

THE  
*Lagonda*

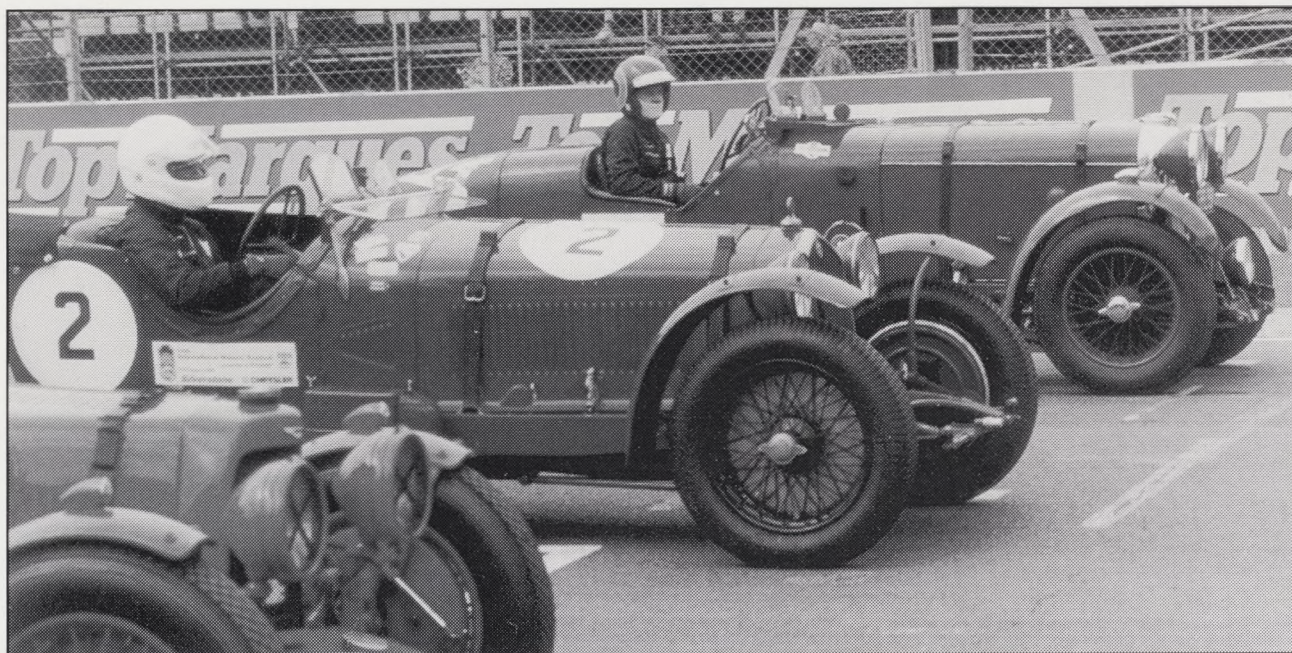
THE MAGAZINE  
OF THE  
LAGONDA CLUB



Number 175

Winter 1997/8





### Why not be on Pole next year?

We rebuilt the Engine and Chassis of Terry Cohn's Lagonda EPE 97 in very short time for this year's Coys' Cup race meeting. The car was driven to Silverstone, it achieved fastest lap on all three days and was only closely beaten into 2nd place overall.

The following week it was driven out to the Nurburgring where it competed in the Old Timer Grand Prix and came 3rd overall, only beaten by an Alfa Monza and an 8C Alfa, it was then driven home.

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## Lagonda Magazine

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## FRONT COVER

Richard Mann approaching the Simplon Pass  
(2005 metres). Read all about it on page 15.

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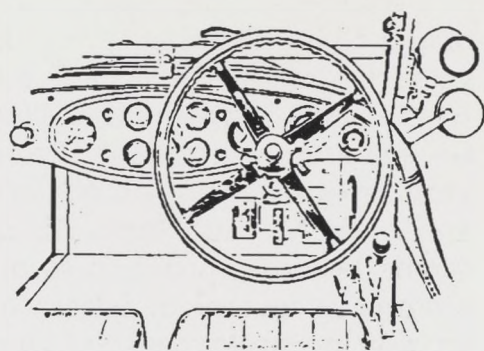
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# From the Driving Seat

by Ken Painter



THIS EDITION OF THE MAGAZINE is bigger than usual, because we have a great deal to report on and many contributors have sent technical or historical material as well. So, if the article you took such pride in writing isn't in this edition, relax! Just for once in a while your Editor is in the happy position of having too much for one magazine. Keep up the good work and keep those articles flowing in.

We report in full on the Annual General Meeting in this issue. Like Arnold Davey said in the Newsletter, it was a great success, with the most Lagondas we have had at an AGM for many years. I do not intend to add anything to the many comments, both for and against the style of the meeting, except to say that many of you have written and expressed your views. Some who wrote to the secretary asked for their letters to be published in the magazine and this has been done, other letters to the secretary have not been included simply because the author did not ask for this to happen.

There is no attempt to present the views of the writers as a "pro" or "anti" camp and the letters are reproduced strictly in the order they were received by me, so don't try to infer any deeply significant meaning into the way they are presented. There is no attempt at balance either, all letters for publication have been printed.

Actually, there is something I have to say: accountants and auditors present all financial transactions in terms of "profit" or "loss". An Annual General Meeting

will always involve the Club in expenditure and this is better thought of as a "cost". There is never any attempt to make the day self-supporting financially, the question is always one of how much should your committee spend in order to give you an enjoyable day - or weekend - out? We live in an age where even the small hotels can make good money by hosting wedding receptions and the like on weekends, so we can never again expect to find free accommodation. The more attractive the venue, the greater the demand for it, the greater the demand, the higher the cost. Some clubs keep the costs down by holding their AGM somewhere mid-week, without any supporting activity and few members seem to bother to attend. How representative of members' views can any decisions be in such circumstances and is this a practice we would want to follow?

For years, your Committee has agonized over where the AGM should be held and how many activities should be built in to the day's, or weekend's entertainment. I joined the club when I lived in Yorkshire, many years ago, but Chris and I travelled south to a number of Annual Meetings, usually combining the one day event with a weekend visit to our families. But I am aware that, if you plot the members on a map of Britain, a very high percentage live in the southern counties. Are we serving the interests of the majority of members if we continue to hold the AGM so far south of, say, Birmingham?



I well remember a member from south of the River Thames complaining a few years ago that the AGM was too far north. At that time it was held at Weston on the Green, a little north of Oxford. We get very few of our more northern members at an AGM, but long distance travel seems less of a problem to our overseas members, several of whom attend each year. Why can't we attract you if you live north of Birmingham? Are we getting the venue wrong? Or the mix of events? Or is it some other reason? Your Committee certainly don't know why (or if!) we are failing you, so why don't you tell us what you would like to see?

Finally, to change the subject completely, several members have asked me if they could send me material for "The Lagonda" on computer disc. My computer is not exactly "state of the art" technology, I put everything I receive onto computer disc to send to the printer, using WordPerfect 5.1 as his computer can read that and convert it directly to Quark Express. If you can send me material in either of these two systems, then I will be happy to take it on disc, PROVIDED you can assure me and our printer that your discs are virus free!

K.P.P.

# Reflections

by David Hine

MY OLD BOSS USED TO HAVE A HABIT of leaning back in his chair with his lips pursed, his eyes half closed and his finger tips lightly touching, as he intoned "I prefer the errors of enthusiasm to the indifference of wisdom". I suppose it was his way of avoiding my demotivation after he had just ticked me off for dropping a bollock.

Judging from some letters and editorial recently, some members felt we went seriously "over the top" with our 1997 AGM at Phyllis Court, while others have written to say it was the most successful and enjoyable Lagonda Club weekend they have ever been to..... you can't please all the people all of the time, as they say.

When volunteers have worked long and hard to make an event a success and

lie exhausted from the effort, any criticism, whether justified or not, hits home very hard. It is my opinion that "Astounded from Tunbridge Wells" should be sensitive to this, particularly if they do precious little themselves for the Club.

Having said that, we have received a lot of helpful advice, which will be factored into our future deliberations.

If we judge the AGM weekend by the turn-out of Lagonda cars, then our endeavours to find a good location were well rewarded. This was, by any measure, a record in numbers, variety and quality.

Despite earlier misgivings, the weather was kind and the sun shone most of the day to emphasise the tranquillity of the banks of the Thames at



Henley. We could have saved most of the expenditure if we had taken a chance and not bothered with the marquees. However, bearing in mind the volatility of the British climate, it would have been the height of folly to entice you all to a field, however beautiful and not provide shelter. The organiser's brief was to lay on the AGM day at the Club's expense, subject to any sponsorship. Sponsorship was forthcoming from A.M.L. Ltd and L.M.B. Racing, this was much appreciated.

We must not take for granted all the regalia and archives stalls, together with a splendid display of historic Lagondas and the latest product from Newport Pagnall.... all to make the mouth water.... and all requiring manning and organising beforehand.

The Gala Dinner Dance and the Riverboat Cruise were added attractions, laid on for those who wanted to make a one or two night stay. They were supposed to be self funding by the participants and they almost were. The loss of £280 was made on the dance, because not as many members as we expected wanted to go.

When this problem became apparent a few weeks before the event, tickets were offered to other car clubs and, thank goodness, they took them up. My impressions of this event were excellent from the moment I entered the room. The tables were enhanced by Gloria Mayes' beautiful flowers and I was greeted by many young members and their guests and beautiful partners. I got the impression that they are more at home in dinner jackets than the older members I greeted!

I was honoured to welcome the Chairman of the Aston Martin Owners' Club, Ian MacGregor, himself a past member of our Club when he owned a 16/80. Also from the AMOC was our good friend Michael Urban, who, as Chairman of their Jubilee Committee, had done a lot to help organise the 1995 Le Mans cavalcade with me.

Our sponsors, A.M.L. and L.M.B. Racing had bought tables as well and I was delighted to be introduced by Harry Calton to Bob Dover, the new boss of Aston Martin Lagonda. As the wine flowed, the talk was of our centennial celebrations in 1999 and enthusiastic help was promised by the Company. The meal was excellent and the band played the most exciting music. Sure, they were outrageously expensive, but there was not a moment when the floor was not packed with young and old alike, bopping the night away.

I met the quietly spoken Matron and her Deputy Matron from Helen House Hospice. It was a joy to see the expression of incredible delight on their faces as our Charity Auction of memorabilia passed the five thousand pound mark under the expert gavel of Malcolm Barber. And I laughed at the sight of Tony Mayes disappearing under piles of cheques and banknotes as people fought for their goodies! The money we raised here will have a more focused impact than if we had gone for an international charity.

All in all, a night to remember and be grateful for. Sad it didn't appeal to more of you, but that's life I guess. Judging by the numbers, the Riverboat Cruise appealed to a broader cross-section, Tony's gamble paid off here and it was fully subscribed. Once again, we were blessed with good weather, good food and good company as we drifted up the Thames and admired the pads of those who prefer bricks and mortar, rather than our own mobile treasures.

We learn from trying different types of events, what appeals to the majority of our active members. In this way we can tailor our future programme and control our finances accordingly. As I said in my AGM address, 1998 may be quieter, before the storm of our 1999 Centenary.

Let us hope that enthusiasm continues to overcome indifference.... or whatever they say!



# Book Review: "Lagonda"

by Bernd Holthusen, Palawan Press.

Price: £275. ISBN 0952 30093 1

by Kevin Lloyd-Bisley and Ken Painter

AVERAGELY PRICED BOOKS ARE USUALLY passed to editors of magazines as complementary copies for review. With a very high quality and limited production edition such as this, the usual rules obviously can not apply. Equally obviously, we could not let such an important book become available without a proper review. Kevin Lloyd-Bisley stepped into the breach, just as Colin Lindsay loaned Ken Painter a copy, so this is an amalgam of our views:

Many reviewers start by saying that the book was hard to put down, in this case it would be fair to say that it is hard to pick up! It is a very large and heavy book, with 426 pages, 745 black and white and 241 colour photographs. It comes in an elegant slip case and is produced to the very highest standards, using the best in modern technology. The results are, in a word, stunning. The large format for the many pictures is always a great advantage, but Bernd has electronically enhanced virtually every picture and the clarity and details within them is a pure delight. He has deliberately reproduced some in an "as found" condition and the contrast between them is remarkable.

This is undeniably the ultimate Lagonda book for the enthusiast, but Bernd makes it clear that he concentrates on the 4½ litre and V12 models, so the earlier cars are given a briefer coverage. Even so, he presents a thorough and authoritative study of the marque in an immensely readable and informative way. He covers the history of the Lagonda Motor company from its formative years in Staines and includes many fascinating and rare early photographs of the factory and drawings

of the earliest models. The enhancement of the pictures is especially useful here and we are treated to some wonderfully clear pictures of industrial life in the Lagonda factory at the turn of the century.

Every single model is summarised and, more important, illustrated, although your editor would have welcomed some computer enhanced pictures of the high chassis 2 litre saloons! Once he reaches the 4½ litre period, the story is told in greater detail and here, as elsewhere, the careful selection of photographs greatly enhances the story.

There are sections on the racing years and the W.O.Bentley era. Each chapter could warrant a book in its own right, but the essential information is all there and included much which was new to at least one of your reviewers.

For the more technical amongst us, the chapter covering the Meadows engine is of particular interest, with beautifully reproduced pictures and plates, giving a large amount of detail and technical information. The many photographs of the V12 engine are also outstanding and show what a technical tour de force the engine was when it was first introduced.

Bernd is a keen and enthusiastic member of the club and his enthusiasm for it shows through in almost every page, where he gives generous tribute to club members and officers at every opportunity.

Although the bulk of the pictures are contemporary with the cars, there is a section with specially commissioned new colour photographs. Corinna

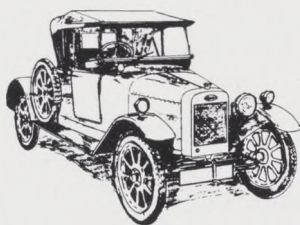


Holthusen's work is truly outstanding and will, we fear, make many lesser mortals reluctant to provide pictures for publication in the magazine! Her photographs of cars in their modern surroundings and the pictures of the most meticulous restorations are works of art in their own right and will repay many hours of detailed examination. It is rare to find work of such technical and artistic quality in any motoring work at any price and they add greatly to the pleasure of reading the book.

Although this is a truly outstanding book, there is one minor criticism. Bernd wrote the original text in German, so all English measurements were converted into metric equivalents. Although the quality of the translation is faultless, it is

a pity that these measurements were not returned to their original format for the English edition. To be fair, if that is all there is to comment on, there isn't much wrong! Ken Painter has one other comment, his cat hates the book. She loves to curl up on his lap as he reads, but "Lagonda" is so heavy she is getting seriously squashed!

