



THE MAGAZINE OF THE
LAGONDA CLUB
Number 234 Autumn 2012



— DAVID AYRE —



David Ayre in his 1927 H/C Lagonda during the London to Cape Town Rally

"The only original pre war car to finish without major mechanical difficulties" John Brown Hero

Lagonda Bentley Invicta

International Rally Preparation

World's largest stock of pre-war Lagonda spares

- Complete restorations
- Maintenance
- Chassis straightening
- Full pattern service
- Storage facilities
- Valuations and appraisals
- Cars and projects bought and sold
- International client representation
- Covered transport
- Stockist of Evans Waterless Coolants

Insurance work undertaken

Past projects include, full restoration of Speed Six Bentley
Class winner at Pebble Beach

David Ayre • Mobile +44 7785 365890 • Telephone/Fax +44 1635 268058

www.davidayre.com • www.prewarcarparts.com

E-mail: david@davidayre.com

WANTED — PROJECTS OR PARTS



The Lagonda Magazine

e-mail: lagclub@tiscali.co.uk · Web Site: <http://www.lagonda-club.com/>

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: rpmrs@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

Other 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>

Contributions do not necessarily represent the views of the Board of Directors, nor of the Editor and expressed opinions are personal to contributors. No responsibility is accepted for the efficacy of the technical advice offered. Acceptance of an advertisement for publication in "The Lagonda" does not imply endorsement of the product or service by the Board.

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

FRONT COVER:

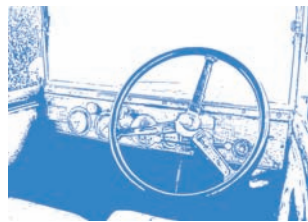
*The first Works demonstrator for the new 16/80, now owned by John Stubbs.
Photo by Peter Lloyd.*

Contents

From the Driving Seat	5
Preparations for the 80th year of the 16/80	6
AGM report	9
The Bert Hammond Archive.....	14
BPK 202, Alive and Kicking	19
Wartime Weymanns.....	23
Project Invicta Part Two	27
Letters.....	30

From the Driving Seat

Ken Painter



WEARING MY "MODEL CHAMPION" hat for the light cars, I recently visited Jim Punter in Stoke Pages, who owns the oldest known 11-9, a 1919 model, with the barest minimum of frills, no speedometer, just a switch panel boasting an ammeter, and headlights that dim to become side lights. Jim's father restored the car in around 1960 and nothing has been changed, except the block, which developed some nasty cracks a few years later.

Jim uses the car regularly, but lightly, each summer and he offered me a ride with him. For such an early car, it has surprisingly lively performance, cruises easily at around 40 mph, has a remarkably smooth and supple ride, with no shock absorbers - and seven inch diameter, two wheel brakes that require greater than normal concentration, as they are not the most efficient I have ever enjoyed, even though Jim maintains them in perfect condition. He is not a Club member, although his father was, many years ago. I hope to persuade him to join us in the near future.

From Stoke Pages, it was a short diversion on my homeward trip to visit Robin Aikman, proud owner of Wilbur, the 1923 12/24 MC Coupe,

formerly owned by the Jeddere Fisher family. I knew that the car was away having a new hood made after 88 years' stalwart service, but the chance to meet Robin and Maureen was too good to miss. After a long chat over a light lunch, Robin and I adjourned to the garage to check and identify the collection of spare parts amassed by Arthur Jeddere Fisher many years ago.

Within the collection was a clutch plate for a later 12/24, so not suitable for Wilbur. It was slightly rusty, but otherwise in good condition. Mine is totally worn out and when I diffidently asked Robin if he would sell it, he insisted on giving it to me. What a wonderfully kind man!

At next year's AGM, we will be celebrating a hundred years of the Lagonda Light Car and we hope to encourage as many of the survivors to attend as possible. Since we have only managed to track down about 36 cars world-wide, we wouldn't have a huge display, but it will be the 80th anniversary for the Rapier and they will be featured as well, so we look forward to welcoming members of the Rapier Register to make it an occasion to remember.

***Last date for copy for the Winter magazine is
... FRIDAY 14th December 2012 ...***

Preparations for the 80th Year Celebration of the 16/80 Special Six

Len Cozzolino, Brian Savill and John Breen organise the 16/80 display

IT STARTED, AS all these Lagonda club things do, with a call and the seemingly innocent question "Would you mind helping organise the ...? It won't take too much time ...All we need to do is write a few emails to the 16/80 owners to let them know that the 16/80 is the selected model at this years AGM". "No problem" I said, happy to help. I had no illusions that my help was requested not for my detailed knowledge of 16/80s, their owners, or Lagondas in general but as I am relatively computer literate and therefore could send emails! I say computer literate but as the saying goes, "In the land of the blind the one eyed man is king".

From this inauspicious beginning, the journey started, and what a journey it was, as any 16/80 owner will now testify. We should also state from the beginning that Valerie Bugler may also have rued the day we got involved in this obsessively simple project.

In early February, Brian, John and I met at the monthly joint VSCC/Lagonda meeting at the Royal Oak in Barrington. Not too many cars to ogle at nor many owners to chat to on that cold February evening, so we had the evening to ourselves to plan our attack on the unsuspecting 16/80 owners. Odd how many of our meetings involved a pub! We discussed numerous fiendish ways of encouraging 16/80 owners to attend, after all we were not going to be outdone by the record 30 2L cars at last years' AGM. Fortunately, some of our more outlandish ideas were discarded and we

settled on a more gentle approach. However, the common ground was that it would be a good idea to perform a thorough review of the club's database on the 16/80 and that a simple booklet be written showing the member' cars pictorially.

The first port of call was to Valerie to ask for the list of 16/80 owners, so we could send out the first of many emails/letters. This was the first of what must seem to her a near infinite list of questions from us. Next port of call was Arnold Davey to start to build a digital data-base based on his extensive handwritten records. As you can imagine, the trip to Arnold's house revealed a mass of information on "everything Lagonda". The well-thumbed index cards, a system first started by his predecessor, were a veritable treasure trove of data. Though it has to be said Arnold's predecessor's handwriting was easier to decipher than Arnold's later additions!

Over the next months we built the digital database from Valerie and Arnold's data, supplemented with a first class database John Stubbs had created over the last 40 years. We also reviewed various other data sources - VSCC owner register, local vintage car club events records. The Geneva vintage car rallies proved a surprisingly fruitful source. But with each new car we thought we had discovered there it was in Arnold's data! So from the start of 70 odd cars on Valerie's electronic data base, we built the new database to a total of 177 16/80s.

It was during this exercise that we made the 16/80 owners work for their membership. We sent to every club member the data we had on their cars - ownership history, details of the car and any other interesting history. These records were supplemented with photographs. As you can imagine we received corrections and updates back from a few keen members, the rest sent in their information simply to stop us pestering them via email (this is where my computer literacy came to the fore).

Some of the histories are fascinating, others sad. All too many simply saying "car scrapped" We particularly liked the stories of how some enterprising person found his/her car in a scrap yard, usually in the Midlands, and haggling on the price to settle at £18 or even the heady £25. Oh those were the days! Many recounted how they could have chosen between a Bentley, Rolls, or some other equally desirable car that was languishing in the scrap yard. Today they would be sold for hundreds of thousands as a "Barn-find ready for a sympathetic restoration". Automobile auctioneer's speak for "needs twice as much again spent on it to make it even drivable!"

