



**THE MAGAZINE OF THE
LAGONDA CLUB
Number 240 Spring 2014**



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FRONT COVER:

'Fox & Nichol's own designated 2 Litre Team Car, outside their premises. Note the period petrol pumps. From Lagonda Club archive'.

Contents

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|
| From the Driving Seat. | 5 |
| Has anyone seen my old Lag? | 6 |
| The Milky Way | 13 |
| The Saga of a 1938 LG6 | 17 |
| Project Invicta S-57..... | 22 |
| Modelling Classic Cars | 26 |
| T8 Gearbox Repairs – Part 1 | 29 |
| Letters | 31-33 |
| The AGM Weekend | 34 |

From the Driving Seat

Roger Seabrook

THE SEASON FOR vintage cars is now well under way. While I am writing this the sun is shining, the garden is bursting with life (particularly the weeds) and the cars are waiting to be taken for a drive. When I open the garage doors the sun will shine even more, until I am far enough up the road with the hood down, and then it will pour with rain - guaranteed!

Colin Bugler recently put me in touch with Tony Hunter, a professional engineer, who builds scale models to museum quality standards. Tony had contacted the Lagonda Club, as he wanted to build a copy of a 2 litre Speed model. He has offered to write some articles for future magazines, showing the progress of construction, finishing with the actual model. I hope he will agree to show this at a future Club event.

He starts off with an introduction in this issue.

The Rapier Register had its Suffolk Dinner on 5th April, and two pictures are included. There will be a full report in the Summer magazine. We were unable to attend, as we were committed to the Daffodil run to Christchurch (over 140 cars entered this year). The weather was rather poor, with persistent rain.

I decided to take a short cut on the way home on the M4 and, about half a mile before the exit, the engine cut out. My £5 Scintilla magneto, which has lasted some 25 years, had finally expired! Changing this to my spare on the hard shoulder, at dusk, and in the rain, is an experience I do not wish to repeat. I could not see the timing mark clearly, and it was set one tooth out (retarded). However, it did start again, and we arrived home safely.



At the Rapier Suffolk Dinner, John Sword, the guest speaker, is presented with the Guiver Gong, for travelling the greatest distance to the event in a Rapier

***Last date for copy for the Summer magazine is
... FRIDAY 27th June 2014 ...***

Has anyone seen my old LAG?

Len Cozzolino talks to Rear Admiral John Roberts

OVER THE YEARS the Lagonda Club has received countless calls and letters, asking: 'if the red Lagonda that was once owned by Aunt Doris is still in existence', or similar. The dawn of the new Club website has made it far easier to ask such questions, and the number of requests has increased considerably. Some are routine and easily answered, and we can put the old owner together with the new owner, or impart the sad news that the old Lag is no longer with us. Occasionally, the story behind a request is so interesting that we think we should share it with you all. Hopefully, this is the first of many more such stories.



Earlier this year, a John Roberts enquired whether any of his three Lagondas were still in existence. During our conversations, we discovered that Mr Roberts was a retired Rear Admiral, and had a naval career every bit as interesting as his Lagondas.

Rear Admiral Roberts was a Dartmouth Naval College cadet at the age of 13, served during the 1939-45 War, joining the Fleet Air Arm as a pilot in 1944. He held many, if not all, senior posts in the Fleet Air Arm, including Captain of HMS Ark Royal from 1971 to 1972.

During his captaincy, in January 1972, Ark Royal was involved in what was probably its last aggressive action, now immortalised by the book: "The Phoenix Squadron", by Rowland White.

Rear Admiral Roberts' first Lagonda was a pale blue Rapier which he bought

just after the war, followed by a 2 litre, and then an M45.

I let him tell the story:

"The 2 litre was PK 9203. I bought it in December 1946 from a garage owner in Truro. Can't remember his name, but he had refurbished the car beautifully. The bodywork was immaculate - British 'racing' green. He had even put Castrol 'R' in, with that lovely smell! Unfortunately I was not aware in those days that Castrol R was 'vegetable' and Castrol XXL mineral. Anyway, when I had to top it up I put in XXL, and that damaged the engine. I had a wonderful 6 months with it - in North Wales where I lived then. Sadly, the Navy sent me to the Mediterranean in June 1947 for a two year spell, so I sold it. My final journey was from the north of Scotland to Staines. The engine was not performing well - due to my having put the wrong oil in - and the garage in Staines was THE Lagonda garage - in those days anyway. While I was there an elderly fellow was looking at the engine, and I said "Do you know anything about these cars?" He looked at me scornfully and replied "I built this engine. Me and 'Bill XXX' built this car. I did the engine and he did the body". You don't have this experience these days! That was the last I saw of PK 9203.

My previous car was a Lagonda Rapier - I think 1934 or '35. I bought that in February 1946 from a chap on my flying course, because he needed the money to buy an engagement ring - for the girl he subsequently married! It, too, was a lovely car, except for the fact that the Wilson pre-selector gearbox had a



John Roberts in the driving seat of PK 9203, in 1947



Rapier BJJ 642 at St Merryn 1946

slipping clutch. It got by, but it was a nuisance. It was a nice pale blue. Its registration number was either BJ 0642 or BJJ 642. The photo is very faint. I would be surprised if it was still 'alive'. I sold it to another Fleet Air Arm pilot, before buying PK 9203.

Returning from the Mediterranean in 1949, I bought a Lagonda 4.5 litre 'pillarless' saloon with, I think, a Meadows engine? I sold that in 1955 when I was stationed at RAF Benson, to an RAF pilot called Ray Hanna who later became the leader of the Red Arrows. That was a good car. But 'pillarless' is not a good idea, or wasn't then, and the doors were a problem. The registration number was AYO 296 and I think it dated from 1934 or 35. I bought it from a sales garage in Birmingham. In 1950, I 'went away' in it after my first wedding - with the usual collection of cans tied to the back! I rather doubt it is still 'alive' though.

Sheila drove the Rapier and rode as a passenger in the 2 Ltr. And that is the end of my Lagonda days. A happy 10 years, though. While in the Mediterranean, in Malta, I had an 'L-Type' MG. 1.5 litre."

