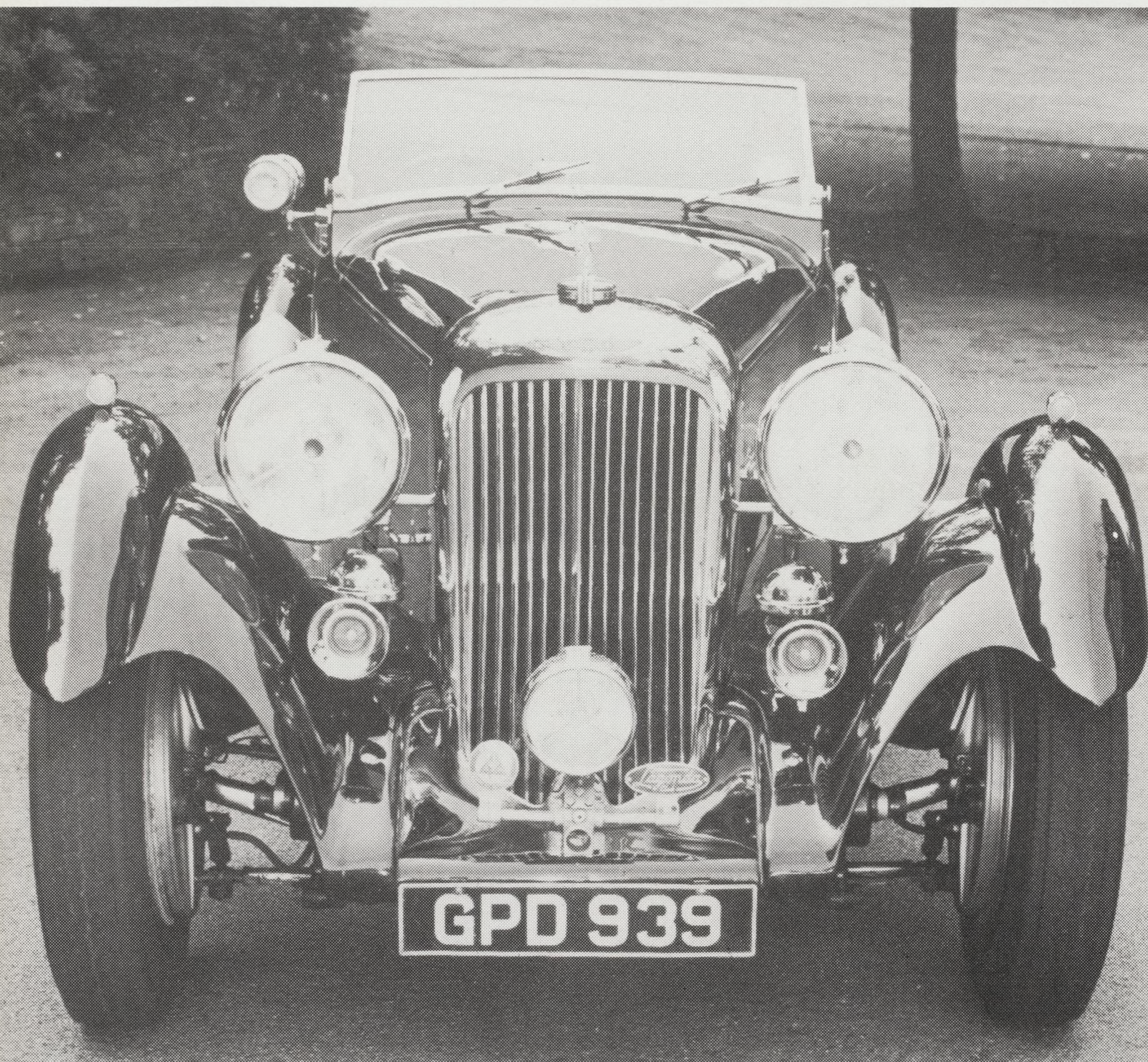




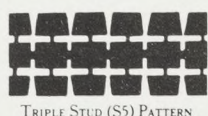
**THE MAGAZINE OF THE  
LAGONDA CLUB**

**Number 119**

**Autumn 1983**







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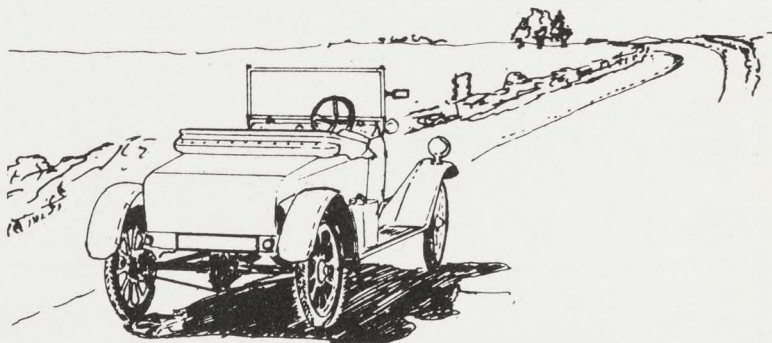
MAGAZINE

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Autumn 1983

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*Editor:* B. W. Walker, 17 Malcolm Road, Shirley, Solihull, W. Mids. B90 2AH



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*FRONT COVER:* Herb Schofield's Rapide, designed in 1936, to fit the magazine in 1983. How thoughtful. Photo: Martin Willescroft.

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.

**COPY FOR WINTER 'LAGONDA' URGENTLY REQUIRED. Submit to Editor by 30th November please.**



# Out and About

MEMBERS WILL BE SAD to learn of the death of the founder of the 2-litre Register, Peter Densham, on 26th August 1983.

Peter was a close friend of my father in the early years and I well remember his kindness to both my sister and myself. It was always a delight to either visit him or to welcome his arrival when he came to see us.

He was an extremely kind, generous and helpful person who will be greatly missed.

A full tribute by Alastair Innes Dick appears elsewhere in this magazine.

PG 8804 now boasts an MoT, insurance and tax. The first time for 12 years. Although she was not used to attend the A.G.M., it was raining on the Friday when I left, she appears to be fairly happy with the arrangement. Removal of the main windscreen led to problems of forward vision with the hood up as the aero screens are fairly low and I tend to sit fairly high. I did not think this a reasonable basis to try the benefits of the insurance policy.

Apparently 53 other Lagondas managed to persuade their keepers to attend, along with passengers, and enjoy a delightful Saturday.

I found it most reassuring to see the pleasant "used" state of the cars. Fun and use obviously being the overriding thoughts in owners' minds, not the fear of having to spend hours drying and polishing every time the cars are taken out.

Some clubs award their concours prizes to cars that are never used on the road, being trailed to and from meetings.

Happily the Lagonda Club is not amongst them.

Of the cars present the awards were made to the following:

<b>Car Club</b>	C. Sherwood	3-litre
<b>2/3-litre Class</b>		
<b>1st</b>	G. Seaton	3-litre
<b>2nd</b>	P. Evans	16/80
<b>3rd</b>	C. Banks	2-litre h.c.
<b>Concours</b>		
<b>1st</b>	A. Downie	LG.45 Rapide
<b>2nd</b>	P. Erhardt	M.45 D.H.C.
<b>3rd</b>	J. Skeffington	LG.45
<b>Merit Awards</b>	J. Davis	3-litre D.H.C.
	T. Wakeley	2-litre s.c.
	J. Leeks	2-litre l.c.

Is there a good "legal bod" in the club?

Two recent incidents with the Lagonda would seem to indicate that I may soon need one.

The first occurred when, in the middle of the engine rebuild, an apparently intelligent person appeared and enquired, in the past tense, "What was it?". Perhaps if I had thrown the 1 lb. copper mallet instead of the 2 lb., the acceleration and flight path would have been better and I would have had my first fool.

The second happened whilst undergoing all the frustration of "running-in". One endeavours to keep the speed to reasonable levels, leading to tedium. However corners, roundabouts and the like can brighten things a little. Whilst approaching a bit of fun, in the form of a roundabout, in a 40 m.p.h. limit at no more than 35 m.p.h., looking ahead to see whether "fun" was to happen, I spotted a "modern" parked on the entrance with hazard lights aglow and the owner walking to the rear of his delight. I allowed plenty of room for both.

Suddenly the person went "photographic" and stepped into the intended line of action. Cheese was not the first word to spring to mind. It had to be shorter in the time available. I had to stop. The 2-litre l.c. is *low*. The sump had only just been cleaned and I had no desire to begin the exercise again.

*He looked surprised* and said he had not realised that the car was going so well. *I was surprised*. I did not think the brakes were that efficient as I haven't adjusted them yet.

However I missed him and he missed his photograph. Next time? Who knows?

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## PUB MEETS

**Midlands:** Third Thursday in each month at the "Green Dragon", Willington (just off the A38 between Derby and Birmingham).

**Southern:** Second Wednesday each month at 8.30 p.m. at the Windlemere Golf Course Club House, West End, near Lightwater, Surrey. (Near the junction of the A319 Chobham Road and A322. Exit at Junction 3 if approaching on the M3.) Alec Downie is the organiser.

**Northern:** First Sunday lunchtime each month at the "Floating Light", Standedge, near

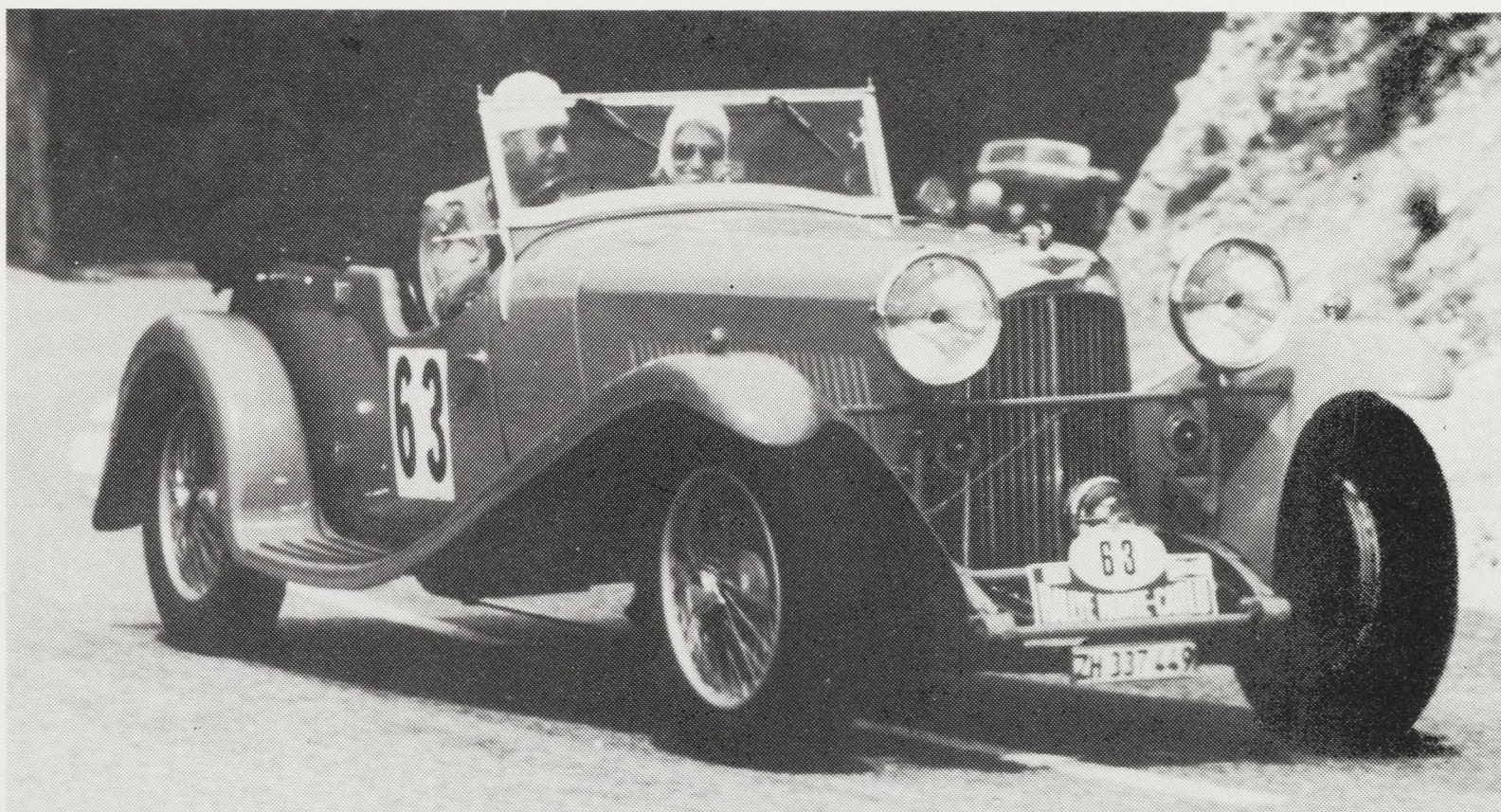
Marsden, W. Yorks.

**London:** Jointly with the B.D.C. on the third Tuesday each month at the "Bishop's Finger" in Smithfield. Easy parking.

**North East:** First Wednesday in each month at the Cave Castle Hotel, South Cave, N. Humberside. With V.S.C.C.

**Dorset:** First Thursday each month at Hambros Arms, Milton Abbas for a "Noggin and Natter".

## Continental Report



*Well on the way to victory. Ursula and Rolf Stahli on the "proper side" of the road.*

*Photo: Rolf Stahli*

SOME GOOD NEWS from the continent:

Have you ever heard of a Lagonda winning the Monte Carlo Rallye? Well, it was two weeks ago and it was the 4th Rallye Monte-Carlo des Voitures Anciennes 1983 (for cars from 1919–1945) and we were lucky to receive the first prize, the cup from S.A.S. le Prince Souverain (Rainier) for the category "Tourisme". (There was a second category for sports cars, won by Mr. Rückwarth (D) with a Daimler Benz SSK, 1929.)

