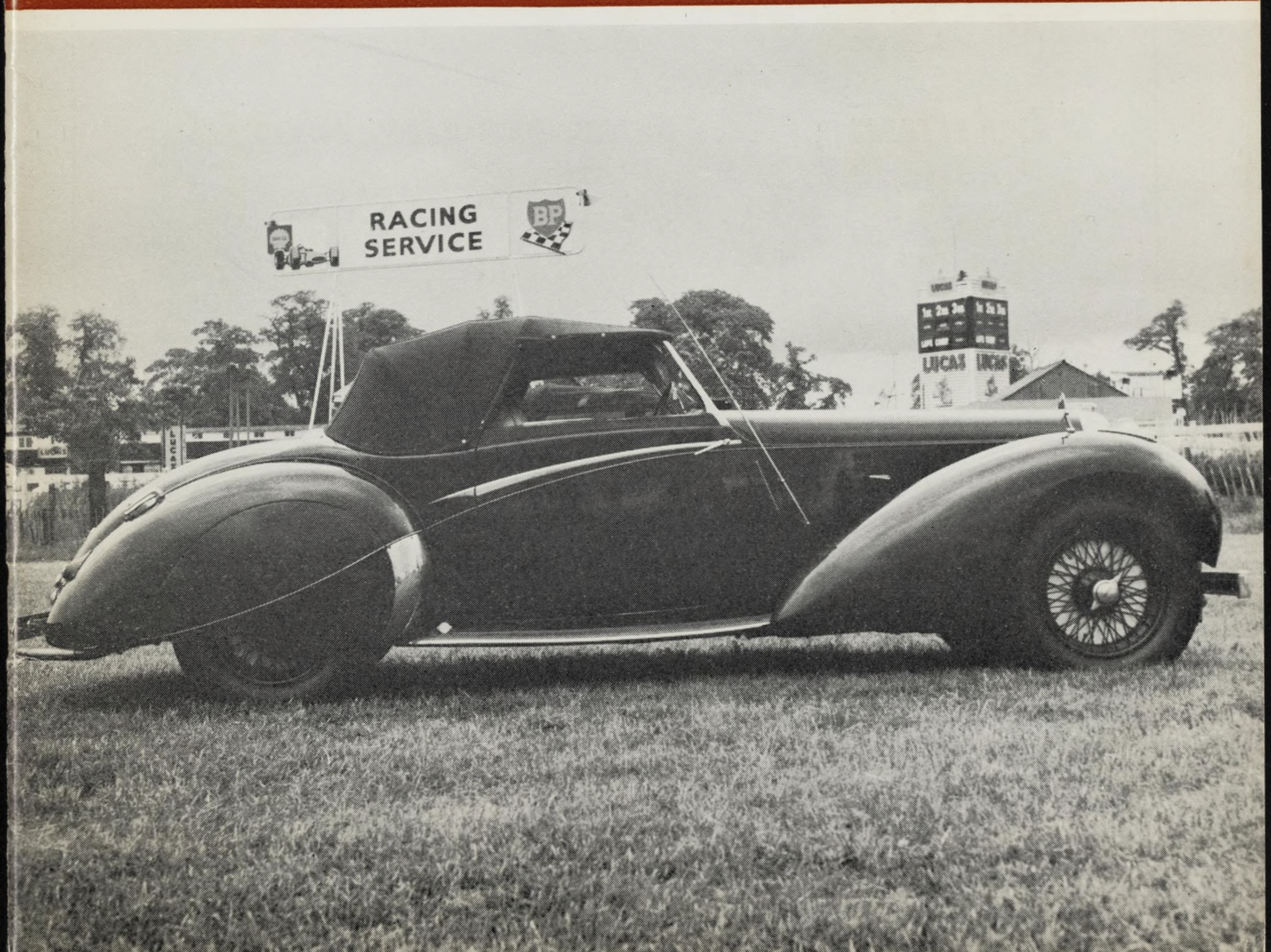
THE Lagonda

THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB

Number 96 Autumn 1977



THE Lagonda

MAGAZINE

Issue No. 96 **Autumn 1977**

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

Editor: A. W. MAY

Editorial Committee:

ARNOLD DAVEY J. W. T. CROCKER

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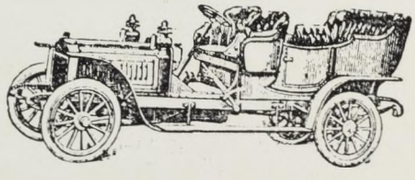


Contributions do not necessarily represent the views of the Committee nor of the Editor, and expressed opinions are personal to contributors.

FRONT COVER: Herb Schofield's elegant V-12 Coupé.

Out and About

At the time of writing this Editorial, the Club's big event of the year the AGM/Dinner Weekend is still to come. We have heard that all the rooms at the hotel have been booked by Club members while others who are not staying overnight are coming to the Dinner in the evening. The whole occasion promises to be the highlight of the Club's social calendar and is looked forward to eagerly by those who attended the first of these weekend-style AGM's last Autumn.

Amongst those who have promised to be with us are Bob and Helen Crane from the U.S.A. They hope to be accompanied by the Jacobsens and John Lazor also from the States and who came last year as well. So the American members will be well represented!

We understand that Alan Curtis, Managing Director of Aston Martin Lagonda Ltd. together with other company colleagues will also be with us and we look forward to returning the welcome and hospitality afforded to the Club at the launching of the new Lagonda last year.
(Elsewhere you will find news of how this exciting car is progressing.)

* * * *

FINMERE, usually a very popular event for our competitive members, had to be cancelled at the last moment through lack of support. Rightly your Competition Secretary John Batt is very concerned and raises a number of important questions in this issue. Please read his comments carefully and let us hear your views on this vital topic.

* * * *

For a change it did not rain at MICHELHAM PRIORY this year when members from the South East corner congregated at this ancient pile for a chat one August afternoon with their cars looking very much in their element parked on the gravel paths before the mellowed stonework of the Priory. A very pleasant afternoon.

* * * *

With a world constantly adjusting itself to ceaseless inflation and haywire prices it is not surprising to note an increase in the number of telephone calls from members or potential members concerning the market value of the various Lagonda models. Understandably the Secretary cannot possibly be expected to supply this information for a market where values have no fixed base. We recommend that a chat with other members who own a similar model can sometimes prove enlightening or with your insurance company if you are already the owner. Where the car is one you are thinking of buying so much depends on its originality etc. that the only sensible judgement must eventually be your own.

* * * *

Northern Notes

From Herb Schofield

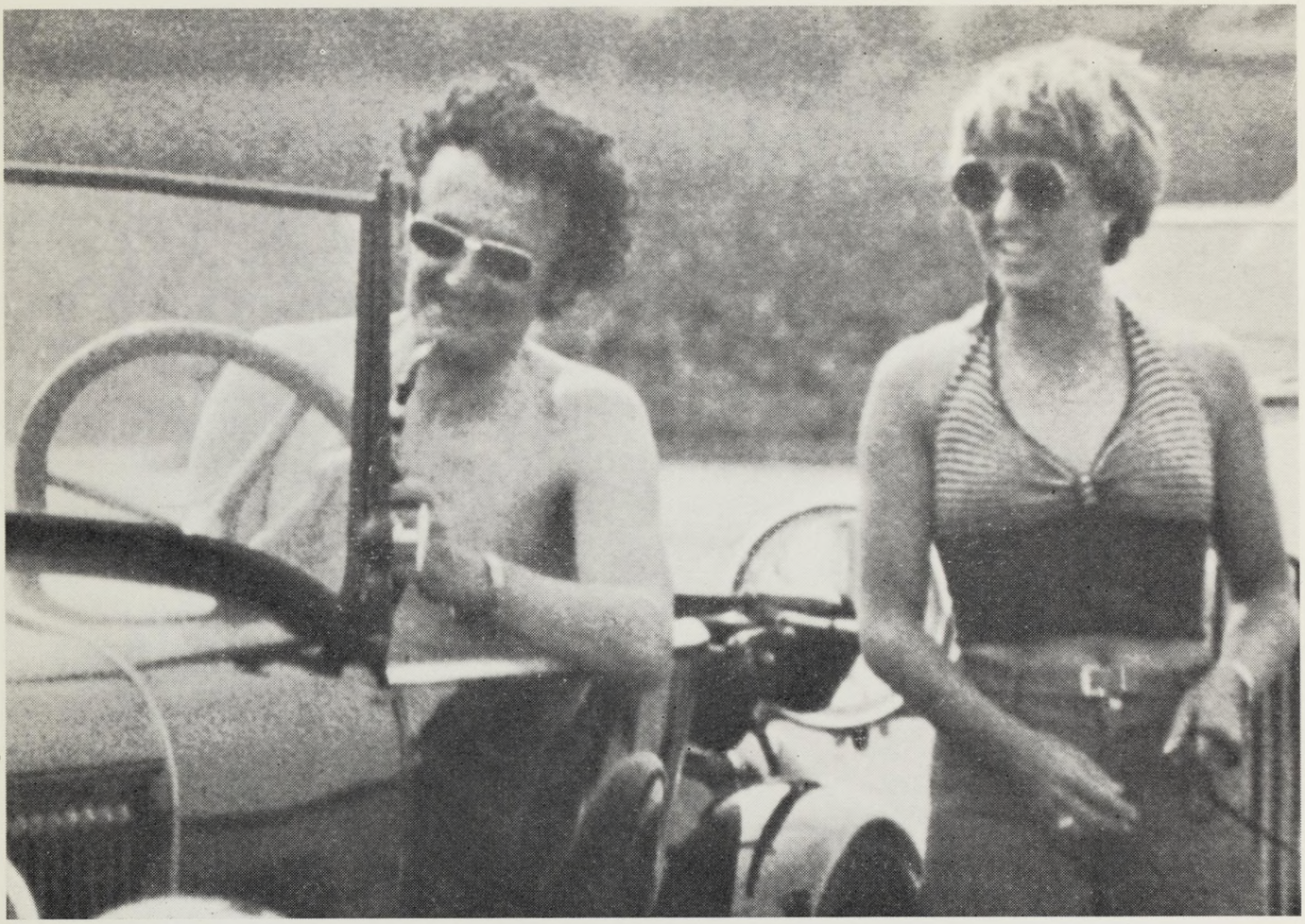
The Border Rally 1977

Alan Brown and myself always look forward to this event. This year it was Brown's turn to provide the transport which turned out to be his Van den Plas bodied M.45 tourer, having a style of coachwork—at least to this writers eye somewhat less elegant than the standard factory produced effort, maybe because the windscreen is deeper, or the tail more pronounced or the body wider, however this cannot detract from the fact that it really is a superb car in which to drive. Brown economics decreed three years ago that he couldn't afford to have the whole car resprayed—so, he had half of it done from the back end as far forward as the scuttle which produces a rather odd effect, and the thought constantly occurs, at least to this writer, that when he eventually gets round to finishing off the front bit the back will want doing again!

