



THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB

Number 100

Autumn 1978



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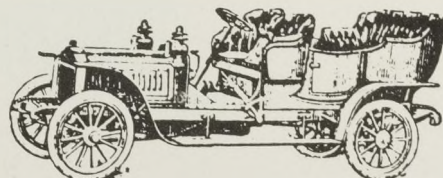
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Contributions do not necessarily represent the views of the Committee nor of the Editor, and expressed opinions are personal to contributors. No responsibility is accepted for the efficacy of the technical advice offered.



FRONT COVER: David Hine's splendid 4½-litre Special which scored a spectacular victory at the Bentley Silverstone meeting.

Photo: Studio 3.

ONE HUNDRED magazines on! A milestone to be proud of in any club. Grateful thanks are due to all contributors, both recent and past, for their literary and photographic efforts. It would be invidious to name any single person above others or pick out individual names. All contributions are important whether great or small. Just keep on sending them in!

★ ★ ★ ★

Many thanks are also due to our reliable printers who have made great efforts to keep costs as economical as possible over the years.

To mark the occasion there are some articles of nostalgia in this issue, while the front cover shows that our Club thinks positively about the future as well by the example of David Hine's creation of a handsome "Special". It not only looks good—it goes some as well! In this way Lagondas are gained instead of lost for ever.

★ ★ ★ ★

Out and About

News of two deaths severs links with the old Lagonda Company and of which we were sorry to hear. Lord Essendon, formerly Brian Lewis, died earlier this year at his home in Lausanne in Switzerland. He was aged 75. In the thirties he drove Lagondas in many races and achieved considerable success.

The other was Ernest Macey, an old Lagonda employee, who died this year at the age of 83. Mr. Macey was born at Thorpe and spent his working life at the Staines factory, latterly with Petters after Lagonda had moved out. Our sympathy goes to his wife and family.

★ ★ ★ ★

Another milestone in the continuing progress of Aston Martin Lagonda (1975) Ltd., was reached with their production on August 23rd of the 1,000th carburettor version of the popular Aston Martin V.8 model. Only three previous Astons have reached this production figure — the DB.4 (1,110), the DB.5 (1,023) and the DB.6 (1,467).

★ ★ ★ ★

Watch out for the London Film Show's details in the Newsletter. A new venue — The Rugby Club at Hallam Street near the B.B.C. The date is December 1st. Please give it your support!

The First Hundred

by J. W. T. Crocker

A CENTURY — a centenary — a centenarian — 'the ton'. Why should there be such magic attached to the figure, a hundred? But there is. And the hundredth issue of *The Lagonda* is no exception. One hundred issues! On one hundred occasions some poor wretched editor, sometimes aided but more often not, has assembled material, cajoled people into providing copy, ended up scribbling most of it himself, and finally, with relief, has put the thing to bed only to start sweating away with the next issue. Why do they do it? Is it considered less unpleasant or onerous than the hair shirt or the treadmill? I doubt it. But without the staunch band who have served us well and faithfully over the years, twenty-seven of them (years not editors), the Club would have been the poorer; indeed it might not have survived at all because for the majority of members the magazine is their only contact with matters Lagonda.

In March 1951, D. P. King, our first Editor, put pen to paper and *The Lagonda* was born to mark the amalgamation of the 2-Litre Register ('My dear chap, they're all mechanics, covered in oil, for 'ever grovelling under their cars') and the Lagonda Car Club ('Lot of stuck-up, chinless wonders). Both camps found they were wrong about the other. They were all the same, just slightly mad or worse! From the start, the magazine carried a variety of articles — technical, historical, comical — which thus set it apart from the journals of other one-make clubs which tended to be parochial in content and flavour.

June 1951 saw the first of many delightful cartoons by G. W. Allen, March 1952 'Spares and Technical Topics' by Ivan Forshaw starting, "The writer expresses warm appreciation of a very large number of Christmas cards, some as yet not acknowledged. He apologises for a disruption of the service following this holiday, finding forty letters awaiting his return", a situation which was to repeat itself many times over as his postbag and efforts, willingly given, increased over the years.

September 1952 brought the first change of Editor with Tortoise Taylor taking the chair and there appeared the first of many 'spoof' adverts,

this one having a dig at that well known Lagondarist and Vintagent, Arthur Jeddere Fisher —

"2-litre (*unblown*). This is the ex-Broderick Hemshall car. Late property of enthusiastic undertaker; now fitted with very pretty sun-saloon body, three seats (one full-length). Meticulously maintained by Morgue Motors. Modified engine with extra large clearances giving greatly reduced operating pressures. Special reverse-camber rubber-assisted springs giving low C.G. with incredible road-holding. Fire Power Head. Very light but powerful sprag. Gearbox with 2nd gear adequate for all normal purposes. Original oil. Suction wiper overhauled, bills shown; spare wiper blade available. Lighting conductor, goes like the clippers! 120 m.p.h. speedo. Ideal for keen learner. 425 gns., or would exchange 1951 Atco, condition immaterial. — A. Jabbere Kisser, Upsydaisy Cottage, Kingston Jaunt, Oxen."

Taylor's first term of office, for he was to be foolhardy enough to return later, ended in 1954 when in the Spring, Francis Winkworth took over. He was responsible among other things for introducing advertising to the magazine. He continued to be well served by G. W. Allen (wife to two members pouring over pile of 'Lagondas' — "Any more wishful thinking about 'Rapides' Charles and not another copy of that *Lagonda* rag comes into this house!").

Winter 1955/56 announced that H.R.H. Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh had accepted Honorary Membership and in the years to come, during his long ownership of a David Brown 3-litre, I had the pleasure of sending a copy of the magazine to the Palace once a quarter!

Winkworth battled on alone — not the first and certainly not the last Editor to do so — but his business commitments intervened and with Autumn 1956, Tortoise Taylor was persuaded to enter the lists again. He tried to protect himself by setting out at the beginning of each issue an imposing list of 'Editorial Staff' namely Advertisement Manager, Associate Editor, Production Editor, and Assistant Editor. By putting himself in as Number 3 in the batting

order he hoped to avoid being saddled with the whole job. It was a nice try! The 'adverts' started again of which just two examples, the first at the expense of Ivan Forshaw, the second of myself —

"*Lagonda Special* Blown V.12 engine mounted amidships in Rapier chassis. Maybach gearbox outboard at rear. Brakes very good but inadequate. Reason for sale — lost interest after road trial. Suitable for rich aunt. Sensible offers only please. — Lynn Garth, Sandecotes Road, Parkstone, Dorset."

and

"*Increase Your Natter-Patter* — Consult B. Bonehead (Prix de Drone). Charleys a speciality. MANSion House 8733 (evenings)."

Over the next years the advertising, much of it national, grew. And whilst modesty forbids me to name the Advertisement Manager, and although much hard work had to be put in, it is indicative of those expansive times when we 'hadn't had it so good' that many of our cars were being used as everyday transport and therefore we were a reasonable market prospect for petrol companies and the like. In my own case, it was not until 1960 that our family possessed a car other than a Lagonda.

In the period from about 1955 until well into the sixties the magazine carried numerous reports of occasions when Lagondas were used in films and I myself went to Spain on location for three weeks with my LG.45 Rapide (Christmas 1957).

Taylor's well laid plans to delegate the work of producing the magazine were of no avail and after two all-night sessions in which I participated, Tortoise had had enough and at Christmas 1958, Adrian Whitelegge filled the breach. His first issue included extracts from letters received from Ivan Forshaw from which I will give you only two gems —

"Paradoxical though it may appear, a car, like a human being, is loved as much for its vagaries and imperfections as for its virtues."

and

"Your attitude, I take it, is that positively everything has now happened and that lightning never strikes twice in the same place. Do not deceive yourself, my friend; who should know better than you and I that the Lagonda is no ordinary motor and must not be judged by the standard of ordinary

motors. I therefore respectfully draw attention to the telephone number as above and place myself at your disposal."

