



**THE MAGAZINE OF THE  
LAGONDA CLUB**

**Number 254 Autumn 2017**



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**FRONT COVER:** Mark Yeomans' 11.9 model KK after winning the light car and ladies' choice awards at the 2017 Annual Gathering.

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# From the Driving Seat

*Roger Seabrook*

WE HAVE USED our 2 litre Lagonda quite a bit this summer, clocking up about 4,000 miles since May. Starting with the tour to Lancashire, we then took it to Brittany on a Bean Car Club event. Following that we were in the Netherlands with the Continental Rally, and, in September/October on a trip to Spain and into Portugal. The only problems were a puncture, caused by those speed ramps in Holland, and a leaking petrol pipe in Spain, where the solder on the pipe from the pump failed. This was fixed in the hotel bathroom, where I set up my small vice and blowlamp, and re-soldered the joint. No smoke alarms in the bathroom! Always carry plenty of spare kit when travelling in a vintage car!

Brian Stevens has written an interesting article on the 3 litre IOE engine developed by Ricardo, and this will be serialised – the first part in this issue. That this engine has survived is a miracle, and I wonder what power output Brian will get from it when it is running again. I can still picture it lying on its side in Tom Pinguey's back garden in 1978, along with all sorts of Lagonda bits and pieces.

I managed to sort out the plug whiskering at last. Dropping the carburettor needles down a fraction

worked very well, followed by a change of plug to a Bosch W7DTC (recommended by the ever helpful John Batt). The engine now ticks over smoothly, and accelerates without hesitation.

We have at last moved the 2 litre saloon into our garage (many thanks to John Sword for looking after it for the last six months). I have not managed to do any work on it yet, but it looks as though it will run again without too much needing to be done. Then will come the task of making it sound and reliable. The rear springs certainly need re-setting and tempering, and the interior will need to be tackled (i.e. cleaned, and the leather nourished and repaired – **can anyone recommend a firm that can restore old leather seats?**). The driver's door drops when opened, and the wooden A-post has weakened by the top hinge. I am hoping a metal bracing frame will strengthen this area as replacing the post would cause major problems. I will try to stabilise it so it doesn't get worse – no more than that! In the meantime it can remain shut, and ingress will be through the passenger door! There are two little wooden 'doors' in the roof above the windscreen – what are these for? They won't open fully. ■

*Last date for copy for the Winter magazine is  
FRIDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2017. Articles needed urgently, please!*

## The Hills were Alive with the Sound of Raindrops . . . Tour of the Peak District 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> June 2017 by Tim Gresty

IT ALL STARTED to go pear-shaped when our Lagonda Club President was asked his choice of ode as traditional entertainment for our Peak District Gala Dinner at the Izaak Walton Hotel. “I’ll do Noah and the Ark” he blithely proclaimed.

The die was cast. From Monday 4<sup>th</sup> June to the Gala Dinner evening of Wednesday, the heavens poured in biblical proportions.

Armenian Christians long claimed Noah’s epic lifeboat came to rest on Mount Ararat. We know better. Its resting-place was Thorpe Cloud, at the gateway of picturesque Dovedale. We watched that conical hill ebb and flow from sight in the Peak District’s cloud and rain for four days and nights. It’s no wonder the Derbyshire; Staffordshire and Cheshire triangle, which hosts England’s Peak Districts, is the greenest of our green and pleasant lands. And yet, by all accounts, a great time was had by all.

Fifty-two hardy souls voyaged in 22 assorted Lagondas plus the Crossley, all clad in traditional wet-weather gear. A Jaguar XK150, a Porsche 356B, a brace of Aston Martins and a spectacular

Bristol Beaufighter, post-war heaters and demisters working at full spat throughout, escorted them. Oh how we pitied them, closeted away in their warm cocoons, with radios blaring out the latest weather updates, while we enjoyed the stormy waves and cooling breezes of England’s well-aired roof garden. Ho-ho.

Three days of ‘Suggested Routes’ journeyed over 230 winding, steep and scenic miles. These took them through the southern White Peak to “Historic Railcars, Trams and Revolutions”, across Cheshire’s Peak and the Tissington Trail for “Hidden Valleys, Fords and Historic Halls”, and then high into the northern Dark Peak for “Passes, Peaks and Ancient Places”. Understandably, few ventured onto the full itineraries, but a select handful of brave souls with webbed feet and underwater breathing travelled the full ‘Suggested Routes’ on some of England’s finest vintage-friendly touring roads, narrow lanes and hidden valleys, and earned the awed admiration of all.

This is the story of those aquatic peripatations, told by the sodden



*Diorama of Lagondas around Ian Ronald’s eminently-sensible Crossley 20.9 Golden Saloon at Ecclesbourne Valley Railway, whose railcars carried us on a voyage of rural delights, in flood conditions, to Duffield and back to Wirksworth for our Pullman luncheon.*



*Sodden Lagondas at Tissington Hall: home to Sir Richard Fitzherbert, 9th Baronet, who valiantly hosted our Reception, Buffet Luncheon and Tour - and mopped up the puddles left in the Great Hall by our well-soaked outerwear.*

camera of our good friend (and Associate of the Royal Photographic Society) Richard Connolly and the words of Tour organizer Tim Gresty. This Tour of the Peak Districts was his valedictory event as Northern Secretary Emeritus.

#### **Our home for the Tour:**

##### **The Izaak Walton Hotel in Dovedale**

The Izaak Walton in Ilam is a superb base for a summer walking holiday. Set at the gateway to Dovedale, one of England's most scenic valleys and close to the beautiful villages of the Manifold Valley, its gardens overlook the valley and the twin sentinel peaks of Thorpe Cloud and Bunster Hill. Behind the welcoming gardens in the hotel publicity photo, you can see Bunster Hill. We couldn't.

Fortunately, the Izaak Walton comes with a trio of well-padded lounges and a full-feature traditional Pub with

real ales and the other accoutrements required by Lagonda enthusiasts. So, with a large portion of the hotel's excellent Haddon Restaurant allocated to our group, we had an ideal base to plan, recover and socialise while the cataclysmic weather did its best to wash us all down the valley.

Led by the excellent Hotel Manager Shura Prince, the team provided us with a warm, welcoming and comfortable stay.

#### **DAY 1: Sunday 4th June :**

##### **Registration & Dinner**

Goody Bags tempted early Registration, and were well-filled with local Guide Books and Maps, a special brew of Lagonda Ales from local brewery Peak Ales, traditional mints and lemon sherberts from Chesterfield's Willett's Sweets, scenic postcards, and Rally Plates kindly organized by Jonathan Oppenheimer and supplied by SMP



Print Group.

Excitement of the day was provided by Susie Batt, whose spectacular fall down the stairs won the Tour's Icarus Trophy. Fortunately, it resulted in minimal injuries. As Hotel Manager Shura Prince is a stalwart of the local Wetton & Alstonefield Responders, the precautionary medical checks were carried out swiftly and efficiently. Well done, NHS: what would we do without you?

A gentle supper preceded an extended visit by many to the hotel's Dovedale Inn. Sadly, Nigel Walder and Rodney Saunders were far too late for such libations: Rodney's 1934 Rapier misbehaved itself on departure from Sussex, necessitating substitution of Nigel's more commodious 1934 M45 Abbott TT Replica and a long drive late into the night. How they found their way to our Hotel in the deep dark of the Peak District remains a mystery to this day.

