

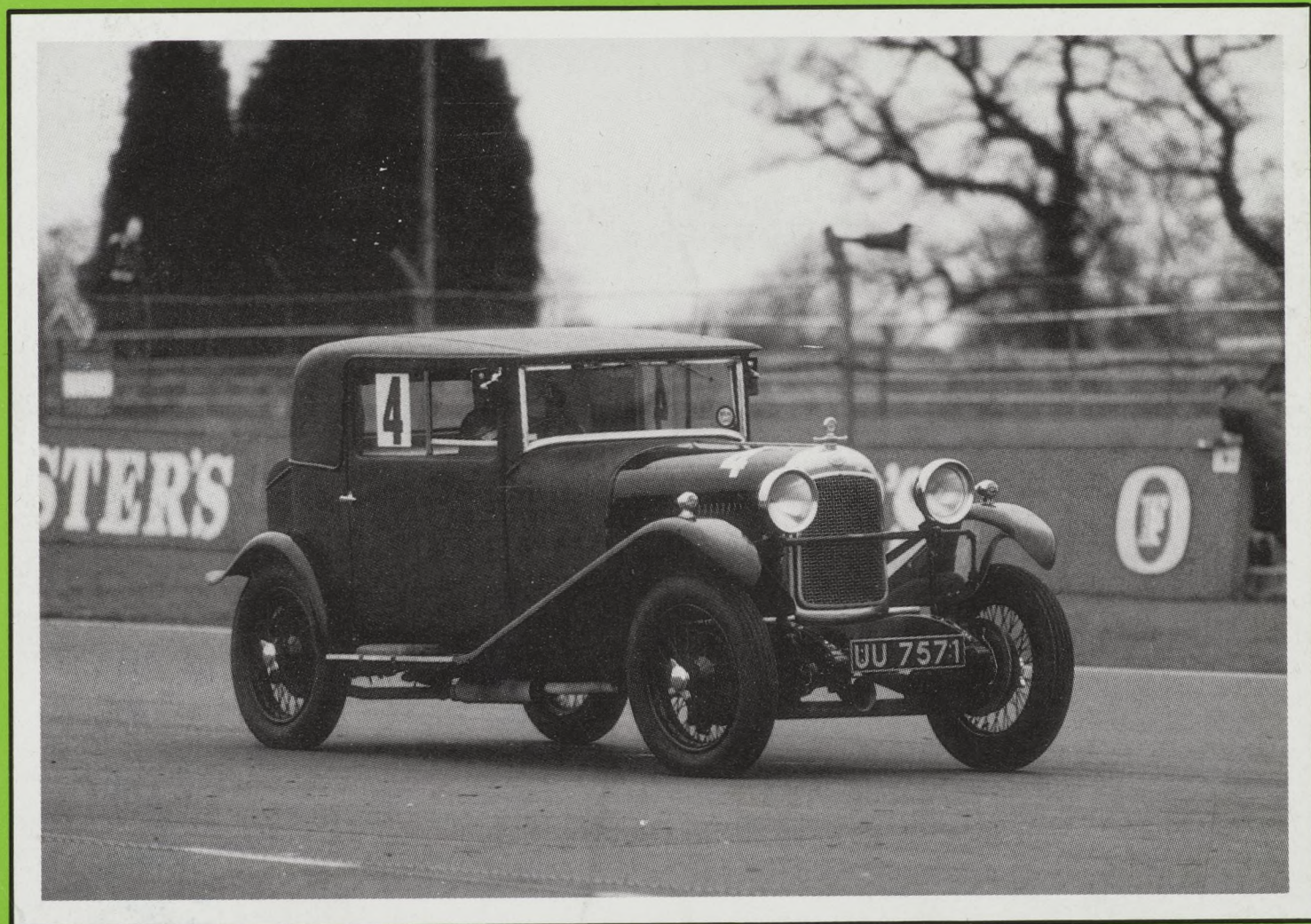
Lagonda



THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB

Number 156

Spring 1993



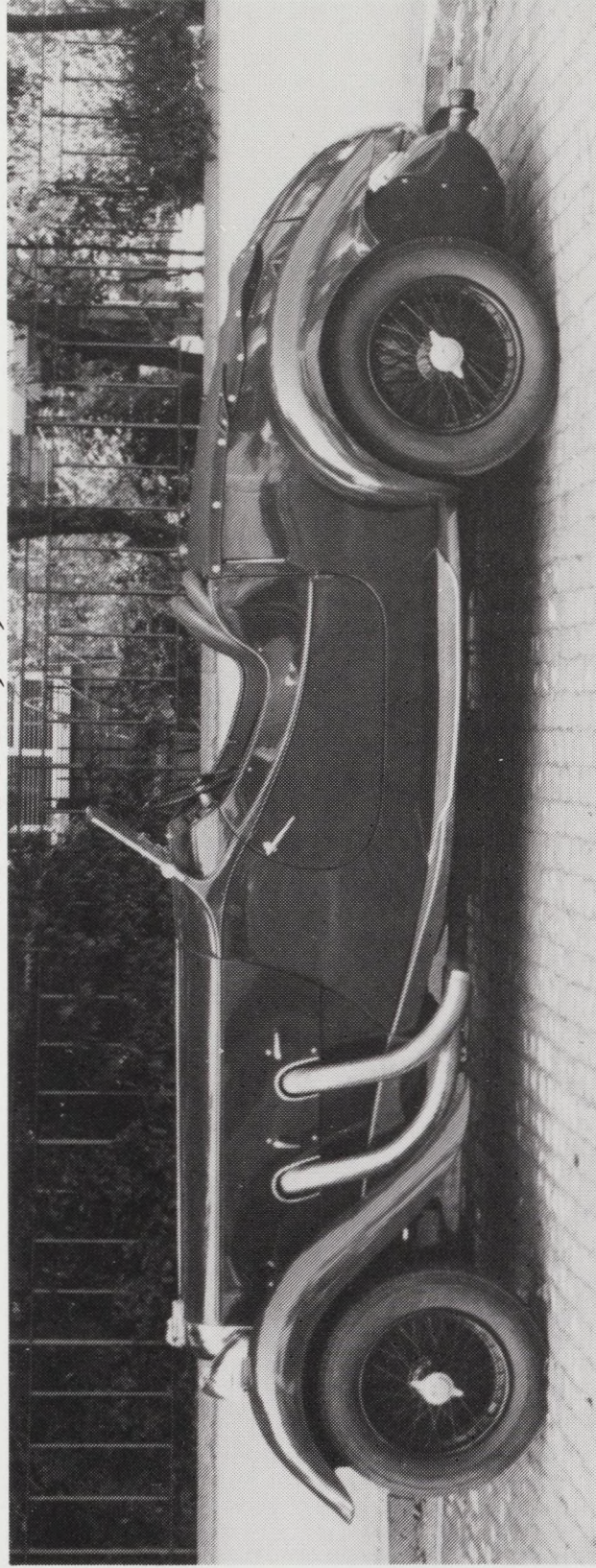
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MAGAZINE
Issue No. 156
Spring 1993

