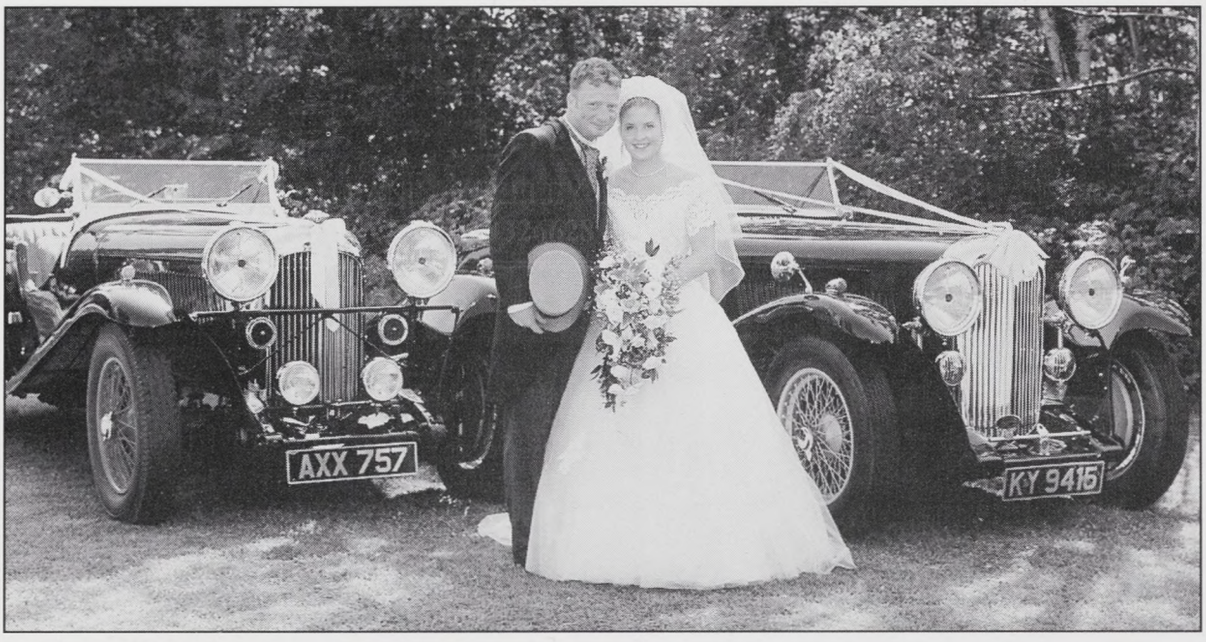
THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB

Number 181 Summer 1999



We also build them slow and reliable but still capable of a fast getaway!

You have all seen enough of EPE 97 which is of course still out there racing in the hands of its owner and behaving as a well prepared old lady should, so time for something different!

We do not force our customers to have race prepared motor cars and are very happy servicing them for the all important task of "getting to the church on time".

In this instance all went smoothly, but AXX 757 does have a 200 BHP engine thus ensuring that the bride and groom could make a rapid departure!

Simon Bull's Invicta has semi-retired from racing and is being used as a "Q car" for everyday use in London and long distance touring, surprising many a modern with its 230 BHP and 125 MPH top speed.

A 1904 Martini is currently being fully rebuilt. This is a fascinating project, because we are having to re-manufacture a vast number of new parts. We are tempted to wave the magic wand over the engine and see if we can double its original power, as we have with the Meadows engine, but the owner feels it might not be in keeping for the London to Brighton.

Do come and discuss your requirements, or just drop in for coffee and a chat.

Our hourly rate is still very competitive and we are happy just to service your vehicle, of any type, as well as taking on any challenge you may throw at us.

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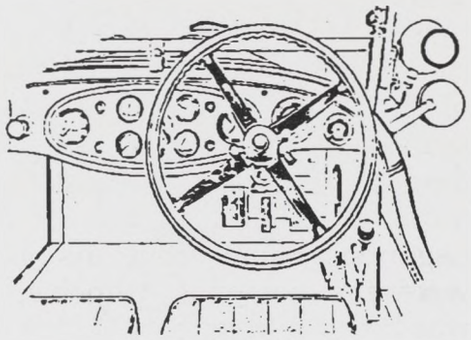
From the Driving Seat



by Ken Painter

HERE WE ARE, half-way through our centenary year and the Painter family have yet to make an appearance at any of the events. Before the deafening shouts of "off with his head", or similar are too demanding, let me explain. It is all due to a combination of ill health in the family and serious problems in the garage. My wife's mobility is now seriously affected and this drastically limits the type of events she can hope to attend. We all hope and expect that the problems are comparatively short term, but there is unlikely to be much improvement this year at least.

The problems in the garage involve That Other Car in my life, so I won't bore you with the details, except to say that the gearbox has been fitted with **two** new sets of gears, both faulty, and the "engineer" even made a mess of replacing the original set in the casing, so we had to take it apart and rebuild it ourselves. Having sorted that out, a very expensive brand new piston seized on an equally expensive new con rod after less than 20 miles of motoring. We now have 3½ pistons and a block which may be too damaged to use again. I think I might start collecting matchbox labels, it just **has** to be a cheaper hobby.

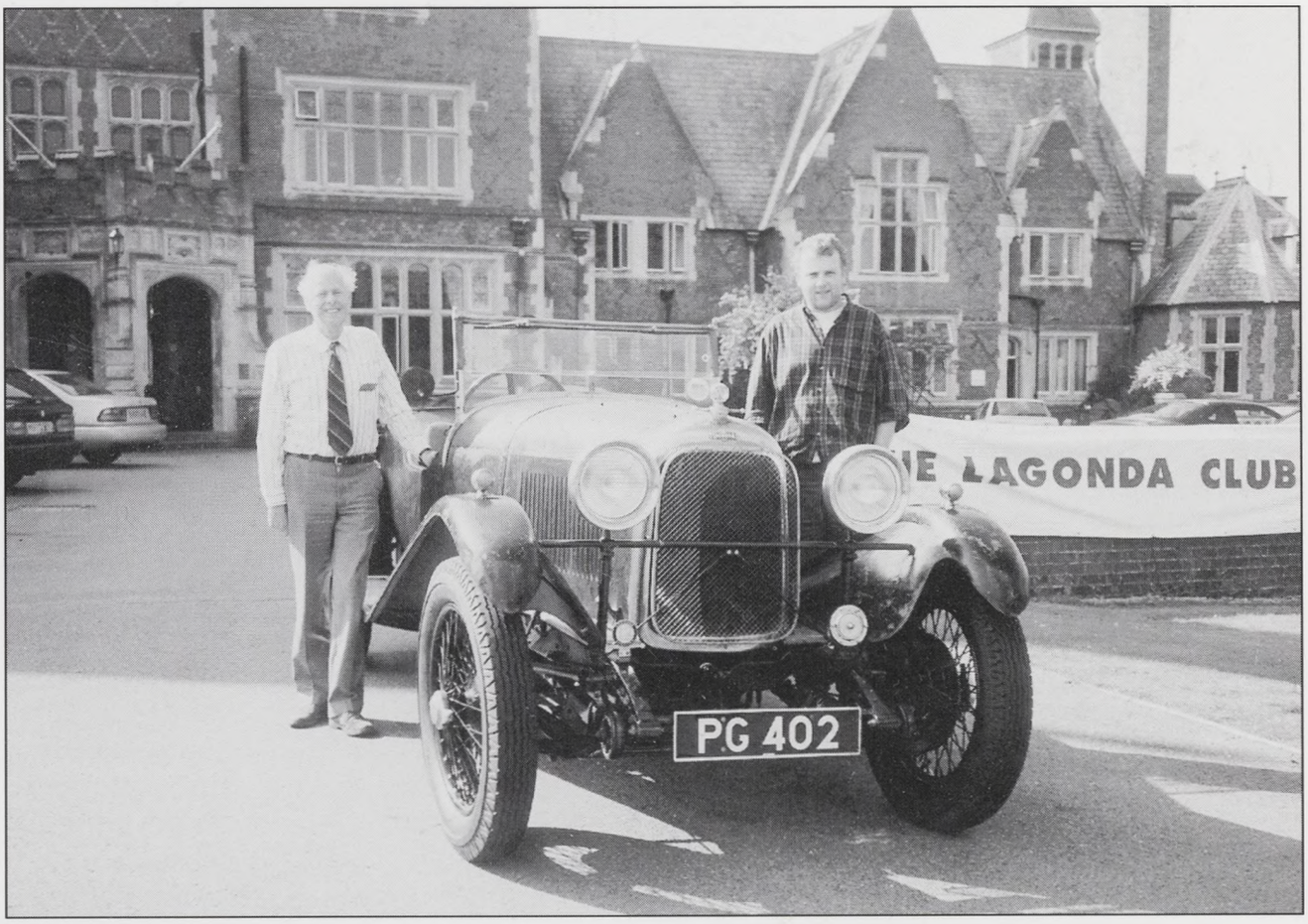
Life on the motoring front has become so desperate I have re-commissioned my 1930 Standard Big 9 Saloon! I know, it's a car with no merit at all, other than being made just before the magic cut-off date of 31st December 1930, but my father had one when I was a callow youth and the family had some wonderful holidays in it. I remember us all walking up Porlock Hill as the car was too heavily laden to struggle up it with more than the driver on board. So, when starry eyed romantics come up and chant "Ah, they don't make 'em like that anymore!", they are somewhat discomfited when I reply "and a b****y good job too!" Even the 11.1 I had the joy of driving at a recent AGM can outperform the Standard and I am certain that a 500 mile holiday trip would no longer hold the appeal it had almost 50 years ago. Are we getting soft in our old age, or just wiser?

If all goes according to plan, this will be the very last magazine produced on my old, steam-age, computer. The Committee have kindly agreed to provide a new set-up, which will be fully compatible with the equipment used by our printer and we have some exciting new ideas to make your favourite magazine even more interesting and attractive. They won't all happen at once though, it will take a little time before I can exploit fully the facilities the new equipment will offer. One thing I can promise is that I will have an email address, so those of you who have caught up with the 20th Century will be able to send material electronically. For those who still use pen and ink, your offerings will be just as welcome.

I want to end this on a more serious note, with my very personal tribute to Ted Townsley, whose obituary is featured in the magazine. When I first joined the Club, back in November 1959,

Ted and Eleanor were some of the first members we met. They took us under their wing and made us feel not just part of the Club family, but part of their family too. Whenever we visited them they made us very welcome and Ted was more than kind to me. Three of my Lagondas came from his garage, two were his personal property, the other was being sold on behalf of another local member.

Looking back, the prices he charged me were incredibly low, even by the standards of the fifties and sixties, one was actually passed to me in exchange for a 35mm camera! Ted's only concern was that I was able to own the right sort of car and he must have lost money on every deal, but that was his way. He was kind, generous and wanted to encourage younger members to participate fully in the activities of the Club. A true enthusiast and a true Yorkshireman, he will be sadly missed by all his many friends.



On the road again after a forty year absence, the 1929 high chassis 2 litre tourer PG 402. Previous owners were: 1946, D G Bradford; 1948, R D Gregg and, in 1949, Alan Audsley, who was Secretary and Treasurer of the 2 Litre Register. The car passed to John Lee in 1953 and in 1957 to Andrew Rosselli, who totally dismantled it but then emigrated. After some years in Graham Clarke's ownership, the kit of parts finally passed to Alan Elliott. The car is pictured at Aldermaston, with Alan and Jonathan Elliott after its rebuild - although restoration of the body remains to be completed. To be finished for the Brooklands event perhaps?

Now listen sunshine - you must know of some 11·9 bits somewhere

The 1921 11.9 hp Racing Car Recreation

Jeremy Oates is still doing the impossible

IT IS almost a year since writing about the hoped-for reconstruction of one of the two-seater racing cars that raced at Brooklands in 1921 and 1922 and, although the photographs may not indicate it, progress has been made

However, I would first like to thank those of you who wrote after last year's article and offered assistance to John Scholey and myself. Alan Audsley sent me an enlargement of his drawing of the 1923 type KK, with offers to assist with any lathe work. Roger Burt - a distant relation and non-member, but born archivist - unearthed many articles on the Claudel Hobson carburettor. But the real breakthrough came when yet another non-member, Anthony Blest on the Isle of Wight, offered to lend me his 1922 11.9 for the winter.

