



THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB

Number 90 Winter 1975



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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: R. L. Atwell's very fine 1938 V.12 Coupé de Ville. (Photo: Warren E. Warner.)

Out and About

THE ENCLOSED PHOTOGRAPH HAS TURNED UP AND shows a pair of M.45's competing in the Brighton Speed Trials, probably in the early fifties. The driver of CGO 62 is thought to be Major Charles Lewis. Does anyone know of the current whereabouts of either car? (Surely now owned by Group Capt. Rexford-Welch. Ed.)

* * * *

Ivan Forshaw writes to tell us that MR. JOSHUA SIEGER, a Poole businessman, has been appointed to represent the Export Club movement on the British Overseas Trade Advisory Council. Mr. Sieger has also had a very long association with the Lagonda Club as Ivan recalls that he was the Club's Joint Secretary when Ivan joined back in 1934.

* * * *

FRANK WALLER notes in a recent letter that owners with Lucas P.100B headlamps who are in need of replacement bullseye lenses should contact SOUTH DEVON OPTICAL CO. LTD., 7 UNION STREET, NEWTON ABBOT, DEVON. Tel.: Newton Abbot 4864. They can supply lenses to the correct magnification of 21/55.

Member C. F. FRANCIS returned to England earlier this year having travelled home from a trip to India and Far East on a motor cycle. By now he should have recovered from his journey—any chance of recounting his adventures in the magazine?

* * * *

BRIGGS CUNNINGHAM and his Motor Museum in California are given a good write-up in the November *Motor Sport* with some fine photographs too. This reminds us that Briggs' 1940 V.12 Rapide, which he has owned since new, had only travelled 6,000 miles up to Spring of this year. Can this low mileage be a Club record, asks Bob Crane?

* * * *

We are very sorry to learn of the death in America of ART COZZENS. A stalwart member of the Club for a number of years his enthusiasm for Lagondas will be much missed by our American section. Our sympathy goes to his relatives and friends.

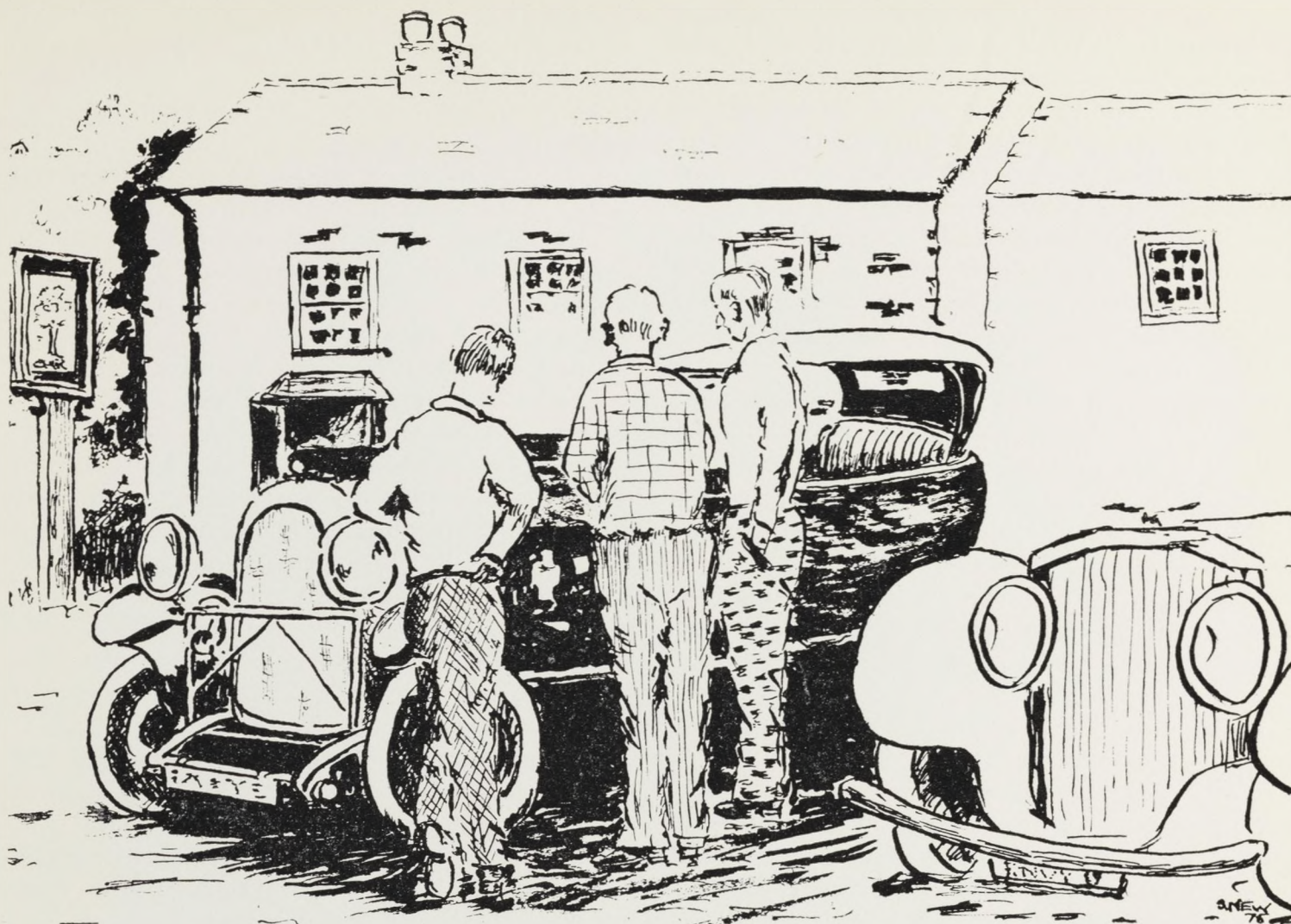
* * * *

Some changes took place in your Committee at the last A.G.M. BARBARA WITTRIDGE retires from the position of Treasurer as Witt, Donald and she are taking over the Half Moon Inn at



Brighton Speed Trials—see above

Photo: Guy Griffiths



"Even the rust has a shine . . ."

Cartoon: S. New (Ex. Lagonda Company)

Horsington in Somerset (what about a Pub Meet?) and the Committee have placed on record their grateful thanks for all her good work and wish the family all success in their new venture.

Taking over as Treasurer is ALASTAIR INNES DICK whose wide business experience will prove a great asset in keeping our accounts in impeccable order. MIKE GABER regrettably resigned from the Committee to take up a business appointment in Saudi Arabia which will keep him in the Middle East for some time to come, although he will no doubt be in evidence at any Lag Meets which coincide with his home leaves. Mike did a lot of sound work behind the scenes to help the smooth running of the Club.

We also welcome to the Committee JIM MCMURDY whose enthusiasm for the David Brown 2.6 and 3-litre cars will be most useful.

* * * *

The Committee wish all Members and their friends a happy, prosperous and above all, peaceful New Year.

Midland Notes

by Neil Frajbis

BY THE TIME THESE NOTES APPEAR IN PRINT, 1975 will have drawn to a close. The programme for 1976 is already beginning to gel but before I go into any detail perhaps it would be as well to look back, with a critical eye, on the 1975 Midland activities.

First of all, the overall programme was rather ambitious in the number and varied type of events but the object was to offer members a choice of event and venue. There is always a problem of slotting the local area events in between more popular VSCC, BDC and our own important annual meetings. John Batt has this juggling problem each year and he always manages to produce a well balanced fixture list.

I did not realise that two of the dates allocated

to Midland events fell on bank holiday weeks and I am sure this was partly responsible for the low turn out. The second Midland Social on 3rd August in the Stratford area was called off because of very little support. Apparently a lot of people, including yours truly, were away on holiday at that time and Tony Wood, who had kindly volunteered to organise the day, could not find any interest from members living in and around the Stratford area. So lesson one, avoid peak holiday periods.

Lesson two, it would seem, members prefer to gather for a good natter and noggin and the treasure hunts, gymkhanas or whatever are purely an excuse to be there.

By far the most popular and successful event was the Midland Film Show and I shall therefore repeat this in 1976. In fact the provisional date is 16th March, should you want to make a note of it, but full details will appear in a future issue of the Newsletter.

It would seem that the Sunday Pub Meet Social is also the order of the day for 1976.

With regard to competitive events, albeit mild ones, it is true that the Northern and Midland Secretaries are hatching a few ideas to encourage members in the two areas to give mutual support in co-promoted events. All will be revealed in due course.

Lesson three, is advertise, advertise and advertise. It may be old hat, but the message has to be thrust right home for people to take any real notice. Granted it costs more money this way but if it gets the desired results it enables the organisers of events to make a net profit. In fact, £2 instead of £1 increase on the subscription rates could possibly have allowed a little more to be spent on advertising our own events.

Just to keep the records straight I must briefly mention the happenings since the last notes. The Treasure Hunt eventually took place on Sunday, 31st August. For reasons already stated the turn out was very poor in numbers, but the quality was superb. Namely the Colquhoun's in their 2-litre, Harry Taylor and family with DB.3-litre, the Witts in M.45 and last but by no means least John Ward with 16/80. Also yours truly with 16/80 who was Clerk of the Course, Chief Paddock Marshall, Route and Check Point Marshall and no doubt other nasty names if the entrants comments en route were printable. They all completed the course, so it could not have been too bad. The finishing order was as listed

above, so congratulations to Mairwen and Robin. Also well done Harry and family for coming a close second, it was the very first time they had tackled such an event.

I expect there to be an entrants viewpoint reported elsewhere in this issue.

