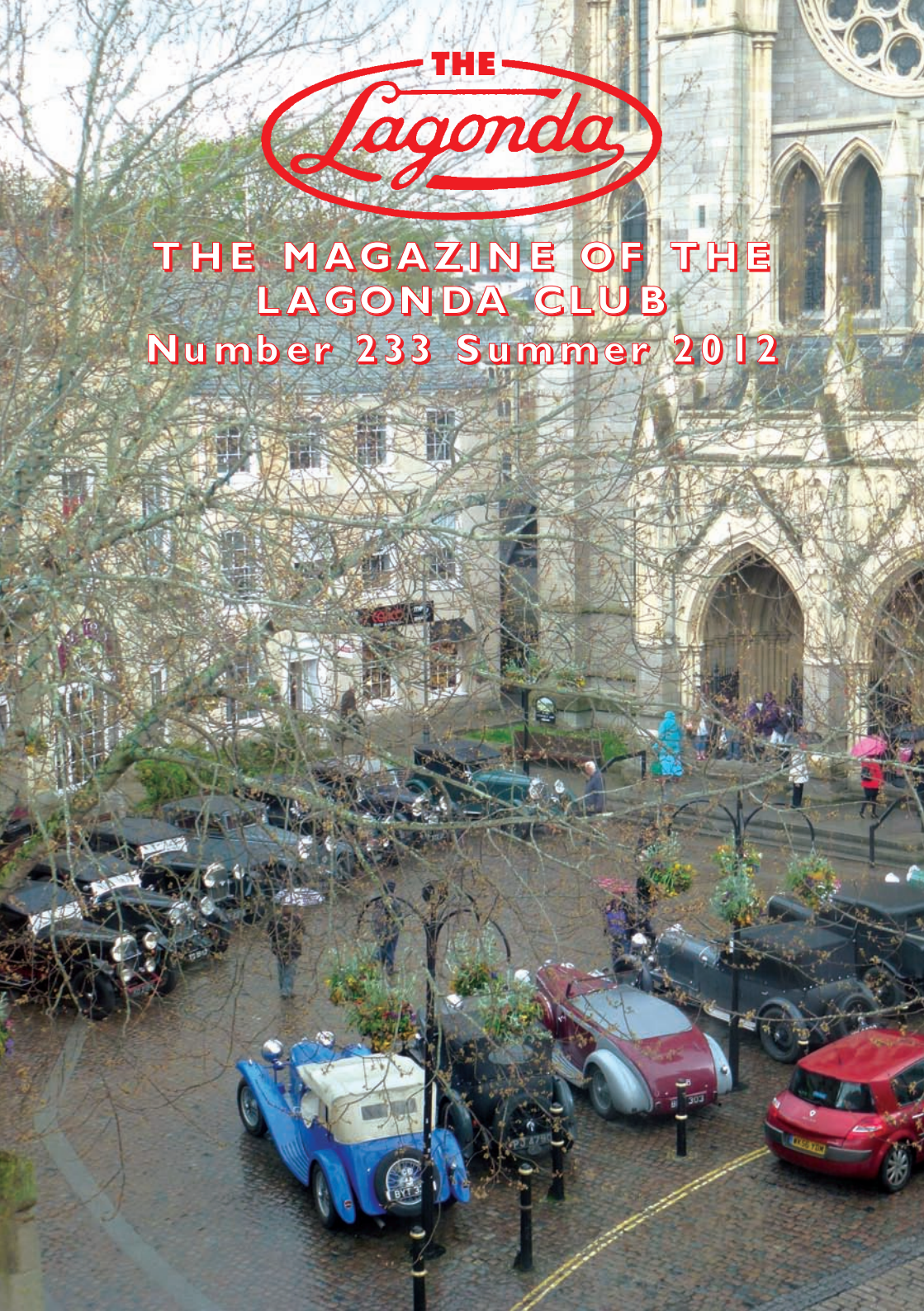




**THE MAGAZINE OF THE
LAGONDA CLUB
Number 233 Summer 2012**



— DAVID AYRE —



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LAGONDA CLUB LIST OF OFFICERS 2012

President: D. R. Hine

Vice Presidents:

A. Davey, A. W. May

Chairman:

Dr Jonathan Oppenheimer,
21 Criffel Avenue,
Streatham Hill, London, SW2 4AY
Tel: 020 8671 0852 Fax: 020 8855 5366
e-mail: jono@smpgroup.co.uk

Company Secretary:

Andrew Gregg,
6/7 Queen Square, Bristol BS1 4JE
Tel: 0117 9069400 Fax: 0117 9069401
andrew.gregg@gregglatchams.com

Membership Secretary:

Colin Bugler,
Wintney House, London Road,
Hartley Wintney, Hants, RG27 8RN
Tel/Fax: 01252 845451
e-mail lagclub@tiscali.co.uk

Registrar & Newsletter Editor:

Arnold Davey,
86 The Walk, Potters Bar, Herts, EN6 1QF
Tel/Fax: 01707 651302

Editor:

Ken Painter,
Church Farm Cottage,
The Street, Rickingham, Diss, IP22 1EQ
Tel: 01379 890653
e-mail: kenpainter@talktalk.net

Treasurer:

John Sword,
Chivel, Chipping Norton,
Oxfordshire, OX7 5TR
Tel: 01608 683227
e-mail: j.sword@hotmail.com

E-Communications:

Christopher Hobbs,
Church Cottage, Church Hill,
White Waltham, Berks SL6 3JH
Tel/Fax: 01628 825246
e-mail: christopher.hobbs@chco.co.uk

Competition Secretary:

Richard Reay-Smith,
Hollyhurst, Godolphin Road,
Weybridge, Surrey, KT13 0PU
Tel: 01932 830366
e-mail: rpmsr@hotmail.com

Post-War Cars Secretary:

Peter Gilkes,
61 Horton View, Banbury,
Oxon OX16 9HW
Tel/Fax 01295 269897
pete@gilkes-surveying.fsnet.co.uk

Board Members:

Peter Blenk,
56 Rivermead Court, Ranelagh Gardens,
London SW6 3RY
Tel: 020 7731 7484 · Fax: 020 7731 2836
peterblenk@gmail.com

John Brown,
Biddenden Farm Oast,
Station Road, Rotherfield,
East Sussex, TN6 3HP.
Tel/Fax: 01892 852586
e-mail: kay.john.brown@care4free.net

John Boyes,
Cosford Hall Farm, Cosford, Rugby,
Warwickshire, CV21 1HT,
Tel: 01788 578723
john.s.boyes@btinternet.com

The Spares Service:

Robin Cooke, Lagonda Spares,
Johnson's Farm, Carlton, Saxmundham,
Suffolk IP17 2QW
Tel: 01728 604040 · Fax: 01728 604570
e-mail: spares@lagonda-club.com

The Lagonda Shop:

Denise and Martin Bugler
Garden Cottage, Walhurst Manor, Picts Lane,
Cowfold, West Sussex, RH13 8AW
Tel/Fax: 01403 865442
e-mail: shop@lagonda-club.com

Yahoo newsgroup: <http://groups.yahoo.com.group/Lagonda>

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Overseas Representatives:

USA:

Rudy Wood-Muller,
P.O.Box 403, 51 Bill Hill Road,
Old Lyme, CT 06371, USA
Tel: 001 860 434 1996
Fax: 001 212 226 4909
e-mail: lagondausa@aol.com

Netherlands and Belgium:

Herman Arentsen,
Logtsestraat 3, 6675 NB Valburg,
The Netherlands
Tel: (+31) 488 431291
Fax: (+31) 481 373593
e-mail: eh-arentsen@hetnet.nl

Germany:

Roland Danner,
Kleingschaidt 79,
D-90562 Heroldsberg, Germany.
Tel: (+49) (0) 9126 288 472
Fax: (+49) (0) 9126 288 374
e-mail: roland_danner@t-online.de

Rudolf Ernst,
Schoenaich-Carolath-str. 22,
D-22607 Hamburg, Germany
e-mail rudernst@yahoo.de

Switzerland:

Franz Hatebur-Mani,
Huenibachstr. 58, CH-3626 Huenibach,
Switzerland
e-mail: fhatebur@bluewin.ch

UK Area Representatives:

Anglia:

John Stoneman. Tel: 01353 649494
e-mail: john.stoneman@btinternet.com

Midlands (East):

Harry Taylor. Tel: 01159 830363
e-mail: hta108@aol.com

Midlands (West):

Terry Brewster. Tel: 01386 792770
margaretbrewster2@btinternet.com

Kent:

Adrian Lead. Tel: 01304 614690
e-mail: a.lead @btinternet.com

North:

Tim Gresty. Tel: 01260 291830
e-mail: timgresty@cognitio.co.uk

Northern Ireland:

Peter Walby. Tel: 028 9066 5610
e-mail: pursang@doctors.org.uk

Scotland:

Alistair Gunn. Tel: 0131 4412279

South West:

Alan Elliott. Tel: 01963 250353
e-mail: alanpatelliott@btinternet.com

Surrey, Sussex & Hants:

Michael Drakeford. Tel: 01903 872197
e-mail: michaelwdrakeford@hotmail.com

Yorkshire:

Ian North. Tel: 01482 879105
e-mail: iannorth.kazoo.co.uk

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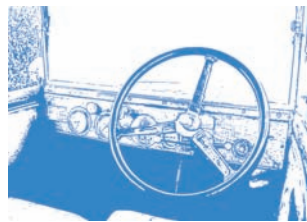
An atmospheric view of the cars, in front of Truro Cathedral.

