned thought they had been scrapped! Twenty years later, after endless writing to Ivan Forshaw to source a second head and parts they were finally found and work restarted.

Then, guess what, the original head was found by the Garage !! Sadly before the car was finished Mr Openlander passed on, so the car went up for sale.

Alan finished the mechanics, and Peter Phillips did a lovely job on the red leather interior. Alan then owned the car for 17 years, but only covered 500 miles! Which is where I came in!

I am thrilled to own her. She runs beautifully and, yes, she does what it says on the box - long weekends away in some style! A special thank you goes to Alan, who finally gave in to my pressure and sold the old grey lady to me.

Now I had to start thinking of ways to enjoy using this lovely car after nearly 60 years of storage, other than the 500 miles, so firstly a quick fettle was done by Jeremy Brewster, and then I was off on the VCC Celtic tour - 1500 glorious miles around Scotland Ireland and Wales.

So far so good so, full of confidence now, why not do a wedding in the South of France? Take the old girl (car that is) another 2500 miles- some small teething problems but all sortable on route! Back home, over a beer, I was talked into a new cam by the two Johns - Batt and Ryder. "It will give you more overlap for better acceleration". So off to John R's to have it fitted, only to discover that the car had already been breathed on! This would have been from her racing days at Brooklands, when driven by Cecil Vokes in JCC events in the 1930s. So instead we did some VSCC event regulation requirements for competing.

Next, up pops an e-mail from the Benjafields Club. Do you fancy a 24 hour event? A celebration of Bentleys winning Le Mans in 1924, it would be the first such event for 75 years for pre war cars, and a real test of machines and crews. Well, what a challenge for "the Grey Lady" (Vokes's nickname for my car). First stop - pick a team of drivers, to be known as , you guessed it, "the Lady Boys" - Tim Greenhill (Wolseley), Tony Lees (Viper/Cognac), Tim Parker (Lagonda), and Yours Truly .

THE EVENT

This was at the Superb Circuit, at Autodromo, Algarve, Portugal, a 2.9 mile lap of up and down flowing corners - lovely

When the list of requirements came through the car needed rather more preparation than I had assumed, added to which I decided to reline all brake shoes. They had gone hard, and were not that good in the wet, in fact they were hopeless!

A second battery was also fitted, as the car would run nine hours in the dark, together with fog lamp, extra spot lights, fire extinguisher, two new Andre Hartford shocks to the front, throttle springs, etc....

Next - tyres ! I was running on Blockleys, but would they cover the 24 hours? I rang MWS Tyres and they generously offered a free set of Blockley's as our sponsors. Tim Parker had a spare set of wheels, robbed from his 2 litre , and we fitted these to start the event. We were ready. I am delighted to report that the one set covered the 1500 miles of hard driving - JUST!

On a glorious sunny day 21 teams took part in the start. In true Le Mans fashion, we lined up across the track from our motors - flag down, run, get in, whilst seamlessly erecting the hood for the first 20 laps. We had decided to change drivers every 20 laps, so we all got lots of track time.

The event was the brainchild of William Medcalf, organized and run very professionally by Philippa Spiller of Podium Events. William had laid on several mechanics, mainly for the Bentleys of course. However, there was a floating mechanic - David Ayre - who, thank goodness, likes Lagondas as, on lap 17, there was a loss of power. This was followed by spitting back through a carburettor , and a metallic noise on the overrun ! Back into the pits, rocker cover



The car with Andrew, when he first acquired it



As found by Alan Hancock , in USA

off , side panels off. All looked normal, until we noticed that there was now no tappet clearance on an exhaust valve! On investigation we discovered the collet had broken and the valve had dropped onto the piston, bouncing up and down but only for two laps ! A search of the pits revealed only one washer! That was suitable but the diameter was wrong so David, with power drill and a file, fettled it down, added the all important centre hole, and reassembled it. So we finished the other 23Hours and 1400 miles- good old Lagondas!

The experience of driving 24 hrs including a very dark night was surprisingly enjoyable. Our team was not really that interested in sleep, or anything mechanical, but showed rather more interest in another driver's attractive wife!

