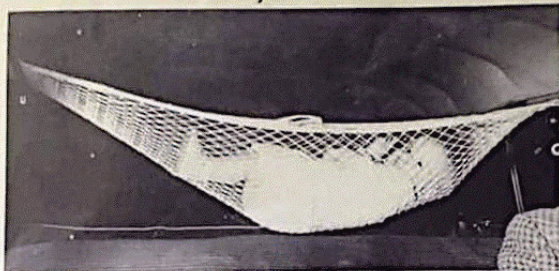




**THE MAGAZINE OF THE
LAGONDA CLUB**

Number 264 Spring 2020

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LAGONDA CLUB LIST OF OFFICERS 2019/2020

President: D. R. Hine

Vice Presidents:

A. Davey, A. W. May, K. P. Painter

Chairman:

John Sword,
Chivel, Chipping Norton,
Oxfordshire, OX7 5TR
Tel: 01608 683227 • Mob: 07795 480031
e-mail: j.sword@hotmail.com

Membership Secretary:

Colin Bugler,
Wintney House, London Road,
Hartley Wintney, Hants, RG27 8RN
Tel: 01252 845451
e-mail: admin@lagondaclub.com

Vice-President & Registrar:

Arnold Davey,
86 The Walk, Potters Bar,
Herts, EN6 1QF
Tel/Fax: 01707 651302 • Mob: 07773 681556

Deputy Registrar:

Len Cozzolino
Wytmead, Essendon Hill,
Essendon, Hatfield,
Hertfordshire, AL9 6AW
Tel: 01707 275133 • Mob: 07789 001716
e-mail: len@cozzolino.co.uk

Editor:

Roger Seabrook,
Haslemore, Old Dashwood Hill,
Studley Green, High Wycombe,
Buckinghamshire, HP14 3XD
Tel: 01494 482379 • Mob: 07887 635290
e-mail: warrington74@live.co.uk

Treasurer:

Brian Green,
The Coach House, Long Lane,
Haughton, Tarporley,
Cheshire, CW6 9RN
Tel: 01829 261522 • Mob: 07969 450078
e-mail: brianjohnngreen@btinternet.com

E-Communications:

Len Cozzolino
Wytmead, Essendon Hill,
Essendon, Hatfield,
Hertfordshire, AL9 6AW
Tel: 01707 275133 • Mob: 07789 001716
e-mail: len@cozzolino.co.uk

Competition Secretary:

Tim Parker
25, Chilworth Mews,
London W2 3RG
Mob: 07966 466605
e-mail: timothyparker@hotmail.co.uk

Other Board Members:

Christopher Hobbs,
Church Cottage, Church Hill,
White Waltham, Berks SL6 3JH
Tel/Fax: 01628 825246 • Mob: 07775 847811
e-mail: christopher.hobbs@chco.co.uk

Nigel Smeal,
4, Nelson Terrace,
Islington, London, N1 8DG.
Tel: 020 7251 8972 • Mob: 07711 666504
e-mail: cowcomm98@aol.com

Post-War Cars Secretary:

Peter Gilkes,
61 Horton View, Banbury,
Oxon OX16 9HW
Tel: 01295 269897
e-mail: pgilkes2@gmail.com

Trophies Officer:

Martin Sumner,
Silver Birches, Stoke by Clare, Sudbury,
Suffolk CO10 8HP
Tel: 01787 277729 • Mob: 07748 988338
e-mail: mjsumner@silverbirches.co

The Spares Service:

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

The Lagonda Shop:

Denise and Martin Bugler
Garden Cottage, Walhurst Manor, Picts Lane,
Cowfold, West Sussex, RH13 8AW
Tel: 01403 865442 • Mob: 07770 270601
e-mail: shop@lagonda-club.com

Newsletter Editor:

Tim Wadsworth
The Thatched Cottage,
Emmett Hill Lane,
Upper Minety, Malmesbury,
Wiltshire, SN16 9PP.
Tel: 01666 860368 • Mob: 07989 911642
e-mail: tim@lagondahire.co.uk

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Overseas Representatives:

USA and Canada

Colin Gurnsey
658 East 5th Street,
North Vancouver V7L 1M7,
British Columbia, Canada
Tel: [+1] 604 980 7429
Mob: [+1] 604 788 7429
e-mail: gurnsey@telus.net

Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg:

Herman Arentsen,
Logtsestraat 3, 6675 NB Valburg,
The Netherlands
Tel: (+31) 488 431291
Mob: (+31) (0) 651 427163
e-mail: eh-arentsen@hetnet.nl

Switzerland:

Franz Hatebur-Mani,
Villa Montana, Höhweg 1h, CH 3700 Spiez
Switzerland
Tel: 0041 33 243 3879
Mob: +41 (0)79 816 3786
Fax: 0041 33 243 0607
e-mail: fhatebur@bluewin.ch

Australia:

Nick Proferes
Tel: +61 8 8278 9242
e-mail: nproferes@internode.on.net

Germany:

Eckhard Fabricius,
Franklinstr. 53, D-40479, Düsseldorf, Germany
Tel: +49 211 626767
e-mail: fabricius@fabricius.de

UK Area Representatives:

South:

Michael Drakeford,
Tel: 01903 872197 · Mob: 07932 565830
e-mail: michaelwdrakeford@hotmail.com

South East:

David Bracey
Tel: 01622 751493 · Mob: 07710 423667
e-mail: dcbracey@gmail.com

South West:

Nigel Paterson,
Tel: 01460 258844
e-mail: nigelandkathypaterson@btinternet.com

Anglia:

John Stoneman,
Tel: 01353 649494 · Mob: 07850 218518
e-mail: john.stoneman@btinternet.com

East Midlands:

Harry Taylor,
Tel: 01559 830363 · Mob: 07901 846672
e-mail: hta108@aol.com

West Midlands:

Robin Balmain,
Tel: 01531 640166 · Mob: 07816 668065
Fax 01531 640167
e-mail: jenniferbalmain@btinternet.com

North West:

Nigel Hall
Tel: 01457 762766 · Mob: 07831 638383
e-mail: nigelhallgb@gmail.com

Yorkshire:

Ian North,
Tel: 01482 897105
e-mail: iannorth44@gmail.com

Northern Ireland:

Peter Walby,
Tel: 028 9066 5610 · Mob: 07767 271851
e-mail: pursang@doctors.org.uk

Scotland:

Alastair Gunn,
Tel: 01506 324138 · Mob: 07913 677339
e-mail: alastair.gunn@hotmail.co.uk

COVER: Mark Yeomans gives the background to this picture on Page 35

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From the Workbench

Roger Seabrook

WELL, WITH THE current lockdown it wouldn't be *'From the Driving Seat'*, would it?! Or could it be? Travel to the shops for essential supplies is permitted in the UK, so why not use the Lagonda for this instead of the boring old 'modern'. Indeed, many of us used our vintage cars as everyday transport at one time, so why not now? The lack of heavy traffic makes for an enjoyable drive, to brighten up your day!

I do hope you are all keeping well and remaining positive in these challenging times. There are gems of human spirit to see, such as the 99-year-old gentleman who has raised nearly £28 million for the UK National Health Service, by walking many circuits of his garden. He was hoping to raise just £1000.

Laurence Hannam corrected me by explaining that the LG6 and V12 Lagondas were all fitted with Lucas ST330 'on/off' switches from new. I have one of these on the 2 litre tourer but it is next to the battery under the back seat. Not much good if the cut-out sticks in as it has done on many occasions. This requires frantic scrambling to get the seat up and switch to 'off' before the wiring melts.