## **DAY 2 : Monday 5th June : Daytime Ecclesbourne Valley Railway and Crich Tramway Museum**

It would have been good to report that Day 2 dawned bright and early, for our planned journey into the scenic heart of the Peak District via Longnor and Hartington. It didn't. The heavy and incessant rain meant only a brave few took the full route to Wirksworth, home to Ecclesbourne Valley Railway and its eclectic collection of Railcars ancient and more modern. Most set off late, and took the shorter route via Newhaven (the other one, not the Channel port) and historic Middleton to Wirksworth Station, where our drenched photographer Richard Connolly ARPS documented our assembly. Warmly installed in our

plush twin railcar set, we enjoyed our Prosecco and snacks made with Ecclesbourne Valley Honey as we departed for Duffield down the beautiful rural Ecclesbourne Valley. We think it was beautiful, but the dense fog created by our gradual drying-out meant none of us could see out of the windows. Duncan and Barbara Arthurs (whose invited but poorly 1926 Invicta 3-Litre Tourer transmogrified into a Porsche 356B) spent time in deep discussion and assistance in the driver's cab. Given Duncan's legendary myopia (as those of us who have crewed for him in VSCC Trails can attest), it was a miracle we returned safely from our comfort and coffee stop at Duffield to Wirksworth, where a copious Buffet Luncheon awaited us in their static Pullman carriages.

Next stop Crich, Ding-ding for the National Tramway Museum, and its extraordinary working collection of trams from the great days of local authority urban transport.

A short drive down to the Derwent Valley took us up through Crich Village to the Museum. By kind permission of the Museum team, we were permitted to park our vintage Lagondas in the Crich streetscape, with its assembly of historic buildings including the reconstructed Red Lion Inn, our base for hot chocolate and cake.

By this stage, the rain had slackened enough to permit walking the site, and visits to Display Hall and workshops. Even better, the trams were in action, so most of our gang enjoyed a clifftop journey to the Glory Mine viewpoint in a choice of 1928 Blackpool Corporation single-decker or 1921 Leeds City Tramways double-decker – all for an old penny!





*Appropriate luggage on Robin and Maggie Wodehouse's 1930 3/4 1/2 Litre Tourer: a Steamer Trunk and (we understand) an inflatable dinghy.*



*Streetscape at Crich, with Jonathan and Merav Oppenheimer's M45 Saloon leading the queue for the bar.*



*Dream - Tissington Hall in the sunshine.*



*Reality - Mike Heins and Hazel Rowlands: 1929 2-Litre High Chassis Tourer in the wet.*



## **DAY 2 : Monday 5th June : Evening Sub-aqua Barbeque at the Izaak Walton**

From Crich, a most interesting historic return to the Izaak Walton. As one of the cradles of the Industrial Revolution, Cromford, in the Derwent Valley, is packed with the industrial archaeology of its heritage of mills and mining, with early canals and railway tracks littering the gorge and its surrounding hills. Our route took us climbing up the fearsome Via Gellia, rated the most dangerous road in Britain on its reputation as a motorcycle Shangri-La. The rain kept the bikers indoors!

Continued heavy weather meant the planned Terrace BBQ retreated from the sodden gardens to the Haddon Restaurant, where a valiant effort was made by all to pretend the sun was shining, and the view over Dovedale and Thorpe Cloud scenic and sparkling. Hmmm . . .

## **DAY 3 : Tuesday 6th June : Morning The Cheshire Peak via Wildboarclough and Dowell Dale to Tissington**

Another day of serious participation. Our suggested route took in some of the North's most beautiful highways and valleys. Through Waterhouses (home of the late and much lamented Leek & Manifold Light Railway) and up the soaring B5053 to Warslow, it then glided over Thorncliffe to circle the magnificent Roaches. Dropping steeply to the hidden charms of Wildboarclough, the routes climbed to the famous Cat & Fiddle and over desolate Axe Edge. GUM roads (grass up 'middle, as we say in the North) led down to hidden Dowell Dale in the lee of Chrome Hill : rated the most beautiful valley in England, yet largely

unknown and practically ignored

The swift and soaring A515 took the route down to the time-warp village of Parwich, and through wide (and unsurprisingly torrent-deep) Tissington Ford.

Sensibly, most gave it a miss, and drove less dramatically to Tissington Hall for lunch. A select few (led by the intrepid Nigel Walder and Rodney Saunders and their Car of the Tour) braved the serious winds and dense fog to earn themselves the plaudits of all, and a stiff drink at Tissington Hall.

## **DAY 3 : Tuesday 6th June : Afternoon Tissington Hall : Luncheon and Tour**

Tissington Hall is one of England's hidden gems. Set at the heart of a private estate village, in the shadow of an ancient village church, the Hall has been occupied by the Fitzherbert family since they built it in 1609. One of England's masterpieces.

After our accustomed Prosecco reception, luncheon was served in the Great Hall by Red Olive, Derbyshire's leading alfresco caterers. Their superbly presented menu featured monkfish and salmon, fillet of beef and coronation chicken, as Sir Richard Fitzherbert, 9th Baronet, played host around the tables.

After luncheon, Sir Richard gave a learned and humorous library introduction to his family's involvement in the Hall, and his well-briefed guides provided a private and informal Guided Tour of the Hall, and its long history. A rare privilege. Our members then dispersed for an evening of Open Dining, at our recommended choice of local pubs. Some just staggered back to the comforts of the Izaak Walton.



**DAY 4 : Wednesday 7th June:  
In the wake of the Dam Busters, and  
Gala Reception & Dinner**

Better weather meant many of our group enjoyed a full day's motoring on our Route Suggestions. Over 100 miles of fine highways took them over the peak of the Peak District, passing ancient Arbor Low, the Stonehenge of the North, before swinging off through scenic Monyash..

Continuing through Miller's Dale and Litton, the route led deep into Monsal Dale, and the fierce Monsal Head climb and hairpin.

North of Bamford, the route skirted the three hill-hemmed Derwent Valley Reservoirs: Ladybower, Derwent and Howden. These were the training grounds for the Lancasters of 617 Squadron, the legendary Dam Busters.

A diversion led through Castleton and Edale, and then climbed fierce and sharp Winnatt's Pass. An easy lollop to Calver drove down through the pretty Longstone villages to photogenic Ashford-in-the-Water, and over the hills to the Izaak Walton.

For our final evening in the Peak District, celebrations at Izaak Walton Hotel followed our accustomed 'Bow Ties & Tiaras' theme, with yet another Prosecco Reception prior to our splendid Gala Dinner. A spirited rendition of 'Noah and the Ark' by Lagonda Club President David Hine dispelled the last of the rain, and prizes for endeavours of heroic achievement were awarded. Proceedings adjourned to the Bar for light social discourse. The following morning, all drove home in the dry. ■



*Enjoyment - Tim Gresty and Margaret Browning: 1931 2-Litre 'Lenny' makes waves in Tissington Ford.  
All pictures by Richard Connolly.*

# Aston Martin works Visit on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2017

## *Brian Green reports*

YOUR BOARD MEETS four times a year, in January, April, July and October and for the July meeting we try to find somewhere interesting, with a motoring connection, to hold our meeting.

This year, thanks to the kind efforts of club member Stephen Matthews, we were able to hold our meeting at Aston Martin Works, in Newport Pagnell. Based in the old Aston Martin Factory, with a heritage stretching back almost 60 years and an even longer association with bespoke and luxury vehicle manufacture (being the home to Salmons Coachworks since 1830) Aston Martin Works offers new and heritage car sales and servicing, from a routine check-up to a full restoration.