The last item in the Midland Calendar was the Dinner held on 1st November. Twenty-four members, an improvement on last year, descended upon the Newton Park Hotel for drinks, din-dins and plenty of chat. We were pleased to welcome Herb and friend, Roger Firth, Alan Brown and Alistair Barker from the northern counties. As promised, the formal chat was kept to a minimum but there was one important duty that had to be performed. It was the presentation of a farewell gift to the Wittridges who will soon be taking up residence in the Half Moon Inn, Horsington in Somerset. We shall dearly miss Barbara, Witt and Donald at the Meriden Pub Meet and on behalf of all Midland members, I wish them every success in their new venture.

I am told that it will not be very long before a Pub Meet is going at the Half Moon, details of which are advertised elsewhere in this issue.

I doubt whether there will be time to include a full report of the Midland Dinner in this issue but one will appear in due course.

That's your lot for now except to remind Midland members to support their two local Pub Meets. The first at the Manor Hotel, Meriden, second Tuesdays and the other at the Gate Inn Osgathorpe on the third Tuesdays. Also may I take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy Christmas and Successful New Year.

**THE EDITOR REPORTS THAT
HE IS BADLY IN NEED OF
MAGAZINE COPY FOR THE
NEXT ISSUE. PLEASE HELP!**

**ADVERTISING RATES:
£15 per whole page
smaller spaces pro rata**



Greetings from Lagondas at a V.C.C. Run

Photo: Roy Paterson

Hull & East Riding Members Notes

THE PLEASURES OF DRIVING IN VINTAGE CONVOY are becoming known to us. Once when three Lagondas were passing through a quiet village an elderly chap was on top of a tall step ladder trimming his sizeable hedge. As the first car rounded the right handed bend he looked somewhat surprised. As the second came round he could hardly believe it. When the third followed, he nearly rocked off his steps.

Sometimes the Lagondas are augmented by the Railton Rocket Don is running until his 3½-litre Lagonda is on the road. This Lag will be another classic case of remains discovered as a complete wreck being rebuilt as a worthy replica. It was literally unearthed from a Scottish farm where it had been located by our Scottish Secretary, and had the bonus of a tree growing up between the

chassis. Indeed the tree had to be sawn into several pieces to facilitate the unearthing of the rusty remains. The most spectacular log has a perfect smooth imprint of the front axle beam on one side with a similar imprint of the track rod on the reverse.

Invariably there seems to be convivial camaraderie engendered between vintage convoy drivers and other traffic on the road. But I suppose the ultimate in Lagonda convoys is only witnessed by modern weekend family drivers northbound to Lancashire when being passed by our worthy Chairman supported by Captain Barker and Messrs. Brown, Firth, Hall and Hine, as they hie home after one of their Silverstone weekends. The writer would rather like to see that for himself.

When we had one Lagonda and the Railton northbound earlier this season we pulled off into a Motorway Services parking one to the left, one to the right, with two rears facing the centre. A powerful police car followed us in. One of its burly occupants walked towards us. This was it.

Police Officer: Now then, have you got a current MOT Certificate for that car of yours?

We: Yes officer, would you like to see it?

P.O.: No, it's all right thanks. What we really want to know is what make of cars are they.

We: This is a Railton. Have you heard of them?

P.O.: No, I've never met one. What's the other then?

We: That is a Lagonda.

P.O.: Oh I know all about them. They go round corners sideways. I had a ride in one. Once.

Curiosity satisfied, he wished us the best of luck, and off they went. He'd not been warned that what he said would be taken down and might be used in evidence, but nevertheless it is the truth and nothing but the truth.

Ken Pape has had his most active season for years, to conclude which he thought up a splendid piece of inter-club camaraderie. He managed to site three open Lagondas on a broad verge facing the oncoming traffic which was mainly driven by members of the VCC. The centre Lagonda bore a precisely painted greeting as shown in the accompanying illustration. The Veteran's course car stopped for quite a while during which its driver said he could put us in touch with some vintage spares and left his card. Succeeding crews hooted and waved and smiled, and a couple stopped for a friendly chat too. All very jolly on a sunny Sunday morn.

We hope fellow members do not consider us presumptuous in offering greetings on behalf of the Club. Ken is our local PRO at the moment, but it seems that I am still the scribe.

HERMES I

New Forest Rally Tour 1975

AS WINTER APPROACHES, IT IS PLEASANT TO CAST our minds back to the start of that glorious 1975 Summer, and the first of the really hot "hood-down" days, 8th June. This was the day chosen for the New Forest Rally Tour, and we really couldn't have picked a better one.

I had been given the job of organising this year's event as a "reward" for having won two years in succession; beware!

With the aid of some persuasive advertising plugs by Duncan Westall in the Newsletter, we

managed to reach a fully subscribed entry during the preceding week, and all Lagondas!—(well, just one small 4½ Bentley!)

Mike Hallowes, Colin Bugler, Alan Elliott, Tony Bailey in 2-litres, Paul Watt in his very sporty 2-litre special, Martin Holloway in his 3-litre tourer; Philip Erhardt in his magnificent M.45 DHC; (Philip's father bought this car new in 1934, and although it subsequently passed out of the family, has recently been bought back and beautifully restored), David Williams LG.45 DHC travelled furthest, from Abergavenny; Brendan Monk and Don Curren of the Rapier Register appeared with Abbott and Rannah tourers respectively; Michael Valentine's beautiful V.12 graced the line-up at the start, as did Adrian Whitelegge's nice 4½ Bentley, full to the gun's with junior Whitelegges.

After coffee in the gardens of the Compton Arms Hotel, cars were released at two-and-a-half minute intervals, on the 45 mile course through some of the picturesque parts of the forest, Brockenhurst, Burley, over to Cranborne, and back via Fordingbridge to Rufus Stone where welcome refreshments were available at the "Sir Walter Tyrell Inn".

The winner was Don Curren, 1936 Rapier Rannah tourer; second was Mike Hallowes' 1929 2-litre HC, and third Tony Bailey 1928 2-litre HC.

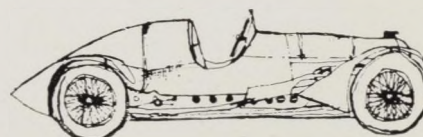
This was a well supported family event, and one in which the children seemed to take a leading part judging by their enthusiasm over the scores.

Please turn up again next year!

DICK SAGE

NEW FOREST RALLY TOUR RESULTS

				<i>Points</i>
1	Don Curren	Rapier 1936	.. 20
2	Mike Hallowes	2L 1929	.. 19½
3	Tony Bailey	2L 1928	.. 19½
4	Colin Bugler	2L 1930	.. 19
5	Brenden Mark	Rapier 1935	.. 19
6	Allan Elliott	2L 1930	.. 19
7	Paul Watt	2L Special 1931	18
8	Philip Erhardt	M.45 D/H 1934	17½
9	Dave Williams	LG.45 D/H 1936	17½
10	Adrian Whitelegge	4½ Bentley 1929	17
11	Michael Valentine	V.12 D/H 1938	.. 16½
12	Martin Holloway	3L 1932	.. 13



Verb sap. re Silverstone

On the grid what roareth yonder?
Can it be an old Lagonda?
Yes! The roar and clouds of steam
Indicant old Lagondam.
See beside with bleary eye,
Gubernator Lagondae,
Hopes to be Victor Ludorum,
Victor Alvum, Ferrarorum!
Enter frantic handicapper,
Trying to rate Lanciam TriKappa;
Now he's placing, much less nervous,
Leas Frances et Minervas.
Soon they're off! Our hero falters
Not sed capit Lotos, Altas.
Invicta victa, Maseratos
Capit also, tunc Bugattos!
Then, to charm the watching ladies,
Passes also big Mercedes.
Out in front go harum scarum
Copiae magnae Lagondarum.
Our hero's car makes hideous hum,
Louder quam motorem bum,
Nunc his car begins to wander,
Punctured tyre on old Lagonda,
Skids on corner, language terser,
Ends in hayfield, vice versa.
Sedit midst the thistle, sorrel,
Lost once more the victor's laurel.
Mox our hero's feeling brighter—
Tailless now his car's still lighter.
Next year, surely, magna gloria,
For others Waterloo, for him Victoria.
Then getting quite above his station
He dreams of major celebration,
Caviar from Fortnum's hampers
Bathing in post-vintage champers,
Soaped by sleek puellis blondis,
Victis by him all Lagondis.

M. R. V., with acknowledgments to A. D. Godley.

Budding bards and willing
writers are asked to send
in their efforts for the
magazine as soon as
possible

Midland Section Annual Dinner Saturday, 1st November

THIS MIDLAND SECTION ANNUAL DINNER TOOK place on Saturday, 1st November, at a charming venue, well chosen by organiser Neil Frajbis, a short distance from Burton on Trent. This was a very pleasant occasion, but with a hint of sadness, on account of the impending departure of Barbara and Witt Wittridge, who have purchased licensed premises of doubtful repute in Devon. Witt has at last decided to repay something of that from which he has so unselfishly taken for so many years! The Witts were presented with a silver salver to remind them of their old friends of the Midlands.

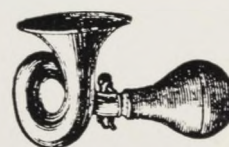
The only pre-war vehicle present was the Witts' Lagonda Rapier. On arrival Barbara complained bitterly of wet feet because it appears that Witt has not yet read the chapter on floor building, and how was he to know it would rain. Anyway it put to shame all those others, with weak excuses, why they were out in modern rubbish, e.g. no money, Lag impounded by bank, crankshaft broken, etc.