For those of you who were too slow off the mark to buy a copy at the specially discounted introductory rate for Club members, the price may seem high, but this is sure to become a collectors piece in its own right, as cherished and valued as the cars themselves. Production was limited to 1000 copies, so don't delay, buy now, before it is too late, you won't regret it.



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# Brooklands to Beaulieu Motoring History Run, May 10th 1997

Organised by HERO - The Historic Endurance Rallying Organisation and run by John Brown

by Richard Mann

I BECAME A MEMBER OF HERO following the entry of AXD 56 in Le Jog in 1995. This run looked to be the sort of thing I like doing, i.e. driving the car with the navigation not being too testing and giving it a 300 mile exercise.

My son James Mann, a friend of his, Paul Robinson and myself made up the crew. AXD was thought to be in good order and off we set from home (Litlington, E. Sussex) at 6.15 a.m. to drive to Brooklands, proudly displaying our plaques fore and aft, saying "Brooklands - Beaulieu". However, about 50 minutes later, on the A23 near Handcross Hill, we boiled! I removed the plaque from the front, refilled the radiator and we proceeded to Brooklands.

What a shame so little is left of the historic racing track, but what a feeling of history. We checked in, received our Road Book, I did a 30 second video slot of me and the car for the 90th anniversary of Brooklands and, at 9.05 precisely, set out to do the Test Hill - 8:1, 6:1, 4:1, with a warning not to go too fast at the top as there was a steep bump. All went well, apart from slipping the clutch a bit in second and we then proceeded through the historic racing sheds and buildings onto the banking itself. Very exciting, but all too short, as not much remains, but great fun.

All now concentrated on our jobs, James and Paul on navigation and me on driving. We very quickly realised that the directions and mapping were excellent, the route missed all big towns and we enjoyed quiet roads, magnificent

views and lovely villages you would not have believed were in the crowded south of England. The weather was something else, with heavy showers and some sunny intervals. The car likes moisture in the air though and always seems to be at her best then, so as we were dressed properly in waterproof gear it seemed no more than a nuisance.

We stopped at the Bat and Ball, Hambledon, for lunch and paid our respects to the home of cricket. We also needed more water, this was concerning me a bit, as the car generally runs with no need for top-ups.

We arrived with no more trouble at Beaulieu at about 4.15 p.m., after 120 very enjoyable miles. The weather here was sunny and warm. AXD 56 won the best pre-war car award in the concours, largely, I think, for originality and the history of the Monte Carlo Rally 1936 and the RAC Rallies 1934 and 1935, plus the one family car history. Anyway, I was very pleased.

At about 6.30 p.m. we set off home, with James driving, which he did very well. After about an hour of fast roads we boiled again and had to top up once more. I saw the next job looming, what was causing the problem? After that pause we had no more trouble, Paul was delivered to his house in Brighton and James and I stopped at a local hostelry for a well-earned beer. Then home about 9.30 p.m. after 311 miles at more than 16 miles to the gallon. Not bad for a 63 year old M45, who, by the way, passed 350,000 miles on this run.



# The 1997 Annual General Meeting

by Tony Loch

THIS YEAR'S AGM WAS HELD ON A SATURDAY instead of Sunday, Saturday 20th September, and at a different venue - Phyllis Court at Henley-on-Thames on an attractive expanse of tree lined grass leading down to the river. There was ample space for all the Lagondas and even for the moderns for those of us unable to get our proper car there. Even the weather smiled on us. The result was a higher turnout of cars and members than we have seen for several years.

Aston Martin Lagonda had generously provided a series of marquees for the AGM and the Club subsidised the excellent buffet lunch, so we were on our own and not bothered by outsiders trying to find the bar or the loo. Everything was set for an excellent day.

Only a few minutes late over 110 members gathered for the AGM. (Did the Committee really expect it to start at 10.30?) The Chairman started by welcoming all those who had made the early start and especially the Whiteheads from Australia and the Sewalls, who had brought their M35R from Maine, USA and had toured England before reaching Henley. The highlights of the year had been two enjoyable touring rallies on the Continent and a recent one in Ireland. At the BDC Silverstone Meeting there had been a record Lagonda entry - 8 x 4½s and 4 Rapiers and a non-member in a 3½ litre Lagonda-Jaguar, whatever that was. The next major event for the Club would be the 1999 Centennial celebrations and, while the full programme was still being discussed, the main event would be a great gathering to display the history of the marque. The MD of AML had, the previous evening, agreed to support this event financially. The Chairman remarked that, compared to Lagonda, Ferrari's much vaunted 50 years looked pretty silly.

The accounts were then approved, again without any discussion.

The Chairman introduced Clive Dalton, who had agreed to stand as his replacement for Chairman at the next AGM. Clive has been a 2 litre member since 1959 and in the last year has been on the sub-committee revising the Club's constitution. He would be co-opted onto the Committee at their next meeting, so that he could be "run in". Messrs Davey, Bugler and Stoneman were re-elected, as were messrs Willoughby and Lloyd-Bisley, who had been co-opted to the Committee in the last year.

The next item was the adoption of the revised constitution. It was explained that this was necessary because of the changes in Company Law and shortcomings in the existing constitution that had come to light. The main changes were that the Committee would become a Board of Directors, with the Chairman given more authority, especially for the running of the Club between Board Meetings. The Board would be able to dismiss a Board Member who ceased to have the confidence of the Board. Company Law no longer required a club of our size to have an annual audit and this was reflected in the new constitution. Copies of the revision had been distributed before the start of the meeting and valuable comments had been made by members who had obtained advance copies. A member asked if the draft had been scrutinised by anyone legally qualified. It was explained that the sub-committee considered that they had sufficient experience of Company Law to make this unnecessary, but it was agreed that if it could be done on a no-cost (or low-cost) basis it would be. The revised constitution was then approved and the Chairman thanked the sub-committee of Lindsey, Painter and Dalton for their hard work. This concluded the formal part of the meeting.

The Chairman of the Centennial sub-





*The oldest Lagonda at the AGM, Steve Lawrence's 1913 11.1 – needless to say, he won the award for early cars.*



*The youngest Lagonda at the AGM, the 1963 Rapide of Ken Smith. We don't see enough of these lovely cars.*





*The formal part of the event was very well supported.*



*Raymond Baxter presents Tony Hayes with his award for the best M45 and thanks him for a great weekend.*



committee, Jeff Leeks, then explained that, in addition to the Grand Gathering already announced by the Chairman, other events being considered were a tea party at Great Fosters, where many of the pre-war Lagondas were unveiled to the press and public, regional events and a European Rally. Other suggestions would be welcome. Brooklands was being proposed as the venue for the Grand Gathering because of its Lagonda connections. Concern was expressed from the floor that, although the Centennial had been proposed 2 years ago, very little progress seemed to have been made; 1999 was only 15 months away and there would be a lot to be done if it was to be the success that it deserved. In particular, the venue for the Grand Gathering should be booked as soon as possible while there was still a choice of dates. The Chairman noted the concern and promised that the Centennial would be given priority at future Board Meetings.

The meeting then closed, leaving plenty of time for looking at the cars before lunch.

Over 80 Lagondas were present - one count put it at 88. There was a special area for notable cars, which included two of the 1936 LG45 Team Cars and one of the four 1929 2 litre Team Cars. Also included was an M45 that had been in the ownership of the same family since new, which must be rare (unique?). We

were also privileged to be allowed a preview of the 1997 Aston Martin Volante Convertible, which would be unveiled at the Motor Show in October.

The model count was difficult because Lagonda owners have always been undisciplined, thank goodness, and some did not park where they should have. There were at least 32 2 litres, one 11.1, three 3 or 3½ litres, 10 M45, 14 LG45, 2 LG6, one V12, four Rapiers, five specials including two 3½ / 4½s and four post-war DBs including a 1963 Rapide. There was also a post-war Bentley at the back pretending to be a Lagonda.

The concours was judged after lunch and the awards were presented by Raymond Baxter, the well-known BBC commentator and motor sports enthusiast. It was a very enjoyable day amongst wonderful cars and their owners, in a typically English setting, on a hot sunny September day. England at its best.

Our grateful thanks go to Tony Mayes for organising such a successful and varied weekend for us all. He put in a huge amount of hard work on our behalf and the event was a great credit to him.

#### **Editorial Post-Script:**

*Members will be delighted to learn that Kip Waistell, who is a Solicitor, generously agreed to check our new constitution for us and, with some very minor corrections, all is well!*

---

#### **The award winners were:**

##### **Early Cars:**

1913 Cabriolet, Steve Lawrence

##### **2 litres:**

1932 LC Speed Model, Keith Bowley

##### **16/80:**

1933 Tourer, John Breen

##### **3 Litres:**

1931 Tourer, Martin Holloway

##### **M45:**

1934 Tourer, Tony Mayes

##### **LG45:**

1939 DHC, Brian Watson

##### **LG45:**

1939 DHC, Detlev Mayer

##### **V12:**

1938 (1940?) DHC, Jean Gorjat

##### **Rapier:**

1935 FHC, Malcolm Burgess

##### **DB Cars:**

1963 Rapide, KHA Smith

##### **Specials:**

1937 LG45 Le Mans rep, Terry Brewster

##### **Car Club Trophy (overall winner):**

LG45 DHC, Brian Watson

##### **Ladies' Choice:**

The Rapier of Malcolm Burgess

##### **Merit Awards:**

1937 LG45R Tourer, Knut Schmiedel

1929 2 litre SM, Ian Ronald

##### **Awards for Distance Travelled:**

1937 LG45 Tourer, Manfred Hassel  
from Wissen, Germany - 650 miles

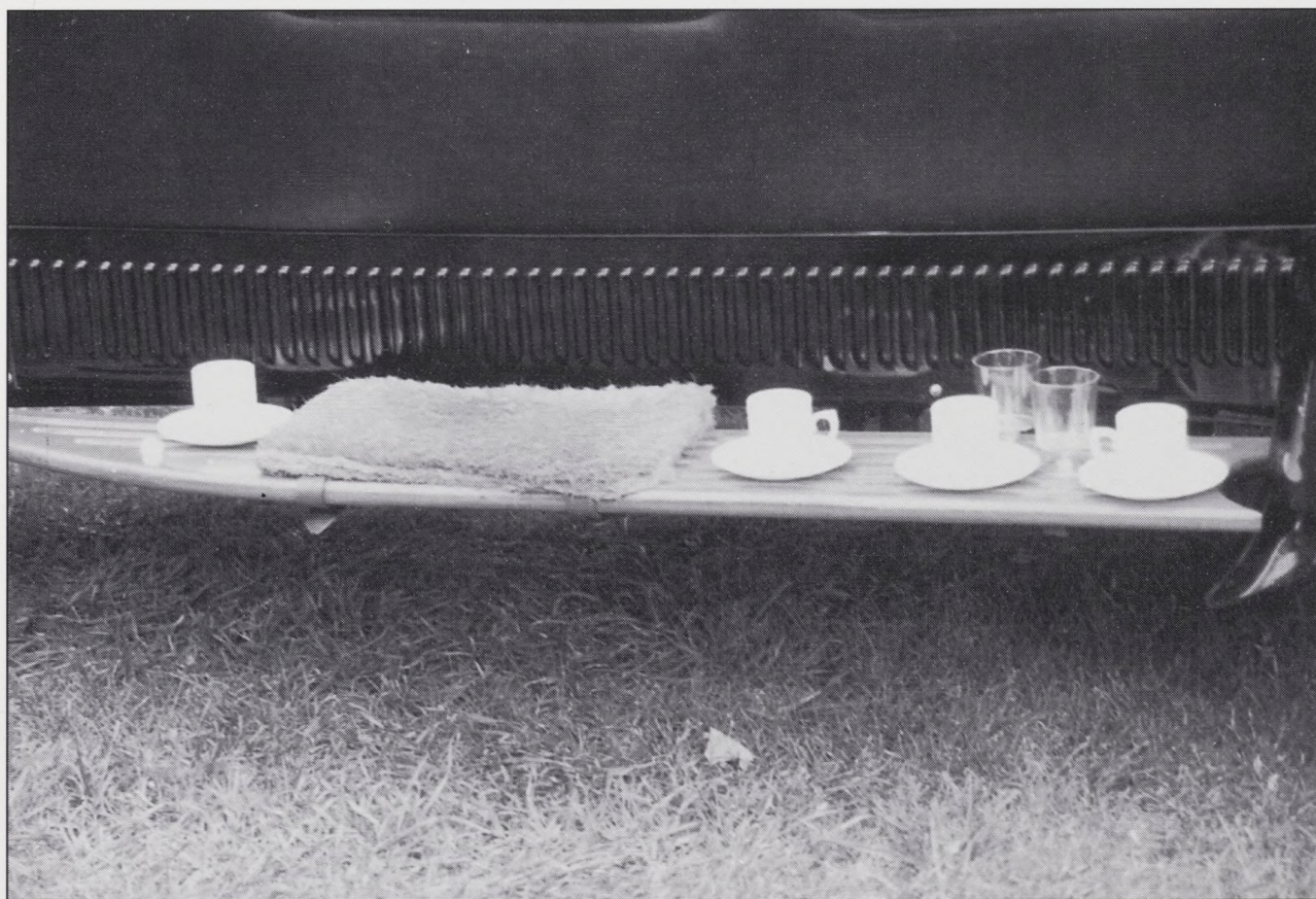
1934 M35R, Nick Sewall

All the way from Maine, USA





*A good time was had by all! The new Aston Martin and the old team cars in front of our marquees.*



*Afternoon tea – Or would prefer something stronger?*



# 11 Tropheo Once More - June 9th to June 20th 1997

by Richard Mann

HAVING DONE A LOT OF WORK on AXD 56 since summer 1996, which included new exhaust springs and a new no 2 exhaust guide, leading to a new cylinder head gasket and therefore new studs for the engine, plus a repaired speedo drive, John Blake, my son James and I then worked on replacing the two ignition switches with a "correct" ignition switch, showing C. M. and C&M., which I traced through Richard Jones (J12). This took longer than planned, as I had to map all the connections and change them slightly to fit the correct switch. Then, not content, I fitted a new starter motor from Alec Downie, as I had a problem finding replacement brushes for the original Rotax starter, which is now my spare. I then added four new tyres and was ready for my first run of the season: "Brooklands to Beaulieu", another record written up for the Lagonda Magazine. That run alerted me that the cooling system needed a good clean-out. That having been done, John Blake as co-driver and I set off for Calais on Monday June 9th, via the Channel Tunnel, to take the Autotrain overnight to Nice. All went well and paying a bit extra for a sleeper, rather than couchettes, made the trip much more comfortable.