The work on building the database was fascinating and brought up a few surprises, for me at least. If you look around any Lagonda gathering it is dominated by Tourers. Even taking into account that many Saloons were "chopped" into Tourers over the years I was surprised to see that there were in fact more 16/80 Saloons built than Tourers. Using a simple pro-rata basis we have extrapolated the known cars up to the total of 261 that Arnold Davey believes were produced. Therefore on a pro-rata basis some 111 Saloons were built, 104 Tourers, 25 Vanden Plas and 21 Drop-head Coupes/other.

All we had to do now was put all this data and the photographs we had collected into a commemorative booklet. A simple task! Poor old Brian had to buy

a new computer just to handle the data and John learnt rather more about managing files via email than he cared to; not to mention how to retrieve files from the hitherto unknown directory OKL5. The age of remote working was forced upon them if they wanted to keep my excesses in control - which they did.

Once the booklet was written, all we had to do was make sure it sold. So again the poor 16/80 owners were hit by another barrage of emails extolling the virtues of this fascinating book - we omitted to tell them of course it had largely been written by them anyway. Nothing like sending coals to Newcastle.

During this exercise we came up with another cunning plan to justify yet more emails. This was the dedicated 16/80 spares newsletter. The idea was to allow 16/80 owners to sell spares they had which they had sitting in their garage on a "just in case" basis. So yet more emails went out at irregular intervals. To make them more useful we added some helpful tips, but the ulterior motive was to remind everybody about the AGM.

So to the weekend itself. On the Saturday, a lovely trip around the Cotswold countryside had been organised. Although there was no official 16/80 group for this there were six on the trip, three in procession up the notorious Edge Hill. The ascent was accompanied by the usual crunching of gears, missed gears and tinkle as something or other fell off (my car at least, having only just got it on the road after 47 years slumber). For those of us who made it to Upton House we had the ignominy of being asked to put pads under our cars to stop the oil dripping, as if a Lagonda would! But as some bright official noted, a vintage car that does not leak oil has no oil in the sump! Perhaps wise words!

Through this barrage of emails we managed to encourage around 20 16/80s to turn up on the Sunday. No other model was as well represented, both in numbers or range of body styles. Given

that there are only 75 16/80's in the Club and some of those, we know, are mere projects or in one case several boxes of bits, this was a very high turnout.

Pretty much every body shape was represented from T2 to Laurence Drake's late-bodied T8 together with two Vanden Plas bodied cars. As if to prove the earlier point, of those 20 cars only one saloon was present. Ian Dimmer brought his wonderful SWS ST24 bodied saloon, resplendent in red and black, with rear facing air horn on the scuttle.

Of particular interest was John Stubbs' car PJ 7395. This was the first production 16/80 and was used by Lagonda as their press/test car. This is also the car that adorns the front cover of the commemorative booklet and for those fortunate enough to get a place at the very well attended dinner on Saturday evening, adorned the cover of the menu. We were also extremely pleased to see Stephen Weld's beautifully original 1931 Crossley Tourer (GO 5249). As you all know it was from this engine that the 16/80 engine was derived and the similarities are immediately apparent. Stephen drove his car some 200-odd miles from North Yorkshire to be with us.

We had to wish two 16/80's happy birthday for Sunday, both registered on 7th October 1932 and so 80 years old on the day. Don Toone brought his splendid T5 Tourer (YY 1546) and Pierre Häslers T5 replica (YY 62). Unfortunately as Pierre lives in Switzerland he was not able to be with us.

Special thanks have to go to the 16/80 owners who made it from afar. Patrick Rollet arrived from France with his semi-sports bodied 16/80, Howard Wong from Canada, Douglas Fox from Malaysia and John Campbell from Ireland. Also special thanks to Peter Fisher and Dick Lamb who trailered their cars just to be there. Peter is half way through a total rebuild and I know he used the day to good effect to see how the various bits he has spread across his garage floor fit together.

Congratulations go to Brian Savill whose tourer won the 16/80 Concours Tankard this year, and to John Sword whose 2 seater VdP won the Ladies Choice Prize

So be warned you early model owners, our tactics worked, so all we can suggest is change your email address or suffer as the 16/80 owners did this year!



Has there ever been a larger assembly of 16/80s? Photo by Pete Fisher.

AGM 2012 at Heythrop Park

Clive Dalton makes a long weekend of it

SOME SAY IT was like Fawlty Towers and although that is a little harsh there were times when it did exhibit that combination of arrogance and incompetence that Basil Fawlty did so well. The staff were all polite and enthusiastic but the organization, shall we say, left something to be desired. At check-in the computer gave every indication of being, if not on Mars, certainly on the Moon. "Can we have dinner?" was followed by an interminable wait whilst the computer made up its mind that we were actually on a dinner, bed & breakfast package. There were other problems which will be picked over before the provisional booking the Club has for September 28th and 29th 2013 is confirmed.

However, as a location and for those of us fortunate enough to have an upper room in the main block it could not be bettered. For one thing the views in all directions are wonderful and for another the lawns on which we parked the cars were equally stunning. Given that the Club AGM weekend is almost invariably blessed with good weather it was a perfect location for the outing round the Cotswolds too. One can only too easily see why it is such a desirable place to live.

Shirley and I skived off early Friday afternoon and set out with the hood down but by Milton Keynes it was spitting and by Buckingham it was raining hard enough for us to duck into the Tesco Car Park to put the hood up under the trees. It got worse and worse from then on and revealed that I had not done quite enough work on restoring the wipers. They became intermittent and would stop completely from time to time. As overheard on the Sunday we

ought to get out more often. "They are more reliable if they are used." We did eventually arrive to find several other Lagondas parked out the front but not much sign of their owners. Adrian Lead appeared in the hall which was welcome as he had only started coming in 2011. Once the complicated accounting system not to mention the geography of the hotel had been cracked, dinner was a pleasant meal with a nice wine to go with it.

Saturday morning the weather had cleared and we spent breakfast wondering if each new couple in was part of the Club, which in many cases they were. The meal finished with a sort of impromptu gathering. It tends to happen at Lagonda events. After that, we went over to a friend's at Ledwell, came back with a dry hood to find lots of cars had appeared and their owners were milling about in the Hall. Some ordered lunch then waited so long that they tried to cancel, only for the lunch eventually to appear. Not good.

The briefing in the Wedgwood room caused someone to remark that organizing the Lagonda Club was like herding cats, part of the attraction for some of us. Nevertheless we all got away on what the route book said was 55 miles but some averred was more like 74. However that may be, Warwickshire and Oxfordshire were matchless in the sun and we all finished up at John and Ros Sword's for a most welcome tea.

The Dinner that evening was in a long narrow room only wide enough for two tables staggered which gave the feeling that, being at the end, we would have a long wait. Some things were done well and the service at that meal was one of them. Enough staff had been provided to do the job properly and, given the

propensity of the Club only too readily to talk amongst themselves the evening was a great success. The new location has brought lots of welcome new faces both to the Dinner and to the Concours. Not only were there 121 sitting down, itself a record but the discussions afterwards were still going on at a quarter past one in the morning, another record.

Sunday morning breakfast was well organised. We knew the system, there was plenty of food and we seemed to have the place to ourselves. Some of us wondered if we ought to have ordered lunch.

We go outside then to form the cars up under Peter Blenk's guidance. This year the 16/80s were the featured model and a great number of nicely turned out ones showed up. It was particularly good to see our former Chairman, Brian Savill, now much recovered and with his very spectacular open car. By 12.50 there were 65 cars in all and 69 by about half past one. Not as many as we used to see in the 1960s but times have changed and you never now see the tatty cars held together with string and fencing wire that used to appear. They did add to the general gaiety but the standard of the cars has immensely improved over the years. Going home on a low-loader still happens but the insurance you pay against it e.g. your Green Flag sub for a year, is less than half a tankful of fuel which must say something about reliability.

