



[www.lagondaclub.com](http://www.lagondaclub.com)

# NEWSLETTER



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This month's Guest Contributor is:  
**Martin Mountfort**

**No. 527**

**November 2024**

For full details please refer to the Club EVENT's page on the Website <https://www.lagondaclub.com/events/>

## November

3<sup>rd</sup>

9<sup>th</sup>

30<sup>th</sup>

London to Brighton Veteran Car Run

VSCC Lakeland Cotswold Trials

VSCC Winter Driving Tests Bicester

Christmas is coming – well we all know that, but what you may like to hear is that there are some Christmas bargains from the Lagonda Shop.

More than a year ago we decided to move the Lagonda clothing and some other Shop items over to Logo That Polo, (LTP), as we believed that there was not just a financial benefit to the Club, with money tied up in stock, but also a benefit to members with more choice and colour ranges of products.

We have been delighted with the service and quality that LTP have delivered, however we still have a few items of original stock which we can offer at a

large discount at this festive time of year. Order through the website and grab a bargain - if you are quick enough.

- Polo Shirts – Adult – reduced to £10 from £24
- Polo Shirts – Child – reduced to £6 from £13.50
- Sweatshirts – Adult – reduced to £12 from £27
- Sweatshirts – Child – reduced to £6 from £14
- Men's Fleece - reduced to £15 from £35
- V Neck lambs wool sweaters – reduced to £25 from £40.50

Arnold Davey writes to say that apparently there was a movie film made by the crew of M45R BPK 743 in the 1936 Monte Carlo Rally. Somehow it has survived and was shown on television on 20th October in a programme called *Footage Detectives* on the *Talking Pictures* channel. Did anyone to record it? If they have, what is the copyright situation? Replies please to [newsletter-editor@lagondaclub.com](mailto:newsletter-editor@lagondaclub.com)

## This month's letter is from Martin Mountfort, owner of Rapier BGH798

My interest in old mechanical things germinated in my very early years. I was born in 1947 and my father was a farmer. Old tractors with weird starting systems intrigued me and I was often helping with repairs. My thrill was when an engine, which hadn't been running for ages, noisily smoked into life.

Time passed and I got married at 21 and had two daughters, a mortgage and tight domestic budget dictated that I could only run fairly old cars which needed frequent repairs. As time passed my jobs and salary improved and eventually, I had a company car. Motor cycle racing and skiing became my hobbies. Both these hobbies ended in accidents which didn't please my wife, and after my last motor cycle grass track racing incident, my riding leathers were placed in the dustbin by my wife.

With time on my hands, I decided to restore an old car. I bought a very rusty XK140 and a Mig welder. So begun a project which I am ashamed to say took 4 years to complete. After some years a Jaguar Mk VII followed which, when restored, I used as a wedding car.

At this time, I lived at Horndon-on-the-Hill in Essex. A man sometimes walked by my house and chatted about my cars; he was Peter Mumford who had a Low Chassis Blown 2 Litre Tourer. I was immediately entranced by the style of his

car, the way the front mudguards turned with the steering, the stylish running boards and fabric body although the gears seemed a bit tricky.

My interest was so intense I decided to order a book about Lagonda. Perusing the model descriptions, I concluded that a Rapier might be the car for me. Not too big, easy gears, luggage space on the tourer model and then I read about The Rapier Register with a comprehensive spares scheme.

Peter told me about a Rapier coming up for sale in an auction at Saffron Walden or Duxford, I think. We went along, probably in one of my old Jags. This turned out to be the Eccles Racing Rapier, but in my naivety, I thought it totally unsuitable, only a single seater, no luggage space, no lights and not very original, I did not bid. I was ignorant of the significant history of it. As it turned out this car was bought by Tim Metcalfe who I met some years later, Tim has become a friend and is now the Secretary and Treasurer of The Rapier Register.

Subsequently I spotted an Abbott Tourer being sold by Orchid Cars of Amesbury Wiltshire, I bought this car on October 17<sup>th</sup> 2014 for £23,750 and have never regretted the purchase, a lot of money for a humble working man, but you probably only live once. This Rapier had been restored by Muir Laidlaw of Edinburgh and then won the 1971 Rapier Register AGM Concours

I corresponded with Muir and he sent photos of the restoration. When the car came into Muir Laidlaw's hands it was already fitted with AJS pistons which brings the capacity up to 1200cc. He had 90 thou taken off the head face. I think she does drive a little more briskly than a standard Rapier.