Soon a pattern evolved. Cover 20 laps, check car, oil, fuel, tyres, keep marking pit wall signs , coffee food,

chat, watch the Bentleys being serviced. The marshalls were all local, and did the full 24 hr stint. They were really enthusiastic, and we thank them all.

We met the right crowd, on the right event and had a good time, including trying to wind up the ladies team - Gillian Carr, Katarina Kyvalova, Georgina Bradfield and Georgie Riley.....of course they beat us , but only on a technicality ! Everyone stayed at the splendid Vila Vita Parc hotel, where awards followed a rather sumptuous dinner with much wine and Vodka, strange how it all seemed so right on the night!

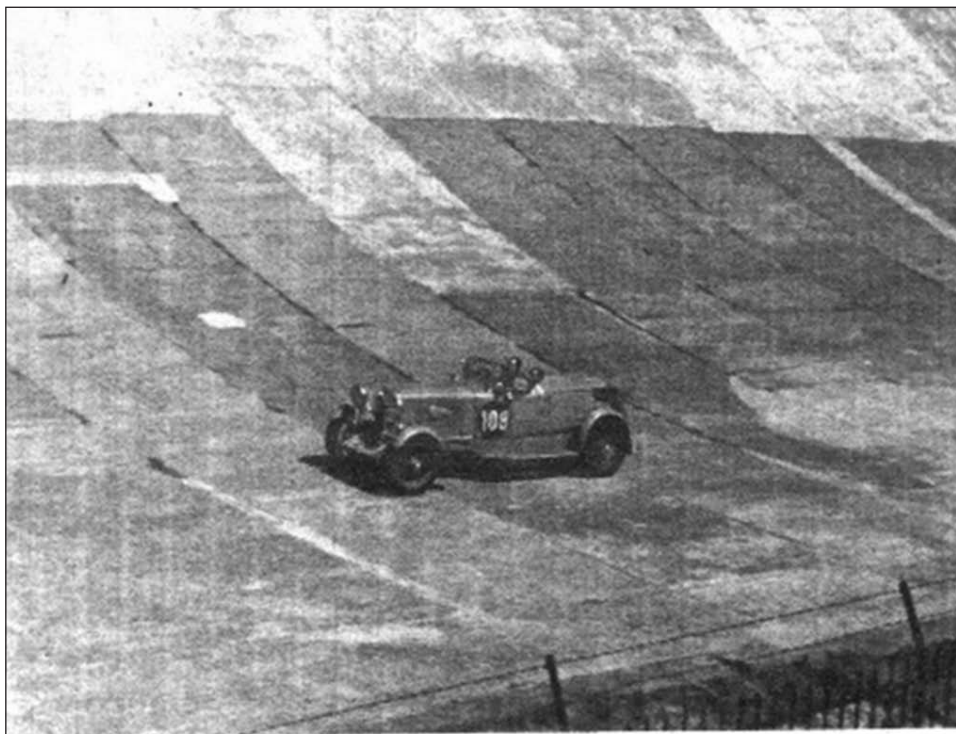
All cars except one finished , but some teams chose not to do the full night, thus depriving themselves of the achievement and the point of the event - 24 hrs non stop in a pre war car.

Did we enjoy it? No,we loved it !

"The Lady Boys"



Touring in Scotland, 2013



I thought you would like to have this. I was rather fortunate, just after this was taken I was doing 94 m.p.h. when one of the main rear springs broke, the chassis broke and automatically locked the brakes of all four wheels, I skidded about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile, turned round three times, nearly went over the top of the banking and then slid down to the inside of the track, finally landing up right across it, with everything solid and the car completely immovable. However, we were towed off and I am glad to say we were none the worse.

I recently did 100 miles an hour on this old car coming across Salisbury Plain.

I forgot to tell you that I was recently elected a full member of the American Society of Automobile Engineers and can now add M.S.A.E. I am very gratified about this as it was a direct result of my trip to America last year, and the impression one or two of the big Engineers gained of my knowledge after spending several hours with them, as I had been elected by virtue of my English Degrees and recommendations of people like Rolls Royce etc., over here, pleased my American friends.