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H. L. Schofield

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Colin Mallett, (11.9 and 12/24 models).
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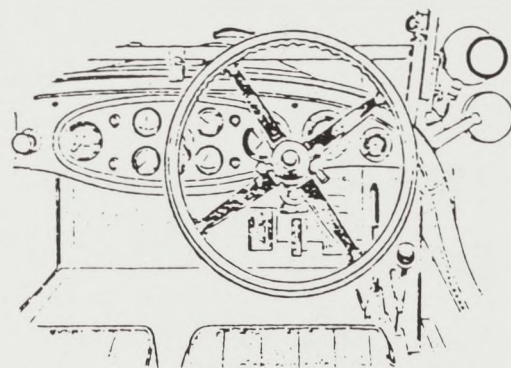
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FRONT COVER

*Roger Firth's 2 Litre in the 1994 Pomeroy
Trophy Event. He beat our President's Alfa –
the 1935 Le Mans result all over again!*

Contributions do not necessarily represent the
views of the Committee, nor of the Editor and
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Acceptance of an advertisement for
publication in "The Lagonda" does not imply
endorsement of the product or service by the
Committee.

From the Driving Seat



What do you think of the new cover design? I was warned that, for some of our more conservative members, it would be regarded in much the same way as a moustache drawn on the Mona Lisa. We have kept to the same cover design and, largely to the same seasonal colours for many years, but I have rashly decided that it is time for a change! The old cover design never properly fitted the photograph dimensions and it has always involved enlarging bits of the picture and cutting the edge, or edges off. This has meant that some really good pictures have been ignored in the past and the criterion for selection has had more to do with the shape of the picture than its relevance to the rest of the magazine. I know about the history of the design of our Club badge, but it has always struck me as odd that we have never made any effort to show the wonderful variety of radiator badges used by our marque over the years. Our esteemed Hon Sec caused them to be drawn beautifully on computer a little while ago and the opportunity this presented was too good to miss.

We have taken the opportunity to redesign page 3 at the same time. I still get material for the newsletter and so does our Hon Sec, so we hope that the new layout will help those members who are still struggling with joined together writing to work out who does what within the Committee. Time alone will tell.

Changing the style of the cover and page 3 is one thing, changing the content of the magazine is another - and there are no plans for that. We seem to have got the mix of materials about right for the majority of tastes - but could still do with more about the post-war cars. Can no-one

tell us what it is like to own one of the recent models? Another suggestion, are there any more members who own a Lagonda and one of its contemporary rivals? We have had comparisons with Sunbeam and Bentley, what about Alvis, Rolls Royce or any of the continental rivals? A chance here for our American members too, how does the Lagonda compare with products from their side of the Atlantic? I am prepared to bet that we could be in for a surprise or two if they were compared on the American's home ground.

The timescale for the production of the magazine means that I am writing this in March, but you will be reading it in May. Some of you will have been using your Lagonda at the very least on the finer days of the winter, others will, by now have discovered where you put the key to the garage doors and have remembered (or been forcibly reminded) that the pedal in the middle is to make the Lagonda go faster, not to slow it down. For the more active types, the winter brings few opportunities for competitive motoring in our sort of cars, so the quarterly competition report has been held over until the Summer magazine. Just to remind you of the joys of summer motoring, a couple of accounts of continental jollies have been included in this edition. If this inspires you to try something similar it is not too late to have a go for yourself!

Now it is normally Arnold Davey's pleasant task to give you advance warning of events, but it won't hurt a bit to remind you of the International Historic Meeting at Silverstone on 24th and 25th July. The

(Continued on page 26)

Reflections

Aren't "clashes" awful – the diary type I mean. Already we've had to decide to go to Monk Fryston instead of April Silverstone – and so on through the year. Gone are the old days when the VSCC calendar never changed for year after year, now they get bounced by Go-Kart meetings, or so it seems!

In the '60's, April Silverstone was the annual target for the winter's special creation. Meadows engines were used a bit like Kleenex tissues and most running in was done before we got to Towcester.

Enough of the nostalgia. The '93 Spring is sprung and we're all looking for green shoots, to give us the confidence to fill the tank of the old Lag (with lead if no one's looking).

I have always pumped grease into the prop shaft of the M45, with no problems I can recall, but I am now told it should

be thick oil. Is this one of those endless debates because grease is better now? We should put it right for the new manuals.

Heartbreaking piston seizures after expensive rebuilds are in the news at present. Whilst I would not dare to comment on individual cases, a general point which seems to come out is that a lot more clearance is required for long stroke engines than for modern designs.

Well, your Committee has toiled tirelessly through the long winter nights to provide spares, communications and events for your Lags and hope you can avoid enough "clashes" to join in a few. Do then come to the AGM Weekend in September for the grand finale.

Hope the season goes well for you.

D.R.H.

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Regional Events

Regionalisation is alive and well! We have information about a whole range of events and will be happy to continue this in future magazines. Not all of the events listed are exclusively for Lagonda owners, but all offer good company and an enjoyable time.

Midland Notes

The periodic pilgrimage to Newport Pagnell **may** be on this year. I have received a communication from our good friend Roger Stowers at AML indicating that the question of visitors is currently being addressed. Thinking positively, I wish to compile a list of members wishing to attend.

The procedure on the day is as follows: Arrive at AML, in a Lagonda of course, around noon. Park in the designated area and shortly after proceed to a local hostelry for lunch.

In the past, the tour has commenced at 1400 and finished around 1630.

Ring me – home 0602 325356 / work 0509 232706.

There is a limit on the number (about 12) so respond quickly to avoid disappointment.

We have been invited to a rally organised by the Pre-War Austin 7 Club, held on Wollaton Park, Nottingham during the W/E 5th/6th June. This is a very large, well organised event, details of which should appear with a Newsletter.

Last year there were 5 Lagondas present – can we improve on that number?

I am intent on organising another meeting at the Bass Brewery Museum, Burton-on-Trent. This is an evening event and past meets there have been excellent. My contact was the M.D. and Lagonda member Mr. D. E. M. Matthews who has since moved to another location. Hopefully, I will be able to establish another contact sympathetic to our cause and arrange something for June or July.

Harry Taylor

Chillenden Vintage Car Meetings

Thursday 11th March

Meet at The Anchor, Wingham, 7.30 for 8.00 pm. Speaker Geoff Moore on 'Twenty Years of Vintage Motoring in Kent'. Food available.

Thursday, 13th May

Spring Evening Meet – Early evening onwards. The Square, Elham. Kings Arms. Food available.

Sunday, 20th June

'Barwick's Mystery Tour'. Start Adisham Station 10.45 to 11.30 am. Pub lunch available.