The AGM this year was held in a proper auditorium. Nevertheless the gremlins still got into the sound system ("Are there any geeks in the house?") so almost everyone had to stand up and speak up. Richard Reay-Smith asked, towards the end whether he could be heard at the back and, hearing that he could, apologized.

The business went pretty much went to plan with an introduction by our President, some words by our Chairman including a particular welcome for

members from distant parts and an intimation that he was retiring at the end of this year having done five years. "If you think that chairing the Lagonda Club is difficult you should try a thousand Jews of the West Wimbledon United Reformed Synagogue." It was then revealed that the Chairman Elect was John Sword and that to replace him as Treasurer Brian Green was to join the board. We also heard that Aldermaston Manor was reverting to a private dwelling having been bought by a Russian. We are not going back there again. "It's next to AWRE" said someone.

The meeting concluded with a presentation about the coming Club Website. This has turned out to be no small undertaking. The Cub accepted a bid of £15,000 for the job, added 20% for contingency and has now used about half of it. As Richard said, it is more than 95% ready to go live but the last 5% is taking a lot of effort. Richard and the Chairman were much at pains to make it clear that the Forum run by Peter Schirg was in no way to be compromised or superseded. Peter himself was reported as being keen to see the final effort as soon as it went live. Richard and Chris Hobbs were particularly thanked for the effort they had put in on this project.

The AGM went on longer than it usually does but this is not a criticism. It was thoroughly well conducted by Andrew Gregg, was full of interest and finally finished at about 12.30 when it was time either to go out and look at the cars or to eat lunch or both.

One notable event was the recent acquisition by The Lagonda Heritage Trust of Bert Hammond's tools, generously donated by his family. Several of the cognoscenti made a bee-line for them after the AGM and by half way through the afternoon only the most esoteric were left unidentified. What is more they were all in the most excellent order just as though he had put them away expecting he might have to get



Just some of the 2 litre models on display.



Three magnificent DB cars.

them out again in a few months' time. As a memorial to an Engineer's working lifetime they were a nice thing to be remembered by. They are also a testament to how American tools came to dominate in the first half of the 20th century.

Once the formalities have been got

out of the way the afternoon is free for all sorts of pleasant things. The cars look stunning in the sunlight, the poor judges are hard at work, there are friends to talk to and, for us, no urgency to get home. We can recommend this skiving lark except for one thing. Monday's weather was just as bad as Friday's.

LAGONDA CLUB AGM CONCOURS 2012 AWARDS

Class	Winner	Car Model	Registration
2 Litre	Barry Halton	14/60 Tourer	PF 6601
Rapier	Martin Mountfort	Abbott Tourer	BGH 798
16/65, 3 Litre and 3½ Litre	Philip Mayhew	3 Litre Tourer	GY 2362
M45 and LG 45	Peter Walby	LG 45 Saloon	CY 106
LG6 and V12	Stan West	V12 Freestone and Webb Saloon	FXB 119
Post-War Cars	David Stone-Lee	2.6 Litre Drophead	HWJ 900
Volkes Trophy (Longest distance travelled to the AGM by a member in a Lagonda)	Patrick Rollet	16/80 Semi- Sports Tourer	
Ladies' Choice	John Sword	16/80 VdP 2 seat Tourer	APH 850
Seaton Trophy (Best used and maintained Lagonda)	Tim Wadsworth	2 Litre Tourer	GP 793
16/80 and Car Club Trophy (Best featured model)	Brian Savill	16/80 Tourer	YY 2406
Concours Cup (Best of Show)	David Stone-Lee	DB 2.6 Litre Drophead	HWJ 900



The proud award winners display their trophies. All three pictures by Peter Lloyd.



- Classic and Modern High Performance Vehicles
- Agreed value on vehicles over 10 years old
- Discount for Limited Mileage
- Valuation not normally required
- Discount for Club Members
- Discount for Collections
- Full UK and European, Breakdown and Recovery Service

The CLASSIC LAGONDA INSURANCE

Our Policy includes FREE Club Track Day cover, Green Card European cover and legal expenses insurance, and can be extended to include Historic Rallies and Wedding hire.

Classic Car Specialists established 1965

Immediate cover is available by telephone.

www.heritage-quote.co.uk

MEMBER



General Insurance
STANDARDS COUNCIL

For a Free Quote

0121 246 6060

For a Free Quote

The Bert Hammond Archive

Arnold Davey recalls a pioneer from the earliest days of Lagonda history

BOARD MEMBERS OF the club whose telephone numbers are in the public domain get frequent calls from people seeking knowledge of a car's whereabouts and, less frequently, from people with a historical connection to the company and its employees. The calls range from the idiotically vague- "Grandfather had a really big green Lagonda, can you tell me if it still exists? No, I don't remember its number"-to the fascinating and invaluable. One such in the last category led Colin and Valerie Bugler to pay a visit this year to Christine Day in Northamptonshire. No sooner were they in the house but they realised that the Lagonda memorabilia that Christine had offered was no less than the collected paperwork and tools left by Bert Hammond, Chief Tester of the company until 1935 and passed on via his daughter, Jean Taylor.

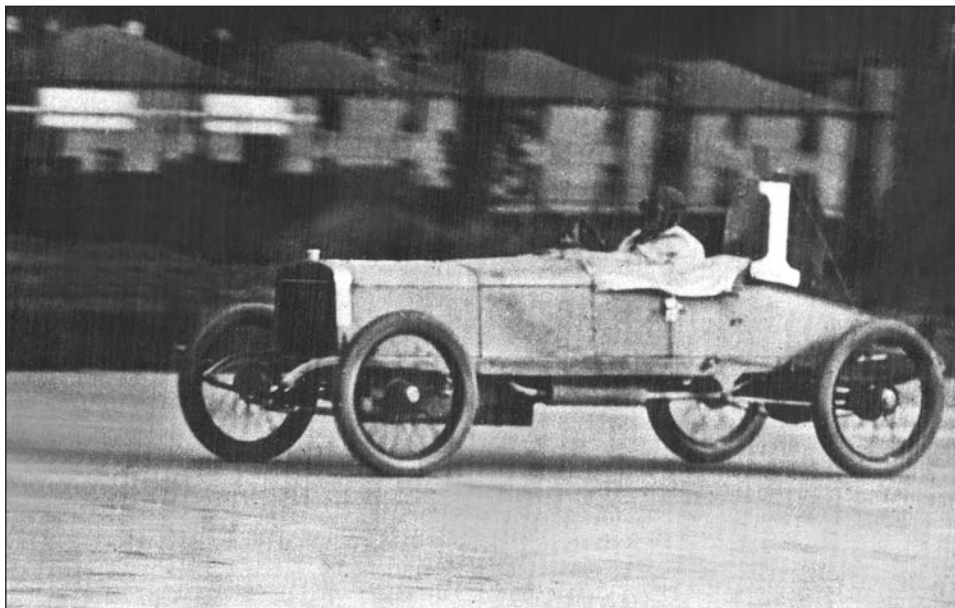
Jean had kept all this precious stuff and was kind enough to lend it to me for the 1978 history and again to Geoff Seaton for his 1988 Illustrated History. Included in the archive are the original portrait of Wilbur Gunn, the Tricar and Edwardian photos, the 1928 and 1929 Team Car pictures and much more. The one item Christine retained was Bert's imposing 1910 passport, but she has supplied a colour photocopy of this splendid document, with its liberal selection of rubber stamps from Russian dignitaries.