I have got used to watching the ammeter to see if it goes into a

massive discharge on tick-over, then to rev the engine up and not turn it off until the switch is off. Tim Wadworth's article on page 24 is tempting me to go down the same route, and in particular on the saloon, which doesn't have a 'half charge' resistor fitted.

Alec Downie, who sadly died recently, was a prominent member of the Club for many years. He was a real character, and very likeable – an appreciation will appear in the Summer Magazine.

I have driven the saloon out into the road at last, but sadly the oil leak from around the timing case persists. Not a good design on the 2 litre, and this one has been damaged by a larger than standard stud which has opened a fissure into the oilway. All attempts to cure it in situ have failed, and the only solution is to remove the whole timing case, make up an insert to the oilway, and repair the thread. This cannot be done accurately without setting the case up on a flat surface, and reaming the oil hole to get a good fit for a ferrule to be pressed in.

So, to get the car under way, I have decided to install the original engine from the tourer. I rebuilt this some years ago, and it has sat under the bench ever since. ■

Last date for copy for the SUMMER Magazine is FRIDAY 26th June 2020.
URGENT - new articles are needed please and interesting photographs,
especially as there will be no events to report on for the foreseeable future

A Day at the Races and where that led

By Arnold Davey

Part One

IN THE EARLY 1950s I was working for the Borough Engineer at Harrow as a one-man Structures section. Half the work was checking the calculations submitted by developers (tower blocks were very popular then). The other half consisted of attempting to convert into concrete or steel the sometimes-wild ideas of our own architects. In the course of this I became a close friend of a talented young architect John S, who was later to give up that profession and become a respected art director in the film industry. John was a few years older than me, with a wife and small son. He was also a member of the 750 Motor Club and together we used to go to the monthly meetings at the Abbey Hotel on the North Circular Road and listen to the heated debates between Colin Chapman and Leslie Ballamy on suspension design.

Then John had a windfall when his grandfather left him a small legacy. So, he did what any red-blooded young man would do; he bought a Lagonda. It was a very nice one and I now know it was a 1933 16/80 with one of the first Silent Travel saloon bodies. Originally black with burgundy trim it had been rather spoiled by the vendor who had, in a vain attempt at sportiness, painted the body up to the waistline with metallic gold household paint. This had weathered rapidly to bronzy-

brown. The only fault which showed up was a tendency to overheat. This had clearly been a long-term problem, for an earlier owner had somehow contrived to fit a second water pump, which far from helping, actually made the problem (choked radiator) worse, by increasing the water throughput. We became used to a fine spray of brown water hitting the windscreen if high revs got used.

A feature of motor racing at the period was the Daily Express International Meeting at Silverstone. It was a full-blown Grand Prix event that didn't count towards the World Championship, so all the teams joined in as a kind of extended test session because they could try out experiments without it being a disaster if it failed. John proposed we should go and when I quibbled about admission prices, quite steep for the period, revealed that his father was the advertising manager for the Daily Express and would provide free tickets, which changed everything. He also invited another friend of his, Brian P, whom I had met once before. I arrived at John's house on the morning of the meeting to find him wearing a business suit and a long face. Some crisis had arisen in the family and he was about to leave for Bristol in the Lagonda, so our luxurious ride to Silverstone was off, but the free tickets were

still available. John was going to miss the races but there was no reason Brian and I shouldn't go. But in which car? I was running a very pretty Singer 9 Le Mans coupé which had very odd handling as a result of some previous owner's massive prang and no rear brakes after repeated failure of the axle oil seals; Brian had an extremely scruffy Riley tourer, possibly an early Nine, although it looked bigger, with no hood and only front seats. Brian



The 16/80 we didn't go to Silverstone in

then revealed that he had only the previous evening put the engine back into the Riley after a re-bore and therefore would welcome a longish run to Silverstone as part of the running-in process. So the Riley it was. Just as we were leaving, John handed over a massive manila envelope with all the papers we would need and added "Pa says to

use the Brown route".

I don't know if it still applies but in the 1950s, when Silverstone had lots of entrances, even one across the fields from Whittlebury, your booked tickets came with a colour-coded route to follow. Provided you did, the number of snarl-ups due to conflicting traffic streams would be minimised and you would finish up in the most convenient car park to your seat. So with Brian driving, I set about examining the paperwork

we had been given. It soon transpired what John's dad had done. He had secured a set of the documents issued to gate marshals so that they can check whether proffered tickets, badges, armbands, etc. are genuine. We had badges which said 'Clerk of the Course', 'RAC Steward', 'Judge', 'Competitor' and so on, down to the dog-catcher, as they say. What weren't there were any tickets for seats. Therefore, we had to decide who we were supposed to be. We ruled out any of the top brass, who would be well known and probably there already. We ruled out

'Competitor', 'Commentator' and 'Marshal' (in case we were given a job). Finally we decided to be 'Contractor' as that was nicely vague and suited our none-too-smart dress. So with windscreen sticker applied and shiny yellow armbands each, we arrived at the gate. The gate marshal couldn't have been more helpful. The Riley,

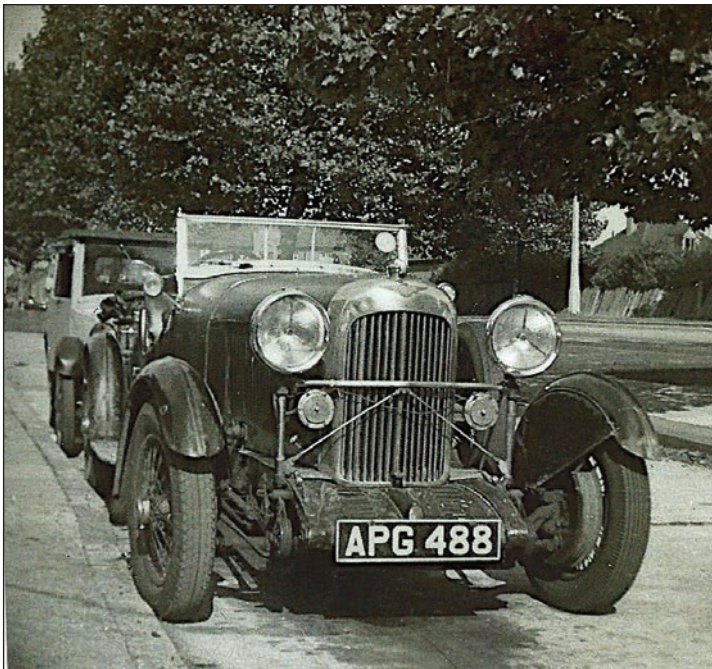
it turned out, had no battery. In the rush to get it done last night Brian had not bothered, thinking that he was only going to John's place, a mile or two. Fitted with an Autovac and a magneto, the only need for electricity was at night, provided pushers were available for starting, since the handle was liable to slip and cause injuries. We explained our need for pushing space to the gate marshal and he obliged by directing us to a plot next to the lane kept clear for the ambulance, where we would have a clear run. It was even slightly downhill.

The "Contractor" passes worked like a charm. We could go anywhere we liked and no peaked caps questioned us. I had my food in an ex-army haversack which could

have been a toolbag and Brian had something similar.

We had agreed that if questioned, we were investigating the public address system faults, notoriously common then. But we never got to sit down.

