

### -DAVID AYRE-



David Ayre in his 1927 H/C Lagonda during the London to Cape Town Rally

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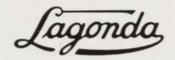
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#### **FRONT COVER**

2 Litre and M45 waiting for return to start at The Castle Hill, hill climb. Picture by: Patience Bundschuh.

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# From the Driving Seat

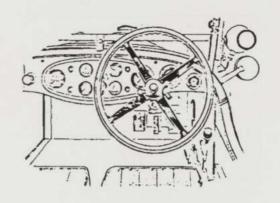
#### by Ken Painter

ONE OF THE MANY BENEFITS of editing "The Lagonda" is in being included on the mailing list for the publications of other clubs. We send our magazine to many organisations and many, in turn, send theirs to us. They can vary from simple photocopied sheets for some smaller clubs, to A4, full colour presentations that set the Lagonda Club a standard to work towards in the longer term.

Two that always interest me are not from one marque clubs at all. The first is the newsletter of the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs. The Lagonda Club is a member of the FHBVC, who work tirelessly on behalf of all old vehicle owners to keep a close eye on planned and current UK and EU legislation and to protect our freedom to use our old vehicles of all ages on the roads.

Their current Newsletter is, as always, a mine of useful information, it includes warnings of the dangers of buying logbooks or V5 documents and/or chassis plates when the vehicle concerned no longer exists. The dangers of fraud are very real and many enthusiasts are unaware that the DVLC already follows up advertisements for these items, so the registration numbers can then be blocked for re-issue, making the documents valueless.

They are also monitoring very carefully the new legislation controlling the manufacture of replacement number plates. To prevent the practice of fraudulent registration of stolen vehicles with genuine numbers that exist on other vehicles, it is now a legal requirement for number plate manufacturers to be registered and for them to record details of



both the vehicle and the purchaser of new plates. Purchasers will have to show the original vehicle documents before they can obtain the new plates. Modern reflective plates are, and will continue to be, available from many sources, but makers of pre-1973 style plates are limited in number, are generally small businesses and often work by mail order. FBHVC believe that many older vehicle owners will be reluctant to send original identity documents through the post and they will be reviewing the effect of this new legislation very carefully. On a personal level, this will be very important to me, as my 2 litre saloon has long since lost all its registration particulars and will have to be re-registered.

Another fascinating read is the magazine of the Brooklands Society, which seems to find an inexhaustible supply of new information on Britains first purpose-built motor racing circuit, which was also the home of aircraft makers and some of the most highly respected engine and chassis tuners in the country. Many of our members are also members of the Society and, even if your Lagonda has no direct links with Brooklands, it is well worth joining. As a club, we have affectionate links with the track and the Society. No-one who attended our wonderful centennial celebrations there will ever forget that fabulous day.

Fascinating though these publications may be, the one that ranks as my number one choice is 'Aston', the journal of the Aston Martin Heritage Trust. My personal connection with Astons is strictly limited to the post-war versions. When I ran Salop Classic Cars we sold a

beautiful DB Mk 3 FHC and more DB 4, 5 and 6 cars than I can remember. My codirector owned a DB3S, several DB4s, a DB4GT, a racing DB4 and a DBV8 – but not all at the same time - he also raced a V8 at le Mans, so I have fond and vivid memories of the marque.

"Aston" makes truly riveting reading and features articles by personalities intimately involved with the cars or the company, or by well known and respected writers, so every contribution is a gem. In the last two editions, they have featured the Aston Martin Atom, speculated on the possibility that the Chater-Lea currently owned by Andrew Getley might be the earliest known Bamford and Martin product, given brief histories of

the Salvadoris and of Tony Brooks, carried accounts of Aston Martin's racing at le Mans and in the legendary Mille Miglia and reprinted articles originally written by Lionel Martin, Humphrey Cook and Mortimer Morris Goodall. This is just a taste of the huge range of topics this beautifully presented journal carries and I should add that Lagondas occasionally get a look-in too and not just the models made after the two companies joined forces! For those who are not members of the Aston Martin Heritage Trust, copies can be purchased, price £12.80, including UK post and packing from the trust at PO Box 207. Wallingford, Oxon OX10 9TU, you will love it!

Last date for copy for the Spring magazine is . . . Saturday 29th March 2003 . . .

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### A Lagonda Reunion

#### David Cochrane has a stroke of luck

A COUPLE OF MONTHS AGO, a colleague at work brought me a cutting from a local Nottingham newspaper which he thought I would find interesting. It was about a 1902 De Dion which was celebrating its centenary, and I did find it interesting, but much more so than he realised. This was because the car belonged to the great-grandson of the man who had bought it new, a certain Daniel Hanbury.

Now as you may know, I am lucky enough to have had a grandmother (Susan de Salis) who had owned a blown 2 litre Lagonda since the war, and passed it on to me when she got too old to look after it. She had told me the story of how it had been bought new in 1931 by Daniel Hanbury and given to his daughter for a 21st birthday present. (Her name is engraved on the reverse of the name plate on the Lagonda's dashboard). This girl had apparently found the Lagonda to be too heavy for her, which is why it was sold. My grandmother's brother had bought the car from a dealer in 1936.

I managed to contact the De Dion's owner, a pleasant chap, and he suggested that I should speak to his mother. I had a nice conversation with her and it turned out that her father was Sir Alec Coryton, who older members might remember as a Patron of the Lagonda Club until 1960. She said that, as a 10-year-old girl, she remembered her aunt driving the Lagonda. This was pretty good, but then she casually mentioned that her aunt would be most interested to hear that her car was still in existence!!

Yes, my Lagonda's first owner is still alive and well (apart from being a bit deaf) and living in Somerset. This of course totally made my day! I wrote to her and enclosed some photos of the car that had been taken when we were in France in 1985, on the Lagonda Club trip to Le Mans to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of our win there. Two days later I had this wonderful letter back:

Dear Mr Cochrane

Thank you so much for your letter – I am so delighted to have news of my beloved old Lagonda. (What an amazing

piece of detective work!)

I have so often wondered what had happened to it. Yes, indeed, I owned it in 1932 and it was my pride and joy for many years in those wonderful carefree days when motoring was a pleasure & travelling abroad was a real adventure. I drove it all over France and Italy – and at least twice a year out to my home in Italy. It was all so safe and one never even thought that one's luggage could be stolen out of an open car! wonderful days those were before the war. My father, Daniel Hanbury loved his old cars, the De Dion - and as I expect you know he owned the original Silver Ghost (1907) Rolls - which is now sometimes to be seen at rallies or special occasions, as he left it to the Rolls-Royce works when he died.

Anyway I kept the dear Lagonda till I married in 1936 – and then we went to live in London. But we honeymooned in the Lagonda – but it no longer was a good car for London, and, after a bit, a family started to look like appearing and that would involve transporting all the clobber a baby needs to have! So we sold the car and had a dull ordinary saloon.

That is all I can tell you about it – except that I loved it dearly and am <u>delighted</u> to know its still going and is in such good hands. If you <u>ever</u> find yourself in the W. Country do let me know and come and see me – I am now



Taken in 1932 in front of the Chateau de Chambourd, original owner driving.



very ancient (92) and a widow and we both gave up driving a few years ago!

I'm returning your photographs as I'm sure you need them for your archives. I can only find a small snapshot of me and a girlfriend in the Lagonda (I don't need it back).

Yours sincerely

A totally delightful letter, as I'm sure you'll agree, and it brings up several interesting points. The first is that my grandmother's story, of how Miss Hanbury (as she then was) found the car unsuitable for her, too heavy, etc, and sold it after about 18 months and bought an Austin Seven instead, is quite wrong. Perhaps this tale was told to her brother by the dealer, and it got passed on. Also interesting is how much she used it, especially for touring abroad, which must have been quite an adventurous thing for a girl in her early 20s to do before the war.

She also sent a little snapshot of the car, taken in front of a chateau on their way back from Italy in 1932, herself and a girlfriend both wearing white linen helmets, with piles of luggage in the I studied this photo with a back. powerful eyeglass, and discovered a wealth of fascinating details about the car, the similarities to how the car looks today being as interesting as the differences. It seems to have the unusual heavier finned brake drums, which I have always wondered about, as other 2 litres don't have them. I think they were fitted to later Lagondas (16/80s?), but could have been fitted to my car by the

Lagonda works to improve the braking performance going over the Alps. As well as the heavier brake drums, the large GB plate on the back could also have been fitted by her.

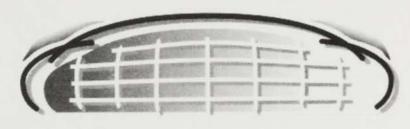
I arranged to take the car to visit her, and on the Saturday before VSCC Prescott, my oldest son and I drove down the M5 motorway, struggling through the holiday traffic. She and her old car had a great reunion; her daughter and son-inlaw were also there, and I took them for runs around the lanes. I also showed them her name engraved on the reverse of the dashboard plague. She couldn't remember many details about the car, not really surprising after 66 years, but enjoyed seeing it and riding in it again. I showed her the log-book dating from 1936, and she said that the stamp issued in June 1936 by the RAC Touring "International Department Permit" was for her honeymoon. I told her it had always been known as "Lily" in our family, but they used to call it "The Gondola". Her family was keen on amateur films and had filmed their wedding, including going away in the Lagonda. Her daughter has had this transferred to video, and offered to show it to us the next time we were passing.

We spent a very pleasant couple of hours there before saying our goodbyes and beginning the trek back up the motorway. We camped overnight at Prescott and had a very convivial evening, listening to the excellent jazz with the aid of a few beers. A most satisfying finish to a splendid day.

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Colin Gurnsey and Nick Sewall enjoying the expanse of a growing field of cars.

Picture, Patience Bundschuh



The court of the Great House at Castle Hill serving as a staging area for the next run up the hill. Howarth Gilmour's M45 tourer ready in the foreground.

Picture Rudy Wood-Muller

### An Elegance of Lagondas

#### Rudy Wood-Muller reports on a gathering of Lagondas at Castle Hill, Ipswich, Massachusetts

IN THE SPRING OF 2002 I sent an emailwith the title "pipe dreams" to Rob Bettigole, one of our most energetic members, who regularly campaigns his 2 litre. I went on to propose that since the membership in the Northeast US had reached a critical mass (in my modest frame of reference, ten) who reside in a reasonable proximity to each other (less than 300 miles) it was time to organise a meeting using a centrally positioned The Castle Hill Concours d'Elegance in Ipswich, Mass. has become a magnet for amateurs and cognoscenti and in collaboration with the Vintage Sports Car Club of America (VSCCA) organises an excellent event. On Saturday the VSCCA has exclusive use of the grounds for their Hill Climb and on Sunday the grounds open for the Concours and an exhibition of Classic Cars. Months of emails and phone calls later, we had the requisite commitments

and were ready to go.

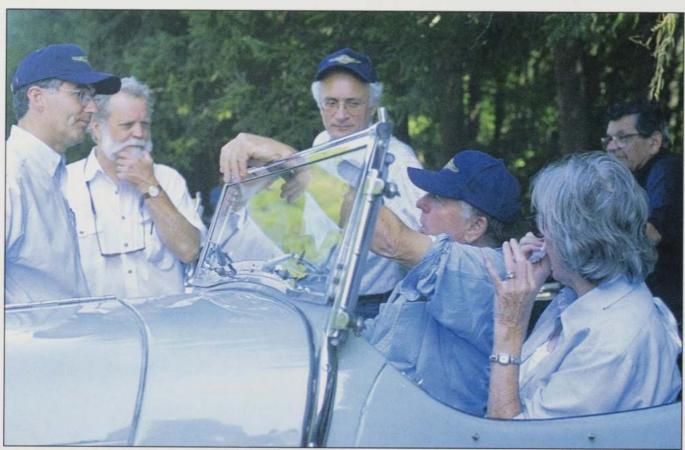
On Wednesday preceding the event, Colin Gurnsey arrived in New York from Vancouver, British Columbia, After spending a night with us in Connecticut and running a critical eye over my DHC, he left for Greenwich. Conn. to drive one of Desmond Fitzgerald's cars, the newly acquired LG 45 Tourer, with Desmond to come in his V-12 DHC. Alas, the oil pressure gauge of the V-12 was still exhibiting an uncomfortable reading and Desmond wisely decided not to take it. insisting that Colin drive alone. A Friday afternoon call advised me that he was coming that night for an early start on Saturday in convoy with my DHC. A lovely sight to behold on a crisp autumn morning! After about an hour of 2500 rpm driving, I realised that my temperature was slowly edging upward and decided to stop and perform the 41/2 litre sock ritual. The engine had not run at a good speed for many months and the old sock contained the usual unsavoury mix of scale, aluminium oxide and water grease. (This episode reinforced my admonition that our cars should be run regularly and for a good distance at the speeds for which they were designed.) The remainder of the 200+ mile trip went smoothly in spite of a few unintended wrong turnings! (I was car so must take the

responsibility.)

