



THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB

Number 161

Summer 1994

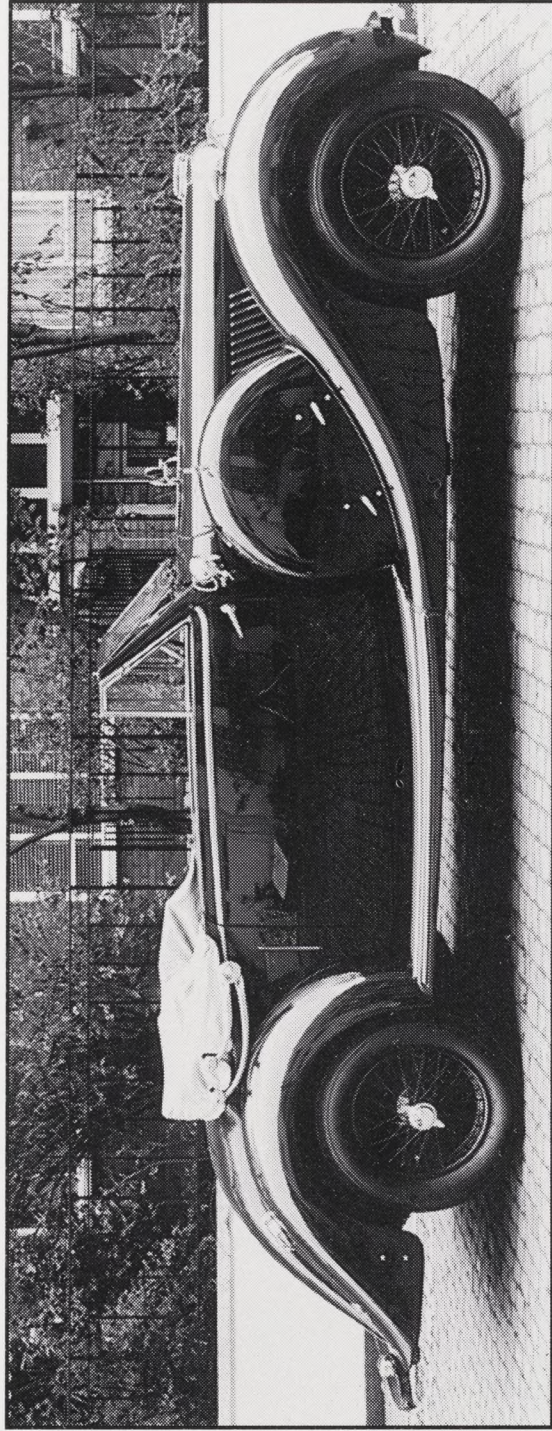


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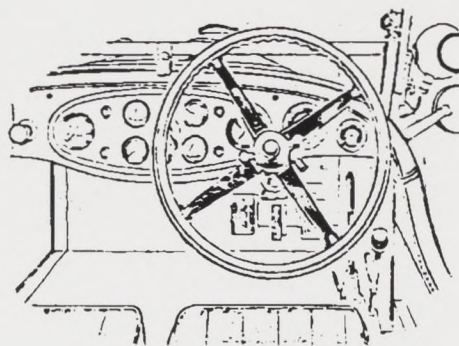
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FRONT COVER

Sorry, but the editorial collection has run out of suitable full cover pictures, but here is a splendid shot of the Club Stand at the recent show at the Birmingham NEC.

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From the Driving Seat



This is being written on a glorious summer evening and I am hating myself for having the 2 litre still in its component parts. On days like this we should be out enjoying our Lagondas and not sitting at home slaving over a keyboard!

For a series of complicated reasons that I don't want to bore you with, this is being re-written immediately after our return from the Vintage Sports Car Club's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations at Malvern. Painter junior sadly failed to get offered a single competitive event, but Painter senior took part in the Shelsley Walsh Hill Climb, the driving tests and the Cornbury Park Sprint.

Three events in four days proved to be a stiff test for the car and the driving tests were unsuited to my car as the tracks quickly became too rutted for my limited ground clearance - another good reason for a Lagonda! The event itself was the excuse for the family holiday and we camped at the Three Countries Showground for most of the week.

I hoped to be able to report on the high numbers of Lagondas joining us there and the official programme lists no less than 28 who entered at least one event. Others simply turned up to watch or to marshal, but I have a confession to make, I was so busy enjoying myself I hardly had time to look at the other cars, never had a chance to walk round the visitors' car parks and so talked to very few of our members.

If those who went had as good a time as the Painter family, the whole event will be regarded as a great success. Even the occasional rain shower didn't

dampen people's enthusiasm and the camp site was remarkable for the sheer variety of cars and means of camping. The cars varied from Lagonda, through lesser marques such as Rolls Royce and Bentley, to wonderful motoring oddities such as Bedelia, Tamplin and AV Monocar cyclecars and a wonderful propellor driven tricycle. The means of camping included the most modern motor caravans or trailer caravans, a couple of lovely vintage trailer caravans and tents of every description, including a genuine Red Indian Wigwam. As a friend mentioned ruefully, the phrase "As sane as the next man" takes on an entirely new meaning in such company. And just in case you think that I want to dissociate myself from this glorious group of nutters, I had made new furniture for my 'new' VW van, which replaced the one which burned out last year. I made the bed with the side door open, only to discover that it was too big to unfold with the door shut. The first night we took off the internal door handle, but on the second night I sawed the corner of the bed off. The bed now makes a very effective anti-theft device as the door can only open two inches with it in place!

K.P.P.

Lagonda

Reflections

Back in 1964 Herb Schofield and I built a special LG45 for racing. We had not done much research and were confident that even an old worn M45 engine was so powerful that we would take the VSCC racing scene by storm.

You can imagine my surprise when we were easily passed by a 3½ litre drop head Rolls Bentley in full road trim, and driven by a girl as well! So back to our garret in Oldham we scuttled and delved into old magazines to read those wonderful articles by Col. L.S. Billy Michael on how to get really moving. Our eyes popped out with stories of snapped crankshafts if the damper is thrown away but we were greatly encouraged that there was lots we could do.

In those days 'eligibility' was a word reserved for the upper class debutantes and we only felt limited by our imagination and cash. We shaved a tenth of an inch off the head, fitted modern pistons, reprofiled the cams and fitted tyres that resembled doughnuts. Huge Jaguar carbs were searched for in scrapyards and big lorry telescopes kept the back end on the ground.

With 120 BHP at the back wheels the effect was electrifying and we had a wonderful time storming past lesser mortals for some years. In those days the

VSCC were more concerned about appearance of the cars than originality and I suppose there was not that much modern technology around to take advantage of. If for instance though a modern production crankshaft had been available which would drop into a Meadows engine we would have fitted it like a shot and felt no guilt at all!

I suppose human nature never changes and sooner or later modernisation of old cars reached the stage where the flood gates had to be forced closed and strict if somewhat empiric eligibility rules imposed.

Even within this straight jacket there is tremendous scope for improving car and engine performance and I for one have been thrilled to watch Meadows engined Lagondas and Invictas moving once again into the top positions in the vintage competition scene.

I am equally sad to note that some other enthusiasts feel strongly opposed to these re-engineered power units but most legislation leads to division sooner or later.

To sort everybody out I've just bought a V12 and plan to take the race scene by storm again in the year 2000 . . . if I'm spared!

D.R.H.



Lagondas in the Cape

The Vintage and old car interests are flourishing in the Cape and while there are active Early Ford and MG clubs, the rest of us including four Lagondas, are members of the Crankhandle Club where members cars range from an 1896 Benz to a 1960 Lancia Fulvia.

The Crankhandle Club was established in the interests of old cars in the 1950's and while most early cars are American, there is the essential upmarket spread of British cars; I have mentioned the four top cars but the others include Rolls, Bentley, Alvis and then there are post war sports models like MG, Triumph and Austin Healey. The Club is busy and although it does not rival the Lagonda activities list for 1994, the clubhouse is open on Wednesday evenings and at the weekend. Members can count on a rally or outing once a month in addition to a monthly Sunday morning "natter" where members can display their latest acquisition, restoration or sort out problems; there is a considerable level of car expertise amongst members which rivals any of the books in the Club's extensive library.

The Club is fortunate in being situated in a very beautiful part of the world where distances to places of outstanding beauty around the Cape Peninsula are very short while a half hour drive takes one to the winelands and the mountains of the Boland. The Club organises two main rallies into this area each year. One rally perpetuates a drive to Houw Hoek, some 60 miles from Cape Town, initiated in 1903 (one of the original participants still makes it) where the rally takes one to wine and apple farms in the mountains and invariably includes a drive along the high level coast roads before ending up with a sumptuous meal at the Houw Hoek Inn, one of the oldest

inns in South Africa and renowned for its excellent cuisine.

The Swartland Rally on the other hand is a whole weekend affair requiring the cars to drive from Cape Town to Tulbagh (about 85 miles) on a Friday afternoon for a rally beginning early on the Saturday. This is another scenic rally with the organisers ensuring a fair mix of narrow mountain passes, fertile river valleys, vineyards and wheatfields to drive through while trying to keep a check on speed, distance and guessing where the marshals are most likely to be. Accommodation is in delightful chalets in Tulbagh, the centre of which comprises of old Cape Dutch cottages dating from the early 1700's and although severely damaged by an earthquake in 1969 have been carefully restored. Entertainment is outdoor cooking, traditional South African braaivleis (barbeque) and the rally culminates with a prize-giving outdoor breakfast on Sunday morning; if one chooses the time of year one can guarantee no rain. Last year we were soaked during the rally itself which was very unseasonal.

We would love to be able to participate in your Lagonda calendar and although we don't have those delightful pub and point to point meets we make up for it with the scenery and the weather (usually). Should any Lagonda members be visiting this part of the world, we would be happy to show them around.

P.C.D. Vowles
5 Marsh Road
Rondebosch 7700
South Africa

Memories of life at the Lagonda Factory

My friend Derek Rutherford sent me two copies of the Lagonda Car Club Magazine and as I read Ray Wickham's article with great interest it occurred to me that my contact with Lagondas goes a long way back and you might find it of interest.

I went to work with Lagonda at Staines in 1930. My father, who did not want me to work in London, knew Alfred Crammer - in those far off days the company's Technical Director - and asked him if there were any vacancies. "Our Mr Davies wants someone in the Service Department" was his reply and I started work at the factory on The Causeway for the princely salary of £1. 10s. 0d. per week.

I remember Sir Edgar Holburton was Chairman, Brigadier Metcalfe was Managing Director, Ted Bolton was Works Manager, Frank King was Sales Manager with F. Stephenson and "Wilkie" Williams as salesmen. Mr Hutchins was Finance and Wally Bavin in the Purchase Department. "Buckie" as Mr Buckingham was always called was the 'body' man; Bay Davies, the Service Manager, was always called "JD" and I married him in 1933.

In 1933/1934 Lagonda was taken over by Alan Good. Richard Watney was appointed Managing Director and Hugh Wheeler became Financial Director.

During World War II the rest of the factory made Gill Rings, 6-pounder guns while the Service Department moved out of the works into garages around Staines - Bridge Garage - Bones Garage and along the London Road manufacturing flame throwers. there were considerable staff changes and Muncaster House, a large property at Laleham, became a hostel for staff who were working away from their homes. I had left Lagondas when I married but came back and ran the

hostel.

During the war a doodle bomb hit the house in Stainash Crescent where Lagonda spares were stored. My husband worried about these spares and the idea of starting in business on our own after the war came into his mind. Eventually we did so and became Davies Motors trading at 273 London Road, Staines. The directors of Lagonda were very good to us; we were given a concession on the earlier 2-Litre, 16/80 and 3-Litre models and later the 4½s and 12s. We had a staff of some 30 including sales with Noel Purdy, service with Norman Watts, Nobby Ford and Peter Dabny and a paintshop looked after by Ted Bibby. When our daughter Penelope left school she joined the company in the sales department and to this day remains a firm Lagonda enthusiast.

The first post-war Lagonda Club meeting was held at our house in Shepperton. Ray Mickham was there and I have some old photographs and videos which show, amongst others, Alan Deller, Squadron Leader Powell and also one of Mrs Ball, wife of one of the members, with my son Jim then aged about two in the oldest Lagonda which was a sort of cross between a bath chair and a motor bike.

Later we had an excellent meeting in Bournemouth. Vincent Smith, a Lagonda enthusiast who owned a hotel there, arranged the rally and there was a fine turnout of cars followed by a drive through the New Forest.

We had an excellent team of workers at Davies Motors and made friends with many of our customers. I well remember Ray Wickham's generosity with presents of fruit from Kent; Mr Clark of the Glastonbury shoe firm sent us a pair of shoes each and a further pair for our Chief Tester, Dunc Smith. Bandleader

Billy Cotton of Wakey Wakey fame had a pet phrase . . . buy a Lagonda and see Staines. In response to an advertisement in "The Motor" we sold a Lagonda to a customer in Sydney, Australia. He had the vehicle completely overhauled before it was shipped out to him. Years later when I was on holiday in Australia I phoned Mr Whitehead who invited me to visit him at his home on the Pacific Highway and to view his collection of Lagondas. The original vehicle that we had sold him was in mint condition. On shelves in the garage I noticed a box with the label "spares from Davies Motors". Bill Warwick also had a Lagonda. He first visited us at Staines when he was Master on the Caronia; later we were very proud of him when we learnt that he was to be the first Master of the Queen Elizabeth 2.

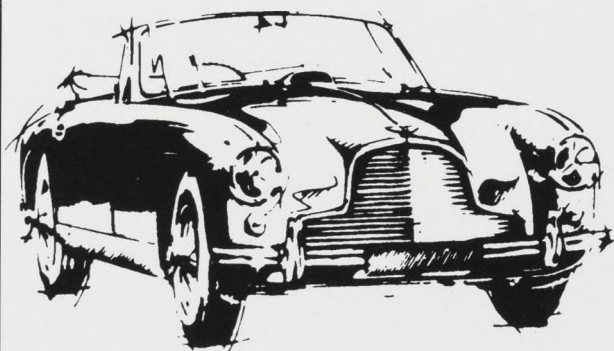
We retired in 1965. Our contact with Lagondas was renewed in June 1987 when my daughter and I arranged a reunion with the men who had worked with us at Davies Motors, Staines, and their families. During the afternoon Alec Downie and a friend brought in their Lagondas which became the subject of detailed inspection and scrutiny - a highlight of the afternoon along with old photographs, press cuttings and documents about the company on display.

So 60 years on I still get a thrill when I see Lagondas on the road, in a museum or on television and I feel proud of my connection with them. Good luck to the Club and hello to anybody I know who remembers us.

Vivienne Davies



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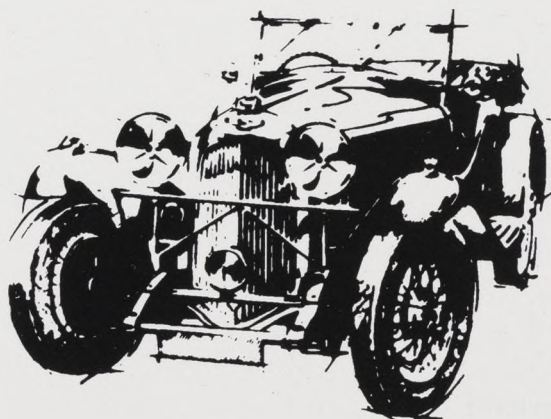
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Competition Driving

This is the second part of a series of articles on Competition Driving. The first part dealt with the preliminaries - competition licences, the regulations and scrutineering etc. We now come to the competition itself and to the actual technique of driving in sprints and hillclimbs, and then racing.

