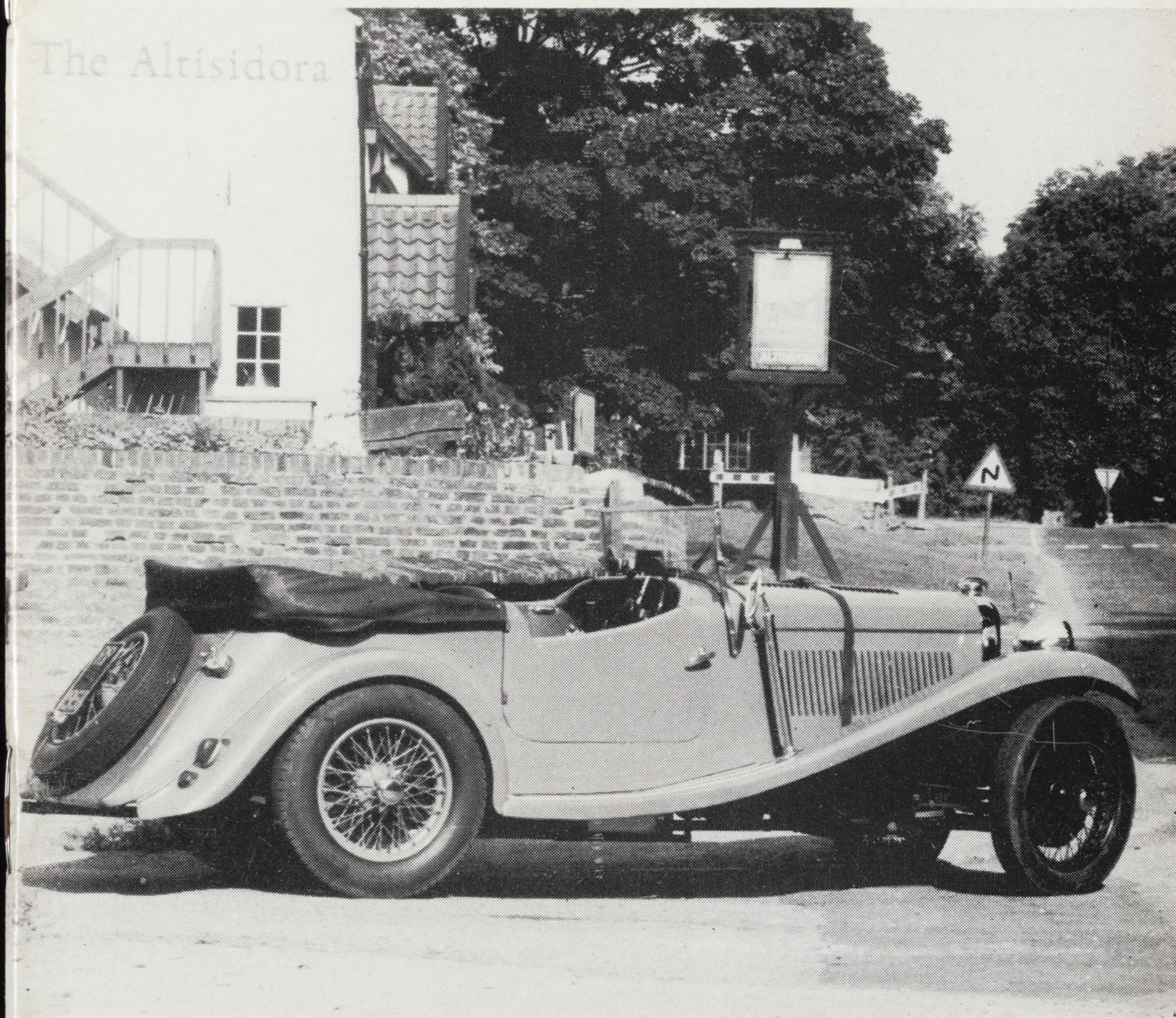




THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB

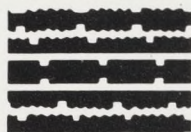
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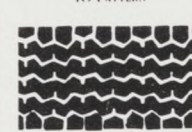
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MAGAZINE
Issue No. 122
Autumn 1984

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

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FRONT COVER: Roy Paterson's Rapier waiting patiently for the owner to "top up" at The Altisidora.

Photo: Roy Paterson.

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.

AS THE CONTENTS will prove, this has been a very active Summer for Members. A lot of this activity seems to have taken place on the other side of the Channel, which must have posed lots of problems for the Organisers if not for the participants.

The work that people put into the organising, I am sure, gets overlooked by the majority of us who just turn up and enjoy the fruits of their labour. The proof though that they must enjoy both the organising and the participation is shown by the fact that already plans are afoot for a mass invasion of Lagondas to celebrate the Victory achieved in 1935, at Le Mans.

This being a 50th Anniversary means that it should be well worth supporting in great numbers. The person to contact for information and or reservations is Peter Whenman.

The person that gets the Editorial thanks is Arnold Davey, for producing the updated Register of Members and Cars. Without this publication appearing in place of the Summer "Lagonda" we would have had a two-page Magazine. Happily in the intervening period enough people heeded the threat that I would open the Register at random and write to people asking for articles about their Lagonda lives. Also, I now have the backing of Harry Taylor, Midlands Secretary, to help in the gathering of information and articles to fill future pages. So now there is the threat of two of us writing to you at the same time. Pressure that will be hard to escape.

The editorial 2-litre has been to quite a few of the Vintage meetings in the marvellous weather that we have had this year, although we did get wet at the end of the July Silverstone.

The car has usually been parked well away from its better cared for sisters. This situation may alter as time goes by and the bodywork is tidied up, a necessity, as after 53 years it is now beyond middle aged sag. If something pretty drastic is not done soon the pattern will be so altered as to be of no use in the rebuild. However the fun

provided is hard to give up.

I am tempted to make it last a little longer if possible.

Please forgive me if you do see the car, it is not her fault.

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: Second Sunday lunchtime at the Navigation, on A670. Junction of A62 and A670 on road out of Uppermill, near Oldham.

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".

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John Lancaster A.F.C.



JOHN LANCASTER, who died in March, was well known in Club circles for his regular attendance at meetings in his beautiful David Brown 3-litre drophead and for his equally frequent winning of the post-war part of the concours d'elegance with it. Not so many members were aware that he was a professional painter whose very distinctive flower paintings are in great demand. I remember that it was only when John sent a greetings card with one of his paintings on it to Wendy and me when we married that the penny dropped and it dawned on us that our John Lancaster was "the" John Lancaster.

He had an adventurous life, the adventures starting at the age of three when he was returning from India with his mother in 1916 and their ship was torpedoed in the Mediterranean and sunk. After Marlborough and a short spell with an accountant, he went to Kenya at 18 and after trying farming, goldmining and hunting, joined the police in the 1930s. He joined the R.A.F. in 1938 while on leave in England and became a pilot. His flying career was very varied and I recall lots of anecdotes which were usually distinctly anti-heroic. He became the personal pilot to Sir Arthur Coningham and flew many V.I.P.s, including the King and Winston Churchill. It is perhaps typical that I have

never discovered how he won the A.F.C.

After the war he carried on flying as a commercial pilot for Aly Khan and the Maharajah of Jaipur. He began to take his painting hobby seriously at this time and in 1949 returned to England, gave up flying and took the plunge of painting for a living. After his first marriage was dissolved, he married Rösly in Switzerland in 1956 and they settled down in Aspenden, Hertfordshire, although with fairly frequent trips to Switzerland both for family reasons and to keep up his skiing.

The bulk of his paintings have been sold to greetings card publishers but others, all highly distinctive, hang in discerning homes all over the world. I remember him saying that he now couldn't afford one of his own paintings.

I last saw John at the VSCC Shuttleworth meeting in August 1983, when he seemed perfectly fit and was greatly enjoying the wartime aircraft flying and on display. Not very long afterwards he was taken ill with leukemia. We will miss him and I extend the Club's sincere condolences to Rösly and to their children, Charles and Julie.

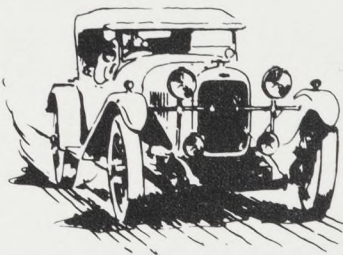
ARNOLD DAVEY

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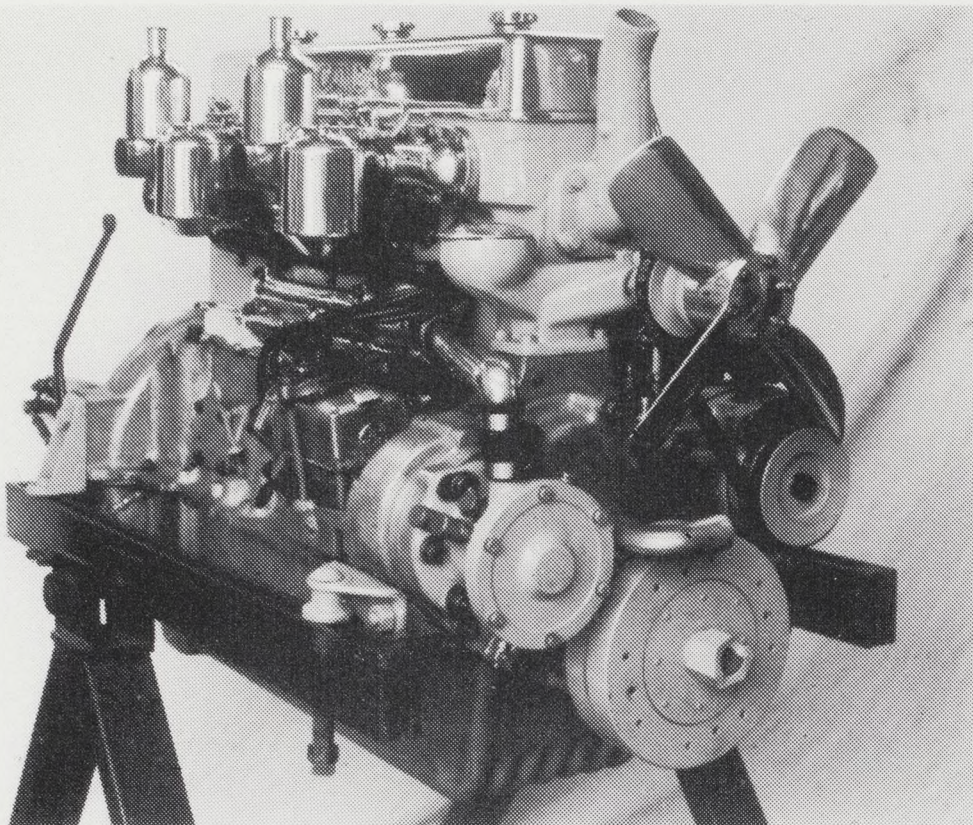
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Malvern 1984, a View from a Lagonda.

AS A VSCC MEMBER of a mere 25 years there was no way I was going to miss the Golden Jubilee events at Malvern, at least in part. As it happened my family were extremely forbearing and I was privileged to take part in the whole event, made all the more enjoyable by participating in LBT 74, my ex-Henry Coates Rapide special.

Tuesday evening, 3rd July, saw myself and Dave Hill in his AC 16/70 special travelling South in unbelievable weather, hoping to snatch a drink at the John Scott reception and to sign on. At the VSCC office we were given an International type rally plate, a superb glossy Golden Jubilee Programme, a list of competitors and events, free clipboard, tin of travel sweets courtesy of Dunlop, six packs of Trebor Golden Jubilee mints (a godsend as it happened with my worst attack of hay fever for years), a cuddly toy—no, sorry, wrong channel.

Our residence for the week was Dave's caravan and awning, which he had deposited on the Three Counties showground the previous weekend, along with most of the outdoor VSCC fans.

Perusal of the entry list showed that of 600 odd cars entered variously for eight events there were 28 Lagondas, from Odell's 1923 version to Barker's 1938 V12, taking in up to three events each. The overall total, by the way, ignored the 300 or so members taking part in a scenic run on the Saturday to Prescott, an extremely pleasant outing by all accounts, taking in various places of motoring interest.

However, back at the ranch, come Wednesday morning and Dave had really got the open air bug, rising at 6.15 a.m. As it happened the weather was already incredible, only to improve all week to impossible heat by the weekend, so a leisurely start was made towards our first days activity, the Driving Tests on the Three Counties showground, supported by the Concours in one of the massive buildings.