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From the Driving Seat

Ken Painter



WEARING MY LIGHT Cars Model Champion hat for a moment, I have been presented with a puzzle and, to solve it, need the help of those of you who attended the Centennial celebrations at Brooklands in 1999. There was an 11.9 two seater present, possibly owned by a non-member. For some of the time at least, it was parked to the left of Jeremy Oates' 12/24, PD 1256. The only picture I have seen has the car in deep shadow, but I think it had red wheels and either black or dark blue bodywork. It is not clear if the car was displaying a registration number.

Can any of you identify the car and its owner and/or do you have a clearer picture that I could copy for my "Light Cars" file? The car is likely to be one of the "lost" models, once owned by a former (or even current) member of the Club, who sold it and the new owner never joined us. Tracking it down will be a challenge, but I want to try. Someone must have invited the owner to come along and join in the fun if he is not already 'one of us'.

In common with all the car clubs to which I belong, the Lagonda Club is currently experiencing a fall in membership. This may be due

mainly to the world's financial situation, but we wonder if there is anything we could do to improve the quality of the services we offer to you, our members. For instance, does the magazine give you what you want every quarter, or are we missing something that you would love to see included on a regular, or occasional basis? Is there anything you would rather never appeared at all? Suggesting new topics would not result in you having the problem thrown back at you by asking you to write about it yourself. Your Editor will always try to find a well-informed member who would be prepared to oblige.

Does the Club make the spares you need? The Spares Committee is made up of enthusiasts for just about every model, but that doesn't mean that we collectively know about every problem fellow members might face. Unless that hard to find widget that breaks down on your car also fails on one of ours, we may never know there is a problem. Of course, this doesn't mean that we can make and stock every part for every model, but a little more feedback from all of you might prove to be the answer to your prayer.

***Last date for copy for the Autumn magazine is
... FRIDAY 19th October 2012 ...***

The 35th Suffolk Dinner 2012

Warren King reports on Suffolk's venerable dinner party

THE SUFFOLK DINNER on Saturday 31 March 2012, arranged by Mike Pilgrim, was held as usual in the White Lion Hotel on the sea front in the east coast town of Aldeburgh. An extensive refurbishment in the hotel provided us with a spacious new dining room in splendid surroundings, where we enjoyed an impeccable four-course dinner.

This traditional Dinner in March marks the start of the summer of Lagonda and Rapier motoring. 39 members and friends were welcomed by Mike Pilgrim, including Leo and Marianne van Ijsseldijk who had made the trip from Holland although they were not able to bring their Rapier. Leo has a major interest in restoring and maintaining a collection of some 65 Indian motor bikes, ranging from 1903 to 1965, as well as Bugattis and a vast Minerva saloon. Mike noted that several people had arrived after having trouble with their car – John Sword with exhaust problems, Peter Merrick with faulty gear linkage, Warren King with magneto failure, and John Batt who had to leave his car behind. Peter's son Oliver was present as a welcome representative of the younger generation of Rapier enthusiasts. Irene Clark was unable to come but her daughter Angela was keen to tell us about progress in restoration of the Rapier. It was disappointing that Tom Harrington from Paris was not able to make the journey for personal reasons. Mike was particularly pleased to see Tim and Cilla Sobey at their first Dinner; they acquired their Rapier last autumn, and Mike paid tribute to Cilla who was the driver for a significant part of the 206 miles from Ledbury in Herefordshire. This trip won for them the famous

Guiver Gong which was presented by a past winner, Tim Metcalfe.

We were entertained by a talk by Paul Hartley who told us of his early life with old cars and his professional experiences as a consulting agricultural engineer with a UN organisation. At an early time he became friendly with Hamish Moffatt, the enthusiastic and eccentric old car buff, and joined in some of his more acceptable adventures. Subsequently Paul took up posts for the UN in three continents, passing on his expertise in remote areas, including Kenya, Lesotho and Iraq. In retirement Paul lives in Suffolk, sharing his skills and experience with local organisations, and indulging himself with old cars. What full lives many Lagonda and Rapier owners have led.

The following day we gathered at The Old Mill in Saxtead Green for the traditional Sunday lunch. The sunny weather encouraged even more members to arrive with their cars, and there was a splendid display in the leafy car park, where the Lagonda M45s and LGs and two Rapiers were shown at their best. We do not often have an opportunity to admire both the very rare Lagonda 16/65 of Len Cozzelino and the unusual Lagonda 14/60 saloon of Frank Tuffs. There was much waving of arms when David Wall appeared overhead at 600 feet in his Tiger Moth for his annual fly-past. David flies from an airfield nearby and would be happy to take a member as a passenger on a future occasion – preferably someone who has come some distance to the event. Perhaps this could be the prize for the Guiver Gong winner!

We all enjoyed a very pleasant weekend and look forward to the season's events with some anticipation.



The cars at the Old Mill, Saxtead Green.



Frank Tuffs and his early and rare Lagonda 14-60 saloon. Photos by Warren King.

Lagonda Trip

Robin Sadler enjoys another of John Fitton's tours

WITH ANOTHER FITTON'S tour eagerly anticipated I spent the previous week looking at long-term weather forecasts in the constant hope that the outlook would improve. However Wednesday dawned to black skies and lashing rain. The decision had already been made to take the 3.5 Carlton DHC to appreciate the benefits of wind up windows and a tight, and lined, hood and Robin set off at 08.00 to join the queues orbiting the M25 (some years ago it was decided that the harmony of these occasions would be enhanced if Robin was allowed to grip the wheel and tear along at whatever pace suited him, or conditions and car allowed and collect his co pilot at a station near the destination). After 1½ hours to travel 25 miles on a very soggy M25 the M3 came as a welcome relief and the trip continued in only mild discomfort in very wet and blustery conditions to Plymouth station.

Apart from a wrong turn which lead to us descending a very torturous Cornish lane we found the hotel to be in a lovely setting overlooking Talland Bay. As the cars assembled more stories of derring-do in the face of atrocious weather were heard, even from those who had had to resort to using a modern. All were settled in and then assembled for Pre dinner champagne reception where John welcomed the newcomers to the tour. We were then called in to enjoy the first of several excellent meals and were also then able to fully appreciate the benefits of having taken over the whole hotel, which meant that everything was organised to our convenience.

John and Joan had gone to a lot of trouble to pre plan the table settings with place names allocated and changed each day of the tour ensuring we all had the

opportunity to socialise with most of the assembled company during the four days. A principal focus on that first night and for the rest of our stay was the most amazing collection of eccentric artefacts that littered the whole interior and exterior of the hotel. These had been collected by the proprietors over the years during various overseas trips and provided wonderful conversation pieces

Thursday dawned slightly more promisingly, albeit with continuing strong winds, but dry and cars left at their leisure for the 25 mile journey to the National Trust property at Cotehele. The nature of the Cornish roads meant this to be quite a trial for the 2 litres and all were wary of the oncoming locals on very narrow roads. The property was a delight, the main house having been commenced in 1465 with later additions, but still retaining its authenticity. It was saved for posterity by the last of the family ownership who, through forethought and patient negotiation, made it the first property to be gifted to the National Trust in lieu of death duties. We toured most of the gardens and grounds and were amazed to find a three sided tower atop a field outside the walls which could be climbed using very steep and dark winding stairs without a single warning or liability disclaimer sign, the view from the top making it very worthwhile climb.