With the prospect of warm sunny days and long evenings, we encourage board members to bring their “proper cars” to this meeting. However, even on a sunny day, a three hour plus journey down the M6/M1 motorways is not high on my list of enjoyable things to do in an M45 and the weather forecast for July 26th could only be described as biblical. Nevertheless, four hardy board members braved the weather and we were able to enjoy the display of Roger Seabrook’s pretty Rapier 2-seater, John Sword’s magnificent M45R fixed head coupe, Peter Gilkes beautiful DB 3L 2-door saloon and Christopher Hobbs delectable 2L low chassis speed model.

The meeting was held in a room that overlooked the heritage showroom where a mouth-watering selection of Astons, ranging from a 1954 DB2/4, priced at £300,000, through a stunning DB6 Mk II Volante at £1.5m to the

very first V12 Vanquish, at a relatively affordable £139,950, distracted our attention from the business in hand.

The morning was devoted to the Spares Committee meeting and we were joined at lunchtime by the rest of the board, bringing the total number to 13. After lunch we were given a whistle-stop tour of the premises, starting with the new car showroom where six of the latest Vanquish Zagato limited edition models were awaiting delivery to their lucky new owners. Only 99 of these cars will ever be built. Not to everyone’s taste perhaps but a sight that will probably never be seen again.

From the new car showroom we were taken to the spotless service area, where current models receive attention for anything from a routine service to a major upgrade or repair. Unfortunately, we were asked not to take photographs in the service area or anywhere except the new and classic car showrooms, due to the number of customers’ cars present, but if you check the company website at <http://www.astonmartinworks.com>, all will be revealed.

Adjacent to the service area is a small workshop where the first of 25 DB4 GT Continuation cars was being built up. Each of the new cars will be built to lightweight specification and carry a VIN number in the original series. 75 DB4 G.T.s were built between 1959 and 1963 and of these only eight were lightweight models.

From the service area we moved on to the heritage section where, again, anything from a routine service to a full rebuild is carried out. Only one Lagonda

was spotted, a striking black William Towns V8, which looked to be in splendid condition. In the body shop it was interesting to see that Aston Martin have retained the original tooling and specialist skills necessary to recreate the elegant curves and lines of the cars from the David Brown era. Some of the original body bucks are still in use, although most have now been replaced with copies as the originals become

damaged.

Time was limited and we reluctantly returned to our meeting room to continue with the board meeting.

I'm sure that I speak for all of us in saying that we were very impressed by the quality of workmanship and the professionalism and enthusiasm of all the staff at Aston Martin Works and hope to be able to visit them again in the future. ■



*New Aston Vanquish Zagato limited edition models awaiting delivery*



*Board attendees with their cars*





*Classic Astons front the superb meeting room*

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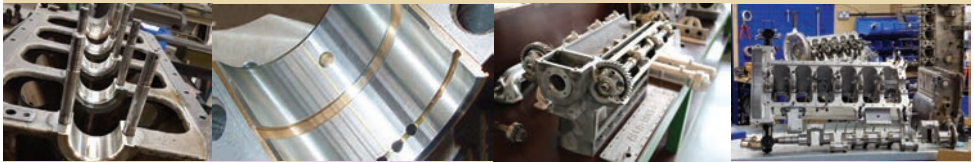
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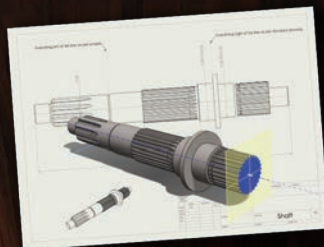
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## Racing Reminiscences from the Swinging Sixties

### Enter the 1952 DB 2.6 litre saloon. *By Ron Gee*

BY CHANCE IN 1960, a DB saloon appeared for sale at a car dealer and service station in Sidcup. The asking price was £450, which was a remarkable drop from the £3,100 list price of a new car. That is how life was, until about 1968 when prices of historic cars began to increase exponentially. So I purchased this car.

This time I struck lucky. The car had been re-sprayed in Bristol Car Red and had a rebuilt engine. The garage owner told me that he had had difficulty in timing the engine, so he had made his own settings. On one trip to Silverstone, using the M1, the car made 95 mph according to the speedometer, and would have gone faster. However, as I intended to race that day, I resisted the attempt to try for the ton.

Unfortunately the car had low torque at engine speeds of less than 4000 rpm. This was not usually a problem as there was plenty of “poke” anyway, but at Firle Hill Climb the car shot up to 5500 rpm in first gear then, once a change to second took place, 4000 rpm did not “kick” in until the top of the hill was reached. So times at Firle were unimpressive.

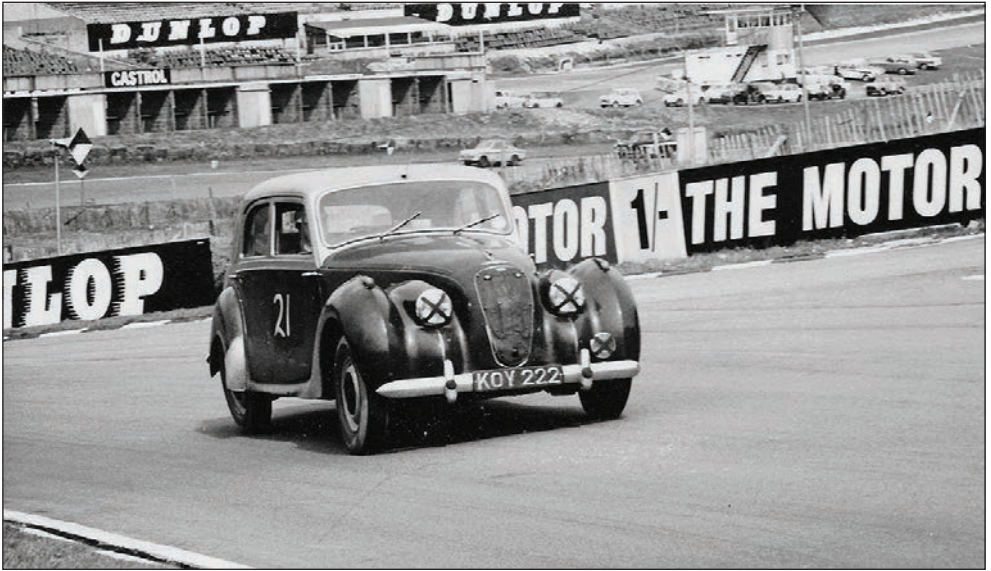
I list below some modifications to the car:

- The asbestos brake linings fitted when I purchased the car, were abysmal. Fade would set in after 3 or 4 laps at Silverstone. Fortunately I fortuitously found out about thermoplastic brake

linings which, under the action of heat, moulded themselves to the new shape of the drums, and would last for 10 laps of Silverstone before fade set in. One minor feature was that if the car was not used for a day or more the first brake application would always cause it to pull to one side as, when parked, the linings sprang away from the shoe and needed to be reshaped so as to perfect them for subsequent use. Once the linings were reset there was no problem for the rest of the day. One solution was to bond the linings to the shoes, but it was not really necessary. In the 60s, I was able to purchase thermoplastic linings from DisCan (the drums best friend) and from Mintex.

- The original Lucas headlights were also abysmal. So I changed them for Marchal units. These gave adequate lighting up to 80 mph, and once helped the 2.6L to win the November handicap, which was a rally lasting from Noon until Midnight.