The ladies were the spice to this evening, although there were no cases of sexual assault (but what temptation) and we were honoured by the presence of visitors from the north including a fellow called Schofield, with his charming companion Joan, as well as Roger Firth, Alistair Barker and Alan Brown. Also in attendance were brand spanking new members Mr. and Mrs. Dufty, who recently acquired a Vanden Plas 3-litre.

Neil Frajbis recounted an amusing Metaphorical tale concerning the relative types of head gear, worn by members of the respective sections, North, Midlands and South, and which seemed to give the reason, why Southern Lagondas all have large bore exhaust pipes.

There was a liberal scattering of invitations for members to attend the Northern Dinner next year.

S. PETTIFER



BARBARA & WITT WITTRIDGE

Welcome Lagonda Club
members and their friends
to the

**HALF MOON INN
at HORSINGTON
near WINCANTON
SOMERSET**

*

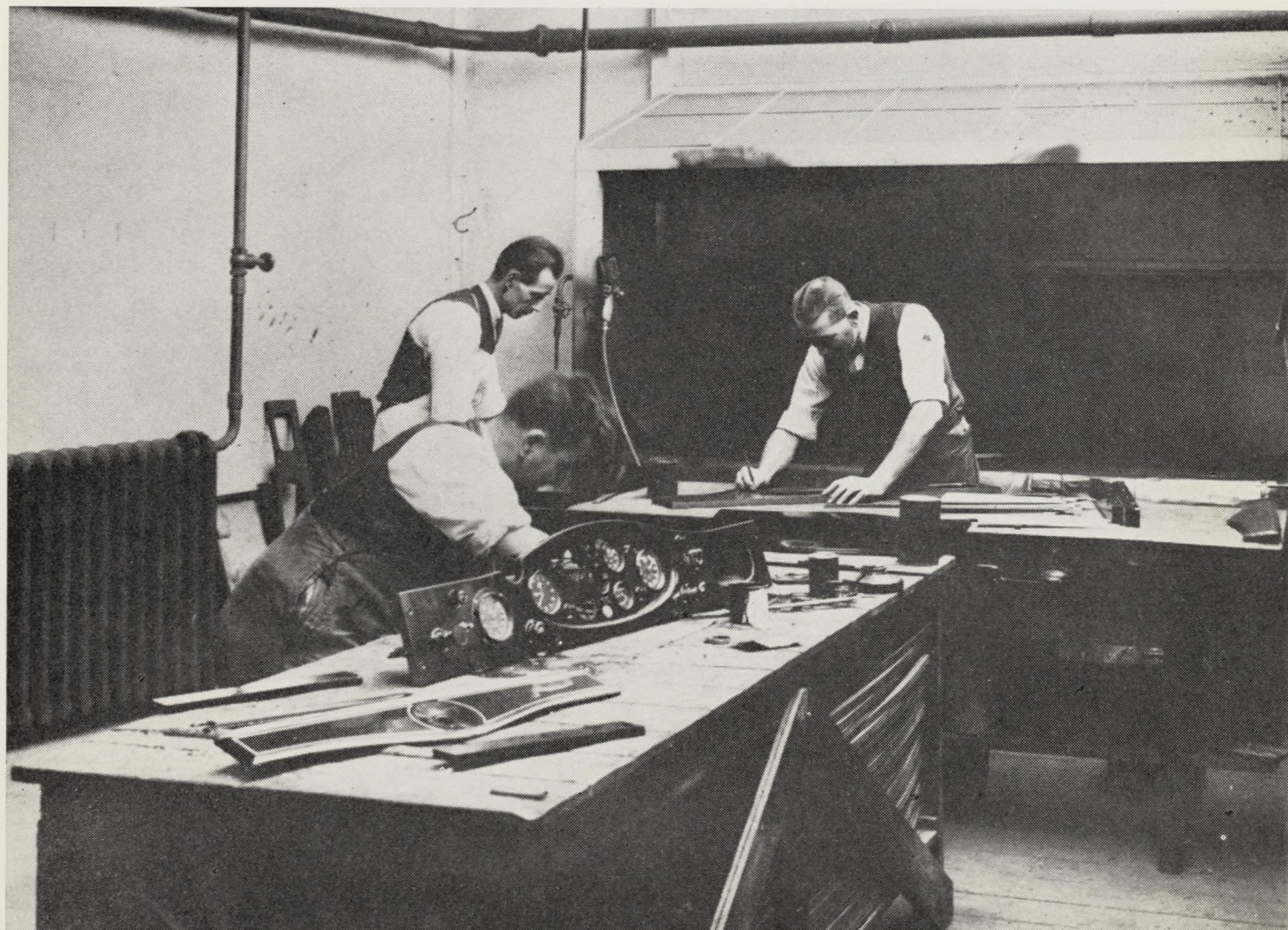
A Free House

Lagonda Days

MORE SCENES FROM STAINES IN THE EARLY THIRTIES from the notes and photographs of Arthur Thatcher. The photograph right shows the Wood Mill Department, then under the supervision of the foreman Mr. Morris. He is seen in the dark suit and wing collar examining some wood. Arthur Thatcher remembers a spindle machine going through a troublesome period when the cutters on the machine would burst sending pieces through the corrugated iron walls of the building and come to rest up to a hundred yards away. Nasty! The chap in the foreground looks a bit uncomfortable feeding wood into the circular saw.

The photograph below shows the french polisher at work at the back on the left with two others marking up the instrument panels. In those days, even basic parts of the car as these were treated by craftsmen as works of art. Arthur owes his own skills to the training he received from this department.

* * * *





A Diesel Sports Car

To Wales with a 1932 Lagonda

Powered by the latest 3.8-litre

Gardner Diesel: Bwlch-y-Groes

Climbed at 30 m.p.h. Average:

42 m.p.g. for 182 Miles!

THREE YEARS AGO THE FIRST DESCRIPTION OF A Gardner Diesel-engined touring car appeared in *The Autocar*. The car was a 1925 Bentley fabric saloon, to which a somewhat lightened version of the Gardner four-cylinder transport engine had been fitted.

Enthusiasm for the car's performance on a run into the Lake District on that occasion was subsequently fully borne out by the results achieved with the same car by Lord de Clifford in the Monte Carlo Rally of 1933, when the car put up the best performance by a British entry and only, perhaps, failed to gain the highest possible award because, after all, it was a 1925 chassis with 1925 brakes.

The engine then used was definitely a transport vehicle engine, and it was fitted in a car chassis primarily to prove to transport operators that it was sufficiently smooth and quiet to be used in a private car; it was not put forward, however, as a car unit.

New Sports Engine

Since that time a new engine has been developed, and is in every way suitable for the larger type of sports car. It is a four-cylinder, of 3,800 c.c. capacity, rated at 22.5 h.p. and develops 83 b.h.p. at 3,000 r.p.m., while it has the remarkable power-weight ratio of 1:8—in short, for each 8 lb. of the complete power unit, 1 b.h.p. is developed.

Once again it was the writer's good fortune on behalf of *The Autocar* to have the first run for Press purposes on the 1932 Lagonda which has been used for testing this engine, and which has already done 12,000 miles under Diesel power.

The journey undertaken was from the Gardner works at Patricroft, Manchester, to Bala, then on to Bwlch-y-Groes, and back to Manchester again.

48 m.p.g. for Over Seventy Miles

No attempt was made to travel at excessive speeds, or to make a good average, and the 30 m.p.h. limits were rigorously observed. In short, the car was driven in an ordinary way at its

natural touring speeds, the route, of course, being by no means of the arterial road variety. Bala (72.5 miles) was reached in 2 hr. 21 min., or 30.56 m.p.h. average. The fuel used was then carefully measured, and the tank contents were exactly $1\frac{1}{2}$ gallons less than when we started—or 48.32 m.p.g. for a total weight of just over $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons! Bwlch-y-Groes was the next objective, and the winding, narrow lane along the shore of Lake Bala and the climb to the summit were necessarily taken sedately. But the remarkable thing about the engine, in spite of the 3 to 1 gear ratio that it pulled, was the effortless way in which top gear was held. Diesel engines are usually governed both for maximum and for minimum revolutions. In the case of the Gardner there is no maximum governor when fitted to cars, but the minimum governor is essential for maintaining the correct idling speed.

This speed gives a car pace on the level on top gear of rather under 8 m.p.h., and it is possible to open up from this pace with absolute certainty; thus top gear can be used in traffic or round blind corners without any fear of a stalled engine. True, it is pleasanter to use third, but there is no actual need to do so.

Before descending Bwlch-y-Groes it was noticed that the radiator temperature had risen to 85 deg. C., so at the foot the blanking plate was taken out of the radiator before making the climb. This blanking plate, by the way, had cut out all the standard Lagonda radiator except the top three inches, so that for ordinary running (when the thermometer never went above 70 deg. C.) a radiator about the size of a cigar box would be ample.

Up Bwlch-y-Groes at 30 m.p.h. Average

Bwlch-y-Groes was climbed from a standing start in $2\frac{1}{2}$ minutes (equalling 30 m.p.h.), the distance being $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles and the average gradient 1 in 7. Third gear (4.22 to 1) was just a little high, and second (6.92 to 1) just too low for the best results; for instance, on the 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$ gradient near the top the revolutions were at 3,200, while the road speed was 29 m.p.h. At the same revolutions an appreciably higher speed could have been held had the second gear ratio been higher, since the engine had pulled third gear on the first part of the final steep section.

With the unblanked radiator (no fan), a strong following wind and brilliant sunshine, the water temperature at the end of the climb was 85 deg. C.

After descending again, several steps were made for photographs on the next ascent; and restarts were made on 1 in $4\frac{1}{2}$ with the greatest of ease, using the first gear (11.07 to 1).

The fuel was checked again at Bala, and one gallon had gone in 29 miles of hill-climbing and frequent restarting.