Conscious of the need to be back in London before dark, we calculated we could just about see the last race but what we didn't allow for was that everybody, no matter which colour route they had used to get there, chose the shortest route, through Buckingham, to return to London. As a result, we joined a near-stationary queue before Dadford and it took best part of an hour to get through Buckingham. Our schedule was now seriously in danger and Brian revealed his demon driver



John S's other 16/80. It is still in existence.

persona. Tall and lanky, with a shock of wild hair and thick-lensed glasses, he was Central Casting's idea of a boffin. I began to wonder if he could see much beyond the radiator cap when we came up behind a mimser in a new Standard Vanguard on that long straight road (A41) between Bicester and Aylesbury. Brian pulled out to overtake only for the mimser to increase speed to prevent us. So, Brian speeded up too and we travelled for what seemed a lifetime side by side before the mimser got terrified enough to let us by. I queried the running-in procedure for the Riley and whether it included 5000 rpm but Brian maintained that high speed was OK, it was labouring in a high gear you must avoid. By the time we got back to Harrow it was definitely getting dark, but we made it, just.

Brian not only looked like a boffin; he was one. He worked for Napier at Acton in some experimental job to do with aerospace which he could not talk about. He was living with his parents in a house which had only just been finished in September 1939, when the developer had had to stop building houses, leaving a vacant plot of land next door. During the war Brian's father had been able to acquire this plot for an allotment and afterwards Brian had roofed part of it over and used it to house his collection of interesting cars, all in need of care and attention. One day, not long after our day at the races, John came to see me. He said we must all help Brian out. Apparently, Brian's father, assumed to be settled in his job, had suddenly been offered

a much better one in the Midlands, had accepted and was going to move there. He was in the process of putting the house on the market and had assumed that Brian would go into digs. Digs were unwelcome, Brian had no wish to leave Napier and what was he to do with all these cars? John's solution was to round up all the enthusiasts he knew and try to persuade each to buy a car to solve Brian's crisis. If eventually space became available, at least he would know where they were.

So shortly after, a party assembled at the carport. On offer were:

- A Bugatti Type 35 fitted with a Ford V8 engine after The Hon. Ted Greenall had blown up the original at Prescott.
- A dark green 3 Litre Sunbeam tourer, the pushrod one, not the twin-cam, in staggeringly original condition, down to the original invoice and instruction manual in the door pocket.
- A black Brooklands Riley 9, so low that you could sit in the driver's seat and place your hand on the road.
- A green Lagonda Rapier drophead coupé by Maltby which had spent the war in a field.

Brian was going to keep the Riley we had been to Silverstone in, as the most practical of his fleet. All the others had to go and quickly. The Bugatti was going to be relatively expensive, but it was not road registered and was going to need another engine. Having been a cossetted racer it was in remarkably good condition, but quite out of the question. The Brooklands Riley had no hood, nor any way of providing

one, so that was out too. Anyway, someone else was bidding for it. The Sunbeam was gorgeous, but under pressure Brian admitted it only did about 12 miles to the gallon. He started it up and even at tickover you could hear a low whistle from the air vent in the petrol filler cap as air was sucked in to replace petrol in the tank. And it was too big for my garage. So, it came down to should I buy the Rapier, on offer at £50? Sympathy for a pal won and after a slight haggle I got it for £40, to be collected that week. Brian had some complicated insurance arrangements that covered all his cars, provided only one was in use at a time and it was arranged that he would keep the Lagonda on cover until I got it home and I would sort myself out as and when the Lagonda went back on the road.

So, the following Saturday I cycled over to Harrow to become a Lagonda owner. A 1934 Rapier, BLC 599 (D11067). My soft spot for Lagondas had started before the war, at around the age of six, after my parents bought a house on a new estate at Southgate, north London. As was the habit then, the estate developers built a bungalow to use as an estate office and when the last property had gone, did it up to sell as a residence. The man who bought it owned the most beautiful car a small boy had ever seen, a BRG T7 tourer Lagonda M45. I used to try to be there when he took it out and absorbed the rumble of the exhaust note. It was only in 2015 that I discovered which car this was:- ALU 796, chassis Z10509. Also, in 2015 I

was able to drive ALU when it was for sale at Coy's. Later in my boyhood, in a boys' adventure story book, a set of illustrations of low chassis 3 Litres confirmed the marque loyalty. And now I had one, twin overhead camshafts and all.

There followed an indoctrination exercise from Brian as he explained various eccentricities. I had never used magneto ignition before, so he showed me the earthing cable, not attached to any switch but just hanging loose under the dash. To stop the engine, he said, just find that cable and rub its end against something metal that is earthed. He also explained that the handbrake ratchet was extremely worn and unreliable; best leave it in gear. Then there was the driver's seat problem. The car had stood for at least five years in a field with the hood up (until it rotted away, that is). As a result, the leather of the front seats had gone, exposing the steel shell, which had rusted to paper thin. Demonstrating the car to a possible buyer in the week since I had seen it, Brian had over-cooked a corner, panic-braked and split the seat back in half, so that the driver's seat was now more like a bar stool. After the cockpit drill explanation, I stowed my bike on the back seat and set off home.

The handling was delightful, the brakes reassuring after the brakeless Singer, but there didn't seem to be much power. Further pressure on the middle pedal produced more noise but no more revs, which was surprising since I had been looking the model up and learned that it was good for many thousands of them.

But the 12 miles or so home didn't allow for much experimentation and there would be time for that later. I got home to find the drive gates shut. We shared a drive and our neighbour, who had no car, liked to keep the drive gates shut. I preferred them open and a low-voltage war was permanently engaged between us. We had had to push the Lagonda to start it and I was not sure half an hour's running would have put enough into the battery for a restart. At this point the malfunctioning handbrake became important. We lived on a steep hill (it wasn't called Summit Way for nothing) and, unwilling to stop the engine and unable to set the handbrake I had a problem getting into the drive,

eventually solved by just driving into the gates, causing them to burst open and bounce back, clouting the front wings hard and adding two more gouges to the scruffy paint.

All the way home I had been struggling with the preselector gearbox and its 'fore and aft' change. The indents which located each gear were very worn and several times I got lost in the 'box and had to go to top and count forward to find an intermediate ratio. When finally, in the garage I forgot that selecting a gear didn't engage it, selected neutral and when my foot came off the brake the car shot forward to thump the far wall. ■

To be continued



The day I became a Lagonda owner - 1955

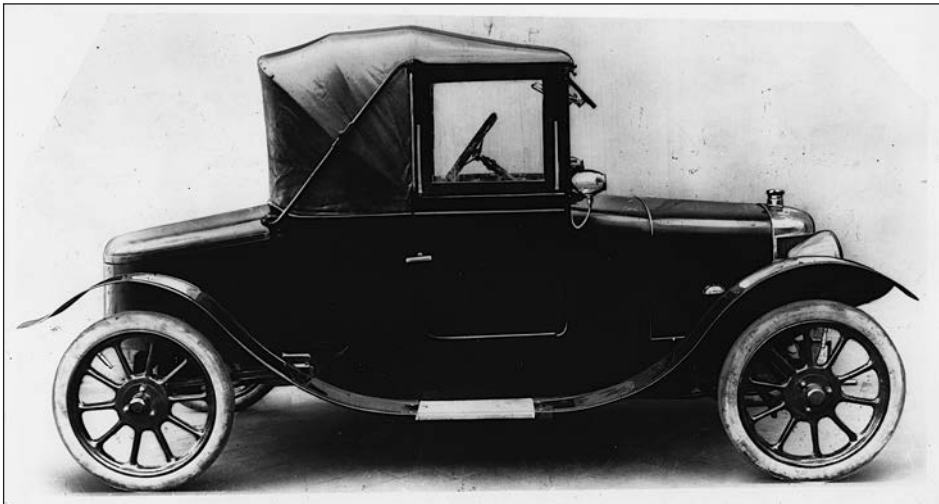
Vintage Variety

Ken Painter finds more pre-war pictures

BEAULIEU AUTOJUMBLES always produce some interesting old photographs and at the 2015 Spring Autojumble I found a selection from 1913 to 1941.

