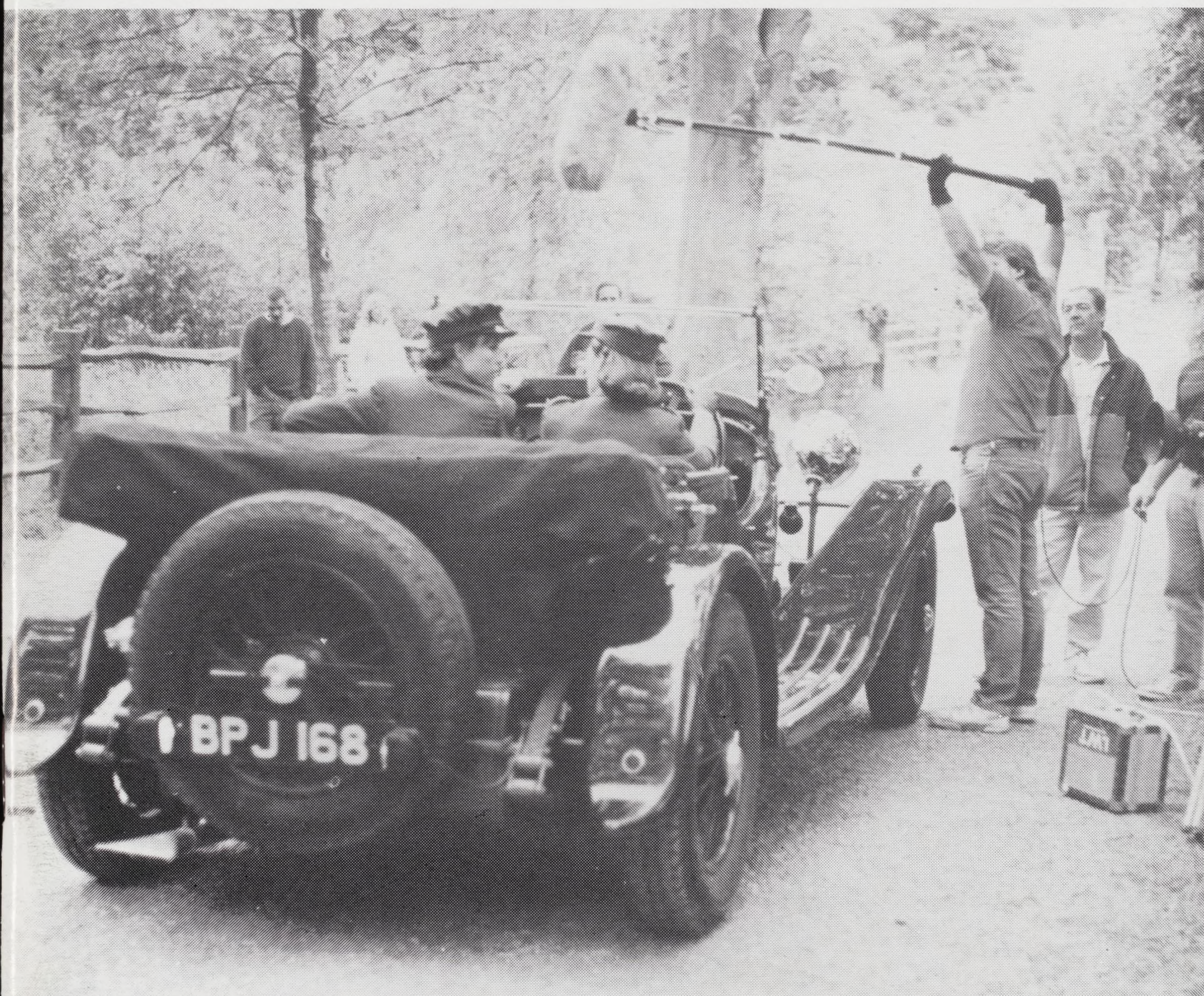




THE MAGAZINE OF THE
LAGONDA CLUB

Number 139

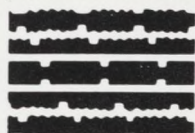
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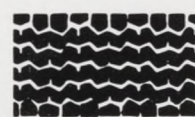
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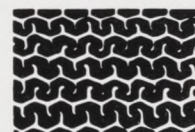
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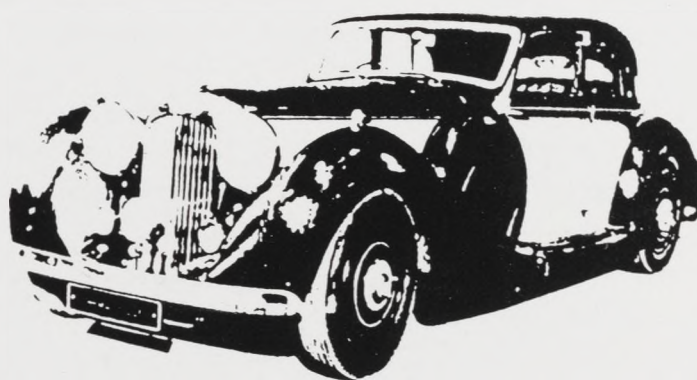
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FRONT COVER

*Andrew Gregg's M45. Recording
soundtrack after filming for the TV series
"Wish Me Luck".*

Photo: Andrew Gregg.



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the views of the Committee nor of the
Editor, and expressed opinions are
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advice offered.

From the Driving Seat

WITH THIS, my fourth issue of 'The Lagonda' we are now roughly back to schedule with production and my New Year resolution is to keep things that way! There is a small stockpile of 'historic' material from a wide variety of sources, which most of you will not have seen before and an even smaller stock of photographs, taken at recent events, but articles from you, our members will always be welcome.

The suggestion in the last magazine that we should make more of the involvement of Invicta and Crossley owners in our activities was, coincidentally, accompanied by a contemporary road test of the 4½-litre Invicta. I visited the library at the National Motor Museum recently to research the background of a different car altogether and found a road test of the 15.8 h.p. Crossley and this is reproduced elsewhere in this issue. I have some more contemporary material on the Crossley for future magazines, so you can expect a regular diet of Mancuniana for a year or so.

I have also managed to acquire some new line drawings to use in the magazine, cynics will realise that these are very useful space fillers when articles don't quite fill the space available, but they do help break up solid blocks of print and add a little variety to the pages, that's my excuse anyway!

The pre-Christmas celebrations within the Club, held in London and Beverley are also reported in the magazine and both events gave me a splendid opportunity to meet old and new friends. The Hull and East Riding Members' dinner was pure nostalgia for Chris and myself. We joined the Lagonda Club when we lived in Yorkshire way back in 1959 and were

welcomed into the fold, gently instructed on all matters of Lagonda lore and encouraged to take part in as many events as possible. We still treasure our one and only Club award, which we won on a treasure hunt and will always value the friendship of the Club members we met all those years ago. The only problem is that returning reminds us only too well how time flies, we first went to Yorkshire when we had been married for a year, this visit we were showing off pictures of our grandson!

K.P.P.



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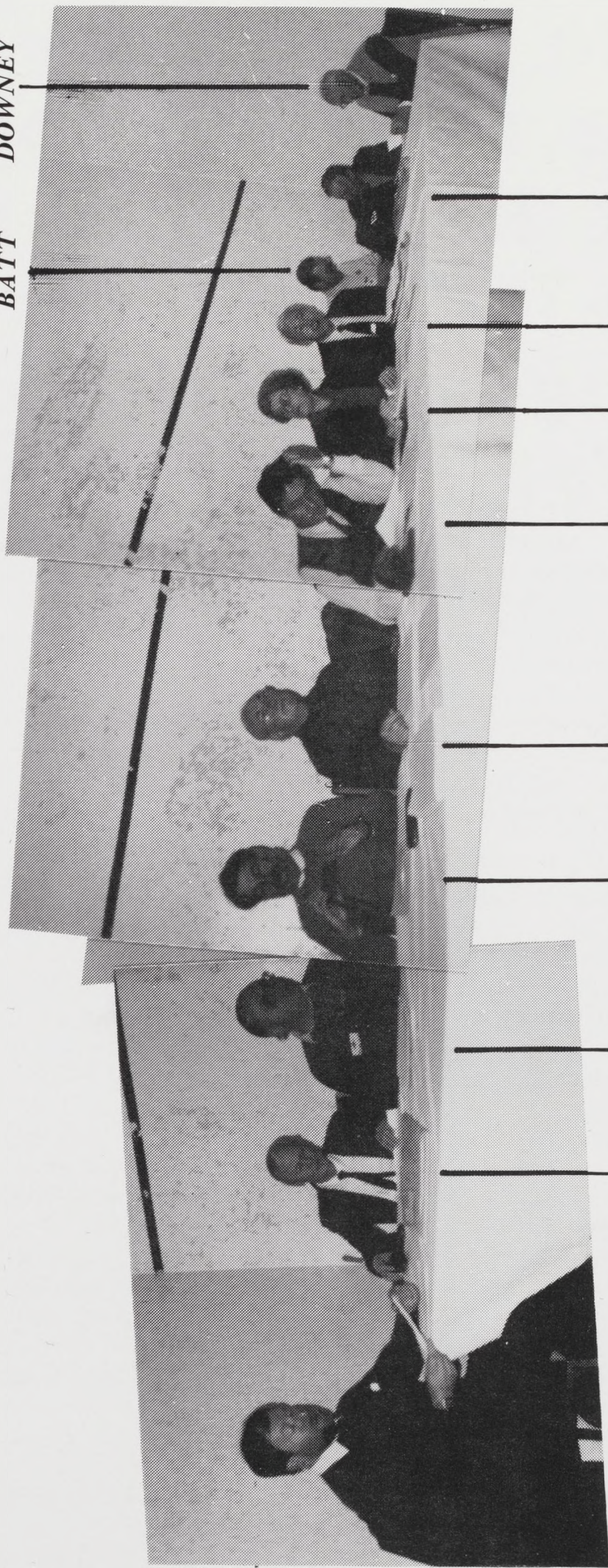
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No this is not the Last Supper. It is your committee in typical disarray at the "Squash Court AGM" of 1988. Left to Right: Technical, Rendall; Treasurer, Elliott; Subs, Hyett; Editor, Painter; President, Crocker; Chair, Ody; Temp Sec, Davey; Registrar, Davey; Events, Batt; Lepus, Hare; Southern, Downey.

The Esso Bristol to Weymouth Vintage Vehicle Run, 14th June 1987—The Esso Bristol to Bournemouth Vintage Vehicle Run 1988

I WAS going to suggest that it was for the reason of economy and printing space that both these events are referred to in the same article. Sadly, it is just pure idleness!

Both events were organised by the Yeovil Car Club under the guidance of the energetic and efficient Keith McGee. It was a glorious sunny day and out of 350 entries, we had eight Lagondas, including:

Ian Creer's 1928 2-litre Tourer

Bob Jenkin's 1930 2-litre Tourer

Brian Reid-Rutherford's 1930 2-litre Tourer

Dudley Palmer's 1930 2-litre Tourer

Tony Breakspeare's 1932 2-litre Continental

Ian Greene's 1932 16/80 Tourer

My own 1934 M45 Tourer, and Gwyn Stephens' 1935 M45 Tourer.

A number of the Lagonda entries assembled before the start for a "team photograph". Gwyn, who had left South Wales at 6.30 was wringing his hands with despair at the performance of his fellow countrymen in the Rugby International against Australia. All the Lagonda entries reported an enjoyable and trouble-free run down to Weymouth which took us from Ashton Court over the splendid Clifton Suspension Bridge, out of Bristol and on to the first check-point at the Market Square at Wells. From Wells we followed the A39 to Glastonbury and then on to Ilchester (both towns well worth a stop

and an inspection) before checking in to the second checkpoint at Yeovil.

From Yeovil via Charminster, we went to the third checkpoint at Dorchester before finally arriving at sunny Weymouth. Bob Jenkins and a number of others stopped for a picnic on the way in a pub (Bob's Labrador Jason also tried to have a picnic with the publican's pet rabbit!). Most of us, including Gwyn Stephens, headed for home after the prize-giving, which just goes to show what splendid and useable motor cars Lagondas are.

The 1988 event, which has already been reported by Neville Maine-Tucker was an even larger and better event than 1987. This year's event was preceded by an entertaining pre-Rally dinner at the Redwood Lodge Hotel, which included a speech by Alec Rivers-Fletcher, who was one of this year's entrants with his Alvis Speed 20.

There was a large contingent of Dutch enthusiasts and the evening was rounded off with a splendid firework display.

This year, because there were over 400 entrants, it had been decided to move the finish from Weymouth to Bournemouth.