From Nice, in a temperature of 80° F, we set off to drive North towards Megeve, our starting point for the Rally on Wednesday morning. We started by going down the "Promenade des Anglais", very apt, before the real drive began. We stayed the night near to Albertville and drove on early on Wednesday to Megeve. The car went well, except for some overheating, which improved the further we went. After registering and getting our rally plates we had a good testing day, climbing

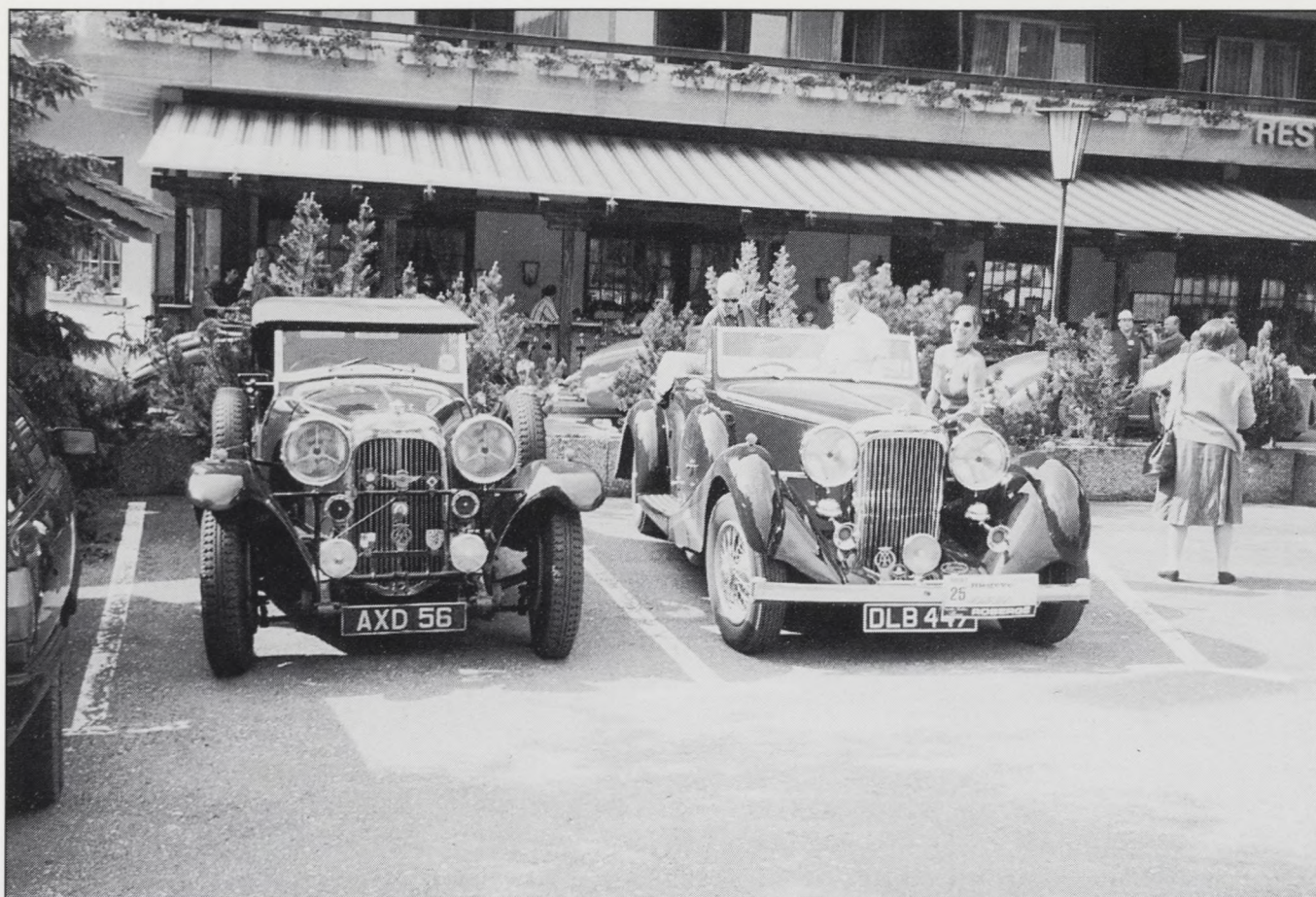
narrow roads, with a good stop for lunch high in a mountain valley, returning to Megeve to spend the night.

The next day, Thursday, the main run started via Chamonix, Argentiere and Col des Montets (1461m), a stop for lunch at the Barrage d'Emosson, a huge reservoir in Suisse, then back to the Col de la Forclaz (1527m and massive) and two more climbs before arriving for tea at Gstaad and a well earned rest. Then a further stage of 55 miles and a climb up to Grindlewald, the car running up to 106° F on the thermometer, but only boiling over when we stopped the engine. The scenery at Grindlewald is spectacular and the North face of the Eiger awesome.

Good eats and drinks and then, on day three, Friday, I broke two height records for the Lagonda, the Grimsel pass, 2165 metres (7145 feet) and after lunch the Nufenen Pass, 2478 metres (8177 feet). I had now realised that although the thermometer reads 100° F going up, if I sailed over the top and drove down for a mile or so the temperature dropped rapidly to about 85° F and so that became the technique, slightly mystifying people who stopped at the top to enjoy the view, seeing me disappear down the other side.

I felt we should now be in Italy, but no, we were in the Italian speaking part of Switzerland, which was something else I learned on our trip. I then learned something I was not so happy with. I discovered a pin-point leak in the water pump, which was to need repairing at our next stop, the Grand Hotel des Iles Borromees at Stresa. One of our fellow rallyists supplied the answer, some J & B epoxy metal was applied to the hole and, as it took a minimum of 15 hours to cure, it was just possible to fit the repair in





*AXD plus Patric Arnaud's LG45 at Gstaad.*



*Angela Goodhart + self and two splendid machines at the Vimy Memorial, the monument to the Canadians who died in the first world war.*



before the 11 a.m. start on Saturday. We found that the repair held well, we had a good drive up the Simplon pass and were presented with our Diplomas for getting to the pass without outside assistance. Then on to Martigny to an "acceuil" (welcome) which included a visit to their car museum, which had a wonderful collection of Veteran cars. I did not know that the Swiss made the Pic-Pic and the Sigma, both wonderful machines in which you could sit with your top hat on! On to Verlieu for the night. When backing the car over a nasty bump to park for the night I grounded and the car needed some running repairs to the bracket holding the exhaust pipe and to a tiny fracture near the manifold itself. John decided to make an evening of it and led the dancing into the small hours.

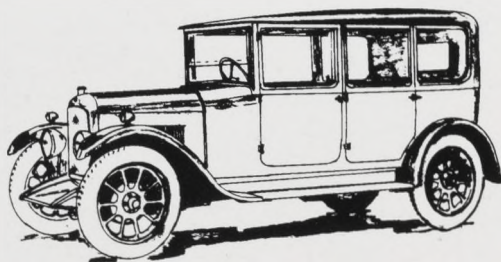
Sunday, after the running repairs had been completed, we set off for Megeve and, at a garage just before starting a steep climb to Forclaz, I noticed that 1st and 2nd gears were sticking enough to give me warning signals and guessed that we were running short of oil in the gearbox. Luckily we found a garage open and able to supply us with a pipe of the right size to funnel the R40 through, rather than taking up the floor. This would have taken an age, as the car was full of tools, containers for oil and water and luggage, but we were able to fill the gearbox and leave almost immediately up a very steep climb to the Col de la Forclaz (1527m) in second gear. At some point near the top of the climb, after about 20 minutes, I realised that I was stuck in second gear for some time to

come. At least that was the gear to be stuck in, as I could go up and down mountain roads, although rather slowly!

As a result we missed the Mayor's welcome at Megeve at 12 noon, for we only staggered into Argentiere at 1.30 pm. I parked the car in the shade of a tree and then the two hot and weary motorists quaffed some cool draught beer, had a Salade Savoyade and felt 100% better. About  $\frac{3}{4}$  hour after we had parked the car, we returned and, "magic", the gears released and we drove back to Megeve in fine style. We polished the car up and took part, as two Tweedy, sporting Englishmen with flat caps, in the Concours d'Elegance. Not good enough to win, but we got a lot of "Bravo!"s and cheers from the crowd. It was then back to Paris by Autotrain, after an easy run to near Geneva to lunch with friends and back to St Gervais-le Fayet for loading up - a stage which John drove with great panache, dinner with some of our other rallyists also returning to Paris and then the last stage of the trip started.

John took the Eurostar back to London and on to Litlington and Jo my wife and I, accompanied by Angela Goodhart and Guy Thin in a 1938 BMW tourer, set off on a three day trip via Amiens to Bruges for a day's sightseeing and then home via the Channel tunnel. In all the car had covered 1552 miles and had supplied me with many tests of varying degree, which had been solved well enough to continue and complete the drive. A superb driving holiday.

The Il Tropheo organisation would welcome other Lagonda members and the supercharged 2 litres would love it!





# Improvements to the 16/80 Lagonda Engine

by Bill Wright

THE TWO LITRE CROSSLEY ENGINE in the 16/80 Lagonda, in my view, has a good performance when compared with the other engines of the period. It is a simple and basically sound design, but can be improved upon - what design cannot?

The alterations I am about to describe have given trouble-free service on my car over many years and the engine runs much smoother and quieter as a result.

The first alteration concerns camshaft lubrication. The camshaft and tappets do not have a pressurised oil supply, but rely on scavenge oil draining down from the valve rockers. Over the years, wear in the rocker bearings causes the forward camshaft bearings to be starved of oil, most of the oil draining from the rocker bearings nearest to the rearmost rocker shaft pedestal from which the system is fed. Also, the skew gears driving the oil pump from the end of the camshaft suffer undue wear through inadequate lubrication, being in a remote area of the camshaft chest which sees little oil mist.

I have yet to find a pair of skew gears that are not showing signs of wear after what would be regarded as a period of normal use.

My solution to the problem is to run a positive oil feed direct to the camshaft bearings and also to the meshing point of the skew gears. The sketch shows the essential features of the modification.

A  $\frac{3}{16}$ " diameter pipe runs from a banjo connection, replacing the blanking plug for the bypass valve on the rocker shaft rear pedestal and passes downwards, between the push rods operating the valves of number six cylinder, to a "T" piece above the camshaft. A second pipe, also  $\frac{3}{16}$ " diameter, runs forward above the camshaft, from the camshaft and finishes in the oil feed hole to the front bearing of the camshaft. The pipe has to be set to

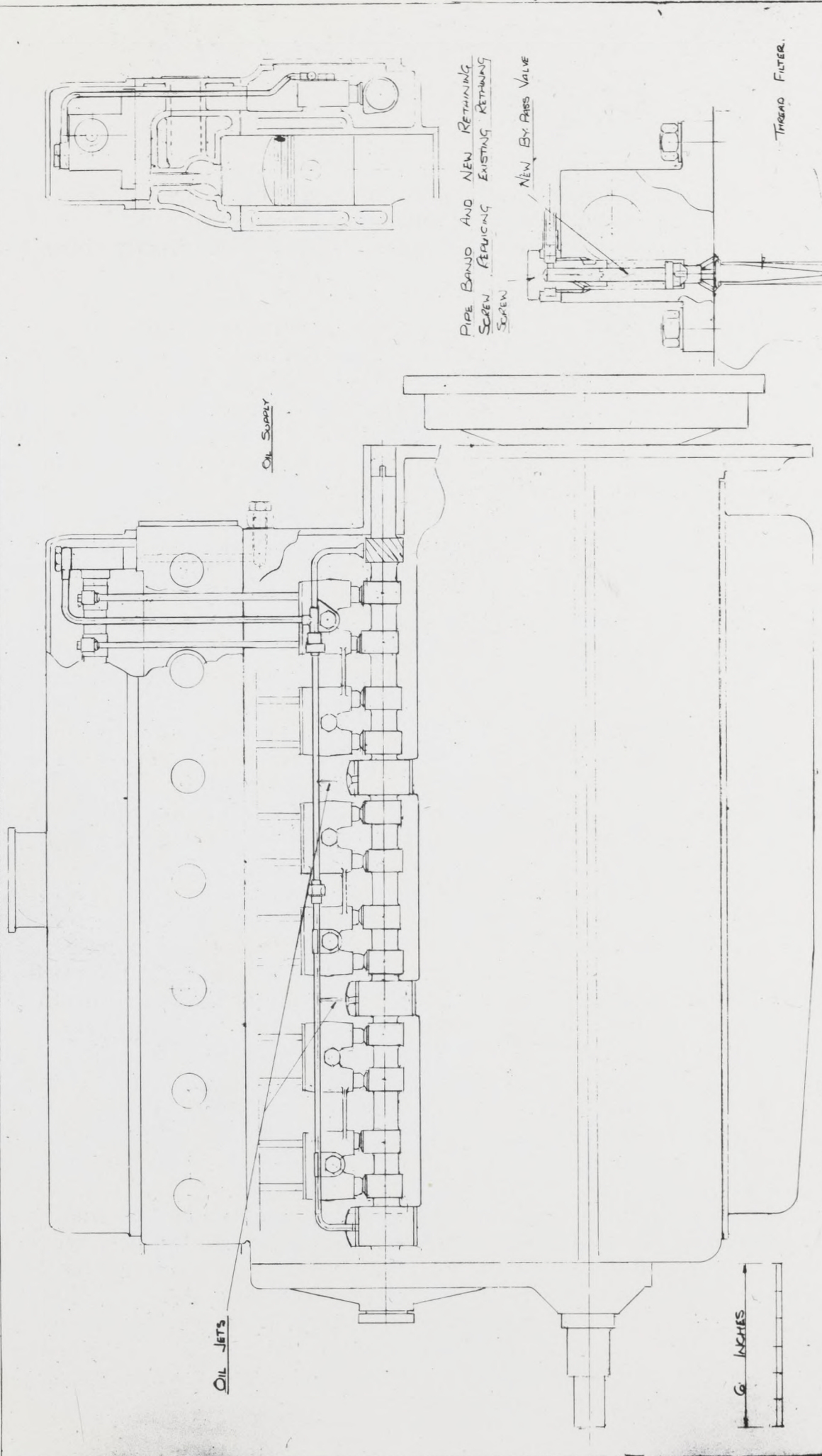
pass through the holes in the webs housing the second and third camshaft bearings, so that it is directly above the oil feed holes to these bearings. By drilling a  $\frac{1}{16}$ " diameter hole through the pipe wall, in line with each of the two oil feed holes, oil can be fed straight into these bearings. For ease of assembly, I incorporated a pipe union in this pipe, so that it can be fitted in two pieces and the pipe is located by "P" clips to the tappet block retaining bolts, as can be seen in the sketch.