An interesting story in itself, but some of you will have spotted that the 2litre was not 'run of the mill', if such a thing ever existed. It was no less than one of the four competition cars Lagonda built, especially for the PERR syndicate and Fox & Nichol. So, unbeknown to John Roberts, he had a very special Lagonda indeed, with PK 9203 being Fox's own- designated special racing car. These four cars (PK 9201 to PK 9204) were the prototypes for the later low chassis 2 litre cars. The engine, though standard in outward appearance, incorporated special racing camshafts, and a raised compression ratio. The chassis was strengthened, to overcome the fatigue issues around the "S"-bend in

the chassis, and extensively drilled, where possible, to reduce weight.

PK 9203 was raced by Frank King and Howard Wolfe in the 1929 Double 12 at Brooklands, where they finished 6th in class and 18th overall, at an average speed of 61.8mph. Given that King and Wolfe were largely novices in a race full of professionals, this was a credit to both men and machine! PK 9203 raced at Le Mans, but unfortunately had to retire. Other successes, for PK 9202, were the 1929 Six Hour Race with Lewis and Jarvis, the 1929 Irish GP and the Ulster TT, driven by Hindmarsh. Although the car finished in all the races, it was not placed. PK 9203, along with the three others in the team, were bought by Captain Ivan Forshaw and remain, to this day, in his family.

Rear Admiral Roberts' other car AYO 296, an M45, though not originally a racing car, became one, and a jolly good one at that. As he says, he sold it to an RAF chap. That chap was none other than Ray Hanna (Flight Lieutenant). He joined the Royal Air Force in 1949, having learned to fly in his native New Zealand. He flew some of the great British piston engined aircraft, such as the Tempest V, Sea Fury, Balliol, and Beaufighter. His first operational posting was to 79 Squadron, 2ATAF, flying FR9 Meteors. In the nineteen fifties, he flew nearly all the early British jets including Vampires, Venoms, Attackers, Sea Hawks, Swifts and Javelins. In 1965 he was selected for the newly-formed Red Arrows as Red 3. He was appointed Leader the following year, and remains the longest serving Leader in the history of the team. His outstanding leadership is acknowledged as having made the Arrows the world-renowned aerobatics team they are. In recognition, a Bar was added to the AFC he had previously been awarded, for several feats of outstanding airmanship as a fighter pilot.



M45 AYO 296 racing at Silverstone in 1966



AYO 296 as it appears today

Ray Hanna also used the M45 in his wedding celebrations, in fact he married the one Wren Rear Admiral Roberts had under my command at RAF Benson. The next, and current owner, Richard Robarts also used it for his wedding car. So three consecutive owners completed their nuptials in AYO 296 - one wonders what other stories the car could tell!

In August 1962, aged only 17, Richard Robarts bought AYO 296, (a subterfuge to get past parental objection to racing). Her pillarless body was well past its prime, so he set about building a lightweight two seater special, sometimes described by the Bentley Drivers Club magazine as 'the hand knitted Lagonda'! Richard raced her between 1963 and 1968, at VSCC and Bentley Drivers Club race meetings and hill climbs, with very good results. It was often up against much more powerful machinery, and there was also great rivalry between him and the LG 4.5 litre specials of David Hine and Herb Schofield.

1965 saw AYO adorned in white ribbons for Richard and Angela's wedding, followed by a honeymoon tour of the South Coast. Richard's long term ambition, to race modern single seaters, came to fruition in 1969, starting in Formula Ford, followed by F3, and F2, culminating in a works Brabham F1 drive, partnering Carlos Reuterman in 1974. During this time AYO 296 was 'resting' in the barn. Then, in 1984, Richard removed the lightweight race body and fitted a new Team-Car replica body, rebuilt her engine in 1995, and this is how she remains today, in regular use.

In comparison the little Rapier has led a far less exciting life, but that story I will leave for the current owner, Alastair Boyes, to expand on. BJJ 642 thankfully still exists and is in fine fettle, motoring around the south of England.

We are glad to say that Rear Admiral Roberts has been re-introduced to all three of his cars and is pleased all have fared well.



Rear Admiral Roberts is reunited with Rapier BJJ 642

Book Review

Lagonda Journey - written and published by Alan Elliott

ALAN HAS BEEN a member of the Lagonda Club since 1967, although he bought his first Lagonda, which was in very poor condition, in 1959. He returned it to working order and sold it in 1962. Wanting another Lagonda was a major, and very sensible reason for joining the Club in 1967, and this led to his purchase of GP 895, a 1931 2 litre tourer, which is still in the family. His family have encouraged him to write of his motoring experiences, and this book is the result.

As is the case with so many of us, Alan's motoring experiences began long before his first Lagonda and, in 1952, when he was called up for National Service, he took with him the 1934 Wolseley Nine, inherited from his father, who had bought it from some Australian cousins in 1935. They had bought the car at the start of a long visit to the Mother Country, and sold it when they returned to Australia.

The story begins with an account of the Wolseley and takes us through his motoring life, right up to the present day. As an enthusiastic driver, Alan has owned or driven a wide range of cars, and every one is mentioned as he relates his tale. The book is subtitled "Fifty Years of Vintage Motoring", but many of the post-war cars in his life deserve, and are given, their place in his adventures.

Very sensibly, Alan has chosen a topic for each of the book's 22 chapters, and this makes it very easy to read as he takes us through the various stages of his motoring experiences. You will read of his cars, the Motor Clubs he joined, the competitions, the

Continental events and many other aspects of his long motoring career.

At 83 years of age, he still enjoys driving, although his career as an electronic design engineer has helped here, since his Lagonda is the only one known to the Club to be fitted with an electric clutch release mechanism, designed and built by himself. Alan served as Club Treasurer for some time, and has been a regular contributor of articles to 'The Lagonda' and other Club magazines

This is a very entertaining book and deserves a place in every Lagonda Club member's library. Copies are available only from Alan, as this is a self-published enterprise. Send your orders to: Alan Elliott, Greystones, Lower Kingsbury, Milbourne Port, Sherbourne, Dorset, DT9 5ED, enclosing your cheque for £11.85. This covers the price of the book at £9.95, and UK postage and packing. For overseas orders, please contact Alan direct for details of the postage costs.

"Bookworm"

The picture overleaf was taken in 1947, and shows Alan's car with a young lady in the rear seat. It is next to Tim Wadsworth's GP 793, sporting a large external windscreen wiper. Does anyone know the venue?

All of the cars, where the registration numbers are visible, are shown in the latest list of members.

For years, Alan was the one to beat at Prescott. His polished ascents were always the quickest of the 2 litres -

Ed.



