



**THE MAGAZINE OF THE
LAGONDA CLUB**

Number 235 Winter 2012/2013



— DAVID AYRE —



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FRONT COVER:

Alex Brugger enjoys another Continental Holiday

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From the Driving Seat

Ken Painter



THIS IS MY 99th edition of "The Lagonda". When I took over I made it clear that my ambition was to produce 100 editions before handing over to a new Editor. This was entirely my own decision and it is one I have never regretted.

Roger Seabrook has generously volunteered to be our new Editor, but he is unable to take over until later in the year, so the two of us are working in partnership until his work commitments allow him the time and space to take control. We assure you all that, from your point of view, the change will be as seamless as we can make it.

The Board allow the Editor a great deal of editorial freedom and exercise a very light touch in their overall supervision. This will mean that Roger will be allowed time to develop his own approach, so you may well see changes in style and/or content over his period in office. He has been assured of two things, he will not be expected to remain in post for the next 25 years if he doesn't wish to and, once he takes over formally, the ex-Editor will not interfere!

As the Editorial role is an ex officio post in the gift of the Board of Directors, I shall formally stand down when Roger takes over full Editorial

duties and he will then be co-opted onto the Board, before formal confirmation of his appointment at the next Annual General Meeting.

I intend to remain 'Model Champion' for the light cars after I have handed over the Editorial role and will continue to attend the Spares Committee Meetings, which are held immediately before the Board Meetings. If the thought of yet more sagas on the progress (or lack of it) on Connie, my 12/24, fills you with horror, you must complain to Roger at the appropriate time.

Do remember that the future of the Magazine rests entirely in the hands of you, the Club members. The Editor does not, and has never been expected to write the content. That is your job in the main. You have supported me splendidly over the last 25 years and I thank you all most sincerely for this. There have been very few occasions when I have had concerns about filling its pages. Keep sending in your contributions and suggestions; we are a modern Club, with firm and proud links to the past history of the marque, so articles about the old times and old black and white photos are as welcome as accounts of our current activities and modern full colour digital pictures taken very recently.

***Last date for copy for the Spring magazine is
... SATURDAY 29th March 2013 ...***

Tim's Technical Tips - Timing the 2 Litre

Tim Wadsworth dreams up another neat trick

THE 2 LITRE engine, familiar to many of us, is of the traditional vintage design where you can actually “see things going round”. A comforting sight compared to modern engines where you have no idea what is under the black plastic lids and require a selection of the most weird screwdrivers even to open one up. The exposed shafts of the 2 litre are actually more than comforting. One in particular can be put to very good additional use.

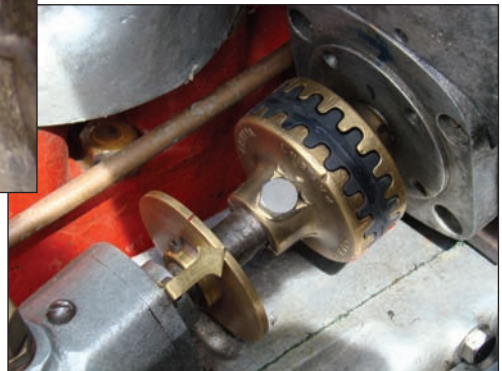
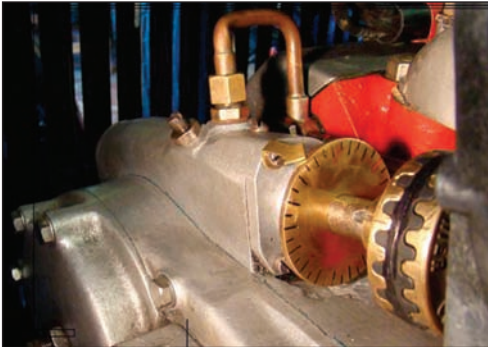
The magneto drive shaft driven by a fibre skew gear from the exhaust camshaft rotates at crankshaft speed and, as the fibre gear is attached to the chain sprocket not the camshaft, it maintains its relationship with the crankshaft regardless of camshaft setting.

Furthermore there is room on this shaft to fit a calibrated brass disc with a collar and grub screw between the

vernier coupling and the timing case. Equally conveniently a pointer can be attached to one of the 3 screws that secure the shaft. It is then a simple matter to bring the engine to TDC and line up the appropriate mark on the disc with the pointer arrow before locking the disc in position by means of the grub screw.

Now there is no longer any need to lift carpets and floor boards to see the flywheel, gingerly turning over the engine while your assistant (wife) shouts “bit more, bit more, ... too much !” You can see the disc and pointer as you turn over the engine yourself. Start it up and the ignition point shows up very clearly by the light of a strobe and, for those who are setting up their cam shafts, the job has become a whole lot easier.

Exposed shafts – don’t we just love them !



The Suffolk Dinner

Saturday 23 March 2013, 6.45pm for 7.15pm

at

The White Lion Hotel

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Crushed Tomato and Basil Soup



Dill Marinated Salmon Gravadlax with Lemon Crème Fraiche

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or

Steamed Syrup Sponge Pudding with Vanilla Pod Custard

or

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Coffee and Truffles



**After dinner Ken Painter Esq., will speak to us about
"Trials & Tribulations of being an Editor".**

Gary Guiver Gong award for the Rapier coming furthest. Dress optional.

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see flyer for details.

Tickets £33 each + s.a.e., cheques payable to Mike Pilgrim, from
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The White Lion, tel. 01728 452720, offers rooms, or for details of other
accommodation contact Mike on 01394 382773. Book in good time!



ALSO – on Sunday 24 March
Morning Coffee at Lagonda Spares, Carlton
(view the used spares!), then lunch at
The Old Mill House, Saxstead Green

Bring your Lagonda!



10th Continental Rally Nuremberg 2012

David Hine enjoys another fine event

AS THIS WAS the 10th anniversary it was appropriate that Roland and Sabine Danner were our hosts for this spectacular event in Nuremberg.