The tools, some well worn, others pristine, all reflect on his testing duties, which clearly went beyond just checking the performance of completed cars and extended to measuring components in exact detail. Some of the tools are obviously home made for some specific purpose, now lost. All the high precision instruments are American in origin and I am not sure whether this is a relic of the Gunn era or just follows the widely held

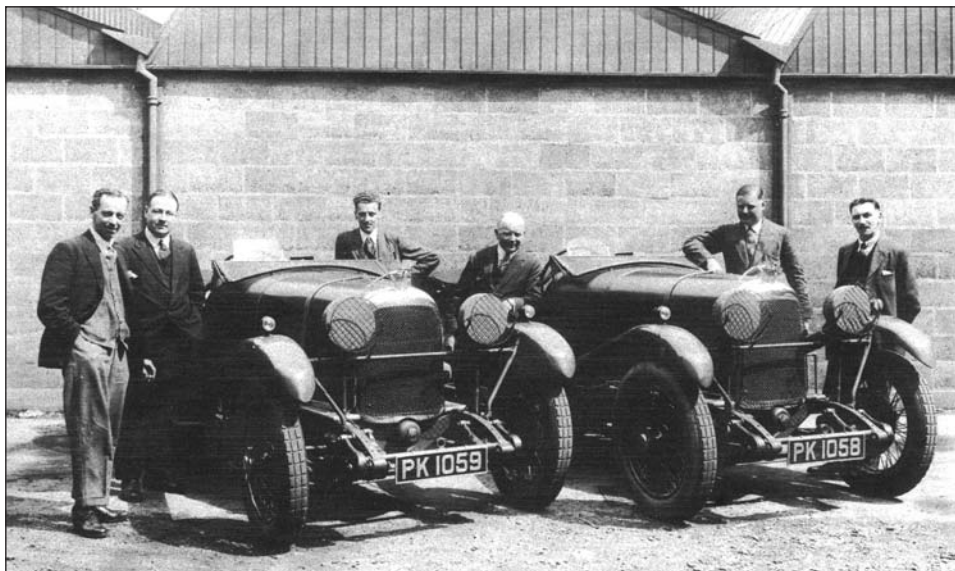
belief in the 1920s and 1930s that American equipment was the best. Lagonda did have a tendency to use ANF screw threads, rare in the British industry, often with Whitworth spanner sizes.

For newer members, not steeped in Lagonda history, I will outline Bert's career. Leaving school in 1902, aged 13, he went to work for a cycle maker in Staines called Knights. Wilbur Gunn began to make motor cycles seriously in 1903 but initially only made the engine, relying on Knights for the cycle bits. When Knights went out of business in 1904, possibly because Gunn started making frames himself, Bert crossed the river and started at Lagonda. At this time there were five employees, Gunn, Alfie Cranmer, Bert and two fitters. The steam engines that had been Gunn's original interest were still a feature of the works, itself part of the Gunn household in Thorpe Road.

Bert was to stay with the company until just after the 1935 Receivership, rising to the post of Chief Tester but along the way also encompassing 'works' racing driver, rally navigator and general Pooh-Bah. After the second war he was 'discovered' by members of this club, notably Arthur Jeddere-Fisher, who had bought a derelict 11-1 and got Bert to rebuild it, which he did entirely from memory. It was this memory, exact and detailed, which was our principal and only reliable guide to the early years of the Lagonda company and the extended interviews with him in the 1950s, recorded on tape by Tony Osman, are now in the Heritage Trust's collection. In Wilbur Gunn's early days he mostly took Alfie Cranmer as passenger in the chair of his tricars in the scores of competitions that Lagonda entered, but Bert sometimes went instead. In 1906 the opportunity arose for Lagonda to bid for



Brooklands, summer 1909. Bert Hammond races the 1909 18 hp Lagonda.



Second important picture from the Bert Hammond archive. Two of the 1928 Team Cars just before setting off for le Mans. Note the visible dynamos, precursors of the low chassis engine. People appearing are, l to r, Ted Bolton, Works Manager; Walter Buckingham, coachwork designer; Eddie Masters, chassis designer; Alf Cranmer, Technical Director; Bertie Kensington Moir, Racing manager; Bert Hammond, Chief Tester and Reserve Driver.



On board the MV "Ulster Monarch", August 1929. Left to right: Bert Hammond, Lloyd (Hammond's assistant), Robin Jackson, Arthur Fox, Donald Wicockson (F & N's Chief Mechanic), C A Broomhall, Tim Rose Richards, Arthur Dobson.



A selection of Bert Hammond's tools, some well worn, but most in perfect condition.

Post Office contracts for delivery vehicles and a special tricar was constructed with a huge box in place of the chair. The qualifying test was to last for three months, during which period the mails had to be distributed to all London Head sorting offices within the hour. Bert was chosen to be the driver. Unfortunately, that spring saw the LCC decide to electrify all its tram services at once, so that every main road was up at the same time, with horrendous traffic jams. The air-cooled tricar, undercooled at best and not helped by the vast mail box, ran red hot and at the end of each run could only be stopped by engaging a gear and letting in the clutch with a bang.

After the change to four wheeled vehicles, Bert got another new task; racing driver. In 1909 a short series of races were entered at Brooklands with a special two-seat lightweight 18 HP. As an unknown quantity, Bert got a good handicap in his first race and won it, but after that the handicappers marked him down, so there were no more wins. The following year he accompanied Gunn on the Russian St Petersburg Reliability Trial as co-driver but then was confronted with Gunn's idea that he should stay in Russia to train mechanics to service the flood of Lagondas expected to be ordered as a result of the Lagonda's excellent result. The flood did not materialise (post-Soviet era research shows only 12 Lagondas went to Russia) and Bert was soon back in Britain.

Bert's competition activities began to take a back seat when Bill Oates joined the company in 1914. Primarily a salesman, Oates campaigned the 11-1 in trials and rallies and prepared himself a special lightweight 11-1 coupé two-seater, complete with high compression engine. With the advent of the First World War, Lagonda only slowly converted to munitions work but did so with a vengeance after 1915, going over to two-shift working and appointing Bert as Night Superintendent. As such he was in a reserved occupation and immune to conscription, but social pressures on a young man (he was 26 in 1914) led him to volunteer for the forces twice, but each

time was "fetched back" as he put it, by the company.

Munitions work stopped overnight in 1918 at the Armistice and Gunn, Cranmer and Bert had hurriedly to convert the now vast machine shop back to car production. Bert's contribution included finding all the unsold 11-1 parts stashed all round the town in various rented properties. Within six months an updated 11-1 was on sale again.

In 1921 Lagonda got back into racing again, with Bill Oates, now a Major, constructing a narrow single-seater 11-9 Brooklands car. Bert did some of the testing and Oates had a successful season at the track (and elsewhere), culminating in breaking five distance records in the 1½ litre class in October. Meanwhile, the factory built a pair of racing two-seaters specifically for the JCC 200 Mile race, one for Oates and the other for Bert. This was the first long distance race ever held at Brooklands for light cars and the publicity was enormous. Mechanics were carried, Ernest Graham sat beside Bill Oates and Glen Logan went with Bert. Practice lasted three weeks and the race was run off far faster than anyone expected, with Segrave's winning Talbot-Darracq winning at 88.8 mph. The Lagondas finished 11th and 13th, with Bert the quicker by four minutes, an unexpected result that caused a small furore as Oates was an officer and gentleman while Bert was an 'other rank'.

