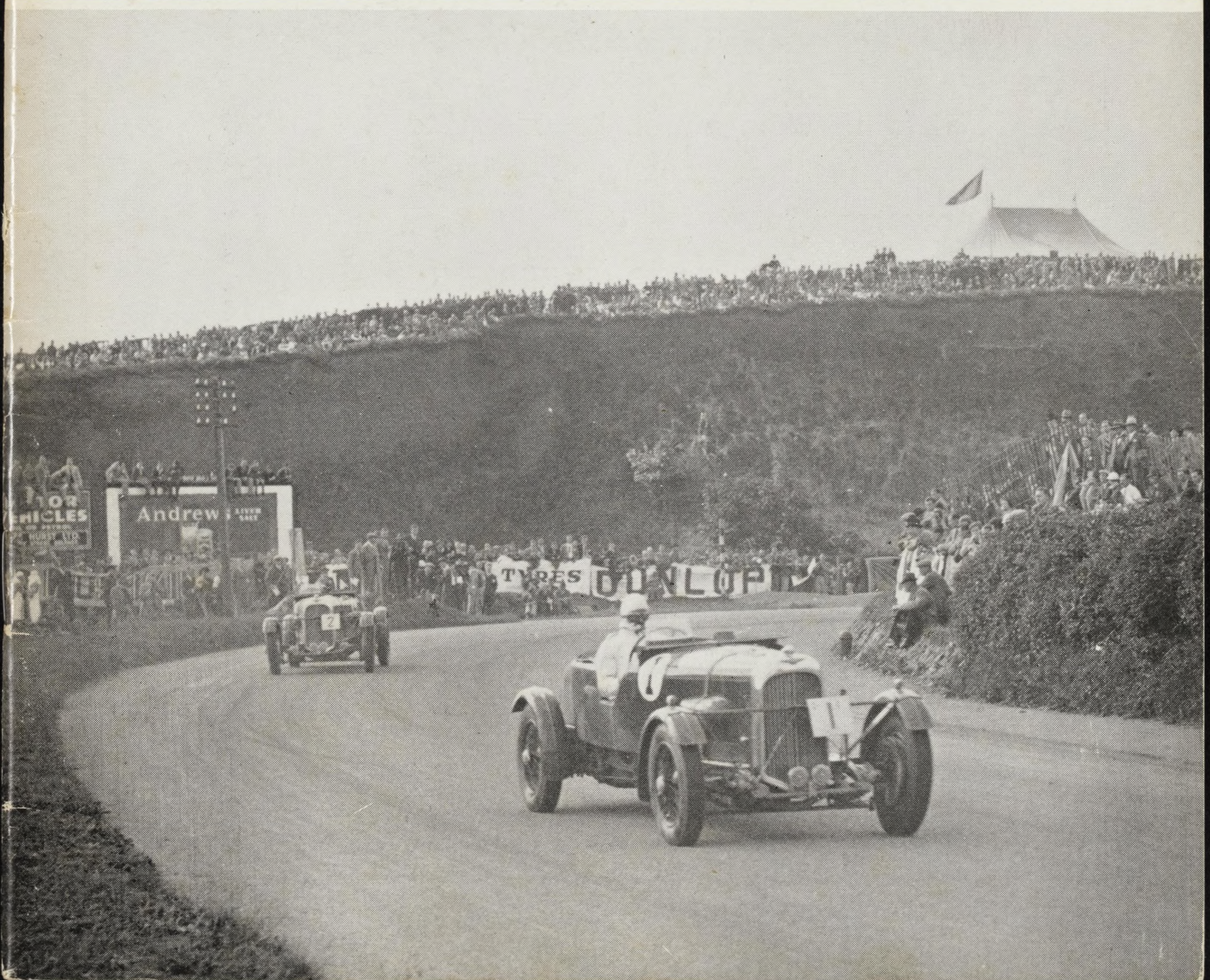




THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB

Number 69 Spring 1970





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MAGAZINE

Issue No. 69

Spring 1970

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

Editor: A. W. MAY

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Contributions do not necessarily represent the views of the Committee nor of the Editor, and expressed opinions are personal to contributors.

FRONT COVER: A scene from the 1935 T.T. Race. A description of the cars and drivers appears in "Notes, News and Announcements".

NOTES, NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

REAL ROAD RACING. Our front cover shows John Hindmarsh and Charlie Dodson in the M.45R's rounding Quarry Corner on the Ards circuit during the 1935 T.T. There was a large ditch just to the left of this picture and there is a memorable series of photographs showing a Riley Imp sailing over the bank and into this ditch in the 1934 race. One can see why all the nurses are standing there now!

The natural grandstand in the background is well filled but the use of the advertisement hordings would be frowned upon today as would the rather large crowd of people hanging about at the road edge.

What a good car Hindmarsh's was. It finished fifth in the 1934 race, first at Le Mans in 1935 and seventh in the T.T. in the same year. As Arthur Fox was changing to LG.45 for 1936 it was offered for sale after the race for £600.

Dodson finished a few seconds behind his team mate in eighth place, this being the car that Brian Lewis took into fourth place the previous year. (Thank you Mike Wilby for this look back into the past. Ed.)

* * * *

HERMES writes from Hull of local Lagonda news:

KEN PAINTER used to be an energetic supporter of our pub meet. Then he was posted elsewhere. It has been secretly known for him to fix the inner workings of the R.A.F. to enable him to make his official visits in this region coincide with our last Tuesdays. At the first meeting after Christmas a lot of interest was shown in a Souvenir Booklet of the Singapore Motor Sports Club Exposition sent by Ken from R.A.F. Changi. There were notes and pictures of his 16/80 in action, also Harry 'First Asian' Robinson's M.45. Good to know Ken thinks of us. We still meet on the last Tuesday and will always be glad to entertain any visitors.

Congratulations to MARY and IAN NORTH, our most successful competitive couple. For her sensational drive through the blizzards of the November Handicap Mary was awarded the Committee Trophy. Although richly earned she was so surprised that when she received an invitation to go down to the dinner-dance for the presentation, she thought the committee meant they would pay! Pleased to say she still went. The North's seem to do best when Ian is doing winter navigating. He must have spent his sea-going time dodging the ice-bergs we think.

Ian's was the highest placed Lagonda in the Vintage Measham, this time the highest finisher not in the awards list. So watch out for further improvement next year.

HERMES

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THE 2-LITRE SUPERCHARGED LAGONDA

SINCE ITS INTRODUCTION IN 1925 THE 2-LITRE SPEED model Lagonda has met with increasing success, and the steady demand for a similar vehicle with an even higher performance has led to the introduction of the supercharged model which we have recently had an opportunity of trying on the road and on Brooklands. The main features of the chassis are, of course, similar to the well-known 2-litre, and this means that the engine has already had five years trial in addition to the very exhaustive tests which have been carried out before offering the supercharged model to the public.

The blower is a Zoller which has been found to give excellent results, especially at low engine speeds. The purpose of fitting a blower was not primarily to increase the maximum speed, although it has actually done so by some 12 m.p.h., but chiefly to improve the acceleration and power at medium revs. This has been achieved to such an extent that even the most optimistic advocate of supercharging would be somewhat astonished at the performance of this engine. Although only of 2-litre capacity (the four cylinders having a bore and stroke of 72 mm and 120 mm respectively), the engine does not in the least suffer by being used to drive a comparatively large and extremely comfortable car, which both in size and performance gives one the impression of having nearer four litres than two available.

On the occasion of our test we took the opportunity of having a look round the works to see the various components both during manufacture and when completed. The standard of finish of every part is extremely high, and all materials are subjected to special tests in addition to the finished article. The crankshaft is extremely stiff and fully balanced, the method of attachment of the balance weight to the shaft being ingeniously carried out, in such a manner that they become virtually part of it, and it would be impossible for them to shift in any way.

The detachable cylinder head has hemispherical combustion chambers, fully machined to a high finish, and the inclined valves are operated by rockers from the two overhead camshafts. Adjustment of the valve clearances is set by rotating the fulcrum pins which are eccentric,

thus giving a very fine adjustment without trouble.

An excellent feature from the point of view of the owner who likes to do his own decarbonising, is that the cylinder head can be removed without disturbing the timing, thus shortening operations considerably. Pressure lubrication to all engine parts ensures a long life.

The clutch is a single dry plate, and is fitted with a very easily adjustable clutch stop. The adjustment can be reached by simply removing a floor board, and can be set in a few minutes to suit any driver's individual requirements. The saving of time in changing up through the gears is considerable, and with the stop set fairly tight we found it possible to go through all the upward changes as quickly as we could move the lever.

A visit to the Lagonda works would be of great interest to any car owner, as the firm make everything under their own roof which is economically advisable. That is to say they make everything except such components as are completely specialised productions, such as carburettors, magnetos, radiators, and various pressings and parts which are only made in large quantities by a few well-known firms. It is noticeable that in all these cases price is not the first consideration, for, knowing that a sports car will have a great deal of hard work, components are only used which have proved their ability to stand up to the work involved.

On driving the car we were immediately struck by the fact that it felt much smaller than it looked, and on a twisty road one could definitely "chuck it about" as if it were half the weight it actually is. This is a point which one does not always expect to find on a full 4-seater, even though it is a sports car, and it shows how thoroughly the makers have got down to the problem of steering and road-holding. The steering is light but with ample caster and the car can be held on indifferent surfaces without effort.

Another remarkable thing about this engine is the amazing flexibility and smoothness, which fully bears out the statement in an article on supercharging which appeared in our last issue. In this it was pointed out that supercharging, correctly applied, solves the problem of distribution, and makes an engine considerably smoother than it was when unsupercharged. This has happened in the case of the Lagonda, and it has made what was already a very nice sports car, not only considerably faster, but even smoother throughout the range.

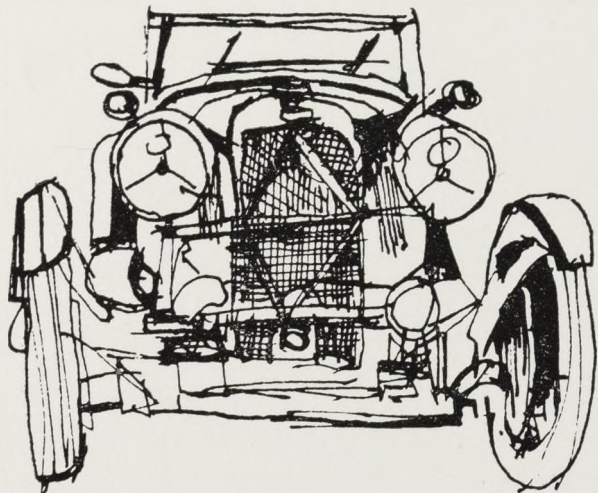
The 2-litre supercharged Lagonda is definitely a fast car at all speeds. By this we mean that it not only has a high maximum speed, but that owing to its fine acceleration and excellent handling, it can safely maintain a speed under adverse conditions of road and gradient, which would be difficult or impossible on some cars with the same maximum speed.

Under modern road conditions the ability to get to 70 or 80 m.p.h. quickly is of far greater value than the attainment of a considerably higher speed only after a long time, and it is in this way that the Lagonda excels.

Acceleration from a standing start, using the gears, gave us 30 m.p.h. in 5 secs., 40 m.p.h. in 9 secs., 50 m.p.h. in 12 secs., and 60 m.p.h. in 18 secs., while the maximum speed achieved was 92 m.p.h. We kept the car on full throttle on Brooklands for some laps without even getting it really warm, while it held 90 m.p.h. on the level absolutely tirelessly.

From a standing start, the test hill was climbed in 12 secs., which is a very good performance indeed for this type of car. 80 m.p.h. can be reached in third gear, and there is no fuss or vibration at any engine speed. These properties really make it two cars in one. When feeling lazy and in no hurry, one can go about continually in top gear, slowing down to 6 m.p.h. in traffic, and picking up again without a sign of roughness or pinking. Then when speed is required, a flick of the gear lever, a gentle pressure on the throttle, and almost racing car performance is available. The bodywork as well as every feature of the chassis, is of the very highest class, and at £775 complete the car is an amazing achievement, and we are not surprised to learn that the demand has greatly exceeded all expectations.

Reprinted from *Motor Sport*, October 1930, by kind permission of the Editor.



2-LITRE BRAKE DRUMS

THANKS TO THE EFFORTS OF MEMBER WALTER Reckitt we have discovered a firm who are prepared to manufacture "Ribbed Type" brake drums as fitted to the Continentals and 16.80s. These later drums were cast as opposed to the pressed type fitted to the 2-litres prior to the Continental. This firm have made drums for another one-make Club and their work has been inspected.

The drums would be made from Cast Nickel-Iron Alloy, ribbed on the outside and machined and drilled ready to place on the car. We have been quoted £14 each for the rear drums and something less for the front ones. The price will depend on the number of orders received. "Mintex" MZ.41 linings have been recommended for use with these drums.

This seems to be an ideal opportunity to set the car up "Brake wise" for the next thirty or so years and judging by the angle of some of the front brake linkages seen recently there should be at least a strong demand for the front drums. The correct geometry between brake shoe and drum should produce vastly increased stopping power.

It is visualised that problems over delivery and payment will arise and will have to be ironed out later.