There was a splendid response and a total of 43 cars and 90 folk attending. The hotel they picked was some distance outside the City. This was the Allee hotel in Neustadt an der Aisch. It was family run, recently renovated, and was ideal for the event.

It was a 1500 mile round trip for the intrepid UK participants and we were made most welcome by our Continental family.

On the first day we had a bus trip into Nuremberg and were shown all the contrasts. First the spectacular, but now derelict, rally grounds where Adolph Hitler held over a million folk spellbound with his speeches, then onto the beautiful mediaeval parts with an amazing labyrinth of caves and tunnels where all the beer came from!

The next day we drove our cars West into Mainfranken region with pleasant stops in farm museum and, on the return, a visit to a bottling plant. This was where our sponsors, Franken Brunnen, make and fill bottles with their salty water. I

grew to like its taste but co-driver Alan Brown couldn't cope with it!

The second day was quite a long trip into the "Swiss" part of Franconia with lunch at a magnificent castle with views down to the river. The Gala dinner that evening was in a hall which had been a beer brewing place with all the polished vessels. Fancy Dress, local dress or period dress was required and all made a splendid effort with some comical results.

I carried on drinking and singing until 2.00 a.m. with this youthful crowd, just like the old days. I felt delicate in the morning, when it came to fond farewells, again, just like the old days.

We didn't go but many folk with 21 Lagondas, including Batts and Heins, went on an extended trip into Czech Republic organized by local members Robert and Petra Kudela. All stayed at the 6 star Esplanade Hotel in Marianske Lazne. The sun continued to shine and there was a scenic run out to the famous Grand Hotel Pupp where scenes for the James Bond films were made.

Alan and I drove back home with Nigel and Jenny Hall. The drive through Germany past the Nurburgring was memorable.





Peter and Gudrun Shirk, dressed for the Gala Dinner



Anne and Harley Jetzer, who will organise the Swiss event in 2013



Roland and Sabine Danner, the hosts



Warren King receives the prize for the Rally intelligence test



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More Historic Pictures

Your Editor finds the pictures and Arnold Davey tells the stories behind them

ALWAYS ON THE look-out for interesting photographs, I found these at a variety of autojumbles. As usual, the sellers knew little or nothing about them, but I know a man who does! After they were scanned into the computer for publication here, the original prints were donated to the Club Archives and this is what Arnold Davey has to say about them:

"Thanks for the photos, which I have added to the archives. The Team Car photos are excellent prints and are in fact both pictures of the same car, BPK 201 (Z11118)

The photo where it carries number 1 was taken in Belfast in practice for the TT of 1934. The Hon. Brian Lewis is driving, well buttoned up against the rain. The passenger is more difficult. He might be the man in the lower photograph on page 51 of my 4½ / V12 book, who I believe was the proprietor of the garage Fox & Nichol hired for the race. With those goggles it is difficult to be sure. In the background we can see BPK 203, John Cobb's car, and the tall balding man on the left is Donald Wilcockson, Fox & Nichol's Chief Mechanic.

The second photo, where the car carries number 2, was taken a year later during the 1935 TT, at a pit stop. You will note that the car has grown sidelamps, not there in 1934. They are refuelling and you can see the enormous square funnel on legs standing on the tail while five-gallon cans of petrol were hurled into it.

Wilcockson is kneeling by the offside front wheel, while another man looks to be adjusting the rear brakes. You can see on the bonnet the special bulge that Arthur Fox put on to house his magic inlet arrangements; arrangements which were top secret and concealed from everyone. It is very helpful for the historian that in 1934 the race numbers were on the side of the scuttle and in 1935 were placed higher up on the curved top.

PG 8804 is, of course, the 1930 Double Twelve car. It had clearly been slightly tarted up for daily use, with production cycle wings and posher lamps, but I notice that the racing radiator filler cap is still there, although minus the overflow pipe. That big square driver's elbow cutout is original. The car is still in the Club and is currently on the Continent.

The fourth one, was taken at a 1949 Silverstone race and is UU 1487 (it is possible to read the number when the original photo is enlarged on the computer, KPP). It was in the Club then, owned by P.G Stanton. I know the family as I was at school with his younger brother John. John still lives in Potters Bar, but doesn't remember me.

It was originally a Close Coupled Saloon (Honeymoon Coupé) and the record card says that awful tourer body came from a Rover, although it looks home-made to me. Stanton dropped out in 1951 and the car hasn't been heard of since. Chassis No was OH 9304, made in 1929."





The next two were fairly easy to identify by yours truly. The 11-9 is taking part in one of the many trials of the early 1920s and is being driven by Tollemache, one of the firm's Directors and a regular competitor in his day. I don't know at which event this was taken.

The seller described the last of the pictures as a Rapier, but, of course, it is really a 16/80 Vanden Plas two seater. It was taken in a car showroom

some time ago and is AMF 805. The car is still with us and is currently in Holland. If the current owner would like a copy, please contact me

The picture of UU 1487 was taken by Guy Griffiths. We don't know who took the others. Some may not be the work of accredited press photographers. From the Club's perspective, this can make them even more interesting and worth saving.





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Thoughts on the Oates' 1921 Record Breaking 11.9

Ken Painter sticks his head above the parapet

BEFORE I JOINED the VSCC's Light Car and Edwardian Section, I seriously considered making Connie, my 12/24, go faster, just to make driving her on modern roads less stressful for me and other traffic. The LC&ES frowns on tuning these cars and only accepts unmodified cars, so now, as far as I am concerned, Connie will stay as she is. That said, the incredible performance put up by Major Oates in his 1500cc record-breaking runs in October 1921 in his single-seater 11.9 racer continues to fascinate me.

He covered:

the flying mile at an average of

86.91 mph;

10 laps of Brooklands at 82.36 mph;

50 miles at 82.61 mph;

100 miles at 80.19 mph and one hour at 79.17 mph.