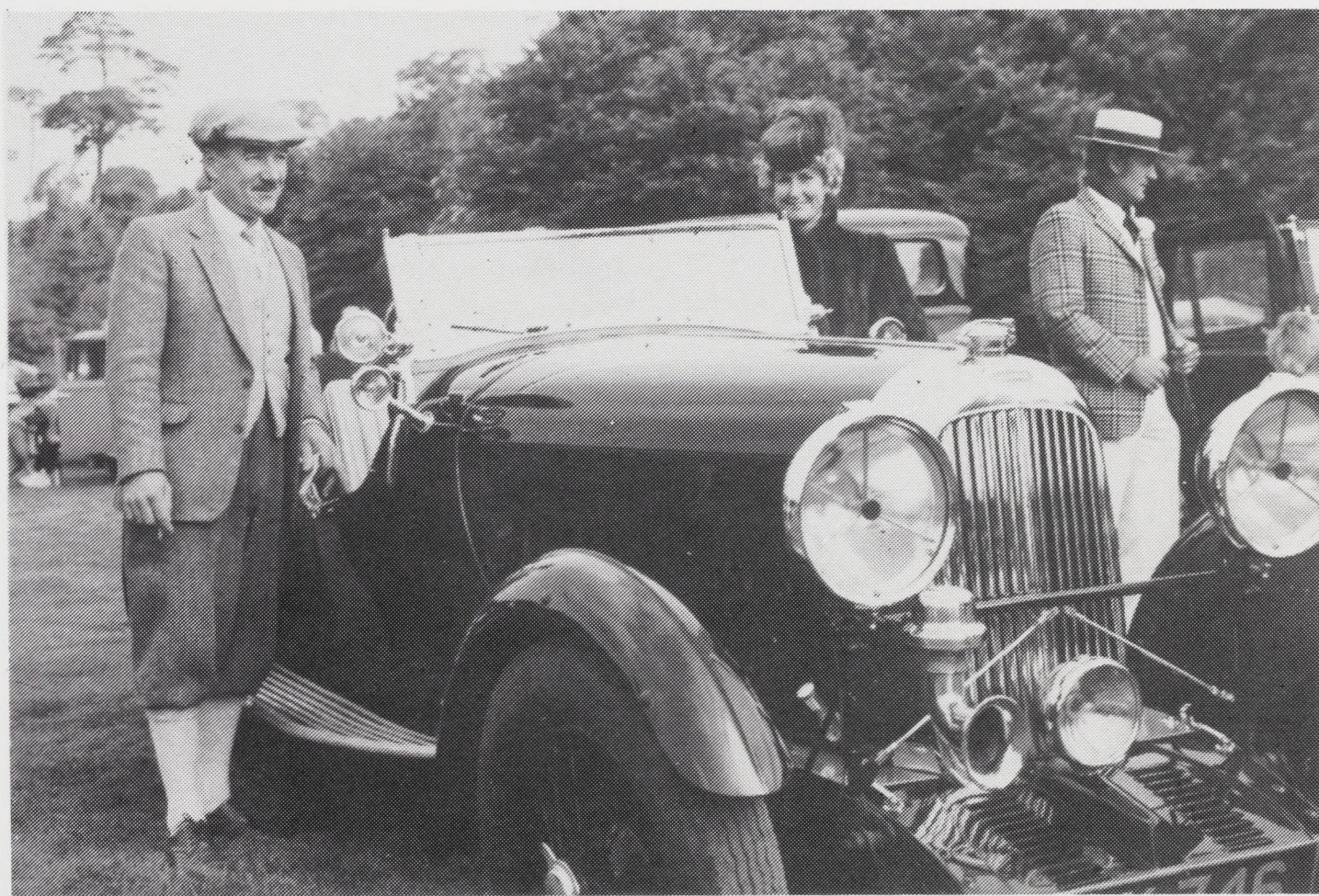
The Lagonda contingent consisted of 15 cars, listed below:

1927 14/16 Tourer. Mr and Mrs C. Hancock (Penarth)

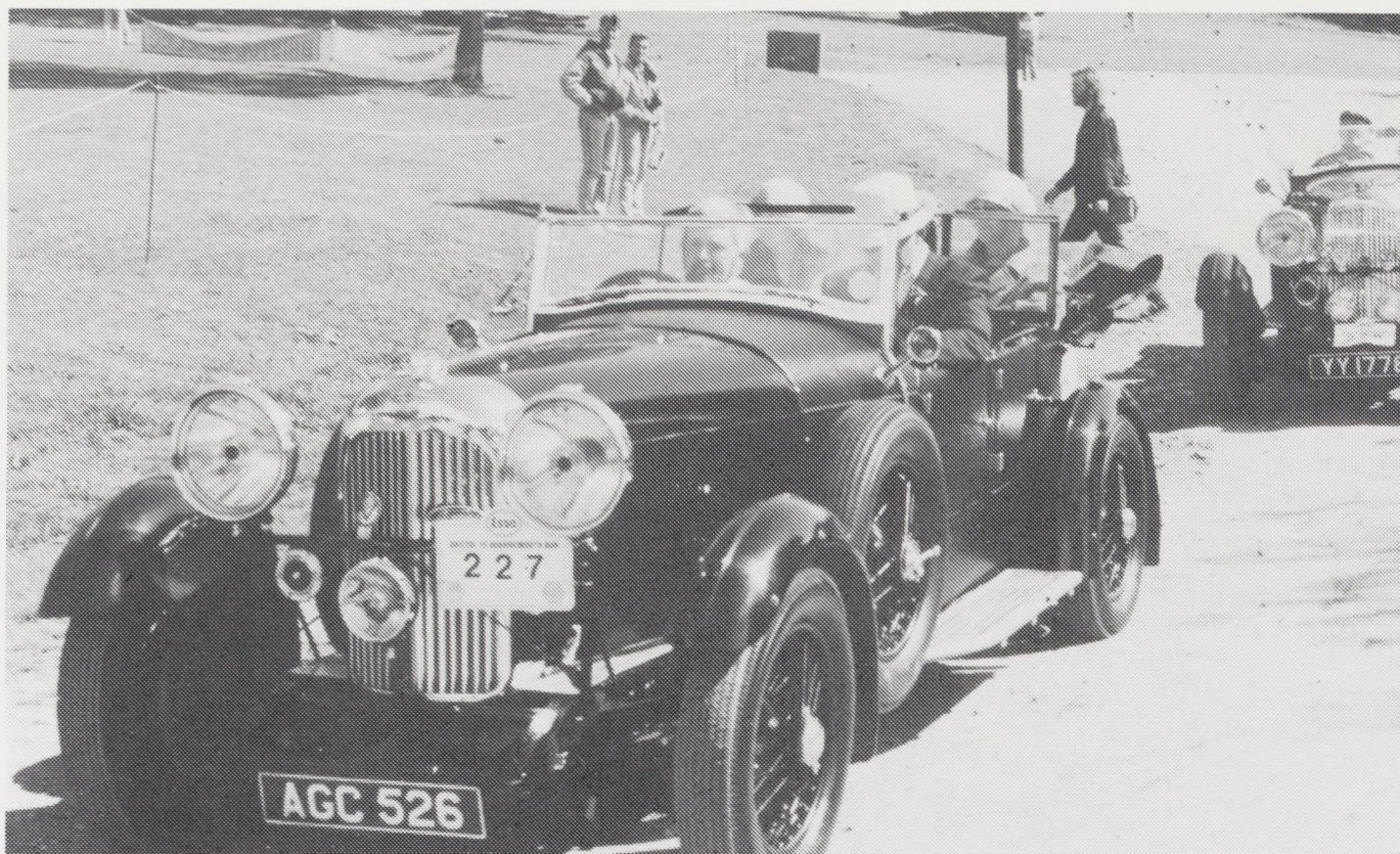
1928 2-litre Tourer. Ian Creer and Len



Lagonda line up before the off. L to R. Dudley Palmer 2-litre, Andrew Gregg M45, Gwyn Stephens M45, Ian Creer 2-litre, Ian Greene 16/80



Tony Breakspeare—1932 2-litre Continental.



Bristol—Bournemouth 1988 Ian Greene's 1932 16/80 leads off from Ian Gostlings 1932 2-litre Continental.

Read (Bristol)

1928 2-litre Tourer. Peter Jones & Barrie Kerley (Westbury)

1928 2-litre Tourer. David Edwards and Nick Ebdon (Cheltenham)

1931 2-litre Tourer. Dudley Palmer (Weymouth)

1931 T3 2-litre Tourer. Michael Wheeler (Windlesham)

1931 2-litre S/C Tourer. Bob Barnes and Richard Dresner (Tonbridge)

1931 2-litre S/C Tourer. Matthew Collings and Neville Maine-Tucker (London)

1932 16/80 Tourer. Ian Greene (Shepton Mallet)

1932 2-litre Continental. Ian and Connie Gostling (Penarth)

1932 2-litre Continental. Tony Breakspeare (Honiton)

1933 3-litre Tourer. Henrik Baungaard (Dorchester)

1933 M45 Tourer. Andrew and Mary Gregg (Bristol)

1934 M45 Tourer. Athos and Alexandra Ellades (London N10)

1935 M45 Tourer. Gwyn Stephens and Kelvin Price (Neath, West Glam.)

Gwyn, as last year, was once again bemoaning the awful performance by the

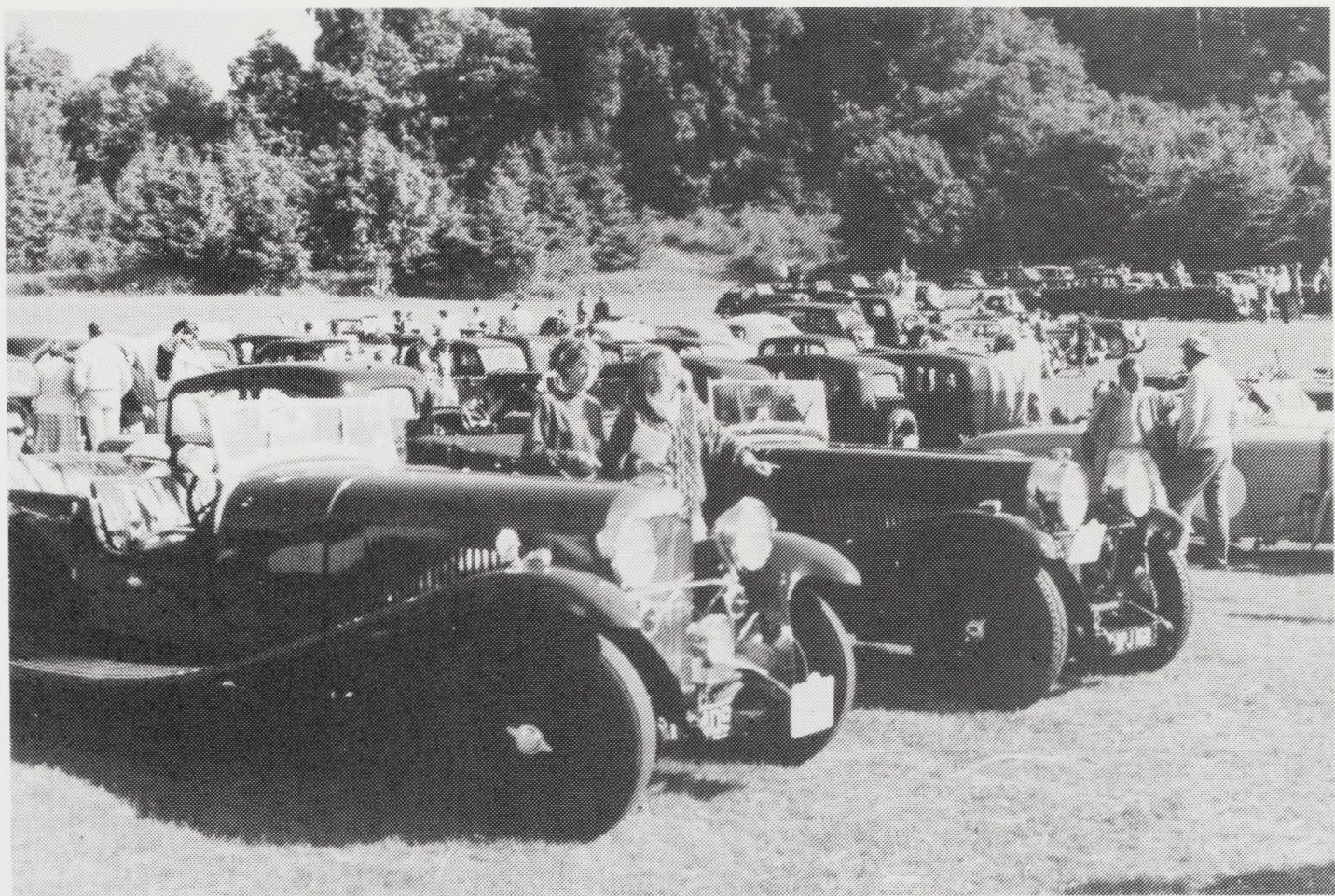
Welsh rugby team! The route again took us from Ashton Court as last year, via Wells to Yeovil. From Yeovil, however, we headed for Sherborne with its beautiful Abbey and thence to Blandford Forum for the penultimate checkpoint. From Blandford the route took us to Wimborne Minster and then via the magnificent two-mile avenue of beech trees past the ancient hill fortress of Badbury Rings, before finally arriving in Bournemouth.

The arrival in Bournemouth was somewhat chaotic due to roadworks and lack of signposts, but I think everyone arrived safely.