The Rally itself was somewhat easier than last year and was organised by Mr. and Mrs. Julian Reisner together with pupils from Axwell Park School, they also provided the excellent food and the beer. Thank you Julian for all your efforts and we can only hope that next year we will be able to produce enough entries to justify all your efforts; and now the results:

1st	C. Boylan	16/80
2nd	B. Naylor	Rapier
3rd	A. Brown	M.45
4th	T. Metcalf	Rapier
5th	T. Adams	Fiat
6th	O.R.J. Rider	Scimitar
7th	G. Jolly	Lea Francis

The following morning despite the fact that the Northern Sec. and Brown had forced down several



Brian Dearden-Briggs and Joan Crosfield at the Northern Driving Test.

pints of Scottish and Newcastle beer they found themselves completely without after effects and because of this decided to navigate a more attractive route back to Oldham, through the delightful Yorkshire Dales.

Sweeping down on quiet roads through Teesdale, Arkengarthdale, Wensleydale and Wharfedale we were able to appreciate some of England's finest scenery and the effortless performance of the M.45. Thank you Alan.

Northern Gymkhana 1977

A Nostalgic and Sunny Event

Like the man said "it was even without any collaboration from the Air Ministry roof it was very obvious that Sandtoft was HOT" (see Lag. Mag. Autumn 1959) and when the Northern Factory contingent of Brown, Barker, Hine and Schofield arrived the car park at the "Wheatsheaf" was packed full of Club Members gulping down as much ale as possible before the serious bit in mid afternoon. Competitors at the Southern Driving Tests which is taken very seriously will not perhaps understand our attitude up here. The 'Tests' are purely an excuse for people who have known each other for upwards of twenty years and more to have a sort of get together. The meeting attracted all types of nice motorcars and provided the rare sight of four LG.45 Rapides and even rarer I suppose—three LG.45 tourers of Townsley, Barker and Daker, the latter being featured in the Club Christmas Card some years ago.

We welcomed back to vintage motoring and the Lagonda Club ex-Northern Secretary Brian Dearden-Briggs stripped to the waist in the hot weather and looking like an extra from a film on Belsen. He competed in his 1925 Citroen as his twin cam Sunbeam was out of action. To this writers mind the very name Dearden-Briggs evokes some sort of nostalgia—for he was the Hon. Northern Secretary when I joined the Club in 1958, and he it was who persuaded me to partake in my first competitive event at Sandtoft in 1959. I remember he wrote some very unpleasant things about my old blown 2-litre

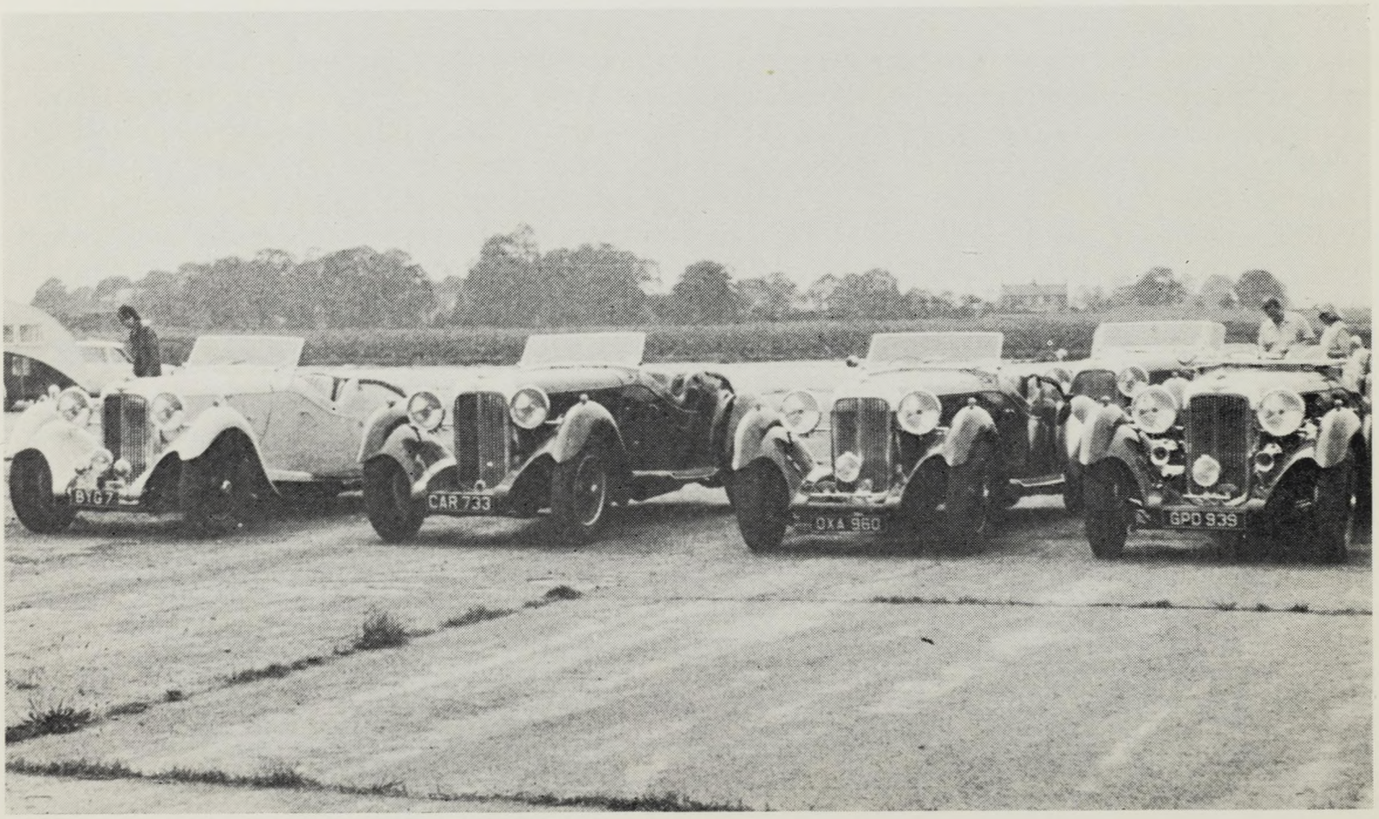
(GO 4495) in the magazine write-up of the meeting, so afterwards I wrote some equally unpleasant rubbish about him and on this basis a strange sort of friendship was born!

Looking back they say is fatal but it is something we all indulge in. I dug out my Lag. Mags. for the same meeting 10 years ago which was also held at Sandtoft. We had a page of six photographs covering the event taken by John Davenport. One of the shots was "rare sight—3 LG.45 Rapides", well the same cars were there with the same owners this year. The other photographs included Hoggard and Rider who were also with us this year. So I dug back even further—to 1957. This meeting was also held at Sandtoft Airfield 24 members competed of whom 19 were driving Lagondas, well we do a bit better than that nowadays. In 1957 keen Southern types used to attend—that seems to have changed a bit, but of course petrol was only about 20p a gallon and you could stay at the "Crown" Bowlry for only 75p a night! Ken Pape competed in 1957 as he did in 1967 and again this year. Northern Secretary Henry Coates laid out the tests in 1957 as he did this year with John Broadbank and the report in the meeting was written by Doc. Rider who has also been with us on every occasion. Some things don't change do they? Anyway back to 1977! Paterson won (because I suspect he was sober) followed by Brown (because he was probably drunk!), and dinner and sleeping arrangements were provided by the Belmont Hotel, Thorne. Yes the sun shone out of a cloudless sky (as it did in 1957 and 1967). My man of the meeting dear old Paul Watts up from Reigate in a 2-litre Lagonda—God bless you mate, and special thanks to Henry and John for laying out the tests and to Julian Reisner and his lads for Marshalling. See you next year, same place, in the sunshine.

By the time you read this magazine Roger Firth will have become Mr. Roger Firth, congratulations, and may we add our good wishes for the future.

Northern Dinner Apologies (see last magazine)
Dr. Peter Clark also came in an old car—the oldest, a high chassis 2-litre Lagonda, and David Hine wishes to point out that he did not come in a 1934 BSA "Scout" but a 1937 LG.45 Rapide, for this slight error the Northern Secretary offers his humble apologies!

Talking about spares. We are getting a quote for new G9 2nd. speeds (you may remember we



LG.45R's of Messrs. Firth, Davenport, Hine and Schofield.

had some made in 1968). If you are interested please let HERB SCHOFIELD on 061-624-6236 know.

I would also mention that should you want any technical advice or information about spares you have only to contact the Northern Lagonda Factory. The garage is on the telephone 061-624-6236 and the best time to ring is between 8.00 p.m. and 9.30 p.m. any Tuesday evening when Schofield, Hine, Brown, Davenport, Hall, Barker and Firth will be on hand to help you.

Visit to Newport Pagnell

by Arnold Davey

ON A COLD DRIZZLY DAY IN JUNE A SELECT PARTY from the Midlands toured the Aston Martin Lagonda works on a visit organised by Harry Taylor. Five Lagondas were parked in a line in front of the reception block, much to the delight of our guide who immediately rushed off to get his camera.

There seem to have been some alterations to the factory since I was last there in the period when DB.6's were being built, and I fancy the reception block is new, forming an extension to the front of the service building and also housing the rolling road test bed on which carburettors are set up and which is invaluable for rectifying the sort of complaint where the customer says the car "misfires over 130 m.p.h.". I seem to remember that in the DB era the engines were built on the south side of the main road but this is now given over entirely to service and "the Experimental" to which we were denied access. Engines are now built on the north side where the whole car building operation is under one roof.

