

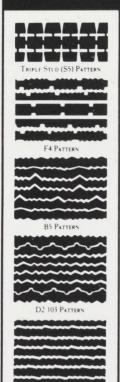
THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB

Number 135

Winter 1987



Veteran, Vintage, Classic & Contemporary



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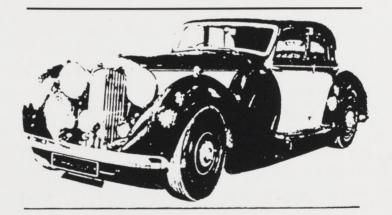


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FRONT COVER:

Mrs. Robbie Hewitt with BPK 203, 4½-litre Team Car at Brooklands, May 31st, 1987. Photo: John Oliver.



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 SPRING "LAGONDA" URGENTLY REQUIRED. Submit to Editor by 30th March please.

Out and About.

congratulations to Truman A. Stockton and his wife Ruth who, last November, celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary. We wish them well in the coming years. Also their V-12, of which there is a picture in the magazine.

Congratulations, too, to David Ayres who had an article on him and his 2-litre in a classic car magazine, expounding the virtues of using a proper car on a daily basis.

Let's hope other owners are inspired into the same attitude.

From the photographs in the magazine

of the New Years Day 'do' at the Pheonix it appears that a number of Lagonda people were present to see inside Peter Whenman's workshop. Always worth a visit if you are in the area.

You never know what you might pick up from advice to bits and pieces.

(If the latter please let Peter know.)

Please would contributions to the next magazine note the editorial change of address on page 3.

Hopefully the 2-litre will catch me up and move too.

I know they're slow, but!

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.

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"LAGONDA—A HISTORY OF THE MARQUE"

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Letter from America.

ENCLOSED you will find a Xerox copy of a clipping from the August 13th issue of Old Cars Weekly. It's a very poorly written story in that it contains no details of the race, the car or its owner.

I found the owner not to be a member of the Lagonda Club but he does belong to the Classic Car Club of America. Its roster shows Mr Morrison to live in Salina, Kansas at 3265 Country Club Road, 67401. He also owns two Bentleys.

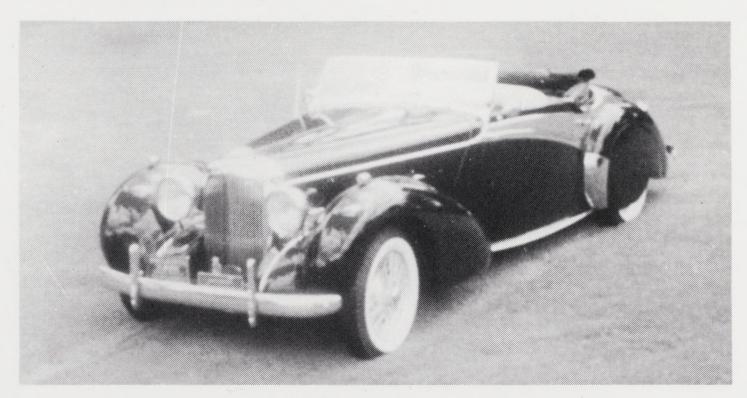
I wonder if his car is actually one of the

two entered by the factory in the '39 Le Mans where they allegedly took 1st and 2nd in their class and 3rd and 4th in the overall finishings?

Enclosed you will find a picture of my 1939 Rapide which has just been repainted after extensive but minor body work.

I'll be interested in your comments either by letter or the magazine.

TRUMAN STOCKTON JR



Vintage Division Impressive at Pike's Peak Climb.

VINTAGE RACE CARS once again opened the annual Pikes Peak Auto Hillclimb held July 11th near Colorado Springs, Colo.

The 65th running of America's secondoldest auto race took place on the twisty 12.42-mile gravel toll road that rises 4,708 feet from the starting line to the 14,110 foot summit of the mountain. The road is so high and steep that it is used by many car makers for brake, transmission, fuel system and emissions certification testing. Many modern cars stall on the mountain with vapor lock or overheating; the sight of the restored racers—some of which were 60 years old—speeding up the mountain had the 15,000 spectators shaking their heads in wonder.

Organized by Vintage Racing of

Redondo Beach, Calif., the vintage division consisted of historic racings cars ranging in age from a 1972 Hawke Formula Ford to a 1927 Bugatti Type 37A Grand Prix car. "Matlock" television series music editor Ted Roberts drove his 1968 AMC Javelin to the fastest time. Due to slicker-thannormal course conditions this year, his winning time was about a minute slower than the vintage division record, set last year by veteran driver Jack Guynn of nearby Manitou Springs. Roberts' car is one of a handful built by the factory to race in the Sports Car Club of America Trans-Am series. Roberts bought the car in 1969 and has raced it himself since then. Mark Adams finished second driving a 1955 Jaguar XK140.

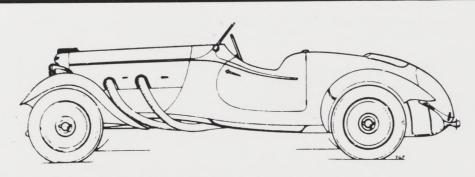
Although post-1950 cars filled the top six positions, the crowd was most impressed by the sights and sounds of the older sportsters, particularly Richard Morrison's 1939 V-12 Lagonda Le Mans,

Cliff Jones' 1949 Healey Silverstone and Carlton Coolidge's 1927 Bugatti. Even the slowest car to finish, Robert Seiffert's 1949 MG TC, completed the course in just under 22 minutes at an average speed of over 33 mph—a speed that most enthusiasts would find difficult to match in a modern performance car.

After the completion of the vintage division, the crowd saw new records set in the open wheel, pro rally and open rally divisions with two-time World Rally Champion Walter Rohrl of West Germany piloting a factory-prepared Audi Sport Quattro S1 to a new overall course record of 10 minutes, 47.85 seconds, at an average speed of almost 68 mph. Rohrl's new record was almost 22 seconds faster than Bobby Unser's 1986 record in a similar car.

JIM PETTENGILL

(Reprinted from Old Cars Weekly, with thanks).



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2.6 Litre Suspension Setting.

RECENT ARTICLES in the Summer and Autumn editions of the Lagonda have raised the question as to whether the 2.6-litre should have the torsion bars adjusted to give negative rear wheel camber rather than positive camber as set on delivery.

I cannot say which setting is correct; but I can describe my experiences with KOY 222, a 2.6-litre which I owned in the 1960's.

The torsion bars could be adjusted by means of a screw. Thus their tension could be released before dismantling; (unlike those on a Morris Minor which spring to equilibrium with a sudden "twang" if you are not careful) and the setting easily adjusted. I do not think that there is sufficient adjustment to alter the setting from positive to negative camber.

The workshop manual for the car stated

that the car should be placed on a level surface and the torsion bars adjusted until the rear chassis member (to which the bars were attached) was $10\frac{1}{2}$ " from the ground. n.b. the $10\frac{1}{2}$ " is from memory. Anyone trying this exercise should consult a workshop manual first.

One day, therefore, armed with a ruler and the manual's recommendations, I inched my way under KOY, found that the rear chassis was about one inch lower than recommended, and adjusted the torsion bar setting to the manual's recommendations. This increased the positive camber. I drove it like this for about a week, but did not like the new setting. Perhaps it was just imagination, but the car did not seem to grip so well, possibly because less rubber was in contact with the road on this setting. So I reset the suspension to give



Ron Gee enjoying the Lagonda at speed.

Photo: Ron Gee.

the previous camber setting.

For road use, I would say that Lagondas had the suspension right. I used the 2.6litre for about 10,000 miles per annum, mostly in the traffic of Greater London. It coped with roundabouts, rain, snow and ice, motorways. In 1963, KOY managed to win the November Handicap, a stiff one day and night rally that the club used to run annually for its more intrepid members.

If one took the car racing, then the car became a handful as one endeavoured to corner faster than one would on the road. Initially the car would understeer, then as it rolled to the suspension limits, it would change to oversteer. After one practice session at Silverstone, I was called into the steward's office and threatened with being black-flagged during the race, if I persisted in "rolling and sliding" the car round Silverstone.