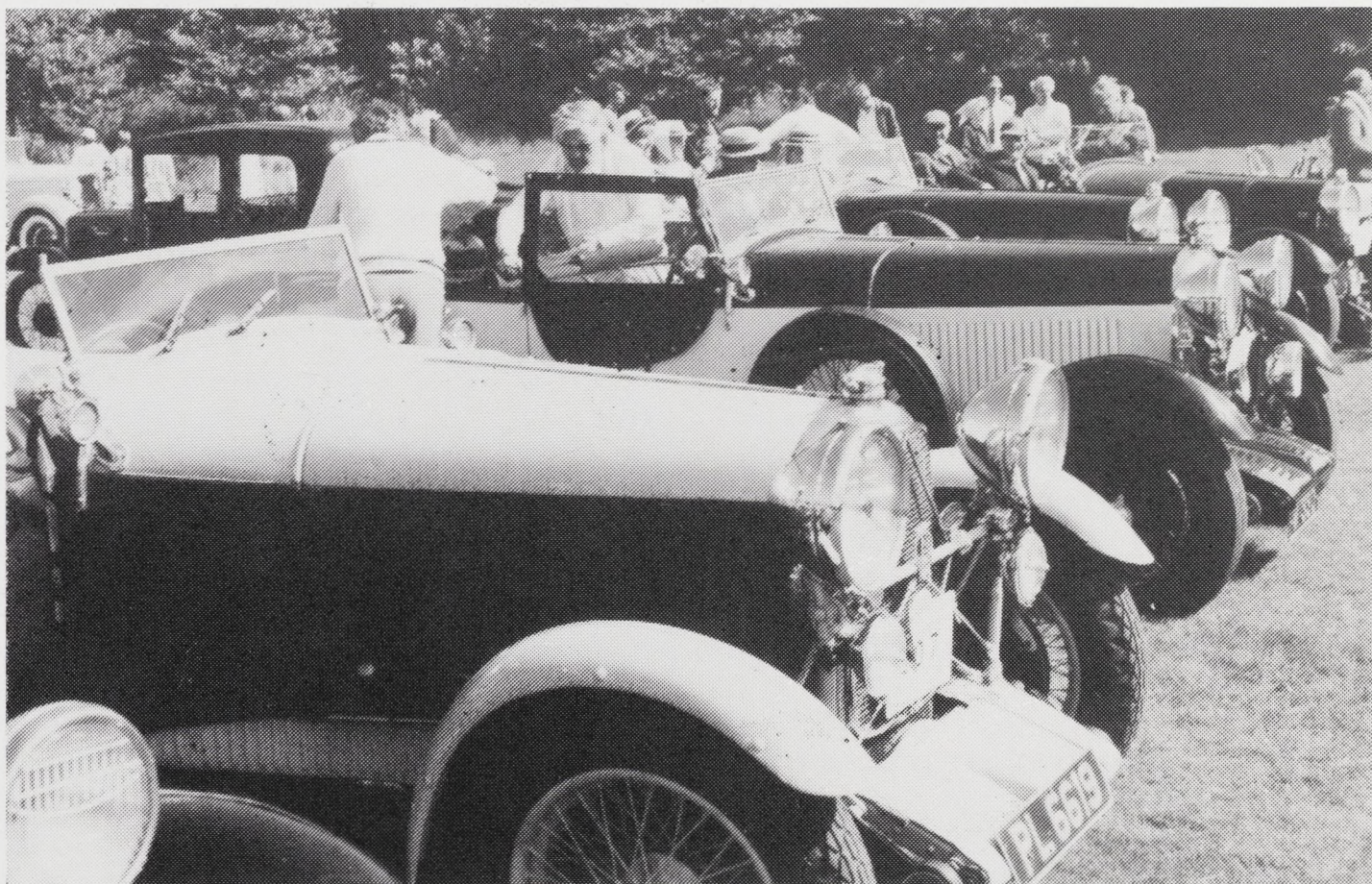
The star attraction of this year's event was the deal that Keith McGee had been able to arrange with a couple of hotels, which included a very reasonably priced and splendid bed and breakfast accommodation. (Mary, my wife, and I ended up in the bridal suite of the Royal Norfolk Hotel which included a jacuzzi and bed the size of a football pitch!) As well as safe garaging for the Lagonda.

Both events were thoroughly well organised and great fun. I commend next year's event to all Lagonda owners!

ANDREW GREGG



Foreground—Henrik Baungaard's 1933 3-litre, Middle—Andrew and Mary Gregg's M45 Tourer, Background—Alec Rivers-Fletcher's Alvis Speed 20



Dudley Palmer's 2-litre, Michael Wheeler's 2-litre, Bob Barnes 2-litre, Neville Maine Tucker's 2-litre



Jottings From The Chair

THE MAJOR events in the Chairhome since the AGM have been a weekend with your Events Secretary, and the Annual Film-show, while the closing in of daylight at the tail end of the year has put a stop to the more enjoyable side of working on cars. It has always seemed a paradox to me that even with warm workshop facilities it is harder to work on cars in the winter, when they are less used, than in the summer, when there is plenty of reason to be out driving them. Should be the other way round.

The run over to the Batts household in Bedfordshire was in superb crisp autumn sunlight, and we chose to drive the 3-litre saloon across the grain of the main roads, through Amersham, Chesham, Berkhamstead, Dunstable and Ampthill, taking in the Chiltern Hills in a blaze of autumn colour, especially around Berkhamstead Common and Ashridge Park. It was one of those unbeatable vintage runs you never forget.

At John and Suzie's home in Maulden we were very comfortably looked after, and had a splendid vintage morning on the Sunday, exploring the similarities between his blown 2-litre car and our 3-litre saloon, on the same basic chassis, both 1931. It always seems normal to adjust the clutch stop on occasions like that, so we did this, decided that we had made a major improvement, and then went off at lunchtime in his 2-litre, five up, for another crisp sunny tour around the best pubs in that part of Bedfordshire.

The run home to Kingston was in darkness on an increasingly cold night and we were thankful for the luxury of a vintage saloon.

The car has been running far more smoothly since Alan Rendall diagnosed a couple of weeks earlier that the gearbox and engine were not in line: carelessly I had put my spare engine in "temporarily" a long time back, without checking that the centres were the same as previously. Having now identified a difference of almost a quarter of an inch, and realised that it was impossible to lower the gearbox without modifying the mounting cups, I could only raise the engine itself. With heroic patience and some good luck I was able to jack up the whole engine assembly, complete with radiator attached, sufficiently to slip additional pads beneath the engine mounts. The original bolts were then too short, but we have a wonderful place called Jones Industrial Fasteners in Surbiton who quickly fixed me up with some longer replacements.

Which leaves a question: do 75 mm engines on the 3-litre have a different mounting height than the 72 mm version?

The Film Show was held this year at Thames Rowing Club, or rather at their fine Edwardian clubhouse in Putney, and the panelled bar and dining room were so suitable that the films themselves were really rather superfluous. In the old days, the Film Show was when the footage taken of Club events during the year was shown just before Christmas, with beer and

sandwiches. Things have changed now, we have no Club films to show, and people really come for the company and a much more lavish meal. If we have access to Thames next year, I think we might do better to stick to the social side of the occasion, enjoy the surroundings, and delete the films.

This year we had "Scene One, Take Nun", a B Movie from the 1960's with Suzannah York driving Alan Rendall's father Ken's 2-litre around London in a highly improbable plot (a bank robber jumps in to make his getaway at one point!); plus Jaques Tati's "Traffic", which whilst interesting proved that 1 1/2 hours is too long to keep people from where they really wanted to be, talking to their friends. Still, the arrangements were excellent, by Alan with an outstanding dinner organised by Rosemary Rendall and her lovely waitress servers.

Phil Ridout brought the latest find on the documentary front: a splendid full plate photographic record of the Lagonda factories at Staines, Coventry and Southampton during the war, with a superb cover shot from the base of the Staines factory chimney with LAGONDA reading down in perspective towards the screen.

Disappointingly, only two Lagondas attended, out of the 60 or so members there: OG 9999, our 3-litre saloon, and David Biggins 2-litre tour KY 514, braving the rain with four up and no charging circuit for the long run back to Dorking in the dark. Considering the weather the lack of cars was understandable I suppose, but we had a wonderful spot to park them, under the clubhouse balcony overlooking the river.

I don't know if the experience that night was too much for David, but I now note in the Newsletter ads that his car is for sale.

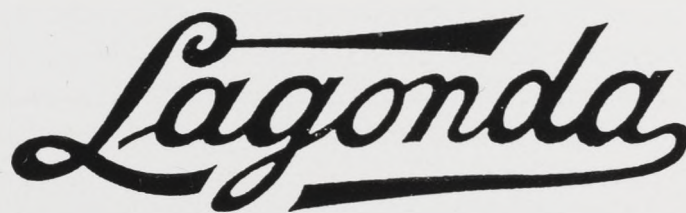
Richard and Pat Sage from Dorset stayed overnight with us so that they could go to the Film Show, and on the Sunday morning we enjoyed a brisk run out to a local pub in company with the Rendall 2-litre, with Richard sharing rides in that and in our little Amilcar, which provided some light relief. Unfortunately it

subsequently encountered a Cortina at too close quarters on Christmas morning, and is now in the sick bay.

One area where I think our Club is behind some of the others is in failing to involve members' sons and daughters more. This sense of family continuity is deliberately promoted in the Bentley and Vintage Clubs, and makes for a much healthier mix of generations as well as encouraging succession in owning and driving the cars. The BDC have a special table at their Dinner Dance for younger family members, who get to know each other independently as the years pass. I believe we should try this approach, and make positive efforts to involve whole families in events like the Northern Dinner and the London Film Show, quite apart from treasure hunts and rallies.

The Club Christmas Card operation went very smoothly this year, thanks to the efficiency of Gill and our young daughter Nancy in sending them out during my absence abroad. The well known Lagonda Club proclivity to Sod's Law worked a treat and we sold more of the cards this Christmas than we did in 1987, when the design was first used. Nevertheless, they were good value and all 3,000 were sold out by mid December. For 1989 we shall have another attractive colour design of Jacques de Farcy's red M45 in the Continental snow. I am taking steps to avoid last minute panic by commissioning the printing of the cards now.

JEFF ODY





The film star BPJ 168.

Andrew Gregg is lying on the running board on the other side of the car giving driving instruction!!

Turning The Lady Into A Film Star

ABOUT TWO years ago I watched with interest as the television series "The Diary of Anne Frank" was made using Welsh Back in the old and now rejuvenated area of Bristol Docks as the film set.

A number of period vehicles were being used as props, though most of them were left hand drive cars as the scene that was being filmed was supposed to be Amsterdam.

Out of idle curiosity I enquired about the cars and told the man in charge of them that if he ever wanted a decent car for his film work he should give me a ring. He

asked what I meant by a decent car, to which I replied "A Lagonda of course", and promptly produced a photograph of BPJ 168.

I thought nothing more of this chance meeting until, to my great surprise, at the end of July this year I received a call from a man who asked me if I still owned my Lagonda and if it was still painted red!

I said I did to which he replied, "Can you please bring it to Rotherfield Hall, Crowborough, next week for filming?" A quick look at my diary revealed that it could be arranged, subject to my being able

to hire a trailer.

A call to the Honeyfield Trailer Centre, who promised me their latest two-wheeled dumpy trailer for £70 resolved that situation, and so, having loaded the car up the evening before, we set off for Crowborough on the 1st of August.

The trailer turned out to be a real pig and even though we were using my Mercedes Estate as the tow car, anything over 45 miles an hour made the whole rig totally uncontrollable. Five exhausting hours later we arrived at the splendid, but sadly dilapidated, stately home known as Heathfield Hall, where we unloaded and waited for some action.

The time spent sitting around on film sets is quite incredible and is something to be believed! We sat for hours and hours waiting for the Director or the Producer or another scene to be finished. The facilities provided by the film company were quite brilliant, with wonderful catering, which provided a full blown breakfast, lunch and, if necessary, supper together with non-stop coffee and tea all day.

Eventually, I was introduced to the actress who was to drive BPJ 168. She took one look at it and said "My God, I've only ever driven an automatic car in my life."

The thought of having to cope with a central accelerator and a right hand gear change threw her into panic!

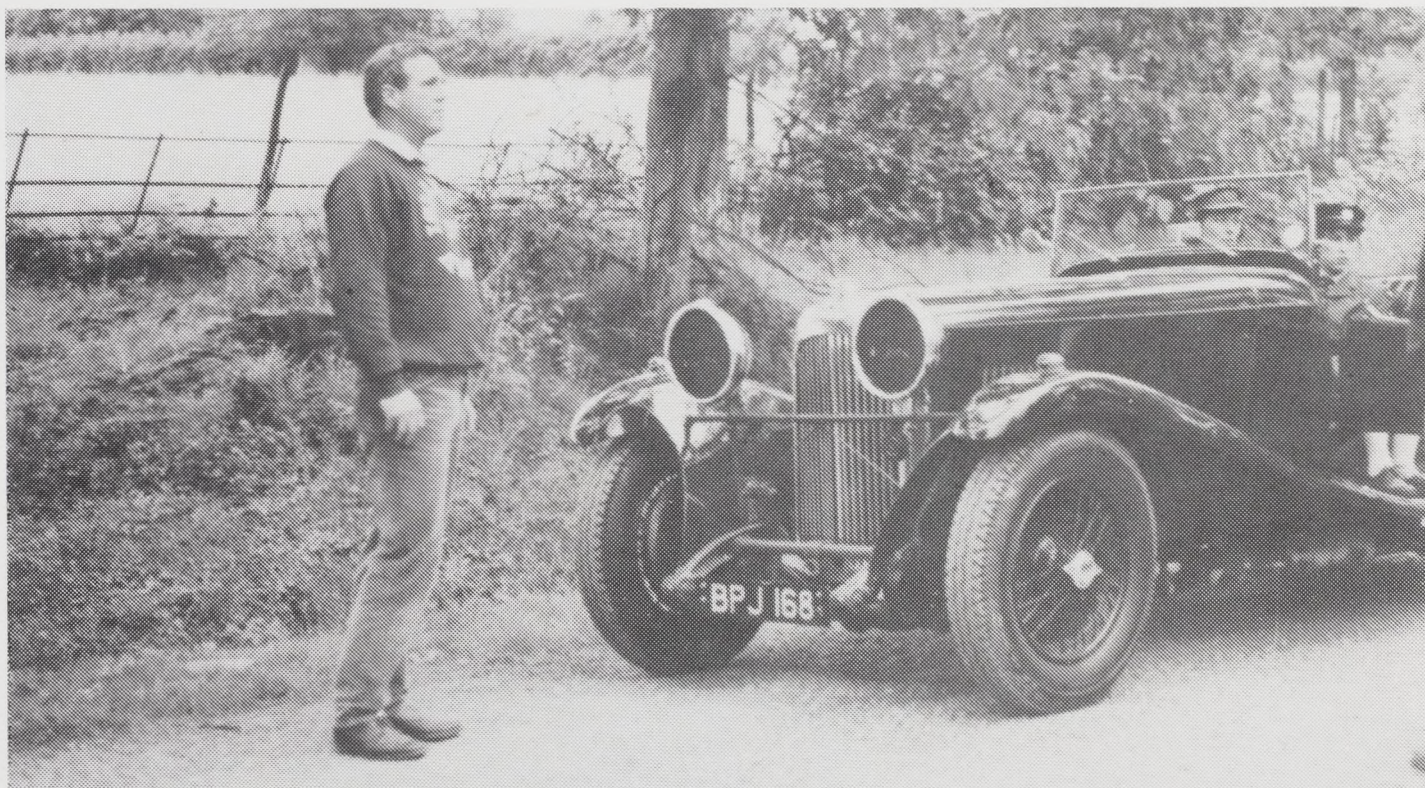
Eventually, and after she'd been suitably packed with cushions, she was persuaded to sit behind the wheel and a compromise scheme to get her to drive the car was arrived at. The hand throttle was set so that she wouldn't have to use the accelerator and the principle of clutch operation was explained to her. With my lying on the running board, out of sight of the camera, and hanging on for dear life, we set off down the pot-holed drive of this stately home towards the cameras.