The armaments in the great hall gave a vivid impression of just how gruesome armed conflict can be but all the remaining rooms, of which there were many and varied with all manner of quirky doors, windows and alcoves, were festooned with tapestries and it all had a very homely feel to it. We walked down through the gardens to the quay on

the river Tamar which gave an authentic feeling of how it must have been as a working port in years gone by. Lunch was taken in the cafe which occupied the old pub buildings and if the toast we ate were made from the flour ground at the mill further up the valley. It was testament to an excellent miller. The mill and attendant workshops were again evocative of a bygone age and showed how very self-contained these estates were

A variety of routes back to the hotel were taken; some to include the fishing port of Looe, the shark fishing capital of the Great Britain, not that any were caught and all were safely back or well on their way before the rain returned. Sadly this curtailed the planned expedition by some of us along the coastal path to find a snug pub in Polperro.

Friday dawned as a much better prospect for the trip to Truro where we were all to meet in the reserved car parking at the Cathedral. The sentinels at the gate allowed us into the forecourt by removing the large steel bollard with a manful display of strength and we filled the confined space. The cars made a fine display in front of the Victorian Cathedral and attracted a great deal of attention. To my eye they posed the question - was the Cathedral ever better dressed ? Although was it reasonable for that delightful blue and grey car to seek entry to the Cathedral through the front steps?

Most attended the organ recital where a live broadcast of the organist, an 18 year old Cambridge organ student, was projected onto a large screen. It was impressive to see such dexterity in one so young, although Roger Firth, our own resident organist, did opine that he was "a trifle weak on the Mendlesohn", something which I'm sure others of our party also picked up. Others strolled around taking in the character of the place, indulging in a little retail therapy and lunching in the town.

We left the forecourt just before the heavens opened again to return by various routes mainly encompassing the King Harry ferry for which £5.00 single, £5.50 return was demanded, which seemed a strange Cornish custom. Some stopped at the Tressillick gardens which were damp and judged to be a bit early to be at their best.

We returned to the hotel, to be met by our smiling host enquiring after our enjoyment of the day and commenting that the sun had shone all day on Talland Bay. Pre-prandial drinks were taken in the setting sun on the terrace, followed by dinner, which was accompanied by a wine tasting conducted by a charming young man who gave detailed background to the wines and the reasoning behind their being served with each dish. Most tarried long over dinner and the tables weren't cleared before 10.30 after which the more hearty souls propped up the bar discussing the merits of widgets and camshafts.

The previous evening's weather did not hold for the Saturday and the assembled company set off for the first leg of the planned tour. By now most were feeling the strain of very narrow roads and steep gradients and the route along A roads was most welcome. The recommended stop was at Bedruthan steps, a National Trust property featuring particularly large rocks leading down from the cliffs into the sea which, legend has it, were stepping stones for giants. These Cornish folk are quite adept at getting you to pay to see such imaginative interpretations of nature's wonders, we decided. In company with the Harrisons we found the, slightly more delicate but nonetheless random steps for humans, and clambered down 147 of them to reach the beach below. From there it was easy to see how the Bedruthan steps had been formed, huge overhangs of rocks towered over us and recent falls of rock and soil left other sections of the coastal path exposed for the next South West storm to be brought



Beautiful cars grace the frontage of Truro Cathedral.



Another row of cars at the Cathedral.

down into the sea. We all agreed it was a lovely beach for bathing and were deeply disappointed to have forgotten our bathing costumes!

Some had a snack lunch at the cafe, but most followed the recommendation to visit Padstow, (or Padstein as the locals disdainfully call it in honour of the celebrity chef who has colonised the place). Years gone by it was a proper Cornish fishing village but the status now conferred by his many restaurants, cafes and delicatessens had brought with it the trippers and car parking, and moving through the town had become a trial. Some stayed to lunch, some travelled straight through and some, knowing of its delights and shortcomings from previous visits, stayed away.

On the return route we were recommended to visit Lanhydrock, a very stately home which had been built in the Tudor period but seriously damaged by fire then rebuilt in the 1880s in the same style but with Victorian levels of comfort and sophistications such as central heating and bathrooms.

The house was as the family had left it with contents intact and gave a vivid impression of the opulent lifestyle of the titled wealthy in those days. Sadly, although that generation had produced 10 children, the ravages of the First World War and other misfortunes meant that in the 1960's the last of the family died leaving no issue to assume the title and estate and the house passed to the National Trust.

The final dinner was up to the excellent standard we had come to expect. The owner even managed to coax the Chef and his brigade out of the kitchen to take the plaudits from their diners. The draw for the table plan had favoured us and we were on the top table with the Fittons. During conversation with John he did admit he had had a great deal of trouble organising the table plans but had resolved his difficulties by passing it to Joan, who devised a system and then spent some time perfecting and enacting it.

Richard Reay Smith gave very eloquent thanks to the Fittons on behalf of the tourists and Tony Saunders and Sue Broockwell presented them with a veritable forest of flowers and some refreshment to sup whilst admiring them. Most were facing journeys of some magnitude and with an eye to the atrocious forecast for the following day the evening finished at a respectable time, for most. Sadly once again reference has to be made to the weather - Sunday dawned as predicted, lashing rain and a force 8 wind, which seemed to come from all directions at once.

Fortified by stout breakfasts the cars and occupants, dressed as best as possible for the conditions, set off. Much to my horror and shame, for the first time ever, my engine refused to fire. After the initial panic which involved lifting the bonnet to confirm that everything was saturated, including me by the time I'd finished, I sat and considered for a moment. I then had my Eureka moment and the cause became abundantly clear, a small tweak of the advance and retard ensured the magneto was not shorting itself, which it does if over-retarded and damp and she fired first push, as usual.

The conditions on the road were as bad as I had ever experienced and as I trundled along the A303, feeling for all those without the luxury of a good hood and wind up windows, I remembered the scene at Lanhydrock house where they had been setting up for a triathlon for today. At that moment travelling in 80 year old cars seemed far more sensible than running, bicycling and swimming in those conditions.

Having exclusive use of the hotel ensured there was even more socialising amongst members than usual, I'm sure I and most participants had conversation with everybody in the party. Another memorable tour superbly organised with a very light touch, enabling the participants to dip in and out of the day's itinerary as they chose. As John said over dinner "It's all about getting the right hotel" and, I think, in that regard most considered he and Joan had excelled.

Serendipity

Two photographic 'finds' by Ken Painter and Matthew Roberts

IN THE AUTOJUMBLE at the Spring Start meeting at Silverstone, I found this photograph of a 1928 Lagonda, a 1926 edition of the 12/24 Spares List, to complement the 1925 version that came with Connie, and another luggage trunk for her tail, to replace the rather tall one fitted by Colin Mallett many years ago.

The picture of the Lagonda is very interesting. The registration number doesn't feature in the current Members' Register, although other cars with PK numbers do, so I was able to place it as a 1928 car, probably registered in July. I emailed a copy of the photo to Valerie Bugler and asked if she had it listed in her archives. She hadn't but contacted Arnold, who had, and the car has quite a history. This is what Arnold was able to tell us:

The car, number OH9138, was fitted with the prototype low chassis engine in 1929 and was a works car, driven by Mike Couper with great success in a wide range of events.

In October 1928 he took two Class E records at Brooklands, achieving 200 Km at 79.5 mph and 200 miles at 80.7 mph.

In December 1928 he was entered to drive the car in the London-Exeter Trial. He drove in a dual role as an entrant and a travelling marshal and was awarded a Gold Medal. The photograph shows the car at a checkpoint in this event.

He and the car then took part in the March 1929 London - Lands End Trial, when he was awarded a Silver Medal. In May the same year, he was awarded a Gold Medal in the London - Edinburgh Trial.

He drove it again in the first Brooklands Double Twelve Race on May

10th and 11th 1929, where he won his class at 66.4 mph. He drove the entire event single-handed, beating the two Fox and Nichol low chassis cars, each with two drivers sharing the cars. General Metcalfe then had a difficult task explaining to Fox exactly why an earlier car beat the newer models... The Double Twelve was a typical English compromise. The race organisers wanted to run a 24 hour race, similar in concept to le Mans, but as they were not allowed to race at Brooklands during the night, they arranged two twelve hour races on consecutive days, with the cars held in parc ferme conditions overnight.

The car featured heavily as a masthead picture in "Auto Motor Journal" throughout 1929.

Our archives show that in January 1949 it was owned by L. Goodwin, who is listed as the owner in the 1950 Register of Members. In January 1951, ownership had been transferred to Cedric Philcox and in August 1954 to CMC Spedding. We understand that it was owned by Alan Hitch in the mid to late 1950s, but we have no further details of his ownership. After this it is no longer recorded in Club files and we have no other news of the car.