A line of 2 litres filmed by Guy Griffiths May 1947



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The Milky Way

(also known as the Klausen Rennen Hill Climb)

Florian Brandt reports on a scientific discovery

SMALL GOVERNMENTS OF tiny countries can react quickly, when there is a chance to adapt to the latest results of science. This time it is the really conservative Switzerland and two of the smallest district governments, Glarus and Uri, which made a big step forward to increase the milk yield of cattle. There is a big chance that soon the milk economy in our country will be heavily influenced by Swiss high altitude farmers. Those readers usually well informed about the latest news in the science of agriculture, will have noticed that research specialists Adrian North and Liam MacKenzie at the University of Leicester (School of Psychology) published that, when herds of Holstein Friesian cattle ($n > 1000$) were exposed to music, the milk yield of each cow rose by 3% a day (0,73litres / 1,54pints). But beware, not all sorts of music : rock 'n' roll, rockabilly, or even pop music, will have an inverse effect! Music with a continuous rhythm of pleasing delight, like classical music, was highly effective!

This stunning information led the government of Uri and Glarus to organise a gigantic test in one of the higher, isolated regions of the country, far away from any disturbing noise from industry or aeroplanes etc. They have carefully chosen the high altitude, 21,5 km long Klausen Pass which goes up to nearly 2000 m, probably an ideal test area. Now, the interested reader will ask, what is classical music ??? Four-stroke or Two-stroke? Four, six or even twelve

cylinders ? Will low revs affect the milk yield (or: will low revs please Swiss udders?) of the black & white or brown & white cattle more, or are higher revs a better stimulus? The whole research was carefully conducted by Mr Trümpi, a local with a very good taste and an understanding of the subject. He had chosen more than 270 cars, and even motorcycles accompanied by some Morgan three wheelers. He conducted this orchestra with tremendous knowledge and passion for the subject. Yes, he managed to introduce the usually unheard jewels of classical tunes to the numerous audiences, and stopped the sometimes too-prominent instruments from overshadowing the others. Two different test groups were designed, one with slower driven vehicles, the other with definitely very fast driven machines!

The Klausen Pass is very tricky to handle, the numerous serpentine follow the gaping abyss without any safety device, ideal for the suicidal driver who has already seen everything in this life! Yes, all this is possible in Switzerland! The FTD group was an eclectic mix of cars - Lago Talbot, ERA, Alvis, Bugatti, Maserati, Bentley , Lagonda etc. - a highly interesting auditorium realising quite a bandwidth of classical tunes. There was the deep voluptuous burble of some Bentleys, in contrast with the somewhat 'new money' rumble of an ERA. The Alvises produced a more indifferent tune from the better suburbs, while the Lagondas gave a



Some magnificent cars gather for the Klausen Rennen Hill Climb



Florian spins his wheels in a spirited start

wonderful fully-developed tune of cleverly designed industrial burgundy warmth, which resembles an elegant lady from Knightsbridge, or even better from Belgravia, but never Chelsea. Chateaufort du Pape will always outclass a Lambrusco.

There were some Bugattis too. Most of them offered an awkward mix of Pampa-sound - pleasing but definitely lacking French refinement. Those Morgans had a thunderous stomp from the long stroke, while Amilcars failed completely - nervous, ear-teasing, and sometimes erratic in rhythm. A Mercedes SSK, featuring a fearsome compressor, was in fine tune but, when pressed hard, the trumpets were blown. Even deaf cows must have stalled the milk production completely, therefore a no-go in the long run.

As you would expect, the German government sent Mercedes Benz to participate in the scientific research field test. But the late, and heavy, director of the racing department, Alfred Neubauer, would have turned in his cold grave if he had known that today's Mercedes professionals didn't read the design study with the utterly needed respect. They sent the slim and rakish W25 racing car from 1934, wrapped in a body which would easily outclass any wet T-shirt contest. Oh what a shame! This machine brought the whole lactation process to a halt, as those cylinders developed a very unpleasant glassy high-pitched cacophony, that overpowered the spectators' ears. A long pause of silence was needed after that

nightmare. In the end the Mercedes Team failed completely.

The sound of the lower-revving/big-bore engined cars seemed to be to the taste of the Swiss cows, and the ideal stimulus. The intense pulsation was feeding the enormous pink udders of the many cows along the test track, brim-full of milk.

I would suggest that best results for the milk yield were achieved by engine sizes within 4000 and 5000 cc and revs between 2000 and 3500 U/min. Revs above 3500 U/min are only for the ignorant, heartless frolic drivers who are definitely not interested in any milk production. Overall, this research, with faultless organisation, will be highly respected and recommended, and should lead to others following suit. Farmers around Prescott or Shelsley Walsh could stay just in front, and have the chance to collect a lot of silverware for achieving the best milk yields. Therefore let's hope that the national government won't miss the mighty Milky Way.

This reckless author was somewhat over-enthusiastic when he tried to tune his LG 45 with abandon, which is well known for its deep throaty, dark and sturdy, Bob Marley Rumba rumble stomp. He missed all the lactation jewellery when he showed off the 'stir of the Jericho trumpet' sound, while developing a smelly wheel spin, when thundering away out of a cloud of R40 fragrance. Of course this led only to a disappointing 4th in the racing class, behind a Lago Talbot, an ERA type B and a vivid Rapier (inverse milk yield effect!).





The Pit Stop'



At speed on the hairpin

The SAGA of a 1938 LG6, or 'THE SAVING of AFN 432.'

By John Batt

RAILTON OWNER AND VSCC member John Dyson, from nearby Harlington, phoned to say his bank manager had turned down a loan, for a chap offering a derelict big Lagonda as collateral. Was I interested? Definitely yes!

A few days later, Maulden garage owner 'Buster' Newnham and I rescued AFN 432 from a sad-looking shed off the A5 near Hockliffe, Bedfordshire. Indirectly, Susie and I had provided the chap with his loan!

This LG6 long-wheelbase saloon was obviously an early test failure. In those days it was a 'ten year test' and, clearly, the car had not been used for some considerable time. However, fortunately it had not been vandalised. I noted the matching numbers, which I checked with Arnold Davey. The Smith's Jaeger-movement watch was still in the glove box lid, and the mileage read just 48K. There were no holes in the block, and someone had drained it by cutting through the bottom water hose. So far, so good.