Much to my relief, our arrival at the VSCCA sponsored and organised Hill Climb was not greeted with: " Who are you?" and "Where is your membership card?" but with a beaming: "Thank you so much for bringing such wonderful cars!" If ever there was a reason for driving Lagondas.... The rest of our group was already at the Great House enjoying an al fresco lunch break before the afternoon runs up the hill. I was promptly informed of the first candidate for the "Good Samaritan" award. Nick and Jean Sewall arrived from Maine without problems, but could not restart. Joe de Falco, whose 16/80 is still waiting to be commissioned, diagnosed the problem as a faulty magneto condenser and promptly set out to obtain one. In the Lagondas made afternoon. "Lucy", again: appearance Bettigole's 2 litre and the M45 of Howarth Gilmore, formerly owned by member Dan Ghoshe, who this time brought a veteran monster, a 1913 Fiat of 11 litres. Very rewarding to watch was EPE 97, the 1937 LG 45 Team Car of Richard Lisman. She was driven with verve by new member, but seasoned driver, Clive Doyle. To watch a long wheelbase car negotiate the demanding course in capable hands, reminded me of



Barbara Bettigole, Jean Sewall, Colin Gurnsey, Joe d'Falco. Rob Bettigole & Werner Bundschuh Picture, Patience Bundschuh



Rob Bettigole, Werner Bundschuh, Joe d'Falco listening to Nick & Jean Sewall discussing ignition problems of the previous day. RWM listening intently. Picture, Patience Bundschuh

my own lack of skill in tackling Prescott Hill in a Lagonda of similar size some years ago. We should all take pride that of the 22 cars competing, three were Lagondas! The course at Castle Hill is the winding driveway of the Estate, with daunting stone walls and rather precipitous drops on one side. No wonder the VSCCA takes driver and

spectator safety seriously.

After an exciting afternoon we regrouped at the George Fuller House, a tidy B&B in Essex, Mass. where most of us were staving during the weekend. A very brief rest and clean-up (of the cars of course) before departing for an early dinner in nearby South Hamilton. Thanks to the navigating skills of Joe de Falco who led EPE 97, Rob and Barbara Bettigole's 2 litre and Colin Gurnsey in the LG45 Tourer through the night to the Black Cow Restaurant where we enjoyed an excellent meal and good camaraderie, not experienced in Lagonda circles in America in recent times. The Club Committee very generously provided mementoes of the occasion, evidence of which was very visible the next day on the field, Lagonda hats usually not seen here.

On the return trip Isabel Ferguson had the dubious pleasure of a ride as passenger in EPE 97, an experience which I am sure she will long remember. She and Joe are almost finished with the restoration of a fine 2.6 DB DHC which provides for more creature comforts. At 8 am on a brilliant September Sunday, eight Lagondas assembled at the George Fuller House in nearby Essex, Mass. in order to be able to arrive in parade order on the field at Castle Hill. The lead car took a wrong turn and it took some spirited driving to reassemble the convoy. We were early on the field and gained a good position before hundreds of very handsome cars began arriving to fill three rows on a 100 foot wide swath of mile long lawn running from the Great House to the sea. Howarth Gilmore, though a participant in the Hill climb was unfortunately not present. We did have the pleasure of welcoming Tom Bibb who joined the Club recently and brought his blown Rapier in spite of its ongoing problems. A gentleman who would not be daunted. Once on the field, we were the only marque of quality which was represented as a group, giving the spectators a capsule lesson about Lagondas. Almost all models were represented and proved to be a major attraction. The enthusiasm of the attendees to the Event rivalled that at the Concours at Pebble Beach. Additionally, hundreds of pre 1973 vehicles were assembled to give the visitors the opportunity to see a multitude of fine cars in ideal conditions.

The Castle Hill Concours now in its 8th year is considered one of the premier automotive expositions in the US and regularly fields a fine selection of interesting high quality marques. The winner of the Concours this year was an Alfa 2.9 8C as well as class wins for a most interesting 1925 Voisin and a Rolls PI with an unbelievably opulent interior. The special marque for this year was the Cadillac. I believe a number of Lagondas would be contenders for top honours and perhaps one year we can arrange for Lagondas to be chosen as a special marque. That way we can present a number of fine cars and be eligible for the Concours. The interesting aspect of Castle Hill is the VSSCA presence which assures that the sporting heritage of the cars is not overshadowed by the Concours aspect. By mid afternoon, our group was beginning to disperse to start their homeward journeys. Rob Bettigole and Werner Bundschuh were still together when Rob's gearbox became unruly and necessitated emergency attention. There is no substitute for know-how and loval support.

\* Seldom does a humble wordsmith have the opportunity to add to the lexicon of the Language. To properly title this extraordinary (for America) gathering of Lagondas, I searched for a proper term; "Pride of Lagondas" sounded good, but my cats categorically rejected that on the grounds that the Lagonda badge depicted a sworn enemy



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of felines. My argument that Lagondas are cousins to Jaguars (through adoption) did not convince them. A colleague introduced me to a fascinating volume on the subject by James Lipton titled: "An Exultation of Larks" which gave no clues, except to state that the ancient art of "venery" may be practised by anyone and of course critiqued by all.



Joe de Falco, Clive Doyle and Werner Bundschuh examining his 21 Continental, which only recently was brought back to serviceable condition.

Picture, Patience Bundschuh

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### Some Lagondas I Have Owned

#### Herb Schofield reflects on his experiences with a variety of Lagonda cars

I WAS CONCEIVED ON THE BACK SEAT of a 2 litre Lagonda, presumably with hood, sidescreens and other things erected. I can therefore justly claim that my first journey was, in fact, in a Lagonda!

Dad was a Lagonda enthusiast way back in the mid-thirties, when he purchased his first 2 litre, or rather 14/60 tourer in 1934 (TU 7350). There followed two or three other 2 litres before the war.

He joined the Royal Navy in 1939, was sunk in the Mediterranean in 1942 whilst on convoy duties and spent the following three years on Battleships 'Warspite' and 'Valiant'. He then came home and, picking up where he left off, purchased another 2 litre tourer, then another and finally the last one in about 1954, which he obtained from Thompson-Doxey Ltd of Southport, specialists in Lagondas and Aston-Martins.

Dad sent this car up to Preston to have a Shorrocks blower fitted. In truth, this 2 litre was incredibly vulgar, having been built to the order of Jack Holland of Holland's Toffees Ltd. It had 2 seat coupé coachwork, fold-flat windscreen, maroon coachwork, cream upholstery and, you are not going to believe this, chromeplated cycle-type wings! Under-standably, my mother refused to be driven in this supreme example of bad taste, so it had to go, and so it did, to be replaced with a pink Vauxhall Velox!

I purchased my first Lagonda, a blown 2 litre (GO 4445) in 1957. The car survives and is now in Austria. It gave me two or three years of trouble-free motoring on a daily basis. The Zoller blower was worn out, so the performance was, in fact, worse than a standard 2 litre, but it looked the part. Unfortunately I never managed to persuade any young ladies into the back to

re-enact my father's historic performance of some years previously, mainly because the car had no hood and I had rather a lot of pimples! I joined the Lagonda Club in 1958 and competed in my first Club event in 1959. Happy days!

event in 1959, Happy days!

In 1960, I saw, in a car showroom near Accrington, Lancashire, on display and not for sale, a 1938 Lagonda Rapide in perfect original condition, 28,000 miles from new. This was the most beautiful car I had ever seen. Dark green with fawn mohair hood, chromed brake drums and front axle and highly polished engine, all executed to the express wishes of the original owner. The image of this car would not go away, not helped by seeing the feature film "Chase a Crooked Shadow", starring Richard Todd and James Crocker's Rapide. Anyway, to cut a long story short, including lots of letters, an interview with the owner and with help from Dad, we parted with £750 and I became the proud owner of GPD 939. It was wonderful, not only did it look the part, but it was also fast and I was a very lucky chap. Here was I, aged 21, with a Lagonda Rapide! The car was used on a regular basis and I started doing a bit of competition work. Driving Tests, Night Navigation Rallies and I even raced her once at Oulton Park. However, it became obvious that this wasn't, perhaps, the best way of keeping my beautiful original car in perfect condition; so, inevitably, my thoughts turned towards building something purely for competition use and, when Brian Dearden-Briggs sold me a derelict, engine-less, LG45 saloon (BGB 988) for £15 I was on my way.

Dearden's home was a Mecca for Lag enthusiasts in those days. We used to gather there on Tuesday evenings, go up to the pub, talk about cars and, on our



Herb's father's first Lagonda.



A young Herb, with his supercharged 2 litre.

return, as lads do, we urinated into the petrol tank of the said car for a bit of a laugh, not realising of course at the time that, eventually, I would have the task of

releasing this noxious fluid!

I had my chassis, I knew what I wanted as far as coachwork design was concerned, but still had no engine. To cut another long story short, about this time, a young university student called David Hine arrived on the scene. He said he would give me an engine and, what is more, help me fit it. On the strength of this, we shook hands and formed a friendship and partnership became the origins of what eventually would become known as the "Northern Lagonda Factory", which was especially active in the sixties, seventies and eighties and is a story for another time, but back to the main theme.

I thought it would be rather suitable for me to have a Lagonda saloon for daily use and subsequently bought a rather nice long V12 saloon, rather like the short saloon, but a bit longer, if you see what I mean. The car had previously been owned by a well-known Northern comedian called Frank Randall. He was also a bit of a sex maniac, judging by the contents of the rear door pockets! Unfortunately, 12 mpg meant that I couldn't really afford to run it, so JPG 654 was quickly passed on to Tom Pinguey, who did a bit of dealing with Lagondas in those days. What I had particularly liked about the V12 was the coachwork design and the ride qualities, so when I saw an LG6 short chassis sports saloon (CKY 520) advertised in Chalfont St. Giles I was on to it like a shot. I bought the car, but in truth it was a bit of a dog, having had a hard life. It had done the 1950 Monte Carlo Rally and some rally or other in North Africa, but it did have a good engine. This LG6 was different from standard LG6 saloons inasmuch as it had spats over the rear wheels (as on Rapide Coupés), spare wheels in both wing casings and inbuilt jacking pump operating from under the front passenger seat. The car is illustrated, bottom page 268, in the Seaton book.

I ran the car through the terrible cold winter of 1963 and when the thaw came, the rear wings started dropping off and it was time to say goodbye. I sold it to Ted Townsley, who immediately yanked the engine out, installed a diesel unit and put the LG6 engine in a special he was building, which is now owned by Peter Weir.

Cars seemed to come and go quickly in the mid sixties. Around this time I went with Denis Roberts to buy an M45 tourer in Nottingham. From memory we certainly came back with the car, although I am not quite sure who paid for it. I ran it for a while, but don't remember anything about it at all. Also at about this time, I jointly purchased, with David Hine and/or Alan Brown, a couple of LG45 saloons and I don't remember much about them either! Then there was an LG45 drophead, lovely to look at, but rather worn out. This car certainly still exists (WG 4835) and has been under restoration in Scotland for the past 35 vears!

The next car to arrive on the scene was another LG6 sports saloon (DAK 311), but in contrast to the last LG6 this really was a superb car, totally original. she is illustrated on page 267 of the Seaton book. I always thought the LG6 sports saloon the most beautiful of prewar saloons. Stand one by the side of any equivalent contemporary big Alvis or Bentley and you will see what I mean. The Alvis might be a bit quicker and the Bentley quieter, but the LG6 had style and also rode much better than the other two.