This is the first photograph of it that has come into our possession, although Alan Hitch loaned Geoffrey Seaton a post-war photograph for his book, where it appears on page 83. Geoffrey comments on the front chassis cross-member being a standard HC example, as it is in this earlier photograph, which pre-dates fitting the LC engine, so Geoffrey's suggestion that the car had been returned to standard HC format when it was sold could well be true.



The story behind the second picture is just as interesting. It was found by Dave Roberts' son Matthew at a stately home in Wiltshire and Dave sent it to Colin Bugler. It shows a Lagonda 3 litre saloon at an RAF base during the war. The registration number cannot be seen, so we know nothing about the car itself. Colin had seen the same picture in the Caravan Club Magazine, dated June 2012 and he supplied the information below:

The article in the Caravan Club Magazine from Gerard Ferris in Barnet says: "The person in the white flying overalls, standing to the left of the caravan door, is my father's cousin. He was Flt Lt Henry Michael Ferris DFC and was a Hurricane fighter pilot in the Battle of Britain. He was a notable RAF fighter "ace" and was killed in action on 16th August 1940.

From research at the Imperial War Museum, it appears that the photographs were taken at Wick Airfield in the north of Scotland on 27 or 28 February 1940. Further research has revealed the pilot on the right to have been killed in the Battle of France on 19 May 1940 and the dog to have been killed in the bombing of Croydon Airfield on 18 August 1940. The pilot sitting in the doorway survived the war. In the family, these photos are known as "Michael's caravan photos" and they appear in many books on the Battle of Britain, the Hurricane and the RAF in general. They have also inspired an American artist to design a jigsaw puzzle picture around it and the artist has portrayed himself as standing in the doorway."

You just never know what history lies behind these random discoveries until you do a little research.



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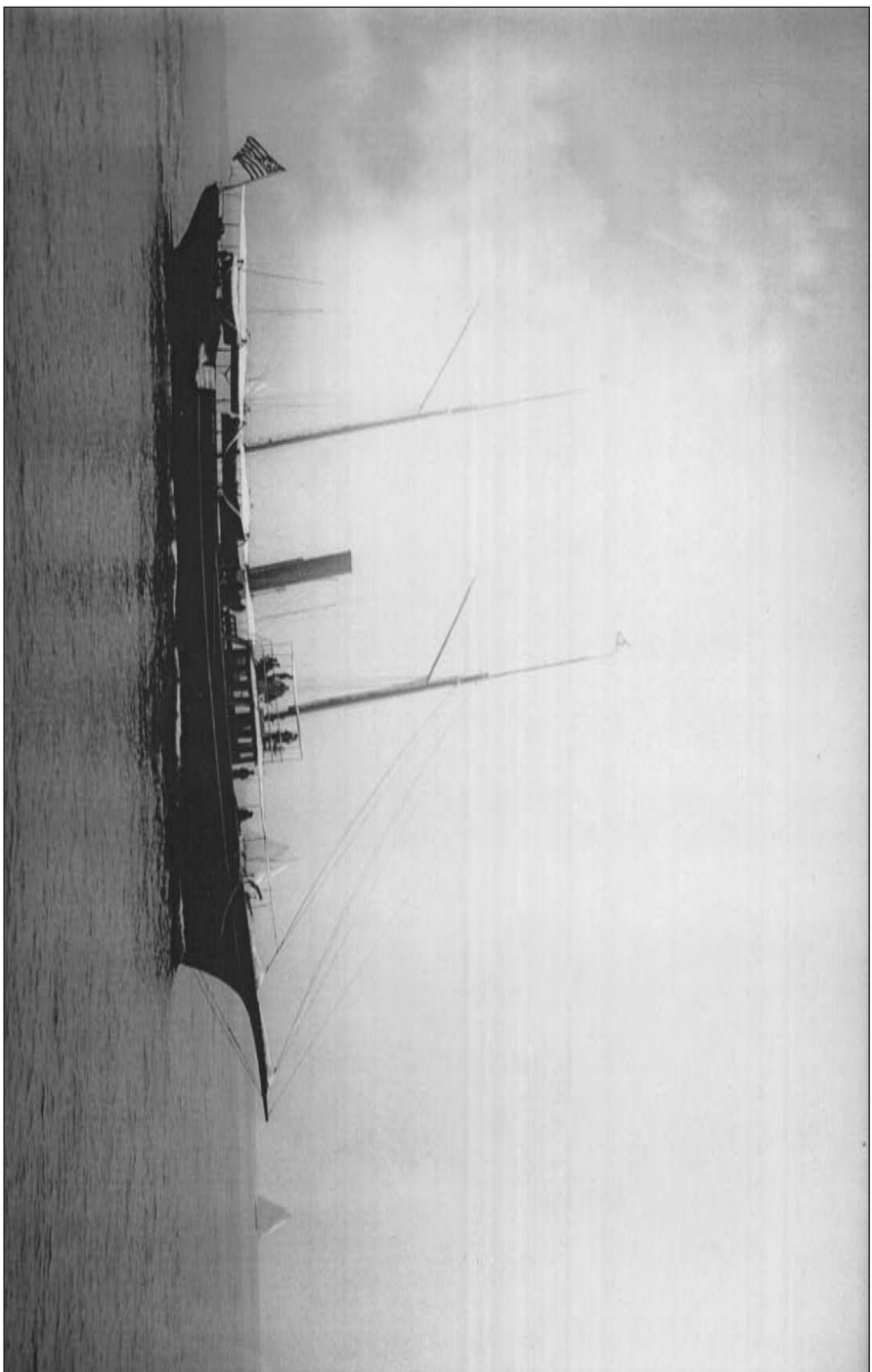
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The Steam Yacht "Lagonda". No link with the cars at all, but a vessel registered in America. Colin Mallett bought this picture off the Internet.

EARLY DAYS

(We prefer the errors of enthusiasm to the indifference of wisdom!)

David Hine reflects on his mechanical adventures

IT WAS BACK in 1957 when I was 14 years old, when my father bought me a kit of parts for making a small Stuart Turner, single cylinder, steam engine. I took them back to boarding school, Ackworth Quaker School and presented them to my long-suffering craft master, Ken Rosewarne. We started with the base plate and he showed me how to fasten the rough casting onto a lathe face plate and start to machine it smooth. I remember the delight I had as the sharp tool progressed very slowly across the cast iron surface to produce an almost mirror finish. This all seemed easy to me so I then took the rough, tiny, crankshaft forging and put it into the lathe chuck to machine it. Disaster, the tool rode up the unsupported shaft, chewed into it, bent and mangled it. Ken Rosewarne sighed and started to show me how to fabricate a crankshaft from two pieces of rod and hand made webs brazed to them. Soon we had a replacement crankshaft and things could proceed. I had begun my long road as an apprentice.

Fast forward to 1961. I had passed my driving test, at the third attempt and was desperate to have my own car. Dad had promised to buy me one if I never got on a motor bike. (It is now 2012 and I have never even sat on one!). We purchased, for £45 a 1948 Ford Prefect, 1172 cc side valve job. I was absolutely clueless about anything under the bonnet and just happy to drive it even though it was very slow indeed. I learnt the hard way that batteries pack up if they are not topped up with distilled water, that engines rattle very loudly if they get low

on oil, and get very stiff if there is no water in the radiator! Somehow this wonderful little car survived all this abuse and never failed to get me home.

However I wanted more excitement and was badgering my Dad to get me a MG TD which was for sale at a bomb site garage near Manchester University where I was doing Petroleum Engineering. He was dead against this, convinced I would kill myself in such a car. I guess his job as an insurance broker did not help.

One day our metallurgy lecturer Doc Evans roared into the car park in the most exciting car I had ever seen. To me it looked like an enormous MG - it was in fact a Lagonda M45 Rapide - I was in love! Doc had already agreed to sell this car to the USA for £450 and he later bought a T8 M45, which was later owned by Brian Green. He encouraged me to join the Lagonda Club and Dad and I were made most welcome at the West Towers pub meet. On the way home from this meeting we spotted a 1934 Park Ward Bentley saloon for sale at a garage and purchased it for £180 as a stop-gap car. Compared to the Ford it seemed the height of luxury, but it was a bit tired and the engine rattled rather a lot.

Dad had helped me decoke the Ford which had a nice flat cylinder head; we did the job all in one morning. I set about taking the Bentley engine apart with the same swift enthusiasm and was soon rather amazed at the number of nuts and bolts I was faced with. Once I had the cylinder head loose, I stood astride the engine and gave it a heave with all my

strength. Nothing happened for a couple of tugs then suddenly I found I was holding it above my head with nowhere to put this enormous casting. It described a graceful arc and crashed down onto the aluminium wing of the car. Paint flew off and I recall marvelling at how thick the chips of Rolls Royce coach paint were. Another lesson learnt the hard way. Off came the sump, which was full of the most amazing quantity of sludge. This sludge was actually quite abrasive in feel and I made a note always to remove the sump from any unknown car I came to own, as a first step. Once the pistons were out, the reason for the engine rattle became clear. The small ends of the connecting rods had bronze bushes which had worn thin and broken up.