And so the good work continued. In passing, must mention (Summer 1960) the report of the Northern Party with picture — "A sample of the Cold Buffet" — all very definitely pre-Alan Brown! Whitelegge tried to break away from the imposition of writing an Editorial:

"What on earth is the point of an Editorial anyway? Club activities, past and future, are all dealt with in the later pages, there is no particular policy to be plugged and world events (thank heaven) tend to leave the Club unmoved. Looking at back numbers of the Magazine, this feature usually seems to be irrelevant, unnecessary and often quite unintelligible. To take a few examples at random, Editorials in the past have dealt with such topics as mountaineering, Berkeley Square, cheap Burgundy and the importation of pigs into Spain in the 16th century. . . . So let's break with tradition and stop all this nonsense. In this issue there will be NO EDITORIAL."

The interesting variety of articles and reports continued and Allen's cartoons (wife to bloke in 11.9 — "For pity's sake, what sort of status symbol have you bought *now*?")

Adrian Whitelegge had always made it clear that his tenure as Editor was not to be a long one and with the Autumn 1961 issue, Ian Smith assumed Adrian's mantle. There was by now a solid tradition behind him but this did not lessen the amount of work which had to be undertaken. He maintained the high standard of his predecessors and carried on single-handed, except for advertising, until 1963.

It was with the Spring/Summer issue of that year that Tony May, presumably on the principle that if you cannot beat 'em, join 'em, and with the house already awash with Lagonda impedimenta, started out like whatsisname in *Pilgrim's Progress*, determined to tackle and overcome the Lagonda Club's answer to Giant Despair, the editing and production of the magazine. See his brave announcement in his first issue when he was determined to lead, from the front this time, an 'Editorial Team'! No doubt he has received assistance from other members from time to time but I know, and for heaven's sake, he knows, that for most of the time he has carried the burden of producing the magazine single-handed. And it should be remembered that

Tony May has had the job through an increasingly difficult period with soaring costs; not for him the luxury of limitless photographs, additional pages at will. Was it not Wellington who apologised for a long letter because he had not the time to write a short one? Tony has had to produce a much tauter magazine and he has done so without any loss of style or content. It may be imprudent of me to draw attention to the fact that Tony May has been doing the job for

fifteen years. It must clearly seem longer than that!

So let us be unsparing in our thanks to editors past and present and very particularly to Tony May whose professionalism has shone out of each and every issue and who has managed to sustain an always interesting and readable magazine. May he keep it up: the first fifteen years are the hardest!

* * * *

Hull & East Riding Members' Notes

by Hermes

IN REVIEWING their activities during 1978 it may be said that this local section have had a quiet year.

Main feature is that the coachwork on Don Hoggard's rescued 3½-litre slowly progresses at a high standard but is still unfinished despite a considerable expenditure of time and money. Regrettably, Ken Pape's 2-litre has been off the road for a long time awaiting new bearings for its gearbox.

On the social side the Section has maintained its traditional support at the Northern Dinner and Sandtoft with D. R. Clarke and his wife making a rare appearance in their 2-litre drophead at the former and Rowland Hill in the ex Ken Pape original M.45R being just beaten by his two sons at the latter.

There was good support for V.S.C.C. member Bridget Laycock when she and Rob invited us to their house one Sunday afternoon when her 1912 Mercedes (in chassis form) was being given an airing. Indeed, our Don was privileged with a drive—probably because if anything had gone wrong after he'd disappeared down the drive, his professional expertise would have got them both back. Nothing did go wrong. We offer our thanks to Bridget and Ron for their kindness and hospitality.

A car auction near Scarborough was also well attended. We firmly believed that Hermes X had sold his other make for over £4,000, but when he went up to collect his money he was told that it was a false bid.

Finally, we gave good support at Cadwell, where someone is reported to have lost his fortune because an opportune business venture hastily promoted by a certain B.D-B and family were open to receive bets. The

Principal appeared pleased when a Sunbeam came first but assures us that he is still a dedicated postwar Lagonda enthusiast.

HERMES I

THIRD VINTAGE CADWELL REPORT

YOUR REPORTER dropped in on the Saturday afternoon and found Rosemary Burke of the V.S.C.C. Staff amicably supervising the signing in of competitors wishing to have their cars scrutineered in advance. The glorious sunshine and growing number of tents and caravans lent a holiday atmosphere, and one Lagonda was noticed beside the tent of its attendant family.

Race Day was bright with sunny intervals, and the notes were made from a position overlooking The Mountain, a steep left and right section towards the end of the circuit.

Event 1—FIVE LAP SCRATCH RACE

Two Lagondas started, both listed as 1,232 c.c. On the opening lap the pointed-tail blue one (No. 30) was second up the ascent, and the squarer white one (64) fourth. On the next, 30 (Crocker) was in the lead and 64 (Nickalls) fourth. Cricker retained this lead until the end of the race while Nickalls improved to third on lap three and was still third on his last lap, but the climb seemed to knock all the stamina out of his Rapier and very very slowly did he disappear into the tree-lined Hall Bends. However, so great was the lead built up by the first three drivers over the fourth (and original leader) that when the white car finally came to a halt just over the finishing line, Peter Nickalls was third.

Once again James Crocker had the fastest lap (he'd had it before in his first race at Cadwell two years ago) but this time it was at a slightly faster speed.



Nigel Hall, runner-up in the Brooklands Memorial Trophy, with James Crocker.

Event 3—FOUR LAP HANDICAP RACE

Three Lagondas entered and all started. First time round the highly polished aluminium Rapier (91) was seventh, with the long green 4½ (48) twelfth and the similar coloured humpy V.12 thirteenth, which was unlucky for Barker (56) because he had started comfortable seconds ahead of 48 (Hall). This was typical of Hall's driving this season and on subsequent laps he was ninth, third, and finally second up The Mountain. To have improved six places on one lap at Cadwell is Some Driving! He too had the bonus of a fastest lap, to his well merited second place. Barker in the V.12 was thirteenth, twelfth, and finally eleventh; and 91 (Seath) finished but was not in the first dozen.

Event 6—SPERO TROPHY RACE OVER 8 LAPS

The focus of Lagonda attention was now the familiar red Rapier (32) on the front row of the grid, with Seath's shining example some distance further back. From the scratch start 32 (Fletcher-Jones) was first off the line as befits the reigning holder of the Spero, but in a matter

of yards he was passed, only to take the lead again before disappearing up the climbing left-hander at the end of the short starting straight. Three times he was first up The Mountain, but then on the fourth he was just a length behind Salome and on the fifth the Rapier expired and had to be manhandled up the steep slip road into the paddock. Seath continued going very well and finished in fine fettle, though not among the leaders. Some Lagondas would appear to be more reliable than others, and R. D. Seath obviously has one of the former and enjoys it.

Event 9—FOUR LAP HANDICAP RACE

The two 4½-litre drivers from Event 3 re-appeared and again both finished without incident. Barker was a steady fifth for his first three laps and fourth on his final lap. Along the finishing straight he was being rapidly overtaken by a car looking much like a B. Bira E.R.A. but which is the very quick Clifford Special with highly developed Autovia V.8 engine. Barker pressed on regardless and it

was anybody's guess how they finished, except, of course, the hardworking timekeepers. They put Barker's name above Clifford's, with equal times.

Hall, on his first ascent, was seventh and just behind a 3-litre twin-cam Sunbeam fitted with supercharger. On his next lap he was still seventh, but the Sunbeam had improved to fourth. Undeterred, Hall made a few passes on his own account and third time up The Mountain was fourth with the Sunbeam still third. On their last appearance up the steep twists the Sunbeam was first with Hall's LG.45 right up his exhaust pipe, and there might be just enough distance left for Hall to win. However, on emerging from the woods and into the finishing straight the gap had widened and the push rods could not quite force Hall ahead of the twin-cam and he had to be satisfied with another second place, albeit his time within a second of the winners.

