



## THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB

Number 109

Spring 1981





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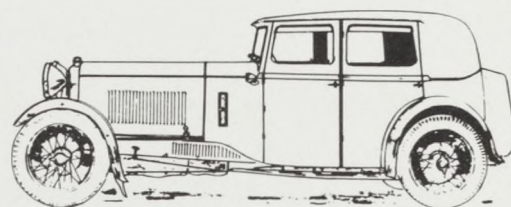
MAGAZINE

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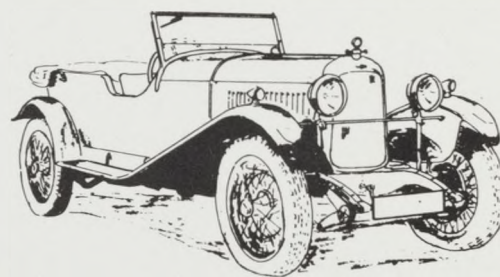
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Contributions do not necessarily represent the views of the Committee nor of the Editor, and expressed opinions are personal to contributors. No responsibility is accepted for the efficacy of the technical advice offered.

FRONT COVER: The DB 2.6 drop head coupe with appropriate surroundings.



# Out and About

THE NEW venue for the 1981 A.G.M. promises to be one of the best the Club has enjoyed. The OATLANDS PARK HOTEL is set in extensive grounds at Weybridge, Surrey and on Saturday, 26 September, it will provide the background to rows of shiny and well kept Lagondas. It will be possible to take your picnic by your parked car and for those who prefer differently there is a restaurant in the hotel, a pub near the entrance to the hotel or several "take-aways" in the village of Oatlands. We plan to assemble before lunch in the usual way, have the A.G.M. in one of the conference rooms during the afternoon while the judges are looking for the Concours winners. Then time after the meeting to have another look at the cars or stroll through the historic grounds of this stately mansion which was once the home of the "Grand old Duke of York" before taking your leave.

The hotel does hold popular dinner dances for its guests and the public on some Saturdays but we cannot, for this year, coincide on such a date. It is intended to do so in 1982 on the assumption that this new venue, within easy reach of London and the approach roads west of the capital, proves popular and we return in following years. To whet your appetites, a brochure and tariff of the hotel is enclosed. MARK THE DATE IN YOUR DIARY NOW and resolve to come along for a really enjoyable, relaxing day with your fellow club members.

Because the hotel is not licensed, the management has no objection to the club running its own private bar and Alec Downie has kindly offered to organise this. Alec has also made an open invitation to those members staying at Oatlands overnight on the Saturday to come to his own home nearby for drinks and informal gathering that evening after the meeting. Thank you Alec!

More information will follow during the course of the summer. SATURDAY, 26th SEPTEMBER—LAGONDA DAY!

★ ★ ★ ★

TAX ON POSSESSION, that unpopular scheme dreamt up by the Department of Transport, has collapsed like a hot air balloon having been deflated by the onslaught of protest from the owners of "classic" cars

throughout the country. Which shows that public opinion, when properly organised and presented can still achieve great things despite bureaucracy and in this respect James Crocker and the H.V.J.C.C. deserve our grateful thanks.

★ ★ ★ ★

THERE HAS been an increasing demand from members for reprints of technical articles from the very early "Lagonda" magazines and the Editor makes no apology for acquiescing to such request. So from time to time reprinted articles will appear in the absence of any volunteers to write currently on technical matters. Ivan Forshaw's notes on oil pressures, which follow, are well worth repeating for example.

★ ★ ★ ★

A WELCOME new feature in the magazine is a regular contribution from ARNOLD DAVEY. His "In Register" column will I am sure be pertinent and of continuing interest. Arnold also reports on some light thrown on the later life of Mrs. Wilbur Gunn after she was widowed. It fills a significant gap in our knowledge of the Gunn family.

A. W. M.

★ ★ ★ ★

OIL PRESSURE. Low oil pressure is the most common cause of high blood pressure amongst owners. More letters are received on this subject than on any other, and a public examination may save much correspondence. The makers recommended pressures were as follows, all with hot engines and at a speed of 30 m.p.h.:

	<i>Per square inch</i>
2-litre 4 cyl. prior to 1930	15 lb.
2-litre 4 cyl. subsequently	30 lb.
16/65 and 3-litres prior to 1930	16 lb.
Later 3-litres and 3½-litres	30 lb.
16/80 Special Six	20 lb.
Rapier	30 lb.
4½-litre M.45 and LG.45	20 lb.
4½-litre LG.6 and V.12	30 lb.

Pressures may read higher than the above without detriment, but it should be borne in mind that excessively high pressures may



result in blown joints or fractured pipes. Lower pressures at tickover speeds are common and no cause for anxiety. Pressures may read considerably higher when cold, and there may be a natural variation between winter and summer. There may be a temporary fall in pressure under conditions of stress, as when being driven hard on a hot day, or after prolonged hill climbing.

Although the above figures represent recommended minimum pressures, in practice it will be found that engines will cover great mileages with complete satisfaction at considerably lower readings, provided they are not over-stressed, and dependant on the cause of the low pressure. The causes of low oil pressure may be summarised as follows, roughly in order of probability:

1. Worn crankshaft journals and bearings.
2. Choked suction or pressure filters.
3. Defective oil pump.
4. Air leaks on suction side of pump, or oil leaks on pressure side, caused by bad

joints or loose unions.

5. Dirty, defective, or sticking oil pressure release valve; broken release valve spring.
6. Lack of oil in sump; oil in bad condition, or of unsuitable grade.
7. Defective oil pressure gauge.

The remedies for the above will be obvious, but further advice is always available from this section of the Club. Total loss of oil pressure may be due to an extreme condition of any of the above causes, or to a sheared oil pump drive or broken oil pipe. Ordinarily an engine may safely be run with low pressure but a complete loss of pressure should bring it to a standstill until a thorough investigation has been made, the cause located and rectified. Otherwise the repair bill may be very heavy. All these lubrication systems are fitted with an adjustable oil pressure release valve and the effect of an adjustment here should first be tried if the oil pressure is suspect.

I.F.

## *Pilgrimage*

*By Peter Cavanagh*

"NOSTALGIC BEYOND description" is a phrase occasionally used by one who finds himself in a situation where mere words fail to record his personal feelings; where the "sword" of memory has proved itself for once mightier than the "pen". It is with such feelings that I have attempted to record my day's visit to what remains of the Brooklands we once knew.

It was on a warm spring morning last month that I set off, and having collected John Langrishe (hon. sec., Healey Drivers' Club), turned the nose of the Healey towards Weybridge. Turning into Brooklands Road, the whole scene came back with such a bang, that it was impossible to believe that time had elapsed at all.

Turning into Vicker's car park we were met and despatched to Charles Gardner who was to "look after us", a thing which he did in no uncertain manner, with charm and friendliness that surpassed a Knight Errant.

We had hinted that perhaps a snapshot or two of the old bankings, with maybe a glimpse of the Healeys in the foreground, would be

rather wonderful souvenirs to be treasured. Not only was our request granted, but an official photographer was laid on complementarily.

Passing the main block, we came upon a joyous sight, for there stood the old Club Building, complete with balconies as ever was, and still in perfect repair (now being used as offices), and in the paddock the original shelters that had once housed the "gleaming monsters" now protected a mass of workers' bicycles; with above them, still visible, the faded words "Dunlop" and "M.G." The Positions Board gantry was still there, and even some of the old boards attached to it. The concrete pits of the Campbell Circuit are more or less complete (now small workshops) as were the rows of little buildings where Parry Thomas once abided. The large wooden shed housing part of the "Ancient Aircraft" collection is intact, and in fact a telephone call came later in the day from a gentleman who wished to fly an S.E.5 away.

How delighted we were, to see that the Test Hill had been cleared of undergrowth and





The 1936 500 Miles Race with the LG.45R (Lord Howe and the Hon. Brian Lewis).

looked almost "as new". (Charles said he had this done as he felt that he "ought to".) Then we drove up the Campbell Circuit hill to behold a glorious, but oh, so sad, a picture. Before us stretched the dear old Home Banking or, I should say, most of it, overgrown with young birch trees which had seeded themselves between the crevices in the concrete. Closer examination showed that only the centre section was thus affected, the top and bottom sections being clear. We ran the cars around, gazing upwards as we went to see the railway-sleeper barriers still round the lip, complete with rusted steel facings. We paused to take our first photos and climbed the steep slope to the top, our feet slithering on the patches of moss, and surveyed the places where poor Percy Lambert and Clive Dunfree had been so tragically killed. Somebody had said at one time that a cross had been erected along the edge of the trees, but we searched in vain.

Returning to the cars we rounded the base of the curvature, making for the "Members' Bridge". At the first sight of it, silhouetted against the blue sky, one's heart leaped, only to sink again at the sight of an enormous

workshop built underneath it, leaving only about 18 ft. of concrete at the top passing through to the other side. A tragic sight, believe me, to one who well remembers cars like the "Napier Railton" rushing under that bridge a yard or two from the top at around 130!

We retraced back via the Campbell gradient, round the base of the "Members' Hill" and joined up with the banking again on the "Railway Straight" side. Lambert had been photographed thereabouts making his successful 1913 record attempt, driving his Talbot as the first man to exceed 100 miles in the hour. It was the spot depicted on the old B.A.R.C. badge, showing two cars passing under the bridge. It was always a tricky spot for drivers when there was any wind about, for on the banking behind the Members' Hill one was completely sheltered until one emerged under the bridge, and then it was a case of hang on the wheel or be blown over the 30-ft. top. Disbelievers could pay 10s. on a non-race day, take their latest sports car round and find out for themselves. I didn't believe it in 1934 and although it only cost me 5s. for a two-wheeler, I'll never forget my experience there



on a Douglas motor-bike as long as I live!