I went to a local machinist who made me some new bushes and at the same time opened up the grooves in the pistons slightly to take new oversize piston rings. The big end bearings were still in good shape so all went back together exactly as I had taken it apart. I well recall the thrill as the engine burst into life again, this time rattle free. I roared around the Cheshire countryside with great enthusiasm and passing the RR factory at Crewe decided to call in and show them my pride and joy. To my dismay the manager sent down to meet me asked me politely, but firmly, to leave with my scruffy car as soon as possible!

I took the car on holiday to Abersoch in North Wales and was out in it one day with Dad for a ride. I said that I needed some new tyres because the re-moulds had flats on them where the previous owner had done several emergency stops with the complicated, but very effective, servo assisted brakes. Dad had a sixth sense, he suggested stopping at a remote Nissen hut garage and that I should go in and ask them if they had any 17 inch tyres. Blow me down, they had five in stock. However I had to go and check if a lady doctor still might need them for her Bentley up near Rhiw Mountain.

Minutes later we were at her cottage up a rough track in a beautiful secluded spot. Dr Richards had retired there with her lady chauffeur several years before. They now had a modern car but the old Bentley that she had owned from new was laid up in a shed. The doors of the shed creaked open to reveal a complete, if slightly shabby Barker drop head coupe. I couldn't resist trying to buy it and she eventually agreed to part with the car for £125. The engine ran perfectly and I later found out it would start by simply moving the advance lever. However the chassis suffered from awful low speed wheel wobble.

I managed to get the car to a garage where the elderly mechanic told me to leave it with him for an hour. The wheel wobble problem was solved and I never thought to ask him how he had done it! (toeing OUT the front wheels has been known to "solve" this problem). However, even though I liked these Bentleys very much, I still wanted a Lagonda and one had come on the market at Jack Bond's Vintage Autos in Kensington. It was a beautiful T8 M45 Tourer and the asking price was £750. Even though the price was far too high I wanted to see the car and persuaded Herb Schofield, who I had just met, to come to London with me as a technical adviser.

We did the return journey from Oldham in my mother's Riley 1.5 in a day, quite a feat in the pre motorway era. Herb and I got on well on the journey, he was all of 25 years old, but seemed very mature and experienced to me, six years his junior. In addition he owned a LG45 Rapide, which had just won the VSCC Oulton Park Concours.

We eventually found Brook Mews North and the Lagonda looked absolutely fantastic. They fired it up and Herb gave me a confident thumbs up as he observed the oil pressure. It turned out later that this was the limit of his technical expertise but his negotiating skills proved invaluable. I had brought some

tiny 35mm colour slides of the Bentleys and, when held up to the light, showed them to good effect. Herb had no compunction in describing their condition as splendid much to my embarrassment. After a lot of debate he struck a deal for me, the two Bentleys plus £100 for the Lagonda. We all shook on it and departed back North. A few days later Jack Bond and a colleague arrived in the M45 at my parents' home in Alderley Edge. I took them up to the double garage where the two Bentleys were ready, washed and polished and full of petrol, but still looking their age. If Mr Bond was crestfallen he didn't show it. They had a cup of tea and departed. I just stood and gazed at the gleaming white Lagonda, fearing I was dreaming. I later realised that this car was also fairly original under the bonnet and it is amazing how a quick respray and rechrome can impress!

The first few runs were trouble-free and I soon managed to master the gearbox. I had rung Ivan Forshaw for advice and he had wisely told me to back off the clutch stop until I got the hang of double de-clutching. "It should just kiss at full pedal depression" summed up an hour on the phone.

The only serious problem I had with the car happened a few weeks later when third gear broke with a nerve shattering clunk, followed by knock, knock, knock. Another call to Ivan saved the day. I was to meet the Pines Express steam train the next morning and a replacement gearbox would be in the guards van! I did struggle to fit it and had to have several attempts to line up the box before all ran smoothly again. Ivan charged me a total of £28 and I had to send the old box back down to him. Dad suggested I wrote to Jack Bond and tell him about the failure and I diffidently complied. I was amazed and delighted to receive a cheque for £25 by return of post. I doubt his successors in Kensington would be so generous in 2012!

I used the M45 as my every day transport through the winter of 1963/4 and was dismayed by the effects of salt and smog as it lost some of its initial glow. I did a longish run to the Club AGM which was held at Overstone Solarium near Northampton that year to encourage northern members to attend. I shall always remember the Chairman, James Crocker's response to a member who complained about the long distance he had had to travel - "Well we are supposed to be a motoring organisation" - brilliant.

The engine was showing its age and had developed a bit of a rattle, which I minimised by retarding the ignition. I knew I had to do something but had little time and less money. I was working part time by now, but only getting £9 per week most of which went on petrol. I was taking my brothers to school in the car and pulled up opposite a new Aston Martin. The driver got out to admire the Lagonda and said he had one back at his works. He turned out to be Hugh Gardner of Gardner Diesels based in Patricroft near Manchester. He had owned several Lagonda models before the war and put his engines in all of them, hoping to start a fashion for diesel engines in cars as well as lorries.

I must have been sharper than usual that day and asked him what he had done with the old petrol engines. He thought there might be a couple lying about at the works and would I like them? He made me most welcome at the factory and showed me round the engine building lines. I recall that the mechanic was allowed three revolutions of a new engine by which it must start and run. Failure to comply involved a full strip down of the unit.

He showed me his LG 45 saloon which had a novel interior heating system with finned radiator tubes under the passengers' feet. The engine was a unique 4 LK unit built specially to fit under the Lagonda bonnet. However, for me, the exciting part was the visit to a small store room. There were two

Meadows engines and quite an inventory of spares for servicing the Lagonda cars and upgrading such parts as the rear axles to take the torque from the big engines. I recall paying £35 for a virtually unused M45 engine which had been removed, complete with all its accessories from a new Saloon in 1934. It was delivered next day on one of their immaculate lorries together with a lot of spares Mr Gardner had thrown in for nothing.

With more youthful enthusiasm, I remember changing the engines one weekend using an old rope block and tackle, hitched up to Dad's Rover to lift them in and out. To my delight the "new" engine ran so beautifully that my M45 was instantly transformed into what it would have been when it first left Staines in 1934. This engine had been run in at the factory and then all the settings on the carburettors, coil ignition, and magneto were locked with wire and little lead seals.

I have re-built many Meadows engines over the years and always aspired to, but rarely achieved, the silent and smooth power of this fantastic find. I continued to use the car every day through 1964 and only had one problem. It failed to proceed one day after I had backed it out of the garage. It turned out to be that the heads of all eight bolts, that secured the crown wheel, had sheared and fallen harmlessly. The ever-patient Ivan Forshaw sent me replacements but not before he had sold me one of his batches of clutch plates that he had had made, and I didn't need at the time.

It was in the late summer that Herb Schofield told me, at a pub meet, that he had acquired a chassis, from Dearden-Briggs and was building a special for racing. I went up to his factory in Oldham and began to help him. He was working in a small shed with no proper facilities. Over a pint, we agreed to go 50/50 on the project. I could provide an engine, the old one from my M 45 and we got a gearbox from Dennis Roberts. With the help of the Gardner spares,

steering and springs were re-bushed and Herb built the body. All was done for £95 and the car took to the road in the spring of 1965 (see magazine Summer '65 for the full rebuild story). Alan Brown gave us much help and guidance. April Silverstone shone gloriously sunny and we roared off to take the VSCC by storm. I couldn't believe it when everything overtook us and soon realised that one needed a lot of power to go racing, even with a lightweight chassis.

Back to Mr Gardner at Patricroft and the second engine was purchased for another £35. This was an LG45 engine, which was correct for the chassis. However, it had been used a little more than the one I had installed in my M45. The result was electrifying and, with a generous handicap, several races were won before we were put to the back of the grid! This was a very happy year for me, not only had I enjoyed racing but had met Jill who was to become my wife, and still is. I sometimes wonder whether it was my good looks or the gleaming M 45 tourer that first caught her eye. By now I was working for Shell Chemicals as a shift technologist earning £1500 per year. This was more than adequate in those pre inflation days, but the writing was on the wall and all prices, including cars were rising at an extraordinary rate.