On his one hour run, he suffered a puncture when he picked up a nail and had to stop and change the wheel. This, "The Motor" pointed out, "makes the performance all the more meritorious."

All this with an engine, evolved from one that, at best, was capable of around 50 mph in standard form, depending on which road test you read!

Just how did he do it? This simple answer is that we don't know for certain, but in my earlier fantasies I wanted some of that for Connie, so I read everything I could find about his car and then did some hard thinking. What follows is a combination of the very limited evidence, some elementary maths and some of my theories. I shall try to make clear which is which.

Back first to another extract from the article from "The Motor", October 12th 1921:

"We examined the engine after it had been dismantled for measurement and superficially there was little to distinguish it from the standard production. Shell Aviation spirit, Speedwell oil, Palmer tyres, Zenith Triple Venturi carburettor and KLG plugs were used."

This needs a modicum of unpicking. As the standard 11.9 engine is only 1421 cc, Oates had modified it by increasing the capacity to be closer to the 1500cc maximum for the class.

He did this in two different ways, his first modified engine was bored out to 70.5 mm, giving a capacity of 1483 cc, still slightly under the class limit. To begin with, he fitted a larger Claudel Hobson Carburettor, but "The Motor" report shows that by the time of the record attempt, he had changed this to a Zenith Triple Diffuser, described by them as a Triple Venturi, but we know what they mean. Some people have disputed this, but a poor quality photo of the engine and a drawing from the 4th Edition of "The Small Car Handbook", published by "The Autocar" circa 1926, both included here, persuade me to believe the report.

The second modified design used a crankshaft with a 5mm longer stroke, combined with the standard 69mm bore, giving an increase in capacity to 1496 cc. I add this for completeness; it came later and the over-bored version was used for the record runs.

What other features that we know about could contribute to such an enhanced performance?

The car was narrower and lighter. The racing body was more aerodynamic, had a much smaller frontal area and created much less drag than the production cars. The engine had a more efficient exhaust system, an oiling system for the rockers, and used Shell Aero fuel (was this a higher octane fuel? I confess I don't know).

Back to my theories: It is very likely that the compression ratio was increased, probably by using pistons with taller crowns. The compression space is to one side of the bore, as the engine is a fixed head design, with the valves one above the other. The final drive ratio is not known, but it had been converted to bevel drive and Arnold wonders if Oates had gone as far as using a 3.9 ratio. Tyre size is not recorded, but the later racing two seaters were fitted with 710x85mm tyres. With the 3.9 axle this would give 20.2 mph/1000, not enough to achieve that magic 86.91 mph for the flying mile, even if the car was tuned to achieve 4,000 rpm. Many stripped-down record breakers used wheels of larger diameters than they would for racing (Sheer acceleration isn't so important) and I suspect this might have been the case here as well.

Oates had tuned his earlier 11.1 road car to achieve 4,000 rpm and this was commented on in an article in "The Autocar" on 8th May 1920. When you look carefully at the speeds recorded in contemporary road tests, it is clear that the road testers regularly took the engines to 4,000-plus rpm for short periods. For some time I was puzzled by the figures as published, but when I recalculated the true figures without rounding down the ratios, as the factory did, possibly for simplicity, I could see that many testers were using much higher engine speeds.

In modern times, the light cars' rev limits are often reduced by valve bounce at around 3,000 rpm. That is the peak rev limit shown in the catalogue and where the power curve simply flattens. It is quickly and easily cured with new, stronger, valve springs to replace old, weak and tired originals.

To return to the magazine report, what exactly did "The Motor's" reporter mean by "superficially"? We know that the engine was over-bored and the larger capacity declared, was this and the other changes listed above enough to give the car its vastly enhanced performance? Equally important, what was done to increase the reliability of an engine with such an apparently high state of tune?

Now for some more of my theorising. Could the modifications have included a pressure fed crankshaft? This would certainly improve the engine's reliability at high revs. The only "superficial" differences might then be proper connections on the pipes feeding the two main bearings, (the original system just has the oil pipes a fairly loose push fit into the main bearing caps), and the lack of any scoops on the bearing caps on the connecting rods, possibly with the two troughs, into which the conrods dip, machined away, or simply with large drainage holes drilled through them. Avoiding the drag caused by dipping the big ends in pools of oil would give another small boost to performance.

Unless the reporter was familiar with the original internal set-up, he could be blissfully unaware of such changes, even assuming he examined the crankcase. The block can be lifted off the crankcase, complete with the crank, rods and pistons and the official observers would only have been interested in checking the bore and stroke to confirm the capacity.

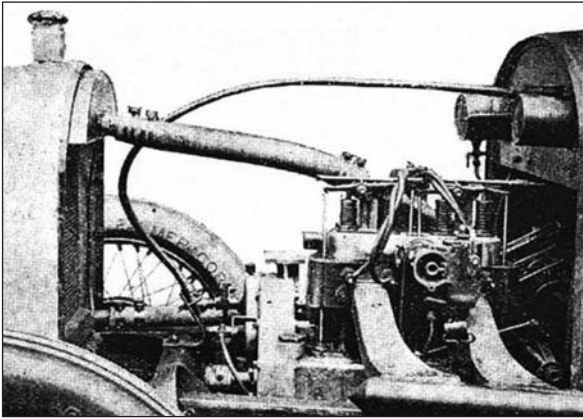
If the car had a pressure-fed crankshaft, why not give it slightly larger journals? Not having studied an 11.9

engine's internals, I can't comment about the clearance space available between the 11-9's crank/rod assembly and the sides of the crankcase, but there is sufficient space in a 12/24 crankcase for the increased stroke used in the second tuned engine. I don't know how much space would be needed to accommodate larger bearings, but how much larger than standard would one need to go?