The showground, by lunchtime, was a

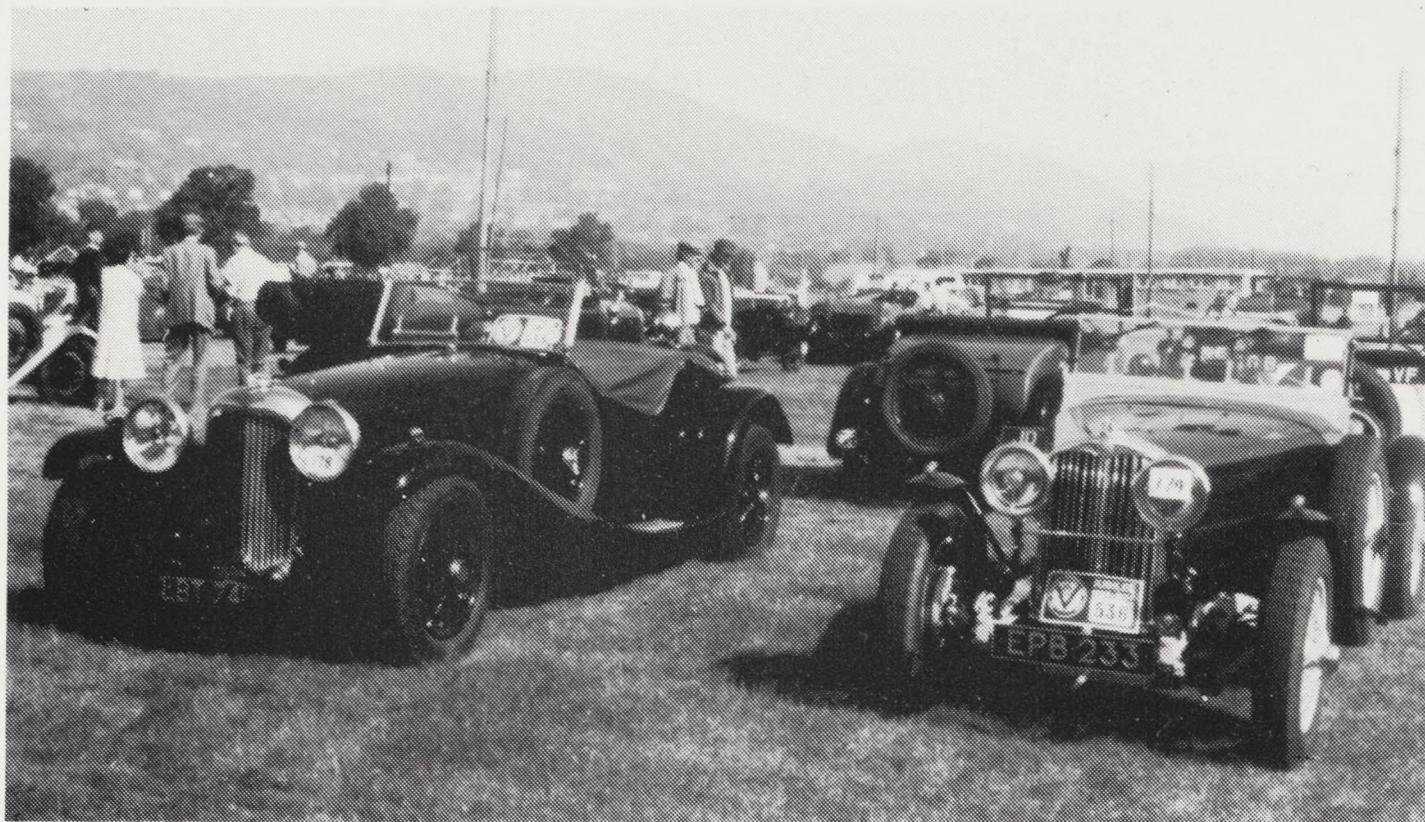
sight to behold with 300 entries plus spectating members, well over 500 vintage and thoroughbred cars on show.

The first voice we heard as soon as we were parked was the unmistakeable "Aussie" twang of Bernie Jacobson introducing himself, I having sent him a crown wheel and pinion for his Rapier with the Austin Seven crowd when they last came from down-under. We were to see a lot of the Australian party over the week and spent many hours in pleasant conversation. They had brought half a dozen cars packed two to a crate, some with wheels off to squeeze in, despatched in the teeth of an Australian dock strike. Rod House, having received a very late entry, literally dusted off his Vauxhall OE for the first time in 15 years for this little outing with no preparation whatsoever. Bernie had his very neat Eagle Replica bodied Rapier which he drove in ever increasing circles round Britain till the oil pressure expired just before August Prescott. Bernie manufactures some extremely durable hood/tonneau fabric in fleck finish, as per the quality of pre-war material, fully water and stain proof, I have a sample (plug).

Meanwhile back at the Driving Tests, there were the usual mixture of wiggle-woggle, garages, balls on and off poles, braking, slow/fast, etc. The M45s of Stephens and Willis looked quite majestic, if a little large for these activities, while the 2-litres of Firth and Colquhoun looked decidedly steady. I had no thoughts of awards at such activities but there was a handicap system based on wheelbase and I was surprised to see I missed a 3rd Class Award by making an absolute pig's ear of the acceleration/braking test.

Dave was over the moon with a 2nd Class, first time out after his 15 year rebuild of the AC.

The Concours cars looked magnificent



Malvern Driving Tests, LBT 74 and AC 16/70 to the fore and the Malvern Hills in the background.

Photo: D. A. Hill.

and Doc Ryder's 3rd place was well deserved, the car looking superb. Mike Hoare was proudly showing everyone the photos of his Phoenix-from-the-ashes rebuild of his nearly finished 2-litre. Roy Paterson also looked very suave taking photos, clad only in flannels and early VSCC tie.

Wednesday evening saw a Civic Reception given by the Malvern Hills District Council in the eminently suitable Winter Gardens Pavilion, the Chairwoman saying some very complimentary things about the VSCC and its Members, this evidently being the largest convention Malvern had ever known. (To be followed by the just as large Morgan Rally.)

The necessary early morning start for Silverstone on Thursday was welcome for the cool air after (and before) the sweltering sun. The Driving Tests were very much in "Pom" style but with one flying lap sprint in the afternoon. I began to get quite excited with a standing $\frac{1}{4}$ under 20 secs, flying $\frac{1}{4}$ in 11.7, within the first ten on the acceleration/braking and a flying lap of 1 min 26.5, however "Pom" handicapping takes care of the larger cars and most awards were in the 2-litre cars and, I believe, included James Crocker in

the Rapier.

Thursday evening heralded another massive gathering of all the right cars on the showground for the barbecue, enlivened by the very professional "Longbridge Loafers" Jazz Band, all VSCC Austin fans of course. This evening was also our assignation with our friends and rivals Pete Cattell and Tim Cork with the Riley Lynx 6, who were staying in the caravan prior to the road Navigational rally on Friday.

So 180 cars patiently queued for scrutineering and the fairly straightforward route instructions for a morning section of 66 miles, and an afternoon of 44 miles. All on a beautiful route in the Worcester/Hereford countryside.

Classes were numbered alternately, thoroughly mixing the entry, and starting two at a time. There had been a quiet word in Dave's ear "from above" the night before to avoid rushing round the countryside in the Lagonda, and to put up with any baulking if it occurred, advice well received under the happy circumstances of this Golden Jubilee event. As it happened all other competitors followed were extremely courteous and

helpful when possible, neither the 1902 Mors nor the 1911 Rolls-Royce "block of flats" causing us any serious delay, each followed for several miles at surprising speeds. Dave had plotted the route fairly efficiently, partly on the move, and the main concern was regularity at average speeds of 24 or 28 m.p.h. The Lag. has a trip mileometer, but this is wrongly geared so we have to carry a correction sheet for constant reference (a bit difficult on night events). We wrong slotted twice on the first section but I also forgot to correct the milo, and took us too fast apparently, however the two errors must have cancelled each other out as it later transpired. We were tempted to follow the Australian Vauxhall when they intentionally wrong-slotted in front of us just after opening time for a pint to relieve the heat.

The organisers must have been very disappointed when marshalls did not turn up for a couple of later time controls, but for us this did not spoil a very enjoyable event.

On Friday evening we were introduced by Pete to Bruce Winder from New Zealand, a Riley fan, aircraft engineer by profession who kept us entertained with tales of Kiwi motoring.

Saturday was a day off for me, if you can call bouncing for Dave in the AC on the

Trial a day off. The course was in an ideal setting on Eastnor Castle Estate, but with the dry weather it was unbelievably rough, and I did not blame Dave for refusing to take the newly rebuilt car down(!) one section. We were entertained at lunch time by a flying display by a Stampe biplane, piloted, some of us assumed, by Biggles (he of the rally route instructions here, and on the Eastern).

So to the grand social occasion, the Golden Jubilee Ball, back at the Pavilion, 700 plus members, free wine from Dunlop, witty speeches, and reminiscences, and the presentation of the major Awards.

Now, some of the results had not been announced, including the Road Rally, and who was called up for the major Award? Yours truly! Talk about the cat that got the cream! Dave had really cracked this one and had taken us to what must be our most satisfying Rally result ever.

Sunday was the day of 90° plus temperatures and we could not face the crowd at Shelsley, so we took our wives on a short run to the Talbot Inn at Knightwick, a pub recommended to us for its cuisine, rightly so, by Bernie Jacobson, whose "Hiya Jo-ohn" had greeted us from behind a pint pot as we passed on the Rally. We had actually invited Bernie along as a passenger, but he gave the lame excuse about taking in laundry and darning socks or something to pay for the rest of his holiday.

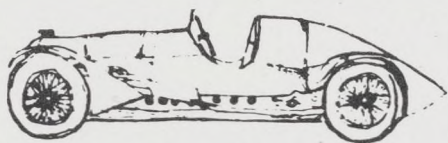
What an unforgettable week, it was a pity we had to miss the Northern Gymkhana which clashed on the Saturday.

None of this would have been possible without the help of Bob Alexander, who kindly offered the loan of a crown wheel and pinion for the season, after mine stripped on the eve of April Silverstone, many thanks Bob.

By the way, did you hear about the Lagonda member who booked into a 5-star hotel, but decided it was far easier to sleep in his open car, rather than negotiate the hotel steps after a night-out.

Here's to the next one.

JOHN HARRIS



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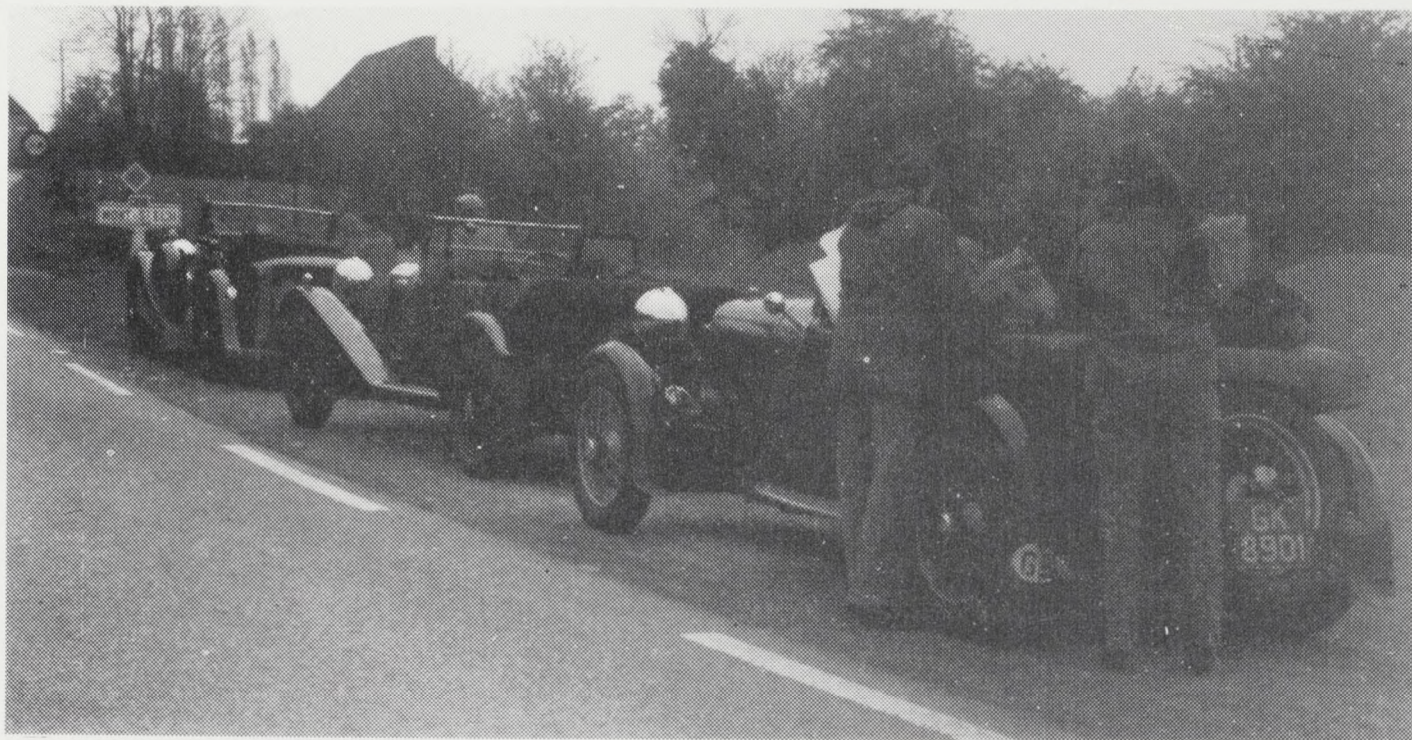
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Evenings — Weekends

The Champagne Trip.



Well on the way. Richard Hare's 4½, Roger Seabrook's 2-litre and Roland Morgan's 2-litre.

Photo: Michael Jones

THURSDAY, 3RD MAY. Arrived at Roger Seabrook's at 9.30 a.m. expecting to find him raring to go. Muffled voice from garage asks me to go round back, where I find H.E. up on axle stands with floor out, and Roger clutching starter bendix which he is just repairing with a bolt from Morris 1100 sub-frame which happens to have same thread. Apart from that he had found one wheel's rim was splitting, and had had to indulge in some tyre changing and paint spraying. All this with a heavy cold too. H.E. was back from the upholsterer's (just) and had, as always in such cases, got pretty dirty. Never mind, Roger had cleaned the car, and for the first time in over 25 years it had upholstery to be proud of—albeit not finished yet.