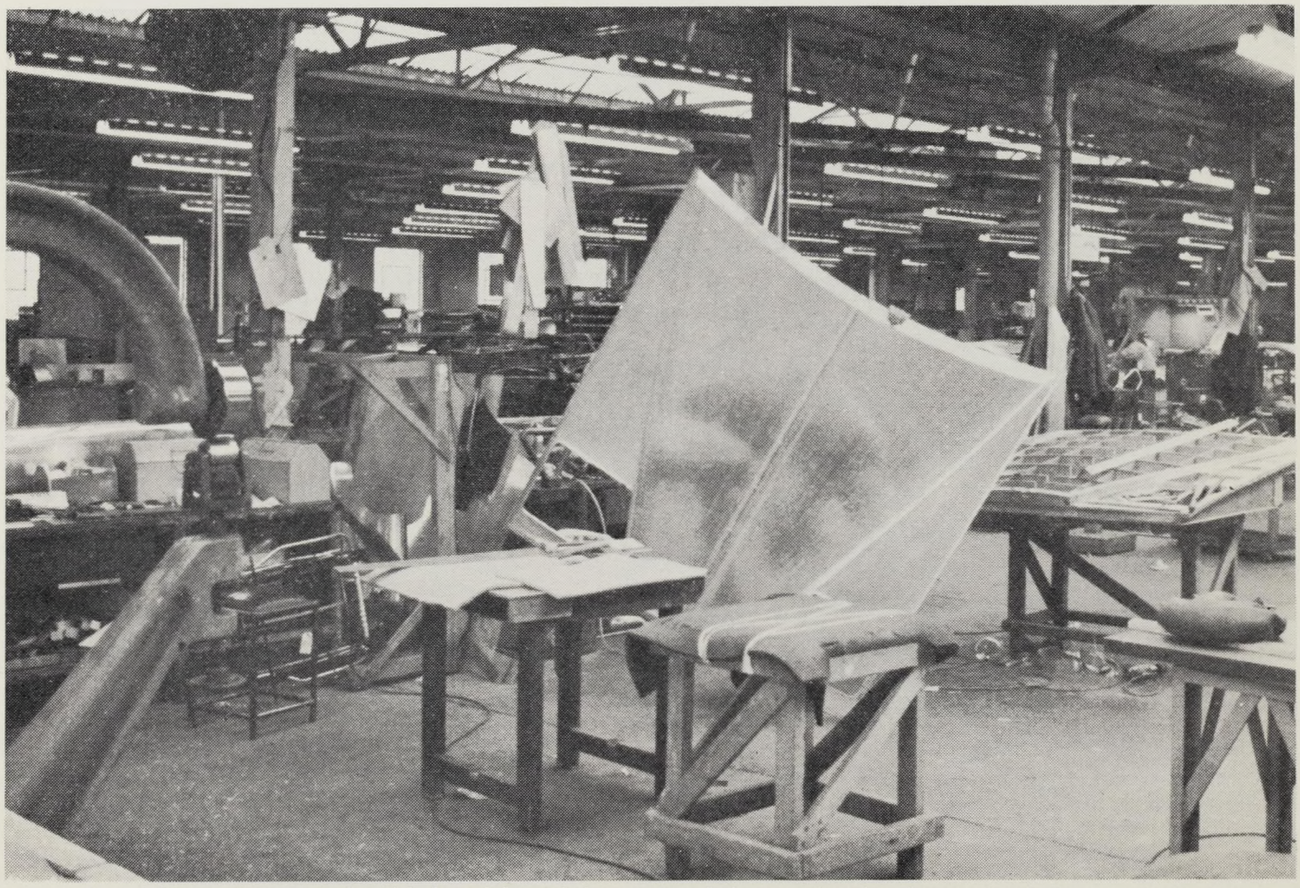
We were there only a few days after the Jubilee Bank Holiday which had extended to a week at the works and there were in consequence a few parts of the works deserted as shortages had led to workers being sent home, but the production is going steadily otherwise and order books are healthy. Naturally we were all keen to see the new Lagonda but No.1 was in Los Angeles at the Autoshow there, and No. 2 in Experimental for some emission/crash testing work. We did see parts being assembled for four more, however, and the company expect that the first production car will be in its owner's hands by Christmas. So far all the body parts are being hand made for the Lagondas but clearly jigs will be prepared by the autumn.

The DB range of cars from DB.4 to DB.6 were built on the Superleggera principal (under license) in which a conventional tubular chassis had attached to it a multitude of small, thin gauge steel tubes which outlined the body. The aluminium body panels were formed on a stretching press, trimmed off and riveted or bolted to the small tubes. With the V8 a different principle entirely was adopted, severing the link with Superleggera. A stout floor pan is built up by electric welding from a set of fairly simple pressings and in a series of whole-car jigs other pressings and square section tubes are welded on so that at the end of them a sort of complete but unpanelled monocoque hull emerges on to which doors and lids can be hung. The panelling on the V.8 is very much less curved than on the 6-cylinder cars and is attached to the hull with pop rivets (mostly). There is still a great deal of handwork in the body shop and, for example, the cold air vent in the bonnet lid and the tricky area around the headlamps are all hand beaten. Each man generally specialises in on operation and nearly all have made special tools for the job, many of them beautifully polished examples of toolmakers' art. One feels that if the supply of old files ever dried up, Aston Martin Lagonda will go out of business.

After trial fitting the doors and lids, the bodies go to the paint shop where all the spraying and rubbing-down are hand operations. (You can tell the rubbers-down by their big flat fingers). I missed the answer to the question of whether the paint is baked, but certainly rectification jobs are, so I suspect that the proper paint jobs are too. The underbody is sprayed with a black gooey wax of the self-healing variety. After this the bodies enter what passes for the production line in a small factory like this with suspension, brakes and steering going on first, followed by the wiring, rear axle, slave wheels, engine/gearbox unit, glass, seats and trim and final details.

AML have no foundry so all castings are bought in, and so are crankshafts and camshafts. These latter appeared to arrive already machined and hardened but block and head castings appeared roughly fettled only and all machining operations on these are done at Newport Pagnell. The machine shop looked considerably more modern than the old one with fewer operators. As always at AML, each engine is built up from

The Midland Section's cars line up at Newport Pagnell.



In the Panel Shop showing the third and fourth bonnets of the production Lagondas being made by hand.

The new Aston Martin Vantage model showing covered grille and spoiler. *Photos: Arnold Davey*

scratch by one man and the erecting shop holds four or five stands. The V.8 is a surprisingly simple layout and very sturdy. Both block and heads are alloy, with dry liners. There are four overhead camshafts, each engraved with its name driven by separate double row chains with a third chain for the auxiliaries. There is a deep, stepped sump, also aluminium, and four down draught double-choke Webers have totally replaced fuel injection. We asked why this was and I gather the injection system was just too complex and delicate. If the adjustments to mixture were done in the wrong order, for example, the injection pumps could get ruined in seconds at a cost of £600. A useful relic of the injection system is a tapped boss in each of the eight exhaust pipes to which diagnostic equipment can be coupled to set the carburettors up properly and for checking in service.

Gearboxes are either Chrysler Torqueflite or ZF. The latter represent about 70% of the production and this is a special 5-speed ZF box, code marked "007" by the makers—a nice touch. The rear axle is a de Dion layout with a Watt linkage, coil springs and inboard ventilated disc brakes. This has been simplified on the Lagonda, I gather. The discs, front and rear, are monstrously heavy things about an inch thick and nearly all ventilation holes. They have to be balanced and this is done in the same shop as the piston/connecting rod sets are balanced. Rather to my surprise the rods are steel, but I presume aluminium ones would be overstressed. For the U.S. market a much lower compression ratio is employed, involving a quite different piston and the engine is weighed down with the legally required anti-pollution garbage, exhaust re-circulating air pumps, catalysts in the silencer and so on. There is even a gadget (compulsory) that says when all the catalysts are exhausted. As the power output has never been disclosed, we don't know how much is lost in all these fuel wasting attachments. The only E.P.A. gimmick that A.M.L. are spared is the "5 m.p.h. bumper" which is not compulsory for small firms for another five years, with a possibility that they may get an extension of time. The American market absorbs about a third of the production, Japan another third and Europe the remainder.

There were several points that intrigued me as

we walked along and saw the cars growing. Part of the front "chassis" subframe is detachable and I was curious what part was so buried by the engine and radiator that it had to come out downwards. It proved to be the steering rack, as I might have guessed, which is too bulky with its power assistance to come out round the engine, which does indeed fill the compartment completely. I fancy the twin brake servo cylinders are pretty difficult, too. The sound deadening material is made by A.M.L. themselves and consists of a foam plastic/lead sheet/foam plastic sandwich about an inch thick. It has the advantage of staying put wherever placed and is very effective. It was explained that on a car of this nature space is more at a premium than weigth and to get the same effectiveness with another material an unacceptably bulky pad would have to be used. (Oversimplifying wildly, noise attenuation is usually proportional to the mass of the damping material). A new dash layout was announced on the day of our visit and every car we saw had it already, with a more modern looking panel in front of the driver.

A.M.L. use quite a number of small components pirated from other makers, Jaguar door handles and locks, for example. This is because the motor components industry seems unable to think in numbers less than ten thousand and has no interest in small production runs. General engineering firms are quite different, however, and any of the components which can be made on standard types of engineering equipment can be bought to A.M.L.'s requirements, representing purchases of one or two hundred at a time.

The seats are still of hide, either Connolly or Brig of Orchy, according to colour, but non-wearing surfaces are now matching vinyl. The trim shop was shut down when we were there, which disappointed the ladies in the party, although a splendid leather smell was still about.

All cars are road tested three times after which there should be no faults left on the original list and the final inspection is on a hoist immediately after the return from the last run. The road testers confirmed that the Vantage model, of which we had seen two or three on our way round, is noticeably faster than the standard production car, and is not just a showroom special. (2 seconds quicker to 60 m.p.h., according to 'Motocar'). The factory has been doing a lot of wind tunnel work on the Vantage and discovered that due to a quirk in the air flow, the front spoiler fitted to this model makes the radiator opening unnecessary and Vantages are now being fitted with a blanking panel containing the auxiliary driving lamps and sprayed to match the body. Enough air comes in below and through the spoiler to cool the engine.

On the final inspection bay we could look at a dozen or so complete cars awaiting inspection. Some customers have odd requirements, and one wonders what the man with the totally black, inside and out, Vantage is going to do with it. High speed funerals?

On the service side of the road there were all kinds of Aston Martins in all sorts of conditions receiving attention. There were also two Lagondas, an LG.6 tourer (ex-Michael Deakin) having attention to the bodywork and brakes, and the first V.8, now in a club member's hands (Neil Viner) and sporting a chrome "Lagonda" in Wilbur Gunn script on the tail in letters about 2 inches high. It has also been repainted in pale blue metallic whereas when last seen it was in Roman Purple. Also visible were one of the very rare DB.5 Estates, based on the car Lady Brown had made, a pristine R-type Bentley Continental and a blown $4\frac{1}{2}$ Bentley, the last two belonging to the same owner. The registration plates were a good cross section of the world and clearly many overseas owners are wealthy enough to ship their cars back to the works for repair. We also noted at least two V.8's registered AMV 8, which is a number owned by the company and used for photographic and publicity purposes. Our guide and others we spoke to were very caustic about untrained meddling with a car and engine so complex, and now that the service interval is up to 10,000 miles, one is clearly encouraged to take the car back to the works for servicing as well as repairs. The firm had also recently bought a DB.2/4 coupé and have restored it where necessary to immaculate condition as a showpiece and conceivably as the nucleus of a historical section. Our guide was firmly of the opinion that it was the nicest of the six cylinder cars to drive, but was naturally enough, completely loyal to the current production model.

All in all, we were impressed with the spirit of the staff. This isn't the sort of factory where you could get trampled to death in the rush to get out when the hooter goes. We were there at that time and no one moved until he had finished what he was doing, and the staff leaving do so in a trickle, not a flood. They were still wandering away

three quarters of an hour later when the Lagonda Club party moved off. Nor are all, or even the majority of the employees white haired old codgers; it was heartening to see a high proportion of young skilled men.