The first shows an 11-1 with the very short running board step, but with electric lights. I had always believed that these were introduced in September 1914, along with the long flat running board, but as this photograph featured on page 249 of "The Autocar", dated 9th August 1913, it suggests that the factory was

at least considering the idea a year earlier. Although road traffic was light in those far-off days, it must have been difficult to check for cross traffic at crossroads when the hood was erected. There were no traffic lights then, but the busier junctions were often manned by a police officer to control traffic flow. The first, manually operated, red-amber-green traffic lights in England appeared in Piccadilly, London in 1926 and the first automatic versions were used in Wolverhampton in 1928.



Racing pictures from private collections are always a welcome find and the second picture, from the 1936 Ards TT, has an intriguing caption on the back: "*Francis, driving Arthur Fox's Lagonda in the*

T.T. They did promise to paint the car Howe blue and silver line, but there wasn't time. Francis didn't seem to mind." Francis was, of course Earl Howe and he finished the race in 5th place. This was to be

the last TT race, as there had been a tragic accident when Chambers' Riley skidded into a lamp post at Newtownards, and knocked it down. Several spectators were killed and others injured. They were standing

in a dangerous position and the authorities simply couldn't control the crowds properly. Earl Howe had taken part in every TT race since 1928. Only Eddie Hall could match this.



The third picture is from another private collection and shows Earl Howe's car being refueled in the pits.


Note the huge funnel being used, allowing very rapid refueling and preventing the fuel from splashing.



Picture number four shows Brian Lewis in the same race, in the two-seater EPE97. Lewis made a good start, but had a problem after about four hours. A stud in the timing case broke away and the timing chain threw all the oil out through the hole, so he was forced to limp around the circuit for the remainder of the race, finishing in 14th place. Even so, the team was one of only two to have all their cars running at the finish. Picture number five is particularly interesting as it was taken by Joseph (Joe) Lowrey and shows one of the V12 Le Mans team cars, probably the Selsden/ Wooleran car, chassis number 14090. The Brackenbury/ Dobson car had the 'bombs' around the horns painted white. The car is in a static display at "The Chessington Rally" on the 13th July 1941, parked next to George Monkhouse's Darraq, although the photograph credits the V12 to Connel (sic). Could Connell

have driven the car to the event? The original number plate is obscured by the trade plate. This could well be one of the last pictures taken of a team car, before they were seriously damaged by a flying bomb later in the war. With virtually no motor sport activity to report, "Motor Sport" had a long article on the event in the August 1941 edition, covering more than two pages, and describing the cars on display in the "Club News" pages. The description of the Lagonda is a little muddled, as it misprints the Le Mans date, quoting the year as 1929 and not 1938. Although it was a wet day, it was reported that over 160 people attended as spectators.

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The last picture was acquired from the late Bill Boddy's collection, and shows a car that has been campaigned over many years since the 1950s. It has a more sporty appearance these

days, with cycle wings replacing the long type fitted in this wartime snap. How many of you can identify the long term owner, who has now passed it on to one of his sons? ■



2019 Season Review

Tim Parker looks back over the year

I HAVE ALWAYS been tempted by the VSCC Measham and have entered the Pomeroy in the past but the 2019 season started for me at the Goodwood Members Meeting on the first weekend of April. The organisers decided to hold a race commemorating the Bentley victory at Le Mans in 1924 naming it after one of the victorious drivers, John Duff. The race was open to pre-1930 road-going sports racers so seemed to suit the 2 litre down to the ground.

Once the memory of the extremely high entry fee was forgotten, I was able to concentrate on enjoying the event. I am not a regular Goodwood attendee, having been only once to the Revival, but it has to be said that they put on a great show. Everything at the meeting was “curated” and done in pretty good taste. It almost sounds nauseating but to give the organisers credit it did work. My children especially enjoyed the free fairground and Wall of Death. And then the grids themselves contained mouth-watering cars from every decade. It really was impressive. The John Duff Trophy was populated by a lot of Bentleys, but fellow club member Trevor Swete was driving his quick Invicta 3/4.5 and stationed next to me in the paddock. Meanwhile member Mark Hayward had entered his exotic supercharged FWD Alvis.

The race itself was a lot of fun; the long straights and fast corners suiting the 2L well. I had an enjoyable dice with a 3 litre Sunbeam and eventually managed to get the better of him, but that was the limit of my achievements!

If the chance comes about again, I recommend members give it a go.

VSCC April Silverstone was as good as ever. In the Fox and Nicholl race Richard Reay-Smith's LG45 was beaten by Trevor Swete's Invicta in 13th and 11th places respectively. In Race 3 Nick Morley was 11th in his LG45 special while Andrew Howe-Davies' 3 litre was 19th in the following handicap. In race 9 Andrew and I went head to head, just beating Andrew as the finish line approached and less than a second in front.

On 18th of May the VSCC were at Oulton Park. Mark Butterworth made a welcome return to the track in the V12 coming 6th in Race 5. Not far behind in 8th place was Richard Reay-Smith, sporting a new, more powerful engine. Nick Morley's LG45 was 14th in his race. Sadly, Tim Wadsworth and Trevor Swete were visited by the mechanical gremlins and failed to complete their races.

Brooklands also hosted the Double Twelve in June. On the Saturday, Andrew Cheyne in his 3/4 ½ special competed in the Brooklands Sprint coming 3rd in his class. In the Sunday Driving Tests there was a 3rd in class prize awarded to Dick Slaughter competing in his Lagonda 2 litre HC, following David Bracey, who was 1st in the same class but in his 1935 Aston Martin MkII. It is worth mentioning that Peter Blenk was the Concours overall winner in his Lagonda LG45. Another Lagonda member, Christopher Hobbs was also present, and in his 1933 MG K1, took part in two events.



A fine shot of Tim Parker's 2 litre ahead of the opposition at Goodwood



Andrew Howe-Davies' 3 litre at Brooklands Sprint



*Richard Reay-Smith's fast LG45 next to
Tim Wadsworth's fast 2 litre at Silverstone*

The supreme winner of the Double Twelve event is chosen from those who enter two of the three disciplines. Of this number, Michael Drakeford was the highest scoring and only Lagonda at 21st for the Double Twelve, with a 3rd position in his Concours class of three with an adjusted score of 89.14.

The last Saturday of June, the hottest of the year so far, was the date for the VSCC Donington Park meeting. It is a long time since we have had three vintage Lagondas in one race, but this time Tim Wadsworth, Andrew Howe-Davies and yours-truly managed to get their cars onto the same grid. Starting on handicap, Tim Wadsworth had to make up five seconds a lap to catch me and Andrew. The result was a win for Andrew by 0.5 seconds from Tim Wadsworth while I managed to trail a few seconds behind. Also racing were Richard Reay-Smith, Trevor Swete and Nick Morley in the ODM series, but I am afraid I do not have a record of their places. What I do recall vividly is the extremely hot drive south at the end of the race. It was almost a chore.....

almost!

At the VSCC Brooklands Sprint Tim Metcalfe fired up the Eccles Rapier to come first in class 13, racing cars up to 1100cc, and Dick Slaughter took a 3rd class award in the Driving Tests.