Of course, much can be learnt by attending a course at one of the racing drivers schools. There is also a school, fairly recently established at Prescott, devoted to hill climbing techniques.

It is very useful to keep a log of the events in which you compete, recording all significant particulars such as tyre pressures, engine tuning, where you changed gear, RPM over the finish line, and all other useful data.

Part 6 : Sprints & Hillclimbs

Introduction

If you have never before driven a car whilst wearing a crash helmet, you will be surprised how quiet and smooth the car seems to be. All the usual rattles and noises miraculously disappear. In particular, you do not hear the normal engine noises. For this reason, it is very easy to over-rev the engine in low gears without realising it is happening. Hence you must use your tachometer - or revolution counter. Pay close attention to it.

Look after your crash helmet and keep it in a protective bag. Helmets are expensive items and can even be rejected by the scrutineer if they have deep scratches.

Preparation in the Paddock

Run with the minimum amount of fuel in the car. In the, hopefully unlikely, event of an accident, the less fuel to catch fire the better. Furthermore, the contents of a fourteen gallon tank will weigh some 140 pounds. "Adding lightness" is essential when hill-

climbing! Remove all unnecessary items from the car. Tools, jacks, cans of oil, spare parts, can easily amount to a hundredweight. Ensure that any loose items in the car are properly stowed. You do not want them rolling about on corners. I do however keep a screwdriver and one or two useful spanners under the seat cushion, readily available for any last minute emergency. Do not leave any tools, sandwiches or the wife's sunglasses laying on the running boards! The hood and tonneau cover must be clipped down. Check that the bonnet is properly secured.

Some very successful hillclimb exponents have gone to the length of draining all oil from the gearbox and back axle. This is intended to reduce oil drag and also to save weight. It is considered that a sufficient film of oil remains to lubricate the gear teeth for the short run up the hill. I have never gone in for these extreme measures myself!

Provided the road is dry, it pays to increase tyre pressures to forty or even fifty pounds per square inch. The harder the tyres, the less running resistance and the less turning friction created when you steer. The car becomes infinitely more manoeuvrable.

Warm the engine up in the paddock but do not let it idle for too long, which might oil-up the plugs. The problem with most speed events is getting the engine up to temperature before the start. I usually run with the radiator totally blanked off with a piece of cardboard. Even then, it is only just about up to temperature by the finish line.

I aim to put on my crash helmet some five minutes before the "off". This confirms that goggles fit over spectacles satisfactorily. It also warms them up a little to prevent misting. Under humid conditions, an anti-mist preparation is

advisable on both glasses and goggles. It is useful to have your mechanic (ie wife) standing by in the assembly area, to help with any problems with helmets, goggles, overalls etc.

The Start

The start line marshals will position your car correctly on the line and then place a chock behind the rear wheel. You may then release the handbrake and forget about it. Make sure your goggles or visor are correctly in position. The actual start is usually indicated by a red light changing to green. Timing does not commence with the green light, but at the instant you cross the start line. Do not allow yourself to be too hurried and fluff the start. Make sure you are ready to go - then go like hell! My starting procedure with the two-litre Lagonda is to bring the engine to 3000 RPM and drop the clutch straight in. There is usually some oil or rubber on the start line so there will be some wheelspin, even with a low-powered car. I regard this wheelspin as somewhat of a safeguard against anything breaking in the back axle - a half-shaft or crown wheel and pinion for instance.

Cornering Technique

Whether competing in sprints and hillclimbs or in outright racing, cornering technique is the vital winning factor. Any fool can drive a car fast in a straight line. It takes extreme judgement and precision to take a car through a corner on the limit. Sprints and hillclimbs, in particular, demand perfection in cornering. A margin of only 1/100th of a second may make all the difference between winning or losing. However, although the same general principles apply, cornering technique and speeds in the wide open spaces of Silverstone are somewhat different from the hairpin bends and narrow road between high banks at Shelsley Walsh. Note that on extremely sharp corners, a car will understeer to a significantly greater extent than on more gentle bends.

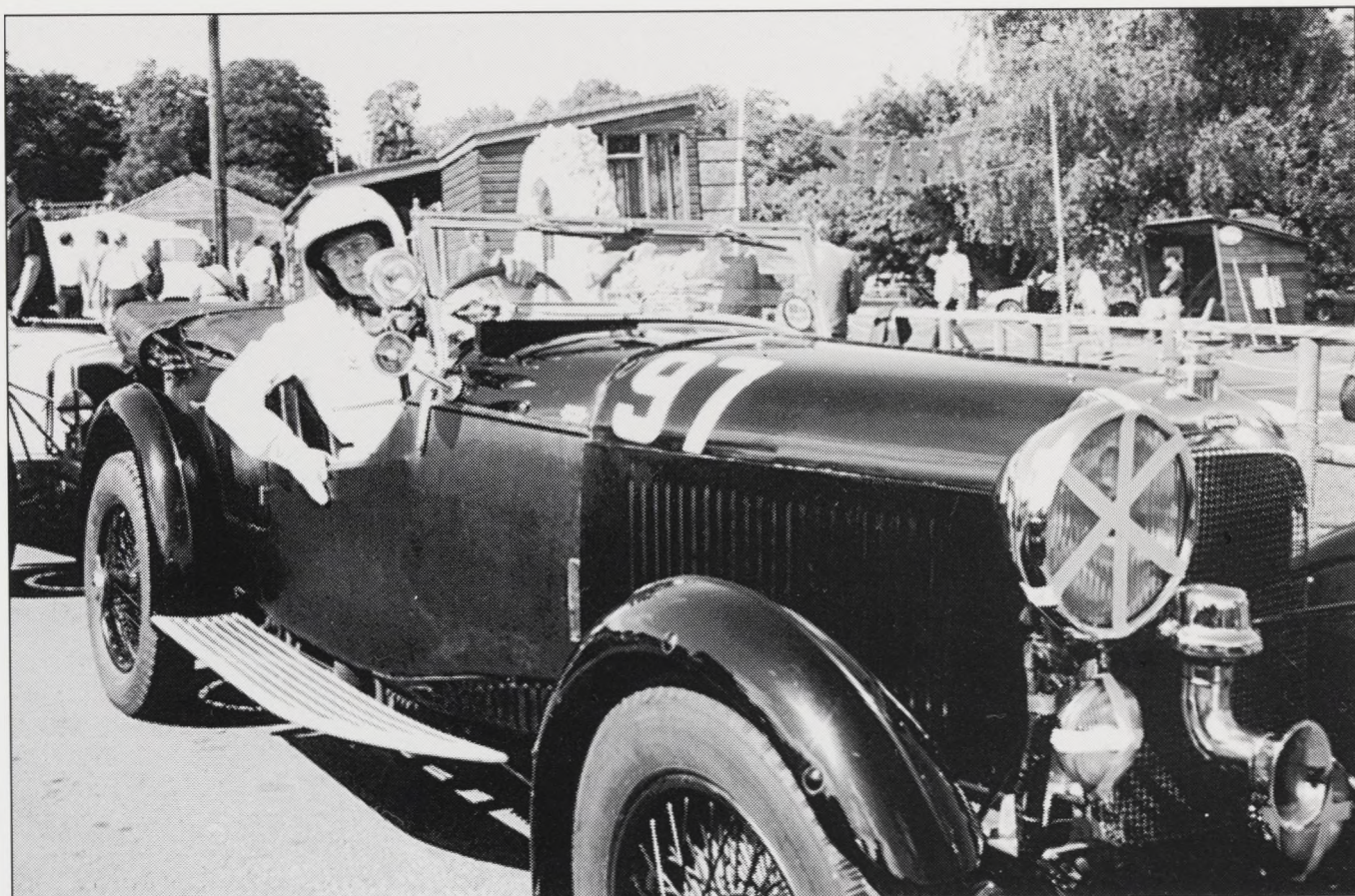
To go through a corner at the highest possible speed, it is essential to follow a line of constant and maximum radius.

You must therefore use the entire width of the road. It goes without saying that on the approach to the corner, you must be on the extreme far side of the road from the apex. Similarly, for maximum speed through the corner, you must exit on the far side from the apex. During practice you need to establish the true apex of the corner - or slipping point. You can learn a lot from your walk of the course. By studying the corner, the apex can be judged. In reality, some variation from this ideal point will probably be needed. The practice session will give you the opportunity to establish - and perfect - the maximum speed line.

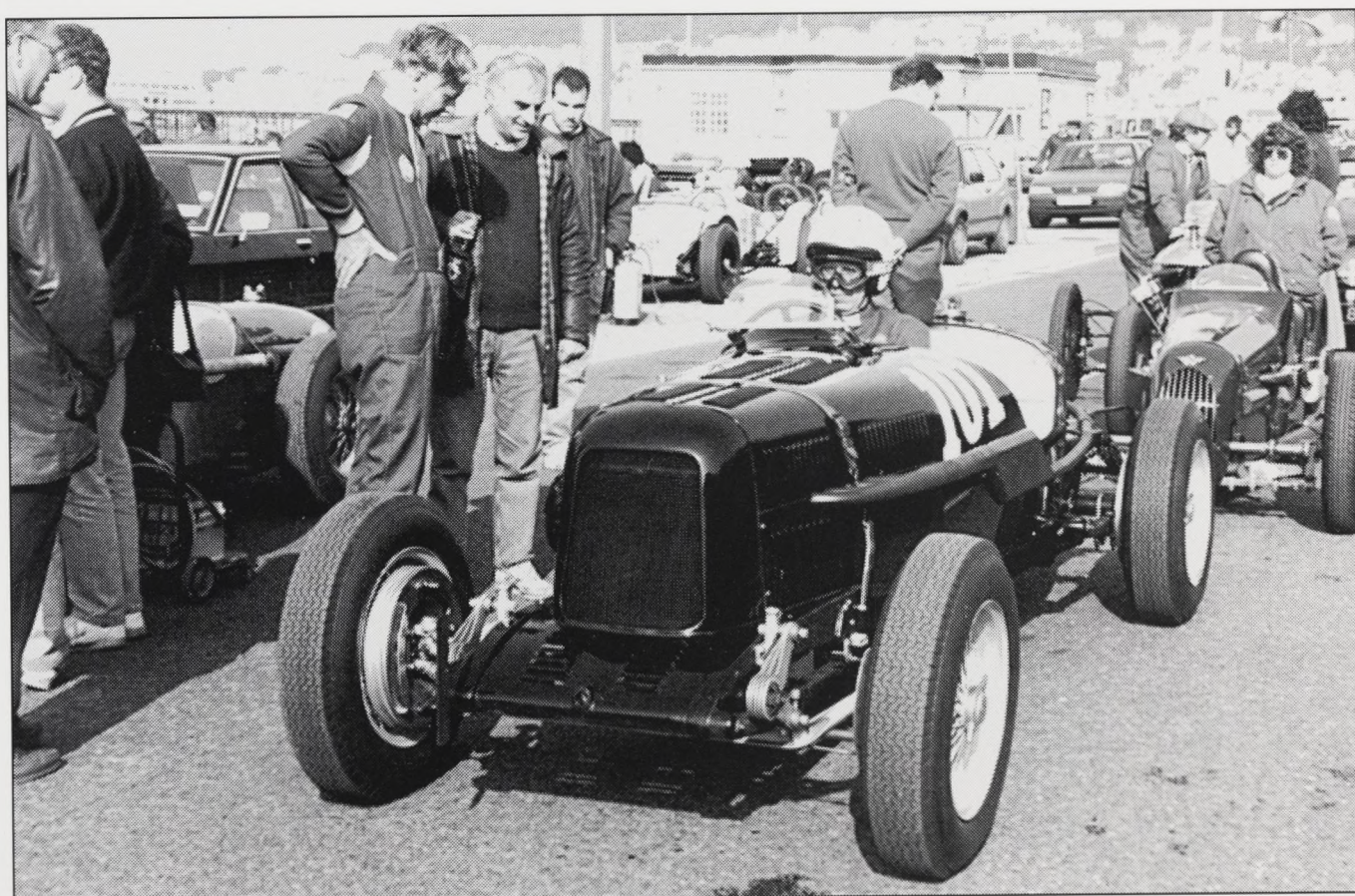
Study the line taken by other drivers. Hill Climbs such as Prescott or Shelsley Walsh, where as a spectator, you virtually look down on the cars, are first class venues to study cornering technique. Marshalling is an excellent entry into the sport and enables you to observe driving technique even closer. It also earns you Brownie points towards getting an entry at a later date - Prescott, in particular, is always over-subscribed.

After the event, it is also useful to study and compare photographs of yourself and other competitors, taken on the same corner. You can learn a lot from these. It is surprising how many drivers do not use the entire width of the road, particularly on the exit from a corner. They have therefore not gone as fast as they might. There are exceptions to this rule however, where it might place you in a disadvantageous position for the next corner or where there is a need to avoid bumps, rough areas or adverse camber.

The importance of using the entire road width cannot be over-emphasised as it can make a very significant difference in cornering speed. Tyre rolling resistance diminishes very significantly as the radius of the corner increases. Furthermore, avoid "sawing" at the wheel. Aim to drive as smoothly as possible, with steering wheel movements kept to the minimum - unless of course you have to correct a slide. In such circumstances you are unlikely to be achieving your



Alan Elliott – lining up for the start, prior to the fastest climb by an unblown 2 Litre. Prescott August 1993.



Weston-Super-Mare Speed Trial, October 1992. Peter Whenman's Rapier Special being studied by Tim Wakeley and John Organ.

Photos: Alan Elliott

fastest time anyway! The fastest climbs are usually the neatest, with the least "fireworks".

Remember that acceleration times are always greater than deceleration times. It is important to build up speed after the corner as rapidly as possible and therefore to leave on an increasing radius with least road friction. As you are leaving the corner and entering the straight, take off steering lock smoothly and gradually. The exit phase of a corner is the most important - go in slow and out fast.

Gear Changing

Some hill-climb experts recommend that all downward gear changing should be done whilst actually in the corner, the premise being that this is when the car is at its slowest. This may be good in theory, especially if you are lucky enough to have a pre-selector gearbox where a simple kick down on the pedal is all that is required to effect the change.

However, the two-litre Lagonda crash gearbox is not one of the easiest to use. Even after thirty-five years of practice, I still sometimes get it wrong! I find that the only practical procedure is to change down whilst braking on the approach to a corner. The heel and toe technique is essential. It is much easier in older cars with the central throttle pedal. It enables you to blip the engine and double-declutch at the same time as you are braking. The technique needs quite a lot of skill and practice, but you can obtain this practice on the public highway, at the approach to every roundabout.