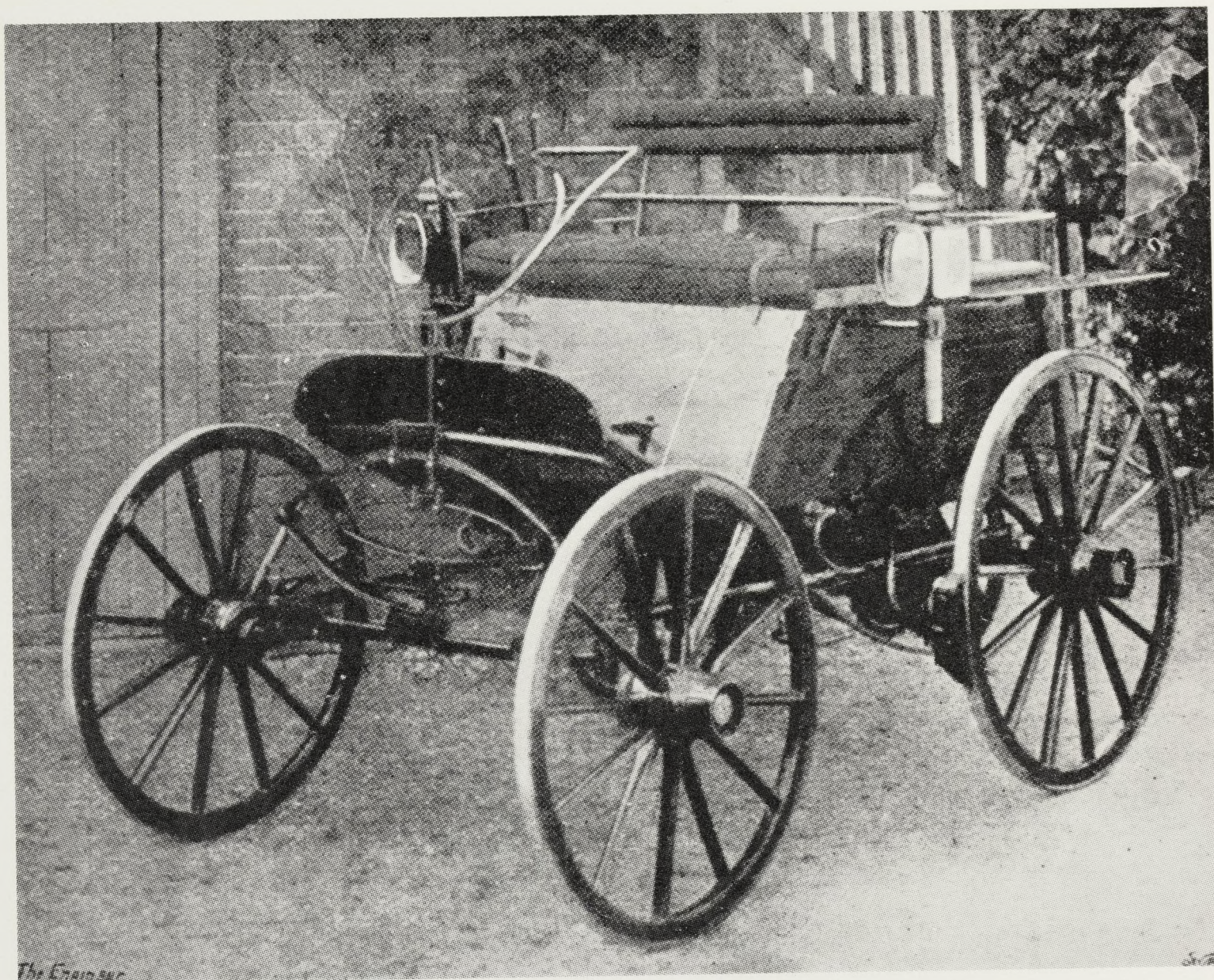
In order to estimate the demand, if any, will those members interested please drop a line to Harry Gostling, 8 Ridgeway Road, Isleworth, Middlesex (who compiled these notes and hopes he has not dropped any clangers).

Just in case it is not generally known these drums will fit all the 2-litres and the 3-litres on the 2-litre type chassis.

Publicity will be given anon to the success or failure of this project.

H.G.

IN MEMORIAM
SINGER
1876 - 1970



The Yeovil Motor Car

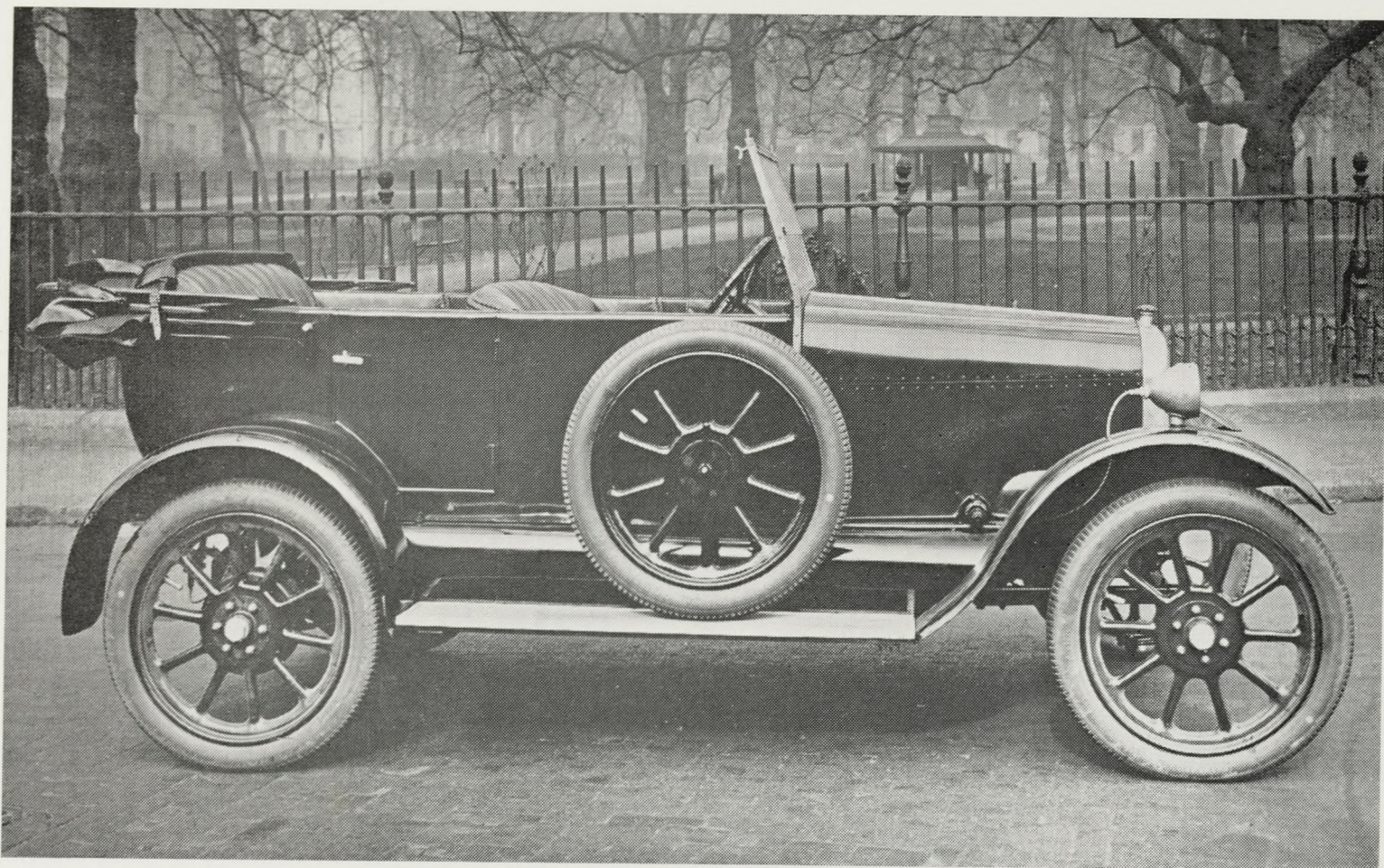
COMMON LINK

AS EVERYONE KNOWS WHEN DAVID BROWN TOOK over the Lagonda Company he moved the production away from Staines and the works which had made Lagonda since before the turn of the century had seen the last car emerge through the gates to be tested up and down the road to Runnymede.

Petters Ltd. well known as manufacturers of oil, marine and other engines took over and it has recently come to light that they too have had interests in motor car design and manufacture for many years. This firm started at Yeovil and in 1895 produced a car powered by a 1 h.p. oil engine that gave it a maximum (so it is said) of 10 m.p.h. The engine of this remarkable device is now in the Yeovil museum and a picture of the car is shown.

This did not end this firm's desire to produce a good motor car and in 1926 an interesting and advanced, yet cheap model was announced. Whether this ever got as far as the production stage seems doubtful as no survivor is known but the report in the *Motor* of 23rd February 1926 is worth reading and is reproduced. The demonstration seems somewhat frightening but at least shows some faith in the road holding! The brakes seem the forerunner of discs and the convertible body and track of the required size to fit in the ruts of roads in far flung places are novel features. It was a good looking car as the photo over shows and the ex employees of the Old Company who stayed to work with Petters when they took over will know that the cars can still be a popular topic of conversation at the Causeway works.

M.H.W.



The Seaton-Petter in Berkeley Square, W.1.

The 10-18 h.p. Seaton-Petter

A New British Car Which Will Run 15,000 miles Without Decarbonizing, Seats Five in Comfort and Costs £150. Only Five Moving Parts in Engine

Reprinted from *The Motor* 23.2.1926

EASY HANDLING UNDER THE MOST ADVERSE conditions it is possible to imagine is provided by the new Seaton-Petter car, the engine of which is made by the well-known concern of Petters Ltd., Yeovil. It is a full four-seater vehicle of ample size, selling with full equipment and nitro-cellulose unscratchable finish at £150.

The track measures no less than 4 ft. 8 in., so that the car fits the standard trails in all parts of the world, where the roads, in many places, consist of only a couple of deep ruts made by the passage of lumber wagons and light horsedrawn vehicles.

A practically fool-proof chassis has been produced. The engine, which is said not to require decarbonization even after over 15,000 miles' use, has no valves, valve springs, camshaft or timing gear, and contains only five moving

parts, all of which are of most robust construction. Moreover, the pistons can be withdrawn and the big-end bearings attended to without the need for taking the crankcase apart. A three-speed gearbox and conventional spiral-bevel final drive bring any hill on which the wheels will grip within the climbing capabilities of the vehicle, while the brakes are powerful and effective.

Before going on to explain how this desirable simplicity has been attained, we might mention that we first made the acquaintance of the car by being driven round and round a yard on the premises of the British Dominions Car Co. Ltd., at Yeovil, the manufacturers of the Seaton-Petter. This yard was, in effect, the floor of a large machine shop which had been dismantled, leaving mountains of sticky clay three or four feet high, and strewn for several square yards with great blocks of masonry at least a cubic foot in shape and size. Here and there were slopes of 1 in 3 or 1 in 4, where steps had once existed, and the irregular surface was strewn with old bricks, bits of corrugated iron, etc.

We were asked to sit in the car with Mr. Douglas Seaton, one of the directors of the concern, who proceeded to rush over every obstacle at 15 or

20 m.p.h. Approaching the field of boulders by charging across a 1 in 3 ramp at right angles to the slope, we turned on full lock in the midst of the blocks of masonry, and continued round the yard, climbing steep mounds of soft clay en route.

This wild rush continued for several 'laps', on one of which the blocks of masonry were taken a little too fast, and the car charged the spiked iron railing. Nothing daunted, Mr. Seaton slammed in reverse gear and rushed backwards at speed, bursting a front tyre in the process, after which the car, at what appeared a perilous angle, turned round a full lock on a steep slope and scraped along the side of a galvanized iron shed. During these operations no undue jolting was experienced and there was never the slightest feeling of insecurity despite the angle to which the car was tilted.

This was merely to show us that there was nothing wrong with the chassis design, so far as practical results were concerned, as the car in question had covered over 15,000 miles, of which such cross-country steeplechasing formed a fairly large part.

Neat Two-stroke Engine

The engine is a very neatly designed vertical twin two-stroke; the cylinders, which are cast in one with the top half of the crankcase, have a bore of 89 mm, while the stroke is 100 mm. This gives a capacity of 1,319 c.c. A detachable cylinder head is provided and aluminium pistons are used. The upper half of the crankcase is provided on one side with a large inspection plate which covers two orifices through which the big-end bearings can easily, if required, be dismantled, when the pistons and connecting rods can be drawn out after the removal of the cylinder head.

The engine is of the two-port type, crankcase compression being employed, while a wide centre bearing has been found to give excellent results without any leakage of gas from one chamber to the other. The carburettor is bolted to a Y-shaped induction pipe, cast in one with an inspection cover similar to that on the near side of the unit, but which is provided with spring-steel flaps ten-thousandths of an inch thick, capable of opening inwards, their movement being limited by a tongue of sheet steel.

When the piston rises in the cylinder, therefore, a depression is created in the crankcase, with the result that the mixture is sucked in from the

carburettor through the aperture normally covered by the spring flap. These tongues of thin steel are, in effect, an exceedingly simple form of non-return valve, and never require the slightest attention, nor do they require grinding in even when first fitted. They always keep the same degree of temper owing to the fact that they are not exposed to the heat of the burning gases.

When the piston descends, the flap, of course, closes, and the mixture is forced up a transfer passage into the cylinder. The piston has a deflector head and when it next rises the fresh mixture, while being compressed, is deflected so as to scavenge efficiently the cylinder head, the exhaust being forced out at the same time through a large port opposite the transfer port.

Big Torque at Low Speeds

This engine, therefore, gives the same number of impulses per minute as a four cylinder four-stroke engine, but it has the advantage of giving a considerably greater torque at much lower speeds, so that not only are the hill-climbing powers of the car very exceptional, but the torque is so constant that wheelspin is not experienced in conditions from which the conventional type of car would be inextricable without the use of non-skid chains; 18 h.p. is developed at 1,600 r.p.m., although the engine will 'rev.' up to 2,500 r.p.m.

The crankshaft is very robust, and as it is supported by a wide bearing between each throw, and carefully balanced, the unit is, without exaggeration, as smooth running and silent as an electric motor. The bearings are of phosphor-bronze, immediately detachable and lined with white metal. Cooling is on the thermo-siphon system, provision being made for fitting a fan should the car be used in hot climates. A Rotax dynamo is fitted at the forward end of the engine on the off side and driven by skew gear from the end of the crankshaft, while above the dynamo are fitted a Remy distributor and ignition coil. On the near side a Rotax starting motor is spigoted into the clutch housing and engages with teeth cut on the periphery of the flywheel by means of the usual Bendix pinion. At present it is undecided what make of carburettor will finally be used, but the Cox Atmos instruments fitted to the experimental models would appear to suit the engine best.