Most reluctantly, I eventually sold the car to David Vernon, because on my shopping list was an LG6 drophead, but before I could locate one I bought an LG45 tourer (EGW 920). I only had it for a short time, because Captain Barker had expressed an interest in the car. At that very moment, Dr. Noel Gale decided to sell his LG6 drophead, so Barker and I concocted a swap-over deal. He would purchase the LG6 on my behalf and then we would simply swap cars, he getting the LG45 and me the LG6, geddit?



The LG45 Rapide, Mr Schofield senior poses next to it.



The V12 Rapide

We motored down to Oxford to collect the LG6 (GPD 117), which was said to be a prototype of the model. It had louvred bonnet sides, no raised mouldings to the side of the body or over the boot and a slightly different hood line. The whole car was in very good condition and I think it had been a Lagonda Club concours winner at some time. Trouble was, the car was painted 'wedding white', so I repainted her dark red and ran her for some years with great reliability and enjoyment. The car was recently owned by Terry Tratalos in Cheshire.

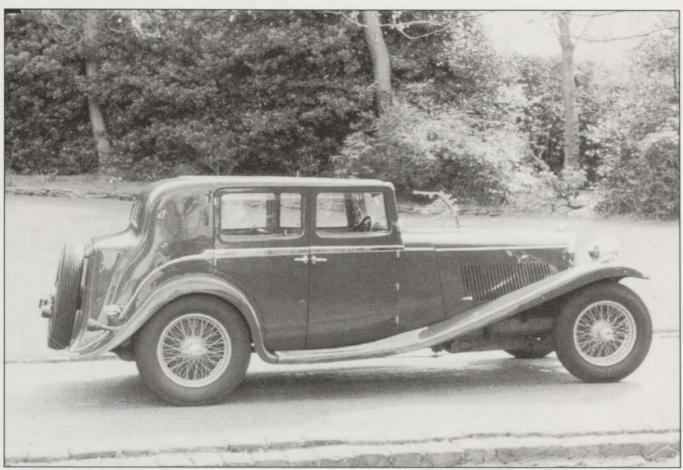
We have now progressed to the early seventies. I was going out with Robbie Hewitt, who was a handsome woman in those days, and she gave me the tip-off about a V12 Rapide (FMA 310) that was coming up in a Christies auction. By various means, we got hold of the name of the vendor and I persuaded him to withdraw it, by offering him his reserve and penalty commission if the car was in the condition described. It was, and I bought her home. I think that, in many ways, the V12 Rapide coupé is the most beautiful and refined car that the company manufactured

I was now the proud owner of the two most glamorous cars that Lagonda had made. The V12 was a 1938 model. which had its engine changed by the company in 1946 for a sanction 2 unit. At the same time the original shock absorbers were exchanged for telescopics, which transforms the handling of these cars. If you stir the gearbox it will equal, or even better, the acceleration of the LG45R. It also has a higher top speed. As far as I know, no road test was ever carried out on the V12R, so you will have to take my word for it! Anyway, this isn't really the point, the car was so guiet. refined and relaxing to drive and a big advance on anything before. This, in the end, was the problem for me, it was just too much like a modern car and I was a vintage enthusiast, so, after eight years of refined motoring, I sold her through Coys of Kensington.

It's funny how your tastes change.

My favourite Lagondas used to be the late thirties models, now I prefer the earlier cars. I originally thought the M45 saloon was nothing more than a long bonnet with a shed on the end. Now I think of it as a handsome greyhound with one of the best wing lines ever. I bought mine (AEL 30) from Peter Towers in 1982, restored the car and fitted a heater - big mistake - as enough heat comes back into the car from the engine to warm a small factory! The car was fast. almost as fast as the tourer version, but refined it most certainly was not, at least, not compared with the later models, but it was fun and friendly and it had character. Toward the end of the eighties I purchased from Covs, on the very day I swear that the market for vintage and classic cars peaked, a 1930 3 litre Special Six tourer. The day after, it was worth only half of what I had paid, or so it seemed at the time! Never mind, I would still buy the car again. As I say, it was a 1930 car (PL 4051) and the actual Autocar road test car. There are photographs of it new in Holthusen's book. The car still retained its original unchromed German silver radiator, elaborate stoneguard, Bosch horns, 'bullseye' P100s, signpost lamp, the lot. It certainly looked the part. Under the bonnet was this testament to heavy British engineering, in fact I swear it is larger than the Meadows 4½ litre. It was certainly of much higher quality, it didn't ooze oil everywhere, it was manufactured by Lagondas themselves and it didn't seem to produce that much power! The steering is a delight and, together with the 2 litre, much superior, in my opinion, to the 41/2 litre. The handling, too, is superb, with that true vintage feel. The gearbox, let's admit it, is a bit of a shocker, with this huge gap between second and third speeds. In spite of all this, all in all, the 3 litre is a wonderful car, which I still have. Recently a John Ryder camshaft and other mods have transformed this fine machine.

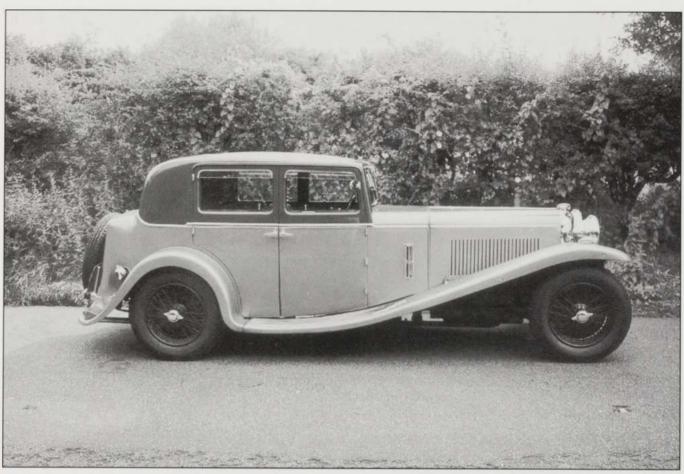
Now we are getting near the end of the story. Sad events in my life decided me to sell a couple of cars, including the



"A handsome greyhound", Herb's M45 saloon.



The 3 litre Special Six tourer



"The Wendy Ann", Herb's lovely 3 litre saloon.



Wendy Ann herself. The late and sadly missed Ann Shoosmith, with her Bentley.

M45 saloon and the LG45 Rapide, so that I could spend more time with my late wife Joan. I immediately regretted selling the M45, but, curiously enough, not the Rapide. It was so original, even down to the carpets and the interior trim. This meant that it got little use in recent times, so, after 33 years it was time to say goodbye. It had seen me change from a weedy teenager into a fat middle-aged rocker!

Eventually, my life returned to some form of normality and I started looking for another good M45 or 3 litre saloon. I advertised, I followed-up leads, I did all sorts of things, nobody wanted to sell me a saloon. Eventually, thank to Jon Oppenheimer, I did find what I was looking for and, one spring morning in 2000, my partner Ann Shoosmith ran me down to Godalming to inspect a 1933 pillarless 3 litre sports saloon. When we saw it, we just knew we had to have it and I made an immediate settlement. It was a one-family ownership car from new, having

passed from father to son. It came with original handbook, various letters from the Lagonda company and the original catalogue from which the model was chosen, amazing.

Vintage car enthusiasts will know that Ann spent countless years driving, sprinting and racing open vintage Bentleys, in all sorts of weather and here was old car comfort for her at last. We made plans to attend all sorts of events, the Isle of Man Rally, down to deepest Wales, or just a run out in the rain to a favourite pub. Sadly, this was not to be and, for the second time in eight years, I lost someone who I loved dearly. She was the most organised and determined girl I have ever known, but even she could not overcome the health problems that faced her. But, by God, she tried. In her memory, I now call the car 'The Wendy Ann', after her and the wonderful times we had together. So, on a very sad note, this just about brings my story to an end – so far.

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"You're not just a Number with us" "an oasis in a complicated world"

### **Cecil Gordon Vokes**

#### Michael Drakeford tells the story behind Lagonda's filters

WE ARE ON THIS EARTH for but a short while. How many of us will leave a mark?

Within the world of Lagondas there will indeed be a worthy number, some of whom I have been, or will be, proud to have known. One person I did not meet is Cecil Vokes, of Vokes filter fame. Whilst all the books on the marque refer to Mr C.G.Vokes as Cecil Vokes he preferred the Christian name of Gordon by which he was known to his family and friends. His colleagues at work referred to him as CG and it is by these initials I shall refer to him in his article.

It is because of his son, G.H. Vokes, or 'Tony' Vokes that I became informed about the marque some 10 years ago. I used to, and indeed still do, collect for Christian Aid. Having been a long time fan of the older car and having restored a number, I always had a hankering for an Alvis Speed 25 Tourer. As I collected my funds for the charity I noticed in this particular neighbour's carport, a car under a tarpaulin, which sported two rather large headlights. On the third year of collecting I had the courage to enquire about this vehicle, possibly an Alvis. It turned out to be a Lagonda belonging to Tony Vokes, the son of C.G. who was a founding member of the first Lagonda Club. By coincidence, Tony's first car was an Alvis 12/60!

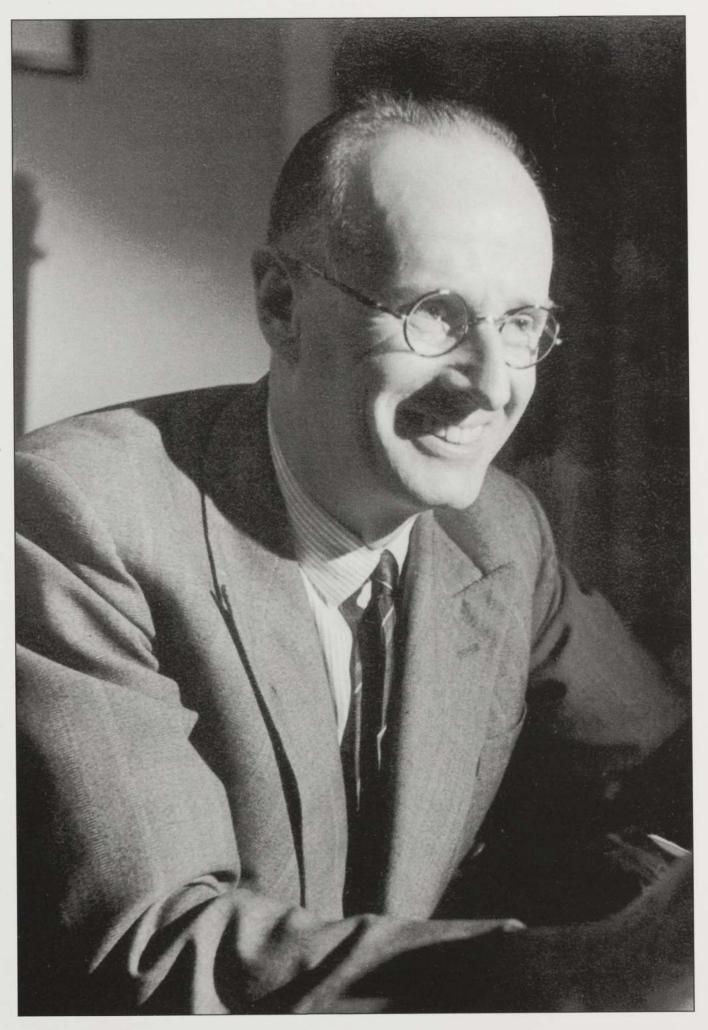
This car under the tarpaulin was a 3 ½ litre tourer, registration number WS 2774. My attempts to buy it were unsuccessful. Eventually it was sold at auction and the current owner is thankfully a club member. Tony Vokes drove this car when owned by his father in 1941 and then regularly until 1963 when it succumbed to the ravages of time. Between then and 2000 when it

was sold, it became the inevitable elongated restoration project with only the odd appearance on the road up to 1977. When it was his daily transport Tony used it along side a post war DB Lagonda. Whilst it was laid up he had many tempting offers of around £250-£500, for then it was considered 'just an old car'. During his ownership he removed the exhibition filters from the late 1930's and replaced them with then modern standard production filters, but still Vokes types.

Tony, now in his early eighties, is still going strong and is a mine of information. Anyone with a Vokes car would do well to fax him on 01483 573509. He is slightly deaf and finds a fax easier to handle.