Alfred Brown

Racing at Brooklands, 1936

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26 Abbotswood
GUILDFORD
Surrey
GU1 1UY

13th December 1996

Alan Hancock Esq.
The Old Mill House
Horsted Keynes
Sussex RH17 7AZ

Dear Alan

How very nice to hear from you with news of U4 6690!

I do in fact, know quite a lot of this car's history, as not only was it owned by my father for many years - including I believe, the wartime years - but I ran it myself for about a year between 1949 and 1951!

At any moment between about 1930 and his death in 1961, my father owned more than one Lagonda; a good average was probably six, and you have most likely seen the photograph of five of them on page 140 of Geoffrey Seaton's classic book "Lagonda - An Illustrated History 1900 - 1950". This of course, includes UW 6690, but one other was missing from the line-up, WS 2774, a 1935 M35 $\frac{3}{4}$ litre Vanden Plas tourer, which I was using at the time and later acquired.

I know that Father had a particularly soft spot for UW 6690, which I believe was his first 3 litre. He raced it regularly at Brooklands, and I possess a photo of it lapping at 100 or so on the Byfleet banking. He told me shortly afterwards that within minutes of the photograph being taken, a road spring broke, and the resulting axle movement applied the brakes on all four wheels with spectacular results. The car remained upright through several gyrations and only just missed flying off the top of the banking!

He always insisted that it was the fastest 3 litre he ever owned, and he never reached its terminal velocity - it always seemed to be still accelerating as long as circumstances permitted!

I do hope that when you return it to England, you will succeed in rebuilding it and I shall look forward to renewing its acquaintance.

Equally, if you can spare a moment to come over to Guildford one day, I have no doubt the meeting would be an interesting one. In fact, I still own WS 2774, but she has been off the road now for over 30 years - although basically roadworthy. I had long considered her a retirement project, but when that time came in 1989 I found that the spare time I assumed I would have, did not materialise, and - even more compelling - the "steam" in the old boiler (mental and physical) ran too low!

At least, in Horsted Keynes you do possess on your doorstep, an alternative form of wheeled transport while working on the car!

Yours sincerely

Ray Vokes
G.H. Vokes

*P.S. I will take the liberty of passing
a copy of this letter to Arnold Dwyer
T.*

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A fine period picture of a 14-60, belonging to Barry Halton and taken at Odell in Bedfordshire'

Exploits with Lagondas - Part 1

Neale Edwards recounts his years of Lagonda ownership

*Owning a Lagonda is a lovely way of life,
The brutish style and comfort, also satisfy my wife.
With gears the wrong way round, and the terror of the sound
Of grinding teeth and squeaks from underneath, the ground
Flies by at supersonic speed; you hope you never need
The cheque book held in case the costs exceed
The limits you have set. You have to feed
The family and the car, with both at once, you can't succeed*

I HAVE HAD a number of Lagondas over quite a few years. They were all very much loved in their time with me, and, not having one now, I rather miss them. Warts and all.

The only ones I haven't had are a 41/2 litre Meadows-engined car, a Rapier, and a 16/80. I have had two V12s, the first one being GPC895, which was chassis number E3037. It was a grey de Ville prototype, with a markedly different body in the detailing, which WO used a good bit, and was the car tested by The Motor in 1938. It reached a speed of 109 mph on the Conrod Straight north of London. When I had it, it had just had an engine rebuild by Bassett Down Engineering (Nigel Arnold-Forster). It was an excellent performer, good for high nineties (more no doubt if you were braver than me) and went with us many times to those wonderful empty billiard table smooth roads in France.

I remember a garage at Lessay "helping us out". The water pump was leaking and water was dripping out of the hole in the bottom of the timing chest, which was there for that purpose. This, of course, I didn't know, and was delighted when they stopped the leak with some sort of rubber sludge which

hardened in the hole. Only when I got back, several hundred miles later, did I discover that the pump was totally hidden behind this chest and, to repair it ,you had to do rather more than our French saviours had done. And the water, instead of dripping harmlessly onto the French soil, collected in the chest. Fortunately nowhere near as much as I had feared.