But generally Bert was far too busy in his testing duties to be spared for long with the factory banging out nearly forty cars a week at the summer peak, each one taken at least once round the test route involving Old Windsor, Englefield Green and Egham. The next highlight came early in 1925 when he accompanied Arthur Davidson in performance trials in the prototype 14/60 fitted with a makeshift tourer body and a new shape radiator with no badge. Their remit was to roam the main roads of Surrey and Sussex and see how many rival makes they could pass. Bert was most impressed.

"There was nothing to touch it in its class" he remembered. As was so often the way, the prototype incorporated a number of 12/24 parts, which were to prove too delicate for the heavier 14/60 and had to be strengthened, to the detriment of the performance of production cars with heavier coachwork.

By 1928 Lagonda had realised that the Speed Model 2 Litre was capable of competing in international sports car competitions and their 18 dealers were coerced into putting up the money to build a four car team for, primarily, Le Mans. Only three would run, but a fourth car in reserve was deemed to be sensible. Bert was chosen to be the reserve driver, the three main places being given to well-known racing drivers. The Lagonda effort was ruined by two of the cars hitting each other, which scuppered any publicity triumph, but the team cars were brought out for the Lagonda Fete at Brooklands in July and Bert was one of the drivers giving demonstration runs. Some years ago an 'Old Lag' told me of a hair-raising ride with Bert in one of the team cars at the fete and of seeing an indicated 100 mph on the Railway straight.

Bert went with the team to Ulster for the 1928 Tourist Trophy race. Only two cars now, and no reserve driver. Neither finished, leading the company to scale back its involvement, concentrating on trials and rallies, which in those days accounted for pages and pages in the motoring magazines. In 1929 Fox & Nicholl and the PERR syndicate took over the racing, with four cars again and although theoretically there was no factory involvement, Bert accompanied the team to the TT and is in the photograph taken on board the ferry.

He pops up again early in 1930 navigating Lord de Clifford in a 3 Litre for the Monte Carlo Rally. Officially, the noble lord owned the car but one is pretty sure he didn't and that Bert was there to look after the firm's motor car.

The Depression took a big toll at Lagonda, as a study of production numbers shows. In the six months from

November 1931 to April 1932 only around 100 cars were sold, less than four a week, and only slightly better the following summer. The testing department nearly vanished and it was left to private owners to enter competitions, which they did with enthusiasm. There were no less than eleven Lagondas in the 1933 RAC Rally. By 1934 Bert was doubling up as a salesman and recalled going down to Malvern to demonstrate an M45 Rapide, which he did so successfully that the customer agreed to buy that car and no other. After a desperate call to Staines, Bert returned by train with the cheque in his pocket; about his only experience of public transport.

Then came the bombshell of the Receivership in the spring of 1935. Most of the staff were laid off and the Receiver went round the works trying to cobble up cars to sell from accumulated odd bits and unwanted bodies. Bert came back once the new company got going but I deduce he was unhappy because among his papers are two testimonials, which suggest he was job hunting. The first is dated 13th August 1935 and is signed by Ted Bolton as Works Manager and the second is dated 7th November and signed by Walter Buckingham, Bolton having left. Despite this late date, the Receiver's name is still on the notepaper. Bert joined Frank King, formerly the Sales Manager and they both went to work for Lord Avebury's Lammas Graham factory. So Bert had no input into the LG45 and subsequent models. His job as Chief Tester went to Derek Rutherford, whose autobiography is another item in the Heritage Trust's archives.

As I mentioned earlier, the club discovered Bert in the early 1950s, managed to ferry him to important events, like AGMs and once got him to be a judge for the concours. He died in 1966, but we will always be in his debt for his wonderful memory and historical knowledge, without which we would have to have relied on magazine articles of the period.

BPK 202, Alive and Kicking

Michael Drakeford becomes a real racer's mechanic

FIRST GEAR, 3,000 revs, second gear, 3,000 revs, third gear... Just imagine, the cheering, waving crowds completely enthralled by this magnificent car that won at Le Mans in 1935. And there I was, exhilarated as the wind rushed by sitting next to the driver Quirina Louwman. How much better can it get when you are a member of the Lagonda Club?

This adventure started when Colin Bugler rang just a week before the Goodwood Festival of Speed asking if I was free to help James Wood and the Louwman family to look after BPK 202 while the car was at the show. As I lived in West Sussex and knew just a little about M45s he thought that I might like to help. No further questions needed. Yes, but only for three of the four days. With an assurance that I could find a replacement for the Friday, all was confirmed.

A hunt for the Friday replacement eventually led to James Mann volunteering and helping on that day. The procedure was that we would be expected to attend from 7.30am until the event finished, acting as mechanics and to ensure that the car was race-worthy. Additionally, with little time away from the pits, to answer questions posed by the public in the pits about the car and Lagondas generally.

BPK 202 looked superb, highly original yet smart. James Wood introduced me to his partner Quirina, better known to all as Queenie, and her father - the great man himself, Evert Louwman, owner of the 250 car museum in Holland, which also houses the V12 Le Mans Lagonda team car, HPL 448.

Queenie drives, and indeed races for the museum a wide variety of cars, but this was the first time on BPK 202. She

made a joke of the middle pedal accelerator being impossible, but James assured me that she drives anything and has come across this before. The dash layout was deciphered with the aid of descriptive photographs provided by the museum which showed neither a choke nor a working Ki-gass pump, but two magneto switches, a pump-on switch, and a lever to switch between the two sets of twin petrol pumps. She started on the button with the relatively quiet burble of an M45.

Evert and Queenie were to take the car up the Goodwood Hill the following day, and all was set for the event. The car had not been on the road for 8 years, save for servicing and a shake down during a half day journey before she was transported to the event.

On the Friday James Mann did the honours, without much ado. There was a little exhaust smoke, but nothing to worry about.

On the Saturday the plan was for the Class 1, comprising some of the older cars at the festival, to start at 8.00 am, with a second run at 5.00 pm.

The 'other' cars included such exotica as a 1903 Mercedes, incredibly spotless, and with absolutely no oil drips from the underside, the driver was Lord March's sister; An ERA - R9B; a racing Maserati; a Gordon Bennett contemporary Fiat; an early Sunbeam; a very noisy BRM and much more.

To add to the prestige, BPK 202 was flanked by the Bentley Supercharged 4½, UU 5872, which was driven by Tim Birkin at the 1930 Le Mans with the intention of running the supercharged 7.1 litre Mercedes Benz SS driven by Caracciola and Werner into the ground. Birkin pressed the German car so much

that although the Bentley failed due to a broken con rod, so too did the Mercedes car, which failed to start after a pit stop as the dynamo had stopped charging. A 6½ litre Speed Six Bentley driven by Barnato and Kidston won the race with another coming second. The 1935 win by BPK 202 was at an average of 77.85 mph against the fastest Bentley win at Le Mans of just 75.8 mph.

On the other side of the Lagonda was a Jaguar XK120 driven again by Sir Stirling Moss, and next a 'C Type' driven by Norman Dewis who co-drove this car with Stirling in the 1952 Mille Miglia, and then a D type. All very good company indeed.

BPK 202, having been laid up for some 8 years was bound to show a few teething troubles despite having the engine regularly run at the museum. After the first run on Saturday, not only was she smoking badly through the exhaust, but she started to misfire as well. I donned the rubber gloves. My guess was the sparking plugs. To test this, on pulling into the pit after the first run I asked Queenie turn off one magneto, to test the remaining one, and then test the second. The running did not change. Rough on both. Then we tested the two sets of pumps, the same result. The Jaguar team of six came up with the suggestion that it was a sticking valve. I was not convinced and checked the two carb pots. No oil. I obtained some oil from our newly acquired Jaguar friends, who were most eager to help. It did not stop the problem.