Having gone past the cameras, I yelled to her to put her foot on the clutch again and grab the handbrake which brought us swiftly to a halt.

Four or five takes later and having been called "Lovie" by the Producer (male) more times than I have ever been so affectionately addressed before, the scene was shot.

After an exhausting but exciting day we loaded the car and trailed it back to Bristol. Another five hour drive.

Three weeks later we were wanted again but this time the location was Blackheath in South London. In view of the problems with the trailer, the car was brought up to



Andrew Gregg and BPJ 168 plus the director "can we do it one more time please Lovie!"

the outskirts of London on an A bar which I had fabricated some years ago, before driving it to the location. The filming, again, followed much the same pattern as last time with, again, endless waiting around. By the end of the day the children, who had come with us, were tired and so we agreed that my wife would go back in the Mercedes and I would follow at a more leisurely pace with our film star, still resplendent with headlights blacked out as if for the blitz.

It was thus that BPJ 168 became a film star.

However, the story does not end quite there because the Bristol Old Vic Theatre Company recently put on a performance of a play called "A Town in the West Country". Melvyn Bragg wanted to do an item on this production for The South Bank Show. BPJ 168 was again produced, complete with blacked out headlights to act as a backdrop for the TV personality whilst he described the play. He arrived one drizzly afternoon in a terrible rush,

gave our new star a cursory glance, borrowed my comb to comb his hair, did his piece and rushed off to London.

What does the future hold for BPJ 168—she is now having her gearbox rebuilt!

ANDREW GREGG

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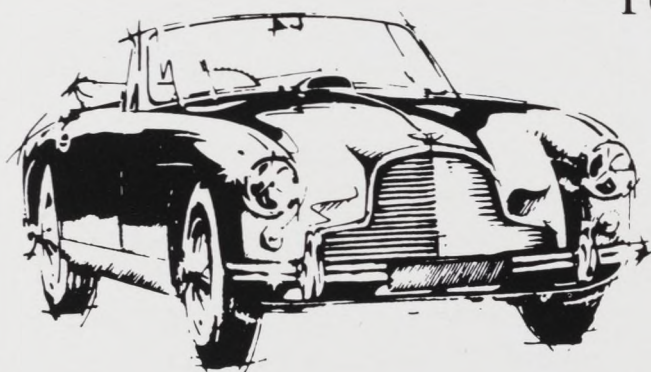
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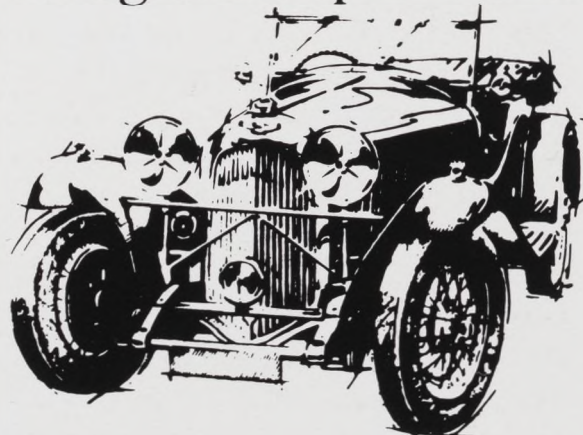


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The 22nd Club de l'Auto Paris Deauville Rallye, 7th to 10th October, 1988

AS MY V12 Lagonda is partly dismantled for some attention by Peter Whenman to its internal combustion arrangements, we decided to take my Invicta on this rally this year. It is a 1931 S-type—the low chassis 4½-litre Meadows engined model, with a one off four seater drophead coupé body by Corsica, green, low, fast, mean and occasionally breathing fire, hence its name—“Salamander”.

Off we set for Paris on a Wednesday via Folkestone and Boulogne. We proceeded on our noisy way to Paris at around 60 m.p.h. and eventually ventured on to the Périphérique ring road. By this time it was dark, raining hard and the Paris rush hour, with traffic nose to tail in all five lanes. We were in the middle lane, when Salamander started misfiring seriously, amply justifying the mean bit in her character. I just managed to keep her going however, and got to our hotel, but I spent the next day trying to find the cause in the hotel garage instead of sharing with Shirley (my wife and brilliant map reader through Paris) the erotic delights of the Musée d'Orsay.

Friday dawned sunny but with threatening distant clouds. We duly paraded at the Trocadero, as requested by those talented organisers the Club de l'Auto. We collected two smart practical “blousons”—anoraks to you—our rally plate and a useful collapsing hold-all with our instructions kit and a Calvados survival kit in it.

Next came a delicious breakfast. From here on until Monday the Club had arranged all meals and inexhaustible supplies of wine (except at the Casino in Deauville who had obviously heard of the very low alcoholic m.p.g. of the participants) and most of the meals were

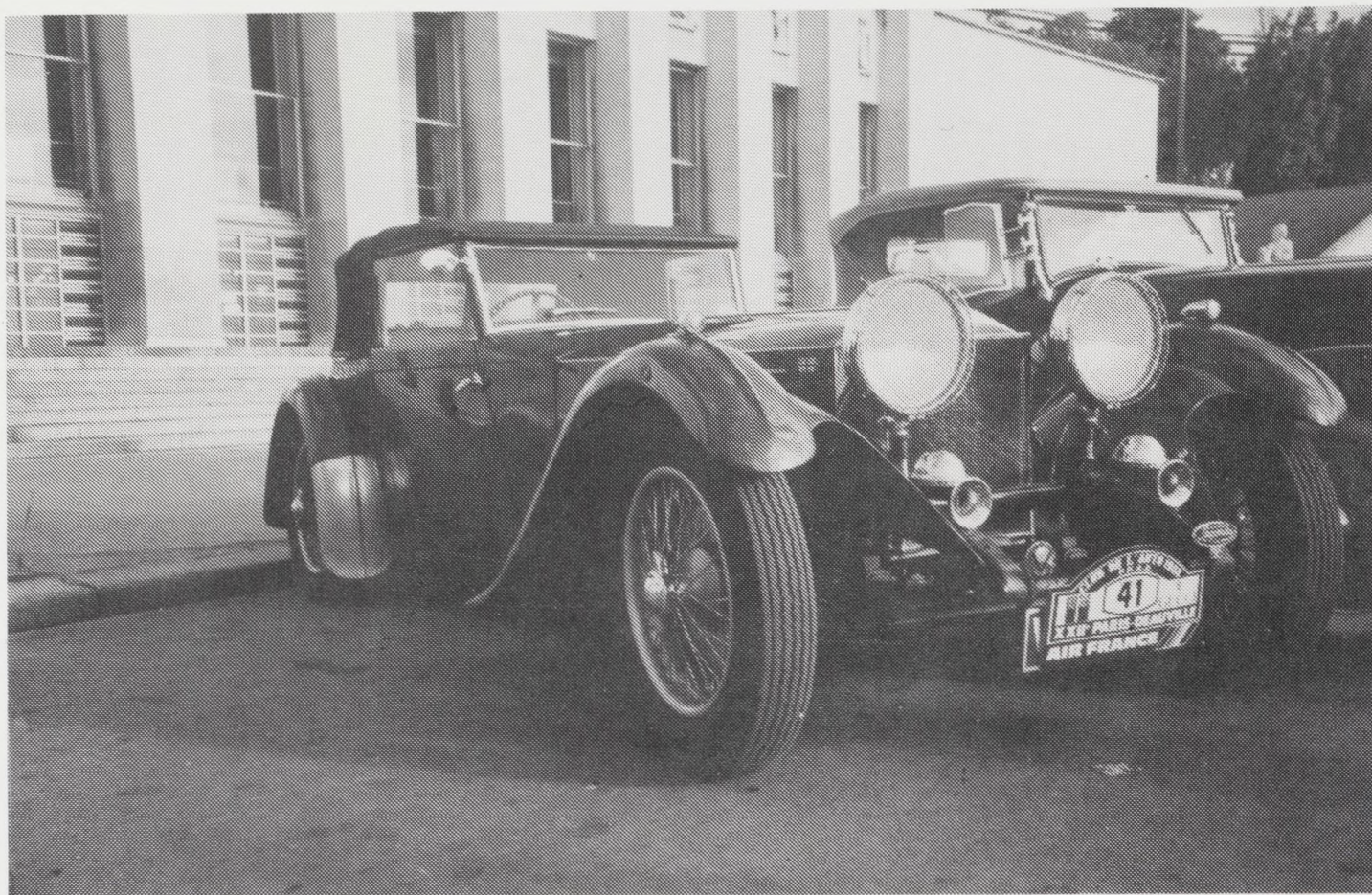
of very high quality.

Ranged around the Trocadero before the start was a remarkable assembly of about a hundred cars ranging from a 1909 Cadillac to a 1939 Rolls Bentley tourer. My personal favourites were Raymond Truelove's 1913 Panhard and Levassor Torpedo, Barry Bowyer's bog standard 1923 3-litre Bentley, a gigantic Renault tourer called Salmanazar, the works blower 4½-litre Bentley conducted by George Daniels, and Geoffrey St. John's Type 55 Bugatti, plus a 1938 Delahaye drophead by Figoni which demonstrated that the dollar grin was a pre-war French invention. If that is not a mouth watering sample, then you shouldn't be reading this!

Unfortunately only one Lagonda attended, a standard Lagonda bodied LG45 drophead coupé in navy blue belonging to Philippe Desagneaux but driven by his son as he was giving a first outing to a 1939 Délage so beautifully and sensitively restored that it looked like a new car.

At 9 am the great fountains of the Trocadero, including giant water cannons, erupted and the mounted band of the Republican Guard walked in perfect formation into the square, fanfaring away like anything as they came seemingly from between the supporting arches of the Eiffel Tower. Perfectly drilled, very smart indeed, with chequered flags impressed in our honour(?) on the horses' rear haunches.

About 9.30 am and in number order, earliest cars first, we left in sunshine. Once clear of the suburbs the faster cars opened up and we sped along pretty roads by the Seine. For some way the blower Bentley followed me at my 60 to 70 m.p.h., but finally it blasted past enveloping us in a fog



Salamander before the start at the Trocadero.

Photo: Michael Valentine.

of blue exhaust smoke, making any re-challenge impracticable because of poor visibility. Perhaps this was the secret of their success at Brooklands in those distant days.

Mid-morning the wind blew up and brought with it pelting rain. Pit-stop for lightning hood erection, though it was a thoroughly dampening and detumescent process. This was Friday morning and the rain continued to pour down from leaden skies until the end of the rally on Monday, when it brightened!

Delicious lunch at the Chateau de Melleville, fortified drive to Deauville with everyone getting lost and vintage cars observable across a French plain going at speed down farm lanes in every direction. Arrival at Deauville early evening, rooms of "grand confort" at the Normandie, good dinner, bed. I asked one of the escorting gendarmes if he had had trouble with the wind on his motorbike after lunch. He said no, only with the wine (*pas le reut, mais le vin*).

Saturday dawned wet. Cars, covered in mud from the journey and sand from the Deauville beach, deposited by the nocturnal typhoon, could be washed with the rain landing on them. The planned picnic lunch took place indoors. Then we had a regularity test—three times at the same speed round a closed off block on the front. Four cars started at a time and all went very sedately until some of the English sports cars present (about one third of the entrants were English, just not Lagondas) decided to have a go, with quite a lot of rolling about and noise. I concluded that the only way I could achieve the desired regularity was to go as fast as possible on the basis that I would then clock up the same time on each lap. Unfortunately I got a bit quicker on the last lap according to my brave companion and time keeper Johnny Drawbell. My lap speed, about which I was quite pleased, was immediately beaten by about five seconds (in around a minute) by Anthony Holt's 1938 sports Alvis special, his



The spirit of Invicta defying the rain.