Cornering hard on the track would cause the outside rear wheel to "tuck under". Indeed after one meeting, the "tuck under" effect wore "Avon Turbospeed' off of the side wall; and also started to shear the wheel rim away from the hub. Fortunately Ivan was able to sell me another wheel.

In the years previous to my efforts, one other 2.6-litre owner had competed at Silverstone i.e. Dr John Groom who once signed my competition medical card in his surgery at Chislehurst and then chatted Lagondas for 30 minutes, oblivious to the queue of patients in the waiting room. Dr Groom said that, no matter how he tried, he could not make the 2.6 slide. Perhaps his suspension was set differently!

RON GEE





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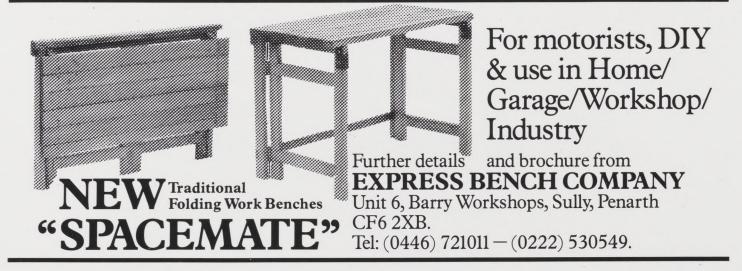
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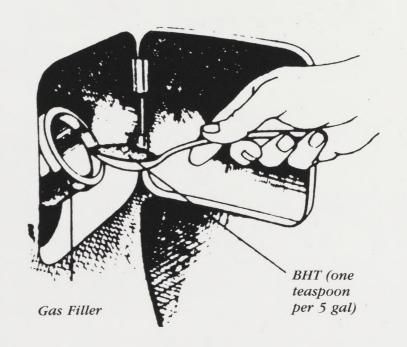
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JOHN OLIVER



Raymond Wickham, AUU 332 et Al.

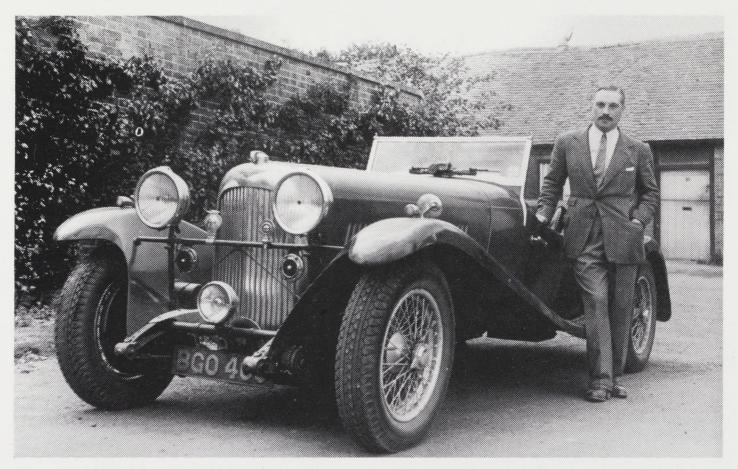
THE PHOTOGRAPH SHOWS Member Raymond Wickham in the 1940's, with BGO 400, the well known 3-litre which he had recently acquired from another familiar Club Member of the period, Air Vice Marshall Sir Alec Coryton, who had run the car in the war years. (BGO 400 is now owned by Geoff Clark, and has been for much of the post war period).

I was extremely fortunate in being able to meet Raymond Wickham in the course of buying our new M45, AUU 332 (illustrated in the Spring 1987 magazine). Raymond had had the car in regular family use since he bought it in 1952, and apart from some nice adaptations to suit growing children, had had it maintained in precisely the state in which it was produced. (The key to an 'original' car

must be that it has been professionally maintained: DIY enthusiasts put things on the bench for later attention and forget to put them back on the car again). Eventually, at the age of 85, he was heavily persuaded by his family that the Mr Toad image was endangering his health, quite apart from the health of innocent bystanders in the village. I was treated to a Performance Demonstration by Raymond before I bought the car, so I understand the feeling.

In between BGO and AUU, Raymond owned an LG6 drophead, which he says was a superb motor car, but for some reason he quite quickly changed it for the M45.

Sir Alec Coryton was a prominent Club Member, before my time, but came into



Raymond Wickham and his 41/2-litre.

contact in another incidental way: he approached me as I was nervously lining up to do the hill at Prescott in the 1960's, and said he had no Lagonda now, but still had some badges: did I want them? Of course I said yes. Sure enough, ten days later a parcel appeared on the doormat, including not only the 2L Register badge, but also the very nice pre war Car Club badge which was assembled from three distinct parts; an authentic 4½ radiator badge which was screwed onto a model M45 radiator in miniature, which itself had wired onto it a separate miniature radiator badge of its own. Lovely, just like those Shredded Wheat packet pictures that used to go on and on into the distance.

When we bought Raymond Wickham's M45 it was just a week before the Henley Royal Regatta, and as the car had been little used for some time except by what RW called "farmyard mice and Old Weddings", there was an exciting few days of exploring, cleaning and polishing before two magnificent outings beside the Thames in tropical temperatures.

Truly unaltered cars are a delight to explore: you encounter all the thoughtful details that so seldom survive, like the

Photo: Courtesy Kent & Sussex Courier.

original tools and universal plug spanner; the oil can, and jack and its lever in the engine compartment; the sidescreens strapped behind the back seat; and the proper air filters and drip tray for carbs. On collection, in June, 29,077 miles were recorded (129,077 according to RW), and since then we have done a further 900 miles in about three months. It is satisfyingly smooth and powerful, the gearbox easy and the back axle quiet, whilst the brake servo is an enormous luxury.

The carbs have the correct KT needles, although they were rather worn and the pistons fouling, so that simple cleaning and new needles corrected the mixture considerably. I was fortunate in retaining contact with the garage foreman who maintained the car for Raymond all those years, and was able to replace the gearbox and axle oils with the same 140 grade that he had used. For the chassis I greased the car alternately with ordinary medium LM grade and thick 250 grade "steam oil", which is also superb for the steering box.

The petrol pumps clattered uncontrollably for the first few weeks, and after fruitless pursuit of air leaks I finally

discovered the obvious, that they were picking up filters full of old rust from the tank and cutting themselves off from the fuel lines. I have replaced one with a new Morris Minor unit (they don't do exchange deals anymore), with some regret, but I thought that relying on two original pumps was a little optimistic.

The rear tyres have been replaced with 7.50 section covers, which give slightly higher gearing but suffer from very minor but very noisy fouling on the wheel arch inners on cornering, which is a nuisance.

One item which required high priority action was the steering box mounting; for some inexplicably short sighted reason the factory fitted aluminium brackets in the early thirties, and I know from experience with the 3-litre that they can fall apart in your hands once the fixing bolts are removed. They crack across the three bolt holes, and impressively strong bronze replacement castings can be obtained from the Spares Scheme.

Anyhow, I now have the chance to carry on with the AUU where Raymond left off. I lived in the same street as a green M45 owned by Mr Symonds when I was five, and was left with an indestructible impression. It was taller than I was then. I hope I am man enough for it now!

JEFF ODY

2-Litre Full Frontal.

2-Litre Front End Inspection

IT IS SELDOM THAT the timing chest cover has to be removed as the two jobs in that area, chain adjustment and the replacement of the fibre timing wheel, can both be attended to simply by removing the inverted "L" shaped inspection plate. In fact, one can also adjust the exhaust cam-shaft timing.

After a major overhaul of the engine, I myself did the re-assembling and shortly afterwards was a bit suspicious of the inlet cam-shaft timing but decided to leave matters as they were until I had got a few thousand miles on the clock. Peter Whenman, and presumably Lagonda, set up the timing with a jig and not having these facilities can result in a bit of a hit and miss affair, single handed, and the odd degree one way or the other can make all the difference. Access to the inlet camshaft is denied unless the complete cover is removed.

Additionally I had a small water leak where the pipe is attached to the pump, a defective bush on one of the radiator trunion mountings and a bit of an oil leak between the chest and the block. At the same time I wanted to replace P.80's with P.100's. So, I decided to do the whole lot at once.