To end on the Registrar's territory, I noticed that chassis numbers are now in the 11700 region. Working backwards, I calculate that the Receivership and takeover by the new owners must have happened at about chassis No. 11500. For omen-hounds, I would like to point out that in 1935 the old company went into a Receivership at chassis No. 11450.

V.S.C.C. Prescott

13th/14th August

THIS EVENT WAS NOTABLE FOR TWO THINGS—Jonathan Abson won his class in Elliott Elder's Rapier and the day was almost a complete wash-out, as Gloucestershire received the equivalent of a normal August rainfall in just one day!

Prescott is always well subscribed, and this year was no exception and I am pleased to report that my 4½-Litre completed its first event satisfactorily after more trouble at Silverstone a fortnight earlier which again necessitated an almost complete engine rebuild.

I lost count of all the Club Members seen over the weekend, but there must have been at least a couple of dozen, and far too many to mention here.

When sheltering from the rain in a tent, under a tree, or in the bar, it is extremely difficult to follow the action on the hill. The organisers also ran through the event extremely quickly with a minimal interval, sufficient only to allow the Marshalls to have a quick sandwich and do the other thing. The good work they did during Sunday was especially appreciated in such appalling conditions, and I am pleased to report that this fact was acknowledged over the tannoy at the end of the Meeting. The last run was concluded just before 5.30 p.m., a good hour earlier than usual and the course car cleared the Hill following Alan Cottam in the Connaught who once again made F.T.D.

As luck would have it, the evening was reasonably clear as a convoy of three Lagondas—David Greenwood with young son James in their Rapier; Tony Metcalfe and family with their Rapier; the

The Woollard and Hallowes' 2 litres take shelter. *Photo: Tony Wood*

Batts with LG.45 together with a local friend Richard Gabriel with a beautiful Invicta, had a most pleasant run back to Bedfordshire stopping only for the usual reasons at a delightful pub near Kingham. However, as the Lag. was driven into the garage it began to rain and four days later when doing these notes, it still continues!

Not such a pleasant week-end but the last time it rained was 1954, so we should be alright for another 23 years.

For record purposes Lagonda times are set out below.

JOHN BATT.

V.S.C.C. PRESCOTT—AUGUST 14th 1977

			1st run	2nd run
Class 2. Sports Cars 1101-1500 c.c.				
42.	P. Nickalls	1934 Lagonda Rapier	59.96	58.19
Class 3. Sports Cars 1501-3000 c.c.				
53.	J. G. Ody	1929 Lagonda 2-Litre	75.95	73.95
55.	J. C. Woollard	1927 Lagonda 2-Litre	77.59	
56.	A. T. Elliott	1930 Lagonda 2-Litre	70.43	68.87
57.	M. Hallowes	1929 Lagonda 2-Litre	70.98	68.84
60.	R. J. Sage	1934 Lagonda 16/80	70.02	68.79
Class 4. Sports Cars over 3000 c.c.				
83.	J. A. Batt	1936 Lagonda	66.67	63.32
Class 6. Racing Cars up to 1100 c.c.				
107.	A. McCall	1939 Rapier S/C	61.33	87.42
110.	P. J. Morgan	1935 Lagonda Rapier S/C	56.66	56.90 2nd
Class 7. Racing Cars 1101-1500 c.c.				
122.	J. D. Abson	1935 Lagonda Rapier	56.53	55.64 1st.

A PLEA FOR HELP FROM THE EDITOR

My stock of copy and photographs for the Magazine is very low indeed. Can all contributors please make a special effort so that the Winter Magazine can be published at the normal time. Copy date is November 15.

New Forest Rally Tour

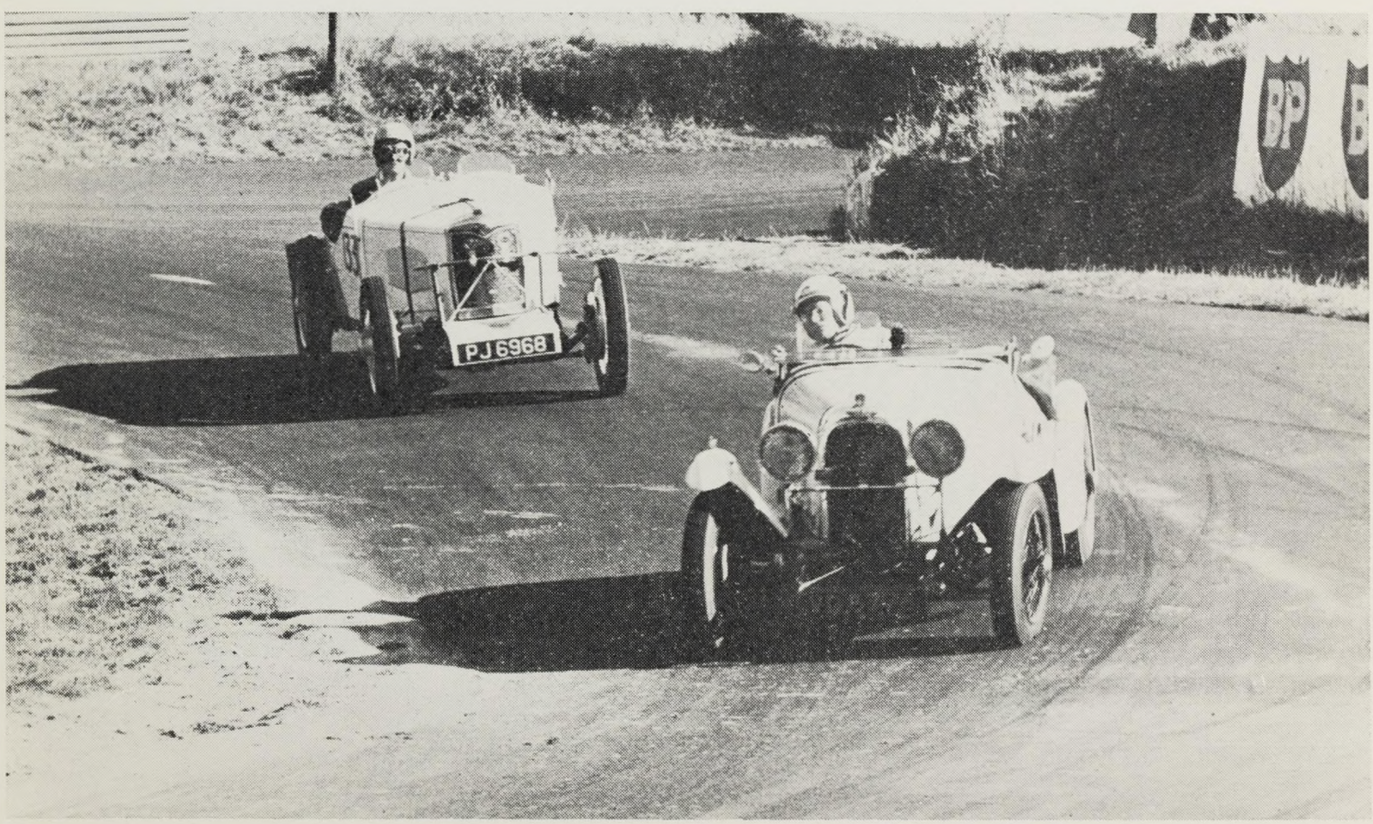
AFTER RUNNING THIS EVENT FOR SEVERAL YEARS, Dick Sage was looking for someone to take over and, as I live within a few miles of the Forest, it seemed appropriate for me to organise the Rally for a year or two. For various reasons, not the least of which was a trip to Hospital by my chief map-reader and wife, we were short of time and eventually set out to plan the route one Saturday in May. Starting and finishing points were to be the same as in 1976 and we arranged the Start and coffee at Rhinefield House, a stately home near Lyndhurst.

Sunday, 19th June dawned dull and drear in the New Forest but eight stalwarts arrived in Lagondas, including the oldest competitor, Paul Watt, aged 70, in a remarkably spartan 2-Litre Special. Route Sheets were distributed over coffee and eventually cars began to leave. For many, this was their first mistake as Clue Number One was near the front door of Rhinefield House.

Generally, clues were designed to be seen from a moving car or were close to parking places. Two anagrams were thrown in and seemed to fox some crews.

The only part of the route which we had not checked in May was the finishing point—a Pub near the Rufus Stone. For many years this has been used and the Lagondas parked on the large expanse of forest grass opposite. After the Start we moved to a point about half-way around the course, saw the cars through, and then motored gently to the Pub. To our horror we found that some negative character from the Ministry of Don't had dug a trench alongside the road, preventing cars from driving onto the forest. The Pub car park was full of tin boxes on another treasure hunt. Fortunately an undug section of grass, just the right size for our cars, was found a short distance away.

Over lunch and beer the cans were admired while Route Sheets were checked. We were joined by Geoff Seaton, Colonel H. W. King and Phil Ridout. It was hard to choose between Geoff's famous 3-Litre and Philip Erhardt's M.45 Drophead for sheer elegance. The latter car appeared to have a "performance" accessory in the form of a side-opening boot-lid which Dick Sage recognised as a cunningly-disguised Air Brake.



V.S.C.C. Cadwell Park—Brian Naylor (Rapier) in the Spero Trophy race. *Photo: Tony Wood*

Finally the results were announced and, as in previous years, competitors achieved roughly the same marks. I think that most people enjoyed their day and it would be nice to see 12—the maximum number—next year.

Results:

1st	Alec Downie 2L LC(s)	16 marks
2nd	Joe Harding M.45 / Peter Whenman 2L HC	15½ marks
4th	Dick Sage 16/80	14 marks

COLIN BUGLER

Midland News

IT IS VERY DIFFICULT, DURING THESE LIGHT summer evenings, to sit down and write up on past and forthcoming events, but at last I have managed to do so.

