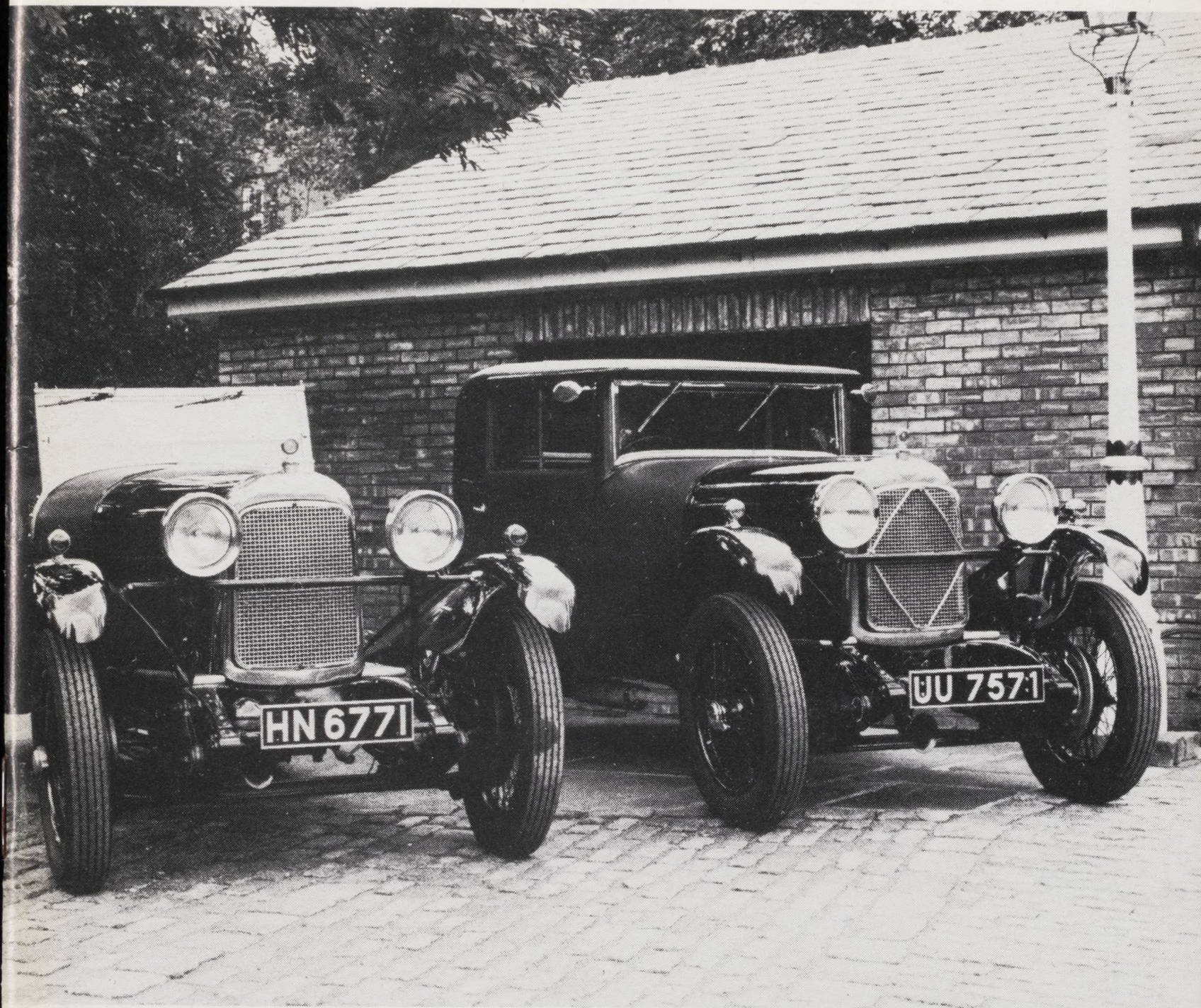




THE MAGAZINE OF THE
LAGONDA CLUB

Number 134 Autumn 1987



Veteran, Vintage, Classic & Contemporary



TRIPLE STUD (S5) PATTERN



F4 PATTERN



B5 PATTERN



D2 103 PATTERN



RS5 PATTERN

Crossply: Dunlop, Lee, Bedford, Fulda, Firestone, Universal/Lester, Ceat, Avon, Denman, Olympic, Fort, Pirelli, Mabor.

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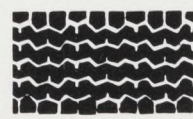
CHEVRON PATTERN



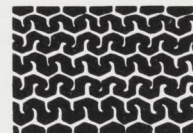
5 STUD PATTERN



R5 PATTERN



R6 PATTERN



CR65 PATTERN



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FRONT COVER:

*Two happy cars. The "Honeymoon
Saloon" with a suitable partner.*

Photo: Roger Firth.



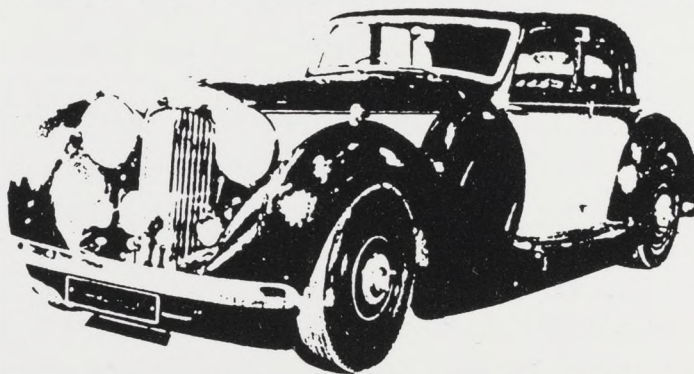
MAGAZINE
Issue No. 134
Autumn 1987

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Contributions do not necessarily represent
the views of the Committee nor of the
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is accepted for the efficacy of the technical
advice offered.

**COPY FOR WINTER
"LAGONDA" URGENTLY
REQUIRED. Submit to Editor
by 31st December please.**

Out and About.

IT'S HAPPENED AGAIN. Lagondas along with their sisters, Aston Martin, have proved what all Club members have known for years. How desirable they are.

Ford, no less, have now realised this and earlier this year decided that they would join us.

Whether this now entitles the owners of Dagenham cars to Associate membership is an interesting question.

Their funds in the form of subs would certainly help the spares side of our lines along very nicely. Although the organisers would probably find it hard to convince the XR owner that the 2-litre dif really would fit with a bit of modification.

The benefits would be good for us though as we could all have new back axles

at a reduced rate as there would be so many of them available.

On the serious side it would be nice, if rumours are true, to see Aston Martin Lagonda back on the circuits from whence they came.

On another serious note, if you do not read the article you wrote or see the picture you sent, please forgive me.

I am afraid that I went to a pub for something or another and whilst I was inside somebody borrowed my modern car.

Unfortunately they removed everything, including Mag bits and some Lag bits before it was found. Please accept my apologies. I will try not to let it happen again.

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: Joint Lagonda/VSCC meet. Third Thursday in each month at the "Floating Light" nr Marsden, on the Lancashire/Yorkshire border.

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 "Pipe & Glass" South Dalton, between Beverley and Malton. Map reference: 965 454, Sheet 106.

Glamorgan: First Thursday with the VSCC, Court Colerman, Glamorgan.

Dorset: First Thursday each month at the Frampton Arms, adjacent to Moreton Rly. Stn. on B3390, Bere Regis. Map reference 780 891, Sheet 194.

Copy instruction books:

16/80, 2 lt. H/C, 2 lt. L/C, 3/3 1/2 lt., M.45, LG.45, LG.6, V.12	£5.00
Copy Meadows Engine Catalogue	£2.50
Car Badge	£8.00
Lapel Badge—oval, brooch fitting	£1.25
Lapel Badge—winged, pin fitting	£2.00
Tie—blue or maroon Terylene	£4.00
Key Fob	£1.50
Overall badge	£1.75
Magazine Binder (holds 12 issues)	£3.25
Short history of the Lagonda	£0.75
V.12 "Trader" sheets	£0.75
Books £17.50 (+ postage & packing £2.50 overseas) = £17.50 UK. Overseas £20.00	
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"LAGONDA—A HISTORY OF THE MARQUE"

by Davey & May

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Overseas add £2.50 post and packing.

Alan Hess.



Alan Hess & David Dunn with EPE 97 photographed at the 1980 Brooklands Reunion.

Photo: Arnold Davey.

ALAN HESS died in July, ironically within a few weeks of his notorious namesake in Germany. He was never a member of the club but as a successful record-breaker his affairs entangled with Lagondas several times. Alan was born at Kew in 1900 and was driven round Brooklands at the age of 7, starting a connection that lasted throughout his life. By the age of 22 he was a Committee member of the MCC and later the Secretary of the MG Car Club, coupling this with both driving in and managing their very successful team of Magnas. He made his living as a journalist, specialising in motoring matters and in 1935 founded and edited the magazine "Speed", which he ran until 1939, selling the title to "Motor Sport". As if this wasn't enough, he was also the public address commentator at Brooklands and ran his own radio show on Radio Normandy, fitting in BBC broadcasts as well.

After the thrilling 1934 TT, Alan persuaded Lagondas to fit one of the TT engines to an otherwise normal M45 saloon and entered it for the MCC Brooklands meeting. Whilst flat out down

the Railway Straight they hit a bird which shattered the toughened glass windscreen and both Alan and his passenger were badly cut about the face. Both were very lucky not to lose an eye. Not long after toughened glass was banned in competitions.

The Lagonda event most closely connected with Alan was his successful attack on the "Sports car hour", an unofficial record that attracted great attention in the late 'thirties. In October 1937 Alan persuaded Dick Watney to lend him EPE 97, the LG45 Team Car for an attack on this record. He took the car to Fox & Nicholl for tuning and on October 7th, on a drizzly afternoon, managed to cover 104.44 miles in the hour from a standing start, carrying a passenger and in full road trim, even to number plates. The passenger was Jeff Leitner, then the editor of "The Sphere" and thus having to remain anonymous at the time, but he wrote up the event for "Speed" in a very good article, as he could be more objective about it than Alan could. Lagondas gained a great deal of useful publicity from this record,

yet when Alan presented his bill for £25 for Fox & Nicholl's expenses, Dick Watney wouldn't pay it, since there was no written agreement. This rankled with Alan to his dying day and he never got involved with Lagonda again. EPE 97 had a varied career, but when David Dunn restored the car and brought it to the Brooklands reunion in 1980, Alan was reunited with it and drove the car around the banking in the demonstration runs. The photograph is of the reunion of car and driver in the paddock.

After a busy war in the Ordnance Corps, reaching the rank of Major, Alan joined the BBC for a spell but, amazed to find that the Austin company had no publicity department, he sold the idea to Len Lord and got the job. He then threw himself into a series of well publicised round-the-world type record attempts, nearly all successful, in the most unlikely cars. He also hired a most competent and attractive secretary,

Diana, to run the UK end while he was off gallivanting, and soon married her. The Austin job lasted 7½ years and then he went to Simms, until retiring in 1965.

As well as writing and racing he was also a very good artist, particularly in pastels, and we have one of his pastel drawings on our living room wall. I met him while researching the Lagonda book and, since he lived close by, met him at intervals from then on. He was a very conscientious Vice-President to the Brooklands Society and came to every possible meeting, even after his health began to deteriorate.

Everyone who knew him is going to miss Alan Hess; for his encyclopedic memory, for his enthusiasm and keenness and above all, for his tremendous kindness and willingness to put himself out to help people. They don't make them like that nowadays.

ARNOLD DAVEY

Midland Notes.