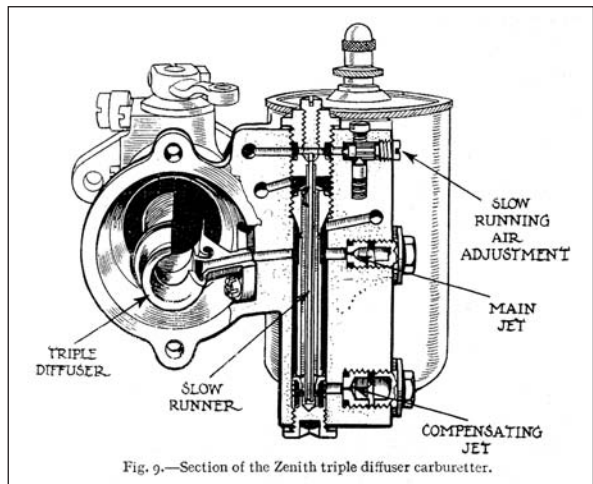
Nobody seems to know what sizes the crankshaft bearings were originally, all we know is that the shaft was sturdier than that fitted in the 11-1, Modern-day experience suggests that only heavily

re-ground cranks are seriously prone to bearing failure, but we are then talking of speeds in excess of 40 mph, a long way from Oates' figures.

Was it possible they used steel of higher quality to build the crankshaft? Was it as carefully balanced as possible for its time? If the answer to any or all of these questions was "Yes", we may have a better idea of how Oates achieved such creditable results. If my theories are nonsense, or if you have more plausible ones, then please tell me. I don't want to be accused of writing rubbish ALL of the time!



Not a good picture, but the only one I have of the engine



A drawing of the carburettor



Stewart Brown's 1928 2 Litre High Chassis Speed model, Muir Laidlaw's 1929 3 Litre High Chassis 2 Seater and Alastair Gunn's 1933 2 Litre Continental at Gerald Smith's house



Steve Webber's 1929 3 Litre Special

Lagonda and Aston Martin Visit to New Lanark

Alastair Gunn reports on a Scottish Area Event

THE EVENT WAS jointly organised by me and our member Gerald Smith who lives some 20 miles south-west of Edinburgh. As well as owning a 1936 LG45, Gerald also owns quite a few Aston Martins including a very nice 1½ litre International, which has recently been put back on the road. As he was organising a AMOC Scottish area meeting at his house, he very graciously invited all the Lagonda Club Scottish members to join him on the day. He had also arranged for us all to go on a run to New Lanark World Heritage Site.

This is a village on the River Clyde in South Lanarkshire and was founded in 1786 by David Dale, who built cotton mills and housing for the mill workers. Dale built the mills there in a brief partnership with the English inventor and entrepreneur Richard Arkwright to take advantage of the water power provided by the only waterfalls on the river. Under the ownership of a partnership that included Dale's son-in-law, Robert Owen, a Welsh philanthropist and social reformer, New Lanark became a successful business and an epitome of utopian socialism as well as an early example of a planned settlement. The mills operated until 1968 and by 2006 most of the buildings had been restored and the village has become a major tourist attraction.

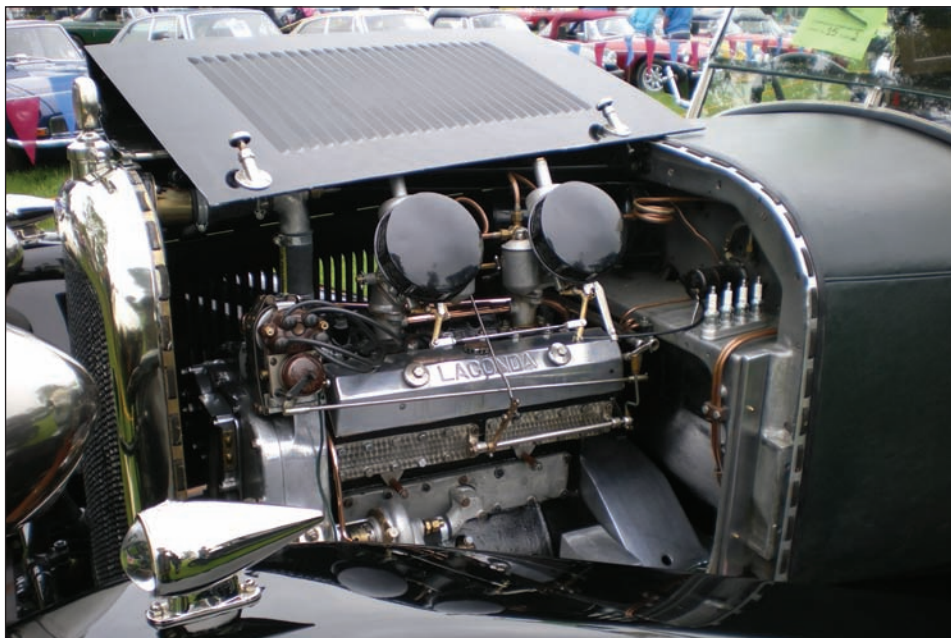
The Club membership up here in Scotland is rather sparse on the ground as there are only 12 members in total who are spread out all over the country, although there are three members who live in Edinburgh including myself. I

discovered that the trouble with trying to arrange events some distance ahead is trying to get people to commit to the chosen date. Having contacted all the members either by email or letter there were various excuses for not taking part – car or cars off the road or they were committed to other things on the day.

Saturday the 11th of August was a glorious day - dry, sunny and rather warm in the afternoon, which we have not had very many of up here in Scotland this summer. I set off from home in my 1933 2 Litre Continental tourer and had an enjoyable run to our hosts Gerald and Margo's house – about 21 miles. Having met Gerald on the road into his house I parked my car, appropriately, in front of his LG45 which was in one bay of a row of six garages. Alas the LG45 was off the road due to magneto troubles and did not take part in the proceedings.