Meanwhile Nick Bell achieved a first-class award in the VSCC Hertfordshire Eastern Rally.

In July there was only one entry at Shelsley, but Andrew Cheyne (3½/4½) upheld the Lagonda name with a first on handicap.

Later in the month Robert Lewis carried the flag in his V12 in the pre-war race at the Silverstone Classic.

As the season galloped to its close, Nigel Hall in his LG45 represented us at VSCC Loton Park and Keith Dobinson 2L at the VSCC Prescott Long Course.

Writing this now in the Spring of 2020, when we are deprived of all motorsport, I feel that we must not take our vintage motorsport for granted. Let's hope there is a second half of the 2020 season and, if not, an enthusiastic return in 2021. ■



A fine early shot of Nigel Hall's LG45 overhauling a Rapier at Copse Corner - Silverstone

Picture Quiz

THE TOP PICTURE was taken by Guy Griffiths at Prescott on 2nd August 1948. The fine High Chassis 2 litre has some interesting side-lights, with additions to the main CAV torpedo shaped items.

I have seen a picture of, I think,

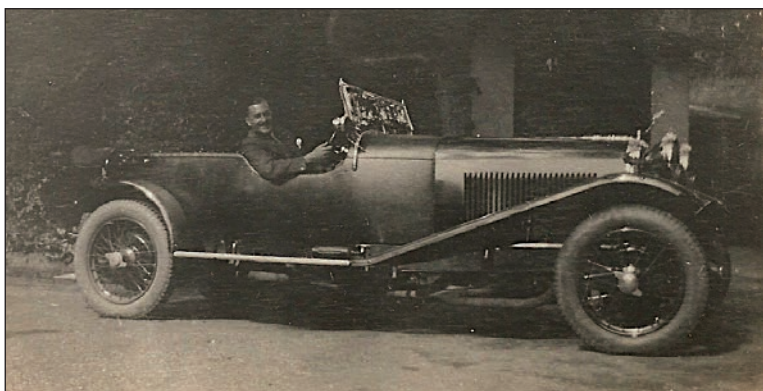
Lord de Clifford with a similar car fitted with those lights, but the number plate is not shown. Can anyone identify the driver, and does the car still exist, I wonder. It is not listed in the 2 litre Register at that time.



The bottom picture shows a person who is clearly delighted with his handsome 3 litre High Chassis tourer. It looks quite new – perhaps he had just collected it from the showroom

(or the factory). What a magnificent car – a similar one appears in Geoff Seaton's Lagonda book.

Does anybody recognise the picture or the person in it? ■



Pitfalls - Part I

By David Hine

I HAVE COMPILED revised handbooks for most models of Lagonda. Some of the written word is all my own work, some is a rewrite of the Company handbooks, some is gleaned from articles and quite a bit is from work by other members that was never published.

The motivation to do this work came from my early inexperience causing descent into mechanical pitfalls only to find many others were in the pit with me. Some of my companions were fellow enthusiasts but others were, so called, specialists making the same mistakes.

I also noted that some in the trade were anxious to keep knowledge to themselves, perhaps not entirely unreasonable.

There are, thankfully, few howlers in these publications but I did write rubbish about two litre camshaft timing in the “Vintage Lagonda Handbook” which I have tried to correct in the 2017 Two Litre engine handbook. We all thought having a bit of valve “overlap” would help and it does with modern camshafts. However, it’s counter-productive with the original profile camshafts.

As I said, my early days with my M45 tourer could be nail biting. On the whole the car was superb and my innocence was bliss. I was a bit stunned, one day, when she failed to proceed on my driveway, and the cause was a pile of headless bolts in the bottom of the rear axle casing.

Another drama which I observed, was a member at Sandtoft. We were

having a beer in the nearby Reindeer pub when he drove into the car park in his LG45R and, as the engine was idling, the crankshaft damper fell off, gently, onto the ground. Another member was about to start a race at Oulton Park. When he was waiting on the grid a marshal handed him the nut off his damper which had just fallen off. I am ashamed to admit to using a bit of Loctite as well as those tab washers to hold things together.

A common fault happens when the dynamo decides to stop charging. There is the temptation to push closed the contact breaker. This inevitably leads to a short circuit, a red-hot cable and sometimes a fire unless you quickly switch off your master battery switch (if you have one). I now always fit an extra 50-amp fuse in the cable between the ammeter and the starter solenoid. For some reason this fuse never featured in original wiring systems and may explain the disastrous fires that have destroyed a few cars over the years. (Vintage Supplies part number 307, single fuse box).

Boiling radiators are a constant cause of grief. Many hot weather trips are ruined as brown fluid is discharged all over your immaculate Lagonda. I was fortunate in not suffering for some early years but when we started racing the overheating problem became acute. The given view is that radiators were just not big enough but this is not the cause. My pal Herb solved the problem in the end. He had a radiator re-cored and then fitted the toe off one

of his ladyfriend's tights as a filter in the top entrance tube. We couldn't believe how much sludge and shale it caught after a couple of laps of Silverstone. I recall, after a spirited drive back from Monk Fryston in my Saloon, I decided to check the gent's sock I had used as a filter in my radiator. There was so much muck in it that I couldn't get it out. It was like the proverbial monkey's paw! I had to dismantle the top casting in the end. If that lot had been dumped into the top of the radiator it would have completely blocked it. The main cause of the problem is the scaling of the water passages when the water is drained out for the winter or simply for maintenance. It is made worse if only plain water is then used to fill up. We solved that problem by always using Bluecol type anti-freeze mixture and never draining unless it was vital. Repeated changes of sock gradually remove all the scale until the system settles down corrosion free.

Blown head gaskets gave us a lot of trouble, again made worse when the stress of racing was added to the story. In our enthusiasm we snapped a few head studs and stripped a few head bolts torqueing up to 70 lb-ft for 7/16th inch studs. Wise counsel advised us to take things slowly. This involved ensuring all threads were free and lubricated. Then proceed by pulling the head down onto a new gasket having applied Wellseal to all surfaces, only torqueing to 55 lb-ft evenly across the head. Run the engine gently until it is nice and hot. Remove the rockers and back off each nut half a turn and torque again to 60lb-ft maximum. Reassemble and go for a long run or two. After a few hundred miles repeat the procedure and note

that you can get another half turn on each nut for the same 60 ft-lb setting. A wise investment is a nice new set of head studs with slightly longer nuts from the Club Spares section. This is much easier procedure on two litre engines with no rockers in the way. With V12 engines only 30 lb-ft should be used for the thinner 5/16th studs. Also, with V12 engines, you have to be sure the blind nuts are not bottoming and giving a false torque reading.

Magneto problems are also a nightmare for most of us. It's never easy to suggest what spares you should carry on a long trip but a spare magneto is really a wise investment. In addition, you really have to practice quick changing and then actually using your spare magneto. A lesson I learned in France on my own once. I had a spare magneto but when needed it didn't work because it was damp and not stored properly. Many folk have the spare magneto fixed on the bulkhead under the bonnet, nice and dry and warm, but then confess to not being certain how to fit and time it ! If you can't find a complete magneto for your spare, then replacement parts can save the day. A condenser fitted with the correct terminals can be a big help. A contact breaker spring is another suggestion but the replacement of said spring is fiddly and the loss of a tiny screw in a foreign field could be game over ! I actually carry a complete contact breaker assembly which can be slid into position if required. More information is in the handbooks and you can actually do a great deal of Magneto servicing yourself apart from winding the coils! ■

To be continued

On Lubricating the Original Lagonda Clutch

Clive Dalton explains how, and why

THERE ARE TWO lessons here, not one. We had to be carried home from Lutterworth after the Snowdonia event. The 2-litre clutch wouldn't disengage and the reason was that I had failed adequately to lubricate the sliding joint that is on the output shaft of the clutch. Mind you it took a lot of thinking to work out that this was the cause.