Well, we didn't think of winning the rally in taking part this year (already the third time with the Lagonda), we were lucky to get a

starting place with our M.45 amongst all these famous Bugattis, Alfa Romeos, Mercedes, Daimler Benz, Invictas, Bentleys, Rolls Royces and even Delahaye, Talbot Lago and Hispanos as well as some Americans with Packards and Chryslers; about 60 cars in total. There were competitors from all over Europe and even one from Australia and four from the U.S.A. Our starting place was Lausanne (the four others were London, Barcelona, Paris and Bad Homburg in Germany). We started at 3 p.m. (21st June) for the first 800 km. journey — the concentration run — taking us to Aix les Bains where we had to be at 4 p.m. the next day. This



gave us time for normal sleep in an hotel during the night. From Aix les Bains, where all the competitors met, we started for the "common run" early in the morning at 7.30 for the 470 km. to Monte Carlo. The speed chosen was 50 km./h. and there were six time-checks on the way. It was a really nice route starting over steep hills (passes) and following up and down mainly the "Route Napoleon" (N75/N85) to the south. We arrived at Monte Carlo at 7 p.m. (23rd June) having had an entirely trouble-free run (with nearly all the screws still tight!).

These three days of really enjoyable "motoring" in France (best of weather all the time) were followed by three days in Monte Carlo in great luxury, big fun, good food and plenty of wine, drinks and champagne free of charge (or was it included in the price?). Here was also the third part of the rallye, a concours for the best restored car, a concours d'élégance and an acceleration and braking trial. The selection took place in this last test as nearly all the crews came to Monte Carlo without any penalty points. In this test, time was measured for an acceleration for 120 metres and the distance was measured for braking to the actual

stop. These results were calculated in a Formula 
$$N = \frac{T(D+120)}{10}$$
 giving a certain amount of points.

The fact was, that braking was quite important and as the Lagonda has quite a reasonable acceleration but really excellent brakes, we got a really good result — first prize!

It was nice to see the brave grey Lagonda as the winning car amongst all these competitive and powerful, impressive looking vehicles. We came down to Monte Carlo like tourists with just our luggage on the rear seats, while many teams had assistance cars and tender cars full of tools and spares, equipped with mechanics and moral assistance...

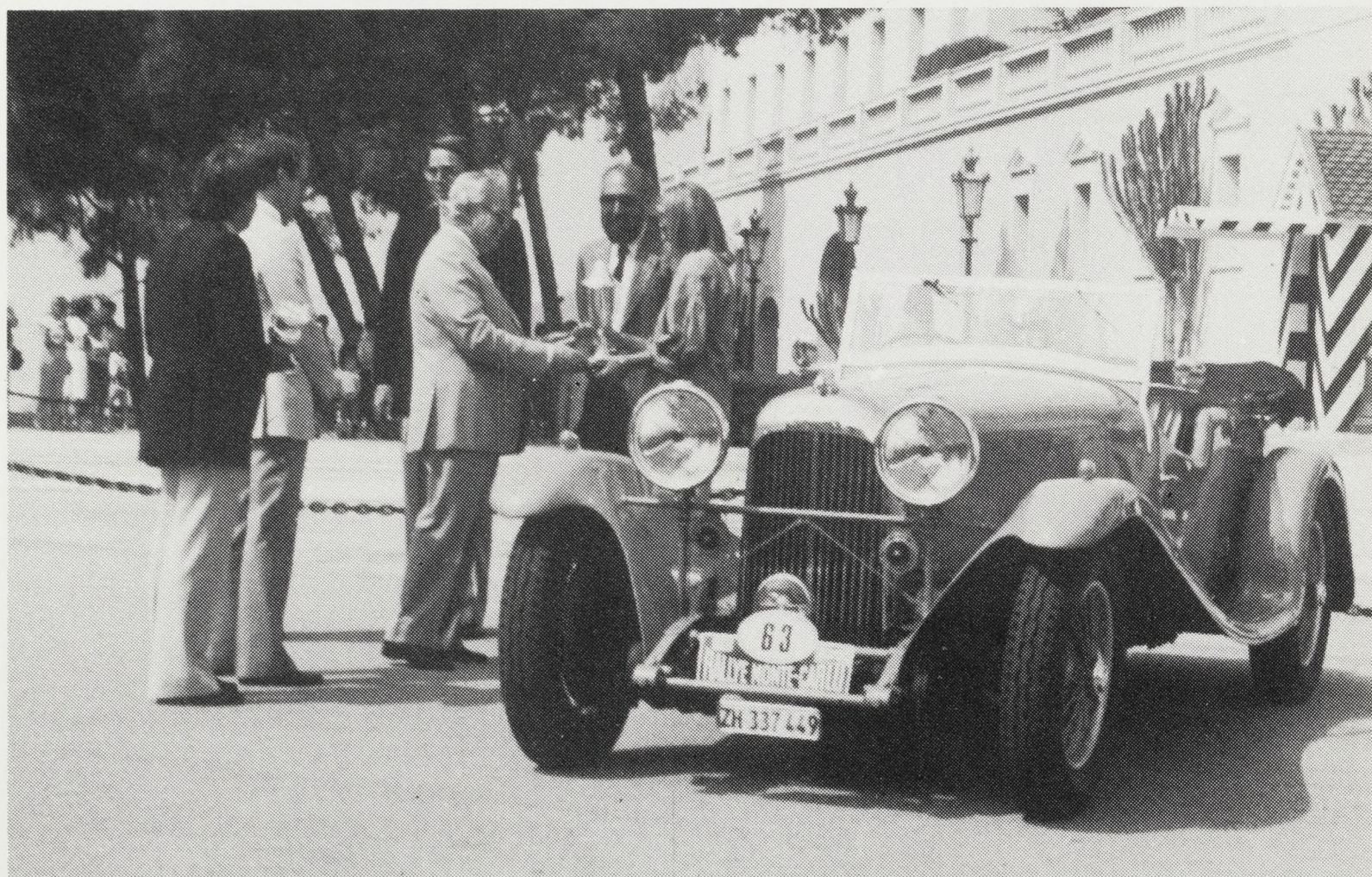
Well, we really had a good time amongst all these motor-people and the whole rally was so well organised that I think everybody is looking for the next one which should take place in about two or three years.

This is the short report of "a Lagonda winning the Monte-Carlo Rallye".

Looking forward to the A.G.M., we hope we can manage to come this year.

Greetings from Switzerland.

URSULA AND ROLF STÄHLI



1983, 4th Rallye Monte-Carlo des Voitures Anciennes. M.45, Ursula and Rolf receiving the goods from S.A.S. le Prince Rainier III of Monaco.

Photo: Rolf Stahli





PETER ASHLEY DENSHAM, who has died at the age of 68, had been Vice-President of the Lagonda Club since 1961. But his dedication to Lagondas and the Club went back far beyond that. His affair with cars began with a Morgan but, at the age of 20, he changed to a 2-litre Lagonda with which marque he stayed for good.

Peter was in the Territorials — the H.A.C. — before the War and on its outbreak made military history by arriving, in his 2-litre, at his first posting a day early, having got advance infor-

mation of its location. In due course he went to India and was commissioned as a Mountain Gunner, staying in the Far East for the rest of the War.

At the end of the War he farmed for two years with his brother and in 1946 founded the 2-litre Register. Even Peter was surprised by the enthusiasm shown at his most successful launching of it; perhaps this was because the main object of the Register was to keep the cars alive rather than to indulge in social activities.

The Register grew steadily and in 1951 resulted in the amalgamation of the old Lagonda Car Club and the 2-litre Register into the present Lagonda Club of which Peter was Club Patron from 1951 to 1960, then Vice-President, also having been Treasurer from 1969 to 1972.

In 1955 Peter started his business which increasingly took up his time. Peter's single-mindedness about the "job in hand" made it difficult for him to indulge in Club activities but his helpfulness to all Lagonda people was never failing and was, characteristically, done quietly and effectively. He presented a painting — the Densham Trophy — for annual award for the most active 2-litre or 16/80.

What is not generally known is that, when Wilbur Gunn's grave was found at Egham and required suitable maintenance, it was Peter who was the anonymous donor to the cost of its upkeep. His generosity in making the gift and his insistence on anonymity were entirely typical of him.

The Club, besides losing one of its founders, has also lost a great friend and we hope that Lucy will be comforted by the knowledge that she has all our sympathy.

A.B.I.D.

## *How not to do it*

FIRSTLY phone up the motor trader. You have heard he has the car for sale. Then tell him what a rare, unique car he has, then point out that only three were made. Proceed to relate the exact history, the names of the famous drivers connected with it and the races in which it ran. Compound this by adding the simple fact that it is worth a lot more than he is asking for it.

Then proceed to the point of phoning various Lagonda friends, all over the country, who you think should definitely save this historic car from going to a fate worse than death . . . abroad, again.

Then become inspired at 9.30 the same evening . . . realise that maybe it could be just what you are looking for . . .

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# Midland Happenings

THE MIDLANDS Pub Meet — third Thursday in each month at the "Green Dragon", Willington (just off the A38 between Derby and Birmingham).

The A.M.L. Factory visit, scheduled for Wednesday, 20th July was postponed — them not us. A dispute between the panel beaters and a Director led to the workers being given their notice (immediate). After several days, Courtney arrived back at the Works, the dispute was resolved, the Director involved "resigned" and the visit was on again.

A phone call from Roger Stowers the A.M.L. P.R.O. informing me of this left me just six days to scrape a contingent together.

With the help of John Batt, to whom I am most grateful, a dozen people and four cars made it.

A suggestion by Mrs. Batt was accepted by Roger and the tour commenced in the engine department. We were thus able to speak to the gentlemen responsible for the building of that remarkable power unit. We have on previous occasions arrived there after everyone had left. Perhaps next year we can start in the Service Area or the Upholstery Shed.

As expected, nothing has changed — even the production run is identical to '82, four Lagondas and one Aston per week.

After the disappointment of the cancellation and with so little time to reorganise we again had an excellent day. Many thanks to Roger Stowers and my apologies to the many members who wanted to attend but whom I could not contact in time.

I feel I must comment on Philip Stephens' article "Beating the 'Trundles' " in No. 118.

Whilst I think the "Mod" to the 3-litre was very well drawn and described, I think a little of Philip's time could have been spent on rectifying his engine and exhaust problems. 4,000 r.p.m. and only doing 50. Engine roar at 70 — rubbish!

Mine is a 1953 D.H.C. which I have taken around the clock since I acquired it in '68. In that time the engine has remained untouched until January this year when the head was removed, decoked, two valves fitted and reassembled. It did and still does 100 m.p.h. with ease and the only noise is the wind. At 70 m.p.h. is a modest 3,500 — as they say of long stroke engines, it fires at every lamp post.

As for keeping up with the "Jaguar Boys", I get more delight in seeing the Jap rubbish off.

Thanks, Philip, for the overdrive info.

HARRY TAYLOR

Midlands Secretary

## *If it works, leave it alone*

TO THOSE READERS who may have surmised from the dearth of notes emanating from this outpost of automobile endeavour in the Spring issue of our magazine, that some final victory over the nasty habits of LG 8429 had been achieved, I crave indulgence.

I have, since 26th April, until today, 1st September, been engaged in an enterprise that far worthier company than I have baulked at for one reason or another. I have in fact been building an MG "B" . . . "Why?", you may ask in ill disguised boredom, and I am afraid that my answer must be "Vanity". In a rash moment one winter night in the early part of the year, surveying the remains of my son's latest sacrifice on the altar of youth, I said, "Never mind, lad . . . I have the technology, I will rebuild it, stronger, faster, better, etc., etc." and he gave me the job. The technology consisted of a set of UN spanners and a lump

hammer.

Whether or not he will succeed in controlling his compulsion to reduce every car he drives to a high density cube of scrap metal remains to be seen, all I can hope for is that some filial affection, nurtured in his infant breast, will remind him of the 250 single handed man hours that I have put into the project from receipt of the body shell from Cowley to the quick burble round the block to see if anything falls off prior to going for its M.o.T. 250 hours of sweat, toil and blood. At least I now know what the "B" stands for.

How on earth these cars were built on a flow line is beyond the limits of my understanding; there does not seem to be one tiny part that has been designed specifically for the car, there is a vast hotch potch of spacing pieces, strengthening and supporting brackets, packing washers and a host of small, very sharp



items of metal whose purpose is cloaked in an ambiguity that is extremely difficult to penetrate. However all this is behind me now, and, as it is to Lagonda folk that I pen these notes, rather than the M.G.O.C., I will turn to matters Lagonda.

During the time of the MG rebuild, my attention would sometimes wander across the garage to where the 16/80 stood. Rather alone and aloof amongst the heaps of tin and electronic gadgetry that belonged to the MG, and I began to cultivate a feeling of neglect towards the old lady. I had promised her for some time that I would one day have her wheels rebuilt, but had always put it off, usually because I needed her on the road, and the wheel company took rather a long time. However now seemed a good time to do it, and refinish them in powder coat, rather than continue the uphill struggle against the elements with paint and brush. Her wheels were quite wobbly to say the least, and as I was up to my lay shaft in the MG I couldn't very well be driving the Lagonda. Critical path analysis I think it's called, doing more than one thing at once and arriving at a common end at the correct time.