Thursday, 9th September

Autumn Evening Meet – Early evening onwards. Red Lion, Hernhill (near Boughton). Food available.

Chillenden is south-east of Canterbury.

Devon & Cornwall Region

Sunday 23rd May

The Claycutters Arms, Chudleigh Knighton, followed by visit to South Devon Steam Railway with Buckfast Butterfly Farm and Dartmoor Otter Sanctuary.

Meet 1030 – 1100 hours for coffee followed by pub lunch prior to afternoon excursion. Reserved parking area at pub, and hopefully at railway centre. A social event for all the family with Bentley D.C. also invited to attend.

Saturday, 19th and Sunday, 20th June

Devon Motor Show, Westpoint, Exeter. Club Stand with static display and Regalia sales. Four volunteers with cars for display required for each day.

Sunday, 15th August

Devon Driving Tests, Devon Driving Centre, Westpoint, Exeter.

A competitive and social event at a purpose built learner driver centre with good tarmac surfaces, ample spectator space and Centre Building with toilets, video and catering facilities. 1½ miles

from Junction 30, M5 and far superior to the disused airfields commonly used for such events.

Entrants and Marshalls required to make this a worthwhile annual event. Bentley Drivers Club and Western area members of VSCC invited to participate.

Sunday, 26th September

Blundell's School, Tiverton. Invitation, together with RREC and BDC to inter-school pedal car Grand Prix. The aim is the encouragement of engineering design and workmanship by junior school pupils with cash prizes for design awards and success in the Grand Prix. Each school will be attracting sponsorship for the performance of its car with proceeds to be split between Royal Marsden Children's Hospital, Dr. Barnardos and Save the Children Fund. A social event in superb surroundings and within easy

reach of members in the mid-west.

August/September (Date to be announced)

Cornish Picnic at Lamellion, Liskeard. Generous hosts, ample fare but bring a bun and a bottle to help out!

Lagonda South Area Events Diary

1st Sunday of each month Pub Meet at The George, Holyport, Nr Maidenhead, from Noon. Or organised event. Pub meet may vary venue.

6th June: The George. TBA

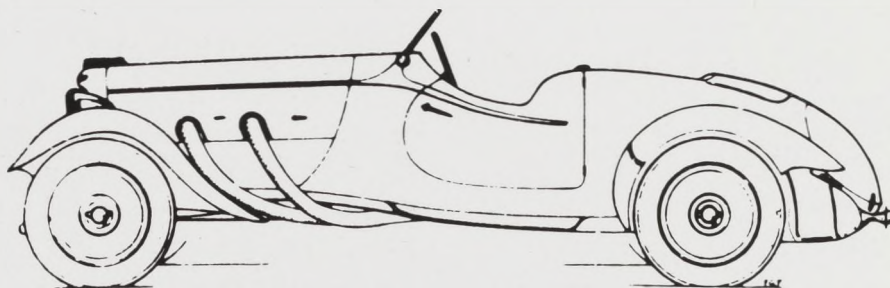
4th July: The George. TBA

1st August: The George or Special Event. TBA

14th/15th August: Thames Traditional Boat Rally, Henley – Picnic

22nd August: Fawley Steam Museum

5th September: The George. TBA



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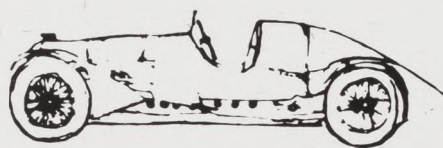
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The 1992 Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held once again at Studely Priory, near Oxford. It was a fine day, but with less dust than the previous year, so the 60 or so Lagondas and the 70 or so members stayed considerably cleaner.

This was Jeff Ody's last official occasion as our Chairman, after ten years of service and this was marked in an appropriate way, but I'll deal with that at the proper time.

It was also an unusual AGM in that, for legal reasons it was not possible to present the accounts formally, so an Extraordinary Meeting was planned for December and, for the sake of completeness, that meeting is duly reported at the end of this account.

After Jeff had formally opened the meeting on behalf of our President, who was unable to attend, our Honorary Secretary, Colin Bugler gave his report. Briefly, the Club's computer system is now operational, with all subscription records listed and details of owners' cars now being entered. He gave details of the new items of regalia now available and these seemed to be selling briskly both before and after the formal meeting.

We had been offered - and accepted - the opportunity to buy all the remaindered stocks of Geoff Seaton's book and the Club now has a good stock, which will be sold only to members.

The meeting also marked the retirement as Membership Secretary of Brian Hyett, now that membership records were computerised. At this point Bryan was presented with a tankard to mark his many years of office.

Finally, Colin reminded members that the Club was now affiliated to the RAC and members could enjoy special rates and other benefits if they paid their RAC membership fees through the Lagonda Club.

Next to speak was Ken Painter, editor of this magazine. He reported that the

magazine remains healthy, with a good and regular supply of articles, but he would like to see more technical material. Alan Brown had suggested the magazine feature an advice column and this would be tried. Ken also said that he was seeking to improve the quality of the pictures in the magazine.

Peter Whenman gave a brief report on the competition scene, it had been a good year for Lagondas, with an increasing number of sons and daughters driving the family cars. This was to be encouraged. Members had taken part in continental events, including the Mille Miglia and Monte Carlo. All mourned the passing of Dick Sage and his role as reporter of competition results had been taken on by Alan Elliott.

Jeff Leeks stated that about 13 regional organisers had been identified, some with small local committees to assist them. Local events were beginning to be organised and members were urged to contact their local organiser. To make this easier, a list is published elsewhere in the magazine. Jeff also said that he was keen to encourage more involvement of the post-war cars, something your Editor is also keen to see.

John Oliver reported on the spares scene. The Club had loaned the spares scheme funds to allow for the production of patterns for new castings. Sales suggested that more owners were working on their cars themselves and all were reminded that there was an impressive display of stock items in the rally field.

Clive Peerless explained that, to comply with Company Law, it was necessary to circulate audited accounts not less than three weeks before the AGM. This had proved impossible, hence the need for an extra meeting in December. Our Chairman assured members that Club finances remained in good shape and the official figures would be reassuring. The present Auditors, Cohen and Partners of



The 1992 AGM – what the Members saw



and what the Committee saw.

Surbiton were then reappointed for a further year.

Under the terms of Article 33, Messrs Leeks, Peerless, Schofield and Taylor were due to retire. In addition Messrs Ody and Hyett had tendered their resignations. Leeks and Peerless offered themselves for re-election and this was passed unanimously.

Jeff Ody explained that Herb Schofield was leaving the Committee as part of the changes following regionalisation. Herb has for many years played a leading role in organising events in the north and it was hoped that he would continue to do so. In honour of his loyal service it was proposed that Herb be appointed as a Vice President of the Club and the motion was duly carried. Herb assured members that he would continue his work for the Club and thanked members for honouring him.