In 1966 I was working on the night shift on the High Pressure Polyethylene Plant when my attention was drawn to an advert in the Manchester Evening News for a Lagonda Saloon, price £100. Jill and I drove out to see it and were delighted to find an M45 saloon, one month older than the tourer. Jill christened her "Lady" and so she has been called to this day. I beat the poor chap down to £90 so that I still had £10 to tax the car. During that winter, this M45 saloon proved invaluable for warm trips over the hills to see Jill where she lived in Sheffield. I remember a couple of return journeys in deep snow over the Snake Pass, the only car on the road but no problem at all. The interior was not only warm but full of fumes which often

made me drowsy so new piston rings were purchased from Maurice Leo for £10 11s 6d. This helped to solve the fume problem but it was only fully cured when I modified the bonnet louvres some years later.

Herb and I were still enjoying racing the special; it was called CBU, which was the registration it had been given. Herb re-bodied it again, some years later and it was known from then on as "The Fire Engine", owned today by Terry Brewster. The car performed superbly, the only real problem was overheating of the coolant water. This was solved when we invented the use of a sock filter to catch all the muck from the engine before it blocked the radiator.

Herb wanted another challenge and, after our trouble free construction of an LG special we had no qualms about tackling a V12 project. The elders in the Northern Section of the Club tried hard to dissuade us. They told us how complicated this type of Lagonda was. We were young, enthusiastic and foolish and shrugged off these wise words. In the end, Ted Townsley gave us a complete car, less engine, for nothing. He had used it with a diesel engine in it until it was worn out and the body rotten. We gleefully set to work in Jack Buckley's workshop in Oldham. Jack built the Le Mans replica body for us at a total cost of £250. This was a magnificent achievement and the car is still in this form, being regularly raced by Alastair Barker to the present day. The chassis had to be dismantled and I got a shock when I could not simply drive out the spring shackle pins, I had no idea they were threaded.

Because everything was worn we purchased another donor car for spares. This was a long chassis limousine, no engine, but little used. It provided good springs, steering column, brake parts etc. Herb and Jack did all the creative stuff and my job was to do all the mechanics and wiring. Strange to record, the V12 engine presented no serious problem. This engine was discovered in Carlisle.

All I had to do was de-carbonise it and it started with a howl as soon as we had lowered it into the chassis. My skills had been adequate for the more basic LG 45 special but I had more than met my match with this beast of a car!

All was rushed to be ready for April Silverstone, our customary time target. The car, looking superb, drove out of Jack's garage the day before the race. The first problem was that we could hardly squeeze behind the steering wheel as it had extra length for the previous limousine coachwork. That evening I exchanged the limo steering column for the original one that came with Ted's chassis. Little did I realise what a difference this would make.

Off we set to Silverstone with gay abandon. To our consternation the car weaved from side to side, a phenomenon made worse by the fact that the bearing behind the steering wheel was virtually seized up, making corrections very jerky and difficult. The brakes were awful with huge pedal travel. I had not mastered the complexity of the dual master cylinder even though I had replaced all the rubbers inside it. I had had the brake drums drilled with holes for cooling, but the chap who had then skimmed them for us had used these holes to clamp the drums into his lathe so they then became octagonal when released!

To add to the general instability we appeared to have no shock absorbers. The front ones were just an ineffective design and the telescopic type we fitted to the rear axle had simply snapped as soon as the axle casing twisted under torque. I had fitted a Bowden cable to operate the carburettor throttles. My poor design meant that a tiny deflection of the accelerator pedal opened them fully so the car was either stationary or leaping forward at full power. Herb's seats had been designed to copy the Le Mans cars and were a simple curved sheet of aluminium with leather laced over them. They were beautiful but excruciatingly uncomfortable and made

worse by the brake lever sticking through the passenger side.

We somehow managed to swoop and swerve our way to Silverstone and, because of the car's superb appearance, found ourselves the centre of attention with cameras popping and crowds all around.

The commentator gave us a huge build up which made our sudden fall from grace even more embarrassing when the engine lost six of its twelve cylinders. It turned out later that I had fitted two anticlockwise distributors and one of them had given up enthusiasm for revolving the wrong way!

I limped back home on six and set to work resolving all these problems. My incompetence had shaken me badly. I had experienced very few problems with CBU the LG45 special. It had plenty of power, light steering, excellent brakes and good predictable handling. The V12 had the opposite characteristics in virtually all respects. I made some progress over the next couple of months but a full, body-off investigation had to wait until the end of the season. I recall driving alone to Silverstone for the BDC meeting in August that year, 1968, racing in the pouring rain but achieving first place overall, wonderful. I still have a picture to prove it hanging in our downstairs loo.

I had been fortunate that the engine, gearbox and rear axle of the V12 had all performed satisfactorily - if these had been troublesome I may have lost all enthusiasm. I fitted replacement brake drums from the donor car and carefully rebuilt the slave and master brake cylinders. So far, so good. Then I refitted the original rear shock absorbers and fabricated some rods to stop the rear axle twisting under load. The front shock absorbers were replaced with telescopics, fitted inside the wishbones, which looked very neat and worked well (they were later banned by the VSCC)

Now I turned my attention to the very complicated front suspension and

steering set up. The cause of a lot of the problems turned out to be due to the complete failure of the chassis lubrication system. This had not been difficult to overcome with the LG45 because we had simply replaced the oil pipes with grease nipples. This does not work with the V12 chassis. On this front suspension the lubricating oil enters the top wishbone bearings, flows through hollow sections and drillings to lubricate the main swivel pin (king pin) ball race and then fills up a cavity to overflow down to the lower wishbone bearings and also out to the track rod ends. So far, so good, but the designers snatched defeat from the jaws of victory by sourcing the oil, not from a clean oil reservoir, but from the bottom of the engine sump where all the gritty, watery sludge accumulates. The handbook says that the engine oil should be changed every 2500 miles. If this unrealistic demand had been strictly adhered to, then maybe all would have been well. In practice most owners just topped up the engine oil and the fact that the engine was designed with no proper oil filtration system spelt disaster for the reputation of this otherwise splendid model.

The V12 was much improved for the 1969 season with almost all the faults eliminated. It remained twitchy on corners and to our dismay had less power than the LG45 special that had preceded it. Herb was not enamoured with these shortcomings and he sold me his share at the end of the year.

I well remember my one and only meeting with W.O. Bentley when he told me to use much higher engine revs before changing gear. At July Silverstone, with the engine howling, I gained more first prizes using this advice. However, at the Finmere BDC driving tests the next day, I noticed a much lower oil pressure. The drive home was smooth and uneventful. It was a week or two later when I took the lid of the oil strainers. Imagine my shock when I found them completely full of aluminium shavings. I

recall that I could not sleep that night, gripped as I was with fear of dismantling this behemoth of an engine! In reality it was not as bad as expected, just hundreds of nuts and bolts all of different lengths and sizes.

The problem I discovered was that two of the connecting rods had almost welded themselves together. This engine was a Sanction 2 version and the web on the crankpin had been dispensed with to allow a greater bearing surface. I never found a reason for this failure. It took me a year to complete the rebuild, which included new main bearings, Hillman Minx pistons, and heat treatment of the aluminium conrods to restore their strength, known as solution precipitation. The result was a success but only just, because I did not take the precaution of getting initial oil pressure using the starter motor alone. I simply fired up the engine when all was complete. No oil pressure reading

appeared on the gauge and another sleepless night passed before I guessed that the oil pump needed priming by filling the filter housing and letting the oil run down to the pump. I did take the car with its "new" engine racing once more but did not have the courage to rev it to its full potential. I sold the V12 to Alastair Barker later that year and he has raced it successfully to the present day. Steel conrods have replaced the suspect aluminium design and new camshafts gave much-needed boost to the torque curve, but that's another story.

These early day fumbling trials eventually matured to some modest degree of competence, which, in turn, gave me the courage and audacity to re-write the original handbooks for several models of our marque, often incorporating essays by Ivan Forshaw et al. The idea is to warn folk of the many pitfalls into which I have fallen and still await the unwary enthusiast.



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A period photograph from Graham Doyle of a Lagonda 2-litre low chassis. The photograph was taken in the mid-1950s, and shows the car parked near an entrance to The Park in Nottingham. Castle Boulevard is in the background, and Nottingham Castle Rock would be to the left of the photographer. The car was advertised for sale in May 1954 for £165 o.n.o. with excellent tyres and new batteries. An on-line inflation calculator gives this as £3,625 in today's money – clearly this was the time to buy!



The Invicta S-Type, imported from France.



The left side of the engine, partially dismantled.