- Tyres. When purchased the car was fitted with Michelin X tyres, which made the steering heavy, although they would undoubtedly have been cost effective as far as the tyres were concerned. However to my mind the use of such tyres on the front wheels was a false economy as the wear and tear on the steering would, in the long run, need rectification of much more expensive steering parts. So I changed first to a complete set of Avon Turbospeed cross-ply, and



*The 2.6 at Brands Hatch - how to do it!*



*The 2.6 at Silverstone - how **not** to do it!*

next to Turbospeeds on the front wheels and Pirelli Cinturatos on the rears. This resulted in the steering being much lighter, but also a small drop in top speed. As an example of this, between my home in Sidcup and my employment at a research establishment at Badgers Mount near the top of the North Downs, there was a stretch of highway en route over which use of four radials would often enable a speed of 94 mph. Four cross-plies would only provide a speed of 90 mph and 2+2 would allow 92 mph. One interesting feature of the use of cross-plies on the rear was that after one race at Silverstone the Maker's name (i.e. Avon) was worn away from the rear, nearside tyre. I never noticed such wear after a race on a radial. Maybe the name was moulded elsewhere.

- Tachometer. By the 1960s, the use of semi-conductors enabled the purchase of an easily fitted Tachometer from Messrs Smith's Instruments.

- Seat Belts.

- Gearbox: A DB 3 litre unit with the lever straight into the gearbox, instead of the original steering column linkage.

### **Racing the 16/80, and the DB Saloon**

In 1961, the 16/80 was again entered in the then annual Lagonda Club sprint at Brands Hatch and this time I came first in Class E, according to the engraving on the pewter flagon awarded by the Club. Later that year I entered the 2.6 into two races at JDC Silverstone. One race was for novices, and the second was a seven lap handicap for Lagonda cars. I succeeded in obtaining a second place in each. Practice for the races took place in the morning during a deluge

of rain. I remember streams of water flowing across the track, encounter with which caused the 2.6 to be suddenly lifted sideways. Fortunately in the afternoon the weather changed for the better and whilst the track was still wet, it was no longer deep in puddles or streams.

1962 arrived and the car was again entered in the Lagonda sprint and later in an Allard Owners club sprint at Brands Hatch. With respect to the former, first place in the 2-litre class went to Maurice Leo. However his car was fitted with a supercharger, which gave it extra power. In August the 2.6 was entered in the JDC/BDC handicap race for Lagondas and scored a first. Unlike sprints, competing in races required a medical certificate, which I left to the last minute. As a solution I called on Dr Groome, a club member, who had previously raced his 2.6 at Silverstone, and who had a practice only 2 miles away at New Eltham. Dr Groome was delighted to see me, immediately signed the form, and then spent 45 minutes discussing 2.6 litres, to my embarrassment and to the annoyance of his patients.

Later in 1962, I entered the 2.6 in the November Rally, in which I navigated and a friend drove. We were making good progress until dusk arrived. There was a fault on the dynamo, which reduced output. Although I tried various electrical remedies, the cause was a worn dynamo pulley and not the electrics. A subsequent foray to the Spares department at Feltham enabled the purchase of a new pulley. I wonder whether today's 2.6 owners can buy



such a pulley so easily. When the Club totalled up the competition points for the year, I was awarded the Allison Trophy for driving forwards, backwards and sideways around the race tracks.

In 1963, I again gained a second place in the 2-litre class at the Brands Hatch sprint. Again Maurice Leo "pipped" me with a lap time of 1 minute 19.5 seconds, whilst the normally-aspirated 16/80 lapped at 1 minute 20.5 seconds. The 2.6 was also entered, but its lap times were about 2 seconds slower. The circuit at Brands Hatch had more corners and slopes than Silverstone, so I was just not brave enough to take them as fast in the 2.6 as the 16/80. I again took part in the Lagonda race at BDC Silverstone, this time with the 16/80. Once more the weather was atrociously wet. At the flag drop, I had to give 10 seconds start to Alan Brown and George Purnell in 2 litre cars. They drove more wisely and slower than me and I caught them up half a lap later. I endeavoured to overtake these two competitors on the second bend and was succeeding until the car spun, not once but three times, before entering the ditch at the trackside. We stopped before the ditch bottomed, which was fortunate as the damage to the car and myself was limited to the alloy casting which carried the steering assembly. I had to leave the car at Silverstone. Fortunately Bill Michael gave Patricia (my girlfriend at the time) and myself a lift back to London. I was then able to buy a replacement alloy casting from Tom Pinguey, who offered a rival

spares service to Ivan Forshaw. After the weekend I still had to report to work, at least for the morning. I then travelled by train to Silverstone, fitted the replacement casting and then drove the 16/80 overnight to work the next day at Eskmeals in Cumberland. A week later the car and I returned home to Sidcup. Later that year, the 2.6 was again entered for the November Handicap. Once more I navigated and a friend drove. This time we scored a first. Later that year, I was awarded the Car Club Trophy for being the most improved driver for the year.

1964 arrived. The first event was a Northern driving test organised by Herb Schofield. As it was a long way to the venue in Yorkshire, I entered the 2.6. By some fluke, a choice of tyres (i.e new Pirellis on the rear wheels) enabled me to score a class win with the cumbersome 2.6, otherwise completely unsuitable for driving tests. The profile of the new tyres enabled just a small area to be in contact with the road surface. Hence one could drive up to a barrier and immediately turn right by turning the steering wheel and simultaneously opening the throttle, so that the car rotated about a vertical centreline axis. Thus a 90 degree turn was immediately generated.

Once again I entered the 16/80 for the BDC Silverstone race. The handicappers were quite generous on this occasion. On consulting the programme I thought that the main competition in the race would come from a Rapier and a 3 Litre, which would give the 16/80 the benefit of a 10 second start. As luck would have

it, this was not the case. The flag dropped, and I set off. After a hairpin corner (was it Becketts?) once I had got the car on the straight and narrow, I was able to look back and see how the competition was progressing. Two or three laps later I was able to observe that instead of the two pursuing cars catching the 16/80, I was gaining on them. I thought: "Oh good, all I have to do is drive steadily and carefully and I should win." This was indeed the case! At the end of the year with extra wins at the Spring Social Rally etc., it would appear that I had gained enough points to win the Fox Trophy, which was awarded to the member who scored the maximum points in events that year.

By 1965 I had found other leisure diversions, so it would seem that I only entered one or two events.

One was the August BDC meeting. At this event, I was given the same handicap as Alan Brown who was racing in his 2-Litre. With the help of the synchromesh gearbox, I out-dragged Alan away from the start. The 16/80 held its own until the hairpin at Becketts, for which I failed to brake enough and spun. Luckily, although following closely behind, Alan avoided a collision, and set off at a steady pace. As soon as possible, I followed and was steadily catching up, but the race ended before I could overtake Alan, who finished fifth. I finished ninth. My best lap time was recorded as 1min 42.0 seconds. As far as unsupercharged Lagondas with 2 litre engines are concerned, this would seem at this time to be

slower than the 1 minute 39 and a bit seconds recorded by George Purnell at Silverstone. It did however almost match the best time for myself in the 2.6 at Silverstone, which, from memory, was published in an earlier Magazine as being 1 minute 41.8 seconds. It is a sobering thought that a then 30 year old 16/80 could match the times of a 2.6 because of its superior cornering performance. Nevertheless the 2.6 proved its worth, as it was a superior competitor in rallies on the public highways!