There then followed some highly technical changes to the Articles of Association of the Company, to allow for the changed Committee structure. The wording of rule for periodic retirement of Committee Members was also tidied up at the same time.

Then the part the members were really waiting for, The Concours results:

Overall winner was Geoffrey Seaton, whose 3 litre received the Car Club Award.

In the 2 litre and 16/80 class David Willoughby's 2 litre LC Supercharged car was first and Dennis Nichols' 2 litre Carlton DHC was second.

The 3/3½ litre class was won by Bryan Hyett's 3½ litre tourer, with Ross Jenkins' 3 litre second and Greff Powlesland's 3 litre Highly Commended.

Alec Downie's lovely LG45R took first in the 4½ litre class, followed by David Hine's M45.

For the DB cars - and there was a fine selection at the AGM this time - George Williamson's DB 3 litre car took the prize.

Finally, Alec Downie's LG45R was also selected as Members' Choice.

Back to the main business, after the formal adjournment of the AGM was voted there was lengthy discussion on the topic and members voted for changes in

the system to ensure that this would be a 'one off' exercise.

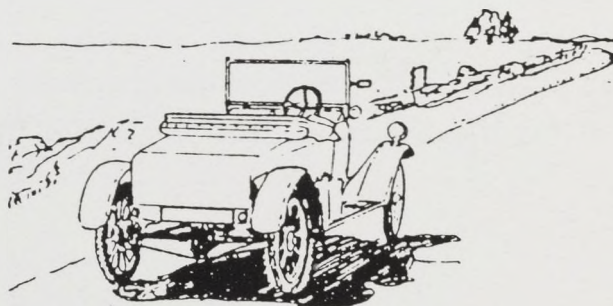
The formal business over, Jeff Ody handed over to David Hine as his successor and David, in turn, asked Herb Schofield to pay tribute to Jeff's years of service. Herb's witty and wide ranging speech recalled contacts and events over many years and he concluded by presenting Jeff with a model of the M45 Le Mans winner. Jeff responded with a brief word of thanks and recalled many enjoyable times over his 33 years of membership.

Moving on to the adjourned meeting in December: The Chairman welcomed the somewhat smaller number of members to what was, in effect, a continuation of the September meeting. David assured those present that steps have been taken to ensure that this split meeting would remain a one-off.

The accounts were then formally presented and, after a brief discussion, were duly approved. As Jeff had assured the meeting in September, the Club account remains healthy.

The amendments made to the Articles of Association at the September meeting had prompted an eagle eyed member to note that the wording regarding automatic retirement of Committee Members could be put in a more useful form and this was duly proposed and adopted. After this brief amount of business, the meeting was closed. See you all at the next AGM!

Wilbur



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As a Member of any other Motoring Organisation:

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| <p>3 Are you exempt from surcharges on older vehicles and caravans when you travel to Europe? <input type="checkbox"/> YES or NO?</p> | <p>7 Do you have a dedicated 0345 telephone number for membership enquiries? <input type="checkbox"/> YES or NO?</p> |
| <p>4 Do you receive discounts on European cover, publications and signs services? <input type="checkbox"/> YES or NO?</p> | <p>8 Does your membership cover your car for any authorised driver, and you, whatever car you and your spouse are travelling in, as driver or passenger? <input type="checkbox"/> YES or NO?</p> |

If your answer is YES to all these questions you must already be enjoying the privileges of RAC Associated Club membership.

For immediate cover or further information telephone 0345 41 41 51 (weekdays 9 a.m.-5 p.m.)

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THE NEW KNIGHTS OF THE ROAD



The cars outside the Normandy Hotel.

1992 Paris - Deauville Rally

Of the 36 cars that lined up around the 'Les Fontaines de Trocadero' in the shadow of the Eiffel Tower, at 0700 Friday 2nd October, for the start of the 26th 'Paris - Deauville', well over half were U.K registered and five were Lagondas, making "us" the most numerous of the one-makes.

Other competitors in this annual event organised by the Paris based "Club de L'Auto" included Belgian, Dutch and German entries, thereby bringing a thoroughly 'continental' flavour to the start with such evocative marques as 'Amilcar', 'Bugatti', 'BMW', 'Talbot' and 'Hotchkiss'. Comprehensive route instructions were issued, to be studied over a complimentary breakfast, together with various mementos, 5 litres of oil and exceedingly well-tailored winter driving jackets, donated by "Peugeot Cars and Trucks" the principal sponsors of the rally.

Cars departed in perfect autumnal weather, in order of age, the oldest being a U.K registered 1908 "Gregoire 70"; the last, a French registered 1939 "Hotchkiss" 686 cabriolet.

The rally is more of a cavalcade than a tough test of navigational skills and the hardest part throughout the four days was restricting one's intake, both solid and liquid, at lunchtime so as to do justice to the superb evening menu.

The lunch stop, which lasted three hours, was at L'Aigle, some 50 miles from Deauville and with the cars drawn up in the town square, it gave some of the entrants, most of the citizens and all of the school children, the first opportunity to inspect the other cars.

Apart from my M-45 'Rapide' Saloon, John Lawson attended in his fine 1932 'Continental' tourer and Margaret Leigh, with her delightfully original 2 Litre H.C. 2 door fixed head coupe. There were two



Anthony Dady's M45 Rapide Saloon.

John Lawson's 1932 2 litre Continental.



LG-45's present; a 'Rapide' tourer from Germany and a superbly restored white tourer owned by Jean Walschaerts from Belgium.

The first day's drive ended with the cars being securely housed in the underground garage of the magnificent hotel 'Normandy' in the centre of Deauville, prior to a reception and dinner given by 'Le Centre International de Deauville'.

Sadly Saturday morning started with a strong chilly wind and the first of the days downpours, which by lunchtime had become heavy continuous rain. Most cars arrived at the lunchstop at the 'Memorial de la Paix' at Caen, an excellently laid out museum of second World War exhibits and archive material, concentrating on the 1944 'D-Day' landings which took place on the nearby beaches.

Many of the open cars forwent the p.m. drive to Arromanches, due to the truly atrocious weather conditions; 30 knot winds, torrential rain and flooded roads. Those that did make it to Arromanches and succeeded in pin-pointing the check-in soon made for the warmth of the town's largest bar/cafe. Here the hardies amongst us were drying out with calvados and coffee. Notwithstanding the appalling weather, everyone was back at the 'Normandy' in sufficient time to prepare for the reception dinner at the Casino in Deauville.

Sunday morning was entirely devoted to preparing for the mid afternoon 'Concours d'Elegance' and this required herculean efforts from all the crews owing to the previous days accumulation of mud, externally and water, internally. The days was dry but very cold and extremely windy so that the programmed 'fly-in' of vintage aeroplanes to Deauville race-course, to coincide with the 'Concourse d'Elegance', sadly was a non-starter, or rather a non-flyer. A solitary 'Morane' bi-plane made a few low passes, watched by many, all like me I'm sure, with hearts in their mouths, at the antics of a "'sporting" pilote de l'avion' - crossed controls, 50 knots of wind and severe turbulence!