MOTOR SPORT BROOKLANDS MEMORIAL TROPHY

Congratulations to Nigel Hall on being the runner-up in this season-long competition. His two second places at Cadwell in conjunction with his numerous successes earlier this season lifted him to a comfortable second place (behind Chris Mann who uses both E.R.A. and Alfa Romeo) and a cheque for £75.

By coincidence this shows the rate of inflation because that is the amount that Iain Macdonald received five years ago when he won the trophy. Indeed, one wonders whether Nigel on a recent trip to the northern counties inveigled out of Iain a Macdonald camshaft — or something.

I still regard this award as the world's Grand Prix for our type of vintage motoring and it is worth recalling that during the current decade two other members have been runners-up, namely James Crocker and Bob Alexander.

CAKCLE FROM CADWELL

The programme listed Jon Abson in the Allcomers Race but the elder Special Rapier which he always drives was conspicuous by its absence. Not so Jon himself. With Alan Brown at his side the pair were unusually conspicuous as they walked along the track, from a distant marshals' post. Their unaccustomed duty was the result, apparently, of a slight twisting by the presidential arm when that dignitary noticed neither of them was racing. He's quick on the

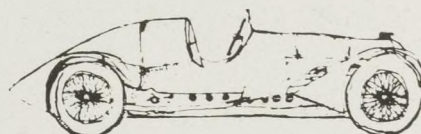
uptake is our Jim! (Maybe that is why V.S.C.C. Secretary Peter Hull found himself chained for the afternoon to the commentators' box way out in the country.)

Alan was joking again when he said he was going to hold out the red flag while he decided which was the correct flag to use.

Good to see among the supporters, Robin and Mairwen Colquhoun, the Dearden-Briggs family, and Messrs. Hoggard, Pape, Ody, Woollard and Wood; no doubt they would all see others, unmentioned here.

Bentley Silverstone had been the day before Cadwell. Lagondas had done well there too, including the majority of Sunday's drivers and notably David Hine in beating all the Bentleys by a runaway victory driving his spectacular new lithe Lambda-like special tourer.

ROY PATERSON



W. S. JOHNSON & CO.

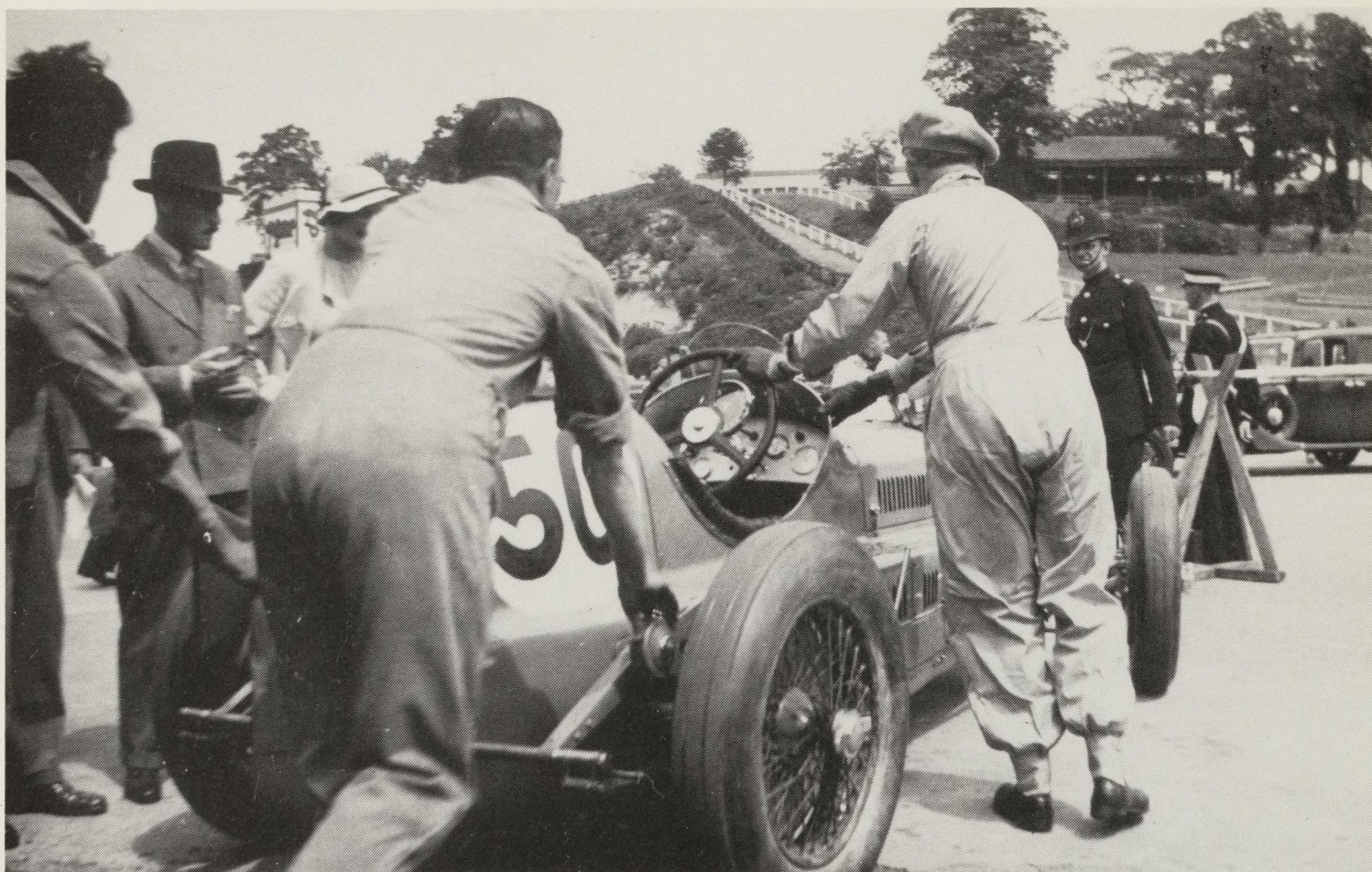
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The 1934 British Empire Trophy Race—Lord Howe with his Maserati.

Fifty Years Back by Alastair Innes Dick

A PHOTOGRAPH album going back fifty years cannot only be a reminder of the excitements of one's late 'teens but can also, such has been the speed of progress, be a record of the amazing changes which have taken place in the car and aeroplane. So perhaps some reminiscences of up to fifty years ago may not be out of place in this 100th Magazine even though there is nothing about Lagondas; others are far better able to tell of those!

One of my early vivid recollections is a Bournemouth flying meeting at which small aircraft raced round pylons at an altitude of less than fifty feet or so. Over the heads of the crowd, too. One near miss was scored by Dudley Watt in a war disposals SE5A which, in avoiding ramming another aircraft on a turn, had to dive beneath it, only inches above a crowded car park.

It was only after one machine had been blasted by a mentally deranged farmer's shot-gun and there had been more than one bad

crash, that these delightfully happy-go-lucky affairs were abandoned.

Shelsley came my way in 1928 at about the time when Shelsley Specials were becoming the Hot Rods of the hills. The doyen of them all was Basil Davenport's Frazer Nash "Spider". On its record-breaking runs it appeared to be trying to throw its driver and shake itself to pieces, all whilst desperately trying to keep both cylinders firing. The car then looked — and still did three years ago — as much like a high speed scrap yard as one could wish for!

My next flashback is to my first Brooklands with John Pares, the builder of an Austin Special known as "Slippery Anne" (and who else can remember her?). The memory of every other car at that meeting has been quite blotted out by that of Kaye Don taking the lap record in the 12-cylinder Sunbeam. *What* a car! It not only went like a car but it *looked* like one, unlike the present day over-engined roller-skates.