The writer now backtracks to an early race, of which he has both lost and forgotten the exact date, but not the race itself. In contrast to the previous reminiscence, the day was sunny and hot, and so was the interior of the 2.6 saloon. So I removed my jacket before the race. Following the flag drop, I made a good start and initially lapped the circuit all to myself. Near the end of the first lap, whilst rounding Becketts, the seat belt slipped off my jacketless shoulder and friends spectating in the grandstand could lipread me as I mouthed curses whilst I somehow replaced it. At the next corner (Club Corner?) I entered rather too fast - the car ran onto the grass on the outside of the bend, the seat belt again slipped down and this time jammed in my elbow leaving me to steer the car one-handed. To exacerbate the situation, the car responded to impacts from the rough verge and jumped out of gear. Fortunately I somehow survived and for the rest of the race discarded the seat belt. The race was 15 laps for the



*The 16/80 on the grid at Silverstone. Can anyone name the others taking part?*



*The 16/80 at Firle. A luxury picnic for the spectators and no barriers spoiling their view!*



scratch-man, somewhat less for me. I remember after 10 laps becoming mentally tired. Furthermore even the thermoplastic brake linings were beginning to fade which meant that retardation for the bends (some entailing braking from 80 mph) had to be done by changing down with the gears. Nevertheless I somehow recall gaining a win even if I did not receive the chequered flag at the end, because even the flag marshal was confused. There was often a post race meeting at a pub on the A41 just outside of Aylesbury. At the gathering, I recall asking Arnold Davey who had won. He replied: "I don't know. I rather think that you did". I am afraid that I have lost the race records and perhaps the winner's cup, but not the memory of the race.

So the story of my Lagonda racing history ends. Some of the

times quoted by me from memory may be incorrect. If so would a member who possesses a full set of magazines please write and correct my mistakes. I would be pleased to learn or re-learn the times of 50 years ago. Like some other readers, I do miss the saga of happenings at the Club's racing events. This is not to disparage the scribes of today, but we used to be able to read about Hamish Moffat's cross-continent trip to South Africa (most of the map was red then), as well as articles about those who had competed at Silverstone, in which vehicle, and what lap times were recorded. Perhaps this account could coerce some of today's racers to describe their experiences. Finally I iterate that comments and corrections are welcome and I look forward to reading these in a future edition of The Lagonda. ■

x PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.—SEPTEMBER 1, 1926.

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# The Annual Lagonda Gathering

## *Warren King took part*

THE ANNUAL LAGONDA Gathering 2017 took place over the weekend of 30 September and 1 October at the venue enjoyed over the last few years, the Wokefield Park Hotel near Reading. The hotel provides comfortable accommodation and a spacious lawn display area for our cars.

The Lagonda model chosen as the theme this year was the post-war car, created after the merger with Aston Martin in 1947 under the leadership of the industrialist David Brown. Thanks to the encouragement of Alan Heard and Len Cozzolino, members responded accordingly and twenty-three DB cars appeared, including many not seen before and two project cars awaiting restoration by their enthusiastic owners.

As usual the weekend activities commenced with a short run through the countryside on Saturday. Steve Wilson organised a visit to Bishopgray, the well-known Lagonda specialists, whose recently refurbished Aldermaston premises are only six miles from Wokefield Park. The team had designed a tour with route maps and directions covering over forty miles though the local lanes. Arriving at Bishopgray, members were greeted by a superb array of cakes and confectionery, all prepared by Steve's wife, Anne. Some fifty people in more than twenty-five Lagondas enjoyed Bishopgray's hospitality, and in particular, the opportunity to visit the immaculate workshops with an array of Lagondas in progress.

The Lagonda Club Dinner on Saturday evening took place in the hotel grand Dining Room following pre-dinner drinks where everyone made and renewed friendships. Nearly ninety diners enjoyed fine dining and wines from a varied and extensive menu, interspersed with toasts and speeches in traditional Lagonda Club relaxed style. It was very appropriate to hear from Adam Brown, grandson of David Brown. He told us of David Brown's early life and his enthusiasm for sports cars. David Brown was attracted by the Lagonda engine, designed by W O Bentley and others during World War II, and adopted it very quickly for the Aston Martin. He was very happy to continue to use the Lagonda name, and the creation of Lagonda cars as comfortable high performance touring cars. In due course in the evening, in the usual way we were treated to after dinner musings by David Hine, which included references to his aspirations at an earlier age to be a streaker. Then followed a traditional folk song he had recently composed with a rousing chorus, which encouraged everyone to join in. As the Dinner came to a close the jovial atmosphere of the evening extended from the dining room to the bar. Amongst the diners were members from abroad and UK members who had travelled some distance. Walter and Lisa Czech and their son Cornelius, who have an LG45, had come from Germany, and Eckhard and Brigitte Fabricius, well known to



*DB 3 litres line up*



*DB 2.6 litres line up*

*Pictures from Alan Heard*





*Alan Heard shows some pictures to John Biggs, ex Feltham employee.  
Picture from Alan Heard*



*Adam Brown in the car his grandmother Daisy Brown drove.  
Picture from Alan Heard*



*Malcolm Fishwick's superb 1952 DB 2.6L. Picture from David Lloyd*

Continental Rallyists, were also from Germany. USA members, Peter Lloyd from California, and Herman and Jeri Schaller from Florida were also with us. We welcomed regular Lagonda members, Peter and Ann Walby who had brought their 2-litre from Northern Ireland, and from Scotland, Peter and Katie Weir and their son Tim, and also Peter and Hilary Cochran.

The Annual General Meeting of The Lagonda Club was held on Sunday morning, and this is the occasion when the Club Committee doubles up as the Board of Directors of The Lagonda Club Limited to satisfy the requirements of the Companies Act. The meeting was conducted cordially by our Chairman, John Sword, and followed the conventional agenda. He first turned to the Club President, David Hine, who provided a succinct summary of the state of the Club and its activities. In contrasting the involvement of members currently in every aspect of Club activities with the passive attitude of members during his Chairmanship more than twenty years previously, he paid tribute to many improvements – in financial management, the adoption of IT throughout, the provision of a comprehensive spares resource, the continuation of competition activity, and the huge increase in social events of every kind. This all represented the keen involvement of many members, and as a result the Club is in good heart.

Each officer of the Committee reported to the members on their responsibilities. Colin Bugler said he will maintain a confidential register of members who have a useful expertise which they are willing to share with others. Peter Gilkes, the DB cars

representative, was able to report a significant increase and activity amongst DB owners, which tied in nicely with the theme of the Gathering. Members accepted all the reports with satisfaction. The Committee had decided on the winners of two awards – the Committee Plate, a prestigious award for outstanding work for the Club over a long period, was awarded to Michael Drakeford, and the Gosling Trophy for the best article in the Magazine was awarded to Roger Learmonth, for the entertaining story of his Two Red Cars. In his absence Georgina Drakeford accepted the Trophy on his behalf. From the floor Colin Mallett reminded members that during the year the Club had lost the long-standing enthusiastic USA Club representative, Rudy Wood-Muller, and invited members to pay their respects with acclamation, which they did. After general discussion of a number of matters the Chairman brought proceedings smoothly to a close.

After lunch the focus of attention was on the cars carefully arranged by model in a picturesque setting on part of the lawn in front of the hotel. Rain had been forecast for the weekend and although it was threatening, we were relieved that it remained dry. Nevertheless it seemed sufficient to deter a number of members whose allocated spaces remained unfilled. The DB Lagondas had pride of place and they were arranged in a semi-circle at the top of the site, with all the other Lagonda models in a wider arc behind them. There were twenty-three DB cars, more than ever seen together before, and in the centre was the very rare four-door Lagonda version of the 1970s V8 Aston Martin.