TWO MEMBERS made their debut at the July pub meet. Mr D. Hall in his 3-litre special having travelled from Leicester, and Mr. E. Mathews who has an M35R. Mr Mathews hails from North of the border but is currently based with his company in Burton-on-Trent—just down the road from the "Green Dragon". The entire evening was spent outside with the cars, entering the bar only to replenish the glasses. 11 members and friends attended.

The A.M.L. visit was, as always, a great success. Everyone who said they would like to attend, attended. The six car line-up across the factory front was most impressive and drew much attention, both from the workforce and the general public. Roger Stowers, the A.M.L. PR Officer was quite proud of the attention received—the previous week he was host to the Ferrari Club which, apparently passed unnoticed.

The 1988 visit is, I am sorry to say, a none starter. All visits from October 1987 until the Motor Show 1988 are prohibited. There were several rumours why. Given that the restriction will be lifted around the

time of the Motor Show, it should not be too difficult to guess at the reason/s. A DHC Lagonda was mentioned, re-designed from the ground up, but it was all speculation.

I am assured of a reservation for 1989 as normal.

In attendance:

Peter Hawksworth	DB 3-litre
	DHC
Chris Paling	2-litre
Dick Hannis	M45
Martin Pollard	3.5 Tourer
Jan Brown	3.5 Tourer
H. Taylor	DB 3-litre
	DHC

ATTENTION DB 3-litre OWNERS

I am currently negotiating for a run of Jackall hydraulic jack seals. These can be manufactured in neoprene and the estimated price for a run of 10 is approx. £4-30 each. There will be a discount for larger quantities ordered. Contact me if you require any.

HARRY TAYLOR

Autobiography of LEL (continued).

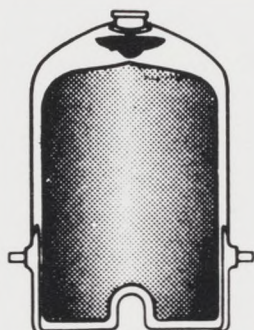
IT'S A LONG TIME since I wrote anything for the magazine and I note the Editor is asking for "copy" from D.B.s. My memory isn't as good as it used to be and the boss isn't much use either (you'd better keep quiet LEL or you won't have anything new).

We have now left Notts and live in Bristol. I had a terrible journey to my new home—my oil and water had been getting terribly mixed up and I had to suffer the indignity of riding on a trailer and my front grille really got hurt in the process. Instead of my old barn at the cottage I now have a double garage surrounded with all my spare parts etc and also with the Rover belonging to my bosses wife. Unfortunately whilst I've been here I've spent most of my time in hospital—Alan and Harry of course are no longer able to look after me but Richard and Mike are doing their best to put me on the road

again. I've been rewired, my gear box and hypoid unit have been overhauled, bumper bars and grille rechromed—one of my doors has had a new ash surround and we are hoping that another cylinder head will sort out my oil and water problems. Bristol is a lot different from Nottingham; there are a number of hills, some quite steep. I would rather negotiate the Marble Arch than the centre of Bristol. There are, however, many pleasant runs on which I intend to take the boss and his wife (thank you LEL).

The boss has a friend who is a member of the Alvis Club and also the R.R.E.C. so I am in good company. I was also introduced to Richard and Mike by a Lagonda enthusiast.

I gather I've got my photograph and some notes about me in Geoff Seaton's new book—I am looking forward to that.



GWR

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THE 1920's AND 1930's. NOW RESTORED TO ITS
ORIGINAL CONDITION.**

That memory of mine—I nearly forgot to tell you—the boss has been french polishing some of my woodwork—makes me feel much smarter—I hope he does the lot (we will try LEL!)

When I was in Nottingham we had a friend who was an expert coach painter and he was going to sort me out—but regrettably he became ill and wasn't able to manage it. Since then the boss has done nothing about that. (You haven't done too badly LEL—apart from everything else you've had new tyres and batteries).

Oh yes—you may remember that previously I asked about my sisters—there were two others like me. It was like this. Three 1949 chassis with 2.6 engines were sent to Bournemouth for their bodies to be added in 1950. One of my sisters finished up by being taken to pieces for spares but no-one seems to know anything about my other sister. I keep looking out for her—presumably she should be LEL 280 or 281 or 283 or 284, if all were registered together. If she no longer exists I must be unique. If anyone knows of her existence would they please let me know.

I did explain in a previous chapter about where we differ from the standard model. We three of course were far superior to the standard model.

I understand from Lag Mag 133, page 14/15 that in the 2.6 models that were sold our torsion bars had been adjusted to give our rear wheels positive camber, whereas our designers had intended negative camber. This appears to be confirmed by Donald Bastow in "W.O. Bentley and Engineer" page 327. Can any of our experts guide me on this? (getting quite technical aren't you LEL?) Would the intended camber really have improved my roadholding? I am afraid I don't know which camber my rear wheels have and I'm quite sure the boss doesn't (You are right LEL—there is no information in "Owners Handbook" or the "Manual" or as far as I am aware in any information supplied by the company).

Perhaps I had better finish here otherwise I might be too late for the Editor. Should be glad to hear from anyone who can help with my queries, hope to see you all on the road.

JOHN CAINE

The Tale of Two SU's.

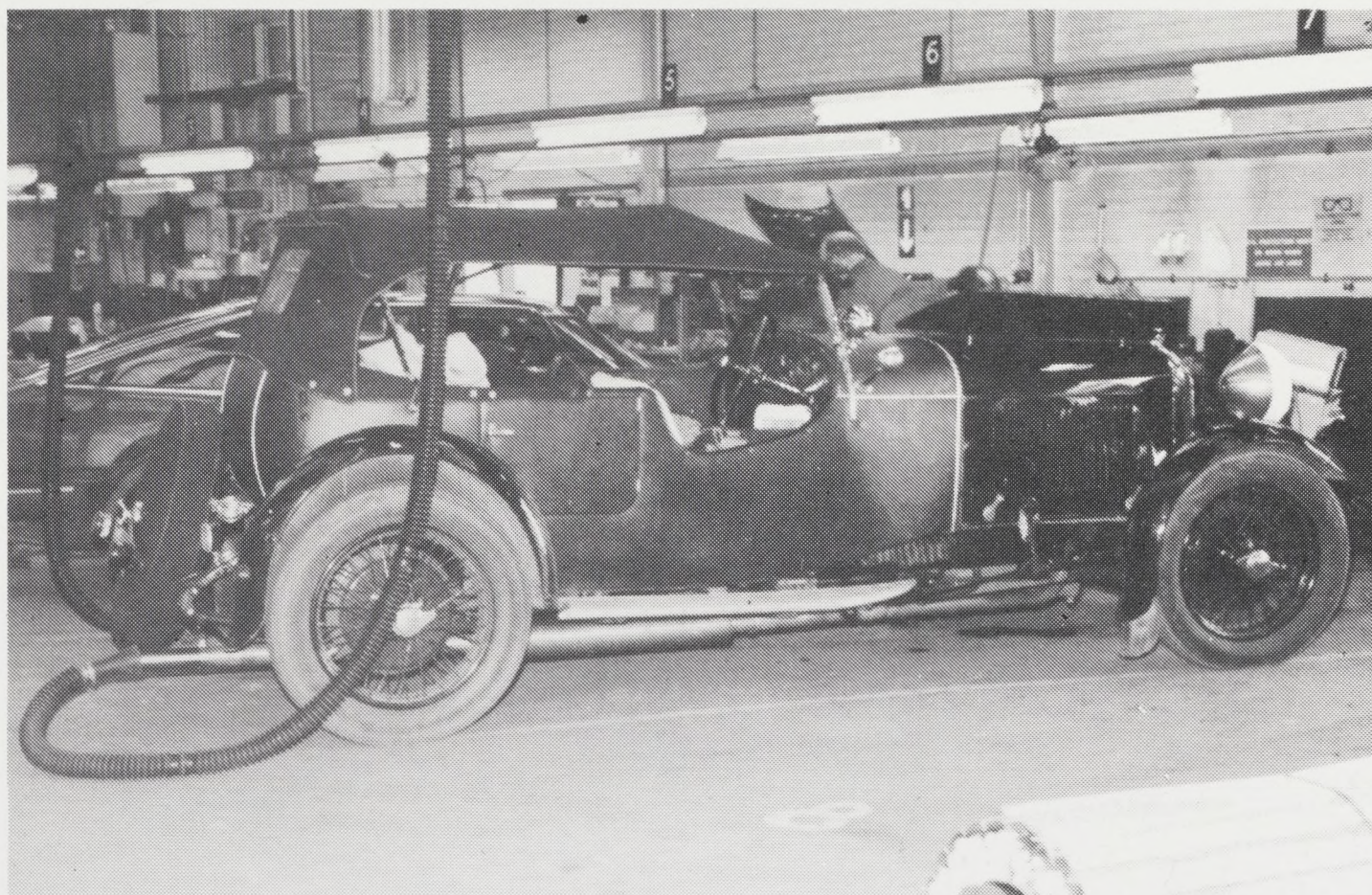
LAST OCTOBER I took delivery of my first step into Lags., namely an un-blown 2-litre.

Now it came to pass that the state of tune was not as it should be and I commenced to rectify this. It became evident that one carb was set very rich and it was impossible to change it. In fact, no matter where the mixture screw was set, the engine beat did not alter. It appeared then that changing the needles would not solve the problem.

I decided against the numerous "expert" tuners and went for the best i.e. S.U. Carburetters in Birmingham. The first problem was that they had been renamed "Fuel Systems" since B.L. claimed ownership. Secondly, because Directory Enquiries runs on chips it did not facilitate a history function. Nevertheless, contact was eventually established and the appointment made.

Arriving at the appointed time and place, I was greeted by the white coated foreman who introduced me to Reg. Now it appeared that Reg suffered a malfunction of the hearing organs, or to be more precise, he was very, very deaf. How then can he hear the ———— you ask. By "feel" I reply. But, down to business and the first test was grasping the tail pipe for several minutes (he would not have held my DB 3-litre tail pipe for several minutes—Asst. Ed.) whilst constantly muttering to himself.

Removing himself to the other end to peer down the throats of the carbs he proclaimed that the spindles looked good but that the needles were far too low. "You must have something wrong" says Reg. "It shouldn't run like this." He then produced a sliver of brass about 18" long and ledged the end under a carb diaphragm and used his finger to form a pivot for the



The 2-litre in the S.U. Factory, March 1987.

Photo: Chris Paling.

rod. This started to tremble as it did when the process was repeated on the other carb. He then announced that the timing was out—he was not wrong—it was fully retarded on the hold control.

I impressed on Reg that I wanted the carbs in as new condition as possible, so both were removed and stripped. The jets were so large that they could only have been drilled. New spindles were also fitted just to be sure and the job was completed some 3 hours later. The tickover was set and the balance and mixture checked—found to be spot-on.

I am very pleased with the way the work was carried out and the end result.

PL 5560 was the last vintage car to pass through their workshop—it is now closed—and Reg is now enjoying his retirement, touring on a bicycle.

CHRIS PALING

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



S.U. Needles

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Lagonda	4½-litre	K	KT	C1
	3-litre	MME	7	A0
	2-litre		6	

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Castrol for Lagonda

3½-Litres.

MAKE LAGONDA
MODEL 3½ Litre
TYPE 6 cyl.
YEAR 1929/35

MANUFACTURERS:

Lagonda Ltd.,
Staines, Middx.