Soon afterwards some of the other Lagondas and Aston Martins started to arrive; the other Lagondas were Muir and Mary Laidlaw in their 1929 3 Litre High Chassis two seater and Stewart Brown in his 1928 2 Litre High Chassis Speed Model tourer. Steve and Claire Webber were driving down from Aberdeen in their 1929 3 Litre special and had decided to go straight to New Lanark. Everyone was warmly welcomed by Margo and Gerald to their beautiful house and we were introduced to the AMOC members before we were given coffee and tea and a most excellent and delicious buffet lunch which followed.

After this the Lagonda contingent set off on a spirited run to New Lanark – a



The engine of Stewart Brown's 1928 2 Litre High Chassis Speed Model



Gerald Smith's 1½ Litre Aston Martin International. Behind is Stewart Brown's 2 Litre High Chassis Speed model

distance of 20 miles. Having spent some time preparing and printing out route directions for everyone to follow, I was slightly put out when I was told that one of the roads that I had chosen for the route was closed to traffic and we had to go a different way – Sod's Law springs to mind. On the way there a motor cyclist going the other way got so excited at seeing three vintage cars at once, that he raised both his arms into the air.

On arrival we were very privileged as we were allowed to park our cars outside the Institution, which is inside the mill complex, and not in the public car park. Gradually most of the space was filled up with Lagondas and Aston Martins of all ages and they made quite a spectacular sight in the sunshine. Shortly afterwards Steve and Claire Webber arrived safely after their long journey and the cars were being admired not only by the us but by the public as well. Many photographs were taken and questions were asked about the cars.

The mill complex is spread over a large area and eventually consisted of four mills all originally driven by water power, each mill having several water wheels to drive the machinery. An Engine House was built in 1881 to drive Mill No.3 and it now houses a restored twin cylinder steam engine that originally powered a mill in Selkirk. Mill No.1 was built in 1785 and burnt down in 1788 and was rebuilt in 1789. Mill No.2 was built in 1788 and Mill No.3 was built in 1790 - 1792. Mill No.4 was built in 1791 - 1793 and was originally used as a store and workshop but it burnt down in 1883. In 1811 a total of 1,442 people worked in the mills: - 558 in Mill No.1; 486 in Mill No.2 and 398 in Mill No.3.

In Robert Owen's time some 2,500 people lived at New

Lanark. The workers houses were mainly tenements and were built between 1790 and 1809. The village also has a Church, the Institution, School, Shop, Mechanic's Workshop, Dyeworks, Gasworks and its own graveyard. Robert Owen's house built in 1790 is now an interesting museum. Next to it stands David Dale's house of the same date, which is now used as business premises. A very pleasant afternoon was spent going round the complex, which is extremely interesting and is a great piece of Industrial Archaeology.

At the end of the afternoon some people headed for home whilst others drove back to Gerald and Margo's house and enjoyed dinner in the evening as well. I would just like to thank our hosts Gerald and Margo for organising such an interesting and very enjoyable day, and of course, the weather was fantastic which also helped. I look forward to organising more events in 2013.

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Ian Gostling 1918 -2012

Kelvin Price read this oration at Ian's funeral

IAN WAS YOUNGER brother of Harry Gostling, some 6 years his senior who was influential in Ian's early life.

Ian was born in Kilkenny, South East Ireland on 24 July 1918 and lived his early life in Isleworth, West London being educated at the City of London School. He took a keen interest in motoring from an early age being influenced by the ever increasing number of motor agents setting up along the Great West Road. After school one Saturday lunchtime, about 1930, his father took him by train to Weybridge to see for the first time motor racing at Brooklands.

He was hooked on sports cars and racing and spectated there many times subsequently. In September 1932, he actually witnessed Clive Dunfee's horrific fatal accident when he crashed over the banking in Bentley "Old No 1" in the 500 Miles Race.

He had a motor cycle licence at 15 and at 17 became one of the first in mainland Britain to be required to take a compulsory driving test for a car which he did in a 1927 Austin 7 Chummy. By 1938 he was driving his first MG, a 1929 14/40 in which he and his mother travelled extensively including regular visits to their family cottage at Bosham near Chichester. He also owned a rare French sports car a 1928 Vernon Derby and shared his brother's cars too.

At the outbreak of war in 1939, still only 21, Ian joined the Royal Army Service Corps which enabled him to drive all manner of vehicles including the AEC Matador, then one of the largest road vehicles in the British Army. In

1940 he found himself in France providing transport for the British Expeditionary Force. When the Dunkerque evacuation order came in May 1940 the roads leading to the port had become so cratered, littered with the debris of war and congested, he had to abandon his vehicle some 30 miles from the coast. He, along with others, then set off on foot for Dunkerque clutching his trusty Lee Enfield rifle and all he could carry. He was lucky to get aboard one of the last ships to get away from Dunkerque harbour and return to England without incident. The ship alongside was not so lucky suffering a direct hit. Such is the lottery of war.

It was during this time he experienced his only serious motoring accident. In the blackout, in London, the slender tyres of his MG somehow became entangled in tram lines at a junction which caused him to lose control and collide with some pretty solid street furniture. He woke up in hospital and recovered without any long term damage.

About this time, his brother Harry, in the Royal Artillery, had been posted to India and, as an officer, Harry was able to "claim" Ian to serve with him, which he did for the rest of the war. Ironically he spent almost 6 years in India but never developed a liking for curry! Nevertheless, Ian's driving skills in difficult terrain did not go unnoticed by the British Army as he was chosen to be chauffeur to Lord Moynehan for a time.

Back home in 1945 Ian returned to his former job in the textile business and the search was on for an economical car

- with sporting pretence which was a 1930 Austin Ulster. In the late 1940s, he competed in such sporting motoring events as the meagre petrol ration permitted in this, an MG J2 and a 6 cylinder Magnette amongst others.