*A 1957 DB 3 Litre fronts some vintage 2 Litre cars*



*A magnificent DB 3 Litre drophead. Pictures from Peter Lloyd*



It was said to be one of seven, and the one ordered and used by David Brown himself. Several of the cars were quite immaculate, others clean and shining, but showing that they are in regular use having covered a considerable mileage. Although a number of promised cars were missing, credit is due to the owners of the restoration projects who had taken the trouble to bring their cars on trailers. Perhaps their enthusiasm and confidence were bolstered by the sight of cars in the condition they are aspiring to.

An interesting visitor at the Gathering was 91-year old John Biggs who had spent most of his working life at Aston Martin Lagonda. John joined Lagonda at Staines in 1940 and in 1944 he joined the Army. On demobilisation he re-joined the company, by then at Feltham, where he remained in a variety of positions for some years. As a panel-beater and welder John found himself in Frank Feeley's experimental department, working on prototype Astons and Lagondas. Later on, John had proved his general expertise and was invited to join the race department under John Wyr, which opened a new world, and John continued with the race teams when Reg and then Tim Parnell took over. He retired in 1977, and then for some time he was a tutor in the evening classes at Newport Pagnell. Now, after an eventful life, John busies himself with his woodworking hobby, making all kinds of elaborate walking sticks amongst other things. John Biggs was quite taken with the array of Lagondas, that he had been so familiar with, on the lawn.

In the light of the turnout in previous years the number of cars

in other classes was disappointing. There were ten 2-litres, and ten M45s and LG45s, and only three or fewer cars in the other classes, a total count of all Lagondas of fifty-three.

No doubt the dire weather forecast had deterred a number of owners. It was all the more heartening to see Mark Yeoman's Early Car present, making a stark contrast to the later sporting models and the comfortable luxury of the V8 Lagonda. The Lagonda Club is not one that places undue emphasis on show display cars; however judging show condition is one of the entertaining aspects of the Lagonda Gathering. The judging had taken place during the course of the day and in mid-afternoon everyone gathered in front of the Club marquee for the awards to be presented. The Club President, David Hine, made the announcements and the presentations to the class winners with his customary aplomb, and the winners had their photos taken. Best in Show award was given to Richard Williams with his V8 Lagonda, and the ladies had rather quirkily chosen Mark Yeoman's Early Lagonda for the Ladies' Choice award. The Concours Cup for the best in the Featured Model Class was awarded to Mike Fishwick for his 2.6 DB Lagonda. The prestigious historic Vokes Cup for the furthest distance travelled was given to Peter Cochran for the trip from Scotland.

During the afternoon many cars had been examined closely, details discussed, and conclusions reached or deferred for later consideration. Such is the custom of the Lagonda enthusiast. As late afternoon wore on, members gradually departed after a happy 2017 Lagonda Gathering. ■



*As long as you keep the speed up you don't get (too) wet! Just look at the enjoyment these people are getting from their lovely 2 Litre Lagonda*



*Happy award winners, glad they ignored the weather forecast! Pictures from Peter Lloyd*

## 15<sup>th</sup> Continental Lagonda Rally 24<sup>th</sup>–27<sup>th</sup> August 2017

### *David Hine took part, with Alan Brown*

THIS YEAR WE sallied forth to the province of Friesland in the northern part of the Netherlands. The partnership of Herman Arentsen and Macko Laqueur had located a fine hotel in the pleasant town of Beetsterzwaag, for our base.

We arrived midday from the port of Ijmuiden (near Amsterdam) to be greeted by a fine line up of Lagonda cars of all types. A cane had been put into the hotel lawn for each car to touch so that the array was perfect! The sun shone for the whole weekend, which was wonderful and makes such a difference to the enjoyment of these gatherings. Friesland is a lightly populated, mainly agricultural, region and very few of our members had ever been there so it was a real treat to get to know it.

Following a superb evening eight course barbeque we had to get up the next day to leave at half past eight, which was almost too much for the UK contingent. The amazing route through lakes and polders was fascinating, finishing with a visit to a museum of local art. However your writer was so taken with all the classic boats gently “racing” on the inland sea that he missed the culture bit. Lunch was a luxury picnic where each of us had a hamper and a rug to sit on, inscribed “Lagonda”. Then there was a visit to a steam pumping station, which controlled the water levels in the area. Mid afternoon stop was in a lay-by where there was a Lagonda ice cream van dispensing a huge variety of flavours. See picture of Alan Brown tucking into one!

The meal that night was at a horse breeding centre and we were treated to

a display of high speed carriage riding, which was then sampled by the Kudela youngsters and Warren King alike.

The last day was less demanding, with a Lagonda themed coffee stop at a stately home and more excellent countryside to view. However the Mallett M45 saloon had to be hauled out of the front lawn by a vintage tractor as it had sunk in up to the rear axle. All the Lagondas then surged into the centre of a huge Old Timer Festival at a place which rejoiced under the name Twijzelerheide. We were treated as honoured guests and wandered amongst the array of old tractors and a vast number of classic American cars. Soon it was time to move on back to our hotel for a bit of pampering. At the splendid gala dinner we were assured that the next three years of Continental Rallies were already scheduled with many volunteers lined up to organise the events around Europe including Italy in 2020! Wow. ■

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*Delicious Lagonda ice-cream. How did you get those extra scoops Alan?*



*Colin Mallett's M45 is dragged out of the mud*

# Fathoming out the “unfathomable” Part 1

## (The continuing story of the experimental I.O.E. Ricardo Engine) *By Brian Stevens*

AT THE TIME of writing his comprehensive Lagonda history (the ‘blue book’) Arnold could only find enough information on this mystifying engine to provide one sentence on page 241:~

***“There was also an experimental ioe 3Litre engine, the purpose of which it is not possible to fathom”.***

As the current custodian of this curious engine, the history of which remained, until quite recently, shrouded in mystery, I now find myself in the exciting position to be able to expand somewhat upon Arnold’s original brief reference to the 1930 Ricardo project.

Using paragraph headings for this article in order to help make it flow, I’ll attempt to set out the findings of my most recent research undertaken down at Ricardo’s headquarters in Shoreham; combined with some already established relevant background history. I will include key technical observations and any speculative suppositions that we now might draw from these revelations.

### **The background:~**

#### ***Harry Ricardo***

Born in 1885 in London, Harry and his company (Ricardo Eng.1927 Ltd.) had become firmly established down in Shoreham by the 1930’s, where it still exists today on its original site adjacent to the Aerodrome. As a ground breaking ‘Artist/Engineer’ Ricardo is now seen

as a truly innovative pioneer; already famous in fact by the beginning of the 1930’s as the advocate of efficiency in combustion engine technology. He enjoyed international acclaim within this field; a design objective that naturally overlapped into the pursuit of optimum performance from the internal combustion engine.

#### ***Brigadier General Metcalfe’s initiative***

During March 1930, ~ (following Bentley’s decision that January to commission Ricardo to develop their I. O. E. 4 litre engine) ~ HRR ~as Harry Ricardo was known~ rather naturally becomes General Metcalfe’s favoured consultant to breathe new life into the Davidson Lagonda 3 litre motor. Although Davidson had left Lagonda by then the General probably had a vested interest in the continued development of this engine, having originally commissioned its ancestor as the 16/65 in 1927. Evidently, the intention was to adapt the latest Ricardo turbulent ‘power head’ combustion chamber design, (itself a development of the ‘squish head’) to fit a modified Lagonda block. I.O.E. valve gear replaced the original O.H.V. configuration providing just one large inlet valve directly over the top of the pistons. The aim was to increase both the power output (to around 100+ BHP.) and improve the torque at higher revs.

Harry received the Davidson 3 Litre engine drawings from Staines at

the end of March and was then busy at the drawing board for four months before meeting up with Alf Cranmer and Masters at the Lagonda works, to discuss production details.