Beyond where we stood, towards the Railway Straight, the track was almost clear of shrubbery, and in fact as one approaches the river (where the banking goes over the Wey), the surface is quite good for nearly a quarter mile, for some of it has a tar dressing which has prevented the growth of greenery. What was therefore the wavy part is now about the smoothest, although the "Bump" is there still (we know because we tried it!). Charles had suggested some last snaps slightly panned, to give an effect of motion as the cars came on to the straight, and that we go back towards the Members' Bridge as far as the surface was clear and return at some pretence of "speed". "Pretence?"—I fear "full chat" would have been nearer the definition. I was forced to take my foot off as we swept off the banking, firstly, to stop showering stones over John's bonnet, and secondly, to enable me to pull up in the space available, for a large hanger now sits across the Railway Straight. John declared that two mechanics, finally convinced that we were not "ghosts", were about to slide back the doors so that we could carry straight through and out the other side. However, we soon saw a sad aspect to his joke, for the Straight did carry on to the "Byfleet Banking" and then ended abruptly into nothing, with runways and green grass now cutting it in half.

It is now 17 years since Brooklands was raced upon, but I estimate that a half to two-thirds of the track remains, this including the finishing straight, the course of which is difficult to follow owing to large buildings of sundry types sprawled over its surface. Though some folk may have sentimentally hoped or wondered if Brooklands could ever be used again, that, I fear, would be impossible. About all one could squeeze out of the existing surfaces would be a quarter-mile sprint or a dash up the "Test Hill" for a cup of tea on the old lawns.

With such conditions prevailing, many would take for granted that the memory of Brooklands is dead or dying, but as stated earlier, its memory is not to be allowed to die, or even lie down. A committee, including several "names" of the pre-war days, has been formed under the eye of Vickers, and I was privileged and delighted to see the drawing of a magnificent memorial, to be erected in the Railway Straight vicinity for all

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to see. No longer will train passengers wonder about those strange concrete banked areas as they sweep by; they will be able to read in large letters "BROOKLANDS 1907-1939". A map of the track in detail with badges of the B.A.R.C., J.C.C., Flying Club and Vickers will surmount a list of record holders, and sundry data, all engraved in bronze to be imperishable—and, who knows, but that if we all wish strong enough, the adjacent part of the track might be kept in fair condition to go with it.

A wonderful book is also being compiled by Vickers containing scores of splendid photos, many hitherto unpublished. Charles decided with us that a good title would be "Fifty Years of Brooklands".

I wonder if there stands a monument, anywhere, to the memory of Mr. Locke-King, that indomitable man who gave us the track—spending over £150,000 of his own money in doing so, and who, supported by the devotion and enthusiasm of his wife, overcame endless obstacles to provide the world's first motor track?

Looking back, I am sure few would disagree that the atmosphere of Brooklands made it an irresistible magnet to all who knew it. Even today that atmosphere has not diminished. As we stood by the Club House gazing at those pine trees, with the spring sun shining on their red-brown stems, the air seemed filled with the sounds of everything we knew—the gay colours, the chatter of voices, the revving of highly-tuned engines, the whine of the "blowers" on the distant bankings, the buzzing of bees, the rattle of tea cups, the gay dresses of the ladies swishing past the enclosure gates, the feeling of heat reflected off the dazzling concrete and a feeling of being completely and gloriously carefree. We have many excellent tracks today, but there can never be another Brooklands, ever!

But I think that the dubious rumour which has floated around from time to time of "nasty horrid, Vickers pinching our track" should be put in proper perspective. Let me put it this way. Racing at Brooklands ceased in 1939 due to a war which lasted six years. During that time the track was Ministry-requisitioned, cut about, built upon, suffered bomb damage and the like. Shareholders had not seen a penny in that time and at the end of the war were confronted with the prospect of not seeing any for another three years, since the track would

not be released until 1949.

If Brooklands were to be retained, Vickers would have had to be moved, for there just was not room as things were. Heaven knows what the cost of restoring the track to first-class order would have been. But the Ministry quickly realized it was cheaper to buy the track for industrial development than to reinstate it as a motor racing venue.

The B.R.D.C. held a meeting of violent protest but, alas, the shareholders, having in mind the facts stated, and with the temptation of seeing £330,000, sold out to Vickers. Thus, on a miserable winter's day in 1946, the curain came down.

Let us not forget, however, that Cobb declared that "The memory of Brooklands would remain immortal" and it is grand to see his wish being realized.

REPRINTED FROM AUTOSPORT  
WITH ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Peter Cavanagh, one time Club member but better known for his long career in radio and on the stage, wrote this article in 1956. Sadly, news of his death was reported in March this year.

Ed.

THE GOSTLING PRIZE for 1980  
has been awarded to MIKE HALLOWES  
for his entertaining magazine article about  
the birthday celebrations for his Lagonda.  
Congratulations, Mike!

## PLATING

\* \* \*

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# Constance Gunn

*by Arnold Davey*

ONE OF the minor stories left incomplete in our book was the subsequent life of Mrs. Gunn after Wilbur's death. I did some research on it, but was unable to discover anything at all. Now, thanks to an incredible coincidence and the enthusiasm of Colin Bugler, we are able to fill this gap.

Actually, the way this has come about is just as interesting as the story itself and I will digress for a moment to explain. Colin's duties as a bank inspector took him, in August 1980, to Broadstone in Dorset, which is only a few miles from Ivan Forshaw. So one day he took his LG.45 replica Team Car to the bank with the intention of calling on Ivan in the lunch hour. The bright red LG was parked in the bank car park all day, and next morning one of the ladies on the staff approached Colin and told him that she was interested in the Lagonda because her grandmother had once had living with her a lady who was Wilbur Gunn's widow and that her mother still had a photo of Mrs. Gunn. Colin was naturally astonished at this and immediately arranged to see the mother. The story that follows is as Mrs. Burden remembers it, and confirms some of the other loose ends, like Constance Gunn's hobby of dog breeding.

The coincidences that brought Mrs. Burden and Colin Bugler together are amazing. If Colin hadn't taken his Lagonda to the bank that day Mrs. Burden and her daughter, who were probably the only people in the world who knew the story, would never have met him. Or if the daughter had taken the day off. . . These sorts of coincidences occurred several times in the collection of the facts for the book. For example, a colleague in my office proved to be Doreen Good's son-in-law; David Johnson met a girl at a party who was Wyndham Hewitt's niece, and several other coincidences of this kind. So much so, that I concluded that the spirit of Wilbur was masterminding things from up there.

Now to the story. We have never discovered the date of the Gunns' move out of The Cottage, Thorpe Road, their original house which became the factory. They were there in 1906, but by 1913 were living at Hythe House,

Staines, where the freehold was in Constance's name. (The remark on p.21 of the book refers to this house, not The Cottage.) They were still living in Hythe House when Wilbur died in 1920.

The terms of the recasting of the Lagonda company made over a lease on Hythe House to the Company and there was a further term that the freehold would be sold to the Company within ten years. Clearly this hadn't been enforced by 1920, but by 1923 it had been and Constance moved out to the Oatlands Park Hotel at Weybridge. I believe Hythe House to have been the big house with the semi-circular drive opposite Staines Bridge in the map on p.99 of the book. It is now part of the re-aligned main road to Chertsey.

The Gunns had put every ha'penny they possessed into the 1913 company and one imagines that, after Wilbur died, Constance's only income would be that from the shares he owned. His salary as Managing Director would stop at his death. We don't know what kind of dividends Lagonda paid at this time, but Wilbur's death had come right at the peak of the short-lived post-Armistice boom and even in 1921 sales were way down on 1920. The will set up a trust to administer the Gunn estate, one of the trustees being Col. Howard Goad. As Constance's maiden name was Goad, we can assume he was a relative, perhaps a brother. Goad did not survive much longer than Gunn and by 1930 his place as trustee had been taken by Gerald Lennox, another of Constance's relatives, and probably a cousin.

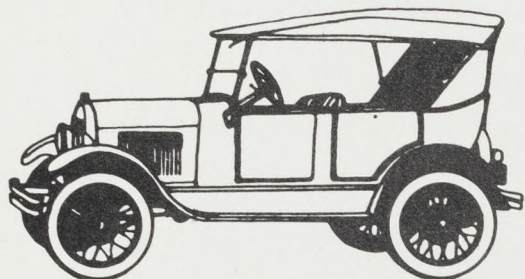
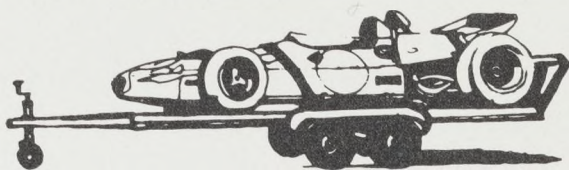
The Oatlands Park Hotel proved expensive and some time in 1923 or 4 Constance Gunn moved to Dorset, to become a paying guest at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Burden in Pilford Heath, Colehill, near Wimborne. They had been recommended to her by a friend. She was 69 years old in 1923 and her eyesight was failing, but the imperious manner that had led to her being called "Lady Grey" in Staines (her first marriage was to a Charles Grey) had not left her. I think the photograph shows some of this spirit. Mrs. Burden recalls the commanding presence and even when



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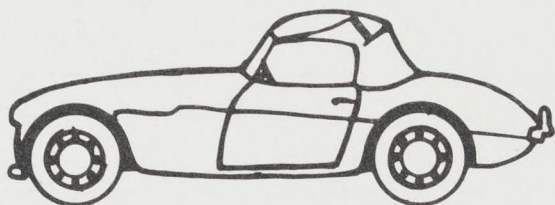
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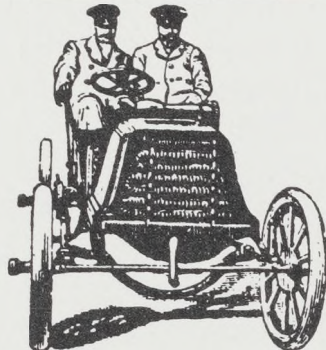


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**Mrs. Constance Gunn**

### **WANTED**

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**Robert McCracken**

**338 Bleasdale Road, Mossley Hill  
Liverpool L18 5JB.**

**Phone: 051-734 0089  
early evening.**

Mrs. Gunn was nearly blind she still swept along in a majestic manner. Mr. Burden used to write her letters for her when she became unable to do it herself. Unfortunately Mr. Burden is dead, so the chance that he might remember some of the addresses and possibly give a lead to what happened to Marjorie Gunn cannot be pursued.