The procedure is to brake using the ball of the foot on the brake pedal but at the same time, turn the foot sideways and blip the throttle at the appropriate instant using the heel. You will make a mess of it the first few times but after a great deal of practice you will get the hang of it. It is also of great value on the road and was employed by many of the old-time chauffeurs, who prided themselves on their smooth driving. Almost imperceptible downward changes can be achieved. The technique is apparently

not recommended by the Institute of Advanced Motorist - it is certainly not so vital with modern synchromesh gearboxes. Dependent upon the relative positions of the brake and throttle pedals, you may sometimes need to twist the foot. The technique can also be done on cars with right hand throttle pedals, usually by operating the throttle pedal with the side of the foot.

Insurance

A normal road-going insurance policy does not of course cover taking part in speed events. I have never myself investigated the cost of competition insurance but I am told it is very expensive. However, accidents are in fact very rare. In a sprint or hillclimb you are driving on your own and it is up to you what degree of risk you are prepared to take. If by any chance the worst should come to the worst, the car might suffer some damage but really severe damage is exceedingly unlikely. The risk of damage is probably much greater from some fool in a modern car on the public highway. Witness the recent unfortunate accident to Rodney Felton and Geoffrey St John during the Bugatti rally in France.

Part 7 : Racing

Racing has been described as a demonstration of the ultimate mastering of a difficult art. The exhilaration of actually winning a race is a great experience. The greater number of vintage car owners have no intention whatsoever of racing their own car. It must be admitted that there are some risks involved for every participant in a race. But every owner knows that he faces calculated risks every day of his life. Most races take place without the slightest hint of disaster. I firmly believe that there is infinitely more danger in driving up the M1 in the rush hour than ever there is in a vintage race at Silverstone.

The most important thing to appreciate about motor racing is that it is totally different from driving on the road. Even a mild Vintage Sports Car Club five-lap handicap is poles apart from fast driving on the road. The driver will have

a rude awakening who believes that just because he can corner fast with a satisfying tyre squeal, this qualifies him as a racing driver. He is probably not really driving at racing speed anyway. It would be extremely foolhardy to even attempt cornering on the limit on the public highway. Anyone trying it should be locked-up immediately.

One of the best books ever written on the subject is, "The Technique of Motor Racing by Piero Taruffi". Apart from being a successful racing driver, he was a Doctor of Engineering and brought his theoretical mind to bear on the subject. The book was published in 1958 and is now out of print but is available from the second-hand specialists. Taruffi began his racing career in the thirties and then continued into the post war era. The techniques which he describe are more applicable to our elderly motor cars than the methods outlined in more recent books. Another extremely good book is Sammy Davies' "Car Driving as an Art". However, helpful as books can be, the

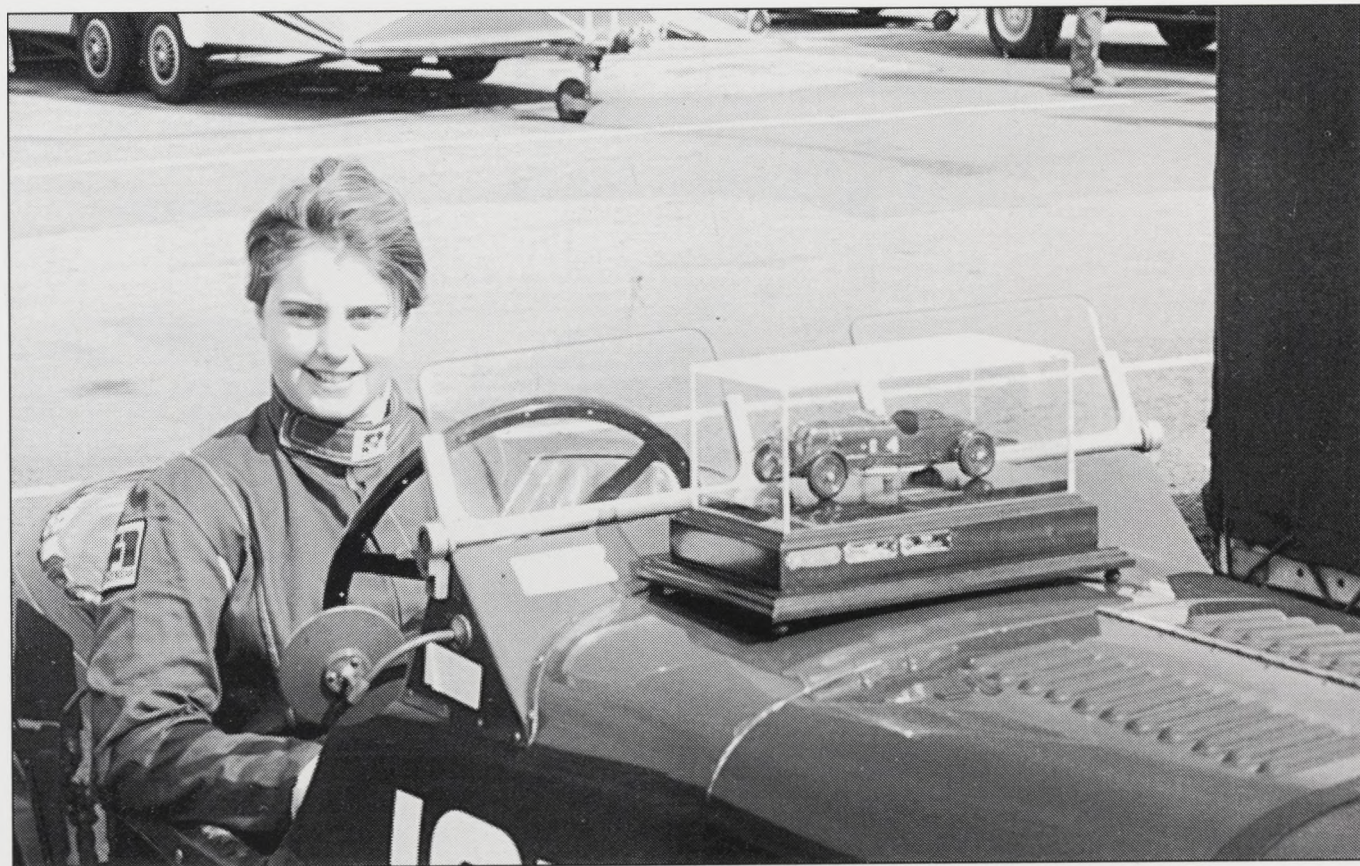
only real way to learn about motor-racing is the hard way - by bitter experience.

A good introduction to racing is the annual VSCC one hour speed trial held at Silverstone at the start of the April race meeting. It enables you to circulate at racing speed, against a set target which you must achieve in order to be classed as a qualifier. The event also includes a compulsory pit stop to change plugs, which is fun.

Before the race, make sure you fully understand the meaning of the various flag signals. Failure to comply can mean suspension of your competition licence. Do not drive using the crossed hands technique. This may look impressive to spectators, but if perchance you need to take swift evasive action your arms may be locked-up in the wrong direction. Reaction time is always stressed as important, but anticipating a situation can save more seconds than quick reaction time.

Equipping the Car

As far as preparing the car is



Motor sport is not just for males! Rachel Whenman looks suitably pleased after being presented with our Newcomers' Racing Award. We need more young people in the Club to follow her example!

concerned, the most important item of equipment is the rear view mirror. You will be overtaken. Of that there is no doubt. Furthermore it is essential to know not only who is behind you but who is to the side as well. In a two-litre Lagonda with its limited performance you will be continually overtaken. You must keep a very careful watch for fast cars rapidly overhauling you, particularly on the approach to a corner. You need a great deal of power to corner fast - and this the two-litre does not have.

I prefer a curved mirror which gives a wide panoramic view. Perhaps the only disadvantage is that the image is reduced in size but this can be allowed for. Make sure that the mirror has a very rigid mounting. There is nothing worse than vibrating and juddering mirror.

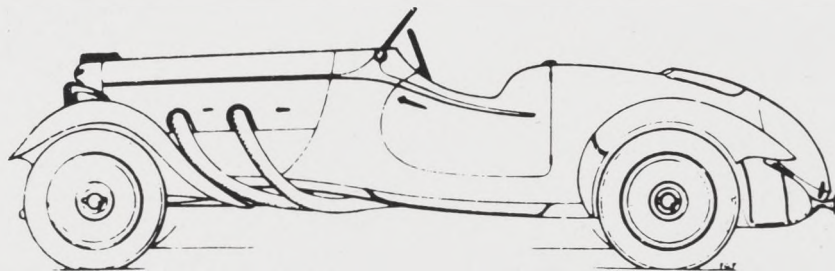
An upright standard windscreen absorbs an immense amount of power and should be lowered or removed. If you have a fold-flat screen, this is fine. I don't, so I completely remove the windscreen. I have a permanently fixed Brooklands

Aero Screen on my car in front of the main windscreen. The aero-screen is easily raised when needed. It also forms an ideal table on which to stand wine glasses during less energetic events! It is better to look over the top of the screen than through it. This becomes particularly important in rain and under conditions of poor visibility.

Make sure you are comfortable at the wheel with adequate support. As far as footwear is concerned, soft shoes are recommended, either proper racing shoes or trainers. Take great care not to step in any oil.

Technique

Motor racing, having first started in France, the Continental rule of the road applies. ie. drive on the right and overtake on the left. However, you will need to move over to the left on the approach to a right-hand corner, in order to follow the fastest line of greatest radius. According to the rules of racing a car thus placed on the approach to a corner has priority over following cars.



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He is fully entitled to follow his fastest line through the corner. However, as a novice, you would be ill-advised to press this right of way to the extreme. If another car is coming up fast behind you at the approach to a corner, leave room for him to overtake. Until you have acquired a great deal of racing experience, discretion is the better part of valour! You will also find experienced drivers in faster cars overtaking you on either side in a corner, if they can find room. In many ways it is more difficult driving a slower car than a faster car. You are continually being overtaken and for this reason, rarely are you able to adopt the fastest line through a corner.

Handicaps

Many vintage races are handicap events. You will be advised of your handicap in the final instructions. You will leave the paddock, having been grouped together by the marshals in the assembly area. Arriving at the start grid, the start line marshals will guide you to your correct position. The starter will then come and tell you which batch of cars you will start with. Starting on the correct flag-fall always seems easier than you expect. Mistakes are actually quite rare.

Handicaps are generally more confusing to the onlooker than to the participants, but are difficult to calculate. They are based upon previous known best lap times of the car and driver, or in the case of newcomers, estimated from similar cars. The latest system in use with the VSCC makes use of a computer, into which the known or predicted lap times for all competitors are entered. The computer system is also able to calculate predicted lap times for a circuit, given the actual times from another. Finally, having fed in all this data, the computer system then calculates the handicaps for the race and in theory, all entrants should cross the finish line together!

Obviously the system is not as perfect as this. There are always new entrants whose cars and individual abilities are unknown. Furthermore, it is impossible

to start cars in batches closer together than five seconds. However, even the organisers sometimes get it completely wrong and one car will be seen to run away from the rest of the field, to win the race by a huge margin.

Handicappers only seem to take account of flying lap times. It is actually quite difficult to allow for the initial acceleration results from a standing start, which results in a much slower first lap than all the others. This can make a big difference in a five lap race. Inherently, this difference is always greatest for the slower cars, to their disadvantage. Even with a simple five-lap race, I have always found it very difficult to keep count of the number of laps covered. The race always seem to end much earlier than expected.

Practice

The practice session gives you the opportunity to put to the test all the variables in tuning, tyre pressures, cornering technique etc. You will be allocated a practice session, probably of fifteen minutes duration, which you are expected to adhere to. This may not sound long, but you can wear out a great deal of tyre rubber in this length of time. In act, you could wear-out the car, so use this time sensibly. It is usually possible to fit in further practice at the end of the main session, although do not rely on this. You may also find yourself practising with extremely fast cars during these final sessions - Ferraris, Maseratis, ERAs and the like, so watch your mirror like a hawk!

The Start

Starting boards are usually shown at three, two and one minute intervals. It is usually adequate to start the engine on the one minute signal. If you should be unlucky enough to suffer a dead engine, hold your arm straight up in the air as a warning to those behind.

Immediately the flag begins to fall, you should go. Don't wait for it to reach the ground. In the heat of the moment immediately after the start, do not over-rev the engine in first gear. Watch your rev counter, in addition to the road

ahead. Keep another eye on your mirror.

Remember that the first corner in a race is the most dangerous. heel and toe braking and gearchanging is, if anything, even more advantageous in racing than in sprints. However, avoid unnecessary gear changing. Any time spent in changing gear is time in which the car is not being actively propelled forward. Do not baulk other drivers. Give way to those wanting to overtake. Do not wave your fist at other drivers, even if you feel you have just cause. Vintage racing is still a gentlemanly sport, unlike the hooligan driving seen in some modern saloon car racing. In the same way, protests are virtually unknown in vintage events. Finally, it is not done to roar around the paddock.

Events

The annual Lagonda handicap at

Silverstone is an ideal event for the first real race, but you need to enter early. It is a combined race with Bentleys and they always seem to get their entries in first. If you enter late you may find the race is already full up with Bentleys. It would be great to see a full turn-out of Lagondas for the next meeting at Silverstone this year. The event is traditionally always held on the Saturday of the August Bank holiday weekend. I have a soft spot for this event as it is the first race I ever won - way back in 1976. It was also the first time I have ever been asked for my autograph!

This article concludes the second part of the series. Part 3, to follow next time, will move on to cover rallies, driving tests and trials etc.

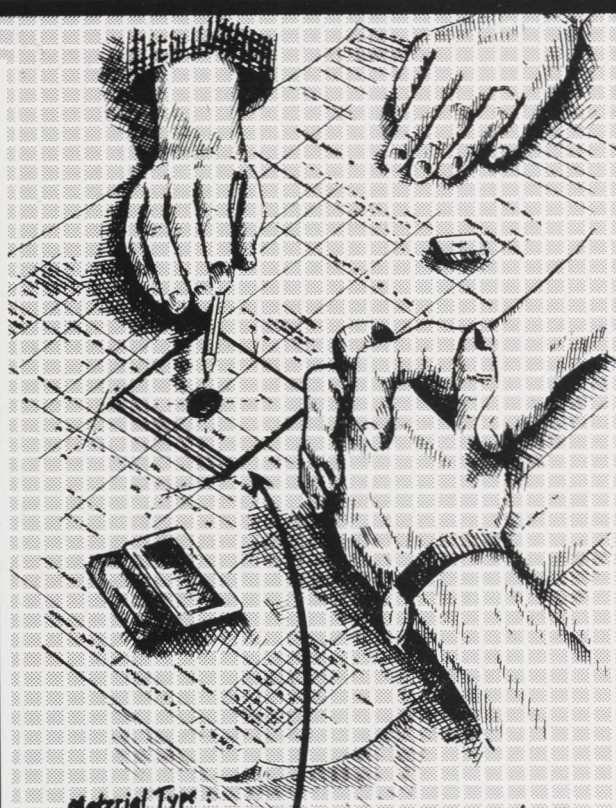
Alan Elliott



A taster for the next article! Macko Laqueur and his mechanic Luc Bottels in the Winter Marathon.