My appeal for help for spares produced the cartoon by member Stuart Timmins - do we have a means of de-selecting members?

With the Blest car on the ramp we were able to measure the four angle-iron sidemembers and, with the aid of oxy-acetylene - a Christmas present from my wife - the four members were created.

From now on, matters became too complicated for an amateur like myself and we had to have the correct style of wire wheels made for us. This involved the production of a pattern, then casting five centres and spoking onto 710x90 beaded edge rims. The result is very heavy but seems to match the photographs of the time.

We had another lucky break when we found a company, ML Weld, in Portsmouth. Their main business involves dredgers, cranes and heavy lorries - and some of their lathes and forges are massive.

Within a week, Nigel, the Governor and Nobby had made from drawings the front transverse spring, two rear springs, the single chassis member, U bolts, platforms for the rear springs to hang from and front spring shackles.

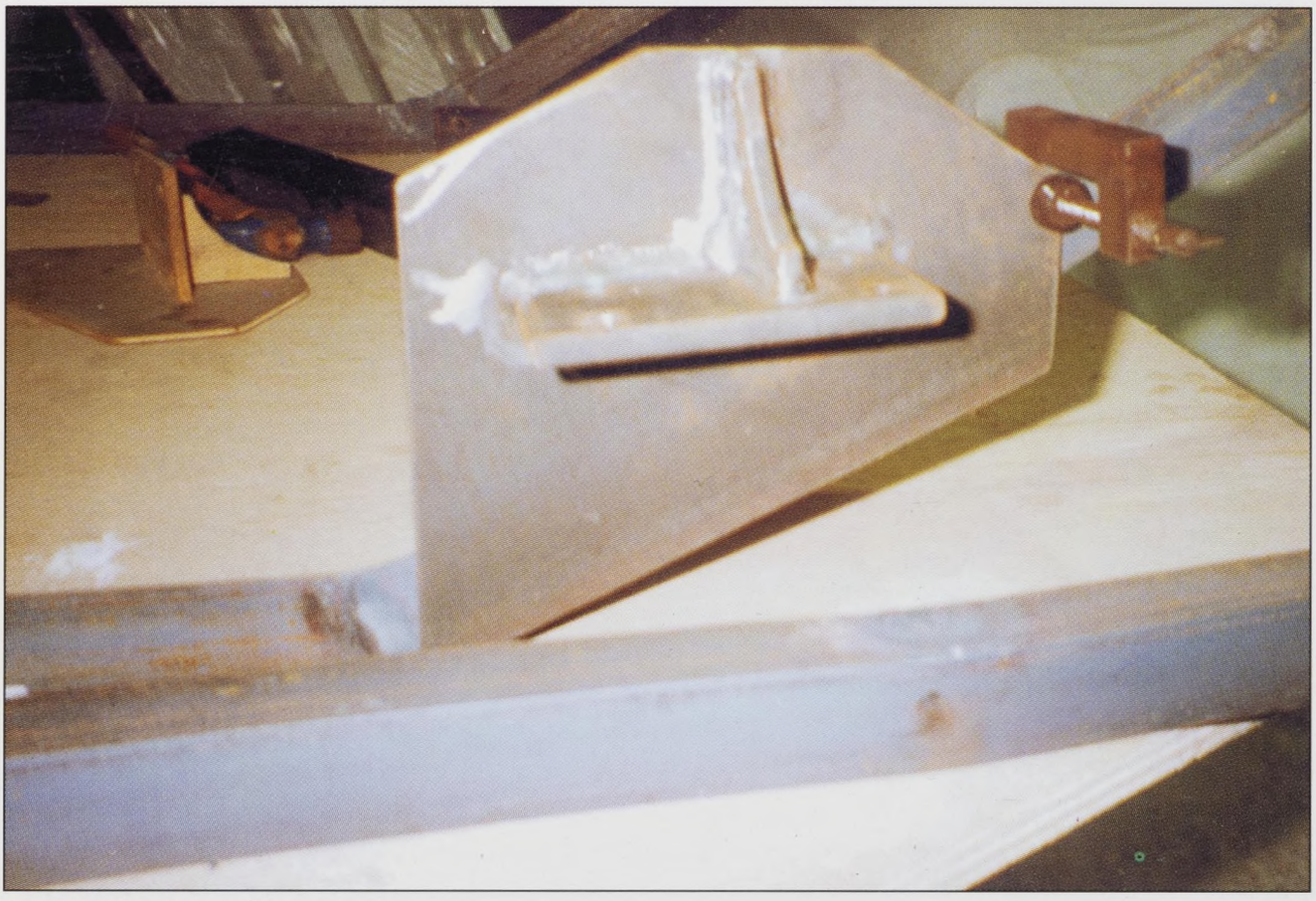
Our local blacksmith was able to make the front member that supports the radiator. This has been re-cored and re-nickled and looks superb, but will not really show in the finished car, as it will be covered by an aluminium cowl.

This car only has the one cross-member, behind the gearbox and, of the two boxes we had, one proved to be correct. Now came the moment when we could roughly assemble the sidemembers and drop in the sump and gearbox bolted together. The sidemembers were then re-heated and bent further, where necessary.

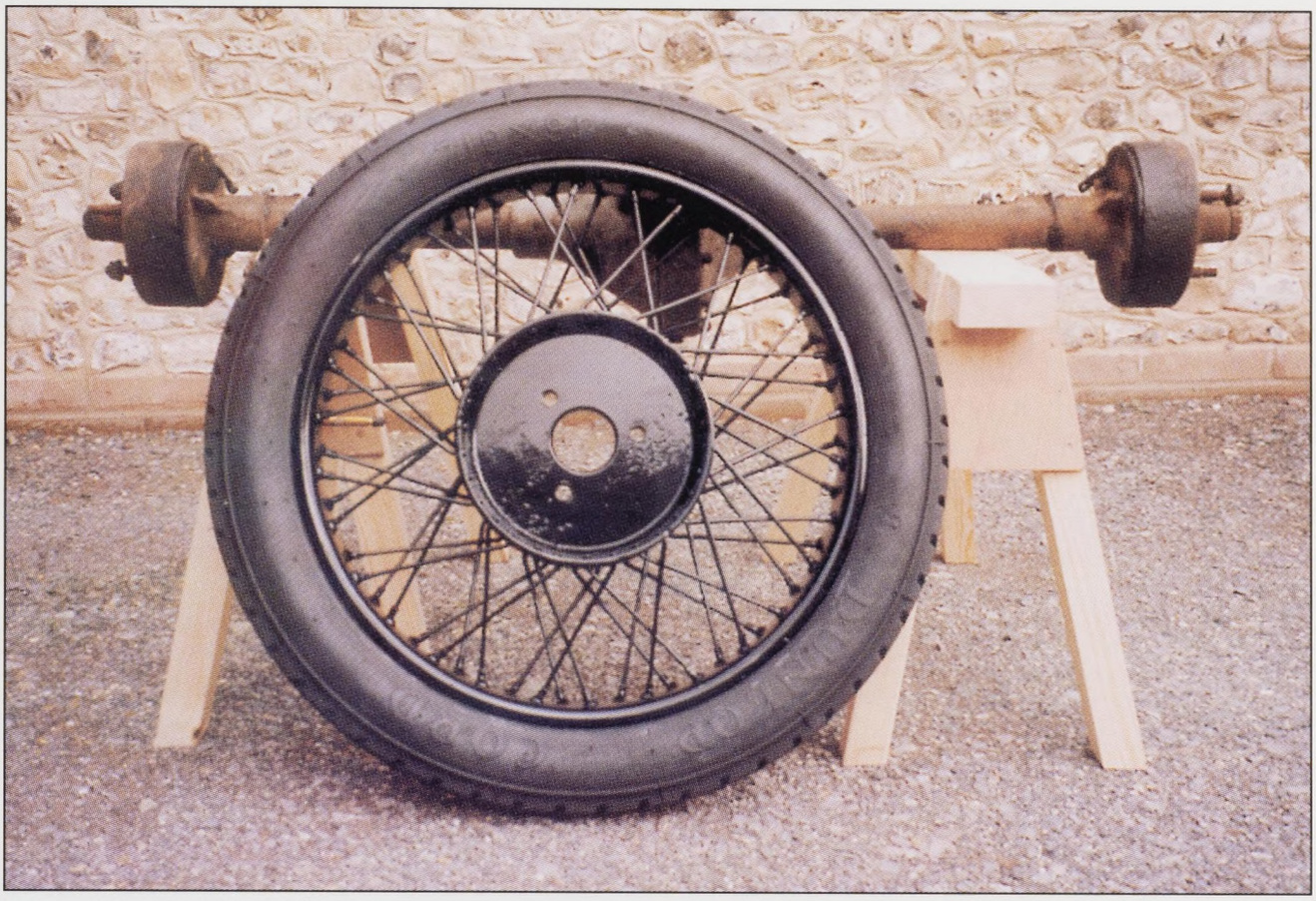
There has always been a mystery surrounding the type of carburettor used in the original car, but while the wheel specialist was studying the photographs he identified it as a Claudel Hobson and one was found at the Spring Beaulieu. It certainly looks very like the contemporary photograph.

Ahead of us lies a certain amount of riveting and rebuild of the engine. There will also need to be a re-jigging of the back axle's ratios, but as the brakes only operate on the rear wheels (and transmission) and are exceedingly small, running metal shoes on drums and lubricated by oil from the differential, we feel that a top speed in excess of 90 mph without the aid of Brooklands banking may prove impractical for normal road conditions. Maybe we should aim for 60/65 mph and hope to stay alive!

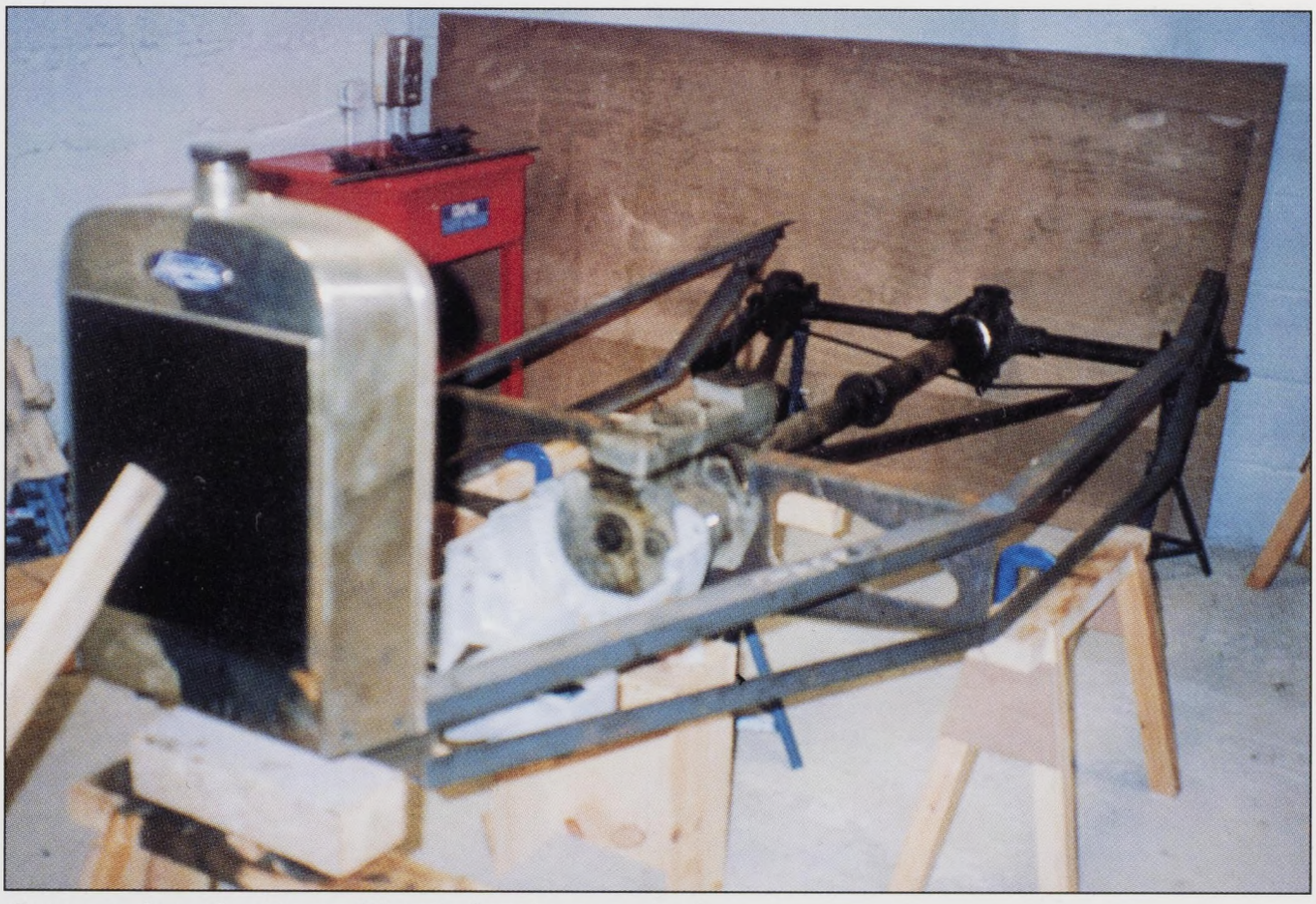
Nigel and "Nobby". Springs made within 48 hours.