In the Lagonda clutch when you put the foot down the driven plate is arranged to move forwards by about 3/64" so freeing off the clutch and disconnecting the engine from the gearbox. This desirable state of things requires the driven plate assembly to slide on the splines by an amount that is set by the spring and screw assembly that is bolted to the first, or front, Hardy-Spicer joint. This spline assembly should be lubricated by leakage through the wick that is packed in to the end of the crankshaft. However, this wick frequently becomes blocked and the correct remedy is the take out the small cheese-head screw that is fitted into the clutch output shaft and to inject oil before replacing the screw.

One has to remember that this shaft does engine speed and one has, therefore, to use oil of adequate thickness so it doesn't all come out as soon as the engine starts. Engine oil is no longer thick enough, though in the days when the engine was new it probably worked.

I lubricate my chassis with Macoma 96 which is a steam cylinder oil as recommended by Wheatley and Morgan and this got injected into the clutch output shaft the week-end after the Snowdonia event. It made a big difference. Marshalling in the VSCC Hertfordshire rally in 2019 became a pleasure instead of a misery.

Unfortunately, on my 2-litre Continental the seats have to come out and the big floorboard moved backwards by some six inches in order to gain access to this screw and the difficulty of doing this lead to our having to be carried home.

Secondly, Stevie Bidwell who helps me, noticed that the clearance between the clutch thimbles and the clutch withdrawal race was about 5 mm even though with the thimbles fully back the required 0.020" clearance was observed. Clearly the thimbles need to be fully forward before adjustment. The thimbles of the clutch need to be pushed FORWARDS so as to contact the clutch withdrawal race but with an 0.020" feeler gauge between them.

Thus the 0.020" that appears on the drawings so frequently is explained. This may be old news to many of you and if so then I apologise.

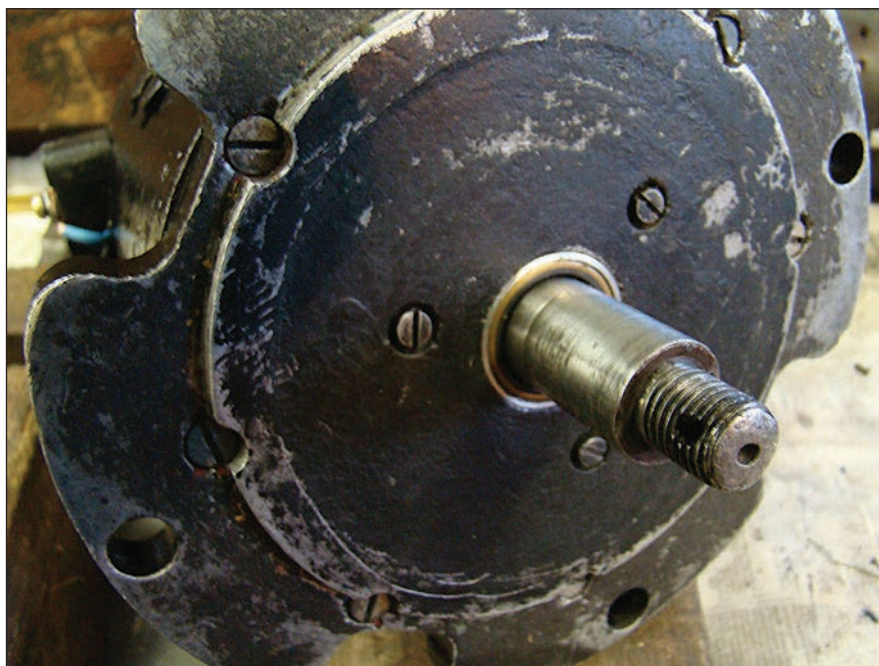
Len Cozzolino, who's 16/65 has the same clutch as the 2-litre in it, complains that his clutch is either in or out - unlike mine which is fully progressive. Although I have told him about lubricating mine, I have not heard whether that is the solution. ■

Tim's Technical Tips - The 2 litre Dynamo

Tim Wadsworth moves to constant voltage

AMPS? WHO NEEDS them? Well we all do, but not too many and not too few. The original 3 brush dynamo is robust and adequate but output control by the Summer/Winter charge switch is, to say the least, very basic. Too many amps and the battery is overcharged requiring frequent top ups and shortening its life. Too few amps and the lights will dim especially if you have other electrical equipment connected such as an electric fan. To overcome this problem later cars were fitted with a 2-brush dynamo and an electro-mechanical regulator. We can do even better today.

First the dynamo must be removed from the car and I now refer specifically to the nose mounted dynamos as fitted to the low chassis cars. To get the dynamo apart the forward ball bearing and the surrounding brass cage must be gently knocked out of the nose casting. This is difficult and requires a thin flat drift to get past the starting handle dog. Now, if the dog could be removed first, the shaft would pull through the bearing making things so much easier. The answer is to machine a hole in both sides of the nose casting giving access to the bolt and nut holding the dog on to the shaft.

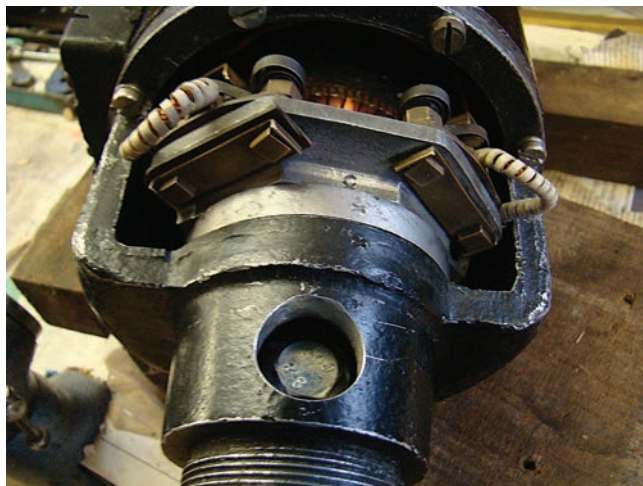


The modern lip-seal installed in place of the oil scroll

Bearings can be replaced and, if the shaft is worn, it can be sleeved back up to size.

While on the mechanicals it is a good idea to replace the (ineffective)

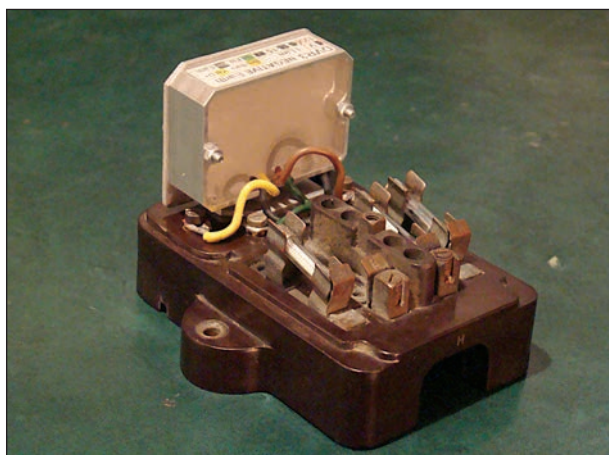
reverse-scroll oil seal at the drive-end of the shaft with a modern lip seal. A thin collar will make up the difference in diameters.