Opening any door resulted in a carpet of woodworm dust on the ground. Finding any solid wood proved almost impossible - there was virtually none there. All the body panels, whilst complete, showed damage - so what to do? The year was 1977 and, with other PVT cars available for use 'on the button' in the garage, a reconstruction was quickly decided upon, to save the car.

It was quite impractical to resurrect this sad saloon but

incorporating and repairing Lagonda's aluminium coachwork, in creating something else, seemed a definite possibility.

I had always been taken by the unique style of the V12 Rapide. An LG6 version had been produced, so why not create another with some updated design cues? Why not indeed? This would not be my first total Lagonda rebuild, I had all the components, and how about adding a 'blower' for additional fun? Good idea, I like supercharged cars!

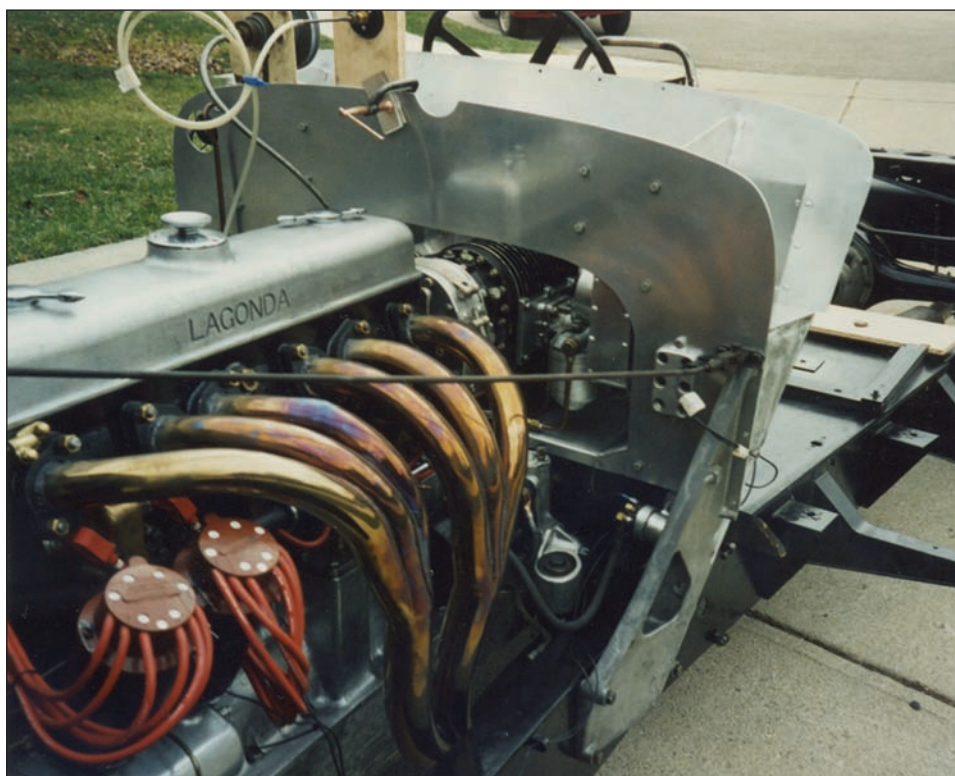
It was an easy job removing the bodywork - it simply gave itself up. The chassis was cleaned and shortened to a sporting 10 foot wheelbase. The front-end suspension bushes were replaced, and new rear springs made. The prop-shaft was shortened, the Alvis gear box sold, and a central -change G10 unit was acquired and fitted. The steering box was overhauled, and the chassis was painted. Then, suddenly, my Company moved us to Southern Ohio. Initially, my contract was for three years, but we eventually stayed there for over nine!

Fortunately, the area around Dayton was car-country, and home to GM's 'Mr Goodwrench'. Our blown 2 Litre came with us, creating a good talking point when visiting machine shops and parts outlets, for items required for the LG job we had shipped over to our new home, in Springboro.

New American friends helped the rebuild progress. Meantime, I designed a two-seater body with cut-away doors:



AFN 432 as found - 1977



AFN 432 Engine and Chassis progress

I believe Frank Feeley would have approved! The stripped-down engine revealed standard bores with little wear, and a sound bottom end. However, I decided to do a complete overhaul, fitting Mahle forged pistons to accommodate the stresses of the blower, and giving attention to cylinder head gasket sealing. The blower was to be mounted at the rear of the engine, with the drive made by friend Derek Chinn back in England, to my design. He also machined a pair of very smart Lagonda-style blow-off valves a la 2 Litre.

By this time the car was a running chassis, which I drove happily around our Ohio neighbourhood. They are not fussy about such things in the States! Neighbour (or is it neighbor!) Janet enjoyed a number of my test runs. Dave Berry visited to join me at the Indy 500 race in 1995, and helped initially to tune the now-supercharged engine.

The new body frame had been more or less completed, using American 'white ash' and a nice piece of long grain US hardwood, chosen for the dashboard at the famous 'Dayton Hardwood Store'. Former timber merchant Ian North helped select this important item, when he and Mary came over to see us. It was now 1998 and time to retire, return to the UK, and back home to our house in Maulden.

I next contacted coachbuilder Alan Ede in nearby Toddington, who fashioned the aluminium scuttle and rear deck. John Cale repaired and modified the running boards, to 'cut in' forward of the rear wings: he also skinned the two doors. The radiator was rebuilt and shortened, which was quite a job, with chroming entrusted to Peter Whenman. New louvred bonnet sides were made by a contact in

Malvern (ex Morgan!), and the original four wings and boot-lid were fitted after repairs and adjustments.

All new floor boards in ½" marine ply were next on the list, plus fitting the instruments into the re-designed dashboard. Winston Teague, with Mathew Blake of AES, did the rewiring for me, incorporating a 'plug in' loom for the dashboard, should it be necessary to remove it for any serious maintenance on the blower.

Past Parts Ltd. overhauled the brake hydraulics, drums were skimmed, and new linings in MZ Gold supplied by Midland Brakes in Rowley Regis (their Material Code 9010). I had the wheels rebuilt by Richards of Cardiff, P80 lights fitted to replace the rough P100s for a more balanced front-end appearance, and indicators incorporated for modern safety reasons! The first MOT now loomed.

Meantime, upholsterer Russell Davies, from Liddington village, handled the grey leather upholstery and black carpets, shuttling between his home and my workshop (5 miles), whilst the car stood on jacks. This took three weeks, including the hood and tonneau etc., and it is a very nice job. AFN 432, with its naked aluminium bodywork, was successfully MOT'd at Trevor Coomber's Ampthill garage, and so it was finally ready for the road. By now it was 2002: how time flies when recounting a 25 year story!