After making the tea, I was set to work cleaning some spare plugs (readers with long memories may remember how choosy H.E. is) and to polish the radiator, wheel-nuts and so on, while Roger replaced the bendix, floor, seats and carpets, and selected which tools and spares to pack.

While Roger had a much needed bath, I took the car out for a test and refuel mission, and after slight brake adjustment

pronounced its health to be excellent. Lovely to be driving it again and I can still change gear just as well as ever—i.e. about one in three attempts is clean!

By 1 p.m. we are loaded and set off—for the Studley Arms a mile up the road and Roger's first decent meal for 24 hours, thanks to pressure of work on car and having wife and new son in hospital.

We hoped that H.E. was having all its troubles before the journey, being a well mannered and kindly car, and so it seemed to be since the journey to Dover was pleasantly uneventful, though rather cool after the warm weather of the previous weeks. Since the engine is still a bit tight several thousand miles after its last overhaul the coolness was welcome in one way. Roger had even talked of fitting an electric fan. During my ownership the engine was so sloppy that it never showed any intention of over-heating!

When we arrived at the Mildmay Hotel at Dover (good out of sight parking) we found the three 4½s of Downie, Firth and Townsley had just arrived. The rather unprepossessing exterior of the hotel belied its comfort and good food, so "well fed up and agreeably drunk" as Hofnung

put it, we retired at a good hour to prepare ourselves for the early rising.

Friday, 4th May

Have you noticed that whenever you stay at an hotel hoping for a good night's kip, there are always the late night revellers and the early risers. Well now I know why, in the latter case at least—they get up and bath and pack at 6 a.m. because they have to be at the Hoverport by 7.30 a.m. under pain of cancellation.

We were all duly paid up and cars packed by 7 a.m. when we trooped in for our special arrangement breakfast, but somehow it got to 7.29 a.m. when H.E. led the way to the port, and Alec was rather pensive—with good reason, since although H.E. was waved on, the 4½s, right behind found their tickets being offered to the highest bidder. However, after some haggling they were squeezed on, much to everyone's relief since we had a tightish schedule to reach Reims owing to the Gallic habit of robbing us of an hour.

Actually the 4½s were lucky to be at the back, because H.E. had been selected to start another line, and despite the flat calm crossing, had seaspray all over the front, necessitating a good dowsing with the spare radiator water after disembarking. While we were doing that, the Townsley engine was undergoing close scrutiny by customs—though whether for interest or because they suspected Ted of making a hash under there we didn't discover.

So, in pleasant sunshine and parrying the usual questions (in French and English now) passed the half-hour while we waited for the Hare 4½ and the Roland Morgan 2-litre to join us from the ferry. Roland Morgan's car had a giant plastic reservoir on the running board to quench its considerable thirst, while with four people in occupation its luggage space was strictly limited. In its "well used" appearance, aero screen set up, and four suitably dressed occupants it presented the epitome of Vintage motoring.

With five hours to cover the 170 odd miles to Reims, we set off briskly (less briskly on the uphill bits as far as the 2-litre cars were concerned!). As always the

convoy proved impossible to maintain—at the first set of unco-operative traffic lights we became two convoys, the Hare 4½ leader with the 2-litres, and the other 4½s. At the first large roundabout where Hare hesitated and led us up the wrong exit, the three 4½s went the right way and vanished into the distance, no doubt wondering why they couldn't catch us.

Having thrown off Calais and got onto some less congested roads the motoring became very pleasant, with a modicum of sun to cheer us. French roads have improved immensely in 20 years, and H.E., post-rebuild is much taughter anyway. I am sure 20 years ago any attempt to drive the car in France would have left bits of Lagonda strewn along the road, and my temper explosive.

At our first p. stop, and second(?) watering of the Morgan car, we decided that in the absence of sustenance (only the Hare car was properly equipped in this department) and time, we should press on to Reims trying not to be too late. The discussion obviously continued in the Hare car, as in due season it pulled into a suitable lay-by and suggested that the available goodies might as well be eaten and drunken. After a little thought the Morgan contingent headed into the nearby village in search of alcoholic and solid fare. So having eaten all the Hare sandwiches and drunk the coffee, the convoy of two now, pressed on towards the lure of Champagne, and some more incident-free vintage motoring.

Amazingly we all arrived at the "Place of the Rights of Man" within five minutes of each other, even the Evans 16/80 which was travelling independently, and all half an hour late!

Comte Audoin de Dampierre's LG 45 strategically placed on verge under the large "Charles Heidsieck" lettering reassured the doubtful.

The above ground part of the winery was somewhat reminiscent of a modern brewery, with the giant stainless steel fermentation vessels.

Down below was "something else". Miles of tunnels and high chambers, hewn out of the solid limestone by the Romans'

slaves about 200 A.D. with the tool marks plainly visible. The temperature is a constant 52-55°F. One bay contained half a million bottles; the total number seemed uncountable, but we were assured that they were all accounted for!

It would have been very easy to get lost in the labyrinthine passages, but the full party emerged blinking in the sun, after an hour below and headed for the "tastings"—none of your delicate swirl and spit, we quaffed it by the glassful, comparing the vintages—dear, dearer and dearest! The latest brew to hit the market is "Champagne Charlie" which has a cheap and cheerful sound, "Brut" has a slightly unfortunate sound to English ears, "Blanc de Blanc" is the top of the range. They all tasted good to me. We were reminded from time to time, and we proved to our satisfaction each night, it does do away with the headache next day!

So, made suitably merry we sailed forth, shunted the cars down to the verge to join Audoin's for the group photos, causing considerable excitement to the rush hour traffic round the roundabout of the "Place of the Rights of Man", not least because of the lightheaded photographers skipping about trying to get to the central island to get all the cars in one shot.

After that and the usual explanations in halting French as to the age and origin of the cars, we threw the traffic into confusion once again by all driving off the verge together, pointing our bonnets resolutely at the middle to get to the Epernay exit.

The 25 mile brisk run to the hotel excellently rounded off the day's motoring. The rooms were variously double or twin bedded. When Roger and I presented ourselves to the receptionist she asked Roger if he were a couple. He said "No" very firmly, and added in further enlightenment that we had left our womenfolk at home. (That was one of Audoin's complaints—too few women in the party though the ratio was 6:10.)

The evening soon got going in the bar, and with the arrival of the Dampierres the arguments over which room number the drinks were down to (Roger Firth

generously seemed to be shouting loudest) ceased, for thereafter it was Magnums of Champagne, courtesy of Charles Heidsieck, all the way, pausing only to present Audoin with a copy of the Densham Trophy picture, signed by us all, in appreciation. (Not least, of the half bottle of Brut each we found waiting for us in our rooms. Champagne, not the Henry Cooper stuff!). Dinner was good as well.

Saturday, 5th

Gravitated as usual to the car park, after breakfast. Amongst the usual onlookers was one whose demeanour and battered Nikon marked him as a professional photographer, who turned out to be on an assignment for the *Mail on Sunday* magazine, connected with a rival Champagne House. Nevertheless he thought some Lagonda shots could add impact. Roger got in quickly by pointing out that H.E. was the oldest, so had the best credentials. So—pictures were taken, with and without the driver and navigator, but the Editor's decision is final. If someone could keep an eye on the *Mail on Sunday* though . . .

Suitably chuffed at the possibility of National Coverage, we set off into Epernay to look round, before lunch at No. 6, Avenue de Champagne, the Dampierre residence, which happens to be next door to Moët & Chandon! H.E. was making an interesting "wheel-speed" squeak, which Roger suspected was a bearing turning on the stub axle, which had happened before and been cured with Loctite. Happily, in Epernay we found a motor factor who produced a dictionary and Loctite leaflets enabling us to choose a suitable one. Having already obtained a large can of trichlorethylene for degreasing, which is apparently too dangerous to sell in England, we were in business and joined the Lagonda crush in the front yard of No. 6. Thereafter more champagne ad lib, and lunch, an excellent cold collation. Only the thought of last night's dinner and of the one to come that evening prevented us eating even more. For those who thought that you can have too much of a good thing, red wine flowed. Representatives of

rival houses popped in to lunch and examine us and our cars, one being the owner of an XK 120 F/H coupe. Audoin has a Salmson saloon which Peter Evans sampled, and a DB 6 Aston Martin Volante, and a pretty 3½-litre pre-war Alvis saloon, and others not present.

Eventually after much nattering and clutching cases of bubbly, at advantageous rates, we drifted away, in our case as we left H.E. behind, in Alec's Rapide—an effortless and comfortable car, though less roomy than the 2-litre! Our party led by the XK 120 visited the First World War fort, La Pompelle. This mainly underground edifice, contained an interesting museum of mostly French and German material, but with the odd case devoted to Italian and British equipment.

And so back to the hotel, through Reims Forest again, on the N44, collecting H.E. on the way, while Roger Firth was waylaid and incorporated into some French wedding photos (well the Rapide was anyway).

Meanwhile, back at the hotel the other Roger set to work to strip the o/s front hub

whilst I try to remember what happened during the day for this article. (Early on Alec had asked Roger and me who was going to do it, and Roger said "Not me" quicker than I did.) A progress visit to the car park found a relieved Roger—the wheel bearing was 100%, the squeak was just a slightly loose wheel. We decided anyway to cadge lifts to the Grand Cerf (Big Stag to you) for the evening jollies, trying the Townsley 4½ as well this time, a delightfully original car. An even more excellent dinner, with, in typical French manner, long discussions between Audoin and the wine waiter. I sneaked the seat next to Rosaline, Audoin's very attractive wife, whose excellent English allowed us to converse meaningfully about the failings of Mitterand and suchlike.

Sunday, 6th May

Apart from the Morgan party, everyone made breakfast together, said their "Good-byes", paid up and looked happy and set off in loose groups, the Firth, Downie and Townsley contingent towards Belgium and Holland, and the Evans, Hare, Seabrook lot following good advice and heading up the



Journey's end and pre-lunch champagne

Photo: Michael Jones

road to the village of Hautvilliers, quiet and unspoiled, with a Benedictine Abbey.

After a coffee we pottered on alone to Reims, stopping at the British Cemetery at Marfaux, one of so many in this part of France, beautifully kept as always by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Reims Cathedral is magnificent. From Reims up the N44 to the ancient capital of Laon, now capital only of Aisne province. This city on a hill is impressive, but the weather had turned cold and grey since Reims, and the cathedral suffered a little in comparison with Reims'. The weather became even colder and greyer as we drove on towards Arras, with a biting NE wind doing its worst to the driver (me at the time!) The area round Arras seems to be devoid of hotels, so we ended up driving back down to the Hotel Beatus at Cambrai which Roger knew of old as a comfortable place with well-off-the-road parking. As we were driving south (with the biting NE now affecting the navigator!) we crossed the Evans' 16/80 going north.

Monday, 7th May

The cold north-easter blowing even more boisterously—bringing tears to the eyes of the driver (Roger now); sidescreens effect a great improvement. Back through Arras and on to St. Pol and Hesdin on our way to pay homage at Agincourt (or Azincourt as is) with its discrete memorial and charming little museum, with a friendly lady curator whose carefully spoken French even we can understand. We foolishly decided to forgo lunch, thinking to press on to Calais, and eat while we wait for an earlier crossing than the booked one (7.40 p.m. on Tuesday!)

Ahead of us in the queue was the Downie Rapide—Alex not feeling too well and the cold wind making it seem not worth while to extend the trip. In the event we both got the same message from the harrassed girl at the check-in, who was getting regular icy blasts every time one of us barged into her office; the message was

“Come back at the time you are booked”. Meanwhile the icy blasts were whipping lots of nasty sand all over the cars, so we got away A.S.A.P. and tried the ferry terminal, but you are not allowed to trade in excursion tickets. So we beat it from Calais and its sand, back to another hotel Roger knew of old, La Chaumière at Ardres, checking in and downing a large warming coffee, whilst wondering where Alec and Sylvie had ended up.

To make the most of our extra time we drove to Boulogne, the back way past the Field of the Cloth of Gold (Henry VIII jaws Francis I you remember). Boulogne old town pleasant, new town less so as full of English Bank Holiday trippers seeking alcohol in bottles and cans. Left Boulogne on St. Omer road, turning off to Licques on a splendid cross country road of rolling hills and superb views—so close to the boring N43 Calais-Arras route. Once again the hotel offered safe parking round the back.

Tuesday, 8th May

Arose and breakfasted in a leisurely fashion and sauntered into Calais to ascertain the chances of an earlier crossing today, mainly because the weather was still cold and in the hope of getting home in daylight to wash the salt and sand off the car. Got to the terminal at 9.50 and at 10 we were on board—no chance to go round the duty-free. The sea was officially described as “moderate”. Halfway across my stomach officially decided that it was immoderate, and I've decided officially that in rough weather I prefer ferries, where fresh sea air can be very beneficial!

Back in England H.E. seemed positively anxious to get along the boring motorway bits as quickly as possible. It was my turn to drive from the lunch stop at Dorking back to Stokenchurch (no motorway bits) so I had lots more chance to prove that I still need gear changing practice!

Reflections

The French are very pro old cars. Much

MAGAZINE CONTRIBUTIONS BY:

WINTER: 30th November
SUMMER: 30th May

SPRING: 28th February
AUTUMN: 30th August

hooting and flashing (of the lights that is) accompanied us; the English cars ignored us, though their occupants sometimes came to speak when we were all parked. The 2-litre when properly sorted really is a delightful car to drive; excellent brakes and handling—if only it had a little more urge. What was plenty in 1959 when I bought the car isn't quite enough in 1984. Never mind over the whole trip it averaged 28 m.p.g., and when it does find someone slower, the rising crescendo of third gear as the aristocratic nose edges past the inoffensive 2 CV or whatever is sheer delight.