The third pipe making up the assembly is integral with the "T" piece and is really a short cantilever, which is braced by a sheet metal angle bracket to the rearmost "P" clip supporting the pipe assembly. The pipe is flattened at the end to form a fish tail and set so that it is directly over the mesh point of the two gears. Oil is fed directly onto the mesh, with surplus oil lubricating the camshaft tail bearing. In this way, all camshaft bearings and the skew gears receive a positive oil supply.

Returning to the rear rocker pedestal, the new banjo bolt will have to be drilled to accept the stem of the bypass valve and I have fitted a filter in the oil feed hole in the cylinder head underneath the pedestal, to protect the new oil jets.

The oil filter is made from a  $\frac{3}{16}$ " BSF countersunk screw, which locates in the countersink of the oil hole. Two diametrically opposite blind flutes are cut in the screw thread and are open to the inlet side of the filter. Two further blind flutes interspaced between the inlet flutes connect to the delivery side of the filter. Oil passing through the filter can only reach the delivery side by passing through the thread spaces, so trapping any debris that is large enough to block the oil jets downstream of the filter.





LAGONDA 16/80 ENGINE

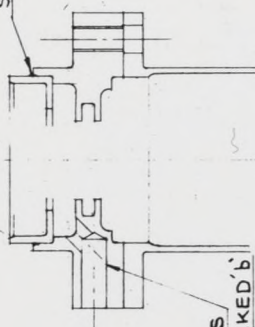
SKETCH OF MODIFIED LUBRICATION SYSTEM TO CAMSHAFT

SEE DETAIL DRAWING

5/12/12



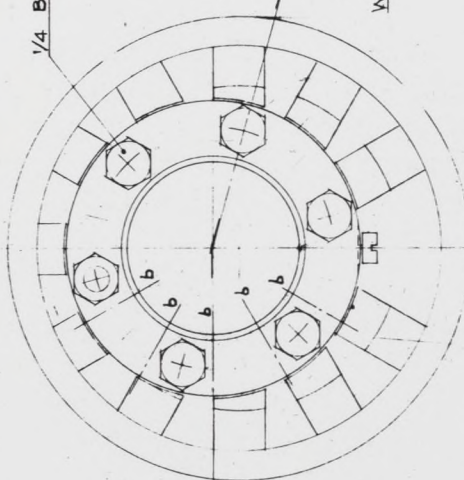
SILVER SOLDER



5 DRAIN PASSAGES  
AT POSITIONS MARKED 'b'

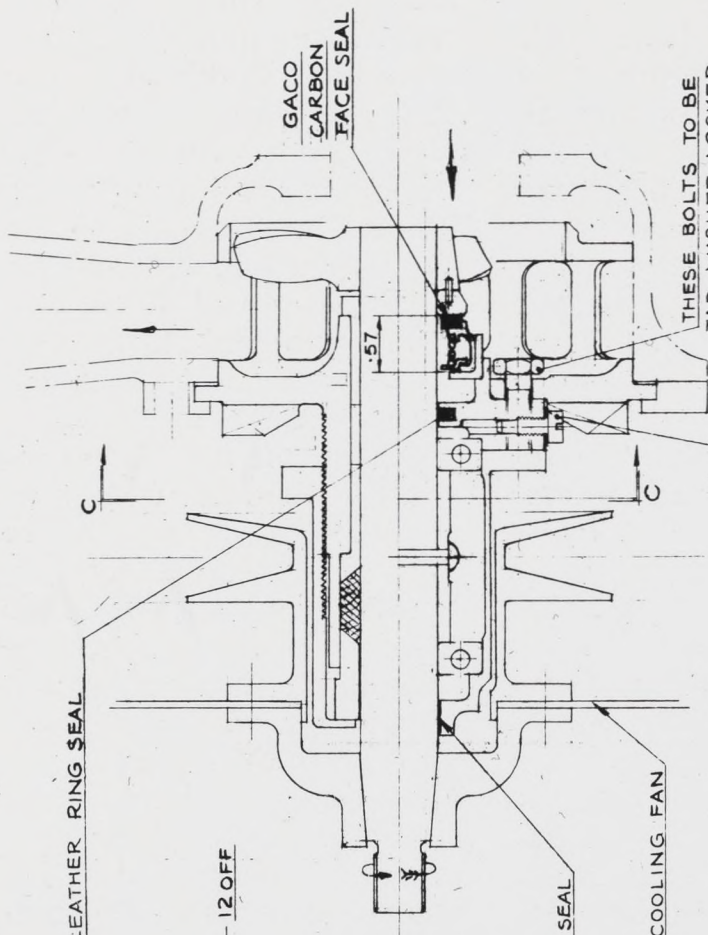
PART SECTION A-A

1/4 BSF BOLT - 12 OFF



SECTION C-C

LEATHER RING SEAL



WINDBACK SEAL

COOLING FAN

GACO  
CARBON  
FACE SEAL

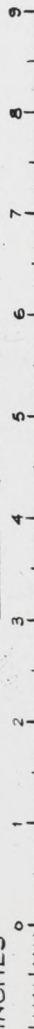
THESE BOLTS TO BE  
TAB-WASHER LOCKED  
IN PAIRS.

2 BA SCREW  
OIL FILLER PLUG

## LAGONDA 16/80 ENGINE MODIFIED WATER PUMP

SCALE - 1/1 FULL SIZE

INCHES





A new bypass valve is required, since the pilot shaft of the original valve would foul the new filter. The new valve is the same as the original, except that it is located by the head, instead of the pilot shaft.

I am indebted to my friend Bill Brownhill, who kindly made the sketch of the modification, reproduced here. He has also made separate detail drawings of the pipe banjo, pillar bolt, bypass valve and thread filter. These detail drawings are lodged with John Breen, just in case anyone wants a kit of parts to be made, but we would need an order for at least six sets of parts before he can consider manufacture.

The second alteration relates to the water pump. My car is the early model, with the pump mounted on the front face of the cylinder head. The pump in its original state was a continuous source of trouble, with the packing gland requiring constant attention to keep pace with the water leaks. I decided to take the bull by the horns and replace the packing gland with a standard GACO carbon face seal and the plain bearings with two ball bearings housed inside a sealed chamber. My sketch shows the main features of the modification. The original layout of the pump is shown as a half section above the centre line for comparison with my new design, shown below it.

It will be seen that the housing containing the plain bearings and packing gland in the phosphor bronze front cover plate of the pump has been machined off and in its place is a steel housing containing standard ball bearings for the shaft to run on.

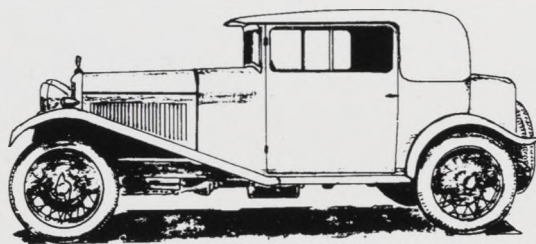
Sandwiched between this bearing housing and the water pump proper is a second steel housing, containing the GACO carbon face seal which seals against a stainless steel ring, pressed onto the shaft (also stainless steel) behind the pump impeller. A number of vent holes in this seal housing will drain away any water, should the seal start to leak and prevent water contaminating the oil in the bearing chamber. These are shown in Section A-A. A leather ring seal at the rear wall and a windback seal at the front wall of the bearing chamber contain the oil. The bearing chamber can be filled with oil by removing the cheese head screw and giving it a few squirts with an oil can. This operation needs only to be done rarely- say once a year.

It can be seen that the bearing housing fits neatly inside the bore of the fan pulley, which is unchanged and although the design departs from originality, the modification is hidden from view, well, almost.

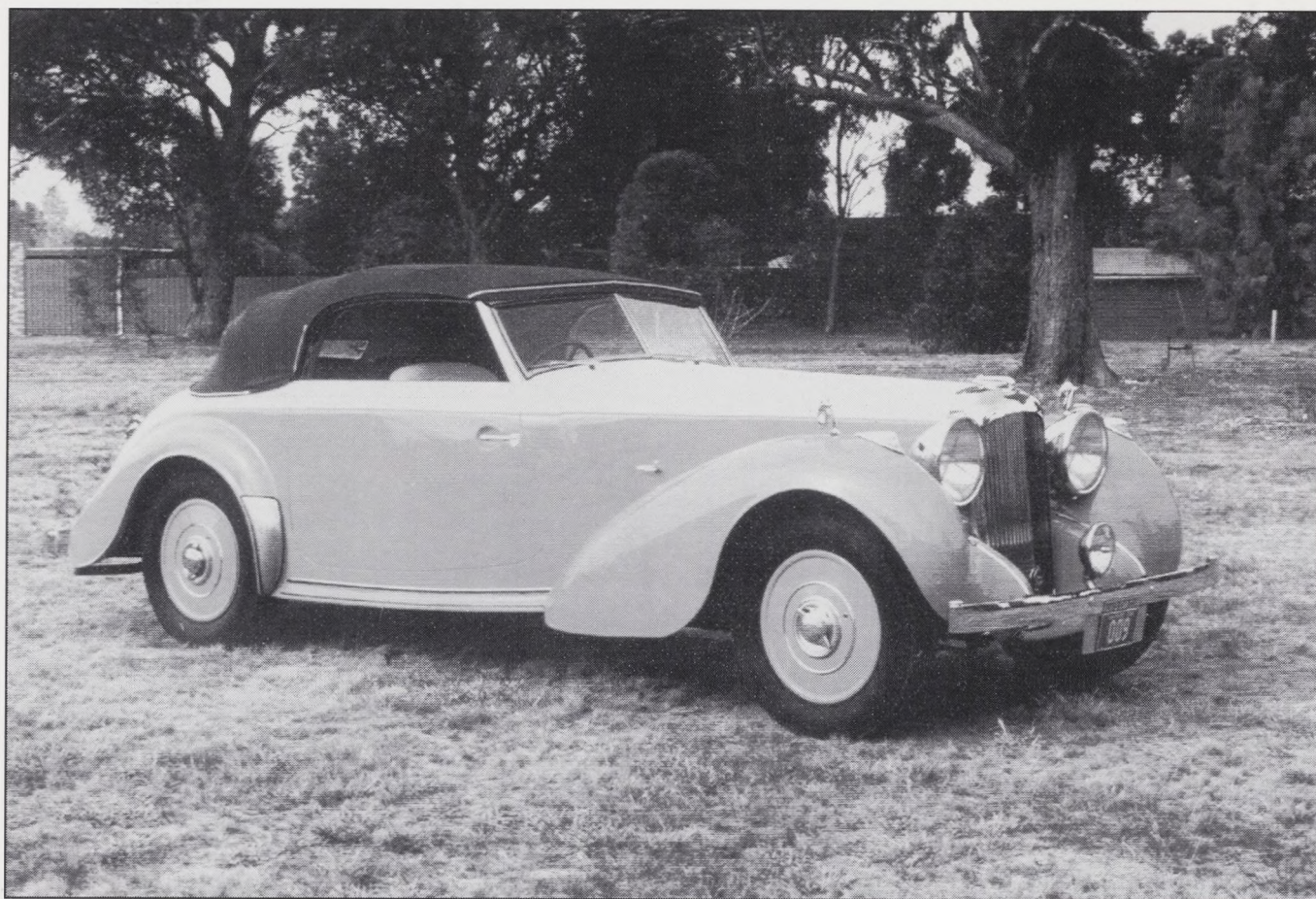
The GACO seal is a standard part from the George Angus catalogue. George Angus, when approached in the first instance, approved the design, gave advice on surface finish of the sealing face and generously sent two seals free, gratis, by return of post. How's that for service?

The steel housings are cadmium plated and the plating has lasted well over the years, better than I have.

The pump has performed perfectly and the shortcomings of the original design have been eliminated.







*Jim Whitehead's James Young bodied V12, see "In Register" opposite*





# In Register

by Arnold Davey

I STARTED OUT, CENTURIES AGO, to pass on some of the stories I gleaned from "Old Lags" at the Staines send-off for the Le Mans trip. But I got diverted on to other things, like you do. Actually, this story stems from a later interview with Eric Farquhar in October 1995, when the prizes were given out to the people who had responded to the Sainsbury's competition for memories of working at Lagonda. Eric's entry came second to Janette Knight's, with the late Derek Rutherford third.

Eric started at Lagonda in 1931 as a trainee electrician, under Fred Gillis, who combined being foreman electrician with being landlord of "The Bell" public house in Staines. During working hours the electricians worked on the cars and after hours (and in panic situations, during the lunch break) they also maintained the factory electricity system which, in true Lagonda tradition, was grossly overloaded and had to be "nursed" to avoid total breakdown.

After a year, Eric was deemed competent enough to wire a car unsupervised and he stayed on at Staines, doing this until called up during the war. On demob. he returned to Lagonda in 1946 and transferred to Feltham at the David Brown takeover. He only left when the firm moved to Newport Pagnell, since this would mean taking his son away from Kingston Poly., where he had just started, there being no comparable college at the new location. Eric also stressed the extensive social activities which were so enjoyed by Lagonda employees and recalled the famous cricket match between the factory team and "Mr Bentley's Eleven", which was captained by Norman Yardley (Cambridge and England). Eric, as the factory's demon bowler, was delighted to take Yardley's wicket.

At the October 1995 event, Eric, who had missed the June send-off by being in hospital at the time, showed me a fascinating photograph, taken pre-war, of him carrying out some work on a V12 drophead, the like of which I had never seen. It was registered FYU 319, a number not hitherto encountered and the bodywork was clearly not by Lagonda, featuring a split windscreen (very advanced for 1939), Ford V8 sidelamps and Marchal headlamps perceptibly smaller than P100s, but backed up by a pair of very large spotlamps flanking a Corps Diplomatique plate. The car was parked by the roadside, being attended to on what was probably a pre-delivery shakedown run. I had a go at identifying FYU, with no success and eventually filed it under "Chassis number not known", a curious file nowadays as it lists more V12s than there are gaps in the records, largely due to the activities of number-swappers - the bane of all Registrars' lives.