The homeward trip of 80.7 miles gave an average of 34.9 m.p.h. and a fuel consumption of 45.7 m.p.g. During this run acceleration tests were made, and the excellent figure of $24\frac{2}{5}$ sec. was obtained for the acceleration from rest to 60 m.p.h., using first, second and third gears.

From 20 to 50 m.p.h. on top gear took $22\frac{1}{5}$ sec. while on third gear the time for the same range was $13\frac{1}{5}$ sec. A maximum speed of 83 m.p.h. (by tested speedometer) was reached.

For the whole run of 181.8 miles the fuel oil used was $4\frac{1}{4}$ gallons, or 42.7 m.p.g.

What are the general impressions of the engine? It is mechanically quiet, starts instantly (the starter battery is only a 70 amp. 12-volt type), and pulls in a most effortless way. It is certainly noticeable when idling, but no more so than a four-cylinder petrol engine of equivalent size.

The exhaust note is neither unpleasant nor loud, and tyre swish on a newly top-dressed road completely drowns this and all other noises.

No Undesirable Traits

For those who appreciate the big-engined sports car there seems to be no reason which would make the Gardner engine undesirable—indeed, anyone being driven by it and not told what it was would never realise there was anything unusual about the power unit except that it has an exceptional amount of what can only be described by the word “guts”. It really does pull!

And, of course, there is that little matter of consumption. Over 40 m.p.g. at over 30 m.p.h. averages is really to be in pocket on one's motoring, and, as the Lagonda has a 20-gallon tank, one could go from London to Edinburgh and back without a filling stop.

The engine, known as the Gardner 4LK., is based on previous Gardner engines, which have been developed to a very high pitch in the marine and heavy transport worlds, wherein they are the leading example of the direct-injection type, fuel being directly into the cylinder and not into an ante- or pre-combustion chamber.

Bore and stroke are 95.25 by 135.35 mm, the capacity is 3,800 c.c. and the compression ratio is

in the region of 14 to 1. At 800 r.p.m. the output is about 27 b.h.p., rising at 2,000 r.p.m., and reaching 83 b.h.p. at 3,000 r.p.m. The weight of the engine is 684 lb. (with starter) and this figure is secured by extensive use of light alloys.

The cylinder block, for example, is of aluminium with inserted hardened iron liners, while the cylinder heads (cast in pairs) are of the same material with a bronze plate in which the valve and injector seatings are formed. By this arrangement the parts liable to wear are all renewable independently of the main castings.

Chambers cast on the heads enclose the valve gear (operated by tubular push rods). Specially light alloy is used for the crank case, and this carries the crankshaft in five bearings, while the camshaft runs in six bearings. To withstand the high pressures used in a Diesel engine a very massive crankshaft has to be used, and it is of 3 in. diameter, machined from the solid bar, and fitted with balance weights.

The connecting rods are equally robust, and the long pistons are likely to give almost endless wear.

Lubrication is fully forced throughout, for not only is oil forced into the hollow crankshaft for the main and big-end bearings, but it passes up drilled ways in the connecting rods to the small ends.

Fuel is injected by a Gardner-Bosch fuel pump, supplied from the tank by an Amal mechanically driven feed pump. The actual injection into the cylinders is by means of Gardner nozzles, and the efficiency of the engine depends, of course, upon the correct mixing of air and oil spray in the cylinder; this is effected by masked inlet valves and a piston with a cupped top, to secure the necessary turbulence at full compression.

Reprinted from *The Autocar*, 23rd August, 1935 by kind permission.

NOTE FOR MEMBERS:

Members who have not paid their subscriptions by 31st January 1976 will be presumed to have resigned from the Club.

The Midlands Treasure Hunt

ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED FOR 1ST JUNE, THE Treasure Hunt finally got underway on Sunday, 31st August. We congregated, would you believe, at a pub—The Belper Arms which, as everyone knows is in the village of Newton—Burgoland U.K.

There were about seven Lagondas lined up in the car park, and after lunch and a few beers we moved off at intervals along a picturesque route. It is amazing how close one can live to such areas and be oblivious to their existence.

Everyone in the car had a job to do—the children were counting feet (public footpath signs) and we gave grandma the task of recording the number of times we went under water and over high tension cables or something like that.

Anyway we finished in second place to Robin Colquhoun and family, but then, he had not got a Mother-in-Law handicap.

There were several amusing incidents such as cars passing one another from opposite directions, others at the roadside devoid of occupants and apparently abandoned. One clue had most of us positioned outside two Methodists chapels just as the congregation was leaving. The ladies in their Sunday bonnets appeared to be quite proud that we had honoured them by turning up for the occasion.

I forget the name of our final destination, but we had time for a walk around the grounds and gardens whilst our sheets were marked.

This was our first treasure hunt and we all thoroughly enjoyed it. Our thanks to Neil for the way he organised it, and we are hoping for a similar event next year.

HARRY TAYLOR

Actions Speak Louder Than Words

IN THE CAR PARK AT SILVERSTONE WE PARKED three abreast and fairly conspicuously, Don, Ken, and I. We had covered 180 miles in close company and thoroughly enjoyed it. I went straight off to the paddock to ask Herb's Company for a report on my long-missing horizontal Scintilla. Some time later I returned to our cars to find Don

away, but Ken still there and just starting his picnic lunch having meantime given his tourer a good dose of spit and polish. Parking next to mine might have enhanced the appearance of his even further, if that's possible; conversely mine parked next to his seemed to suffer slightly by comparison.

Suddenly I was disturbed to receive someone loud and clear

"You're not going to rebuild yours are you?

Otherwise you'll not have the scruffiest car in club any longer."

I admit no suitable retort sprang to my lips, no crushing counterblast was vented, I was momentarily speechless. My car was not defended as it should have been for to me it is a well thought out design and after 16 years is still fairly respectably good looking as it stands there wearing £150 worth of new tyres and tubes, (7.00 x 18 rears). That certain member passed on his way and shall remain nameless.

Perhaps an apposite reply was engineered the following day, at Finmere. Not only was the scorned car second Lagonda when driven by Don Hoggard, it was first Lagonda when driven by me, and kingpin of the Hermes entry which clinched the team award with third man Ken Pape. After all, the original Henry Coates Special is licensed all the year and used on the road, not kept just for show.

Here please allow me to record the pleasure of knowing members like the Townsleys. Once more Ted and Eleanor sent out a widespread invitation, only this time it said Come about eleven. And there was a buffet lunch waiting.

During the afternoon there was the annual quiz, and this time a Lagonda member pipped those of the AMOC. Later, several guests of both clubs discovered how leg-wearying it is to play a major work on a vintage player-piano. After that Ted drove out his latest acquisition. None of us had seen it before though it has appeared at Yorkshire charity functions during the long enjoyable summer. Before taking it to one of these, two men have to spend a whole day cleaning it down, polishing it up and otherwise checking it all. There is much to do on a 1930's Leyland-Merryweather fire appliance. My own heart warmed to it immediately for there on its sides were emblazoned the arms of Hull Corporation. I remembered the publicity when it was delivered before the war, the highest turntable escape ladder in the country. During the war it must have been

one of the busiest too, because Hull had more than a fair share of h.e. bombs, parachute mines, and incendiaries.

Here it was in full working order over 30 years later and with a very low genuine mileage. All present thoroughly enjoyed Ted's demo. He was in confident command with everything at his finger-tips, going round and round and through all its possible movements controlled by no less than seven clutches working as efficiently as they did when new some 3,000 miles ago. Unfortunately, nobody offered to go to the top for maximum elevation. Everybody seemed suddenly busy doing other things. I was unable to because I was filming—that's my story anyway!

Then all retired for a splendid buffet tea with marvellous trifles, and it was not only the children who had second helpings.

It is difficult to think what action to take to express our gratitude for their openhanded hospitality; for the moment I offer a sincere word of thanks on behalf of all who enjoyed it.

Let us all keep on enjoying the friendliness of our Club.

ROY PATERSON

The 1936 Rapier

Progress Made in the Production of This Efficient Small Car as a Separate Entity: Chassis Improvements and a New Range of Bodies

IT WAS ANNOUNCED IN *The Autocar* OF AUGUST 30th that the small car formerly produced by the Lagonda Company, and known as the Lagonda Rapier, had been taken over entirely as to manufacturing rights and so forth by Rapier Cars, Ltd., of 195, Hammersmith Road, London, W.6. The concern are henceforth making it as a separate car, on its own, known as the Rapier. The new company are under the control of Major W. H. Oates, who for many years past was associated intimately with Lagonda cars, together with Mr. I. T. Ashcroft, the original designer of this machine, as technical director.

Since the first announcement of this change was made a careful survey has been made of the car's whole design with a view to incorporating such improvements as might be desirable, whilst an

Message from the Chairman

The subscriptions and requested details of your car(s) are not coming in fast enough. To enable the Club to run properly and at maximum efficiency we must have your subscription NOW. At the same time we need the details of your car(s) for inclusion in the new address book which will show full details of every car in the Club—or it will if you bother to send in the information required, if you don't, or leave it until later then there will be no point in the whole exercise as by the time it is produced it will already be out of date. So please reach for your pen and return the form together with your subscription NOW. Thank you.

entirely new range of coachwork has been evolved for mounting upon this interesting and efficient chassis, so that it is now opportune to refer in detail to these fresh activities. The Rapier will now be sold as a complete car, whereas formerly it was listed as a chassis only. It may also be mentioned that the new company are opening a works for assembly at Kew, where it will be possible for an even greater measure of hand-built care to be bestowed upon the production of the car in limited numbers. Certainly it stands out as an individual and typically British machine of sporting character, and has already very favourably impressed drivers qualified to judge.