Since 1907 the name Hepworth has been synonymous with piston manufacturing. Over the past 15 years small batch production has been undertaken by the first of the fourth generation. Peter Hepworth has built up over the years the largest and most specialised range of piston, cylinder liner & bearing components for pre-1980 engines anywhere in the world.

The expertise given to each product line results in the latest technology being applied whatever the age of the engine. Lagonda engines play an important part in the range, with continual development being undertaken. To this end all new production pistons are diamond turned, ring equipment is the most technically advanced available with all original specifications coming from the company's own collection of Lagonda drawings.



Material Type:
12% Silicon / 1.3% Magnesium / 0.9% Copper / 1.6% Nickel / Aluminium Alloy with coefficient of Thermal expansion of 19.5×10^{-6} per °C.

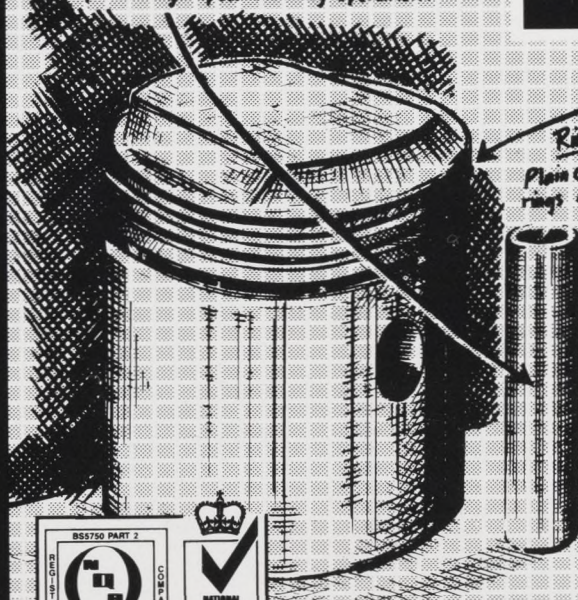


Gudgeon Pins

Extruded or fine bared to give smooth low stress internal bore diameter. Surface finish polish lapped to within 4 micro inches, maximum CLA. Similarly the piston pin holes are controlled to the same degree of finish by using special high speed reaming operation.

Peter Hepworth Components are able to offer piston & cylinder liner components for the following:

- 1934/35 - 10 H.P. 1104cc Rapier.
- 1933/35 - 16/80 1991cc.
- 1926/33 - 12.9 H.P. 2 Litre, Speed, C.R. 6.2 to 1.
- 1932/35 - 20.94 H.P. 3181cc. O.H.V. 3 Litre, special selector.
- 1934/35 - 30 H.P. 4 1/2 litre, Z, (M45) Comp HT 1²⁵/₃₂ Crown Dome
- 1937 - 30 H.P. 4 1/2 Litre, Rapide, C.R. 6.55 to 1. Comp HT 1⁷/₈ Crown Cone
- Post War DB Engines.

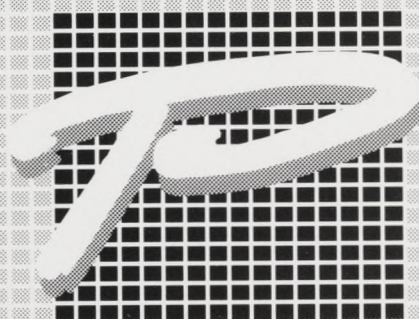


Ring Equipment:

Plain or chrome top compression rings depending upon application.

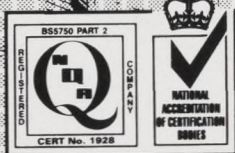
Napier undercut compression rings for the 2nd or 3rd groove - a sophisticated compression ring acting as well as an oil scraper.

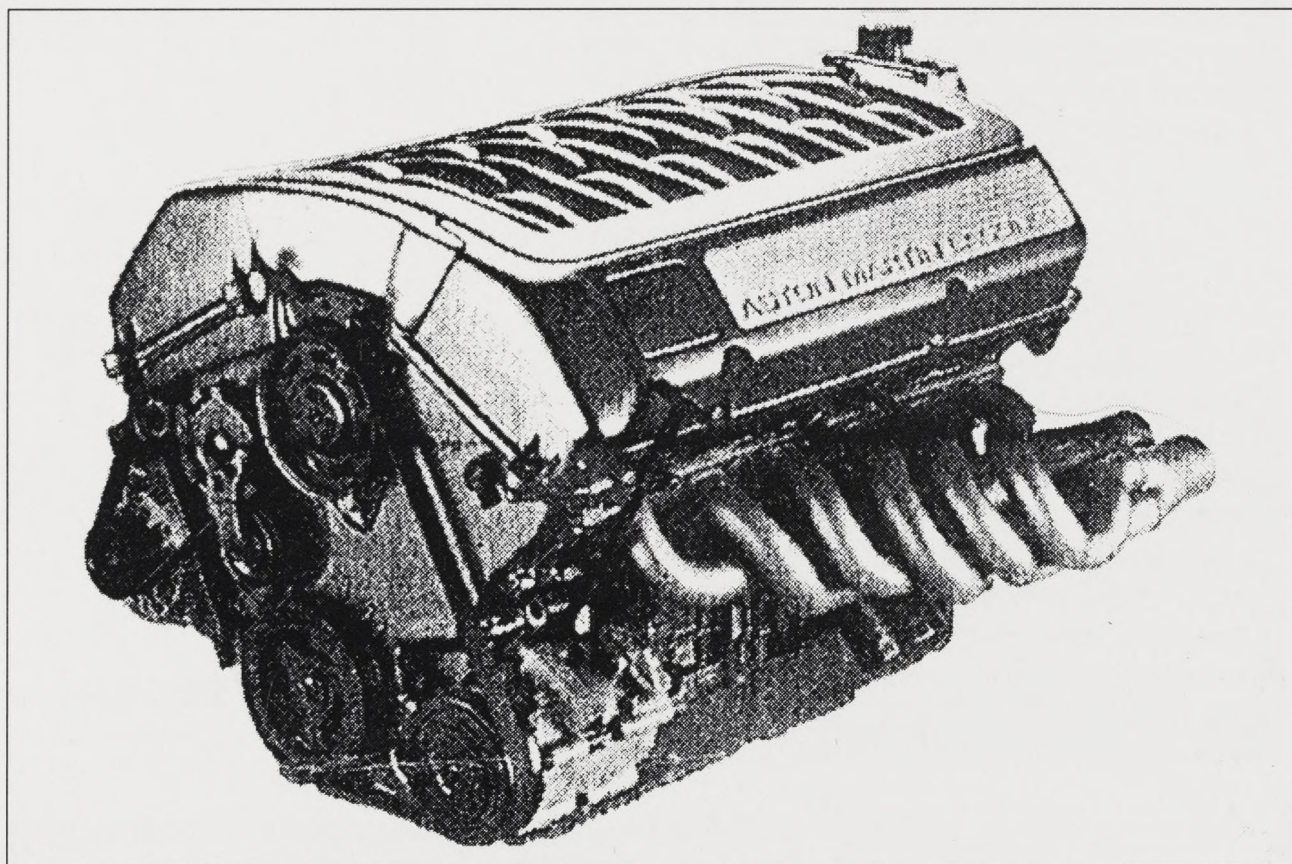
Oil control ring twin bevelled cast iron and in certain applications fitted with a conformable helicoil expander giving uniform wall pressure independent of groove depth.



**PETER HEPWORTH
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Cleveland V - 12?

This V - 12 engine was unveiled recently at the International auto show in Turin, Italy, powering an Aston Martin Lagonda Vignale concept vehicle. It was made by combining two of the new V - 6 engines being built at Ford Motor Co's Engine Plant No. 2 in Brook Park. Their displacement was increased from 2.5 to 3.0 liters, resulting in a 6.0-liter, 48-valve V-12 rated at 400 horsepower at 6,000 revolutions per minute (rpm) and 400 foot-pounds of torque at 4,500 rpm. Ford has not announced any plans to produce the V - 12 engine, but Cleveland will be making the 3.0-liter V-6.

LAST COPY DATES

The deadlines for copy to be included in the remaining issues for 1994 are as follows:

Autumn..... Monday, 19 September

Winter.....Monday, 19 December

Please ensure any articles to be included are with me by these dates.

Thank you

K.P.P.



PUB MEETS

Northern: Third Thursday, The Great Western, Standedge. Between Oldham and Huddersfield, past Floating Light towards Huddersfield. Details, Roger Firth, Tel 061 303 9127.

Home Counties: First Sunday, The Stonor Arms, Stonor, Nr Henley, from noon. B480, 3 miles off the A423 from Henley. Details Jeff Leeks, Tel 0494 563188.

East Kent: First Sunday, Griffin's Head, Chillenden, Nr Canterbury, from noon. Details, John Anderson, Tel 0304 61309.

Dorset: First Thursday, The Wise Man, West Stafford. 3 miles E of Dorchester, MR 726895. Details Dudley Palmer, Tel 0205 788458, or Peter Dobson, Tel 0202 731265.

Somerset: First Tuesday, The Strode Arms, West Cranmore, 3 miles E of

Shepton Mallett. MR 668432 (VSCC Meeting)

Third Thursday, The Rose and Crown, East Lambrook, 5 miles E of Ilminster. MR 423190.

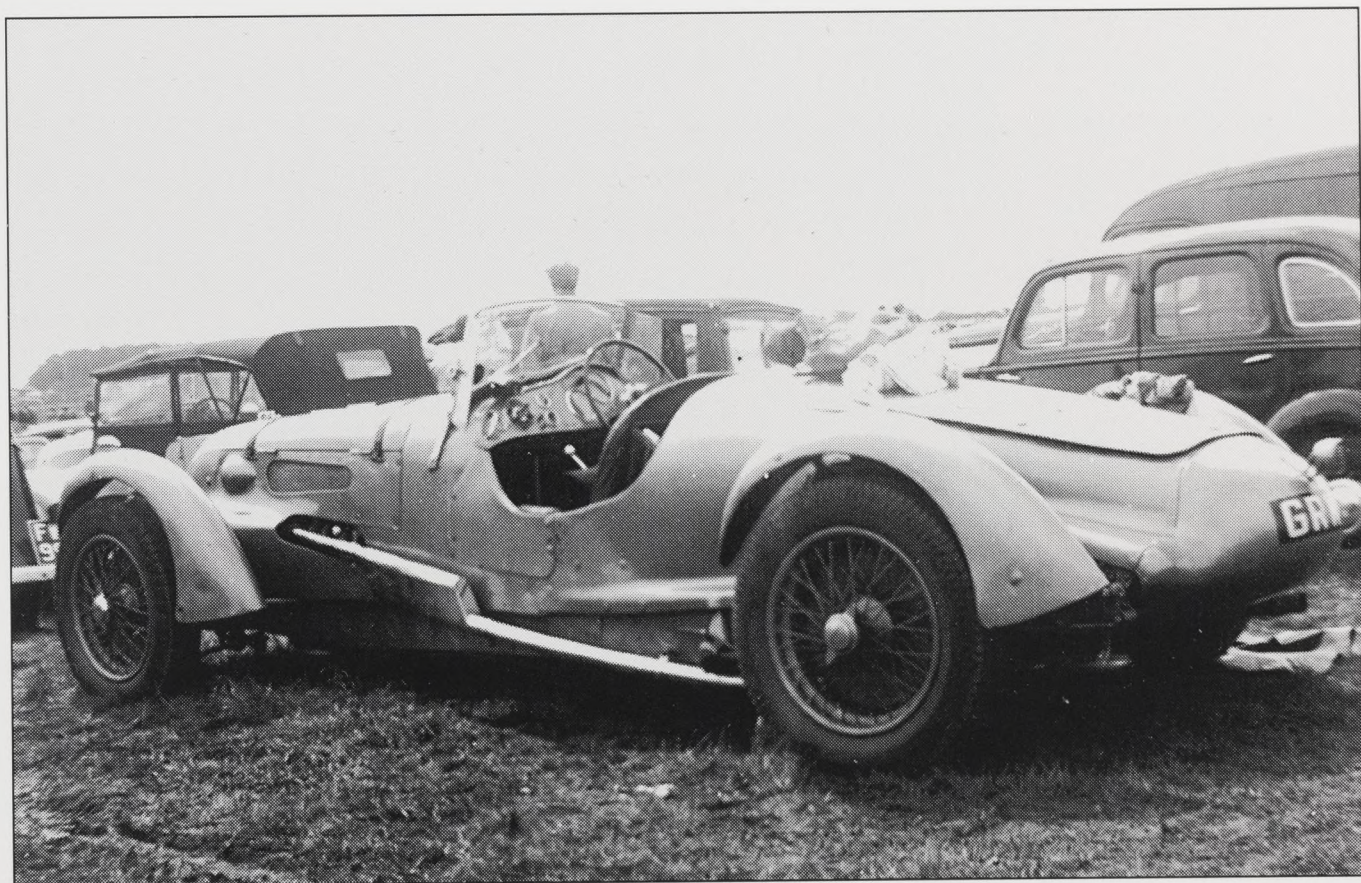
East Anglia: First Friday, Royal Oak, Barrington, Cambs. Details John Stoneman, Tel 0353 649494.

Second Wednesday, The Scole Inn, Scole, near Diss (VSCC Meeting).

Third Wednesday, The Bridge Hotel, Clayhythe, Waterbeach Cambs. Details, John Stoneman 0353 649494.

First Thursday, The White Horse, Edwardstone, MR95 2428. Details James Holland 0787 228241 or Charles Ping 0787 310559. Pub Tel 0787 211211 (Grid ref: 952428).

North East: First Wednesday, The Triton, Brantingham, near the A63T.



The V12 team cars were damaged in a bombing raid during the war. This one was pictured at Silverstone in 1952 before its present perfect replica body was created.



Northern Driving Tests, Elvington 1994. Les Simpson (right) acts as Marshal and our Chairman (left) acts as Referee.



Evelyn Clayton and John Townsley spectating at the Tests.

Lagondas in Russia

As promised, more on Lagondas in Russia, and I suspect, as much as we are going to get within this particular exercise. The patience of my researchers has been exhausted with my demands on this apparently eccentric task. With everything being in Cyrillic script, I can do nothing on my own, of course.

First the photographs. My collaborators in the St Petersburg Imperial Photographic Archive were successful in locating a number of plates of competing cars in the 1910 period, including (amazingly) two of the 1910 Reliability Trial 4 cylinder Lagonda, the reputed Winning Car between St Petersburg and Moscow driven by Wilbur Gunn and crewed by Bert Hammond and a colleague plus an Imperial Army officer. One is a splendid half plate with bags of detail showing Wilbur looking just like our late lamented Dick Sage in his military cap and moustache, about to set off from the start among the well wishers. The other is one of a panel of four small snaps, showing the Lagonda among other competing cars in the Exhibition Hall in Moscow, part way through the event.

Secondly, the journalistic archives in the State reference library produced two pages and a route map in the "Automobile" of the period, plus an advertising announcement referring to Lagondas. The texts are confusing, as Sod's Law would dictate. The caption of Lagonda no 38 from the Photographic Archive refers to the Winning Car, confirming our own British Folklore, but the entry and finishing lists refer to a much longer trial covering 2000 versts (about 2000) from St Petersburg through Pskov, Vitevsk, Gomel to Kiev, and then back, diverting eastwards to Roslavl, Moscow and Bologoye before returning to the Imperial capital. The confusions

are twofold, as the entries are not listed in running order (Gunn is no 42), and the finishing order lists Gunn as no 38 as clearly painted on his radiator, but as Retired! It is not even likely that he won the St Petersburg to Moscow section, as that would have been right at the end of the event (out of 14 days including stops) by which time he had presumably fallen out.