I took the V12 to a well known, and I thought respected, repair shop, which broke as much as it mended and charged an obscene amount for the pleasure. They broke the oil level indicator when removing the starter motor and dynamo, and ruined the radiator shutters. They also messed up other things, so I don't invite them to do work for me any more. No Christmas Card either. They still advertise extensively using words like "professional". Well, you are bound to get caught a few times like that, and regrettably that wasn't the last. Mostly, however, you meet nothing but honest decent folk who genuinely share an interest with you; that makes up for the bad smells.

The French bystanders loved that car. All they wanted to know was how much petrol it used. They were, of

course, hoping for a horrendous number and, not wanting to disappoint them, I translated 8 mpg rather liberally into litres per hundred kilometres. In this way I satisfied their desire to show how ludicrous the English were, especially ones who owned things like this Lagonda; I was pleased to have shocked these people and shown that we Brits could cope with most things. The usual French response was to make the right hand look like a bottle by pointing the clenched fist, thumb first, in the direction of the mouth and saying, with excited vigour, "Ca boit, Hein?" They would then add, with a pumping action of the other hand, "Mais puissante!" This never failed to fill us with pride and amusement in roughly equal measure. I suppose that, being the obvious thing to say, I shouldn't have been surprised to hear it again on more than one occasion.

Our experience is that, generally, the French like to see vintage and old cars. The V12, and the next one that we had, would infuriate cars behind, especially on a hill. The V12 doesn't look a particularly fast car, but both of these were really remarkably fleet. A diesel, un-turbocharged Peugeot or Renault starting from practically hiding up your exhaust pipes at the beginning of a long straight hill, and itching to get by, would be about 500 yards behind you by the time you got to the top. Now, if that isn't showing them!

We never as I remember it, ever had a serious breakdown in a Lagonda, until quite recently. I did put a 14/60 in the ditch when we were in Le Lot, which made it look a bit undignified, but a tractor and a Frenchman sorted that out very smartly. It is strange how a road will be utterly deserted until something like that happens. People materialised from nowhere until there was quite a crowd; well, half a dozen gawpers at least. That car had earlier disrupted the peaceful life of the ferry operators on the Poole to Cherbourg run. For some reason, we

overslept, and when it was time to drive off, we weren't there. Eventually we were roused and there stood KW1805, alone on the deserted car deck. It was just like Daddy's Yacht, and that expression remains in common usage in the family to this day. In the depths of France Profonde, I managed to wring the neck of the brass fitting which sends the engine oil up to the cam boxes. A wonderful French garage owner made, from the solid, a new replacement, with all the right threads, and this went on the next morning. He made it over-night on his backlash-laden lathe, with a candle over the chuck; we have found that the French normally can and will make or mend anything. I couldn't even get this fellow to take any money for his trouble, so we gave him a bottle of warm wine which was in the car. They are wonderful and co-operative mechanics. I met one once, who, it was claimed, had copied a minced up MG camshaft overnight.

You do have the odd battery which gives up the ghost, but that is only to be expected. A dreadful bore, though, unloading the back under the tonneau to get the replacement fitted. And of course, while you are driving around to find a new battery, you need to push the thing to start it. Just as a breakdown draws the crowd, so the need for a push causes instant evaporation. You learn to try and shop at places on a hill.

The great fun with the 14/60 was to try and find a 2CV and then overtake it, preferably on a hill. We did manage that just once. The 14/60 was giving all it had, and the exhaust note was fearsome-intimidating even. The proper tail pipe had failed in Penzance and the garagist we went to happened to have an old organ pipe from a de-frocked church next door. With a smile of absolute satisfaction he said, "I knew I'd find a use for that," and promptly bolted it up to the Lagonda. Not only a fine sound, but also some much needed holy



The handsome 3 litre tourer with T2 replica body



V12 saloon, chassis 16049

protection. That could be why we eventually overcame that 2CV. We like to discount the possibility that the nuns on board may not have been trying. All French people try all the time.