It is worth while briefly mentioning the main features of the design. The four-cylinder engine has a bore and stroke of 62.5 by 90 mm (1,104 c.c.), rated at 9.68 h.p., the tax thus being £7 10s. It is a highly efficient unit for its size, having twin overhead camshafts, driven by chains, double con-

centric valve springs, a particularly massive and short crankshaft running in three bearings, and 14 mm sparking plugs situated vertically and accessibly in the space between the two inclined camshaft covers. Water circulation is by a pump, operated by an auxiliary drive on the off side of the engine, which then extends to the dynamo, and again, through a vernier coupling, to a Scintilla magneto.

An E.N.V. four-speed preselector gear box is used, and between it and the engine is a single-plate clutch. In conjunction with the latter there is a trigger mechanism whereby, when the gear box is in neutral, and the engine idling, the clutch is freed and the gear box is not revolving. Furthermore, starting from rest is effected by engaging the plate clutch, and is not at all concerned with the take up of the first speed band in the epicyclic gear box. Thus smooth starting is secured, as well as absence of gear noise when the car is stationary.

Right-hand Gear Lever

With the car running, the first portion of the pedal travel controls the clutch, and further depression of the pedal changes gear. The gear lever is on the right-hand side, and operates in a fore and aft direction over a quadrant for the different gear positions. Transmission is by an open propeller-shaft with needle-roller bearing universal joints to a spiral bevel back axle, the frame is adequately braced by tubular cross-members, half-elliptic springs are employed at back and front, and the very efficient Girling brakes are used.

Among the changes which have been made latterly may be mentioned the use of softer springs to increase the comfort of riding, also the provision of solid eyes to the rear spring ends, the better to take the considerable torque exerted by this form of brake. There are also improvements in regard to the tensioning of the overhead camshaft chains, whilst support is provided beneath the tail end of the gear box where formerly there was none. A slightly more flexible engine mounting is employed. Also, a convenient feature is the provision of a trap-door in the bulkhead whereby the magneto distributor and contact points can be reached from the driving compartment, the magneto otherwise being rather inaccessible. Alternative gear ratios are provided for the closed and open models.

As regards bodies, steps have been taken to produce a type of coachwork which, without

involving excessive weight, shall be of stout construction to stand up to a chassis that offers a high performance; the standardised versions are an open four-seater tourer priced at £375, a drop-head coupe at £410, and a two-door four-light saloon at £415. The chassis price is £270. There is also available an open two-seater of pleasing appearance. The wheelbase is 8 ft. 4 in., and the track measures 4 ft.

Whilst the main appearance of the car has not been radically altered, there is a change in front in that the fairing between the dumb irons no longer conceals the triangulated cross bars which brace the lamp brackets and the front of the frame, but the radiator remains set well back. As to the rear, a modern but neat effect has been obtained by sinking the spare wheel into the sloping tail panel and enclosing it in a metal cover. This arrangement is seen, perhaps, to best advantage on the open four-seater, which also has an easily operated hood which folds into the body.

In the driving compartment an appreciable improvement is afforded by the fact that the gear box no longer causes an awkward well for the drivers feet.

Reprinted from *The Autocar* 8th November, 1935 by kind permission.

A Lagonda Tale

Dear Sir—Four years ago I heard of a Lagonda languishing in Berkshire obviously in need of a good home. Subsequent enquiries revealed that it was a 16/80 Saloon, very original but lying outside and had been there for possibly 10 or more years. Not being very interested in 16/80's I passed the information to Gordon Withers who, after negotiations lasting over two years, purchased the car. The owner of the car had been a motorist for many years and had obviously had a very interesting life, an insight to this is given in the receipt for the car below, the price and, of course, the previous owner's name is omitted.

B. J. HORWOOD
Mayfield, Sussex.

Dear Withers,
I trust you managed to get home safely without any trouble yesterday. Apart from the seized off-side front wheel, which I would have treated had I known; the removal was very good as far as I was concerned. The furrow in the gravel recovered much better than I thought it would.

I must find something to drape the roses over!

I did not get time to tell you about what is missing from the near-side front stub axle—they are three of the four castellated nuts between brake back plate and stub axle. These are about 5/16 in. BSF. Also a pin (tapered?) with a nut same size to lock the king pin in position. I should be able to find these as they were definitely collected and put in a safe place.

I am sorry, but I have never had a handbook, but if you can borrow one from your Club, perhaps, and bring it down I can show you these on it and discuss. There is also one (plain) tappet adjustment lock nut missing ($\frac{1}{4}$ Whit?), I cannot remember any reason for this but I think it was removed.

The engine did not use much oil and has not been rebored (this could have been conveniently done when the crankshaft was ground had it been necessary). Valves and valve springs should be in good condition as they were replaced when the crankshaft was reground by Autoparts of Exeter. Tappet push rods have some worn cups and should be examined and rebuilt where necessary. Rockers should also be examined for near and lost motion.

Engine has done very little since bearing overhaul and I would not rebores until really necessary, although you may be tempted to use this period of rebuild to get other things done, the gearbox will probably need brake band adjustment and the magneto, although working, is only roughly adjusted. Money spent on a new or factory reconditioned magneto, if they exist, would probably save you a lot of trouble in the long run. I would consider converting the primary circuit to operate a "solid state" transistor alternative starting circuit. I have had a lot of experience with magnetos on Austin 7, Swift Fleetwing and in particular the dual ignition magneto on the Alvis 16.9 Silver Eagle (six).

If I built a car body to last I would rule out iron and plywood and either use teak and aluminium or plastic but fibre glass is too brittle. I would always want to make a better and streamlined body, not copy the old but I am really interested in engines and transfer of power to the road. Bodies have always been a nuisance as they fail before the engine and it is cheaper to buy a new car than replace them. I would like a 'Meccano' system body in aluminium alloy with everything replaceable in about an hour with a spanner.

I have owned and driven (1) Austin 7 1926, (2) Swift Fleetwing 1930 (new), (3) Rover 16 h.p. 1930, (4) Wolseley Hornet, (5) Delage DI, (6) M.G. Magna, (7) Hillman Minx, (8) Alvis Silver Eagle, (9) SS Jaguar, (10) Lagonda 16/80, (11) Another Hillman Minx, (12) Austin 7 (Coil Ignition), (13) SWB Land Rover, (14) Mk. VII Jaguar, (15) Wolseley Hornet 15 h.p., (16) Austin A40, (17) 1927 Rolls Royce PII, (18) Singer 9 Sports, (19) Austin A90, (20) LWB Land Rover, (21) Rover 105, (22) Jaguar Mk. IX and several others.

I have bought for relatives or friends and driven for short periods Austin 16 h.p. 6 cyl., another Singer 9 and a Rover 10 h.p. all pre-war types. I think the most magnificent and impressive car I have ever been in (perhaps because I was young) was the Lord Mayor of Bristol's (about 1910) 60 h.p. Napier especially when it had a gas fuel balloon billowing on top during World War I.

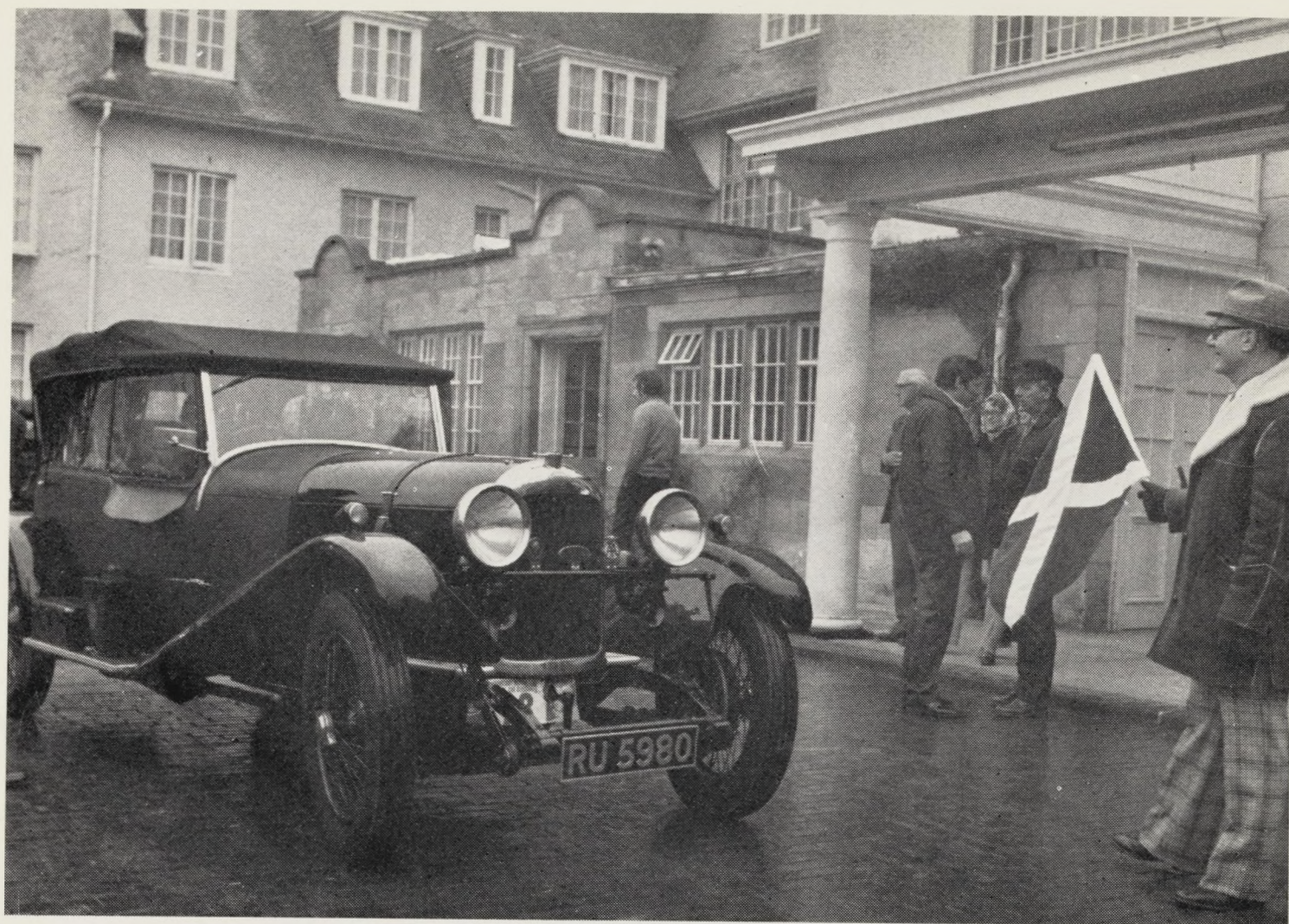
In contrast was a Lea Francis supercharged Hyper Sports of a friend. The family had early Vauxhalls and Uncles' Sunbeams, Rileys and Beans as I remember from when I was old enough to take intelligent interest in everything, before that it was Argyl and Daimler. I used to go for local drives with the doctor in a very early Humber or Vulcan, his brother had a Turner light car.