From the outset therefore it was my

intention to remove the lamp/horn bracket, the radiator, the bonnet and the bonnet sideboards, but of course it is not necessary to remove the lamp bracket to get at the timing chest but it does make for convenience of working. I have a stool which fits between the dumbirons enabling the job to be done sitting down! As a point of interest, but depending on the model of 2-litre one has, it is possible to do a chain adjustment/fibre wheel replacement without even removing the radiator; an awkward job governed by the amount of space one has between the timing chest and the radiator. Apertures are available to test the chain tension.

It follows that it is a good idea to have a spare fibre wheel available and a pair of radiator bushes and radiator hose; a copy of the instruction book which gives some quite useful drawings and descriptions is also a good thing.

Stripping Down

First remove the bonnet by disconnecting it from the support bar running between the scuttle and the radiator; then remove the bonnet sideboards. Next, remove the lamp/horn bracket; do this by taking out the bolts securing the rearward supports to the chassis members and then removing

the nuts from the bottom of the vertical posts. Don't try and remove the bracket sockets as this will entail removal of the shockabsorbers. It will probably be necessary to "persuade" the posts out of the sockets which are tapered. *Don't* bash the thread with a hammer, use a brass drift!

The radiator is now very easy to get at. First disconnect the top and bottom hoses fom the engine side (don't forget to drain off!). Then remove the caps from the trunion mountings; 2 nuts each. Finally take out the bolt securing the top of the radiator to the support bar which can then be tied to the water elbow to keep it out of the way and lift out. Next remove the dynamo (if you have a front mounted one) having disconnected it electrically. Only four nuts out of the eight surrounding it.

For the next phase it is prudent to anticipate problems in the replacement of the timing chest cover and a lot depends upon who last did the job. On a bit of board draw a rough outline of the cover and mark thereon all the retaining bolts on the periphery and this includes one passing though the "L" plate. Drill holes fractionally over "4" to receive the bolts as they are removed; don't be fooled into thinking that any one will fit anywhere; theory!, more of this when the cover is replaced. There is a larger diameter stud



positioned roughly centrally from which the nut must be removed. Patience is now the word as it is not necessary to remove the oil pump. Firstly there are two studs/bolts securing the suction pipe flange to the oil pump; these must be removed altogether and it is suggested that if they are bolts they should be replaced by studs as re-tightening up into a soft casting is most unsafe. Cut screwdriver slots in the ends of the studs for removal and replacement and then tighten up with nuts. Secondly there are two extra long 1/4" studs passing right through the oil pump and the cover to the chest from which nuts must be removed. Lastly there are two bolts behind the oil pump and these have to be unscrewed gradually as the cover is withdrawn after all the other bolts have been removed. In fact the lower one can be used to free the cover by screwing the bolt head back against the body. The final thing to be done prior to removal is to slacken the large nut holding the suction pipe to the side of the sump and swing the pipe itself clear of the timing chest cover.

Adjustments

Page 39 of the instruction book describes the chain adjustments very well, the main point being to get the sequence right but as the chains are now exposed to view one doesn't have to stick ones fingers through holes to feel them! Observe the note about the spring link on the chain connector links and don't forget that the chains travel in opposite directions. There are 41 links in the lower chain and 37 in the upper; it's a good idea to carry spares. Here is an opportunity to check the security of the oil feed pipe; nuts and joints. Page 40 describes the lubrication.

Page 41 of the instruction book describes the cam-shaft adjusting mechanism fairly well and, as it suggests, such adjustment is rarely necessary except when assembling. In fact all that has to be done after slackening off the castellated nut is a turn or so in one direction or the other on the adjustment stud which minutely rotates the cam-shaft within its driving sprocket.

A word on assembly may be of interest, the first point being the realisation that the

driving sprocket is not itself secured directly to the cam-shaft; there are two components between these two items. First is a 3-spronged "Spider" keyed and nutted onto the end of the cam-shaft, the sprocket being immediately behind this and free to rotate on the shaft. Thus, the entire contents of the timing chest can be assembled including the adjusted chains but leaving the cam-shaft castellated nuts loose. Upon rotation of the crankshaft everything moves round but the camshafts themselves will remain stationary. When the pistons on numbers 1 and 4 are set at T.D.C. timing of the cam-shafts can commence, turning to 3° after for the inlet cam-shaft and then to 12° after for the exhaust cam-shaft. One of the prongs of the "Spider" has a lug fitted to it and through this an adjustment stud is threaded. The second component is the Timing Adjustment Plate which, when fitted, encompasses the "Spider" and is bolted to the sprocket at 3 points. It embodies a slot to contain the adjustment stud. Whilst the sprocket has a number of tapped holes all around its circumference the 3 holes in the Adjustment Plate will not necessarily line up when the cam is set to the valve initially. This is where the adjustment stud comes in; to allow the Plate to rotate to one side or the other. When this is finally bolted to the sprocket the cam position can be adjusted to the valve minutely. Page 35 gives the timing settings but opinions vary on these. A useful home-made tool is a piece of tube with 3 slots cut in one end to fit over the "Spider"; a hole at the other end for a tommy-bar and the cam-shaft can be turned easily for initial setting. An important point here is to see that the adjustment stud is a fairly tight fit between the jaws of the slot in the Adjustment Plate, ie., there should be no axial play. If there is, this could result in the lug being rattled apart from the "Spider". On the exhaust side, the Timing Adjustment Plate forms the boss to which the magneto fibre timing wheel is fitted and it is essential that mag. timing be carried out after final adjustment of the exhaust cam-shaft.

For the final valve timing either when installing or subsequent adjustment to it,

it is easiest to use No. 1 cylinder with the 4 thou. gap accurately set and with the other cylinder cams "free". When all the others are adjusted it is as well to re-check the timing on No. 1. Once wear has taken place however sprockets, chains, cams, bearings can all affect accurate timing and it has been suggested that whilst adhering to the 12° after for the closing of the exhaust valve an increased overlap is beneficial by the opening of the inlet valve at T.D.C. or even as much as 3° before.

I have a pamphlet, issued 50 years ago, as an advertisement, describing the functions of the four strokes of the internal combustion engine and it exhorts the reader to make use of the memory keyword SCEE: Suction, Compression, Explosion, Exhaust. It goes on to explain, with diagrams, the up and down movement of a piston and the opening and closing of its pair of accompanying valves. It all looks remarkably simple which inclines one to think that at each alternate T.D.C. the inlet valve snaps open and the exhaust valve snaps shut. Alas this is not so! We come across this phenomenon of "overlap" where both valves are open at the same time which at first gives one the impression that atomised petrol is being blown straight out of the exhaust pipe! Be that as it may the fact remains that such an overlap is essential for the efficient engine breathing.

In spite of overlap the system still seems simple enough but why is it that when one is trying to watch an old nail being pushed up and down through a plug hole, a set of markings on the flywheel which has to be looked at from the other end of the engine and two valves, one which should be closing and another that should be opening; we always get into such a muddle?! It possibly stems from the fact that all manuals on the subject refer to the exhaust valve "being about to close" and the inlet valve "being about to open"; the point being that these two precise moments are themselves the limiting factors of the overlap period in degrees.

I've made up a useful gadget to help in the operation and it consists of an old sparking plug with the centre portion removed and in its place I've fitted a boss which fits snugly and has a short length of steel rule rivetted to it; it also has a hole in the centre through which a 6" nail is dropped onto the head of the piston. Thus on rotation of the crank the nail rises and falls against the scale on the rule. A refinement of this is to fix a rear facing light onto the car's lamp bracket and then use the shadow of the nail head against the rule; this gives a more accurate reading. It is best to use No. 4 cylinder for this process but doing the actual check on No. 1 cylinder. It follows however that a minute movement on the crankshaft gives a large movement to the periphery of the flywheel upon which the timing marks are stamped; thus, having established that the piston is on its upward journey on the compression stroke by rattling the rockers on No. 1 cylinder valves, to ensure they are both closed, one should take the rotation with the starting handle through the compression/explosion strokes and up onto the exhaust stroke but just short of T.D.C. Now it's a question of head under the dashboard and making use of the bendix gear to turn the fly-wheel by hand precisely onto the timing mark being checked.