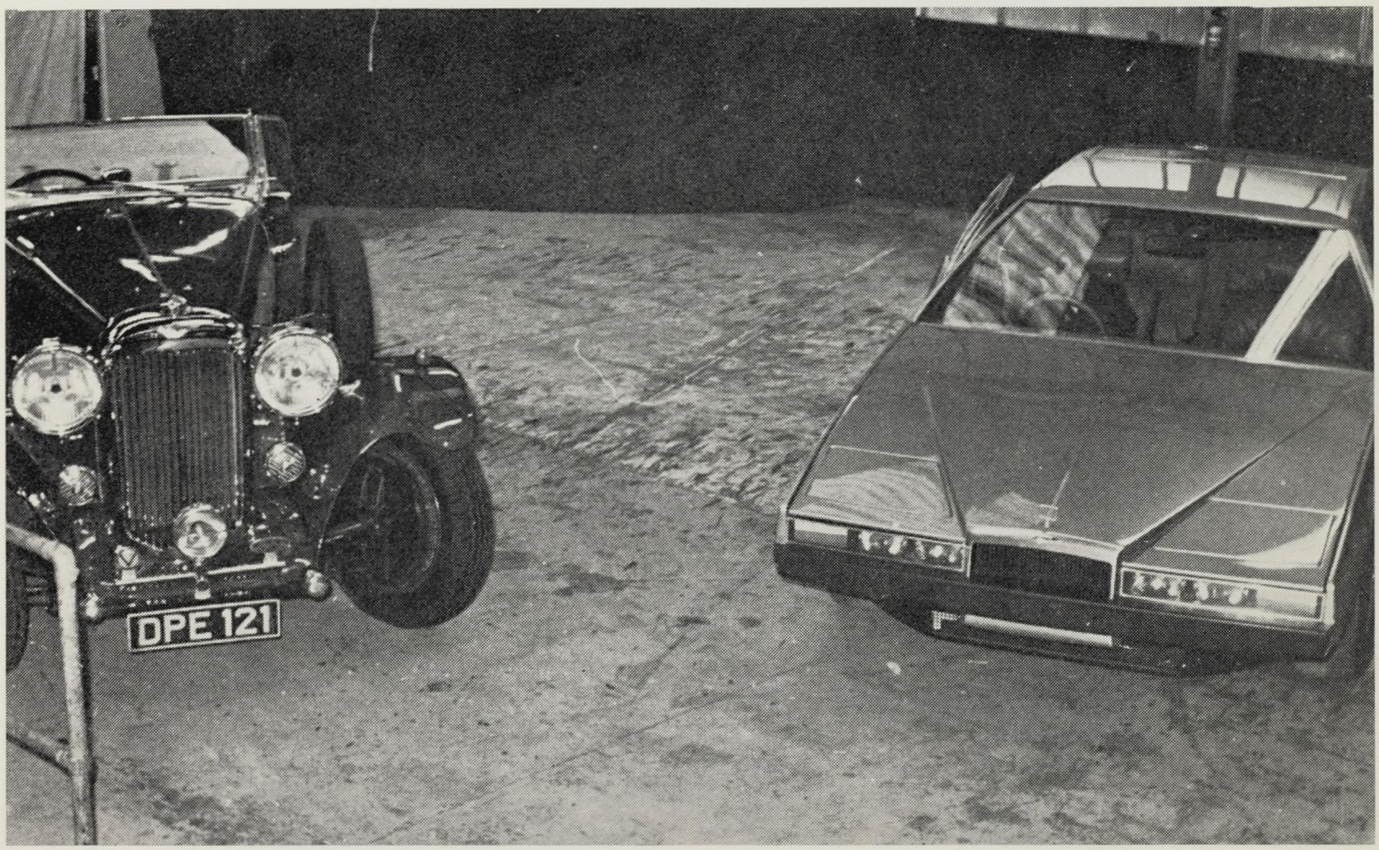
A visit to Allied Breweries at Burton-on-Trent was the substitute for the April pub meet, and a very entertaining evening it was too. Although beer production is fully automated, the lecture, so ably delivered by our guide (Neil Frajbis in disguise), was most interesting. As no one had jumped in a vat en route, the same number of starters arrived in the sampling dept. where we spent the rest of the time. Many thanks to Neil for the arrangements.

The 29th May saw us at Wollaton Park in Nottingham for the Midlands Social. Although the rain held off, it was rather cool but as there are many indoor attractions, it did not spoil the event.

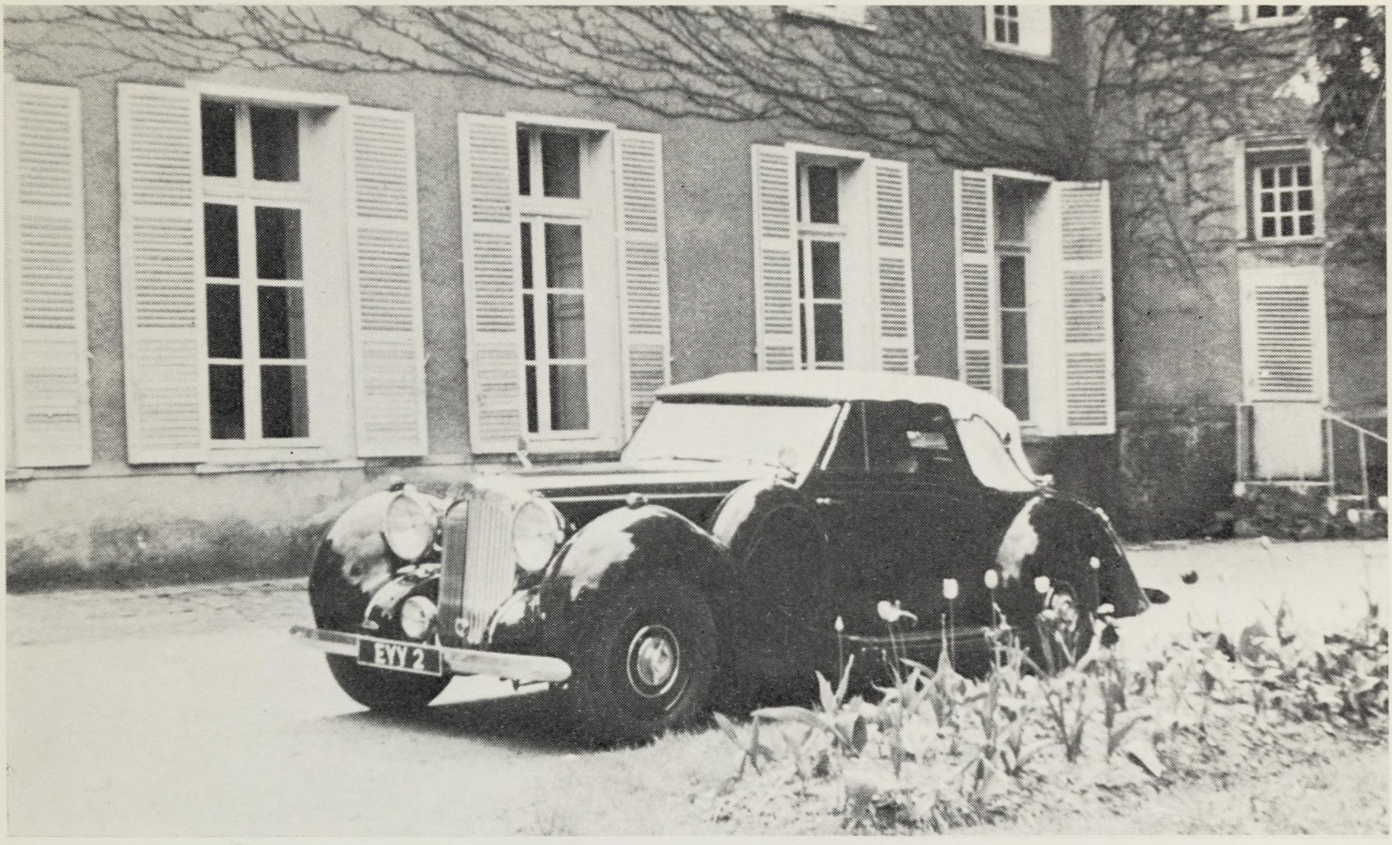
The highlight of the year must be the day we spent at Aston Martin Lagonda Ltd. We met in Towcester for lunch before going on to Newport Pagnell. The five Lags. were given pride of place across the front of the Factory and they proved to be quite an attraction to the staff. The tour It commenced in the experience for most of us. that followed was an Service Dept., on through engine assembly, body shop, trimming etc., and ended with everyone disappearing into different parts of the building. Surely, there cannot be a better built car anywhere in the world today. Each engine is the responsibility of one man, and the body panels are still hand beaten into shape. Unfortunately we did not see the new Lag.—an elderly gent. was beating out the bonnet for Lagonda II and No. I was still on test having only recently returned from the States.

A memorable day and one that will be repeated next year.

H. TAYLOR



N. L. Webster's LG.45 poses with the new Lagonda.



By V12 to the Midi

FIVE DAYS OF LEISURELY FEASTING IN THE SOUTH of France in May at a fraction of the real cost under the guise of a rally was a potent lure— especially with such a trenchant name— L'Escargot d'Or. So, urged on by Robby Hewitt, we booked up, got a green card for the V.12, changed all its oils, pumped its tyres, diverted its headlight beams from lower left to lower right and stocked up with useful chemicals and bits for every disaster we could think might happen "en route".

Then the Saturday before we are due to leave, a telegram arrives saying the rally is cancelled. Delicacy forbids me to repeat the comments of members Hewitt and Valentine at this bombshell, but after our rages had abated she decided to visit vintage Le Mans as planned and Shirley (that's my wife) and I decided to go to the South of France anyway.

So off we set for Dover and the great beyond. It is a fact of V.12 motoring that if you belt the daylights out of the brute the petrol consumption goes down to about $11\frac{1}{2}$ miles per gallon. If you drive at a careful 40 m.p.h. with a feather touch on the gas prodder then with luck you will get up to $12\frac{1}{2}$ m.p.g. So there is not much incentive to go slowly, or indeed anywhere. We decided, however, to keep to a steady 60 to 70 m.p.h. in view of advancing years (hers not ours) and this did obviate the need to tow an oil tanker behind us.

Having hovered lurchingly over the Channel, on we press to Paris down the N1, the boringness of which is alleviated on the outward journey by the expectation of delights beyond. Guided unerringly through a maze of Rues, Boulevards and Places by wife's wizard map reading, we arrive at the Gare de Bercy to put the Lagonda on the train autocouchette to Toulon. But, they say, it is too high. No it is not, I say, your maximum is 5 foot 3 inches and it is only 5 foot 1 inch. Ah but, Monsieur, that maximum is for the top layer on the car trailers and your car cannot go on top because it has a soft roof. So it must go on the bottom layer for which the maximum is 4 foot 10 inches. So it cannot go on the train, Q.E.D. Let us therefore open the roof I say. By all means and it can then go on the bottom layer. Good I say, Ah, but then, Monsieur, you must have a tonneau cover (which of course I don't). Game, set and match to French Railways, so at 8.30 p.m. we set off on the Autoroute du Sud to drive rather than ride to the South of France, and after a night at Fontainbleau, decide to press on the next day. Shirley

takes the wheel for the first time. It's wandering a bit, she complains. French cambers are notorious, I reply, then a Golf passes us at about 90 to our 70 pointing energetically at our front wheel. So we stop, just before the tyre, cut internally to shreds, would have caught fire. With my posterior sticking dangerously out into the track of French cars passing at at least 100 m.p.h., I change the wheel, leaving us with no spare. A serious thought with several hundred miles ahead of us and a shortage of tread on what had been the spare.