C.G. was one of those people who one could find it easy to envy. He was a hard worker who developed interests that served as enjoyment as well as a job. His filtration systems became legendary. Ask anyone who has been an engineer involved with the military, marine or vintage vehicle, and they will know the name. When the infamous 50 destroyers were sent to Great Britain under the lend-lease agreement in the second world war, it was Vokes filters that kept them going. Our tanks in the deserts of Africa were fitted with the Vokes filters that extended engine life far beyond those of the Axis forces. A differential factor of 10 to 1 has been quoted in some cases. Think of the logistical advantage of that!

Within the first Lagonda Club, C.G. was a driving force. He was a very keen supporter of Lagonda, having up to six examples of the marque at any one time. Indeed the Vokes Company owned many more. His first Lagonda was a 1928 semi



sport 14/60, PK 1001 shown in the photograph with a very small Tony Vokes perched on the rear seat. C.G. was a strong advocate of the Lagonda fetes held at Brooklands which were stopped by BARC, the British Automobile Racing Club, for no apparent reason. In order to compensate for the loss of these events. which had provided excellent publicity for Lagonda, he suggested to General Metcalfe in late 1932, at that time Chairman of Lagonda Limited that a Lagonda owners club should be set up, with the support of the Lagonda factory. C.G. advertised the proposal in Motor Sport and wrote to about a hundred owners who were on the factory service department lists.

The first club meeting was held at the Vokes filter works then in Putney and General Metcalfe was elected President with C.G.Vokes as Secretary and Treasurer. Mike Couper became Trials Secretary and Bill Oates Chairman of the committee. Members of the Committee comprised C.C.L.Brown, E.d'C.Carr, A.D.Jaffe, and P.J.Field Richards. The annual subscription was one guinea. The first event was held at Hanworth Air Park and was a cross between a rally and an air display, concluding with a dance. C.G. remained very involved with the club until it was disbanded just prior to

the war.

Whilst he was undoubtedly involved with the launch of the Rapier, it is worth commenting that the photographs taken at the Great Fosters event in 1934 did not represent C.G.Vokes as described. Tony Vokes has confirmed this but could not identify the individual so named. A photograph of C.G. appears with this article together with a previously unrecorded photograph of a number of the Lagondas forming part of the Vokes stable of cars pre-war. The person sitting in the 3 litre UW 6690, currently owned by Alan Hancock is believed to be A.A.Smith, General Manager at Vokes engineering and one who (together with C.G.) ran the car for many years before the war. Incidentally she was at that time

known to all and sundry as 'the Old Grey Mare' (as per Widecome Fayre).

It is worthy of note that C.G. Vokes used his fleet of cars as mobile test beds for his filters, much to the annovance of his sales force who drove them around the UK, and considered them 'old cars'. The photographs of the engine bay of UW 6690 clearly show the extent of the filters. These were taken around the time that an article in The Autocar dated 3 February 1939 considered the filters produced by Vokes for car engines. The remarkable claim was made in the article that these filters fitted to an engine will ensure that it NEVER wears! Copies of the article are available from the author on request.

A further photograph of UW 6690 with this article was taken at Brooklands and is inscribed on the reverse with a very informative note from C.G. to his former wife and son. This is also reproduced. The caption on the back

reads:

"I thought you would like to have this. I was rather fortunate, just after this was taken I was doing 94 m.p.h. when one of the main rear springs broke, the chassis broke and automatically locked the brakes on all four wheels. I skidded about ¼ mile, turned round three times, nearly went over the top of the banking and then slid down on the inside of the track, finally landing up right across it with everything locked solid and the car completely immovable. However, we were towed off and I am glad to say we were none the worse.

I recently did 100 miles an hour in this old car coming across salisbury Plain.

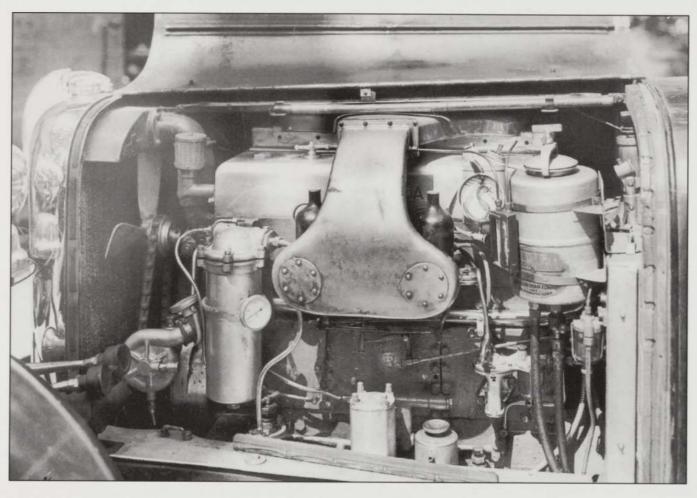
I forgot to tell you that I was recently elected a full member of the American Society of Automobile Engineers and can now add M.S.A.E. I am very gratified about this as it was a direct result of my trip to America last year and the impression one or two of the big Engineers gained of my knowledge after spending several hours with them, as I had been elected by virtue of my English



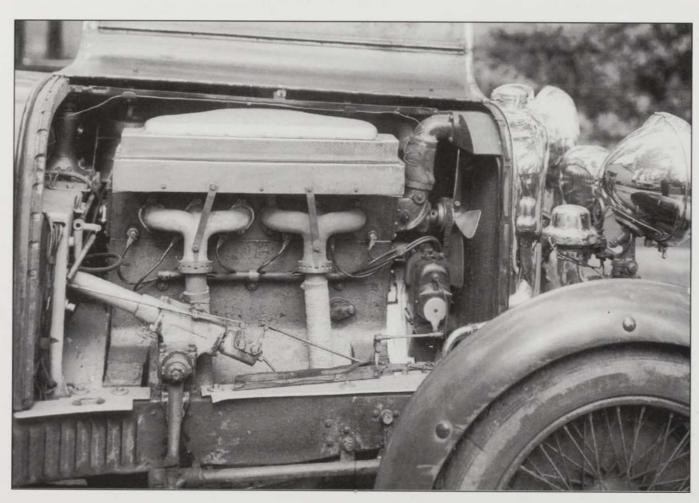
Vokes' semi-sports 14/60, with a very young Tony Vokes perched on the rear seat. Note the experimental American bumper (fender).



Part of the Vokes' stable of Lagondas at his Alton farmhouse. There is a similar picture on Page 140 of the Seaton book, but this shot has  $A\ A\ S$ mith in the driving seat.



UW 6690, showing its generous supply of filters in 1938/9.



Degrees and recommendations of people like Rolls Royce etc., over here, pleased my American friends. All love Gordon."

Could it really do 100 mph on the

flat?

Gordon Vokes had a engineering career. He was one of the original importers of the automatic windscreen wiper, believed to be the Trico-Folberth, into the United Kingdom from the United States and pioneered many other accessories such as a flexible bumper which allowed for accidents at up to 5 mph to go unnoticed (almost). This is clearly visible on the photograph of PK1001. C.G. was also an early importer of the car wireless. At one time he sued a certain Joseph Lucas over the patent rights for the electric windscreen wiper. As an importer of the manifold C.G. claimed suction wiper infringement of the general principal of wiper screens. He personally fitted many suction wipers by hand in order to make a sale, and had to bear the cost if he broke the windscreen in the process. He was not successful in the courts and thankfully both the electric and the suction wipers were deemed lawful.

He had begun his engineering career with John I Thornycroft as an apprentice earning 6/- a week (30p). This rose during the five year apprenticeship to 14/- and when he had finished his training he had the princely sum of 30/- a week in 1913.

After the Great War he set up his own business with an overdraft of £100 secured by a guarantee from his father, Alderman Frederick Michael Vokes, High Sheriff of Hampshire. Initially he could only draw £1 a week, less than some of his employees. C.G. had a great admiration for the developing car industry in the United States and his numerous visits there resulted in some lucrative import deals as well as numerous ideas for filtration. His business grew over the years culminating in a 2,000 workforce in factories in Putney, Alton and later in the early years

of the war, Henley Park, at Normandy, near Guildford, Surrey - after Putney had been bombed.

Gordon Vokes' interest in filters began in 1926, having seen a great need for them in all types of machinery. Some of his creations were tested by the War Office in 1929 and were in fact the only ones to pass the Government tests. In those early days he was also involved with oil production equipment and secured a very large contract for the filtration equipment in the enormous pumping houses in the Iraq Petroleum Company's first oil pipeline, which was 1,200 miles long stretching from Kirkuck to the Mediterranean. The contract was the financial foundation to the Vokes business and shortly after this Vokes Limited was incorporated.

It will be for his work during World War ll that he will be best remembered.

In 1943 Vokes Limited was called in to assist with the ageing 50 lend-lease destroyers from the United States. When they arrived their filtration systems were shot, replacements were unobtainable, and within days Vokes had designed, manufactured and delivered replacements, which were fitted to all the vessels.

By far the major supply of filters went towards aircraft. Prior to the second world war it was deemed unnecessary for filters to be fitted to aircraft. However when aircraft began to operate far afield, in areas of a less clement climate such as the deserts in North Africa, it was discovered that engines and ancillary machinery became subject to excessive wear resulting in a greatly reduced performance and lifespan of the equipment.

Perhaps, for an example, it is best to use C.G.Vokes' own words which he spoke at a presentation to celebrate his service to the company and also his contribution to the Country's War effort at an Extraordinary General Meeting held at the White Lion Hotel in Guildford, on 10th December 1946:

" You will remember we lost Tobruk



UW 6690 at speed on the Brooklands track, driven by C. G. Vokes.

I thought you would like to have this. I was rather fortunate, just after this was taken I was doing 94 m.p.h. when one of the main rear springs boke, the chassis broke and automatically locked the brakes of all four wheels, I skidded about 4 mile, turned round three times, nearly went over the top of the banking and then slid down to the inside of the track, finally landing up right across it, with everything solid and the car completely immovable. However, we were towed off and I am glad to say we were none the worse.

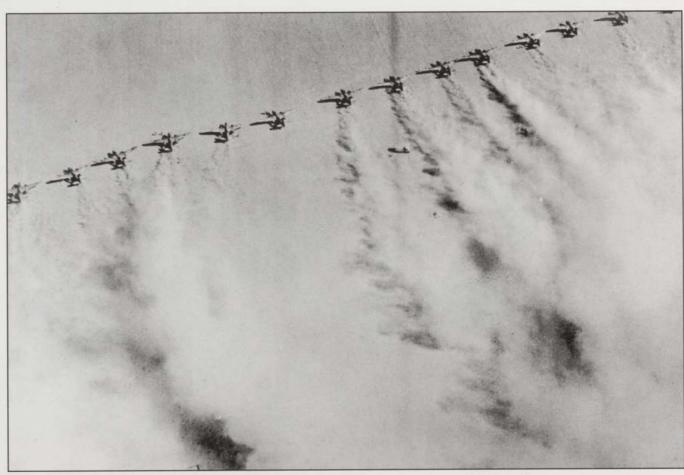
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I forgot to tell you that I was recently elected a full member of the American Society of Automobile Engineers and can now add M.S.A.E. I am very gratified about this as it was a direct result of my trip to America last year, and the impression one or two of the big Engineers gained of my knowledge after spending several hours with them, as I had been elected by virtue of my English Degrees and recommendations of people like Rolls Royce etc., over here, pleased my American friends.

A reproduction of the wording on the back of the picture above, note that it is signed Gordon.



Australians in Egypt in Bren Gun Carriers fitted with Vokes filters.



. . . and Boston Bombers taking off in formation. The need for efficient filters is obvious!

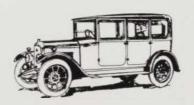
very suddenly. You will probably learn the truth one day; we believe that we have a good idea of the truth now. It is an undisputed fact that our tanks were fitted with our filters. The engines were doing 2,000 miles but the steering gear had been failing within a comparatively short time. We had even put filters in to give the crews fresh air and so far as we knew everything was O.K. but a good many tanks failed very suddenly. It was eventually found that, unknown to us, there was a small engine - driven compressor which operated the steering gear which. through not adequately filtered was worn out after a few hours use. After Tobruk had fallen it was decided that thousands of tons of British Equipment at

Tobruk had got to be blown to pieces before the enemy had a chance to use it. The first we heard of it was on a Tuesday morning when a number of our friends came down here from one of the ministries and told us the story. They said that the bombers we had out there were not heavy enough and we had got to send four-engined bombers, which had to leave England on the Saturday, otherwise it would be too late. To design, test, get the material and provide something new for aircraft, I think my friends would agree that six months would be fast going, but we worked all day Tuesday and designed what we wanted. It was taken down to Salisbury Plain and flown in a machine on Wednesday and the pilot reported that it was perfectly satisfactory.. We worked day and night on sandwiches and 256 air cleaners left the works on Saturday night. With all respect, the contract for the job arrived months later."