Having valve caps is an advantage in that if one brings the fly-wheel up to just short of the mark when checking the inlet valve the cap can be felt between the finger and thumb; it should rotate; advance onto the mark and the cap should not be capable of rotation due to the rocker now bearing upon it. Exactly the same procedure, but in reverse, for checking the closure of the exhaust valve. It is important to ensure that all testing is done after forward rotation of the crank-shaft ie., don't turn backwards if the mark has inadvertantly been passed. In point of fact I have an old steering wheel fitted with a coupling to attach it to the front of the crank-shaft and this makes for more accurate control over the turning of the shaft.

It seems strange to be doubting Lagonda's figures on the timing but I have now had recent experience on three separate cars and each one has improved considerably upon the advancing of the inlet opening. Maybe someone can come up with a suggestion but my view is that

the extra time is needed to take up all the wear!

The stroke measuring tool, by the way, is very useful for checking the T.D.C. mark on the fly-wheel. I had to mark my own as the fly-wheel had previously been on a 3-litre. Bring the piston up just short of T.D.C. note the point of measurement on the scale and mark the fly-wheel; take it over T.D.C. and down to the same point and make a second mark then halve the distance between the two.

Fibre Timing Wheel

One should always keep a spare, and ideally, already fitted to a spare boss (Camshaft Adjustment Plate). To replace, it is best, for convenience, to turn the crankshaft so that the slot and adjustment stud is at 12 o'clock. Then, remove the 3 bolts securing the boss to the sprocket behind. Observe carefully the position of the magneto drive spindle and mark with chalk. Upon removal of the unit the spindle will of course rotate slightly and its new position should be noted. Upon replacement, the spindle should counter rotate back to its original position thus preserving the correct magneto timing.

Feel the edges on the spiral drive spindle and if rough, smooth off with a small emery block. This will probably mean retiming the magneto anyway!

Don't forget there are a few engines in which the fibre wheel rotates in the opposite direction to normal. The original method was to rivet the fibre wheel to the boss but some people prefer 2 B.A. nuts and bolts and it is advisable to peen the bolts over.

Reassembly

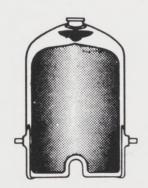
First the timing chest cover. Have a spare tooth brush ready to clean the threads on the bolts! Any swarf thereon could damage the already suspect thread in the aluminium casing. My own view is that these ought to have been Whitworth threads. Anyway, check each bolt back into its hole right up to its normal depth plus a turn or so. In so doing make sure there is a firm grip. If not, see if a deeper thread can be cut and a slightly longer bolt used; this is often possible. In the event of

failure put a 5/16" B.S.F. tap down the hole (don't drill it) and enlarge the cover plate hole to take the bigger bolt. If particular, the hexagon head can be filed or ground down to the ¼" size. All of this must of course be done prior to offering up the cover plate and use a jointing compound. The studs will assist in initial lining up and watch the alignment of the oil pump drive; at the same time gradually feed in the two bolts behind the oil pump. Then each bolt should be screwed up just short of finger tight. Final tightening should be done from side to side (cylinder head fashion) and use anything other than an open ended spanner. Don't forget the nuts to go back on the studs. A somewhat time consuming operation but not done often and well worth finishing up with a satisfactory oil tight job. Now the oil suction pipe and dynamo can go back.

In replacing the radiator don't tighten down the trunion mounting caps until the support bar is secured at the top. Check all hoses and clips and here's a suggestion; fit a Renault thermostat shut-off valve in the top hose. I have one with a 75° setting and it exactly fits the hose and found to be most beneficial. Make sure it's fitted the right way round! Another small point; the piping between the water pump and the radiator takes many forms. All metal pipe is too rigid and all rubber is too floppy. A mixture of the two is best, the underlying requirements being a modicom of flexibility to absorb vibration which was what I didn't have, hence the leak.

Apart from the bonnet and sideboards there only remains the lamp/horn bracket if it has been removed, and another suggestion; disconnecting and unfolding cable from the lamps and horn is tedious. Fit a multi-line junction box on to one of the frame members under the bonnet and everything can be disconnected from there and the complete lamps, bracket, wiring and all can be lifted out in one piece.

JOHN ANDERSON





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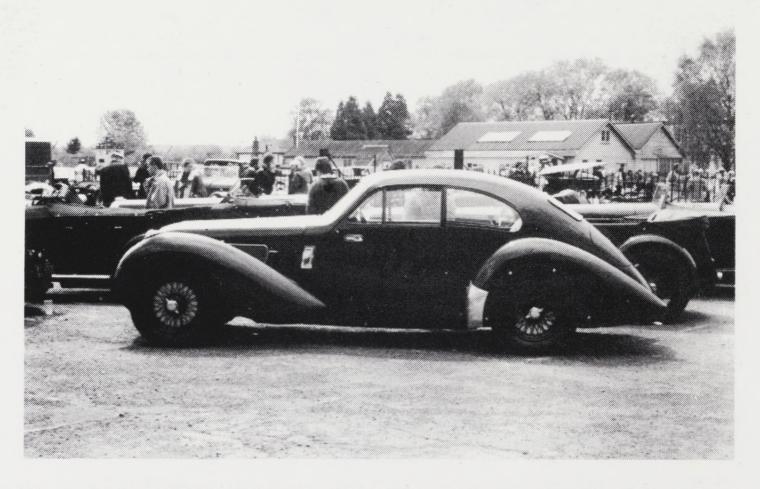




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The special Lancefield bodied V-12 (ex Brian Morgan rebuild) at Brooklands, before her recent price shattering sale.

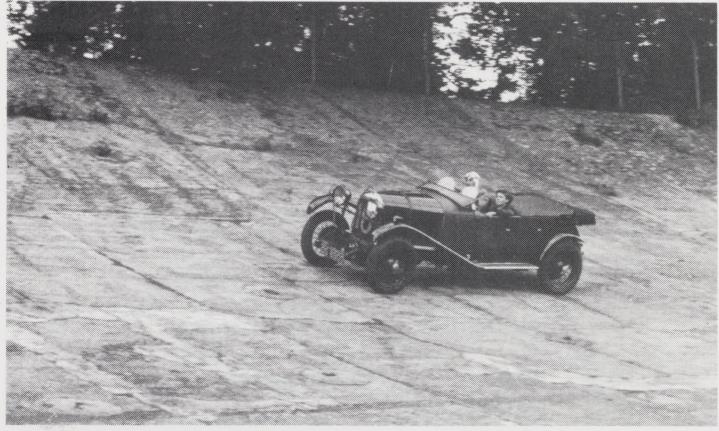
Photo: John Finch.



John Rees' V-12 at the Brooklands Museum's Party, June 7th. Photo: Nic Drukker.

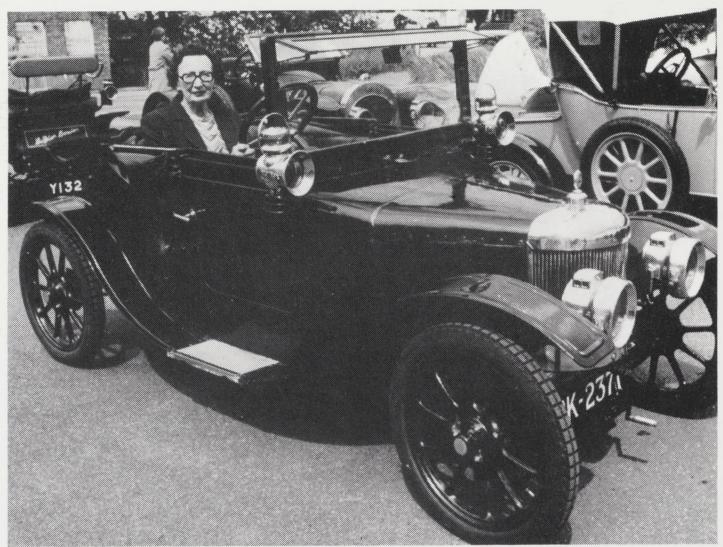


General view of the Brooklands Clubhouse with Lagondas and Bentleys prominent. The 'Grand Slam' and 'Blockbuster' bombs outside serve as a reminder that the Clubhouse was used, during WWII, by Barnes Wallis as his design office. Photo: Alan Elliott.