The hole machined in the front housing for easy access to the starting handle dog

It is not good enough just to remove the third brush, the field coils have to be rewound and this is a job for the expert.

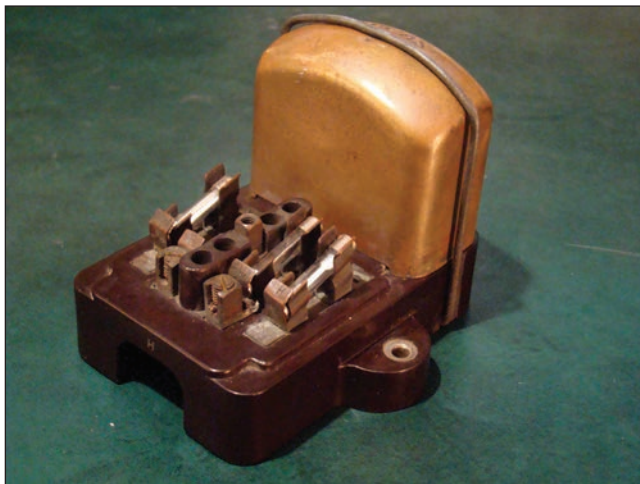
The old electrical/mechanical cut out is now replaced by a solid-state unit that acts as both cut out and regulator.



The electronic regulator that replaces the cut out

This will fit neatly in the cut-out box under the existing brass cover so visually the car looks exactly as it always has done. Such a unit, the DVR3, is sold by Dynamo Regulators Ltd (www.dynamoregulators.com)

The advantages are a constant voltage meaning that the lights are brighter, there is plenty of current for the ancillaries and the battery is not overcharged. Amps - just as you like them. ■



The finished cut-out (now a regulator) - indistinguishable from the original

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ETV 199 Restoration Continues with the 'Running Boards'

Mike Dufton continues with this epic rebuild

BY WAY OF a change from mechanical restoration, a new chapter has been opened with the completion of two new running boards. The original rotting items bore no relation to any design I've seen on a T2 Tourer bodied Lagonda, appearing to have been fashioned from the remnants of the one-piece wings and running boards once fitted with the car's saloon body. Two new boards and edge/ tread kit was purchased from the Club's Spares division, expertly run by Robin. But this was never going to be a matter of just bolting things on and 'job done'!

The first step was to measure and photograph a pair of running boards fitted to an original vehicle. Yet again, help was received from a well-known Lagonda expert, Tim Wadsworth. No two boards appear exactly the same, but it was extremely useful to see and record such detail as the cutting angle for the side and tread joints, screw sizes and pattern, support bracket arrangement, position of the board in relation to rear mudguard and chassis/body and discuss ongoing maintenance of the installation. Armed with this wealth of information some installation differences were instantly apparent, remembering that ETV 199 is a High Chassis car (actually a 14-60) with a T2 Low Chassis Tourer body. The support bracket centres were

considerably different, ETV having three, two bolted on the straight part of the chassis and a further one on the forward angled section where it narrows to the engine. The LC version has a closer spacing of the two pressed steel brackets on the parallel section and a very elegant forged question mark bracket supporting the nose of the board. It was also noted that the front tip of the board on the LC car lined up very closely with the brake cross shaft but on ETV falls some eight inches short - not a problem, but requiring a bespoke nose support bracket to be designed and manufactured to reflect the lines of the LC one. So, with as much data gleaned as possible, it was time to start on the practical shaping and fitment of the aluminium components to the running boards.

My past history with sheet metal and wood has never been terribly buoyant, and many might prefer to put the job in the hands of a professional coachbuilder. However, with moderate skills and the thought that further practice can only show improvement, the challenge was accepted. Mention cold shaping of any metal, and particularly this extruded aluminium, the first thing you will be told is to keep annealing it, and they're absolutely right! Be careful though, too much heat will, almost without warning,

turn solid into liquid, the key point being when to move the heating flame along the aluminium. This is easily indicated by the application prior to heating, of a thin film of household soap. As soon as it starts to turn brown, keep the heating flame moving along, and be careful - the temperature will be rising at least a foot ahead of the flame, so don't get your fingers burnt!

When visiting Tim, he kindly offered the loan of some wooden formers which had been made to assist the process, to which I've added a few more. Without these I am sure the job could not have been achieved, and it's well worth doing a bit of woodwork prior to getting started, every curved profile having been

formed using these patterns. The edge treads were completed first, starting with the outside one, then the inner. This right-angle material is not easy to shape, constantly distorting, but easy to correct providing you regularly anneal it and use a rubber mallet, otherwise you may flatten the apex of the raised tread pattern. Be patient - it may take a considerable number of adjustments, offering it up to the board frequently. As the radius is produced the outer edge tends to reduce in depth and curvature, a point to note, as the opposite tends to happen when producing the inner curve, which may need adjustment when the angles are cut to make them meet evenly. I must admit, I didn't wholly achieve this!



Laying out the running board strips



Fitting the strips

The concave shape of the end curve by the rear wheel is challenging. A different former was used to achieve this, assisted by a wooden block to apply force with the hammer to the tread edge. I probably should have found a piece of round wood rather than a steel bar to persuade the curve down into the former, but the inner face is not seen externally when fitted! The outer edging/tread is made up of four pieces - two long lengths, a small radius concave curve and a short joining piece. The tricky bit is now getting the correct angles. The first to be completed was at the front nose end, initially assisted by creating card templates to guide the cutting line. It is advisable to cut, using a junior hacksaw, wide of the marked line, then slowly file the sawn face, alternating frequently between the two mating surfaces. As each is reduced and the vertical face moves closer to the side of the board, the angles change slightly, and a corresponding adjustment is made to the heel or toe of the cut on its neighbour. If you don't split the angle correctly you will find the vertical sides are of different heights and are not matching, not a total disaster if the amount is small - a little bit of profiling with the file can make it look alright!

Having completed the front, and with use of toolmakers and G clamps to hold the edge strips in position, securing screw-holes were marked and drilled in the curved side. Apart from the screws put in as close to the end as possible, the rest were marked at

eight-inch centres, although I was not concerned about them being exactly opposite each other front to back, along the parallel sides. The outer edge ones were later used to position the screws in a line across the top surface, securing the treads. Although aluminium and stainless steel are not recognised as the best materials to pair together, the availability of the screws desired were not readily available in other than A2 Stainless. Slotted, raised head, countersunk, self-tapping screws 2.90mm x 19.00mm were used throughout, 56 required for each board (available online from Precision Technology Supplies). All holes were first drilled 2.00mm proceeding into the wood by 6.00mm, the aluminium hole opened out to 3.00mm, and finally countersunk. Care must be taken not to shear off the screw if power tools are used, which happened on one occasion, but rectified by 'digging' out and using a longer screw (22.00mm), which has worked out well and unseen!

Having completed the sides, the top treads were much easier, annealing and using a simple bending guide soon had them following the alignment of the grooves in the board. Each end is cut to the correct radius to the side/end tread and bevelled slightly so it matches where they intersect. By using a piece of wood clamped to the board, the drilling of holes was accurately achieved, the sequence being identical to the previous side pieces.

The first board to be completed



The jig for forming the rear edging curve and the result

was done before any wood treatment was undertaken. I ultimately decided, rightly or wrongly, to use a wood stain which left a satin finish, and chose Ronseal Trade, 10-year Satin finish Teak wood-stain, available from Screwfix. Two coats were applied, resulting in a not-too-dark a colouration. The second board was worked on after the stain had been applied, and with care, showed no signs of marking, which had then saved the removal and return of the screws!