The clutch is the well-known single dry-plate Borg and Beck, very smooth in action and so

light that, without the use of a clutch stop, very rapid changes up can be made at all speeds.

The gearbox is of the three-speed-and-reverse type, centrally controlled and of orthodox design. A feature is the silence of the intermediate gears. A hand-operated transmission brake, consisting of a contracting band with a large-diameter drum, is fitted behind the gearbox, and an exposed propeller shaft transmits the drive through two special mechanical universal joints running in oil-baths, so that wear is reduced to a minimum and long life assured. The back axle is of Canadian manufacture and of the semi-floating type, the shafts being mounted on Timken roller bearings. The gear ratio afforded by the spiral bevel is $4\frac{7}{8}$ to 1, this having been found to give the best top-gear performance. The second gear is 8.63 to 1, first gear 14.98 to 1, while reverse is 19.5 to 1.

The brakes are of unusual design, and although we were not at first impressed by their appearance, we are bound to admit that they are remarkably efficient. Two shoes, 6 in. or 7 in. long, grip between them the periphery of the back-axle brake drums. The chief merit of the design seems to lie in the fact that the brakes are most accessible and easy to adjust or reline.

High Ground Clearance

The front axle is made by Alford and Alder Ltd., to the design of the manufacturers, especially to give a very large ground clearance ($10\frac{1}{2}$ in.). The hubs are fitted with large-sized ball bearings, while all ball and other joints in the steering are provided with grease-gun nipples to ensure their easy and adequate lubrication. The steering gearbox is of the cam and lever type, and follows the most modern practice; it provides very easy steering and is quite irreversible. The drag link from the steering gearbox to the arm on the stub axle is high up out of the way of possible accidental damage, and passes about an inch above the front axle. The steering can thus be readily adjusted. The tie-rod is also placed behind and at about the same height as the front axle, which thus serves to protect it from damage.

The springing is by quarter-elliptics all round, and no trouble has been experienced with them, largely, no doubt, owing to the special type of anchorage employed and the very high quality of the material used. It is interesting to note that there is no tendency for the front springs to flatten out, thus upsetting the steering after a big mileage

has been covered. Sankey detachable pressed-steel wheels are used, shod with 30 in. by $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. tyres. This is a large size for a car weighing complete only 17 cwt., so that long wear is assured, while this size of tyre is readily obtainable in any part of the world, being standard on several wellknown British and American popular cars. The wheelbase is 8 ft. 6 in.

Ingenuity has been displayed in the arrangement of the battery and tools. These, together with the petrol tank, are all accommodated under the bonnet, which is extended to form the scuttle. The battery is thus in the best sprung position, instantly accessible for attention or filling up with distilled water, while wiring to the starter switch, dashboard, etc., is reduced to a minimum. Space is provided alongside the battery box to contain large tools, such as the pump, jack handle, etc., a smaller box being made to take the standard tool kit. The petrol tank holds sufficient fuel for 200 miles, with a reserve supply.

Lubrication is on the petroil system, giving a consumption of approximately 1,000 miles per gallon when fuel is being used at the normal rate of 30 m.p.g.

We were able to enjoy a good run under real Colonial conditions over raid-sodden grass and clay on the downs near Yeovil, and over very bad roads. The springing is most efficient, while such is the smooth and even torque of the engine that even in deep clay and climbing wet grass slopes of 1 in 3 there is practically no wheelspin, although ordinary high-pressure tyres are used. We afterwards went to a hill in the neighbourhood of Yarcombe, with a gradient of 1 in $3\frac{3}{4}$, and got a considerable distance up this before the car came to a standstill through wheelspin. We are assured, however, that the experimental car, with a Cox Atmos carburettor, will take three up this gradient with ease.

The maximum speed is in the neighbourhood of 40 m.p.h., and this can be maintained, if required, all day without any harm ensuing.

The Seaton-Petter is a very creditable attempt to produce a really low-priced car suitable for the most arduous conditions at home and abroad, and when its size and roominess are taken into account, it represents very good value at £150, complete with full equipment. The tax is only £10 per annum, which is a consideration to many motorists.

* * * *

FRASER NASH RAID TO THE ALPS

June 27th to July 11th, 1969

by John Organ

THE IDEA OF AN "ALPINE JOLLY" TO COMMEMORATE the successes gained by Frazer Nashes in the Alpine Rallies in 1932, 3 and 4 was first suggested by David Thirlby in the Christmas 1967 edition of the *Chain Gang Gazette*. From humble beginnings this soon blossomed into the "jolly" to end all "jollies and subsequently David and Michael Bowler set off to Bolzano to "recce" the proposed route and organise hotel accommodation and other arrangements—much help being received from Denis Jenkinson in this connection. From the overwhelming reception and incredible amount of help from the Police and Town of Bolzano it was obvious that the "raid", as it was now called, was going to be a most outstanding success. (The word raid is the Italian description of an historic journey).

At the 1968 Christmas Party of the 'Nash section initial bookings were taken and at this stage there was a provisional arrangement for 40 'Nashes to make the journey—in the end this had dwindled to 36, even so this is a formidable number of vintage cars of one make to make such a journey—the cars ranged from 1925 to 1936 with fully representative range of 'Nash types with engines of all types included, Anzani, B.M.W., Meadows, Gough and Blackburne plus non-original's in the shape of A.C. and a lone Aston Martin engined car. Much valuable trade support was received from Castrol and Renolds, both of whom sent spacious vans which not only carried inexhaustible supplies of oil (G.T.X. and 'R') and chains but also carried large quantities of spares supplied by competitors ranging from complete engines to axle clips. Dunlop also supported the event behind the scenes whilst A.F.N. loaned a V.W. Van which conveyed all the excess luggage, 'Nashes don't have very much space for large suitcases and the suchlike.

And so on Friday, 27th June, Frazer Nashes began to converge on Crystal Palace from all parts of the country. The car I was co-driving, Chris Snowden's 1934 A.C. engined T.T. Replica had to come the furthest—from Carlisle whilst Dick and Rosemary Smith and Graham Hartley

came almost as far from the Lake District. Unfortunately we were reduced to 35 starters by this stage as poor Bob Upston had thrown a rod out the side of the block of his A.C. engined car a short distance from home—fortunately Bob and Margaret were able to get a lift to the Palace and got a lift to Bolzano in Freddie Giles' Volvo which Keith and Jane Hill were driving as a tender vehicle. The cars left London for Dover at 3 p.m. after the official departure and by tea time 34 'Nashes had converged on Dover—yes 34, poor Alastair Pugh had suffered a suspected broken crank in his immaculate 1928 Anzani (the car David took to Bolzano on the "recce"). Fortunately Alastair was able to get a lift to his home at Reigate where he collected his Rover 2000 T.C. the 'Nash being left at a garage in Folkestone. After a hilarious evening in Dover we boarded the 12.30 boat (reduced rates for the party) for Ostend and settled down for what rest we could hope to get on the boat.

At 4.30 a.m. on Saturday, 28th June, the noise inside the boat as 34 'Nashes burst into life was indescribable. Calamity No. three then occurred when Thirlby's clutch disintegrated whilst driving up the ramp out of the boat (it had been "jingling" on the way down to Dover)—an easy remedy was to simply shove the car into the back of the Castrol transporter whilst David and Paul Shaw joined the Pugh's in the Rover. After a short conference on the sea front at Ostende, the cars joined up into groups of 4 or 5 and set off towards Luxembourg. The motorways from Ostende to Brussels gets worse every year—we found the best way to beat the bumps was to get in the fast lane and go like hell! We all got lost in Brussels trying to find the restaurant where breakfast was arranged for us and following this the remaining journey to Luxembourg was easy. We all parked in the station yard where a variety of rebuilds took place. The Thirlby car was hoisted manually onto a concrete platform at the front end to facilitate working underneath whilst fitting a replacement clutch. Mick Gibbs had his sump off his Meadows engine trying to find out why the rear main was leaking oil and "Ganger" Hartley was brazing up his track rod ends! And so to bed for a much needed early night ready for the 6 a.m. start next morning.

Sunday, 29th June dawned clear and warm as we set off on the 450 mile trek from Luxembourg to Innsbruck. The first part of the journey to Karlsruhe was fairly slow but from then on it was

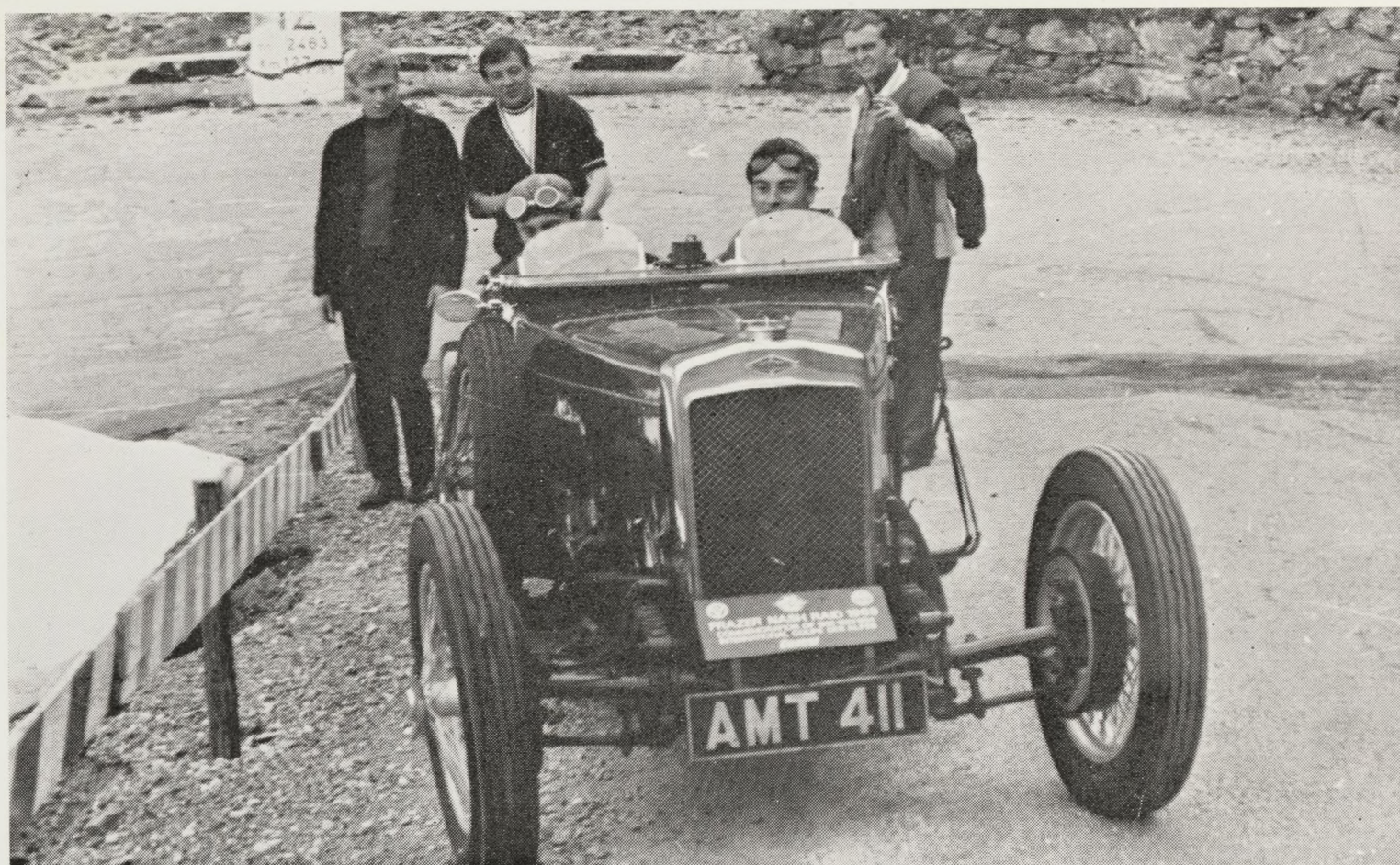
a fast blind down the autobahn as far as Augsburg. We had a bit of fun in Karlsruhe when the nut on the bevel box front coupling came loose on Dick Smith's Nurburg. It was Sunday lunch-time and the sight of five 'Nashes parked in the main street, one with its floorboards out and chains on display was too much and seemingly the entire population turned out to witness the antics of the mad English. After Augsburg we turned south towards Garmish and Innsbruck, with the magnificent sight of the Alps getting closer all the time. Due to various stops en route for one thing and another it was 9 p.m. when we reached Innsbruck—we were just parking outside the Hotel Europe when surprise, surprise who should be walking across the road in front of us but Elliot Elder! He had come down on holiday with fellow Scot, Tom Richardson and his wife in their Cortina to watch us in action. So now there were three Register members on the Raid, Grace Eaton was the third being in the hot seat of Jack's A.C. Nash, plus one ex member, Mike Reddaway who now has a 1926 Azani Nash. Another 'Nash had to be put aboard the Castrol van—Angus Cunday's Meadows T.T. Replica had broken its crank at Garmish.

9.30 a.m. on Monday, 30th June, we assembled the 'Nashes in the main square in Innsbruck behind our Police escort ready for a run in convoy up the Brenner Autoroute (free to us). And so into Italy and down the other side of the Brenner into Vipiteno where a most tumultuous reception was held for us—we were led into the narrow main street of this ancient town by the band and young ladies in national costume. Flags and bunting were out—it really was a most wonderful experience. Into the ancient town hall where much vino and Campari and other goodies were liberally dished out to all. Even the band came in with us and we all had a real good sing song by the time Giles had donned a bandsmans coat and led us all into a rousing Auld Lang Syne! We then staggered out into the sunlight and followed the energetically driven Strada Poliza Alfa T.I. on a riotous ascent of the Giova Pass—David Thirlby had the Anzani on two wheels and on the last hairpin Dick Smith nipped past the Alfa and was actually congratulated on his fine achievement, however we were told that in future we must all stay behind the Police car and on the descent of passes—piano, piano! We had lunch at the top of the Giova, a lot of people thought we had lunch in Vipitino but that was only "elevenses"!