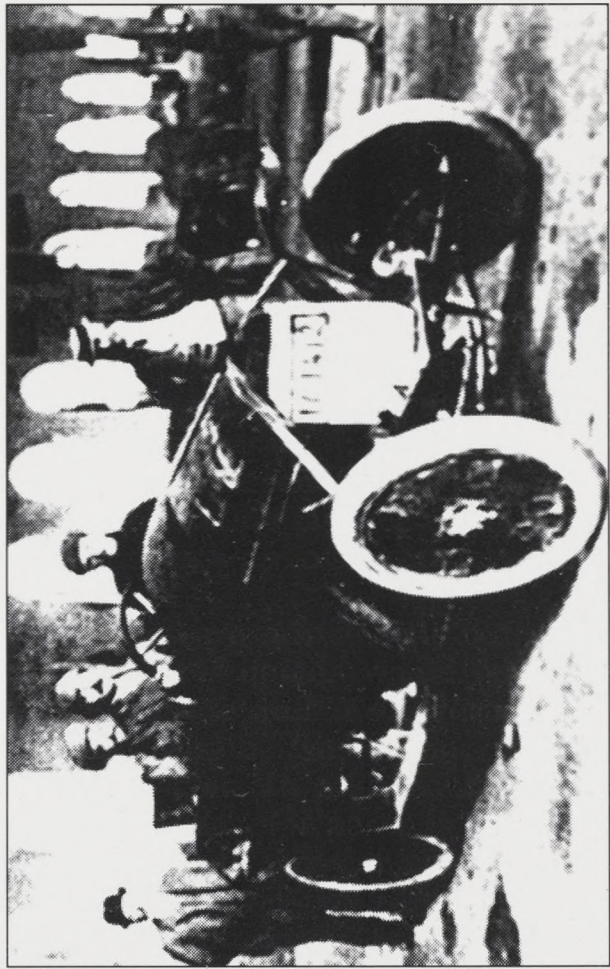
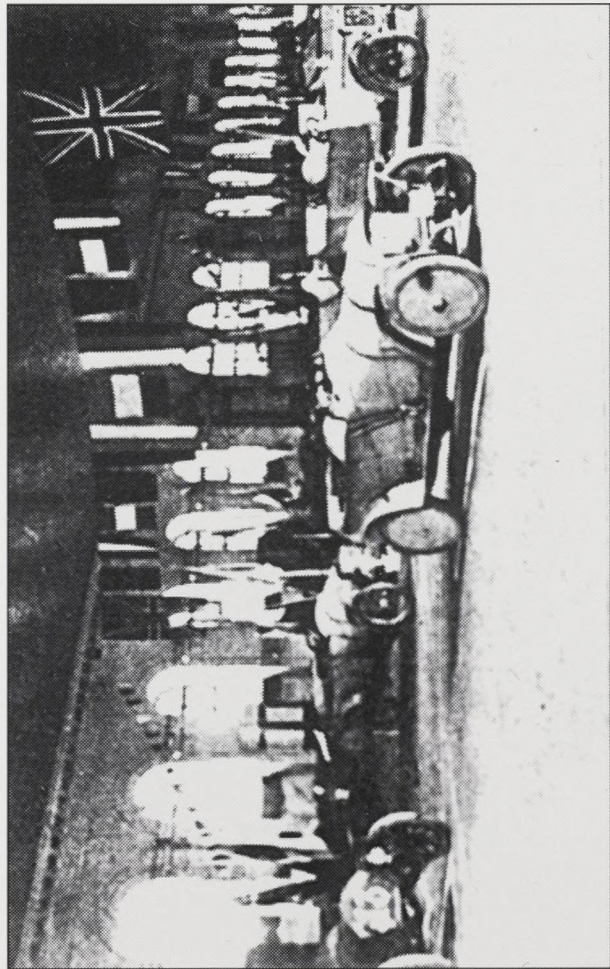
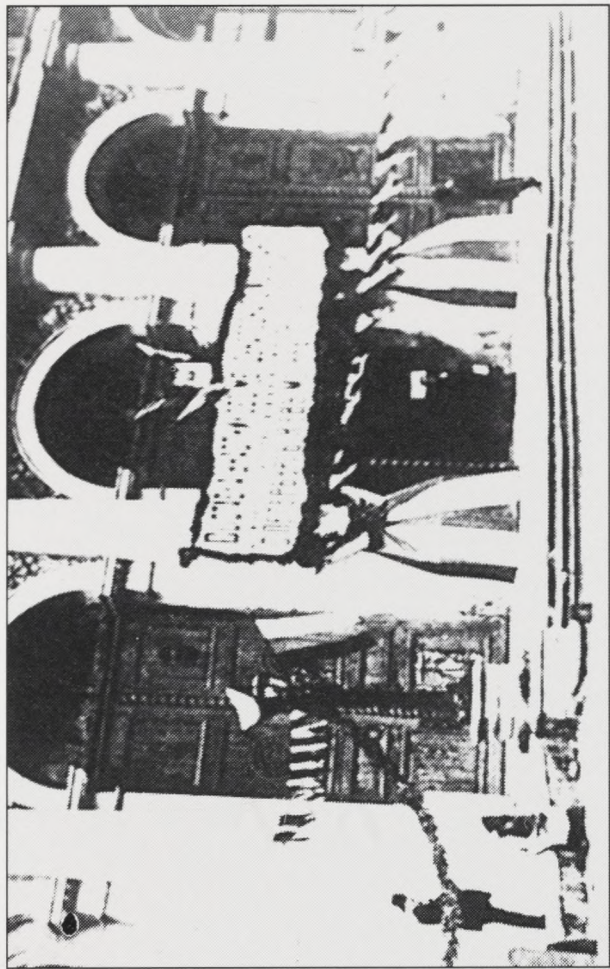
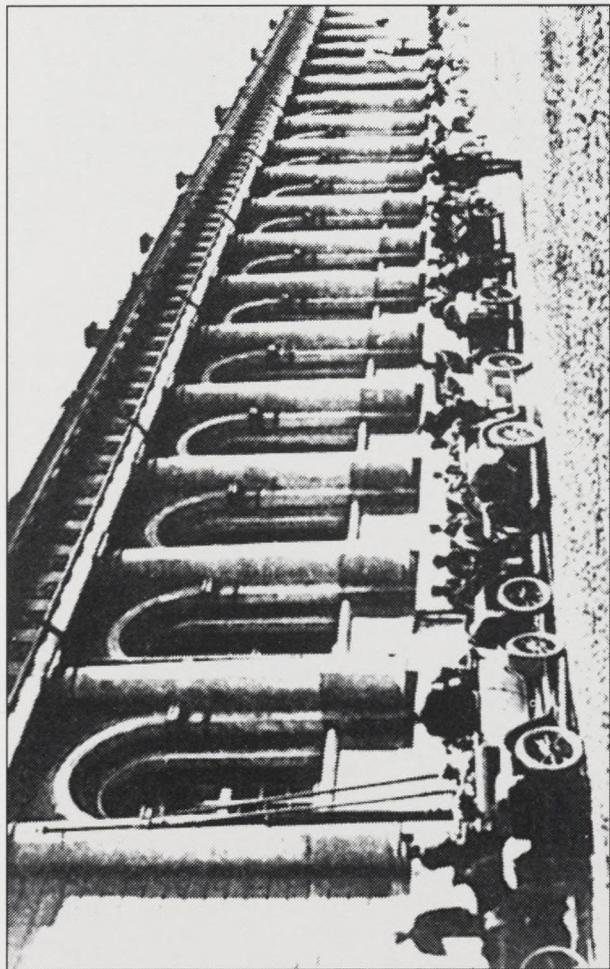
The dates are not obvious but are a clue. The dates quoted would not have matched up to our own records as Imperial Russia was then on the Gregorian Calendar, and about 14 days adrift of the West (or perhaps we in the West were adrift, who can say). But the Entries page indicates 16 to 30 June 1910 (Gregorian) for the 2000 verst event, whilst the photograph is recorded as having Gunn setting off on 13 July 1 for Moscow.

Finally, the general material. the advert refers to the Engineering Establishment opened by S Levi in St Petersburg in 1898, and appointed local agents of the British firm of Jonathan and Son, selling 11 Lagondas in Russia between 1903 and 1913. Meanwhile, an Almanack of 1910, in the Russian Celebrities section, lists the Great and the Good of Russian society, with their residences, positions and so forth, plus amazingly, their Motors. A quick scan of this edition alone yielded several Lagondas, including those operated by the Ambassador to London, and the Minister of the Interior.

I hope this is of interest, and shall pass on any more snippets which may turn up from my Russian enquiries!

Jeff Ody





1910 Reliability Trial, Lagonda (No. 38) can be seen in the picture bottom left.

Rapier Raison D'etre - Le Mans Tour '94

"Lined up in characteristic echelon with the crowds chanting and the sun mercilessly beating down, the drivers wait in anticipation, mechanics nervously looking at their watches. 12.15 and the flag goes down, the roar of ten thousand horse power struggling for grip fills the air, rubber burns as fuel ignites and the cars speed away into the distance.

Hammering down the grandstand straight, flick right then left and right again. Pace car peels off as we charge uphill under the Dunlop Bridge, left then sharp right around Tetre Rouge Corner heavy on the breaking and blast off down the Mulsanne Straight pushing 90 mph, broken half way by First Corner.

Accelerate out past Aston, Bentley, BMW, GT 40, TR, Cobra, AC and Jaguar braking again at the end of the Mulsanne with TR diving inside. Sprint up to Indianapolis, blasted to oblivion by Matra flat 12 on full song and Alpine - Renault hot on its heels. Nasty narrow chicane around Arnage scrubbing tyres and opposite lock pulls us through. Squirt the throttle and glide through the sweeping esses of Porsche Corner.

More dicing with a brace of Cobras in close pursuit as the Ford Corners (appropriately) rapidly appear, back to straight ahead and excited fans. 13.6 km, a full circuit completed and only 23 hours and 55 minutes to go . . . "

For many, motor racing is a dream, racing abroad with the likes of Carol Shelby and in front of thousands of spectators became our reality as the Rapier marque "competed" again 60 years after its first appearance.

Wednesday 15th June

On the morning of June 15th Rapiers, a Lagonda and a Jaguar set off to Portsmouth for the 12.00 sailing to Cherbourg. We all arrived, chatted and

met our fellow companions for the next 7 days, drove onto the ferry headed by a smart Lotus 7 and settled down to a sunny calm crossing.

We reached France early evening after nearly leaving Marion on the boat (her cabin was obviously very comfy) and proceeded to set off in small groups, our destination Sourdeval. After an impromptu scenic tour of Cherbourg as we could not find the right road out, we were driving through the French countryside, straight open roads and taxing gradients.

10.00pm and we were eating and drinking "chez Dominic" before snaking down the valley into our three gites surrounded by a labyrinth of streams and canals.

Peter Merrick and his band of merry men made sure that alcohol starvation would not be a problem as G&T's were rapidly consumed and fabled stories told.

Thursday 16th June

Morning was met with birdsong, gurgling waters and bright sunshine. Chris Compson arrived with "beaucoup de baguettes" and a hearty breakfast was consumed.

With the Normandy celebrations so close, a visit to Arromanches, Pont Herbert and several other poignant reminders was planned. We trundled up the hill to the first gite to find it resembling Silverstone Paddock rather than a holiday cottage. Bonnets were up, overalls donned, grubby fingers probed engine bays and diagnoses were confirmed. After a flurry of activity around the spares box BYL, AUA and the 3-litre set off in convoy past smiling locals waving and sounding their horns at our curious cars.

Arromanches was reached at lunch time resulting in heavy wine



David and Dominic parade through Sourdeval en route to the Civic Reception.



James and David Greenwood with Rapier Register Members after their memorable 3 laps of the Le Mans Circuit.

consumption, meeting some veterans who were here 50 years ago and a chance for Chris Compson to gain "hands on" experience of French ladies.

We toured the museum and admired the Mulberry Harbour before continuing on to the vast American war cemetery at St Laurent and the gun fortress of Pointe du Hoc.

With not a cloud in the sky we headed home and disaster struck. AUA sounded more like a truck than a Rapier. David Greenwood donned overalls and diagnosed the problem as a broken timing chain tensioner. The 3 litre became tow car but the steep downhill gradients cooked AUS's brake linings so the car was hidden in an unsuspecting Frenchman's drive. A long day was over and a cramped drive home ensued.

Our late arrival scrapped any plans of eating but Dominic and Pauline excelled themselves allowing us home on full stomachs. As the first group left the restaurant Malcolm had lost Marion but, assured that she must be in capable hands, left on his own. 15 minutes later and as if by magic, Marion appeared curious as to what was so funny. We then travelled back to the Gites, Malcolm was allegedly in pyjamas, and with Peter chatting, 3am struck before the lights went out.

Friday 17th June

Friday started slowly and never really got going. The weather was appallingly hot with a slight cooling breeze and breakfast unhurried. Peter and Chris Compson set off, transporter in hand, on the trail of AUA whilst others sunbathed, read and explored the valley and numerous water works (the gites were converted mills with various other industrial buildings up and down stream).

The arrival of AUA lead to furious activity in "The Paddock" utilising the mechanical genius of Dave Williams, Mike Pilgrim, Peter Allen and Chris Banks with others lending friendly advice.

Lunchtime loomed and James, Keith,

David Morris and Chris Compson ventured into Sourdeval deciding to buy everything possible from the shops that were open to create a very dignified picnic.

Peter, white coverall clad, then returned to monitor progress on AUA. Soon after and not to be outdone by Rapier unreliability, Bernie appeared brandishing a shattered half of the Jaguars cooling fan pulley and drove off to Vire in search of a French machinist and lathe.

The Mayor's reception and Rapier parade was drawing ever closer but would the crack mechanics beat the clock, and would Malcolm be able to remove every spec of dust from BLA before JB's side exiting sports exhaust covered it in dust again.

With timing cover in place and floor replaced we thought AUA would make it but accessibility problems proved unsurmountable in the time available.

Calling it a day we scrubbed up and put on our best togs and were directed by smart Gendarmes to parking outside Dominic's restaurant. 6.15 and the parade of Rapiers set off around Sourdeval, with Dominic passenger in BYL and displaying a large Union Jack blanking out any visibility on the left hand side, assembling at the Town Hall. Whilst the cars were parading James, David Morris, Chris and Helen decided to slip into a local bar for a swift half - cunning, as the Mayor took forever to pop the champagne corks and fill our glasses. Speeches followed and a picture of a Rapier was presented to the Mayor (ironically of AUA which was "cassee").

The Mayor was presented to the drivers, bonnets lifted, French inscriptions adorned windscreens, smiles exchanged and then taken for a ride in Malcolm's beautiful Abbot FHC. Dominic and Pauline once again excelled themselves with the meal and the plentiful aperitifs that followed. French conversation flowed and early bed beckoned in preparation of the dawn rise for the big race itself.