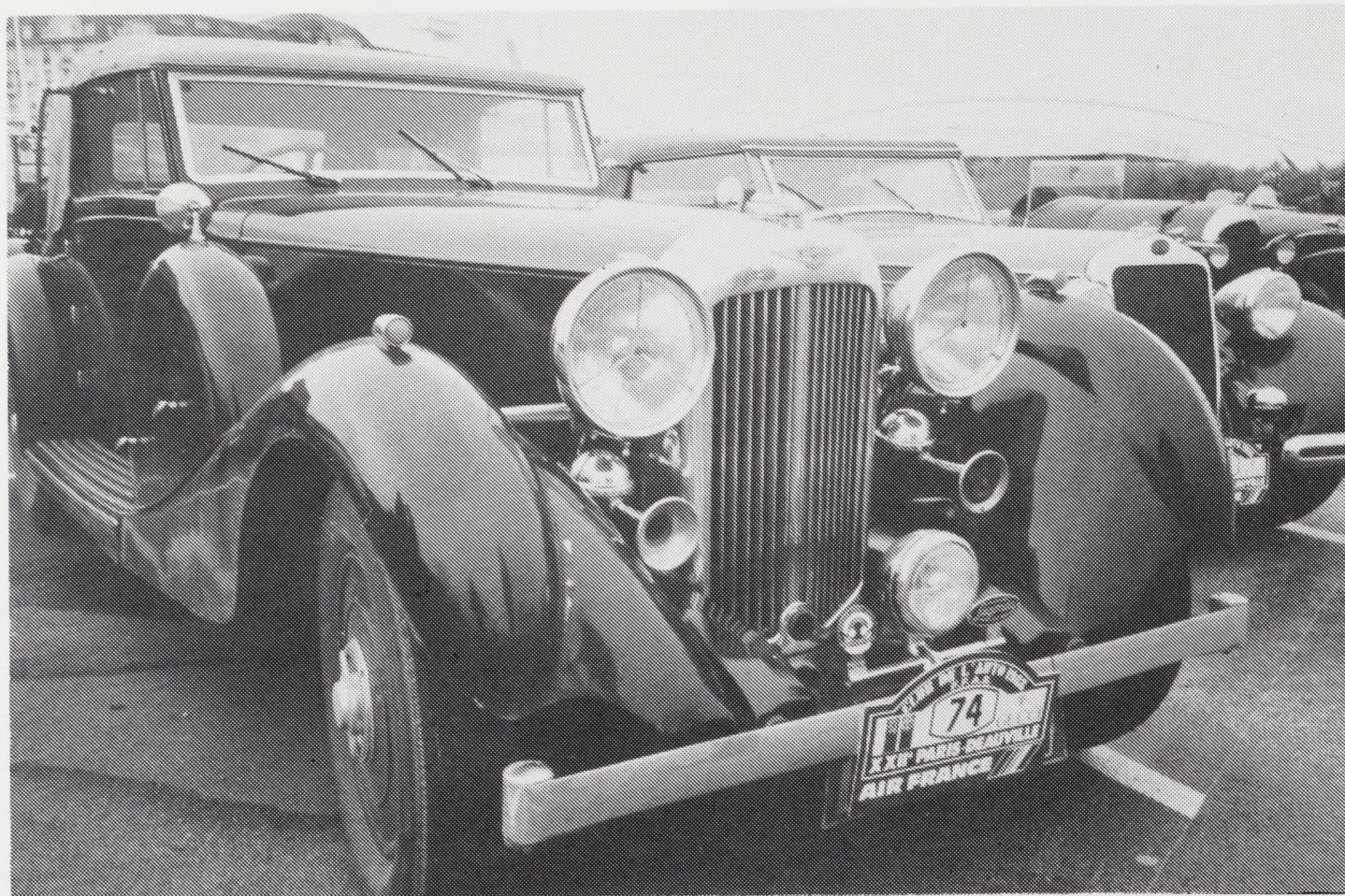
Photo: Michael Valentine.

regularity clearly being of the kind inspired by Epsom Salts.

Warming dinner followed, given by Gucci in the Casino with a lot of Gucci marketing. Unnecessary, because we already appreciated them as they were sponsors. The curtains of the Casino windows were then drawn back to celebrate Gucci. White firework rain fell from the heavens to outdo momentarily

God's unilluminated type He was still plugging away with.

Sunday dawned wet. We had a pretty drive in the country to a charming hilltop village, Beaumont en Auge, where we were offered a local bread pudding, Calvados and cider (which some of us weren't up to!) then back to Deauville for the Concours d'Elegance picnic and display. The notion was idyllic, the reality



Phillipe Desagneaux's LG 45 (and his Delage).

Photo: Michael Valentine.

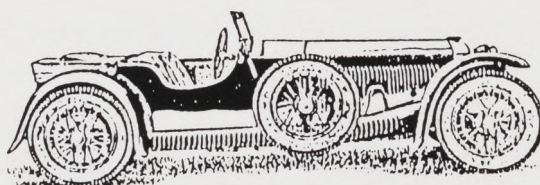
damp to sodden. Instead of the participants disporting themselves in period costume in the gardens of the racecourse we all sat inside in wet discomfort, but all praise to the Club de l'Auto for the rearrangement. After lunch the presentation of each car and its drivers. When his wife stalled the Invicta and could not restart it, your scribe manifested himself as the "Spirit of Invicta", flinging back the roof of the car and appearing by magic from inside it. A touch with the special Invicta wand mended it (I wish it worked so well on its petrol pump) and off we went. In case readers are in doubt as to what the Spirit of Invicta looks like—who knows, they might also need his help—a photograph is enclosed, though the Editor may censor it (He wishes he had, Ed.). Everyone made the most they could of the day and also of the evening when the ladies emerged for the gala dinner from the dungaree chrysalises in which throughout the rally they had been hiding their beauty and dazzled us all with their

glitter and radiance. Speeches, prizes and dancing; bed very late.

Monday dawned wet. Packing and goodbyes, then off to the Dieppe to Newhaven ferry.

Everyone I think enjoyed the rally and those in open hoodless cars, mostly English, plus the gallant President of the Club de l'Auto, Jacques Orvain, endured the weather with the fortitude which only the true aficionados of vintage motoring can display. But I'm glad my car has a hood!

MICHAEL VALENTINE



New Years' Day 1989

THE BIG EVENT in our part of the world on New Year's Day is the Vintage assembly at the Phoenix, Hartley Wintney, but as usual we chose to avoid the crowded atmosphere there and go to Adstock instead. It is a pity to miss Peter Whenman's reception at the Phoenix, but the run to Adstock (towards Silverstone from us) is much more interesting and the parking and service much more enjoyable when you get there.

Richard Odell (12/24 and Riley Sand Racer) organises the pub to receive us with mulled wine and a grand buffet and he always gives Lagondas a warm welcome. There are one or two prizes every year: a bottle of Scotch for the furthest travelled to the event and another for the most unusual vintage transport. In previous years we had a good chance for the distance prize at about 60 miles from Kingston, but not any more. This year it went to Nick Portway who came 110 miles from Suffolk in his Vauxhall, but I suspect that Roly Grindell who came with him in his M45 travelled a few miles further, but wasn't listening.

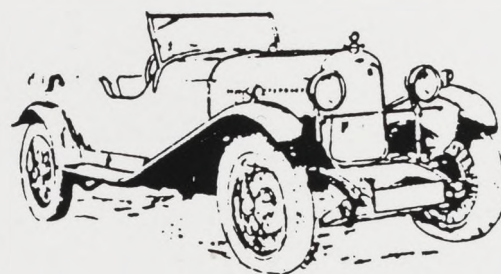
Roger Seabrook was there with the very attractive ex-Michael Jones long wing low chassis 2-litre and Michael himself came in his present car, a Chenard Walcker of rather similar proportions. Other Lagondas were Jeff and Hilary Leeks in their

potentially blown LC 2-litre, looking elegant as ever and our own M45. Also there was veteran member James Wollard with Jerry, although not in KW 2102: we hope that he is able to correct the situation before long.

All told, an excellent end to Christmas and start to the New Year. Everyone was brimming with goodwill to make everyone else enjoy themselves. 50 varied vintage vehicles filled the car park and the weather was kind, if grey.

To which I can only add: a Happy Motoring 1989 to All our Members and Readers!

JEFF ODY



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Andrew and Mary Gregg and BPJ 168.

Motorama 88

SUNDAY 4TH SEPTEMBER 1988 saw this year's "Motorama 88" held at the Old Down Estate, near Olveston, just outside Bristol.

It lived up to its description, 'a fun day' for all the family and proceeds were in aid of St Mary's Church at Olveston.

Last year's event was disappointing due to foul weather conditions and the few days leading up to the 4th September made me think that this year's event was also going to be a wash-out. It turned out to be

a beautiful day and the event was well supported and featured over 200 different vehicles in various classes ranging from vintage/veteran, classic/historic, specials, motorcycles, and even bubble cars!

My entry was my M45 BPJ 168 and Mary, my wife, entered our 1933 Wolseley County Saloon. It was with great surprise that I found myself parked next door to our editor Ken Painter's Maserati. On the other side of me was an immaculate



Ed. and Andrew Gregg's children and winning M45 Lagonda.

MG TD and beyond that a splendid and unrestored Lanchester tourer complete with an elderly lady in the back seat and sheltered by a rear glass passenger screen. She looked as though she had been with the car since it was built in about 1928!

Throughout the day, various events took place including a funfair, jumble sales, Autojumble and an entertaining cross-country course for a 4-wheel drive vehicles that was most spectacular.

The judging of the various classes took place in the early afternoon when, to my surprise and joy, we managed to collect the first prize for both the Lagonda and the Wolseley as being the best cars in their classes. What sensible and highly intelligent judges there must have been on that day—sorry, Ken, you'll just have to get a Lagonda!

ANDREW GREGG

ANDREW HAYDEN

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Wot, No Drips?

I SUSPECT that most owners of 16/80s fitted with the Crossley water pump are very familiar within its innards. For as long as I can remember I have had to repack the gland with monotonous regularity, cursing this crude and incontinent piece of Gortonwork. But perhaps I am being disloyal: it is very necessary as a failed fan (drive) belt causes an instant deluge of boiling water. Also its crudity means simplicity; it is relatively easy to make bits for it.

The aim of this brief article is to recommend a gland packing which, for the first time for more than a quarter century has rendered the pump on my Crossley

dripless. While based in Glasgow recently I spent a useful lunch hour with the James Walker office, discussing water temperature, pump shaft r.p.m. and packing box dimensions. The solution is James Walkers FORTUNA PACKING No 417, 5 mm (3/16") × 8 mm. A box will last you forever. A few tips however:

1. The shaft must be in good condition (no scoring).
2. The phosphor-bronze water lubricated bushes should be a loose fit.
3. Run the fan belt very slack to reduce bearing load.

STEPHEN WELD

Cars in Books

"Dangerous Davies the Last Detective" by Leslie Thomas

For anyone seeking a lighthearted and entertaining thriller containing numerous references to a Lagonda, I commend "Dangerous Davies the Last Detective" to you. He was described as dangerous because he was said to be harmless! His car is described as a 1937 Lagonda Tourer "for ever open and exposed to the weather". It is also described as "a car which prompted the envy of many enthusiasts almost as much as it evoked their disgust that such a rare prize should be kept in so disgraceful a condition. It was rusty and ragged. It's fine great brass headlamps

wobbled like the heads of twin ventriloquists' dummies. Its metal was tarnished to brown, its elegant seats torn and defiled with rubbish. In the back lived a huge and unkept dog as foul and matted as the rest of the interior".

There are numerous other references to the car throughout this easy reading book. I was left wondering whether the description (it surely cannot have had brass headlamps) was that of a car either known to or once owned by the author Leslie Thomas.