At 1,000 lire per head we had a splendid lunch, a foretaste of things to come. After lunch we descended the steep southern side of the Giova, piano, piano, as instructed by the Police (our friends), down to Merano for yet another reception—more vino, more campari, more nosh and even orangeade for those who were beginning to feel the effects of the earlier happenings. And so onto Bolzano where at 6 p.m. 33 'Nashes parked in the main square to be greeted by the "Top Brass" of Bolzano whilst the band played Tyrolean music for us. Each crew was presented with a bottle of the local best Red Wine (the bottles had a special label—welcome Frazer Nash Raid 1969) and other goodies including a book called Roads in the Dolomites (English Edition) which contains lots of fabulous photographs and maps of the area. We all drove through the town at a steady 2 m.p.h. following the band to the Hotel Luna-Mendschein and into the fabulous Hotel Garage complete with Italian mechanico (ex Lancia's), Lathe and Welding Equipment (Gas and Electric), in fact the lot! With the cars safely tucked away we ate, drank and slept well that night!

Tuesday, 1st July was supposed to be a rest day but most of the party spent the entire day in the garage. Angus Cunday and John Teague were busy replacing the broken engine with one of the spare Meadows' from the Castrol Van, David Thirlby was fitting his Alpine Sprockets, Ian Trainer fitting new clutch linings whilst Dick Smith and I removed the bevel box from the Nurburg in order to tighten up the front nut properly and also a nut on the end of the reverse countershaft that had come loose. During the day the temperature in the garage rose above 100°F—we finished re-fitting the bevel box at about 8 p.m. having consumed vast quantities of liquid refreshment of various kinds throughout the day.

The next morning, all the cars rebuilt (except "Ganger" Hartley's whose engine was out in order to have it's camshaft built up on one lobe by our tame Italian mechanic) set off for Ora for—yes, another reception. Mixture as before except that we sat outside in the sun. After that lunch at the Lido at Caldaro where there was the splendid sight of a group of British holiday makers sitting on the grass enjoying the sun having a highly technical discussion about Meadows crankshafts! From Caldaro we all stormed up the Mendola Pass, at the top of which there is a splendid "pub".



John Organ and Ian Trainer with Renault mechanics on the Stelvio

Photo: Roger Richmond

Ten 'Nashes had been entered in a special class in the Corsa Della Menola (Hill Climb to you) the following Sunday so this was the ideal opportunity for the competitors to have an unofficial timed practice run. The "racers" returned to Appiano whilst the rest of the party parked in various vantage points down the pass. I was fortunate enough to occupy the mechanics seat of Mick Gibbs' Exeter for this run and what an exhilarating experience it was—full bore all the way. The Police (our friends) had closed the road but wouldn't account for any farmers who might appear from various side tracks off the pass, they obviously didn't bank on a convoy of heavily overloaded haycarts descending the pass whilst we were ascending it! None the less we reached the summit in 13 minutes which was not hanging about by any means. Bob drove too fast for him to take it all in!

Thursday, 3rd July was Stelvie day. Once again leave Bolzano in convoy for Gomagoi at the foot of the Stelvie where they started the timed runs in the thirties. Nigel Stoyel and I had swapped cars on this trip, Nigel was with Chris in the A.C. car and I joined Ian Trainer in the Meadows T.T. Replica. After a break for refreshment at Goma-

goi we set off in "convoy" up the 48 hairpins of the third highest pass in Europe (9,040 feet)—it turned out to be quite a burn up actually—the Police Alfa up front making the tourists pull over for us (see what I mean about them being "our friends"). We had a fabulous snow ball fight at the top and took many photographs of the breathtaking views. After lunch the road was being closed for anyone who wanted to make an "unofficial, official timed run". Once again the spectators gathered at various vantage points down the pass whilst the devilish characters returned to Gomagoi for their assault. Jack Eaton was first away and disappeared into the distance at a great rate of knots. Whilst Ian and I were waiting to leave the line I asked "Jenks" who was timing us from the start what a good time was and he reckoned if we broke 30 minutes we were doing well. We set off at a cracking pace, broadside round hairpin after hairpin, 5 min., 10 min., 15 min., we were doing very well. At hairpin 12 (48 is at the bottom incidentally) Ian slammed the gearlever into bottom and bang, the chain broke. But what an ideal place for it to happen for parked just below the corner was the Renault van. Quick service by the lads from Manchester

had us motoring again within 4 minutes and we reached the top 32 minutes after leaving the line at the bottom. So we had done 28 minutes on the road which was very good for a standard Meadows car, F.T.D. was Jack Eaton with a rousing 22 minutes whilst Clive Gould in David Johnson's Blackburne did 24 minutes. We all had a celebration drink at the top and then descended rapidly in order to get back to Bolzano early as we had a deadline to meet.

That evening the Town of Bolzano gave us a most fantastic official reception in the grounds of the Hotel Laurin. All the "Top Brass" were there and there was absolutely incredible quantities of food and wine (all free). Speeches were made, David Thirlby made one in Italian which was a good laugh for everyone, and everyone was presented with a memento of the occasion. Entertainment was provided by the local Tyrolean dancers and singers and an excellent tyrolean band from Ortisei which we nicknamed the Ortisei Hot Five (the trumpet player and clarinettist were obviously jazz fans at heart!) We all joined in the dancing and singing and as we all got merrier and merrier there was the sound of splashing water from the swimming pool—the bathing party was led by Freddie Giles, Mick Gibbs and Denis Jenkinson—"Jenks" took a flying leap through the air having first taken the precaution of removing his specs. And so a mottly collection of dripping wet Nash owners followed a staggering line of wet footprints through Bolzano at the conclusion of this VERY FORMAL RECEPTION!

The next day was another rest day and most people took advantage of it and had a rest. Nigel Stoyel and I spent an hour or so sorting out the carburettors on Chris's car, Chris was sleeping off a hangover at the time! Having got it sorted out I took the car out for a test run and found a most interesting pass just outside Bolzano—had the A.C. Nash really wound up on the smooth surface and wide hairpins.

Saturday, 5th July was practice day for the Meldola whilst we also had some Driving Tests in the main square against a team from the Automobile Club of Bolzano in Fiat 850's, etc. The locals won I'm afraid, best Nash performance was by Peter Still with his 1936 Meadows T.T. Replica who was fourth overall. Practice for the Menola was held in a thunderstorm which made the surface treacherous—Bob Upston driving Michael Bowler's Anzani hit a stone retaining wall and bent the front axle and Jack Eaton took

to the undergrowth but extracted himself again and completed his climb. The axle was straightened by our Italian mechanic who also welded Jack's chassis that had been cracked as a result of its excursion.

The next day was of course the Corsa Della Mendola and most of the Nashes left Bolzano early to drive up the Menola in convoy prior to the event. The entrants namely Tim Boyce, Jack Eaton, Vaughan Skirrow, Freddie Giles, Dick Smith, Bernard Harding, Mick Gibbs and Bill May left a little later accompanied by team manager "Jenks" and his assistants Stoyel and Organ. Whilst all the Italians were doing last minute tuning to their Abarths and Porches, etc. in the paddock (the square at Appiano) the Nash entrants were casually drinking beer by courtesy of *Motor Sport*! After the Nashes had left at minute intervals, "Jenks", Nigel, Andy McIver (Tim Boyce's mechanic) and I piled into the V.W. and set off in search of the Funicular station ("Jenks" steering and operating throttle and brake and Organ changing gear and operating the clutch). A trip up the Funicular (courtesy of *Motor Sport* again) and we joined the rest of the party at the top. Now if you ever go to an International Motor Racing Event you should go with "Jenks"—we had V.I.P. treatment everywhere at the top of the Menola, crossing through barriers we shouldn't have done and a free run of the paddock—fabulous! Tim Boyce was fastest Nash in just over 12 minutes which was very fast indeed (beating lots of Lancias and Alfa's, etc.). Vaughan was second and Jack third so two Meadows's cars beat the potentially faster A.C. engined car. Dick Smith had his mag come loose and stopped half way—the sound of his swearing was deadened by the cheers of the Italians who couldn't understand his curses—Dick was treated like a hero (as were the rest of the Nash contingent) and given much vino to compensate for his back luck. Freddie got two gears at once near the top and had to stop and sort the transmission out before crossing the finishing line about 77 minutes after starting. In the evening Tim was presented with a large cup which was duly filled with the contents of an enormous bottle of champagne which was shared by all and sundry. As with every other night we didn't get to bed much before 2 a.m.—sometimes it was well past 3 a.m., the nightlife was very good especially when the landlord realised we were of the "Frazer Nash company of sporting Englishmen" and

produced a bottle of red from his cellar for us and wouldn't accept payment for same!

Monday, 7th July was the big day of the Dolomite passes, six being on the itinerary. Unfortunately the fine weather had a relapse and we had a dull misty day, not that it spoilt the enjoyment at all. First stop was Ortisei for another of those mid-morning receptions and a pleasant surprise when we discovered the local policeman was the trumpet player from the Ortisei Hot Five! From Ortisei we ascended the Sella Pass, down the other side amid fantastic Dolomite scenery (pity it was damp and misty) and then climbed the West flank of the Pordoi. Down the exciting East flank to Arraba for lunch. Following lunch we moved onto the Falzarega Pass—most exciting beginning with hairpins in an alpine meadow, then above the tree line into really ferocious Dolomite scenery with a hairpin inside a natural Rock Tunnel! The top of the Falzarega is our furthest point East—send postcards, etc. and take photographs to record fact. Descending the pass it begins to rain and is very wet by the time we get back to Arraba. Due to the weather the scheduled timed run of the East flank of the Pordoi is cancelled (much gloom) as is the proposed route via the Valles, Rolls and Costalunga Passes (more gloom). However as most people began to return to Bolzano by the direct route a small splinter group was formed at Arraba. This consisted of Michael Burn who was driving Bill May's Gough engined T.T. Replica, Clive Gould with the Johnson Blackburne (both these car's owners had returned in modern vehicles!) Michael Bowler and girlfriend Caroline in the straightened Anzani and Derek Hall and his wife in his Meadows T.T. Rep. (Derek had competed in pre-war Alpines in a Singer Le Mans.) These four cars and their intrepid crews decided to do the scheduled route despite the inclement weather. Clive had a spare seat in the Blackburne which I hastily occupied being a glutton for punishment at the best of times—Maria Rose was the brave passenger in the Gough. We stormed up the Pordoi in nil visibility (as exciting as a timed run!) sliding on the cobbled hairpins—the Blackburne making gorgeous exhaust noises. Down the other side of the Pordoi and on down the main road as far as Moena. Turned left here and along to the bottom of the Valles Pass which still has an unmade surface like all the alpine passes did before the way. We hurled up the Valles in pouring rain, axle tramp on the hairpins

due to the "washboard" surface. At the top we assembled the four cars for photographs and had a cup of coffee. Maria and I then exchanged cars so that I was now in the passenger seat of the only chain gang Nash to have competed at Le Mans (1935). Down through fabulous wooded slopes with glimpse of fine scenery to the foot of the Rolle Pass—stormed up here in thick mist, spun the Gough on a hairpin in front of the Blackburne (whoops) and received a wonderful reception at the top. Everyone except Mike and I decided to return to Bolzano direct—it was rather cold and wet. However, the two intrepid occupants of the Gough decided to return via the Costalunga Pass which was even more exciting. Descending the West side in rapidly disappearing light we had to traverse rough unmade roads due to recent landslides having washed away much of the original surface. We eventually arrived in Bolzano at 9.15 p.m. and walked into dinner looking as though we had just completed the Milla Miglia! A most satisfying days motoring—celebrated well that night!

Tuesday, 8th July was our last day in Bolzano and was a rest day. Spent the morning preparing the cars for the journey home and the afternoon sightseeing, the weather had returned back to the normal bright sunshine. Last night in Bolzano was spent celebrating well into the early hours—our host's did us proud!

We left Bolzano in convoy on the Wednesday morning, before we left Italy three cars had trouble. Peter Gibson broke a back axle and Dick Smith cracked his sump on a stone whilst ascending the Brenner. Spares were retrieved from the Castrol van and both cars mended on the spot—we changed sumps on the Nurburg in no mans land between Italy and Austria. Whilst we were doing this we realised that "Ganger" hadn't appeared—it later transpired that he was still in Bolzano with a duff mag and busy rigging up a coil conversion.

The rest of the journey home was uneventful. And so on the evening of Friday, 11th July we returned to Dover triumphant after a most wonderful holiday. All the cars that had left England had returned under their own power—except the V.W. and David Johnson's modern M.G. Magnette both of which had broken their gearbox and engine respectively in Ulm—the V.W. of course full of everyone's luggage!

Prescott will seem so tame after the Stelvio!

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What is an Old Lag?

I AM GLAD YOU ASKED ME THAT QUESTION—AS ALL smart politicians say when somebody bowls them a real snorter.

Well, we had better commence by clearing up a little matter that has confused more than one generation, i.e., the difference between an Old Lag with capitals and an old lag without.

The latter is one who has done his stretch in one of H.M.'s prisons, either converting large stones into smaller ones or learning how to sew tough old mail bags; two activities presumably designed to bring home to him the dignity of labour.

The Old Lag, on the other hand, has done his in a place which the natives of that time referred to as 'The Lagonda' and is now known as Causeway Works or Ironbarks, according to which side of the road he is destined to work out the remainder of his sentence.

Now, it is a sorry fact that whereas the old lags are a fruitful and multiplying race—to the point where their overcrowded living conditions has become a matter of national concern—the Old Lags are a dying breed. A recent census shows that only twenty-five of them are (or were?) still sufficiently alive to still earn a crust in the place where they were first put on probation.