Hanger for nearside spring.



One of the finished wheels.



Sump and gearbox in position, to locate crossmember.

Non-Standard Modifications

Mike Hambley plays with his M45

ABOUT eighteen months ago, after a lengthy and very debilitating illness I found myself presented with the opportunity to become reunited with my first proper car, my much cherished and sadly missed M45, which I disposed of in the late 60s, prior to embarking upon an enforced holiday in the Peoples Republic of Vietnam.

Upon acquiring the car I found to my surprise that I could not drive in anything but a straight line and that changing gear whilst attempting to persuade her to deviate even in the slightest degree from her chosen heading was an impossibility, indeed verging on the dangerous. The local club Gurus were consulted and various solutions were proffered, ranging from 40 psi in the front tyres to removing the shims in the front axle, checking the toe-in and the castor angles. Finally Master Guru Whenman was beseeched by fax for a judgement. All of the above was the reply, but without the tyre pressure increase, 35 psi would be fine. These word of wisdom were heeded gratefully and acted upon, result? A minimal improvement and I never have, to this day, seen the published figure for that wretched castor angle. It never occurred to me, of course, that I had aged more than 30 years from the time when I would throw her round corners and storm hills, leaving gasping A/Healey 3000's in our wake, nor that, after my illness, I now weighed a mere 165 lbs, as distinct from my usual barside zero fuel weight of 235 lbs, product of a tattered ego refusing to acknowledge the facts of old age.

Anyway, she was mine again, all mine and drive her I would, as far and as fast and as often as I could, all I needed was muscle and that translated into hydraulics and then to power steering, but how, without damaging her original integrity? It would have to be a complete bolt-on accessory, removable without trace, safe and reliable. After much nattering within the club, little was forthcoming, but one kind soul suggested that I contact the local hotrod centre, "they have power on everything, don't they?" The advice from the Chief Rodder, a man with a tattooed bald head, was to modify the Power Assist unit from an early Ford Falcon, this could be the quickest, cheapest and most suitable method.

With the help of my dedicated engineer, one Grant Cowie of Campbells Creek Engineering, the appropriate bits were acquired and reconditioned, using new Ford seals, bearings, hoses, etc.. Specialised brackets were fabricated to mount the pump and reservoir above the generator, the motion sensor was tucked away inside the chassis under the steering box, connected to the drop arm and the directional ram unit was attached to a new tie rod end, barely visible behind the radiator, all very neat and discreet. Now try it out. WHAT an experience, can you imagine steering, no, parking, an M45 with one finger? It was horrible, no feel, no self centring, too fast - and the rear end would slip away without warning.

Back to the Chief Rodder who, after a drive, pronounced that the pressure was way too high and that we should stuff some "bloody great wedges in the front axle" to accentuate the castor. He was, of course, referring to our famous shims, which we promptly replaced. Now the power steering had something to centre it or push against and the car once more

transmitted that all-important feel which, after a few short journeys, became almost as familiar as the original setup, although I still have to watch her a bit, as she has no body weight aft of the centre of the rear axle and the backside can still depart quite rapidly, but now at least with a bit more warning. After a 3,000 mile trip at mostly high speeds I can say that I have no trouble in interpreting her instructions and the city handling is delightfully effortless.

I have always been wary of pushing a Meadows 4_ anywhere near the red line for anything more than a few moments, the vibration alone being a fair warning that the red line means what it says and that blatant disregard for these warnings can have terminal consequences. However, the Chief Rodder informed me of a quick fix employed on Big Block Chevvies, which is to remove the original spring-action harmonic damper and to substitute a mercury filled damper from a Perkins diesel tractor engine. We did, and it works like a charm, no need to alter the main shaft, just drill out the Perkins aperture. I still treat her with respect up near the red line, but cruising at three five is so much smoother for her and for me too. which brings me to long range high speed cruising in hot weather.

As most are aware, it can get a tad warm down here in the never never, summer temperatures peaking at up to 115 deg F, this can sometimes be too much for the standard Lagonda cooling setup, even with a new radiator core. We contemplated the easy, but ugly, option of adding an electric booster fan, but this was not as easy as we thought, space being at a premium if we were to preserve her originality. Then we noticed that the original fan is positioned quite a way back from the radiator core, we turned up a thick aluminium spacer, which moved the fan much closer to the core with a satisfying result, stuck in city traffic on a 108F day, she sat quite happily indicating 85C on a recently recalibrated temp gauge, the oil temperature went up to about 100C, but cooled down as soon as the engine speed increased between traffic jams. We were going to fit an oil cooler, but felt it was going a bit too far, as the oil temperature usually matches the water temperature under normal circumstances. I guess the sheer volume of oil in the sump must account for the relative temperature stability. We added an oil filter of modern design using a replaceable cartridge, had the body of the filter hot sprayed with aluminium and then mildly polished so that it doesn't look too garish. This has done wonders for the colour of the oil and one must assume the suppression of nasty black abrasive particles, etc. Whilst on the subject of heat dissipation, I decided to add some tastefully shaped air scoops to the front brake backing plates, as I had seen in some original photos of the marque. This has reduced fade to the minimum when pushing her hard on Alpine rallies in the summer.

Which leads me to the bane of most vintage motorists, VAPOUR LOCK as it is known down under, a common affliction of all pre-war vehicles, but especially those equipped with SU fuel pumps. As a frequent victim of this malady I had a new stainless steel tank made up, re-conditioned the SU pumps, rebuilt the carburettors, cleared all the fuel lines and renewed that all-important gasket on the fuel filter bowl, all to absolutely no avail. Coincidentally, it became necessary to fit a new silencer and, in doing so, the root cause of our problem became evident, poor basic design.the design team at Lagonda had, in their wisdom, deemed it a good idea to run the fuel lines from the tank to the filter along the same side of the chassis, up to the filter bowl and then across the bulkhead to the pumps. We all know full well the ferocious heat that the trusty Meadows generates under the bonnet, plus the long fuel lines adjacent to the heat of the exhaust system, no wonder the SU pumps cannot function properly. So we re-routed the fuel lines in braided steel hosing along the other side of the chassis, leaving original lines in place, but tucked away out of sight. The

braided fuel hoses were terminated just short of the bulkhead and the rest of the lines were completed in copper to maintain a period appearance. The fuel filter bowl and selector tap were moved to the other side of the bulkhead and connect up via a much shorter line to the carbs. We added a fuel pressure gauge take-off for a modern gauge with a beautifully silk screened period dial, as we had done with the oil temp and pressure and water temp gauges. As I had become exasperated with the SU pumps I fitted two separate booster pumps just above the fuel tank, these are separately wired and controlled by two separate switches on the dash, one for main, the other for reserve. They are not slaved through the ignition switch to ensure a fail-safe operation and have to be turned off separately when finishing a run. Either one will get me home with or without the SUs, but they run happily in parallel with the SUs indicating about 2 psi under normal running, which is quite within the range of the float chamber needle valves.

As I have a 4_ litre Derby Bentley, I became aware of a worthwhile mod that the Bentley Drivers Club members are fitting to their cars, i.e. an overdrive, but in our case there is no factory made unit to fit, so we plundered a wrecked Volvo 240 for its electric Laycock unit WITH output shaft and reconditioned it. An additional chassis crossmember was bolted into place with suitable support members and the unit was mounted aft of the gearbox, using a split tailshaft and BMW universal joints, keeping the original tailshaft for the next owner. An electrical circuit was fitted, with an on/off dash mounted switch and an inhibitor microswitch on the top gear slot of the gearlever gate to eliminate the possibility of the O/D being left on in the lower gears, but more importantly in reverse, as this is almost instantly fatal to these O/D units. I usually engage it on the open road at about 2,000 rpm and this results in a road speed of approx 60 mph. I say approx because the speedo readings are no longer accurate (if they ever were). She pulls this without demur and has to be watched because she tends to get a bit carried away and you can find yourself in the company of some disbelieving rozzers, who nevertheless will book you.

As the main highways in Australia are long and unlit it is essential that one has some decent lights, especially as large kangaroos often become confused and bound out in front of the car with disastrous and sometimes fatal results (they can weigh up to 140 lbs). The standard P100s are just not adequate, unless you do as we all do here and fit specially crafted quartz halogen bulbs, which give a 55/65 watt beam and fit straight into the original sockets. These are available through Anthony Pearson fax/ph 61 8 9278 4393.

So, there we are, an old man's toy, but one that can be enjoyed in any conditions without leaving any scars for the next owner after I've gone to the great Rally in the sky. Hope this is not too long and will give other M45 types food for thought. I'll be happy to supply as much technical data and photos to any who may be interested.

Oh Dear!

John Ryder Tells an Age Related Tale

"JOHN, I think I've got a problem with the 3 litre. When I was taking it for a run today, there was a sudden tinkling noise and it lost power. I re-started it, the noise had gone but it was very flat and when I took the rocker box off, three of the push rods were not moving, what do you think it is?"

So went the telephone call, one Sunday evening in what we euphemistically refer to as "Summer". Now 3 litre engines have a widely known reputation for longevity. Mine has never missed a beat in the thirty plus years since I rebuilt it and what I found when I investigated my friend's problem greatly surprised me, for I had never personally encountered the problem with the many 3/3½ litre engines which I have rebuilt over the years. Nor had I heard of anyone who had, but you learn something new every day - and so it proved to be in this instance.

I have now gained knowledge of three other 3 litres similarly afflicted and, within the past few days, I have heard of one more.

What had happened was that an area of the cast matrix, which forms the location for the cam-follower housings, into which go the spring-loaded push rods and the cam follower sleeves/rollers had suffered a catastrophic failure and totally destroyed No 5 cylinder mechanism and half of No 6. Hence the cessation of movement of the three push rods in question.

In addition, the resultant debris had punched a fair sized hole in the base of the actual camshaft oil-tunnel, releasing the oil reservoir contents, together with an assortment of cast iron and steel remains, into the sump. Not a pretty sight! I must say I was extremely impressed with the philosophical response of the owner when viewing the mess which had, but a short while ago, been a very sweetly running unit. I had, in fact, completed a programme of work on the front end, brakes, etc. quite recently and, on road test, commented to the owner how very nicely it went and sounded! (Ah well!)

Could it be salvaged? That was the important question. When completely stripped, the whole engine was in first-class order, with no significant wear in any area and whoever had rebuilt it had done an excellent engineering job.

I found, in addition to the wrecked areas described, a segment missing from one of the other matrix areas and, as the piece was nowhere to be found, it had clearly been in this condition for a considerable while, although still working satisfactorily.

So, we appeared to have two problems. An inherent one, related to casting integrity and a particular one, possible initiated by casting failure, but perhaps an "effect" as distinct from a "cause" - see later!