Now comes an irritating period in our lives! After mileage shakedown, Susie and I were quite happy to leave the body in unpainted aluminium and began to use the car regularly. It ran very well, but could stand increasing the blower drive ratio for even more oomph. However, wherever we went we were asked the same question, which rather palled - 'what colour are you going to paint it?' Eventually I



Chassis trials – on test while in Ohio



Back home. Body ready for skinning in aluminium

printed some cards to hand out - 'maroon with black wings'.

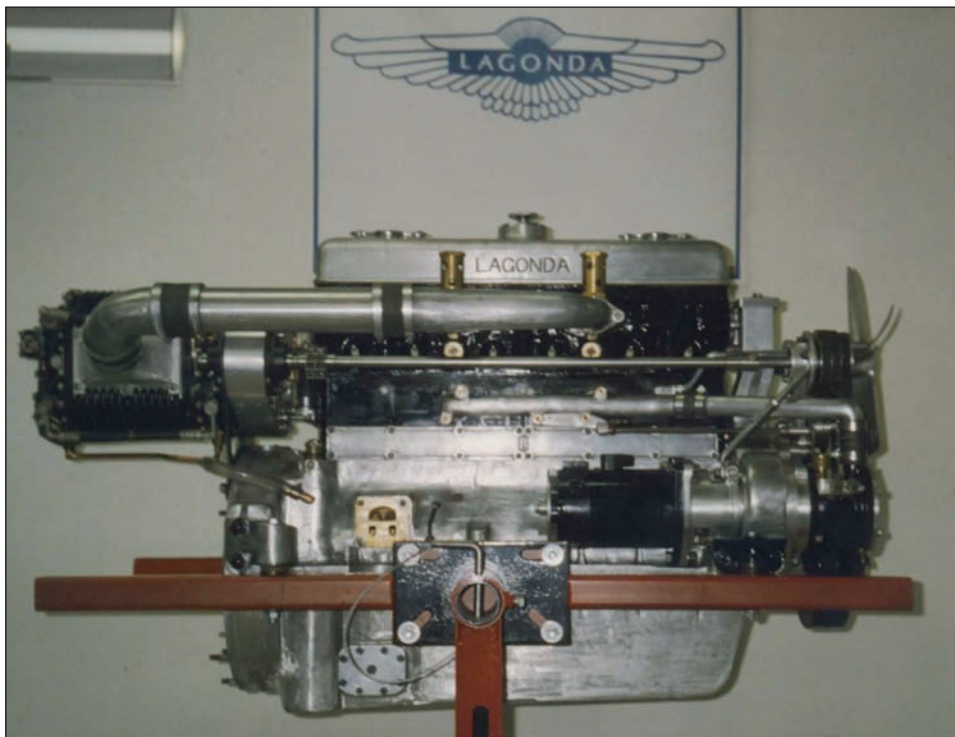
Many enjoyable miles later we reach Summer 2013 and, being under certain 'pressures', arranged an appointment with Darren Sorenson, at his UCR Paint shop in Little Brickhill, Bedfordshire. For a second time, the car was stripped down to the chassis. Friend Mike Heins came to stay and helped to remove the engine, which is

a big lump to risk handling on one's own. It is now being 'refreshed' and the blower drive ratio altered. At the time of writing the newly-painted body and parts have been re-assembled, whilst the engine is planned to go back into the chassis in late Spring 2014.

To be continued.



New Dashboard – Blower gauge on right



The modified engine, complete with supercharger

Project Invicta S-57

The Quest for Identification

Don Redmon reports from California

IT STARTED INNOCENTLY enough. We wanted to be sure that car number S-57, stamped on our Invicta coupe's aluminium firewall, was the same as that originally installed on frame-vendor's chassis-number S120. We wanted to be certain that car S-57, purchased by us in 2011, was an original 1931 Invicta fixed head coupe.

The reason for our concern was a local rumor; that our S-57 was a Frankenstein, cobbled together in Great Britain during World War Two.

Being familiar with the vagaries of my species, I knew that anything was possible, no matter how remote or absurd. However, as a student of history that includes pre-Beatles Great Britain, I did recall that, yes, England like the rest of the world, was somewhat preoccupied between 1939 and 1945. So the chances that someone switched bodies on a sports-type automobile, in the middle of World War Two, in England, while not impossible, seemed improbable.

I presented this scenario to Jo Moss Kitcher of the Invicta Club U.K., who strongly doubted it. We, here in the colonies, started to feel better after that.

We originally heard this information from our engine builder, Paul Hasselgren. His business is close to the noted San Francisco restorer, Laurence Anderson, who had acquired some data on English automobiles from E-Bay, a few years ago. His information included frame number listings on Invictas. According to his records, S-57 was originally built as an open-topped Low Boy, and the current hard-top coupe body had been installed in 1943 or 1944. The source was listed in Harrah's Auto

Museum Library. This was, of course, a major concern, as this Library is considered to be very reliable. I contacted Harrah's, and they checked to see if they had ever owned S-57. They had not, and had no records of the car, or any information about it.

I then contacted the Invicta Club UK and was told that Duncan McGregor, the club's Archivist, Historian and Registrar, would search for any records on S-57. He would also see if there was any record listed at UK DVLA, (the equivalent of the US Department of Motor Vehicles). The Invicta Club, and Duncan, had the best records on the car, and found that S-57 was first listed in an edition of the Invicta Club U.K. magazine, dated 1931.

However, the story from Mr. Anderson was still hanging over us. This, and were there any other identification numbers beside those on the firewall, kept at us like a painful tooth. We wanted as definitive proof as possible, that this really was an original factory-built automobile!

That the car's identification number was stamped only into the firewall and the valve cover, was confusing. The firewall can easily be removed, and transferred to another frame, and the valve cover is even easier to swop. We wanted to know if S-57 was the ONLY identification number for this automobile, as that seemed an insubstantial way to identify and track a factory-produced car, nineteen-thirties vintage or not. All our other American and British cars have frame tags and/or numbers stamped into the frame.

Finally we heard that the car should also have a frame-vendor's number



S-57 (S120) circa 1955



Don stands by Jo Moss's car – the owner is in the background

stamped onto the chassis (Invicta bought-in their chassis, they did not make them). Now we were getting somewhere, so we asked where we might find it.