Saturday 18th June

Big race day. Malcolm and Stanley had a 7.30 start to buy the tickets at a hopeful discount and to make race entry easier. James and David Greenwood with BYL closely followed to make the 11.00 deadline for the assembly point in the town of Le Mans itself. They missed Malcolm at the rendezvous but found him when hopelessly lost in Le Mans. Tickets in hand and car and driver temperatures rising, Le Place de Braind was found (unsignposted and behind iron gates) together with a collection of fine machinery that one dreams about. Receiving complimentary tickets necessitated hasty and successful touting. It was 11.00, "Gentlemen, start your engines".

Sandwiched between a Ferrari 275 GTB and a 328 BMW Le Mans was negotiated under Police escort with ease along closed roads and through red lights. Along the route doors flapped and engines steamed succumbing to the sun. Half an hour and within a "parc ferme" cavalcaders mixed, bonnets opened and several vehicles decided to empty their radiators.

Mid-day and the cars ventured onto the track to be joined by Carol Shelby in the Le Mans winning Aston Martin DBR 1 with several Cobras, Fords and Astons in tow. All lined up on the grid, more photos and French celebrities and the start of three glorious laps.

This experience already described was recorded on film, James managing to snap many photos whilst speeding round the circuit - inheriting a face speckled with exhaust soot and battered by 90 mph winds just to get that shot without an aeroscreen in the way.

With the 3 laps completed and 27 miles later the cars assembled in the car park of the Automobile Club de L'Ouest for public display. The Rapier was one of the oldest cars there and its brief history (French translation on the left headlamp and English on the right) drew many admiring onlookers. We met up with the Lotus 7 couple - Chris, he was emotionally attached to that cap!

Dave and Dewi recorded the Rapier together with intrepid photographer hanging out the back. After some soothing beers it was time for the main event to commence and at 3.57 pm Le Mans started with our own Derek Bell driving the Gulf Oil Kremer Porsche leading the pack.

Interestingly this year's field comprised Prototype pure racing cars and GT's which had to be road worthy. Many new names and resurrected old ones were competing in the '94 race including ALD, Alpine, Bugatti, Chevrolet, Courage, Dauer, Debora, De Tomaso, Dodge, Ferrari, Harrier, Honda, Lotus, Mazda, Nissan, Porsche, Sauber, Toyota, Venturi and WR.

3 hours into the race and the Gulf Oil Porsche was dropping back, Andy Irvine (Toyota pilot) leading, Bugatti doing well and both Lotus' were still alive.

8.00am James, David Greenwood, Dave and Dewi linked up with Bernie, Helen, John, Kathy and Russell, all consumed a Grand Marnier crepe and watched the sunset - time for some "camera cliche" night shots of Le Mans.

1.00am and off to the Ford Corners to spy some glowing brake discs. We were not disappointed with the Bugatti and Venturi's (travelling in formation) putting on a colourful display. Finally linked up with all except Peter and friends before climbing into sleeping bags with the bark of exhausts, fireworks, lights and people doing their best to disturb you.

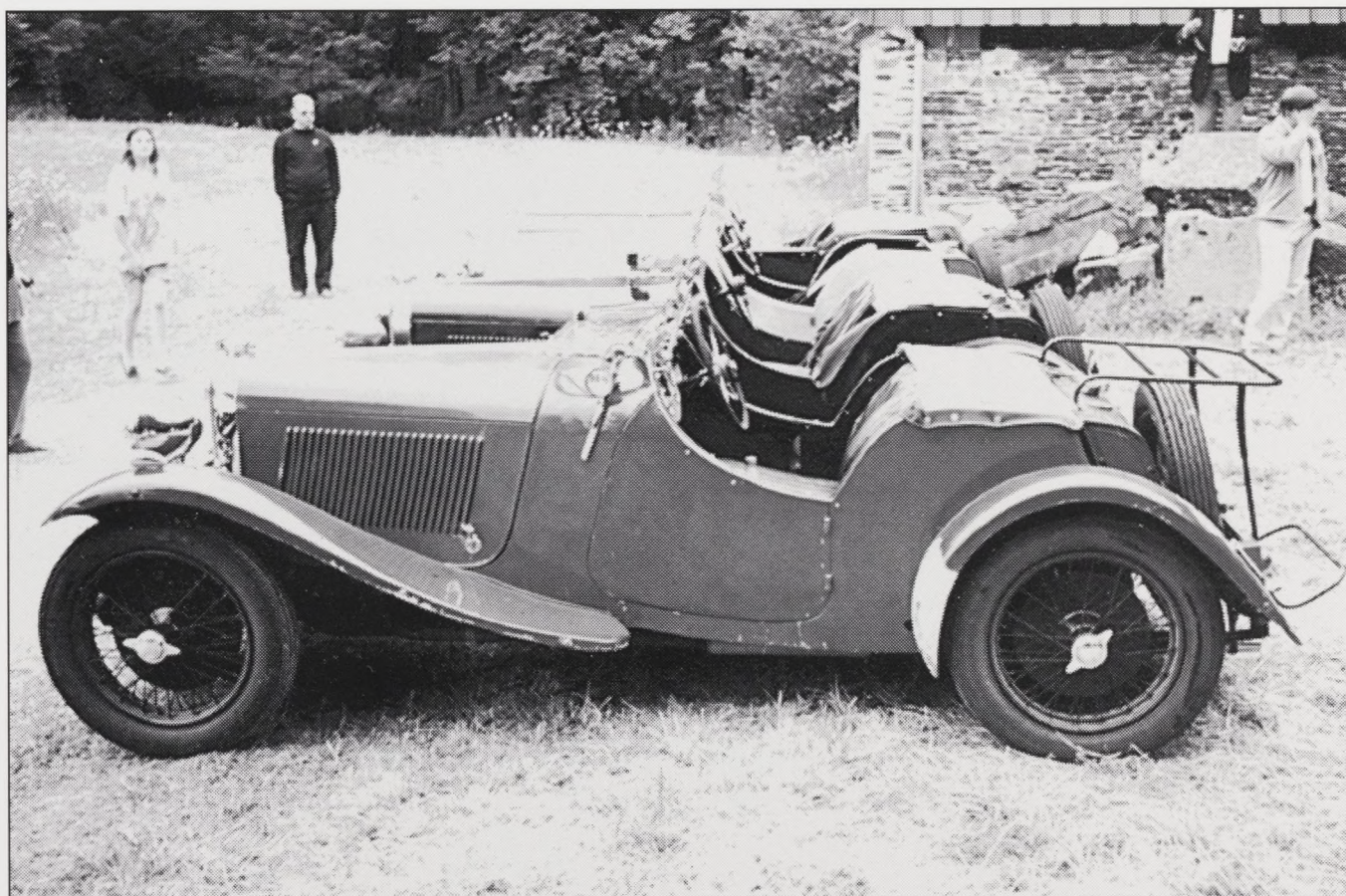
Sunday 19th June

We woke up around 5.30am to chirpy birdsong, roaring engines and a sleeping bag covered in dew. Up and washed by 8.30 and with a baguette for breakfast we went to take a couple of morning pictures as a memento of making it through to Sunday.

About ten teams had retired overnight including both Lotus' who had managed to crash. The Toyotas were leading, Derek Bell had slipped back to 5th place and the Bugatti after a major engine rebuild was lying 11th. 10.30 and knackered it was time to journey home.



Barbeque at the Upper Gite.



Eagles at the Lower Gite.

It was not long until we spied 3 Rapiers and their occupants sitting in the cool shade of a bar. We joined them and were informed of Mike's catalogue of mishaps including COL boiling thrice (and driver boiling twice), a cracked radiator saved by the miraculous properties of Radweld, a puncture (the kerb moved!) a lack of petrol and no dynamo.

We set off to find a scenic spot for lunch with Peter taking action photos of the Rapiers in action. Mike decided to press on while the going was good so lunch became an exclusively Eagle affair at a quiet bar in Ambrières-les-Vallees. Homeward bound in convoy Peter, Alison, Chris Banks, David and James arrived at Sourdeval ready for the Rapier Banquet. On the way back COL had managed to boil again making good use of Mike's 20 litre supply of mineral water adorning the back seats.

Other problems: AUA had arrived at Le Mans only to suffer from fuel vaporisation followed by a flat battery due to an over zealous driver; The 3 litre (it was not Peter's day) had a smashing time (literally) with a rather obnoxious Frenchman.

9.00 pm and a photocall outside Dominics, collaring an innocent jogger to snap 10 cameras in quick succession. Once inside a special menu had been prepared and it was decided that everyone should sign everyone else's menu to mark the event - which rapidly turned into a logistical nightmare.

All done, we ate and drank, gave toasts, drank toasts, made speeches and gave out awards (Australian jazz tapes with a Lagonda on the cover, care of Russell). 1.00am bedtime.

Monday 20th June

Peter, Chris, Helen, David, Chris and Keith were leaving early so a quick team photo outside Gite No 2 was arranged with Stanley doing the honours and young David pulling the short straw for the "self-timer sprint". Photos taken and baguettes packed away we waved our fellow travellers off and wandered up to

Gite No. 1 for a second breakfast, doubling as lunch.

After lunch a group of us journeyed to Villedieu to look at a Bell Foundry and to search out some postcards and stamps, Malcolm joined us later on and found an attractive bargain in one of the curio shops. We also met up with some members of the Roadrunner Club on their Tour de Normandie (MGB, Daimler Dart, Honda S800 and Austin 7s). We viewed the church, shopped for the BBQ and meandered home.

Russell, armed with BBQ and firewood (expertly chopped by young David and Bernie), brought forth flames and the steak began to sizzle. Inside Helen and Kathy were busying themselves preparing garlic bread, avocado dips, nibbles, salads and jacket potatoes. Champagne and wine (Australian) were brought out and the party was flowing.

Pudding rumours were rife and we were not disappointed with a light fruit salad to follow. The evening drew on and everyone was vying for "the best joke and accompanying actions" with Peter and John sharing equal first place. We turned in late only to find that a spirit of the woods had turned on BYL's indicator at 3.00am waking Mike up and causing him to switch it off.

Tuesday 21st June

Another pootling day not travelling much further than Sourdeval market and church. Most of us made it and had a wander round and bought some light provisions for lunch. Bernie and Helen were more organised and looked around the cattle market with Bernie left holding the calf and Helen picking up a memento of the occasion on her jeans.

The afternoon saw sleep and reading, valley walks, more exploration of the countryside and the study of waterwheels whilst Dave and Dewi performed a frontal lobotomy on JB and replaced everything all within one hour and 15 minutes - well done.

Evening and a group meal in a different restaurant in Sourdeval - the highlight being the waitress who was

admired by many but too young for most. With the meal paid for we set off in search of music as it was an evening of song all over France. We were stopped briefly by an Amilcar enthusiast and James did his best to act as translator for David and John.

Over in the lorry park the whole of Sourdeval, young and old, were enjoying a local band playing the Stones and Lynyrd Skynyrd. As the bands played on we slipped off into the night past the local Gendarmes - Bernie driving on the wrong side of the road followed by Mike with no lights!

Wednesday 22nd June

We woke up for an early breakfast and were greeted with persistent drizzle, it looked like the hood and windscreen would have to be raised for the first time. Every car seemed to be packed before breakfast except BYL - but it had been parked in a dry woodshed the night before, a pleasure not enjoyed by Chris resulting in a "wet bum" all the way back to Cherbourg. Dave and Dewi had the carbs in bits "just to make sure" before setting off.

As we met up with Peter and Alison sipping coffees and Calvados in Lessay, the weather brightened and with hood and screen down we journeyed along the coast to Carteret, lunched and walked along the harbour wall pausing to admire a skilled shovel operator building a harbour wall with 10 ton boulders. It was 2.00 and time to complete the last 30km of our French driving.

We arrived dead on 3.00pm and parked up behind David and Dewi. 3.20 and the rest of the party arrived only to completely ignore the one way system around the port. Our roars of laughter and cheers when Mike "et al" came to rest were not shared with such enthusiasm by the French docker. Finally all together Frank informed us of yet another puncture to COL, this time with the boot fully laden. We bump started COL and were all on the boat.

The crossing was calm and sunny (it WAS calm Chris) and we spent our last

Francs, filling what little room there was with duty free and were back in Portsmouth along with what seemed like the whole of the Royal Navy. No sooner had we said our farewells the stern opened and we went our separate ways - through congested traffic and the chilly evening air.

Seven days of fun and we were still talking at the end of it. Only BYL and BGY escaped the overalls with BLA only conceding an electrical fault. Everyone enjoyed themselves with the weather and welcome extended by Sourdeval enhancing the occasion.

The drivers and the driven were as follows:

Peter & Alison Allen

BGY968 Eagle Replica

Chris Banks

JY6305 Eagle Replica

Stanley & Shirley Bingham

"Modern car with large duty free boot"

Malcolm & Marion Burgess

BLA916 Abbot FHC

David & James Greenwood

BYL234 Original Eagle

Bernie & Helen Jacobson

EQC949 Pre-war Jaguar Special

Peter Merrick and Chris Compson

AUA649 Rapier with ex Prototype body

Keith Lardner, David Morris, Chris & Helen Merrick

RLT794 DB 3-Litre Lagonda

Russell Meeham, John & Kathy Needham

"Modern hire car from Paris"

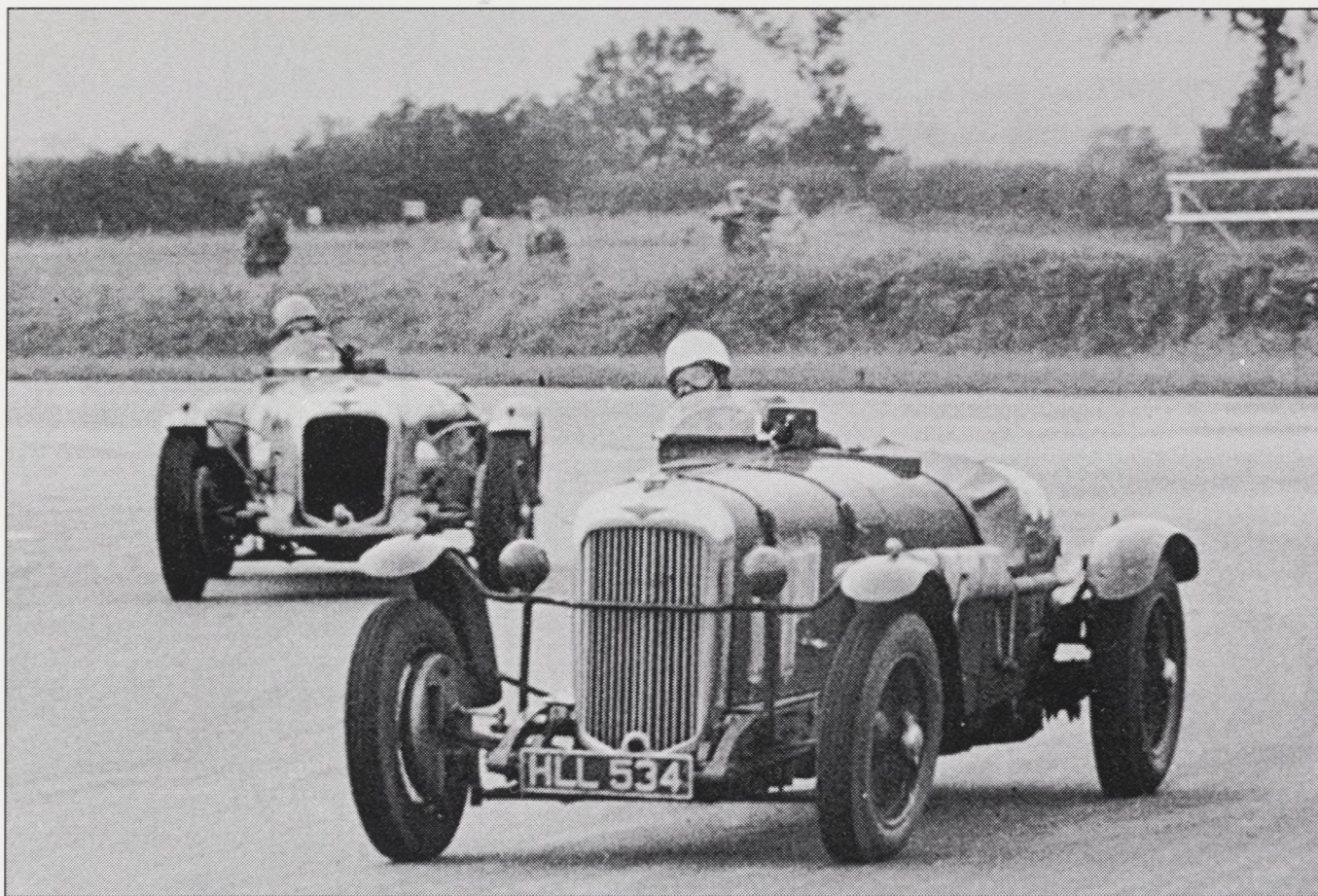
Mike & David Pilgrim, Frank & Eve Tuffs

COL454 Ranalalah DHC

Dave & Dewi Williams

JB7885 Ranalalah Tourer

James Greenwood



We think these historic pictures of the 1936 team cars were taken at Silverstone in 1956. Does anyone know for certain? Arnold would love to know.