If only filters had been fully utilised earlier, the North Africa campaign could have been shortened. Nevertheless the filters provided by Vokes doubtlessly helped towards the first major Allied victory of the war.

Sadly it was the type of pressure outlined above that took such a toll on the health of C.G.. Such were the needs of war. His role at the factory decreased substantially after the war with much time off due to ill health caused by overwork. He relinquished the post of Managing Director initially H.F.Osborne, who worked with Aston Martin prior to joining Vokes. C.G. remained on the Board and eventually died in 1961 at the age of 69. Tony Vokes held a series of senior engineering positions at Henley Park from 1948 to 1963, being largely involved with developing the company's business into new fields. The business was eventually bought by Thomas Tilling, who in turn came under the BTR banner under the direction of Owen Green who clearly knew a good thing when he saw one. The business has moved on since the days of C.G., now producing a wide variety of products including filters.

Whilst his interest in the Lagonda Marque remained with him after the war, he no longer had the early energy, enthusiasm and drive that resulted in the creation of the first Lagonda Club. Nevertheless the name of Vokes lives on, and the last formal engagement by the Vokes family was when Tony Vokes was invited back to open the Fiftieth Anniversary Fete celebrating the Vokes move to Henley Park on 8th June 1991.... But that is another story.



### The Suffolk Dinner

Saturday 22 March 2003, 6.45pm for 7.15pm

The White Lion Hotel

Market Cross Place, Aldeburgh

Baked Carrot, Orange & Rosemary Soup

\*

Assiette of Smoked Salmon, Brown Shrimps & Halibut

Caramelised Onion & Camembert Tart

٠

Breast of Local Chicken, glazed with Ricotta

\*

Marbled Dark & White Chocolate Cake or Chilled Passion Fruit Torte with Sorbet & Chocolate Crisp

\*

Coffee and Mints

.\*.

On this the 50th Anniversary of the Rapier Register, our Speaker will be its President, Ted Fuller. Gary Guiver Gong award for the Rapier coming furthest. Dress optional.

A vegetarian Goats Cheese & Artichoke Tartlet is available in lieu of Chicken if stated when you order tickets.

Tickets £25 each, cheques payable to Mike Pilgrim, from Little Orchard, Bredfield, WOODBRIDGE IP13 6AW, by end of February please.

The White Lion, tel. 01728 452720, offers two nights B & B plus Friday OR Sunday dinner, £125pp. Details of accommodation at other hotels and guest houses, or with local members, from Mike on 01394 382773. Book Early!

ALSO - on Sunday 23 March

Meet for lunch, from noon onwards at the Old Mill House, Saxstead Green near Framlingham

Bring your Lagonda!





### Visit to Aston Martin

#### Michael Drakeford and the Board go to see some big boys' toys

THERE ARE FEW PERKS of the job for your committee members, and when one does fall at ones feet it should be grabbed. When the Committee was cordially invited to attend lunch at Newport Pagnell and visit the factory producing the fabulous Vanquish, it was an opportunity not to be turned down. There were to be a number of surprises in store for us.

On arrival we all admired the two flags of the Aston Martin and Lagonda marques flying high and proud over Sunnyside, the original Head Office

building.

The tour of the factory, ably orchestrated by Roger Stowers, Archivist, naturally commenced at the metal bashing end. Long gone are the days when everything was made in house. Even so the old skills are still used, as we saw, with the various panels being crafted from preformed aluminium to ensure that each panel will fit the car perfectly. The next surprise was the enormous internal boxlike frame, made in Worcester by Hydro Automotive Ltd., around which the car is built; after inspection and trimming the panels are glued to this frame. Yes, glued.

You might well ask how the panels can be removed in the case of accident damage. So did I. Knowing that my technical knowledge on these things is not far off zero, it was explained to me by Peter Panarisi, Product Press Officer, that they use a method similar to taking a hot cheese cutter wire between the two sheets to melt the glue. Now why did I

not think of that?

A sub-frame houses the giant V12 built by Cosworth Northampton. At this stage the complexity of the braking and the suspension sys-

tems can be seen before they are enveloped by the curvaceous front panels which by this time have been painted to the choice of the prospective owner. The process uses eight coats of paint and

lacquer.

We were not amazed that the newly painted panels were protected by covers made of top quality hide. On the subject of leather, the trouble at Connelly's has been addressed and the leather will now come from Bridge of Weir, a source used

in past years.

The Vanquish will remain a select car with about 500 being built annually. Each will take about 8 weeks to construct and test. Should you want to buy one new, the wait will be around 2 years. Who said we were hitting a depression? 30%t of production will go to the States, 30% will be for the UK, and 25% will

find a home in Germany.

About half way round it occurred to me that we had not seen any DB7s. It was gently explained to me that these were built at Bloxham on a quite different assembly line. Still of the same high quality, but less individual in nature. They now have the same 6.0 litre V12 twelve power plant. Both cars have a staggering performance. The smaller car has a normally aspirated V 12 developing 420 bhp resulting in a 0-60 mph time of less than 5 seconds and a top speed in excess of 180 mph. The Vanquish is stage 2 tuned with modifications such as high performance cams, and the engine develops 460 bhp, which gives 190 mph.

The factory offers teach-in days to enable new owners to come to terms with all this power using either their own cars or ones owned by the factory. It also gives them a chance to try the paddles at the back of the steering wheels,



The Vanquish engine bay is very full of engine!



A Vanquish being given a routine service. The owner has a keen sense of humour, note the number plate.



The Board enjoy a close look at Bond's latest Aston.



which operate the gearbox. I seem to remember that Nigel Mansell had trouble with these at Ferrari in his Formula 1 car when his left was mistaken for his right and his car did a rather sharp circle on the test track. The Vanquish gearbox is indeed Formula 1 style with six sequential speeds with an electric hydraulic clutch that operates without a conventional clutch pedal. Little wonder that my request for a test drive was very politely declined.

Not surprisingly we were told that some owners have a tendency to request the skills of the factory panel beaters within a few weeks of ownership. This is a pity bearing in mind the immense amount of effort that goes into perfecting these cars. The quality control is amazing. So often when we saw the post inspection cars there were chalk marks showing imperfections for correction where, despite our detailed examination, we could find neither fault nor blemish.

Having chosen the colour of my Vanquish, the Aston Martin Racing Green, we left for superb lunch to be joined by Kingsley Riding-Felce, Director of Production, and Tim Watson, Director of Public Affairs. Orange juice was the order of the day.

In the afternoon we visited the Aston Martin Service Unit where cars are sent, not surprisingly for service but also restoration. The progress made in the area by the improved build and design over recent years was amply demonstrated by the lowering of the service times for the older cars at 18 hours for a major service, down to 3-4 hours for a modern DB7.

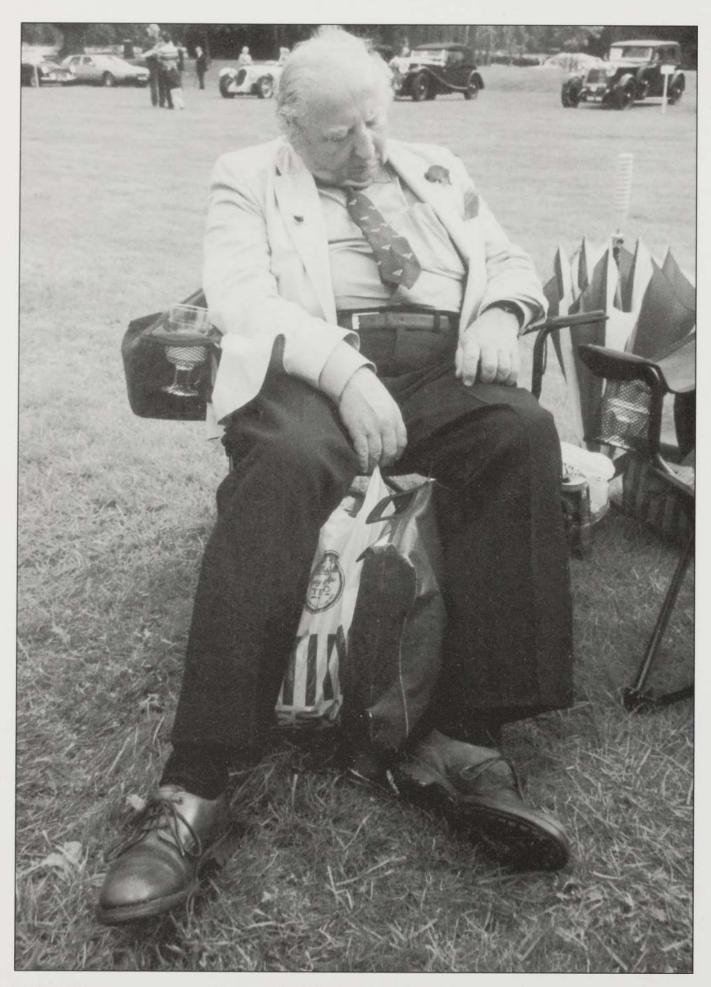
Samples of the chassis up restorations include the well known DB6, LLO 840D, once owned by Paul McCartney. It featured in the July edition of Classic Car magazine.

Looking to the future, we were told that there would be another production line starting this time at Gaydon, in 2005, which will produce a smaller Aston Martin aimed at the Porsche 911 market. Following this, if all goes well, it is expected that the name Lagonda will be resurrected with a top of the range vehicle, well suited to the marque. Fingers crossed.

The final surprise of the day was the arrival of a silver Vanquish. I must say that the growl from the exhaust, which excited John Batt no end, being a Ford V8 fan, had an accent far too ribald for the sophisticated growl of the V12. This was the James Bond car, suitably equipped with four rockets and two machine guns. The latter protruded from the top vents in the bonnet at the touch of a switch. The engine for the purpose of the film, was indeed an American Ford V8 giving power through to all four wheels. As Ford own AML, who are we to comment? It takes nothing away from the aura of this fabulous machine.

Bond really is back, in the right car, an Aston Martin. Next time it may even be a Lagonda!





Roland Morgan, as many will remember him at our AGMs.

## **Roland Morgan**

### Herb Schofield pays an affectionate tribute to one of a vanishing breed

IT WAS WITH GREAT SADNESS that I learned of the death of Roland Morgan. He was one of those chaps you looked forward to seeing, whether it be at Silverstone, Club meetings, or the A.G.M. He seemed to have come from an earlier age, straight out of a P.G. Woodehouse novel, with his impeccable manners, well worn but expensive clothes, a stained Sanction 1 Club tie and a shirt which was always a size too small, which probably explained his flushed appearance. And we mustn't forget his buttonhole. He always wore a buttonhole and a handkerchief in his top pocket.

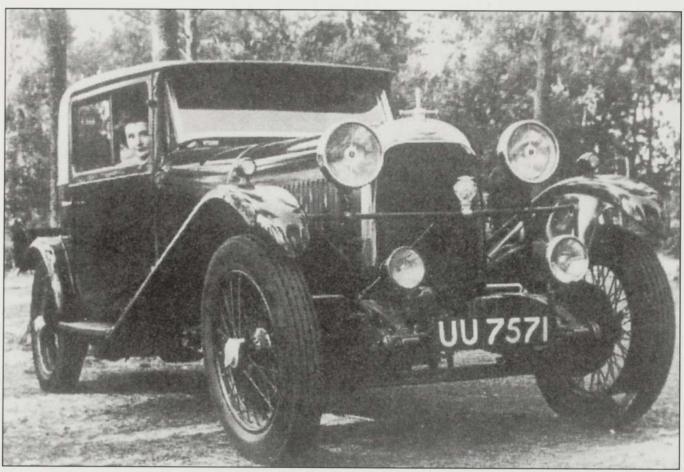
I knew him best in the late sixties and early seventies when, for part of that period I lived weekends with Robbie Hewitt in Bolton Gardens, South Kensington. Robbie was a handsome and desirable woman in those days and was also a keen Lagonda owner. The peace of a late Sunday morning was quite often disturbed by the sound of approaching 2 litre Lagondas, headed by Morgan, Gaber and others, looking forward to a trip out into the countryside and some serious drinking. Happy days!