Sticking to my theory, the plugs were removed and checked. They were all black. This was not unexpected as being able to start without choke, she would be expected to have been set rich. The front six plugs were very wet indeed. Two plugs had no gap, partly due to the sooting, and partly because they were well under the 20 thou I expected.

Having cleaned and adjusted the plugs I set about to find cause. The front carb must be the culprit. Taking off the air-filter revealed standing petrol at the needle. Perhaps it was dirt at the valve, a broken float, or wrongly shaped 'fingers'. The first two were OK, leaving the fingers, which I adjusted

On starting the engine, the smoke cleared, but after a while the engine again became rough. Checking the carb revealed that there was no longer flooding petrol, and the level was correct. At least something was sorted. This time one of the magnetos appeared 'off', and it ran better with the other. Still thinking that it must be the carb producing too much fuel, I looked to the needle. This was slightly worn on one side. I put the top back on and made sure that both pistons dropped with an equal metallic 'plop'. They did.

Only one thing for it, unscrew the needle and drop the needle to weaken the mixture. The knowledgeable amongst our membership would expect me to raise each piston and listen to the change of engine speed etc. Fine in a quiet garage at home but impossible with screaming cars such as the recent Jaguar Le Mans winners, the BRM, the Connaught and particularly the Bentley next door.

The first attempt was still not enough, but a second adjustment worked. She started well, and after a short while there was no smoke. Joy. The engine sounded just fine. At 5.00 she went up the Hill just as she should, smooth and fast. The realisation hit me that I had been fiddling with probably the most well-known and precious Lagonda of all time. What an honour, what a privilege. I cannot believe I had been allowed. Asking later how she went Queenie told me that the car had slowed and she had pulled out the lever to change over the pumps. It worked, but it did mean that there was probably muck



BPK cooly hides alongside a Blower Bentley.

LAGONDA VAUXHALL BENTLEY

Rebuild & tuning specialist



2 litre Lagonda with 4.5l Meadows at speed during Prescott 2012. Keep an eye out at events as it does battle with the 3 / 4.5 Bentleys!

- Annual servicing
- Economy or performance tuning
- Cylinder head gas flowing
- In-house Dyno (from early 2013)
- Full rebuilds
- Full fabrication and machine shop in house
- On-site ash framer, coachbuilder, paint shop and radiator rebuilder
- Visit our website for more examples of our work

**PAUL
ROGERS
ENGINEERING Ltd**

Located near Hook, Hampshire 5miles from M3 junction5
01256 86 21 20 info@paulrogersengineering.co.uk
www.paulrogersengineering.co.uk

in the filter. Strangely on this car I could see no reservoir filter on the petrol tank side of the pumps.

I had expected to have to check and clean the filters on the pumps early on the Sunday, but when I came to do it, it was clear that the whole assembly would need to be undone. I thought that as one set of pumps was working, it would be better to leave well alone.

As it turned out the work done on Saturday lasted and BPK 202 did us proud. It was only on the last run that the third gear jumped out under acceleration. Now that is something for other than me to sort. James Mann later told me that they once had the same problem on AXD 56 which turned out to be no more than a weakened return spring that required replacement. However, the gearbox had been difficult all weekend. Reverse was hard to attain, and on the Friday Queenie preferred a push backwards into the pit. On the Saturday it was decided to try harder. While Olav Glasius, who had sold his Lotus collection at the auction was talking to Queenie, he fiddled the lever, and I did the same to the lower shaft. In the end, it was discovered that a gentle tap was required on the shaft to relocate the other gears.

The engine temperature that was on the high side at the beginning of the weekend needing the electric fan to cool but on the Sunday it was running without the fan at 70 degrees, as she should be.

So there it is, a brilliant car, hugging the road like a limpet with an engine that pulls so well. How do I know this? Well, one of the many bonuses of being a mechanic in a white overall, apart from

being mistaken as Goodwood staff, is that at each climb you are taken by van to the start. Here, those with either old cars or racing cars may need a battery trolley, which goes in a trailer pulled by the van. Other mechanics are there to just be available.

After the cars have left, the vans take their passengers to the top of the hill. If you have a decent driver, and enough space, the mechanic is invited to become a passenger. You proceed down the hill with an occasional squirt of the accelerator. The crowds, and in particular the marshals wave and cheer, and one just has to reciprocate. What magic. What a privilege.

I must admit, and do not tell anyone, but I actually drove BPK 202 at Goodwood. Not many know that. On the last climb of the event, after the start times had changed for the third time, there was a panic to get the cars out of the pits. As Queenie was late, I started her up as normal, and as there was no hand throttle, had to be in the car. The marshal in charge came along and waved off the Blower Bentley, we were next, and then Sir Stirling Moss. Above the din I shouted "No driver", the response came, "We can see that, just drive it out NOW". Well, what can a chap do, but drive the Le Mans winning Lagonda? Obviously, it was not to the track, but just a couple of hundred yards to a line up, but wow. Queenie just smiled, and said "Thanks".

In turn, I have to say thanks to James Wood and Evert and Queenie Louwman. Long may they look after these great Lagonda cars, perhaps with a bit more usage? Mr Louwman, if you want another driver to help you do this ...



Wartime Weymanns

Tony Steward researches some more Weymann saloons

FOLLOWING ON FROM the summer issue of the Magazine, with its photograph of a Lagonda saloon and Hurricane at Wick Airfield in 1940, I attach photos of two other saloons which were on Lincolnshire bomber bases towards the end of the War; both are Weymanns but only one of them has survived.

I had known 40 years ago when I bought my 2 Ltr L/C Weymann that she had been on an RAF airfield but I did not follow it up at the time, nor later on because I mislaid the old buff log book and forgot the name of the airfield! Last Autumn, I had a major clear out and the log book resurfaced. It showed the owner in 1945 as Victor Douglas Edwards of Azile House, Lewknor, Oxon and that in August and September 1945 she was registered in Market Rasen; there were also a couple of stamps for issue of petrol at RAF Station Wickenby. This I found on the appropriate OS map half way between Lincoln and Market Rasen and instead of saying 'airfield disused' as I was expecting, it said 'Wickenby airport' so a couple of weeks later we found ourselves at its gates where there is a Memorial to the 1125 men of No 12 and 626 Lancaster Squadrons who 'failed to return'.

The airfield has a thriving flying club and still uses one of the old runways and the old Watch Office. This has a cafe on the ground floor and on the first floor a splendid little Museum, housing the Memorial Collection and Station Archive. In the crew list for No 12 Squadron we found the name we were looking for, Sergeant Victor Douglas Edwards DFM Flight Engineer. The Museum subsequently provided me with details of his operational record. They also told me they were holding a Wings and Wheels week to raise funds and

commemorate 70 years since the base was opened (It was one of nearly 50 in Lincolnshire and they say, on average, you would encounter an airfield every 7 miles.) We had hoped to take her back for this event after 67 years but as with so many of them this summer, we had to call it off and go in the 'modern'. I do my best to keep her out of the rain for reasons given later on.