The organisers had erected a large marquee and put on a splendid buffet lunch together with unceasing top-ups of good wine, to fortify the spirit for the afternoon's concours. Period costumes were everywhere to be seen and a witness to these goings on could well have imagined himself in a time-warp.

Fortitude, in the face of the bitter wind, was overwhelmingly displayed by competitors and spectators alike but most noticeably by the ladies in the competition, many of whom, like my co-pilot - Lizzy Scott-Moncrieff, wore diaphanous, flapper, mid-twenties dresses and uncomplainingly strutted and posed before the judges, striving for the coveted 'Grand-Prix'. A gala evening followed at the Casino during which the many prizes were distributed, the 'Grand Prix' being a magnificent suite of matching leather luggage donated by 'Gucci', a co-sponsor.

A feature of the rallies (four per year) of the 'Club de L'Auto' is that no-one seems to be really sure as to the points tally or who won what and why. Nevertheless, everyone wins something and the welcome given to overseas competitors is most marked and sincerely meant.

A late brunch on Monday 5 October followed by a fast drive in convoy to the Channel Ports for the early evening ferries, brought to an end a well-organised and most enjoyable 'Paris - Deauville'. A last minute stop for a dozen oysters and a glass or two of Muscadet, much of which re-appeared later due to a force 8 gale in the Channel, completed the long weekend.

**Anthony R. Dady D-31 and
Lizzy Scott-Moncrieff**



D. B. Matters

Front Wheel Bearing Maintenance

During the annual maintenance on my DB 3 Litre, I discovered a worn front wheel bearing. Stripping off the brake drum I anticipated a similar operation to other vehicles. It was not – much more simple in fact.

Remove the brake drum by removing the split pin and releasing the nut.

The inner ball race is enclosed, in the drum, by a bearing cap held by 5 bolts. Release the tabs and the bolts, lightly tap the cap and remove. The ball race can now be examined/replaced.

Access to the outer bearing is more simple – remove the circlip and lift it out. Note the position of the tapered spacer between the two bearings.

Tools required: Hub drawer, to remove the brake drum and circlip pliers.

No special knowledge required.

DB 3 Litre Engine/Gearbox Removal

A broken circlip in the gearbox necessitated an engine/gear box removal. A new experience for me – how can it be done easily or rather with least difficulty. Whilst I have lifting gear that can cope, the problem lay in the height required to clear the body bearing in mind that as the load is taken off the chassis, the body rises, on its suspension.

Close inspection indicated that it would lower into the inspection pit if the steering rack was removed.

After dismantling the necessary controls; radiator; manifolds; prop shaft etc., I removed the rack – a relatively simple operation. Remember though not to turn the steering wheel or rack after dismantling or you might end up with full lock to the left of one turn and right of five turns.

Taking the weight of the unit, lift and pull forward to clear the G/B tail from the chassis. Beware any components/wiring running along the bulkhead likely to be fouled by the rear of the engine as it tilts downwards.

I used a second set of lifts at this stage to enable me to control the angle of tilt.

Having raised it high and forward enough to clear chassis, mountings etc., lower at about 45 degrees (looks like the Titanic).

Prior to the tail reaching the floor, place something under it to aid sliding – I seconded my son's roller skates.

Extraction and replacement was accomplished without any hitches. Much better, I feel, than having that lump hanging from the ceiling whilst the car is moved to and fro.

H.T.

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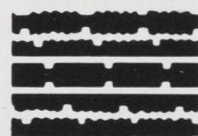


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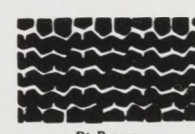
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French Leave In 1927 2 - Litre 14/60 Semi-Sports Tourer

After something like two years away with David Ayre, my 3-litre Tourer finally came back early this summer. It was and is a magnificent creation and Jan, my wife, and I set about getting it ready to take to France for four weeks or so in late May to show it to the world and enjoy its return. Jan is a professional water colourist, while I do my best with oils, and we planned this trip so that we could put together a decent body of work to bring back for an exhibition at the end of June. The timing allowed us to conclude our stay in France with the anniversary of the D-Day landings in Normandy and attend the Dedication of a memorial to the Regiment that I served in long after the War, during National Service, The 4th/7th Royal Dragoon Guards. It was indeed a very moving occasion, and as it turned out was the last event that the Regiment organised before being amalgamated in July of this year to become The Royal Dragoon Guards.

So, with a lot to look forward to, we finally packed the Lagonda for the trip. This is where we hit the first snag. Have you tried to fit all the paraphernalia for a month away from home into a T2 body with no luggage rack? If you have, now add to the normal holiday clobber the masses of painting gear, easels, canvases, blocks of heavy water colour paper, stools etc. and you will begin to understand why this little piece is headed '... 14/60'. The car we finally packed to the gunwales was dear old KW 1805, a 1927 Semi-Sports Tourer (see p. 62 Seaton!). My tubes of paint live in a delapidated old Hong-Kong Picnic basket inherited from a great aunt who used to paint and that was strapped to the driver's side running board. The trunk on the back was full of a mixture of clothes, tools, painting stuff and spare parts. The enormous rear space took everything else. That included non-artistic essentials like a bowler hat and a

rolled umbrella plus suit and black shoes for me to wear for the march behind the Band to the Memorial in Creully, to say nothing of Jan's large and beautiful hat and bits and pieces. There simply would not have been a hope of fitting all our accoutrements into the 3-litre as well as ourselves. A further reason if one were needed was the width, and therefore shoulder room, of the body and the bench front seat, both of which made us more comfortable than the narrow and bucket seated alternative, and sitting a little bit more upright rests the throttle foot better than sitting low with your feet straight out. If you are me!

The decision to use the 14/60 was taken in just enough time for me to pull the clutch apart, reline it and replace the withdrawal bearing. I got landed with this because, despite working perfectly well most of the time, it started to squeal when you put the pedal down, and then bind up and either leap forward or stall, depending how the traffic or the driver felt at the time. I was warned that getting the clutch out of a two litre is one of those jobs that ought to be easy, but isn't because bits will just not come out of the spaces available to say nothing of going back. The really excellent news for those privileged few who have 14/60's is that, since this was the car and chassis for which the 2-litre running gear was originally designed, the whole thing comes apart with ease and the exercise was not hard at all. I still have no idea what was squealing and binding with that, but it doesn't happen now, so I feel well rewarded.