ANDREW GREGG

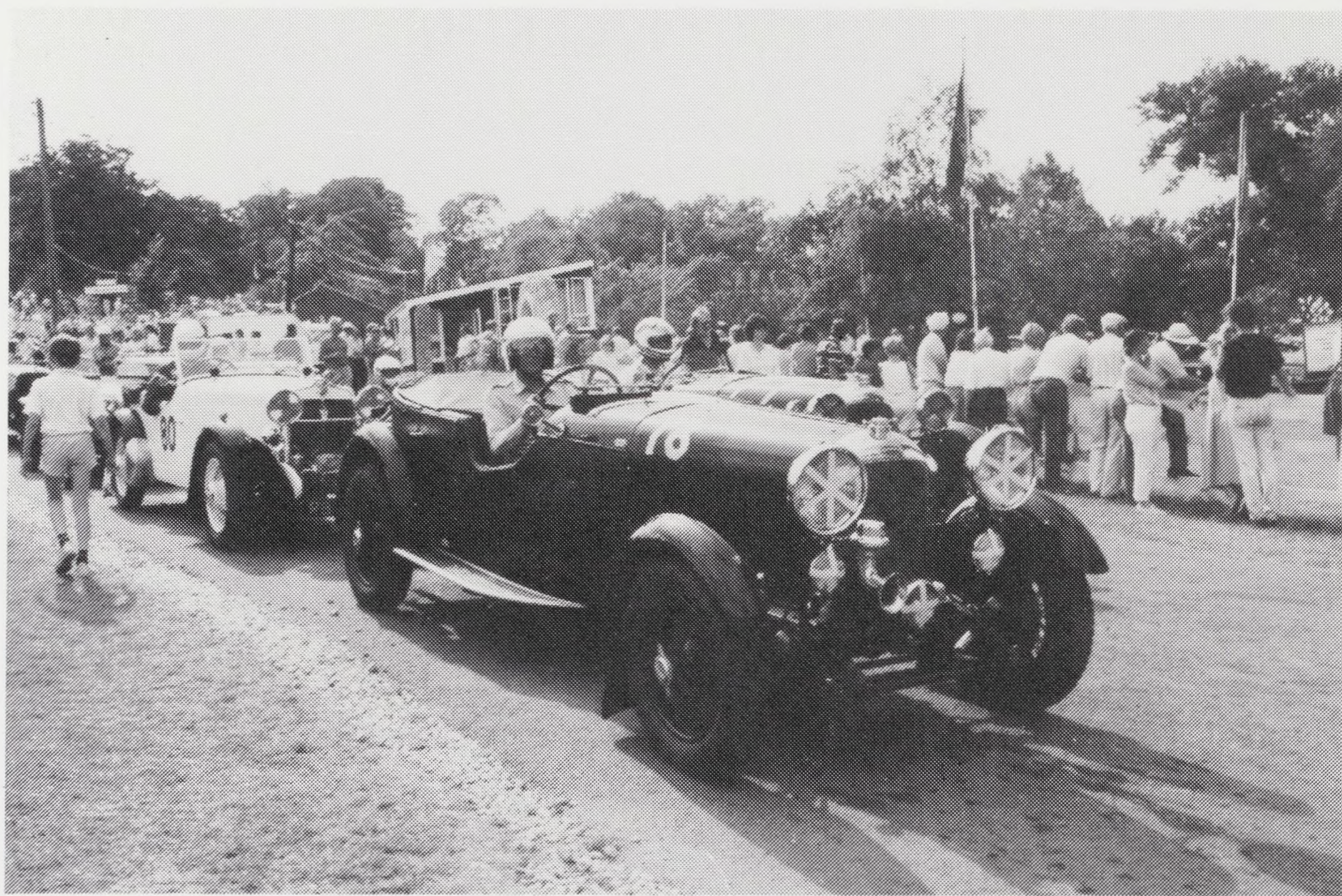
LAGONDA CLUB FIXTURE LIST 1989

4th Feb	V.S.C.C. Brooklands Driving Tests
4th March	Pomeroy Trophy—Silverstone
25th March	V.S.C.C. Derbyshire Trial
7th April	Northern Dinner/Dance Club Annual Prizegiving—Monk Fryston Hall
15th April	V.S.C.C. Silverstone
9th May	V.S.C.C. Curborough Sprint
May TBA	Midland Social
5th May	Eastern Club Evening—Barrington—Friday 'Spring' Social
21st May	Southern Picnic at Weald & Downland Open Air Museum, Singleton, West Sussex
28th May	Norwich Classic. Starts: Norwich, Knebworth, Bath, Oxford, Nottingham, Stockport, Harewood. Finish: Donington Park
3rd June	Colerne Sprint
11th June	Wimpole Hall—Treasure Hunt, Nr. Royston, Herts.
18th June/July TBA	New Forest Rally
18th June	Brooklands Reunion
June TBA	Midland Social
24th June	V.S.C.C. Silverstone followed by Evening Social—Green Man, Syresham
1st July	Skelsley Walsh
8th July	Northern Gymkhana
July/Aug TBA	Hartley Witney—Phoenix Rally
8th/9th July	V.S.C.C. Oulton Park Race Meeting and Concours
Aug TBA	Midland Area
4th Aug	Club Evening—Barrington, Nr. Cambridge
5th Aug	Club Evening Pub Meet—Gloucester Area Venue TBA
6th Aug	Prescott Hill Climb
13th Aug	Shuttleworth Joint Meeting—Bedfordshire
20th Aug	Michelham Priory—Social, East Sussex
27th Aug	Cadwell Park Race Meeting
9/10th Sept	Beaulieu Auto Jumble, Hants.
16th Sept	Club AGM—Weston Manor Hotel, Oxford
23rd Sept	V.S.C.C. Donington Park
24th Sept	Lagonda Fun Day. In aid of Guide Dogs, Ripley, Sussex
30th Sept	BDC Silverstone. Lagonda Race
8th Oct	Weston-Super-Mare Sprint
22nd Oct	V.S.C.C. Eastern Rally
11th Nov	Lakeland Weekend—TBA
Dec	London Social Evening/Film Show
8th Dec	Hull and East Riding Area Annual Dinner

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Alan Elliott and 1930 2-Litre L/C Tourer at Prescott Hill Climb 7th August 1988.

Photo: Pat Elliott.

VSCC Prescott Hill Climb 1988

THE SEVENTH of August 1988 and Prescott Hill in the Cotswolds was "en Fete" for the fiftieth anniversary celebration of the first VSCC hill climb held in 1938.

Prescott Hill had originally been "discovered" by Tom Rolt who used to visit Prescott House and took great delight in sliding his chain gang GN up the 1 in 6 hairpin bends of the drive, at that time only surfaced in loose gravel. The house and estate unexpectedly came on the market in 1937 and Tom's first thoughts were for the VSCC to purchase the hill. This was not possible, but the news was passed to the Bugatti Owners Club, who were in a position to make the purchase. This was done, with the agreement that the BOC would allow the VSCC to hold an

event there each year. Hence the highly successful hill climbs held there each August in which so many of our Lagonda Club members have participated over the years.

The anniversary event was held in brilliant sunshine and the venue took on its customary "garden party" atmosphere. Guest of honour was Sonia Rolt, Tom's widow who ascended the hill in the 12/50 Alvis which has been in the family since new. Other notable visitors included Clive Windsor-Richards, who competed in Lagondas before the war and also Sam Clutton who was celebrating 50 continuous years of competition in the 12 litre 1908 Grand Prix Itala.

Lagondas are unfortunately not really

competitive in hill climbs. Their adverse power-weight ratio puts them at a great disadvantage and they are rarely able to figure in the awards list. However, the Lagonda Club has now allocated an annual trophy (actually the Night Trial Trophy) for the best performance by a two litre Lagonda (including 16/80s). This award is on handicap so that blown and unblown cars have an equal chance. A thought provoking feature of the Night Trial Trophy is the inscription which states that it is awarded for "the best performance of the night"!

Ten Lagondas were entered, of which one was a non starter. The times and results are shown in the table.

All competitors, whether in the awards list or not, had a most enjoyable day. Why not join the world of competition licences and crash helmets, and enter your Lagonda next year to swell the numbers? Your scribe has been taking part for twenty years—quite a sizeable proportion of the fifty year history of the course—and looks forward to another twenty years if chance permits!

ALAN ELLIOTT

No.	Driver	Model	Best Time (Seconds)	Handicap (Seconds)	Two Litre Handicap Positions
25	P.S. Allen	Rapier	61.13	66	
26	I.A. Rowe	Rapier	58.06	61	
70	R.J. Sage	2-Litre H/C	65.19	65	4th
71	R.M. Seabrook	2-Litre H/C	67.33	67	5th
76	P.D. Smith	2-Litre (Blown)	62.08	63	2nd
77	J.C. Bugler	2-Litre L/C	64.15	64	3rd
78	A.T. Elliott	2-Litre L/C	62.96	64	1st
82	D.J. Keen	Rapier (Blown)	58.35	58	
117	P.R. Tebbett	4.5-Litre	Non-starter	64	
121	J.F. Harris	Rapide Special	55.24	59	

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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.

North Wilts/Avon: Second Tuesday each month at "The Shoe", North Wraxall. (On A420 between Marshfield and Chippenham). Contact Editor for details.

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Overall badge	£2.10
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Short history of the Lagonda	£0.75
V12 "Trader" sheets	£0.75
Scarves (long, with badge)	£8.65



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The New Silver Crossley Coachbuilt Saloon

First Performance report Upon a Car of Great Refinement and Fine Appearance. Comfortable Springing a Prominent Feature

THE FIRST announcement of the new Silver Crossley car appeared in *The Motor* last Tuesday, and we have in the meantime had the opportunity of taking over the first of the production models for a comprehensive test on the road. We were distinctly impressed by its all-round performance; it is not a sports car and yet it possesses very useful maximum and cruising speeds, while refinement in operation is unquestionably an outstanding characteristic of its behaviour under all conditions likely to be encountered while touring at home or abroad.

Before recording our road experience we will describe a few of the salient features of this very interesting chassis. In the first place the shape of the car has been altered somewhat by the installation of a new and fashionably designed radiator, in which the shoulders are relatively high. A trace of the general lines of previous Crossley radiators is discernible in this new model, but the lines of the upper part have been smoothed out with a beneficial effect in so far as appearance is concerned. The front of the car has been further improved by installing large chromium-plated head lamps.

NEW BRAKING SYSTEM

The Silver Crossley is substantially the same as its prototype, but a new front axle incorporating Bendix Perrot brakes has been installed. Instead of cables in the brake operating gear, rods and levers are now used to couple the brakes, while the

drums are larger than in the past and have been strengthened by a deep flange to prevent distortion when the shoes are applied with great force. Another slight modification concerns the length of the front springs. On the previous 15.7 h.p. Crossley models the axle was offset considerably in relation to the ends of the springs. This disparity is not so marked now, as the forward part of the spring (and the dumbirons) have been increased in length by a few inches. Contrary to usual practice, the springs themselves now lie alongside the frame instead of beneath it.

The engine remains very much as hitherto, save for the fact that the dynamo drive has been equipped with a bearing on each side of the chain wheel inside the timing case itself, thereby allowing the dynamo to be withdrawn without interfering with the chain drive. A Simms Vernier coupling is installed between the chain wheel assembly and the instrument itself; this, together with the magneto, is mounted on a swingable bracket from the timing case.

SILENT THIRD SPEED

The magneto is secured by a strap instead of by screws and is thus rendered much easier to remove should an overhaul or repairs become necessary. Perhaps the outstanding innovation, however, is the inclusion of a twin-top gearbox providing a silent third speed. Actually this gearbox provides the equivalent to alternative top gear ratios, both of which are quite silent.

The gear lever, incidentally, is now centrally disposed.

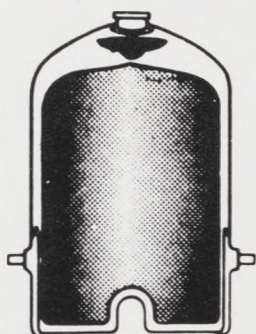
The saloon body is exceedingly comfortable and has imposing lines. There is plenty of legroom in both front and rear seats which, by the way, are upholstered in fine narrow-pleated leather. All the bright parts of the car are chromium plated and safety glass is fitted throughout; electrically controlled head-lamp reflectors assist greatly in night driving. The body panels are formed entirely of aluminium.

There is something about this new Silver Crossley which is reminiscent of large car practice. Tried on the road, the car *feels* as though it is solidly built, and the springing provides a softness in riding comfort which is thoroughly desirable. On the other hand, the damping effect provided by the shock absorbers applied to both front and rear axles is such that rolling or pitching is hardly noticeable when negotiating tortuous lanes with poor surfaces.

The engine pulls quite well from a cold start and does not require a great deal of warming up before evenness in running can be attained. Ease of handling is a notable feature of the performance; thus the steering gear is light and accurate and yet requires no undue movement of the wheel in order to take the road wheels from lock to lock. Again, both clutch and brake pedals are extremely light, the former being smooth in action both so far as the pedal movement is concerned and the pick-up of the drive from the engine, while the latter pedal applies the brakes with great force, although the foot pressure is not greater than that demanded by the clutch.

WELL PLACED CONTROLS

The central gear lever comes nicely to the hand and the steering wheel fits quite well into the lap, while the seat, which is adjustable over a wide range, gives a slightly reclining position. The new gearbox is decidedly attractive. With ratios



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of 18.69, 11.6, 7.1 and 5 to 1, the car is equipped for all conditions likely to be encountered either in this country or abroad. As the bottom-gear ratio is relatively low, it can be dispensed with altogether under ordinary conditions, so that when starting from rest we invariably engaged second, on which gear the pick-up is quite smooth and progressive. Experimentally, we engaged third gear on a slight upgrade and found that the car would move off quite smoothly from rest without any necessity for slipping the clutch unduly.

It should here be mentioned that the actual car tested was fitted with an experimental axle ratio which was rather higher than the standard fitment; consequently, the figures obtained for the acceleration curve were not so good as those of the standard product. We compared our figures with the works' figures, however, and as the discrepancy in times amounted to just about what would have been expected in the circumstances, we decided to take the figures supplied by the experimental department of the works in order to make the curve more representative of the production cars.

As will be seen from the curve, 50 m.p.h. can be reached from a datum of 10 m.p.h. in about 35 secs. in top gear, and in 28½ secs. in third. This achievement is really quite good when it is borne in mind that it is impossible to obtain a tremor from the engine anywhere in the speed range. Mechanical noises are practically non-existent and carburetter roar and exhaust noise are also practically inaudible. Changing up is quite an easy matter and one which does not necessitate a great deal of juggling with the relative speeds of the meshing pinions. It is necessary to double-declutch when changing down, however, but here again, great accuracy is not at all necessary. In traffic the silent third speed is a real boon for there is very little backlash in the transmission and as this "gear" is dead silent in operation, even when over-running, it is almost impossible for the occupants to know whether or not the direct drive is engaged.

EFFICIENT BRAKES

Special mention should be made of the brakes, for they are efficient, smooth in action and extremely powerful. As is well known, in the Bendix Perrot system there is a self-wrapping action given to the shoes.

Most normal main-road hills can be taken in the stride of the car in top gear, but if one encounters a stiffish grade and the traffic is heavy, the silent third can very usefully be employed. It is hardly ever necessary, when touring to use second gear, although this ratio enables 30 m.p.h. to be reached.

Altogether, we were distinctly impressed by this Silver Crossley. It is a car built to a specification, not to a price, although the latter is quite moderately fixed at £545.

Reprinted from "Motor" July 15, 1930 with grateful thanks.

CAR TESTED: Silver Crossley coach-built saloon; price £545.

ENGINE: Six-cylinders; push-rod operated overhead valves; magneto ignition; bore, 65 mm; stroke, 100 mm; capacity 1,991 c.c. R.A.C. rating, 15.7 h.p.