It would therefore seem to be an appropriate time at which to compile a kind of written identikit for the benefit of posterity (present trends indicating that it will be only too glad to have something to laugh about) before this extraordinary breed disappears for ever.

* * * *

An Old Lag is usually identifiable by his well-lined features, a cynical attitude towards those who profess to long for 'the good old days' and a morbid obsession with impending disaster—mostly expressed in terms like 'I reckon we'll have the bums in any day now'.

He is an authority on Official Receivers, take-overs, short time, overtime and no time at all. He is also an expert on the use of corrugated iron for industrial building purposes—and various ingenious methods of making it weatherproof.

Like most ageing people, he is apt to forget what he used to say about the cars when he was working on them—and now thinks they were the best ever built. ('Built, mate—not slung

together!') He justifies this view by pointing out that some of them are still running around at thirty or forty years of age—and will probably be doing so long after he has shuffled off this mortal coil.

He remembers names like Wilbur Gunn, Alfie Cranmer, Dick Watney, W. O. Bentley and A. P. Good, without whom there would never have been any Lagondas or, for that matter, a factory for anybody else to take over. And, unless you are a good listener endowed with phenomenal patience, you would be well advised to avoid mentioning Ulster, Brooklands, Monte Carlo or Le Mans whenever he is within hearing distance.

He also remembers times when the total complement of the outfit was reduced to twenty-five, including the board of directors, and is still amazed at the size to which it has since grown. (Funnily enough, it never seems to occur to him that he has had a hand in it.) This may be the reason why he tends to behave as if he were one of the owners and, therefore, entitled to air his views on how well, or otherwise, 'they' are running the place.

But generally his attitude to newcomers has mellowed over the years and he is no longer convinced that their primary purpose is to sack him the minute they get one foot inside the door.

* * * *

Of course, like all ancients, an Old Lag is apt to ramble on and on about things in which nobody any longer has the slightest interest.

Such as:

The days when men sat on the grass on the other side of the Causeway and waited for somebody to appear at the West gate and hold up two or three fingers to signal how many 'hands' were needed that day—if any.

The days when the cure for anything that broke was to make it twice as thick and keep your fingers crossed. If it broke again, then it obviously hadn't been thickened up enough the first time.

The days when 'The Ship' sailed over to the other side of the Causeway and left exposed to the public gaze those holes in the machine shop wall that by some chance lined up exactly with the back entrance to the pub.

The days when the 4½-litre won the 1935 Le Mans while 'officially' the property of the Official Receiver, who was a bit of a sportsman himself. And nobody knows whether he was also

aware that another piece of his 'property', a Rapier racing special, was passed over the wall at the back of Experimental (now the carpenters' shop) and loaded on a lorry waiting in the adjoining road.

The days when wages were only known to be a certainty if the jungle telegraph reported that Brown Bess (a 2½-litre) had actually been *seen* heading for the bank. Security equipment consisted of copper-headed, hub-cap hammers. (About which there are some very funny stories indeed.)

The days, or more specifically nights, when nobody would dream of going home until the show cars had been safely loaded on lorries and seen off to the Motor Show—more often than not with about half-an-hour to go before the doors were due to shut.

The days when the builders of 'The Best Car in the World' (according to their advertisement) really began to panic over the Lagonda V.12—and were only saved by the timely intervention of a nasty little man called Adolf Hitler.

And so on, and so on . . . *ad infinitum*.

* * * *

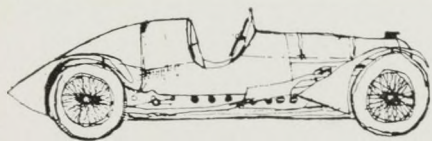
All of which reminds me that a very senior member of the order once told me that you were only entitled to be called an Old Lag if you were here during the car days. All the years of blood, sweat and toil of the war just didn't count one tiny, weeny, little bit towards it. O.B.E., yes. But Old Lag, never!

Incredible? Maybe. But then we are dealing with no ordinary breed. So perhaps we should be tolerant about their little idiosyncrasies for the short time left to them. When the last of them goes the news will not hit the headlines, nor will they rate a memorial.

Which is a pity really, because I have just thought of a rather good epitaph—THEY BUILT BETTER THAN THEY KNEW.

Perhaps somewhere, some day, somebody will daub the words on one of those old speedometers which the makers had to modify by increasing the range to 100 m.p.h.

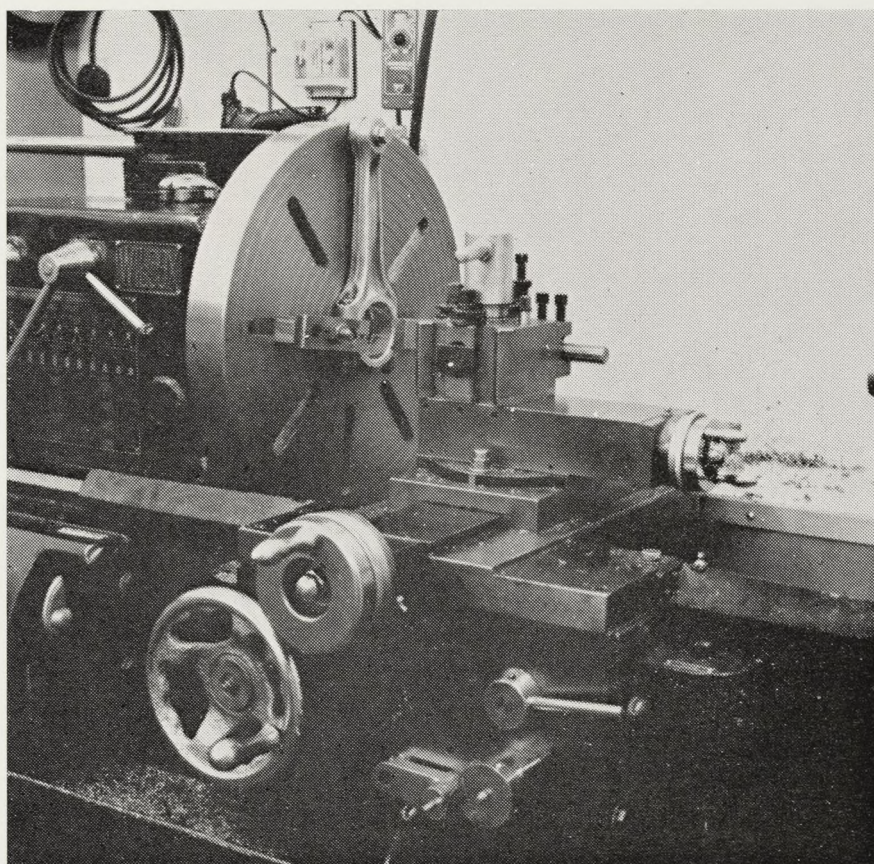
F. E. CHASEMORE.



The Restoration of JBG492 PART 4

WHILE I WAS AWAITING THE RETURN OF THE cylinder block from the reborers I made a start on the water pump. The impeller was badly worn on its back surface where the graphite seal bears against it and the tapered bore for the spindle looked somewhat grooved so I bored out the centre of the impeller and soft soldered in a phosphor bronze flanged bush with which I restored the original dimensions. I had broken off the screwed end of the spindle not knowing that it was left-hand thread so I drilled and tapped the spindle, screwed in a stud and held it in place with Loctite. I could not get a replacement graphite seal assembly but as the metal bellows portion seemed good I machined the remains of the old graphite away, turned up a new piece of graphite and attached it with Araldite. A new front cover was ploughed out of a 4½ in. diameter duralumin billet with a straight water outlet, the necessary right angle bend being obtained by using a moulded rubber elbow. The roller bearing which supports the spindle immediately behind the pump has no separate outer race but runs direct in a large flange. Strangely enough this had to be opened out 0.005 in. to accept a new roller race inner so the original must be non-standard. All these parts were put away when the block came back.

Needless to say the crank was tight in its new main bearings, they always are even though I always specify that it is to turn freely by hand. I scraped out the bearings until the necessary freedom was obtained and then set about reducing the connecting rod big ends to suit the reground crank pins. Both faces of the big end joint were machined down 0.015 in. being very careful to keep at right angles to the axis of the rod and locating each one off the little end to ensure a constant length. The big ends were then put together and the bolts tightened with a torque spanner to ensure constant conditions. I worked out that to give 0.001 in. clearance at -10°C, which was about as cold as the car is ever likely to get, a clearance of 0.002 in. was needed at 18°C which is my workshop temperature. I set the rods up on the faceplate and bored to this dimension. Although this gives 0.005 in. clearance at 100°C which is probably the working temperature I cannot see what else one can do.



*Machining the
connecting rod*

This is undoubtedly the big snag with dural rods.

I now come to the part of my tale which is the best example of not being able to see the wood for the trees that I have ever experienced. Having designed and obtained 30 piston castings I now set about machining these. I started with 30 knowing that I would scrap a few during the process and I wanted two sets, one for myself at $+0.040$ in. and one for Bob Watts at $+0.060$ in. Having spent over a month on the job I had just finished the last operation on the last piston, ending up with two sets of fourteen, when it suddenly dawned on me that while I had been fiddling about with $\frac{1}{2}$ thou dimensions I had completely overlooked the fact that my original drawing was wrong in the first place. I had designed the piston with a rectangular lump on the crown to get up to a 9 to 1 compression ratio and this wretched lump was at right angles to the gudgeon pin instead of in line with it. So there was nothing to do but to chuck the whole lot in the scrap and get back on the drawing board. My only consolation is that at least a dozen knowledgeable people had looked at these objects during the course of their manufacture and not one had spotted the fault.

Having got the drawing away to the pattern maker I set about a final cleaning of the block and giving it two coats of my favourite cylinder

black. All new water plates were made from $\frac{3}{16}$ in. hard rolled aluminium which were black anodised for further protection and held in place with 2BA brass cap nuts.

Attention was now turned to the cylinder heads. After descaling and vapour blasting these revealed an extraordinary amount of pitting in the combustion chambers and the valve seats as though the cylinders had been full of water at some time. Certainly there can have been virtually no compression due to valve leakage. I restored the surfaces with a variety of rifflers and emery cloth and then recut the valve seats. Strangely the valves and guides, when cleaned, were as good as new. The cylinder head faces were also badly corroded and so I had these surfaces ground removing 0.030 in. from each head which, as far as I can see does not weaken the head at all. I was interested to find that Lagonda used a 30 degree valve seat instead of the more common 45 degree angle. At this stage I put in two valves and a sparking plug and checked the volume of the combustion chamber to see if my previous calculation on the piston height was right. There was a slight error but this was compensated for by the increase in bore to 76 mm which just brought the compression ratio back to 9 to 1.

When dismantling the block I had removed the main oil gallery and in doing so had damaged

it. This is a piece of 11/16 in. \times 16 s.w.g. steel tube which is pushed into a line of holes bored in the block with an interference fit. The only piece of tube I could get was correct on the outside diameter but of very heavy gauge. It is 26 in. long but I managed to drill it out by soldering a very long shank onto a twist drill and tackling the tube from each end.

As I mentioned previously the crankshaft journals were fitted with force fit dural plugs containing a positive network of oil passages with a view to stopping sludge collection. I decided to fit a full flow oil filter of modern design because there is every sign that the V.12 is a great sludge producer. This, in my view, allows me to use a much more straightforward design of crankshaft plug and so I made a set of dumbbell shaped plugs which were a sliding fit and which were sealed with O-rings at either end. They are secured in position with the original

grub screw. The plug in the back main journal is a real labyrinth of complication being only $\frac{3}{4}$ in. diameter but having to provide a passage for pressure feed around its outside, a separate groove around the circumference with a drain hole connecting the groove back into the crankcase just in case the pressure supply leaks back into the clutch and finally another hole right through from the crankcase to the clutch spigot bearing for oil mist. This latter also keeps the clutch plate splines lightly oiled. All good fun to think out but I am glad I don't have to earn a living doing this for other people. I would never dare to charge enough.

The new piston patterns are now at the foundry and while waiting for the castings I am restoring the starter and dynamo both of which were working but when stripped it was hard to imagine why.

BRIAN MORGAN

Dinner at the 'Devereux'

by Arnold Davey

IF ONE WAS TO PLOT ON A GRAPH THE ATTENDANCE at the Dinner-Dance against the year, the result would look like the tooth form of a circular saw, with, for each successive venue, a slow rise in members to a peak and then a sudden drop. For this year's Dinner, the Committee spent a lot of time on arguing out the principles and the financial angles of the whole affair, and came to the conclusion that, if the dance aspect was dropped, a more intimate occasion was possible in a smaller room and the event ought not to make a loss even if numbers were lower. The final form was that the dinner would be by invitation only and the invitations would go primarily to competitors, organisers and marshals and then to the remainder of active members who were known to be interested. Plus a minimum of official guests, of course. There were teething troubles, inevitably, but they were overcome and 54 people sat down to a well cooked and unusual meal in the 'Devereux'. Refreshingly, it was not at all the usual 'banqueting' dinner with the plastic turkey and cardboard petits fours. The members present just filled the room and we had the run of the place since the 'Devereux' is a lawyers' pub, opposite the Law Courts, and does not open on Saturdays except by special arrange-

ment. There were three guests (plus their ladies). Darrell Berthon, the retiring Vice-President of the Bentley Drivers' Club and attending our dinner for the first time. John Nutter, the Competition Secretary of the Bentley Drivers' Club, and George Bowthorpe of the Alvis Owners Club who won the November Handicap Rally in 1969.