Project Invicta

Don Redmon describes an exciting project

THE ACADEMY OF Art University, established in 1929 by Richard S Stephens, is the largest private school of art and design in the United States with more than 18,000 students. Dr Richard A Stephens took over the Presidency in 1951, and Dr. Elisa Stephens, succeeded her father as President in 1992.

Richard A Stephens has always had a penchant for cars, a sentiment that has been passed down to his daughter, Desiring to offer automotive design at the Academy, Dr. Stephens wanted to give students a design perspective that they would not be able to receive from anywhere else. With access to a museum of rare and classic vehicles, students can study exquisite design and apply that sense of craftsmanship to their own artistic pursuits. The automobile museum preserves and pays homage to these classic fixtures of international automotive innovation and also provides inspiration and a sense of history to students that attend Academy of Art University.

The Academy of Art University Automobile Museum received its 1931 Invicta in July 2011. The car was picked up from the importer at the Port of Oakland and trailered back to our shop to view properly and admire.

As soon as we rolled the car out of the trailer everyone converged and started to inspect it. We were looking for any obvious signs of distress, damage or just plain broken parts. The automobile was quite dusty and dirty from its long sea voyage. As our inspection progressed we noticed a lot of caked-on old grease and oily dirt on many of the grease fittings and surrounding areas. Under the hood/bonnet the engine compartment

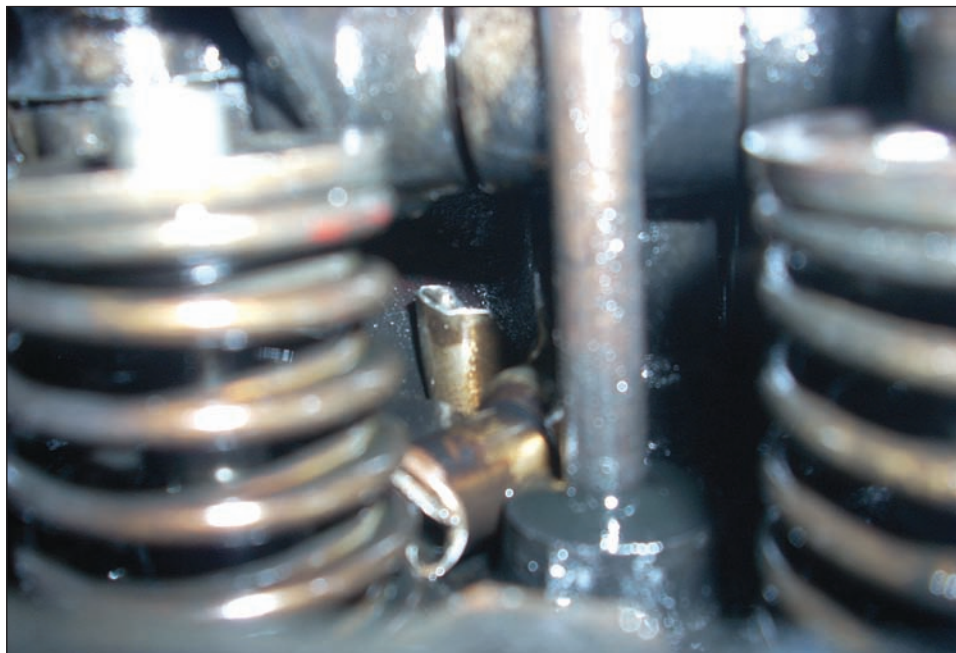
was a messy stew of oozing and leaking fluids. The closer we looked the more problems we found. The electric starter did not work and as the engine felt hard to turn over by the hand crank I decided to remove the valve cover. The second push rod was broken in two about an inch down from the rocker cup and this did not look to be an old break. This as it turned out was a sign of things to come.

I decided to perform a leak down test on the engine before we went any further. I wanted to have a better idea of the state of the engine's internal health and I wanted quantitative numbers and factual information that would tell me what the sealing ability of the piston rings and valves were.

A brief explanation for those of you who do not know what a leak down test is. Basically it is a test to determine the internal sealing fitness of an engine. To perform the test, you regulate a uniform amount of air into one cylinder of your engine at a time, with the piston at TDC and valves seated and closed. The gauge on the leak down tester can then tell you the amount of air leaking from that cylinder. Zero percent is a completely sealed and non-leaking cylinder and 100 per cent leak down is a fully open drain pipe. Air will generally escape past the piston rings into the crankcase and/or past the valve and valve seat area into either the intake or exhaust system. But air can also escape past a bad head gasket, cracked block, etc. This test can also give you a good idea of where you are having problems or need to investigate further. As the air pressure is constant while testing, what ever is leaking will make air leaking noises. If your problem is piston rings then the



The Muffler - Boom Box.



The broken push rod.

crankcase breather will hiss or hum. If it is bad valve seating problems, the intake or exhaust system or pipe will sound like air escaping down a tube. We had a lot of air escaping from various cylinders, exhaust valves, and some out the carburetors so I fully expected to see some bad things there when I got the cylinder head off.

A few random leak down test examples: Two to four percent is a good professionally built racing engine. A modern street engine could be anywhere between eight and twenty percent. The first cylinder that I tested on the Invicta returned a reading of 95% on the gauge. I then knew that we had a serious problem. Continuing the test the rest of the engine's cylinders read 95, 86, 82, 75, 22 and 18 percent leak down. On the bright side we had two reasonable cylinders out of six. This then was the confirmation; the engine was going to have to come apart for internal inspection, repair and re-building.

The rocker arm shaft assembly was actually removed before the leak down test as I could see and feel problems there. We found wear on the shaft, and rocker pads, etc., but it is repairable wear. We hard chromed the rocker shafts and then re-ground back to size. The rockers are getting new bushings which are then bored to clearance. The rocker pads turned out to not be too bad and so they were cleaned up with out too much effort or trouble.

Our exhaust system brings me to pose a question to the Invicta owners at large. Our car has a large hollow exhaust boom box behind the left front wheel and below that fender. The two exhaust headers exit into this box which then feeds a standard looking tail pipe down the left side of the car to the rear. In the only good pictures that I have found on line so far, neither of the two white Invictas which were involved in historic racing in England had this box. They

feed the two exhaust manifold pipes directly into a long pipe with ran down the left side of the car and exited behind the rear wheel. Any information and or pictures about this exhaust box would be most welcomed.

The two porcelain coated exhaust manifolds are as usual now only partially covered. We will have the flanges machined flat again and the two pieces re-coated as this project progresses. They are in surprisingly good shape inside given their age, though after cleaning we did find evidence of previous cracks fixed by welding.

The carburetors looked to be in reasonable shape from the outside and without the knowledge of running the engine. The control bars and cables and mechanisms were all semi-thrashed. The intake manifold came off next and I was able to see into the intake ports and look for any damage. Some of the intake ports did not look nice.

We had progressed with the engine disassembly to the point where I had the cylinder head and cylinder block and all related components off the engine. Many other parts were also sitting on the shelf when we had to finalize our preparations for the International Auto Show at the Moscone Center which takes place here in San Francisco each November. The Academy of Art University Automobile Museum presents an exhibit of vintage cars from our collection as part of the IAS. This year we brought thirty five classic automobiles and in a unique turn brought the Invicta in the state of disassembly that it was in as well. As most people will only ever get to see a finished restoration, it was felt that the before or more correctly in the midst of, would be of interest. I chose 82 out of the group of hundreds of photographs already taken of the work in progress for the Audio Visual Department who got everything ready in one day. They made a continuous picture loop which was

then shown on a large plasma television screen next to the Invicta. Now patrons of the show could not only see the Invicta stripped down live there in front of them but could also by watching the large screen picture loop see the car being disassembled. It was a hit and I was amazed at how many people had never seen a piston before. It was especially rewarding to see the reactions on the children's faces when their parents would tell them. "That's what the inside of a car engine looks like".

The Moscone Auto Show was a nice side excursion for Project Invicta. It enables people who had never heard of or seen an Invicta and a Meadows engine before to learn a little bit about both and ask a few mechanical and historical questions. There were a lot of smiles to go around and that is always a good thing.

We just finished doing some basic flow testing of the Meadows cylinder

head. This was primarily done to confirm what I thought the ports were doing such as CFM, turbulence and that the exhaust port did out-flow the intake, and also to add to our information base as to the camshaft. More on this in the next article.

We are restoring this unique automobile as correctly as is humanly possible with an eye towards what it was originally intended for; high performance street driving, rallying and amateur level racetrack events. It will also look beautiful as well.

So any information and knowledge as to Invictas, this particular automobile especially and 4-5 Meadows engines and overall mechanical components will be appreciated and passed on through these articles to the readership and world at large. I am sure that everyone will appreciate the pooling of information and knowledge about these rare and unique automobiles.