TRANSMISSION: Single-plate clutch; four-forward-speed gearbox with central control; open propeller shaft; spiral-bevel final drive.

SPEEDS ON GEARS: Top (5 to 1), 60 m.p.h.; 3rd (7.1 to 1), 52 m.p.h.; 2nd (11.6 to 1), 32 m.p.h.; 1st gear ratio 18.69 to 1.

BRAKES: Pedal operates internal-expanding Bendix Perrot shoes in all four drums.

PETROL SYSTEM: 13-gallon rear tank with a reserve supply of two gallons.

SUSPENSION: Semi-elliptic springs, with shock absorbers front and rear.

TURNING CIRCLES: Left, 41 ft.; right, 39 ft.

DIMENSIONS: Wheelbase, 10 ft. 3 ins.; track, 4 ft. 8 ins.; overall length, 13 ft. 10 ins. overall width 5 ft. 7 ins.; ground clearance, 9½ ins.

CROSSLEY MOTORS LTD.,
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Guests at the Hull and East Riding Christmas Dinner.

Photos: Ken Painter.



The Hull and East Riding Christmas Dinner

WHEN ROY PATERSON rang us in November to ask if we could make a special effort to attend the famous Northern Dinner, it didn't take too much arm twisting to persuade both Chris and me to rearrange our work so that we could travel up during the morning of Friday 9th December. After all, we had to collect a car from Hornsea which I had bought some three months earlier, we wanted to visit some friends in Shropshire and the starter motor for the M*s*r*t* was ready for collection in Birmingham after a very thorough rebuild. What better way could there be to spend a weekend than combining all of these activities into one marathon trip?

The meeting has been held in the same hotel in Beverley—The Beverley Arms—for many years now and they offer a special deal to guests at Christmas Dinners in the form of overnight accommodation at the very attractive rate of two for the price of one. The staff seemed undismayed at the thought of us taking up two spaces in their car park and were perfectly happy to let us park a fully laden trailer as well as the tow car. Only one Lagonda graced us with its presence—Don Hoggard's 3½-litre tourer, but sundry dismantled bits were noted in the backs of various cars in the car park, so it is just possible that a second car was there as a kit of parts.

It was a particular pleasure to meet Mr and Mrs E. G. Craske, he is a former member of the Lagonda Company staff and spent most of the evening reminiscing about the old days. Virtually every Club member at the dinner tried to talk to him at some time during the evening and he has promised to tell your Editor a little more about his time with the company, so expect to read more about his life in a future magazine.

The evening itself was masterminded by Roy Paterson, resplendent in his old school blazer. Unfortunately he evaded my every effort to photograph him, perhaps he thought I would use it to throw darts at or something, because he managed to introduce Herb Schofield to the assembled guests as the magazine's new editor, an understandable error, Herb and I joined the Club at about the same time and both now look dashingy handsome with our greying hair and trim beards—rather different to the youngsters of thirty years ago . . .

Roy has a very clever way with him, instead of standing up and making a long speech whilst our dinners get cold, he leaps to his feet between courses and delivers a few well chosen sentences as the waitresses clear the tables. This way we all get to enjoy our meal as well as his oratory and it is a method I commend to others. The meal, traditional Christmas fare, was almost an incidental to the many conversations going on around the room, but times have changed, when we first started attending these dinners as locals way back in the sixties, most of the talk was about Lagondas, driving them, bending them, mending them and finding them. This year it was about holidays and grandchildren, are we getting old or something?

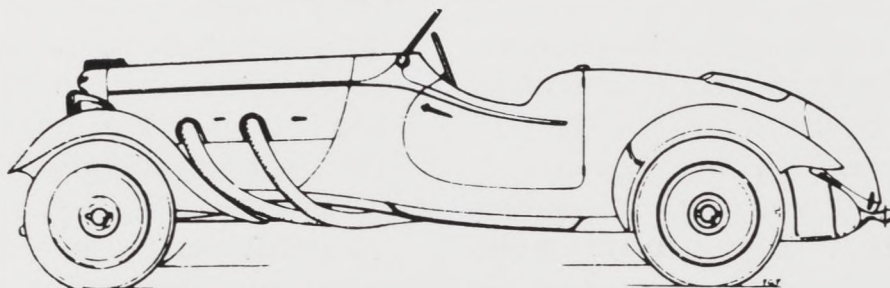
Once the tables were cleared, the talking started in earnest and went on until well after midnight. It even went on well after the bar closed, I told you things have changed. Breakfast next morning was a mini re-run of the night before as many of the guests had taken advantage of the two-for-one offer. We kept bumping into Club members in the shops and market for much of the day, it seems we all took the

opportunity to do some Christmas shopping as well!

Thanks are due to Roy for organising the whole thing. It really is a superb evening

every time and Chris and I have already promised ourselves that we will be there in 1989, shall we see you there?

KEN PAINTER



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Letters

Life gets complicated sometimes . . . this letter was sent to me by Denis Jenkinson, although it was sent to Arnold Davey, now you can see why this part of the magazine is just called "Letters". Jenks has added a couple of minor details where Derek's memory has become a little hazy, I have inserted a couple of question marks where the handwriting was a little difficult to read with total confidence. In the interests of historical accuracy, can any of our readers confirm or correct these points? Ed.

Dear Mr Davey,

I promised in our pre-Xmas phone conversation to let you have my comments on Mr Berridge's letter which I had read with some doubts.

It was only later that I realized that Donald Bastow had clarified the various technical inaccuracies.

Mr Berridge raises a query as to what happened to the two cars and their subsequent history is by now well documented.

I think the four photographs are very depressing and I think they were taken in the Ironbarks (?) field after they were dragged out.

I saw them a few hours after the V1 incident because a Mr Bennet (?) who was working with me in Bryce Exp Dept lived in one of the flats.

As he did not turn up that morning and there were various rumours flying about I drove round to Staines Parade and found that both he and his wife had been killed.

Before going back to the works I looked at the two cars at the other end of the group of buildings. The two cars were quite recognisable but a bit battered by rafters and ceiling etc. that had fallen on

top of them. The tyres were not blown off but they may have been burst by the blast and fallen off when the cars were moved. I do remember noticing that the oil tank in the scuttle had been imploded inwards by the pressure wave.

Ever since painting the white circles on the front of No. 5 car at Le Mans in 1939 (To help the timekeepers in the pit to press the right stopwatch) I have always been interested in both cars.

I think I was the last person to drive No. 5 on the road in 1941 and the circumstances were unusual and unexpected.

Just before the phoney-war turned into a real war somebody organised a show of interesting or famous racing cars at Nonsuch Park, near Ewell one Sunday. (Actually, at Chessington Zoo—on July 13th 1941—DSJ). Lagondas were approached and much to my surprise said yes and I had the privilege and pleasure of taking No. 5 there and bringing it back. (It was on Lagonda Motors General Trade Plates—945 PB—DSJ).

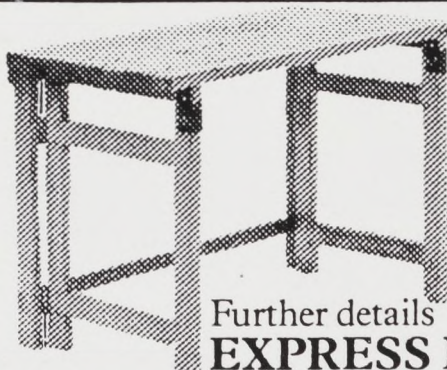
I particularly enjoyed the fairly high speed run down the Kingston-by-Pass in my efforts to get it back to Staines in the failing light.

Because of all that I had a big thrill when John Rees brought the rebuilt car down to Gloucester last summer and I can certainly confirm what a splendid job he had made of it.

Yours Sincerely

DEREK RUTHERFORD





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Dear Ken

The response to the picture book has been most gratifying and I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who have given welcome words of approval in their letters to you, also, indeed, to the many who have corresponded with me direct, either by letter or by telephone. Some of these letters have been acknowledged, but to reply to them all presents a daunting task, so my thanks to you all.

Inevitably, the book is not without its mistakes. We all know about the reversed photograph on page 76 and of course a couple of errors where an advert or picture has been moved, but reference to it in the caption has not been amended. On the whole I think most will agree that Crowood Press have done a good job. Perhaps of more importance are my own mistakes. James Crocker quite rightly informs me that the large saloon shown at the top of page 126, once his property incidentally, is in fact a 1935 M35R and not a 3-litre as stated. The radiator on this car, as far as I am concerned however, presents something of a puzzle, as I am not aware of any other M35R, or in fact any other model being fitted with this type of radiator as late as 1935. On page 177 I state that Tony Lock's car, KY 5207 has two

small doors at the rear, in fact the car has only one I now understand and this can be clearly seen in the photograph. My sincere apologies for these mistakes.

As a matter of interest, James informs me that the beautiful Mulliner bodied V12 saloon at the top of page 258 was written off after running into the back of a truck during the sixties, a sad end for such a lovely lady. Apparently, soon after this incident its owner emigrated to New Zealand—it is indeed unfortunate that he could think of nowhere further to go!

Regarding your request for the back numbers of the magazine I have managed to find one duplicate copy and this I enclose in the hope it may fill one gap in the Editorial collection.

My kindest regards

GEOFF SEATON

Thank you for the magazine Geoff, with the copy of magazine No 6 which Alan Elliot generously provided, there are now two magazines in the official Editorial collection!

K.P.P.

Dear Sir

At the A.G.M. on 24th September, the Committee talked the meeting into agreeing that the 1988/89 subscription would run only up to 30th June, with the

subscription being unchanged at £15. This represents a 33% increase in the sub. Unfortunately nobody asked what the Committee were proposing to do with the windfall (I was too busy trying to work out who was behind the Committee table). It is interesting that this decision has not been relayed to the Club as a whole in the two subsequent newsletters. Are the Committee embarrassed by their guile?

I suggest that either the new Register is printed at the expense of a copy of the Magazine, or the sub is left at the present level for at least one more year than it would normally be or, best of all, both.

What about an undertaking from the Committee?

Yours faithfully

A. J. LOCH

Hmm, according to my copy of the proceedings, the proposal to accept the shorter year for this year's subs was formally proposed by one A. Loch . . . For the record, the subscription year has been shortened to bring the subs period into line with the accounting year of the Lagonda Club Ltd. The subscription rate was left at the full year figure to cover the costs of setting up the new company. There is no plan to raise the subscription rate next year, so it is expected to stay as it is at present for as long as the rate covers the costs of running the Club. Members will get their full complement of magazines, plus the new Register of Members as well as a subscription rate pegged at the present figure for the foreseeable future, all for a one-off alteration in the period the subscription covers. If you saw the problems which a change in the amount of money required bring on our long-suffering Membership Secretary, you would understand why the Committee opted for this variation. This way, only one change is required, just the date the new subscription is due. The point about identifying the members of the Committee is noted, see the photo elsewhere in the magazine and look out for name boards at next year's A.G.M.

K.P.P.

Dear Ken

I had to smile somewhat, having once again come across the rather meek efforts in trying to shoot Jenks down on the subject of replicas.

It is nice to see that we have a mixed bunch in the Club, with certain people coming clean and openly confessing their involvement with replicas, whilst others appear to still hop around the subject. No doubt our friend at Aurangzeb Road, New Delhi would say "Oh deary deary me."

From my point of view, I don't give a toss what Jenks has to say about our beloved cars, perhaps we should all take one step backwards and pause for reflection, following which I would hope for a unanimous decision that our cars are here to be used and enjoyed.

To date, I have well over 30 events down for 1989, anybody care to join me?

Yours

ROGER FIRTH

Dear Ken

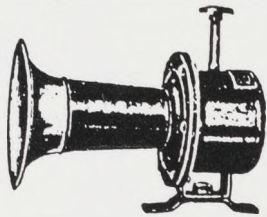
Enclosed is a copy of a most interesting letter that eventually found its way to me via Crowood Press and Valerie May. The Lotus book has not reached me yet, but I look forward to reading it in due course.

As you will see in the letter, there are several snippets of interest that should help to swell the Magazine. Unfortunately the V12 saloon JPD 16 does not appear to have been recorded in any of the Club Directories that I hold, so this rather suggests that the car was written off after the fire. Arnold of course may be able to throw a little more light on it. The chances are that it has been re-registered and now poses as a racer somewhere or other.

When I reply to Mr Kirwan-Taylor I will suggest that he sends us a copy of his body design for the LB6. It could be of interest to the post-war car enthusiasts. I must also apologise for overlooking his stepfather, C. L. Hill. Arnold did in fact make a brief reference to him in his book—I wonder if he has a copy of that?

Regards

GEOFF SEATON



Dear Mr Seaton

I was very interested to read your book on Lagonda and thought you might be interested in my recollections of the forties.

My stepfather was called Charles Loraine Hill. He was a very unusual man for his generation. After Eton he studied engineering at Cambridge and inherited the family shipbuilding and shipping firm in Bristol, the Bristol City Lines—motto “Shipshape and Bristol Fashion”. He was an automobile and aircraft pioneer as well as a shipbuilder. After the first World War, when he lived on Mendip and was driving into Bristol, he saw someone laying a metal rail in a field. Being curious he asked what it was for and was told it was for a greyhound track and that it was very difficult to align the curve so that the hare didn’t fly off. Charles instantly recognised that this was the same problem as bending the stern rail of a ship and the Bristol shipyard thereupon built most of the English greyhound tracks, which kept it going through the Depression.

In the thirties Charles became a partner of Alan Good’s and the Chairman of Westland Aircraft and Petters. Subsequently he became a director of Brush Electric, Fielding and Platt, Heenan and Froude—and Chairman of Lagonda, although you don’t mention this in your book.