Mrs. Gunn lived with the Burdens for about six years and died in August 1930 at the age of 76, as a patient in St. Audrey's Nursing Home, Colehill.

From the financial point of view it is as well she did not survive the bankruptcy of Lagonda Ltd. in 1935, for although the bank, as debenture holders, got nearly all its money back, the shareholders got virtually nothing and she would have become penniless.

It is only a small footnote to the Lagonda story, but well worth telling, and we are all indebted to Mrs. Frances Burden for her picture and to Colin Bugler for his perseverance.



# In Register

## By Arnold Davey

"IT HAS been suggested" is a good old local government opening for any document when you can't be bothered to look up, or cannot remember, the names and dates.

It has been suggested that some of the bits that go into the newsletter, only to line the budgie's cage a week later, would stand a better chance of preservation in the magazine. As the Editor has been prevailed upon to

agree, this column may now become a regular feature.

There are two items this time, both worthy of some permanence.

I recently had a chance to handle for a brief period a Ferodo universal catalogue from the 'fifties. I couldn't keep it, so copied out the items relevant to Lagondas and they are reproduced below:

### Borg & Beck Clutches

<i>Model</i>	<i>B &amp; B Clutch Plate Reference No.</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Facing Set Material</i>	<i>Facing Set Reference</i>
DB 2.6/3L	47418/59	$9\frac{1}{8} \times 6\frac{1}{8} \times \frac{9}{64}$	RYZ	B10/TA/1
V.12/LG.6	40249	$10\frac{7}{8} \times 6\frac{3}{4} \times \frac{1}{8}$	VM	T21B
LG.45	None	$12 \times 8\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{3}{16}$	RAD	—
3 $\frac{1}{2}$ /3L	None	$11 \times 7\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{3}{16}$	RAD	—
Rapier	None	$7\frac{7}{8} \times 5\frac{3}{8} \times \frac{1}{8}$	VM	—

### Clutch Release Bearings

LG.6 46890 (De Luxe) 40893 (Standard)

### Brake Linings

<i>Model</i>	<i>Material</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Lining Ref. No.</i>	<i>Lining Set No.</i>
DB 3L	DM8	$10\frac{19}{32} \times 2\frac{1}{4} \times \frac{3}{16}$	AV/6/1	BAV/6/1
DB 2.6 MK2	MR41	$11\frac{11}{32} \times 2\frac{7}{32} \times \frac{3}{16}$	JG/1/1	BJG/1/1
DB 2.6 MK1	MR41	$11\frac{17}{32} \times 1\frac{23}{32} \times \frac{3}{16}$	MO/31/1	BMO/31/1 (front)
	MR41	$10\frac{9}{16} \times 1.7 \times \frac{3}{16}$	HU/23/2	BHU/23/2 (rear)
LG.6/V.12	MZ41	$17\frac{7}{16} \times 1\frac{3}{4} \times \frac{1}{4}$	LA/12/2	80/C10
LG.45/M.45R/3 $\frac{1}{2}$ L	MR41	$12\frac{9}{16} \times 1\frac{3}{4} \times \frac{1}{4}$	GG/4/1	BGG/4/1
M.45/3L	MR41	$11\frac{5}{16} \times 1\frac{3}{4} \times \frac{1}{4}$	LA/9/1	32/C16
Rapier	MR41	$12\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{4} \times \frac{3}{16}$	LA/8/1	48/C13

### Brake Shoes

<i>Model</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Shoe Ref. No.</i>
DB 3L	$12 \times 2\frac{1}{4} F$	LB 91
DB 2.6 MK2	$11 \times 2\frac{1}{4} R$	LB 92
DB 2.6 MK1	$12 \times 1\frac{3}{4} F$	LB 103 AX
(1947-52)	$11 \times 1\frac{3}{4} R$	LB 104 AX
LG.6/V.12	$16 \times 1\frac{3}{4}$	GO 144 AX



### Preselector Gearbox bands and linings

16/80

Type of No.

Lining	off	Dimensions
SW	4	$5.892 \times 5.517 \times 0.61$
SW	4	$5.892 \times 5.517 \times 0.547$
AS10	1	(Cone) $17.44 \times 1\frac{5}{16} \times \frac{7}{32} \times 7.56$

Rapier

SW	8	$4.95 \times 4.65 \times 0.5$
AS10	1	$14 \times 0.625 \times \frac{3}{16} \times 6\frac{3}{8}$
VM41		Plate Clutch

### Fan Belts

V.12 V112 (Alleged to fit LG.6 too, but ?)

DB 2.6 V120  
(1948-50)

DB 2.6 V114  
(1951-on)

I am well aware that all these parts are probably long obsolete but armed with the part numbers, one can rummage with more confidence at autojumbles because I suspect that some of them were catalogued for larger selling makes.

The other item concerns the materials used in gear manufacture at Staines. Last summer when Alec Downie was organising some replacement gear sets for the OH gearbox, some doubts arose as to the correct specification. To resolve them, Alec sent an old gear to a friend in a metallurgical laboratory of the highest reputation. What follows is a precis of his reply. The purpose of publishing it here is to make sure that anyone placed in the same position in future can refer to this and save some worries.

Steel composition	%
Nickel	3.0
Chromium	0.75
Manganese	0.52
Silicon	0.23
Copper	0.21
Carbon	0.17
Molybdenum	0.06
Sulphur	0.019
Aluminium	0.019
Phosphorous	0.013

This conforms to the old specification BS 970: En 36B. The only problem that may arise

nowadays is getting this stock in a large enough diameter bar. Failing this, En 36C would do and this is now designated BS 970: Pt 3: 1971 Grade 832M13.



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# Mystery Lagonda

## —the Plot thickens

IN THE Autumn of 1977, there appeared in the "Thoroughbred and Classic Car" magazine a letter from a Richard Henry of Glendale, Arizona. It described his interest in an unusual Lagonda which had a V.12 engine, independent front suspension and de Dion at the rear, 18" wire wheels with large drum brakes and a one-off aluminium body. Mr. Henry had first seen this car in the late fifties at a small garage in Tucson, Arizona near to where he was living at the time. It had been left apparently forsaken on a weed choked plot. A photograph inside the garage showed the car in its former glory in light green paintwork. Not being interested in Lagondas at the time Mr. Henry paid it no further attention but retained a slight hankering to know more about this unusual car.

Several years then elapsed before Mr. Henry idly made enquiries as to who was the owner of the Lagonda but without luck as the garage had changed hands. His brother, however, had written to "Road and Track's" Editor John Bond (one-time Lagonda Club member) to see whether that source elicited any clues on the car's history. No luck again but soon after Mr. Henry received a phone call from an Army Captain at Fort Meade in Maryland who turned out to be the current owner of the car and he offered to sell the car to Mr. Henry for \$1500. Being in the Army as well at that time Mr. Henry was not in sufficient funds to take up the offer. His brother, to maintain the family curiosity, went to see the car and took some photographs of it. Two more years elapsed and in conversation with Dudley Froy, who raced at Brooklands in the 30s', Mr. Henry mentioned the car. Dudley ventured the opinion that it was one of the two V.12's built for the Indianapolis 500 mile race in the 40s' or 50s'. This theory may well be suspect.

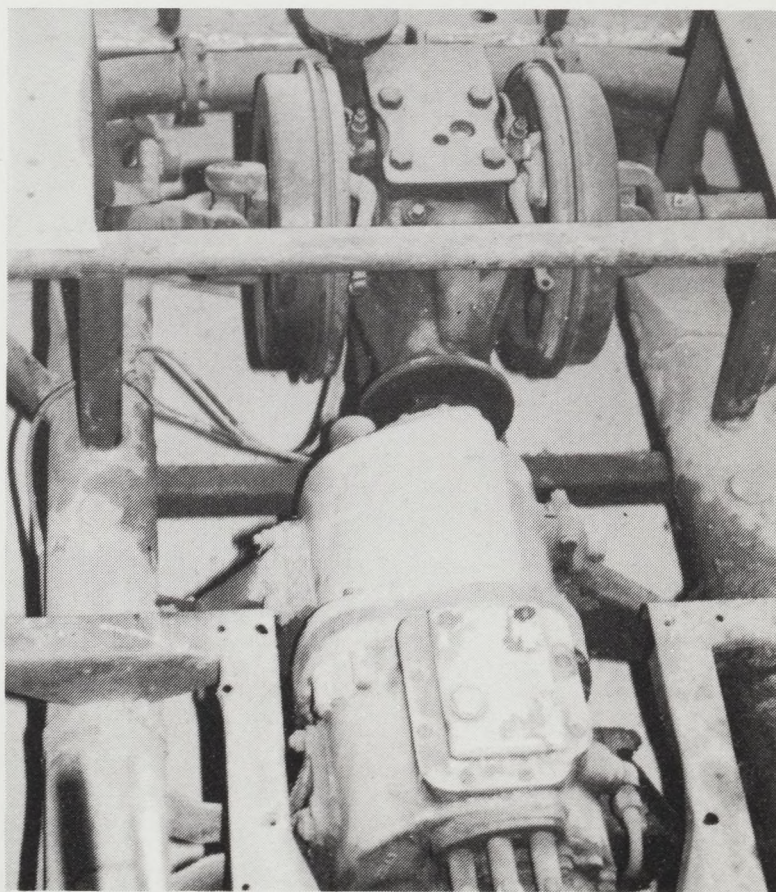
In closing, Mr. Henry last heard that the car had passed to a new owner in California and asked for readers' help in finding out more about the car's earlier history. Now, three years later Lagonda Club member George Chilberg writes to us from California as follows: Dear Sir,—