***The specifications are:~***

Six cylinders. Bore 72mm. Stroke 120mm.

Designed C.R. 6:1. Ricardo 'High Power' type head with O.H.I.V over the piston & S.E.V. in the block. I.V. Throat diameter 1.5 inches. Mean inlet gas velocity 130 ft./sec. at 2780 r.p.m.

**My ownership**

I first saw this experimental engine (well the cylinder head anyway) at the first Lagonda AGM that I ever attended, in 1970, at the Ship Hotel (I think it was) in Staines. The late Geoff Seaton and I were called over to the boot of a car by a chap, who I now think was the late Tom Pinguey, who theatrically addressed the gathered aficionado's with the words "I bet you chaps haven't seen one like this before!" I learnt that the odd shaped combustion chambers were classic Ricardo. Thirty-eight years later I fell over the self-same cylinder head employed as a doorstop for the motor shed of John Franklow in St. Mary Bourne Hampshire - he confirmed my suspicions straight away. I notice that John is no longer in the club register ~ I only wish now that I had asked him more questions about what he knew of the engine's history before his ownership but, at the time (having turned up to buy a Lagonda windscreen), I was too excited at the prospect of acquiring this unique engine to pay due attention to his side of its story. Imagine my surprise,

therefore, to learn of our editor's involvement in the whole tale whilst reading last month's editorial! By the time I had bought the motor, in February 1997, it was completely dismantled, in poor condition and missing all of its ancillaries (however, all the 'special' bits seemed to be there).

Tom Pinguey died in October 1997, having been a lapsed member for some years; however he was actively dismantling Lagonda's in the 1960's, becoming something of a parts supplier within the Club.

At this point in time I had been working closely with fellow Lagonda 3 Litre enthusiast Don Hoggard, collecting parts together for our 1930 3litre projects (Don has long finished his!) and it so happened that he was employed on a job a few miles away from where I worked in Basingstoke. Over a pint he volunteered to help me shovel all the parts into the back of my Cavalier estate the following evening. Despite being well down on the rear suspension, come the weekend it was safely transported back onto the Isle of Wight where I began to assess and research the parts.

**Scant Historical Knowledge**

Although Arnold had known about the existence of this experimental engine for some time, a good deal of mystery continued to surrounded its history even at this point.

The Ricardo Company have always maintained extensive archives, documenting their activities down the years, but these had proved pretty fruitless during the period that Arnold was researching this particular project, for inclusion in the 'blue' book



published in the late 1970's.

However, within the scope of his later publication, the 'In Detail' book, he was able to include several new significant facts that had been learned about the project. Chief among them was that the projected power output was to be 100 BHP. In the light of this, Arnold was able to speculate upon the engine's considerable promise in addressing the 3 Litre's performance crisis at this point in Lagonda's history (1930/31).

### **The 'History/Research' Breakthrough**

Stimulated by Arnold's revelations, I resolved to try and dig deeper into the Ricardo works archives. Luckily I established contact with Ricardo's archivist/information manager Roland Christopher, via their website, to whom I expectantly summarised my interest in the Lagonda I.O.E. project. My initial enquiry met with the familiar brick-wall "*no record of it at all*" reflecting Arnold's previous experience years before. However, a month after this first e-mail, I had rather better luck when a second and very exciting e-mail arrived -it read: ~

*"I have found we have some original material relating to this engine, although unfortunately no correspondence as such. The 4-5 files I have found contain test sheets, curves and other testing notes. They have been in a store in the loft of one of the older buildings here, so are not in the best of condition.*

*There is rather too much for me to copy, but if you are able, I would recommend a visit to Shoreham to examine the material for yourself, and see if any of it is of interest, and*

*the relevant documents can then be copied. If this is of interest, perhaps we can arrange a convenient date?"*

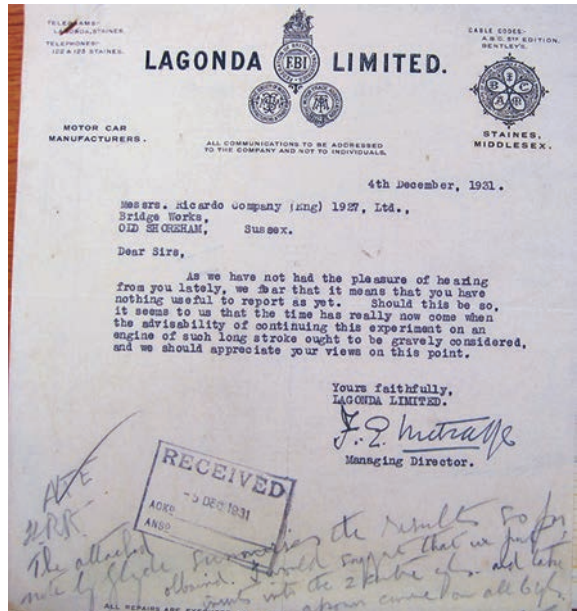
I couldn't believe my luck! And hastily arranged for my pal Maurice Dennis to meet me off the Hovercraft and drive straight down to Shoreham two days later. Upon arrival we were warmly welcomed, given special passes and led into a board room where all of the five folders had been laid out on the table in the company of Rowland Christopher and David Morrison. But then it got even better; evidently, Roland had subsequently discovered the existence of the engine test log book and a draft report that HRR had prepared for General Metcalfe in August 1932. Additionally, one of the five folders contained an illuminating letter from General Metcalfe to Ricardo tentatively trying to cancel the whole project in December 1931! Unfortunately, however, no other correspondence between them or any contract details from Lagonda seemed to have surfaced.

Before my enquiry Roland Christopher had no idea that Harry Ricardo had undertaken this work, and only a few of the full-size prototype drawings had come to light in his search. Unfortunately, details of the head itself were thin on the ground and fragmentary, but the camshaft and piston details surfaced in due course. I guess that all the drawings and these rough notes would have been lost long ago has Ricardo's not survived as an old family firm.

It was all very exciting as I set to with my camera, attempting to record all of the relevant information. After all I was only the second person to



Harry Ricardo



The Metcalfe letter questioning the worth of continuing the project



The Ricardo 3 Litre cylinder head as it is today. The underside will be shown in the next chapter of this story.

set eyes on these folders since 1932! Apparently Harry would have been in his forties when he developed this engine - pretty much at his innovative peak - and in the light of Arnold's much broader research it seems likely that Alf Cranmer's quest for more power from Harry's drawing board might have been to propel the new 3litre 'Selecta Special' along with its heavy Maybach gearbox at least as well as its predecessor.

Unfortunately, as there seems to be no trace of Ricardo's original brief or contract for this commission surviving in Shoreham's archives, the exact details remain obscure. Subsequent study of its development history, however, indicates that Harry's target was to achieve close to 115 b.h.p. out of the Davidson engine. We know that rather less than this, (but sufficient power at 79 b.h.p.) was

achieved in 1932 by Alf Cranmer, up at Staines, by simply boring out the standard engine from 72mm to 75mm, increasing the capacity of Davidson's original design to 3181cc's.

This slight boost was an effective stop-gap for the heavier ZM chassis whilst they waited (and waited) for Harry to resolve the I.O.E. prototype's problems, which took him well into 1932, by which time events at Invicta's had solved Lagonda's power problems overnight.