Hendon in 1930. How unbelievable, looking back, that this was only nine years before W.W.II! The R.A.F. machines being shown off were Wapitis, IIIFs and Foxes with Vimys and Victorias as the heavy bombers.

The Cierva Autogiro was a showpiece along with such weirdies as the Handley-Page Gugnune and the Westland-Hill Pterodactyl (and how many of you remember them?)

There was, however, a hint of things to come in the DH77 Interceptor Fighter which never went into production but whose profile surely shows it to have been an early ancestor of the Hurricane. But however did the Industry achieve the miracle of reaching the standards it did by 1939?

The Gloster-Napier VI was on ground display. It had non-started in the previous year's Schneider Trophy race but later held the record at 336 m.p.h. but for only two days. To my mind it was the most beautiful aircraft ever built.

Another forerunner of a different kind of unpleasantness to come was a fly-past by the R101. Impressive at the time, although one did wonder why so much of the fabric was flapping so furiously. Soon afterwards it leaked out that the airship had had difficulty in maintaining height due to gas leakages and there had been the possibility that the whole envelope could have been torn off due to the many faultily repaired tears! All at less than 1,000 feet!

It has always been known — and that Hendon display must have shown it — that the airship should never have left for India on its last flight and that it was gross irresponsibility that it did so. The whitewashing afterwards must have been a record for that kind of operation!

The pages now turn to 1931 for a particularly good Shelsley when the Villiers Supercharge stole the show. But there were other lovelies to look at such as Lord Howe's fleet of a G.P. Delage, an Alfa and the ex-Caracciola Merc. And Dudley Jeavons' Bugatti, with a special supercharger, and which reached a maximum r.p.m. which was supposed to have rendered Ettore speechless with horror when he heard of it.

The Nacional Pescaras were there on their only visit ever to Britain on their chase of the Mountain Championship. They were lovely cars which not only 'looked right' but were tremendously fast as well. What a find if one could be unearthed today.

Brooklands in 1932 saw the Cobb Delage and the Birkin Bentley working hard at the lap record whilst other names like Howe, Eyston, Straight, Brackenbury and the Dunfees drift across one's mind. Howe's entry of a 2.3 Bugatti in that year's '500' was one of the few occasions on which a Bug. ran in a long distance track race.

It was also in this race that Dunfee's Bentley went over the banking; those who saw it don't need a photograph as a reminder.

The Aero Club was becoming a good place to visit as Service aircraft were often tested from the aerodrome and there was always something to see, such as the Civil Air Display which included some French and American airliners of remarkable shapes. Their names of Breguet and Loire et Olivier have gone the way of many others.

There was, too, a jolly social life to be had in the Aero Club with such ploys as 'going over to Hanworth for tea'; one tea party in which I was involved included Nora Swinburne and Winifred Shotter (under sixties are excused from remembering them — they weren't drivers!)

1933 saw Whitney Straight being successful with his 2.9 Maserati which, in the following year, bore the speedbird motif now used by B.O.A.C. As Straight eventually became B.O.A.C.'s Chairman, was there a connection? The Austins were being developed interestingly and were driven by Charles Goodacre, Pat Driscoll and George Duller. Duller was an ex-jockey and looked the part. Freddie Dixon's Riley and Zanelli's Alfa were cars worth remembering.

Dixon was very well known as a wizard with the building and tuning of racing cars but he was also liable to be somewhat naughty on an evening out. A few years later I met him briefly and, from his appearance, got the impression that he liked a pretty hectic life. Shortly afterwards he was run in for trying to take his car up a lamp post late at night in Middlesbrough and it was such a reprehensible case that he was put away for, I think, six months.

I met him again after a London-Exeter Trial a few days after he'd come out and never have I seen such a difference in anyone's health! Pink-cheeked and clear-eyed, he looked half his age of six months previously! I thought at the time that a prison sentence must be the best health cure going!

1934 brings to mind the Napier-Railton which was now in great form after its initial troubles in the previous year. Who was it who said, so rightly, that "there's nothing like c.c.'s"?

And the Mountain Championship! What a race but if I say that haven't seen motor racing unless you saw that one I suppose I'll be accused of being old! To see Straight, Mays and How arguing it out over the Mountain Circuit was indeed breathtaking!

Campbell brought *Bluebird* to the Track in 1935 and did a lap at 82 (I wonder if anyone else timed him?). The engine sounded as if it was at little more than idling speed. Few who were not at Brooklands on that afternoon can ever have seen this car moving.

One last look at Hendon in 1936. Worth it for the interest of the new generation of aircraft compared with 1930. The prototypes of what were to become the Lysander, Wellington, Hampden, Whitley, Hurricane and Spitfire were all there; so much must have gone on in the industry since 1930.

A curious thing about photographs is how they can evoke a memory in a way which a verbal description can't. The photograph here shown is a good example of this but will only be of interest to the less-young! The man with the cap wheeling the car is surely instantly recognisable by anyone who has ever seen him!

One could go on like this indefinitely, getting more and more like the Village Elder so perhaps I'd better here call it a day!

★ ★ ★ ★

FUTURE COPY DATES FOR MAGAZINE CONTRIBUTIONS

WINTER: NOVEMBER 15th

SPRING: FEBRUARY 15th

SUMMER: MAY 15th

AUTUMN: AUGUST 15th

LAGONDA CLUB APPROVED MOTOR INSURANCE SCHEME

PREMIUMS: In many cases the premium level will be less than half the amount quoted by the non-specialist vintage and classic motor insurers. For example: a 1936 Lagonda LG.45 (value £4,000) can be insured, comprehensively, for as little as £28.80.

SECURITY: Lloyd's of London.

SPECIAL BENEFITS: Agreed Value Clause.

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From our Archives



Top: The mysterious "W.H."

Below: The enigmatic Miss Twitt.



WAS THIS the mysterious "W.H." who left Oldham on 1st April 1907 with the vowed intention of driving his specially prepared Lagonda Tri-car single-handed to the North Pole? Did he succeed in his perilous adventure and achieve his life-long ambition?

We may never know for it is thought that he did not survive the journey. Certainly he was never seen again — as far as we know. Strangely, parts of his car have been found from time to time in odd corners of the Northern Lagonda factory. Was the whole story a gigantic fraud conjured up by some early Northern Club members? And what was W.H.'s real name — Smith perhaps?

Perhaps the answer lies with Jessie Twitt (93) now living in semi-retirement in Cleethorpes. Miss Twitt was W.H.'s housekeeper for many years up to his disappearance. Then, as she said to our reporter when interviewed recently, "I had an offer I couldn't refuse" and left Oldham for the delights of Skegness.

Miss Twitt remains enigmatic about the mystery of W.H. "He was a luvly little t' lad" she wheezed. "I made him up some of my special black puddings for t' journey" she added. "I can't mak' out why he didn't cum back". Could the black puddings be the answer? Could so much unsprung weight proven too much for the tri-car?

Your reporter will continue doggedly to dig out the facts of this tragic story of epic failure.

Watch this space!

A.W.M.

★ ★ ★ ★

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Finmere Finney

Results

"LET'S START now!" shouted Schofield, and a row of Lagondas formed up facing backwards, in a deluge. The new-look Finmere was under way.

"Who's won?" queried dripping faces at the steamed-up window of the results van.

A Ford Popular, driver (have you guessed?) Llewellyn, D. W.

"Who's second?" they cried.

A 3/8 Bentley, driver (you've guessed right!) Llewellyn, T.

"And what of the Lagondas?"

Competition Secretary Batt led them all, vindicating the new-style tests, and proving that a 4½-litre Lagonda can outpace a Ford Popular in a straightforward blind (but not backwards!).