We now move on to the recent census of members' cars, which produced a gratifyingly better response than earlier ones for some reason. Members are beginning to realise that the paperwork that accompanies the car is frequently wrong (my car is registered as a Layonda and nothing I do seems to correct this). As a result, more members have been lifting bonnets and rubbing clean the actual numbers found there. Among the responses was a very full one from Jim Whitehead in Australia, who accompanied it with two photos of one of his V12s, the one with a James Young body. Jim's letter said that he enclosed the photos because no-one in Britain seemed to know anything about this car. Too true. Sure enough the James Young car proved to be the elusive FYU 319,



now with Australian plates, of course, and chassis number 14107. I reproduce Jim's photos.

The car is cream over red, with a black hood and tan trim. The Marchal lamps have been replaced by P100s and the two huge spotlamps have been replaced by a single Lucas Flamethrower, but otherwise the car looks, from the front, exactly as it did in 1940. As is normal, the rear lighting has been changed to comply with later legislation. Jim's notes fill out the dossier. The car has one of the four carburettor Le Mans engines, with an alloy inlet manifold featuring larger ports. It also has the 1940-spec chassis frame, with tubular cross-members replacing the K-frame, modified brakes and the shallower radiator shape. It also has pierced chassis side-members and perforated brake drums.

The front wings look like standard Rapide items, but the rest of the body is unusual, even for James Young, in being panelled in Duralumin, not aluminium, and the whole rear of the car, from one door hinge pillar to the other, including the rear wings, is one sheet of metal - a panel beater's nightmare, I should think. All the edges are wrapped round  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch duralumin rods, giving great rigidity. All this special work is alleged to have put the price, when new, up from £1575 for a Rapide to £2200. The chassis was ordered on 3rd July 1939, delivered to James Young on 25th October 1939 and the finished car delivered to the owner on 1st February 1940. Jim bought it in 1951, by which time it was registered VY 112, which is why I couldn't find it in the club's books.

The third picture came to me from Douglas Brown, whose wife Elisabeth is Dutch and spent her youth in Java, where this picture was taken, about 1940. The young lady sitting on the running board was a friend of Elisabeth's called Nel Vernede and Douglas wondered if I could identify the car and what its history might be. Pausing only to don the deerstalker and Ulster, Sherlock Davey set about combing the records. The car is

clearly a V12 drophead from early in the first year of production, when the doors had no waist belt. The 1937/8 catalogue illustrations and one of the prototype demonstrators had very eye-catching swages running in a diagonal curve from the radiator filler cap to the rear wings, plus teardrop swages in all four wings. These proved so time-consuming to do that the sales force were instructed to try to persuade customers out of ordering these, probably using the ploy that they were going to be dropped soon and you wouldn't want your V12 looking obsolete already, would you? They were very successful in this and the great majority of 1938 dropheads have plain doors. For 1939 a waist belt was introduced.

I didn't have to look far. The fourth production 10 ft 4 in wheelbase car, chassis 14013, was supplied on 1st June 1938 to R.E.Schulz of the Hague, via a Dutch dealer, J Nieuwenhuis. The car was ordered with metric instruments, non-standard rear lights and a headlamp flasher (again, very advanced for 1938). But the clincher came in the special instructions, at the end, where it said "To be fitted with overseas letters IN". I couldn't find my list of pre-war international identification letters, so had to refer to the RAC library, who confirmed that IN stood for Netherlands Indies. The chances of there being two V12 dropheads in Java in 1940 look pretty remote to me.

Unfortunately the story ends there. 14013 has never been in a member's hands and one imagines it was destroyed in the war. Douglas suggests it was probably commandeered by some Japanese high-ranking officer after the invasion. There is always the intriguing possibility that the owner had time to bury it, like "Henry" was in Singapore and that if he didn't survive to dig it up again, it could still be there. I wonder if you can hire metal detectors in Java?

As I write, Elisabeth Brown is trying to find out what happened to Nel, who might just know the rest of the story.





*Nel Vernende, Java, about 1940.*



*Spotted at B.D.C.  
This strange looking device, post war 3litre Lagonda chassis with XK120 engine – looks fun.*





# *The 21st Suffolk Dinner*

Saturday 14 March 1998, 6.45pm for 7.15pm

at

**The Melton Grange Hotel  
Pytches Road, Woodbridge**

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*Grapefruit Cocktail*



*Salmon & Prawn Mayonnaise*



*Roast Saddle of Lamb Dubarry  
with a selection of Vegetables*



*Raspberry Soufflé*



*Fresh Ground Coffee with Sweetmeats*

---

Dress optional. Guest Speaker on this occasion, the 21st Dinner in the series. Gary Guiver Gong awarded for Rapier coming the furthest. Please order tickets, £19 per head, direct from Mike Pilgrim at Little Orchard, Bredfield, **Woodbridge** IP13 6AW. **before end February please**, enclosing a SAE. A vegetarian main course and/or melon in lieu of the S&P are available **if stated when you order your ticket**.

Some accommodation is available with local members, and in local B&B establishments (Oxfam scheme) – contact Mike on 01394 - 382773 for details. For rooms at the Hotel, please make your booking early, requesting the agreed concessionary rates, viz £45 double / £35 single, including breakfast.

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**ALSO - Sunday 15 March, vintage run to country pub for lunch.**

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# Competition & Awards Round Up

**Allison Bentley W.O.**

**Car Club Committee**

**Densham Expensive Noise**

**Fox Mobil  
The James Crocker  
Racing Trophy  
Fox & Nichol  
Le Mans Trophy  
Gaber  
Gosling  
Invicta  
Michael**

**Newcomers Racing  
Bellini  
Rally Trial  
Northern  
Raine  
Seaton**

Wessex Rally  
The first Lagonda in BDC/Lagonda race at Silverstone  
Concours winner at AGM  
Awarded by the committee at their discretion  
Most active 2 litre or 16/80  
For those unfortunate to have major problems  
Best performance at Prescott Hillclimb  
  
Runner-up driver  
  
Top Driver  
Best performance in a V-12, any event  
Best magazine article  
Best performance by Club member  
Best performance driving any Lagonda in all types of events  
Awarded to best new driver in competition events  
Best performance in a navigation rally  
Winner of Northern Driving test  
Best D.B. car at AGM Concours  
Best maintained and used Lagonda

Not Awarded

Jeremy Brewster  
Brian Watson

Tony Mayes  
Stephen Weld

Chris Deall  
Tim Wakeley

Tim Wakeley

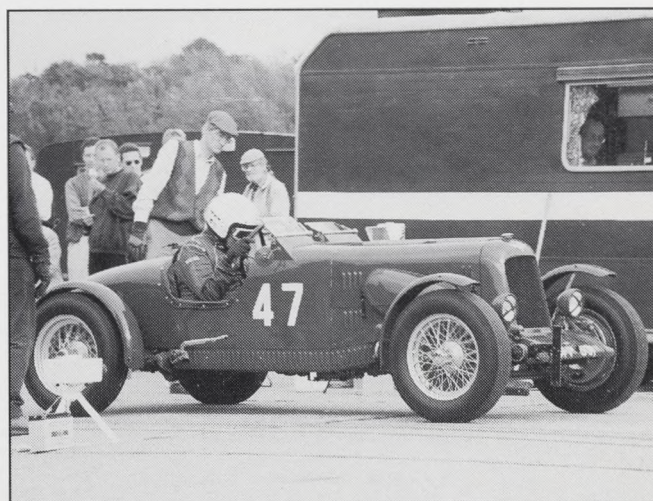
Tim Metcalfe  
Joe Harding  
Not Awarded  
Not Awarded

Mark Butterworth

Not Awarded  
Robin de Garston  
Ian North  
Ken Smith  
Jack Smith

## POINTS FOR RACING SEASON 1997

Tim Metcalfe	38	Rapier
Tim Wakeley	37	Rapier
Mark Butterworth	28	L.G. Special
Tony Metcalfe	21	Rapier
Peter Whenman	19	Rapier
Alistair Barker	13	V-12
Jeremy Brewster	11	Team Car Rep.
Nick Hine	10	L.G. Special
Terry Brewster	9	Team Car Rep.
Joe Harding	9	V-12
Robin de Garston	5	16/65
Colin Bugler	4	L.G. Special
Alan Elliott	3	2 litre
Nigel Hall	3	L.G. Special
David Hine	3	L.G. Special
Neil Jones	2	L.G. Special
N. Walder	2	2 litre
Peter Blenk	1	2 litre
Richard Bush	1	Rapier
Roger Seabrook	1	2 litre
Joe Moss	1	Invicta

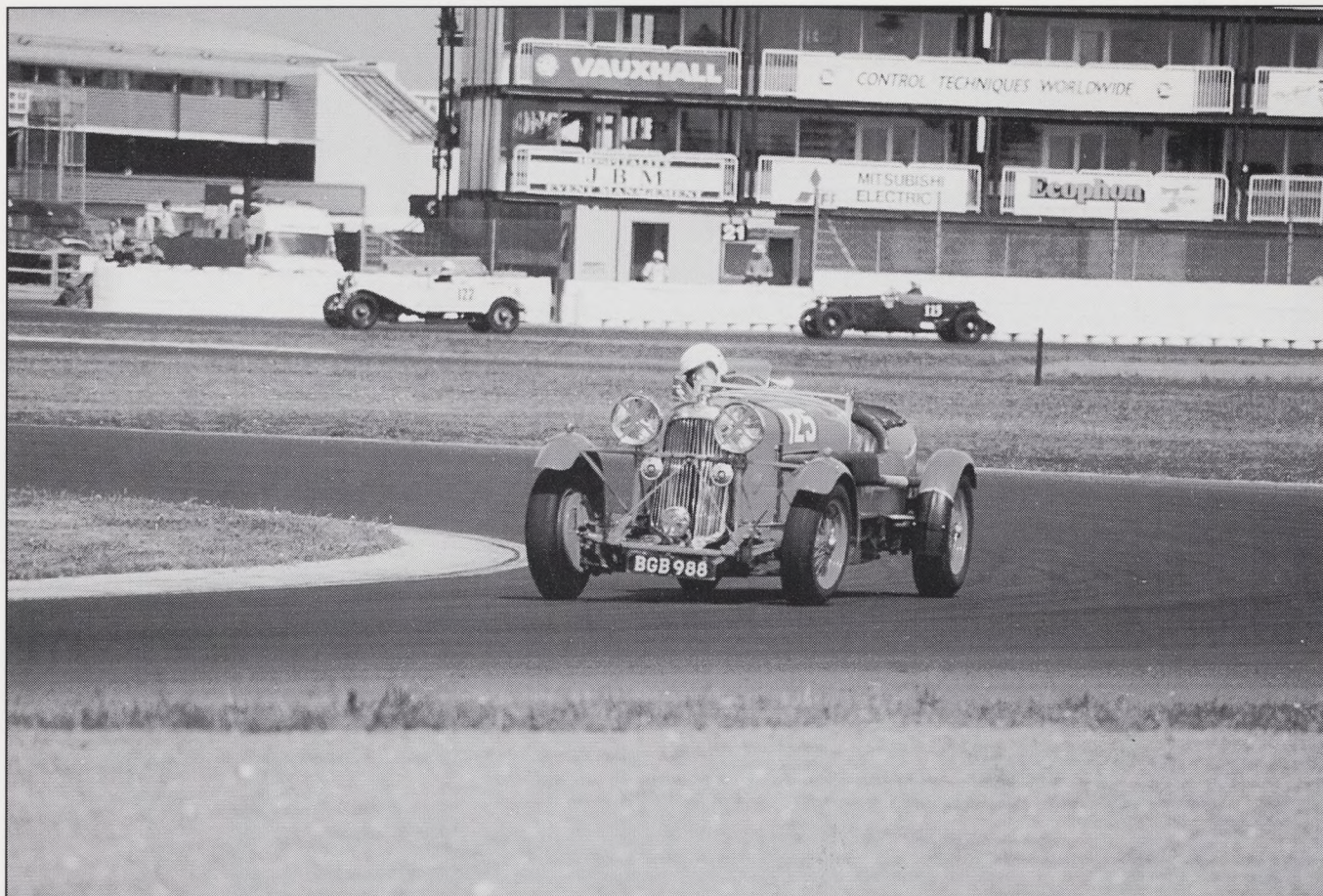


*Tim Wakeley at Brooklands Sprint.  
3000, 4000, Go!*

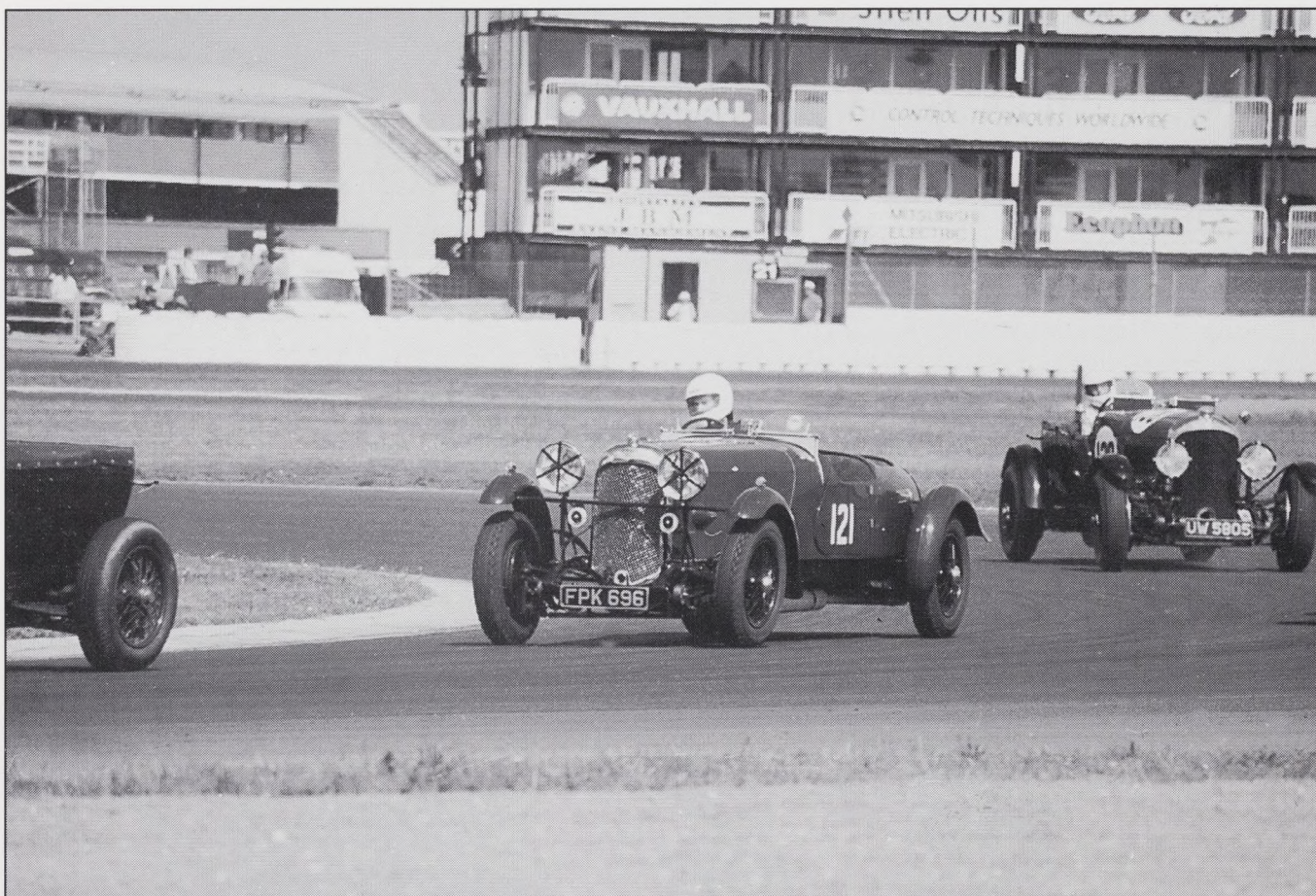
**Peter Whenman**  
Competition Secretary

Look forward to seeing you all at April Silverstone 1998.