When Duncan completed his research, he mailed his findings to us in a detailed handwritten letter. He also sent us "Mystery Photo No. 11", which was of ten Invictas in front of the Swans Nest Inn, in 1955. The caption asks, "Who are the people and which Invictas are present, and where is, or was, the Swans Nest Inn?" But, most importantly to us, right in the middle of the picture is our Invicta hard top coupe!

Duncan also presented us with all known information about the car, including the chassis number. Unfortunately, for me, he wrote in what I would term, "old" English car language: "The chassis frame number stamped on the offside dumb iron, just behind the trunnion housing, should be S120."

Decades ago I was a dealership mechanic, with the original Triumph and Norton motorcycles. Sometime after that, I worked on MG's and Jaguar's. I have deciphered German "vergaser" language, and strange translations of Japanese factory shop manuals into English. I thought that I was reasonably well versed in English automotive lexicon, but I simply could not understand which part of the car Duncan was talking about.

Being a resourceful kind of guy, I went immediately to the internet, to Wikipedia, the fount of all free-for-all knowledge. To quote; "A trunnion (from Old French "trognon", trunk) is a cylindrical protrusion used as a mounting and/or pivoting point (for a cannon)", and "an important advancement in early field artillery." Sounded sensible enough...to a Napoleonic-era artillery man.

The on-line Oxford Dictionary says that a Dumb Iron is "a curved side-piece

of a vehicle chassis, to which the front springs are attached."

OK, so I can figure out that the dumb iron is the forward curved part of the frame, and the trunnion is the front spring-pocket mounting point. But the word "offside" was confusing me. Did this refer to the left side of the automobile, as the steering wheel is mounted on the right, or was this an "old" English code word from 9th Century North Umbria, used to confuse invading Vikings?

I wrote back to the Invicta Club asking for someone to translate the words into "Mer-ah-kin" English.

Then our new mechanic, Lloyd Buck, read the letter from Mr. McGregor, showed me which side of the frame was the "offside", and hence where the stamped number should be located. He explained that "offside" was a reference to which side of the car would normally be FURTHEST AWAY from the sidewalk curb, or edge of the roadway, when the automobile was PARKED! It was really so simple!

We looked for the number between the shock mounting ears and the spring pocket, hoping it would show up through the paint as we saw later, when attending the Invicta Club Spring Concours in May 2013. Prior to that visit, we had never seen another Invicta automobile. As we had had no luck in finding the numbers, we began to remove paint from the frame rails. The entire top front of the frame was stripped to bare metal, from the shock mount to the front crossover brace. No numbers. So I started on the side of the frame, carefully scraping and removing paint. Still no numbers. I decided to keep scraping further forward, to just beyond a hole drilled into the frame, in the hope that a factory employee had hurriedly stamped the numbers just before noon, and was more concerned about lunch than

accuracy. I kept removing paint and, just past the hole, there it was - S120, with the "S" punched right over the hole. The search and stress was over.



I had just finished this article when Jo Moss put Robert McLaren in touch. He had purchased the car from a Mr. E.F.Thorneyworks, in England in 1960. He took it to the Netherlands, and later to Paris. He wrote an article, about the trials and tribulations of restoration, for the November 1966 issue of Car and Driver magazine. I have some great 1960's vintage pictures and stories about the car from Robert (more at a later date).

We continued to hear that there was another Invicta coupe, and/or chassis number S120 car with license plate number GO 6422, out there somewhere. We have black and white photographs of GO 6422 in England in what looks like the 1950's.

Robert sent me color photographs of the car, two of which clearly show Invicta Coupe S57's red frame with license plate number GO 6422, in Holland in the early 1960's.

So we had found the "errant" S120 Invicta coupe. It turned out to be our very own automobile--case closed!

I met Duncan and Jo at the 2013 Invicta Spring Concourse. We agreed that our two countries are separated by a similar language and that there are several differences between English English and American English. He then took Jackie and me for our first ride in an Invicta, his own very special car. It was great.

Thanks Duncan, cool beans!

From the entire crew here at the Academy of Art University Auto Museum we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to both the Invicta Club UK and the Lagonda Club UK for all of your help and hospitality.

Don Redmon
San Francisco, California

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Modelling Classic Cars

By Tony Hunter

WHAT'S IN A name? Emotions can be excited or dulled by just one word. As a young man, the mention of Lagonda conjured up a vision of the epitome of sports motoring between the Wars. Growing up in a grey Britain in the 1950s, still recovering from the 1939 – 45 war, for me, motoring was far removed from the 1920s and 30s, - the golden age of sports motoring.

What do we see today? A range of characterless cars, ranging from the Ford 'Ka' to the Volkswagen 'Up'! As a professional model-maker, wanting to recreate those better days, but unable to afford my own Lagonda, my thoughts turned to making a miniature in 1/8th scale. Some readers may remember that, back in the 1980s/90s, a series of vintage car kits was produced by the Italian company Pocher. These were constructed from multiple parts, to create a museum standard model for the time. When building an Alfa Muletto I was quite impressed, but considered it could be improved upon in some areas.

Having reached a convenient point in my working life, I decided to commence my current project - to build a 1932 2-litre Lagonda. My first point of contact was, of course, the Lagonda Club, which immediately supplied details to help me progress well in my venture. To produce any model requires sound research, photographic evidence being of paramount importance in recreating a miniature. Where possible, relevant drawings are either accessed and printed, or drawn up from scratch (by hand, not on a computer!). I enjoy this process greatly, engineering drawing being a particular

favourite of mine, having taught it in adult education courses.

Progressing drawings into master patterns is the next stage, for casting in various mediums; resin, white metal, brass and nickel silver. My only concession to modern-day rapid prototype modelling (computer) is the production of a tyre, complete with fully detailed tread pattern, in a modern plastic, very closely resembling rubber. A specialist will chemically etch some detailed parts, such as the radiator badge. Apart from one other contracted process – nickel-plating and the radiator shell - everything else will be produced by hand, using standard hand tools, lathe, milling machine, drilling machine, and a variety of soldering equipment.

Recreating the bodywork will entail some interesting work with copper sheet, whilst fabric body panels will be made using a process similar to that on the actual car. At this stage I am sourcing suitable leather for upholstery, in keeping with the chosen scale. The secret of any model is in thinking how to recreate full size processes in miniature. All good engineering follows a series of simple steps, from design through to assembly. What may appear as a complicated assembly is really a collection of simply produced individual items.