Before we departed that afternoon, we were shown around both the museum and the factory, where white-coated technicians were engrossed in F1 work in what seemed to be almost a hospital environment! To this day Ricardo Consulting Engineers Ltd. are still at the forefront of engine technology. ■





# Montacute House Visit

## *Nigel Paterson was there*

LAGONDA CLUB MEMBERS from the South West of England met at Montacute House, near Yeovil, on the 10th September. The aim was to have an informal get-together and the opportunity to see a fine Elizabethan manor house and formal gardens. Eight cars came along and parked in the courtyard of the stables. Members with cars were Alan and Pat Elliott, Martin Holloway and Jane Donaldson, Antony Bowie, George Wander, Hughie and Pam Hill, Bob and Amanda Gilbey, William Harkness, Nigel and Kathy Paterson. It was also good to meet Nick and Karen Bacon who

have recently bought a restored 2 litre supercharged car. The weather forecast was not good, but Sunday morning was better than expected, however it turned wet and windy in the afternoon. It felt as if my hood was going to blow off on the way home along the A303! Visitors to the house commented how nice it was to see such fine cars lined up in the courtyard. Several asked whether they were made in France or Italy, despite it saying Staines on the radiators! Montacute was a good venue for a small meeting and it was generous of the National Trust to provide a dedicated parking area. ■



*Left to Right: Pat & Alan Elliott, Kathy & Nigel Paterson (& Cass the dog), Martin Holloway & Jane Donaldson*



*Left to Right: George Wander, William Harkness, Bob & Amanda Gilbey & Antony Bowie*

# Letters & emails ... Letters & emails

Your Editor received this interesting letter early in the year. It refers to Laurence Drake's article in Issue 250 Autumn 2016. Still topical in view of the Annual Gathering where the post-war DB cars were the featured models:

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RG27 8RN, United Kingdom

*Laurence Drake*

10<sup>th</sup> January 2017

I have read with interest your article on Peter J. Biggs "Life of high achievement" and took particular note of your comments on HRH The Duke of Edinburgh's 1954 Lagonda 3-litre convertible which I read was recently auctioned. Should you know who the new owner is, I would be grateful if you would pass on the following information which he may find of interest.

After WWII, my father, the late Lord Kadoorie, a resident of Hong Kong, was keen on purchasing a top British sports car. At the 1953 motor show at Earls Court he placed an order for an Aston Martin DB2/4 with Mr. James Stirling, the General Manager, as well as taking the distributorship for Aston Martin Lagonda Ltd for the colony. I had just been placed in a boarding school in Switzerland at age twelve and as the Easter holidays in 1954 were short, I was sent to friends in England. During the course of the holiday, my father arranged for me to visit Hanworth Park in Feltham where his DB2/4 was still in the build. Nearby was HRH The Duke of Edinburgh's Lagonda. Mr. Stirling pointed out to me that this car had a number of unique features amongst which was the convertible top which had three inches more head room to enable The Duke to wear his top hat whilst driving with the hood up. I believe the windscreen had been heightened by this amount to provide the additional head room. It would be easy enough today to check these dimensions against the standard car. The Lagonda was beautiful but needless to say my vivid memories was on a test drive sitting in the back of another DB2/4 being driven between roundabouts on the A40 reaching 90 m.p.h. in the hands of a works test driver.

*With kind regards,*  
*Michael D. Kadoorie*

Michael D. Kadoorie

MDK:AL-jc:L100117-1604

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# Letters & emails ... Letters & emails

Hi Roger

You have probably heard that I drove my 1923 11.9 model KK coupe to the Annual Gathering. I guess it is quite a few years since anyone actually drove to the event in a light car.

However, we had a really good drive down from Pershore in Worcestershire to Wokefield Park, covering some 105 miles at an average of 29mph! The car, TA6980, climbed all the hills across The Cotswolds with some ease and even the challenging Chain Hill out of Wantage was conquered.

Unfortunately we had to return on the back of a recovery truck due to a

gearbox bearing having given up the ghost. Not sure what has caused the problem as yet to strip it.

There may also be some damage to the big ends due to oil starvation..... found lots of metallic particles when I cleaned the sump! The general advice, talking to Ken Painter and others, is to invest in a conversion to a pressure fed crankshaft.

The upside was that we picked up the Light Car award and the Ladies Choice.

I attach a photo of the car and its silverware (see cover picture).

Best Regards

*Mark Yeomans*

Dear Roger

I have had the front springs set up on my M45 Saloon. I had the rear ones done exactly 50 years ago.

They were seemingly impossible to get into place until Alan Brown reminded me how we did it last time.

I attach a photo of the simple extending mechanism I used to get the shackle bolts in place.

The only advantage of my advancing years is that I am excused from doing it again!

Kind regards

*David Hine*





## *Letters & emails ... Letters & emails*

Dear Roger,

This photograph was taken at the Brooklands Reunion in August when Allan Winn presented the Robby Hewitt Trophy to Christopher Hobbs, with Nick Duckworth of Aston Martin Lagonda Ltd in attendance. Both Allan and Nick had just spoken at the opening of the new scoreboard. Allan did so as Museum Director and CEO, and Nick because of the support his company had given towards the creation of the scoreboard in tribute to the many occasions Lagonda and Aston Martin cars had competed on the circuit when the original scoreboard was in use.

With best wishes,  
*Michael Drakeford*



*The following email came via Martin Mountford:*

Dear Martin

In 2018 we will drive the Lagonda (2.4 litre with preselector gearbox) from Amsterdam to Beijing passing roughly through Turkey, Iran, Turmenistan, Kazakhstan etc. (the southern route).

And then we will drive back again from Beijing through Mongolia, Russia etc. to Amsterdam again (the northern route).

If there are members who have tips or advice, I would highly appreciate

that. Support by the club would also be welcome.

As matters stand now, in fact two Lagondas will do this event, as another Dutch Lagonda owner joins us on this journey. The whole trip will take about three months and covers 25,000 kilometres (16000miles), and will take place during the summer months.

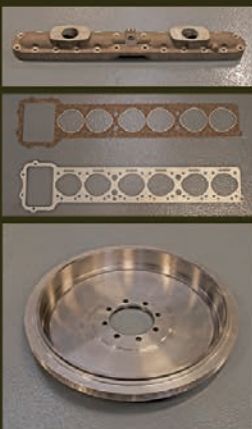
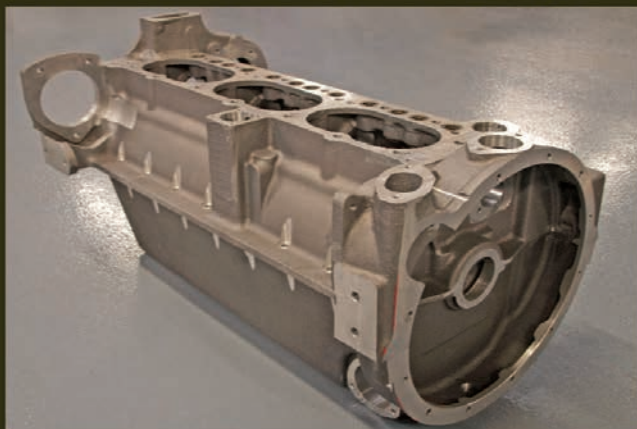
With kind regards,  
*Otto van Blaricum*



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| - Sump 4.5 Ltr.                               | - Halfshaft 4.5 Ltr.                              | - Clutch conversion 4.5 Ltr, 2 Ltr.<br>and 3.5 Ltr. |
| - Oil pump 4.5 Ltr.                           | - Inlet and exhaust manifolds<br>4.5 Ltr. and V12 | - Steering conversion V12                           |
| - Water pump/pump housing<br>4.5 Ltr. and V12 | - Timing cover 4.5 Ltr.                           | - AND MANY OTHERS                                   |
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