I took the wheels to a company called the \*\*\*\*\* Wheel Company near Birmingham, and agreed a price for a total rebuild and epoxy powder coat finish in black. After some time the wheels were ready and I collected them, and at the time was very impressed with the appearance; though you must keep in mind that powder coating is a cruel finish to any surface that it not perfect, and of course my old rims had their fair share of rust pits in them. All in all though I considered it money well spent, any money spent on a Lagonda is well spent, isn't it?

The wheels seemed a little tight to slide on the hubs and did not seem to go on quite as far as they used to, but I put this down to the abrasive blasting needed to remove the old paint and rust, sharpening up the splines somewhat, so with a good push and with the wheel nuts hammered well home I took the car out for a spin, confidently expecting that my view of the cycle wings would be rock steady and that we should have a perfectly smooth and enjoyable run.

Horror! Horror! At 30 m.p.h. the wings shook like a Dervish, the scuttle gyrated and the whole car vibrated almost without control. Not until 47 m.p.h. or so was reached could the shaking be reduced and after this critical

speed had passed it commenced again. I returned to the garage, convinced that something was loose at the front end, but inspection proved this was not so. There was no loose spring, or damper or king pin or steering arm or loose anything. It never entered my head to look at the wheels, after all they had just been rebuilt at great expense. Puzzled I sat on the floor in front of the car and idly spun one of the wheels. It jerked left, right, up, down, left, right, up, down. I checked the others. They were all the same, a thousand times worse than they had been before the rebuild. In fury I knocked off the wheel nuts and attempted to remove the wheels, intending to whistle them straight back to the wheel builders; I could not get them off, they were stuck fast, no matter how I tried I could not shift them more than about one eighth of an inch. In the end in order to get them up on to the bench for examination I took the whole assembly off at the hub. Wheel, brake drum and hub, lock, stock and barrel. Examination proved that the inner row of the outside spoke heads were cocked up at an angle instead of being flush with the wheel hub. These heads had dug into the hub splines and were holding the wheel fast on to the hub.

It needed 6½ tons of hydraulic pressure to press each hub out of the wheel. This gives some indication of the force that is applied when screwing home the wheel nuts. With the wheel free from the hub it was plain to see the damage. Each hub had suffered in a like manner, with the spoke head crushing about ¼ in. of the spline. The only available remedy was to machine off the damaged portion of spline, though I did not like doing this, after all if you have 3 in. of spline, then at some time or other you must need 3 in. A bit like the late Tony Hancock when he said "if you have eight pints of blood then you need eight pints", just before he fainted at the prick of the vampire's needle.

I am now left with four modified hubs that I would prefer were not modified, and every appearance of a long and acrimonious dispute with the \*\*\*\*\* Wheel Company over responsibility for what has been an expensive and frustrating exercise. If there is a moral in this sad story it must be "if it works, leave it alone".

PETE TOWERS

\*\*\*\*\* *Pete will, no doubt, fill in these for members who contact him.*



# *The Brooklands Garden Party*

DRIVER HEWITT SAID: "Come, clamber in, step on anything you can find". Difficult in a skirt, tights and high heels (chaps, please note), but she accomplished the feat.

I later discovered that my lady passenger was none other than out Ministeress of Transport, Mrs. Linda Chalker, a very sporting lady.

Then came the two by two Byfleet runs, for which a crash helmet is compulsory. A good friend came rushing up with an R.A.C. stamped model. The only trouble was that it was a genuine 1926 model . . . so I wore it. By then I was completely demoralised and well "seen off" by a standard 4½-litre.

Returning to 1983, Peter Whenman had a spin along the banking. He returned and seemed very enthusiastic having seen off a 4½-litre Bentley and said "it doesn't half go".

Alan Geggus and I also fielded my 1922, ex

J. A. Joyce, single seater A.C. on which we had done much work, but unfortunately it was not ready enough to run that day. What a super car it is — the only one I have ever driven which actually likes corners.

It was then time to go home; 4½-litre Team Car, A.C., trailer and tour car. The only problem being our "bon ami", Roland Morgan was not to be found, anywhere . . . it transpired that he was having a "low-ebb" in the long grass on the Byfleet banking and there is an awful lot of it at Brooklands. We eventually found him and scooped him up, leaving him in the good hands of Southern Secretary, Alec Downie.

What a lovely Garden Party it was, never mind that the Queen wasn't there — she missed something.

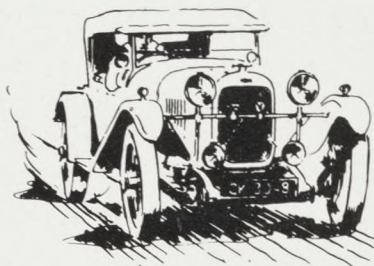
MRS. ROBBY HEWITT



*Members getting good support outside the Club House.*

*Photo: Mrs. Robby Hewitt*

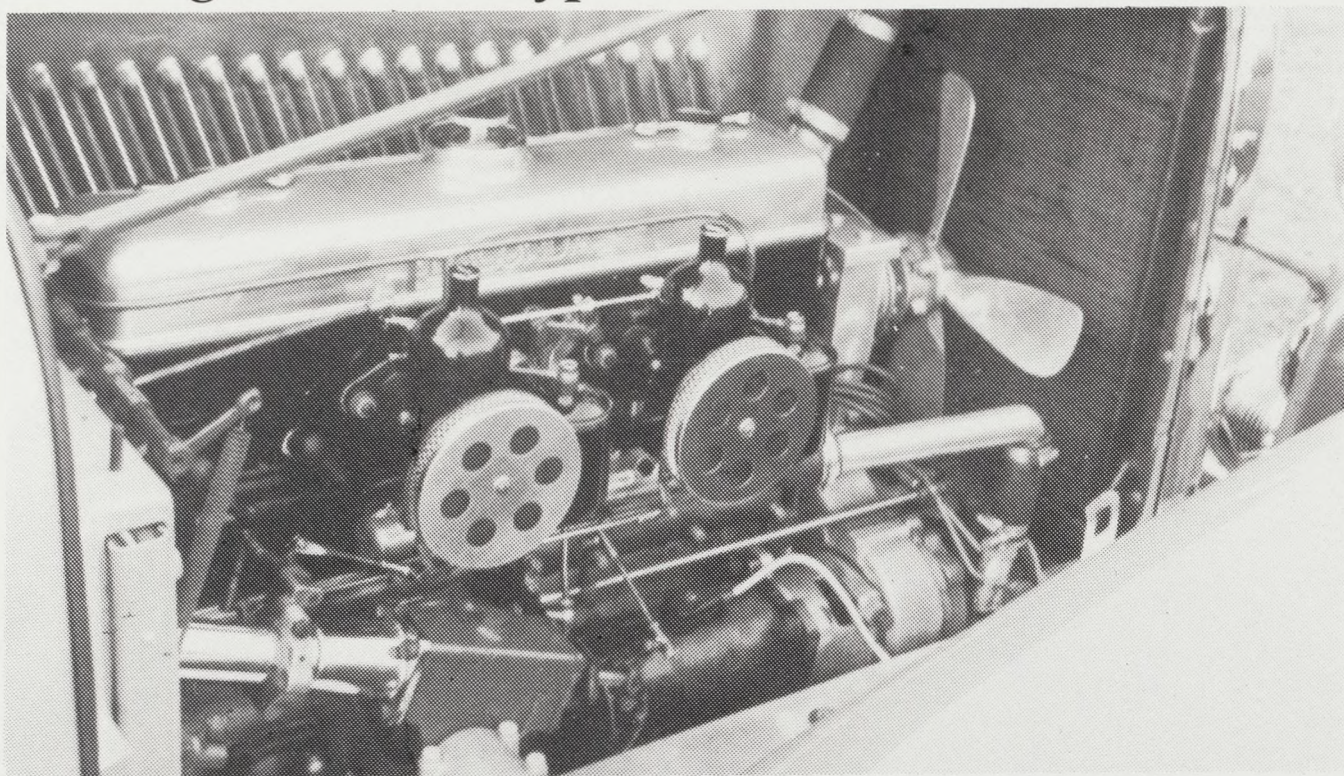




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# Ramblings 1983

by THE CAPTAIN

IT SEEMS the magazine is always short of copy and since I have done so little this year (but elegantly) I felt the necessity to stick my unwanted oar in and stir the pudding so to speak! (mixed metaphors).

Work progressed on the V.12 which will finally be finished in July and if I can get it set up right we shall give it a whirl at the B.D.C. Silverstone meeting at the end of August. I think I can say it is a labour of love to take a smashed V.12 from Cadwell Park back to the Northern Factory, strip, mend and rebuild it and find it took you four years to do it. Fortunately my brother who was driving on the day at Cadwell has mended a good deal more quickly than the car. Whether his rebuild is a better job than mine is not for me to say. However, he has definitely been developing some peculiar habits over recent years (buying a Talbot for instance!) *105s are O.K.* — Ed. I think delusions of John Hindmarsh catch us all on occasions and Fred is no exception. Considering Cadwell is damn near impossible for a V.12 Lagonda, I think he came out of it remarkably well.

I will not bore you, at least not yet, with a technical dissertation on a complete V.12 rebuild since that is something for another occasion and I must see if the damn thing works properly before I tell you how clever I am. I think it is sufficient to say that the chassis had to be straightened, the engine was six inches further back than W. O. Bentley had intended, all the brake back plates were broken, etc., etc. There was nothing that was not broken or bent and yet it did not look too bad at the time!!

I have also sold my grey LG.45 Tourer this year. Do I hear cries of "Another Mistake"? Thus there has been nothing left on the road in which to partake in the various club cavortings! Three Lagondas in bits are however enough to fray the charms of any "vintage car nut" and so as the V.12 nears completion, a start has been made on my other LG.45. I realise this statement will cause the likes of Hine and Hall to break out into a cold sweat, but it was obvious that a public announcement had to be made at some time on such an important subject and this seemed to be the right opportunity.

I think that is enough of the serious stuff so

we can now turn to the more light hearted matters such as the lovely hair shirt that Roy Hatfield was wearing at Sandtoft! But let us begin earlier in the year. Like a good little disciple, I have attended the V.S.C.C. race meetings throughout the year and given and received my fair share of banter and bonhomie, consumed the regulation quantities of the lousy beer that they serve at all racing circuits, then trotted off home in my little tin box. It is not the same is it? If the weather had been kinder earlier in the year I would have got the "big bike" out on some of these occasions, but with my riding ability an MV Augusta 750S is definitely for the dry! Anyway I do not want to get my flashy multi-coloured leathers wet. I did manage a few early outings with the "Ollerton Chapter" to various venues (who the hell are they? you ask). It would take too long to explain who they are and it does not matter a lot anyway. Like the "Barrel of Bricks" and Mr. Hoffnung I wish I had not bothered to start this bit. The bike however, has given me some joy and I rode it up to Sandtoft to see the lads at the driving tests. This proved to be a better outing. Nice weather, nice beer, nice people and nice cars. It was a pity I could not stay the night as I believe all went well!

Anyway, next year I shall be in the thick of it if the R.A.C. will allow! I shouldn't be surprised if the regulations are so many and onerous that none of us will venture forth. They really do get right up my nose and I thought they were there to service the motoring public and the competitive motorist in particular. Who the hell wants to fit some ghastly timing device on the front of their pre-war car just because the R.A.C. say so? We do our competitive motoring to enjoy ourselves and I'm sure a 1/10 second is not that critical to us. It would also have been nice to ask us. However, the R.A.C. would not make any exceptions! My God, we talk about the bureaucracy of Civil Servants, they are minimal compared with the overpriced rigid inefficiency of the R.A.C. I had better stop on this subject before I really get going.