Ian enjoyed music and dancing and was a good tennis player, and this was where he met Connie whom he married in December 1951. The year earlier he had purchased the sports car he always admired and wanted since he saw them being built nearby in Isleworth - a chain driven Frazer Nash. The car he chose was a 1935 TT Replica {CMH 493} but the 6 cylinder Blackburne engine proved troublesome despite attention by an Frazer Nash expert. After a move to Penarth, as an area sales manager in the textile industry, the decision was taken to replace the engine with an AC 2 litre unit which transformed the car into what Ian considered the best car he ever owned, Ian used the car in speed events and he and Connie also used it for touring.

In the early 1950s, this was replaced by an Jaguar XK120 drophead coupe for touring at home and on the continent, resplendent in a striking special order colour scheme of cream and black. They enjoyed trips to France, Germany, Switzerland etc. This was in turn replaced by a red XK 150 drophead and Triumph TR5

When brother Harry died, after a freak accident in his garden in 1973, Ian took on one of a pair of 1932 Lagonda 2 litre Continentals Harry then owned - a

handsome blue & black tourer with contrasting red wheels. This, Connie and he enjoyed for the next 25 years travelling to events all over Southern England as retirement gave more time for such pleasures. It is this car most enthusiasts will best remember him owning.

At almost 80 years of age he purchased a Jaguar E type, a red 4.2 litre Coupe, which he enjoyed for several years before replacing it with something lighter in the form of a restored MGB roadster.

Ian and Connie were a dedicated couple for over 55 years particularly keen on their home and large well stocked garden. The house stands on the site of a former castle with some of the oldest walls in Penarth within its boundary. It was a bitter blow when Connie died five years ago after a period of failing health.

The last open car Ian purchased was a BMW Z4 which he still enjoyed with the hood down even if latterly he had to be chauffeured by his carer, Anne Thorpe.

Despite mobility problems he rejected moving into a care home on a permanent basis. With the help of his dedicated carer and friends, he managed to reside at home until a few days before his passing. Here, I must pay credit to Anne in the way she looked after Ian during the last five years.

Sadly, at 94, time had finally run out for one of life's gentlemen, a good friend and wonderful link with the past.



France, Switzerland and Italy in a Lagonda with the roof down

Alex Brugger holidays in style

IN JANUARY 2012, we decided that we should once again have a Lagonda holiday and started thinking about routes and what could be, not a challenge, but a jolly rum trip. We looked at various websites for destinations and thought a hut in the Swiss Alps would be wonderful. We found what we were looking for south of Disentis in the Canton Graubünden, in the Medel Valley, 1720m above sea level. We booked the hut which was one of two run by the local Hotel Cuntera in Curaglia a village with the population of about 50 including the cows. We also booked the Eurotunnel and we were set for the summer.

With a brand new MOT, a service by Simon Constable and new starter motor, we set off on the morning of the 11th July towards Dover and got stopped at the UK border control and given the once-over with some swabs. On to Reims, where we stayed in the Hotel Universe in the middle of town and close to a public parking garage (it was tight) and a lot of eateries. The next morning we were heading towards Besançon where we had booked the Ibis Hotel. Whilst driving along the motorway we were overtaken by a 4 door Fiat 500L that drove rather erratically in front of us. Next thing, a man with a camera was leaning out of the side window taking photographs. He was taking photos all round and, with a thumbs up and a quick toot, they were gone. The following day, we aimed for Lucerne in Switzerland via Neuchâtel and Bern. Up to now the weather was kind to us and besides some drizzle we

had good weather. On Friday morning in Lucerne it rained rather heavily as well, up to Andermatt and St Gothard. As school holidays had just started in northern Europe, the motorway was blocked for four hours, towards Italy. We took the non motorway road and turned east over the Oberalp pass (2044m) and found ourselves alone. In Disentis we bought some provisions, bread, sausages, air dried meats, cheese, milk wine, beer, etc all of it locally produced and went to collect the key.

The owner of the Hotel told us to follow her in the car and after about six miles we arrived. The last two miles up the mountain was a hairy drive, basically a single track zig zagging up the side of the mountain with hairpin bends that the Lagonda just about managed.

Arriving at the hut it was, as expected, at 1720m. Running water in the wooden trough outside. A long drop. Wood fired cooker and a small gas ring. The kitchen was about 6'2" high and I am 6'4". I only hit my head once! Lighting was 12 volts from a hidden solar panel on the other side of the roof. Upstairs was a bedroom and a dining area of cosy dimensions. Originally, the hut was built in 1905 and was used by the farmer to make and store the cheese in the spring and autumn. In summer the cows and goats are moved further up, following the melting snow. No telephone either, bliss.

We stayed there for a week walking going down to the village to get more provisions and carrying them up. Good exercise.

The following Friday we drove over the Lukmanierpass (1,915m) to Belinzona. We had no reservation and checked into the Hotel Internazionale who offered free parking and a 30% discount on the room. First shower for a week and boy did we need it. In the afternoon we visited the local museum and to my surprise the fortifications were built not to keep the Italians out of Switzerland but to keep the Swiss out of Italy. Super food and a most tremendous thunder storm during dinner on the covered terrace.

The following day we went to see some friends in Ascona (193m) on Lago Maggiore and stayed with them for a couple of days. A very pretty town and some very good food - and the bills reflected this.

Along the Lago Maggiore we went towards Italy through Verbania and Domodossola, up the Simplonpass (2,005m). What a fantastic drive. Lunch on the pass and down towards Brig. Most of it in second gear as it was very steep. The scenery was breathtaking and with the hood down the sun behind us it was an experience of a lifetime.

Arriving in Brig I noticed the car was not firing and driving as it should and after much head scratching we decided to clean the plugs. I noticed the no. one sparking plug was wet and changed it. Hey presto, we are in business again and looking first in Visp and then Martigny for a hotel. Checked into the Hotel Alpes & Rhone and went to see the La Fondation Pierre Gianadda car museum. The museum exhibited about 50 cars dated between 1897 and 1939 and included a Benz (1897), Stanley Steamer, De Dion Bouton, la Delaunay-Belleville belonged to Nicolas II of Russia, a Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost, a small Bugatti "Royale", a Mercedes SS, a Alfa-Romeo 1750cc, a Hispano-Suiza as well as some Swiss cars. All in perfect working order. In the far corner there was also a Lagonda and if my memory serves me right dated

1935. Worthwhile going to see them but such a pity it's in a very cramped basement. They say many of these models are the world's only surviving examples.