It has never been our custom—thank heaven—to have toasts and speeches, but our new President, Mike Wilby, was at his most droll in welcoming our guests and in MC-ing the distribution of awards. The principal award winners for 1969 were:

Annual Trophies

Michael Trophy	J. W. T. CROCKER
Fox Trophy	J. A. WOOD
Northern Trophy	A. BROWN
Densham Trophy	A. T. ELLIOTT
Allison Trophy	J. A. BATT
Car Club Trophy	A. W. MAY
Bentley Trophy	MRS. FRED A ROBERTS

Award List

Border Rally	1st	R. A. K. COLQUHOUN
	2nd	W. H. GOLDING
Northern Rally	1st	A. OGDEN
Finmere		
Best Ind. Perf'nce.		H. HINE (BDC)

Finmere (Continued)

Best Member	{ M. LEO M. H. WILBY
Class 1	J. C. BUGLER
Class 2	R. W. KERRIDGE
Award of Merit	{ A. BROWN A. TOFFOLO
Team Award	{ J. C. BUGLER A. TOFFOLO A. T. ELLIOTT
Concours d'Elegance	
Overall Winner	J. WRIGHT
Class Awards	{ N. P. BLAKENEY- EDWARDS M. VALENTINE J. H. LANCASTER
November Rally	
1st	G. H. BOWTHORPE (Alvis)
2nd & Best Member	MRS. MARY NORTH
Navigators' Awards	F. A. COLLINGS
Navigators' Awards	{ F. A. COLLINGS I. D. NORTH
Award of Merit	{ H. E. COLLIS K. WALLER H. HARBEN

As it happened, none of the awards had been engraved due to 'flu striking the firm who do this, and as they aren't on the 'phone there had been the most precarious arrangements made to get them back to present on the night. Various Wilbys and Absons had become part of the furniture at Paddington until the cups finally turned up on the morning of the event. And of course they had to be rounded up again at chucking-out time, drained of booze and sent back to the engravers.

After the award presentation, which followed the shortest conceivable speech by Jon Abson, Mike Wilby presented Darrell Berthon with a cut glass decanter from this club to mark his retirement and as a token of the friendship between the clubs as bodies and their officials personally. To go with the decanter, Richard Hare had made and engraved a silver label in a matching style. Col. Berthon seemed very moved at both the gift and the evident feeling which had produced it, and made a short but very sincere speech of thanks and assured us that the co-operation which both clubs have enjoyed in the past will become stronger in the future.

The company then returned to the bar downstairs for the remainder of the evening, and personally I found this part of the evening far more enjoyable than the average dance where, apart from having to bellow over the noise of the band, one only really sees the half dozen or so people on one's own table, whereas at the Devereux the various conversations, in ordinary tones, continually merged and split again so that one talked to or listened to dozens of different people throughout the evening. I am sure the bar takings were greater, too, than at a normal dance as several well known faces were more flushed than the heat of the room justified.

A splendid evening seemed to pass in a flash and it was closing time before it seemed possible. A few members were seen plotting on the pavement outside to 'go on somewhere' and it is alleged that the evening didn't end until midday Sunday for some.

More Stowage Space Inside the DB 2.6

DESPITE ITS ELEGANT AND ROOMY BODY, THE interior of a DB 2.6 doesn't seem to have enough stowage space for tools, tyre pumps, this and that, and odds and ends that all true motorists carry about with them. The glove boxes on the dash are singularly well named, and when a few maps, AA book, and other slim documents have been loaded into the door pockets, there is just no more room anywhere else.

I think I am right in saying that all these cars were fitted as standard with a radio, and an extra speaker beneath the rear seat. I can see Ivan Forshaw wincing at the thought of radios in Lagondas, but remember, we are talking about cars, not virtual pets. Tony Vokes, the previous owner of my model, had told me that this extension speaker did not work, but why worry, one speaker was all any normal person needed. Four screws hold it in position, and I removed the thing and explored behind with a torch. Lo and behold, a large smugglers' cavity measuring over a yard in width and 7½ in. deep. To utilize this terrible waste of space to the full, I got to work with my tinsnips and cut away all the metal forming the vertical front support of the seat tray, until it was flush with the floor and the

underside of the seat tray. Understand that the seat tray is still supported by an inner member 7½ in. to the rear, and whilst I had a few qualms about weakening the seat support, when the opening had been made I could not feel the slightest difference in stability of the seat. It would require the effect of the most vigorous back-seat frolics by 20 stone people even to make the seat tray deflect, and as I gave up that sort of goings-on when I was 14, I hardly think anyone should bother about weakening.

Where the metal had been cut on the vertical, I finished off with two aluminium folded strips to trim, and found an old piece of Wilton carpet in the loft at home which was cut to fit the space. I should add that the metal is steel, and what little rust was present was removed with emery paper, and a coat of red oxide applied to the interior.

I am finding this new cavity most useful. A foot pump fits in, along with a tool roll, spare plugs, spare bulbs and a nylon towrope (for towing somebody else, of course) and a couple of cans of GTX oil. All in all, a real boon.

B. SHIPLEY

LAGONDA CAR PRICES

1958 - 1969

YOU PROBABLY DON'T NEED AN ARTICLE TO TELL you that Vintage car prices in general, and those of Lagondas in particular are going up. But it might be of interest to apply a more objective test than everyone's memory to see just how much prices have risen and if the different models have followed the general trend.

The only method available is to study advertisements of Lagondas for sale in magazines, since the Government have steadfastly refused to publish a Lagonda price index, in spite of overwhelming public interest in the subject. So my girl friend and I plodded through classified ads. in the *Motor Sport* issues of the last 12 years, and recorded all the Lagondas for sale with asking prices; the aforementioned magazine being the only source prolific enough to make the laws of large numbers work in our favour. In order to save eyestrain only pre-war Lagondas were included.

The data is, of course, open to two major criticisms, first selling prices are not necessarily

the same as asking prices, and second, the condition of cars varies enormously. The first problem was ignored on the expectation that sellers' optimism was a constant proportion of the price, so that the trends would be shown even if selling prices were slightly lower than those shown—ono's were ignored on the assumption that within every seller there lurks an ono. Some differences in quality were eliminated by missing out obvious heaps and *concours* winners. It was hoped that the averaging effect and a few statistical tricks would do the rest.

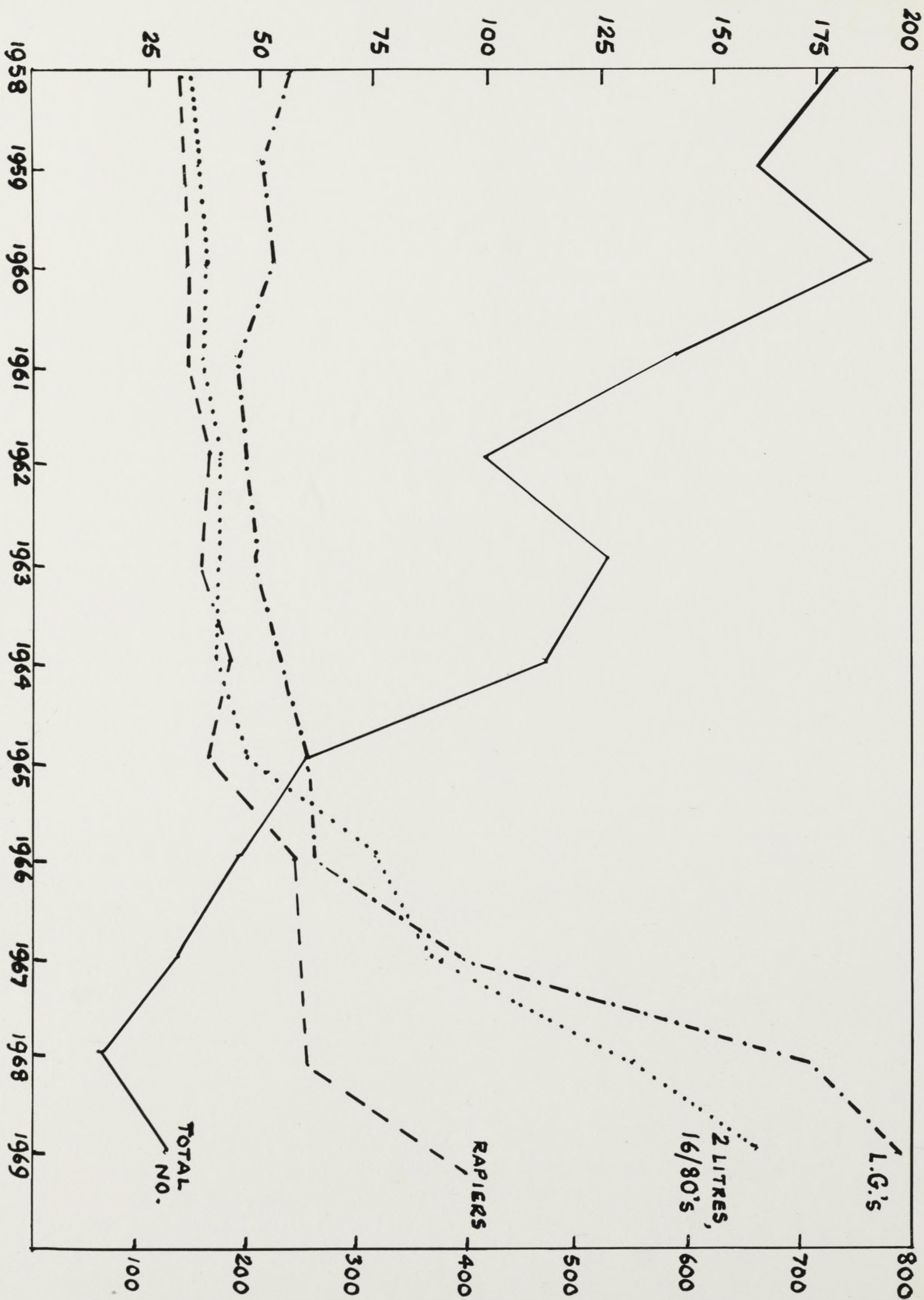
1958 was chosen as the start as it was my impression that most pre-war models had just reached or passed their low point in prices, and scarcity value had begun to offset physical deterioration. The vintage 'thing' had not really got underway and pre-war cars had to compete on merit with post-war models. You probably remember the times—a few decent sports cars had come on to the market, and those grotty fibreglass specials on Ford and Austin 7 chassis began to die a lingering death. People still used vintage cars to travel about in; miles per gallon were quoted in the advertisements as though they were the next most important thing to colour. Twin camshafts were so rare they were a selling feature of 2-litres and Rapiers.

How painful it was to see good M.45 Tourers for £200 and less, Alfas for prices even I could afford today (though ten times as much as I could then). The staggering thing was the number of cars for sale in those days. There were five or six Rapiers and 2-litres a month in summer and nearly 200 Lagondas of all models in a year. The period as a whole saw about 1,250 ads. and a total value of £270,000. Though the number of cars advertised declined from 180 per annum in 1958-1960 to 35 in 1969, the total expenditure on Lagondas has been maintained at £25,000 to £30,000 per annum by steeply rising prices, especially since 1965.

2-litres and Rapiers were the most numerous each at about 20 per cent of the total, followed by LG's 18 per cent, M.45's 12 per cent, 16/80's 10 per cent, 3/3½-litres and V.12's 9 per cent. This probably does not indicate anything in particular as the turnover must vary from model to model (who could bear to part with a 2-litre?). All models are disappearing from the scene, 4½'s and Rapiers a bit slower than the rest.

Price trends for the most numerous models are shown in the graph. In general prices rose only

LAGONDAS FOR SALE



slowly in 1958-1965—in fact $4\frac{1}{2}$ Saloons and $3\frac{3}{4}$ -litres still seemed to be going down at the beginning of the period—but in 1966 they really took off. 2-litres and 16/80's made about £160 at the beginning (16/80's a bit less than 2-litres) but from 1965 to 1969 rose from about £200 to £600 or £700. Rapiers have risen less strongly and seem to be this month's Best Buy.

It's in the heavy class that the real money is being made. The LG prices (saloons and open cars) shown on the graph are also fairly typical of M.45's which are a bit more erratic due to the smaller numbers on sale. $4\frac{1}{2}$ saloons were, not surprisingly, somewhat cheaper than tourers over the period and rose in price a bit later. V.12's were all over the place, due to small numbers and large quality variations, so rather defy analysis but rest assured that they are going up! $3\frac{3}{4}$ -litres seem to have been the fashion leaders by rising strongly in price back in 1963 and 1964 but the figures are a bit suspect.

To try and smooth out variations in the separate models and go to get a trend worth projecting for the future a logarithmic trend was fitted by least squares. This is just a fancy way of drawing a line through a lot of dots. For the period as a whole the average increase in price was, frankly, not all that great at about 12 per cent per annum which is only about 9 per cent when the decline in the value of money is taken into account. From the investment point of view you might as well have bought dull things like shares or a house.

Over the second half of the period, however, the rise in prices has been much higher than more common place objects. The wife ought to be told she is much better off with a couple of LG's than a house.

Basing forecasts on the latter half of the period the magic regressions give these as the price of your good condition Lagonda in five years time.

2-litre	£2,900	
16/80	£2,800	
$3\frac{3}{4}$ -litre	£2,300	
Rapier	£900	
M.45 Tourer	£2,900	Saloon £2,700
LG Tourer	£3,800	Saloon £3,000

Sorry, there were not enough 11.9's and V.12's failed every statistical test known to man.

Everyone has their theories of what caused the price increase. Clearly more people wanted to

hang on to or buy Lagondas, but what lay behind this? The rise in incomes since 1958 has been considerable but this made the rise possible rather than caused it. People certainly are not getting more intelligent so we will have to put it down to fashion and the profit motive.

However, demand for cars coming on to the market has not necessarily increased all that much. The numbers of cars offered for sale has declined so much that the man with the big cheque book gets the car. He was probably around many years ago only now, in a sellers market, he sets the price. We can despise him for having little sense or buying a car for the wrong reasons but the fact is the price rise has been caused just as much by us, the silent masses of Lagonda owners, for not selling our cars as often as we used to do.

Before anyone writes a rude letter let me say three things.

(i) I did not cause nor do I necessarily approve of the rise in prices though it has done wonders for the care of and condition of cars (which has probably made the above survey overstate price increases in the last few years).

(ii) If there are any statisticians in the club, I'm sorry, but I do not expect a Ph.D for this.

(iii) I like Rapiers. The figures just come out that way.