During the war my stepfather was first in Cairo and then in NY in charge of North American convoys for the Ministry of War Transport (see attached doggerel!).

He returned to England early in 1944 and we bought a house in Thornbury in Gloucestershire. Each Tuesday he would leave for Staines in our 4½-litre short

chassis 1940 Lagonda (number plate JPD 16), driven by Fred Cumming who had been his chauffeur since before the first World War when he had a 1908 Napier. I would often accompany him on these visits and came to know Dick Watney and W.O. quite well over the next three years. I was 14 in 1944 and learnt to drive on those war-time empty roads to London in the Lagonda—and on the farm tracks on our farm in a 1939 Lancia Aprilia which Charles also had. I still think the 4½-litre Lagonda V12SS is one of the most beautiful cars ever designed. Charles’ car caught fire at high speed about 1949. The fire came through the dashboard. I don’t know if it was a total write-off? It was replaced by a rather ugly Hooper bodied Bentley.

I very well recall the Staines factory and attended a fearsome demonstration of Lagonda developed flame throwers in Staines Reservoir. In addition to the Petter oil engines illustrated in your book as being manufactured at Staines I think I recall some sort of fuel injection equipment (Simms?) being manufactured.

I also recall the design and building of the 2½-litre LB, the terrible row with Rolls about the name and driving in the first grey prototype with the Cotal gearbox. As I recall, the body which finally David Brown used was partly designed by Vanden Plas—but a French guy only distantly related to the English coachbuilder? I never quite understood how much Feeley influenced this—the helmet wings would seem, to indicate this? I became, as a result of all this, very interested in automobile design. I still have my suggested drawing for the 2½-litre.

My stepfather resigned as Chairman of Lagonda on the sale to David Brown in 1947 and Brush was bought by General Electric. Charles became Chairman of Folland Aircraft and, working with Harry Folland and Teddy Petter (Lysander, Whirlwind, Canberra, P-1), developed the Gnat.

I retained my interest in cars and aerodynamics and was associated with Colin Chapman in the design of the Elite and Lotus Marks 18-30. See the book enclosed.

I am amused that Bond has just purchased Alan Good's fabulous house in Oxfordshire—Glympton.

Yours sincerely

PETER KIRWAN-TAYLOR

P.S. I can still recall the smell of the Lagonda after a long fast run. We regularly exceeded 100 on the A4 before Marlborough and would average 60 from Thornbury to Staines.

Written, I suppose, in 1944 when C. L. H. headed the Hill mission to Trincomalee in an Avro York. He wrote a scathing report to AV Alexander which the Navy didn't like:

I'm Charley Hill, and I'm the man,
The only man who really can
Repair and build and own a ship,
Design propellers without slip,
I cleaned up in the Middle East
All which was done without the least
Assistance from the other chaps
Who naturally were awful saps
And yes, I quite forgot to say
I showed them in the U.S.A.
How ships can load a thousand tons
Of T.N.T. and twelve inch guns
In hours, not days as heretofore,
Some sailed in less but never more
So now I turn my Mumbo Jumbo
Eastwards out to fair Columbo
Where 'tis said the good ships dally
Nor can ever onwards sally
Till six weeks or more are past
(The Clearance there is not too fast)
The Chiefs of staff said "Hill old chap"
(And said it with a hearty slap)
You're just the man to put it right
For Winnie said the other night
Send Charley Hill to stop the rot
For, of all the men I've got
Hill has powers beyond belief
Fly him out to Bully Beef.
So here I am and here I stay
I've done a power of good, and may
Have left my mark at work and play
As you have often heard me say
I never brag and never bray
And yet I always get my way.

Dear Editor

I think that the Thames Rowing Club was a splendid spot to hold our film show this year. If one goes over the edge, go back to the club and take a paddle off the wall!

Two proper Lagondas appeared, one being our Chairman's saloon—he was noted in the bar—and a 2-litre, which acquired a puncture. The proud owner was seen to be attempting to knock off the fly off hub caps in the wrong direction. Remember, it's FORWARDS to undo.

The Buffet dinner was superb, kindly organised by Mrs Rendall, but the films were terrible, some members were driven to the bar, not to drink, but to escape the films. We motoring idiots want to see old motoring films! Even if we have seen them before, they bear seeing again.

Maybe, held at the rowing club, we could return to what used to be the old dinner dance concept. Not the formal bit, but three piece live music, say drums, clarinet and trumpet. No disco! Keep it simple, dance or see your friends in the bar for a natter.

Only thoughts

ROBBY-ANNE HEWITT

Dear Sir

I write in response to the barbed and waspish letter of Denis Jenkinson—'Lagonda Mag. 136'—and as I am the owner of one of the seven fake Lagonda 'Rapides', I feel I am in a position to answer his question on 'The Club's' feelings.

I wrote fully, at the time of purchase, to Arnold Davey explaining my acquisition of 'LG-45' mechanicals and as there was not one shard of any of the bodywork, I proposed adding a 'Rapide' style body.

His reply, and incidentally the reply of a few other members to whom I have spoken, indicated sadness that a saloon had been allowed to deteriorate to the

extent that it had disappeared but by revitalising a chassis, albeit with non-original bodywork, we were putting Lagondas back on the road, which is one of 'The Club's' aims. He added that with only 25 examples made and documented, separating the fake 'Rapides' would be simple and future purchasers would be protected.

What a sympathetic and realistic attitude!

The costings involved in fabricating from scratch a totally new look-a-like saloon body, which would in itself still have been a fake/copy/replica were horrendous and so I persevered with the very much cheaper option of the 'Rapide', acknowledging that I would probably be subject to criticism. Strangely, many of the jibes come from people living in mock-Tudor houses filled with reproduction furniture, their walls lined with prints of Breughel and Vermeer!

I have been a 'Motor Sport' reader for over 25 years and DSJ's crusade for authenticity has found much empathy in my own heart. The total fabrication of historic racing cars; the transfer of chassis numbers to further defraud; the chopping up of perfectly useable saloons to make even more 'Le Mans' Bentleys—none of these practises can be condoned. However in the case in question NONE of these malpractises have taken place, just a dead Lagonda has been brought to life using a body built 'in the manner of Frank Feeley.'

I hope to be present at the 1989 AGM where I will 'parade the car about'—whatever that means—and allow the gullible public to think it is a real fake' (sic).

Yours faithfully

ANTHONY R. DADY



Sir

Can we hear more from your reporters on 'The Lagonda Chateau Holiday'? They seem to have had an adventurous journey south through Norway in the snow. Has EV 4604 skidded into the ditch? (Page 11 of the Summer 1988 magazine).

Yours truly

LEPUS

Dear Mr. Ody:

I just read with interest your 'Jottings' column from the Summer 1988 issue of the Club magazine which I just received.

I believe that the 'Hitler' Lagonda you saw in Finchley was really an automobile that I acquired in April of 1987.

I have traced the history of my Lagonda, which was a 1937 four door convertible, back to the original owner—Lord Basil Sandersen, and even received correspondence from prior owners as to the facts surrounding this car.

The car was owned by Lord Sandersen until 1969.

I have enclosed a photo copy of a letter I was able to acquire, signed by Lord Sandersen, explaining the whereabouts of this particular car during the time he owned it. On travelling to England in 1987, I spoke with his son who remembered the car to be solid black when his father owned it.

I have enclosed a picture of the car for comparison purposes, if you so desire. (Not suitable for reproduction here. K.P.P.)

I must tell you that the car has returned to England as I brought it to the Christie's Beaulieu Auction in July of this year and it was purchased at the auction by Mr. John Brown of 50 Bartholomew Street, Newbury. Berks RG14 6AP.

In all of my research, and in the Club records and in Christie's research, they could find no evidence of another four door Lagonda, so I strongly believe the one you saw in Finchley has now returned from the States to its proper home in the U.K., and certainly, based on Sandersen's

information, would not have been in possession of anybody in Germany.

Should you discover any other 1937 four door Lagonda convertible, I would certainly appreciate it if you could keep me informed so I can include that information in the file that I have set up regarding the history of registration number DYH432, chassis and engine number 12177/G10/L.

Is there any way to receive Club materials on a more timely basis here? I have been making several trips to the U.K. and some day would like to be able to attend a Club function while in the U.K.

Best regards

ROBERT F. CRYSTAL

Dear Mr Levinger

I am most interested to learn from your letter of the 8th July that you have acquired my old 1937 Lagonda. The recent history of it is somewhat sad.

I was approached by telephone in December 1968 asking whether I would sell it and I then found that the prospective buyer was running a local building Company which I had never heard of. He apparently felt that if the car was for sale it would have considerable advertising value for him and to cut a long story short I sold it to him with all kinds of extras for two-thirds of the price that Sothebys had indicated to me as a reserve in their following sale which would probably take place in October 1969. The actual date of my sale was early January 1969.

The new thing that happened was that a friend of mine who is very interested in old cars saw in a sale by Sothebys in June or July last year the Lagonda, Sothebys having found that they had sufficient on offer to run an additional sale. My friend told me that it was in a most dreadful state being dirty and uncared for and it actually went for a price just 50% of what the man had paid me six months before. Anybody who has a little sense about selling cars or anything else for that matter would realise that little 'dolling up' makes all the difference, but not so the last owner before

yourself which must have cost him a pretty penny and presumably he has learned his lesson.

As to your enquiry I have not the windshield for the rear seat in my possession as I passed this on. I would warn you, however, that it does not make the 'car complete' because I bought and had this windshield fitted myself in the late '40s when I was taking my young family for a trip on the Continent and wanted the three of them to sit on the back seat without being blown about when the car was open, it cannot therefore be regarded as an integral part. If you choose, however, to pursue your quest further I would make an approach to Sothebys themselves as I cannot find out where the fellow who bought it from me is now to be found.

It may interest you to know that I kept a most detailed account regarding these trips over many years and it averaged, after conversion of litres into British gallons, never worse than 17 miles per gallon nor better than 20 miles per gallon over approximately 2,000 miles.

For your information a firm called Maurice Leo of Gregories Road, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, used to be in possession of all the spares in the South of England for these old Lagondas and may still be in business in that way. This lost its attraction when during the summer season the traffic problem became just as difficult abroad as in this country and motoring lost most of its pleasure in consequence.

If there is anything further I can let you know please do not hesitate to approach me because I feel real affection for the car.

Yours sincerely

MR. LOWELL LEVINGER

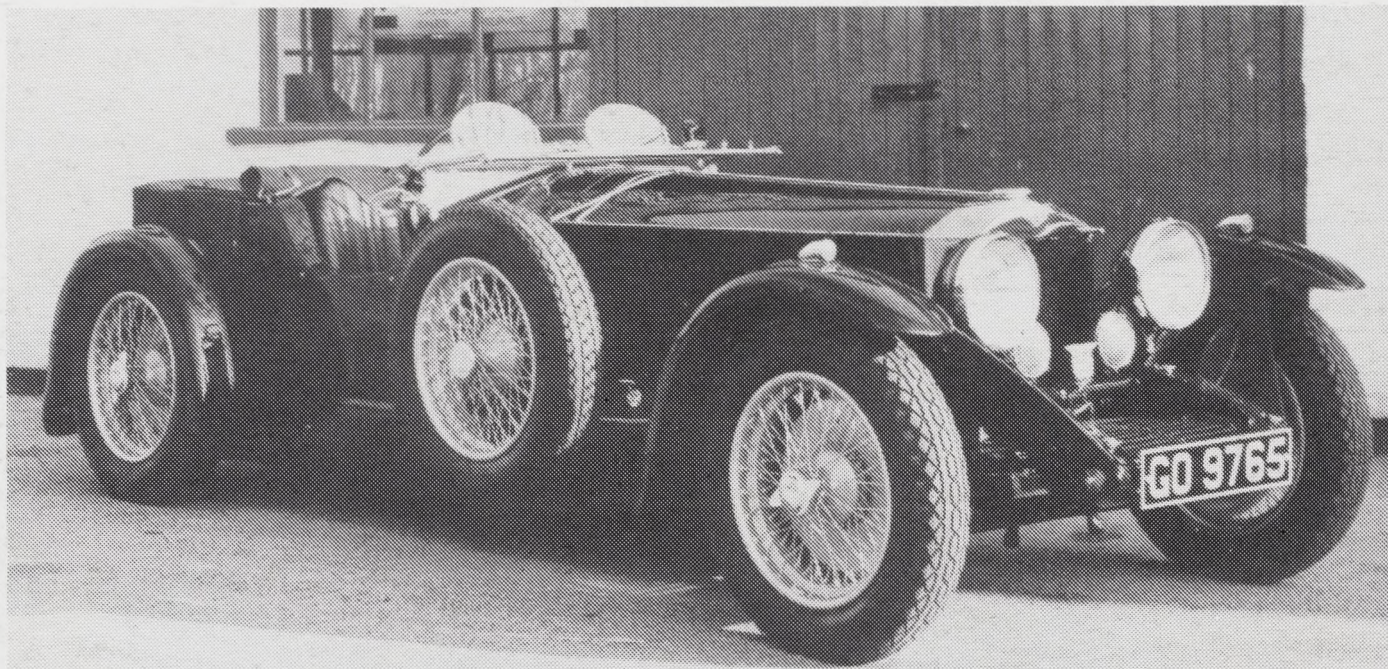
P.S. It might interest you to know that the Lagonda in your possession would have at least 12 coats of paint in its original condition as these high-class Coachbuilders, such as Rolls Royce, Bentleys, Lagondas did not spare expense when turning out something which they considered smart.



Peter Whenman

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