I am writing to you as the editor of the club

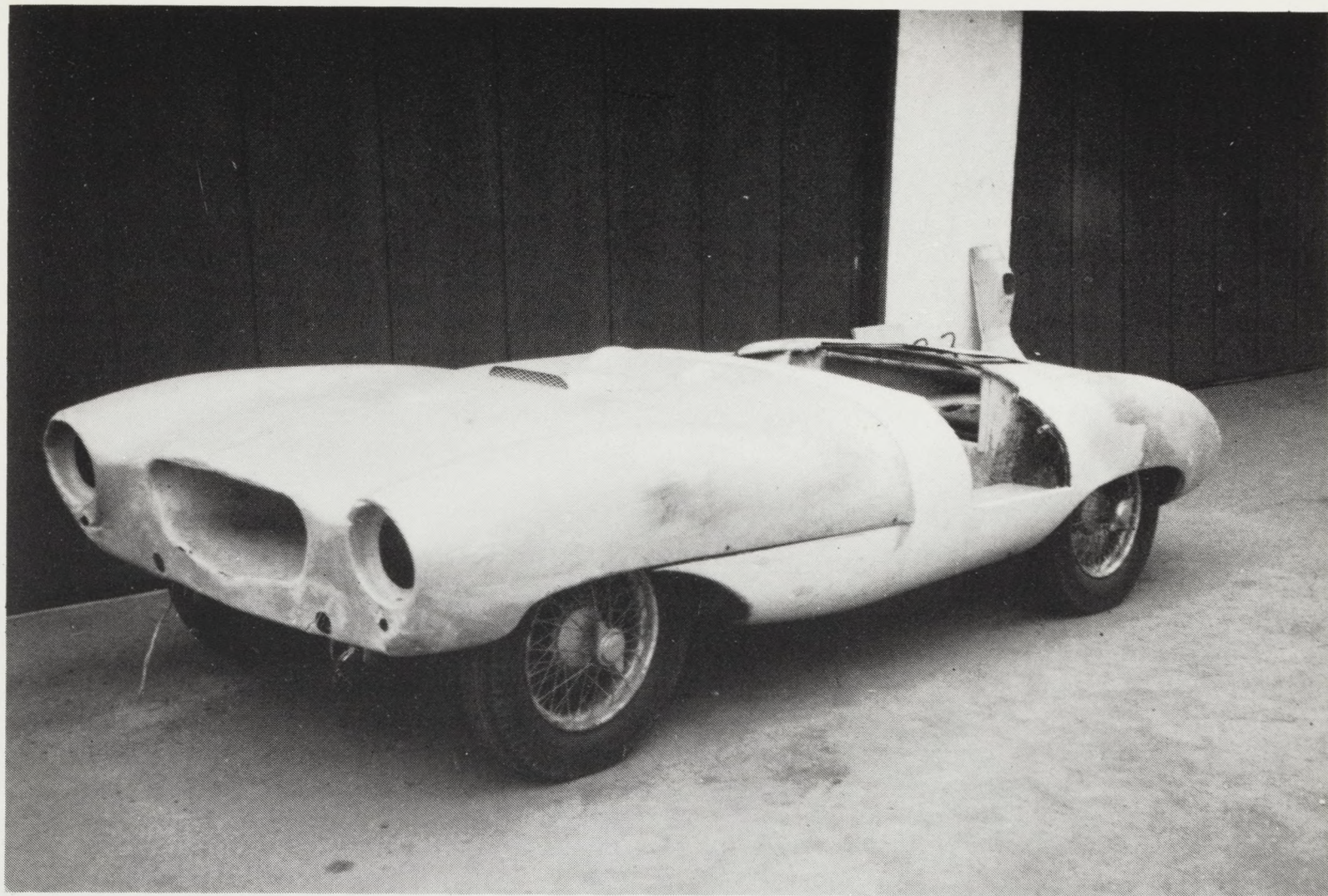
magazine as you must know someone who knows somebody, etc. and so on, who knows what the car described below is. It has been here in the States for years and owned by a few people but, as far as I can tell, has not been run. Perhaps ten years ago a man, I have long forgotten his name, as I saw him only one time, told me that he had owned a V.12 Lagonda "Team Car" as he knew I had a V.12.

Some years later a picture appeared in "Thoroughbred and Classic Cars" so a friend gave me the magazine.

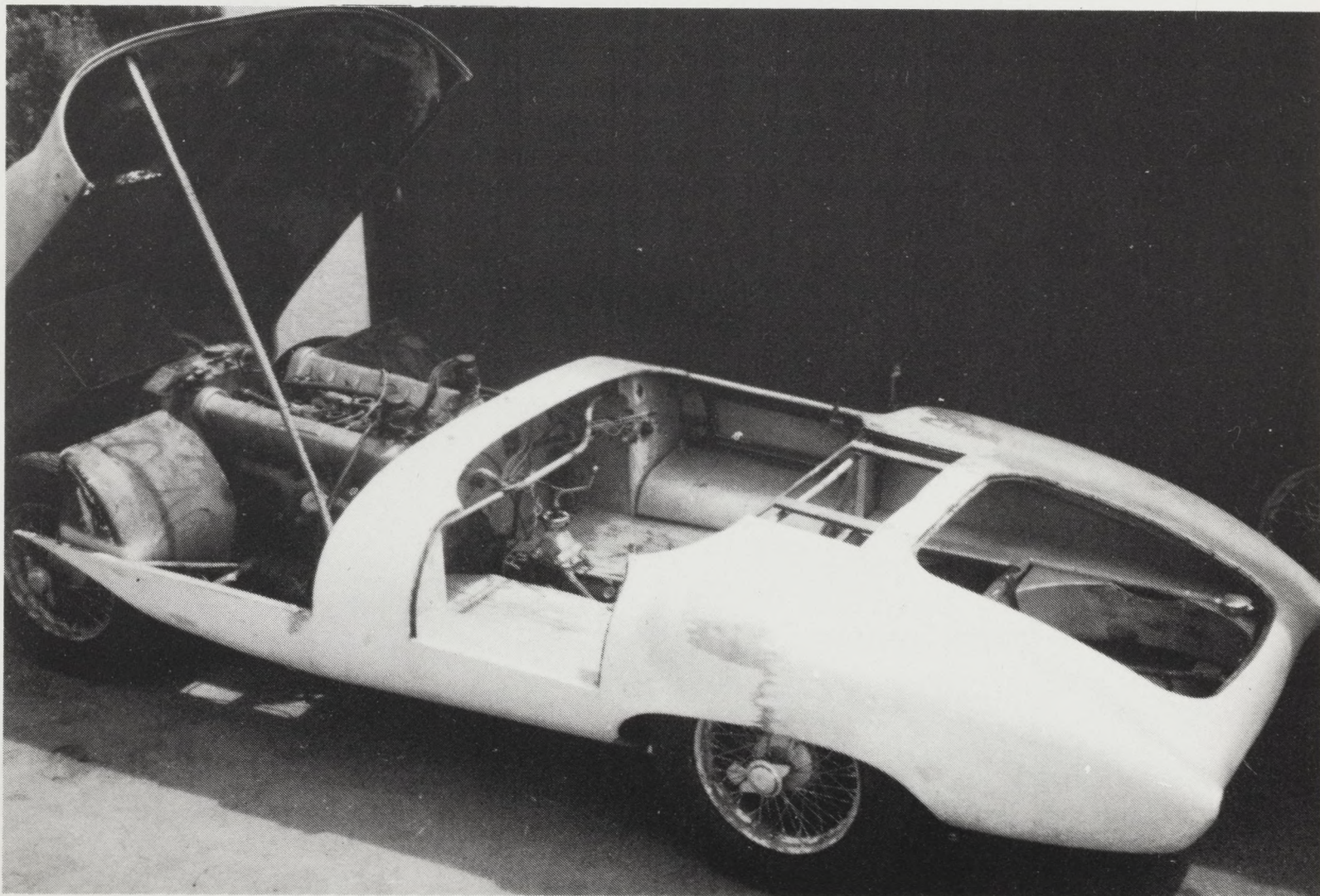
A year or so later, while buying parts for my '29 Ford Truck the name Lagonda came up, and the vendor mentioned that a friend of his brought a Lagonda "Race Car" home from Arizona and wanted to sell it. — Some months later the owner called up to talk and said he had been advertising the car, but that everyone wanted to steal it and he would like to sell it to me. I said that I had all the Lagondas I could afford plus two, etc., and said that I could not buy it even if I wanted it. He called back a week later and insisted that he bring it to my house on a trailer, so he drove approx. 100 miles down here and asked if I wanted the trailer too!







Three views of George M. Chilberg's Lagonda.