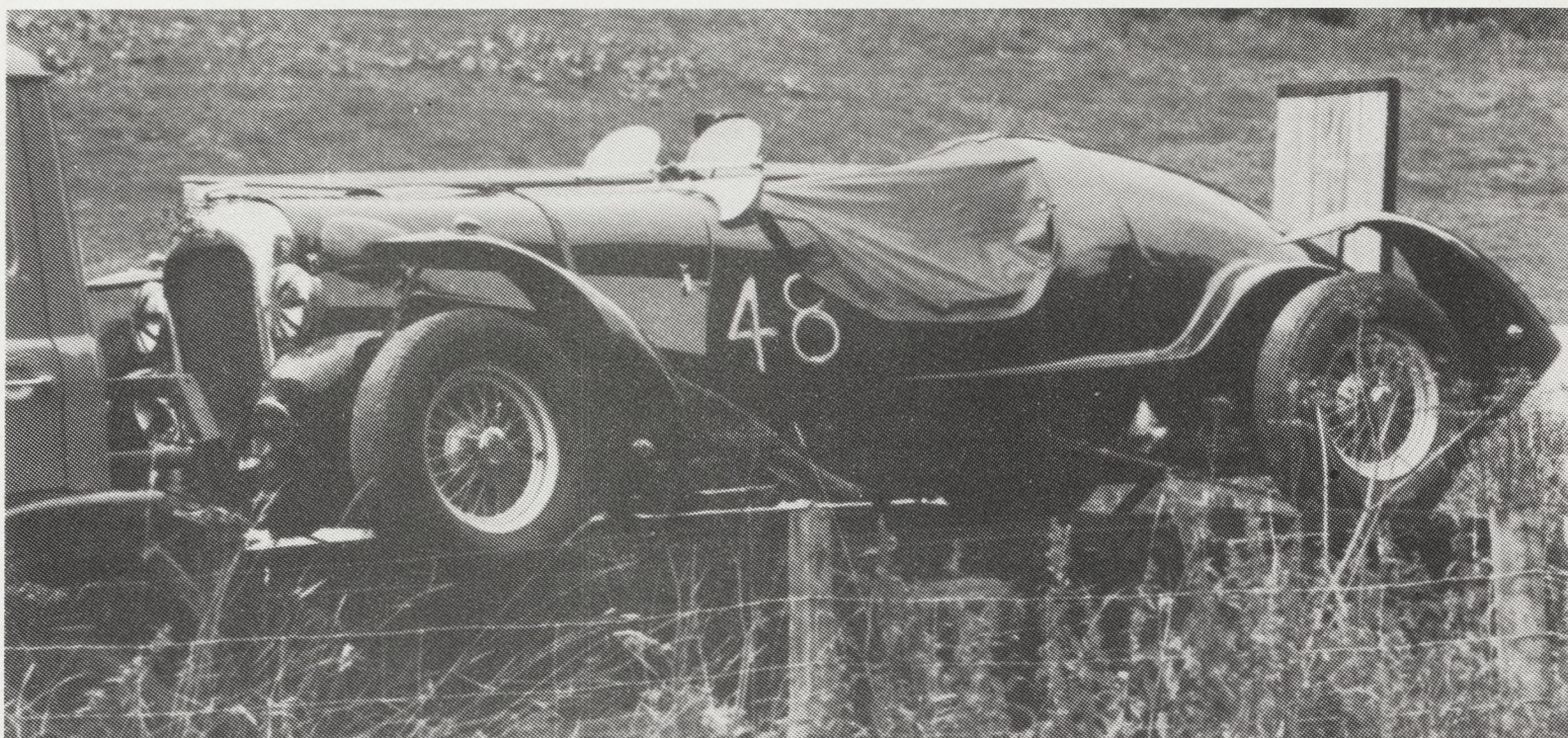
However, I have talked to many people in motor clubs this year and there is certainly a growing disenchantment with the R.A.C. for the high price of motor racing with little in



return (I do believe that was the serious bit cunningly disguised as a Ministerial Report). Hopefully some time later I will give you some details of the V.12 rebuild.

P.S. I see it is new crash helmets again soon, by edict of the R.A.C. What is wrong with the current almost brand new one for Vintage Racing?

ALASTAIR BARKER



*A new twist to V.12 history. Was the picture taken before or after the accident? Answers on a post card please.*

*Photo: Alastair Barker*

## *Up to Date*

THE FIRST MAJOR CHANGES to the Aston Martin Lagonda since its successful launch in 1976 were announced on Tuesday, 13th September.

The improvements are part of a programme of revisions to the entire range of cars produced at the Newport Pagnell factory.

In unveiling the changes to the Lagonda Mr. Gauntlett, Aston Martin's Executive Chairman, said: "The car has been an enormous success, and is still receiving acclaim and attention wherever it goes.

It was a bold move by Aston Martin to introduce such an advanced car when it did. The electronics and other features which were an important part of the car may be commonplace now, but seven years ago it was almost like treading into an unknown world.

This car's continued success is a tribute to everyone connected with its conception and development. It remains a very fine car, and these changes demonstrate the ongoing development that will ensure the Lagonda's success for many years to come."

The exterior of the car has been subjected to little change, with the dramatically eye-catch-

ing lines being retained. One new exterior feature is the re-styled wheels, while additionally U.S.-style safety bumpers, and under spoilers, have become standard for every market.

Following considerable market and customer research, the interior has been improved, with the seats being restyled and having additional support.

Because of the sophisticated air-conditioning the original Lagonda did not feature opening rear windows, but these have now been added following requests from customers.

Aston Martin's research also pointed to a need for improved control knobs, and this has been implemented in the latest model. Further improvements include the re-location of window, seat adjustment and door lock switches from the two front doors to a re-designed centre console.

"I think it fair to say that the Lagonda has evolved rather than been dramatically changed," said Mr. Gauntlett. "With close on 300 having been sold throughout the world, and demand being greater than ever, we would be foolish to change for change's sake."



The Lagonda accounts for 60 per cent of the four-car weekly production at Newport Pagnell, with the U.S., where it has been recently launched, and the Middle East taking the bulk of the overseas sales.

Changes to the two-door range of V.8 Saloon, V.8 Vantage and V.8 Volante include improved air-conditioning, and the fitting of a sophisticated Bosch radio. All three models also now feature B.B.S. wheels, giving the cars a strikingly modern appearance.

"In an age of continual change what we have done for 1984 may not seem dramatic," said Mr. Gauntlett. "But this honing of these fine cars is an important step forward. It makes the Lagonda even more exciting, while quite frankly the V.8 range has now been finely tuned to a degree which would be difficult to improve on."

The cars made their public début at the Frankfurt Show, which opened to the Press on Tuesday, 13th September.

Despite all the changes the prices of all four models remain the same, and they are: V.8 Saloon — £39,999; V.8 Vantage — £44,999; V.8 Volante — £49,999; Lagonda — £59,500.

ASTON MARTIN LAGONDA LIMITED



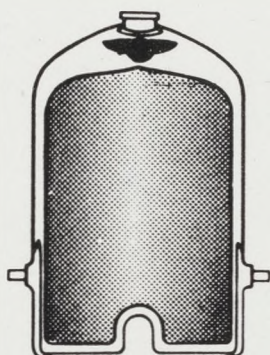
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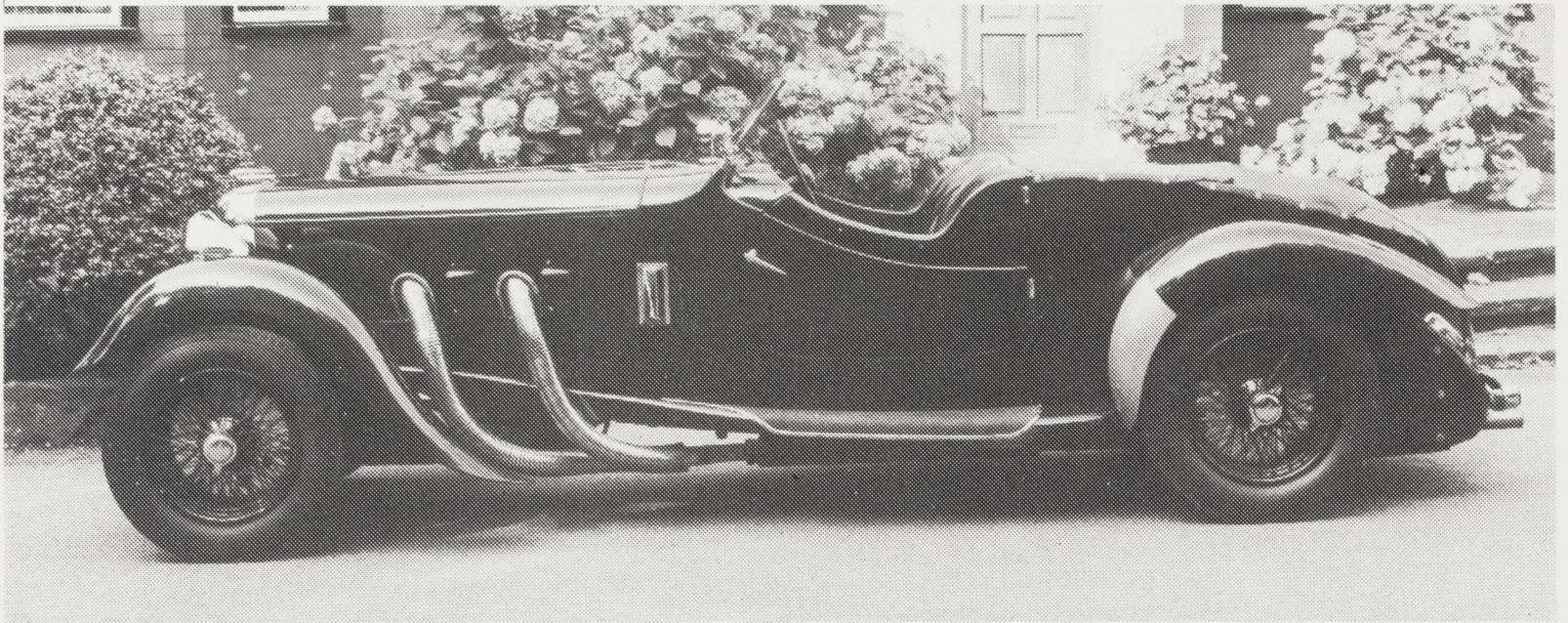
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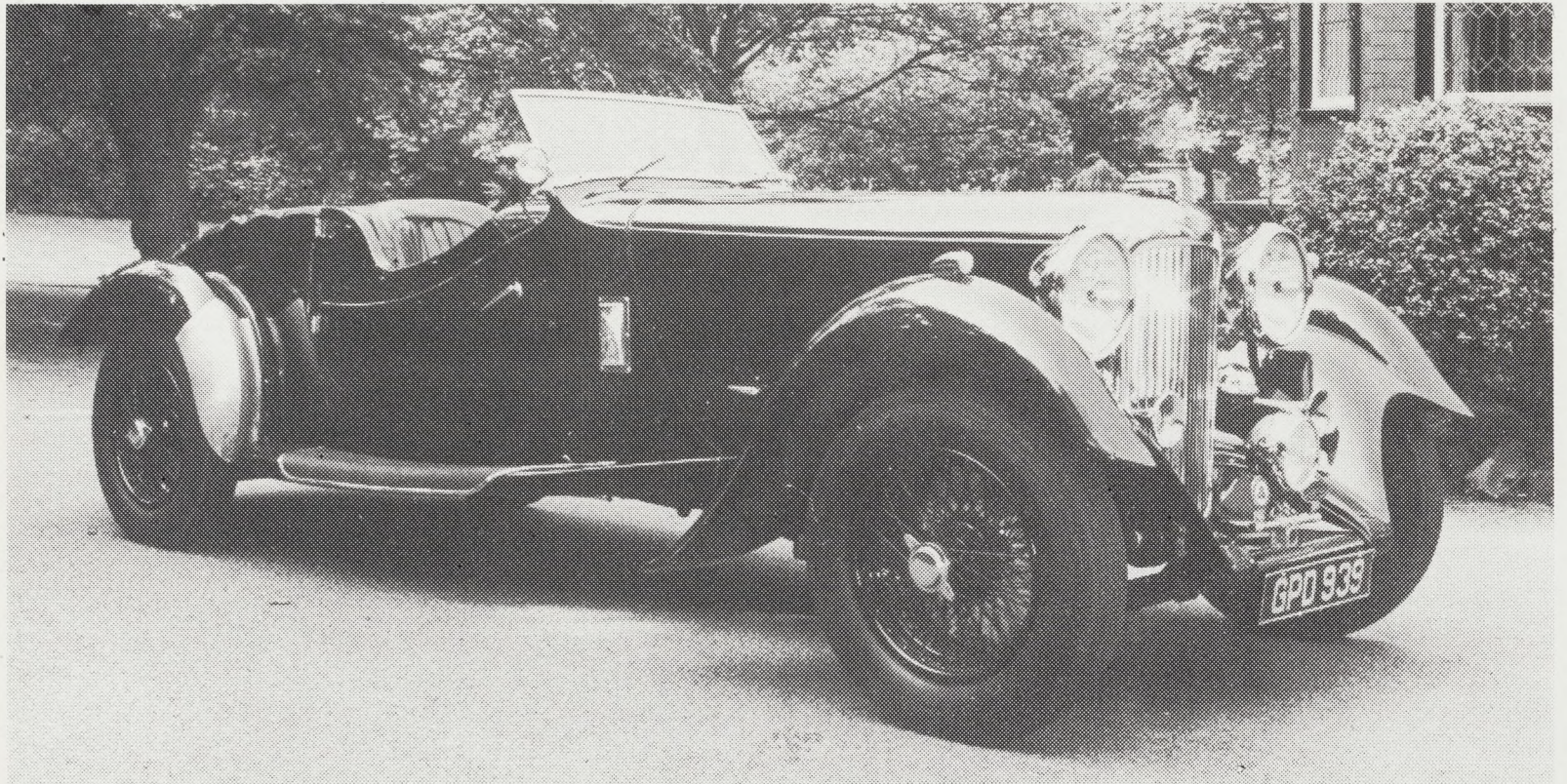
# *Lagonda LG.45 Rapide 1936/37*

## *The Last Big-engined British Vintage Sports Car?*



*Both sides of the story. Herb Schofield's LG.45 Rapide.*

*Photo: Martin Willescroft*



THE LG.45 "RAPIDE" was the last of a line of traditional big British sporting cars stretching back to the 30/98 Vauxhall of the immediate post-war period, through the 4½ and 6½ Bentleys of the mid to late 'twenties and the M.45 Lagonda of the mid 'thirties.

The big he-man British sports car with large lazy engine set in a conventional beam axle chassis, cart sprung all round was already a little old fashioned by the time the LG.45 "Rapide" arrived on the scene in 1936, and despite its claim to being the fastest British car of the period was nevertheless already

exceeded in performance and ultimate handling by a small number of exotic continentals.

The reason for the introduction of the model is something of a mystery. It is rumoured that Dick Watney is reputed to have tossed a rough drawing of what he had in mind into the Drawing Office for designer Frank Feeley's attention. Within the limits of the chassis design, what he came up with was something quite remarkable.