During the first War my mother drove a 1914 Willys Overland (£198) which had a self starter and new type ignition (non trembler). I cannot remember the 20 h.p. Vauxhall's number but it had dissolved Acetylene lighting and my father went in for some competition hill climb in which it had to carry a large wind brake for Handicap, this was possibly at Shelsey.

Mother did not drive alone before the self starter came in but had driven from about 1902, she had a pony and trap to shop, etc. I do not remember any car accidents but my mother had a trap accident when the pony shied and bolted throwing her out.

During the war I had access to my father's workshop and did experiments with his lathe engine running it on methelated spirits and Acetylene gas to drive a large size Dynamo. I also ran a large model coal fired steam boiler and engines with donkey pumps also a $\frac{1}{4}$ h.p. engine, these were all mounted on a trolley. Thousands of matches rescued from the sea at Polseath, from war wrecked ships, made good fuel for starting up.

Our own electricity was shut down and we



Cliff Percival and 2 litre get the flag at the Turnberry Rally earlier in the year

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went on to local 140 v. DC mains just before the war, but we used to charge the batteries for coil ignition cars in the district for many years. Paraffin was 4d. a gallon then, all petrol was in cans then and petrol tanks either under the scuttle or front seat; gravity feeding to the carburettor which sometimes failed on steep hills due to the tilt unless the tank was fairly full.

The earliest C.A.V. Dynamos were coupled by a pulley to the propellor shaft and had to be switched off when not in motion as dynamo started motoring. Ammeter and voltmeter were mounted on a special wooden case. Cables were bound with metal over insulation to protect them from mechanical damage. Engines had two valve inspection plugs per cylinder, one with a sparking plug the other sometimes with a priming tap for starting. My father used it to drip feed water injection; some sparking plugs had a hollow centre electrode and priming tap combined. Pistons were cast iron, carburettors all updraught so any slight loss of suction made starting difficult, i.e. only atomised petrol (KI Gas?) could reach the cylinders; slow running or starting jets came later, flooding or blocking off the air intake were substitutes.

The family Vauxhall had a special hot air intake from the exhaust pipe, a rather peculiar oil gauge and possibly a piston type oil pump. Ours had a Gabrielle horn.

"Received £x in payment for 16/80 Lagonda seen on and before 6.10.69 towed away without M.O.T. certificate with thanks.

Signed
Mr. X."

P.S. To be collected found.

- (1) Receipt.
- (2) Engine oil filler cap.
- (3) Plated spare wheel retainer disc.
- (4) Body embellishment plate.
- (5) Wooden tool case ex boot.
- (6) Grease gun.
- (7) Mudguards, wood, etc. as placed by yourself in a pile.

To be found.

- (1) King pin retainer cotter.
- (2) 3 castillated 5/17 nuts.
- (3) Magneto advance/retard coupling rod.

Perhaps Gordon Withers will write the saga of the removal of the 16/80 in a future issue.

BRIAN J. HORWOOD

Restoring a DB.2.6

by Bill Janes

TO PUT YOU IN THE PICTURE AS FAR AS MY ABILITIES go. I am a cabinet-maker by trade and have my own small business. On one side of my factory is a chassis and steering engineers and a panel beaters on the other side—very useful! I have a home workshop with lathe, milling machine, shaper, hacksaw machine, drill, welding plant, etc. One of my hobbies is model engineering and over the past 12 years I have fully restored, including the building of the bodies (except panel-beating) a 1926 Vauxhall, a 1916 Sunbeam and I am just in the final stages of a 1921 Sunbeam. So I think we talk the same language, as far as technical things go.

This article formed part of a letter to Jim McMurdy from a Club member in New Zealand

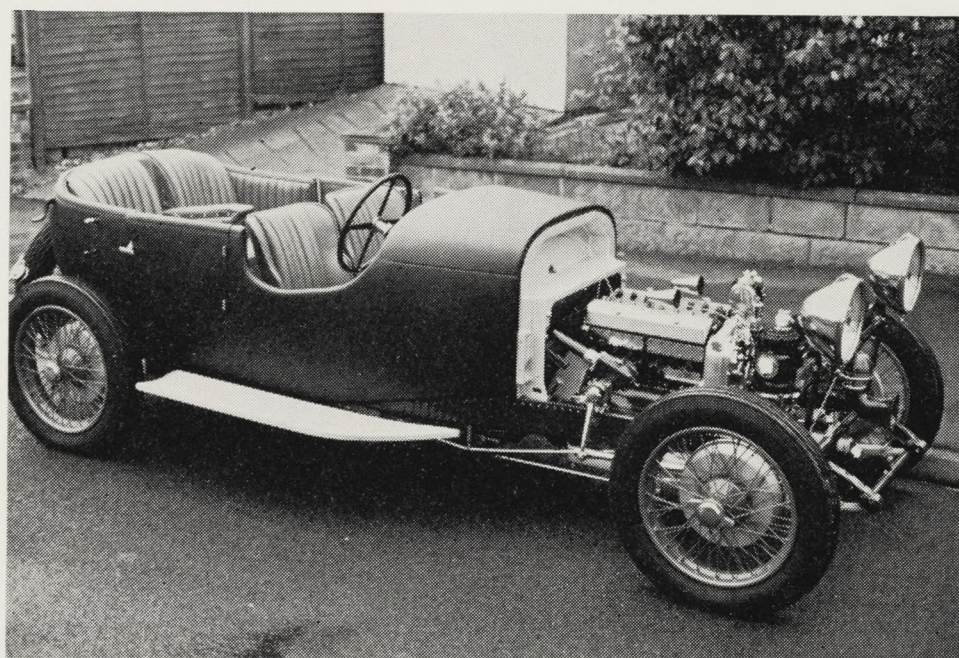
I purchased this car, LAG/50/320, from a Club Member, who bought it in just-running condition. He removed the engine and dismantled it, then realized it was too complicated for him. During his term of ownership he located the remains of a drop-head coupe, LAG/50/556—gearbox number, that had been totally destroyed by fire. Some of the mechanical parts were salvageable. He also obtained the entire remaining stock of spares from the sole agents for Lagonda in N.Z., when they discontinued their agency. The car had done 158,000 miles and was pretty sad mechan-

NEW CLUB REGISTER

Plans are in hand for publishing a new Register. This will only be possible if members return the completed Registration Form with their Subscription. Thank you.

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1 Whitmore Street . Maidstone . Kent

TELEPHONE: MAIDSTONE 26384

ically and with a little bit of rot here and there in the bodywork. The burnt out one was brought out from England just prior to its unfortunate fire and had, had a complete overhaul by Astons, so any salvageable parts are in fairly good order. Mileage on that car was 48,000.

To date I have completed the engine, gearbox and steering. Taking the steering first; I fitted a new rack and pinion (ex spares), new rubber boots (ex Jaguar, large ones), inboard track rod ball joints (ex 1100 master cylinder rubber boots), the outer ball joints, which incidentally, are in perfect condition, the rubber boots I have in stock, new. One thing I could not replace was right in the very centre of the rack, where there is a very strong square section spring. This was broken into many pieces and I had to replace this with a round section spring of somewhat similar tension. Unfortunately, the spring from the burnt car had been affected by heat.

The gearbox was stripped and the gears from the burnt car used, new bearings (ex spares) throughout. The gears themselves, I had hardness tested as they had been blued by the heat of the fire. They passed satisfactorily. A new reversing switch was fitted. As I dislike steering

column gear change, I would like to adapt the top of the gearbox to floor change, either a stick straight from the gearbox or a short remote control set-up. Have you any thoughts on this? I do have a few new parts for the steering column gear change but it does seem to be rather lightly built.

A new clutch pressure plate and clutch plate have been fitted (ex spares).

The bell housing, engine side, of the original car was found to be cracked so the one from the burnt car was used, which is a slightly different design, having radial webs. Obviously a design improvement?? The block from the burnt car was used, mainly because the previous owner had cleaned it up to rebuild. Incidentally, to give you an idea of how hot the fire was, the entire chain case at the front had completely melted and the cam covers had melted and run into the camshafts; the white metal of No. 1 big end had just started to melt and the white metal on the front thrust washers had run completely. The carburettors had melted entirely too.