The day after our visit to the Museum, we were at RAF Binbrook. I spotted old buildings over the hill from our B&B, the other side of Market Rasen, and went exploring. Another Lancaster base, No 460 Squadron RAAF (Australian), another Memorial, another 1000 dead. This one is now disused but after the war, became home to the English Electric Lightning, no doubt because of its very long runway. Here, I found Ray Whiteley, Curator of the Binbrook Heritage Centre, working on an old Lightning. I told him I had been to Wickenby and why and he said "A Lagonda? a Saloon? what was its number? They had one here as the Station hack. I'll go and get you a photo". He promised to send it on to me by E Mail and when I later thanked him for it and told him I couldn't find any record of her survival he replied intriguingly "She could be in the Station dump - you never know!" I am indebted to him for his permission to reproduce this photo.

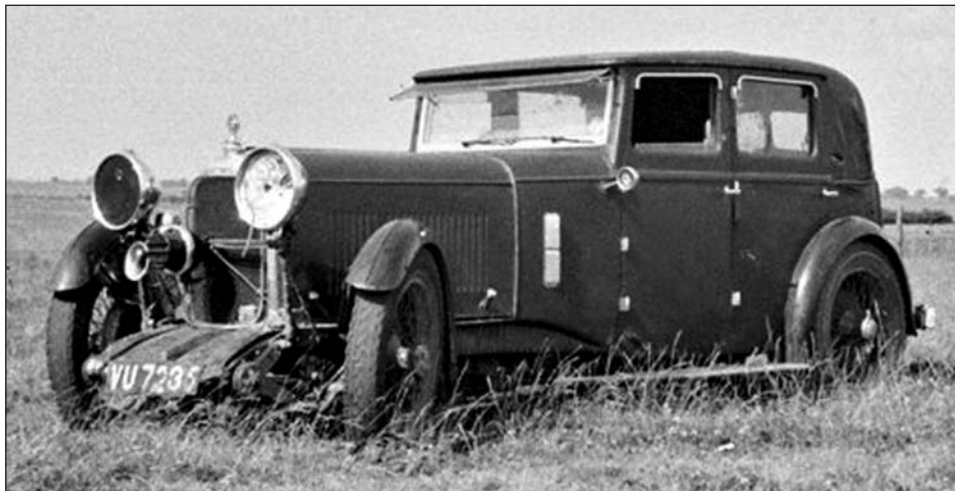
The two photographs clearly show the difference between the two Weymann body styles. The Binbrook one is the later 'tidier' model with the lower coach line extending across the scuttle to meet up with the top of the bonnet side. The bonnet and sides are covered in the same fabric as the body and the doors cover the chassis rails so there is less valance showing. It has a two piece rear

window and the spare wheel mounted on the side. The other difference, of course, is that it is a 4 not a 6 light. Which is the prettier is up for discussion. Some may say "neither" since any car body constructed from wood tends to be more slab sided than a metal one and certainly when taking photographs, you need to carefully choose your angle of shot to get a pleasing result. Personally I prefer the earlier shape, it has more of a vintage feel to it but then I am biased of course.

Any Weymann is now very rare. Their heyday was in the last half of the 20s when the relatively light weight and absence of rattles made them ideal when most cars were heavy and underpowered. Their Achilles heel was the dreaded rot. Rain ran down the windows and soaked the hessian and wadding covering the wood frame. If used regularly, in our climate they never had chance to dry out. At the time the manufacturers expected them to last no more than six or seven years. I believe the survivors to be as follows: there are the two H/C CCS 'Honeymoon' coupes, and two more H/C saloons in the book, one in New Zealand but I don't have any details. The other is Ken Painter's car and he says, as it stands, it is a bit of an

exaggeration to call it a Weymann saloon! There are however over 50 surviving H/C tourers. As for the L/C Weymanns, there is the one sole survivor amongst over 100 tourers. There are four later semi panelled saloons two of them Continentals but it has to be said that metal panelling is contrary to the Weymann principle. No matter, they are far more robust and hence more of them have survived. Also note there are four 14/60's and one 2ltr L/C saloon which are all metal.

After VJ day, Sergeant Edwards took his Lagonda back to Lewknor and soon sold it on. He died in the mid 1960's and I have, so far, been unable to locate any descendants and offer them a ride. In 1952 the new owner registered her as a Hackney carriage - the indignity of it! At a recent car meet, one bloke actually told me off for displaying her original taxi sign; he thought it demeaning! In 1955 she was laid up in a barn and mouldered away for the next 16 years. She became mine in 1971 and I commenced a long, long restoration. It gives me real pleasure to think she was once owned by one of a band of very brave men and that she did her bit for the war effort if only by taking some of them to and from the local watering hole for rest and relaxation.



The Binbrook Lagonda Weymann Saloon.



Tony Steward's earlier example.

Longstone Tyres

John Hudson, Doncaster Road
Bawtry, Doncaster DN10 6NX

Telephone: 01302 711123

Fax: 01302 710113

LONGSTONE TYRES
DOUGAL & ANDY CAWLEY

**TYRES AND WHEELS FOR VETERAN,
VINTAGE AND CLASSIC VEHICLES**



DUNLOP

ENGLEBERT

Firestone

AVON



NEW EXTRA REINFORCED TUBES AVAILABLE

- ★ Unbeatable stocks of tyres including Michelin, Firestone, Goodrich, Dunlop, Avon etc.
- ★ Wheels made to your specification
- ★ Wheel balancing service
- ★ Worldwide Mail Order service
- ★ Tyre fitting & balancing available at some VSCC meetings

Whatever your requirements, please call in and see us, we shall be pleased to help you



The Invicta engine is stripped for inspection.



Project Invicta Part Two

Don Redmon describes the next stages of their restoration project

WE HAVE BEEN quite busy here at the Academy of Art University Auto Museum garage since the last article. We removed some 140-odd automobiles from this building so that construction crews could install a fire sprinkler and electrical warning systems, heaters and electrical up-grades for machinery. The work has been completed and we returned a majority of the cars back to their home.

For safety, we built a rolling box around the Invicta's body and suspended the body inside. We also built a box around the shelving that held the other parts of the car.

While we were moving cars, we took the Invicta engine over to Hasselgren Engineering just across the San Francisco bay in Berkeley California. Hasselgren Engineering is a high end race engine building and testing facility. They have extensive and winning experience in the Toyota Atlantic, Trans-Am, Grand-Am and various vintage series. I had originally planned to do the final assembly myself but the project, like the museum's collection, continues to grow.

We have had a video crew here on and off for the last six months filming a documentary on the collection. Project Invicta became a part of the documentary and so, one fine day in March, the film crew and an AAU photography student followed me over the bay bridge to Hasselgren Engineering. They had disassembled the remainder of the engine and had professionally cleaned and laid out for us to inspect and photograph the bottom end's internal components. The camera crew set us up in a few "posed" scenarios. First we were filmed removing remaining engine parts from the Chevy Suburban. They wanted us to talk and act like we had just arrived so we asked each

other the same questions a few times while the camera crew shot us from different angles removing the remaining engine parts from the truck. However as we are all engine people we quickly got technical and confounded the crew. "No one's gonna know what you guys are talking about" they said, so we packed up and quietly moved inside.

The rest of the crankcase had been disassembled with only the crankshaft left sitting inside. The oil pan was quite interesting with its cast in oil scraper rails and trap doors to prevent the oil from leaving the oil pump pickup during hard braking. The connecting rods were quite nicely made. The non-movable wrist pins on the other hand were badly worn, as you would expect, as were the pin bosses in the pistons. The pistons were worn, no shock there. But the bearings looked new, a deceptive thing. Happily nothing looked excessively worn and, considering what the oil had looked like, I considered this a good thing.

As the electrical up-grades necessary to run machinery and my flow bench were just completed here, it was necessary to take the cylinder head, intake manifold and a carburetor over to my former apprentice's cylinder head shop and flow test the Invicta cylinder head there.