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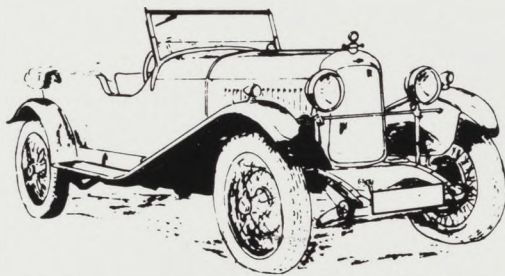
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I gave up and bought it, but asked him to give the trailer to someone else. I could always use a spare engine and gear box. One problem — I really got to like the car and now would hate to part with it or break it up.

I am having a boot lid made for it and the body is being cleaned up etc.

The above is a very long prologue to one question "*What is It?*"

Engine No. V.12/9H. Chassis plate No. 153624.

The gear box has been bolted directly to the rear end and the rear suspension is de Dion.

The front suspension is made up from various parts including what must be a front cross-member from a production car. The brakes are hydraulic converted from mechanical.

The wheels are 60 spoke 18" and the caps are S.S. Jaguar brazed over smooth and rechromed.

The body is beautifully made as is the chassis, but there are a few modifications as the welds are poor — most probably done over here.

There are two fuel tanks in the rear, one on each side of the spare, and one on each side of the cockpit.

The front is not very pretty, but it "grew on me" so I won't change it.

I have been told that Hooper built the Aston/Lag. race cars, and the picture on page 113 of "*The Elegance Continues*" shows a car with similar lines. The metalwork is good enough on the Lagonda that they could have built the body.

Also sketches & pictures in "*The Grand Prix Car*" Vol. 1 of the Mercedes W.125 and the Auto Union frames show a similar rear end with the torsion bars in the tubes with the damper arms connected in a similar manner to the de Dion tube. I know that Prof. Eberan von Eberhorst worked at David Brown after the war. The person that designed the frame has seen his designs.

Yours, George M. Chilberg,  
One Via Maria Elenda, Bonsall, C.A. 92003.

(Over to you Arnold! Ed.)

## ***Rebuilding a 2-litre***

### ***By Derek Green***

FOLLOWING DAVID HINE's breakdown of costs of his rebuild, I thought that a brief history of the rebuild of my 2-litre Lagonda might be of interest. The restoration could have been achieved at less expense, however it must be understood that from the outset I was intent on two aims: (a) as near as possible total originality; (b) as high a standard as I could achieve. In addition to this, being an impatient old cuss, I wanted to have the car on the road as quickly as possible.

I think my aims were successful, since 14 months after commencing, XV3926 was finished and won for me Coachwork of the Year Competition. This was followed by firsts in every concours entered and, to my great pleasure, outright winner at Burnham Beeches. Before going any further I must make it clear that without the help, advice and assistance of such stalwarts as Peter Whenman, Alec Downie and many others the above could not have been achieved, and I have only recounted the success of the car in order to illustrate that I was not prepared to cut

corners or moneypinch.

January 1979 saw the beginning with a 1928 2-litre tourer who had been through two different owners since last on the road some 12 years before. Two rebuilds had been started and abandoned, and in the process, many parts lost—but all the mechanics were present and correct. Not knowing quite what had or had not been done by previous owners and encouraged by Peter Whenman who rightly said: "If you don't do it now, you will regret it later" everything was taken apart, examined and rebuilt where necessary. Certainly as I progressed I became more convinced that if I could make a good job, the old girl should last me out! To further this aim I used stainless steel nuts and bolts throughout and consider the expense of about £100 well worth while and the non-originality imperceptible and therefore acceptable.

In the search for originality, rather than accepting modern alternatives such items as door handles, windscreen butterfly bolts, brake adjusting nuts, lever-roll seat adjusters



etc., were cast or otherwise fabricated from originals kindly lent to me.

The cost of any rebuild comprises of two factors—firstly the materials which have to be purchased and secondly the labour; the first is constant but the second can be reduced or entirely eliminated depending on one's personal skills and time available. In my case I estimate that I spent something in the order of 2,000 hours and the one major skilled job on which I was able to save on outside labour costs was in making the body. Obviously if one has the courage and skill to tackle the upholstery a further major saving could be achieved.

I hope the following breakdown of costs may be of help to other members contemplating the long haul of a rebuild.

### Breakdown of Costs

#### Mechanical

<i>Engine:</i> Bored, crank reground, white metalling of main and big ends, new pistons. All balanced.	£328
Various spares including new valves, valve springs, timing chains, timing gear, water pump, gaskets.	
Clutch relined and new clutch springs	£287
Servicing Autovac, Magnets, Dynamo, Starter	£47

Exhaust system: Stainless Steel Downpipe and Silencer, Copper tail pipe

£87

*Brakes:* Skimming all drums, new cables and rods

£65 £814

*Wheels:* 5 rebuilt and stove enamelled  
5 tyres and tubes

£84  
£191

*Battery:*

£40 £315

*Bodywork:*

Timber £90  
Aluminium £77

Making of Under trays, Body Irons, Wing Brackets etc. £233

Making of Wings, Bonnet and covering Bonnet-boards £525

Making and Glazing of Windscreen £193

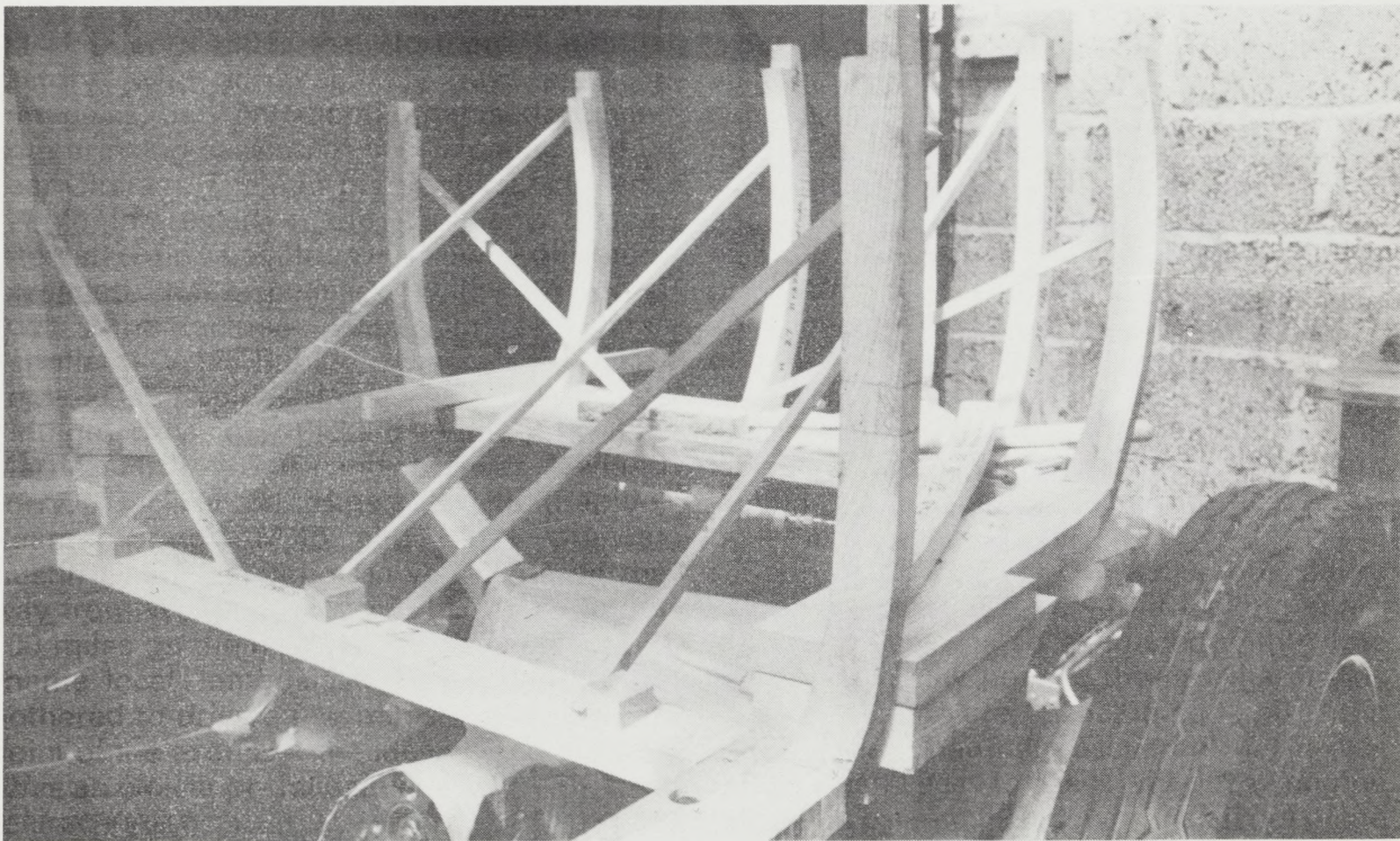
Covering of body including material £180

All upholstery including costs of leather and carpet £989

Hood, Tonneau and Hoodbag, including material £383 £2,670

*Lights:*

Purchasing fully restored 2 P.80 Headlights, 3 Spotlights, 2 nickel-plated Divers Helmet rear lights, Reversing lights and having my own sidelights restored £470 £470  
(A saving could I am sure have been made by careful Autojumbling)





#### *Miscellaneous:*

Various machining work	£300	
Nickel plating	£220	
Copper tubing, Electrical cable, nuts and bolts, Clips, terminals, plugs & leather gaiters etc.	£438	
Painting and materials	£336	£1,294
Restoration total		<u>£5,563</u>

*Note:* In the 1950s, when Vintage motor cars were still used by us impecunious Naval Officers as every day transport, I owned and maintained first a 2-litre Aston Martin and then a 4½-litre Bentley. Since about 1960

however, tinkering about with motor cars was left to others and my venture with XV3926 in 1979 was commenced therefore with some trepidation due to my lack of specific skills. As I have already said, running an Antiques business with its associated cabinet making left me confident on making the body; next time around I would tackle covering it. Upholstery and hoodwork must, in my opinion, be left to a skilled craftsman, since the finished result is so apparent. I would love to own a lathe and learn how to use it; this would then enable one to tackle some of the numerous small jobs that otherwise have to be farmed out.