*Terry Brewster charging on to win the Bentley/Lagonda race, Silverstone August 1997.*



*Nick Hine, a promising young driver, Bentley Drivers' Club Silverstone Meeting 1997.*



# 1997 Irish Rally

## Aug 29 to Sep 7

by Herb Schofield

MAY I SAY FROM THE START that this was the best organised rally I have ever been on and a remarkable achievement, covering as it did a period of nine days and a thousand miles on Irish roads. Congratulations to Peter and Ann Walby, Frank and Erica Storrs and not forgetting Lyn Kearney.

We met up with most of our fellow enthusiasts at Holyhead Ferry Terminus, just about every model of pre-war Lagonda was represented, together with the post-war DB 3 litre of Gilkes. Great determination and enthusiasm was displayed by Jeremy and Margaret Oates, who had travelled up from Hampshire in their 1924 12/24 Lagonda tourer - 400 miles or so just to get to the start!

The sea crossing was uneventful, we arrived safely at Dublin and on to our hotel of the next two days in County Wicklow. Here we joined the rest of our party, who had come over on the Rosslare Ferry. In total, 25 cars and over 50 club members, varying in age from about four to the late seventies! No point in going into great detail about the rally, as it would take far too long and only be of real interest to those of us who participated; suffice it to say we covered most of the scenic parts of the country, from County Wicklow, County Waterford, Killarney and back to Dublin. We visited Waterford Crystal, Ballymaloe Cookery School and gardens, the Jamieson Whiskey Centre, Blarney Woollen Mills and the Blarney Stone, the Rock of Cashel (where I had the very best pint of Guinness on the trip), the Mondello Park motor racing circuit and, finally, the Guinness Brewery. It was remarkable in that none of the cars gave any trouble, apart from a broken starter spring on Doc Rider's M45R, a broken leaf spring on the 12/24 and Nigel Hall's

Maybach Selector 3 litre saloon, which, at one point, decided to select its own gears, to the obvious surprise of the driver!

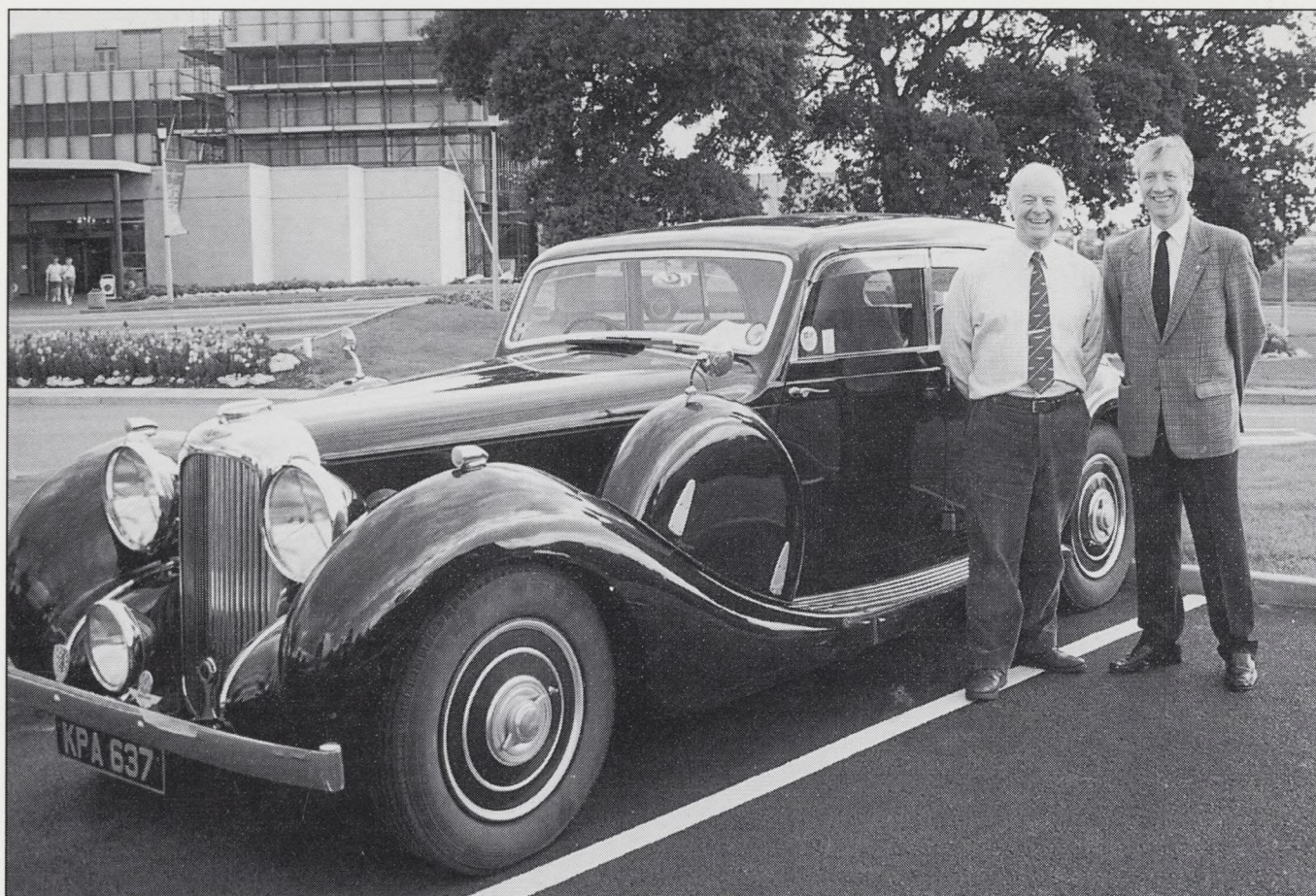
Mondello Park was interesting. Here the Racing Circuit was opened up for us to drive around as we pleased, amazing. Can you imagine **that** happening on a British racing circuit? Our thanks are due in part to Lagonda Club member Steve Lawrence, who had laid this on for us and, in fact, spent the last two days with us on the rally together with his 11.1 hp Lagonda.

On the last full day, in Dublin, we visited the Guinness Brewery, and here we observed the two minutes silence in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales. The city itself seemed sombre and sad and in a bar, normally very noisy, we viewed the funeral service on television in complete silence. Somehow it felt very moving, here we were, in a foreign land, with Irish people who were experiencing the same sorrow that we felt.

The final evening dinner was held at the Hibernian United Services Club, with everyone dressed up in their best suits and dresses. However, Captain Barker did look somewhat ill of ease in his blazer. He told us that he had bought it 30 years previously, which explained the somewhat tight fit; also in nostalgic mood we had Peter Russell-Floyd sporting blue suede shoes - a long time since I've seen a pair of those! Chairman David Hine gave the final cabaret and speech, justly thanking the organisers for all their hard work.

In the coach on the way back to our hotel, Messrs Leeks and Whenman started up a bit of a half-hearted sing-song - like you do on a coach. This prompted Geoff Gates to commence a rendition of "The Good Ship Venus",





*David Hine with Michael Willcock, Manufacturing Director of Waterford Glass, posing in front of Jeff Leeks' V12.*



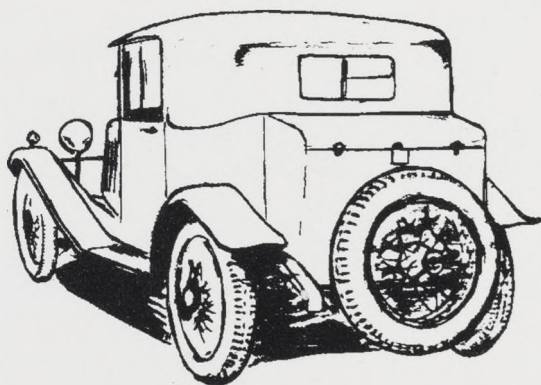
*John and Sonia Clements in Tom Harrington's M45 saloon.*



fortunately we arrived back at the hotel before he got fully into his stride - phew! Geoff, by the way, collected his father's LG45 from the Staines factory **when it was new.**

We will carry so many happy memories. The Irish people, who seemed so kind, civilised and laid-back. Just like the British used to be 40 years ago. We

will remember the rain, we will certainly remember the rain! The poor state of the Irish roads, the new friends we made and, of course, the lovely Irish scenery. Our thanks again to the Walbys, the Storrs and backed by Lyn Kearney, who followed us round in his modern to help us in case of breakdowns. He had a quiet week.



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# Ireland - a 12/24's Version

PD 1256, with help from Jeremy Oates

I WAS LEAFING THROUGH SOME MUSEUM CATALOGUES the other day, really looking for a suitable home for my retirement. I have taken up Bridge and in spite of my years, have maintained my health remarkably well.

I am looking for somewhere quiet and off the beaten track and I expect to end my days on blocks - none of this "Let's take the old girl out for a spin and see what she can do" stuff for me.

Conjuring up a suitable trio for Bridge should not be difficult. Rolls Royce - a trifle stuffy I feel, and the foreigners inclined to cheat? Bentleys would probably overbid recklessly, the early Morris, too timid.

My thoughts were interrupted as they came into the garage.

"She'll enjoy Ireland" he said "A bit hilly but she's a stout little engine".

Ireland? Who said anything about Ireland? Oh no. Not me. It rains in Ireland, the roads aren't fit for a donkey and the hills are vicious.

I will not go to Ireland.



There was no point in playing up in the South of England. They know people down here who take a pride in executing the most horrendous repair in two hours flat and increasing one's compression ratio at the same time. Patience was the watchword.

For once they went to a bit of trouble to get me looking correct. He even re-wired me, while she made an attempt at re-lining the doors and fitting a carpet, as well as creating a front seat.

I let them dawdle to Holyhead over a sunny two days - nearly 400 miles. I took everything, including the Welsh hills,

that they could throw at me and never missed a beat. Were they pleased with themselves.

We were positioned for the ferry - about three from the front - and now seemed the moment to act. As the ship's loading ramp came down he pressed the solenoid. Nothing. Tried the lights. Nothing. Horn dead.

A decent low-loader could have us home by midnight and no more tomfoolery. He did something unusual and, I must admit, I missed a trick. Using his head for once he jumped out and swung the handle. I was so surprised that I started first swing and in seconds we were in the heart of the ship.

At this point I knew that he thought the battery had finally given up. But I knew that the Master Switch he had specially bought and fitted was up the creek. It would take him a long time to find that fault.

The ship was delayed by bad weather and we reached Dublin as night began to fall. He would not make the 18 miles to the hotel in the gathering gloom.

We were hurled out of that ship as if our lives depended upon it - they threw 60 Irish pence at the barrier and tore through the darkening streets like madmen.

After 8 miles the local vehicles began to give him slight puzzled looks and point to the dead lamps.

He ignored them and looked manfully ahead. At 12 miles a Garda patrol car drew level with him. this could be fun - arrested before he had been in Ireland an hour! However they waved cheerfully and accelerated away. This was getting ridiculous. I chucked a lump of rust, as big as you'll find, in the main jet.

It is always a joy to watch his reaction



to this. Disbelief. Foot to the floor. Pull out choke. Even retard the ignition. All contribute to make matters worse. He pulled into the nearest petrol station - it was really dark now.

Parked under a solitary sodium light he dutifully cleared the jet and then had the ingenious idea of taping a torch inside the rear lamp. I gave him a mark for that. We continued to the hotel on the hard shoulder, with her walking ahead up the final black driveway to the hotel.



Everything looks better in daylight and next morning he was full of beans. A local called Lyn (he proved to be a great nuisance, then and later) set about helping find the fault and they eventually isolated the new switch.

While they were looking inside this remarkably simple device the horn suggested a small diversion.

The horn is actually a good friend of mine and has had it in him for him for several years. He always lets little children play with it and the horn had become totally sick of this.

So it caught fire. He always gets a bit panicky over smoke under the bonnet - which I suppose is sensible as the petrol tank sits there.

The horn is also screwed to the petrol tank and it produced a very professional stream of powdery white smoke and a beautiful burning rubber smell. For a big man he moved very fast - but you could see real fear in his eyes as he disconnected everything in sight and pulled the hot horn clear of the tank.



Next day we were meant to head on a "Military Road" to Kilkenny, a full 77 miles before lunch. Even Peter and Ann Walby, the organisers of this cruel prank, thought it could be a bit much - but Oh no. "We'll just start a bit before the others" he said jocularly. I would blame

it on the confidence of youth, but he left that milestone behind a long time ago.

This Military Road was built in the mid 19th Century, presumably as a practice course in case Ireland ever decided to invade Switzerland the hard way. It took me 32 minutes to get to the top, but I refused to boil or even misfire. Even she offered to get out and walk, but two-up we reached the top of what the organisers called "a steep climb". The descent was innocuously hailed as "bumpy".

Enough was enough. It was time to go home. Half way down this apology for a road I unscrewed the rear brake connection and dropped it where he would never find it. Now all he had was a bit of a brake at the front.

"Funny" he said "I think we've got water in the brakes".

It was only at Kilkenny Castle that he noticed the brake cable and pulley hanging out the back - but even this did not deter him. "We'll go straight to the hotel - and miss the scenic route". The man's barking.