With the night ferry from Poole to Cherbourg to catch, and no desire to do the journey on headlights, we set off from Somerset in the late evening, photo's taken, waves and kisses exchanged and glad to be on our way. It was while enjoying the scent of an early summer evening and

listening to the sounds of appreciative wildlife as it saluted the passing Lagonda that the first heart-stopping event occurred. A loud pinging clanging noise as of a very large piece of spring steel going off duty, followed by the sight of something scything through the verge as I sped by. Disaster. Stop. Get out. Open Bonnett. Shame. There on the bonnet landing board are two extremely large spanners. The third, even larger, is missing. Clearly I had forgotten to put them away after tightening up everything in sight. False alarm, and the search for the flying spanner was a failure. This whole event was doubly shaming since I had lost a smaller one left on the running board on my trial run down in Penzance where I had done the clutch under the eagle eye of Bentley-man Keith Hodgkinson only a few days earlier.

I do recommend the Brittany Ferries from Poole to Cherbourg particularly the overnight ones. What you do is this: first make sure that you have a cabin, they are well worth the price: the management will wake you in plenty of time to get off for a very early start. You are on the road by about 6 O'Clock French time, which of course still feels like the 5 O'Clock that it really is. All very efficient and smooth. However, what you really do is park your Lagonda and go to bed. You do absolutely nothing else. When some well meaning fellow who must have lost his way tries to wake you at about 3 O'Clock, you ignore him. You also ignore your wife's suggestion that he may be trying to tell you something. Furthermore, you also fail to hear the thunderous noise over your head and the loud speaker that says in very French sounding English "Druvvair of Keh Veh Eye, It Aw Fahf, to Ees Otto". Having ignored all interruptions and had a wonderful night's sleep, you pull on your clothes in a leisurely fashion and take your wife slowly down to the car deck. There, right in the middle of a space the size of ten football pitches, will be your Lagonda waiting for you. Your journey in your own private ferry is now over.

Jan and I were both surprised by how

cold it can be in late May at so early a time in the morning. Full hood and side screens are pretty effective though, and make things amazingly cosy; however, stiff with cold despite the protective canvas around us, we dropped in on some very good friends, Stewart and Val Miller, foolish enough to live bang on the way we and most other people head into France. Coffee and a shave never felt so good; refreshed, we put the weather equipment away and pointed the nose southwards.

Looking back on the journey, I am most impressed with the 14/60's ability to cover ground comfortably. Whilst certainly no hare, this old lady is no tortoise either. Speed in an open car seems to me to be governed more by the amount of wind-buffetting that you and your passenger can put up with than anything else, and our comfort rate was well within the maximum available. In fact I don't suppose we cruised consistently at more than 55 and probably a lot of the time we went less than that, but that didn't stop us getting down to the Dordogne between Sarlat and Gourdon in time for drinks the next evening. Not for nothing do these 2-litres, even the Semi-Sports 14/60's have such a reputation. Hip-Baths indeed!

There was rather a tense moment when, halfway through the first day with about two hundred more miles to go, I noticed the oil pressure quietly sneaking away. Now, I am paranoid about very little, but show me a falling oil pressure gauge and I turn to jelly. At moments like this the sorts of comments that even intelligent wives throw in are not helpful.

Example: "She's running so well, it must be the dial."

I of course unpacked all the tools, put my assortment of spanners on the running board and set about the relief valve. Lots of travel still on that, so wind in a bit more pressure and press on. Put ALL spanners back, get in and go. Arguably a tiny bit more pressure for a short time, then back to the same low reading. Stop, put relief valve back, drive on: no change. Is Jan right about the gauge? Don't invite any



Jan and Neale Edwards take a lunch break.



Their hosts, the Campbells enjoy a ride.

more discussion, just press on watching it rather pathetically, expecting pressure to become a thing of the past. Amazingly, every now and then the needle becomes its old self again before subsiding once more. Should I be encouraged or worried? Eventually we reach our first evening's destination, a marvellous hotel at Montreuil-Bellay, just south of Saumur. A really good and well lubricated supper drove out worry and we rose early to continue our journey, still without a lot of p.s.i., even when cold. Good sign?

It is the sort of balmy hot weather that we were now having that Vintage motoring beats any other. You can keep your air-conditioned Bentleys when it is like that. We were puzzled by an amazing heavy sweet and almost intoxicating scent that wafted over us from time to time as we drove on south. It was many miles later that we realised it came from the wild acacia trees in full bloom amongst the forest trees and tucked away in the villages we passed through. The creamy white fronds were everywhere and quite beautiful and it is hardly surprising that they give rise to such magnificent honey.

The faithful 14/60 trundled gracefully on, putting a smile on the faces of those it passed. Going the other way, you understand. You don't often pass anyone going the same way; even a 2CV is just beyond reach. Whenever we pulled in or parked, people were interested and sometimes quite knowledgeable. One of the joys of Vintage car motoring is that it is so unthreatening and gives such uncomplicated pleasure. I have noticed that the normal French reaction of pleasure is seasoned with a keen interest in the number of litres of essence it takes to go a hundred kilometres. I ask you, what a question! Since my calculator only understands m.p.g. and is therefore useless in France, I have adopted the policy of pulling a number out of the air, as high as I dare without losing credibility. This sends them away reassured of the utter folly of the English and you are seen as endearingly batty. You are delighted to have double-guessed

them, sending them away content with an outrageous fuel consumption figure. Their gratification at confirming their opinion of the madness of the Brits completes the virtuous circle. Which helps all causes really.

When we eventually pulled into the drive of the Mas where we were staying, we must have done around six hundred miles in about eighteen hours of driving. Given such very broad brush guesswork, I believe an average speed of thirty point three three recurring is about believable. Incidentally, m.p.g. was about 25, very roughly. We once touched seventy five m.p.h., but decided not to disturb it again.

It was at about this time that I became aware of a regular broken-tooth-type noise coming from the gearbox, only in the indirect gears. This must have been because of the increasing number of long, slogging hills which take you always down to a third and sometimes second; which is a good cue for some praise of a feature of the 14/60 as against the High or Low Chassis Speed Model. I have a High Chassis Speed model as well, so feel able to make the comparison. Third gear when confronted with anything like a hill is in my view useless in the Speed Model, because by the time you have made the decision to change down and actually done it, that gear is too high. Anyway, if the hill is a long French one that is certainly true. With the 14/60 version of the constant mesh gears (only about 10% greater reduction) in the OH box that is no longer so. You have a completely usable third gear which will also buzz you along at speeds that are not embarrassing. The valid comparison is between the 14/60 grinding up at 30 or so in third and a Speed Model struggling to hold itself down to acceptable r.p.m. but going less fast in second. When I got back to England I stripped down the gearbox and found two teeth out of the constant mesh gears and I am now having some made to the right pattern so as not to lose this amazing and desirable hill climbing ability. While in France I did take the lid off the gearbox and peer about inside, but couldn't see the missing teeth although I knew they

were there (not there) because I could hear them so clearly; all in all I was lucky that no further damage was caused. How lovely it will be to have a decent gearbox again!