Finally, many thanks to Alec Downie and Comte Audoin de Dampierre who arranged it all, to Alec who shelled out much advance cash, and consequently must have felt like a tax collector as he went round touching us all for different items; and to Richard Hare, who collected an assortment of francs and pounds for the cases of the various brews we bought on the Saturday.

Next year Alec has in mind a trip to Le Mans, the Loire Valley and Normandy. Start queueing.

MICHAEL JONES

Lagonda Clerihews.

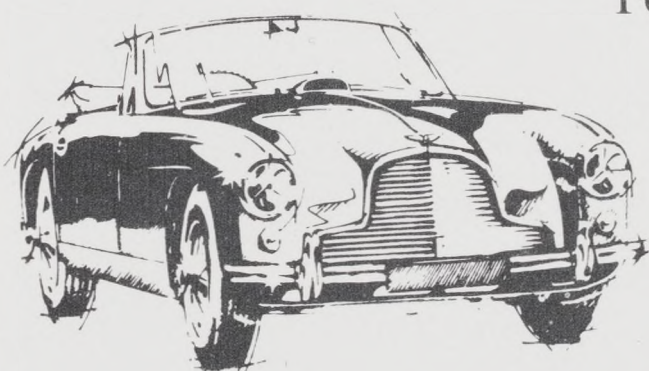
by Arnold Davey
No. 1—Alan Good



Alan P. Good
Was extremely fond of food
With his girth he was forced to shelve
Plans for anything less than the V12.
(Drawing by O. Veldemann, 1936)

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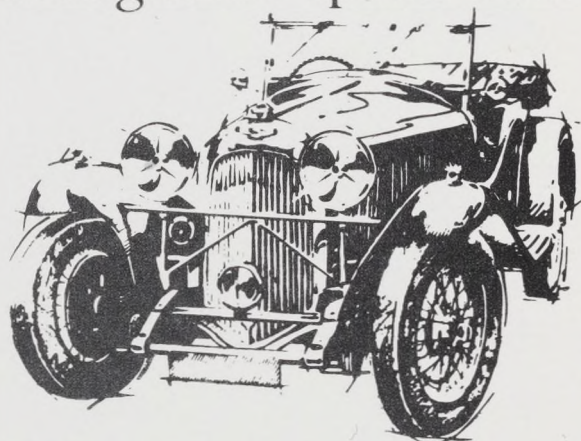


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A Testing Day at Silverstone.

IN APRIL Dan Margulies kindly invited me to take my two Fox and Nicholl team cars, BPK 201 and BPK 203, to his private testing day at Silverstone. It was a lovely quiet event, or rather non-event, there being only a couple of handfulls of Dan's friends with their various Maseratis, Bugattis and the odd Alfa. It was a most enjoyable day and Peter Whenman and his "slave" Ralph took the opportunity of a day off from their hard labour at the Phoenix to bring 201 along.

The old lady owner was looking forward to driving the two cars around the circuit, wearing the compulsory "space mans" helmet (can't hear a thing), and fire-proof knickers. I covered about 10 laps with various passengers. I became bored with wearing out the tyres and the monotony—no trees—no bridges and after all I do suffer from a certain lack of competitiveness. So much so that if I saw another car in the mirror I immediately waved it past.

I thought that now was the time to have a spin in the cockpit of 201 for an extensive tour of the outskirts of the paddock area, just to get used to the car before venturing into the hassle of the circuit.

Taking courage (not the beer) in both hands, the steering wheel in the middle, I edged my way onto the circuit between the "go very faster boys". I completed two laps before deciding that that was quite enough for both of us. Me and the car. I was alright but the car was obviously beginning to suffer. It turned out to be a blown head gasket, so nothing very serious. However, disappointing as at that time I had only driven about 15 miles in the car myself, after lots of work by Peter and Jenks. Happily they are now having fun with the car as I have no room for her in London at present.

We have removed the superfluous American junk from 201, renewed the exhaust system and replaced the P 100's with the correct Rotax headlamps, and carried out various bits of general housework in the engine department.

I have now driven three of the original Team Cars (no replicas—any offers?) and they all feel the same apart from minor differences. I call them "go-faster rattle traps" but they are all fantastic get up and go cars, thanks I think to the "Nics and Foxall" tweeks.

MRS. ROBBY HEWITT



Together again, BPK 201 and BPK 203 at Silverstone.

Photo: Mrs Robby Hewitt

Oiliness - an Elusive Quality or

Μηδὲν ἄγαν

MOTOR CARS MADE TODAY have their oils sealed in little tin boxes with few opportunities for the owner to experiment or change. For a pre-war Lagonda the possibilities are almost infinite and equally worrying to those owners who allow the drama to get out of hand. Two short articles last year have not resulted in indignant letters; the following may provoke them.

One of your correspondents implied rather unfairly that lubrication technology is a quite recent development. It is just one hundred years since the theory of film lubrication was propounded. Metallic soaps, notably tin and chromium compounds, were added to engine oils before many club members were born and oils with strongly detergent, dispersant properties were on general sale thirty years ago. Improvements continue to be made.

In an engine a motor oil has the most difficult conditions to face. Just like a tyre the final product involves compromise between conflicting requirements. Figures on the side of a tin of oil indicate one of its more important qualities. A low figure means it is "thinner", will circulate more freely and generate less heat through friction in the fluid. (Just to confuse you the "Viscosity Index" is something quite different. A high value is accounted good because it means the oil "thickness" varies less as between cold and hot conditions.)

Pre-war engines were designed with different bearing materials and running clearances. A very "thin" modern oil may escape too easily from old bearings to build up sufficient pressure at the vital load-bearing points. On the other hand, with a "thick" oil, fluid friction and reduced flow of cooling oil will cause the bearings to run hotter. White metal bearings at high temperature suffer metal fatigue, crack and break up prematurely. Before my last engine overhaul (by a club member, magazine advertiser, Rapier man) oil pressure was generally low. Changing to

heavy, SAE 50 oil increased pressure on short runs. An hour at 3,000 r.p.m. on the motorway reduced oil pressure to its previous value. Increased friction and reduced oil flow raised the temperature—probably harming bearings. After thorough cleaning and attention to bearings, etc. we have lots of nice oil pressure, oil flow and cooler running.

Oil pressure gauges only show that the oil pump is working. They do not show where the oil is going, in what quantity or in what condition. It follows that zero oil pressure may mean the pump has stopped pumping—with all that may follow—but you may continue for many a mile with low pressure provided you discard the lead boots. One long-established member has none of the gauges working and gets along fast enough driving sensitively "by the seat of his pants".

Thorough cleaning is most important. Sludge tends to be precipitated much more under the cold-running conditions in older type engines. It is made up of oxidised hydrocarbon particles which coagulate and hold lots of nasty abrasive material with acidic residues. On later 4½-litre cars it is virtually impossible to remove the sump while the engine is still in the car. After, say, twenty years the sludge is unbelievably thick. Highly dispersant oil will send this lot circulating to do a lot of damage. In a clean engine modern oil will not allow condensate to form corrosive acids and rust. With older oils the sludge was deposited all round, water settled on components, sump oil still looked clean after long service. Now the sump oil looks horrible but if you change it frequently the revolting by-products go with it.

However, I should be reluctant to fill a Lagonda with very "thin" oil, designed for a different type of operation. I put 10-30 grade in a new, modern car used for short journeys with longish intervals of idleness. At 30,000 miles the cylinders were in excellent condition, the valve gear and

auxiliaries badly worn. Thin oil drains away during the idle time. With only boundary layer lubrication left scuffing occurs until oil is once more flooding round. What is best for the commercial traveller doing 30,000 miles a year in his company Cortina may not be best for your 2-litre going to Aunt Mary once a week and to church on Sunday.

Castor oil was used in sports cars years ago because its coefficient of friction was about one tenth that of petroleum-based oils, but oxidation led to many problems. In racing engines which were frequently stripped down that didn't matter so much.

One of the correspondents warned of the dreadful effect of extreme pressure "hypoid" oil on bronze bearings. These oils have sulphur, chlorine and phosphorus compounds added. It is not that bronze and copper "dissolve" in the oil. At high temperature, say 280°F (140°C) they tend to act as a catalyst to break down the oil. This might be a consideration if one were eccentric enough to want SAE 90 viscosity and could afford the high cost of 2½ gallons of Hypoid!

The steering gear involves rolling and sliding movements so I put in Hypoid oil after it was rebuilt by the manufacturers 23 years ago. Bronze bushes and bronze cages for ball thrust races have not suffered in that time. Even in a New Forest Rally you won't develop 140°C in the steering box. We used sulphurised, chlorinated oils for machining very difficult metals and the cutting oil got uncomfortably hot, 20 years later there was little more than slight staining of copper and bronze machine parts.

The oil chemist has to compromise. An oil highly refined to reduce oxidation loses some natural oiliness so he cuts down the refining and puts in oxidation inhibitors. Some compounds added for detergent quality used to react unfavourably on copper-lead and cadmium bearing metals. That characteristic has been improved.

Don't go overboard for the latest thin technical marvel. The Greeks used to say "Nothing in excess".

RICHARD HARE

Lagondas to Le Mans.

FOR THE PAST EIGHT YEARS I have pilgrimaged to Le Mans in a Lagonda. I was introduced to this way of life by Joe Harding and friends who have been to the race for twenty-one years. In my first year we took two Lagondas and gradually the party grew to almost unmanageable proportions in 1980. Our group then consisted of two Lagondas, Talbot, three Bentleys, Lotus and two back-up moderns. It is also a year that I would rather forget because on the journey south my M45 differential decided to lose two pinion teeth. The last fifteen miles to our camp-site were purgatory with the crown wheel beating hammer blows to the pinion and prop-shaft. Joe Harding had soon repaired the hardy spicer universal joints with an inch of copper cut from his exhaust pipe and hammered into the bearings. I, meanwhile, opened my boot to retrieve a get-me-home

crown wheel and pinion, which some delightful guardian angel had persuaded me to sling in the car just in case.

Of course this amazed the Bentley boys, whose only spares are bottles of certain different liquids. I recall that we could not break the pinion assembly lock nuts without the aid of a garage and vice. We therefore left the rear of my car supported for the night with a trolley jack under the banjo and two hydraulic jacks, each under the rear spring U-bolts. Safe enough you would have thought. All that night it poured with rain and my early morning alarm call was not coffee with a nip of brandy but my car crashing onto the tool box under the running board only two inches from my head. Luckily the motion was softened by so much mud and the naked back plates did not crack under the strain.

My ego was shattered by these events and I did not go to Le Mans the following year.

In 1982 Joe and I just completed our first V12 Le Mans Replica WFX 316 the day before we left for Le Mans (now the David Crow V12) and certainly had to sort out a few problems on the way down which were not all Lagonda derived. On a right-hand bend in Folkestone the faithful Talbot decided to go straight on, mount the kerb, scatter the shoppers and stop in the doorway of a fish and chip shop, no less. As the Silentbloc bushes were very worn and perished, the off-side front friction shock absorbers moved across and wedged the steering arm. In sympathy the V12 regulator blew its top five minutes later, and we therefore had three hours of night driving on side lights and kerbs and four days of push starts.

In 1983 I went to Le Mans with Joe

Harding and his newly acquired LG6 Rapide. The oil bill was £100 split two ways (under protest). When Joe and I rebuilt this engine (again just prior to Le Mans) I had personally handed to him the half dozen or so copper sealing washers which stop the oil from being sucked into the inlet manifold. Many gallons of oil later we found the washers in my workshop at Teddington.

Somehow we always managed to take virgin motors to Le Mans and this year has been no exception. My new V12 replica Le Mans, CS 7979, purred its way there and back without a hitch. Daring one might think, but certainly an excuse to test a rebuilt engine for reliability on a good run on those really delightful French roads, spurred on by the general feeling of well-being and ambiance after many refreshment stops.

PHILIP ERHARDT



Phil Erhardt with his low chassis model M45

Photo: Phil Erhardt

Midland Notes.

THE MEETING at Shugborough was a great success—by comparison to previous events, that is—we joined the Rolls and Bentley people and, although we were greatly out-numbered, we were certainly not out-classed.

Indeed it was noticeable that many visitors were being photographed using the Lags. as background.

Members attending were:—

Roger Wheldon and family in his beautiful D.B. 3-litre D.H.C. of 1953 vintage.

George Williamson in his D.B. 3-litre saloon restored to a similar condition.

Mr. Bhogal and family with his D.B. 2.6 saloon which he has fully rebuilt from a wreck, and a wonderful job he has done too.

Ron Smith with his LG45 Sanction III which only obtained an M.O.T. the day previous. This, therefore, was its first outing. Thanks for the effort, Ron.

A 2-litre was also spotted, but I was unable to contact the owner.

Unfortunately, I was not in my D.B. 3-litre D.H.C. because of an accident two weeks before. This collision taught me something that I had not realised, indeed not thought about before. I ran into the

rear of a Datsun at approximately 10 m.p.h. My immediate thought was "that's my number plate smashed" I should be so lucky. The Datsun bumper is something like 26 inches from the ground. Consequently, there is a crease across the full width of the car at headlamp height—albeit the bottom of the headlights. My bumper, overriders and spot lamps disappeared under the rear and are untouched. Had it been a bumper to bumper situation there would have been no problem—not for me that is.

The sequel is on a more pleasant note. In January of this year I changed my insurance to a Collectors Car Policy with Norwich Union. Within three working days the assessor had been and agreed a price for the repair. The only delay is with the repairer unable to accommodate it.