The post mortem does, as you will see, favour the latter analysis - but the inherent danger of failure does not lessen as a result. When one examines the casting design, it soon becomes apparent that it transcends all the basic principles which were so heavily emphasised to engineers of my own generation.

Never, never generate radical changes of casting section in adjacent areas. The resultant widely differing cooling rates for given masses of metal cause contractions which are highly conducive to, at best, distortion and, at worst, cracking just below the surface. These are undetectable by visual

examination, but they manifest themselves under the stresses of usage, over a period.

Non-destructive test (NDT) techniques, such as X-ray, ultrasonic or magnetic particle and dye-penetrant procedures quickly reveal such failures. However, in the '20s and '30s, if you did not encounter a blow-hole when machining, then it was deemed to be alright.

They usually got away with it in any event, because the components were very over-designed and, in reality, who in 1930 expected people to be still restoring their products nearly 70 years hence?!

So, what to do?

I pondered weld repair as a possible route, but discounted it because the require soak-heat, to ensure a 100% T.I.G. full-penetration weld, could very easily distort the whole block casting. Bearing in mind the excellent general condition of the engine, this was not a risk I was prepared to take. I am not, by nature, attracted to "sudden death" procedures and if pre-heat on a component of this complexity started to go wrong, one would only know for sure when it was too late.

This really only left a pure mechanical solution and. having measured the thickness of the water jacket wall, against which the existing matrix lies, I judged that at 5/16" it was thick enough to support six-off individually designed housings, if one machined away all of the 12 "bored" areas of metal presently forming the support matrix.

Furthermore, in the areas where the internal arcs of the actual bore diameter met, there should be enough metal to form integral "keys" on the jacket wall face. This proved to be so. These would locate the specially designed carrier housings at a pre-determined height above the camshaft centre-line and longitudinal positioning would be achieved by datum holes, into which locating dowels were fitted.

These would match up with jig-bored holes in the keywayed base of each individual carrier block. Thus, positively located in both planes relative to the camshaft centre-line and to the width profile of the actual cam areas, the original geometry of the mechanisms could be completely re-created.

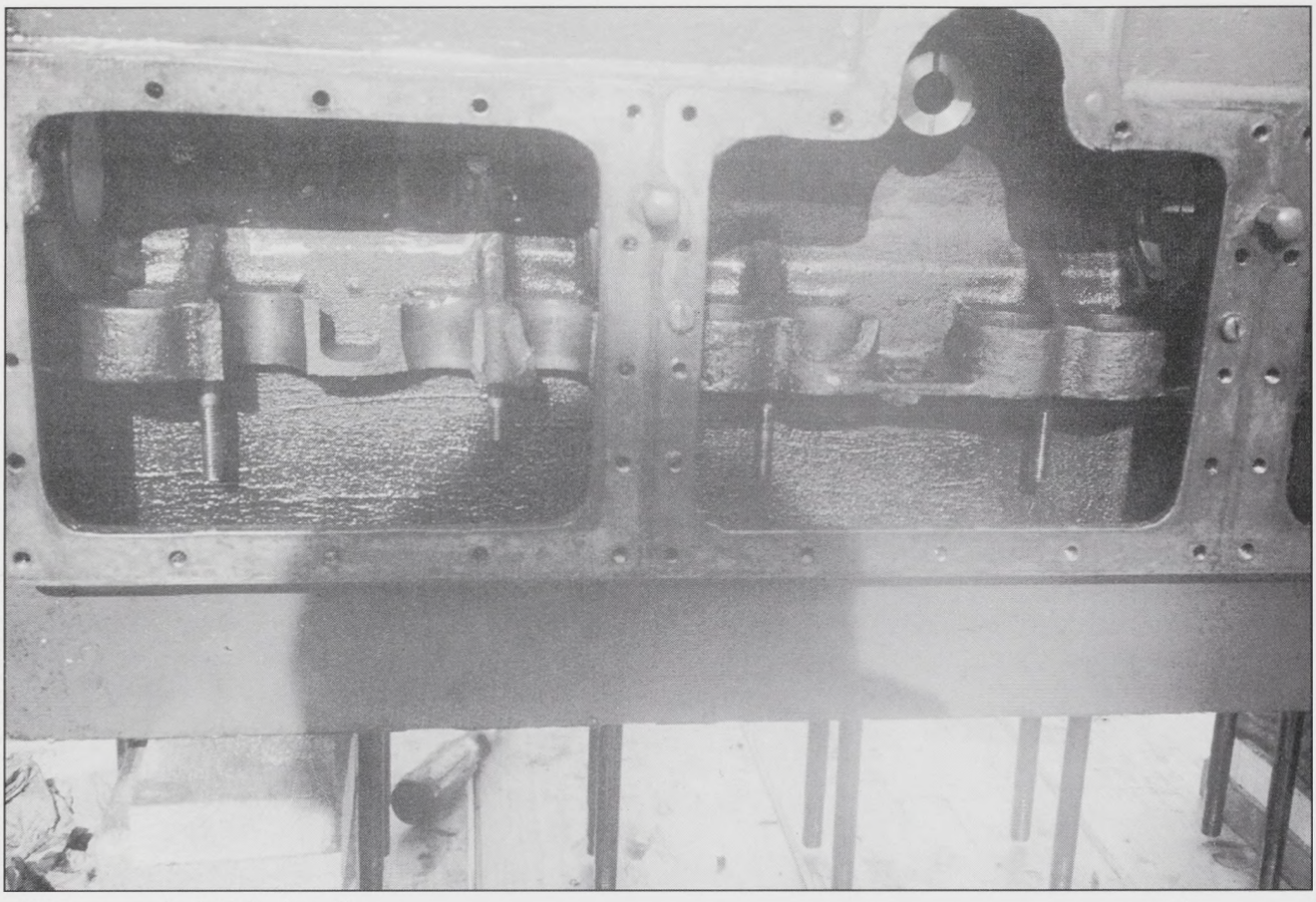
Each carrier block would be secured to the machined rear water jacket wall with 4-off ¼" BSF countersunk head Allen screws. The dowel holes, being centrally located in the machined "keys", were "blind", whereas the ¼" BSF holes had, of necessity, to break through into the water space.

I was initially concerned about the possibility of leakage, but reckoned that with each carrier block coated with "Instant Gasket" and each screw having a close fitting fibre washer beneath the head, we should overcome the problem. In the event, a combination of a really good machined finish, both on the cast face and the carrier block, together with precise countersinking and the incredibly accurate C.N.C. produced screws effected a 100% seal without recourse to such measures.

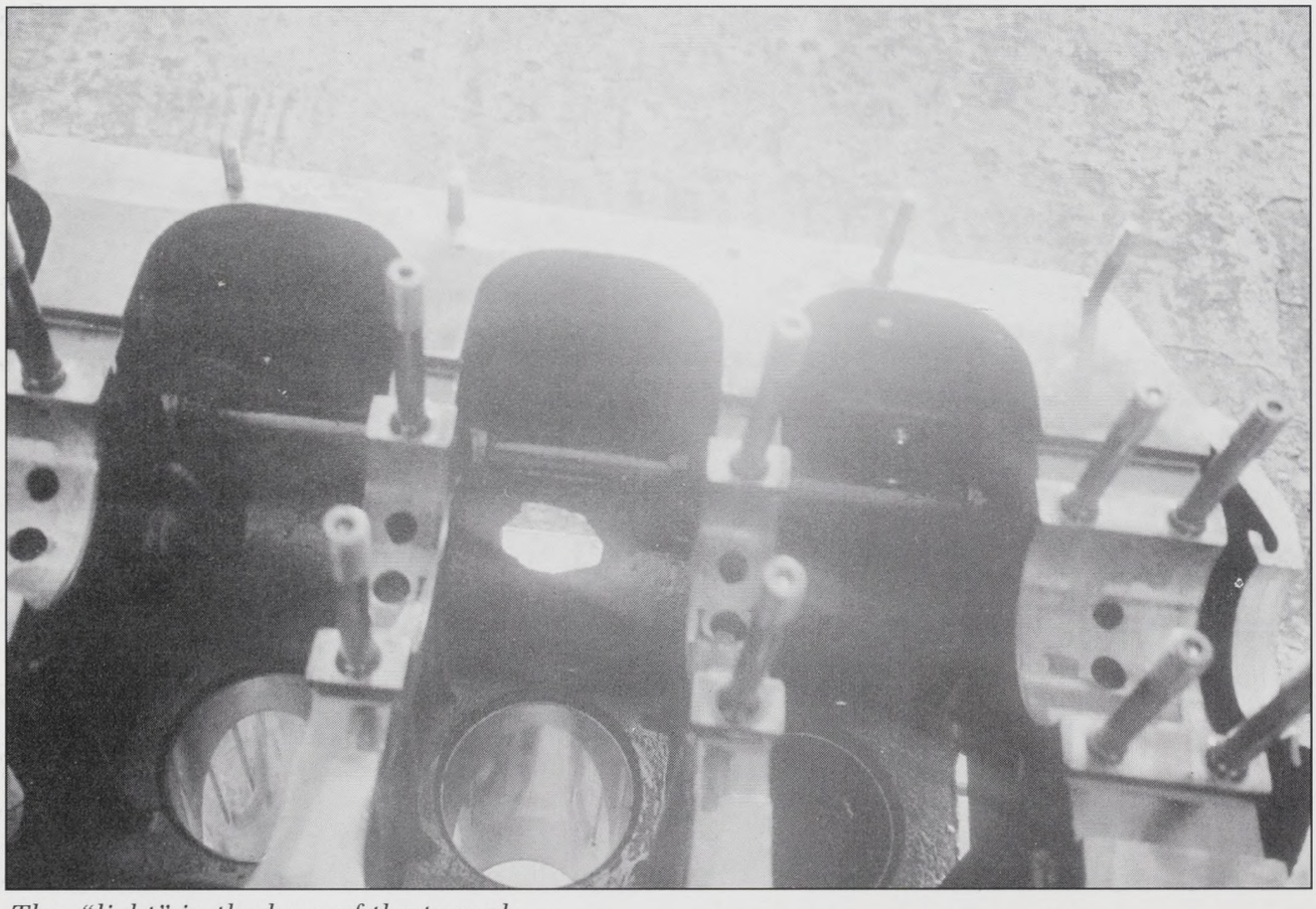
However, Black Country caution prevailed and we used the magic sealant under the blocks and around the threads of the screws anyway! The fibre washers under the screw heads were found not to be necessary.