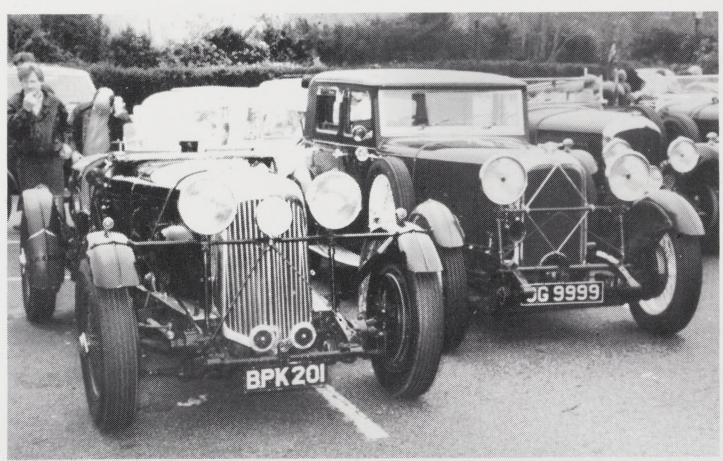
Dick Sage and the replica 2-litre team car on the Members' Banking, Brooklands. Notice the period white helmet.

Photo: Alan Elliott.



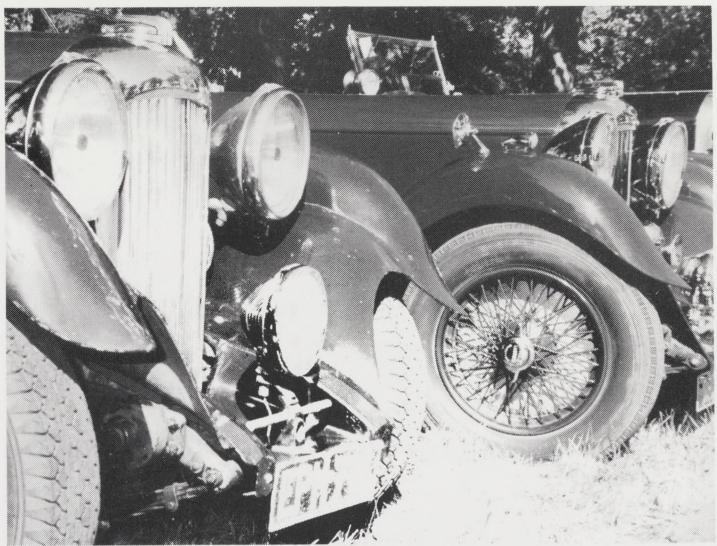
Mrs. Humphreys, daughter of Major Oates, in Steve Laurence's car. Brooklands Museum Party.

Photo: Clive Taylor.



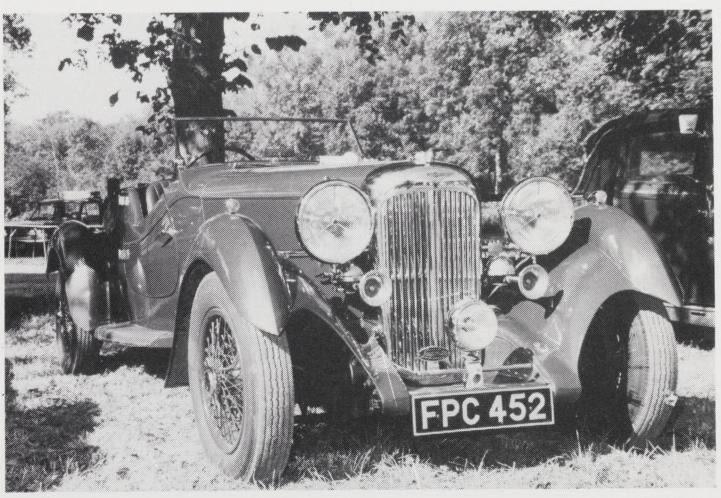
Bolney stage, VCC 'Brighton Run'.

Photo: John Oliver.



9-litres of Lagonda at the 1987 AGM.

Photo: John Oliver.



1987 AGM. FPC 452 resting in the sunshine.

Photo: John Oliver.



VSCC Hartley Wintney, New Years Day, various people surround Richard Bush's 4½ Invicta.

Photo: John Oliver.



VSCC Hartley Wintney, New Years Day, Tim Pryke and Simon Carrel with a 2-litre, 4½-litre and an Invicta.

Photo: John Oliver.



VSCC Hartley Wintney, New Years Day, inside Peter Whenman's workshop.

Photo: John Oliver.

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Renewing The Clutch on The V-12 Lagonda.

LIKE ALL THINGS MECHANICAL to do with the V-12 Lagonda, renewing the clutch is superficially straightforward but involves an enormous number of hours work in dismantling the floor boards and all the moving parts. This article is intended to help other members of the Club who like me have acquired over the years a V-12 Lagonda, an inquisitive interest in how it is all put together, a large number of tools of varying usefulness and a reasonable amount of practical experience of trying to make bits of the car work better. Unlike other members of the Club I have absolutely no engineering training so I hope those who are better qualified will forgive statements of the obvious and misnomers in this article!

Because of the great amount of work involved, the operation of replacing the V-12 Lagonda clutch should not be attempted unless (a) the clutch is starting to slip indicating that there is no choice but to replace it, or (b) the fabric couplings are so clapped out that they clearly are on

their last legs. My car satisfied both requirements fully. Before the process commences you should either park the car over your inspection pit or if, like me, you are not blessed with one of these invaluable excavations, you should first clean the garage floor and secondly put the car as high as possible on axle stands on the chassis. I unfortunately omitted the first of these two preliminary requirements which is necessary because you will spend quite a lot of time underneath the car rather than in it and on top of it and, if not carried out, results in very dirty dungarees and extreme unpopularity with the domestic laundry service.

The first step is to remove the gear lever knob and the top of the gear lever tower which is secured by a number of chromium screws and also represents the top half of the clamp for the swivel point bearing for the gear lever. If the rubber round the base of the gear lever is perished, I am told that an MGB rubber will fit, though I managed to resuscitate

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mine by coating the inside with black Bostik. The only disadvantage of this process is that it also coats the fingers and is exceedingly difficult to remove. At the same time it is advisable to remove the accelerator, brake and clutch pedals as the floor boards will not come up without these being removed. The rubbers on my brake and clutch pedals were not worn through but had become detached from the metal base to which I re-glued them with Evostik. All the floor carpets should then be removed, together with the front seats and the rear seat. The rear seat pan is a useful place for putting things later in the operation.

Next it is necessary to remove all the floor boards, first those under the two front seats which are each equipped with three quick release devices which without a screwdriver are almost impossible to undo; then the forward left footboard. Beware! This also has the dip switch attached through it and this should be carefully removed and tied to one side.

The next thing to remove is the gear lever which you will find lifts straight out. It is advisable to get the gear into neutral before doing this and it should be put somewhere safe to avoid getting grit on the greased end of it. Next to be removed is the gearbox cover, but first there is a sponge rubber cladding around the gear shaft tower which is held in place by a rectangular plate which fits over the tower. This on my car needed prising away fairly gently as, although it was not perished, it was adhering to the tower in one or two places. In fact it was amazingly well preserved considering it must have been manufactured about fifty years ago.

The next step is to seek to remove the floor through which the pedals project together with the whole gearbox cover. I had some difficulty getting the two separated but if the floor board is loosened and lifted from the offside chassis member it is easier to get at the screws and nuts attaching it to the gearbox cover, after which it can be lifted off the pedal levers. It will now be possible to slide back the gearbox cover. This will reveal the clutch, the short propeller shaft and the gearbox,

but do not think that you have yet finished the process of floor board removal. There are no short cuts in this operation. It is necessary to remove also the cross members which support the gearbox covering of which there are two, and in the case of my car these were mounted on wooden blocks with rubber underneath which had perished and had to be replaced. It is also necessary to remove the shrouding for the rear of the gear box and the wooden floors just in front of the back seat footwells. There are also two shaped aluminium panels on either side of these rear footwells which are screwed into the wood, and these also need to be removed. The carpeting should be taken off right back to the front of the rear seat, some of it being tacked and glued down. The two rear foot boards were particularly horrible to get out as they were fixed with nasty little square nuts on the end of countersunk screws which on the offside were exceedingly difficult to get at. Once all this has been removed you will probably find that the whole of the chassis underneath needs cleaning. underneath of the floorboards in my car was also covered with a revolting black, oily, greasy gunge and liberal application of petrol was needed to clean up around the area in which we would be working.