Of interest to D.B. owners is a new book by Andrew Whyte covering the David Brown cars.

It is very well presented and includes many fine photographs. It just happens that my 3-litre is on the cover and featured several times inside.

Also in the June issue of *Thoroughbred and Classic Car* is an article, again by Andrew Whyte, on the same theme.

H. TAYLOR

A Summer to be Remembered. *Hull & East Riding Members Notes*

A LOCAL MAN staked his all—money, property, even his pub the Horse and Jockey—on a chestnut filly in the St. Ledger. This was in 1813. There were ten false starts. At the 11th the filly he fancied won by half a head. (Vintage car races today not so nerve-wracking!) In celebration he renamed his pub after the winner and it's been the Altisidora ever since. It is in the East Riding just outside Beverley, which is still known to the sporting fraternity with its three meetings per year.

A present Beverley trainer worthy of mention is Don Hoggard who grooms, stables, inspects and examines his charges, gives them the necessary treatment, and advises their owners. Don must be specially pleased with his stable's performance in the Sandtoft Dressage Tests, the northern calendar's Classic meeting. Not only was his own entry Jubilate (Hogo up) second, but Rosinante (Pato up) was first, both brought to peak of condition by personal attention at his own H.Q. In addition Ninety Nine (under

Kaspar) was reserve but did not run. All three owners are fellow members. Clerk of Course Alan Brown provided riding crops for his revised version of last year's Whacko.

Various Hermes, sometimes in two- and three-car convoys which seem to increase the Vintagers' enjoyment, have attended the annual VSCC events at Oulton Park with serious Concours, Silverstone, and Prescott, and their special Golden Jubilee events at Malvern and Oulton with fun-tests and elimination Concours where John and Susie Batt and David Royle had northern connections. Plus the Northern Jubilee Run organised by their Bridget Laycock and Mike Clark. The Plus included a surprise visit to meet Dr. Roth of the U.S.A. at his splendid castle near Harrogate where he started up his gigantic veteran Oldsmobile. Mike and Wendy Hoare kept popping up at events and here they introduced Eric Hopper and his covetable 3-litre saloon (ex Dearden-Briggs and Denmark). Delighted when Hoppers came to our August pub meet to make five Lagondas and five other vintage at Cave Castle. Interested to hear Eric was a schoolboy in Hull.

We had reasonable representation at Alne Show near York. Don and Ted Townsley shot here at clay pigeons. Don clearly in good practice, Ted doing remarkably well with Don's gun after long lay-off.

More extraordinary meetings were at Roy Hatfield's Country Club, and at the country home of Tom and Sally Tyler (Sunbeam owners and VSCC). At the former we met John Foster and 2-litre, John born in Hedon here where our unseen but paid-up members Ian and Mary North live. The Tylers invited local motoring friends to what turned out to be a Silver Wedding Feast stretching right down the centre of their sun drenched lawn with over fifty guests. D. R. Clark and Reggie joined in here, Jack Taylor too busy workwise and still rebuilding his Lagonda.

Three noteworthy mentions in closing. The unbelievably long spell of sunny weather this summer. Only rain was a sudden torrential downpour at the

Hatfields' garden barbecue, and showers before and after racing at July Silverstone in quirky contrast to the hot sunny April meeting with enjoyable and speedy parade celebrating 50th birthday of Lagonda's Rapier.

John Macdonald's performance at Silverstone. Didn't hear much about it from race commentators, but in 10-lap Scratch Race with 30 pre-1961 starters and won by D type Jaguar, John powered his Morgan Plus Four to 7th place overall beating Aston DB3S, another D type, Aston DBR1, Jag C type, Willie Green in Talbot Le Mans, Maser Tipo 61 and Connaught. Obviously John won his class; second in his class was 19th overall. Interesting to know John, with a little help from Iain, cut his driving teeth on Lagondas. Now know why the two Macs are called MacDonald Racing.

Finally, we appreciate the generous hospitality, food and drink of the Laycocks' and Clarks' at the start and finish of the Northern Jubilee Run with Dr. Roth's sandwiched in between, and we thank the Hatfields and the Tylers additionally for including us in their more intimate lavish family events.

Truly, a summer to remember.

HERMES I.



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11th Escargot d'Or, 1984.

I TOOK AUNTIE, a 1932 3-litre Lagonda. The Sea Link Ferries didn't go on strike—French Railways weren't on strike either; always think of the possibilities when trying to cross that expensive little bit of water.

After a few years we had decided to do the Escargot Rally again and really splash out on an eight day rally to Sardinia. The last Escargot D'Or which we entered was 1978 . . . and it was cancelled owing to the political situation, but we still went to the Cote d'Azur.

Now, "Motor Rail" works a treat (one is not a chicken!) because if you carefully look at the expense factor by the time that you have paid the petrol, autoroute tolls, lodging, meals and a present for your mother-in-law en route to the South of France the price is the same.

So "Auntie" was duly driven to her lower bunk, 1½ ins. clearance for the windscreen, on the Motor Rail trailer at Calais complete with Harrods plastic bags (Lagonda Green of course) over the five lamps. These are a good idea owing to the presence of flying pickets, if not stones, overnight at 80 m.p.h.

Installed in our couchette we attended the buffet restaurant car for dinner. Allan insisted that I changed into my Isadora Duncan long flowing robes—he thought it was the "Orient Express". At least I hadn't worn the long white beads . . . everyone was in blue jeans, full scruff kit and the food was inedible. That's the last time I change to command.

We arrived at Nice 15 hours later. No problems. We clocked in at the International-Club de Juans les Pins with all relevant documents which were not of great interest to anyone, and received rally plaques plus all details in French, English, German and Spanish which was very considerate of the organisation.

We set off from Juan les Pins to Geneva (143 miles if you take the direct route). It was Sunday, a day of remembrance for the 1st World War, etc., very heavy traffic and

the route was all along the coast road. We got lost, not just us, but many of the 42 cars on the Rally in Nice, Monte Carlo and Menton. In fact, in Monte Carlo the police kept on insisting on the diversion route through the old market and I thought we would have to drive up the ancient steps to get ourselves out of the emboitage. In the middle of all this a chap shouting in English with a microphone stood on the edge of my running board and insisted that I spoke in French for the local radio station, which was a taxing task for my French, to say the least, at 9.30 a.m.

We crossed the border into Italy and after lunch proceeded toward Genova. The local traffic on the coast road was too much so we decided to take to the Autoroute, to catch the boat in time. It was really windy up there, viaducts, tunnels and rain, heavy "Auntie" was being blown, like a little flower, from side to side. The saloon Austin 7 on the rally would have been blown over I am sure had it taken that route. Anyway we found the correct port in Genova to leave for Sardinia. For once we were first to arrive as the other cars had stuck to the conventional route along the coast and arrived one hour late. No problems, we all bedded down, the cars and ourselves on the boat for the nine hour crossing to Sardinia.

The next day, at some unspeakable hour in the morning, we disembarked at Porto-Torres. The French T.V. of Channel Three decided that they would like to join us sitting in the back. So out went all our luggage into their modern car and as a replacement we received a very large, round 17-stone cameraman plus full camera kit and a skinny, long, tall sound man, plus his recording apparatus. I was somewhat concerned about the former as both he and all the equipment was perched precariously on the hood bag or the running boards—what's more I thought that "Aunties" wood frame, which was older than him, might collapse. Then we

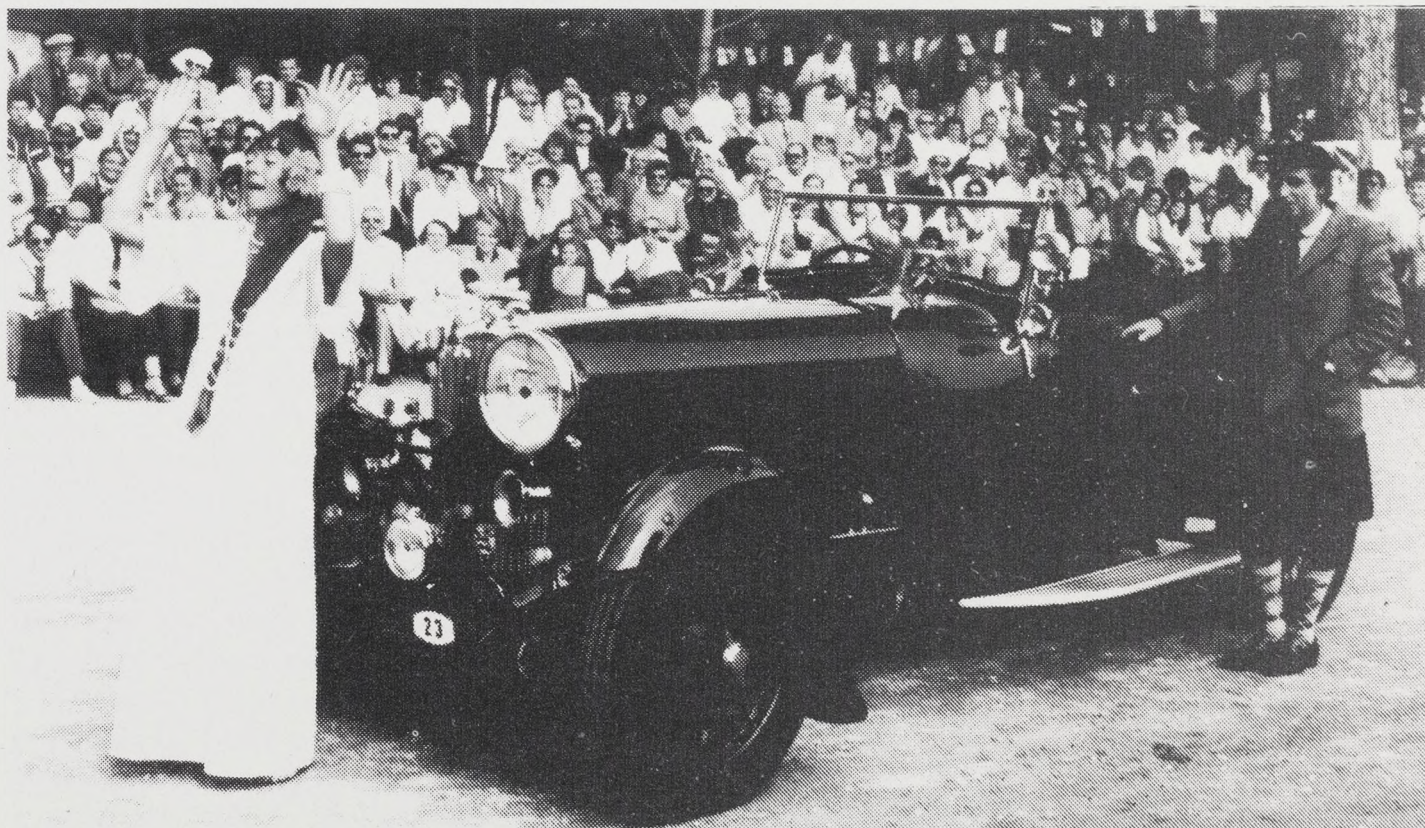
got lost, not of course having the correct map at the correct time, despite the attendance of a modern camera car and a member of the committee who after all ought to have known where he was going. We went into the outskirts of Sassari (a nasty industrial town) and we must, after all, have looked a funny-peculiar lot, and with no smiles on their faces, the local Sardinian Gestapo brandishing automatic rifles let us by. The film crews seemed to be enjoying themselves and taking too much footage. After 1½ hours I noticed that the "sound department" had gone rather speechless in any language. On closer observation I noticed that he was looking somewhat blue of colour and warming his fingers in his breath before being able to press the buttons on his recording apparatus. Well after all it is cold in the back in a heat wave, let alone May in Sardinia! Speechless, they soon pleaded to return to their modern box. It rained, we had a very good lunch up the mountains with folkloric music and dancing. I suggested to the producer of the T.V. film (to run for 35 mins.) that he used a well known song of the 1940's "Je veux changer ma voiture contre un Jeep" and left him to work amongst the sound archives.

After lunch we took once again to the mountains. We were motoring in the clouds. The scenery was very dull, dark black trees, no grass, red rock, completely barren country, no people not even a sheep. It looked like the perfect setting for a horror film or "The Day after the Day After". I suppose given latitude and a touch of sun it could have had more appeal. They said "only 43 kms." after lunch, but they forgot to say that every one was a hairpin bend. The 3-litre was not really constructed to go round corners incessantly, or I could of course be wrong . . . Allan and I took turns with aching arms. We finally arrived at Nuoro—definitely to be missed if you ever plan on going there!

The following day we had a splendid lunch which should have been an outside bar-b-que but, owing to the weather, was held at an Agip petrol station.

As we started to go north west to coast and leave the inner sanctum of Sardinia the weather and the scenery brightened. We tumbled upon the charming little fishing port of Bosa; what a lovely change after the bleak interior of the country.

Thence on to a splendid hotel at Alghero, which was supposedly built by the Aga Khan. I, along with seven others



Aah, the English abroad!

Photo: Mrs Robby Hewitt.

of our intrepid rally, changed and leapt on arrival into their lovely swimming pool, jeered on, much to our disgust, by other rally people from their private balconies. A gala dinner with dancing that evening.

The next morning we were supposed to take a boat to arrive at "Grottes de Neptune" around the bay.

However, as the sea was too rough to cross the bay of Porto Conte we all piled into two Autobuses, if not coaches. On arrival, the sun made an appearance; we descended the steps to the Grotto of Neptune. This for me was the highlight of Sardinia.