Once we had arrived at our new 'home' for the next fortnight, chez Campbell, we unwound and began what turned out to be a perfect mix of working pretty solidly at our painting and having a marvellous relaxing time staying with friends in a separate wing of their home in Milhac in Lot et Garonne, but right next to the Dordogne river. Colin, our host mentioned that there was a mechanical wizard but a kilometre from the house who would help over the diagnosis of my oil pressure problem. "By the way" he added, "You will probably find that it was the gauge all along".

As soon as I could, I took KW down to see Monsieur, who's name was hardly pronounceable, but sounded a bit like Maigret. However good I may have thought my French to be, it became harder and harder to understand the accent as we penetrated further down. Remember 'Jean de Florette?' Double it. Here we were deep in 'Mang-te-nang' country.

Monsieur did indeed remind me of Andre Kenny if only in the sense that first of all I had anticipated this need in the letter I wrote in the last Lag Mag and also in that he would not give up and was determined to get to the cause and cure it. Not a great deal of dialogue was needed or possible and Maigret dropped everything else and turned to with a will. We started by disconnecting the gauge and fitting another calibrated in Bar and in Kg/sq cm, which KW filled immediately and disdainfully with oil. Monsieur found another, and that confirmed my worst fears. Then off came the rocker covers again and the flow I had seen two days before was strong and healthy still. We then tried this gauge on the distribution upper outlet pipe. Same thing, low pressure. Monsieur disappears muttering and apparently perplexed and attaches the gauge to the air line. Much brain power wasted trying to convert from Bar to p.s.i.; the Lagonda gauge had both,

so linguistics not thereafter stretched too much. The new gauge will only read up to the same figure as mine stops at. Monsieur retreats again, then returns from the shadows with another and new gauge which I fit and 'Bingo', all the pressure in the world. Massive relief in the middle of which I tighten up the distribution box junction a little too much and wring its neck. Overnight, this lovely fellow then turns up on a vintage lathe, lit as by a candle, a replacement, British threads and all. KW still carries this piece as an honourable campaign wound.

We found using a vintage Lagonda a wonderful way of carrying our impedimenta for painting. She became the perfect atelier. I would tape my finished but unstretched canvases onto the sides of the car and the bonnet top with masking tape, to dry. Jan found the back seat with the Auster screen upside down to be an excellent easel. While painting, it was possible to see in all directions and we had a good deal of pleasure from watching the wildlife around us. Notably the butterflies, at one end of the spectrum, and birds such as the Golden Oriole, Buzzard and Black Kite at the other.

By the time we left, we had both done a couple of dozen pieces of work and we decided that we would return to Normandy by a round about route, taking ourselves down to the Lot and driving through some of the country where Jan had taken a horse and caravan.

Now there's a training for Vintage motoring. I can't see a horse drawn caravan without laughing, having heard all about her exploits and disasters. Broken gear teeth and faulty oil pressure gauges are as nothing compared with a horse and caravan zig-zagging up steep hills and then in the middle of the night, Poupee the horse, which should have been pooped by then and asleep, mistaking Jan's hair for hay, then bolting off into the scenery, stake and all!

It was during this part of our journey, near Biron and Monpasier and Gavaudon that we encountered the massive storms that hit Europe at the very end of May,

beginning of June. Hail stones the size of steering balljoints! In my roughness with the hood I broke the wooden front hoop. A job for Herb perhaps, or should I do as he does and never put it up? I was by now being quite gentle with the car because of the gearbox noises. We became more Semi than Sports, and despite the massive horsepower of the Lagonda, we marvelled at the exploits of poor old Drop Head Poupee on those hills, and took them with increased respect.

Our return was initially to the same friends who we had seen at the beginning, near Coutances, and it was there, just as they, with a ferry to catch, were leaving and we should have been, that the battery gave out. A 14/60 may be easy to push start on the level or down a hill, but uphill to get out onto downhill is another matter. Stewart bravely harnessed up his Fiat Uno to no avail; all smoking wheels and no movement. Uno horse is nothing when faced with sixty sleeping ones! We had let our friends go and we saw them off from their own home while we waited for a tractor that wasn't in much of a hurry. In fact we got the better of him by waking a whole gang of students who had been celebrating their finals in the next door cottage and getting them to shove. We were rather pleased about this, because they had kept the entire neighbourhood awake all night with heavy metal. There was a delicious justice in waking them with our own heavy metal.

During our return, we bounced into another wonder mecanicien who had helped out an M.G. 14/40 owner by knocking up a new camshaft overnight if you can believe it. He must now be patron Saint of the MGOC who, he says return there annually. This extraordinary chap had restored the Bugatti Royale that was auctioned some years ago. His garage was full of Jaguars and I only stopped for petrol!

There does seem to be an increased interest in old cars now in France. While driving along the Dordogne near Domme, we had to pull in to the side of the road to let a van pass. Imagine our amazement to see behind it, nose to tail, forty or more

Traction Avant Citroens, every one of which gave us a Klaxonnement and a wave. We saluted and hooted for each, and met up with them all later at Carsac. The Lagonda was interviewed for local television and I spoke its lines in halting French. There is apparently a 16/80 with a funny boy-racer body in the museum at Sarlat.

After the magnificently stirring Regimental weekend, we returned along the Normandy coast and back to Cherbourg. Our only remaining incident was the shearing of one of the set screws holding the starter Bendix spring in place, so it was push starts from then on in. No real hardship. But it amused me how people would melt away when a push was in prospect!

I can't wait to get the gearbox together again. The whole trip was a success on every level and I think a 1927 14/60 Semi-Sports Tourer takes a very great deal of beating. The French repair and very small painted Regimental flag on the front mudguard remind us of a fine adventure

Neale Edwards



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Summer: Copy to me by 21st June.
Publication mid-August.

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KPP

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Midlands: Third Wednesday, The Green Dragon, Willington, off the A38 between Derby and Birmingham.

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GF 1954 - Blown Again

On Saturday 15th August 1992 I finished installing its new supercharger and decided that I just had to take GF down the road to the petrol station one mile away. The MOT had expired in May and the road fund licence at the end of April, but before I could contemplate renewing both she needed some petrol. She was ticking over nicely at about 400 r.p.m. and sounded good, no engine noises, but an audible meshing of gears at the front end and an interesting whine from the blower.

I took her gently down the drive fairly carefully; it's cobble-stoned and rather steep; and we were away. WOW! - The difference was quite startling; like a different car. For the past 27 years, of which almost eight of these in our ownership, she has been running unblown on one single HV3 SU. The performance had been reasonable (compared to what?) and occasionally 80 m.p.h. had been achieved on motorways, travelling downhill, with a following wind. She would cruise quite happily at 45 - 55 m.p.h., but hated going uphill, when the revs rapidly disappeared and one was forced to give in and attempt to find second gear. Usually it went into second; sometimes almost silently; often not so silently and occasionally not at all, so that one was forced to stop, select first gear and so on.