The 14/60 has a secret weapon which makes it faster, in certain circumstances, than the normal 2 litres. Because the constant mesh gears in the gearbox are lower than those in the Speed Model when on a hill, if you need third gear, you can usually hold it. On the Speed Model, third is by then too high and the revs are too low, so you have to retreat further into second. That is where the 14/60 triumphs. You can also get the clutch out and in very easily, because that is the car it was designed for and the cross-member doesn't prevent this simple exercise as it does on the 2 litre.

In the 3 litre, AAO111, after joining in the Regimental day on the anniversary of D-Day at Creully in Normandy, we were parked in the empty square at the village of Courtenay on our way down to Saint Tropez. We noticed an old man circling at a distance. He finally plucked up courage and came up to the car and delivered the following speech. "France will never forget what your country did for us." He didn't get any further, but lapsed into a tearful and emotional silence. As did we. This old fellow wore the tiny green button of a Compagnon de l'Ordre de la Liberation (1,061 in total awarded), so he knew only too well what he was talking about.

We returned from that trip in pouring rain with the hood and side screens up, and the new wipers doing about as much good as any vintage wipers. We got from Saint Tropez to Clermont Ferrand, where we spent the night, and we then caught the 6 or 7 o'clock evening ferry for Poole from Cherbourg the following day. Not bad for an old 'un.

The second V12 I purchased from Jonathan Oppenheimer. I bought it with

the engine in bits being restored at Bishopgray. I did this, because my reason for selling the prototype was that I became scared of alloy rods. I had just seen a drophead in London, which had had such a failure, so I sold the lovely grey one and took on the medium chassis saloon. I particularly wanted the long saloon on the medium chassis, because the short one is useless in the back, and I wanted the car to take four tall people. Me at 6' 2", my wife at 6', my son at 6' 7", and his wife at 6'. I don't think we ever carried that combination, but you can see the problem. Anyway, it was the principle of the thing. 16049 served us beautifully, and I felt I could relax with the new Carillo rods. That car sunk itself by giving a very good impression of an engine suffering from fuel vapourisation. It would go for 20 minutes, then stop. You waited for about the same time, then it would go again, only to repeat the process as before. All the experts diagnosed the same thing, and over a period of three years, I parted with a great deal of money as these people tried to effect a cure. I was about to have louvres cut in the bonnet, having lagged everything in sight and used all kinds of additives, when a friend simply said leave it with me and I'll have a look. By the time I got home twenty minutes later, the telephone was ringing its head off. It was my friend to say that he had found the answer and cured it. It was because someone had put the two leads from the two distributors into the same terminal in the fuse box and not tightened the grub screw adequately. As a result, the electricity hadn't got enough guts in it to create a spark, so it stopped. When it cooled down, off it went again for another twenty minutes. My friend put the wires into a private hole for each one and screwed them down tight. No more trouble. But, by then, I had lost faith in this device and sold it to Tasmania, where it is giving sterling service.

TO BE CONTINUED.



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Modelling Classic Cars - Part Three

Continuing Tony Hunter's building of a 2-Litre Lagonda

AFTER COMPLETING THE set of wheels and tyres, the next target was to produce the chassis frame. The side members were cut from one-inch wide brass strip, 0.030" thick. The outline was traced onto a paper template, which was stuck to the brass and then chain drilled around the perimeter, prior to final cutting out and finishing by file. Narrower strip was then added to form the channel section, by soldering. Intermediate frame members were formed and added to create the main chassis. After careful measurement, the underpan beneath the gearbox was cut and soldered, with underpinning channel members to locate and support the gearbox. The gearbox had previously been constructed from a plastic block, machined to shape and the end covers added separately, together with the gear change assembly. Checks were then necessary to prove clearances and general alignment within the chassis frame, including the machined propeller shaft assembly.