It was the epitome of all the things which man has ever tried to copy from nature. It went on for almost $\frac{1}{4}$ mile. The most fantastic sights in different tones of white, bronze and cinnamon, stalagmites and stalagmites which originate from many many thousands of years ago. One could see the Buddhist Temple, the Roman Catholic cathedrals, the giant church organs with carvings of little people around them. The sea lapping in the lower gallery. I was very sorry to have to leave. The most fantastic experience not to be missed, which I shall always remember . . . so too the 600 steps up—they were far easier on the descent . . .

In the afternoon an Épreuve de Régularité in two parts up a lovely windy road with 1 km between. I cannot say that we went great guns on this one as we never saw any kilometer stones which were the markers. Not to worry, mad dash to Porto Torres for the boat.

At 6.00 a.m. on the boat we surfaced to see Genova and boat in torrential rain. Spirits were not high . . . to say the least. Once off the ferry we all set off in the torrential rain in different directions. On one occasion three participants emerging upon each other from different directions. Some had followed an official car—always fatal. It was a severe case of rush hour traffic, hoods up and mopping up. Allan enjoyed the challenge of driving as he hates boats—I closed my eyes and kept mopping up.

After 2½ hours crashing around in this deluge, a breakfast stop in a splendid old

has-been hotel in Ospedaletti. Thence on to our lovely plush Hotel Jauna in Juans-les-Pins; what luxury, a splendid hotel with good parking for four nights, and time to see and hang up the contents of our suitcases.

The next day it was all off to Venice, about 40 miles. I passengered in a Lancia Lambda. I smelt petrol and suggested that the driver should investigate from whence it came. He opened the bonnet and said "you're right, its a fuel union" leapt back into the car and was just about to set intrepidly off, when I suggested that he might close the bonnet as it spoilt my view!

Drinks in the square of the nice old town, lunch then a visit to the Chapelle of Matisse. By then it was gently raining and the absence of the sunlight pouring through the stained glass windows . . . I tried hard, but felt that something was lacking, or it could have been me, with this Chapelle. The following day $\frac{3}{4}$ hour drive to Vallauris. The planned visit to Maughet Museum was cancelled as it hadn't yet been opened.

In the afternoon we had a gymkhana in the village square. I took on a female passenger and I can't say that we did F.T.D. it was more like S.T.D. Allan, meanwhile, took the prize with a Frenchman, cheating of course as he stood on the running boards! On the way back my lady navigator had me beautifully lost up in the mountains then down to the sea . . . so I had a lovely topless swim.

That evening the prize giving in a local restaurant. On descending from the balcony only looking for the "ladies" they called out my name and thrust a large bottle of Rickard into my hands, which prize I don't know, but who was I to argue. Allan's French friend won the Gymkhana. And the next day, we were all feeling a little jaded, after seven days on the trot of jollies and gala dinners. All hands on deck to polish up the cars and ourselves for the Concours d'Elegence. I did think I had a chance here to secure a little pot as we had featured on the first page (not page three) of the local Cote d'Azure newspaper. But, silly me it was

not to be. The folk who turned out in the hired fancy dress of the epoqe, picture hats, morning dress and top hats won the day. In the mountains of Sardinia I wouldn't have needed all that kit only a change of anorak. That evening we all set off in two large plastic buses, wearing our party dresses to the Casino at Monaco. It is a lovely old building of the era, not at all spoilt. The food, I won't bore you with . . . it was not the best, suffice to say I only knew that I was eating fish when I stumbled across a bone.

The cabaret was a certain gentleman whose name I won't mention (it could be libelous). He proceeded methodically to murder the best of songs, and kept on asking for an "encore" from the audience. I called out "Basta", "enough", in Italian. The management thought I'd said "Bastard"! I was requested to be quiet or leave; I wish I could have left, but the bus was not leaving until 2.00 a.m. Well at least thats one of the best Casinos I didn't manage to get chucked out of . . .

And so that was the end of the rally.

We proceeded gently the next morning to recover with some friends near St. Tropez.

The next day we set off some 140 miles to see Peter and Marianne Black, of Amilcar and Alvis fame, nr. Avignon for one night. The "mistral" was blowing (force 10 gale with Sahara sand included) thence back to St. Tropez, and Nice for Motor Rail.

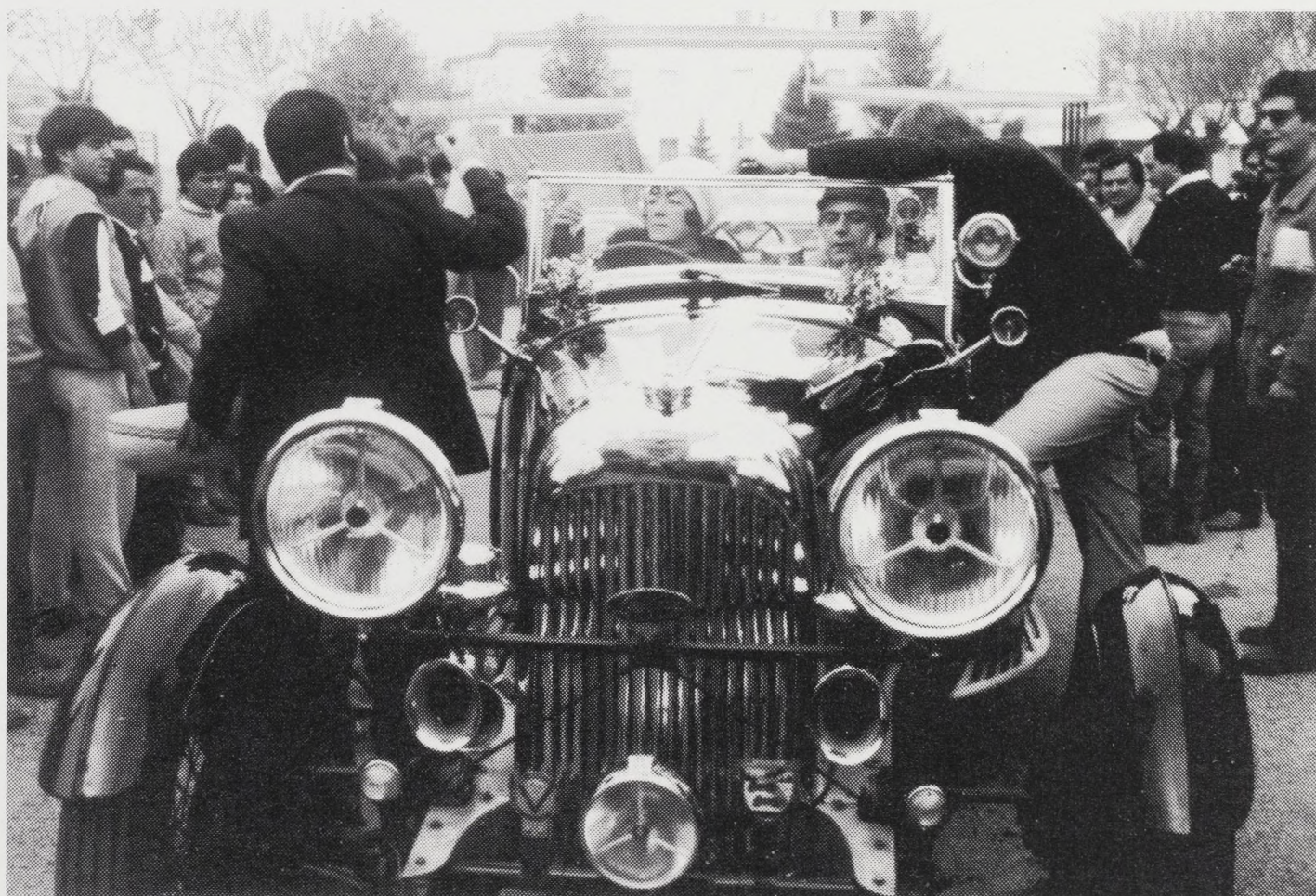
"Auntie" 3-litre covered Nice-Calais in a record time of 15 hours, not using any petrol or oil.

A very good trip, the car used only two litres of oil covering the mountain passes in Sardinia (well who wouldn't) and nothing went wrong—gets boring—don't it!

MRS. ROBBY-ANNE HEWITT



Advertising rates in the Magazine are: £25.00 per whole page. Smaller spaces pro rata.



Robby, Allan and the 3-litre with hangers on.

Photo: Mrs Robby Hewitt

Canadian Reunion.

A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO at a Vintage race weekend, where by pure chance I happened to have been driving my 2-litre Lagonda instead of my 1934 Indy car, I met Ken Bowden.

This old gentleman had come to where my car was parked and started telling me all about 2-litre Lagondas, and as this sort of thing happens to all of us at one time or another, I didn't pay too much notice at first.

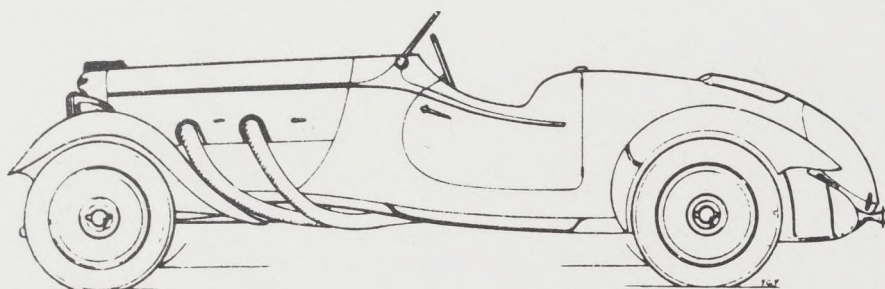
However after a while it became obvious that this chap really knew his stuff, and he pointed out how down on power my car was and that he would have to do something about it.

It turned out that he had worked at Lagonda in the 20's and had actually helped in the building of my car. He left a few years later and after a varied career moved to Canada in 1969. He bought a house less than two miles from where I had mine but had no knowledge that there was a Lagonda in the neighbourhood.

I had bought the car in 1970 and the first time Ken Bowden had seen the car was in October 1982, although I had always driven the car quite regularly. Upon reacquaintance Ken was quite excited about the whole thing and wanted to start right away, but I was a bit low on cash (not all our streets are paved with gold). So I kept on putting things off. The car was, after all, running and I had a lot of more pressing projects. A month later Ken suggested that I drive the car over and that we start on it, and as there would be no charge, at this point I gave in.

We worked side by side in his very small garage where he rebored it, fitted new pistons (available off the shelf in Toronto), raised the compression and renewed every bearing in the engine including the oil pump. We took our time and since Ken is well into his 70's we didn't work when it was too hot or too cold. So a year to the week the job was completed.

During that year I learnt a lot about the



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goings on at Lagonda in the "good old days". Some of these seemed a little too good judging by the number of women involved with tales of driving a 2-litre up Remenham Hill out of Henley at over 60 m.p.h. and accelerating all the way.

Ken had forgotten very little about 2-litres and his ability with a lathe was quite amazing. I was also surprised at being able to work at such close quarters with somebody without us getting on each others nerves, especially when you consider that he is twice my age. I paid for all the materials bought such as pistons and the bronze for making the bearings and so forth, whilst Ken supplied his vast experience and knowledge for the pleasure

of it.

Now oil pressure is 40 psi at idle and will reach 100 psi. Acceleration is now acceptable and I can face most hills without being embarrassed by modern tinware, but best of all, the engine doesn't knock.

It is quite interesting to think of this gentleman having worked on my car as an apprentice and moving to Canada and meeting up with the car again. He told me that this would probably be the last engine he would ever rebuild but that he had particularly wanted to do it. In this we have both been very lucky.

DORIEN BERTELETTI

25 Years with Lagondas.

MY TELEPHONE RANG early in May 1959. The caller had never telephoned me before, but he had recently been coming to our monthly VSCC meetings. My own car was a 12/50 Alvis, his was a Lagonda.

"I'm going on a long trip tomorrow Roy", he said, "would you like to come for the ride—and navigate. To Ludlow. Chap from the far end of Wales is thinking of buying my car and Ludlow seems a good half-way place. We might be coming back in a 2-litre if the deal comes off". When I said I'd no idea he was thinking of parting he explained he had just been given a company car and he didn't want two cars. He reckoned the 2-litre would be easier to sell up here than a 4½, especially his, because it was so heavy on petrol. He wasn't out to make money, as long as he got enough to buy a little boat he'd be happy; he'd had a boat before. "You know, when you're out with your four youngsters all day fishing from a boat, they are not pestering every few minutes for coppers for ice cream and tanners for the amusements".

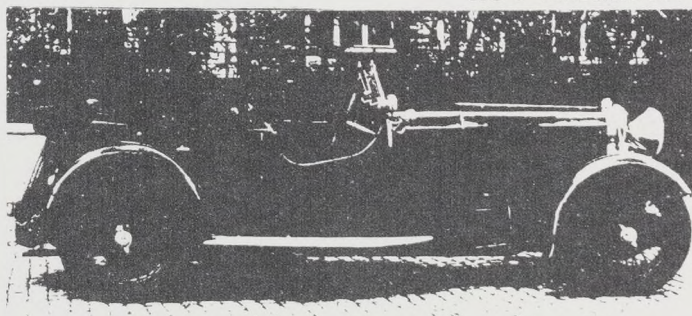
I had fancied his car for my particular family since he first bought it, so I chipped in and said if that was the situation I'd give him what he wanted and let's keep the car up here, never mind about Ludlow and Wales. It was unlucky for the other chap,

but most fortunate for me.