As regards the procedure for ensuring that a mechanical approach would produce the desired results, the following route was followed:

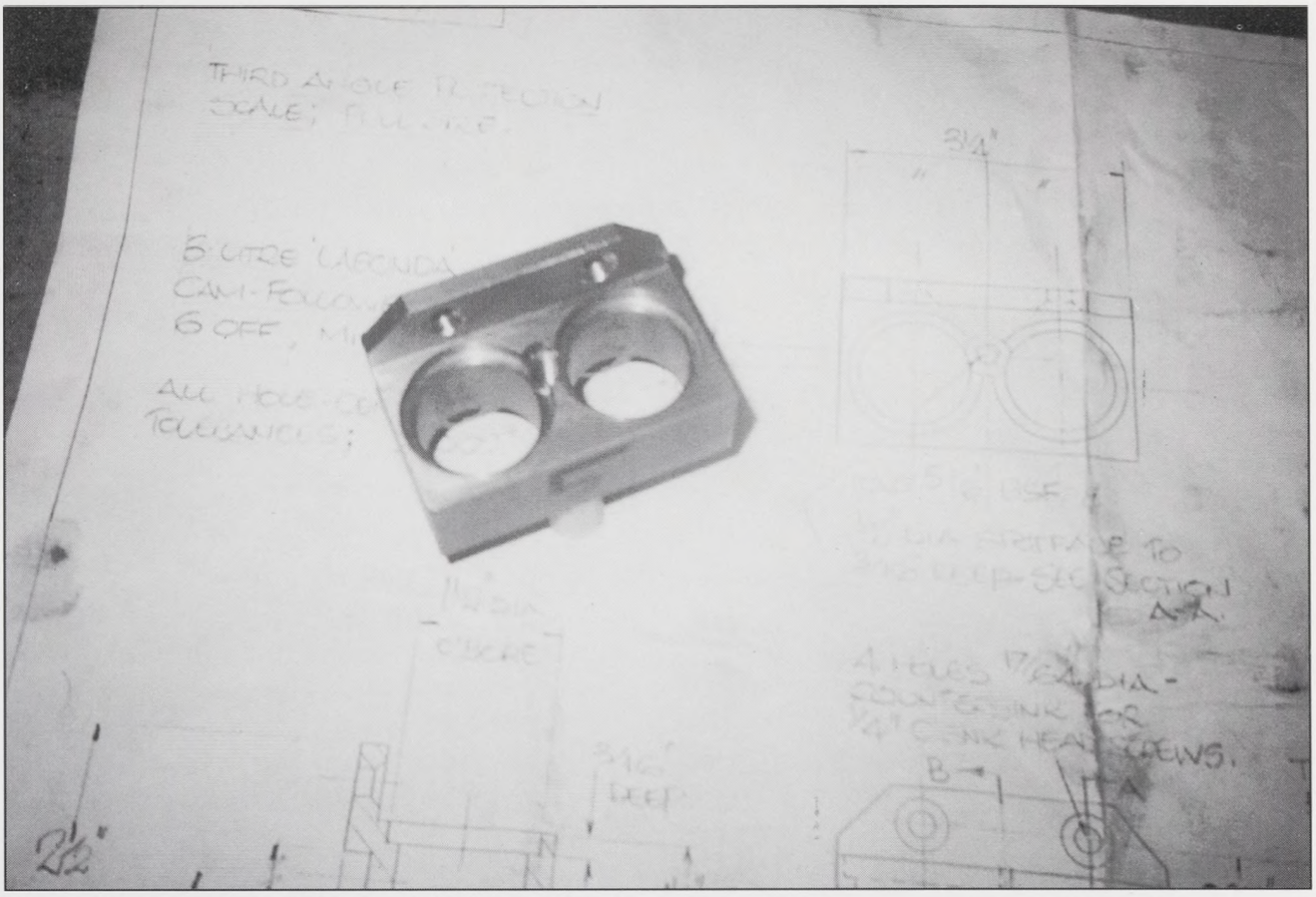
First, a tightly-toleranced jig-boring layout drawing was produced, ensuring that the dimensions between the cylinder block locations and the camshaft were maintained to complete accuracy, from datum holes. The machining dimensions, both of the location faces and of the datums was held to 0.001" on the drawing. However, the accuracy of the digital read-out "Bridgeport" vertical borer used to execute the work, was such that 0.00051" tolerances were maintained - overall!



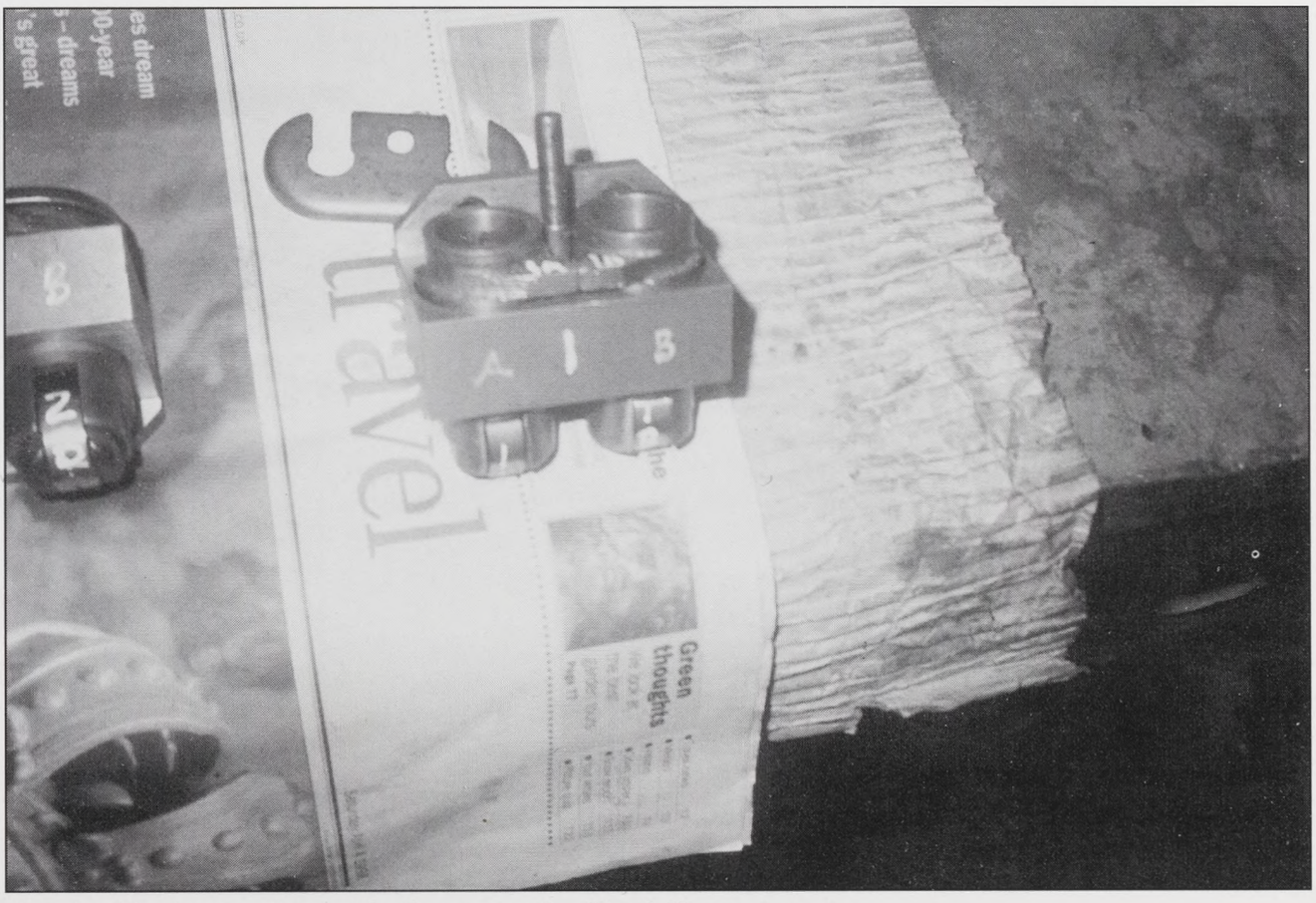
All is revealed (Oh dear!)



The "light" in the base of the tunnel.



One of the six special carrier blocks.



Carrier block complete with sleeves and roller follower inserts.

These figures were duplicated on the production of the individual carrier blocks, resulting in an accuracy of final location somewhat better than the original set-up. Every cam position and all cam-follower "lifts" were exactly correct and the relationships of cam roller to mean cam profile centre line was 0.001".

A word about the D.R.O "Bridgeport" machine: By the standards of Japanese C.N.C. technology it is in the dark ages. However, for people in the business of restoring to good health machinery built 70 years ago, it is absolutely ideal - providing of course that you know how to use it!

Having laid out the principle datums on paper (as in this instance), you can punch these into the "D.R.C." facility and, in effect, do a dummy machining run. Bearing in mind that you get one "go" only at an exercise such as we are now discussing, it is most reassuring to be able to see exactly where you are, **before** you cut metal. The machine will store all the machining co-ordinates which you programme and reproduce to **four** places of decimals (ad infinitum) whenever you press the buttons.

Would I have designed the 3/3½ litre block/cam gear assembly differently? Yes, of course, but only if I had had the benefit of that indispensable designer manual "The Hindsight Book".

Finally, what I believe is a measured analysis of what happened in this particular instance:

In the sump was the remaining ½" of the 5/16" stud which retains the roller assembly, sleeve, push rod spring and push rod in position in the matrix. It was complete with its nut and the "shear" position was exactly in the "clamp" position.

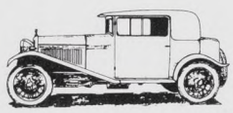
The location sleeves are slotted and the cam follower roller and plunger work always within the slots, in order to maintain the roller at 90° to the camshaft centre-line. Should a clamp stud break, then the sleeve is free to rise. The roller would not be constrained and could thus rotate. The result would then be that the roller assembly becomes jammed under the sleeve/matrix, trans-ferring the resultant high load onto the actual casting as the camshaft continued to rotate.

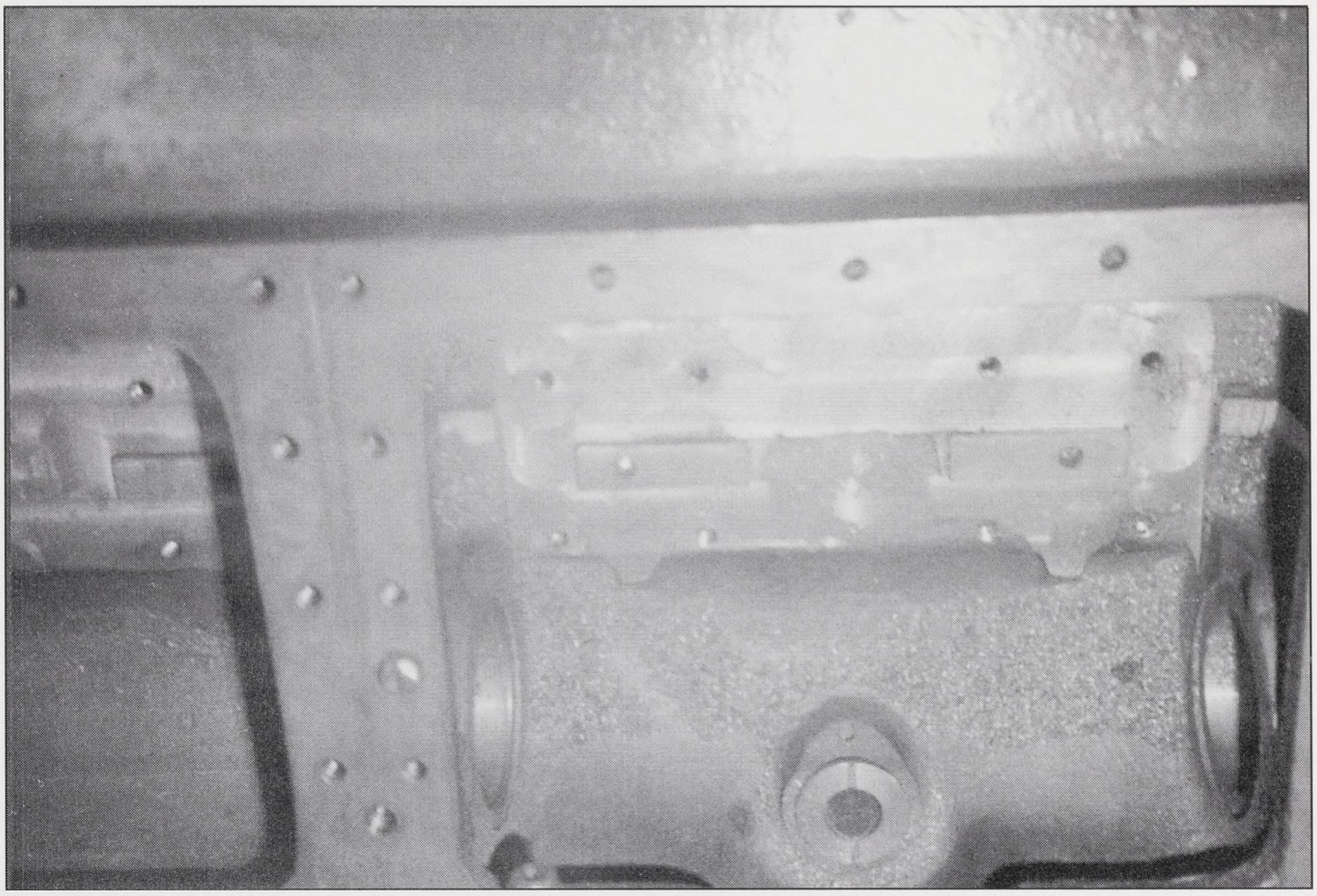
A detailed examination of the debris showed markings on the roller/follower and the relevant sleeve housings, consistent with this analysis. However, reverting to my previous comments about "two problems", it is, in my view, true to say that, whilst this particular problem was most likely caused by the sequence of events described, there is an inherent weakness in the matrix area anyway. Hence the reason why we elected to remove the entire area, as the photographs show.