The Spring Warm-Up

Some thirty or more years ago, soon after acquiring a two litre, I entered a Lagonda Club rally in the Chilterns, navigated by fellow enthusiast Graham Walker, and there we met the late Trevor Peerless, who had also recently become a two litre owner. Somewhat to our surprise we won.

Some years later, after Graham had become a teacher at a prep school in Sussex and I had developed an interest in photography, we met again at the school's Sports Day where the Peerless parents were supporting son Bart, Graham was organising the Sports and I was photographing them.

So, now here we were on a day that certainly was "Warming-up" at the Bentley Wildfowl and Motor Museum, with Bart and his mother and Graham catching up on events.

Bart and fellow organiser Dominic were handing out foolscap folders full of sheaves of paper which looked a mite daunting. The good news was that no timing was involved, we have never been any good at any rally which doesn't allow all the time in the world to work out your route and answers! Apart from one sheet of "Welcome to the Rally" and one of notes on what was expected of us, we were given firstly three sheets of route finding instructions, with some cryptic questions to be answered, secondly a page of General Knowledge questions which had us delving into the recesses of memory, not always successfully; thirdly a page of Scavenger Hunt items to be found en route, and lastly a map with some of the route drawn in. Anyone handing a number eleven on the scavenger list automatically won the rally regardless of any other consideration - it being "A full set of LG45 pistons"! While awaiting these important items the Peerless LG45

is improving the shining hour by being on display in the museum, to which we returned, fruitlessly as it happened, to try to discover the answers to some of the general knowledge. So it was that while dimly remembering that the 1930 Le Mans Mark III MGs were 18/80s and that AC Bertelli took over Aston Martin in 1926, I couldn't decide whether the last two litre Lag was made in 1933, or 1932 but still on sale in '33 - and chose the wrong one. I was sure the 3½ litre was derived from the 3, and that the Vauxhall 30/98 OE was "E" plus O-overhead valves, but in which year Vauxhall moved from London to Luton remains a mystery, we thought that GM took over in 1928 and perhaps it was then. Not so. Over lunch in the pleasant tea-shop of the museum we dredged our memories over such subjects as the first property the National Trust acquired, the Bloomsbury Set, the purpose of Firle and other beacons in the area, and what the Victorians had done to the Long Man of Wilmington - well any male would remember that wouldn't he! Later on when we saw him we were slightly surprised to find that he is still asexual, we both thought he'd been restored in more recent years.

Also over lunch we plotted the missing sections of the route which had to be drawn onto the map, discovered with the help of cryptic clues, luckily not so cryptic as to need the abilities of those who broke the "Enigma" codes in the war! Then there was the Scavenger Hunt, which could turn out expensive - a punnet of strawberries indeed! The black feather, bluebell and stinging nettle were easily obtained locally before setting out, the sheep's wool was harder. As Graham found while I dealt with the botanical side, it doesn't come off the sheep that easily, and as the local population's

boundaries were defined by an electric fence there was nothing to catch the wool, and Graham was, somewhat wimpishly I thought, afraid of shocks while trying to collect the one tiny wisp we could find. He had his revenge later by stopping beside a muddy puddle to let me collect some from another field.

At the cost of buying some more petrol we didn't really need we got the Tiger token (perhaps Bart was on a percentage from the only garage on the route!) and the Cadbury's Flake - though whether that was still recognizable after an afternoon in a hot car I didn't see, and the postcard, and we managed to rustle up a car club membership card between us. That left the bus ticket - it is surprising what people put in litter bins, but bus tickets are not part of it, even next to a bus stop. Rural Sussex is short on buses on Sunday afternoons, so Bart and Dominic's needs in that direction were unfulfilled.

The route itself was thoroughly delightful going through picturesque villages such as Ripe "The place where mature people reside" as the clue put it, and where amongst the carvings over the door of one house the eagle eye could discern a lute - the musical entry to one house. Prior to that a determined search of the church and churchyard at Laughton was nearly called off, until our eyes happened to fall on the seats in the church porch, with their worn brass plaques to Joseph and Ellen Ellis respectively. More church work at Chiddingly to discover the unusual marker - no not the flag pole - but a wooden church pew grave marker, and that the 1407 incumbent's name was Putter - so the sport he might have been good at was? And so on to Wilmington, down "Archie's Road" (Nash Street - one for the Fraser Nash mounted crew), Camberlot Hall ("Dyslexic King Arthur's house") and the "Poet's Refuge" - Milton Hide. Trying to decide from the information on the board at the Long Man car park exactly what his approximate date was, was difficult, since various

theories were mentioned, but no conclusion.

Some vandal had made off with the sign to West Dean, so we missed the turn, (sorry driver) and had to retrace from the main road which we shouldn't have reached. It is up a dead-end road, and the "green box" was one of those rare green red telephone boxes - ie in such a scenic area that even a red box is considered too intrusive, let alone one of the modern Euro-American-Rest-of-the-world style.

I am ashamed to admit that although I competed once at Firle hill-climb I didn't recognise it until well after we were back down, and then at Graham's prompting. I suppose it is fairly normal British Practice to name an event after somewhere it isn't, since Firle Beacon is further east, and Firle Place is several miles further east still. Anyway, I thought the event must have been held on a private road - how did the Bentley Drivers Club (was it?) get it closed?

So to Firle Place for a very welcome "Sussex" Cream tea and a mulling over of a delightful day, quickly looking round to answer the question about the American connection there (the Gage family) and to guess, wrongly, at the first National Trust Property. I'm sure you want to know what it was, so at the effort of reaching up to pull the handbook off my shelf, I can tell you it was Alfriston Clergy House - which we must have passed very close to and missed!

Twelve entrants were expected by our kindly organisers, eight cars arrived, ranging from an Edwardian Wolseley through a Fraser Nash and five assorted Lagondas, one being the very nice 4½ saloon of the Peerless faction and thus a non-competitor, to Graham's Kougar, which was the nearest thing to a Lagonda or a vintage car that we could manage on the day, four cars actually followed the route - I take it that the other three relaxed at Bentley until it was time to potter off by the short route to continue relaxing and tea-taking at Firle. so, declared Bart, everyone has won and everyone must have a prize. But some won a few points

more than others. Somewhat to our surprise we won most. An excellent bottle of champagne. Very many thanks to all those involved in running the event, and yes we would like another one next year, same weather too. The rest of you 692 members missed out. Oh the answer to the one about the hoo-ha over the church painting came up in the Meridian

programme Country Set on 23rd May, but I've forgotten now exactly why they didn't like the painting, which the vicar commissioned because all the stained glass was blown out during the war, and there was no point in putting in anything other than plain glass while there was the threat of more bombs.

Michael Jones

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News from the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs

The Lagonda Club is a member and strong supporter of the FBHVC, which fights hard on our behalf to ensure that National and Euro legislation does not affect our hobby. They also investigate issues like modern fuels and their suitability for our older engines. Their recent update on fuels and a report on discussions with DVLA are reproduced from their Spring 1994 News Sheet.

FUEL MATTERS - UPDATE

Background

There have been two serious concerns about petrol which have vexed the 'old vehicle' movement in recent years, namely, leaded fuel (its merits and its availability for the future) and the volatility of today's leaded 4 Star (leading to vapour locks in the fuel systems of some period vehicles). The VSCC formed a sub-committee in 1990 to investigate the leaded petrol situation and to evaluate lead substitute additives as a prelude to determining the best way to ensure supplies of suitable fuel for the future, if and when 4 Star leaded ceased to be available. The sub-committee has so far produced two booklets. "*The Use of Unleaded Fuel in Older Engines*" and "*Fuel Problems; Use of Modern Petrol in Older Engines*". Both booklets presented all the known available evidence to allow their readers to understand - respectively - the issues in the leaded/unleaded controversy and the use of today's 4 Star fuel in older vehicles (including the 'misfiring' problems usually caused by fuel vapour locks). Generally, both booklets have been very well received throughout the movement, except for a small but vociferous minority who have difficulty in accepting either or both theses.) This dissention, incidentally, whilst surprising does not matter; the whole point of the booklets was to set out the

facts and allow readers to form their own conclusions, thus - hopefully - avoiding the "if only I'd known" syndrome regarding such potential disasters as the probable consequences of prolonged use of unleaded fuel in engines with unsuitable exhaust valves and seats, and the likely causes of poor running and misfiring plus the possible adverse consequences of adding paraffin to petrol as an amelioration.)

I have chaired the sub-committee since its inception and am willing to do so for the foreseeable future. A recent development has been my appointment to the BSI Technical Committee PTC/11 - "Petrol and Automotive Diesel Fuels" through the sponsorship of the FBHVC. This committee has members from all corners of the industry (e.g. RAC, AA, SMMT, UKPIA) plus government departments such as the DTI, DOT and MOD. Its responsibilities are to produce standards for the fuels within its orbit including such matters as labelling of pumps on garage forecourts and (far more importantly for all of us) the composition of fuels including lead content and volatility characteristics. Whilst I was formally appointed to the BSI committee through the FBHVC and am the representative of the VSCC (of which I am obviously a member) and the RREC (of which I am also a member) it is important that the deliberations and decisions of the BSI committee are made known to all the interested parties and I urge the editors of "one make" club and specialist periodicals to feel free to publish these and subsequent updates without the need to seek permission - but with acknowledgement of their source, pray.

THE STATUS QUO

Volatility

The BSI Committee PTC/11 are, inter

alia, considering a revision to BS4040 Leaded Petrol (Gasoline) for Motor Vehicles' introducing a reduction in the seasonal volatility characteristics. (The volatility characteristics, as a point of interest, are changed in order to "provide protection against vehicle malfunction as a result of seasonal changes in temperature" which should result - rather arbitrarily - in summer specification fuel at retail outlets from 1 June to 31 August and winter specification for the rest of the year.) Such a proportional reduction in seasonal volatility would bring BS4040 fuel in line (in this particular respect) with Unleaded fuel (BS EN228) and would be beneficial to those currently suffering from chronic vapour lock misfiring symptoms.

Points of interest which arose during the PTC/11's discussions on BS4040, as part of a routine five yearly review, undertaken on 15 June 1993 were; the UKPIA (the UK petroleum industry's representative) had no record of complaints about the volatility of leaded petrol (a classic example for the need of a voice from the FBHVC) and that, to align BS4040 with EN228 in terms of volatility characteristics would cost the industry £28 million per annum, a cost which the industry did not think justified. A consequent additional cost to the motorists was calculated (by the DTI) at 8p/litre; (an addition which some of us might believe worthwhile if it cured vapour locking).

Although not fundamental to the volatility issue, the UKPIA said that they expected sales of leaded petrol to reduce to less than 10% of their current levels by 1998/2000. This statement is, of course, crucial to the leaded petrol conundrum; firstly it confirms to some extent the previously understood situation that leaded petrol would be available in the UK until the turn of the century but, secondly, it begs the question as to what level of leaded sales would remain commercially viable to the companies; 10% of current sales sounds alarmingly small - and behoves us all to buying as

much as possible meanwhile.

THE FUTURE

Volatility

The outcome of the BSI Committee's deliberations on volatility should be known soon and I will notify the decision when it is made.

Leaded Fuel

Much evidence of disaster attributed to the use of unleaded fuel in inappropriate engines is emerging from the USA. Presumably this may well provoke urgent investigation for suitable lead substitutes there: also parts of the UK petroleum industry appear to be seeking an answer because of the commercial potential (the Federation represents about 250,000 old vehicle users, which reflects a large number of vehicles continuing to thirst for leaded/lead substitute fuel into the 21st century). The VSCC Sub-Committee intends to investigate the lead substitute arena next; meanwhile those currently being marketed are known to be of limited help or no help at all.

Peter Henley (December 1993)

Over the last six months, much development testing has been undertaken with a commercially available anti-valve seat recession (VSR) additive which has been used extensively in the USA. The testing was carried out in a European car, whose engine is known to be very susceptible to VSR with unleaded petrol. A drive cycle representative of European driving conditions was employed, using engine speeds up to 4500 rpm, corresponding to a vehicle speed of 120ph, thus providing a realistic test of the additive.

At higher treat rates than would normally be employed, it was demonstrated that VSR could be reduced to very low levels, comparable with that measured after use with leaded petrol. It looks very probable, therefore, that it will be technically feasible to offer an additive for use in older cars, which will effectively overcome the problem of VSR. An additive of this type would be added by the owner directly to the fuel in the

vehicle's tank.

More testing is required to ensure the absence of adverse side effects. However, the current situation is encouraging, particularly when it is borne in mind that leaded petrol offers a complete solution and is widely available in UK. It seems very likely that an effective anti-VSR additive will be available at a reasonable cost before leaded petrol has become scarce or difficult to obtain.