ENGINE, GEARBOX & REAR AXLE

Application	GRADE		ATTENTION	
	Summer	Winter	Drain & Refill	Examine & Top up if necessary
Crankcase	Castrol XXL	Castrol XL	2000 Miles	Daily if necessary
Gearbox	Castrol XXL	Castrol XXL	4000 Miles	2000 Miles
Rear Axle	Castrol Hipress	Castrol Hipress	4000 Miles	2000 Miles

OTHER LUBRICATION JOINTS

Application	Grade	Lubricate or Replenish
Brake Cable Pulleys	Castrollease CL	500 Miles
Brake Compensating Box	Castrollease CL	500 Miles
Brake Cross Shafts	Castrollease CL	1000 Miles
Brake Pedal	Castrollease CL	500 Miles
Clutch Extractor	Castrol XXL	2000 Miles
Clutch Extractor Ball Race	Castrollease Heavy	5000 Miles
Clutch Shaft Bearings	Castrol XXL	2000 Miles
Propeller Shaft Universal Joints	Castrollease CL	1000 Miles
Road Spring Shackles	Castrollease CL	200 Miles
Spring Gaiters	Castrol Hipress	5000 Miles
Steering Box	Castrol Hipress	5000 Miles
Steering Connections	Castrollease CL	500 Miles
Steering Pivot Pins	Castrollease CL	500 Miles
Wheel Hubs (Front)	Castrollease Heavy	2000 Miles

OIL CAPACITIES

Crankcase	Approx. 3½ gallons
Gearbox	" 3½ pints
Rear Axle	" 3½ pints

MAGAZINE CONTRIBUTIONS BY:

WINTER:	31st December	SUMMER:	30th June
SPRING:	30th March	AUTUMN:	30th September

Memories-1939-1950.

THE SECRETARY has been kind enough to enrol me at the Lagonda Club and I have received copy 133 of the magazine which brings back sparkling memories.

I worked at Lagonda from 1939 to 1950 and had a hand in the development of the postwar LB6.

I am only relying on memory but (from the age of 72) the LB6 was planned to sell at less than £1,000 with a twin OHC 2.4 engine and was intended to weigh less than 23 cwts as we spoke then.

The body was not going to be a Staines hand built body but it was intended to assemble 50 cars a week on a semi production line. The pressing of the steel body was contracted to Pressed Steel Bodies at Dagenham who I think had a contractual connection with Fords at Dagenham. The finishing of the body was to be done at Staines.

Somewhere I have interesting photographs of myself with W.O.B. and Stan Ivermee in the development shop with the first Cotal gearbox which I assembled. The first five cars were hand built and the transmission was via an automatic Newton clutch four-speed epicyclic gearbox controlled electrically by double magnetic clutches. I could out accelerate any car from the traffic lights in the Bath Road by simply using the gearbox clutches.

The car didn't go into production with the Cotal box: I think it turned out to be too expensive but before we could start the production line the board had decided that "there was no future for a high quality medium priced car." So the complete package was sold to David Brown of Huddersfield. David Brown had been cutting the gears for the transmission.

Lagonda was a very wonderful company.

The skills which the men displayed there I have never seen since and now I don't think I ever will again.

The aluminium hand built bodies for the Big Sixes were all handcrafted from sheets of aluminium onto ash and elm frames and

I have not seen that skill since. The old men in the body shops would roll and roll the sheet aluminium until the curves were to the templates which they had made from Frank Aytos' drawings in the lofting shop.

Then the pieces were hand welded together and beaten and when finished one couldn't see a join. Steel wings for the saloons were made in the same way; but at the final finish each wing was scurfed and polished on huge polishing heads driven by 30HP motors with two men holding each wing.

We did all our own chrome finishing but, each item was first scurfed and polished with a final lambswool mop and then in the chrome shop, cleaned, copper plated, polished, nickel plated, polished and then chromed. Chrome by the way is not a protective but only a decoration; the real protection finish was the nickel underneath.

But I am running ahead.

The tragedy of Staines was that the pre-war V-12s were destroyed and all the production data lost.

Shortly before the outbreak of war, all the drawings, jigs and tools, forgings castings and patterns, were taken out of the old factory along the Causeway, and everything was carefully greased etc and out into store. The storage was an empty block of shops in Kingston Parade, Kingston Road, Staines. This was the stretch of Kingston Road after the railway bridge where Gresham Road joins the main road. Late in 1944 a massive bomb fell on the store and destroyed all hope of going back into production.

I was a keen photographer, (still am) and so, Reg Ingham the works manager and I went to the store and I took several photographs of the carnage. I recollect that the tyres were blown off the wheels of the racing cars. I think that I have the negatives somewhere and will search.

I have a list of all the wonderful people who produced the parts for the cars, from Richard Gordon Watney, to W.O.B., to

Frank Ayto in the drawing office, Freddie Hawkins the head of production planning, Alan Paul Good the Vice Chairman of Brush who were the master company under which Lagonda operated, and I can name every foreman of every section; the Big Six gearboxes were assembled by Bert Amiss who would look into each box, carefully rock the gears and listen and then grunt OK.

Although we were a small company we made our own gears except bevels, had our own heat treatment shop, metallurgical lab for steel checking, and everything was done in house.

Dear Lil Pryke was in charge of the leather shop where dozens of hides hung over wooden bars high up in the roof and her father, old Walter Pryke was in charge of maintenance. It was said that old Walter knew where every supply was and where all the wells were. Lagonda had their own water supply on the premises and generated their own power with huge marine diesels.

It is not generally known that Lagonda also developed the first multi-colour letterpress for multiple colour production and it was called the Lagonds Autoplaten. I still have the maintenance manual.

Of course during the war we had to stop all that and the only engine work which

we did was to equip about a dozen fast assault craft for the Boat Squadrons. These boats were fitted with Lagonda V12 engines and screw drive mechanism which could be lifted out of the water so that the boat would hydroplane over river bars.

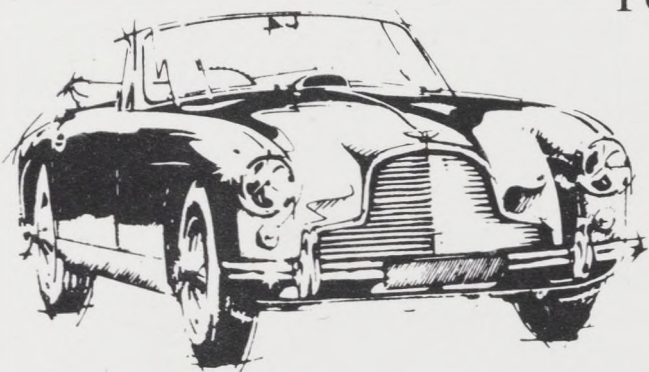
During the war the factory produced the first anti-tank guns, the terrible big flame thrower the Crocodile, the 5" rockets, 2" rockets for the Hurricane tank buster, 35mm AA guns, Polsten guns, cooling rings for the Bristol engines, thousands of coolant tanks for the fighter aircraft, large parts of aircraft fuselage, and other mysteries which I cannot recall.

After the demise of the car production we designed and produced the small high speed diesels which was a story in itself: It began in 1929 when at C.A.V. Acton the German Bosch technicians went home and the whole of the UK was left without a national diesel engine facility because all the fuel injection equipment had been imported piece small from Bosch Stuttgart.

We at Lagonda had a small section where we had been supplying marine diesel parts for ships and we were asked to start from scratch and make all the diesel injector parts and develop the fuel systems. We did. I have run a 2.4 diesel at over 6,000 R.P.M. in 1946. The diesel in the Rover is now Italian. JOHN BERRIDGE

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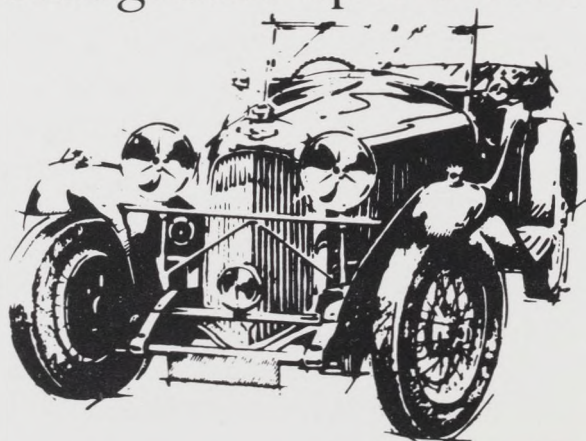


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Bentley Driver's Club— Silverstone.

TO THOSE UNAWARE of this annual event, it occurs on the last Saturday in August and the Lagonda club have been invited for many a year.

There used to be a Lagonda race but due to the dwindling numbers this has become the Bentley/Lagonda Handicap.

The day proved to be dry and warm with only one ingredient lacking—an abundance of Lagondas. Come on chaps, let's see you next year to show the Bentley boys that the Lagonda Club can challenge in force.

Race 3. Lagonda/Bentley Handicap.

This proved to be a good handicap race and consisted of 18 Bentleys and just 5 Lagondas.

There was Ian Rowe and Dennis Keen in their Rapiers, Alan Elliott and Martin Bugler in LC 2-litres and Martin Ingham in his Rapid LG45 Special.

Dennis Keens Rapier which was smoking badly on the line, sadly expired on the first lap due to engine problems. Ian Rowe fought against a handicap more akin to a 3-litre and Martin Ingham drove a splendid race in which he pipped a

4½-litre Bentley to the line by half a second, having started from the same handicap.

Alan Elliott and Martin Bugler had a good tussle in which the latter eventually won—sweet revenge for the Prescott meet.

Result of the Handicap (Lagondas only):

1. Martin Bugler; 2. Martin Ingham; 3. Alan Elliott; 4. Ian Rowe; 5. Dennis Keens.

Race 5. Vintage/PVT Handicap.

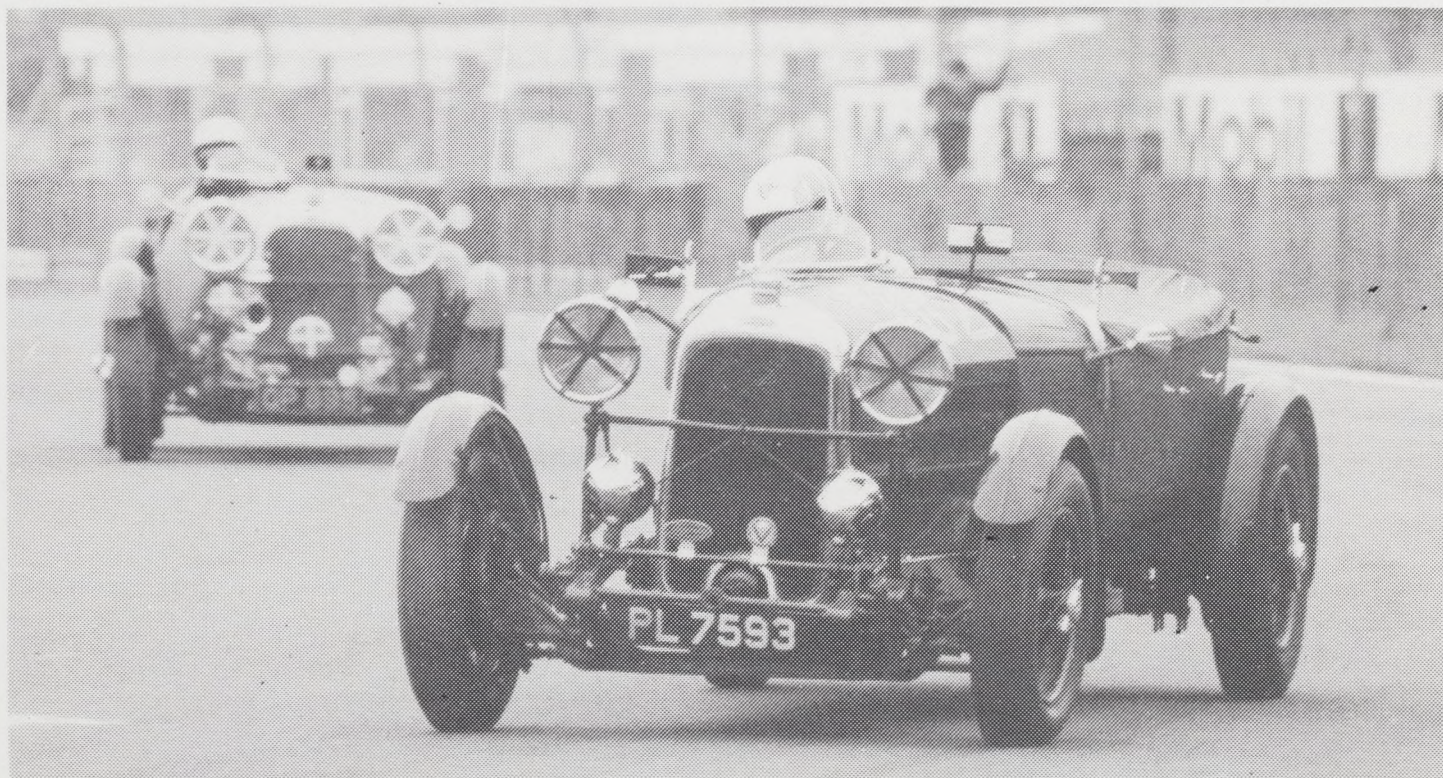
Colin Bugler in his 2-litre and Martin Ingham were our representatives in this event with some very fast cars entered. The 24-litre Bentley Napier appearing as a dot in the mirror one second and a smokescreen in front of you the next is ever impressive.