Underneath the body the chassis was conventional LG.45 except that the compression ratio and power was raised (a claimed 150



b.h.p. gross which cannot be far from the truth). The in-built jacking system was dispensed with as was the ride control to the Luvax shock absorbers. The back axle ratio was raised to 3.31 to 1, and in the case of chassis number 12277R, 3.14 to 1.

In truth the basic chassis/engine design was only a refined version of the earlier Lagondas and no great advance technically on the previously mentioned vintage sports cars and nothing wrong in that. Where the car was different was in the treatment of the body styling. Frank Feeley had done a superb job and the traditional British Bulldog sported coachwork almost as flash as anything produced on the continent or America and managed to stop short of being vulgar, which is decidedly not true of some of the others, which in some instances went way over the top!

The LG.45R sported a very narrow body, slim, steeply raked windscreen, helmet type front wings and flared back ones. The bullet shaped tail came to a point, more snubbed on the later examples which also had three bonnet handles on the exhaust side where the earlier versions only had two. All the wings and boot lid came to a gothic arch peak on their centres, a Feeley design feature which was carried through on all models and indeed to the Aston-Martin cars after the war. The "pièce de résistance" of course was the two big chrome conduit covered exhaust pipes which sprouted from the bonnet sides externally and curved under the body, the tailpipe actually emerged through the tail. The cars really looked the part in their usual B.R.G. finish. The ultimate tart trap for the chap who liked his cars to be British made! The ever present problem of where to put the big spare wheel which could quite easily have ruined the line of the car was neatly solved by shoving it in the luggage boot. The problem of where to put the luggage was never sorted out, so perhaps "Promenade Percy" only used his machine for boulevard cruising or his passengers carried toothbrushes and other small sporting essentials and little else in this the ideal dirty weekend car!

Twenty-five examples of the model were produced from chassis number 12141R through to chassis number 12277R, this car was also the last LG.45 of any type manufactured. With the demise of the LG.45R and indeed the normal tourer for Lagondas the day

of the flapping sidescreen was over, henceforth (with one or two exceptions) open cars were drophead coupés, suspension was independent on the front, the cars were even more comfortable, heavy and expensive and were available with either the six-cylinder or the super new V.12 engines. By the standards of the day these later models were a big advance on anything Lagonda had built before. Looking back 45 years later and from the vintage car enthusiast's viewpoint something is missing — perhaps if only the thrill of flapping sidescreens, wind-blown hair and more basic suspension!

### **The LG.45R Today**

Of the 25 cars produced I have records of 20 which are known to have survived. One model was written off in a road crash and one exists only as a chassis in the U.S.A., this leaves three which are unaccounted for but I would guess that somewhere these cars have survived. What is unfortunately true is that not many "Rapides" are in what I would describe as being really good condition, either bodily or mechanically, and only two or three are really superb, which is odd but nevertheless true.

By present day standards the performance is still good, and so far as my own car is concerned 120 b.h.p. is produced at 2,500 r.p.m. at the back wheels, a timed 0-60 secs. in 12 secs. and a top speed between 105 m.p.h. and 110 m.p.h. The car weighs 31¾ cwt. The first owner told me he covered a lap of the Brooklands Track at 107 m.p.h., not whilst racing but on a private occasion. The handling of the LG.45R is good in the best he-man tradition and the brakes are up to the performance. The type G9 gearbox is a delight despite the incredibly slow first to second change which must have lost the car a second or two in the 0-60 time. I have broken second speed gears twice. Lagondas' also offered the model with the type G10 gearbox with a side change conversion which is not as pleasant to handle and not quite as conveniently placed.

The biggest fault with the car is in the matter of interior width. In a successful attempt to build a long sleek and narrow body, the designer forgot that sometimes fat people would either drive or be carried in the car, nor was there any space for luggage as previously mentioned. He probably reasoned however that nobody would be daft enough to contemplate travel on the back seat which must be a bit like being in a wind tunnel at full blast,



so really the car can best be described as a two-seater with the luggage going in the rear.

### The Interior

Despite being essentially a sporting car nothing was sacrificed internally and the quality of workmanship was just as high as that found on the other models. All seats, door and side panels were of course in leather as was the sidescreen stowage bag attached to the back of the rear seat squab. The hood and framing drops into a compartment behind the rear seats so the line of the coachwork is not spoilt by a mass of folded hooding material. Specially designed aero screens were available too. These screwed on to the folded windscreen plinth by means of knurled screws. The main windscreen could then of course not be erected whilst these screens were in position, nor could the bonnet, which is the reason why you probably don't see many Rapides running on aero screens!

Another design quirk certainly on my car is the swivelling ash tray positioned in the glove compartment lid, which if you open whilst the ashtray is in use deposits the contents on to the shapely legs of your female companion!

### The LG.45R in Competition

Although not a model entirely suitable for racing a number of these cars have been used for this purpose since the war. Freeman-Wright ran AGE 730 "The Scarlet Woman" in normal production car racing, and in V.S.C.C. racing Donald Overy in the same "Scarlet Woman", James Crocker in DXV 163, "Quack" Young in DXA 960 were sometimes successful, the two former turning in times on occasion in the region of around 1.28 secs. at Silverstone, which is quite respectable compared even with some of the various team car replicas, replicas of team car replicas that have come along since. David Hine in DXA 960 has raced at a number of B.D.C. Silverstones during the seventies whilst in the decade before Crabtree in GPA 41 and Schofield in GPD 939 gently toured Oulton Park. The model was more regularly used in V.S.C.C. Driving Tests, Night Rallies, Sprints and Hill Climbs.

In truth, the LG.45 Rapide is at its best where it should be — on the open road where its fine performance and long-legged gait combined with superbly styled coachwork made it the most exciting car ever produced by Lagondas, or by anyone else in Great Britain during the period for that matter.

HERB SCHOFIELD



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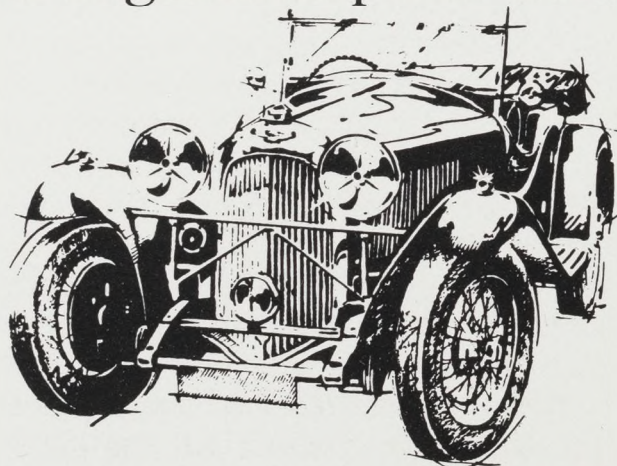


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# *Sports Report*

## *Northern Old Lags v Sandtoft Trolleys*

by our HUMBERSIDE SPORTS REPORTER

NORTHERN OLD LAGS had an enjoyable game on Saturday 9th July, being entertained in an away "friendly" by Sandtoft Trolleys at their Transport Centre ground near Scunthorpe, known thereabouts as Sunny Scunny.

Our teamsheet was as follows:—

Hatfield  
Firth          Harris  
Schofield    Bhogal    Hill, A.  
Paterson    Hine    Turners, J.R. & Ruth    Batt  
Manager — Alan Stentor Brown  
Reserves — Pape, Beardow and Hill, W. R.,  
plus Townsley, Squire, Watt, Simpson,  
Hewatt and Rowley.

The Hon. Comp. Sec. was promoted to No. 9, and for matrimonial harmony the Turners were together on the wing. An absence note was received from Bernard and Amy Raine, recuperating north of the border; nevertheless with team, staff, supporters and friends we had over 40 present from as far afield as Scotland (Squire, Hewatt), Surrey (Watt), Keyingham (Beardow), and Midlands (Hyett, Bhogal), with groups from West Pennines, Yorkshire ditto, Beverley, Sheffield and Northumberland.

The actual playing area was unfortunately smaller than the usual 100 x 130 yards, which led to complications, soon solved by Brown. He deployed his staff; Bryan Hyett (cash), Barbara (sales), and Julian Reisner with his squad of Northumbrians (placing flags and marking out). Next, he briefed the team.

### **Briefing**

Ever the nonconformist, he's not a Sabbatarian anyway, Brown gave us a surprise or two. 1, Substitutions unlimited in time and number; 2, Man for man we should beat the Trolleys but they'd be using diversionary tactics hence we must concentrate on our set pieces; 3, We'd start with A then C at the south end (Main Road), B then D at the north end (Motorway), further details later; 4, He would be referee.

### **Home Team**

In the event the Trolleys ran rings round us whenever they wished. No matter, this was not so much a game of soccer, more a motor-

ing gymkhana. They contented themselves by driving double-deckers round the touchlines offering spectators a topdeck overall view.

Indeed, our club owe the Transport Centre our thanks for accepting us in the first place, and for providing superior shop and toilet facilities. CIVILISATION CAME TO THE NORTHERN EVENT AT LAST.

### **Lagondas**

We fielded the highest percentage of Lagondas for years; only one car of "other makes". Ours were one LG.6 (driven by John and Ruth Turner, then S. Rowley), two LG.45 Le Mans reps (Schofield and Firth), one M.45 tourer (Hine), one M.45R (Hill, A.), one 2-L (Batt), two Rapiers (Harris, Paterson, Hewatt), and one DB saloon (Bhogal). The last three cars were all new to Sandtoft. Harris's Rapier is a Grenfell Special with Brooklands history, and Paterson's is a standard Abbott tourer. The DB saloon is Tara Singh Bhogal's and a splendid restoration job, though the silencer may be a bit vulnerable being even lower than the spare wheel on the LG.6. Firth's has a new body, green this time, with petrol tank amidships.

The one other make was a Jaguar (Hatfield), and a C type to boot, in exemplary condition and on extra fat tyres. Among the non-playing reserves were a second 2-L (Pape) and that unique M.45T (Beardow) also up to the high standard expected at Sandtoft.

### **Shirts**

Barbara sold more T-shirts than sweat-shirts, but not for immediate use. Once again Sandtoft was sweltering . . . but you see more of your friends that way.

Most of the flesh exposed was on manly torsos of varying size, shape and hairiness. A driver in an open Jag had apparently forgotten to dress at all, whereas others doffed their shirts after arriving. A powerful modern motor-cycle brought a later arrival, unrecognisable in space-age suit and huge contemporary compulsory helmet. He emerged not as Dr. Who but as one who always attracts the feminine eye whether he wears immaculate double-breasted high-chested show-six button-three lounge suit, full Highland Dress, or in this case matching soft leather trews,





*Northern Lagonda Factory Tour, Masham Marke Place. Herb and Joan Schofield with the 4½ and Roger Firth with his 2-litre in attendance.*

*Photo: K. S. Pape*

tunic, and boots in powder blue and blushing pink. None other than our A. W. Barker. He was unable to stay long; a pity. The Manager would have let him have a go on the Augusta, provided he walked beside it where the cars had to reverse. That would have been interesting timewise.

Even more interesting would have been Harris's dashing daughter on her rollerskates. Had she been permitted to do the backward bits forward, she would have beaten the lot! It was that kind of day.

The ladies, incidentally, favoured summer frocks, albeit one of the younger ones sported a modern minimal bikini top revealing more suntan than ever before seen at Sandtoft. How does she do it? And for the record Paterson flaunted his 1930s blazer; despite the assistance of Beardow, it refused to meet in the middle.

### **Substitutions**

Brown's Rule was applied and Hewatt (Scottish cap) replaced Paterson, while Rowley (Yorkshire) sat in for Turner, J., making 13 players and entry fees altogether. So Brown is not superstitious either. By chance, too, I happen to know of a Yorkshireman who still owes

his entry fee to a chap from Chesterfield.

### **Extra Time**

Brown, having had no demand from the crowd to "Send him off, Ref", felt he must do something. He decided to play extra time and to stimulate further interest, instead of sticking to the usual lateral division of the pitch, this would be done in the longitudinal format to afford drivers a long awaited opportunity of using the loud pedal.

Test E was along the west touchline (garages) and a lengthy wigglewobble where tennis balls had to be collected from cones, for which Les and Diane Simpson lent young Richard to become, surely, the youngest ever to participate in a Sandtoft test. Finally, along the east touchline (best stand), there was F. This one could only have been devised by W. Ford Squeers, or A. Stentor Brown. On the command Whack-O drivers were unleashed holding an oversize punishment cane to lash out at empty cans atop cones, and prestisimamente. Each thought of getting his own back on some hated schoolmaster. Never have drivers gripped a wheel with so tight a left hand, nor a cane with the right so purposefully. Some decan(n)ed the next cone before



the preceding can had hit the ground. The doctor added his own twist, dexterously but superfluously flicking the cans against the flank of his LG.6 in the same manner that he would whip his horse on an emergency call in the middle of the night. Then Ruth beat him, which makes one think. Hatfield seemed furious, yet maintained firm control and was top in this test too. The braking smoke from those wide boots had to be seen to be believed. It might have dissipated by now. Old Kaspar said, "All these competing vintage cars, no accidents, and not a seatbelt in sight. Does this prove something?"

### Coincidence

At one stage the Trolleys handed out free copies of the *Humberside Visitors' Guide*, in which a paragraph on a well-known inn, Altisidora, mentioned a Watt family. That evening it transpired that complimentary dinner wines, served to members who made a

weekend of the meeting, were thanks to Paul of that ilk. A significant and appreciated gesture.

### Handicaps

Brown calculated these at 10% for post-war cars and 15% for "other makes", with a bonus of 10% for saloon cars and 20% for lady drivers.