I also corresponded with and went to see Sid Wilkinson of Tetbury Gloucestershire who had the Rapier during the 1950s. Sid was in his 90s but was very enthusiastic about vintage cars and motorcycles. During the time of our correspondence, he bought one of the new Morgan three-wheelers which his son in law drove him about in.

Having joined the Lagonda Club and Rapier Register I started to read of forthcoming social events. I went to Colin Mallett's Suffolk Dinner and met Mike Pilgrim who became a friend and, ever since, has helped with technical advice. I went to the Lagonda Club AGM weekends at Aldermaston.

On reflection I realize that owning a Lagonda opened a whole new social circle for me which is more important than the actual cars.

Early problems with my Rapier were usually magneto failures, I had been advised to carry a spare, which I did, complete with fibre coupling marked up for the ignition timing. Once I had a pair of proven Mags I didn't have any more problems. Although once you have had trouble with something you tend to suspect it again. I keep the car in a rather damp building now and last winter after a period of non-use she would not start. I put the Mag Infront of my lounge log burner for an evening and then she started up. Was just dampness.

During our trip through Scotland to the Ultima Thule Rally this year. We had a period of spitting back through the carbs on an incline I incorrectly suspected the poor Magneto and that evening put the spare on. Then on the way home from the Lagonda AGM we had the same funny spitting back through the carbs. Then I realized we had been low on fuel the previous day and had to take the E10 95 Octane, as opposed to E5 99 Octane. There had been occasions in Scotland where I used the E10 95 Octane. In future when low on fuel if I have to take E10 95 Octane I won't put much in. If I had had my wits about me, I would have tried retarding the ignition a little. The control is right there Infront of you on the steering wheel centre.

My most significant Tour was to New Zealand in 2017. This was organised by Cedric Cook of the Bentley Club but Lagondas were invited along. I drove down to Portsmouth in I think November 2016 and met for the first time Mike Heins from Cheshire. Our two Lagondas were loaded into a Container for the sea journey to Christchurch on South Island New Zealand. In January 2017 I flew out to New Zealand and was reunited with my Rapier which duly started despite her long voyage in a metal container, thoughts of damp magnetos. I met Hazel, who subsequently married Mike. And Ken Painter who would be my navigator for part of the tour. When the Tour moved to North Island we went to see Jurriaan de Groot who has a Rapier Tourer just like mine. Jurriaan drove their Rapier along with us to Napier, a lovely art deco city where we attended their annual Art Deco festival.

Jurriaan & Michele invited me back to New Zealand the next couple of years for the Napier Art Deco festival, another example of the social aspect of the Lagonda Club.

I retired in 2012 and in 2022 moved to rural Lincolnshire. The roads are quiet, and I have met many other local classic car enthusiasts. I also run a Bristol 400 car and with my two old cars manage quite well without owning a modern car

Next year I plan to go to many Lagonda Tours.

Martin Mountfort Rapier BGH798

Sadly, we have to report that Bernie Jacobson died recently. Older members may remember Bernie who was at one time our Australian Representative. He left the Lagonda Club some time ago (although he did write a Newsletter in 2021) but continued actively in the Rapier Register bringing his Rapier to the UK on several occasions.

Another long-time member, Arthur Barnett died a few days ago at the age of 97. He joined the Club in 1956 with a Rapier with which he competed, particularly in Driving Tests, including being a member of a team which won first prize at a Singer Owners Club event. Later he owned the 2 Litre which became famous as Captain Hastings' car in the Poirot TV series.

We offer our sincere condolences to the family and friends of these two members.

This is the last Newsletter of 2024, so can I take the opportunity, on behalf of Len and myself, and our Chairman and Board, to wish all members a Festive Christmas and Happy New Year. Back again in January !

**ADVERTISEMENTS:** All advertisements should be sent to Len Cozzolino ([len.cozzolino@lagondaclub.com](mailto:len.cozzolino@lagondaclub.com)). **They are free to members for up to 100 words and 1 picture in the newsletter. Repeat adverts are £25. Longer adverts and additional pictures are always available free in the Website under Classifieds and carried for 6 months or until car/parts are sold.**

## FOR SALE:

**Lagonda 2 Litre, Low Chassis, Speed Model.** Unique Weymann 6 light fabric saloon. An extremely well-presented car that has seen little use since restoration. It has been fitted with twin SUs, an electric SU pump, electric fan and a full flow oil filter. Original carburettors, autovac and oil filter are present. Owned by a club member for 52 years. Please call 01733 609659 or 07971 883083. Offers over £42,500.  
[Charles.Atkinson1@btinternet.com](mailto:Charles.Atkinson1@btinternet.com)