Roland worked at the Stock Exchange, although what he actually did there remained a bit of a mystery. He lived alone at the top of a three storey building in Kensington Church Street. He never married, but fancied the ladies like mad, sadly never managing to keep them for very long. He ran a couple of 2 litre Lagondas and an LG6 Drophead. Over the years these were sold off and he was reduced to coming to the A.G.M. on public transport. But he still came!

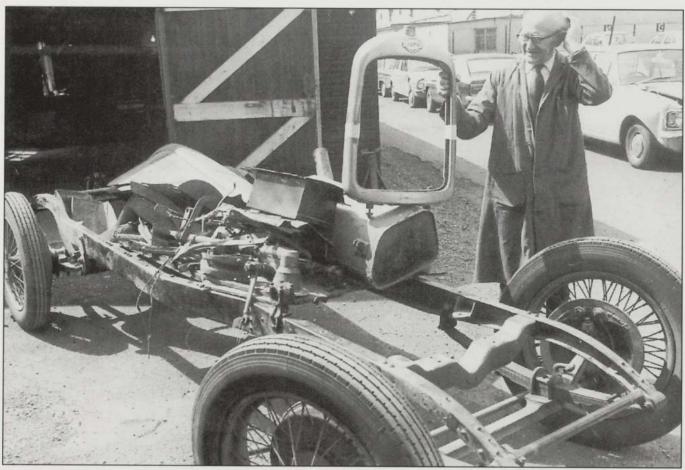
I last met Roland about three years ago at a Club A.G.M. in Henley, when Ann Shoosmith and I joined him for a few beers and lunch at a pub in the town. Afterwards, back at the A.G.M., as was his custom, he fell asleep amongst the cars, surrounded by his many friends. Roland was an eccentric and a character, they certainly don't make chaps like him anymore and more's the pity. The Club used to be full of similar types. The saddest thing about all this is that he probably died alone at the bottom of a flight of stairs. What a terrible way to go.

Goodbye friend. You were truly a gentleman – and a gentle man.





UU, having lost some of its dignity, being stripped of the lower fabric covering and sporting raised headlamps and nonmatching spotlamps.



Mr Blade's man in 1980 scratches his head and wonders where to start.

# Lagonda Close-Coupled Saloon

### Roger Firth reveals all about his Honeymoon Coupé

HAVING BEEN ASKED BY KEN to write something about "UU" my 2 Litre Close Coupled Saloon, UU 7571, I readily agreed, then on reflection thought that I had covered this in an article some half a dozen or so years ago, searching through the magazines I then found that this was in 1987 and as this could do with some improving anyway, here goes.

The Body was built by Lagonda under Weyman Patent number 34814.

Information received from Arnold Davey which I am extremely grateful for shows that six High Chassis survive which were originally fitted with CCS bodies, two of them OH 9137 and OH9406 (my car) are still fitted with their original coachwork. Three now have tourer bodies fitted and one is listed as in chassis form only. The CCS coachwork was carried onto the 3 litre chassis and did look superb with that additional nine inches in the bonnet, none of these is known to have survived even though a number are now tourers. One M45, chassis number Z 11338 was also fitted with a CCS body and is thought to have not survived the war. On page 53 of the Frostic Book, the centre picture shows an M45 with bodywork which I would imagine was a development of the CCS, although it does not appear to be built on Weyman principles.

Since the last article, I have tried to trace more of the car's history, and following the kind gift to me of the original registration book by Peter Hewett who was put in touch with me by Adrian Lead this has helped considerably, even though there are still a number of gaps.

The car was first registered on the 12 June 1929 following which on the 23 January 1930 it was purchased by Tom Klees Dearbergh of Bury St Edmunds.

24 November 1932 to Hugh Nugent Leveson Gower of London. W1.

2 June 1933. To Lagonda Limited. Staines.

1 November 1933 Christien Frederick Dietrichsen. Rugby

18 January 1936 Donart Thursfuield. C/O. Capt W.G. Coates. Rugby.

11 January 1937 New Registration book Issued

1949? To 1955? Arthur Hawkey who told me he sold it to a farmer in Kent.

29 July 1957 Denis Norman Dysler Clarke. Basingstoke

22 October 1959. Robin Courtney Whiteside.

19 June 1965 to 17 August 1985 C. Blake. Warwickshire.

The enclosed photograph of the car during the ownership of Arthur Hawkey shows it having somewhat lost its dignity with the fabric covering stripped off the lower part of the body ( if it was stripped off the top half it would immediately become a Tourer !!) and head lamps converted and higher up for some



UU in North Yorkshire. Some mechanical work has been done and the body is now waiting for a makeover.



UU now looking as good as new.

unknown reason and fitted with two non-matching spot lamps.

I purchased the car from Mr Blake on the 17 August 1985, with a speedo reading of 523 miles which was all it had covered since the rebuild and during his 20 years of ownership, I have now owned the car for over 17 years.

Clearly the car had changed hands several times prior to me purchasing it, and its condition when purchase by Mr Whiteside was very poor indeed. In an effort to improve this, it was stripped down, and what could be stored in the loft of his garage was protected extremely well, but the larger bits had suffered somewhat due to poor storage. Mr Whiteside had undertaken some restoration work on the body by Reading & Co Ltd. Coachbuilders of London Road. Portsmouth at a cost of £122.10.0 and £170.16.11 of mechanical work undertaken by Robert Patrick and Partners Ltd. London SW7 and W. 11 (You indeed did get a lot for your money in those days) but he gave up and sold the car, still in pieces, to Mr C. Blake of Warwickshire. Mr Blake undertook the restoration and this was to a very high standard, the two problems being that the bottom half of the fabric body was covered in red stretch fabric which sagged even when cold and the head lamps had not been put back to original. The radiator supports the earlier badge, the screw holes for the correct badge are clearly visible, why this was changed I do not know. At the time Mr Blake purchased the car, the radiator shell was fitted with the early badge.

Immediately following purchase, some mechanical work was undertaken and the head lamps put back to original together with the Barker Dipping System as was befitting of such a handsome car, The red fabric was not very nice, but as I wanted to get used to the car and enjoy it before embarking upon the tedious nail

breaking job of recovering the bottom half of the body, I left this for the winter. I also repolished the interior timbers and your Northern Secretary made new carpets and helped with the difficult task of covering the rear storage box. All this completed and the car was back to its handsome original appearance.

Why did I want a 2 litre saloon when living in a rather hilly area and surrounded for miles by unsuitable terrain? I already had a high chassis Tourer HN 6771 and I thought that they would make good stable mates.

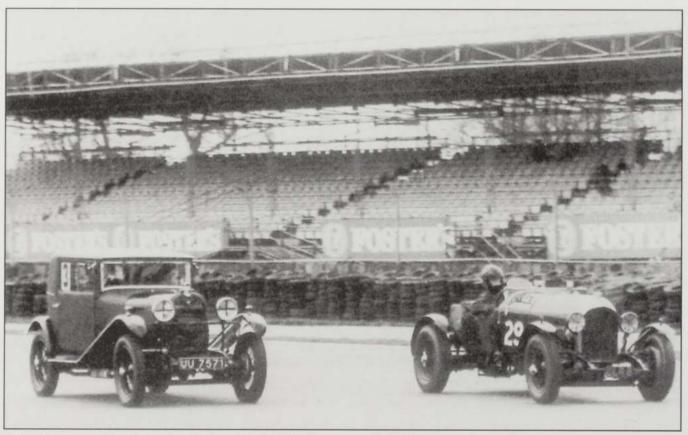
Well this all started with the VSCC Malvern event in 1983, and whilst staving at The Abbey Hotel, parked outside one afternoon was a CCS High Chassis Car registered GU 2935, chassis number OH 9317 and owned by Mrs Margaret Leigh of Tixall in Staffordshire. Incidentally, this car is now in good hands and cherished by Tom Wilcock and resides in a flatish part of Lancashire, hopefully. It immediately and for the rest of the event took my eye, what a splendid machine and extremely rare these days. This car as I found out was the family's pride and joy and clearly was not for sale, indeed I did not ask.

A couple of years later, Herb Schofield spotted an advert in one of the Sunday papers showing a CCS car for sale. I immediately telephoned the owner a Mr Blake, he was in the same line of business as me, and clearly in negotiating his haulage rates, had to start at a rate far higher then he was expecting to achieve. He was asking a ridiculous price, but, seven days of haggling, and we arrived at a price which was acceptable to us both and the car was mine.

Yes, it is slow, does not climb hills very well, but is economical to run, stops as a good car should, and you do not get wet! Basically, the car is a delight to own, very pretty and, in my 17 years of ownership, has served me well and only let



The unique rear seats, here one is folded to show how the luggage space can be increased.



 $Ann\ Shoosmith\ nips\ past\ UU\ at\ the\ VSCC\ Pomeroy\ trophy\ Meeting,\ 1990.$ 

me down once. This was the first time out when we had gone to meet Brian Dearden Briggs and Ann at a restaurant in Yorkshire, and when we were due to leave the establishment at around midnight the starter dog jammed in.

## Now what did the motoring advertisements of the day say?

"The Lagonda Close Coupled Saloon is intended to be used chiefly with two passengers as the car's normal load, but, has provisions, and comfortable provision at that for two additional passengers.

"The arrangement of the additional seats is extremely ingenious for the space behind the front seats, though upholstered and carpeted at first looks as though it is a remarkable commodious receptacle solely intended to carry large quantities of luggage, but, at the back of the car in what would normally be the squab of the rear seats, there seems to be two big cupboards, if one of the cupboards is opened however, out comes a comfortable folding armchair like seat, the other cupboard also containing a similar seat. The interesting point is that there is more leg room than would at first seen to be possible, further, each separate seat is in itself more comfortable than the usual long cushion of the true four seater. When the seats are folded away, a space is available for luggage, and it is

not necessary to stow such luggage accurately or to use any special suitcases.

"In addition to this space, there is a container at the back of the car into which normal suitcases can be stored.

"The car therefore has exceptional luggage accommodation, hence being given the name by some of the "Honeymoon Saloon"

"Both front seats are independent and adjustable, both doors, there being one on each side are of great width when opened, they allow unimpeded access to any of the seats, and interesting point is that the big windows in each door are divided vertically enabling either half to be manipulated independently allowing effective ventilation in very hot weather. All the glass is Triplex.

"The car is of handsome design, the more so because it is short, low and somewhat gives the appearance of possessing a longer bonnet than is actually the case.

"This, the latest addition to the Lagonda range, combines the comfort and capacity of the full saloon with the smartness and chumminess of the coupe. Built upon the famous two-litre Lagonda speed model chassis. Complete for the road - £795. Deliveries in strict rotation, Dunlop Tyres and Cerric finish are standard on the All-British Lagonda and Triplex Glass to all Speed Models."

I hope you all enjoy reading this article as much as I have done preparing it.





There is something about Lagondas that appeals to people, whether it is the styling, the fine engineering or the quality of the coachwork. Whichever it is it certainly attracted me, I have owned and enjoyed Lagondas for forty years. This company was founded because of them and our long established team of craftsmen and engineers have now restored over 700 motor cars in our Staindrop workshops (not all of them Lagondas!)

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# Lagondas 5th and 7th at Le Mans

### David Hine reports on Lagonda's return to this historic circuit

THE LAGONDAS OF NICK HINE AND MARK BUTTERWORTH have made history by achieving 5th and 7th places out of a grid of sixty of the finest vintage and PVT racing cars. The Auto Club l'Ouest decided to open the full Sarthe circuit for a classic 24 hour race this September 2002. Over 300 cars were selected from a hugely over subscribed entry for such a unique occasion.

There were five grids of sixty cars. Grid 1 was pre 1939, the period dominated by Bentley, Alfa Romeo and of course Lagonda! Grid 2 was '46-'56, the Jaguar years. Grid 3 was '57-'61 when Ferrari were dominant. Grid 4 was '62-'65 when the GT 40's roared to the front and Grid 5 was '66-'75 when the banshee howl of the Porsche obliterated all else.