I had surmised that the exhaust ports would out-flow the intake and that became a certainty after the flow numbers came back. My concern was by how much would the exhaust out-flow the intake? I knew that we could take care of some of that with some judicious camshaft work but without real air flow numbers you are only guessing. This was a very quick and cursory test. Bo-Port Racing Heads is a busy shop and I did not want to tie up his flow bench and business.

I made a stand that I could bolt to the head to open the valve of the tested cylinder and hold a dial indicator to note the valve's lift position. I mounted the carburetor upside down so that I would not have to hold the throttle slide open and ran some tests on the intake side.

A short note to let you all know what I had done to the head and why. I performed a basic bowl clean up to the intake and exhaust ports of cylinder number three by hand. I wanted the bowl transition into the port to be smoother and to reduce the size of the transition between the inner valve seat and the port runner. I wanted to see if a light port runner and bowl transition clean up would help reduce the exhaust to intake port's flow disparity.

I was testing the lightly ported cylinder number three against the completely stock and un-touched cylinder number four. I felt that both of these cylinders with their numerous 90 degree turns for the intake air charge to negotiate represented the worst case scenario for the engine intake air flow capabilities.

I tested the head clean. We had steam cleaned and then glass bead blasted the grunge off, but otherwise the casting was "as received". The valve seats had not been touched, though the valves too had been glass bead blasted clean. The single and worn-out 45 degree seat angle on the valve seat face did not help to enhance flow either, but I was not yet ready to do a valve job. I only wanted to find out what the basic stock and then slightly cleaned up head would flow. Would there be an improvement or was there no helping this cylinder head?

Well the results were interesting to be sure. At around 150 thousands of an inch lift we got a strong whistle in the stock intake port. It got louder as we increased the valve lift.

This is NOT a good thing. It takes energy to produce a whistle inside a port. This is very inefficient. Energy should be expended moving the gas charge into the combustion chamber and not on making noise.

As I suspected, when it came time to test the exhaust ports they both out flowed the intake ports at all lifts. The "ported" port was better than the unported which just made it more than too much. But the ported intake port did pick up a little more than the stock exhaust to intake flow inequity so it did help a bit.

By the time that we are finished with the cylinder head's refurbishment, which will include new valves, valve guides, valve job, etc. my flow bench will be back on line. I will then be able to flow test the finished cylinder head and get the CFM and velocity air flow numbers so that my friend Dema Elgin of ELGIN Camshafts can match the camshaft to the engine's actual air flow and power requirements.

Steering Wheel Restoration



Professional steering wheel restoration for all vintage to modern cars, tractors, commercials & boats, especially Blumels, Celulloid & Bakelite.

tel: +44 (0)1843 844962

www.SteeringWheelRestoration.com



Flow testing the cylinder head.



The body goes into its protective box.

Letters

Dear Ken,

I feel I should draw members' attention to my calamitous experience with 4-Life coolant, which I believe is manufactured in the USA and sold by Holdens and possibly others. It is NOT to be confused with the Evans product advertised in our magazine and distributed by David Ayre.

During the spate of reports and correspondence about coolants a couple of years ago it was suggested that OATs, mostly red and orange, should be avoided in old cars, and that we should stick to blue IATs. Now 4-Life is red, and as I was using it in my V12 and had done so since 2005, when the engine was rebuilt, I was worried although up to that point there had been no sign of trouble. However, my mind was put at rest when the VSCC bulletin published a specifically clean bill of health for 4-Life, for which the manufacturers claim a ten year life, boiling point of 180C and excellent protection against corrosion.

For me all went well until last autumn, when the coolant boiled as I was reversing into my garage after a run round the South Circular. The temperature gauge registered no higher than 105°C. Worse was to come in May this year when I set out for the Northern Dinner: a piston picked up and removal of the water gallery side plates revealed that no effective protection had been afforded against corrosion, and that the resulting sludge had collected, especially near the bottom of the front offside cylinder, precisely where the piston picked up.

This is an expensive lesson and I have since discovered that my experience was not unique.

Best wishes,

Jonathan Oppenheimer

Hello Ken.

Last year in May I sold Earl's 1938 V12 to Richard Langridge in Auckland, New Zealand. He is a Lagonda club member. Starting in July, over 11 months, he restored the car to pristine condition. He had kept me informed as he worked on the car.

In May I went to Auckland and saw the car restored and completed the day before I arrived.

I had a ride in the car and it was every bit what I remember of the V12, fantastic. It looks as it did on the day it would have come out of the show room in 1938, down to the paint. We owned that car for 48 years.

I enclose some of the restoration pictures for the Lagonda magazine.

Sincerely

Carmen Kulgoske

*See the next two pages **KPP***

Dear Ken,

It was a pleasant surprise to see a picture of my first car on page 23 of the Summer magazine. It brought back some happy memories.

I bought the car in 1963, having seen it advertised in the Liverpool Echo. It was actually my 17th birthday present and despite a youthful interest in pre-war cars, I had only recently discovered the marque Lagonda after reading a reprint of the 2-litre road test in The Autocar.

Judging from the picture in the Summer magazine, the intervening years had not been kind to WH 4025. It was not running when I acquired it. The engine had been dismantled by the previous owner who never got round to rebuilding it and the body fabric was badly torn and hanging off in places. We towed the car



The part dismantled V12 arrives in New Zealand.



Restoration well under way.



The V12, restored to its original glory.



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

home and, after sorting out all the bits, discovered that the only major part missing was the main oil transfer pipe, supplied by Ivan Forshaw for the sum of 15 shillings plus 2/6 postage (total cost 87-5p for our younger members), although I now know that the handsome radiator mascot had also disappeared!

I spent the next 2 years rebuilding the car and remember achieving an indicated 80 mph when it was finished. However, having joined the Lagonda Club and discovered more about the cars I decided I really wanted an M45, so the 2-litre was sold shortly after completion, to a self proclaimed enthusiast who immediately sold it on at a profit!

The next owner was Lawton Warren who will be remembered by some Northern members. Lawton became a great friend and our son is named after him but he died tragically young and the car was sold on. We were living abroad at the time and I lost touch with the car seeing it only once again at the Queen's Silver Jubilee rally at Ascot in 1977. The then owner was only interested to know what price I had sold it for, so we had little to talk about.

I always check the Club Registers when they are published and it has changed hands a few times since then, currently residing in the Netherlands. I still have a file of correspondence, mostly from Ivan Forshaw, dating from my ownership and would be happy to pass it on to the current owner if he would like to add it to the cars history file.

Best wishes
Brian Green

Dear Ken,
Having suffered, like Peter Henson from a front opening door incident, I too now always fit safety latches.

However, I have found the locking arms on proprietary items to be too short for most cars. I therefore arrange for the arms to be cut and extended, to suit the vehicle concerned. I attach photos of three "extended" latches, each of a different length to suit the individual car.

Yours etc
John Sword

See this page and the next. KPP





EXCELLENCE



Some of the cars that have recently passed through our workshop

For an objective view of the quality of our work,
talk to our customers and look at their cars



Brian Bishop and Charles Gray
Court Farm, Rag Hill,
Aldermaston, Nr Reading, Berkshire RG7 4NT
(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

*Big Enough To Cope
Small Enough To Care
If You Have More
Sense Than Money
Speak To Us*

Telephone + 44 (0) 1189 326628

Contact Brian or Sue

*To experience a modern approach to engineering
coupled with old fashioned customer service*

brian@classic-vintagecars.co.uk

sue@classic-vintagecars.co.uk



www.classic-vintagecars.co.uk