The following was done by an engine reconditioner: crankshaft mains were ground and Vauxhall main bearings fitted; this required the aluminium bearing holders to be line-bored to the outside dia. of the shells. The front main bearing was built up to fit the new front bearing I had (ex spares). The flywheel was turned one hole to present new teeth to the starter and the whole engine was balanced. The con. rods I used came from the burnt car, as they were fitted with shells and not poured white metal, as on the other car. Those took Wolseley big end shells. The pistons were honed, ring grooved and new gudgeons fitted. The cylinder liners were bored (in the block) and sleeved back to standard. The bottom seatings for the sleeves were skimmed and a corresponding amount taken off the top of the block.

A new cylinder head was used, (ex spares) which had a complete set of valve guides and inserts fitted (ex spares), a new exhaust camshaft (ex spares) and the best of the other inlets chosen.

I then fitted and hand scraped all the bridge pieces, using scraper and marking blue. The original tappet buckets were used, a new set (ex spares) of outer valve springs for the exhaust side were used; the rest were old ones re-used. New inlet valves (ex spares) were fitted but I had no new exhaust valves, so had to get the old ones built up—QUESTION—Are inlet and exhaust

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valves made of the same material, as I have some new inlet valves, which could be turned down to fit exhaust? I didn't like to take a chance on it. I had a new cylinder head gasket made, copying the original—five layers of copper sheet—and new copper rings (individual) for the bottom of the sleeves.

The only problem I did strike was with the timing chain area. I chose the best timing sprockets and I had one new (lower) chain tensioner and chose the best upper tensioner and this was where the trouble started. There were two sorts of upper tensioner and not having dismantled the burnt car, was not sure of the chain "path". But by making up the top chain from two new lower chains (ex spares) to the same length as the burnt car's top chain, it then became apparent that the later model engine did away with the centre sprocket, as one tensioner worked outwards and the other tensioner worked inwards. I overhauled the little flat disc valve in the re-used tensioner. I re-timed the engine according to the workshop manual, which I have, using a Castrol timing disc. (I also have the owner's handbook.) A bit of interest here—I was given this timing disc by an old gentleman who used to race Bugattis; he owned five of them in his time. I have left out the now redundant centre sprocket, just fitting a small plate over the hole. I installed a new water pump seal (ex spares) and oil seal (ex spares) round the lower pulley and a new water impellor (ex spares). The oil pump came from the burnt car. I installed a new oil level indicator (ex spares) and fitted a new sump (ex spares). I used two new inlet manifolds (ex spares). The original carburettors, I have cleaned and overhauled. The exhaust manifolds are O.K., except that one has had the bottom broken off of it and it has been welded and there are cracks in the welding. This will require some attention—I think a small piece of flexible exhaust pipe is indicated. The other two manifolds from the other engine are quite badly broken.

The block is painted black and all the alloy thoroughly cleaned, the cam boxes polished, all the dome headed bolts have flame-blued finish.

The starter has been re-bushed and overhauled, so has the generator and the distributor is receiving the same treatment.

The engine is now sitting in my workshop on my engine stand resplendant. This just about brings us up to date with what I have done so far.

I have a little bit more to do to my Sunbeam before I can get at the rest of the Lagonda. I am waiting for the upholsterer to say when he can take the Sunbeam and this will then give me more room to work on the Lagonda—remove the body and have a go at the back and front ends, etc.

What I particularly want to know—are there any modifications that have been found necessary over some 24 years?

I am very interested to note that some accessories are the same as fitted to other cars. I would be pleased to receive a complete list of these, if one is available.

I am enclosing a copy of the new parts, which came with the car, some of which, of course, I have used and some of which I am going to use. I also have a set of exploded view parts pictures, about 23 pages; and a parts list, which, I think, must be early Aston. The parts list was written in 1960 but there is no date on the exploded views at all. A brief description of the engine—angle cam covers, rev counter drive from one camshaft, finned gearbox, conventional back axle with tramp bars and coil springs. Are these of any use to you for your Aston? I also have a few gaskets, which I think must belong to either Aston or the 3-litre Lagonda.

There are about eight Lagondas of my model in N.Z. still running and I am negotiating for the remains of two others; one with a good body but no engine, gearbox or diff., the other is a cut-down saloon, amateur shortened job that was never finished but has all the mechanicals.

I have yet to come across a Lagonda in going order, so will be interested to see how mine performs.

Where does your friend Ted Walker live in N.Z.? In spite of many people thinking N.Z. is a state of Australia and just over the Sydney Harbour Bridge, it is quite a large place!!!

On the personal side, my wife and I are both English, she has been here nearly 20 years and I have been here 28 years. I am 41 years old.

I think that is about all I can tell you at the moment I shall be most interested in any comments you have to make on the work I have done and shall be pleased to have the answers to my queries.

37 CHURCH STREET,
GATE PA,
TAURANGA,
NEW ZEALAND

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Real Ale

Dear Sir—I must apologise for the under-exposed photograph of Mr. James Crocker our esteemed President on page 6 of the Autumn issue of the Magazine. I would like to point out that Mr. Crocker is not suffering from sunburn and the tray of drink in his hands is not stout but proper Northern draught bitter—hence the smile on his face!

HERB SCHOFIELD
Cheshire.

News from Colorado

Dear Sir—This time I've not taken so long to write to you and thank you for the publication of

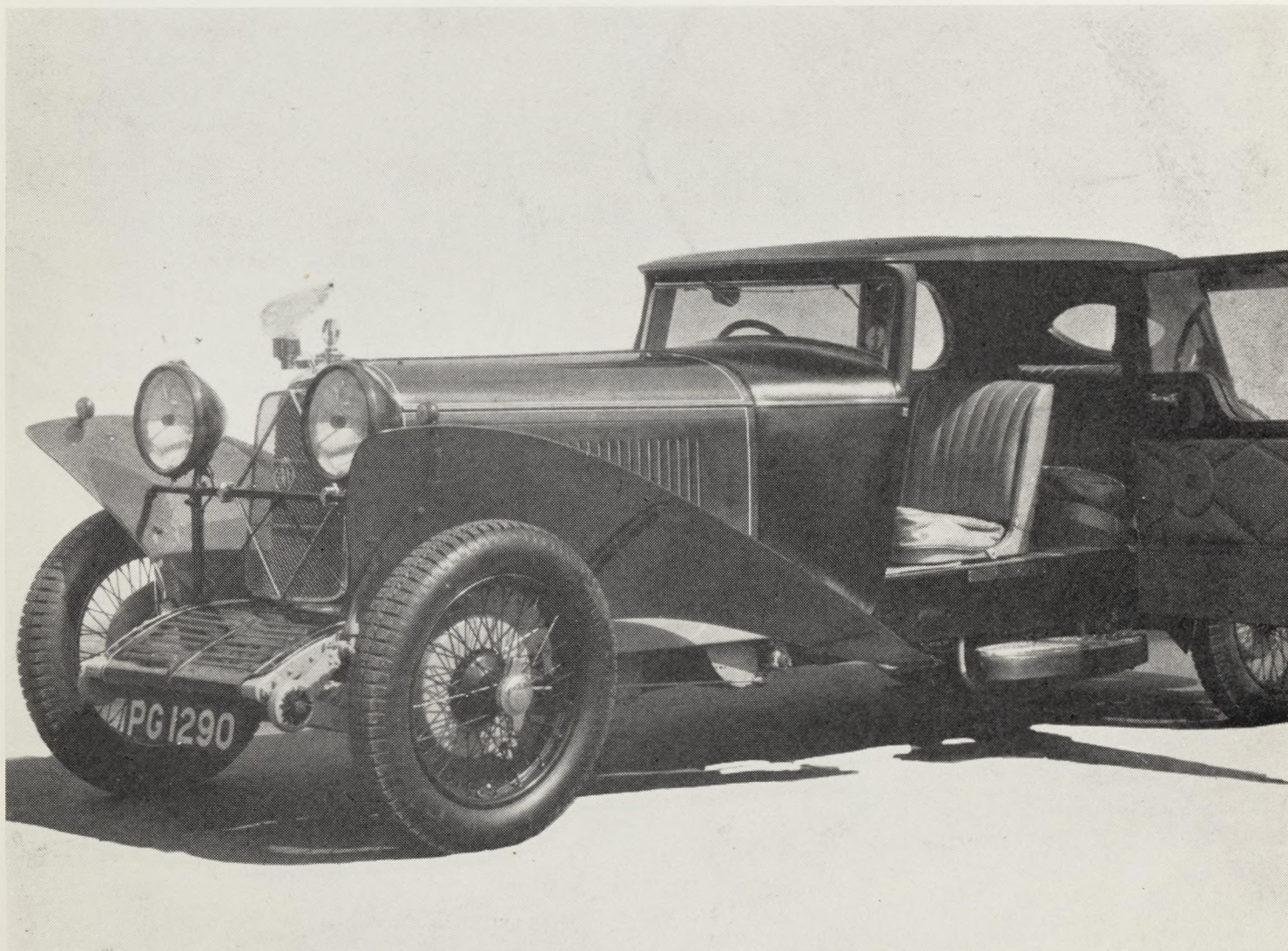
Jim Durbin's and my picture of our two Lagondas in the Winter '74 issue of *The Lagonda*.

Jim's car, on the left, is a drophead coupe with a Meadows engine with 6.50×18.00 tyres and conversion to sealbeam headlights. Mine is a 3-1 seater, with 5.50×18.00 tires. I think I've already told you or that you know that my car has a souped-up 1953 Cadillac engine in it. It has two dual-throated Carter carbs, Mallory coil and distributor and an Edelbrock intake manifold and delivers about 300 horsepower.