## NEW MEMBERS We welcome the following new members:- \* Rejoin\*

D 41	Francis Daly	209th Place Northwest, Sammamish, WA 98074, USA. V12 Rapide DHC 14082 HPH 996
M 22	Ean McDowell	Colac Ballarat, Beeac, Victoria 3251, Australia N/O
P 16	Rainer Prautsch	Rembrandtstraße ,65527 Niedernhausen, Germany 16/80 S10368 AME10
R 22	Peter Ramm	Riverview Boulevard, St Catharines, St. Catharines ON L2T 3N4, Canada. M45 Tr Z11165 BMH 965



## THE DB GAZETTE

Greetings all.

Lots of water under our bridges since last month! It seems that the world has become a wetter place to me. Most continents copped a drenching, but we survived without too much drama, unlike some other localities. Maybe we've had more practice!

This month I want to focus on what can happen when Auto restorers become Auto revisionists! What did he say? Surely you have met someone that sees restoration as boring and seeks the challenge of designing a 'new car' on an existing chassis and mechanicals? Often referred to as a 'special' or as one wag put it 'spearmints', analogous with 'experiments'! What you are about to read is all true, I have seen the results of this attempt to make a 'special' by combining parts from two DB 2.6 cars, but ending up with both being scrapped after years of struggle and strife!

The story starts in the family garage of a would be restorer that had delusions of shortening wheel base and increasing engine power to end up with a car looking vaguely like a DB 2.6 Lagonda, but in fact never actually turning a wheel in anger. One might say that two cars were destroyed over a period of about ten years whilst the owner shuffled cut out pictures and ideas that were never thought through with any hint of research or planning, rather simply working on hunches and inspired by images and information from magazines.

One of the thought bubbles was to shorten the chassis length by about one foot. Body removed, engine and gear box removed, tail shaft removed and about one foot cut out of the centre section of the chassis! Anyone that has seen a bare 2.6 chassis will realise that this is a point of construction where all ends meet and so is subject to all bending, stretching, twisting or other forces that emanate from afar within the chassis frame. You might consult Bastow, chapter 16 and let your mind wander around the forces involved and the problems created by altering the original design!

Of course removing a foot of chassis meant removing about a foot of body, not a task for the faint hearted. Door lengths, body shape, appearance, style and aspect commenced to change and lots of bits that hang off the body and trim had to change, including the turret line. A sort of coupe almost emerged.

I'll leave this mess for you to consider for a while and describe next the mechanical changes wrought upon this once craftily conceived and executed post 1945 gem.

The engine was subject to modification, naturally. Shave a few thou off the head, obtain domed pistons, new sleeves, treat the valves to some merciless grinding, fiddle with camshaft timing, practice some porting and polishing but ignore the oil pump, chains, sprockets and other ancillaries. The crankshaft was treated to crack testing and grinding. Tunnels and cheeses were simply cleaned. Rear oil seal? Was retained, intact in original form. No other mods carried out.

Time simply flew by as it does when waiting for quotes on parts to be sent from o/seas suppliers, read UK/Australia, and also, vague ideas to be thought through, and - having a business to run in one's spare time.

Gear box issues arose and had to be resolved. Parts were ordered but by the time they had arrived our intrepid rebuilder had forgotten how to reassemble the gear box.

Finally the engine was started after years of preparation and it suddenly stopped! No measurements had been taken of the domed pistons relative to the cylinder head, simply assembled and forgotten! The engine stopped itself, of course it did, not from high compression but from pistons striking the cylinder head and destroying that item. Needless to state, the project ground to a halt. Parts over time were simply sold off or scrapped. The body work was paused indefinitely.

There's a moral somewhere in all of this, it's not simply 'Don't muck about with original designs', rather it might be 'Carry out an informed study of Automotive design and Engineering, including styling, prior to tearing things apart!'

Examine your skills base and that of the persons you will engage to assist. 'The wisdom of hindsight, to special or to restore'. You be the judge - some monsters have been created over time but there is probably a bit of Bentley spirit in all of us!



Looking vaguely familiar? Study the door line and roof line and pick the coupé styling, all now gone to Lagonda heaven I believe.

Recently two 'lost' 2.6 DB sedans and a 3litre coupé have been found in Australia. More news of these restorable cars soon.