Peter Henley, (March 1994)

Peter Henley makes mention of two pamphlets prepared by the VSCC Fuels sub-Committee and published by the Federation. We mentioned these in News Sheet 18, and received sufficient orders to have some more pamphlets prepared. These sold out in February. At that time it did not seem worthwhile having yet more made. However, demand since then has been such that we have reconsidered, and have had a further, but probably final, batch made up. The two booklets are "*Valve Seat Recession - use of unleaded gasoline in older engines*" and "*Fuel Problems - use of modern petrols in older engines*". They are £6 each, or £11 for both, inc. UK post and packing, from the Secretary at Elton House, Church Lane, Tydd St. Giles, Wisbech, Cambs, PE13 5LA. It is most important that anyone ordering just one of these books specified the title accurately. If ordering both booklets, but willing to accept one if the other is again out of print, please leave your cheque open, marking it "not more than £11". All cheques payable to FBHVC, please.

DVLA

Following the interesting talk given by

Bob Oliver of DVLA at the AGM last year, deputy chairman, Tom Ryland, and legal adviser, Arthur Jeddere-Fisher, went to Swansea early in the year to discuss matters of mutual interest.

There was hope that there might be some movement towards making it possible for owners to make registration numbers non-transferable, but any suggestion of this was dashed when Bob Oliver reported that legal advice indicated that such a move would require a change in the law.

The V765 scheme for the re-issue of lost registration numbers was reviewed. In general it seems to have worked well, but it was clear that some individuals are prepared to stretch the truth to obtain period numbers for vehicles of dubious antecedents, and some organisations are prepared to turn a blind-eye to such behaviour. DVLA take a very serious view of such matters, and officers of Clubs on the DVLA list need to be aware that consequences for their organisations could be unpleasant if it became clear that the official recommending the reissue of a number failed to satisfy him/herself that the application is genuine. Clubs are reminded that the scheme is only for vehicles which are complete, and can be inspected as such.

The Federation is preparing a code of practice for those on the DVLA list which will be distributed in due course. Amongst other criteria, new applicants to join the list will have to satisfy DVLA and the Federation that they have access to sufficient and appropriate archive material to make the checking and verification of applications possible.



Letters

Dear Ken,

Well its Sunday half hour again and uplifted as ever I must say what a magnificent cover it was on the last magazine. However all those badges on the front seemed to have cropped up more numerous than ever on the inside of the magazine.

I took my rule to the unprinted parts and totalled 19½ col. ins. If you add to this the 6½ col. ins. for the pub meets, which I consider are not for this magazine, this gives a total of 26 col. ins. certainly a good page and a half available for Lagonda matters. Does this I wonder indicate a lack of copy and a need to spur members on to write?

In agreeing with Dr Rider on all his points about overheating, I still think removing blades is a considerable help as he so rightly says this reduces the efficiency of the pump and as such should reduce the velocity of the water in the system.

In any case, if he can enjoy the simple pleasures in life with the aid of a tin of Vaseline and a cork ring he should allow me to get mine from rubbing down my impeller blade.

Now on to matters relative to the Meadows 4½ Lt engine in particular problems I have encountered with them just recently.

The Sanction 3 DHC was blowing blue smoke rather badly out of its exhaust. The first thought was that the studs which pass through the inlet manifold (this is only the case with S3 and S4 engines) had not been sealed. This turned out to be the case but in addition, and not many people know this, the bolt which stops the internal balance piece sliding on the inlet tract was missing. This allows direct entry from the head to the inlet manifold and was the major cause of the blue smoke. I

have also heard of a case of blue smoke arising because this bolt was loose. If you go looking for it, it's in front of the tall centre stud.

The same engine rebelled further when after replacing two rockers one tappet would not close up.

Peering down the push rod hole revealed that the cap that the push rod sits in had come out of the cam follower. Now this shouldn't happen as it is held down by the cam follower spring. On removing the cam follower covers at the bottom of the block I found there were no cam follower springs at all. The 4½ will run quite happily without cam follower springs. I know because when I was racing I took them out in an effort to reduce power losses through the valve train. The car ran quite happily from Oldham to Silverstone and back but during racing at 3800 rpm, valve bounce. Another good idea confined to the waste bin.

Another engine was leaking very badly at the tappet covers at the bottom of the block, and these can sometimes be very difficult to get oil tight. In this case when the covers were removed examination showed the sealing surface of the cover to be like a dog's hind leg and that they would need to be surface flattened. This has almost certainly occurred due to the fact that a thick soft gasket has been used in the past. The use of thick soft gaskets is taboo if both meeting surfaces are not strong enough to withstand distortion when bolted up. In most cases a thin hard gasket with a smear of goo is by far preferable.

I am looking forward to the next magazine and to hell with the expense, give us another good cover.

Regards,

Alan Brown

Dear Ken,

I was most disconcerted to read in the June 94 Spares List that the Scheme must no longer be allowed to advertise members' cars for sale.

Whilst not pretending to understand the reason for this decision, it is puzzling, since potential members seeking a car would join the club in order to see what is available through this valuable facility.

It is of course recognised by me and all, that any car club is partly measured by its spares scheme, and ours I believe, stands comparison with any, but I think it is a retrograde step to rule out "spare" cars.

Might the committee reconsider this?

Royston Cars

(I think you have missed the point! The newsletter has always offered and will continue to offer, a cheap and effective way of advertising cars for sale. We charge a very reasonable £5 for this. Spare parts for sale are offered via the spares list and this will continue free of charge. The committee thought that it was not logical to have some owners pay to advertise their car for sale and others advertise for nothing in a different club publication. The small charge actually helps keep the cost of the newsletter down and we believed it was better to differentiate between "spare" cars and spare parts!

K.P.P.)

Dear Mr Painter,

Congratulations to everyone involved in the splendid colour photo on the cover of latest Lagonda magazine. It really gave me a thrill, and I will add it to the Lagonda book for future generations to see.

Yours sincerely,

Dennis Hawkins

(ex Lagonda apprentice 1924 - 1929)

Dear Ken,

Congratulations on the front cover of the latest Lagonda magazine. Not only is it historically interesting but also artistically excellent, and not often do

these go hand in hand.

Could the figure in the left foreground be F. Gordon Crosby? He looks as if he is sketching and it is well known that Crosby had a soft spot of Lagondas featuring them in many of his continental touring pictures as well as at Brooklands.

Wishing you happiness in your new home, and looking forward to seeing you at Silverstone perhaps,

Yours sincerely,

R. Peter Rae

Dear Mr Davey,

Thank you for your interesting letter of 15th ult. regarding the Lagonda racing cars of the pre-war period. Regrettably, my time as an 'improver' in the Experimental Department spanned only two years, thanks to Mr Hitler; this was from early 1936 to 1938. I was then transferred to the Engine Shop, under "Griff", with several other fully skilled mechanics, of whom more soon.

To revert to the Experimental days - I joined the Department, having severed my apprenticeship with Vickers Aviation (Brooklands) Ltd., in order to become a fully fledged racing driver. What else? I was then 16 years old! Imagine my surprise when on my first day I was asked by Stan Ivermee. "Have you used tools before, boy?" I replied in the affirmative, confident that my meagre tool kit would meet the Boss' approval. One brief glance from him, then; "For the next three weeks THAT will be the only tool you'll need" - a huge broom in the corner - "And you can make the tea".

I was staggered, surely racing drivers were not intended to start their careers in such a manner. However, one learned rapidly!

The Department at that time comprised: Stan Ivermee, Percy Kemish, Lionel Taylor, Fred "Nobby" Clark, Fred Shattock, Albert "Larry" Gains (ex Hon. Brian Lewis Stable). Later, numbers increased to include George Pearkins (?), Thomas ("Tommy"), ex-Lord Howe mechanic and George Russell, who came from Thorneycrofts at Guildford. Further

additions were a new apprentice and a replacement tea boy, "Alfie", who lived in the "Robin Hood" pub on Frog's Island! (Thorpe Lea sounds more up-market). Percy Kemish, that wonder man and Stan's right hand man, was for a time with Squire Cars of Henley-on-Thames, but when Adrian Squire joined Lagondas, Percy rejoined his old team of Bentley Boys. I would like to pay tribute to these gentlemen, for the influence of their teaching has lasted throughout my life.

I digress. Returning to the 'thirties and Lags. During my time there the LG6 and V12 were developed. A chassis "bump rig" was devised in the shop - but no doubt your readers have seen photographs of this by now. The prototype V12 engine was assembled and tested for many hours - my fading memory keeps throwing up a figure of 900 hours; can anyone confirm this? I well remember, to my shame, failing to insert enough shims under the water pump cover prior to the initial run - and it squealed in protest on first turnover! The engine had twin American (?) Stromberg d/d carburettors to begin with; latterly SUs were used. Another feature detested by engine fitters was the method of securing the timing sprockets to the camshafts. It was all too easy to lose a nut down the front timing cover! Some bright 'erb evolved a method of retrieving such lost articles (sometimes) by means of a bunch of welding wire inserted through the centre of a 'Trafficator' signalling arm and connected to a 12v battery. One of the most crude but seemingly effective test rigs for the new chassis was rigged up to a stanchion just inside the shop doors. This device comprised the (serrated/splined?) anchorage for the front torsion bar suspension bolted to the I section girder; the torsion bar, fitted with a mild steel arm to the squared end, was then drilled to carry a scale-pan. This was loaded according to instructions, after the front end of the torsion bar was supported by a stout bearing. We were expected to give the arm a push as we passed by!

I spent time each day filling the petrol

tank on the workshop wall, checking oil, cooler system, etc. prior to engine runs. Under the eye of George Russell, I worked in the test bed for some time. The engine cooling system & Heenan & Froude dynamometer water were circulated via piping to a cooling tower outside the workshop. Water, returned from the test rig, was fed to a top tank of large area, shallow depth and open top. The floor of the top tank was drilled with a series of holes in lines across the width. A similar bottom tank (but undrilled in the top) was mounted below, and at a spacing of some 8 to 10 feet. The water cooled as it drained through the top tank holes, down coarse wire mesh screens situated in line with the drilled rows of holes and into the bottom tank. I hope my guesstimate of 8 to 10 feet is right! Exhaust gases and noise were accommodated by a large coke-filled, concrete-lined pit. There is the classic story of how this pit type was responsible for car firms calling in Harry Weslake to solve their problems of power loss! Harry also convinced "W.O." of the need to reduce valve sizes on the Le Mans V12 cars (see "Lucky all my life", the biography of Harry Weslake by Jeff Clew [Haynes]).

You may be interested (or not!) by the manner in which 'WO's car DPD 28, was fitted with a "Notek" spot lamp/driving lamp? A selection of manufacturer's lamps were mounted on a wooden beam; this assembly was then fixed to wooden trestles and wired up. Each lamp was tested in turn merely by switching it on, moving the said trestle to and fro, and watching the result on the fence which surrounded the Experimental Department, all in the dark, naturally.

On the lighter side of those days, I recall a lull in the work programme and certain members of staff amused themselves by making small model "steam" engines. Whilst on test on the airline, and hidden by a piece of board, one machine gave itself away - Stan Ivermee came in unexpectedly! Needless to say it was requisitioned. I wonder if his son received it?

Incidentally, other manufacturer's cars were brought in on occasion for 'assessing' - quite common practice in those days. Enough! You posed two queries in your letter. Firstly, you enquired about the V12 wire mesh screens for 1939 Le Mans race. I regret I cannot help here, since I had no hand in those racers. However, it was not unknown for those kinds of fitment to be used since road surfaces were not always of the best. Stone guards, headlamp guards and wire mesh screens were in evidence in the 30's. Brooklands in the later years was beginning to break up, and these items no doubt played a valuable part in reducing damage. One example of the 'screen is shown in the photograph of Lord Howe in his Bugatti, for which see "Motor Racing and Record Breaking" - photo facing P105 - by Eyston & Lyndon and published by Batsford.

With regard to the second query. Here again I cannot confirm or deny the story. Personally, I would doubt that such a situation would have arisen, bearing in mind the knowledge and experience of both Lagonda and Fox & Nicholl teams; the engine basically was a well proven design, not changed much over the period of racing from '35 to '38.

In closing, these recollections of some 58 years ago, I apologise for any inadvertent slips or inaccuracies within. Should there be anyone around who remembers those days, and/or any of the following members of my Family, I would very much like to hear from them:

Father - Ray "Tiny" Holmes

(Service)

Uncle Wilf Watts

(Engine Shop, later Bryces)

Uncle Will Watts

(Body Shop, Carpenter)

Uncle Bill Ezzard

(Bonnet Maker)

In reply to your generous offer of the Lagonda Club Magazine, I would very much appreciate receiving same. I did for some time get a copy, then it ceased.

With sincerest wishes,

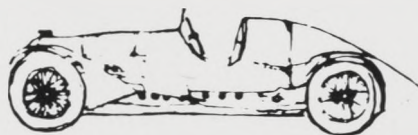
Yours truly

E. W. "Bill" Holmes

PS. Stan Ivermee's morning greeting to me: "What have you done right today, Boy?"

Arnold's queries were:

- i *Were there two separate bodies for the Le Mans V12s, since they appeared at Le Mans with recessed wire mesh windscreens and at Brooklands with not only no windscreen, but no recess?*
- ii *Why did the LG45 Team Car retire at Le Mans in 1937 - it was never properly explained?*



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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> |

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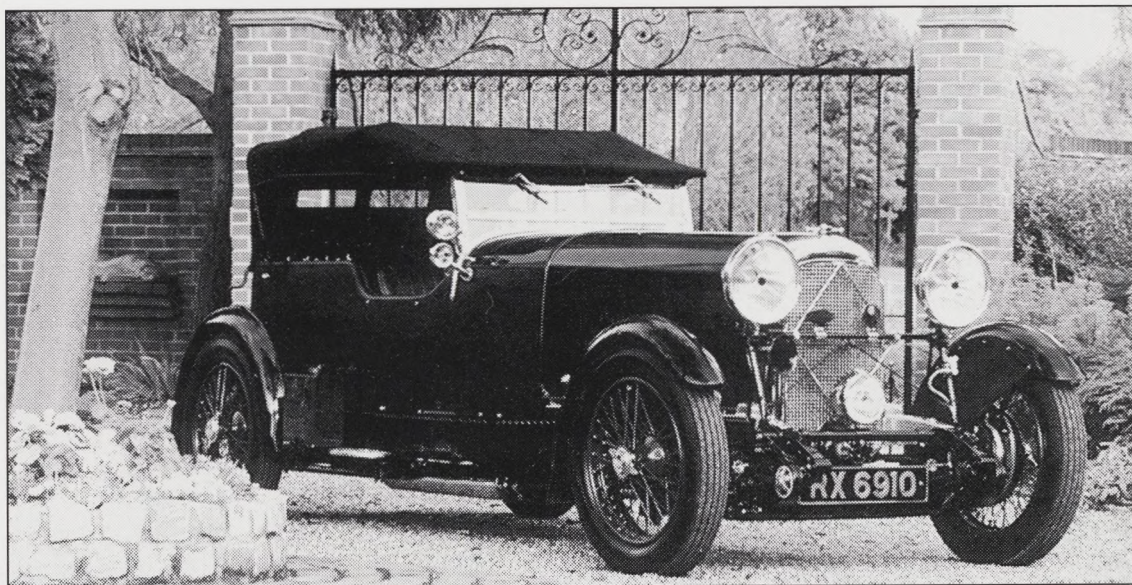
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