In building a model, it is often required to interpret facts and figures, sometimes with slight adjustment to finish up with something that looks right. I call this "painting in metal" mode. With the editor's kind permission, I shall bring you periodic updates, with the hope that it stirs pleasant thoughts of that golden age.



A Rudge-Whitworth hub, to 1/8th scale

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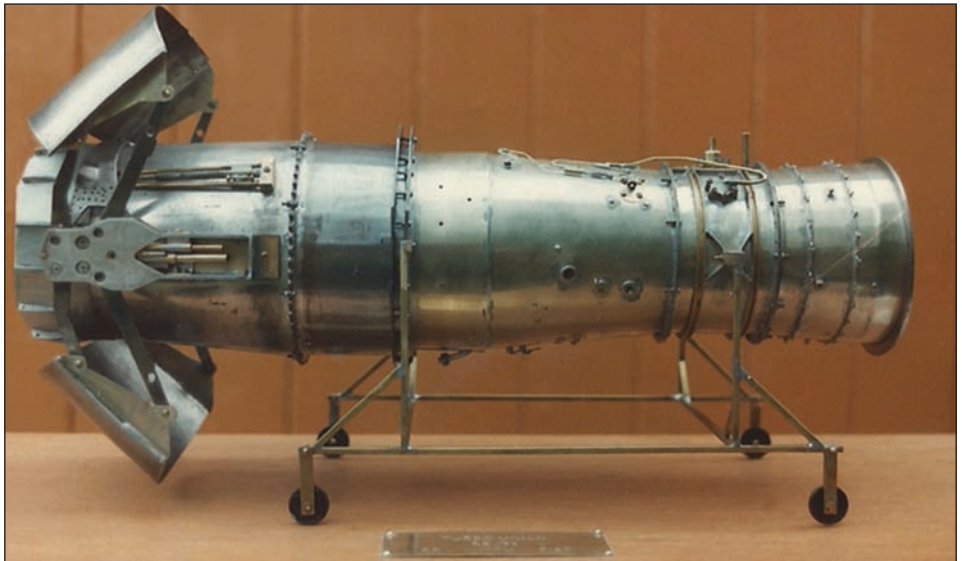
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Examples of Tony Hunter's Work



Midland Railway 0-6-0 goods engine, built to "O" gauge



RB199 TurboUnion Jet Engine. The clam doors for reverse- thrust in a semi open position

T8 Gearbox Repairs- Part 1

Michael Drakeford gets his cogs whirring

DURING A REGULAR service- check of the gearbox oil level, the oil appeared a rather grey colour. This was unusual, for it is normally clear with just a small amount of oil used. An investigation revealed three pieces, broken off different teeth on the constant-mesh lower third gear.

Advice from around the Club went from: "It has probably been like that for years, not to worry", to "My goodness, better get that sorted and the sooner the better". I decided that, as the gears were working well (in fact better than normal) I would continue using the car, and review everything at season-end. My choice, my risk.

Relying on the M45 manual, and encouragement from David Hine, I decided to get the third and layshaft gears from the Club, with a bronze spigot bearing, and find the cause of the problem. It could be metal fatigue from old age, or worn bearings putting strain on the gears.

This article does not repeat the words of wisdom from David Hine, found in the M45 manual, but notes my experience and the issues that came up, that could be useful to other members. I will refer to the three gearbox shafts as layshaft, input, and drive. The input shaft is described in the manual as 'pinion' or 'spigot,' and the drive shaft as 'main'.

Removal of the gear lever revealed two points. Firstly, taking off the bronze gear lever gate was not as difficult as expected. I used a small box spanner and there was room enough. Removal of the linkage was more challenging. The manual implies that the only items to remove, before the lever slides out, are the Woodruff keys. In fact the retaining

bolts have to be not just loosened but also removed, as they fit into grooves on the shaft. Various hammer marks were evidence that I was not the first to attempt removal!

The key on the gearbox end was good and tight, but that on the shaft at the gear lever was worn, giving play of nearly an inch at the gear knob. As the shaft indentation had also worn, I made a new and slightly oversized key to fit.

The gearbox is a strange shape, and it was well worth forming a secure frame, before putting it on my Workmate, so that it would not fall or move during the work. Photographs were taken with the gears in different positions, providing reminders during later stages of repair.

In the manual there is reference to the front layshaft nut being tight. Mine was far from tight and, using a large box spanner, came off with a slight tap. The rear was no more difficult. On taking off the metal covers over these nuts two facts became clear. There was, correctly, a paper gasket under each cover. However, when the two bearing holders were removed, there was intermittent evidence of further gasket material. There should be no more gaskets, as the metal insert should sit flat against the gearbox casing. On replacement I used a liquid gasket as paper gaskets can give a false impression of tightness - more about that later. There are two more paper gaskets to replace, these are for the 'bull horn' and rear drive-shaft castings. The 'bull horn' is visible on the drawing on page 60B of the M45 manual.

The input shaft was next. The left-hand thread castellated nut was loose. This was caused when the 'bull horn' casting was removed, and the shaft taken out. The large cupped washer had been

worn away and had forced itself onto the wider part of the shaft. This meant that there was significant fore and aft movement of the input shaft, which placed force on the bearings, creating wear. In turn, the bronze spigot bush was affected. This was, without doubt, applying adverse pressure to the gears, and was the cause of the three broken teeth.

Expensive replacement gears were purchased from the Club, along with the spigot bush. A set of five Hoffman roller and ball bearings, plus two oil seals were purchased from Henderson Bearings of Ringwood.

As an aside, I replaced the timing chains a while ago. To my annoyance the oil seal on the crankshaft almost immediately started to leak. Club member Roger Cooke said that he had

had the same problem, and it never stops. The part from Henderson has not one, but two ribs that act as a seal, so I will see how that works on the crankshaft.

I bought new Silentbloc bushes, on which the gearbox hangs; three of the four were very old indeed. Finally, on removing the clutch-operated main input shaft drive plate, that slows the lay shaft, I had noticed a lot of movement, quite unlike the drive shaft-end flange. This could account for noise when idling and, possibly, adversely affect the operation of the clutch-stop, causing vibration. David Ayre supplied the bushes, the 'clutch plate', and something I had been after for a while – a sump drain plate cover. These were well machined, and at a reasonable price.

To be continued.