## ***Andre-Hartford Shock Absorbers***

THESE ARE the things like a collection of small tennis bats which appear to hold the axles to the chassis. They don't and they are not shock absorbers even if it says so on those nice discs you bought from Paul Beck. They are, more accurately, dampers and their purpose is to ensure that the car stops bouncing up-and-down soon after you hit a pot-hole.

Of course everyone knows all this and I also thought everyone knew how to set them, until, during the last month, I met people who set them by (a) jumping up-and-down on the chassis, (b) using a torque wrench, (c) correctly, but at three times the correct pressure. For these people, even if not for others, perhaps, some information might be of use.

Even if you are not intending a complete overhaul of the units, but only to reset them, you will need to remove them from the car—at least in pairs. If you do this at the "Silentbloc" bush rather than the chassis from the bracket, you will be able to see whether you need new bushes. "Silentbloc" ones are available, as are the special convex nuts which hold them, but earlier ones had wooden bushes, washers and ordinary nuts. The wooden bushes are easily turned in any hardwood or hard plastic. There is hardly any rotational movement on them and not much angular movement but the Silentbloc bushes, especially if not locked in the centre by the shaped nuts, do break up. A socket set and a vice are handy for squeezing old ones out and new ones in. With the unit on the bench the large central nut is unscrewed and the bolt tapped out. With a little leverage

there will be a clattering of discs, washers and stars and a pointer on to the floor. Note the order, and side, of these because there is some variation, but the drawing shows a typical one.

Apart from repainting the arms (it's not necessary to drill out the rivets, they can be slightly sprung) and replacing the painted-over brass disc with a nice new multi-coloured one, the parts that really interest you are the discs which provide the friction. If your dampers were overhauled after the war they may have discs made from clutch-lining material, but originally they were hardwood and new ones in this material are available. If keeping the old ones it is a good idea to roughen the faces on a sheet of glasspaper. If new wooden ones are fitted they should be smeared with linseed oil first.

Having re-painted, re-plated and replaced everything the units can be re-assembled and attention can be given to the setting, which is why you took them down in the first place. The correct initial tension is obtained by clamping one arm in a vice and pulling on the other with a spring-balance, or bags of sugar in a bucket, and the central nut should be tightened or slackened until the weight needed to move the arm corresponds with that given in the table:

<i>Type</i>	<i>Car Weight</i>	<i>Tension</i>
3 arm	12–20 cwt	19 lb.
3 arm	over 20 cwt	23 lb.
5 arm (Multiplex)	over 25 cwt	16 lb.
5 arm (Multiplex)	over 30 cwt	19 lb.
5 arm (Multiplex)	over 40 cwt	23 lb.



When set to the correct initial tension it may be that the little pointer does not correspond with the zero on the numbered disc: if you want it to then mark the position of the pointer on the outer edge, undo the nut, counting the turns, until the disc can be turned to place its zero at the mark you made on the edge.

Tightening the nut the same number of turns and to the zero should correspond with your initial tension, it is a good idea to check that it does.

When refitting the units to the car it is essential not to tighten-up the nuts on to the "Silentblocs" until the complete weight of the car is resting normally on the springs. This means, if you are fitting them during a rebuild, only *after* the engine, wings, radiator, etc., are in position, otherwise, tension will be given to the rubber and subsequent movements will cause it to break-up.

The table of initial settings is, of course, only that, and subsequent adjustment can be made equally on front or back pairs, during road testing. This adjustment should be made one graduation at a time because each mark, on a good damper, can make 5 lb. difference.

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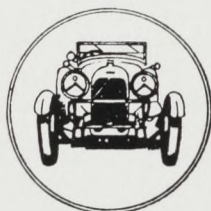
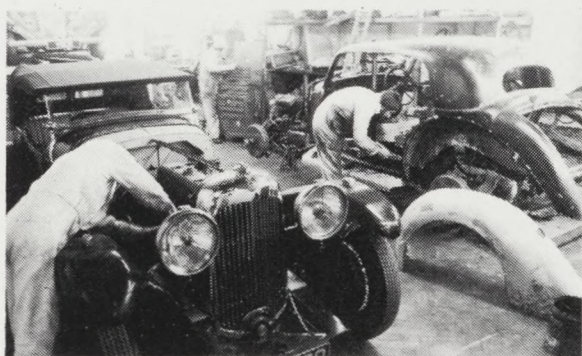
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## VINTAGE MOTOR CAR RESTORATION



The above photographs show three Lagondas undergoing restoration in one of our workshops. They are a 3½-litre tourer, an LG.6 saloon and an LG.45 tourer. I have a special interest in this marque, having owned Lagondas for the past 19 years, covering thousands of miles and having spent thousands of hours in their restoration. Over the years I have gathered together a team of skilled craftsmen who you see above. They are all specialists in their own fields of motor vehicle renovation. My premises are spacious and well equipped and whatever work is required to your Lagonda, be it a minor repair or a complete rebuild, you may rest assured that we offer you a comprehensive restoration service of the highest quality.

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## Obituary—Charles W. Sewell

CHARLES SEWELL (also known as "Rex") was one of the key figures on the design side at Staines in the W. O. Bentley era from 1935 to 1948. He had worked for Bentley in the Cricklewood days and in 1931 when that company was wound up went to work at Napier at Acton who, although they had ceased to make cars in 1925, were still interested and kept a design team in being.

For the next few years he was occupied with the design of what was to have been a 4-litre six cylinder Napier. It never went into production, in fact I doubt if any of it was made in metal. When W. O. moved to Staines in 1935, he set about reassembling about him such of the old Cricklewood staff as he could attract, plus some Rolls-Royce designers like Stewart Tresillian that he admired. Charles went to work at Lagondas principally on gearbox design, and his first job was to sort out the problems of the G.9 box whose gear teeth had a nasty habit of snapping off. The subsequent detective story is too long for these pages, but all was well in the end.

The G.10 and G.11 gearboxes followed and Charles also worked on the stillborn G.12 which would have had solenoid selection.

Development of this was stopped when the Cotal gearbox made such an impression. Unfortunately the durability of the electrical cables then available was not up to the design, otherwise the Cotal might still have been with us.

When the war broke out, all car work stopped of course, but among the various items of war equipment that the factory worked on, the flame throwers became a considerable activity and Charles spent a lot of time on this. He left the company at the David Brown takeover and went to the Fighting Vehicles Research Establishment at Chobham and stayed until he hit on the idea of power driven trailers, and he left the service to develop these as a free-lance, realising that as a civil servant he wouldn't gain a penny from his ideas if he stayed there. He set up as a consulting engineer and remained one until his death in November 1980.

It is inevitable, I suppose, that the key figures of the pre-war company, who were very roughly the same age, will all grow old together and will tend to die within a short space of time, but it is still very sad when it happens.

ARNOLD DAVEY

★ ★ ★ ★

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# Letters to the Editor



See "Steam M.45"

## News from the Manchester area

Dear Sir—To celebrate the historic occasion of the youngest vintage car being 50 years old on 1st January, 1981, the Northern Lagonda Factory (who don't actually have a going vintage car between them) organised a lunch-time drinking session at the "Floating Light" near Oldham. The number of old car owners, people interested in old cars, and people interested in people who own old cars exceeded the organisers' wildest dreams, and some actually came in old cars! Schofield—V.12 Rapide, Hine—M.45, Hatfield—LG.6 Rapide, Harvey—LG.6, Brown—Vintage Crossley, Pickard—Vintage Aston Martin, Firth—LG.45 and pre-war Leyland Lorry, Buckley in Hine's LG.45 Rapide, Dearden-Briggs—M.45 and Hurst—pre-war Austin Cabriolet. John Harvey came all the way from Woking, Surrey in his LG.6—about 400 miles on the day—which should suitably shame local "enthusiasts" who couldn't be bothered to drive a few miles. They miss the point of the exercise: the idea was to actually *drive* an old car on 1st January!

HERB SCHOFIELD

## How about a "dirty engine" award?

Dear Sir—I put forward this proposal for two reasons: (1) the Club has a number of trophies which it doesn't now use; (2) I think I have a very good chance of winning it, as I shall explain in a moment. Quite apart from that though, in these days of perfectly spotless cars, there is a fairly strong argument for encouraging those who use their cars to the extent that they inevitably get too grimy to be prize winning material, and yet still deserve some recognition for being active Lagonda drivers.

But I have jumped to the end of my story. What I really want to know is: how many pre-war engines are still in regular use without having been reassembled since Lagondas built them?

Soon after buying OG 9999, our 3-litre saloon, I obtained a very sad looking spare engine, which was so encrusted with grime that you scarcely noticed the fact that it was entirely complete, including all the accessories. I naturally assumed that it was seized (it isn't easy to check without an engine stand—or car—to fix it down). I left it out of the



way at the back of the parts store, and forgot it. Until we seized the rebuilt motor in OG on holiday in Scotland, as a result of a particularly high spirited dash for the Motorail Terminal at Carlisle, which left one big-end locked solidly on the crankshaft. (When it was too late, this reminded me of what the previous owner had been advised by the factory when enquiring about safe engine speeds: "2,750 r.p.m. for 15 minutes, 2,500 r.p.m. for 24 hours". I can verify this now, I tried to do 2,750 r.p.m. for 20 minutes).