The timing and organisation was fantastic when you consider that all cars, some with two drivers, had to practice in daylight and darkness and then get in four sessions of 45 minutes each in the 24 hour period.

We arrived at the circuit to find everywhere flooded after torrential rain on Wednesday but, thank goodness, after that all we got was unbroken sunshine for the rest of the weekend. Our motorhomes were formed up into a corral and the Lagondas and Invicta together with an Austin Healey and Lola were unloaded. Mark had organised bulk transport for the cars, which was fantastic.

Friday was relaxed scrutineering in the centre of the old town of le Mans with cold beer and a jazz band to keep our spirits even higher! In the evening we had to struggle into crumpled dinner jackets for the gala dinner in an enormous medieval Abbey, very spectacular. The lads were kept in check by Duncan Arthur's glamorous wife Barbara who was the only brave female among us in camp!

Saturday morning was practice and it was clear that the Lagonda cars could keep up with all but the very fastest cars in our group. These days some pre '39 cars sound like Porsches as they scream by. In comparison the V 12 and LG 45 pre war engines were almost silent! Then at 4.00 p.m. we had the classic le Mans start where all the drivers run across the track and jump in their cars and roar away. Nick in the LG took the lead almost immediately and Mark did well but was hampered by having to fit his steering wheel into place before he could drive away!

The LG 45 was lapping at 7 minutes, approx 72 mph and the V 12 was quicker at 6m 45s. Then Mark pulled in to the pits to let Sam Stretton have a go. He achieved a lap of 6m 35s but at a cost, the head gasket blew on the off side.

Amazingly Alan Brown had brought a V12 gasket together with the spare LG gasket for our car so Mark's mechanics, Mike Booker and Simon Edwards set to work to change it. The job was achieved in 4½ hours, a very fine effort hampered by everything being very hot to begin with! The five daylight sessions complete, it was time for night-time practice and off came the beautiful leather covers which Herb Schofield had made for Nick's headlights, just before we left home. Nick lapped just as fast at night which was good news and the Meadows engine was still going like a train. We had agreed to keep the rev limit at 4,200, Nick had stuck a little strip of white tape on the rev counter and could see the needle approaching it even in the gloom on the Mulsanne Straight.

Midnight came and it was time for the first night session, which went without problem and by 1.00 p.m. Nick cycled off for a bit of kip in the van. Alan and I then serviced the car including fuel (it was averaging 10 m.p.g.) the wheel hubs, brakes, clutch and of course oil and water. In 150 miles of track racing you seem to do the sort of adjustments that would be necessary after 5000 miles of normal road use! We then grabbed a couple of hours sleep before the howl of group 5 warned us it was time to be out again at 5.00 a.m. . There had been a delay due to a crash between an original le Mans MGB and a D type Jaguar, no one seriously hurt apart from financially! Dawn came up as the Lagondas steadily lapped, reeling in the opposition as they tired or fell by the wayside. The V12 going perfectly with its re-sealed cylinder head. Nick turned his lights off before the big Bentley ahead of him and it just gave him that little bit more power to get past, as they dashed past the pits on the last lap.

The Lagonda pit that morning was a crumpled sight with us all sprawled about amongst the debris. All the French crowd were extremely enthusiastic, especially one elderly chap who, with his wife came and lovingly stroked the radiator badge of Nick's car. We gathered he had come to le Mans as a boy of 10 with his father to watch the 1935 race. As Alfa Romeo had won for the preceding four years everyone had assumed they would do it again. He recalled the fantastic atmosphere at the time when the Lagonda came from behind to snatch victory from the Alfa in the closing stage of the race. He clearly thought Nick's was the actual winning car, as he had never seen a Lagonda since that amazing day. Nick's French was not quite good enough to disillusion him and he tottered off with tears of emotion in his eyes.

All too soon it was time for the last session with the Lagondas now well up in the grid. The first lap was at slow speed, with the cars in formation behind a track car which held them back. There

was the usual agonising wait for the spectators as it took nearly 10 minutes for them to complete the full 8.2 mile circuit. As the cars came into view the track car peeled off, the lights changed from red to green and they were away. It was incredible to see Nick's blue Lagonda out drag all but the Alfa Romeo. What those Meadows engines lack in BHP they make up for in prodigious torque which is what really counts. On the first time round the Alfa led again, harried by the two screaming Talbots and a very crisp sounding Aston Martin . These cars were going so fast that there was quite a gap before the more traditional sound of heavy metal thundered by. This group was made up of all the classics, The 41/2 litre Bentley was in the lead then the 4½ Invicta, followed by the V12 leading Nick's 4½ Lagonda, finally in this bunch an Alta and a huge White SSK Mercedes, its supercharger fully engaged for the pit straight.

As the rest of the field streamed by it was clear how our group was holding off some pretty impressive motors as more Bentleys, Bugattis, Alfas, MG's and Morgans followed in hot pursuit. It was clear that, in the excitement, Nick was ignoring our agreed rev limit as his lap time was down to 6m 35s and the next time round he had pulled ahead of the V12 and was hard on the heels of the Bentley. As the Alfa took the chequered flag we waited with bated breath for our

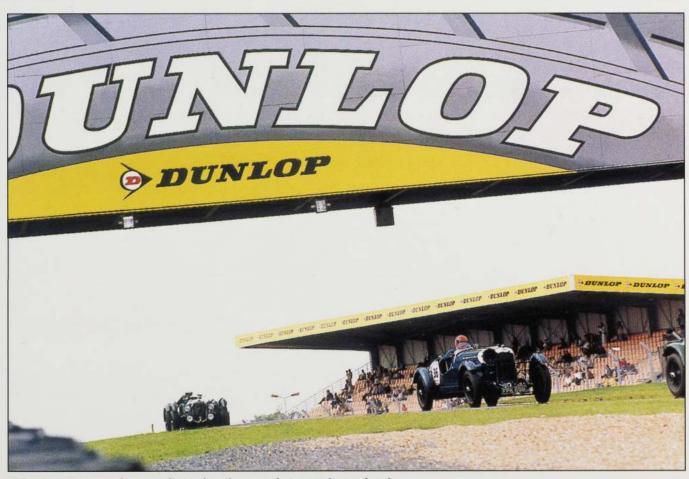
group to appear.

Finally you could see them swerving through the Porsche curves with Nick's Lagonda in the lead to take 5th place overall closely followed by the Bentley and Mark's V12 in 7th place.... jubilation all round. Nick later confessed to 4500 rpm in top for most of the race, equivalent to 110mph. With his relatively narrow 19" tyres he was well balanced and could out-corner everyone but, unless he used full revs in top, they all passed him on the Mulsanne straight. Oh well, I guess those old split con rods may last another season, time will tell!

Sad to say, there were no trophies for



Nick Hine leading the pack.



The two Lagondas in their final race, lying 5th and 6th.

Nick or Mark as the cars they had been teamed up with in the other groups had broken down. However Duncan Arthurs, who has the luck of the Devil, found that his High Chassis 4½ Invicta only had to finish and his group was victorious overall. His team had battled all night with petrol starvation but never given up. Everyone was a bit puzzled to see us dancing in the pits as the old girl, with her very early Meadows engine, rumbled in to take 31st place! This earned Duncan a place on the winners' rostrum and an enormous silver trophy full of Mumms

fizzy. Next day, Duncan and Barbara were tootling home, with Duncan on his Mobile telling all his pals about this. Suddenly some very humourless French plod hauled him into a lay-by and, armed to the teeth, demanded huge wads of Euros with menaces. With his usual quick thinking Duncan showed them the le Mans trophy. The mood of menace evaporated in an instant and he was subject to bristly kisses on both cheeks and waved cheerily on his way.... Ahh La Belle France.



**Top:** L to R: Mike Booker (mechanic), David Hine (mechanic), Nick Hine (driver), Alan Brown (mechanic), Mark Butterworth (mechanic), Chris Petch (driver) and Simon Edwards (mechanic).

Bottom: Proud father David with Demon driver Nick.





Team Lagonda, AKA Norfolk and Chance.



Duncan Arthurs' Invicta on its way to a podium spot.

## Letters

Dear Mr Painter.

At the recent Beaulieu Autojumble I bought a coachbuilder's photo of an M45R with a most unusual and attractive body. Having once owned an M45R I was naturally most interested, though there is no mention of whose body it was.

It would be interesting to find out more about it from the more knowledge-

able members.

May I also add that I think you are doing a splendid job with the magazine.

With kind regards

Peter Blair-Richley

The picture is shown on page 53. A copy was sent to Arnold Davey and his reply is printed below this letter. If any other member has an interesting or unusual picture of a similar nature, I should be delighted to feature it in the magazine. If you wish, I can scan the picture into the computer and return your original to you by return. Peter's photo arrived at 8.30 and was sent back in the 10.30 collection and you can't get much quicker than that! K.P.P.

Dear Ken.

Thanks for the photo of the M45R. The coachbuilder was Gurney Nutting, who called it an Airflow saloon. So far as I know, only one was built like this, on chassis Z11311. We have never had the car on our books and I suspect it didn't survive the war. There was a tiny picture of it in Lagonda's leaflet puffing their service department and this showed the extraordinary rear window, which lives in the little upstand and would give a clear view of anything a mile away, but precious little else (see sketch).

This Bowers picture was used by "The Motor" on 16th October 1934, which was one of the Motor Show issues and I seem to remember this car was on

Gurney Nutting's stand.

We don't know the whole registration number, but in the service leaflet you can see ?? J 250

Best wishes,

Arnold



Dear Ken.

We had to change the 0/S half shaft on the 2 litre recently it had been rotating in the inner race of the wheel bearing for some time. The bearing itself being seized.

The outer end of the shaft differed from the Club replacement, in having a steep taper to the felt bearing surface, which was narrower, as opposed to a more gradual taper. As a consequence, the new shaft needed machining to a sharper taper, with a narrower felt bearing surface.

It now turned out that the N/S half shaft was of yet another pattern, having a smaller hub taper. The bearing being carried on a separate collar. I am told that this is a 14/60 pattern. This also had the

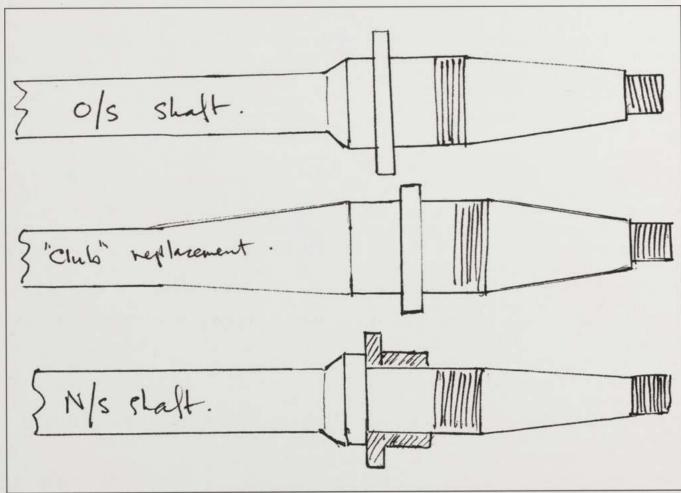
steep taper on the inner side.

All this seems to suggest that: 1. Rear wheel bearings should be checked, and replaced with sealed bearings. 2. If a new shaft is needed to replace an early one, a new hub will also be required!

Yours sincerely,

David Crabtree





This letter was sent to the Spares subcommittee and Clive Dalton has responded on their behalf as follows:

#### Dear Ken

David Crabtree's half shaft letter is very much to the point and illustrates a

number of important things.

1. His O/S Shaft drawing shows a serious design weakness where the shaft has two sharp corners at a point where rotating bending stresses are high. This is not good for fatigue life and Lagonda markedly improved the design in the second drawing which is what the club has had made.

2. David's N/S Shaft drawing is indeed the 14/60 original design and almost the first of the new batch of half shafts was supplied to an owner who discovered he could not use them as his shafts were of this design. He has had a pair made for himself.

3. David's suggestion that the bearings are a source of trouble agrees with my observations. I have seen too many second-hand half shafts where the bearing

seating is worn.