### Test Code

- A. Reverse from line and round a refuge.
- B. Hold pivoted rope to knock down circle of skittles.
- C. Forecast finishing position of near-side hubcaps after left-hand turn.
- D. Forward round bollards in half time of reverse same.
- E & F. See Extra Time (above).

### Final Score

Hatfield — Best overall, after 25% handicap.  
Firth — Best Lagonda, second overall.  
Harris — Second Lagonda.

### League Table

		Tests						H'cap (+) Bonus (-) Column	Pts
		A	B	C	D	E	F		
Hatfield	Jag "C"	-6	10	2	0	7	5	+10%+15%	23
Firth	LG.45 Sp	+6	8	3	0	11	7		35
Harris	Rapier	3	12	4	3	11	7		40
Schofield	LG.45 Sp	-5	14	10	10	16	7		52
Bhogal	DB Saloon	0	16	6	1	23	7	+10%-10%	53
Hill, A.	M.45R	+7	12	6	5	18	7		55
Paterson	Rapier	5	28	5	1	12	8		59
Hine	M.45	21	12	1	0	20	8		62
Batt	2-L	19	18	3	8	11	7		66
Turner, J.	LG.6	8	23	6	5	22	10		74
Hewatt	Rapier	18	10	8	11	33	10		90
Rowley	LG.6	21	19	5	3	33	10		91
Ruth, T.	LG.6	33	30	9	5	33	9	-20%	95

Our thanks to Julian Reisner and his North-umbrian Volunteer Force for their continuing help. We cannot thank enough our friends of

the Transport Centre for enabling us to enjoy our 26th Sandtoft event. We hope they will have us again, please.

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by Davey & May

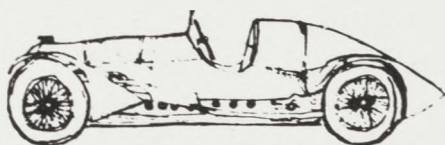
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## Stop it . . .

THE BRAKING SYSTEM on the 2-litre Lagonda, of the rod/cable internal expanding type, depends largely upon geometry in its design and operation and if one is considering a complete re-setting or installation, as distinct from a simple adjustment, then an elementary study is well worthwhile.

As from new, one would be starting with a set of accurately machined drums and unused shoes and linings and it is with the latter items that accuracy starts to waver a bit. They are not expanded at 180° across the diameter of the drum to give an overall parallel contact and thereby an equally wearing surface on the linings. Operational problems would arise here. Each shoe is independently pivoted at its heel and they are forced apart at the other end by a rectangular cam set between flat surfaces at each toe. As set up in the "off" position there is a minute clearance between drum and linings which is not uniform all round as movement brings the shoes out of parallel with the drums. One presumes that the shoes are pivoted in such a way as to bring them (with new linings) directly parallel with the drums at the instant of contact thus ensuring that the total surface is operational. Thereafter the tendency for the shoes to move out of parallel on application of the brake will be taken up by the normal wear on the linings. I believe Rolls Royce used to fit a grinder to the end of a radius arm and swing it from the wheel hub to trim the linings when first fitted to ensure accurate contact.

Another inaccuracy is in the leverage in that the pressure points between the cam and the shoes are at different distances from the heel pivot points. Before turning to the linkage between the drums and the foot-hand levers, a word about the compensator box through which the brakes to the rear wheels operate. This is remarkably simple and provides equalisation between the two *rear* wheels only; it does not compensate the front nor yet between front and rear.

Within the "box" there is a spindle protruding from the top and at its other end, integral with it, is a T-piece bar with a small chain sprocket pivoted at either end. A short length of chain passes around these sprockets across the T and to the ends of the chain the brake cables are attached. Upon operation of the

brake the spindle is turned which tightens the chain and pulls the two cables towards each other. There is an identical arrangement for the hand brake.

Digressing for a moment, I found an awful amount of muck in the compensator box so fitted soft leather gaiters through which the cables pass on entry.

Returning to the linkage, this consists of cables and rods connected to levers (many of them!) by yoke ends with small bolts passing through them and a word on the principle of leverage would not be amiss. If one has a nicely balanced see-saw a pair of similarly weighted persons will remain balanced if sat at equal distances from the fulcrum. If one person is replaced by a heavier one then the balance is disturbed but if the lighter person moves back from the fulcrum point balance can be restored but that person will move over a greater arc, in other words he travels further. Conversely the heavier person is having to exert greater pressure (by reason of his extra weight) to balance the lighter one. Thus with a lever pivoted just off centre, with a given resistance to rotational movement, it is easier to move it by applying force to the longer arm than it is to the shorter but the end of the longer arm travels further. As applied to the footbrake on the 2-litre, if the pedal lever was only half the length it is then one's foot would not have to travel so far but the effort of applying the brake would be considerably greater. In other words it is a case of using leverage to gear up or gear down the system; i.e. by applying a little less effort over a slightly greater distance one can achieve the necessary pressure to stop the car. A classic example of this principle is the handbrake lever.

Exactly the same principle applies to two levers connected by a rod/cable where levers are of different length, i.e. the distances between the pivot points and the pulling points are at variance. Apply the movement to the longer lever and one is gearing up or to the shorter and the gearing is downward. This is what one's gearbox is all about, the teeth on the gears being the levers.

Back to the linkage and one starts with the position of each lever relative to the direction of pull on the rod/cable. The optimum efficiency is obtained when the two components



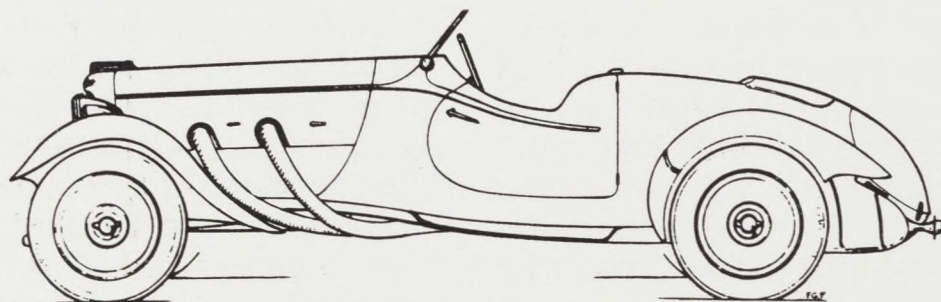
are at 90° to each other and ideally the brake should be fully on at this point. Thus in the "off" position the levers should be at rest just short of the 90° angle and drawn through it on application of the brake.

Dealing first — as one should — with the front brakes and all four wheels off the ground one should check the cross tube which has its own return spring and stop. To make sure that this is in the "off" position all other brake linkage should be slackened off including the hand adjuster on the footbrake pedal lever.

Now we come to an anomaly — I have never seen brand new standard sized front brake drums fitted with similar condition shoes/linings but unlike the rear shoes, which I will come to later, there is no adjustment available to counteract lining wear other than to apply the leverage until the desired clearance is reached. This is bad for two reasons; firstly, when the brake is applied the leverage between the operating cam and the toes of the shoes has been moved away from its point of maximum efficiency and secondly the arm at the other end of the perrot shaft is probably at 90° or even after it instead of being just forward. I have seen several cars in this state.

We now come to a difference between the High chassis and the Low. On the latter cars there is an intermediate drop arm lever pivoted at one end to the frame member and with its aid one can juggle with the leverage. Those on my car have five holes and the rod going forward to the perrot shaft must be pivoted *above* that going back to the lever on the cross tube. Here again there is margin for adjustment to the leverage as the cross tube drop arms have three holes. I find that using the bottom hole of each is satisfactory with the forward rod being located one or two holes above. Some High chassis cars have no such intermediate drop arm and all adjustment must be done at the hand wheel on the perrot shaft lever although most cars still appear to have the three holes in the cross tube drop arms.

For the rear brakes there is a far better arrangement both for adjustment and setting. The flat surface at the toe of each shoe upon which the cam bears is protected by a hardened steel adjustable cap beneath which spacer pads can be inserted when lining wear occurs. This has the benefit of returning the cam to its normal "off" position between the



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**John Anderson at home with 2-litre, a home built JAP vee twin single seater and the pedal car built for him by his father and later motorised by John for his son.**

*Photo: John Anderson*

shoes thereby ensuring correct cam action leverage. Ideally the full surfaces of both the cam and shoes should be lying flat against each other when in the "off" position.

The subsequent adjustment is quite different from the front brakes in that a doubly drilled and tapped plate is located behind each pair of brake cam levers. Into these, bolts with lock nuts are screwed and when in contact with the levers they have the effect of pressing the brakes on to make the final adjustment for correct clearance between drum and linings. The slack in the cables can now be taken up ensuring this is done equally from either side. The object of this method is to maintain the compensator mechanism in the central position and to ensure that the cables are not under spring tension when the brakes are off. The shoe return springs are powerful and if one should break the one on the other side could pull the cable and apply the opposite brake — not with any effect but undesirable. Needless to say the handbrake adjustment setting is identical.

In spite of the power of the return springs I have found it advantageous to fit additional tension springs from the levers back to a point

on the rear suspension springs to assist in the pull off.

The foot pedal assembly itself consists of three components — a substantial "dead" spindle upon which the unit pivots; an operating lever to which two rods are connected (one to the cross tube for the front brakes and one to the compensator box for the rear brakes) and finally the pedal lever itself containing the hand adjuster. The toe of the adjuster bears upon a lug on the operating lever thus transmitting the thrust. A point here is that when the hand adjustment is applied the stop on the cross tube becomes inoperative and the pull from the return springs bashes the pedal back against the footboards. I don't like this and so have fitted a rubber stop to the bulkhead.

This form of brake was a progression from the older external contracting type and before the 2-leading shoe, hydraulic and disc techniques came into being and bearing in mind their age (and the weight they have to stop!) the 2-litre brakes are exceedingly good. In years gone by emphasis was on rear braking; in fact many early vehicles had no front brakes at all but since then it has been realised that front braking can be more effective and I



for one prefer to see my front brakes coming on slightly in advance of the rear. An important thing for younger owners to realise is that in the handbrake one has intentionally designed additional stopping power and it should be used as such and not just as a parking brake (anyway its b—— dangerous in this role!).

In conclusion, and getting to the hard facts of life with brakes 50-odd years old, what can be done to maintain them?

New linings are simple enough so what about the drums? Probably ridged, and possibly untrue. Some say that well ridged drums and linings give one extra contact surface! They can be skimmed on a lathe but that means that the linings will have to have packing strips under them. An alternative is to reline the drums themselves (as mine are) but I don't much like the idea — if the linings are too thin they are apt to buckle.

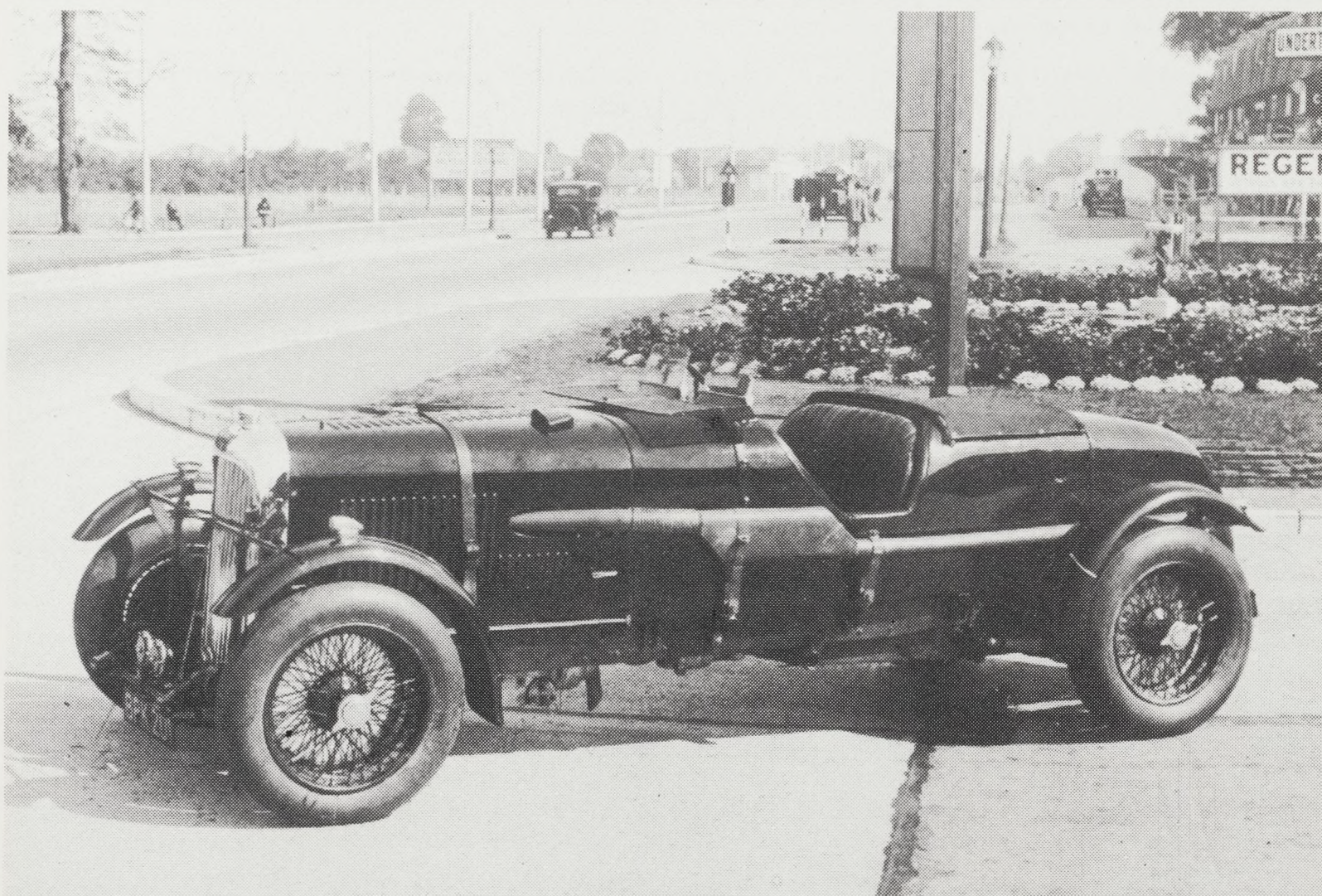
That clonking sound as one's back wheels drop into a pothole is not necessarily a loose shock absorber or wing bracket but the brake shoes flopping against the back dust plate.