The aperture in the camshaft tunnel base was repaired by very carefully shaping a metal panel, to an exact fit in the tunnel, bonding it in place with "Instant Gasket" and securing it with six 2BA screws having lock nuts on the underside of the casting face.

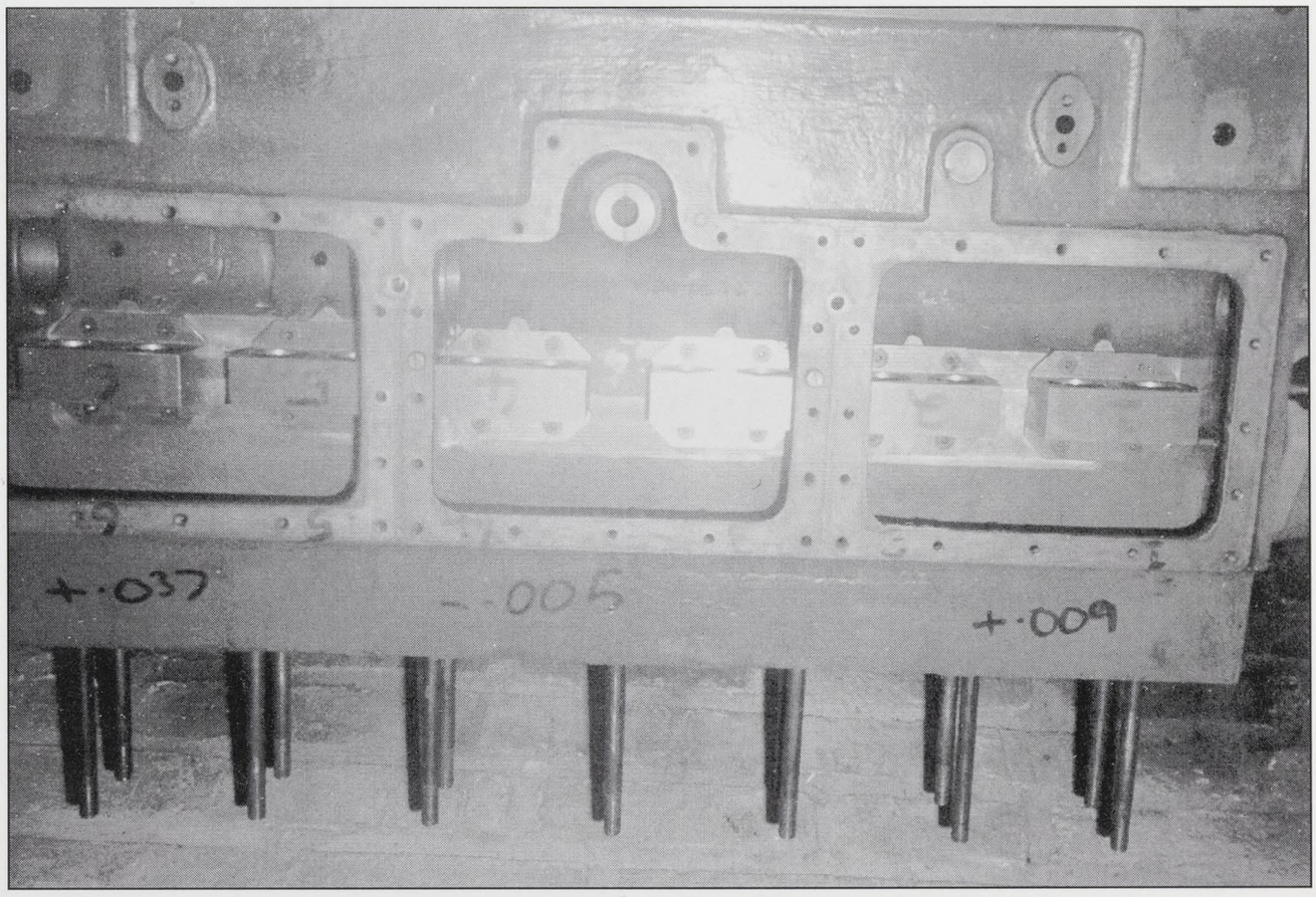
A test, over several hours, using engine oil at operating temperature produced neither leaks nor any detectable change in the firmness of the bonding.

How much did it all cost? To anyone with a similar problem, ring 01746 710382 and all will be revealed - we have the technology!



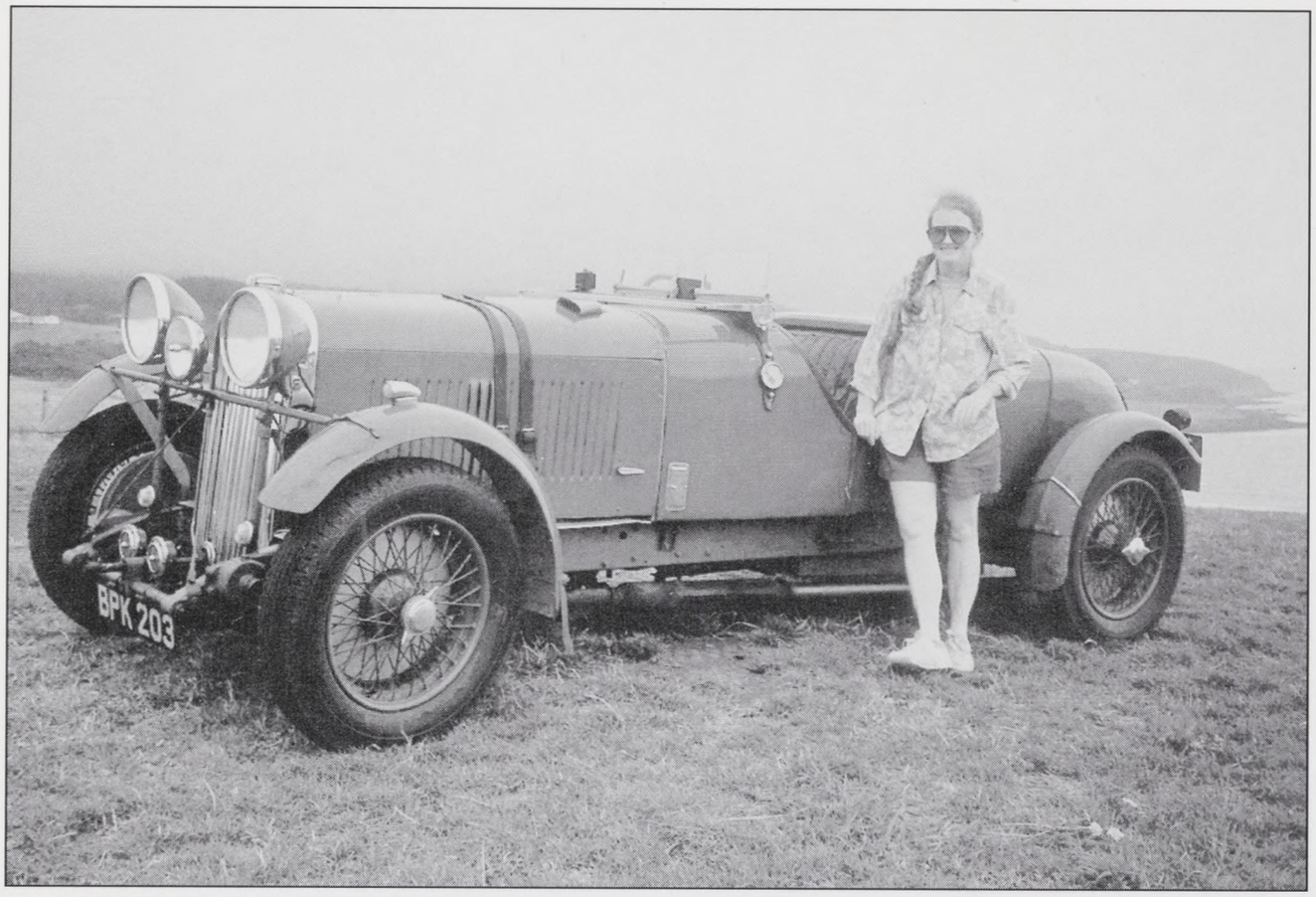


Finish machined seating area. Note two 'keys', dowel datum and tapped holes.



Carrier blocks trial inserted for leak tests.

All pictures by John Ryder



Ruth Turner poses beside BPK 203.

Oh Ye of Little Faith

John Turner Reports from the Antipodes

I HAVE a message for you. BPK 203 is alive and flourishing in New Zealand. Indeed, having looked inside her cardboard Box of Horrors, I can say that she is much healthier than for many years.

She lives in a fabulous farmhouse with superb views over an arm of Raglan Harbour on the west coast of North Island. She is attended by a Talbot 6, a Model A Ford, an Austin 7 Ulster, two vintage motorbikes and three cats. In summer she is protected by a screen of very aggressive mosquitos. She employs two staff to attend to her every whim; Alison Morres and Alan Stewart. She took us all out for a photo call for the benefit of our magazine readers (photos by Ruth).

On our first visit, the Talbot was in hospital. In June or July '97 she had been taking part in a well publicised, well signed Rally, but even so, a teenage yob in a Japanese Thing gave her a Glasgow kiss. At the end of our visit, the Talbot was considered fit for discharge, so your scribe was privileged to be a passenger in the Lagonda, no doubt to keep the staff in order, whilst we travelled the 100-odd miles to Orewa, north of Aukland, at a suitably decorous pace. Ruth, poor girl, was delegated to a modern affair, with Rachel and Tim, our No 4 daughter and son-in-law, who deviated briefly to look at boats. They aren't entirely lost to civilisation, because they have done a full restoration on an MG Midget, and very taut and smooth running she is too.

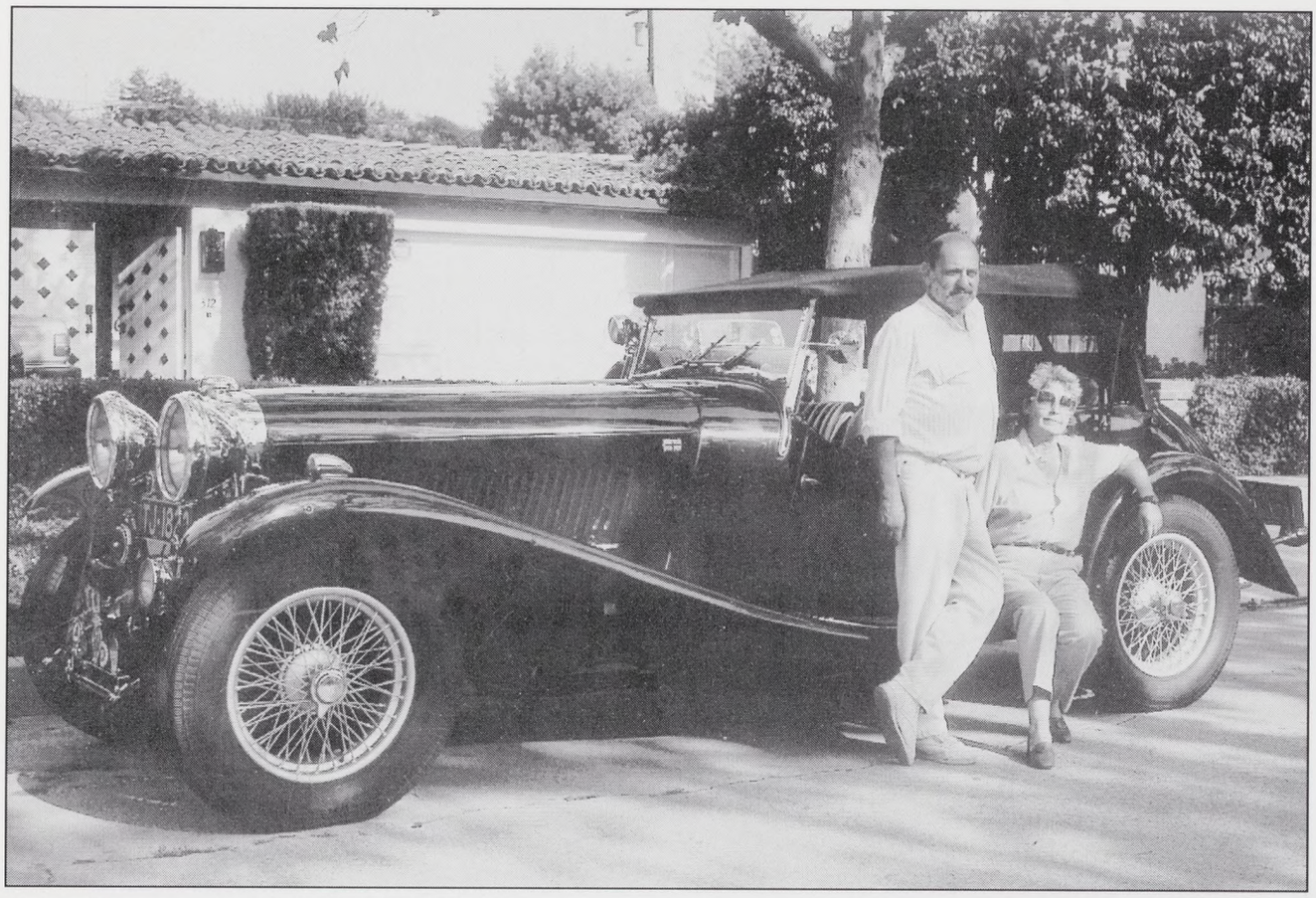
The hospital at Orewa -oh! eat your heart out Alan Brown - is **VAST**. Modern and seemingly suitable as an aircraft hangar, it is presided over by Brian Johnston (one time Club member, J9, of the 1970's). There were many patients, from a Ferrari Dino awaiting discharge, to an early Edwardian Maxwell tourer in the first stages of cure. The wooden artillery wheels were a dream.