Rain fell heavily now and I threw more and more muck at the jet. Finally we stopped in a deeply muddy farm gate and under the engine he went once again, but still that bit of dirt eluded him. Once the jet was clear we would bounce along again - maybe 5 miles, maybe 50 - but it was always lurking in the bottom of the carburettor.

That night he took my carburettor off and scratched around in all directions with a pipe cleaner supplied by John Clements - but still he missed it.

Next day we went to Waterford - which I quite enjoyed. I stopped once and this time he found the dirt, so no more fun there, but I made sure the rest of the rally had to pass him - so he found himself in the middle of the road waving them on with a fixed grin on his face. In the afternoon Lyn and his chum Frank found a garage whose owner had a Lagonda and, by taking an old bolt and a flat iron bar, they constructed a suitable



replacement linkage for the rear brakes. Shane Hullahan he was called and he also owned a Ghost and many Mercedes. He would not charge for his services and is a man to avoid.



By the time we reached Killarney I confess I was running out of ideas. I had tried shaking the front wheels off - but he caught on there and I regularly dropped the magneto linkage - but that never falls away completely. The magneto was actually his weak link but I had fallen out with it years ago and it refused to co-operate.

I blew the exhaust gasket, which was fun for a time - he would slow up for the horses and as we drew level the exhaust made a splendid explosion, sending horse and rider into the next county.

On the final stage but one - 70 miles short of Dublin - I really felt that I had done enough. Those new low-loaders have covered sides to keep the rain off and they are really well sprung. Sprung? Of course! Why had I been so slow?

At the next bump - and there are a number in Ireland - he let the front wheel land in a pot-hole. If you have never heard a transverse spring snap in half it is quite an impressive sound. He got out and saw the damage. She was almost in tears - they really had thought they were going to pull it off. I relaxed - the journey was over. Back to Bridge and the Motorhouse in comfort.

The engine was still running when I heard the first of them rounding the bend. A man called Wenham was first on

the scene, followed by Schofield something or other and Peter Gilkes. One of their companions said "I've got my AA card here. I'll call them". The AA do a good get you home service I'm told, but my hopes were dashed. Schofield had been searching in a ditch and emerged with a lump of tree.

We'll lift the body up and slide this between axle and spring". he said. This was just plumb crazy. No-one cared about my feelings. Wilbur Gunn would have turned in his grave at such an inelegant and futile solution.

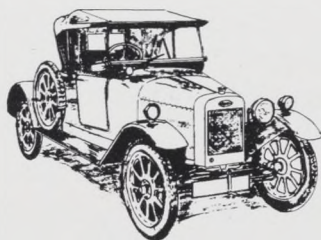
He started off very gingerly, elaborately steering around each pothole, but within minutes we had hit a motorway and he was bowling along at 35 mph as if nothing had happened.

There was little left that I could do - and I assumed that we would limp with some dignity through the back streets of Dublin and home.

That was before he saw the signpost to Mondello Park racetrack. You can't take a seriously sick old car round a racetrack - but he gave me a look which spoke volumes. He wanted his own back and nothing would stop him.

We were unceremoniously lapped by Steve Lawrence in his 1913 11.1, but he did not care. Fortunately immediately after the race Stuart and Rosemary Timmins produced a bottle of very dry sherry - I needed that.

On the last night someone suggested an Alpine trip next year - not for me thank you. however earlier Jill Hine had mentioned a meander around Tuscany. Now that's an idea. I've never pulled a Ferrari before.







*Would you trust these “mechanics” with your car?*



*– Especially if they were doing this to it – it will never pass the MOT test.*



# Uncle Guru's Reply

Contributions are by

Peter Docker, Mike Pilgrim & Alan Brown

## 2 Litre Gear Ratios:

The 2 litre Speed Model has 21 inch wheels, a 4.2:1 rear axle and an OH gearbox with a close ratio between the top gear and third. This close ratio never performed well in hilly country or in traffic. The revs and speed lost in changing down gave very poor performance in third gear, with no capacity to accelerate and, usually, the need to drop down to second gear, which of course was too low.

A few years ago I had a whole box of new gears made and rebuilt the gearbox. As part of this exercise I decided to fix the unsatisfactory third gear and changed the ratio so that, instead of third being close to top, I made it exactly half way between top and second gears.

This has made an unbelievable improvement to the car's performance and the enjoyment of driving it. The slightly lower third gear reduces the need to go down to second substantially.

The gear ratios are now: 1st: 2.98:1, 2nd: 1.934:1, 3rd: 1.368:1 (originally 1.244:1) and top 1:1. I would recommend this modification to any 2 litre owner with an OH gearbox.

## 2 Litre Safe Revs

I have owned a 1928 3 litre Speed Model for 18 years and have enjoyed many thousands of kilometres of motoring in Australia with the VSCCA. The question of safe revs has often been on my mind when there are long stretches of open road where you could drive safely at 140 kph and there is a temptation to let her go.

The engine was designed for Maximum Safe Revs of 4,500, but for sustained running would probably have been nearer to 4,000 rpm.

Today, bearing in mind the machinery is over 70 years old, an engine of this vintage in top condition should

not be taken above 3,000 rpm. The reason being that there are many components in the engine that will have some degree of metal fatigue, if not some minor fatigue cracks. Revving the engine above 3,000 rpm is inviting trouble, something is likely to break.

My advice is to keep the revs below 3,000.

P.D.

*Your Editor respectfully draws all readers' attention to the comments at the foot of page three! A contributor in, I think, "The Automobile" a few years ago made the very valid point that modern roads allow for consistent cruising speeds which were rarely possible when our cars were new. He suggested that, whatever your chosen speed, easing back on the accelerator every so often will encourage oil slash up the bores and improve the bore lubrication. It sounds logical, but does it actually help?*

K.P.P.

## Some Notes on Oils for Lagondas

Viscosity, detergency and additives are factors to consider when choosing an engine oil. The original SAE 40 is a monograde oil. SAE refers to the Society of Automotive Engineers and the number to the viscosity grading system they introduced in the 1920's. The viscosity is specified at 100°C, but it is much thicker, ie more viscous, when cold. Nowadays we have multigrade oils, such as 20W/50, 15W/40, etc. The 50 denoted that at 100°C it must meet the SAE 50 specification, whilst at 0°C it must have a viscosity corresponding to an SAE 20 monograde oil at that temperature. Thus its viscosity varies much less with temperature than that of a monograde and a multigrade oil with correct viscosity at working temperature is not so absurdly thick when cold. This is



good - when starting from cold there will be better circulation through fine bearing clearances to all parts of the engine, better cylinder lubrication and less wear on oil pump drive gears. So I vote for multigrade. At the working oil temperature of typically 50°C to 70°C, rather than at either extreme, an SAE 20W/50 is probably the nearest equivalent to an SAE 40 monograde.

Detergency is a separate factor. Pre-war oils were non-detergent. Any carbonaceous material from combustion blow-by, metallic debris and other non-volatile contaminants were deposited in the sump to form the black clag so familiar to those who ministered to their engines themselves years ago. In days before filters this was good, for otherwise this material would have been circulated through the bearings, to their detriment. Nowadays most oils are "detergent", with cleansing properties. Contaminants are not deposited in the sump, but are carried around in suspension, to be removed by the filter before the oil is fed to the bearings again. No clag means "detergent" is good too, subject to a proviso. Many Lagonda engines have only a gauze strainer, which will not collect the contaminants. At best it may stop substantial items like broken off split pin legs and pieces of white metal from wreaking havoc by getting into the oil pump. Often a strainer won't even prevent blockages by shreds of plastic gasket, exuded when timing covers, etc are tightened home. NEVER use the stuff! Take your time, use only paper gaskets, lovingly cut by hand and/or thin 'contact' sealants such as Wellseal or Hylomar. But I digress. Unless your Lagonda engine has a full-flow filter with a felt or paper (better) element, contaminants remain in circulation in detergent oil. So you MUST change the oil more often, 6,000 miles will not do. I think 1,000 miles is a good interval, but certainly change it before 2,000 miles at most. Lastly, if your "barn discovery" has never had detergent oil in it, you MUST remove all the black clag from the sump and clean out the oilways in the crankcase etc. before using detergent oil.

Otherwise the sludge will be loosened and carried round your engine to do expensive harm. As far as I am aware, all modern multigrades are also detergent oils.

The third factor is additives. A specification such as API SF/CD should appear on your can of oil. Don't buy oil of unknown specification. API is the American Petroleum Institute, who initiated this series of specs in 1947. CD refers to C for "compression ignition" (diesel) engines, issue D, whilst SF refers to S for "spark ignition" engines, issue F. Starting from the non-additive SA spec, successive issues added detergency, anti-oxidants and protection against wear, rust and corrosion at successively higher temperatures, until SF was current from 1980. Then in 1988 SG was issued, calling for higher levels of dispersants and anti-oxidants to control black sludge, the curse of low-emission engines with closed circuit crankcase breathing. An unfortunate side-effect of these dispersants is to encourage formation of "mayonnaise", a nasty emulsion of water and oil. It appears on camshafts and valvegear within the aluminium covers at the top of our engines, where cooling will easily condense combustion products which contaminate the oil through blow-by past the pistons. Ugh! In modern engines the oil is normally hot enough to evaporate the water off, but in engines of pre-war design, often it is not. Pre-war Lagonda cooling systems boil before they can become as hot as modern pressurised ones. Furthermore, the extra dispersant additives in SG oils can be aggressive to some types of seal and gasket materials. So look for SF rather than the more recent SG or SH specs. I use 20W/50 oil to spec API SF. 15W/40 to spec SF seems elusive.

ACEA or CCMC specs G1, G2 and G4 & 5 are equivalent to API SE, SF and SG respectively. CCMC is the Comité des Constructeurs d'Automobiles du Marche Commun, now replaced by ACEA, which is the Association of European Automobile Constructors, whilst G signifies Gasolene.



The ENV pre-selector gearbox of the Rapier, presumably the 16/80 one too, demands engine oil and I use 20W/50 API SE. The gearbox does not need the high temperature protection of SF additives and SE oil is available inexpensively, eg from Comma Oils via Edmunds Walker.

I so often hear the old chestnut about "sulphur in EP oils" that I consulted Castrol Technical Department to get to the bottom of it. It is 15 to 20 years since EP (extreme pressure) oils from reputable oil companies contained "active sulphur", the constituent which damages yellow metals. It caused damage principally in areas of high contact stress, such as the teeth of bronze wormwheels. But these additives are gone, except maybe in low quality unbranded oils, they are replaced by a sulphur/phosphorous chemical package not containing the sulphur in aggressive form. In axles and steering boxes where bronze is present solely as bearing bushes there will be no corrosion - at worst there will be staining or discolouration only. So I use SAE 140 EP in rear axles and steering boxes. It should give better wear protection than SAE 140, which, anyway, does not seem to be widely available.

More detail appears in "Bugantics" pp 51-54, Summer 1976 and p 53 Autumn 1976; "The Automobile" pp 28-32, September 1991 and "Car Design and Technology" pp 36-44, December 1991.

**MP**

#### **4½ Litre Compression Ratios**

The rate at which the compression ratio of the 4½ litre engine is increasing we shall soon have the Meadows 4½ litre diesel.

As I understand it, the C.R. of the standard LG engine is 6.8:1. This is in print in early road tests. I believe, but have seen nothing in print that the M45R

was 7.2:1 and the LG45R 7.5:1.

If you take the 6.8:1 ratio with a flat top piston, level with the top of the block as standard LG 45 you can calculate the total combustion chamber volume as 128 cc. If you then assume the area of the combustion chamber is equal to the area of the bore (it's not far out) then taking 155 thou (this is what I believe Jim Shelley's letter should read), you reduce the combustion chamber volume by 24.23 cc. This leads to a C.R. of 8.15:1. If, as well as taking off 155 thou, you use the LG 45R piston, which has a dome on top, you get a C.R. of 9.25:1. If you then bore it out 60 thou you will increase the C.R. to 9.53:1. Does this indicate that Jim has domed pistons?

Regardless of the above, a couple of cautionary tales of obtaining and running with high compression ratios. We have dabbled with 9+ C.Rs. in the recent past and had the same problem as a fellow club member who went into these regions some years ago. We both suffered from almost uncontrollable pinking, which could only be stopped by considerably retarding the ignition, which led to a complete drop-off in performance. We ended up by filing off the tops of the piston domes to reduce the C.R.

When we first started playing with 4½ litres we always took 100 thou off the head, that is until we went through into the water gallery on one of them. After that it was a little at a time, keeping a close watch. It is not a disaster to go through to the water gallery, providing it is localised and not too big a hole. All you do is put a 5 thou brass shim on top of the head gasket underneath the hole and bolt down as normal. It works, the car is still running like this 20 years on.

As to what the preferred C.R. for a 4½ is, I am not sure, but my water says it should be OK in the region of 8.2:1.

**A.B.**



# Letters

Dear Ken,

Arnold Davey's views in the October Newsletter coincided precisely with mine - his gist was clear when he described the difference between the old Car Club and the 2 Litre Register. Since that time the subject has obviously been discussed between members and I have received my copy of the November Committee Meeting Minutes, from which, reading between the lines, a certain amount of uneasiness is apparent. Subsequently Arnold has made further comment, but it is unlikely that the response to his suggestion that we should write to the secretary is to be made available to the membership at large.

With the arrival of the Committee's request for ticket applications it became apparent that the total cost for a couple amounted to £400 or so, plus bar and travelling expenses. This, I submit, is monstrous and resulted in such questions as "How much of this can I afford for an AGM which, in any event, is in now way specific?" It's a fallacy to imagine that such jollies attract greater numbers and, in any case, members should not be faced with such a decision. There is, anyway, always sufficient attendance to carry out Club business and this is a common situation for any form of club, motor or otherwise. A lunch or a dinner with a possible night stop is all that need be offered and with smaller numbers this presents no accommodation problem. To this has to be added that there were those apparently who had to be persuaded to attend and "outsiders" brought in to maintain numbers to justify a £3000 budget! The published final attendance list seemed to confirm a lot of this and there were obviously mixed feelings as to

the ticket sur-charge towards a charity which seemed to bear little relation to a car club whose members will surely have their own favourite amongst the almost daily begging letters arriving on our doorstep.

There also seems to have been some lack of liaison/control between the organisers and the Committee and probably a not exactly unified opinion within the latter as to the handling of the finances! (Truly within the budget?!)

Obviously a good time was had by all, as the organisers undoubtedly put on a good party and should not attract criticism but, not what was required in conjunction with an AGM.

The Committee seem to have got the message in that the proposed arrangements are different for next year.