G. MOORE

November Handicap 1969

THE COMMITTEE OF THIS CLUB ALWAYS REFER TO this event as the November Rally while I insist on the correct name; they say that there is no longer any handicap; after this year they know better, the snow was our handicap this time.

Saturday 29th November dawned bright and clear and remained so even as I drove into the yard of the Golden Lion Inn, Newmarket at about 10 a.m. but after the first few of our 26 entries had signed on the snow started and by midday some three inches had fallen. The majority of the entrants were keen to go on (two Bentleys reported but then went home) and the Stewards (André Kenny and John Nutter) not only sent them off but went out to marshal as the official ones were snow bound.

The route ran through some very attractive country to the south-east of Newmarket and

skirting to the east of Bury St. Edmunds covered unfrequented roads to Wickham Market. Navigation was by route card (straight on at cross-roads, etc.), photographic clues, tulip card and map reading and a surprising number managed to unravel a good section of the route despite the snow. The entrants were mainly driving heavy vintage cars (or Bentleys) and these went well through the snow albeit sideways at times. I think one or two stopped occasionally to help the lesser non-competitive breatheren in their 'moderns'! Arctic clothing was very useful on this day for the several open cars (e.g. The North's 16/80; Grindell's M.45, Sykes' Speed 6 and Collin's Alvis).

Tea and buns and driving tests were held at the Auction Yard of Messrs. Spear and Son at Camfoea Ash; one of the partners, Mr. Dick Kelsall, is an ex 16/80 owner (he wants another one) and laid this on. There were two simple tests carried out and two latecomers driving large modern Bentleys were doing these in darkness, quite a sight! (Good efforts here by Messrs. Bowthorpe, Shoosmith, Davies, Jones and Harben).

Then by a very straight forward run on to the finish at the Copdock House Hotel near Ipswich where most of the starters had rendezvoused for supper (I had their money beforehand!). Duncan Westal was in command there and some informal but to my mind very fair results were concocted; the Alvis of Mr. Bowthorpe was a popular winner as he is a great supporter of ours and Mrs. North's effort as second overall and best Lagonda is extremely well deserved. Mr. Collin's Alvis was third and the Bentleys of Messrs. Waller and Harben fourth and fifth. The former winning the B.D.C.'s Eastbourne trophy. Supper followed and made a pleasant finish to a memorable day.

D.S.J.

The Summer Magazine will be published in June and the closing date for all copy is 1st May. All contributions gratefully received.



Snowed-up but not dismayed in Grindell's M.45

Photo: P. Faulkes

To France in GP 895 or how not to Tour Abroad

I WAS MOST INTERESTED TO READ MR. ALAN Elliott's article in the 1969 winter edition of the Club magazine.

Since I am a previous owner of GP 895 I am sure that he will not mind if I say that the car has been abroad before, and of course it may have been taken out of the country on other occasions for all I know. However, when I took the car to the South of France it was not in the splendid condition that Mr. Elliott now has it.

This was 10 years ago and the car was that much younger and so was the writer. This may explain why, unlike Mr. Elliott, I did not stop to think about spare parts and the likelihood of anything going wrong. In fact the only precautions that I took to insure against disaster were to top up the engine oil and to take with me a puncture outfit and a tin of sticking plasters.

Moreover, whilst the two front tyres were virtually new, the rear tyres were bald and the canvas was showing on the spare. The reader will think that I was either an incurable optimist or a fool and no doubt he will make his choice. Whether or not the girl friend who accompanied me on the trip knew of this lack of preparation I do not know. If she did not know, perhaps it was just as well; if she did, then not one complaint whatsoever was lodged and what was to follow was borne in a most stoic manner.

We set off and as is always my custom, I never make a firm booking for the boat. I work on the assumption that with so many motor cars on one boat, some will arrive late and some will not arrive at all, thus there will always be spare space. So far this has always worked and I have never missed a boat which I have set out to catch.

Leaving Boulogne we made for St. Omer and as had been my custom on previous occasions drove south of Paris, because I prefer this route. The first night's stop was at Chateaux Thiery and the day was uneventful save that, due to ignorance I did a silly thing. I suddenly thought that I should at least check the oil in the back axle and this I did. I found it to be a little on the low side and so at the next petrol station I had it topped up. All knowledgeable readers will have already deduced what trouble was to flow from that operation.

The following day was uneventful until nearly nightfall. We had partaken of rather a long picnic lunch by the side of the road and unlike Mr. Elliott's driving, the machinery was working flat out. It did so in England without any trouble and so I deduced that it should do so as well in France. Suddenly, about 10 miles from Macon the rear near side (off side in France) tyre burst its wall. The car did not get out of control or anything like that and we pulled up neatly by the side of the road. It was getting dark, there was no time to lose because we wanted to arrive in Macon in time to find a hotel and have dinner. I made a dive for the backseat, pulled out the jack and scrambled under the car. I wound the jack up to the rear spring but beyond that it would not go; not one centimetre would it raise the car. I struggled, but in vain. The 'camions' were hurtling down the road and my friend became extremely worried lest my legs should be crushed by one of them. With the benefit of hindsight, I realised that I had never tried to use the jack before, so how could I know that it would not work? There was nothing for it but to set off on foot. Luckily there was a garage about half a mile down the road and in extremely bad French I tried to convey what I wanted. I left a deposit, borrowed a jack and changed the wheel. Stopping at the garage the attendant was astonished but delighted with what he saw and this went of course for most of the garages at which we stopped in France.

We arrived at Macon, found a suitable hotel, had dinner and retired for the night.

The following morning was a Sunday. After breakfast and during it, I thought what can be done to my tyre, nothing could be in my humble opinion. Nevertheless, I wandered down the main street to see if there was a garage which was open. As luck would have it there was. I pulled the sorry looking back wheel off the car and rolled it down the road to the garage. I shrugged and pointed to the problem. "Ca va monsieur".

"Oui ca va", said the mechanic and a moment later he appeared with the largest gaiter which I have ever seen. I knew that it was illegal in England to use these things but not in France apparently. I imagine all those readers who have managed to get as far as this know what gaiter is. But for anybody who does not, perhaps I should explain that it is like an enormous patch which is vulcanised to the inside of the tyre.

In half-an-hour the tyre was repaired and so was the tube. I was charged about 7s 6d and so pleased was I at what had been accomplished, that I gave the mechanic five francs. He was so effusive that it was embarrassing and I had obviously given him too much. Afterwards, I really thought that he did not wish for a tip at all, he was just very happy to have enabled us to get on our way.

Approximately four or five miles out of Macon we stopped. I opened the bonnet and could see no reason for the apparent malfunction. Then I looked at the petrol filter and saw that the glass bowl was missing. Of course, I had removed it the night before in order to use the petrol in it to clean my trousers at the hotel. In changing the wheel I had smeared grease over a best pair of trousers. Of course, there was nothing for it, but to go back to the hotel. I knew where that wretched little bowl was, it was on the window sill in my bedroom at the hotel because I remembered putting it there. I managed to hitch a lift in an English car on its way back from the Cote d'Azure. The driver had obviously had his holiday because he was as brown as a berry. I began to wonder if we would ever be likewise. Arriving at the hotel, I went to my room which was being cleaned. Again I tried to explain what I had returned for and was eventually understood, "Rien monsieur, il n'est pas ici" and certainly my little glass bowl was clearly not there. I was certain as could be that it had been on that window sill. What was to be done, back to the Lagonda obviously, but what then?

J. B. JENNER

(To be continued in next issue)

The Truth Revealed

Dear Mr. Editor,

Further to my letter telling the true Lagonda story, I have had some correspondence with a Mr. Chas. Long who has provided portraits and profiles of two of his relatives who had some Lagondic connections. As these have some interest in their own right, I append them hereunder:

ADA HARRIET LONG

Born 1883—Present Whereabouts Unknown

Very little is known about this unfortunate relative. One of the Bermondsey Long's she had a good upbringing leading a sheltered life amidst



the hurly-burly of the Tower Bridge Road where her parents operated what was called "a good pull-up for carmen" the latter day equivalent of a Transport Cafe.

Here she assisted in attending the wants of these honest fellows, her dainty shape being the object of admiration and objective comment as she moved amongst them taking their orders for "pudden and two" or "three out of the pan and a large Rosie", "pen'orth and ha'porth twice" and so forth.

A female relation living on the outskirts of Staines suggested that she might enjoy a week or so's rest in rural surroundings. There she repaired adding her maidenly sweetness to Nature's handiwork.

Alas, this rustic idyll was soon blighted. The young men of the neighbourhood were not slow to discover this beauty in their midst, and one of their number the possessor of a horseless carriage (a tricar) invited her out "for a spin". It was then that it all happened.

The tricar having come to rest in a suitable shady lane, the young man asked Ada if "she'd like to have a go". In all her innocence she excitedly agreed. Whe she discovered that it was not a chance of driving the tricar he was offering her it was, lamentably, too late.

So she left Staines laden with shame and regret no doubt kicking herself, and appears to have devoted herself to good work.

The young man, found that the anagrammatic rearrangement of the name provided a name for his tricar—hence Lagonda.

It is hoped that this will finally dispose any American Indian streams and little villages in Ohio, or wherever it is.

HARRY TATTFORD LONG

Born 1851—Died 1910

Trained as an engineer he was patentee of machinery devoted to the manufacture of the "Tatford Double—Bottom Knocking apparatus" and subsequent to pill rolling and chloradyne lozenge blanking and piercing tools.

For his efforts in this direction he became President Emeritus of the Health Salts Aperient Water and Laxative Operatives Society.

For many years prior to his death he was the pillar of the local church as a vestryman and sidesman. His main interest however appeared to be in the Girls Choir. It seems that this interest led him into reckless expenditure of his personal finances—well, you know what choir girls are—things have not altered much, at least not in that direction.



It was at this point that he light-heartedly decided to raise some ready money by using the Church Plate as a security against a loan he obtained from another Uncle, (it was either Drew or Attenborough).

All would have passed well had not a Baptismal Ceremony to be performed unexpectedly, when the Incumbent at the time was somewhat put out to find, at the peak of the Ceremony, that the handsome silver font was not in its accustomed place but in its stead was a enamel utensil bearing the inscription "Lambeth Borough Council", thus of course bringing to light Uncle Harry's unfortunate misappropriation.

This fall from grace caused him to make a short sojourn at Her Majesty's Establishment at Wormwood Scrubbs and on his return to freedom

like so many he found the doors of Society shut fast against him.

With what capital as remained he went into business as a purveyor of dried fish and it would appear that such stocks as remained unsold at the end of each day's trading he used for his personal nourishment. Unfortunately the very nature of this victual had a strong tendency to superimpose a great thirst upon that which nature had already generously endowed him. This in turn increased his consumption of malt liquors which doubtless had some bearing upon his unfortunate demise which happened whilst attempting to shave himself with one of the newly invented safety razors, when accidentally he cut his throat.

They say he bled something shocking.

* * * *

Whilst these two profiles have every semblance of verisimilitude, they yet contain gross distortions for the unwary historian. Wasn't it Henry Ford who said—"History is all junk"?

I am not likely to forget Ada Long. It is quite true that I asked her to "have a go" in the tricar. But this was only because I wanted to try the front seat. All I was thinking about was spring rates so I was totally unprepared for the ensuing assault.

It was probably this more than anything else which led me to design the 11.1—at least, you could keep going side by side. We still correspond.

Harry Long was another kettle of fish. In fact, he didn't die until 1910 after I helped him out for the last time.

It was largely through Harry that I was able to start the firm. I paid him 30s. and promised him free drink for life to play the part of a millionaire playboy who was going to back the firm. Under this stimulus, he performed magnificently and more substantial backing was immediately forthcoming.

Unfortunately, he was then on brandy and champagne, and at his rate of consumption, was making substantial inroads into profits. Eventually, however, we managed to get him on to meths. Later, by sheer chance, we discovered that he preferred petrol. This suited us better as we got a trade discount.

If the Tories hadn't started taxing petrol, he might have lived to a ripe old age.

In the end, we arranged a works fireworks party and gave him a box of matches.

Yours,
G. P. W. Taylor

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letter from Mr. Darrell Berthon

My Dear Mike—Thank you and the Lagonda Club so very much for asking me to your Club Dinner and for presenting me with the truly magnificent decanter. It is a beautiful piece of glass and with its plaque and inscription it will remain one of my most treasured possessions. I did little enough to deserve it but I think the thought behind it is typical of the spirit between our two clubs. Long may it continue.

DARRELL BERTHON

Long Crendon, Bucks.

Meadows 4½-litre Outputs

Dear Sir—I read with interest the letter from A. H. Wittridge in the Winter issue regarding the output of the 4½-litre Meadows engine. If nothing else I think it proves how much wishful thinking there is about power output of these engines.

The data which he quotes came from a test of a LG.45R sanction III engine from the 1936 Fox & Nicoll team car so it can be reckoned that this engine was in a higher state of tune than most, yet only produced 129.5 b.h.p.

The M.45R I once owned was a works-prepared car used in the Monte Carlo Rally and on the test bed it put out 109 b.h.p. and a note at the time indicated that this was better than most. Of course this was on the low grade petrol available in the mid 1930's. I think all these figures cast doubts on the oft quoted 140 b.h.p. but nevertheless the 4½ is a remarkable engine that makes a very potent motor car. The secret is I think not the power it produces but the torque. This is around 215 lb. ft. at 1,500 r.p.m. which means there is terrific punch all the way up the scale. 4½ owners can demonstrate this by starting from rest in top gear and going straight up to 90 m.p.h., but not in this country of course!

M. H. WILBY

London, N.W.3.

Brno/Ostrava combined rally

Dear Sir—Have just received the latest copy of the LAGONDA Magazine and was most interested to read the letter from Czechoslovakia extending an invitation to Club members to participate in a

rally in June. You may know that there is another rally in Brno which takes place just after the one in Ostrava (?) and it would appear that the two could be combined in one visit.

It may interest members to know that the Czechs are most hospitable people and the food and drink are good, also this is one of the most beautiful countries that I have seen in some twenty-five years of travelling, and I think these rallies may well be worth the effort of the long journey—I think my wife's recent and not direct route from Bedford to Prague was some 810 miles.