Martin Ingham finished just ahead of Colin Bugler.

A good day/weekend was had by all and this is certainly a date to put in your calendar for next year.

There is a good black/white photo of the 2.2-litres which I will send on to you shortly.

MARTIN BUGLER



Right hand down a bit. PL 7593 enjoying herself.

Photo: Fred Scatley.

Factory Visit, 22nd July 1987.



Club Cars at Newport Pagnell.

Photo: Arnold Davey.

IT MUST BE FIVE OR SIX YEARS since I have been able to join the annual visit to Newport Pagnell but this year, thanks to two cancellations, Wendy and I were part of the select party, mainly from the Midlands, that toured the works on Wednesday 22nd July.

As usual, our cars created quite a stir and Victor Gauntlett even had his car moved so that the Lagondas could line up impressively outside the admin. building. Whether this was old-fashioned courtesy or doubts about our driving skill, I am not prepared to conjecture. We had a good representative selection too, a 2-litre tourer, two 3½-litres and an M45, all tourers, and two DB 3-litre dropheads. Unfortunately the weather was horrid, cold and showery, but even so there was a lot of photography and several near-accidents as passers-by drove past with their heads at right angles.

Not much has changed in the bricks and mortar at Tickford Road, but the cars have and also the mix of models under construction. The run of fifty Zagato

coupes are still going out, but the Zagato dropheads haven't started yet. We saw six Zagatos in the service shop and other engines ready for fitting. The bodies, of course, come complete from Italy. One we saw was an automatic, a model that isn't supposed to exist and it is difficult to see why anyone should want one, but somebody did. Perhaps a one-legged racer. The Lagonda Limousine, a stretched version with twelve inches inserted into the wheelbase, I thought was a Motor Show Special, but this is not so, there are dozens of them, all ghastly, and we saw four in the service department. It is quite amazing how vulgar the very rich can be. One Limousine had all the bright-work gold plated, even the exhaust pipes, and the upper-half of the body was given an oyster coloured pebbledash finish, using plastic hemispheres over a lower half in Astonishing Blue. Also a TV with cowhorns aerial on the bootlid, sliding curtains on all the rear windows and a body kit that took the sills down nearly to the ground. Most of the awful bits.



Aston Martin "production line".

Photo: Harry Taylor.

were nothing to do with Astons, but had been added by a German *vulgarischegesellschaft*, I hasten to add, and it was in fact at the works for some of the gewgaws to come off and for a respray in a less alarming colour scheme.

Also in the service bay undergoing a total rebuild was DB Rapide LR/127/R, which now rather resembles paddy's broom with its six new heads and five new handles, in that it has had this operation performed twice. The bodyshell, which we saw in the white, is a positive jigsaw of new and old bits. It is nice to think, though, that the owner cares enough for the car to have it shipped over from America for this work to be done, particularly as the bill is likely to be about three times what the car is worth.

When I was last there, the Lagonda formed the bulk of the output; this was when the Gulf Arabs were the best market. Now the mix is more even, with Volantes, Vantages (open and closed), ordinary V8's and Lagondas in about equal quantities. From the chassis numbers I gather that

about 600 Lagondas have now been made (they begin at 13001). The new shape introduced at Geneva is only just now going into production and as the press tool to make the wider wings is not yet in use, for the time being they are made by welding strips on to the wheel arches, using a Heath Robinson-type jig made from a bicycle wheel. The new, non-pop-up headlamps are more easily accommodated by omitting the flaps from the bonnet lid and in fact the nose is now a slightly different shape and I suspect a couple of inches longer, as the bonnet hinge shut line is no longer just behind the grille. We didn't see one of these new-shape cars complete.

It was also encouraging, for those of us who might one day become the owner of an umpteenth-hand one, that more thought is now being put to the resistance of rust, not always an Aston strong point. The sheet steel platform construction of all current models is horribly vulnerable to rust and the vast number of welds needed when a car is built up in this way

out of basically very simple pressings generates a big problem with stress-related corrosion. The present production is now given a very thorough coating of zinc phosphate primer, followed by a tough black underseal coat and all hollow section are injected with Waxoyl. The bodysell outer panels are of course made of aluminium and have no corrosion problem of this kind, although aluminium does corrode in its own way.

In the machine shop we saw the huge new Cincinatti multiple drilling machine that now does all the machining operations on cylinder blocks and heads and takes the place of six different former machines. The size of a small semi—and costing as much as ten, it is Aston's internal vote of confidence in the future. It was fascinating to watch it finish the cylinder boring on a block, change its own tools and set about the stud holes. In fact there are encouraging signs everywhere; the number of apprentices, the sheet metal pressing orders stacked up in fifties instead of dozens and, not least, the fact that the visitors will be forbidden after October 1st

this year, when work starts on the new Aston Martin for 1988. This will use basically the same chassis with a much more modern looking body and the engine will have 32 valves. There is no decision yet on the Lagonda.

The engines now come in a bewildering variety. There are Standard V8, Vantage, Zagato and Lagonda stages of tune and unlike every other manufacturer I can think of, the highly tuned engines, the Vantage and the Zagato, use carburettors, while the more docile cars get fuel injection. Then for each stage of tune there are UK, EEC and Federal (lead-free) versions. Very sensibly, the bulk of the tuning is accomplished by special pistons, which simplifies the machining, and special camshafts and carburettors see to the rest. I noticed that while the sporting engines continue to have a single eight-pot distributor, the injected ones now have a pair of four-pot distributors, one on the front end of each camshaft and with the axis of rotation turned to the horizontal now that the points have disappeared. The Zagato, with its lower nose, uses electric



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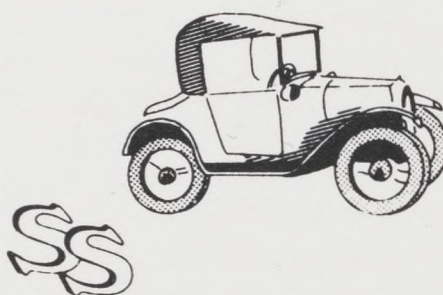
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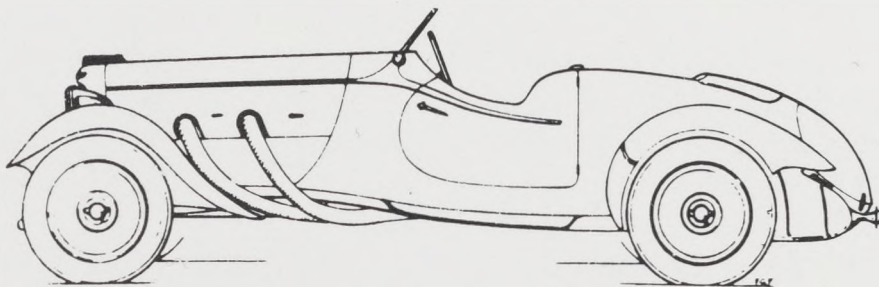
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fans, two of them, instead of the normal viscous coupled mechanical fan and there are three pumps driven from the nose of its crankshaft, one for the power steering, one for the air conditioning and a third whose function eludes me. Plus a separate drive for the alternator, of course. When fuel injection is fitted, the extra clutter of pipes and cables means that the little brass plate on the cambox giving the engine builders name is displaced, since it would be invisible, and in fact it re-appears on the exhaust cambox. It was explained that the engine builder's liability extended right through the warranty period.

Our last stop was the trim shop, by now empty as everyone had gone home. There were lots of little bits of Everflex around in an excruciating green colour and Roger Stowers, who was our guide, explained that they had had an order from the Sultan of Oman for a Volante with white bodywork, upholstery in Lipstick Red and hood in Cooking Apple Green, these being the colours of the national flag. The only source of the hood material proved to be Rolls-Royce, who made them buy an awful

lot of it and there are now rolls and rolls of the stuff lying about, quite useless apart from possible spares for when the Sultan's hawk puts his claws through the existing hood. Some of it had gone to make "slave" hoods to put on cars for road test, so that the owner's hood shall be spotless on delivery. Other bits had made covers for the sewing machines and so on. So if you fancy a new hood in a really eye-catching colour, Aston Martin can probably quote a very good price. As a matter of fact I overheard a conversation between two trimmers, admiring the Lagondas lined up outside the factory at lunchtime and one said what an interesting job a new drophead hood for one of the 3-litres would be.

We also heard some more of the disaster-prone early life of 13008, the first production V8 Lagonda, sold to the Marquess of Tavistock in 1978. It is well-known that on the much-hyped handover day the car refused to start as all the magic electronics had "gone down", and the car had to be pushed past the cameras. What we hadn't heard before was that the



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factory took it back, as they had to, fixed the gremlins and arranged to deliver it to the Tavistock's town house in Kensington. The car was bright red, very distinctive and in all the papers; the occupants felt like goldfish in a bowl as they struggled through monumental cup-tie traffic jams and got peered at and abused by all and sundry. Finally they arrived chez Tavistock and as they glided to a halt in front of the assembled world's press the automatic gear lever linkage fell apart, so that as the nobbs

from the firm chatted up the press and posed with Lady T., so the mechanic from the unobtrusive back-up car slid underneath to re-attach the linkage. Nobody noticed at the time, but it has become one of the factory legends.

So our super tour came to an end as the factory emptied and we all thanked our guides and also Harry Taylor for organising the day. Now if only Mr Littlewood would perform properly . . .

ARNOLD DAVEY

Lagonda. 2-litre High Chassis Speed Model.

The Lagonda Close Coupled Saloon is intended to be used chiefly with two passengers as the cars normal load, but, has provisions, and comfortable provisions at that for two extra passengers.

The car is one of three made by Lagonda of Staines, and two only survive. When purchased in September of 1985, it had only covered 523 miles during the last 23 years.

Known as the "Honeymoon Saloon" this is due to the arrangement of the rear seats which are an extremely ingenious invention. Though upholstered and carpeted, the space behind the front seats at first looks as though it is a remarkably commodious receptacle solely intended to carry large quantities of luggage, but, at the back of the car, in what would normally be the squab of the rear seats, there seems to be two big cupboards. If one of the cupboards is opened however, out comes a comfortable folding armchair like seat, certainly one of the most elaborate and practical occasional seats. The interesting point is that there is more leg room than at first seems possible, further, each separate seat is in itself more comfortable than the usual long cushion of the true four seater car. When the seats are folded way, a space is available for luggage and it is not necessary to stow such luggage accurately or to use special suitcases.