The next day a quick oil level, water, and plug check and off we go. To our surprise the guests watched us from the breakfast room and applauded as we drove away. Skirting along Le Léman (Lake Geneva) we saw a small sign near Nyon of a knife and fork. We took the next turn off the road and found a restaurant La Pêcherie right on the lake serving local fish called Egli, which is a type of Perch but only five inches long, from the lake. A demi of local rose, Egli in batter some local bread. The lake was like a mirror with the French Alps in the background. What a lunch, what a setting!

Leaving Switzerland on a small road over the Jura towards Dole the two passes weren't very high (1300m) but very steep. Dole is wonderful, especially down by the canal, where the restaurants are, that connects the Rhône to the Rhine. The hotel was rather ordinary and in the end we upgraded 2x and had a super room.

The next day we were aiming for the outskirts of Paris via Auxerre and stayed over at the Ibis in Fontainebleau. Had a walk about the gardens and admired the chateau from the outside as we were a bit late. Best Croque Madam ever and the usual demis of rose and an espresso. It was very busy and probably a second visit would be worth while.

Off we went again the next day and hit the traffic around Paris on the N104 aiming for the A16. I have to confess it wasn't our favourite stretch of driving and at 60 mph on sometimes two, three, or four lanes without a hard shoulder and an astonishing amount of road-works, it was a bit scary. We survived and found the A16. On we went, only to run out of petrol near Beauvais. Never mind, we had a reserve tank of which I

confess I wasn't sure how much petrol it held. So it was getting a bit tense, we got off the motorway and found a service station at a supermarket. We did 17 miles on reserve, and later discovered that out of 19 gal (86.25 L) actually 3½ gal (16 L) or nearly 20% of the tank is reserve and could have done about 70 miles. I don't think I will test it.

As usual, ended up in Le Touquet where we stayed overnight in a hotel on the beach and had a super "fruit de la mere", next door to the famous place. On our final day we went shopping at Carrefour and loaded the car to the brim with goodies. We booked a Flexi Plus return ticket on the Eurotunnel and sailed right through checking in, only to be stopped by the UK border control again, we obviously looked a dodgy pair. "Please open the boot. Where have you been? What is your profession? Any guns, any animals, any other substances?" The feeling we got was that they only wanted to see the car and were too apologetic about the inconvenience caused.

On the last stretch from Dover home it was strange to drive on the left side of the road again after 1,400 miles. We had hardly seen a broken down car and coming back to the UK it was surprising how many there were along the M20 and M25.

For the record;

All in all 1,469 miles at 19.68 mpg, 80 gal of fuel, four litres of oil.

Petrol prices varied; £1.20 in Switzerland, £1.25 in France, and £1.39 in the UK.

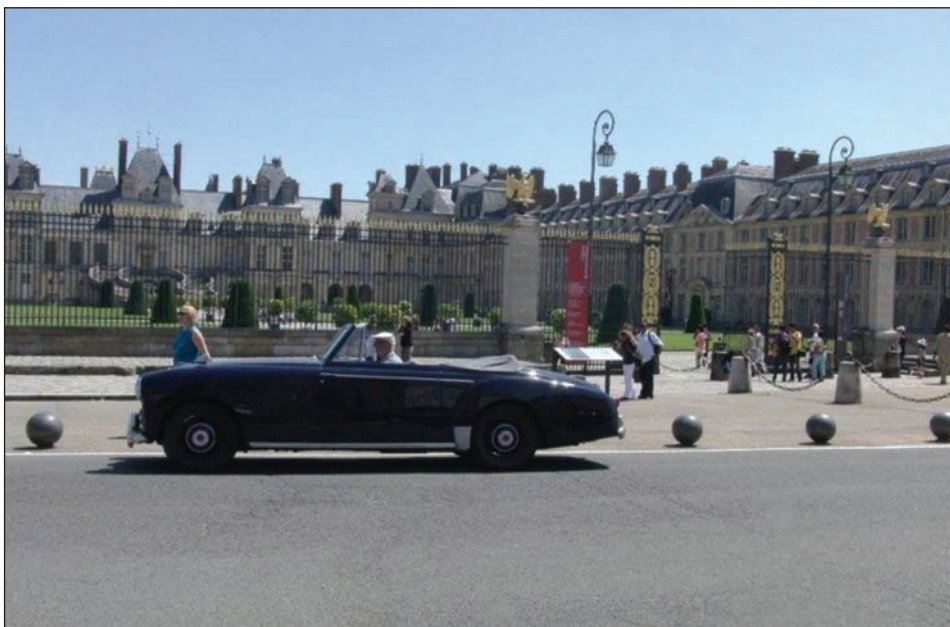
Hotels are average around €80 – €100

French motorway cost €54.30

Our trip in 2007 to Germany 1,700 miles, we averaged 16.34 mpg

Our trip in 2010 to Sweden 1,237 miles, we averaged 20.64 mpg, flat, with overdrive

This trip in 2012 to Italy and Switzerland 1,469 miles, we averaged 19.68 mpg, mountain passes with overdrive



Letters

Hi Ken,

Reading Don Redmon's interesting description of the Invicta restoration project (The Lagonda Magazine, No. 234, p27) one comment particularly caught my attention. It seems that in the USA, like in the UK, film crews can't do tech. When they say "No one's gonna know what you guys are talking about", I think what they actual mean is we do not know what you are talking about, and so we are not interested.

This is sad, and when you think of the number of car enthusiasts who are interested, not to mention the many people who have had a technological education, my conclusion is that there is a large audience being ignored who would know or would like to learn a bit more.