Anyhow, I digress. Having done all the things you put out of your mind, because they never actually happen (unload children, luggage, wife, granny, push car off the road, hire taxi to railhead, find towing vehicle, push OG onto train, off the train in London, another towing vehicle, etc., etc.) I eventually got round to removing the engine for inspection. It was while it was out, that I was obliged to clear the spares store where reposed the spare engine.

Have you ever moved a 3-litre engine? Well I could say a few things about that too, but while it was on the crane (of what the Americans endearingly call a Wrecking Vehicle) I thought how easy it would be to lower it onto OG's empty engine mountings for a closer look. Do I need to tell the rest, or can you guess?

Yes, you're quite right. The engine was quite free, all the valves sprang back and forth, and there was no nasty evidence of maltreatment in the oil filter. After rather impatiently connecting everything up to the mains in the car, and replacing the mag. and carbs. from the "valuables" store, it started easily and ran quietly and evenly. But the most surprising point of all, was the obvious lack of mileage put in by the engine since original assembly. I have bought enough bangers to judge an engine's history, and this one says about 30,000 miles. It has the old mica sparking plugs (even now, in use, although I did cheat with new ones to start it up) and curious little details like a keep-tab to hold the adjustment on the water pump gland nut: I haven't disturbed it, but surely these things must have been discarded by most owners within one or two gland adjustments from new?

We have now done a few winter journeys in the car, probably totalling only a couple of hundred miles, but the engine is a delight to use, with no apparent vices and extremely

smooth. Rumour passed on by the previous owner suggests that it was once rescued from a scrap yard, and its appearance suggests that it lay out in the weather for some time, but it would be nice to know whether it can genuinely have survived in such good condition and also be as assembled by Lagondas. Its presence in the scrap yard must presumably have been via a crashed car.

I have deliberately avoided dismantling it in any way, not out of laziness alone, but to save as many indications as possible of original assembly. This makes me a strong contender for the proposed "Dirty Engine" award.

This is the 75 mm version of the 3-litre unit, judging by the block dimensions, but if other Club Members have any suggestions on points of interest I should be pleased to hear from them.

JEFF ODY

Highbury, London N5.

### Vehicle Excise Duty

Dear Sir—I was interested to see your reprint of Arnold Davey's letter to the Minister of Transport concerning the proposed Vehicle Excise Duty—Tax on Possession. I'm only guessing what's being proposed—amazing what they'll do to get your money, isn't it?

Provision for exceptions to such taxation is made here in Michigan, and, I think, in most of the United States, in a very elegant way: Any vehicle over 25 years old may be licensed as a "Historic Vehicle". Special permanent number plates are issued for it at a cost of ten dollars, two dollars for a fresh pair, if and when needed. The limitations on use of a vehicle so licensed are: 'A Historic Vehicle can be any vehicle or motor cycle which is at least 25 years old and is owned solely as a collectors' item. The vehicle can be used only for participation in club activities, exhibitions, tours and similar events. Vehicles with Historic Vehicle plates cannot be used for general transportation'. Note that there is no prohibition of placing a normal license on the vehicle. I write this hoping that it might be useful in fighting off the blood suckers. I think the Insurance Companies recognise this special status too and offer differential rates.

As a previously admitted devotee of the 2.6-litre (those who have read Mr. Bastow's outstanding book will know that this LAGONDA was a W. O. Bentley concept entirely and



outstandingly advanced at that time) I have to put in a puff for it. For example, could we have one on the magazine cover some time? Michael Frostick's book shows two facing page 116 and Mr. Bastow's book has one, by Klemntaski no less, on page 172. How about it?

HARRY CLAY (C.11)

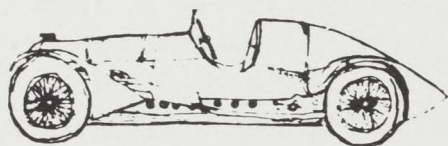
Franklin Village, Michigan,  
U.S.A.

### The Spares Scheme '81

Dear Sir—I was, as always, pleased to receive the Winter magazine and particularly to read about the new spares organisation. I myself made the suggestion of a *per capita* levy to both James Crocker and Brian Horwood some long time ago! I suggested, however, a £20 figure!

I have a nasty feeling though—and I sincerely hope that I am proved wrong—that there will be nothing like sufficient support and I will watch with interest the build-up of the fund.

One of the main—if not *the* main—objects of a Club such as ours is to keep the marque on the road and I mean just that—on the road. I'm not in sympathy with the Concours attitude where use depends on the weather and in any case it's ridiculous to try and make a 50 year-old car look as though it's just come out of the factory. Panic stations at the slightest sign of a scratch and the worst, most cases are those where everything in sight is chromed—I have seen a typical example here in Kent.



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i.e. bushes, clevis pins, shackle-pins,  
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**Contact: Bill Evans (E.14 2-litre L.C. owner)**

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**Evenings — Weekends**

"Working" spares are what are needed to keep our cars presentable and useable.

Circumstances surrounding the ability or otherwise of members to work on their cars will of course vary considerably, but spares are required even if one pays for work on repairs. It is therefore imperative that the scheme succeeds and that all members show their worth to the Club. There are successful examples in other clubs and contributions from only half of the membership would be futile.

Anyone who buys "a pile of scrap" and eventually puts a Lagonda back on the road deserves the support of the Club—which means the members. On the other hand the unnecessary hoarding of spares/cars not likely to see the light of day in the foreseeable future equally deters enthusiasm in those wishing to become useful Lagonda Club members.

Taking the proposed scheme one stage further I feel that there ought to be an *annual* contribution to the fund even if it's only £2-£3 added to the yearly subscription.

Well, having stuck my neck out it's up to me to put my money where my mouth is and herewith £20 as per my original suggestion for onward despatch to Brian.

I become an O.A.P. next month, my four-year rebuild is just about complete and I hope to attend my first A.G.M. for 30 years in 1981!

JOHN ANDERSON

Worth, near Deal, Kent.

### Telecontrol Dampers

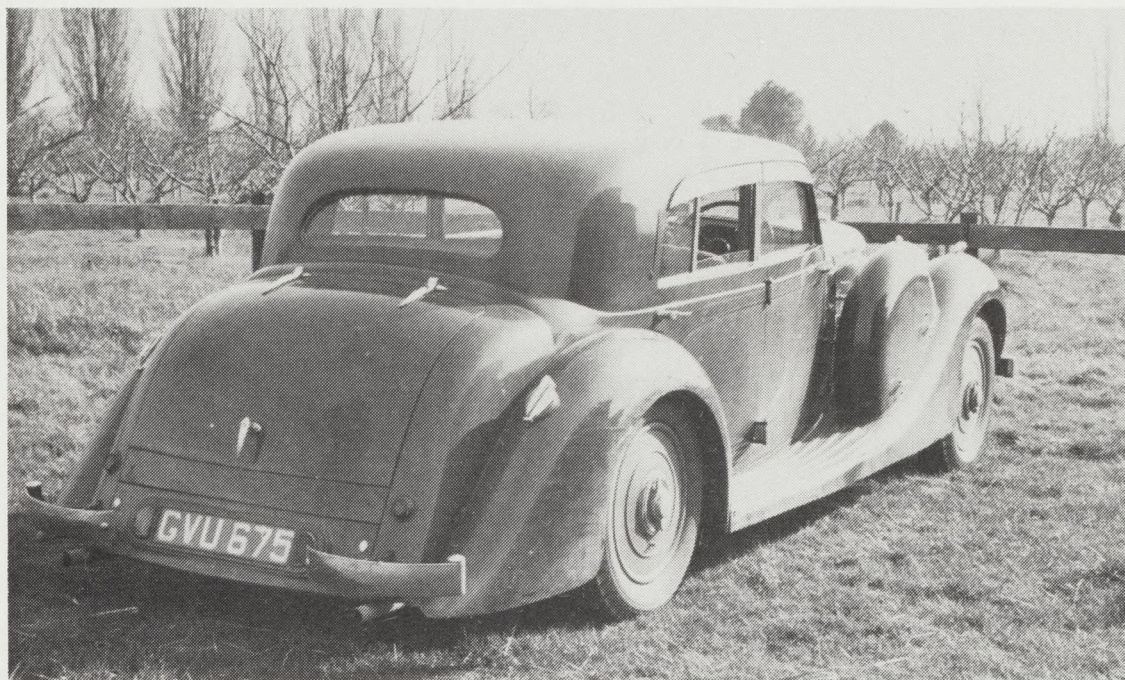
Dear Sir—It has always seemed to the writer that these are among the nicer fitments on quality pre-war cars. Not only because of their contribution to the comfort of the machine to which they are fitted, but more particularly because they provide something with which the driver can fiddle during the boring bits of driving. Even better is that this fiddling is registered on the one gauge over which the driver has some control!

All this is true if the system is in working order and sadly many of them are not. For some time replacements for the rubber bags, which do the pressing in the actual damper, have been available from "The Complete Automobilst", but there has not been an answer to leaking Hand Regulators; there is now!