In addition to this space, there is a

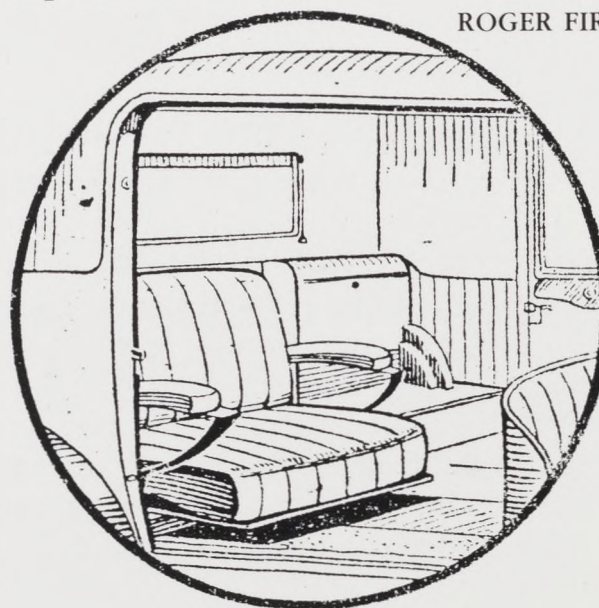
container at the back of the car into which normal suitcases can be stored.

The body is built on the Weymann principle. Both doors are of great width in that when opened they allow unimpeded access to any of the seats, an interesting point being that the big windows in each door are divided vertically into two panes so allowing effective ventilation in very hot weather.

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

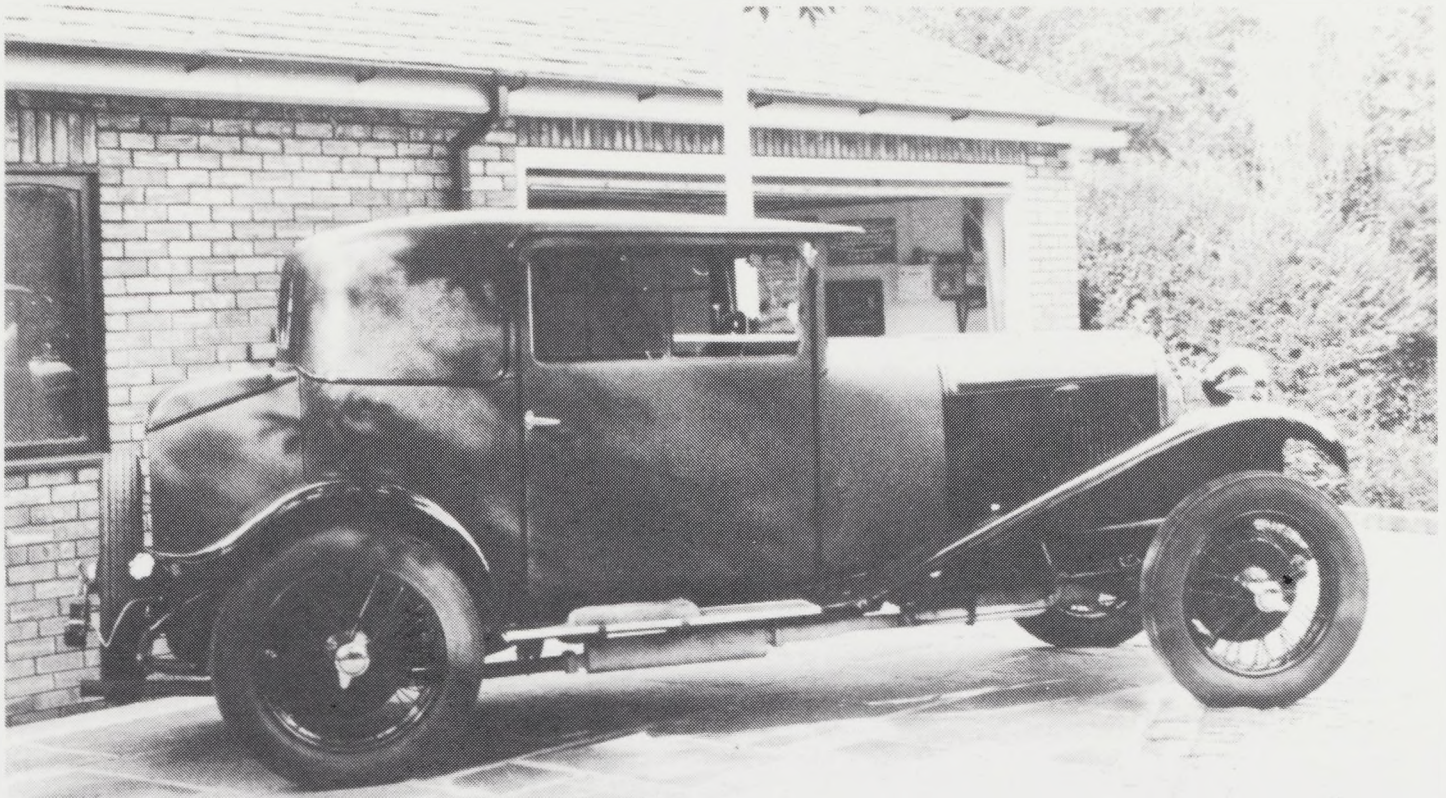
The price of the car when new was £795 complete for the road.

ROGER FIRTH



Sketch showing one of the rear armchair seats down, and the other packed away.

UU 7571.



The good side of a "Honeymoon".

Photo: Roger Firth.

FOR SOME TIME I have been looking for a 2-litre saloon, my preference being for a High Chassis Speed Model which I considered a suitable stable mate for my 1929 High Chassis Tourer, HN 6771.

It was quite clear that very few 2-litre saloons still survived and in fact I only had details of one which was owned by Mrs M Leigh of Tixall in Staffordshire. This car is the Weyman Fixed Head Coupe "Honeymoon Saloon".

Most Lagonda owners (and even past Lagonda owners of Amilcar fame) said that I must be mad and claimed that a 2-litre saloon would be too slow—so what—the 4½-litre brigade appear to be very hood winked and really have lost the sight of proper Vintage Motoring (having 4, I know). I was sure that if I was to hang fire with money in hand, a suitable car would turn up.

I had approached Mrs Leigh but her car was not for sale, in fact it is used quite a lot, and visits France on a regular basis and takes pride of place in the family collection of vintage cars.

Having pondered over Mrs Leigh's car at the VSCC event in Malvern, I found this

quite charming and now having come across it for real considered it to be one of the most attractive true vintage cars.

Still waiting with money in a safe place, I was informed by a certain Lancashire lad known to us all as Burlington or Burtie that he had a telephone number where a 2-litre Fixed Head Coupe "Honeymoon Saloon" was for sale. Without going into too much detail (he has not, yet received his agents commission) this was a sister car to Mrs Leigh's, and what a gem.

Some work had taken place and since the speedo was rebuilt in 1962 it had only covered 523 miles. I purchase the car UU 7571 in August 1985 which was first registered 4 days after my 2-litre tourer (HN 6771) and the engine and chassis numbers are only 25 apart.

For the record, these are listed below:

	Engine Number	Chassis Number
UU 7571	OH 1151	OH 9406
HN 6771	OH 1176	OH 9431

ROGER FIRTH

6ème Rallye Monte Carlo des Voitures Anciennes.

PHEW! That was quite some rally. In terms of the distance covered, the difficulty of some of the roads, the speed at which most of the cars went, the quality of the cars themselves, and the magnificence of the food, accommodation and entertainment provided, the Monte Carlo rally for old cars organised by the Historic Section of the Automobile Club of Monte Carlo must take some beating.

Lagondas were represented by a cream coloured LG45 drop head coupé from Germany which had been completely rebuilt with metric bolts, a red replica M45R team car purchased from a London dealer the previous Saturday by a Swede, a 16/80 Special from Germany which seemed to be specially troublesome, and the author's V12 drop head coupé. Invictas, of which it is now proper for us to take note, were represented by the ex-Shuttler Prescott record holder car. This car was formerly a fixed head coupé but has been modified to carry a sports tourer body. It has under its bonnet a Sanction III Lagonda engine and sports a pre-selector gear box. The Swede showed particular faith in Lagondas and London old car dealers, but he did report that for much of the journey it had fired on only five of its six cylinders, which suggests something fairly wrong with either its insides or its valve guides.

As well as Lagondas there were some other absolutely amazing cars participating. There was a 1929 supercharged Alfa Romeo 1750, Zagato bodied and no fewer than three Mercedes 540K cabriolets, with fabulous bodywork. These last three were outshadowed in terms of performance by an S Roadster and an SSK. This latter having terrified several people with the shriek of its supercharger finally rewarded its impetuous owner-driver with a broken half-shaft. There was an amazingly fast, beautifully restored, Bugatti supercharged type 57, an as new

type 55 Bugatti, some magnificent Rolls-Bentleys and Rolls-Royces including Lord Montagu's Alpine Silver Ghost, and a clutch of Speed 6 Bentleys towering above all the other tourers and going at very high speeds on the bits between the corners. Very original and pretty was Tom Heesom's twin cam 3-litre Sunbeam Sports Tourer, as was its navigator Willo Heesom. One of the slower cars, which happily won the Concours d'Elégance, was a black and red Rolls-Royce 20 Doctor's Coupé graced by Tony and Verity Bourne.

The rally itself started from various points around Europe, with many of the continentally owned cars arriving on trailers and with back-up cars carrying their owners' luggage. The British contingent drove to the start and most started from Reims at 3 o'clock on Wednesday afternoon, pausing for the night in a delightful walled town called Langres, and driving on to Aix-Les-Bains by late afternoon on the following day. We had a first picnic in the mountains and rejoined the route to find the Heesom Sunbeam in a layby with some gendarmes. The gendarmes were in the business of weighing lorries and obligingly weighed my V12. This came out laden, at 2,280 kilos. I make that about 2 ¼ tons, so perhaps 12 miles per gallon is not too surprising!

At Aix-Les-Bains we were greeted by girls in local costume and by cold drinks, then escorted to the local Novotel where we had a swim and a room with a delightful view of the local lorry park! The owner of the cream coloured LG45 Lagonda, despite a back-up of truck packed with spares, roamed the car park asking for an English Whitworth bolt to mend his starter! Muzzled alsatians arrived to guard the cars, and were released after dark.