I say we, because I was helped throughout by Graham Gurney, as well as being given very good advice by Phil Erhardt, Alan Brown and Peter Whenman.

Now begins the serious process of what the Invicta hand book quaintly calls "dismantly".

First the gear shift mechanism needs to be removed. This is much simpler than you might think and consists just of undoing four bolts securing it to the chassis and lifting it off, taking care not to move the downward facing selector pins. There are two upward facing dowel pins to locate it.

To get the clutch out it is necessary to undo, starting from the front, the little bolts securing the clutch housing to the fly wheel. We now encounter for the first time the joys of the castellated nut, which is not, as you might think, an upper class person who lives in a palace, but a

diabolical pre-war device designed to lacerate the fingers and prevent subsequent interference with mechanical matters. Each of the bolts round the clutch housing is secured with a castellated nut with a split pin in it which it is impossible to get at with any ease. Perseverance will however reap its reward. Then there are four large bolts securing the clutch mechanism, the two longest of which go downwards and the two shortest of which go upwards the offside one being very difficult to undo because of the inaccessibility of the nut. The clutch pedal mechanism needs to be detached from the clutch assembly and it will be found underneath the car that there is a simple device held in position by one nut and bolt which separates the pedal operation from the clutch assembly.

Next on the menu is the removal of the small drive shaft between the clutch and the gearbox. This looks as if it will be quite straightforward. It isn't. It is necessary to mark the spiders on the front of the gearbox, the back of the clutch housing and either end of the shaft with paint in order to ensure that the whole thing is put back together in exactly the same position. This is because it is all alleged to have been balanced in the works. You will probably find as you progress that there are all manner of weird and wonderful washers attached to the bolts going through the spiders and the fabric couplings and, according to the instruction book, these must be replaced exactly as they were found.

In order to do this I found that it was helpful to replicate on two pieces of cardboard from a cardboard packing case the two fabric couplings that were being removed and to keep the nuts, bolts and washers from each position in a similar position in the holes in the cardboard. The cardboard can be marked front and rear showing where the painted spider arms fit. It is no good trying to do this on the new fabric couplings because the nuts and bolts will all have to be removed before it can be put in position. Once again we have the delights of removing castellated nuts and the split pins on the three forward nuts at the clutch end of the shaft are exceedingly difficult to remove because you cannot see them other than with the help of a mirror. You also need to take the twelve sparking plugs out so that you can turn the engine with ease. The bolts facing backwards from the spider attached to the clutch turn out not to be bolts but to be tapered screws. This is to allow sufficient clearance for the spider to rotate. Those at the gearbox end are somewhat easier to remove. Take out as many bolts as can be got out and, as mentioned previously, put these carefully in position through the cardboard former.

You might think at this stage that the short drive shaft would just lift out, but as with most things to do with the V-12 that would be an over-optimistic and simplistic conclusion! Attached to each end of the drive shaft is a protruding ball shaped ending which fits loosely into sockets in the gearbox shaft and the clutch shaft. This means that it is impossible to lift the shaft out and I suppose equally impossible that the shaft flies into the car in the event of the fabric couplings collapsing completely, so perhaps one should be thankful for the brilliance of the design! It is therefore necessary, in order to remove the shaft, to dismount the gearbox. This is fixed in position by six bolts and it will be found that below the two forward mountings on each side there is packing material which should be carefully wired and marked and kept for replacement exactly as found.

Everything I have read on this subject states that the alignment of the engine and the gearbox is very important, although in my car the gearbox could only be moved up and down rather than sideways so that the adjustment must have originally been taken up at the engine mountings. Given the amount of wear on the fabric couplings I doubt whether the centering up of the gearbox would have made much difference to the amount of vibration before the couplings were replaced!

Having removed the bolts securing the gearbox, it is then necessary to put two jacks underneath it and it will then be found that it can be moved backwards along the propeller shaft splines about ¾". On my car the universal coupling was fouling the steel sheet housing between the two rear floor pans and I discovered

subsequently that the outer flanges attaching these had become distorted so that the whole floor was lower than it should have been. It is possible to move the gearbox back just enought to get the shafts free from the front of the gearbox and, this having been achieved, it will be a matter of levering off the fabric couplings so they are free, and lifting the shaft out. This sounds fairly easy but if everything is rusted up as it was on my car it is considerably less than easy. Once achieved, the bolts and nuts on the spider should all be cleaned so that the bolts move freely within the spider and the nuts move freely.

Then attention can be given at last to the actual removal of the clutch. The clutch housing and the clutch rear bearing assembly can all be lifted vertically and backwards out of the back of the engine frame; again this sounds simple but requires a lot of manipulating and strength.

After the clutch housing and assembly have been removed comes the inspection thereof. In the case of my car the clutch plates was a nasty black colour and was worn down close to the rivets so it was not surprising that it had started not to slip regularly, but to smell of hot clutch lining. What was surprising was that it was still operating as well as it was, particularly as obviously a great deal of oil had flowed through from the back of the engine. This I attribute, I hope correctly, to the fact that for a long period of time I had overfilled the sump because I only discovered after some years that when there are three gallons in the sump, the oil level indicator (which is the only way in which one can judge the contents of the sump) shows something quite a bit less than full. I suspect therefore that the extra gallon or so I had been putting in the sump had been tempted to find its way out through the back of the engine. I did not renew the spigot bearing at the back of the engine or the oil seal because I needed to get the clutch replacement completed in time to go on a Continental rally, but I realise that I should have done this and I am sure that it would have been possible to find a modern seal to replace it. The existing oil seal had worn a slight groove in the spigot shaft, demonstrating once again that as with men and women soft things wear out hard things. There was also a certain amount of play in the rear bearing but not so much that I thought it was essential to replace it.

The splines were in very good condition and the clutch release mechanism which slides forward also seemed to be in very good condition. Although the forward facing had a little wear on it, I did not think this was a matter of importance and the wear was in fact probably caused by the fact that the large spring to hold the entire mechanism in a free position and the clutch pedal fully back was broken, as I was interested to note it was on three other engines referred to in Brian Morgan's articles on the V-12 restoration some years ago. This spring had been replaced on my engine by a spring forward to one of the sump bolts and I augmented it with another spring backwards from the clutch pedal to the mounting of the brake cylinder.

This last spring could possibly have fouled the rubber gaiter which had been



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fixed to the bottom of the slot in the floor through which the pedals pass. However, on my car those gaiters had turned themselves into a nasty thick layer of black treacly rubber adhering to the bottom part of the pedal levers and I have in fact replaced them with cut bits of inner tube.

I replaced the entire clutch housing as this is readily obtainable from Borg and Beck which is part of Automotive Products, whose clutch technical department were most helpful to me on one or two occasions. The part number for the clutch housing is either 45701/22 which was the number on the one I had bought, or 47084/32. Neither of these numbers correspond with the number stamped on the actual housing which was an overstamping of an earlier number and is 49187. Take your pick, but I am sure that Automotive Products-whose telephone number is 0926 27000—would be happy to suggest where a replacement could be currently obtained. The part number for the actual clutch lining is 47628/121, described as an 11" driven plate assembly.

One of the points I consulted Automotive Products about was the trueing up of the clutch housing. The rest of the mechanism does not require centring but the clutch housing is located on the bolts in the fly wheel and the bolt holes on the housing which I acquired are larger than the bolts. It became a matter of getting these as near centred up visually as we could achieve and we were put off at one time by the fact that the actual pressing of the housing was obviously eccentric in relation to the bolt holes. This is because the pressing is not trued up. The housing itself had however been balanced and had some balance weights attached to one side of it, and I have reassembled the housing without further balancing in the hope that the fly wheel had originally been balanced or would not be much out of balance as it is obviously a turning rather than a casting.