Anyway, *en avant* we cried, and on we went, completing 400 miles in the day, to Vaison La Romaine, a delightful little town near Orange with excellent Roman remains and even better snails. Next day we eyed Mont Ventoux, a 6,000 foot mountain nearby and decided not, as previously intended, to drive up it in view of our lack of spare tyre, so we went direct to Avignon. There in the loft of a tyre depot, after they had scoured France by telephone for a 6.50×18 cover (they don't have them), we found a pre-war wheel, off perhaps a Hotchkiss, with an unused 5.50×18 tyre on it. Good enough for a spare, we agreed, and a great relief to find.

On then to Bormes les Mimosas behind Le Lavandou, our base for the next few days which were all one could wish. Food and drink were delicious, the sun shone, wild flowers were everywhere, the beaches were almost empty and where they were not provided titillating evidence of the spread of toplessness! We visited Le Canadel, St. Tropez and La Garde Freinet, then sadly had to retrace our steps to London. Luckily we did not have to drive all the way back as French Railways Toulon accepted a homemade plastic tonneau cover and let the V.12 on to their Paris train. The plastic was in fact in shreds next morning, so those French trains must go quite fast in between their main nocturnal pastime of noisy shunting.

So home we came, with a truly horrible hovercraft crossing of the Channel. The car was in fact going much better and more smoothly at the end of the trip than the beginning, and indeed more quietly as a result of the rev counter cable breaking, the only trouble we had on the whole trip other than the monster puncture.

One thing I learnt from this trip was that the French love old cars and overcome all their suspicion of the foreigner in their eagerness to learn what it is, how much you would sell it for, or whether you would immediately swap it for some modern Gallic biscuit tin on wheels they happen to be driving at the moment!

Post script: If anyone would like an unused 5.50×18 Firestone 6 ply cover, please write to me at once! MICHAEL VALENTINE

PUB MEETS

LONDON: To be convened at new venue.

WEST HOME COUNTIES.
Fox & Hounds,
Englefield Green, Nr. Windsor.
Second Wednesday each month.

WESTERN REGION:
Half Moon Inn,
Horsington, Nr. Wincanton, Somerset.
Contact Patrons Witt and Barbara Wittridge for details.

MANCHESTER:
Contact Herb Schofield for details.

MIDLANDS:
Manor Hotel, Meriden.
Second Tuesday each month.
Gate Inn, Osgathorpe.
Third Tuesday each month.

WEST SUSSEX:
Sir Roger Tichborne,
Loxwood, Nr. Billingshurst (B2133).
Third Wednesday each month (M. Hallowes).

EAST RIDING:
Cave Castle Hotel,
S. Cave, N. Humberside.
First Wednesday each month (John S. Broadbank).

Lagonda News from Newport Pagnell

ASTON MARTIN'S NEW SUPERCAR HAS SPEARHEADED an export drive in the United States which has earned the company well over a million dollars in less than two months.

The company shipped the prototype of the advanced Lagonda across the Atlantic for the Los Angeles motor show which was held at the begining of May, and since then the firm's American distributors have been overwhelmed with interest and orders.

Mr. Alan Curtis, Aston Martin's managing director who headed a three-man team from the Newport Pagnell works at Los Angeles, said the four-door Lagonda, which will not be available in the States until next year, created an unprecedented interest in the company's existing two-door V.8.

"In the eight weeks since the show opened we have delivered 20 V.8's to customers, which is a quarter of our target for the whole year—and there are many other orders in the pipeline, which we are working flat out at the factory to satisfy," said Mr. Curtis.

With the V.8 selling in the States at 40,000 dollars, the 20 cars supplied are worth 800,000 dollars—and in addition five orders have been taken for the Lagonda since the Los Angeles Show opened.

"The Lagonda is priced at 75,000 dollars in the U.S., so that means the total value of the five orders for this car and the 20 V.8's, is nearly 1.2 million dollars, or more than £650,000," said a delighted Mr. Curtis.

Mr. Rex Woodgate, president of the company's Philadelphia-based American subsidiary, commented: "The Lagonda has shown everyone in the States that Aston Martin is back in business, and capable of producing the most advanced and sophisticated car in the world.

"But American car owners don't usually like to be kept waiting for delivery, so meanwhile many of them have turned to the two-door V.8, which we carried in stock in limited numbers and were therefore able to supply almost straight away.

"Now, however, we are virtually sold out, and are awaiting shipment from Newport Pagnell. I have no doubt that 1977 is going to be our best year ever—and demand really is unprecedented."

The S.U. Carburettor

by A. C. Tomlinson

THE TUNING OF THE S.U. CARBURETTOR IS VERY simple if it is understood that all jets are of standard size. The only adjustment possible is fitting the right size of needle, with the jet adjusting nut set correctly for idling.

Should an engine run badly after having previously given good results do not change the needle for this cannot be the cause of the trouble.

The carburettor should be adjusted by means of the jet and jet adjusting nut in such a way that the correct mixture is obtained when the engine is idling, that is to say it should be made to fire as evenly as possible. This can be noted by listening to the exhaust note. If the engine has a constant uneven beat (known as hunting) this is due to rich mixture. If the exhaust note is irregular and splashy the mixture is too weak.

This adjustment not only adjusts the carburettor for idling but for the whole range of speeds.

If this adjustment is not made, consumption will be bad and performance poor. Should the engine performance therefore be unsatisfactory in respect of consumption and performance, look to this adjustment, and if the correct size needle is fitted it will put the matter right. If it does not, an incorrect size of needle is fitted and it will have to be changed for one correcting the mixture as required. A larger needle will give a weaker and a smaller needle a richer mixture over the whole range of speeds.

ADJUSTMENT. Proceed as follows:
Run the engine until it attains its normal running temperature. Adjust the jet to such a position that the engine idles on the correct mixture. An easy way to do this is to adjust the jet up to a weaker position, then unscrew the jet adjusting nut until it brings the jet down to the position where the engine idles with an even exhaust. A simple way to test for rich mixture when the engine is idling is to lift the piston up slightly, say

1/32 in., and if when this is done the engine runs faster, the mixture is too strong.

If, after this adjustment has been made, the road performance is not satisfactory, a larger or smaller needle will be necessary, as the case may be. If the car pulls better with the manual mixture control pulled out, a smaller needle is required.

Should it be necessary to change the needle, this can be done by removing the two screws holding the suction chamber in position, the suction chamber can then be lifted off and the piston removed. At the side of the piston will be seen a set screw. When this is slacked off, the needle can be withdrawn and the new needle fitted. The position of the needle is with its shoulder flush with the face of the piston. When replacing, care should be taken that the keyway at the side of the piston registers with the key in the body. Great care should also be taken to see that all machine faces and parts are kept scrupulously clean.

There are a number of faults that will cause an engine to run badly, but if the trouble is due to the carburettor it can only be one of the following:

1. PISTON STICKING

The suction piston comprises the piston, forming the choke, the needle and suction disc; into this is inserted the hardened and ground piston rod which works in the bearing of the suction chamber. The piston rod running in the bearing is the only part which is in actual contact with any other part—the suction piston and needle having clearance fit, and consequently should not cause sticking. If this does occur the whole assembly should be carefully cleaned and the piston rod *only* should be lubricated with a spot of thin oil. A sticking piston can be ascertained in a few seconds by inserting a finger in the air intake and lifting the piston, which should come up quite freely and fall right on to its seat when released.

2. WATER OR DIRT IN CARBURETTOR

When this is suspected lift the piston with a pencil. The jet can then be seen. Flood the carburettor by depressing tickler pin and watch the jet: if the petrol does not flow through freely there is a blockage. To remedy this start the engine, open the throttle, block up the air inlet momentarily without shutting the throttle; keep throttle open until the engine starts to race. This trouble seldom arises with the S.U. carburettor owing to the size of the jet and the petrol ways. When it does happen, the above method will nearly always clear it. Should it not do so, the only alternative is to remove the jet. This, however, should on no account be done unless it is absolutely necessary, as when refitting it has to be carefully centred to the needle.

3. FLOAT-CHAMBER FLOODING

This can be seen by the petrol flowing over the float-chamber and dripping from the air inlet, and is generally caused by grit between the float-chamber needle and its guide; this can usually be removed by depressing tickler pin, which allows the incoming petrol to wash the grit through the guide and into the float-chamber.

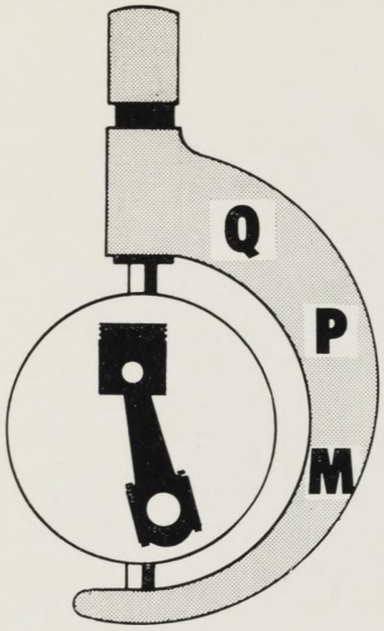
4. JET STICKING

It will probably be found that the cause is stiffness in the manual control or in the jet mechanism itself. The most simple cure is to withdraw the jet to its fullest extent, oil the operating linkages and grease the jets with vaseline or similar lubricant. The control should then be operated two or three times to ensure that the whole system is well lubricated.

CENTERING THE JET

Should it be essential to remove the jet, this can be done by unscrewing the jet holding screw. It must be understood that the needle is very nearly as large as the jet, and yet must not touch it. When assembling it is therefore necessary carefully to centre the jet to the needle, which is done as follows:

First remove pin at base of jet, attaching jet head to jet operating lever. Withdraw jet completely and remove adjusting nut and adjusting nut spring. Replace adjusting nut, but without its spring, and screw up to highest position. When this has been done feel if the piston is perfectly free by lifting it up with the finger. If it is not, slacken the jet screw and manipulate the lower part of assembly including the projecting part of the bottom half jet bearing, adjusting nut and jet head. Make sure that this assembly is now slightly loose. The piston should now rise and fall quite freely, as the needle is now able to move the jet into the required central position. The jet screw should now be tightened, and a check should be made to determine that the piston is now quite free. If it is not found to be so the jet screw should be slackened, and the operation repeated. When complete freedom of the piston



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is achieved the jet adjusting nut should be removed, together with the jet, and spring replaced, and the adjusting nut screwed back to its original position.

ADJUSTMENT OF TWIN S.U. CARBURETTORS

To make a thorough job of adjusting twin S.U. carburettors it is advisable to check first of all tappet clearances, plug gaps and distributor gap. The carburettors should then be checked over in accordance with instructions above.

Now slacken the clamping bolts on the universally jointed connections between the throttle spindles and disconnect the mixture control linkage by removing one of the fork swivel pins. While the suction chambers are off, see that the needles are located in the same position in all the pistons and that the jets are the same distance below the bridges of the carburettors when they are pushed hard against their adjusting nuts.