The performances and metabolisms of all were ameliorated by the continuous operation of an open-air bar, behind which the publican, rain pouring off his soaking hair into his open-neck summer shirt, persisted in pulling pints: and not one of the Northern members criticised the watered beer.

But look at the battle of the giants!

Lagonda cars 1 & 4: 4½-litre bollides: 4 pint dirigants Batt and Firth, men of the North, with Brown snapping at their heels for third place; all three pressed by Harvey Hine on Popular. Then followed Hall (4½), Moore (2-litre) and

Greenwood in an immaculate Rapier.

The backwards start culminated in a width-judging test. In this Batt and Moore were clear winners. Test two was a blindfold wiggle-wobble in which the Chairman's lady wife whispered instructions into the ear of every competitor. The red rose of Lancaster reacted quicker than the white rose of York, and Brown beat Batt. And those two were ways ahead of any other vintage car. Test three was a to-and-fro touch-the-pylon affair, in which the best three were Firth, 4½ Lag., Tom Llewellyn in that massively powerful 3/8 Bentley and David Llewellyn in the little Popular box. What do you know about that, eh?

The second half of the competition wiggle-wiggled (*au claire*) through test four into the garaging problems of test five. Here cunning and ingenuity augmented driving skills. Are there no takers out there for the bets on who should win? All right, it's that Batt man again for the vintagarians, with the B.D.C. men stuffed into their little Popular, buzzing, wasp-like, around the heavies. And lastly, they all tore off into the misty drizzle, with Firth and Llewellyn crossing the line in the order of eight seconds, all the other 4½s in nine, and the 2-litres in a broad band between eleven and fourteen.

DUNCAN J. WESTALL

LAGONDA CAR CLUB AND BENTLEY DRIVERS CLUB FINMERE TESTS 1978

Car No.	Club	Driver	Type	Test						Position			
				1	2	3	4	5	6	LCC	BDC	Others	O/A
1	LCC	Greenwood	R	52	35	42.6	27.3	32	10.5	199.4	6		10
2		Batt	4.5	14	20.6	37.6	37.1	26.2	9.0	144.5	1		3
3		Brown	4.5	38	18	34.2	31.0	29.8	9.0	160.0	3		6
4		Firth	4.5	24	36.2	18.5	29.3	28.6	8.0	144.6	2		5
5		Walmsley	RB	89	57.6	37.8	44.4	60.8	11.0	300.6	12		19
6		Moore	2	18	40.8	39.5	29.1	42.2	14.0	183.6	5		9
7		Ody	2	60	34.0	36.6	38.3	47.6	12.5	229.0	9		15
8		Stanton	2	32	30.2	30.4	54.0	45.8	11.2	203.6	7		11
9		Hine	4.5	89	31.2	32.6	41.4	40.0	9.0	243.2	11		18
10		Barker	4.5	89	38.2	29.8	47.0	30.0	9.0	243.0	10		17
11		Hall	4.5	30	23.4	21.9	49.4	41.8	9.0	175.5	4		8
12		Rogers	2	30	39.4	50.4	42.0	43.2	12.0	217.0	8		14
26	BDC	Harben	4.5	64	48.4	26.7	48.0	45.8	10.0	242.9		4	16
27		Parkinson	4.5	30	29.8	32.6	28.2	29.6	10.0	160.2		2	7
28		Llewellyn, T.		30	29.8	20.6	22.8	29.4	8.0	140.6		1	2
29		Middleton	6.5	32	39.0	41.0	40.0	53.0	10.0	215.0		3	13
47	OTHER	Turner	SS	26	41.2	46.3	31.1	54.2	11.5	210.3			3
48		Llewellyn, D. W.	POP	24	21.8	20.0	24.0	24.9	10.0	124.7			1
49		Hine	POP	26	23.0	24.9	36.0	23.9	10.0	143.8			2
PROVISIONAL RESULTS.....													



Web-footed spectators at Finmere.

Photos: J. G. Ody



3-litre living with a Dobermann Pinscher



HAVING MADE the long and very wet voyage to the Côte d'Azur for the Escargot d'Or Rally in April and then the V.S.C.C.'s weekend at Boulogne, I decided to do something different for a change. Two days and nights I thought, living and sleeping with my dog at a Krishnamurti meeting near Winchester, camping facilities being available, seemed different enough.

Before leaving I removed the passenger's seat (the dog doesn't navigate) and filled the remaining space with sleeping bag, pillows and various items for living in "Auntie" 3-litre. The hood down and dog securely chained to the back seat armrest I set off.

On arrival I discovered that dogs were not very welcome! So I deposited "Auntie" well down the camping field, in fact too far for comfort from the loos and food facilities. I then proceeded to construct the "Lagonda Camping Mobile"— driver's seat out, hood up, then endeavoured to erect the side screens—which proved to be a little battle having only had occasion to use them once previously at

Silverstone.

On the first night I had a pretty sleepless night, as the hound appeared to require three-quarters of the interior of the car and the local cockerel aroused both of us at 5 a.m. so there seemed nothing to do but creep out through all the other happily sleeping campers for a two hour walk in the lovely country fields.

The following day I had two chatty visitors, one was a car bore—you know the type, they seem to creep up out of the ground in all the most unexpected places. They want to see the engine, crawl under the sump (say that it will never get out of the field into which it has arrived perfectly happily) and enquire—is it overhead cam—where is the dynamo—is it coil—do you have a spare engine, etc., etc...? At the time I was vainly endeavouring to feed both the dog and myself. The bore ended up having quite convinced himself that what he really needed, was a 3-litre Lagonda and not his something or other Bentley. He returned on the second day with the same speeches, and luckily, I managed to vacate the premises

before his third threatened visit, when I had promised to let him catch a glimpse of it with the hood down!

The other visitor had a Dobermann puppy, the same age as mine, we had a happy chat about the breed and he didn't want to know where to obtain spare parts.

On the second night I once again volunteered

to sleep with "Dog's Body", but in the confined space I gave up and tied him up outside to the running boards — either he or I had to go.

We had a happy two days in the country — dog, me and car, but I cannot really recommend sleeping in a 3-litre minus seats — watch out for those dreaded seat runners!

ROBBY HEWITT



Tony Wood's Silverstone Snatches



Top: James Crocker and Rapier. Below: David Hine and 4½-litre Special.

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Let's Stop the Rot ***by Herb Schofield***

THE 1977 Southern Driving Tests had to be *cancelled*. The 1978 Border Rally was *cancelled*. The number of competitors in the 1978 Northern Gymkhana *was down* by a third. The 1978 Southern Driving Tests were very *poorly supported*. The number of members attending the Manchester Area Pub Meets *has dropped* from an average of 18 down to about six. *Only six members* bothered to enter their cars for the Bentley/Lagonda race at Silverstone, and four of these came from the Northern Lagonda Factory.

There is only one end to all this if the rot continues. Your Committee and event organisers will lose interest, and then there won't be a Lagonda Club!

So please let us have a bit more effort in the future. Go to your local Pub Meet, compete in Club events, write an article for the magazine maybe. I am sure you will then find you get a great deal more from the Club. See you in 1979.

548 HYR

David Hine's new Special—What it Cost

MY NEW special which appeared at Oulton Park has caused some comment. To explain, it was just a broken up chassis when I got it and I have rebuilt the chassis as original except for an Alvis gearbox — it is a 1937 Sanction III LG.45.

The body is a lightweight vintage tourer which can convert either as a racing special or family tourer. The cost was about twice my budget! I enclose a breakdown for interest of members.