Most turned items are in brass, with assemblies held together with B.A. nuts and bolts of varying sizes, some as small as 16BA. Road springs were assembled from more individually cut strip, whilst dumb irons were turned from mild steel. The rear axle casing was cast in resin from a brass pattern, and then detailed to include boltheads, studs etc. with axle half shafts turned from steel for strength and rigidity.

The next problem to solve was forming bonnet louvres. For this, I constructed a combination of die and set from gauge plate. A male and female matching pair was constructed, with the female part automatically spacing the louvres at the correct distance which, when set under a press, would automatically produce the required line of louvres at the necessary spacing.

Copper sheet was used for the actual bonnet side panels, this being very well suited for the forming process. The die gave consistently formed louvres, whilst the set repeated the spacing from the previous louvre ad infinitum.

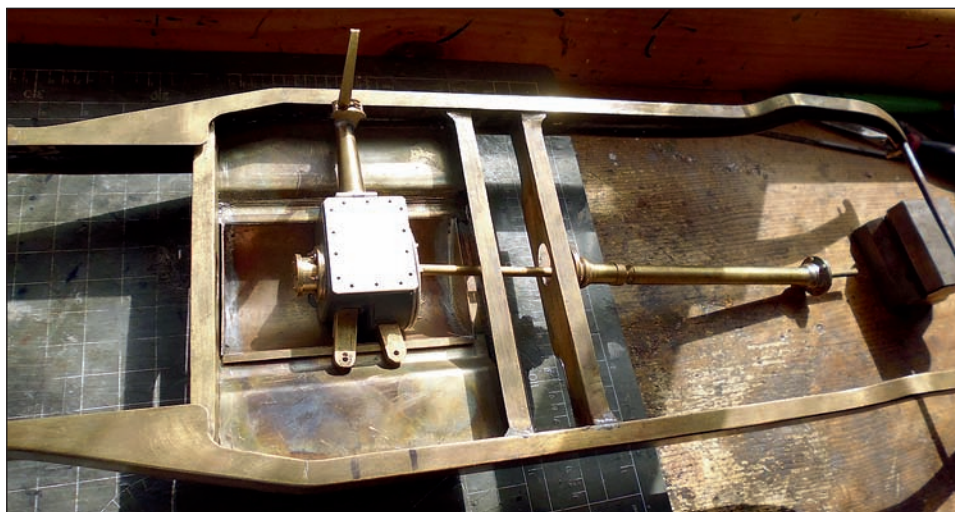
The Lagonda radiator is formed from a series of very subtle curves. The model demanded that it be achieved in a gradual process, constantly checking dimensions and appearance. With no original drawing available, this was to be no easy task. After trying to beat it out panel fashion the results were not good enough, so I ultimately milled and drilled a solid brass block, again using an outline template, followed by hand finishing. It was then polished to a high finish before being sent for nickel-plating, this giving a more period finish than chromium. The temperature gauge mounting was made as a separate item, the glass represented with turned Perspex and drilled through the centre for a (very) thin wire to represent the temperature level. The radiator matrix was made from a commercially available brass etched sheet, followed by chemical blacking before final painting with a satin black finish (the picture shows the matrix in place before final fitting).

I had by now achieved what seemed to me the crucial stages in capturing the feel of a Lagonda. P100 Lucas headlights were the next hurdle. These were turned from brass, with ancillary fittings from wire etc. soldered together and the glass made from Perspex, before these too were sent for nickel plating. The frame is hinged as per original to fit the lenses; the beam focal patterns being scribed into the Perspex.

In the next part I shall progress onto building the engine/gearbox combination, before tackling the coachwork.



The 2 litre chassis nearly completed



The chassis with undertray, gearbox, and propshaft waiting to be fixed to the back of the gearbox



The radiator, with matrix loosely installed



The rear axle and propshaft showing the high attention to detail

Letters...Letters...Letters...Letters

Dear Roger,

I was very intrigued to read about the fact that your car had been fitted with a Riley engine because mine has too!

I get the 95mph notion because mine is very lively. Indeed it has just been prepared for The Flying Scotsman. I might just bring it to the AGM but can't put my finger on the date at present.