In total, the two boards absorbed 30 hours of work, and in no way do I claim 'perfection', but they have turned out to an acceptable standard

and should not look out of place on the car. They have yet to be attached to the chassis brackets, and will now wait until the rear wings are finally positioned and secured. I hope in writing this, other members will not be daunted by tackling the renewal or refurbishment of their car running boards, and no doubt for those who have already done so, it may bring forth hints and tips which improve the process I undertook!

A return to mechanical tasks is now in view, with arrival in a month or two of the completely rebuilt radiator, an article on the process of refurbishment is planned sometime in the future. ■



The finished article - a superb job requiring a lot of patience

Letters & emails ... Letters & emails

Dear Roger,

Ken Painter's interesting account "An 11.9 at Brooklands" (Magazine number 263) is not entirely correct as when I sold BC 6389 to Alan and Nancy Audsley my father, Leo Harrison Matthews FRS, was not the chief vet at the London Zoo but the Scientific Director of the Zoological Society of London.

In 1951 I found BC 6389 at the back of a garage off the A46 near Newark, together with an ancient Bean. The garage had little interest in either car – I think they were both on their way out to the brambles at the back of the building. So, I bought BC 6389 for £25.

At the time I was doing National Service in the RNVR, posted to RAF Syerston for initial flying training. Subsequently I drove BC 6389 extensively in the UK, often in central

London where the tramlines were unfriendly to beaded edge tyres, to Inverness, Snowdonia, Bristol and East Anglia having many interesting and improbable adventures along the way. I repainted the car: the wings black, the body; light grey, and the wheels yellow. Eventually BC 6389 became so decrepit, and I had neither the mechanical skill nor the finances to keep the car on the road. I sold it to the Audsleys for £30 and when Chris Bird advertised the car for sale in November 2017, I bought it for the second time after a gap of 62 years (though for rather more than £25). Enclosed is a photo taken in 1955 of myself at the wheel when I was a Cambridge undergraduate. ■

Best wishes,
John Matthews (Memb. No. M69)



Letters & emails ... Letters & emails

Hi Roger,

My name is JP I restore and maintain Sachit Shah's cars. I attach a couple. The car was brought here to Kenya in the 80s as a derelict long wheel base saloon by Tim Vaulkhard (also a Club member), and he had it locally converted into a tourer.

He sold it to us late 2018 shortly before passing away early 2019. The car featured in the movie *White Mischief*. ■

Best Regards,
J-P Roquier
(the car is an LG45 – UK Reg FPL 134)



Letters & emails ... Letters & emails



The Lagonda in 'White Mischief', a 1937 film starring Charles Dance and Greta Scacchi

Dear Colin and Roger,

Recently I was sent the front cover photograph by Andrew Johnson who lives near Westbury on Severn in Gloucestershire.

I had met Andrew at local VSCC events where he attended in his Riley, one of several he has in his collection.

The car featured was owned during the 1960s by Andrews father, David W Johnson and a young Andrew can be seen in the centre of this picture with his brother. The picture was taken in 1968.

PJ 5967 rang a bell with me. It turns out that it was owned for many years, and I believe restored, by Jeff Leeks and is now owned by one of our Swiss members. It also features prominently in the foreground of the Alan Fearnley Lagonda Fete painting that was used extensively in the Club's centenary literature. But what is of interest is that whilst there is no doubt PJ 5967 is an original blown 2 Litre, during David W Johnsons

ownership the car had a 3 Litre engine (I recall John Batt telling me that he ran his blown 2 Litre with a 3 Litre engine for a few years whilst the blown engine was being rebuilt, so this is not unusual.) Sadly, David W Johnson died many years ago and Andrew was too young, so cannot recall any details

On a personal note, I purchased from Andrew a seized Z-type gearbox. It had been obtained by his father in the early 1960s, almost certainly from Ivan Forshaw. It has never been apart since its factory days. Whilst externally very rusted on the steel parts (having been stored outside) internally the gears are excellent. It currently sits in my garage full of diesel. It will be like this for months before I strip it down and rebuild it with new bearings. ■

Best Regards

Mark

Mark Yeomans (Y2)

Letters & emails ... Letters & emails

Dear Roger,

It has always been a mystery to me why the cylinder head nuts on the 2 litre (and may be other models) are 7/16" UNF. The UNF/UNC thread forms were not drawn up until 1949, by the United States, Great Britain and Canada, to standardise threads in countries using imperial measurements. Did Lagonda have a vision of the future ? Not so. I recently came across (on the internet - where else ?) a comprehensive thread chart giving details of over 500 different threads. From this you can see that a 7/16" CEI (Cycle Engineers Institute) thread is almost identical to a 7/16" UNF. The late Phil Ridout maintained that Lagonda used

Cycle Threads in odd places and this confirms it.

Furthermore, CEI nuts and bolts have across flats dimensions as Whitworth, as do the head nuts.

In another example, the thread on the back of the dash board switches connecting the bezel to the switch body looks like a 3/8" UNF but again, consulting the Thread Chart, this is actually a 3/8" ADM (Admiralty) thread. Just conjecture, but I would like to think that Lagonda used switches designed for WW 1 ship's radios - sadly there is no one left to ask. ■

Best wishes,
Tim Wadsworth

Good Afternoon,

My father, Keith Watson, passed away in 2015 and I have finally got round to clearing his things - he has many, not all, quarterly magazines dating back to no. 26 - 1957 and no. 29 - 1958 - do I just recycle them if your members can download old issues - didn't want to throw them out without asking first - incidentally David Ayre restored and sold my Dad's Lagonda. Thanks, and please advise,
Gabrielle Riley

Your Editor responded asking for the magazines to be kept and passed on to him once travel restrictions are lifted. He also asked for more details and received further (edited) correspondence as follows:

Hi Roger,

Thanks for coming back - he owned a 1928 2 litre high chassis with low chassis axle and wheels - this was confirmed by David Ayre - when he got the vehicle up and running. It was horrible to see it go as I had so many happy memories and obviously my father loved it dearly, but my husband and son were too tall to actually get in it so it seemed better to let someone have it that would love it like my dad - as you can see from the attached it was our wedding car in 1986.

My father is with me, next to the car outside his house. ■

Letters & emails ... Letters & emails



The bride and her father about to leave for the church



The long-term owner and his wife next to the rear of the car

Pictures courtesy of Gabrielle Riley

Drinking and Old Cars

From Desmond Fitzgerald in the USA, via Colin Bugler

A man was walking down the street when he was accosted by a particularly dirty and shabby-looking homeless man who asked him for a couple of dollars for dinner.

The man took out his wallet, extracted ten dollars and asked, "If I give you this money, will you buy some beer with it instead of dinner?"

"No, I had to stop drinking years ago," the homeless man replied.

"Will you spend this on old car parts?" the man asked.

"Are you NUTS!" replied the homeless man. "I haven't played with old cars in 20 years!"

"Well," said the man, "I'm not going to give you money. Instead, I'm going to take you home for a hot shower and a terrific dinner cooked by my wife." The homeless man was astounded: "Won't your wife be furious with you for doing that?"

The man replied, "That's okay. It's important for her to see what a man looks like after he has given up drinking and old cars." ■

.....

So, if you want to stay healthy you know what to do. Just look at the Knarr Mill contingent, pictured at a Technical Meeting in February!

L-R Alan Brown, David Hine, Nigel Hall, Ian Waugh, Tim Gresty, and Peter Bradley





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