Despite everyone being somewhat hot and exhausted we were served a magnificent dinner in the local Casino, morale being restored almost immediately



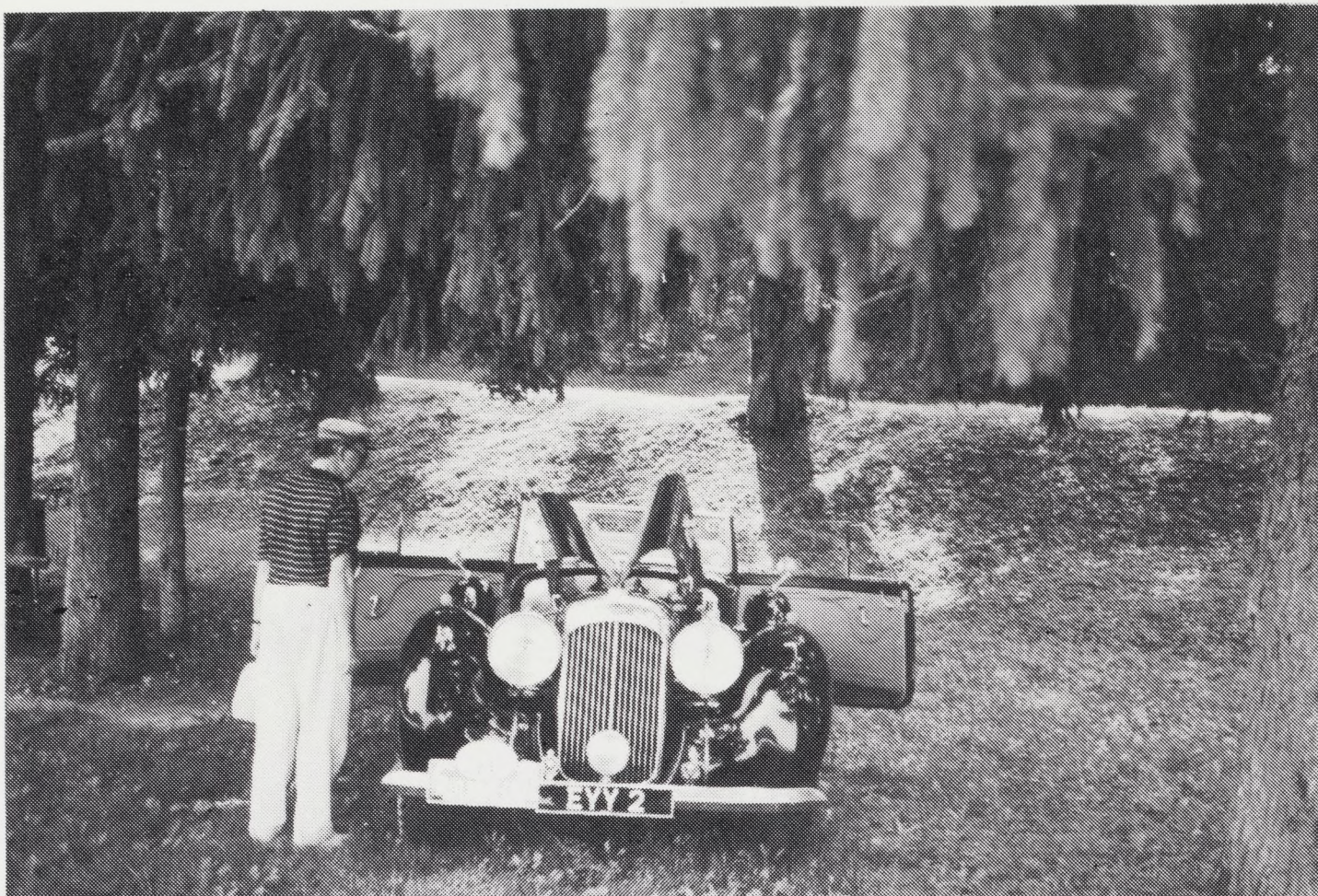
A guard dog at Dix les Bains, later un-muzzled and un-leashed. Photo: Michael Valentine.

by liberal consumption of champagne all, like all the other entertainments, included in the cost of the rally.

We were piped into the Casino by twelve huntsmen, in hunting caps and costume, playing hand held horns and we were then regaled with five amazingly good courses. After dinner we were ushered out to the balcony where a huge trolley was wheeled in with an enormous ice cream model of a car on it, beautifully sculptured and piped. As if this was not enough, quite suddenly there was an explosion from the lawn outside and the most spectacular firework display I have ever seen, with the fireworks set off presumably be some electronic programme, ensued for the next half hour or so. This was accompanied by beautifully reproduced fireworks music and Can-Can dancers!

At this stage we had been away from England for four days and the rally proper had not even started! The following day, Thursday, however it did start and we went for a spectacular drive through the mountains to Megève near Mont Blanc for

lunch. On the way there were two regularity tests for which one had to drive over a few kilometres at a chosen speed—I chose 40 kilometres per hour—and arrive at the precise moment for this average speed. Both these tests took place round narrow mountain pass roads and for the first we performed reasonably well, but in the second were very late because we were held up by the Mercedes SSK! This delay led to the car boiling and this episode may appear on Japanese television, as a Japanese television crew followed the whole rally and photographed any unusual incident, even allegedly following one lady into the bushes! Having replenished the radiator with cold water from a nearby house, we continued towards Megève where we climbed right above the town to the golf club, a most spectacular site high in the Alps, where the thirty-seven participating cars were parked on the grass outside the club house. A delightful buffet lunch was followed by the drive to the Mont Blanc tunnel, on the way to which I regret to say, because the day was very hot and we were quite high up, my car,



Cooling in the Alps, the author wondering if it is safe to open the radiator cap. Photo: Michael Valentine.

which had been rewarded with a new radiator cap cork gasket after the first boil (borrowed from the petrol filler at the rear which had to make do with the old one) achieved a sensational explosion.

The pressure of steam inside the radiator burst the new cork gasket sideways and steam poured out all over the bonnet and all over the windscreen. I was most concerned about this as I felt it was likely to presage much worse boiling later. One of the rally tender cars happened to pass while we were waiting for mine to cool down, and most kindly produced approximately three gallons of water to refill the radiator. A great deal of dirt had come out of the radiator because of this boil-up, despite my having cleaned it with Rad-flush before the rally, and undoubtedly this must have cleaned the radiator a great deal better than the Rad-flush did because, despite my fears, the car did not boil again for the rest of the rally. The Mont Blanc tunnel enabled the general temperature of the car to cool down and we proceeded on a delightful downhill run to St. Vincent d'Aoste for the night.

On Friday we had a long hot drive along the Italian Autostrade to lunch at le Cascine restaurant at Stupinigi near Turin; another bumper meal filling us almost bumper to bumper! Then in the afternoon we had a long very hot drive for miles and miles along Italian plains until we reached the mountains between Italy and France. I kept the Lagonda going between 60 and 70 miles an hour for the whole of the rally except of course on the mountain passes, and although we were set off at one minute intervals we hardly saw another car all day other than the Rolls Doctor's Coupé and the rather unwell 16/80 Lagonda. Nearly all the cars participating were being driven at this kind of speed or faster, and I think it would not be much fun trying to drive one of our slower cars in this rally. The roads got progressively more difficult as evening drew nigh and the cars were regrouped on the Col de Vescavo above Monte Carlo for the final regularity test as the sun was going down. The road up to this Col was exceedingly twisty and very narrow and steep with a precipice on one side. This was the first time I had driven

the Lagonda on this kind of road and I was delighted at how well it handled, even if the Silver Ghost which was just behind me kept up remarkably well. I was quite keen to get away from it on the downhill sections as I suspect that its ability to go exceeds the ability of the rear wheel brakes to stop it! Howard Wilson, who looks after the cars in the Montagu Motor Museum and was accompanying Lord Montagu, told me that one of my exhausts was disconnected so, whilst the others ate snacks and drank cooling drinks, provided by the Club at the Col de Vescavo, I got myself nicely dirty underneath the Lagonda fixing the nearside exhaust pipe back on its webbing strap.

Because of this we set off last, I think, of all the cars, for the final stretch to Monte Carlo—the regularity test in the dark, on a road which on the whole one would prefer not to have seen in the daylight, even when fresh, which nobody was. I loved it but my navigator was less enthusiastic and said she could see it was a challenge but it was one which she could easily manage without!

Down and down we went until we reached the motorway on the outskirts of Menton and set forth for Monte Carlo, the Lagonda refusing to go more than 70, I think just feeling she'd had enough for the day, which I could well understand—also because of the heat problems throughout the latter part of the day with the hammering petrol pump busy pumping petrol vapour instead of petrol. As we neared Monte Carlo, at every corner where there was some doubt as to which way to

go, one of the retainers of the Automobil Club de Monaco was stationed to show the way, and eventually we drove in through a very narrow door into a huge floodlit warehouse where the cars were to be stored—the Japanese television crew were there to receive our innermost thoughts as we realised that we had actually finally made it after this very long and arduous drive.

From here on the rally became more social and less arduous in every way. Our luggage was whisked off to the Hotel Hermitage, one of the best hotels in Monte Carlo, whilst we were whisked off to the Sporting Club of Monte Carlo for a buffet dinner washed down with liberal quantities of pink champagne.

On the following day there was a morning devoted to cleaning up and, after a delicious lunch on the terrace of the Hotel Hermitage, preceded by the inevitable glasses of champagne, we had the acceleration and braking contest, followed by the manoeuvrability contest, followed by the Concours d'Elégance. The acceleration and braking test was won by the Invicta despite its fairly slow braking time, no doubt due to the oil which had visibly escaped from the back axle over the rear wheels via the brake drums. Not even the supercharged Bugatti type 57 nor a road racer Delahaye could match it but the Le Mans replica Lagonda got close. I came a mere twelfth equal. The Concours d'Elégance was won by Tony Bourne's Rolls-Royce 20 Doctor's Coupé, suggesting that the judges, who included Princess Antoinette, preferred the staid charm of



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Prize giving—everyone got cups and medals.

Photo: Michael Valentine.

the 1920's English country village to the flash and grab of the late 1930's Mercedes contingent. The quiet good taste of the V12 Lagonda earned it a fifth place.

From here on the Rally consisted mostly of drinking and eating. On Saturday evening we were all taken to the Folies Rousses at Leow's Hotel, which was an old fashioned chromium plated T*ts and B*ms show. For one act the girls all wore radiators below their own headlights and little else that was visible and the choreography included interesting handling tests for large connecting rods and pistons.

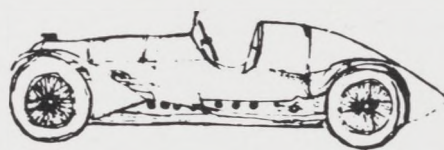
Sunday saw prize giving in the Place in front of the Palace, where each of us was given at least two cups and had the honour to shake hands with Prince Rainier. Ladies in the first few winning cards were also given enormous bouquets of gladioli, etc.

After this the cars were put away again in the warehouse and we went off to lunch at the Monte Carlo Beach Hotel, looking over Monte Carlo's only beach and a huge swimming pool. In this we exercised after lunch to regain our appetites for the Dinner du Gala which took place in the Hotel de Paris and celebrated completion

of a most stretching but most enjoyable old car rally.

It says much for the state of the cars on the rally that the only car to have a serious breakdown was one of the German follow up cars, a modern Mercedes, leaving the owners with no luggage for two days. There's a moral here somewhere.

M.R. VALENTINE



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For Those Interested in Electrical Phenomena.

HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED how few car batteries are replaced because they don't work well enough rather than stop-working. Something can be done at this stage which will prolong the life of the battery and the same treatment carried out much earlier may well prevent the condition occurring.

First consider how a car battery functions. Batteries are a series of cells, in our case six cells in series giving twelve volts at the terminals. Each cell is made up of a plate of lead and a supported plate of lead oxide, both immersed in a dielectric of sulphuric acid. The supported lead plate is the positive pole, the other plate is the negative. During discharging, electrons flow from the negative to the positive pole.

Battery failure is due to the chemical process taking place within each cell. During discharging, the positive plate reacts with the sulphuric acid to produce lead ions and water. The negative plate dissolves to form lead ions in the process, this leads to the battery failure. On charging, the positive plate builds up a thicker coating of lead oxide, removing water and lead ions from the sulphuric acid as it does so, the negative plate releases hydrogen from the sulphuric acid

as it builds up a coating of lead. The lead ions formed in discharging combined with sulphate ions in sulphuric acid to form insoluble lead sulphate. When these coats, both plates of the battery, it fails to deliver sufficient power.

This sulphating may be removed by adding a weak acid to each cell known as "ethylenediaminetetraacetic-acid" or EDTA to chemist. EDTA forms compound with the lead ions in the lead sulphate on a battery plate. This compound tends to breakdown again, EDTA and lead sulphate are regenerated, but this time the lead sulphate doesn't coat the plate, it sinks down to the bottom of the cell where it lays harmlessly as it doesn't conduct electricity. EDTA effectively prevents the battery plates sulphating.