Unscrew the throttle-adjusting screws and screw these back until they will just hold a piece of thin paper inserted between the adjusting screw and the stop lug, then screw in one complete turn. The engine may now be started. When it is thoroughly warmed up the speed may be adjusted by turning the throttle-adjusting screws equal amounts in either direction, depending on whether a higher or lower speed is required. To check for exact synchronisation of the throttle openings it is best to listen to the intake. This is most easily done by inserting one end of a piece of rubber tubing in the ear and holding the other end near the intake of each of the carburettors in turn. If the hiss on one of them is louder than on the others, unscrew its throttle-adjusting screw until the hiss is equal. When it is obvious that this is satisfactory, the mixture should be adjusted by screwing the jet-adjusting nuts up and down equal amounts, pushing the jets hard up against them, until satisfactory running is obtained. As these are adjusted the engine will probably run faster, and it may therefore be necessary to unscrew the throttle-adjusting screws a little by equal amounts in order to reduce the speed. When the mixture is correct on the carburettors, lifting the piston of one of them with a penknife blade should make the engine beat become irregular from excessive weakness. If lifting the piston on one carburettor stops the engine and lifting that of the other does not, this indicates the mixture on the first carburettor is weaker than on the second and therefore the first one should be enriched by unscrewing the jet-adjusting nut. When the mixture is correct from the carburettors the exhaust beat should be regular and even. If it is irregular, with a splashy type of misfire and a colourless exhaust, the mixture is too weak. If there is a regular or rhythmical type of misfire in the exhaust beat, together with a blackish exhaust, then the mixture is too rich.

Before re-connecting the mixture control linkage, make sure that the jets are hard up against the adjusting nuts and, if necessary, adjust the length of the linkage so that the swivel pins may be inserted while the jets are in this position. The throttle spindle connection clamping bolts may now be tightened.

FUEL LEVEL

The fuel level should be $\frac{1}{4}$ in. below the top of the jet, and is adjustable by shimming the needle valve seating.

THE HYDRAULIC SUCTION PISTON DAMPER

This is a device located in the hollow piston rod and attached to the oil cap nut. It consists of a plunger with a one-way valve and its function is to give a slightly enrichened mixture by preventing the piston from rising unduly quickly on acceleration. The only attention necessary is to keep it supplied with thin oil. It should not, however, require attention more than about once a month.

Needle and Jet sizes *Model*	*Year*	*Carb. Type*	*Throttle Diameter*	*Needle*	*Jet*
14 h.p.	1929	Pair H.V.3	$1\frac{1}{4}$ in.	No. 4	.090
2-litre	1932	Single H.V.3	$1\frac{1}{4}$ in.	No. 6	.090
14.9 h.p. 4-Cyl. Supercharged ..	1930	Single H.V.5	$1\frac{5}{8}$ in.	K.	.100
16 h.p. 6-Cyl.	1933	Pair H.V.3	$1\frac{1}{4}$ in.	No. 62	.090
20 h.p. 6-Cyl.	1933-35	Pair H.V.4	$1\frac{3}{8}$ in.	No. 7	.090
1104 c.c. Rapier	1933-34	Pair H.V.2	$1\frac{1}{8}$ in.	No. 2	.090

The Blown 2-Litre

by G. Hibbert

NO DESCRIPTION OF THE TWO-LITRE WOULD BE complete without mentioning the supercharged models. In this form the charm of these old cars is greatly enhanced and with their high back axle ratio and the punch given by the blower, they form a very potent motor car. Giving about 80 m.p.h. in third and 90 m.p.h. in top, the acceleration is greatly improved and they are extremely flexible.

They went into production round about 1930 and a number were built, both in saloon and open form. Unfortunately there are not now many left as so many were wrecked in their early life by over-zealous owners, who asked for too high revs. in the indirect ratios. This is very easily done and an eye should be kept on the rev. counter as they will quickly go up far beyond the safe maximum.

As turned out by the makers, some were fitted with a Cozette, which should blow at six or seven pounds, and others with a No. 5 Zoller, which is considerably larger and should blow at ten or twelve pounds.

In each case the blower was mounted vertically in front of the timing chest and was driven by bevels off the front of the camshaft. A cush drive was also incorporated above the bevels and a relief valve fitted on the induction manifold to safeguard the vanes in the event of a blow-back.

Lubrication is attended to by a small pump with an adjustable drip feed mounted on top of the blower and feeding the bearings through a hollow spindle. The setting of this pump should be thirty drops at one thousand r.p.m. I recommend a small amount of engine oil to be added to the petrol to give additional lubrication to the vanes. Various methods of feeding the pump were tried, but the most satisfactory method is to arrange some type of gravity feed.

Valve timing, as follows, is slightly different from standard:

E opens 50 degs. before bdc
E closes 6 ,, ,, tdc
I opens 9 ,, ,, tdc
I closes 47 ,, ,, bdc

The tappets should be set to give a clearance of .007 in. Camshaft chains should be adjusted before timing is attempted.

The ignition should be set with the points just breaking forty-four degrees before tdc, fully advanced.

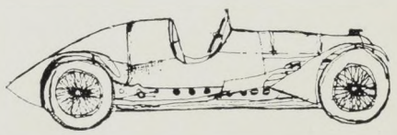
The most suitable plugs are KLG M80 in 18 mm and F80 in 14 mm, or their equivalent in other makes.

The standard carburettor fitted is an SU type HUG 5. The jet size is 100 and the needle type K; with a slow running portion of 100. I have found that the petrol consumption with the above carburettor is a constant twenty m.p.g. over many thousands of miles.

In order that a good head of petrol is available for fast and prolonged indirect gear work, I strongly recommend the use of twin SU petrol pumps as they can cope with any conditions.

In conclusion I can only wish that these grand old cars will remain with us to give many more years of real motoring.

Reprinted from an early 2-litre Register.



The Zenith 'U' Type Carburettor

by A. C. Tomlinson

This carburettor is composed of two parts, the top part which contains the connecting flange, the throttle valve, the float-chamber cover, float needle and seating, the petrol union and choke tube; whilst the bottom portion or bowl contains the float-chamber, and also the float as well as the main jet, compensating jet and slow running jet.

The bottom portion is easily dismountable by loosening the clamping screw holding the retaining stirrup, when the stirrup can be easily swung to one side, and bottom half of the carburettor then comes away in the hand.

The petrol reaches the carburettor by means of an adjustable union, passes through a gauge filter mounted on the fixing plug, and so reaches the needle seating where it enters into the float-

chamber, and is regulated by means of the needle valve operated by the float which works on a pin screwed into the side of the float-chamber.

The float-chamber is maintained at atmospheric pressure by means of a hole drilled through the top half of the carburettor. Petrol then passes from the float-chamber by means of a passage to the main and compensating jets.

Petrol will then pass through the main jet and into a delivery tube situated immediately above it. The same thing happens to the compensator but in this case the petrol rises into the well above it, and at the same time into the cap jet. In the compensating well is situated a capacity tube. This capacity tube is removable and it is possible to employ tubes of different diameter and thereby vary the quantity of petrol that is in reserve when running slowly, and which is rapidly drawn through the cap jet on sudden acceleration.

Consequently the quantity of petrol to be used on sudden acceleration can be regulated to a nicety by simply changing the internal diameter of the capacity tube.

The top of the compensating well is closed by a plug which is pierced by two holes to atmosphere. These holes allow air to pass that is necessary to enable the compensator to work at atmospheric pressure, and also form an emulsion with the petrol issuing from the compensator, which of course finally passes through the cap jet into the choke tube. This plug also carries the slow running tube and slow running jet. The tube dips down into the compensating well and discharges into the slow running jet. After passing the slow running jet the petrol passes through a passage in which is situated the screw for the adjustment of the air.

This screw varies the suction on the slow running jet and thereby regulates the strength of the mixture for slow running. The slow running passage then opens out into the body of the carburettor just above the edge of the throttle, when this is completely closed, by means of a small passage.

As the throttle commences to open petrol from the slow running jet passes through an additional passage adjacent to the one mentioned above, thus ensuring smooth and progressive action. This second passage has a jet situated in it known as the progressive jet, and as a general rule it is not necessary to change the size of it. It is normally 160 c.c. for the 36 mm carburettor.

On the majority of 'U' type carburettors a rich starting jet is employed. This jet is fed directly from the carburettor, and is connected through a starting valve to the upper side of the slow running jet.

Consequently when the lever of the starting valve is pulled over it connects the passage above the slow running jet with the starting jet.

As the throttle is practically shut when starting, it is obvious that the very strong suction that is set up on the other side of the throttle valve will draw petrol from the starting jet, and also from the slow running jet, so that a very rich mixture is provided for actual starting.

Once the engine has actually started the valve can be closed, which will cut out the starting jet and the engine will continue to run on the slow running jet.

DISMANTLING

The main and compensating jets can be withdrawn, after the removal of the jet well plugs, by means of a square ended key. The threads of the main jet and jet well plug have a small diameter thread, so there is no danger of them being wrongly replaced.

The tube and cap jet fitted above the main and compensating jets are never removed.

The slow running jet will unscrew in the normal manner.

The slow running tube can be easily unscrewed after the removal of the slow running jet and its washer.

The capacity tube is a plain brass cylinder which loosely fits inside the slow running well. In order to remove it the slow running jet and slow running tube must be removed, and the capacity tube will fall out when the bottom half of the carburettor is inverted.

The choke tube which is located by a dowel screwed into the top of the carburettor body can only be withdrawn after removal of the throttle butterfly assembly.

The float can be removed by withdrawing the pivot pin by means of a screw driver.

The filter tube can be withdrawn by unscrewing the bolt that holds the petrol pipe against the side of the carburettor.

ADJUSTMENTS

The choke tube size should be the smallest that will give the maximum power or in other words the greatest speed on top gear on a level road. There is no advantage in increasing the choke

tube above that which gives the maximum speed.

The main jet should be the smallest that will give the desired power and speed after the choke tube size has been selected.

The compensating jet controls the acceleration from low speed and the pulling of the engine at low speeds with wide throttle openings, but the smallest size should always be chosen on the score of economy. The test for the correct compensator is that one should be able to run the engine at a very low speed, say 5 to 6 m.p.h. on top gear, and then snap the throttle open without jerking or hesitation. Also one should be able to open the throttle wide with the engine pulling strongly up a slope at about 10 m.p.h. and these tests should be accomplished without undue jerking or irregular running.

Generally speaking, acceleration, pulling at low speed and general running under 25 to 30 m.p.h. should be regulated by fitting a larger or smaller compensator, whilst the adjustment for high speed is effected by changing the main jet.

The slow running jet should be just large enough to ensure regular slow running when the engine is hot, and reasonable starting when cold.