4. It is often suggested that the cure would be better lubrication but I am not sure this is the whole answer. Ball bearings do not need a lot of lubrication. If they are put together clean, the grease lasts well.

5. Enough torque to rotate the inner ring of the bearing on the shaft can not come about from lack of lubrication without leaving very clear evidence afterwards i.e. melted grease and overheated bearing

rings and balls.

6. However one transient cause could rotate the inner ring without leaving serious wreckage. If strong cornering was to apply enough sideways force to the bearings that could rotate the inner race but only for a short time. There would then be a period of straight running when temperatures and loads would subside.

6. Calculations from bearing catalogues suggest that these bearings are very conservatively rated but the evidence of inner race rotation seems to me so frequent that there may still be something wrong.

A question: does anyone else share David's and my experience of inner ring rotation?

Yours.

Clive Dalton

Dear Ken.

Wheel Shimmy

I have been following the discussion on this interesting subject. My own experience suggests that John McDonald is probably right, that is when all the steering joints are adjusted for minimum play without stiffness, then the recommended toe-in will give best steering and best tyre wear. It is also important to remove side play from spring shackles by packing with washers, and to ensure that clips over the spring leaves are tight.

The term which all your correspondents seem to have missed is resonance. Any mass linked to an elastic medium will exhibit a resonant frequency, and although we may not be able to eliminate this natural property, we can tinker with the system parameters so as to raise or lower the frequency, and we can apply damping to reduce its amplitude.

I too have heard that the Derby Bentley is prone to shimmy. My father owned one of these excellent models in the 1950s, and I was able to discover the designer's solution. The front bumper is a heavy item, made from a springy steel strip, rolled at the ends to form hollow eyes. Remove the chrome covers from the eyes and inside there are some loose weights: should shimmy occur then these weights become excited and bounce up and down, but with a time delay so that their motion is out of phase with the shimmy. The idea is that the two effects should be more or less in anti-phase and thus tend to cancel each other out.

My father cured the shimmy in a prewar flat-nosed Morris by adjustment alone. It can occur in motorcycles; he demonstrated to me a frightening solo machine whose girder fork pivots were

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# TYRES AND WHEELS FOR VETERAN, VINTAGE AND CLASSIC VEHICLES



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grossly worn. I have recently eliminated shimmy in a 2CV Citroen by adjusting its track rod ball joints (I was surprised to find they are adjustable), thus earning gratitude from its French owner who

now calls me mon pote.

My view is that with conventional rear-driven vehicles a slight toe-in is preferable, so that under braking when the steering components are stressed, the wheels should tend towards the parallel condition, never actually toeing out, or the car might try to follow one front wheel or the other and veer to the left or right. A beam front axle allows a very precise setting, and I aim for about a sixteenth of an inch (1.5 mm) toe-in, measured at the tyres, not the rims. The measurement should be at the wheel centre height, but I use a home-made telescopic gauge and the sump usually gets in the way, so I measure at half the centre height and use half the setting.

Incidentally, my 2-litre High Chassis has right-hand threads at both ends of its track rod, hence adjustment is only pos-

sible in steps of one full turn!

Best regards,

Peter Minett

Dear Ken,

The Dreaded Shimmy.

Roger Firth's article, Summer 2002, brought back memories and David Hine's follow-up, Autumn 2002, has prompted

me to write of my experiences.

The first time was not exactly 'shimmy', but 'axle tramp' and just as frightening. I was driving down a long hill in the rain, when a modern car stopped some one hundred yards ahead. I was travelling swiftly and started to brake fairly heavily. The front axle juddered and it started to wind up on the springs. I was getting ever closer to the modern and had visions of hitting, or at least stopping one side of it – with a red face. I decided to apply the hand brake gently, whilst easing off the foot brake – and it worked. We pulled up safely and no-one was any the wiser. Now I tend to use the hand brake in that way more frequently and confidently.

I was at a summer meeting of likeminded when owners, somebody remarked that my front wheels appeared to 'toe-out'. I agreed and, at the next opportunity, decided to rectify the matter. I made up a temporary tracking gauge by clamping straight pieces of timber to the centres of the front wheels and, using a plumb line, made marks fore and aft on a large piece of plywood sheet I had laid under the wheels. Measuring across indicated toe-out of about 1/4 inch. I adjusted the track rod at one end (my track rod is not handed, but has a conventional right-hand thread at both ends) to 3/16 inch toe-in and tried the car.

Within one hundred yards I experienced violent 'shimmy' and returned to my garage for further measuring and adjustment. The same thing happened, although not so violently, so I decided to go back to 'toe-out and set it at 3/16 inch. Absolutely fine and no further steering problems. Since then I have fitted new front tyres and new front wheel bearings, as one had become quite audible when spun on the jack.

Yours sincerely

Peter Sowle

Dear Ken.

I was saddened to hear that Roland Morgan had passed on, what a character he was.

He was always at his best on his regular visits to France, there, he considered he got better value for his pound, which allowed him to consume even more drink than normal.

The French people loved him, we all did, his red face smiling out at everyone and his presence always made the events that much more special, on the regular fancy dress parades which quite often he won. I still think to this day that, apart from the Boater, the French could not understand that Roland's attire was part of his normal way of life.

When he was awake, what splendid company he was and I am sure that he was of the opinion that there was no bad drink, only that some were better than others.

Au Revoir

Roger Firth

Dear Colin (Bugler),

I have an old story of how our chauffeur, aptly named Wheeler and a man of many parts (from driving, by way of installing central heating etc., to petrolair-gas lighting), set out one day from here in our 1904 Metalurgique to pick up my grandfather in the metrapole. On the way he "broke a haft shaft". I am not sure where or how much, but I have always talked about frattura speciale, as in skiing (of which latter I have experience, while taking a horrifying preference for the former).

Fortunately for Mr Wheeler, he was within spitting distance of a village which was, like all villages worth their salt until recently, not without its blacksmith. Everything was put right, enabling the driver to reach, with unturned hair, the club, to find his employer standing

on the steps, watch in hand.

I have still got the watch, but wouldn't depend upon it. No Metalurgique,

but, of course, my 2 litre.

I leave it to you to tell the Marines, but only if you think they'll believe it. I'm a sapp-sucker myself (ex R.E.).

Yours sincerely

Michael Tunstall-Behrens

Dear Ken,

You will all know from the membership list the number of cars which Alan Brown has. Sadly. none of these have been on the road for many years and I remember being with Alan in the Selector Special around three years ago when it ran a big end in Buxton and, following nursing back to Alan's home at the time in Hyde, it has not turned a wheel under it own power since.

Alan has now announced that he intends having this on the road during 2003, and Herb Schofield has scoffed at the idea, saying he will never complete it and has declared that he will give Alan

£100 if he achieves this.

Now most of you will know that Herb is a tight sod, very few can say that he has ever stood them a drink, it will indeed be an achievement to prize the £100 out of Herb and hopefully will be recorded for prosperity in one of the club magazines. So that we can ensure that Alan will win the bet, can we have some volunteers to assist him with his project? Offers direct to Alan please.

Yours sincerely

Roger Firth

Dear Ken.

Following the letter in the latest Lagonda Club Magazine numbered 194 from Ion Passfield:

Shame on you Mr Passfield, everything from North of Watford can be taken at face value, you may wish to sample the Northern Dinners both Christmas and Spring, The Northern Gatherings or just visit us for a cup of tea.

Unfortunately, your answer is incorrect, and at the time of writing, we only have 3 correct answers, you may wish to

try again.

With kind regards.

Roger Firth

Too late Jon! The correct answer was given by Arnold in the last magazine! **K.P.P.** 

Dear Ken.

In reply to David Blundens letter in Magazine Number 194:

It is clearly necessary to reply to this letter. I can certainly put David out of his misery in that his answer to part of the question is correct. I just wonder where the other 3 answers are?

I do feel sorry for David and the treatment he has received from his family, and I now hope his family will no longer continue to be nasty with him, especially where Lagonda matters enthuse.

His acquaintance ( he does not indicate what sex) is quite presumptuous in his/her opinions. I am the owner of a

splendid LG45 Rapide and must dismiss his/her remarks as 80% incorrect, at least where I am concerned, I am of course unable to vouch for other owners in respect of all our part of his/her suggestions!!.

As I was not sent to Public School, I therefore have no experience of cross dressing or anything of the like. Who is Cynthia? Was she Mrs Payne? I was not born in 1937. I only have a limp (similar to some other members) when I have crawled from under the car or dashboard resulting in semi seized joints. I have never been invited to join the Himalayan Club, but alas, I do wear odd socks.

My socks were purchased from the late Harold Smith a VSCC member who advertised them in the VSCC Bulletin He was a retired sock manufacturer who offered his surplus stock to members at 28 pairs for £10, I purchased 20 guid's worth. They were not quite as odd as first thought. Beryl managed to pair quite a lot of them off, even if it was necessary to wear two grey socks with odd coloured bands round the top. I still have quite a lot left, and as time goes by, you are left with the odder pairs which you hope people like The Northern Secretary will not notice. I find them great fun when playing the organ. When playing something like Onward Christian Solders (albeit out of fashion these days) and if you are in full view of everyone, you can hitch up your trouser legs so that the socks are in full view, the results being that someone feels sorry for you, and rushes off (Not on a Sunday) to Marks and Spencers and purchases a more sober pair for you. I have send David a pair of odd socks so that he does not feel out of it.

Yours sincerely

Roger Firth

Dear Mr Painter

How wonderful to see my photograph in volume 193 of "The Lagonda" (page 5). I know my driver thinks maturity gives me a certain attraction, but I keep telling him how beautiful I was in

my younger days.

I think the photograph was taken just after the 1939-1945 war, when I had received rejuvenation treatment - I am sure that in my younger days, my side lights would have been larger, and eyebrows would have been fitted over my side windows. My driver acquired me after completing national service in 1961and our forty plus years together have been most pleasurable. He did at one stage acquire an eight cylinder Railton, whilst changing my king pins, but quickly returned me to my number one status.

A small cosmetic surge in the 1970's got me shimmying and coughing rather, but your recent correspondence has finally taught my driver that modern exhaust cams require my valves to open together longer and that messing about with my shims between front axle and

springs was not a good idea!

Unfortunately, I suffer from amnesia and my pre-1947 activities are forgotten and any person who can recall my presence between 1931 and 1947 should kindly let me know what I was doing. I have in my possession a letter from Zenith Carburettors referring to my present carburettors being given to me by a Mr Hewitt of Prestatyn in 1938, and this is the only indication I have of my early life.

You must admit, we little saloons can still catch the eye.

Yours respectfully

for and on behalf of Geoff Clark-Monks (C12) VU 7775



## EFFICACIOUS



A small amount of crack testing for V12 front suspension.

At BishopGray we want our owners to be able to drive their car in the full knowledge that everything is as it should be.

However, we also want them to know that their car is safe. Just because a part is 'original' doesn't mean that it's still doing the job it was originally intended to do.

We are always willing to give our advice when it comes to effecting repairs but our advice isn't always what you would expect.



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### From Snowy England to the Cheetahs of Africa



We rebuilt and prepared Nigel Broderick's High Chassis NLC Invicta for the Safari Challenge in February and have given him 200 BHP to outrun the Cheetahs and hopefully the other competitors!

We would like to congratulate Mark Lewis who in Simon Bull's Invicta won the VSCC Ford Trophy and came 5th in the Brooklands Trophy last year.

(Since this car was rebuilt by us in 1994 it has been campaigned very successfully by Martin Stretton, used as an everyday car by Simon Bull and raced for the last seven years by Mark Lewis without the cylinder head ever needing to be removed)

It may appear that we only restore Invictas, but we have seven Lagondas in the workshop at present, two V12's, two M45's, an LG 45 and a brace of 2 Litres as well as an SS100, a Vulcan and of course two S Type Invictas!

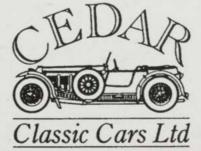
GOING RALLYING, RACING OR JUST POTTERING? TALK TO US.

#### FOR SALE

See our web site for details.

#### RESTORATION

Come and talk to us about your requirements, we have six highly skilled and experienced engineers fully conversant with most vintage and classic cars.



#### SALES

We are always happy to discuss selling your car on a commission basis. No sale. No fee.

### Derek Green

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