It can be seen that batteries treated with EDTA especially batteries which spends period of time not fully charged and those having too many lead ions will have their lives greatly increased.

Should you feel inclined to give it a try add a rounded teaspoon of EDTA powder to each cell. The exact amount is in no way critical. The battery should then be used normally for a few days to agitate the mixture.

CHRIS PALING

Craftsman



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Lagondas at Cadwell.

ROY PATERSON likes to maintain interest in his favourite event in the VSCC calendar and therefore offers this report on Cadwell 1987. Lagonda presence materialised as 5 cars, 6 drivers, and 8 starts but 10 entries, I. A. Rowe not making it twice.

Event 1. Spero Trophy Race—Eight laps with Scratch Start for cars under 1100cc.

David Fletcher-Jones won this at Cadwell in 1977 and again last year. This year he leapt from the line and led for three laps cutting his lap time down to 2 mins 01.4 secs, before pitting with a loose petrol cap. Second placeman Giles Jr. went on to win for his first time, with Morgan/GN Salome, and a lead of 21.4 secs.

Event 4. Five-lap Handicap Race—22 starters.

President Crocker in his Lagonda/AC Rapier was our man here, beating the Avon-Bentley Special (4566cc supercharged) from the start and 17th, 19th, 19th, 17th and 14th at my middle-distance viewpoint, finishing 13th. Not a processional race by any means. He was passed by ERA, Avon-Bentley Special, Riley Sprite Special, Attenborough Special, 4.3 Alvis Sports Special, and Riley Sprite Supercharged Special; whilst he was busy passing six Rileys, two 'Nashes, a different 4.3 Alvis and re-passing the Riley Sprite Supercharged and even the ERA. An interesting time and I bet he enjoyed it immensely. Incidentally his fastest lap was 2 min 09.7 secs.

Event 6. Five-lap Scratch Race—22 starters.

Len Thompson drove the only Lagonda in this race, his Lagonda Rapier with 1500cc engine. On his second time round he improved from 5th place to 4th, in which position he finished. Not such exciting racing but a good fastest lap of 2 min 08.7 secs.

Event 7. John Scott Race for pre-war cars (10-lap Scratch)—15 starters

Amongst all the ERA, Alfa-Romeo, Bugatti and Maserati purpose-built, factory-built, racing cars on the entry list,

he doesn't stand an earthly in his home-made Lagonda/AC; but Crocker was there again. He must enjoy it! He was consistent too, 13th again. But his fastest lap was faster by 1.5 secs for the 2.17-mile circuit. (A bit sad there were so few starters from an entry-list of 27).

Event 8. Eight-lap Scratch Race.

24 names on this entry list but unfortunately . . . only eight starters. Nevertheless John Harris was there in his Lagonda Rapide Special with 4520cc engine. About mid-race he passed an Aston Martin to progress from third to second position, which he held to the finish. His fastest lap was 2 min 18.6 secs. An unexciting race spectatorwise.

Event 9. Five-lap Scratch Race.

Conscientious programme-readers wondered whether John Harris would be starting this one since presumably he had about five minutes between races to either change engines or at least liner one down to achieve the requisite 4500cc as specified in the programme. Whatever he did, he was there in time. So was Peter Fletcher-Jones in brother David's Lagonda Rapier. And there were 22 starters altogether. Three times Peter came round in 5th position, then he was displaced by the 3285cc Ford-engined GN Special driven by Mark Walker to finish 6th. Peter's fastest lap was 2 min 09.1 secs. Meanwhile John improved his fastest lap to 2 min 16.1 secs, and maintained station in the convoy to finish twelfth.

Event 10. Five-lap Handicap Race.

21 starters and Len Thompson was there again, this time off a 40-seconds handicap. He worked hard coming round in 15th, 10th, and 8th positions passing Austins, Alvis 12/70, FN TT Rep, and Invicta S-Type, and then failed to complete lap 4. In this final race it was interesting to see one very young driver, flagged away two whole minutes after the leading lady and 30 seconds after everyone else had gone, apply himself to working his way up the field through 19th, 18th, 14th and then 9th to finish a praiseworthy 5th. A most

commendable drive for Miles Morris—even though he was in father's ERA R11B—and a promising conclusion to the day's programme.

Four races had no retirements. The weather was mainly sunny with occasional cloud. The attendance was only fair. There were fewer spectating club members and Lagondas than usual. However, what was there in a notable way was the consistency of our drivers in their fastest-lap times; Harris with 2.5 seconds difference between events 8 and 9, similarly Crocker

with 1.5 seconds in 4 and 7, Thompson with 0.6 seconds in 6 and 10, and five Rapier times within a spread of 1.6 seconds. This puts into perspective David F-J's performance in being 6.7 seconds faster than the next best Lagonda. As a high-ranking Clubs' member observed, "What on earth does he do to make it go so b....y fast?"

ROY PATERSON

NB. Clubs' member = member of several clubs.

Tartan Thoughts.

RURAL SCOTLAND, and most of it is, enjoys motoring conditions as I imagine they were in the 1930s only the roads are better. Traffic is minimal and most other drivers are still able to be polite. Even traffic in Glasgow city centre seldom comes to a complete halt, red lights not excluded! I recently joined a local picnic run from the city to Peebles; the road from Lanark onwards was smooth, undulating and traffic free through the most spacious open country. I have seldom enjoyed such a good drive since those early days when there wasn't always a traffic jam at Brackley, when the sun shone at Prescott, and when AGMs were at Runnymede.

At the back end of August, James, my nephew and veteran of Prescott and Le Mans, visited briefly, and can now compare a 747 dashboard with that of the Crossley thanks to the British Airways

staff. We spent a couple of nights on the Isle of Arran and for most of the time the rain stopped. The photo shows the Crossley posing at Blackwaterfoot contemplating cormorants and musing over Cortina engined 16/80s, regretting slightly that the Crossley-Bugatti link up in the '20s produced no such exciting possibilities as the Detroit-Newport Pagnall liaison surely will!

I have yet to find a source of Crossley (or Lagonda) spares, but the remnants of industry survive in the Glasgow area with unlimited supplies of water pump gland packing (James Walker), copper tubing, all manner of nuts, bolts and studding, and a little machining job to part of the back axle was done by a firm in Paisley set up to hone 3 ft diameter cylinders for marine engines. If I replaced the Crossley's delicate little cylinders with these the car

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The Crossley in magnificent surroundings.

Photo: Stephen Weld

would have a capacity of 382,000 ccs. Prescott would be a doddle; I might even beat the 2-litres!

It is now late September and winter is once more nudging its way back never

really having been far round the corner. I must boil the Crossley in wax to combat the salt which was still evident here in April.

STEPHEN WELD

Letters to the Editor.

Woodbridge
Suffolk

Dear Sir

Any mention of Rapiers in the Lag Mag attracts my attention, as I look after the Rapier Register's photograph collection and other archives, so Simon Carrell's letter in the Spring issue immediately caught my eye.

I can add a little to the history of Arthur Brend's Rapier, Abbott Tourer BWB 145, as he was also a Register member until 1971. He had, by that time, moved from Nottinghamshire to Camberley, Surrey, but I don't know what became of him after that. However, his Rapier was advertised for sale in both the Rapier News and the

Lagonda Club Newsletter in Feb 1970. It was said to be at Andre Kenny's at Alpheton, Suffolk and appeared to be in the throes of a rebuild, the chassis being described as largely overhauled, the tail of the body rebuilt, and the engine dismantled. With some spares, the price was £70!! We were looking for an open Rapier at that time, to use for competition, and my recollection is that we phoned about this one, to be told that it had just been sold. The Rapier News the following month reported that BWB had been bought by Ivan Forshaw, and might be

broken for spares. I have no confirmation of this, or of its subsequent fate, but it has never reappeared, so I wonder if it might still be down at Parkstone, or if it was indeed broken up in the early 70's. Can Captain Forshaw help solve the mystery perhaps?

We eventually bought the remains of two Rapiers, one minus engine, gearbox and radiator, and the other with the chassis

2, Tupleby Drive,
Harrow on the Hill
Middlesex

Dear Sir

Two Lagonda V12's did participate at the "Rallye Paris-Vichy" last May, and won several cups, both for the rally and following concours d'élépauce Reg 5711 LK04, is SN 14094 and owned by J. L. Jacques. She lives in Provence and also did participate and won the 3rd Grand Prix, early in May at the "Paris de Boulogne" Concours d'Elépauce.

Reg AWS 909, SN 14109 is owned by the undersigned and lives in Harrow on the Hill.

The rallye was very interesting, as

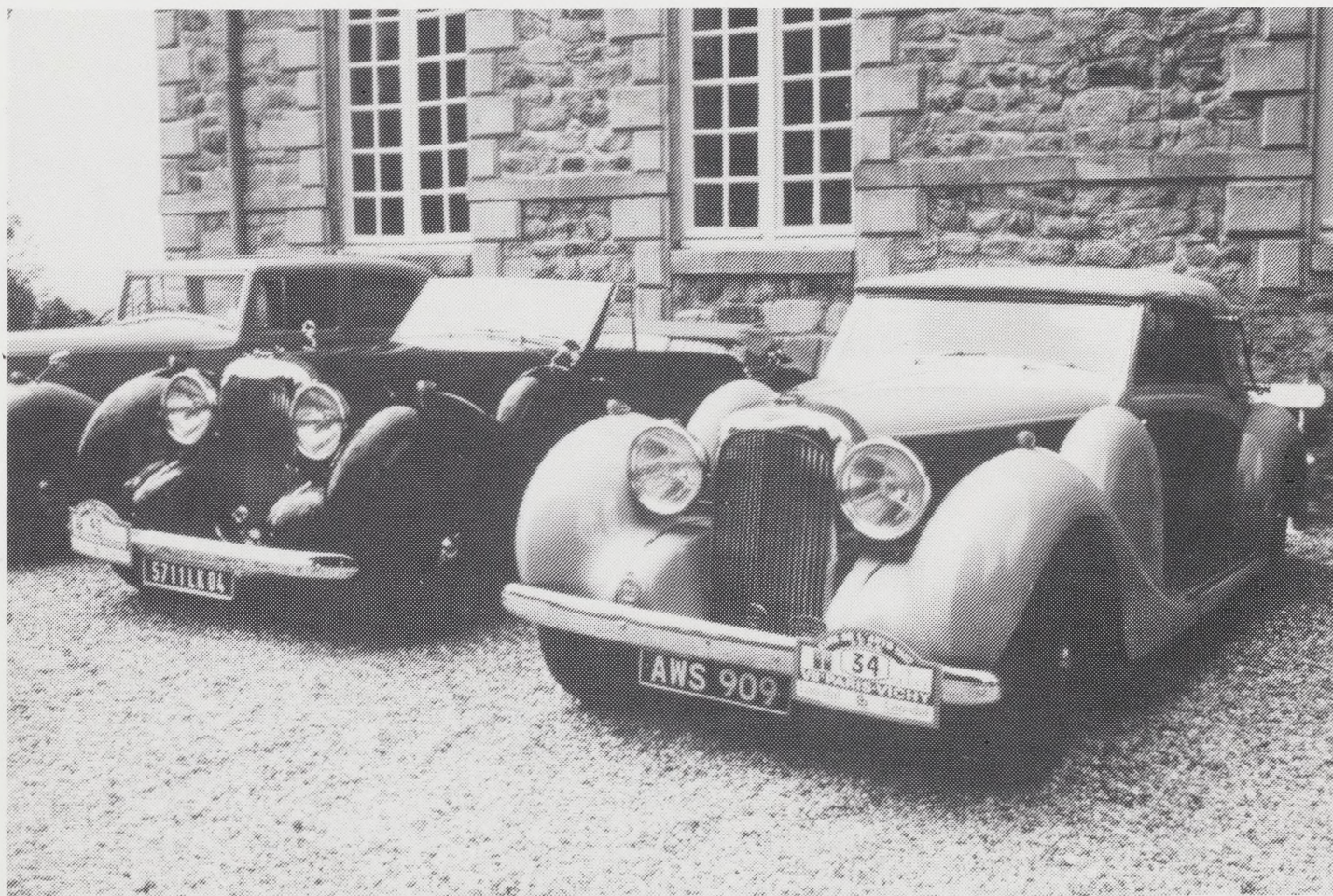
chopped in half, both of which had been sitting right under our noses in Cardiff while we scoured the rest of the country. But Mike got sidetracked into racing an Austin Seven, and the projected competition car is still not finished, though it does have a replica Eagle 2-seater body now.