## SPARES NEWS – NOVEMBER 2024

E-mail: [spares@lagondaclub.com](mailto:spares@lagondaclub.com), website: [www.lagondaclub.com](http://www.lagondaclub.com)

### NEW PARTS NOW AVAILABLE

Clutch spring (202lbs/1") 3L – \*\*\*New specification – Lower poundage pressure\*\*\*

PRICE

£22.04

(All prices excluding VAT and carriage)

### BACK IN STOCK

- CLT209 - Clutch drive spider & shaft, 2L, 3L
- GRS304 - Pair of 3L cross shaft gears
- GSK203S - Rocker cover gasket, 2L

### USED DB SPARES SPOTLIGHT



Footwell air vent, 3L - £55.20



Camshaft sprocket, All 2.6 /3L -  
£34.50



DB 2.6 stop/tail lamp, L461 new,  
old stock - £132.25



Half shaft, All 2.6 & 3 L - £86.25



Centre Propellor shaft, All 2.6 &  
3L - £69



Rear suspension hub to radius  
arm link, All 2.6 & 3L - £80.50

Please visit <https://www.lagondaclub.com/used-spares/> for more information.

### NEW PARTS AVAILABLE

#### CLT301S



Clutch spring (202lbs/1") 3L

### NEW PARTS IN PROGRESS

- Winged radiator badges (curved and flat)
- Bishop Cam steering scroll

Please contact the spares team with any requests for new gaskets not already available.

Please e-mail Robin Cooke if you are interested in any of the following parts. Your support will influence the Committee's decision to proceed or not:

- ZM chassis - braking system (13 parts).
- Rockers, 4.5L.
- Fuel tank senders (3-terminal type) 2L, 3L.
- Various DB parts, please see the Post-1945 Gazette for details.



## SPARES NEWS – NOVEMBER 2024

E-mail: [spares@lagondaclub.com](mailto:spares@lagondaclub.com), website: [www.lagondaclub.com](http://www.lagondaclub.com)

### “A BROOKLANDS LAGONDA FETE”

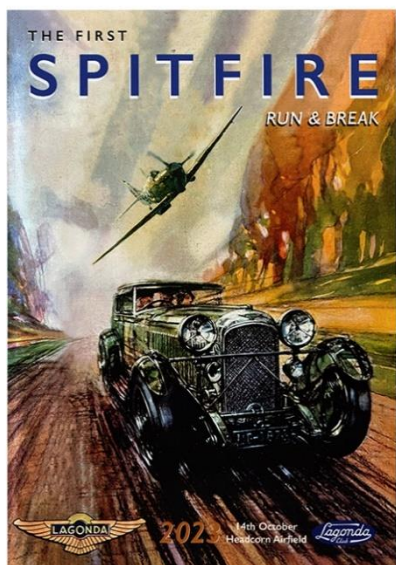
Signed and numbered Alan Fearnley prints now available



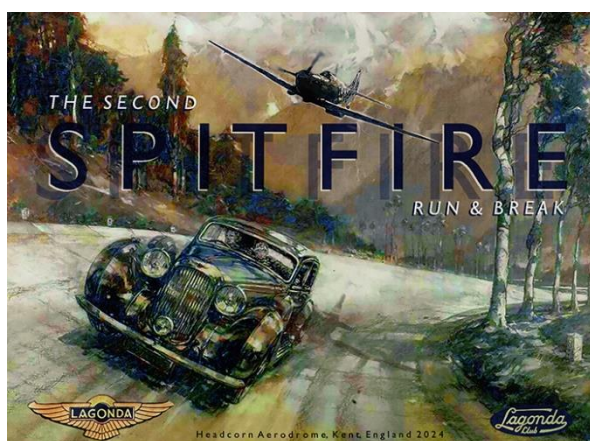
An exclusive print commissioned in 1999 to commemorate 100 years of the Lagonda Marque (1899 to 1999). Painted by the renowned and highly collectible automotive artist, Alan Fearnley.

Last remaining few prints available on high quality cardstock. All prints are numbered and signed by the artist. Approx. print size: 69.2 x 51.9 cm. **Priced at £25 exc. VAT & postage.**

### “SPITFIRE RUN & BREAK” posters now available



These evocative posters were produced to mark the first and second “Spitfire Run & Break” events held at Headcorn Airfield, Kent in October 2023 and June 2024



These A3 posters measures 29.7 x 42 cm and are only available while our limited stock lasts.  
**Priced at £20 each exc. VAT & postage.**

Please visit our website via <https://www.lagondaclub.com/other-club-items/> to order.