The splines on the new clutch lining were almost too tight to fit on the existing splines and one must hope that they free themselves properly. The operation of replacing the clutch housing and the clutch

assembly in the rear of the engine casing was actually easier than removing it, partly perhaps because one knew how it went in and came out, but the replacement of the fabric couplings which in theory looked simple, turned out to be yet another V-12 style job. The fabric couplings provided by the Lagonda Club spares department turned out to be just the wrong size inasmuch as each hole was about 1/32nd of an inch too far from the centre so that each hole had to be enlarged inwards. At first we attempted to cure this by filing the holes larger, but this turned out to be an impossible way of doing it because, whilst the metal was easily filed down, the rubberised fabric between the metal resisted being filed. It therefore became necessary to drill each of the holes out by exerting sideways pressure on the drill to enlarge the hole inwards. Great care had to be taken to avoid enlarging the hole circumferentially because this would have led to play when the drive was connected. Eventually all twelve holes had been enlarged in this way and everything was ready to be reassembled. Refitting the small drive shaft and assembling the bolts and nuts onto the spiders is a time consuming job, partly because of the difficulty of knowing where the holes are for the split pins to go through the bolts. This problem was even more acute in relation to the clutch housing nuts fixing it to the fly wheel, where it was necessary to remove each nut in order to discover where the hole in the bolt was. In a number of cases it became necessary to file the back of the castellated nut to get it sufficiently tight. It is surprising how little needs to be taken off the back of a nut to enable it to move round one castellation when tight.

The adjustment of the clutch clearance is a simple nut and bolt through a slot device and about 34" at the pedal gives about 1/10" at the clutch face.

The rest of the process of reassembly is the reverse of the "dismantly" process and need not be described in detail. It is important of course to put grease on such parts as the spigot, the ends of the short drive shaft and the gear operating mechanism, because probably there will not be another opportuity to do so again for some time, one hopes.

The firing up of the engine was quite an exciting moment, and one watched with some trepidation to see whether all the various parts seemed to be running true.

Luckily all seemed well and a subsequent road test has shown a sweet operating clutch with perhaps a little less pressure than before but some slight vibration tremors at about 2,500 revs. suggesting something is a bit out of balance somewhere. But it is much better than before!

MICHAEL VALENTINE

My Bugatti Royale . . .

MY BUGATTI ROYALE is an M45 tourer (courtesy of transformation from a saloon by Jack Buckley, with help from Alan Brown and Herb Schofield). As it's the *only* old car I have, and likely to remain that way, and because its existence is a sort of insurance policy for my wife if I suddenly expire, well with my modest income as a teacher it's the equivalent of a Royale! Imagine driving £5 million pounds-worth along the A6 to work, which is what I do—comparatively—many days during the year in the M45.

I know I've done some naughty things to the car—like fitting a modern oil filter; and I've not tracked down any original innards and lenses for the P100s after mine fell apart and broke (can anyone help?) so my MOT-passing trick with the headlamps looks wrong but spares me carrying a "pass lamp" at the bottom of the radiator. Worse still, she's got cycle wings (which could be specified in 1934) and those delightful curving mahogany running boards, and I've dispensed with the Andre Hartfords where they can't really be seen at the back. And I could only afford to handspray her myself, so she's hardly a concours job. When I go to the Vintage Meeting at Oulton Park I park away from the concours d'elegance, though I rejoice to see so many superlatively kept cars there, with no marque achieving so many finely turned-out cars in the Concours event as Lagonda. Congratulations, chaps—your cars look wonderful and I covet each one!

But what else do I find at Oulton Park? Why, others like me who cherish their old car and bring it, hood flapping, tonneau weathered, hup-cap dented, and above all

home-maintained and in daily or weekend use, to a meeting where they can exchange the sight of their individually engineered car for the sight of others' and reminisce of the days when cars really were different from each other and had "character".

When I read the magazine, I wonder whether the Club "norms" have not moved towards Lagonda owners driving their vehicles less and less, keeping them more and more polished, and having a fleet of such cars. Such norms will tend to depress the amount of technical advice to be found in the magazine because for such owners the acquiring of technical advice is not really a problem. They already know to whom to turn, and if it's going to be awkward and take time, well there's always the ** to drive instead. For me and others like me, it's all or nothing.

The articles I remember best from Magazine reading are invariably those which give me technical advice—like making sure I've reassembled the front springs the right way round, what oil pressure to look for hot on over-run, and whether or not to advance the camshafttiming. Last year my hard-won teacher's pay-rise found its way into an engine crank-grinding, overhaul, with submersible arc-welding on one pin, remetalling and new Volvo pistons. At 2,000 revs the pressure shown on the original gauge is now a fraction under 40 lbs psi (hot) and just under 20 on the overrun. Finding the firm to undertake the crankshaft rewelding and the remetalling took time, and I was finally very satisfied with the job they did. Without advice from an article in the Magazine, I would not even have thought of checking the camshaft bearings, yet they had to be done too. Start-up in April was the very first turn of the handle, the engine being too stiff to turn over compression on the starter, and we did 800 miles to Devon and back during the summer holidays, without seeing *any* other Lagondas on the road during those ten days.

I've had my M45 since I was 20, and am now, like most Lagonda drivers, middleaged. (I told part of the car's history in the Winter '83 number of the Club Magazine). I can appreciate therefore that Club membership is growing older on average, but I wonder whether there is a danger of the Club norms also taking increased affluence for granted, and with it "true" membership being for those whose cars are original down to the last detail? Just as the "special" of the 1930s is now a collector's piece, I believe that what people did to their cars in the '60s and '70s will be of interest to car-lovers in the year 2010, for I feel sure that with the help of the Club and more published technical advice, cars such as mine will also survive into the next century-along with those which are presently covering fewer than 500 miles per year. And to judge from this year's Oulton, there are quite a lot of cars which don't usually find their way into the pages



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NO JOB TOO SMALL

Contact: Bill Evans (E.14 2-litre L.C. owner)
INDUSTRIAL PROTOTYPES & DESIGNS LTD.
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Evenings — Weekends 030 679 461 of the Magazine. (For instance there's a lovely unrestored 3-litre tourer belonging to a neighbour of mine that's never been in the Club. He's an engineer and may have been put off by too much spit and polish.

On the road the old car brings smiles to many people's faces, and though she may not be concours, she is a lovely sight, her graceful shape belying her size. But the smiles increasingly belong—like clubmembership—to older people's faces. My own pupils are either too polite or canny to jeer, but the "generation gap" is manifesting itself in care only for Porsches and similar acceptably fast cars of today, and my worry is that as our Club gets older and perhaps more exclusive, we shall tend to overlook sharing widely with the next generation the value we place on our old cars. Maybe there is little we can do about this except recognize the dangers of increasing exclusivity and send up daily thanks for having such dependably helpful Officers as Alan Brown and Arnold Davey, whose cultured Newsletters are a mine of useful information. So if you have an idea for extending membership, and especially younger membership, please don't hold back!

A chief aim of the Club is to honour the marque, and I feel I help in a small way to achieve this each time I set out in my old car and so give casual passers-by (even in Porsches) the thrill of seeing a Lagonda on the road.

A final plea therefore—buy the new book of old photographs now in preparation and persuade your local library to order a copy. Take your car to local shows, even if it's not "concours", and let people see it. Above all, enjoy driving it and communicate this to the new generation. Make sure you can keep it on the road by supporting the Spares Scheme, and if you have any technical advice to record for the new generation of owners that our cars will inevitably have, put it down and send it in to our Editor! In that way we'll ensure that not only is there a Lagonda Club in 2010, but if inflation goes on climbing, they'll all be worth about £5m!

ALAN DEBES

Rescue From The AGM.