I have desperately been trying to trace the history of my car, chassis number OH10284, 2.0L T5 Tourer, 1932.

What I have starts in the early nineteen sixties when there is much correspondence between Capt Forshaw

and the then owner, a tobacco farmer in Rhodesia.

The story goes that the original Lagonda engine let go and the car was shipped out there where it competed successfully, first with a Buick engine and then the Riley 2.5

I wonder whether any shipping records are kept but no idea where to look.

Kind regards

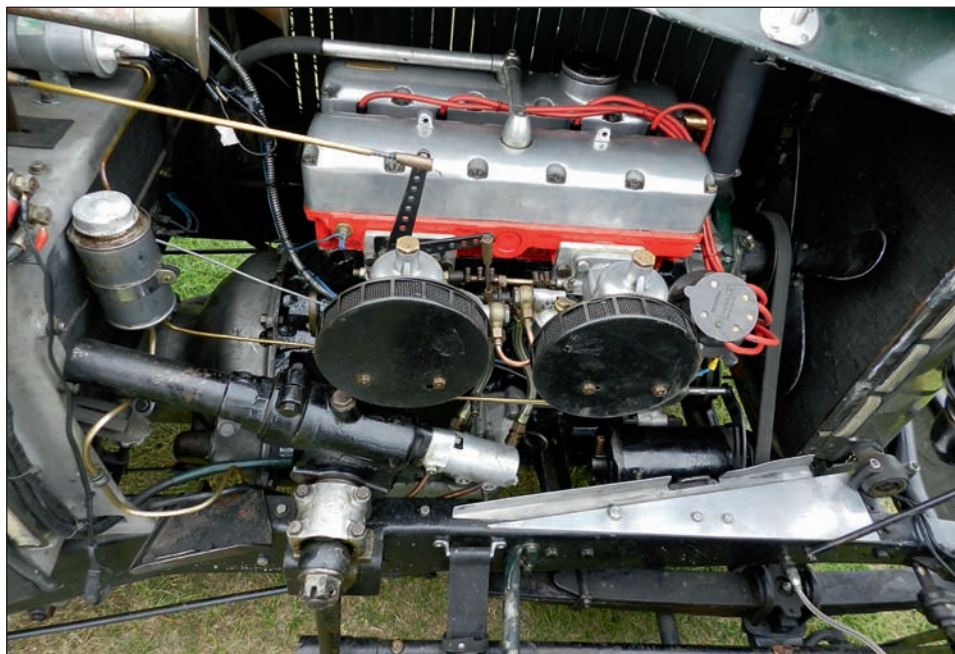
Martin Tinsley

Perhaps a member can help Martin in his quest for the shipping records. **Ed.**


Letters...Letters...Letters...Letters




Martin enjoying his 2 litre at Brooklands



The Riley 2.5 engine fits easily under the long bonnet of the later 2 litre cars'



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Letters...Letters...Letters...Letters

Dear Roger,

I was much taken with the advert by Longstone Tyres on page 11 of the winter 2014-15 magazine. The upholstery in the driver's seat looks extremely comfortable, but is very high; it makes the mind boggle to wonder what is underneath it.

It reminds me of my youth. My first car in 1959 was an Austin 7 Ulster Special. It was special in that the body was even smaller than the original. This made for a lovely close contact with any passengers but, as it had no weather gear, they got very wet when it rained. Thus was it a failure as what we used to call a 'tart trap', in those long lost non-PC days. I needed a car with a hood or a roof.

As I could not afford a good car, I had to buy an old banger. So in 1962 I got a 2 litre low chassis Lagonda tourer – with a hood (£145).



Dear Roger,

In my bookcase, I have every copy of the Lagonda magazine, back to Number One, dated March 1951. They provide a marvellous record of Club activities, all those years ago.

However, I am concerned that many events now take place, but are rarely reported in the magazine. I am particularly thinking of competitions. Although they are reported in the newsletter, these are probably thrown away, and now that many members only receive them by Email, they have become even less permanent.