From there, we dashed over to Selwyn and Gerda Jackson, who made superb coffee whilst we drooled over Bernd Holthusen's magnificent tome: we were provided with tissues to protect the pages. We admired a V12 DHC and a beautifully restored Aston Martin DB5, registration 007 JB - what else? We made thoughtful noises over several, er, projects, before passing a still (for the radiators and batteries you understand) on our way to gaze up at a vast 1908 Humber Landaulet. The younger generation couldn't get over the fact that it will run for ever at over 40 m.p.h.. The ex-W.O.Bentley LG45 saloon is kept elsewhere.

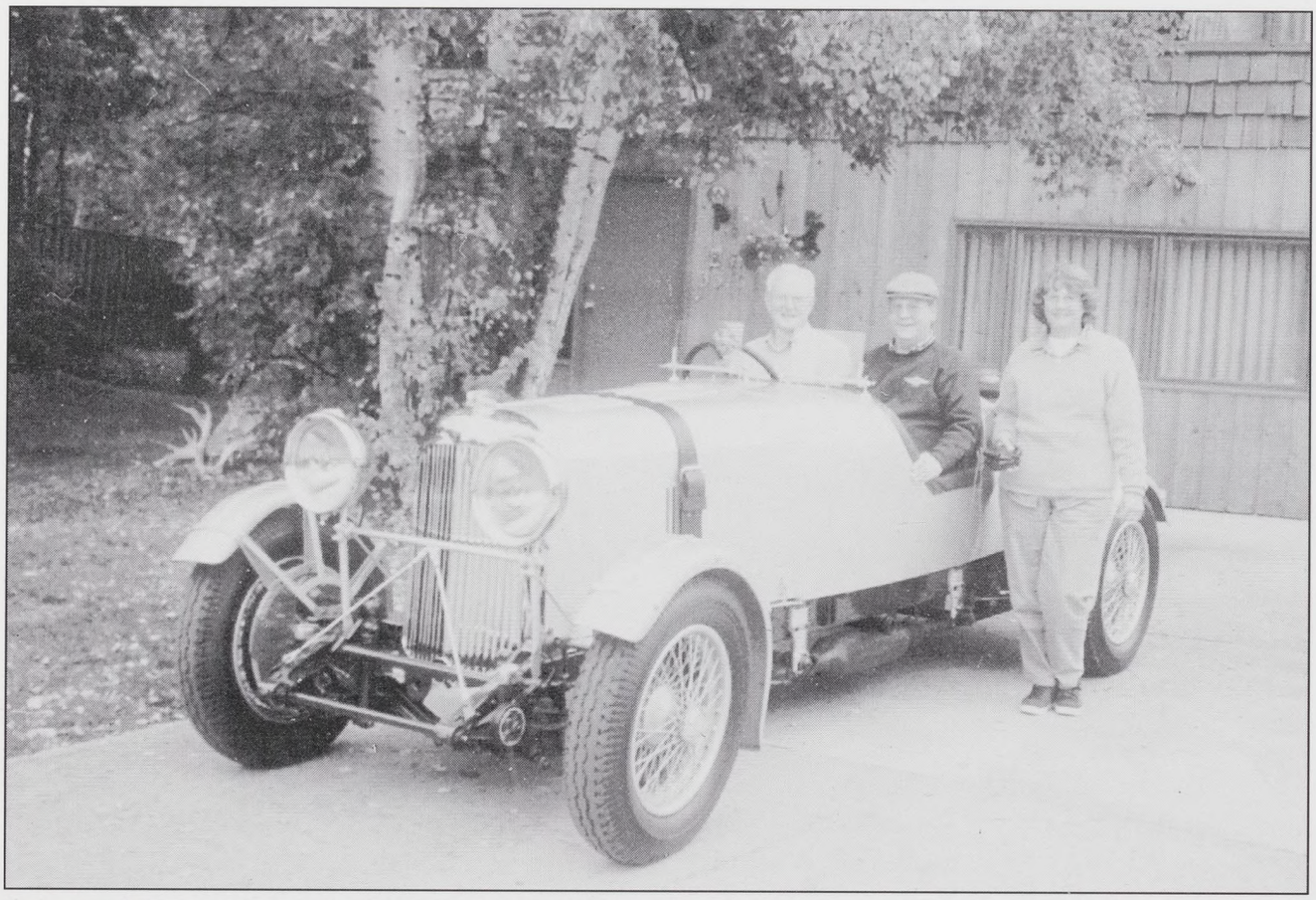
Ruth and I had a marvellous six weeks and not for the first time. Thanks to Boeing, N.Z. isn't all that far away nowadays.

Incidentally, I should warn the Americans that BPK 203 retains her British nationality on the books of the D.V.L.C. and is registered in New Zealand in that letter/number configuration, so don't bother!

Changing the subject entirely: leaded petrol is no longer available in N.Z. Certain cunning colonials have taken lead shot out of cartridges, rubbed off the protective coating, put them in a tube, wire gauze each end and inserted the whole shebang into the fuel line. Informed comment would, I think, be welcome world-wide.



Peter Henman-Laufir's fine M45.



John and Susie Batt visited Henry Robinson in Alaska. He must be the man with the furthest to drive to a Lagonda Pub Meet!

If Anything Can Go Wrong, It Will

Richard Mann Battles with Murphy's First Law

OVER the past few years, I have reported on the Rally adventures of AXD 56. They have seldom been trouble-free, but we have persevered, now here is a brief summary of the problems we have faced and the ways we have overcome them

1995 LeJOG (Lands End to John o'Groats)

The red warning light came on half-way through the first night in Wales, we thought it could be dynamo or regulator failing. We first jammed the regulator shut with a piece of foam rubber and that got us several hundred miles further, but it was the dynamo that was faulty, due to badly fitting brushes. We managed to keep going with jump starts from other rallyists. An AA chap in the depths of Scotland had some bushes from a 1941 US Jeep, which were virtually the same size as the Lagonda's. Once up in J-o-G, we bought a new battery and managed to get home. Then I got the dynamo re-wound and also got the magneto reconditioned, as it was not working well either.

1996 Il Tropheo (A Summer Alpine Rally)

All went well until the temperature climbed to 30°C and that linked to climbing twisty roads, producing petrol vaporisation. After stopping and starting a lot and discussing this with all and sundry, we wrapped the petrol pipes with cotton cloths and wetted them from time to time. This produced an instant cure.

Linked with this, I also decided to clean out the cooling system, which I did with a Holts product and then installed two "pop socks" at the top of the header tank. I have been astonished at how much scale and muck they gather and have noticed a vast improvement in water temperature control. I came to the conclusion that, because of the combination of cast iron and aluminium in the waterways, a filter - in our case the pop socks - is essential.

1997 Il Tropheo

It could have been because of the de-scaling that on this rally I noticed that my water pump had a pinpoint hole, which was leaking a bit too quickly. Having done a running repair externally, using some "J & B Weld", which got me home. On removing the end plate on the pump I saw the extent of the internal corrosion, probably due to electrolysis. I built up the plate with J & B Weld, ground it back to the correct dimensions and, so far, it has worked well.

Monte Carlo Challenge 1998

On the second day of five, I noticed a blowing note was developing and did not think much of it, until the car started to lose power. I had blown a cylinder head gasket between cylinders five and six and, partially, between three and four. However, one and two were OK! My crew and I checked this out with a pressure gauge. I decided that there was not enough time to get a new gasket delivered and installed, so we continued on two cylinders out of six. The car will run like this, because the water transfer is by external ports and does not go through the gasket. As a result, we got to Monte Carlo.

The best one can do is to carry a spare gasket and check on cylinder compression before starting a long run on a Rally. I have now got my own pressure gauge!

The Manns stop for lunch at Montalcino on the Liege - Rome – Liege Rally.

Jo celebrates with champagne when they arrive in Rome.

Liege-Rome-Liege 1998

As the temperature climbed past 30°C on a regular basis, the starter motor began to jam on the ring gear until the pinion on the starter motor cracked in half. I thought it was heat only causing this, but found that there was a broken tooth on the ring gear, with about four other teeth nearby that were damaged. I therefore deduced that the pinion was climbing over the teeth and becoming compressed. The solution, a new pinion had to be made and was done in Rome. At home, I have had a new ring gear shrunk onto my flywheel and my starter problems have been resolved. The company which still makes ring gears to fit the Lagonda is Francis B Willmott of Birmingham.

Quote from "Turn of the Tide"

by Arthur Bryant

Based on the War Diaries of Field Marshal Viscount Allenbrooke

"And while the great ones repair to their dinner,
The secretary stays, growing thinner and thinner,
Racking his brains to record and report
What he thinks they will think that they ought to have thought."

Colin Bugler found this, I wonder if it is how Committee minutes are prepared?

E Townsley, 1920–1999
"Tough Ted Townsley"

TED died on Wednesday May 26th, shortly after returning from the Lagonda Club Northern Tour, which he enjoyed together with some of his oldest and closest friends.

Ted was born in Leeds in 1920 and, after a traditional education and a course in engineering, joined the RAF in 1937, leaving the service in 1946. During the war he served in England, France and Burma.

Ted was best known to Northern Lagonda owners, initially as the proprietor of Barwick Garage, a Mecca for enthusiasts for many, many years. His knowledge of Lagonda cars was immense, having owned 26 examples! He joined the Club in the early fifties.

Ted will be remembered as a big, lovable and highly respected man with a soft Yorkshire accent, but with great determination and purpose. If you organised an event, you knew that Ted would be there in support. Together with Eleanor, they organised many social meetings at their own home and also provided free beer! He also brought the Lagonda Club and Elvington Air Museum together when a new home was needed for the Northern Driving Tests and this meeting will continue as a memorial to him.

On a personal note, the writer very much appreciated the help he received from Ted over the past 38 years. Back in the early sixties it made his job as a 20 year old Northern Secretary much easier!

At the age of 74, Ted started to learn to fly at Sherburn Aero Club, passed all his examinations and flew solo in 1995 at the age of 75. Remarkable!

We will miss him. At his funeral the Club was represented by a large number of Club members and their wives from all over the country. Our sincere, heartfelt condolences go to Eleanor, daughter Maureen and son John.

H.L.S.

Jean Gorjat's V12 at le Bourget at the start of the FIVA Rallye . . . . .