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

Dear Roger,
Please see attached two of a number of monochrome images that I have recently come across. These show examples of the 11.1hp Lagonda with various bodies attached. Clearly, all the photographs are publicity images from the Lagonda factory taken, one supposes, in and around the Staines factory area. The body styles on these cars are interesting, but for me a significant feature are the lamps that are fitted. The four-seater has acetylene projectors, the gas being supplied from a generator mounted either inside the car, or on the running

board. The two-seater has S. Smith & Sons electric lighting, and while these were available from 1912, I suspect that this car may date from after 1916. Does anyone know who the lady driver may be? Is she a wife of a director, a girl from the typing pool, or, as so many motor-car manufactures employed at the time, a music hall star of doubtful repute? The ecclesiastical-style building behind the four-seater is significant, and is possibly still standing today, but does anyone know where?

Best wishes,

Peter MacDonald-Card



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

Dear Roger

I can report that a very successful Cambridge / Anglia area dinner took place on Friday evening 24th January - good food and good company was enjoyed by all - at the Golden Ball Inn Boxworth Cambridge.

Some 40 members and guests attended, and in addition to the usual local Cambridgeshire members, we were delighted to welcome the following visitors:

- ❖ Our Chairman John Sword and his wife Rosalind, Chipping Norton, Oxon.
- ❖ Mike Heins, 2 Lt HC and Rapier, Nantwich Cheshire.
- ❖ Roger and Cheryl Stevens, LG6DHC, Wymondham, Norfolk.
- ❖ Clive and Pippy Tickner, 16/80 and 4.5 Invicta, East Southwold, Suffolk.
- ❖ Mr and Mrs Pete Stabler, 16/80, Great Dunmow, Essex.
- ❖ Dick and Marion Lamb, 16/80 Brundall, Norwich.
- ❖ Martin Sumner and Janet, 3Litre and Rapier, Woodford Green, Essex.
- ❖ Warren King, Rapier Spl, LG45, and DB saloon, Eaton, Norwich.

- ❖ Colin Mallett, Saxmundham, Suffolk.
- ❖ Julien Korek, 3 litre tourer, Hitchin, Herts.
- ❖ Chris Hallett, 16/80 Special Six, Loughton, Essex.
- ❖ Ken Painter, Rickingham, Suffolk.
- ❖ Rowland Grindel and Janet, M45 T7 Bures, Suffolk.
- ❖ Apologies were received from Malcolm and Marion Burgess, as Malcolm is still recovering from his recent serious wrist and back injuries. They wished us all Bon Appetit!

Order of dinner was:

Welcome, introductions and announcements - **John Stoneman**

Grace - **Dr Laurence Drake.**

The Loyal Toast - **Clive Dalton.**

Guest Speaker - **Ken Painter.**

Ken briefly spoke about his recent experiences whilst visiting some of our fellow Lagonda Club members in Australia.

Thanks go to Len Cozzolino for his valued help organising the table cards.

Best regards,

John Stoneman



No pictures from Cambridge, so here is one from The Saxted Mill meeting on Sunday, 6th April. Clive Dalton's Continental, and Len Cozzolino's 16/65 in the foreground

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

Dear Roger,

It was a pleasure meeting you the other day and hearing about your Lagonda. It is obviously a much loved old friend.

You kindly expressed interest in my Grandfather's old Lagonda and, to this end, I have attached the only photograph that I have of him in his car. This was taken in 1924 / 1925, and I would suspect that Grandpa would have owned the car from new.

Having been raised in the era of the horse and carriage, and subsequently spending all his life as a career soldier, he served the majority of his military years in India and, eventually, in South Africa.

He retired at the end of the first World War, with the rank of Major General. His (probably quite generous) pension allowed him to run a house in the Devon village of Luppitt, complete with 500 acres of rough shooting, and two or three staff. Eventually he decided to learn to drive, (probably at my

Father's insistence), as advancing years dictated a reluctant move from his daily use of a horse and carriage, to a motor car.

Some 15 years ago I met the son of his then cook, who told me that my Grandfather was never a natural driver, finding much difficulty with the clutch and gears. Often he would inadvertently select reverse rather than first, and shoot backwards into the ditch. Word would then be sent out that the General was in the ditch again, and a man and horse would be dispatched to drag him out!

I do hope that the attached picture, from my late Father's photo album, is of interest to you, and possibly to members of the Lagonda club.

With kind regards
Nik Cookson*

**Nik Cookson supplies Tetraboost, which your Editor uses in his 2 litre*



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The weekend will commence with a Car Tour in the afternoon with the Lagonda Club dinner at 7.30pm. The AGM will take place on the Sunday at 11.00am followed by a buffet lunch, the concours and prize giving.

The featured models for 2014 will be saloons and fixed head coupes. It

will be a reminder of the many marvellous cars built by Lagonda and the Rapier Car Company, giving thought to the many that have been lost over the years, and admiring the ones that have survived. This will be organised by Mark Yeomans.

We are encouraging all members to attend our annual Lagonda Weekend at this prestigious hotel and, in particular, those new to the Lagonda Club. Early booking is recommended. Full details are on the club website and through the Newsletter

For any questions please refer to Michael Drakeford either by telephone on 01903 872197 or email:

michaelwdrakeford@hotmail.com

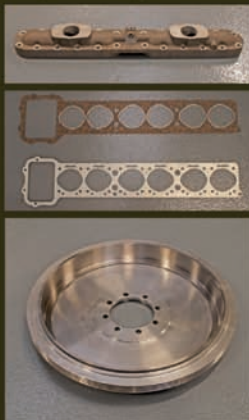
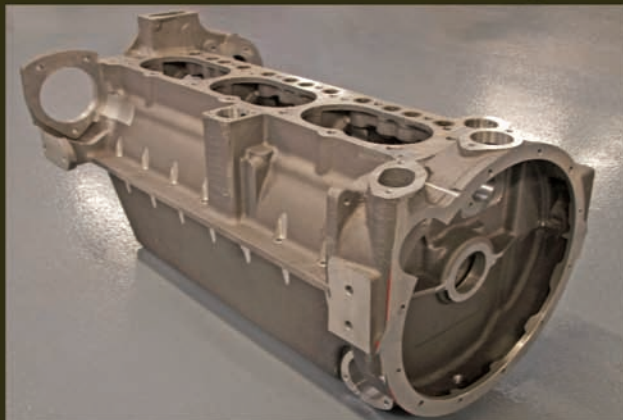




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