Furthermore it is doubtful whether anything held on computer will be retrievable in a few years time. The very considerable efforts of our members in

I liked the car a lot, but that also failed as a magnet for the ladies (possibly because it wasn't a big M45 like the car in the Longstone advert), but it may have been me!

However the point of this letter is to advise you that, in a 2 litre tourer, if you put the rear seat squab behind the driver's seat, unship the passenger seat and put it on top of the driver's seat and put the front seat squabs in the rear footwell, you get a lovely flat 6 foot long sleeping place. It needs an airbed to make it comfortable, but it saves a lot on B&B costs if you don't have any money.

I must admit that I haven't used it for that purpose in the last 45 years, but you never know!

Yours etc.

Jon Pasfield P17

racers, rallies, hill climbs etc. will be totally forgotten and lost to posterity. The magazine is the only permanent record of Club activities.

I must stress that this is not intended as a criticism of current or past editors of the magazine. They do a marvellous job, but can only publish what is sent to them.

The magazine used to include a regular feature "Competition Round-Up", written originally by the late Dick Sage. I did it for a time, then the late Peter Whenman, after which it faded-out. I would like to suggest something similar should be introduced.

Yours Sincerely,

Alan Elliott

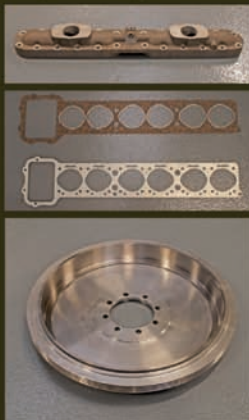
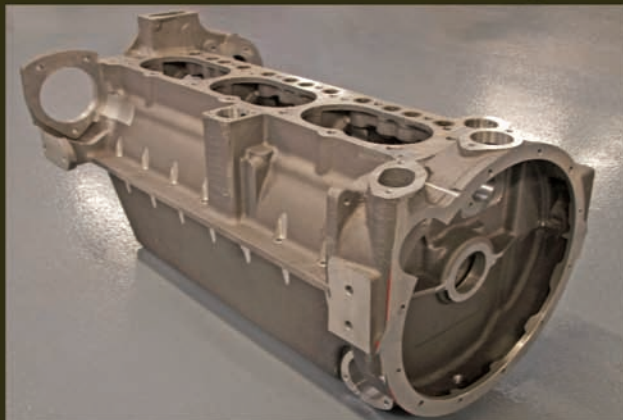
Letters...Letters...Letters...Letters



Historic Race Preparation and Restoration

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We are Market Leader in Lagonda spare parts



**and we have a large stock of dedicated
Lagonda parts available:**

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| - Engine block 4.5 Ltr., 2 Ltr.
and Rapier | - Bell housing 4.5 Ltr. | - Fan tower 4.5 Ltr. |
| - Cylinder head, 4.5 Ltr. | - Crankshaft 4.5 Ltr. and V12 | - Flywheel 4.5 Ltr, 2 Ltr, 3.5 Ltr.
and V12 |
| - HD Head gaskets 4.5 Ltr, 2 Ltr.
and V12 | - Connecting rods 4.5 Ltr.
and V12 | - Brake drums 4.5 Ltr. and V12 |
| - Crankcase 4.5 Ltr. | - Camshaft 4.5 Ltr. and V12 | - Brake back plates 4.5 Ltr.
and V12 |
| - Sump 4.5 Ltr. | - Halfshaft 4.5 Ltr. | - Clutch conversion 4.5 Ltr, 2 Ltr.
and 3.5 Ltr. |
| - Oil pump 4.5 Ltr. | - Inlet and exhaust manifolds
4.5 Ltr. and V12 | - Steering conversion V12 |
| - Water pump/pump housing
4.5 Ltr. and V12 | - Timing cover 4.5 Ltr. | - AND MANY OTHERS |
| | - Magneto drive box 4.5 Ltr. | |

LMB's website (www.lmbracing.be) gives a full overview
per car model of our stock of Lagonda parts.

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SOLD

FOR SALE

1934 LAGONDA 3 / 4 ½



Email lagonda@davidayre.com for further details