Now that high quality video cameras are available at affordable prices, perhaps it is the time for some self help. Are there any budding film makers in the Club who do do "tech"?

Best wishes

Alan Wheatley

Hi Ken,

You might be interested in publishing the below article from America.

The performance of the 2 litre had been waning (almost imperceptibly), with a slight misfire every so often. We took it to France, and it did not like driving around at under 50 mph for any length of time. On the penultimate day of our trip, having added some French 95 petrol 2 days previously, the car would only run on 3 cylinders , with the occasional bang in the exhaust. Once it had struggled to 50 mph it started to run on 4 cylinders, but not consistently. We made it home after adding 98 fuel back in UK. I did a compression test and found

no. 1 cylinder well down, with no. 2 also down. 3 & 4 were OK.

I assumed the head gasket had started to leak between 1 & 2, but when I removed the head the gasket was perfect. However, the carbon deposits were higher than expected – probably due to the changes in fuel consistency. There was a lot a black sticky stuff at the base of the inlet valves. Valve seating appeared OK with no recession and no burning (although they all needed lapping in). However, the exhaust valves stuck when pushed down only a small amount. There was a varnish-like deposit at the top and bottom of the valve stems. I had to use a brass drift to push them out, and when I cleaned the stems they freed up (although I had to use acetone to get the varnish off). The guides and valve stems are unworn. I have had to decoke the pistons & exhaust ports.

I then found this article – the inlet valves look exactly as mine did. And this after only about 6,000 miles with the new head!

Moral is don't use fuel over 1 month old in our engines any more, or try one of the new inhibitors. I had not thought ethanol would have a great effect, but I have never had this kind of build up before, and certainly not the awful varnish.

Regards

Roger Seabrook

Unfortunately, we don't know the name of the original publisher, but we are printing it with credit to the unknown party. If any of our American members can identify the original source, please let us know so that we can credit them properly

KPP

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

Ethanol P1ros & Cons in Automotive Gas

Hey, isn't it great we're using ethanol in our tanks to lessen our dependence on foreign oil? Well to find out the benefits of having ethanol in the fuel in your tank and also what the drawbacks are, keep on reading:

Ethanol Advantages-

Grown and produced in the US reducing reliance on foreign oil

Reduces exhaust emissions in gasoline powered vehicles

Ethanol Drawbacks -

More expensive to produce than gasoline/petrol

Lower BTU content than gasoline = less power per gallon/liter than straight gasoline

Lower BTU content than gasoline = lower fuel economy than straight gasoline

Crop production redirection = higher corn prices

Higher corn/feed prices = higher meat prices

Crop production redirection = less food grown domestically = higher produce prices

Ethanol absorbs water = unscrupulous local gas suppliers can water down their product more easily

Ethanol absorbs water = steel and iron gas tanks and parts rust from the inside

Straight ethanol is corrosive to unplated metal parts

Ethanol softens and cracks rubber and plastic parts not specifically designed to be ethanol resistant

Ethanol softens, cracks, and delaminates fiberglass fuel tanks, especially in marine applications

Ethanol causes gasoline to deteriorate and turn to varnish much more quickly than straight gasoline/petrol

Ethanol/gas mix has a shorter storage life than straight gasoline/petrol

Refiners cannot store ethanol/gas mixes as long as straight gas. Because of this oil companies only refine what they think meets the current need. As a result there is less inventory at any given time driving up speculator driven fuel prices

Old ethanol/gas mix that has turned to varnish clogs carburetor jets, fuel injectors, fuel injection distributors, fuel pumps, fuel filters

Old varnished gasoline/ethanol mix hardens on intake valves, causing them to stick in the guides and bending pushrods, breaking lifters and damaging camshafts

Aircraft engine manufacturers Continental and Lycoming no longer allow automotive gas to be used in light aircraft due to the damage today's auto fuels with ethanol have caused to aircraft engine components when left sitting for months at a time as light aircraft often do.

I personally had an auto engine damaged where I left the fuel in for over a year. It started fine, I got it tuned and running well and shut it down. The varnished fuel hardened on the intake valves and when I started it again the next day the valves stuck and all hell broke loose. 4 pushrods were bent and two lifters were broken. All valve guides were worn to a long bell shape on the inside from the wear of the hardened varnish and had to be sleeved.

A neighbor could not get his lawnmower started that he had left the gas in over the winter. I found it to have good spark but no compression. It was an overhead valve engine so there was a valve cover that could be removed. The intake valve was stuck in the open position. Using a mallet to tap it in and a couple of screwdrivers to lever it out as I

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

sprayed it with carburetor cleaner the valve was freed up. The engine started but ran badly. The carburetor jets and float bowl were clogged with hardened varnish and the fuel tank needed to be drained and cleaned. The float bowl had to be removed and emptied and the jets cleaned several times before it ran reliably. The fuel tank contained clumps of hardened varnish and had to be removed and cleaned out. Pouring a small amount of mineral spirits (paint thinner) into the gas/petrol helps cut the varnish. The main ingredient of mineral spirits and bottled carburetor cleaner is petroleum distillates.

Ethanol/gas mix use in lawnmower/snowblower engines -

At the end of the season drain as much of

the fuel from the tank as you can. Start the engine and run it dry. If there is a drain button in the float bowl press it and drain the float bowl. Spray WD40 into the intake or spark plug hole and turn the engine over a few times to keep rust at bay. Empty the contents of your gas can into your car filtering it through a paper towel in the funnel you've stuck in the gas tank spout. Start with fresh gas each season, and only buy enough to get you through the next couple of months. If you really do need to have gas on hand, be sure to empty the contents of the gas can into your car every 3 months and refill if you are not replenishing it that often.

So in summary, Ethanol use in gasoline Sucks.



These are very low resolution pictures, so don't enlarge well, but just take a look at these valve stems



The broken valve lifters

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