All this happened to the car before I ever got it (in 1957).

I've never yet learned what became of the little Lagonda that was here in Denver at the Rippey Museum but I'd be glad to make another effort if you think it worthwhile.

It would be nice if someday I could get all three Colorado Lagondas for a picture. As you know, Mr. Worth Shrimpton of Craig, Colorado (about



The special bodied 3-litre referred to by Mr. Pollard on p. 22. What wings!

Photo: E. L. Witcombe

miles away) has a V.12 drophead but I'd doubt he'd want to drive it over two passes (over 10,000 feet) just for a picture-taking ceremony.

Should it ever occur, however, you'll be advised.

Thanking you again for your courtesies, I am,
TRUMAN A. STOCKTON, JR.
Colorado, U.S.A.

Super "Sleep" Strikes Back

Dear Sir—I notice that in your Newsletter No. 18, your reporter at the Northern Driving Tests gives my car the model name of Super "Sleep".

It may be that he is feeling his age, and a hint of jealousy is creeping in. Perhaps his ageing bones can no longer take the bounce of stiffening cart springs, his ears the cacophony of clattering con-rods, and his spreading frame the cramped quarters of replica Le Mans coachwork. Perhaps he cannot accept that a somewhat Americanised modern car, in the hands of a superb driver like what I am, can better so many P.V.T.'s.

But, let us be charitable. It is well known that he types with one finger on a Tan-sad Junior typewriter that his father gave him on his eighth birthday, so we shall assume a simple typing error.

JOHN TURNER
Shipley, W. Yorks.

Special bodied 3-litre

Dear Sir—I enclose two photographs of a special bodied 3-litre—I think one of the earliest judging from the registration—which you may feel are of

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sufficient general interest for inclusion in the next issue of *The Lagonda Magazine*. The photos belong to a friend whose father used to own the coachbuilding firm at Kew where this body was built. The car is not now in the Club (or not in the last register anyway) and I wonder if it still exists, or whether anyone remembers seeing it.

M. POLLARD
Worthing, Sussex.

A Son for Andrew and Patience

Dear Sir—Would you be so kind as to pass on to those interested in the Club, especially our kind friends the Wittridges, Mike Gaber, Herb Schofield and John Weatheritt, when or if you see them, the very happy news that Patience and I have a son, a new potential L.C. member, a spare wheel or what have we? And to yourselves of course, thank you for all you've done.

I sail for South Georgia on 1st October for a six month posting there as assistant biologist doing a project on fur seals and the wandering albatross.

With best wishes to you all, good driving,
ANDREW STEWART
Cheshire.

Lagonda Days

Dear Sir—Through you, Mr. Editor, I should like to thank Fred Shattock for telling us more about Wally in the last Magazine. I hope all readers found it interesting. It was extraordinarily good reading to me because it proved I was not the innocent victim of a wily feminine leg-pull!

ROY PATERSON
Cottingham (near Hull).

Sequel to the article in the Summer Magazine 1972

Dear Sir—My DB.3-litre has now completed 23,400 miles since the filter was fitted.

The engine oil and the conventional engine oil filter have not been changed during this time and the condition of the oil is excellent although a slight discolouration is apparent.

The "Novo" element at present in use is the fifth. This is quite reasonable as two elements had been used after the first 800 miles. These are required to be changed frequently in the initial stages because the detergents in the oil are kept absolutely free of contaminants and are able to continue scavenging the engine until all the carbon, water, acid, etc., have been deposited in the filter.

The condition of these filters when removed have to be seen to be believed. The white sludge often found in the rocker-cam covers is all too obviously packed into the element.

The knowledge that the pump is constantly circulating clean oil around the engine is of constant satisfaction to me.

H. TAYLOR T.6.

Welcome to a DB Rapide owner

Dear Mrs. May—Herewith my application form for membership of the Lagonda Club. It may be useful to know some more details about my car and its owner.

The first time I happened to see a Lagonda was at school, around 1960. One of my Egyptian friends came to pay me a visit with his cousin, H.R.H. Prince Fouad, who was driving a 4½-litre Lagonda and told me how much he loved his car. He also told me Lagonda was to introduce a new model, the Rapide Saloon. I was very thrilled to see the car. A few weeks ago, I saw Prince Faoud at a dinner party, but unfortunately forgot to ask him whether he still owns his Lagonda. I doubt so, since he is now living in Greece and road conditions do not seem very positive.

Anyway, while I was still at boarding school, in 1963, I remember to have been terribly impressed by one of my schoolmates who took me for a drive (with chauffeur, since he did not yet have a driving licence himself) in his mother's Lagonda Rapide Saloon. From that day on, I promised myself to own a similar car one day.

As you know, not many of these cars have been sold on the European continent and I had a very hard time in finding one. After having contacted

the Factory, most of the dealers on the Continent, and having put advertisements in several newspapers, I finally happened to purchase a beautiful 1962 Rapide Saloon during a Christie's auction this Spring, in Geneva.

The car has been imported in Switzerland, August 1962 and carries chassis number LR-109-L, engine number 400-109. Engine is the 4-litre Aston Martin with standard 4-speed gearbox; no power steering. Leather upholstery in biscuit colour, coachwork being black. General condition is very good, although a certain number of mechanical and body repairs have to be undertaken. The car carries Swiss (Geneva) plates GE-300.600 and has run some 106,000 km till now.

During one of my trips with this car, I met Mr. R. D. A. Wills, also from Geneva, who was as well driving a Rapide, a beautifully maintained dark blue metallic saloon with wire spoked wheels and a five-speed gearbox. He kindly gave me the Club's address. Unfortunately, he could not inform me about any Club contact address in Switzerland. I would highly appreciate if you could let me know. On the other hand, I am very curious to know how many of these cars have been sold outside Great Britain, mainly in

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the U.S.A. and on the European Continent.

By the way, my car is supposed to have had the following owners (a detail which I still have to check but which seems to be true): Mrs. J. Cartier, the wife of the famous Paris jeweller, who used it chaeuffeur driven at her Swiss residence; she sold it to one of her neighbours, Mr. R. Trembley, a Swiss industrialist, who had the car also driven by his chauffeur; around 1972, he sold it to his friend, Mr. J.-J. Chessex, a well-known author and car-collector, who finally had it auctioned by Christie's.

Possibly still this year, I would like to take the car to England for a complete overhaul. Mr. H. Schofield suggested me to take the car to the Aston Martin Lagonda Ltd., but I wonder whether there would be no less expensive solution. If, by any chance, you could provide me some information about this particular point, I would be very grateful.

ANDRE SCHNEIDER
20 Avenue Peschier,
1206-Geneve, Switzerland.

News from our Saudi Arabian Correspondent (Mike Gaber)

Dear All—Just a few lines from the only Lagonda Club member in Arabia (no doubt I'll be corrected on that score), really to prove that I'm not in Wormwood Scrubbs as some would believe. As the Prophet once said "Give me twelve sheets of sandpaper, and I shall show you a map of Arabia". In fact, venture outside the city here and you are in desert, the real McCoy, where the evenings are breathtakingly tranquil and cool, and its still 90°+ during the day, although the worst heat is over till next year. It was about 115°-120° when we arrived, and only mad dogs accompanied us at mid-day—very risky with all that rabies about.

To put the record straight, when a shout of "the camels are coming" echoes out, everyone here grabs a camera, for the only camels I've seen to date were a bevy of racing camels, similar to large greyhounds with lumps on, and two kneeling with supercilious smiles, in the back of a passing truck. I'm afraid the Pontiac is the new ship of the desert since the natives struck oil.

I've been here now nearly seven weeks and I'm still struck with stark terror when being driven around Riyadh. (I shall never again complain of the indifferent standard of driving back in the U.K.) These boys are homicidal maniacs, one

and all, anxiously asking you if they drive well, as the vehicle careers across main roads, through red lights, around corners on two wheels, bursts of stupendous acceleration from about 500 h.p. under the bonnet coupled with eye-bulging deceleration when it becomes patently obvious that further progress is even beyond *their* determination. Several have remarked upon my pale features at the end of even a short trip. We are convinced that parents threaten children here with "If you don't behave, we'll take you out for a drive tonight". Nothing will possess me to take the wheel over here. Driving has unfortunately followed booze as a once fairly enjoyable pastime during my stay here.

In fact the city is surprisingly sophisticated, with the current practice of rising prices (except petrol at about 1/6d. a gallon) reasonably recent food in the supermarkets, and out of date newspapers. There are cakes and biscuits made here of a quality that would put Fortnums to shame, but man can't live on cake alone. Tea (without milk) is beautiful and consumed on the same scale I once downed beer.

On the printing side, I have found an offset press here with Heidelbergs and a big Miller that just need good artwork to make their day complete. The potential is enormous and I have plenty to do at the moment, with press advertising to prepare plus graphics for the film side.

There is a continuous struggle here against internal politics by the Press, and one has to be extremely careful over free speech. Life is very orderly, without the hooliganism of home, and the people are so courteous and spotlessly clean that I feel like something the camel's brought in most of the time. I'm improving now that I've got away from nasty oily engines, of course.

I hope that Duncan finds the Trophy collection a not too frustrating experience, and that Hewitt's "jolly" went with its customary aplomb, but not without a few car-stopping moments.

I'll miss the Film Show bit, if only the panic to find a seat at the last moment. Give my best wishes to everyone, even the Chairman, and I hope that enclosed cheque proves a subject lesson to those that are lethargic over their subscriptions. Excuse me while I go to polish my halo up!

Best Wishes, Mike.
(Great to hear from you Mike—the tea and cakes bit sounds good, I'm not so sure about the traffic. Keep in touch! Ed.)



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