The adjusting screw is provided of course to give a more accurate adjustment. By turning this screw in a clockwise direction the mixture becomes richer and *vice versa*. It is generally set somewhere between a half and one full turn undone from the full closed position and can be adjusted while the engine is running.

Irregularities in starting and slow running therefore should be cured by adjustment of the slow running screw or varying the size of the slow running jet.

The starting jet should be of sufficiently large size that when the engine is hot and the valve is open the engine very quickly stops due to rich mixture.

The following combinations of jets and choke sizes have proved to be ideal for this carburettor when fitted to the two-litre engine.

	Single Carburettor	*Twin Carburettor*
Choke tube	23 mm	24 mm
Main jet	85 c.c.	85 c.c.
Compensator jet	125 c.c.	130 c.c.

Reprinted from the Lagonda 2-litre Register.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Far East Reflections

Dear Sir—I was interested to read Jeff Ody's article "A Vintage Peripateticity" in the latest magazine. He mentions two characters (or cars) which I have met in the Far East. Mr. Hanson in the Solomon Islands I suspect, is Noel Hanson who used to be in Sabah (British North Borneo to colonial types). When I knew him in 1965 his transport was a Morgan. Malvern can have had little idea of estate roads in Sabah: I remember Mary Hanson casually enquiring whether it was alright that the driver's door overlapped by 6 inches, having returned from her shopping in Tawan. Something tedious had happened to the chassis!

Jakarta is the next place Jeff mentions of which I have first-hand knowledge. There is indeed a rather bulled up MG (TC?) which potters about the city to the delight of its owner, and the distant amusement of the locals. The Old American Car mentioned is a 1917 Studebaker, whichI decided, after close inspection, not to buy for £5,000!

By the time I left Indonesia in 1976 the owner had come down to £2,500. It was in original condition admittedly, but ripe for restoration. A realistic price would have been £1,500, but not an exciting car. He has 2 or 3 other 1930's Americans also. Also in Java was a nice 1.5 Riley (about 1951) in Bandung in regular use, and in East Java the remains of an Edwardian, possibly a Steyr. Also in Bandung was a mid twenties Fiat. I narrowly missed a small Minerva in Jakarta, sold in boxes for a huge sum to I think a Japanese (or American).

STEPHEN WELD

Police LG45

Dear Sir—You may be about to read common knowledge amongst club members in the North West, but today, in a local Vintage and Veteran event, I have just seen a 1935 LG.45 Tourer owned from new by the Lancashire Constabulary.

This car was bought new and has done 87,000 miles mostly in driver instruction. It is a very early one being dissimilar to my own in several respects. It has a Sanction I engine and I regret now I did not note the engine number or even the registration number for those in the club who like to trace every car made.

It was bought by the Chief Constable following

a visit to the Hendon skid pan where he saw a couple of identical cars being used and he said "if they can have 2, I'll certainly have one!"

It is not in pristine condition but for a car in regular use—but not daily—in excellent mechanical order. Everything looks original. It was due to be re-upholstered but the £800 quote was shelved under local government cost saving schemes. It is now no longer used on the skidpan but was until recently when someone pointed out the value. It now does quite a lot of motorway work with 4 up for instruction. The person I spoke to claims to have done 'speeds in 3 figures' in it but is scared of the poor braking. I did not ask where he had done this speed nor tell him 95 m.p.h. was the maximum speed—or perhaps the police mechanics have tuned it up.

The instructor who had been given permission for the first time to take it to a rally was called Andrew Fowlie but this is not given so that the Northern Secretary can ask for him if apprehended over either of the two vital limits!

The Lancashire Constabulary at Hutton also own a Red Label Bentley—also for driver training in fine weather when no salt is on the roads.

The only major modification I could see on the LG.45 was the reversal of the accelerator and brake pedals to the now normal positions.

If this is not common knowledge it may be of use to you for your magazine.

DAVID LEES

The V.12 team Car

Dear Sir—I am a Lagonda Club member, and owner of LG.45R 12202 for the past two years, this being a car that has been in Canada for quite some time now.

I recently acquired the Le Mans team car No. 14090 from the U.S.A., and will be setting about restoring it approximately 12 months from now.

The car has no body at all, and was without an engine when I purchased it, but I have obtained a few parts from Bob Crane since getting the car. One of these parts is a cylinder block, in need of welding, (one of the polished rods came loose and broke two of the cylinder skirts) which has no number on the boss where these numbers are usually stamped, but just the letters 'RAC'. Bob also has let me have the original headers from this car, and a number of other items, but I will need lots of information before starting serious work. Pictures are most important, along

with accurate technical details, and I will have to get in touch with the owner of car No. 14089, which has left the collection of Lord O'Neill in the last year of so, as we will need to get proper body measurements, etc.

This will be a hard project, but we have considerable expertise and are looking forward to bringing this car back to its original condition as soon as we have all the information and have accumulated some of the necessary bits, so I am writing to Herb Schofield, Ivan Forshaw, and Maurice Leo this evening to get the ball rolling.

JAMES E. DALE
86 South Drive, Toronto, Canada.

Whither Finmere?

Dear Sir—As most people know, Finmere had to be cancelled this year due to lack of support, with only eight entries from the Bentley Drivers Club and seven including my own, from our own members.

I hope you will publish this letter as a general appeal for ideas on the form our Finmere Event should take in the future, starting of course with 1978. The running and organisation of the Event has remained the same for a number of years and the weekend always tied to the V.S.C.C. Race Meeting in July.

This year Finmere came at the very end of the month, almost two weekends later than usual, probable because the British Grand Prix in mid July at Silverstone had the effect of moving back the fixture. I now realise this brought our Event into the peak holiday period, which undoubtedly was the main cause of the pathetic response for entries.

As the Northern Gymkhana run by Herb Schofield at Sandtoft has undoubtedly been a success, I would like some reaction either directly or through the Magazine to Finmere being run on similar lines. An advertising sheet would be sent out in advance in the usual way, and the background organisation would also be similar but with the Event based on a local Pub, tests designed to be less "car-bashing" simply by eliminating the timing element, we can then avoid all the R.A.C. complications which are to say the least very restrictive for what is after all, a fairly low key competition and more of a social occasion.

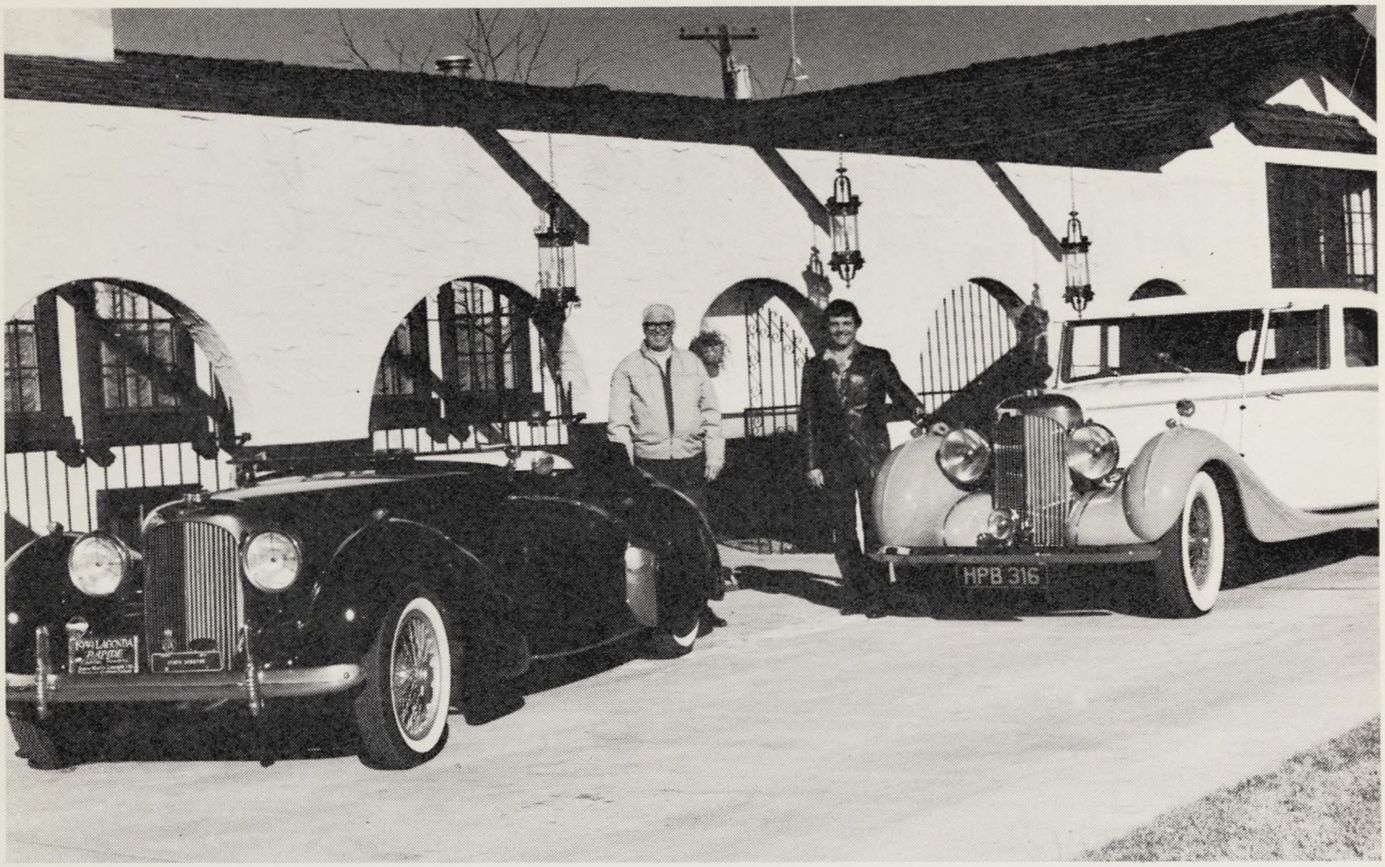
We should also consider the point of inviting Clubs other than just the B.D.C. and would suggest that those members who cannot field their Lagonda be encouraged to come along in the family saloon.

On a more serious note, because of members lack of support, Finmere 1977 will incur the Club in a financial loss. The burden is not large but in these inflationary times, we can ill afford to waste a single penny, and in a Club such as ours, this responsibility is not just that of your Committee or Event organisers, but falls on the members themselves.

Therefore, I suggest that if we are to run a Driving Test, Gymkhana, or what have you, which in itself forms the basis of an enjoyable picnic/social occasion, any changes must be the right ones, endorsed by you all!

J. A. BATT

Articles and Photos are needed for the Winter Magazine please. Copy date: 15th November



Truman Stockton's V.12 Rapide with Kenneth Mausolf's V.12 James Young Sedanca de Ville.

Printed in England by Eastbourne Printers Limited, Eastbourne