I'd been attending the monthly meetings for years through my 1952 VSCC connection with Henry Coates and Ch Batte. Lagondas were the most numerous make there and now I was able to join them. The 4½ brought me the Allison Trophy and after that I was smitten with the urge to compete and parted with it in a three-way deal whereby Henry let me have his competition two-seater and John Beardow took over the big tourer. I thoroughly enjoyed Henry's car for almost eighteen years. Unfortunately I felt I had to replace it with a smaller model some time after I joined the ranks of the retired. Hence my recent Rapier.

And here's a coincidence. My Rapier was delivered new in mid 1934 just 50 years ago. So, for half its life I have had a Lagonda, and for over half my life I've been in the VSCC. I'll try to celebrate at Sandtoft. Hope to see you there.

ROY PATERSON



Lagondas Invade Normandy- June '84!

THIS JUNE saw the eleventh Rally of the Three Valleys organised by the "ancient vehicle enthusiasts" of Normandy. The event has always been well-supported by the Lagonda Club and this year five cars headed for the Normandy beaches. Like those earlier landings, we suffered a casualty and were forced to abandon a lone 2-litre at Portsmouth . . . not so its occupants!

Our rendezvous on a sunny Saturday lunchtime was the civic park at Flers where some 40 cars, dating from 1908 to the 50's were assembled. Tanked up—cars and occupants alike! We headed for the riverside town of Bagnoles-de-l'Orne for a spot of tennis and on through the truly beautiful Suisse Normande on a lighthearted navigational run. No compass or map were needed that afternoon for the flavour was pure fun—just a steady hand and a sense of humour to tackle the ingenious games that were set en route.

The two-day rally is well sponsored and our hosts that evening were Elf Petroleum. We dined that evening on a magnificent,

if not somewhat daunting array of shellfish, drank the local cider and sampled some fiery Calvados before retiring in newly built apartments in the grounds of the 18th century Chateau of Le Bourg St. Leonard. The party lasted well into the wee hours and the early morning start came all too soon . . .

Our route was to head for the resort of Cabourg again on a route spiked with devilish tasks, through fields of summer flowers and past traditional timbered Normandy farmhouses. Flowers were a major element that day and our final task was to deck the cars with flowers gathered from the hedgerows before entering the seaside resort. Replenished by an enormous Sunday lunch, we met the Mayor, paraded through the streets and attended a final prize-giving.

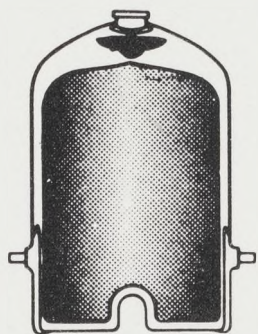
Magnanimous to the last, our hosts showered the entrants with prizes and we left laden with goodies and fond memories of the rally.

Our two-day jolly cost £39 per head all told; not only did we dine magnificently



One intrepid navigator in party mood. Nicknamed the "Doormouse" by day.

Photo: Sally Green



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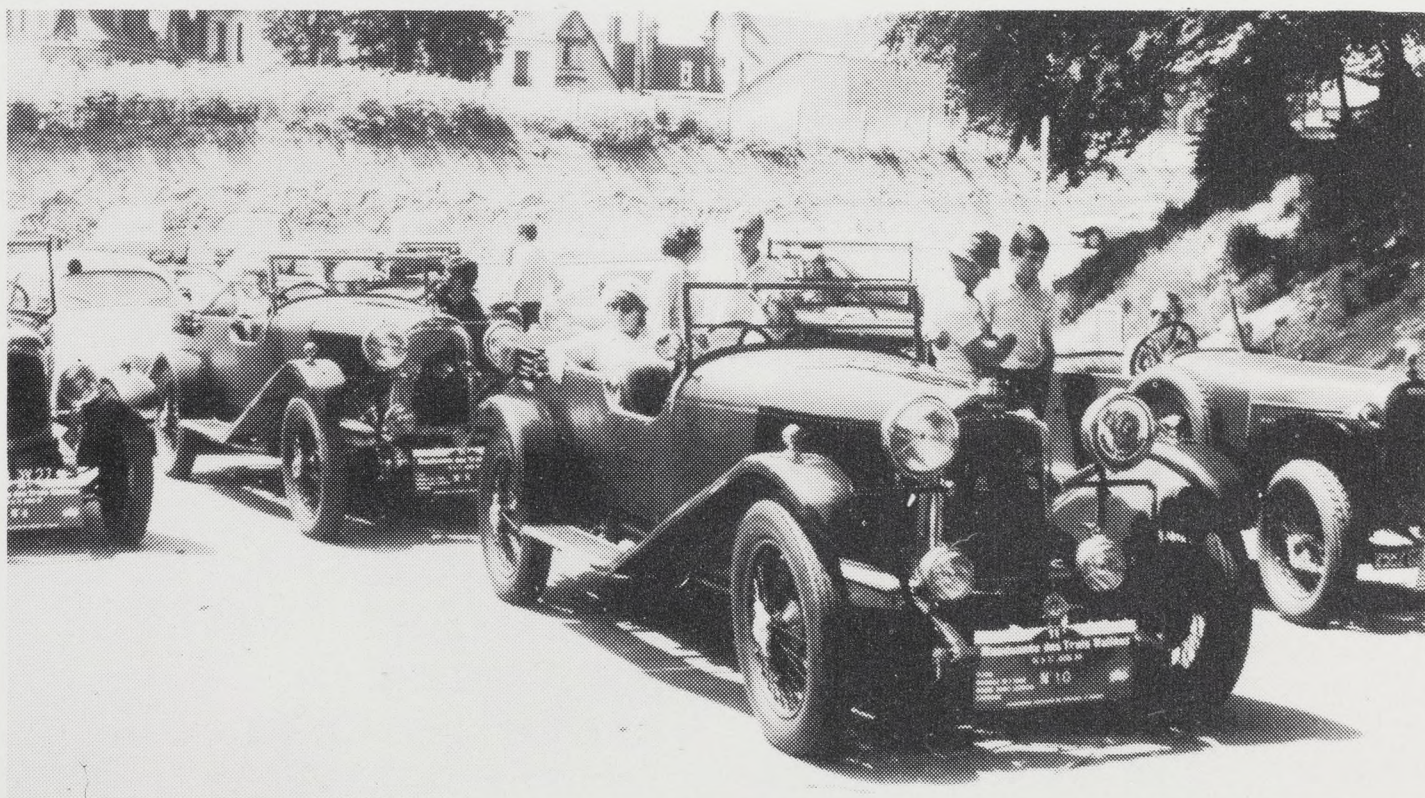
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but we saw some of Normandy's finest countryside, travelling on minor roads we would no doubt have ignored normally and had the pleasure of meeting French motoring enthusiasts in their own country.

If you are planning a French jaunt, the ANVE Rally is well worth incorporating into your itinerary—just ask your Lagonda nicely if you can go next year!

SALLY GREEN



Almost ready for the off. The park at Flers.

Photo: Sally Green.

1991ccs of Prescott.

ARRIVAL AT PRESCOTT with the Cotswolds glowing in late afternoon sunshine was a pleasant change from the gloom that had descended over the Pennines. We had spent the previous night at Mike and Wendy Hoare's repairing a magneto, the Crossley having suffered a progressive loss of sparks—my thanks to Mike and Wendy for their unfailing logistic support on my occasional forays to the North.

We quickly found the Sage encampment clinging to the side of the hill in the field opposite the competitors' entrance to the paddock. We, and many others as it turned out, had forsaken the other field across the road because of the mercenary machinations of the farmer. We were in good company, with VSCC Presidential Theophile Schneiders and V8 Lancias, amongst others, camped in the middle.

Having selected a piece of ground for the tent, the mean-gradient-in-all-directions of which tended towards the minimum, it was gin time. The view from this field across a glass of G. and T. towards Broadway is beautiful, and on this occasion was bathed in a polished copper light, the fields glowing a brilliant amber. Indeed, a stormy sky, which fulfilled its intentions that night providing us with about ten hours of steady rain. We remained dry, but a disturbance in the Sage camp suggested moisture ingress from above or below as son Jonathan forsook his porous bivouac for the bowels of the parental encampment. Lagondas, Crossleys, Th. Schneiders, Lancias and Jonathan emerged from the night glistening with raindrops inviting a thorough wash and brush up before proceeding to the Paddock.

The sky cleared a bit, the hill dried out, cars lined up for scrutiny and the sights, sounds and smells of vintage Prescott were once again in full swing as Saturday's practice got under way. The Crossley ascended restfully, Dick's 16/80 quickly,

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the Colquhoun, Woollard and Seabrook 2-litres purposefully, and Colin Bugler's LG45 displayed the advantages of 4½-litres. But where was Allan Elliott—we missed you, Allan. Stalls opened. You could buy VSCC 'T' shirts and ties, and next door, hamburgers and fried onions to spill down them; press studs, grease nipples, bulbs and beading for the Sage family Morris Traveller doors, books about Bugattis and handbooks for Humbers.

Camp supplies were bought in Winchcombe that afternoon, our "race" number having been suitably obliterated. It was a great thrill to see Howard thundering through the narrow streets in the 1914 Grand Prix Mercedes, helmet, goggles and all. What a delicious machine this is and so very modern for its year, a beautiful, taut design.

It rained again on Saturday night. We remained dry, but a disturbance in the Sage camp, etc., etc. This prompted hilarious (now) memories of floating camps at Finmere and pre-dawn visions of dog Toby adrift in his basket, son Tristan then about

12 emerging from his camp not quite sure whether this vintage business was terribly amusing, not to mention Soldier Weld who "knew" about living in the field, but who proved that army sleeping bags are waterproof to a depth of at least three inches as long as you lie to attention and allow the sides to float up around you!

As we were girding our loins with sausages, eggs and coffee in preparation for Sunday's competition a huge, very old (PVT) lorry rumbled into the field. It was a very funny lorry because it did not really have a body or cab, and was loaded up with all manner of indescribable jumble. The pilot had a wild, searching look about him, although he did seem to be quite a reasonable fellow. He was even offered cups of tea in sympathy. Amongst other oddments he had a couple of gang-mowers on the back—was he perhaps, after FG-MTD? Anyway apparently he was en route for an auto jumble—somewhere.

Then the sun appeared, the paddock and all the surrounding fields filled up with cars and people and the racing began in earnest. Odd and even numbers lined up jostling for position, cars appearing from all angles, some sporting almost indecent looking very overlong extra exhaust systems to comply with the silencer law until unleashed up the hill. The silky smooth purr of the Crossley was completely drowned by the vulgar bellow of a car with an inverted red triangle on the radiator. Action proved that noise is directly proportional to speed up the hill. Here are some times:

Weld (Crossley): 68.76 secs.

Sage (16/80): 63.54 secs.

Seabrook (2L): 69.48 secs.

Colquhoun (2L) 65.24 secs.

Bugler (LG45): 54.31 secs.

Car with red triangle: 56.63 secs.

Very old Itala: 54.62 secs.

Well, you see, I don't really drive the Crossley very hard ("not hard enough", says eight year old nephew, enquiring after the current prices of ERAs). Spares are difficult, and as an only car at about 10,000 miles p.a. she gets plenty of exercise already. And the gear box is not too good, 2nd to 3rd (three times on the hill) takes



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ages. I never put my foot hard down—always like to have something in reserve—I'm sure she *would* go up much faster if I really wanted her to. "Why is he faster" says unthinking nephew, pointing to a green VDP 16/80. Ah, well, you see, it's younger (just) . . . twice as many carburettors ("what are they?") . . . modern gearbox . . . smaller wheels, and, of course, Mr. Sage knows Prescott *very* well. "Why is that thing so much faster—it's miles older than the Crossley" . . . he

I DON'T KNOW how you are with hitchhikers. I know how I am, now. Especially when I'm out with the 16/80.

It was one of those fine promising Sunday mornings. I had done what I sometimes do when the tide is right, the weather is right, and the car is running. I'd driven twenty miles in bright morning to my favourite beach, swam in sharp water, soaked up some sun in a dune, and was heading back in solitude past hundreds of more modern machines bearing humanity seawards. It was not yet ten.

There used to be a long, straight run through the village halfway to the beach, but the residents had agitated for traffic lights so they could talk to each other occasionally. They changed to red in the distance, so I eased down to a coast that wouldn't tax the brakes, reminding myself that I must find out about over-size brake linings since I remember someone remarking that the shims in my front wheel brake system were the biggest he'd ever seen. And that was about eight years previously.

Then I saw her. Them, rather. He had the rucksack; she was holding out a tanned, slim arm which emerged confidently out of a white muslin top layering down to an equally soft skirt in light burgundy deepening downwards to an irregular hem, brown calves and flip-flops. Blonde, long hair: a face equal and honest to her age; an expression of disbelieving interest in the car which faced her. Her arm dropped and she smiled. It was warm and warming.

points to a large 1908 Itala . . . which has a much bigger engine . . . was designed as a racing car . . . and Mr. Clutton and the car know Prescott *very well indeed* . . . etc., etc.

It's no good! I only come to Prescott to enjoy the atmosphere, the cars, the people, and like the Olympic athlete, just to take part. And what fun it was, all 1991 ccs of it!

STEPHEN WELD (MAJ.)

Rule of Thumb.

His interest was only momentary, then he stooped to extract something from a rucksack pocket.

I sized them up in a moment. He'd planned a walking weekend; she was reluctant. He'd decided that if they weren't going to walk, then it would be better to make an early start back to London. He'd worn sensible walking shoes. She had flip-flops. He was angry. She was bored.