548 HYR 1937 LAGONDA

COST OF REBUILD

A. Chassis

	£
Chassis in bits	1,000
Reline brakes	37
Respoke wheels	38
Reset springs	35
Engine overhaul — big ends, mains, pistons	330
Reprofile camshaft	44
Overhaul water pump	8
Shock absorbers (new Hartfords) ...	90
Rocker shaft assembly	50
Petrol pump	16
Copper pipe taps fittings	64
Number plates	6
Rubber hose	6
Overhaul radiator	14
Voltage regulator	9
Tyres and fittings	465
Silencer and exhaust pipe	45
Speedo cable	8
Horn solenoid	4
Instruments	100
Gearbox fitting	80
Bulkhead from Ivan	30
	<u>£2,479</u>

Note: Chassis labour done by writer apart from fitting of gearbox (£80) and the tyres are racing plus a spare set of road tyres—secondhand.

B. Bodywork Materials

Chrome plating charge	120
Carpet	35
Celluloid sheet	18

Double duck hood material	70
Door locks and fittings	27
Rubber matting	22
Aluminium strip	10
Leather	115
Brass for windscreen	34
Bonnet fittings	37
	<u>£488</u>

C. Bodywork Labour—Jack Buckley, Royton, Nr. Oldham

Leather trimmers labour	41
Wing brackets—Petrol tank and screen	292
Body wood frame	476
Panel body and wings	749
Hood frame and side screens	224
Paintwork	356
Making hood, tonneau s/screens ..	130
Assembly and finishing	300
Small fittings and materials	260
	<u>£2,828</u>

Grand Total: £5,795

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Robert McCracken

**38 Bleasdale Road, Mossley Hill
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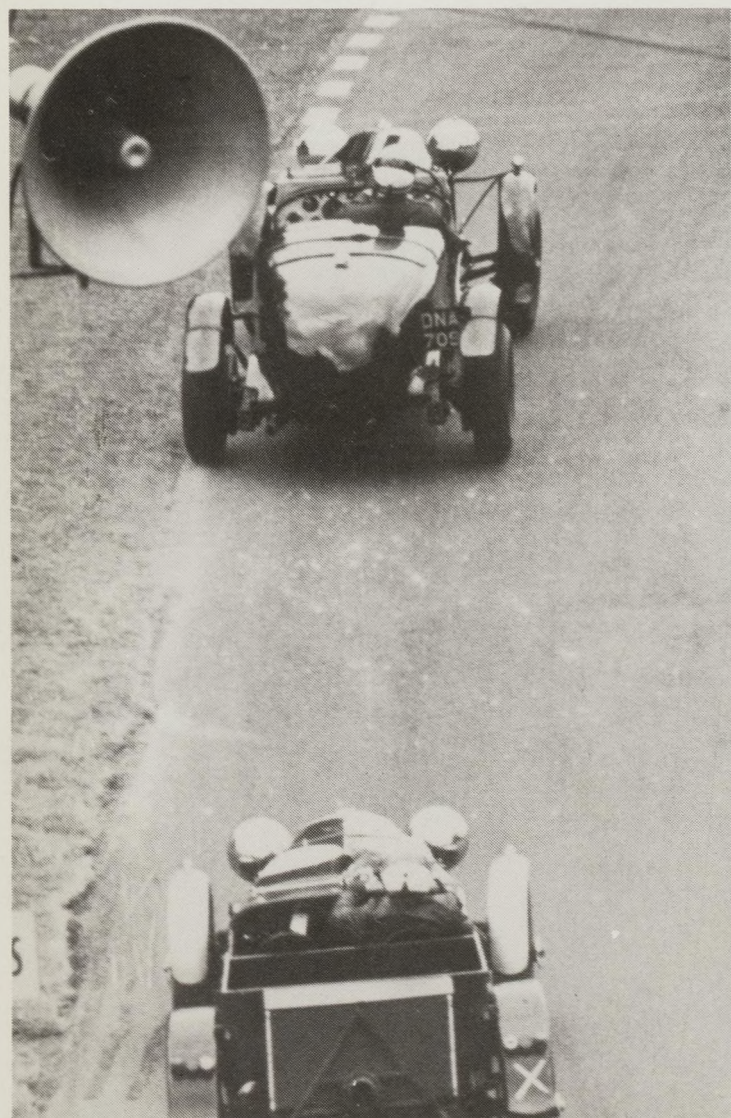
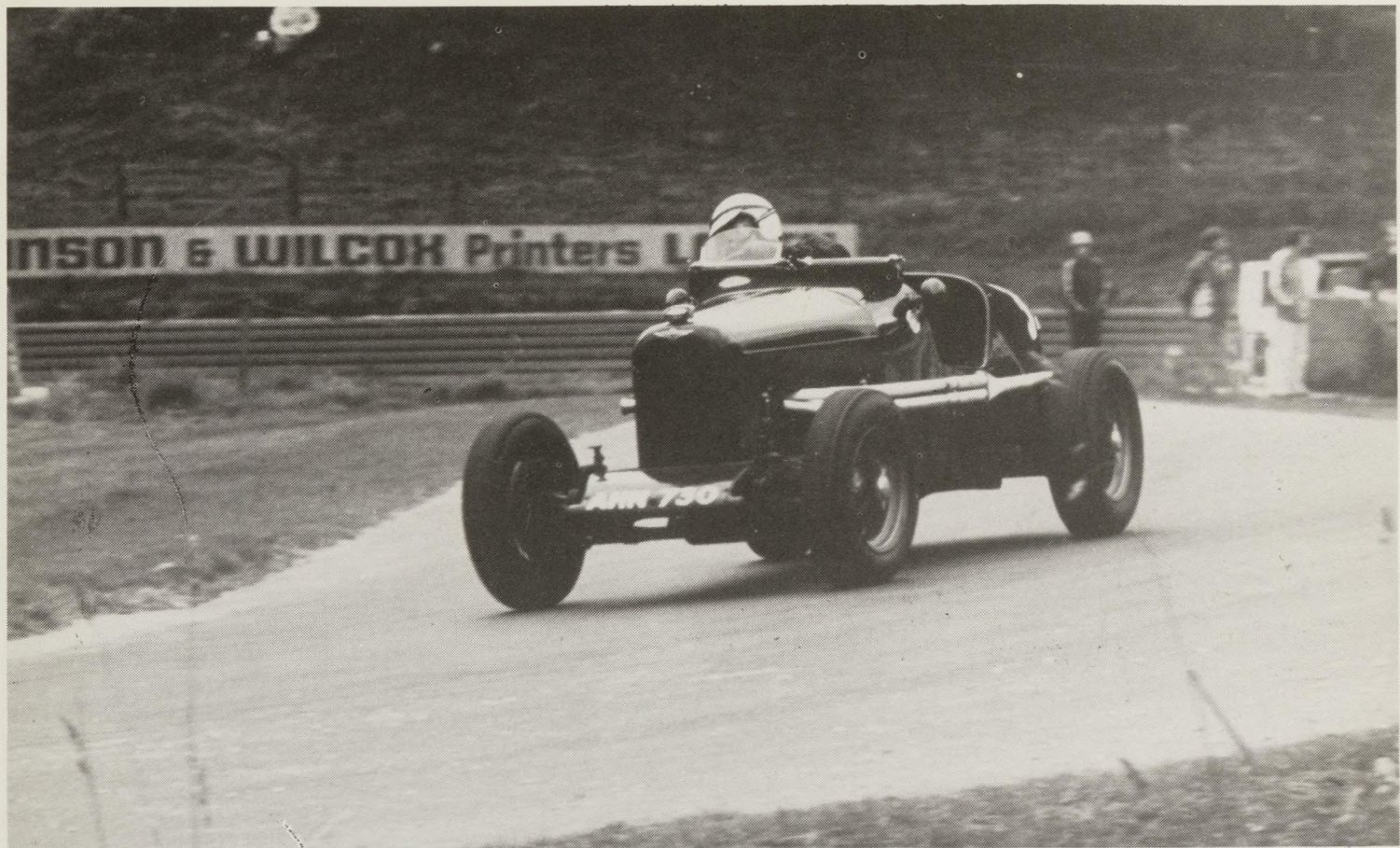
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CADWELL—James Crocker in winning mood.
Nigel Hall (4½) goes up the mountain.