OVER THE LAST 30 YEARS, the 16/80 (providing it starts) has been fairly reliable. It has usually got me home. The exceptions are:

1. After a youthful foray to the Streatham Locarno, the fuel pump "ticked" like mad; but delivered no petrol. An air leak I thought and set off home on the all night buses and the last three miles on my "plates" (feet). The next day I went to fix it. Everytime I worked on the car, an April shower fell. Everytime I walked to the nearest garage (if ½ mile is near), the sun shone brightly enabling me to perspire under my mackintosh. I rigged up a fuel line from a gallon can strapped to the bulk head into the fuel pump and drove home. Fortunately once the pump had sucked some petrol from the can, a vacuum was created and the can no longer leaked. I had to stop every four miles and release the vacuum. Otherwise the pump ceased to tick. It rained all the way back to Sidcup. I could see people looking out of doubledecker buses at the drenched "nut" driving a hoodless tourer through the downpour. They were too well-mannered to laugh openly, but a grin and a smile could still be observed. After an hour's journey home, I garaged the car. Immediately the sun came out with such force that steam could be seen rising from the road.

Once home I found that the cause of the trouble was the fuel pump which "ticked" like mad; but failed to lift petrol from the tank. Oh well!

2. Once a half shaft sheared in Shepherd's Bush. I managed to coast to a side road; and cajoled my father into towing me home with his Morris Minor. A deal with Ivan enabled me to obtain a heavy axle which was transported home on a British Rail excursion from Bournemouth, naturally in those days behind a Bulleid Pacific.

3. An excursion into the Maggott's ditch at Silverstone broke the steering box mounting bracket. I left the car there and returned with another one at a cost of 30 bob (they are £50 now). Then I drove

the car overnight to Cumberland, worked there for a week and returned home.

Come the mid 70s, one could no longer set off intrepidly with a tool kit and hope. My father was too old to be imposed upon for a tow. The BSF spanners in the tool kit would cost about £300 to replace. Insurance for the tool kit would be expensive and, these days, one cannot leave a Lagonda parked for long without vandalism or theft. So I joined one of the breakdown organisations. As a civil servant, I currently belong to Britannia. Rescue. A sum of £28 covers all the cars in my family anywhere in Britain. You are not just towed to a garage. You are transported home if you wish. About 10 days after use of their services, a questionnaire arrives asking whether the service was satisfactory and expedient. Perhaps that is why "Which" recently found them to be the most efficient.

Returning to the recent AGM, in the 10 days prior to this the 16/80 became very difficult to start. I put it down to plugs, carburettors etc. I "coaxed" it to Weston after an 18V cold start in the morning. After the AGM it started OK and I set off down the A40 promising myself a pint of "Morrells" Oxford bitter when the pubs opened at six. The 16/80 thought otherwise and, at Stokenchurch, it came to a halt, fortunately near to a phone box. A few minutes inspection indicated that the magneto points were not "making and breaking", so I free-phoned Britannia Rescue. It took 20 mins to make the call: but at least the phone box responded to the operator if not to the normal procedure. Then a transporter arrived after 50 minutes. It was, after all, some miles from a town. The 16/80 was loaded on the transporter, driven 70 miles (cheaper on petrol and tyres, if a trifle slower than direct motoring) and then unloaded into the haven of my garage. I fitted the car with a spare magneto which lasted five miles before it too broke down with exactly the same fault—a broken spring made from a strip of steel. A remarkable coincidence as regards Poissoinian failures are concerned. Bill Evans made new springs and fitted them to the magneto, so the car is mobile again. Hopefully I will not want the services of Britannia Rescue again for some time; but I think I have had my money's worth out of them in 1987.

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

RON GEE

Letters to the Editor.

Dear Sir

Having received several issues of your magazine through the recommendation of a former colleague of mine Mr C. Coleman at Lagonda.

I was employed in the D.O. at the works in Staines from 1925 until 1935 when the company went into liquidation.

I have in my possession a typed copy of guided tour of the works of the Junior Car Club dated 26th Jan 1929 of which Mr Cranmer, the then managing director, was a member. I was on duty as a guide.

If you would like to use it in whole or part, I would *loan* it to you to copy.

A. DORAN

(It is hoped this will appear in a later magazine).

"Amberley" Warmley Bristol

Dear Sir

Having just written to your colleague, Mr Taylor, regarding Jackall seals, I am primed to write regarding the piece in the newsletter apropos Lagonda prices/values.

The author's comments upon the future membership of the club are valid; there are

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many precedents, but the one springing readily to mind is my experience of the Velocette and Vincent Owners' clubs of ten years or so ago.

The Velo people were riding and using their machines regularly, many as daily transport, whilst the Vincent owners in general polished them and kept account of the rapidly ascending value; it was rare to see a Vincent ridden at any speed, and winter events were definitely out. Much fun was poked by Velo owners at 1000cc 50 mph merchants.

However, the inevitable happened; Velo's are now as desirable as Vincents (I wonder what's changed?) and the club has no doubt changed accordingly; I say no doubt, because I am no longer a member of either organisation. The cross-section of members referred to as a strength of the Lagonda Club can be lost in a similar way.

One area of constructive action (we can't after all depress Lagonda prices) would be to cater more for the post-war models by means of technical advice, articles, spares sourcing, etc. I fully accept that the owner of a 2-litre low chassis model might well be less interested in looking at a DB than vice versa, but they are both Lagondas and their owners are equally eligible club members as regards their requirements from, and contributions to, the club.

As one of the main reasons for joining any one-make club has to be spares/technical advice, the first organisation offering these two services will purloin the whole post-war section of your membership. Perhaps you as a club feel that the needs of DB owning members would be better served by say a dedicated section of the Aston Martin Owners; if so, this should be made clear to existing and

potential members.

As a "new boy" in only my second year's membership, I am not trying to rock the boat, only gently push it in the direction of DB models; as the very proud owner of a 3-litre DHC, I am obviously biased.

We do own a pre-war car (not a Lagonda) which we campaign vigorously all year within our other club, the Classic & Historic, having managed to achieve second in class in this year's club championship. It is not unusual to have two Rapiers in a twelve car entry to some of our events, incidentally.

Please forgive me if I speak from a position of ignorance and these facilities are available within the existing framework of the club; if so, you are hiding your light under a veritable cartload of bushels!

I look forward to hearing Members' comments,

D. W. WEEDS

"Clear View" Deal, Kent

Dear Sir

Why do they do it?!

On page 6 of the winter edition of the VSCC Bulletin there appears a picture of a 2-litre on a transporter taken, we are told, to attend a Concours event. To what depths of absurdity can we get?

Fortunately it attracted the deserved adverse comment and hopefully the incorrect rear window precluded it from any qualification. I couldn't find the registration number on our list but that doesn't mean to say the owner is not a member.

On occasions, I have been asked to do a bit of judging and I've come across some strange attitudes amongst owners and all this seems to me to stem from the existence of "Concours" competitions. Isn't it time these were scrubbed altogether?—they breed an unhealthy frame of mind amongst our fraternity and lead to that age-old argument as to what is restoration and what is modern replacement. This does nobody any good and within the ordinary run of country shows there are plenty of alternative

aspects upon which to make awards for turnout without rigid adherence to originality and spit and polish—the services have an excellent word for it?

On my car I have a repaired bonnet plate on one side—preferable I maintain to a modern replacement but a black mark in a Concours event. Further, I know of a 2-litre in our club which is in excellent running order and original in every single respect—except the silencer. In its existing state it wouldn't stand an earthly as Concours but if the owner spent a fortune on tarting it up and thereafter relied upon a transporter it should, in theory, be unbeatable. Pernickety judges merely compound the malady!

Sadly, there is a more sinister aspect of the Concours saga upon which Arnold Davey touched in his last Newsletter—that of the Yuppie interest where our cars tend to attract buyers for entirely the wrong reasons; I am not suggesting that the two cars mentioned come under this heading!

However, there are indications in various fields that cars are being "renovated", I don't say restored, precisely for that market. Fortunately most are non-vintage. I refer, of course, to the disappearance of many delightful saloons and dropheads. I reckon that if one has such a car it will be well worth hanging on to if only for rarity value!

Certainly restoration of a saloon tends to be more expensive than a tourer but we're reaching a stage now where, in a sale of Christie calibre, a well restored Saloon/drophead will hold its own against its sister tarted up as a replica!

JOHN ANDERSON



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