My toes curled over the top of the brake pedal, entirely free of my own flip-flops on the floorboard under my knees.

The pause at the lights gave me time enough to decide and to act upon the decision. I would pick them up. I would help him into the back with the rucksack, then open the passenger door at the front for her. I would have to help those brown calves and flip-flops in, of course.

Conversation would be intimate at the front: impossible behind. Perhaps in taking my bare foot off the clutch it might just slip across . . .

I pulled up with a smile beside her when the lights changed.

"Well cheerio love", she said matter-of-factly to her companion as he gracelessly climbed in to the back, narrowly missing the paintwork with the inelegantly nipped end of the aluminium frame of his rucksack. "I hope you get a good lift later, and I'll see you next week".

He probably missed the irony in my parting phrase, three miles later.

"This is where I turn off".

ANON

The Phoenix Rally.

Thank you Sally and Derek Green for a very enjoyable rally on Sunday, 22nd July. The Phoenix Rally started off as a fun run on the Royal Wedding Day but has developed into one of the more important events on our Southern Calendar.

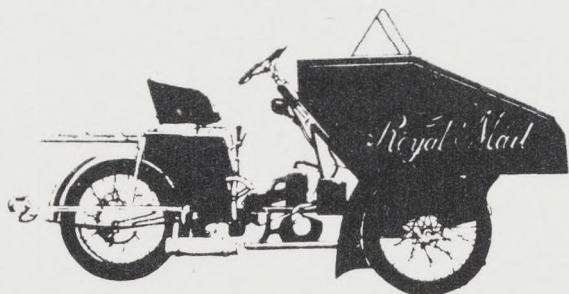
Fourteen cars left Hunts Common for a circuit around the environs of Hartley Wintney, sorting out clues to arrive for lunch on the green at Newnham. After lunch we resumed our brain work for a further 36 miles to finish at the home of Mrs. Holbrook, the mother of one of our younger participants.

On arrival a light hearted driving test took place—the drivers negotiating around a course beset with plastic cones with a

flower pot on their heads, being directed by their navigators. Afterwards, we all cooked our food on the barbeque which had been prepared for us, opened our wine and generally spread ourselves out as per usual. Swimming was then enjoyed by all, except perhaps for Peter Whenman who was thrown into the pool fully clothed to celebrate his fortieth birthday.

SYLVIA DOWNIE

PS: Sylvia modestly doesn't mention that not only did she bake and ice a magnificent Lagonda cake for Peter's birthday, but that her's was the winning car of the day, narrowly beating Peter Evans to the champagne!



Dear Sir,

Ron Gee's article on 16/80 insertion began to make me wonder what it was that the Wise Men of Staines did to those silky smooth Crossley Sixes, when they apparently stripped them down and assembled them properly for use in the 16/80! With their alloy rods, small pistons and very light rocker gear all clothed in masses of cast-iron, vibrations just don't have a chance. The early (1928) Crossley 2-litres did suffer a vibrating period at about 2,500-3,000 r.p.m. until they fitted a large crankshaft damper at the front. I'm sure 16/80 drivers will agree that the engine is very smooth throughout the rev. range—in fact alarmingly so at approaching 4,000 r.p.m. I haven't gone any higher—ask Dick Sage what happens then.

However, Ron, it seems to have been transmission problems which caused your teeth to chatter for all those years!—a relief to Manchester, assuredly.

STEPHEN WELD

Letters to the Editor.

Dear Sir,

As one of the Club's artists, graduating in sculpture years ago, and currently teaching school leavers to be designers of one sort or another; I feel it my responsibility to criticize and hopefully help change the design of the club badge, which to my mind resembles an autograph.

Not only is the loose copper plate script of our present badge aesthetically dismal; but more to the point it is not typical, in my view, as a symbol of the popular image held of the Lagonda: that of the sports car. As I understand it, the present club badge is a straight "take" from the radiator of the 11.9—hardly a typical Lagonda and in addition, being such a rare car, unrepresentative of the majority of Lagondas in the club.

My own car, a late Z type 3-litre of 1934, wears the impressive Art Deco stylised "headless eagle" winged badge, the connotations with flight, speed and grace being obvious. The cars of the late twenties also wore a handsome radiator badge which is qualitative and symmetrical, reflecting the graphic trends of the day and

communicating in its solid yet quite pretty appearance, something of the character of the car behind it. The design of the lettering on the sill plates is also more typical of the period than our spidery scrawl and the intersecting diamond logo on the door panel is worth noting.

If we take the period 1926-1936 as the decade when the typical image of the Lagonda emerged (and I suspect that most preserved cars in the club fall between these dates) and we continue to steal our design from the firms official badges, logos, and trade marks I am sure we could come up with a design that makes better sense both symbolically and aesthetically than our present emblem.

We could also take this opportunity to make the badge more functional by stamping the membership number on the base, with an inexpensive process such as letter punches (Peter Whenman has a set of these!) so that cars may be identified in the absence of their owners.

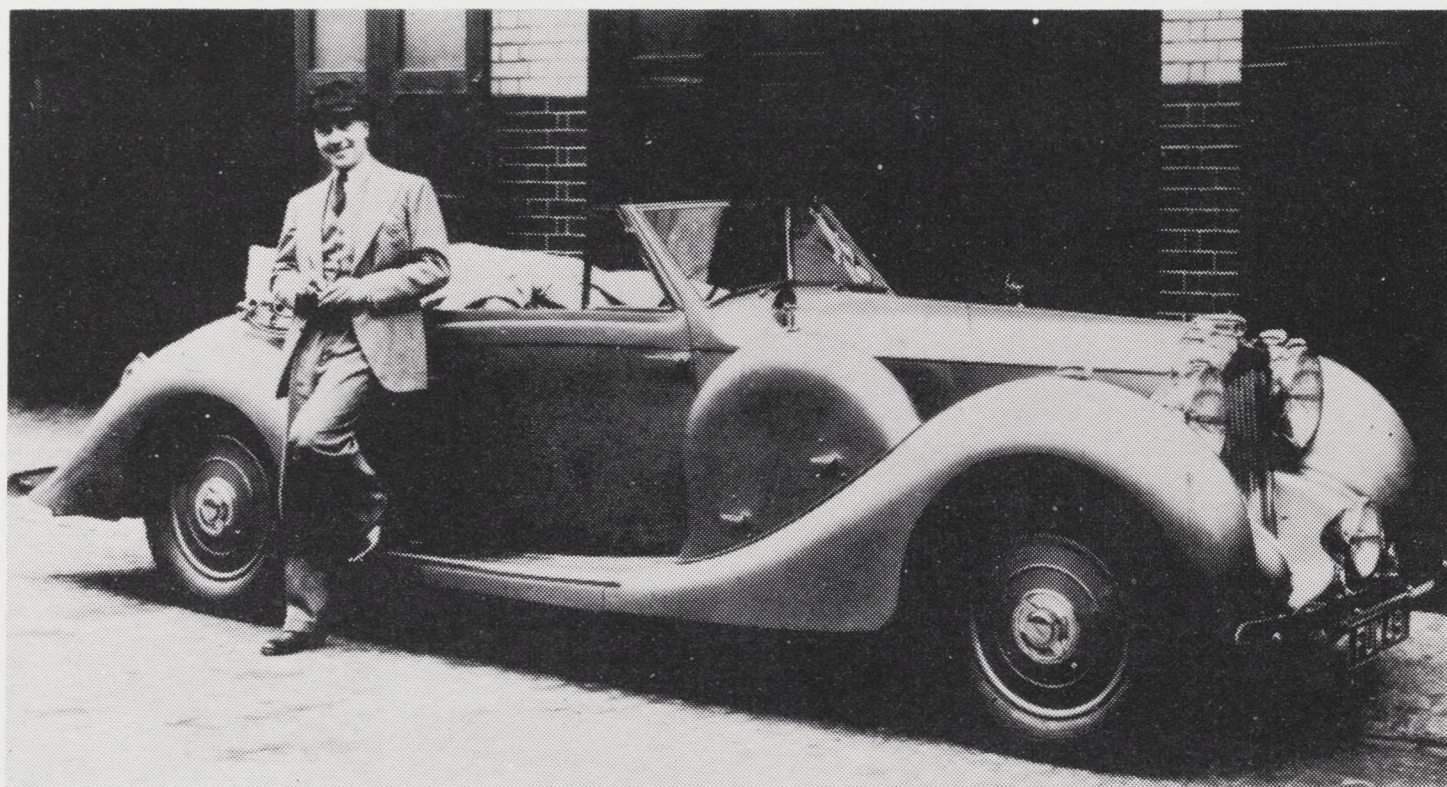
I am willing to start the ball rolling by submitting a sketch for a new badge more or less amalgamating the radiator badges



and the sill lettering of the 20's and 30's cars in a new configuration, and perhaps other members who feel the same way might like to follow suit with their ideas. If enough enthusiasm could be generated it could develop into a competition with a vote being taken on one of the new designs (or the retention of the existing badge!) depending upon the general consensus of opinion amongst club members. Anyway, food for thought and quite an enjoyable exercise.

BRIAN STEVENS

Ventnor,
Isle of Wight.



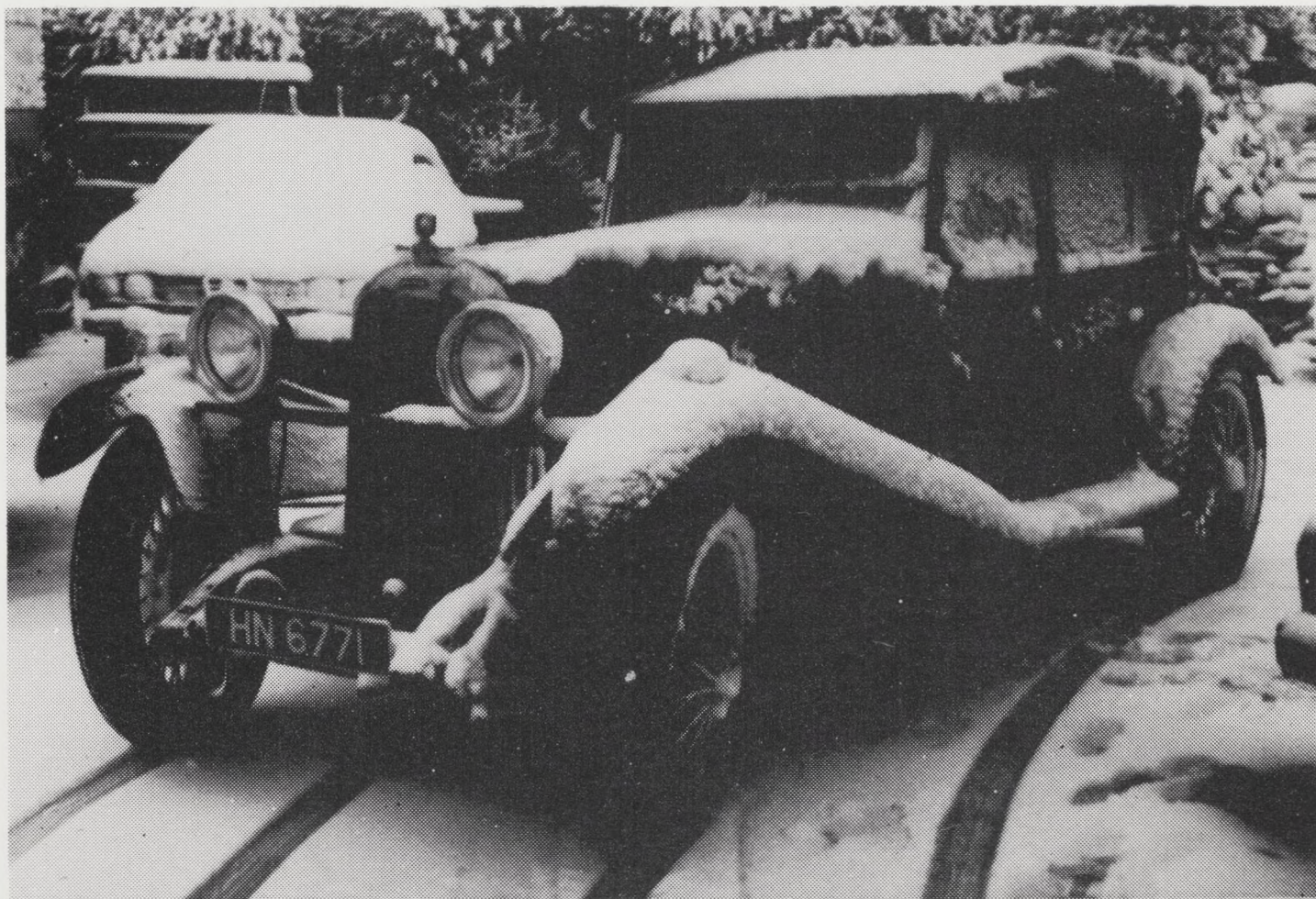
Dear Sir—The enclosed picture shows (Sir) Ralph Richardson in 1939 with his new V.12, FUW 491 (Chassis 14088). This car replaced his LG 45R of which a photo was sent to John Davenport recently from the

ex-Rank Industries stills man.

A. DAVEY
Potters Bar,
Herts.

Dear Sir—Please find enclosed photograph of Joan Zeglar and Bert Booth entertaining guests at the 1984 Northern Dinner.

ROGER FIRTH
Stalybridge
Cheshire



Dear Sir—Contrary to popular belief, it just goes to show that I do use my cars all the year round.
Hope your 2-litre is in good shape.

ROGER FIRTH

*Received in June, this photo shows that the weather up north really is getting better.
Ed.*



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