Photos: Tony Wood



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Brian Dearden-Briggs reflects on the Northern Dinner.

Well I Never . . .

by Peter Densham



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HAVE YOU ever thought about the origin of our Club Badge? Some people may wonder why it was necessary to look any further than the 1935 radiator for inspiration because this is one of the most attractive in the world. It formed the basis of the original Lagonda Car Club badge and was used again after the war when the first efforts were made to revive the Club.

And this is where the trouble all started and no one is more to blame than I was. Looking back I can see where mistakes were made and I realise how easily matters of quite small importance can, if personalised, become incidents leading to behaviour unbecoming to an otherwise mild and non-aggressive Lagonda owner.

I got it firmly into my head that the owners of 2-litre Lagondas were jolly decent chaps and that those who owned the larger cars talked a different language, wore different clothes and in some obscure way were 'different'.

Having worked very hard to form the 2-litre Lagonda Register and to bring membership up to 300 I was not keen to see it "contaminated" by the upstart Lagonda Club. (I am deliberately using again the words which I used to disclose my feelings at the time and which now look

utterly ridiculous in view of our well-integrated and happy club.)

Thanks to the diplomacy of many friends who had worked with me to build up the Register but who had kept a more stable outlook and saw the obvious advantages of joining forces, the amalgamation took place without bloodshed — and now everyone started falling over backwards in their efforts not to tread on too many toes.

The Lagonda Car Club must change its name so that no-one could ever say that it took over the Register (Oh my, oh my!) and if it changed its name then it must change its badge.

The 2-litre Register badge had always been much admired but there could be no question of altering or adapting it to fit the new club. Committees sat upon it and no answer could be found until quite suddenly a young member came up with an obvious solution.

And here we must flash back to 1947 and allow the scene to change. I had recently been demobilised and had decided to learn to farm. My efforts had taken me to deepest Wiltshire and among the unfamiliar objects (e.g. cows) which beset my path there appeared Hamish Moffat, a pupil on my brother's farm near Salisbury. He was aged about 19 and my arrival at intervals in my 2-litre enlivened his unhappy lot; he soon became a regular passenger when I went to meets of the V.S.C.C. — I remember one at Bisley very soon after the war — and to Silverstone where a young man called Stirling Moss was beginning to win races in his 500 c.c. Cooper JAP.

Hamish's enthusiasm for motoring soon became an ungovernable passion and one weekend he disappeared to return to the farm driving a 1923 11.9 4-seater Tourer which he had purchased in London for £36. From now on he ceased to react to normal conversation. He gave up eating and sleeping and washed only at weekends. He spent every minute of his spare time in the barn working on his car.

One of the jobs a student might be asked to do in those far-off farming days was to 'ride the drill'. This meant standing on a wooden step behind the corn drill as it progressed back and forth making sure that the corn ran uninterrupted down the fourteen spouts which deposited the seed in straight evenly spaced lines across the field. Should a spout become blocked and so remain for any length of time the awful evidence would appear for all to see in six weeks' time when the corn came up.

Hamish, while riding the drill, allowed two neighbouring spouts to remain completely blocked for NINETEEN turns across the field!

My brother nearly went mad "How could you do it?" he shrieked. "I was working out my valve timing" said Hamish.

To cut a long story short; Hamish departed one day in his Lagonda and drove it to Cape Town via the Sahara Desert.

In those twenty words I have described one of the most remarkable feats that has ever been achieved in the whole of motoring history. Those are the bare facts; nothing can alter them. I knew Hamish at the time and I saw at very close quarters the events which led up to his departure. He went without encouragement and with very little help and he went entirely alone. His courage and endurance has never received the acclaim that it deserved and I am glad to be able to write these words.

But what has all this got to do with the badge?

Well. Hamish simply said "Why don't we use the badge from the radiator of the 11.9 Lagonda?"

And that is just what we did!