. . . . . and at Magny Cours circuit, See "Letters" on the following page.

Letters

Dear Mr Painter

Last September I participated with my V12 DHC in the FIVA Rallye in France there were four other Lagondas:
No 65, 1932 2l speed model tourer of Robin Colquhoun (GB)
No 113, 1935 4½ litre of Terence Bown (GB)
No 124, 1939 LG6 Rapide DHC of Axel Finis (Germany)
No 126, 1939 LG6 Tourer of Hubert Stephan (Germany),
to keep company with my car, No 125.

We had a good spin around the Formula 1 circuit at Magny Cours and planned to have a Lagonda group picture when exiting the circuit.... but on the enclosed picture there are only four cars as the fifth one did not show up.

All the Lagondas finished the Rallye trouble free by posing down the Champs Elysee in Paris.....
I also enclose a picture of my car, AW 5909, taken at Le Bourget airport at the start of the Rallye.

Sincerely

Jean Gorjat

Jean has spent some time in hospital recently, let us hope he is now fully recovered. ***K.P.P.***

Dear Ken,

We have just taken delivery of GPH 949, an interesting LG6 "Special", probably built on a 1938 Short saloon Chassis (10' 7" wheelbase).

For some years it was displayed in a Pensylvania Auto Museum as a "1935 Lagonda LeMans Racer", which it is clearly not!

A plaque in the cockpit states that it was built by H & B Motors Redhill, Redhill 3642, probably in the '50s or '60s - a Surrey tax disc for GPH 949 found in the car is dated March 1967.

The car's ID is as follows:

1938 Lagonda LG6 "Special"
VIN LG/464/S4
Engine No 12325
UK Registration No GPH 949

The running gear is all standard LG6 with a rakish "tourer" cycle-winged alloy body replacing the original.

Does anyone know anything of this car's ownership or history prior to its USA immigration, or of H & B Motors? In the US it was owned in 1968 by an E.W. Zimmerman of Winding Hill Road, Mechanicsburg, PA.

We plan to use this beast for road work and VSCCA Circuit and Hill Climb events.

Please forward comments to:

Jack Boxstrom,
"5 Doors",
R.R.#2,
Picton,
Ontario,
Canada K0K 2T0
Telephone: (613) 476-9312
Fax (613) 476-9133

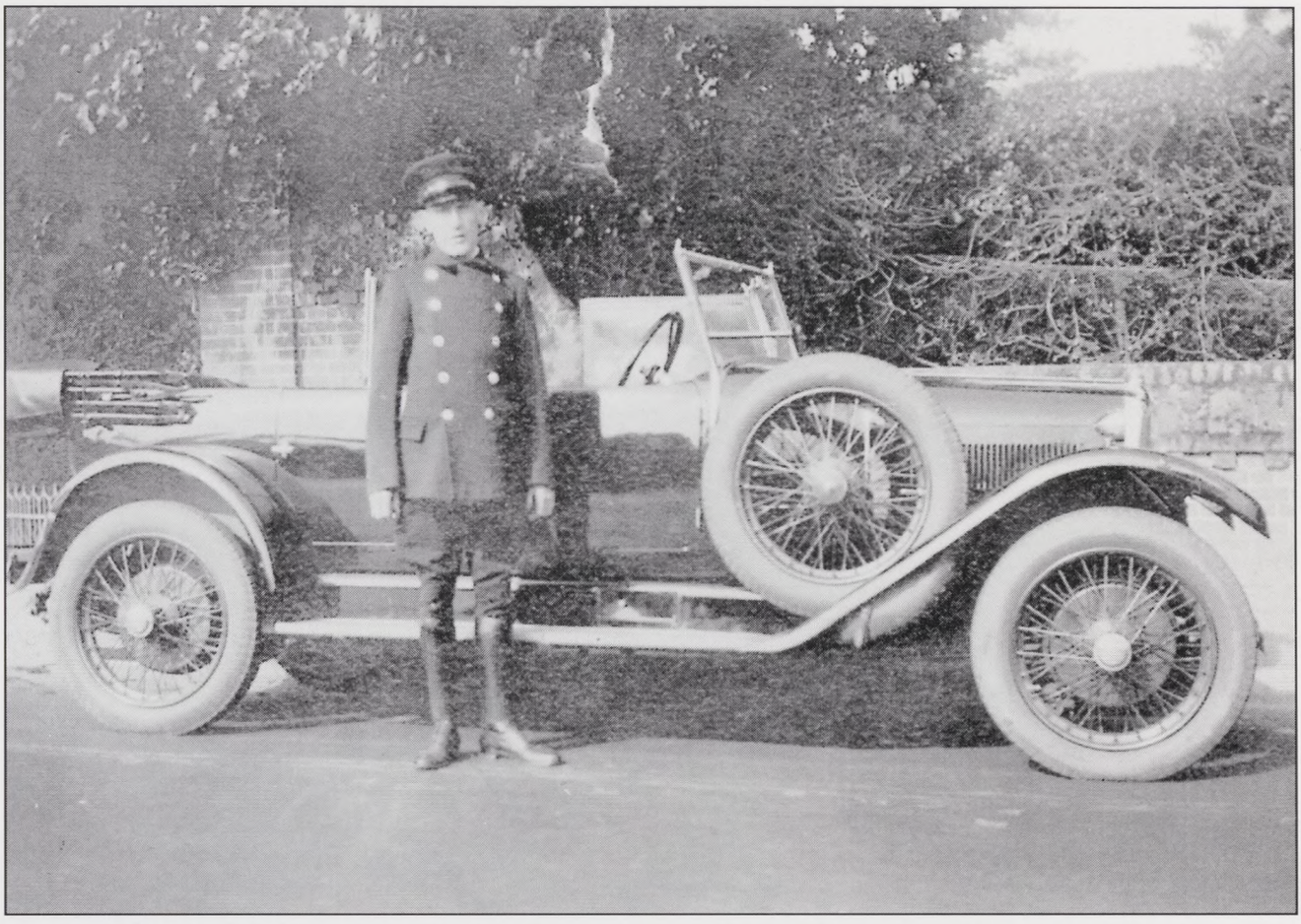
Thank you

Jack Boxstrom (B 20)

Dear Ken,

Johnny Tranter has sent me two copies of the enclosed splendid period photo, so I am passing one on to you for the magazine. The original came from one of Johnny's regular customers, whose uncle is the chauffeur in the picture.

Johnny guessed, correctly, that the car is a Lagonda 14/60. It is fitted with the standard "Semi-sports" tourer



Arthur Baker, late of "Troutbeck" Nr Hayton. He was chauffeur to Lord Haig of whisky fame. Arthur was the uncle of one of Johnny Tranter's "locals". Photo taken 4th July 1929. Johnny identified the car as a 14/60.

LAGONDA DANCE
DORCHESTER HOTEL, LONDON - 1948

Llellan Curry at the Lagonda Dinner Dance in 1948. See Jeff Ody's letter on the following page. (Guests left to right: Jill Elliott, John Blight, Cynthia Yates, Ian Keith, Peggy Bryant and Llellan Curry)

bodywork and looks to be new or nearly new. nobody takes pictures of cars they've had for ages. The semi-sports design sold well up until the introduction of the Speed Model in mid-1927, after which sales of it nose-dived. So it is a fair guess that this picture is 1927 or earlier. It is a shame that from this angle we can't identify the car, but I have asked Johnny to see if his customer knows who his uncle worked for at the time, presumably "up at the big house".

Regards,

Arnold Davey

Dear Ken,

A short time ago, James Woolard and I went down to Kent to meet a Mr Llellan Curry, a delightful old gentleman who had owned KW 2102, James' high chassis 2 litre, in the late forties. In 1951 he sold the car back to Davies Motors, whence it was purchased by James and his father, and the rest is history as they say.

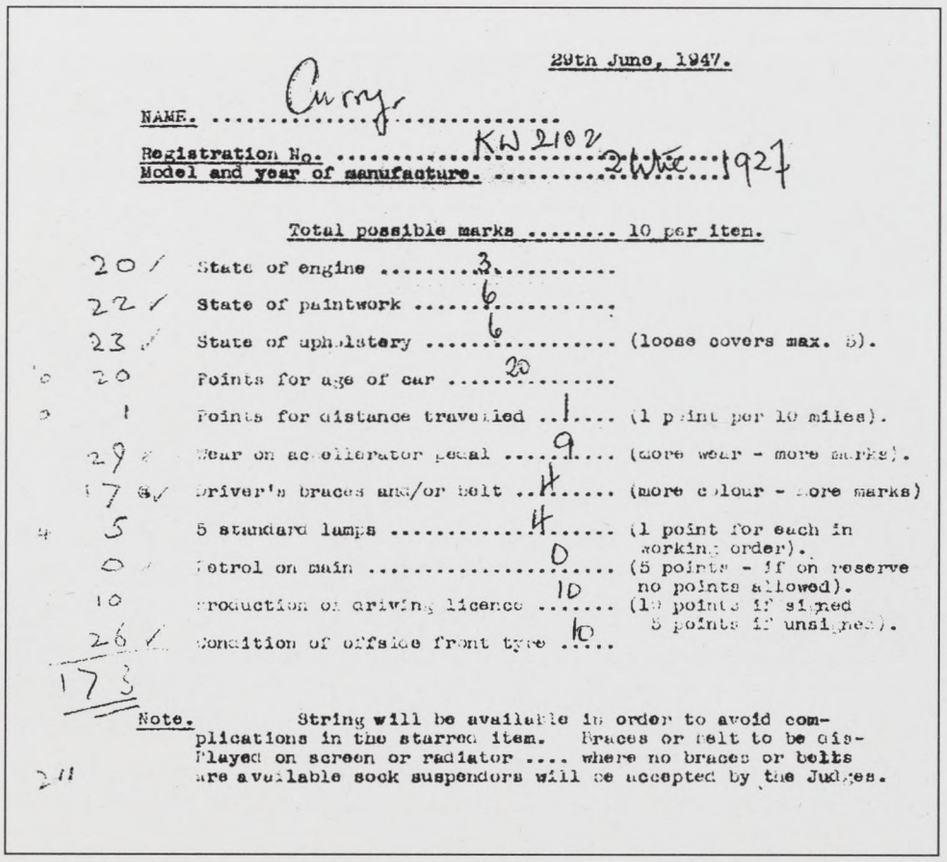
However, during the four years or so that Mr Curry had owned the car, he had clearly been enthusiastic and had not only competed in the 2 Litre Register events that were starting up in that early post-war period, but had also kept the Rally papers, some photos and even a brief clip of 16mm film.

We thought some of these might be of interest to your readers, particularly as they give such an insight into the light-hearted atmosphere of Lagonda motoring at that time. This was especially stimulated by Peter Densham of course, whose sense of humour was legendary and can be seen in the marking system from the June 1947 Rally (attached).

I am not sure that the Lagonda Car Club was quite so frivolous. I also attach a photo taken (at the Dorchester, no less!) in 1948, when Llellan Curry was clearly a guest at the Lagonda Dinner Dance. It was certainly not the style of the 2 Litre Register to use the Dorchester fro its events and you can sense the slight problems of adjustment that were involved when the Register and the Car Club were brought together into our own single Lagonda Club.

With kind regards

Jeff Ody



29th June, 1947.

NAME. Curry

Registration No. KW 2102

Model and year of manufacture. 2 litre 1927

Total possible marks ..... 10 per item.

20	State of engine	3	
22	State of paintwork	6	
23	State of upholstery	6	(loose covers max. 5).
20	Points for age of car	20	
1	Points for distance travelled	1	(1 point per 10 miles).
29	Wear on accelerator pedal	9	(more wear - more marks).
17	Driver's braces and/or belt	4	(more colour - more marks)
5	5 standard lamps	4	(1 point for each in working order).
0	Petrol on main	0	(5 points - if on reserve no points allowed).
10	Production of driving licence	10	(10 points if signed 5 points if unsigned).
26	Condition of offside front tyre	10	
173			

Note. String will be available in order to avoid complications in the starred item. Braces or belt to be displayed on screen or radiator .... where no braces or belts are available sock suspenders will be accepted by the Judges.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– For further details, please contact your Club RAC Secretary

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