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AA Badges

Michael Drakeford does some automotive archaeology

THE earliest AA badges were issued in April 1906. None is known to have survived but it is known that they were of a uniform pattern and probably made in brass. The 'white metal' ones were nickel plated and were available soon after.

The obverse carried a serial number on the shank. After the numbering increased to five digits or more, the number was impressed around the circle. There was also a facsimile of Stenson Cook's signature, which was later reduced in size and the word 'secretary' added sometime afterwards. On the first badges the reverse was plain, but soon the telephone number and telegraphic address appeared.

In November 1907 a smaller version was made for motorcycles. During World War I the motorcycle badges were given coloured heart shaped tokens indicating membership expiry dates.



A combined badge was designed in 1911 after the amalgamation with the Motor Union. The new badge incorporated the 'M' and wings from that body's emblem with the intertwined 'AA's. This was to be the standard pattern for the next 50 years, varying only with the size, type of metal and method of fixing and several additional types. These were the short lived pentagonal light car badge from 1914-1920, the small car badge from 1939-1939.



The commercial vehicle section badges which were brass with a red background from 1911 to 1930, and later replaced by a blue badge from 1930- 1967. Finally, those for committee members were surmounted with a pennant.

From 1925 onwards brass badges gave way almost entirely to a nickel or chromium finish. During the 1930s the wings were made straighter and the pinions were given greater definition.

In 1945 the shape was made more compact with a convex bulge, and in 1967 the large chrome and rectangular plaque arrived

To determine the date of a badge up to early 1930 is difficult. Unless there is other evidence such as membership correspondence it can only be surmised because during this period the badges were simply numbered from 1 to 999999.

Things became easier from 1930 when the badges had annual A-P suffixes between 1930 and 1945. Thus starting



with 1930 as 'A' it is possible to work in which year the badge was issued.

From 1946 things get more tricky. The R, S, and T suffixes were used on flat motorcycle badges for the years 1946-1956, thus not annually. The WXYZA suffixes were used on domed motor cycle badges from 1956-1967, also not annually.

The numbering was no easier for other vehicles. Prefixes would now be used, and the rapid increase in membership numbers led to the following:



OA to OZ prefixes 1945-1957

1C-9C prefix 1962-1963

1A-9A prefix 1957-1959

1D-9D prefix 1964-1965

1B-9B prefix 1960-1961

1E- 9E prefix 1966-1967

So there you have it. As you go around the auto jumbles you will be more knowledgeable than the stall holders. Barter away and find a badge suitable for your car.

More Badges



In 1907 a smaller version was made for motorcycles



Large chrome and yellow rectangular plaque in 1967.



The first motorcycle badge issued in 1907



Motor Union car badge (without wings) in 1907



Industrial or Commercial Vehicle Section badge 1911 to c.1930



Design for Industrial or Commercial Vehicle badge c.1930 to 1967



Light car badge for two or three seater cars up to 11.9 hp. 1914 to 1920 only.



Chromium motor cycle badge first issued in 1929. Replaced c.1952

Thanks must go the Automobile Association for providing this information.



See "Letters" on following page. Picture courtesy of Bill Henderson.



Another of your Editor's autojumble finds. The car is chassis no. LAG/49/35, delivered new to Garage Stierli in 1949.

Letters

Hello Ken

I was wondering if this picture would be suitable for inclusion in the club magazine (in my opinion it is a very good picture). The car, AI 9590, took part in the 1953 Monte Carlo Rally (I am still trying to find out the chassis number and details of where it finished - assuming it did!), the drivers being B G McCartney-Filgate and co-driver J Millard. It is interesting to note what I suspect may be anti-glare screens affixed to the inside of the windscreen, each having 4 suckers visible, also the car has an MG club badge on the badge bar.

On the assumption that it might be suitable for the magazine I have already obtained permission for its use in "The Lagonda" and if used it should be credited to The Bill Henderson Collection:

www.thebillhendersoncollection.co.uk

I have been in contact with Alan Heard who has details of the Post War Lagondas and as stated above the chassis number is not known, therefore the identity of the exact car is not certain. Alan did mention that the Lagonda entered in the 1952 event, registration number AI 9999, chassis number LAG50/344, was also supplied to McCartney-Filgate by Black Bull Motors, Dublin.

Kind regards

Antony Bowie

Arnold can add a little more to this tale; it is one of only three DB 2-6 saloons sold in Dublin around this period. This should help narrow the search. Since it wasn't Lag50/344, that only leaves the histories of two cars to check. Is it possible to make enquiries of the Eire Registration Authorities?

KPP

Dear Mr Editor

I have just read your article in the Lagonda Magazine, which is a transcript of my letter to you written in September 1952. Thank you very much indeed for reprinting the complete letter; I had almost forgotten about it. I kept a copy for many years with all the other jumble behind my rear seat. But it's gone now – perhaps not too surprising.

It was so nice to be reminded about Lady Grey. I knew her well and, in fact, was quite keen on her at one time. Unfortunately the relationship didn't come to anything - but it would be nice to meet her again after all this time. I also remember Titus and how arrogant he was when we got to the top of Porlock Hill on that Lands End Run. It put me off him a bit. But I would still like to see him again if he can be traced. As you know I was in the care of the Jeddere-Fisher family for many years, something over 60 years I believe. Before that I was owned by a Mr Barker (his friends often called him Steady, I don't know why). He drove me extensively for about two years. He used to go regularly to the British Grand Prix at Silverstone. He went to the practice sessions as well which were held on the day before the race. Overnight he camped with friends in the spectator's enclosure. On one occasion (I believe it was in 1948) quite late at night when everything was quiet on the night before the race he drove me round the Grand Prix circuit. Some Officials came and stopped him; they were not too pleased. But I was pleased. Fancy, little me going flat out at nearly fifty miles an hour, head lights blazing, on that famous race track! I will never forget it.

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

Those years with the Jeddere-Fishers were happy ones. I went to many rallies and entered numerous motoring events. At first in the 1950s it was Marcia who drove me most but then Arthur took over. In later years, after Arthur died, I was mainly driven by his son, Ken. It was very kind of you to put a picture of me in your magazine. I think I look quite spry for an 87 year-old (my birthday is in June so I shall soon be 88). As you can see I still have the green paint which Arthur chose for me many years ago.

My new owner is Mr Aikman. He has not driven me very much but he did take me over to see a kindly man called John who lives in Bedfordshire. He spent a month or so doing helpful things to my insides, renovating my springs and generally curing some of my aches and pains. I feel much better for his attention. Mr Aikman does not like my green paint and wants to repaint me Royal Blue, which I am not sure about. I guess I will have to put up with it.

I hope you will forgive me for rambling on. But I did want to thank you very much for reprinting my letter.

Your friend

WILBUR

PS Mr Aikman has kindly allowed me to use his computer to send this letter as an email. W.

Connie says that, when your Editor was a little boy, a comedian, also called Ronald Barker, starred on the wireless and used the catch phrase "Steady, Barker". That is where your Mr Barker's

nickname originated!

Your Mr Barker was the man who, before the war, discovered Giralda the 1914 11·1 Coupe in a scrapyard near Braughing, Hertfordshire. After the war, Arthur Jeddere Fisher extracted it and had it restored by Bert Hammond. Later, he sold Giralda to Charles Elphinstone. She is now cherished by Charles' son James, who also owns a 1914 11·1 four-seat tourer. He is not currently a Lagonda Club member, but your Editor is working on it!

K.P.P.

Dear Ken,

A recent sad fatal accident in Queensland, caused by lack of a second, visual method of securing the passenger's door of a car with forward opening doors, led me to fit these safety latches. One size fits all, they are 'handed'. Setting up and drilling the mounting screw holes involves a 'moment of truth' - to drill or not to drill - but the result can be unobtrusive and reassuring. These latches make a quick visual cockpit check prior to take off somewhat simpler. I fitted them to both doors of my 2.6 LB6 DB Lagonda DHC 1948 recently. In one of the pics, a latch is not correctly closed. See if you can spot it.

I obtained them from Woolies Trim in the UK via the net. Good people to deal with.

Peter Henson

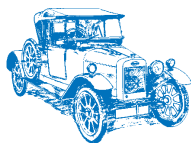
See the pictures on the next page.

KPP

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



Peter Henson's extra door catches.



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Brian Bishop and Charles Gray
Court Farm, Rag Hill,
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(approx 8 miles South off M4 Junction 12)

Works telephone/fax: - 0(44) 1189 712330
Mobile: Brian Bishop - 07776 005633

e-mail: bishopgray@msn.com

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