ANN PILGRIM

leaving the centre of Paris at midnight, over half of the 300 miles from Paris to Vichy were driven at night, even regularity tests. The second day other tests took place on small mountain roads. The third day was the concours d'élépauce, the Lagondas took the 2nd and 7th places, but did not do so well in the gymkhana—You will find a picture of the two cars in front of the Chateau de Brollone, near to Vichy.

If you are interested by some picture or information please let me know.

JEAN GORJAT



"Clear View"
Worth, Nr. Deal, Kent

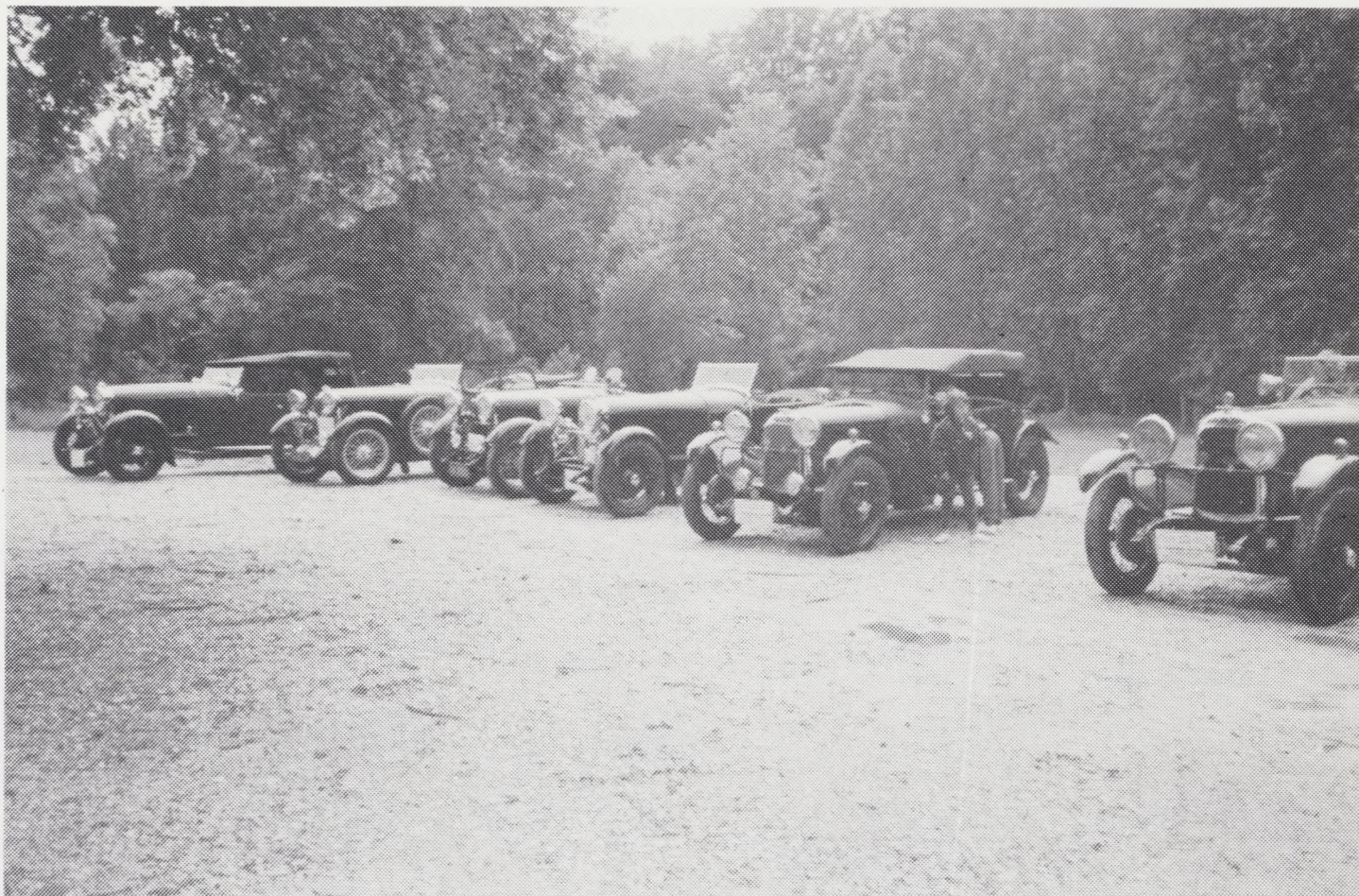
Dear Sir

Together with Roland Morgan's 2-litre, an A.C., an M.G., a Riley and a Lea-Francis, I took my own 2-litre to a rally organised by the French at Bagnole de L'Oru where, happily we found ourselves among ten Lagondas. Many others were, I understand,

at a similar occasion during the Le Mans trip.

Anyway, I thought you might be able to make use of the enclosed snaps of 6 Lags fortuitously parked together at one stage of the rally.

JOHN ANDERSON



3831 Cedar Hill Road, Victoria,
Canada

Dear Sir

For some years now, the B.D.C. has organized a very successful meet here in Victoria attended by R.R.O.C. members as well as our own, from the United States and locally.

There are four Derby-built Bentleys that were on various stands at the 1938 Olympia Motor Show, all within reach of our meet, and next year we hope they will be present to mark the 50th anniversary of that particular event.

However, next year will also be the Centenary of the birth of W.O. Bentley and, in common with other regions,

members in these parts are planning to mark the anniversary in some suitable way.

My great hope is to have a V12 Lagonda with us, to represent W.O.'s post-Cricklewood post-Derby period. There is a drophead in Vancouver that is undergoing a complete restoration (by one of the best restorers in North America) but it will not be ready by April '88.

There is George Chilberg in California with four, although one of them is the Parnell Special, and there is Richard Morrison in Kansas with the ex-Stanley Mann Le Mans reproduction. I know them,

and intend to invite them to the Spring Meet, although both are a bit far away.

Would it be possible, through your good offices, to invite any other V12 owners who may live within a couple of hundred

miles of the Vancouver/Seattle area. I would be grateful for your advice.

Thank you so much for your help.

HUGH YOUNG

88, Narrow Street,
London, E14

Dear Sir

Allan Elliott asks (No. 133) about Wing Commander Allen's Lagonda.

A photo of the car, Reg NKY1161 appears in his book "Fighter Squadron" published by Granada in 1982. I enclose the picture.

DICK RAYNES

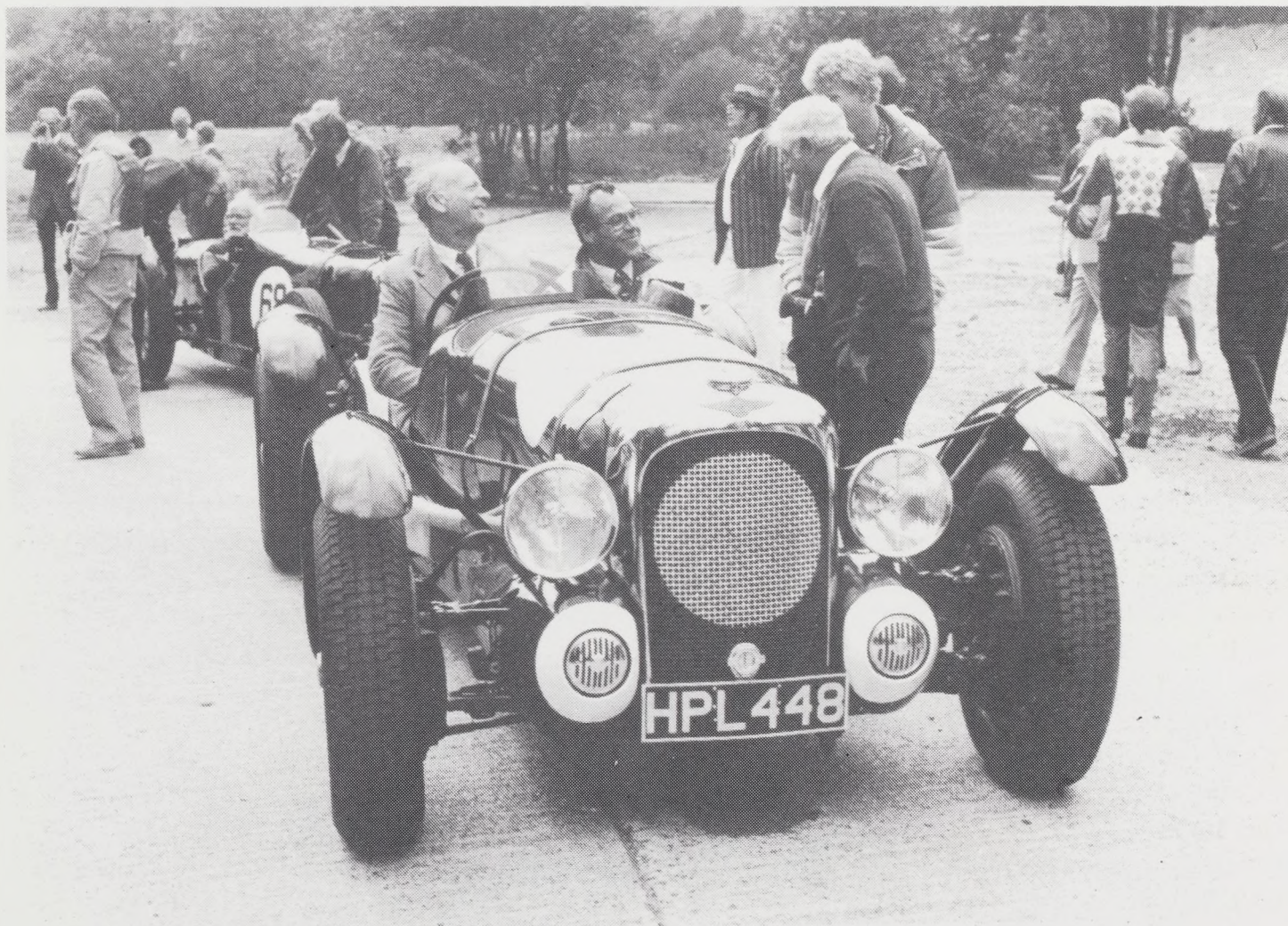
22, Knole Wood, Sunningdale,
Ascot, Berkshire

Dear Sir

Very many thanks indeed for letting the local Ferrari Owners Club in Surrey attend your Brooklands Meeting last Sunday.

I thoroughly enjoyed it—so did my wife—it was great to examine so many marvellous Lagondas, all beautifully kept as usual! Before W.W.II, I was a Lagonda fiend! Thank you again and my kind regards to James Crocker.

CYRIL FEATHERSTONE



John Rees in the original 1939 V12 Le Mans Team Car, passengered by Phil Erhardt. Photo: Alan Elliott.



Peter Whenman

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