But today it was different. She revved freely, pulled eagerly and just slipped through the box - and down again. What Joy!

I mentioned that we bought GF 1954 (what an appropriate number for a 2 litre) some eight years ago, at which time she had covered only 4850 miles since a complete restoration during 1964/65, supervised by Capt. Ivan Forshaw. This included a total rebuild of the engine to full blower standard, without the Zoller blower fitted by Henry Coates in 1944, but with the blower bevel box left intact. Henry had bought the car from Derrington of Kingston in 1941 unblown and had fitted the engine from another chassis into

GF, together with the blower from a 1932 tourer. He kept the car for many years and enjoyed a number of competition successes between 1947 and 1951, mainly VSCC trials in Yorkshire.

Ownership seems to have passed to Jack Allison (of Beverley) in 1954, to a Mr Hill of Stoke-on-Trent about 1962 and to Roland Morgan, who brought GF back to the South later that same year. (I have a bill in Roland's name dated 1st December 1962 from Dumpton Garage of Broadstairs, Kent).

Alastair Sproat was the owner of GF 1954 from 1964 until the summer of 1966, during which time it was restored, sans blower. I have a complete history, detailing work done and bills covering this period and subsequently, in Capt. Forshaw's own handwriting; a wonderful historical set of documents. John Cope of Waldersdale then owned GF for 19 years and sold her to me barely 'run in'.

During the past eight years I felt the urge to re-supercharge her and, of course, the bevel box was still fitted. Then, about five years ago, I decided to take the plunge and ordered a replica of Cozette blower from Richard Hutchings. Richard gave me a provisional delivery date of some 12 months, but had my blower ready in nine months and I arranged to collect it from him at the Beaulieu Autojumble in September 1989. I then set about finding out what else I needed and locating things, like manifolds, an HV5 SU carburettor and various other bits and pieces, talking to many club members on the way.

It soon appeared that my Cozette blower would not be compatible with my existing Zoller bevel box, and Jeff Leeks provided me with a Cozette one, complete with internals, less bearings. Jeff also sold me an inlet manifold and the body of an HV5 SU, leaving not too much to find. The Club provided the blower outlet in unfinished form, but finishing was easy. Some wonderful people called Midel Pty. Ltd. of Australia, whom I met at the

Beaulieu Autojumble of 1991, provided all the missing parts for the carburettor, except for a suction chamber and piston, obtained from another carburettor found at Beaulieu the previous year and we were making progress.

The Club spares scheme newsletters led me to Alan Brown for the necessary blower drive and this arrived in July 1992, shortly before our holiday. Alan was able to mate the drive unit to my Zoller bevel box and therefore the Cozette box obtained from Jeff Leeks is available for any other member contemplating blowing a 2 litre.

I must say that Alan's drive unit is quite superb. It is beautifully made, looks just right and did not cost a fortune. I am very pleased indeed and have told him so! I gather there are now more blown 2 litre Lagondas on the road than ever before, thanks no doubt mainly to people like Richard Hutchings, Alan Brown and others, who have made parts for the blower installation. I will surely enjoy GF 1954 even more now than during the past eight years; - what a transformation!

Peter Sowle

(Continued from page 4)

event this year will be sponsored by Coys, who advertise regularly in this magazine. The Club stand is planned to be something very special this year and we hope to see as many of our members as possible enjoying the weekend. Watch the Newsletter for further details.

The other Very Important Event is, of course, our Lagonda Weekend and Annual General Meeting. We will be at a new venue this year, the Taplow House Hotel, near Maidenhead and we have negotiated a very special rate with the hotel for overnight accommodation. For those who just want to attend the dinner on the Saturday night we have again negotiated a super deal. Contact Jeff Leeks for further details and remember the dates: 18th and 19th September.

K.P.P



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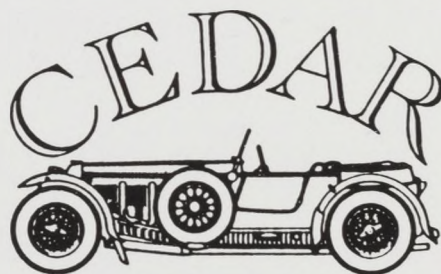
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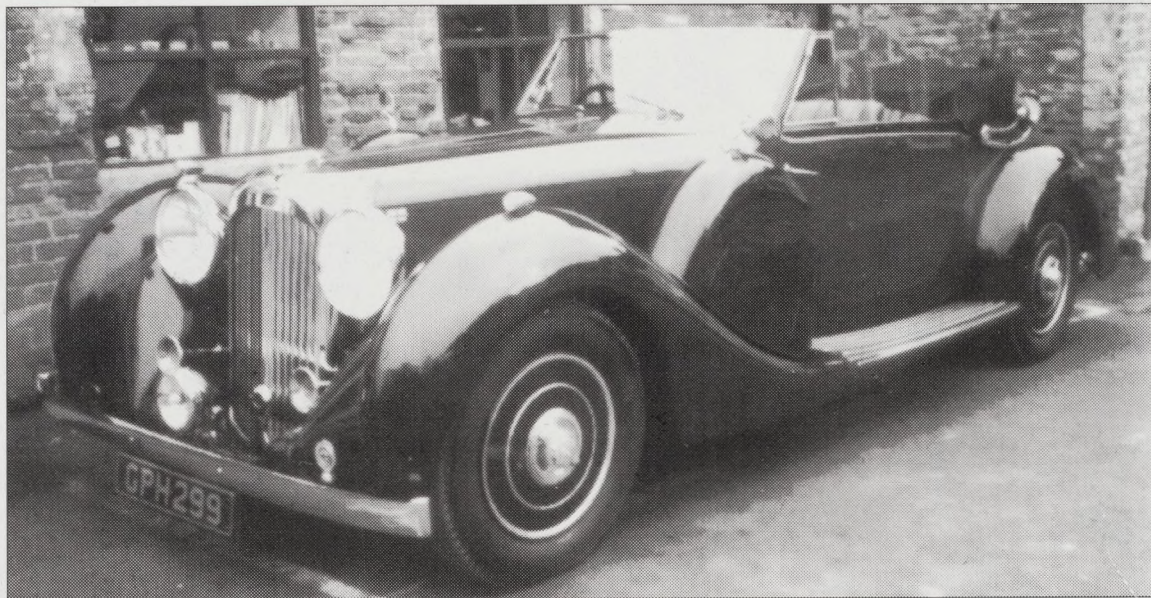
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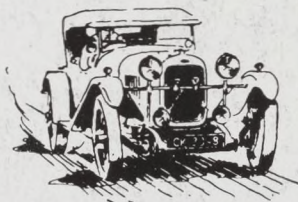
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