This is due to the pivot holes in the heels of the shoes and the brass spindle passing through them being worn. (What about the spares register?!) Additional spacer washers sometimes help a bit. One cam spindle passes through the other, one providing a bearing for the other, often badly worn. The flat surfaces on the front shoes against which the cams bear can be built up and no doubt caps for the rear shoes could be replaced (what about the spares register?!). Similarly, the cam edges themselves could be built up. Then there are all the small bolts in the yoke ends — easily replaced with H.T. bolts or better still, stainless steel. Stretched or worn cables can be replaced.

Generally, as usual, it is a case of striking a happy medium but wouldn't it be lovely to have everything brand spanking new?!

Finally, there is an extremely good article in Magazine No. 15 (a Mr. Dean) detailing a conversion to provide further compensation within the system — I am sorely tempted!

JOHN ANDERSON



1935, BPK 201 outside Fox & Nicholl's works. Note outside exhaust, for 1935 Ards TT, modified bonnet side and top louvres. The main screen also appears to be wire gauze.

Photo: The Geoffrey Goddard Collection



# *Hull and East Riding Members' Notes*

BELATED SEQUEL to Sandtoft report in No. 115, Ted and Eleanor did broadcast general invitation to see première of Driving Test Video, preceded by fruitful time in their orchard. Ted again on location, to supply full supporting programme. Result screened immediately, revealed romantic young couple sharing tender moments of forbidden fruit, believed to be Beauty of Bath but a charming titbit, self-supporting too. No possible connection, but later followed by doctor in a hurry on an urgent case. We appreciated the acts and all join in sincere thanks to Ted and Eleanor for their customary generous hospitality.

Hermes pubmeet grown since Ken's last letter but still room for more. Two dozen Lag/V.S.C.C. folk at September meeting, club cars being three Lags, two Bentleys, two Rileys, 1923 Delage, 8-cyl. Railton, and a pure Mercedes tourer of 9½ litres dated 1912 which has graced our meetings five or six times this year. Don Hoggard and M.35 tourer, Bridget and Rob Laycock with that Amazing Great Mercedes, were with us only 48 hours after returning from the fantastic long weekend in the Isle of Man with the V.S.C.C.; the Laycocks making the round trip of 65 miles as usual on the first Wednesday of the month to Map Ref. 106/917311, Cave Castle.

We reciprocate with Lagonda posse to the Laycock's V.S.C.C. monthly meeting on the third Thursday at their local draught-Guinness pub, Middleton Arms, North Grimston, MR 100/844677, four miles S.E. of Malton. Anyone else interested will be most welcome. Three Hermes Lags already there one summer evening when along came an M.35 from beyond Harrogate with Mike Hoare and family aboard. An elderly gent sitting quietly in pub corner was surreptitiously pointed out as having been a

Brooklands driver in the 1930s. It's true, Boddy's well-known book confirmed so on returning home. In September a friend showed us another club's magazine. It reported a prestigious annual Charterhouse Concours, seven classes and almost 250 entries of which six had their large individual pictures displayed having won classes 1–5 inclusive also class 7, two Bentleys and four Royces. Class 6, neither "other makes" nor "visitors" by definition, was noteworthy won by young Master Miller with — surprise surprise — a Lagonda tourer. He has no picture in their book; he does have our congratulations, whosoever he may be. Incidentally magazine was Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club Bulletin. Increasing number of Lags creeping into books lately. Apart from the commercials, several in V.S.C.C. Bulletins and Brooklands Gazettes, also postcards and expensive birthday cards.

We've had reps. at First and Second Silverstones, but Beardow and Paterson actually entered for the Oulton Park Race Meeting... in the Concours. The latter's newly acquired red Rapier was positioned at the head of a long line of Lagondas in the Concours Paddock, Don and M.35 were next having been substituted for Beardow who could not make it at the last minute, though nothing wrong with his M.45T. Twelve Lags entered for the Concours, probably a record for one make. Round trip of 300 miles for Rapier and M.35 (in convoy with Ch. Batte and Delage) mostly through persistent rain and partly through Pennine fog, so maybe Beardow was the lucky one after all. Cadwell yet again convenient for handling of parts between regions and B. D-B in business with us. Any other Rapier driver tried to transport two 650 x 19s?

HERMES I

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## **MAGAZINE CONTRIBUTIONS BY:**

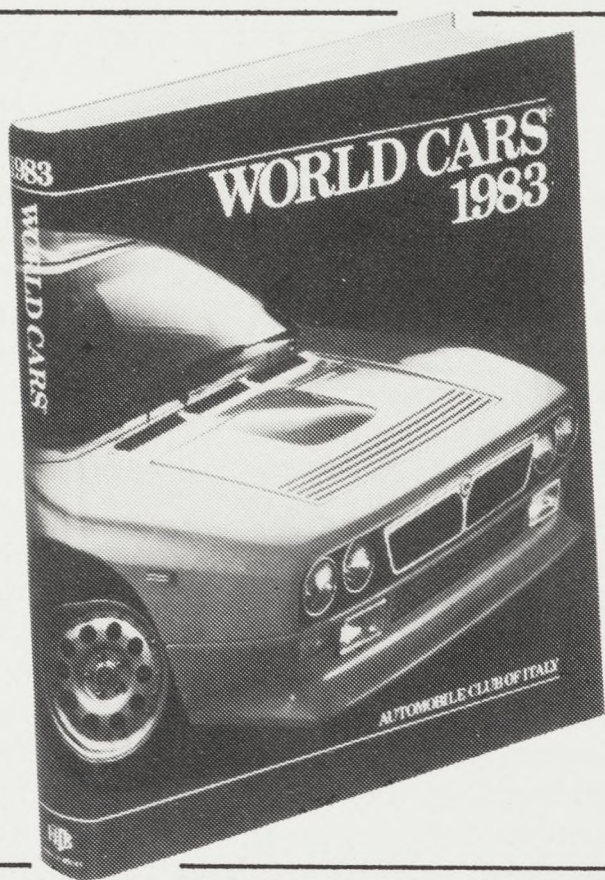
**WINTER: 30th NOVEMBER    SPRING: 28th FEBRUARY**

**SUMMER: 30th MAY    AUTUMN: 30th AUGUST**

*Thank you*

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## World Cars 1983

Pub. Herald Books. £21.00. 440pp.

This has to be the book for the shelf if you need to know. Within you can discover who makes it, for how much, engine and transmission details, etc. Performance figures, chassis specification, electrical information, dimensions, etc. on a model by model basis.

Lagondas get a mention, to be found under the wing of Aston Martin in the index.

There are sections dealing with the 1982 Grand Prix season, specialised design, electric vehicles, coach builders and others. The first two sections being in colour.

World car production, country by country, with a photograph of each car mentioned complete the book.

If you want to know, this is the place to start.

## *Lagondas and Cadwell*

THE INFAMOUS Hairpin and Barn Corners, last year under sentence of death, had an R.I.P. notice in Cadwell's 1982 programme. This year they were extant, reprieved; and lucky for Mike Baxter because they are the section where he overtook in his newly repaired Riley to snatch 10th place by one  $\frac{1}{10}$  second at the finish of Race 2. Another Lagonda owner in yet another make was B. Spollon.

Our Marque was represented by just two Rapiers with John Macdonald entered twice and Brian Fidler once.

### **EVENT 1 — TWO TROPHIES RACE** (8-lap Class Handicap)

The whole entry was split into two groups, with the fastest cars at the back. John was off from the front of the grid and his fastest lap 2 min. 25.5, an improvement from 2 min. 31.5 last year; nevertheless he finished 14th out of 21 entries, 18 starters, and 16 finishers. In the absence of bigger Lagondas it is noteworthy that the winner was Randall Stewart who came right through from the back of the grid in his  $4\frac{1}{2}$ -litre Bentley.

### **EVENT 2 — FIVE-LAP HANDICAP RACE**

Brian Fidler campaigning the Elliot Elder Rapier was our main interest here, and he was

off the 40 seconds mark simultaneously with Baxter. First time up The Mountain Brian was fourth, having apparently made three quick places, but second time round he was not going so well and on his third lap he motored gently back into the paddock. He appears to be having some misfortune with this car. I know he had two gearboxes to choose from, he must have chosen the unlucky one. The Rapier's faster lap was 13 seconds down on last year's. The race was won in a Riley 12/4 with a  $12\frac{1}{2}$  sec. margin over an Aston.

### **EVENT 11 — FOUR-LAP "ANTI-CLIMAX" HANDICAP**

This was the race with which the V.S.C.C. ended their racing season. Eight groups started this time; John was in the third, off 20 seconds, and found he was in a much more exciting race than earlier. The Rapier went well. He was passed by faster backmarkers but he made a few passes himself. On the final lap he had a tremendous dice with a Frazer Nash TT Replica and both were trying to find their way past an Austin 7 Special. Indeed on the last corner, the notorious Barn (where an ERA had rolled earlier in the day), Confident-in-his-Rapier John actually slipped past the 'Nash TT on the inside and came out of it a wheel ahead



(some driving against the chaingang!) but the TT model was understandably faster on acceleration to the finish and just managed to regain fourth by a fraction, half a second behind the Austin. Consistent John found his fastest lap this race was 2 min. 25.6 sec. The timekeepers and judges (of whom Hermes' local V.S.C.C. friend Charles Batte was one) had a most hectic time with 10 of the cars finishing in a period of two seconds. Never has a race been so misnamed. The winner was Pointer in a Lea-Francis, a sixth-group starter off 40 seconds.

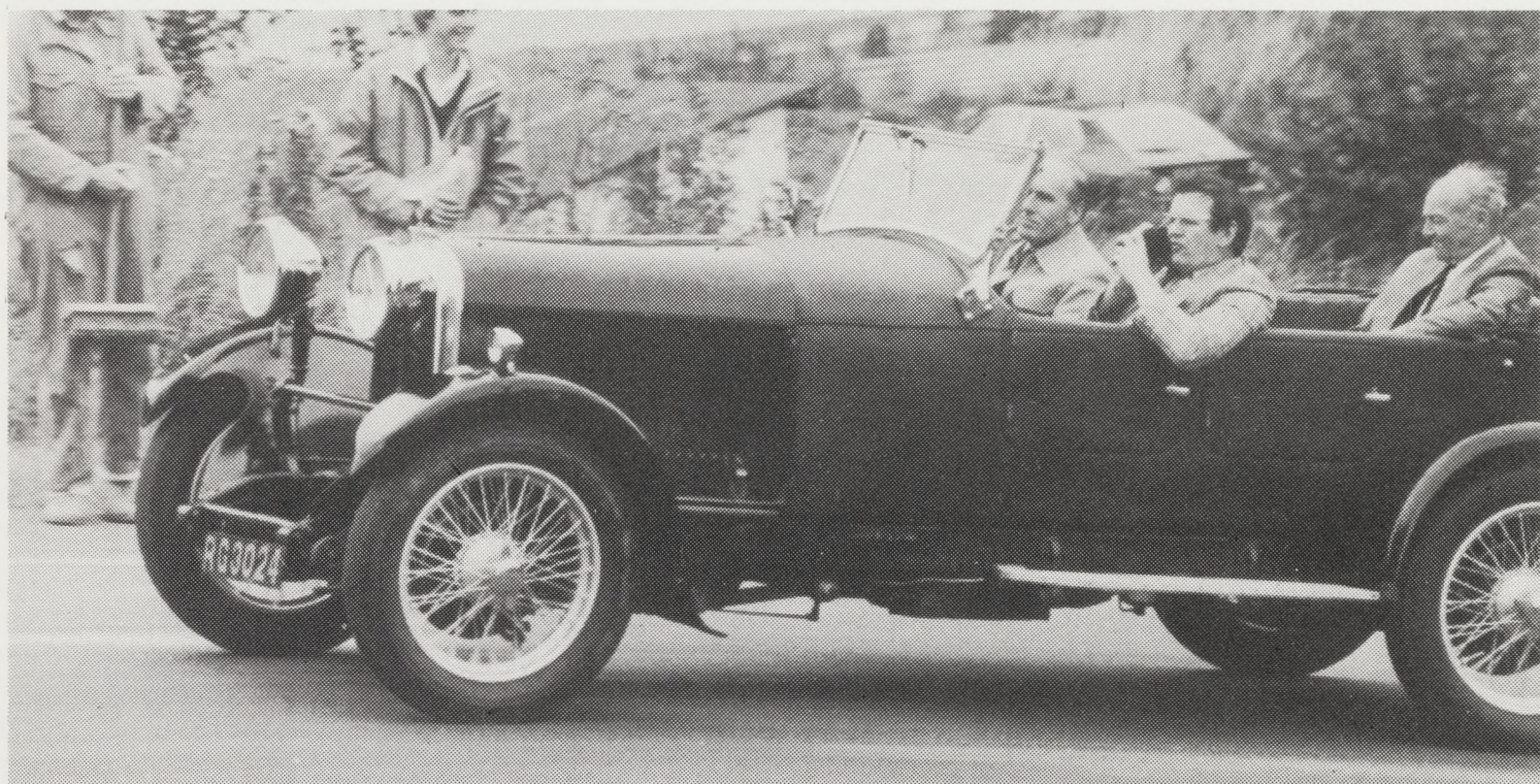
### Other Events

The Spero Trophy Race of eight laps for cars under 1,100 c.c. from a scratch start is of historical interest to us, having been won by a Lagonda Rapier four times out of five during 1973-77, the heyday of David Fletcher-Jones.

third with a best lap of 1 min. 53 sec. Martin Morris won in R.11B, as usual.