However, I would be most grateful if you could make it known that if any members are planning to take part in the rallies and intend coming through Prague, my wife and I would be very glad indeed to see them and put them up should they wish to stay for some time. In any case if we can offer any assistance or guidance, we should be only too pleased to do so, a line to me at the following address will be forwarded to me: c/o Foreign and Commonwealth Office (PRAGUE), King Charles Street, London, S.W.1.

We expect to be here till the end of July, so will just have time to see these rallies through.

All best wishes.

ALAN G. MACKIE,

British Embassy, Prague.

DB 2.6's

Dear Sir—In the belief that perhaps my recent article in the Magazine about my DB 2.6 may have caused your correspondent Mr. H. J. Collins to write about post-war Lagondas in the Autumn 1969 issue, I feel constrained to reply.

It would seem that in the past seven or eight years, Mr. Collins has owned 13 such cars and is clearly more qualified than am I to speak of them. I have owned (and still do), just one, and am very well aware of the limitations and characteristics of my own model. Frankly, it is not everybody's car, it has its foibles, and is undoubtedly a machine which sorts out the men from the boys.

But what baffles me beyond comprehension is Mr. Collins thirteenfold masochism—to use his own terminology. He refers to weaknesses and faults which I have never even heard of still less experienced, but apparently he has gone on and on buying David Brown Lagondas and says "happy was the man who got rid of one". Mr. Collins must surely be the happiest Member in the Club. No-one could possibly be happier!

However, it does really encourage me to know than an ex 2.6 owner is willing to write a letter to the Editor, and talk about his experiences. As a 'new boy', I mourn the fact that since receiving my first copy of the mag.—the Summer 1967 issue, all readers' experiences with DB 2.6 cars have come from that tiresome fellow Shipley, and I was beginning to think that inarticulacy and DB ownership were synonymous terms. I know we are regarded as poor relations in the Club, witness the report on the weekend party at Weston Manor Hotel when the presence of two DB cars was completely ignored, but whilst the product is different, the name still remains the same.

B. SHIPLEY (S20)
Aldershot, Hants.

... And Again

Dear Sir—I read with regret Mr. H. J. Collins indictment of DB Lagondas. While I have little knowledge of the models he mentions, I can speak with a certain authority of the DB Rapide. I purchased my car, chassis and engine 400/110/L, at the New York show in April 1962. I was in no hurry to take delivery, and collected the car from the Aston Martin Lagonda agents in October '62, fully modified to 1963 specification. It was a joy to drive and very fast, in the 125 m.p.h. class, with superb braking and road holding. I did not like the Borg Warner automatic box; there was nothing the matter with, but I just didn't like it. During the summer of 1963, I found that the car ran very hot, too hot, in traffic and I suspect it had never been tropically tested. Also, air conditioning in the locality is certainly desirable and many consider it essential in summer. I fitted a first-rate American air conditioning unit during the winter of 1963/64 and took the car with me to England the following summer. The Works fitted a larger radiator, replaced the eight blade fan with one of 12 blades, opened up the front and fitted reverse air scoops in the bonnet, to suck out hot air. The extra air flow and greater cooling capacity has cured the trouble. At some 30,000 miles the tyres were getting a bit thin, so I replaced them with a slightly larger size. As I expected the rack and pinion steering remained perfect at above some 30 m.p.h., but I was prepared for heavy low speed steering? I therefore fitted the DB.6 power steering, which is a joy. I also got rid of the automatic box and fitted a 5 speed ZF as used in the DB.6. I experimented

with rear ends and found that a 3.54:1 limited slip to be best. I cannot quote top speed, but 105 in third and 125 in fourth are easily obtainable, while the car cruises at 87 (true speed) at 3000 in fifth, giving 17 m.p.g. (U.S.A.) at that speed.

At 50,000 miles the car is, to my mind, about perfect, not a rattle, very quiet and in many ways I prefer it to my DBS. My experience of Lagondas goes back quite a long time. A 2-litre saloon, underpowered, a 3-litre saloon, underbraked and a 1937 LG.45 (I think), a very fine car but you had to be fairly strong to drive it! In the last eight years I have owned a DB.4, DB.5, DB.6 and now a DBS. I call the latter about the ultimate in its class, but a number of experienced high speed drivers consider my Rapide to be its equal. Anyhow, it will be a long time before I sell it and fortunately, the value seems to be increasing as there are, I believe, but two or three in the country. To that extent and to that extent only, I agree with Mr. Collins that the Works were right to drop it!

H. M. GROVES (Group Captain),
Florida, U.S.A.

Balanced Crankshafts

Dear Sir—Alan Brown's experience with his LG.45 crankshaft is interesting as Lagondas certainly claimed to have balanced them both statically and dynamically. The article covering the introduction of the M.45 published in *The Motor* of 19th September 1933 says as much, but prewar motoring journalists were much less technical than their present-day counterparts, and quite capable of engineering howlers. (*The Autocar's* road test of the LG.45 contains a marvellous one about the steering.) So the answer to question 1 is "They said so, even on the M.45".

Question 2 really calls for a reply by a mechanical engineer rather than a concrete-basher but here goes anyway. The function of the vibration damper is to damp out the vibrations winding up and unwinding the crankshaft due to the drive being taken out at one end while the power impulses are fed in all along it. In addition, the crank must have its own natural frequency of oscillation which may or may not come within the range of running speeds. The particular oscillation can be best visualised by imagining the flywheel seized in a giant vice with the crank horizontal and No. 1 crankpin at 90 degrees after TDC. If it is then struck a smart vertical down-

ward blow on No. 1 crankpin, the whole crank will wind up and unwind like a huge corkscrew, vibrating at its natural frequency. The Lanchester type damper which has a controlled amount of rotational freedom between its mounting onto the crankshaft and its heavy rim will, by trying to turn at a steady speed, (Newton's Second Law and that), tends to try to speed up the unwinding part of the vibration cycle and slow down the winding-up part. The whole of the damping action being in torsion and having not much to do with the vertical out-of-balance forces due to an unbalanced crank. Therefore the answer to question 2 is 'Yes'.

Question 3 gets into deeper water and I feel the answer will depend on whether the crankshaft speed is to be significantly increased. If the crankshaft's natural frequency lies just beyond the present upper speed limit (which it might) and the tuning efforts result in an increase in revs./min. so that this frequency is attained during running, it may well be that a larger damper is needed not a smaller one, or else one with different torsional damping characteristics. If however more power is to be obtained at the same crankshaft speed, then I think the existing damper will do. An experience I had some years ago may be interesting here. I bought an AC Ace-Bristol which I intended to race as well as use on the road. It had been very highly tuned at some stage in its life and was, in fact, far too 'fierce' for a road car. The front end of the crankshaft carried an oil-filled Girling torsional damper of heroic proportions whose operating principle was somewhat akin to a torque-converter. This exerted such a damping force on the crank that eventually the Woodruff key which secured it broke and on its way out savaged the keyway to such an extent that it was no longer possible to bolt the thing up properly. No matter how tightly it was bolted up on its taper (after fitting a new key, of course) the damper would damp itself loose within a mile. Eventually the car went back to AC's who ground out the keyway oversize, fitted a stepped key and—pause for breath before coming to the point—a very much smaller rubber-bonded 'Wolset' damper. When I got the car back they were most insistent that with this smaller damper the maximum permissible revs. were to be reduced from 6250 to 5750 or else the engine was likely to dismantle itself instantaneously. So here a lighter damper was not the passport to higher revs.—quite the reverse. But no two engines are

the same, of course.

As far as literature is concerned, most of the books available in a public library would be too superficial for the do-it-yourself damper designer so it is probably necessary to smuggle oneself into a university engineering department library and have a browse. There was, incidentally a good article by Dr. Swanson of Imperial College in *Autocar* of 12th December 1968 on balancing theory and he recommends three books: His own *Engineering dynamics* (EUP 1963); Biezens & Grammell *Engineering dynamics* vol. 4 (Blackie 1954); Thornton *Mechanics Applied to Vibrations and Balancing* (Chapman & Hull 1939).

ARNOLD DAVEY,
Southgate, London, N.14.

Dear Sir—I reply to Mr. Brown's letter in the Autumn Magazine. I thought the following item may be of interest.

The main reason for excessive unbalance is the mass off material has found another axis other than the true one of the shaft, perhaps at some time the shaft has been reground off centre, or the shaft has a deflection figure higher than is satisfactory for a crankshaft (.0015).

While at Jack Brabhams I balanced several thoroughbred crankshafts, including Lagonda's, and found as they were machined shafts, very little unbalance was found.

When the shafts were made only a static balance was carried out, as Dynamic balancing machines were very rare before the war, perhaps somebody who may have worked at Staines could verify this point.

The vibration damper is a very important item, and should never be left off or machined in anyway. It is designed to suit a certain type of shaft, and serious trouble can result if the wrong damper goes on the wrong shaft, this point is really shown up if tried on a Vee engine.

It is designed to absorb torsional oscillation of the shaft, this occurs at its worst as the shaft passes through its critical speed which all shafts have at different speeds, unfortunately the six cylinder engine suffers this at its most effective power r.p.m. band in a lot of cases, that is one reason why it has not been popular for Grand Prix engines.

There is formula for designing dampers but it is far beyond me, so I shall not try.

P. J. DAVEY (D.25)
Woking, Surrey.

REGIONALISATION

Below are listed the names and addresses of local representatives and the meeting place:

Area No.		Monthly Meetings, 8/8.30 p.m.			
1	N. Ireland	J. Longridge, "Rockville", 22 Warren Road, Donaghadee, County Down	North Down House, Comber, Co. Down. 1st Tuesday		
			The Globe Tavern, Joy's Entry, off High St., Belfast. Lunch each Friday for any- one in Belfast on business.		
2	Eire	L. C. Thorn, 5 Grange Road, Rathfarnham	West Country Hotel, Chapelizon, Dublin. 1st Monday		
3	Scotland	J. McKellar-Cairns, 22 Rullion Road, Penicuik, Midlothian	Melville Castle, Eskbank nr. Dalkeith, Midlothian 1st Thursday In conjunction with V.S.C.C.		
4	Border country	I. G. Macdonald, 37 Oaklands, Gosforth, Newcastle-on-Tyne	Red Bar, Ridley Arms, Stannington, Northumberland. Last Wednesday		
5	N. & E. Ridings	D. H. Coates, Hill Farm, Swine, Nr. Hull	Duke of York, Skirlaugh—on A165 and about 9 miles N.N.E. of Hull. Last Tuesday		
6	W. Riding, Notts, and Lincs	Dr. J. G. Rider, The Range, Hatfield, Doncaster	The Hatfield Chace, Hatfield—on A18. 2nd Thursday		
7	Lancs, Cheshire, N. Staffs & Derbys	H. L. Schofield, Foxhill Stables, 271 Mottram Road, Stalybridge, Cheshire	West Towers Country Club, Church Lane, Marple, Cheshire. 2nd Thursday		
8	South Wales	John Batt, 7 Grays Walk, Druids Green, Cowbridge	Bear Hotel, Cowbridge, Glam. 1st Thursday V.S.C.C.		
9	Gloucestershire, Bristol, N. Somerset & S. Worcester	J. Organ, 'Onaway', Chalford Hill, Stroud, Glos.	The Compass Inn, Tormarton, Glos. 4th Friday		
	and for the Northern part of this area	J. Organ	The Royal William Hotel, Cranham, Glos. 3rd Thursday		
9a	Shropshire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire, N. Wales	D. P. Crow, 181 Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Salop.		White Horse Inn, Wenlock Road, Shrewsbury. 2nd Friday	
10	Warwicks, S. Staffs & Leics	C. H. Nolten, 29 Hollyhurst Road, Banners Gate Sutton Coldfield		Manor House Hotel, Old A45 at Meriden (not by-pass). 2nd Tuesday	
11	Essex & East Anglia	J. D. Abson, 11 Highfield Green, Bury Lane, Epping		The Old King's Head, Stock (S.W. of on B1007, Essex. 8.30 p.m. 1st Wednesday	
12	Bucks & W. Herts & Bedfordshire	D. D. Overy, The Old Cottage, Bourne End, Boxmoor, Herts.			
13	Berks & Oxon	M. B. Jones, 4 Grass Hill, Caversham, Reading		The Bull, Sonning. 3rd Friday	
14	W. Home Counties, Middx & W. London	A. H. Gostling, 8 Ridgeway Road, Isleworth, Middx.		Anglers Hotel, Staines. 2nd Wednesday	
15	Kent	L. N. Buck, 21 Willow Walk, Culverstone, Meopham		Park Gate Inn, Hollingbourne, Kent. On A20, $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from M20. 2nd Wednesday Sir Jeffrey Amherst, between Sevenoaks and Plaxtol on A25. 3rd Thursday	
16	Surrey & Sussex	N. T. Walder, Old Park House, Ifield, Crawley		Star Inn, Ruspur, Nr. Horsham. Last Friday	
17	Wiltshire, Dorset & Hampshire	D. J. Palmer, North Carolina, Quibo Lane, Weymouth		Hambro Arms, Milton Abbas, Dorset. 2nd Friday	
18	Devon, Cornwall & Somerset	J. C. Bugler, 3 Springfield Close, Elburton, Plymstock, Devon		To be arranged	
19	London			Coach & Horses, Hill St., W.1. 1st Thursday	

LAGONDA SERVICE



We have a large stock of useful spare parts for Lagonda cars still available. Although the demand for parts has diminished over the last few years and prices have increased considerably, we can still assist Lagonda owners with the majority of parts required for re-building and servicing the numerous pre-war Lagonda Models.

New parts are made up in small batches and consist of gaskets, valves and valve guides, pistons, cylinder liners, clutch and brake linings etc.

We also have a stock of used parts taken from dismantled cars. Often we supply Lagonda owners with cylinder heads, crankshafts, cylinder blocks and similar components which are very difficult to obtain when required.

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