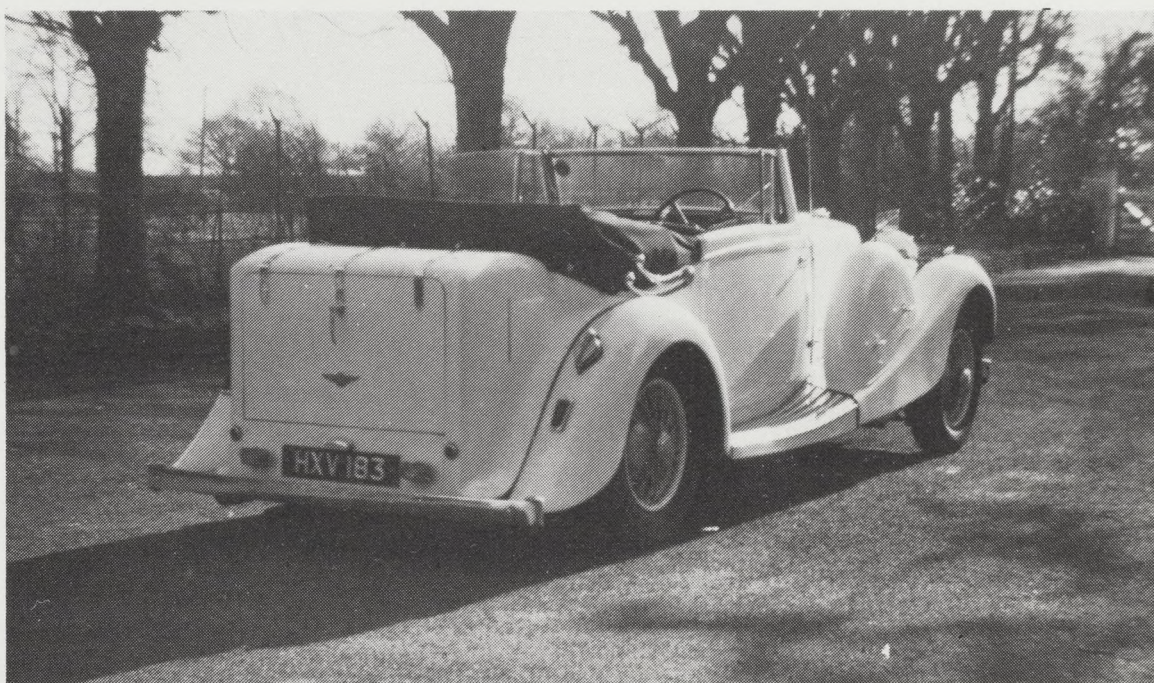
Originally the system relies on a shaped canvas and rubber-bag in a metal tube and



## PRIVATE SALE



**LAGONDA V.12 4480 cc Short Chassis Sportsman Saloon (4 door), dark blue, manufactured October 1939. First licenced 25th June, 1946. Genuine mileage 71,274 since new. Lagonda coachwork, blue leather upholstery. Original tools with leather bound instruction book and workshop manual. Full maintenance history. Offers.**



**LAGONDA LG.45. Sanction III, 4467 cc drophead coupé, cream, enlarged boot made for continental travel. Coachwork by Lagonda. Made under the direction of W. O. Bentley. Mileage 5,701 since complete overhaul. Offers to: H. L. Buckton (B.88), Weather Oak Farm, Morton Bagot, Warwickshire B80 7EB. Tel: Studley 2966.**



this bag is deformed by the action of the screw-wheel, varying the available volume and therefore, the pressure. (Copies of a booklet are available from Arnold Davey, which explains how to fill and pre-set the system.) The bags become porous over the years, and make an increasingly ineffective seal and as they are a somewhat complicated shape no one has been able to produce replacements at an economic price. However, a replacement is now available which converts the metal tube into a pump with a controllable piston in it. These pistons are available from me at £5.00 each if there are enough orders, or £7.00 each if only ten can be ordered and at the same time full instructions for fitting will be sent.

The prototypes have been on my car for three months and have not lost any pressure.

BRIAN DEARDEN-BRIGGS

Mirfield, Yorkshire.

### **The 100 m.p.h. V.12**

Dear Sir—Arnold Davey's visit to Stanley Mann's garage to try the V.12 Saloon for December's *News Letter* highlights and of the risks in selling interesting motor vehicles to a dealer.

That the original "100 miles in an hour" V.12 should be split up, as described, is horrific. Now there will be two V.12s running about each intrinsically and irretrievably incorrect. Surely no one with a true love of fine cars can condone such action. Will it be that a V.12 Le Mans Replica will appear in V.S.C.C. meetings, an inaccurate special for the pleasure of people to be misled rather than there being an original interesting saloon to be admired for being a rather splendid honest motor car? Shame, Mr. Mann!

How ironic does Mike Wilby's piece about FPK 550 in issue 46 of the magazine appear in the light of Mr. Mann's actions.

JOHN FINCH, (F.31)

3 Hillside Mansions, Jacksons Lane,  
Highgate, London N6.

### **The same V.12?**

Dear Sir—The Winter issue of your excellent magazine arrived this morning, and looking through it I was interested to see Mr. D. Berry's musings on a V.12.

In 1955 or '56, I think, Mr. G. H. Lang imported into Malaya through Port Swettenham a V.12 close coupled sports-

man's saloon, which I thought had belonged to Earl Howe. Can this be the car to which Mr. Berry refers? And if so, I would like to know when and from whom it was acquired. The last I heard of it was from a wealthy Indian or Armenian gentleman who had bought it, and was not very well up in such matters as how it should be driven and cared for.

On Mr. Lang's behalf, I had cleared the car through Malayan Customs, and prior to driving it to Kuala Lumpur, filled it up at the local petrol station. The young Chinese girl who served me exclaimed on seeing the car "Hai-yah, banyak (very) old-fashioned lah", and there was I thinking how up-to-date it looked!

But it was a most enjoyable drive on the winding road through the rubber estates—alas, now a dual carriageway—and I was impressed with the utter smoothness of the engine. Quite different from W.O.'s earlier 4-cylinder engines.

I shall look forward to seeing pictures of the car when work is complete.

P. J. GIBBS PANCHERI

Bentley Drivers Club,  
Long Crendon, Bucks.

### **More basic help?**

Dear Sir—May I make a suggestion for the *Lagonda Magazine*. The Club does tend (I think) to assume that everyone knows everything about Lagondas, hence if one is not knowledgeable (my case), one tends to feel a bit at a loss.

Could the Magazine contain at some time: head and shoulders photos of all committee members; pictures and descriptions of each type of Lagonda; full details of where to get repairs and spares?

As far as the latter item is concerned the gentleman in the West Country (whose name I forget) and is it Mr. Brian Horwood, must get a bit frayed with all the enquiries they get, so why does the Magazine not make use of long standing members' experience and give full details of such items as where to get: rechroming; rebuilding; servicing; chassis repairs; re-upholstery; spares?

People may scoff and think that one should do most repairs oneself. If I had time and the knowledge, I would do so. At one time, before I was self-employed, I rebuilt two old M.G.s, but only because the Club kept new members fully in the picture, and repair manuals were



precise and clear. The help the Lagonda repair manuals give seems pretty minimal, and reading the Magazine and news sheets I sometimes don't know what people are talking about.

In short, if the Magazine could just for once assume that *everybody* in the Club is a new member, and set out all and every bit of information it can, it would be a tremendous help.

Do you know of any person or garage in this area who would service my 3-litre? I take it to a garage in London at the moment. They sell a lot of old cars but I don't think they have ever lifted up a bonnet.

M. K. WAISTELL

"Jordans", Church Lane,  
Ardingly, West Sussex.

### Why not use them?

Dear Sir—In response to Derek Green's letter in the Winter issue of the magazine, I feel that I must second very heartily his recommendations—let's USE our cars! After all one is paying:

1. garaging costs—extremely high in London;
2. Road Tax—that is for use of said vehicle on our roads;
3. Insurance.

Now what is the point of insuring, what amounts to a useless means of transport, unless it is used. Why not put them in a museum and have done with the expense. When you take these three major factors into account, let alone the numerous extras, it all adds up to a lot of money, so why not use our expensive toys.

Chaps—less time in the Pub... Girls—less time in the kitchen... after all "the love of your life" must know where the kitchen is, if he doesn't, he will soon find out!

If you live your everyday life with a modern box you have probably forgotten the exhilarating joy of the other world of motoring.

Let's use them—I do!

MRS. ROBBY HEWITT, (H.36)

11 Bolton Gardens Mews,  
London S.W.10

### A Steam M.45

Dear Sir—I read with interest in the report of the Northern Driving Tests a suggestion that my M.45R (apparently now called a special) is driven by steam.

Unfortunately this rumour appears to be

spreading. When the "Craven News" recently published a photograph of it leading a parade in Ilkley to celebrate the 1900th anniversary of the foundation of the Roman settlement there, it was described as a "Steam chariot".

So that this rumour can be scotched for ever I enclose that photograph, showing two "Roman" passengers.

On the other hand, it could be that there may be something wrong, so we should be glad of the advice of any member with experience of over-heating and knowledge of the type of replacement water pumps and S.U. carburetors suitable for a M.45R.

W. R. HILL

A. C. HILL (CO-DRIVER)

Ilkley, W. Yorks.

### The Story of a Beer Mug

Dear Sir—This true story of gentlefolk is a line that I am sure no 1920s Ad man could have thought up but of which I am certain he would have been proud.

Following the A.G.M. an excellent dinner and dance was enjoyed by those stalwarts who remained. Good food and excellent alcoholic beverages were consumed and even the Almighty appeared to approve the proceedings since he laid on one of his better firework displays, together with other heavenly outbursts.

In the early hours a mad dash for the 2-litre was made, avoiding the falling cats and dogs and, perhaps understandably, the pre-flight check was on this occasion skipped. The heavenly wrath was joined by the burble of inimitable exhausts and thereby followed a ride of the Valkyries for 20 miles and as we approached the warmth and comfort of home, I let the old girl have her head—she gets bored sitting in a line up of her bretheren all day being poked by strange fingers. Switch off, climb out and unload—total amazement—there, sitting on the running board was the beer mug I had abandoned during the afternoon.

I remembered I had left it a quarter full and it was now exactly where I had left it, half full of somewhat diluted ale.

"A gentleman's sporting carriage capable of transporting you and your beer without fear of spillage at up to 70 miles per hour."

DEREK GREEN

Hartley Wintney,  
Hampshire.





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