The John Holland Trophy Race for Vintage racing cars, comfortably won by Ron Footitt in AC/GN, was a bit sparse too. Here there were 15 entries, but two non-starters and four retirements brought the finishers down to nine. The first six completed their eight laps at intervals of 17, 9.4, 17.9, 6.1 and 26.4 seconds; the remainder (including Williamson in the spectacular silencer-burning 10½-litre L.S.R. Delage) still being on their seventh lap.

Cadwell was very much a mixed bag this year, some races being extremely exciting but others quite long drawn out. It was a lengthy 11-event meeting and began late, but somehow Event 6 started on time at 3.10 p.m. The weather was generally fairly cloudy but there were occasional sunny patches and at least it was all dry. Lagonda entries were right down



*A Course Car at Cadwell.*

*Photo: Roy Patterson*

This year it was won by chainganger Freddie Giles who wrested it from F.-J. in 1978 and has now won it four times in six years. Next year it would be great if another Rapier was unsheathed, but for some reason most of them are 1,104 c.c.

The Ten-lap Scratch Race for Pre-War Racing Cars brought member Spollon to the grid in his ERA R.8C (ex Williamson, amongst others). His dice with Bill Morris in R.12B greatly enlivened an otherwise dullish race with 19 entries, seven non-starters, six retirements and six finishers of whom Spollon was

but I've never spoken to so many members spectating. The crowd was fairly average but it was difficult to find a seat in the stands.

Meetings cannot be run without marshals. In the past I particularly recall Abson and Brown doing a good job. This year it was John Harris (track marshal with LBT 74 on the track at times), Mike Hoare (paddock), and Wendy Hoare whose name even appeared in the list of officials (results).

Some years ago Enid and I gave John Bear-dow, another spectator, a lift down to Silverstone, and he'd see us at the car after the



last race as he didn't want to waste time getting back to Jean some 180 miles away. Half an hour after the finish there was still no John. So I went straight to the Paddock Bar. There he was, in the middle of the biggest and loudest group, all Lagonda members. Full of apologies, he admitted they hadn't even noticed the racing was over. He had not seen a single race, he'd been nogginning and nattering all day, occasionally in the paddock but mostly at the bar, and he'd had a really wonderful time. I have an idea I'm slightly veering towards John's view myself.

I reckon I had a chat with over 30 people during Cadwell, of whom 15 or so were present or past Lagonda Club members and Don Hoggard, the Pilgrims, the Colquhouns, Tony Wood and Cliff Walmsley have attended over the years. Bri Dearden-Briggs was there too. This year he wasn't organising a betting shop business but was flogging cheap 4½-litre tyres "by appointment". When I arrived home with Enid in the Rapier, I felt I'd had a wonderful day.

One chap I did not manage to have a word with was the driver of the 2-litre RG 3024. He was somewhat inaccessible positionally,

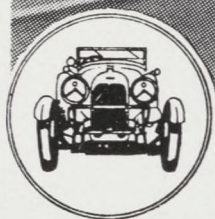
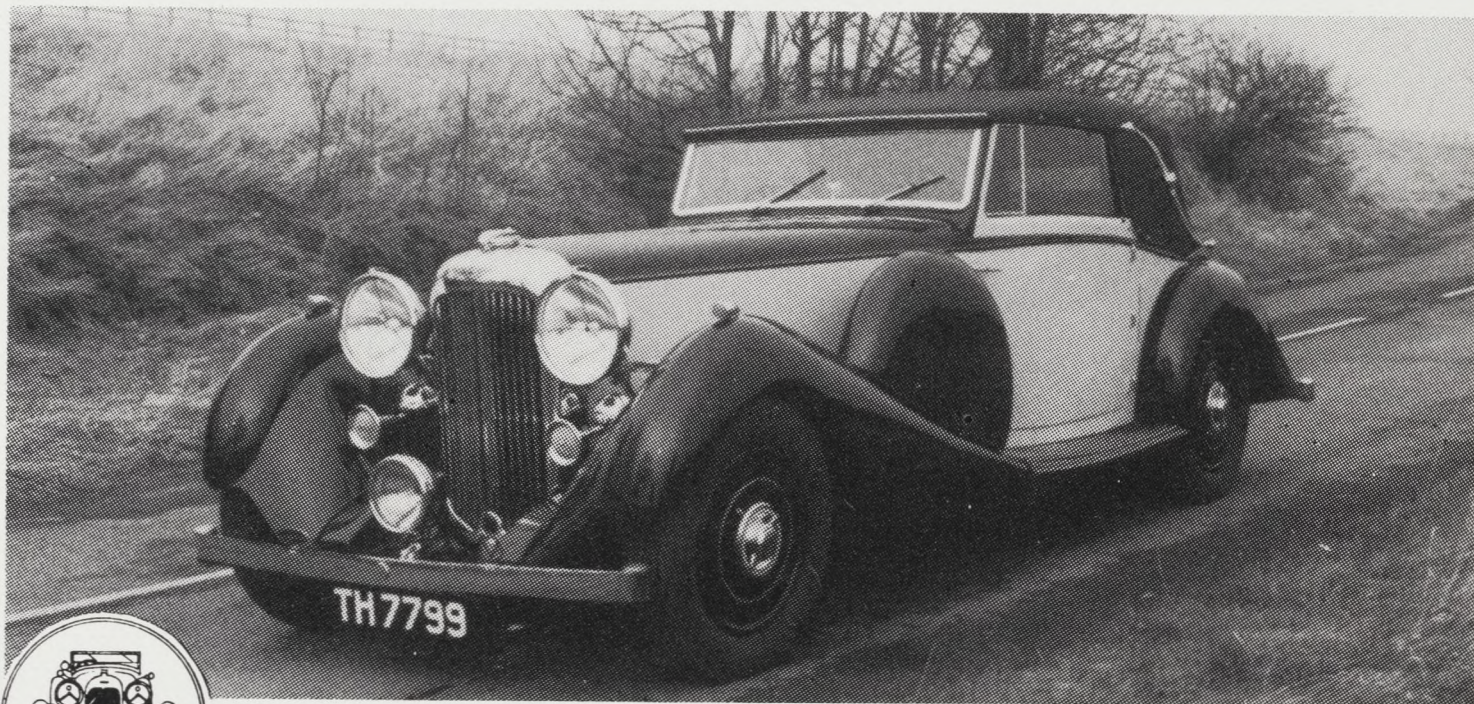
being based down on Race Control and driving the Lag as one of the course cars. This stimulated memories of TF 23 and Phil Kingston and their many years of similar service at Silverstone, and it pleased me since I had complained to the promoting club about the use of modern cars to the exclusion of vintage cars for officials some time ago.

Obviously much of the chat was about the seven previous meetings at this attractive and exciting miniature Nurburgring, during which I calculate that Lagondas and Rapiers have made 63 appearances (1977 being best with 13) including:

- 2 Firsts (Crocker and Fletcher-Jones)
- 5 Seconds (Hall three times and Crocker twice)
- 5 Thirds (Hall twice, Nickalls twice, and Evans)
- 5 Fastest lap in race (Crocker, Evans, F.-J., Hall, and Nickalls)

Perhaps Hall has been the most successful since his two Seconds in 1978 clinched for him the runner-up prize of £75 in the season's Motor Sport Brooklands Memorial Trophy for which he used his long 4½-litre Special. This surely emphasises that the bigger Lagondas can compete here at Cadwell with a very good

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chance, although all the others mentioned in this paragraph were using Rapiers, including F.-J. when he won the Spero with his 1,087 c.c. Special. (E. & O.E.)

The Cadwell Circuit as we know it has been reprieved and the date for the 1984 meeting officially published, 26th August. Let's hope

there will be a strong revival of Lagonda interest competitionwise, especially from the bigger-car drivers. They will have to send off their entries in good time though. I did hear that one member sent in an entry for his V.12 this year, but it was too late.

ROY PATERSON

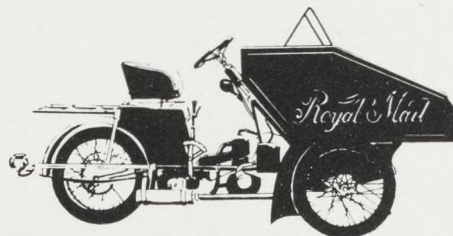
## Letters to the Editor

### Peter Densham

Dear Sir — Having known Peter since our first involvement with the club some 26 years ago the news of his sudden death came as a great shock to Valerie and myself. Elsewhere in the magazine I know will be recorded how Peter's enthusiasm for the 2-litre resulted in the formation of the 2-litre Register and this will come as a surprise to more recent members who perhaps will associate him with the larger 4½ litres and Aston Martins. But that is another story . . . I simply wish to record in the magazine our affection and admiration for a man who no matter how hard pressed he was with his own business commitments always found the time to write a graceful letter of encouragement whether it be about editing the magazine for "X" years, getting the Lagonda book off the ground and last but not least a number of tributes over the years to Valerie's contribution to the running of the club. If this sounds like self-eulogy it is not intended to be so but it illustrates that Peter took seriously his role as a founder member and then as a well deserved patron.

We shall miss his youthful exuberance and his unfailing courtesy — we shall moreover miss him as a good friend. Lucy's great loss is one in which we shall all share.

TONY MAY  
Lindfield, Sussex.



### On a clear day

Dear Sir — On Peter Whenman's suggestion I'm enclosing some photos of a lunch-time party held at Dick Raynes' weekend home at St. Margarets-at-Cliff, Dover.

His garden is literally on the cliff edge (300 ft. drop!) and in it is the original South Foreland Lighthouse! A new one took over many years ago when the keeper's house fell into the sea!

Anyway — as you will have gathered, some photos were taken from the top of the L.H.

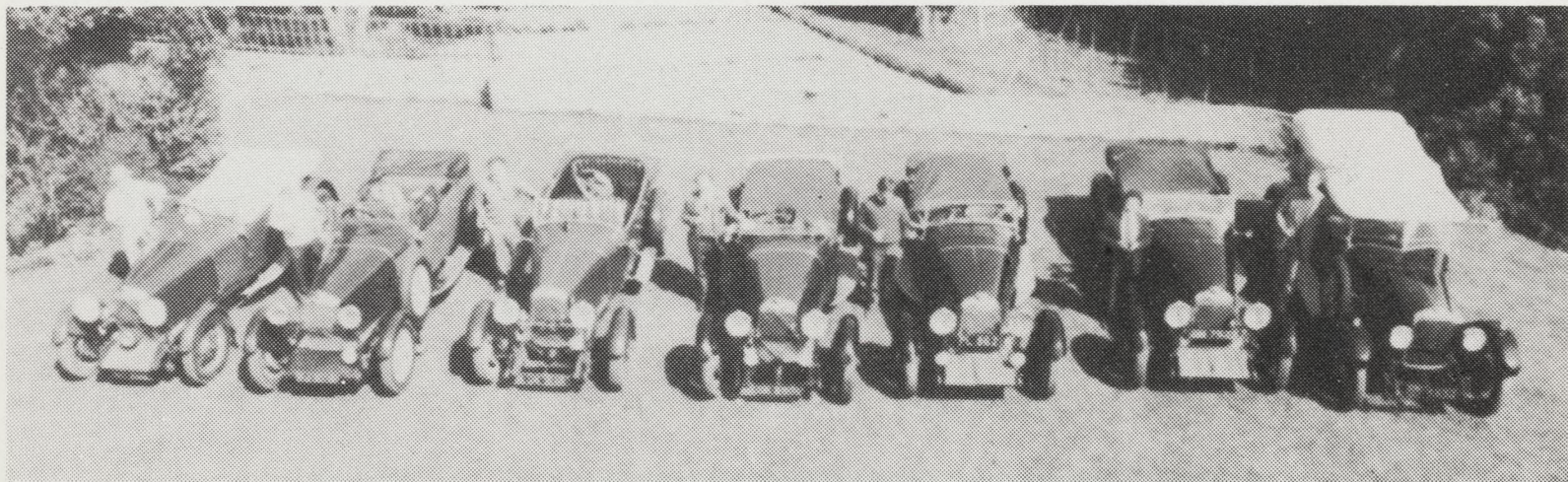
A magnificent array of 2-litres and from left to right they are: Dick Raynes (ex Alec Downie), John Anderson, Tony Russell, Roland Morgan, Adrian Lead, Nicholas Lead (ex A. C. M. Corryton), Paul Edwards (Highbath).

We were extremely lucky with the weather and a good time was had by all!

JOHN ANDERSON  
Clearview,  
Worth, Kent.

*Scene from above.*

*Photo: John Anderson*







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