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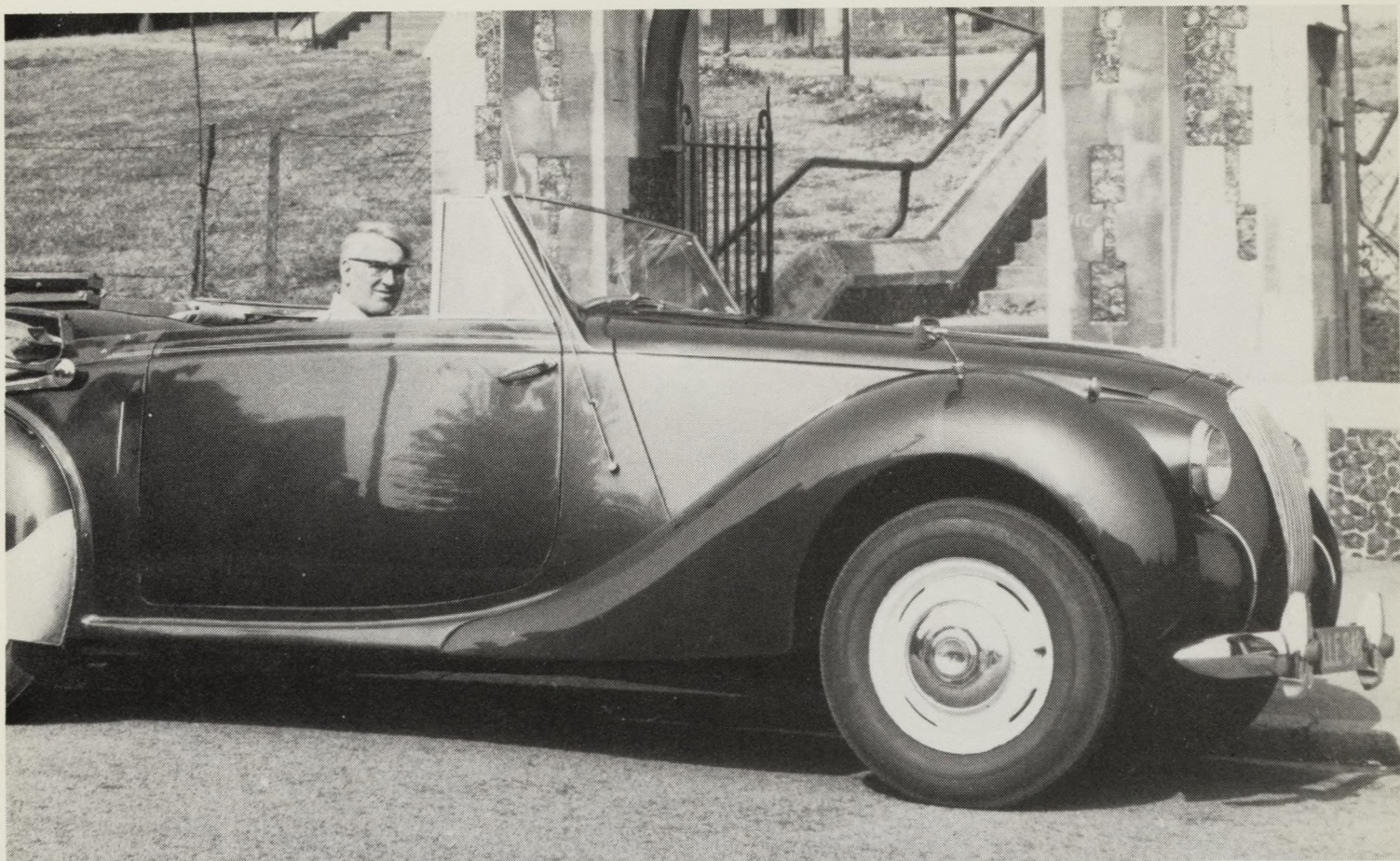
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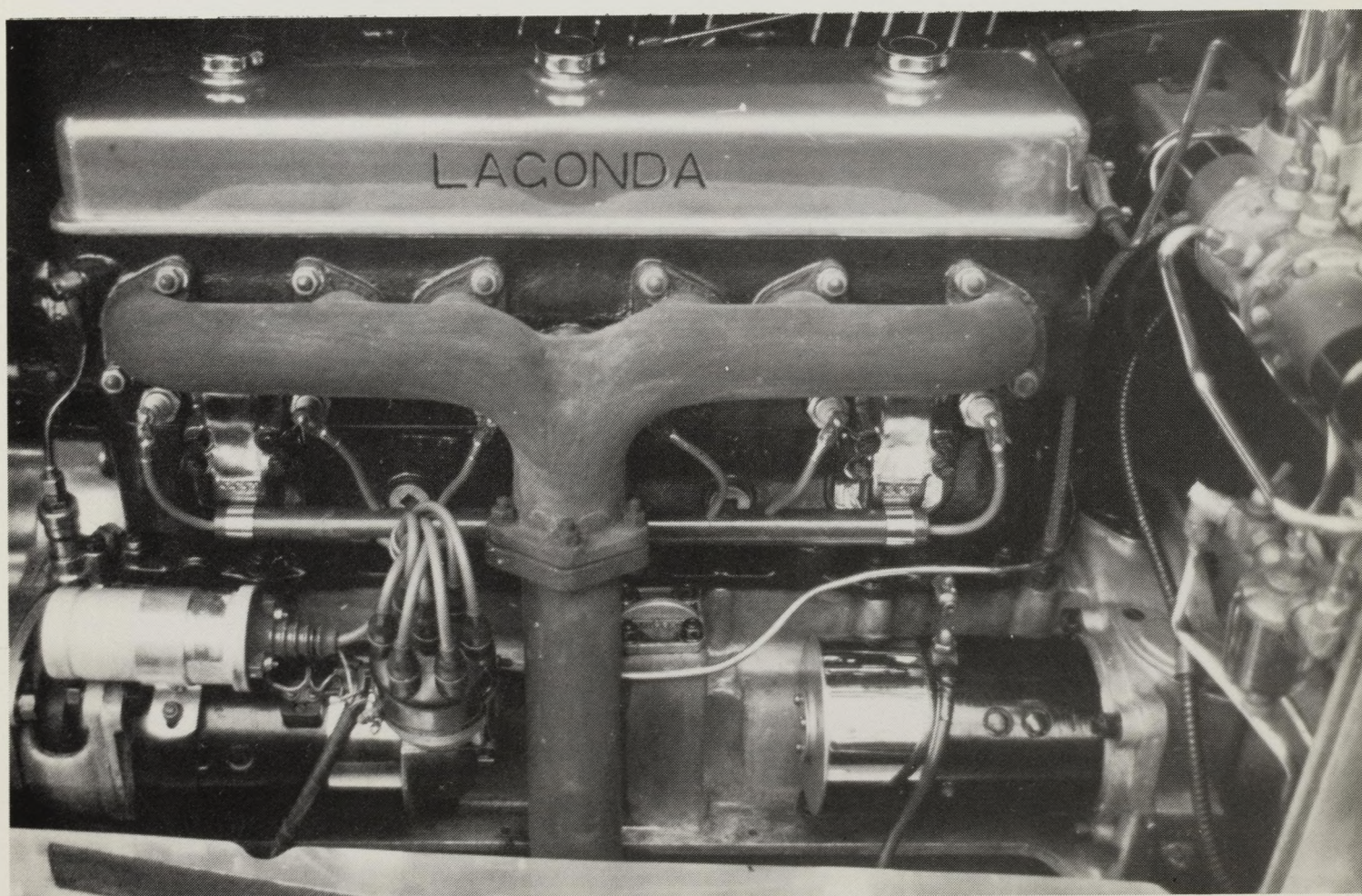
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W. S. Taylor's very nice 2.6 coupé. See last mag's "Letters".



Phil Erdhardt's M.45 engine.

Photo: Michael Jones

Letters to the Editor

Help please!

Dear Sir—In order to help Club members can anyone help me with the following:

1. A suitable alternative starter motor for the Bosch on the V.12.
2. Information, exploded diagram service sheets for the Scintilla Magneto on the LG.45.
3. Part numbers or modern equivalent for complete slave-brake cylinders for both front and back wheels of the LG.6 or V.12.
4. Any drawings or mechanical layouts of the 4½-litre to help me with telephoning technical advice.

Hope to hear from someone! Many thanks.

ALAN BROWN

Matley Moor Cottage,

Matley Lane,

Hyde, Cheshire SK14 4EG.

Tel: 061-338 2766/061-624 6236.

* * * *

THE SPARES SERVICE

Brian Horwood will continue and develop his service for the 'vintage' Lagondas.

Alan Brown is to organise a service for the 4½-litre and V.12.

Brian Dearden-Briggs is to look after the interests of the David Brown cars.

Contact them at:

B. J. HORWOOD,

"Cottingham",

The Warren,

Mayfield, Sussex.

Tel: 04355-2166.

ALAN BROWN,

Matley Moor Cottage,

Matley Lane,

Hyde, Cheshire SK14 4EG.

Tel: (061) 338 2766 or some nights

(061) 624 6236 (Northern Lagonda

Factory)

BRIAN DEARDEN-BRIGGS,

Balderstone Hall,

Mirfield, Yorkshire.

Tel: Mirfield 496276.

Club photographs

Dear Sir—I enclose some Lagonda photographs, in the hope that one or two may be worth putting in the magazine.

Firstly some of my 2-litre during the rebuild; I am afraid that the good intention to take a regular series of this degenerated into spasmodic forays into the garage with a mixture of monochrome, colour negative and colour transparency films at different times. Basic trouble is that greasy hands and cameras don't mix — best thing I suppose would be to record someone else's rebuild!

Secondly, two fish-eye shots trying, but failing, to show every car at the A.G.M., and also Phil Erdhardt's M.45 engine and Ian Creer's H.C. 2-litre front end. As neither of these figured in the awards (slightly overdone I believe was the opinion) I seem to have made the wrong choice! (1977 AGM.)

Finally one showing the pretty patterns of rain and mud, after a long journey on a wettish day, on the back wheel of my 2-litre. I suspect that some of our members never see anything like that these days — all those attending Prescott however, definitely excluded from that stricture!

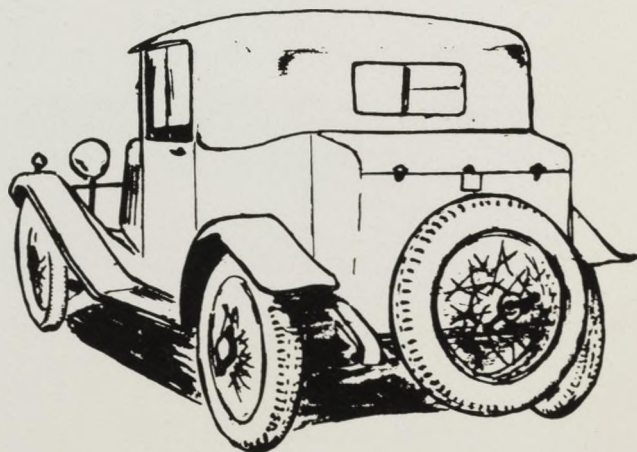
I liked the reprints from the 2-litre Register in the recent Magazine — but I'm biased about the 2-litre.

MICHAEL JONES

Reading,

Berks.

[While there isn't room to show all Michael's photos here, they will be placed in the Club's Photo Album.—Ed.]





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