A final thought; Arnold was quoting me when he referred to the difference between the Car Club and the 2 Litre Register (in those days there was good reason for the separate units) and has pointed out the difficulties of newcomers/youngsters trying to get in amongst us, with today's ridiculous prices. We should be keeping them in mind.

Ah yes! the 2 Litre Register - owner/driver mechanics with not a spare penny in the bank after the 2nd of the month and not a single spare part in sight, let alone synchromesh gears! There was, however, always someone who would know that a such-and-such bolt from an ex-WD tank transporter would make an ideal shackle pin for a rear spring!

If I may be allowed a couple of reminiscences. A journey in the dark across the Pennines with Henry Coates, after having made arrangements at a hotel for a Northern Section Christmas



Party, arriving at my digs in Sheffield. Me, glad to anticipate bed, but Henry thinking nothing of his onward trip to Hull!

Secondly, another journey back from a Northern meet as passengers in John Vessey's Lambda, entering the brightly lit, but deserted steelworks area of Sheffield about midnight. John was explaining to me, in slow and deliberate speech, resulting from John Smith's Tadcaster ale, that he was observing the speed limit for the benefit of the local fuzz. Almost immediately a quick change down and right foot on the boards - he'd seen a pair of P100s in his mirror about to overtake!

**John Anderson**

Dear Mr Chairman,

As a former committee member who served for twelve years as Southern Area Secretary and during that time organised seven AGMs, I feel that I must comment on this year's unnecessarily expensive meeting (sponsored or not). Since being asked to retire from committee, for the last four to five years Sylvia and I, plus Geoff Seaton (until last year) and Jean Seaton, have spent three to four hours each month, sticking labels onto envelopes, folding news-sheets, inserting them along with, at times, spares sheets, trade flyers, magazines, etc. Saving the club hundreds of pounds yearly. This last year it has been particularly heavy with all the Phyllis Court bumf, extolling all its virtues (I never did see a Dinner Menu).

On arriving at Phyllis Court on the day of the AGM, I parked and decided to go over to Phyllis Court to freshen up. On approaching it I was told "This is private and for members only. Your facilities are over there, back where you have come from". So much for Phyllis Court. We only had a field (lucky the weather was dry), which cost £250; toilets, £660; Marquees, £1595; total £2505.

Had the AGM been held in an hotel as normal, the payment for room hire covers all this and you can fill the hotel

with Lagonda Club members, which is as it should be.

I wonder how many committee members went freely to Phyllis Court, or were they cajoled into doing so?

Sincerely

**Alec Downie**

Dear Colin,

Arnold Davey invited members to comment on the direction the Lagonda Club's events should take. Having been a member for nearly ten years, I believe I have earned the right to comment. More importantly, I intend to spend more time on my Lagondas and, hopefully, at Club events. I therefore would like to see it evolve in a positive, open way, during this period of inevitable change.

Arnold set out his views of what the Club should be in the last Newsletter. I think it was unfortunate for him to do so in the way he did without at least reporting in summary form what the views of others might be. His pleasantries about the "foreign member" was particularly unfortunate as well as being misleading and inaccurate. The one advantage to his choosing to do so is that he has opened the discussion he proposed to take place to include the entire range of issues facing the Club in the future.

The purpose of this letter is therefore to respond to the invitation to comment on events, but also to comment on Arnold Davey's "free-ranging" discussion. The views he set out go at the problem backwards, starting with the financing of events before getting into the heart of the issues. Sound financial policies and practices are essential of course, but the Club's financial situation is healthy. Therefore the first priority should be to reflect on the Club's objectives and either confirm the existing ones, or revise them, with a view to keeping the Club alive and strong, not adhering obstinately to old formulas of its past and not favoring any particular Club faction in the process. My comments follow.



The Lagonda Club serves a number of important purposes for its members. Some are related to keeping the Lagondas in as good a shape as possible or getting them that way. An incomplete list follows (not in any particular order):

1. The Club provides a register and history of Lagondas.
2. It provides a list of Lagonda owners.
3. It provides technical information and assistance, not only informally, but through volunteer work from more knowledgeable and willing members.
4. There is access to spares, both old and new, through the Spares Scheme and informal exchange among members.
5. For those not technically competent, the Club is a source of information on specialists who are not only active members, but whose careers are devoted to Lagondas. This facilitates non-technical members' enjoyment of their cars and a more active Club participation.

The Club serves as a focal point for attracting new enthusiasts for the Lagonda marque. It should be able to help these potential members find Lagondas, not only those cars already in the Club, but others as well. The Club should be attractive enough to enlist new members who already own Lagondas, to retain those who join and help them get on with a "project" that may have been waiting for a while...

Once we have our Lagonda(s), we've got them running and we have admired them sitting in the garage space, most of us want to do something with them. Although it is of course possible to do it alone, most of us prefer to do this in the company of others, usually with at least a few other Lagonda owners present - preferably knowledgeable, with full sets of tools and rare spares and expendables in their boots.

To fulfil this need the Club participates in and/or sponsors events which it is hoped will satisfy members. It is not necessary that a majority of

members enjoy every event the club sponsors or supports by encouragement, or participate in with other clubs or organisations. There are several categories of events. A list would include the following:

1. Racing, or race-related events, where winning is important to individuals and the Club. Includes events for Modified or Special cars as well as those that are original.
2. Rally-type get-togethers.
3. Touring events, whether commemorative (1995 Le Mans, 1999?), or just for fun.
4. Educational events (The "W.O. at Staines" lecture mentioned in the November Newsletter).
5. Beaulieu-type events.
6. Social events (can and should be part of other events, more or less formally organised).
7. Business events such as the AGM.

Obviously a single event can and often will combine more than one of the above.

How to allocate the Club's resources (both financial and administrative/management capacity to conduct activities) to the above is what the Lagonda Club should be studying. With the new Club charter the Management Committee has the authority now to look into this with less difficulty than in the past. In my view a systematic review should be undertaken, with a view to a series of proposals concerning the future of the Club to be made at the next AGM.

Having set out an indication of what the Club can do for its members, for preservation of the Lagonda marque and as guardian of its impact as an automobile, there follows some of my personal views on the Club's future direction, given with the hope of aiding other members to sort out their own thoughts on the subject.

My view is that the Club should not limit its activities to those in which every member can participate and



benefit from. If it were to do this there would be no activities. To take Arnold Davey's example, I believe that the member from "Goosefart" and others from similar places join the Club for reasons far different from attendance at the AGM whether cheap and all business or more or less expensive with a social agenda as well as business. Wearing a Dinner Jacket is not my favourite thing to do. However, in order to have fun, meet members (not always easy in a non-social occasion) and talk informally about Club business, an evening such as we just had often provides the needed catalyst to get things going.

I am not a conference addict or a lover of lectures. However I would see no objection to the club doing such things out of the budget for the benefit of others who do.

I don't race either (though secretly would like to), but I sincerely wish the Club would do more in this area, both to ensure a Lagonda Club event of reasonably sizeable proportions in which other marques could participate and to help make Lagondas do as well as they can and should.

At this stage of my participation in the Club, what I like best are events best called rallies for fun. They can be either limited in size or club-wide. They allow for use of the cars, social exchange, touring to new or to rediscovered areas. And they allow me to get to know other people who enjoy the experience of old cars, usually mixed with a bit of history. The Lagonda Club beats all the others I know in that it is a democratic club. There seems to be a belief that it does indeed take all kinds of people to make a world and that they all have something to add (even Americans!). I hope that the Club will continue to support and sponsor such events, even at the risk of losing some money if an individual project doesn't break even.

The Club could consider using more of its resources to "show the Lagonda flag" at events where Lagondas fit in. A list of such events could be compiled and certain ones could be selected,

hopefully to attract new members and perhaps future members (how many of us are under 40?).

Club participation in these events might from time to time cost money. However if I understand the Club's Balance Sheet, there is no financial danger. Management must be prudent, but profitability criteria should not be used automatically to eliminate from the calendar events which don't make money or might come financially below expectations.

The AGM is and, as with other such clubs, should remain a social event. It should be designed to attract as many members as possible, hopefully to get them involved in what the Committee is doing, to get them to know each other, each others' cars and to make them enthusiastic about the Club,

It is also a time where the Committee members should get to know as many members as possible, especially those who can't normally participate in many of the Club's activities, or those whose views may be different from the Committee member's. It is also a time for them to encourage new members to join in various activities. I was quite surprised to find that many Committee members were not at the activities surrounding the AGM official meeting. I think their attendance should be subsidised if necessary but that it should be obligatory. How else can they know the Club?

Arnold Davey mentioned the Magazine and Newsletter as absorbing the bulk of income. He added that they benefit all members equally. He also said that this is as it should be. All three of these statements are interesting and important and deserve reflection. That the two publications absorb the bulk of income is a statement of fact. Whether this is "as it should be" with today's modern printing and distribution techniques is an issue which should be studied with some urgency, particularly if their continuation in the present form results in the elimination of other interesting objectives which the club



may have.

The two publications do not benefit all members equally. All members get copies, but their content is not targeted to all members. Should it be? Can it be? My own view is that in trying to achieve equal benefit to all is impossible, but could be studied. Both publications could be improved from a presentational point of view and in terms of content in order to satisfy a wider audience. But whatever might be done everyone that reads the Newsletter in its present form would want Arnold Davey to continue his "Feature Editor" material he now gives us. In my view much of what he says is so valuable it ought to be in the magazine, perhaps revised, reformatted and published more frequently.

In conclusion, thanks to Arnold Davey's own comments in the Newsletter on a number of important subjects which I suspect have been sacred cows for some time, we all have the opportunity to share with members our views on these issues. All of my comments are made with the hope they will be taken as an attempt to be constructive. I don't think I am alone in my views, but don't expect any changes overnight. Knowing you and other members of the Management Committee, I know my comments will be taken seriously, that is all I ask for.

Sincerely

**Tom Harrington**

Dear Ken,

It certainly was an archive picture new to me. The one on page 25, I mean, in the recent magazine. I've spent a happy hour trying to date it and identify the car.

It is one of the two-seaters, either EPE 97 or HLL 534. The four-seaters had a tonneau cover over the back seat aperture and this car doesn't have that. There are two clues:

- i) Some clown has reversed the rear wings, or more likely, put them on the wrong side of the car. We are looking at the near side but that is the offside rear wing, on backwards. This says

that it must have happened after Fox and Nicholl stopped looking after it.

- ii) The car has no visible lamps at all. Now EPE gained a full set of lamps for the 1937 Le Mans race in June and these included Lucas 1130 sidelamps on the front wings. By September 1937 F & N had cut doors in the side to comply with the new TT rules.

Following from the above, if my assumption about F & N is correct, this must be HLL. Now that car languished in Jack Lemon Burton's showroom from July 1936 to November 1937. It was then sold, but we don't know to whom. It reappeared at Brooklands in 1939, by which time it had acquired a huge airscoop across the scuttle and lost both aeroscreens and the fold-down wire mesh windscreen.

So my guess is that the picture was taken in this 1937-9 gap, when the car was presumably in daily, but not nightly, use.

Regards

**Arnold**

Dear Ken Painter,

I refer to a letter you printed in the Autumn issue of Lagonda Magazine sent to you by Mr John Del Mar. The letter was sent by our Vehicle Customer Services Section in relation to statutory Off Road Notification (SORN). The letter was edited by Lagonda Magazine (Oh no it wasn't! Ed) and therefore contains some inaccuracies, which may cause some concern.

The part of your article "Alternatively, if your vehicle is unlicensed on 31.1.98, but is licensed again, a SORN declaration will need to be made at that time" reads incorrectly. Only when a vehicle is relicensed and subsequently taken off the road again will SORN have to be declared.

Simply, SORN means that, by law, if the keeper of a vehicle does not tax the vehicle because it is not used or kept on a public road, DVLA must be told. Telling DVLA is called declaring SORN.



The requirement to make a SORN declaration only applies to vehicle for which a tax disc is in force on or after 31 January 1998.

If there is a tax disc in force for your vehicle on 31 January 1998, or there has been since that date, by law you must continue to make sure that your vehicle is always taxed when it is used or kept on the public roads. If you do not tax the vehicle because you have taken it off the road for repair, for example, you must immediately declare SORN instead. You must also declare SORN if you take a vehicle off the road and claim a refund of duty on your tax disc, but only if the vehicle remains in your possession.

It may be helpful to your readers to advise them that a SORN declaration can be made on a refund application form (V14 or V33); vehicle licence renewal form (V11 or V85) or on its own form V890. The V890 form is available from the DVLA Customer Enquiry Unit on 01792 772134, or from your nearest Vehicle Registration Office.

Yours sincerely

**Debra Harris**

DVLA Corporate Services

Dear Ken,

It was flattering to see a photograph showing the lady mascot on the radiator of my 1930 3 litre in the last issue of the magazine (P 27). Curiously, during the course of the meeting, it acquired some pubic hair, as you can observe if you study the photograph more closely. I have often wondered who put it there.

Yours sincerely

**Herb Schofield**

Dear Ken,

I think you were rather unkind to describe Arnold's paper "Shanks' Frog" as a fairy story. There are still some of us around who have wondered what happened to Celia - her first name used by her family: she usually chose her other one. (Wild horses, etc.....). I leap to his defence. In case you doubt my credentials on Matters of State, I refer

you to "Lagonda, a History of the Marque" by Davey and May, bottom page 170 and my answer in "The Lagonda" No 120.

In my peripatetic time during the war I frequently met up with Flight Lieut. F-H (Scotland indeed!). She was a fascinating girl and marvellous raconteur amongst other things. She was very well acquainted with A.P.Good, but her assessment of his character makes me doubt whether they were even "just good friends". She was also capable of telling porkies when it suited her. It is quite true that in 1946 she had a 2 litre tourer of a rather unfortunate shade of green, but I am not sure about her membership of the 2 Litre register, or of the re-formed Car Club, though she certainly knew many of the members. The trouble is that she did not tell poor Armitage that she had married briefly (and frequently) so that she had a wide range of surnames to use as required (Again, Wild Horses etc....).

Finally when she disappeared in the late '50s on her way to visit her "Aunt"(!!!) in Paston Green she no longer had the Lag. She owned a Frog Eyed Sprite.

Kind Regards

**John Turner**

*I don't know what they drink in the wilds of North Yorkshire, but I wish I had been sent some for Christmas. Everybody **knows** that the Frog-Eye wasn't introduced until 1958, so Celia couldn't possibly have owned one! Ed.*

Dear Ken,

Having seen in the last Newsletter that the Lagonda Club is now on the Internet, courtesy of a Website set up by Colin Mallett, I took a look at it recently - in fact I've taken several looks at it recently - on the computer in my local library (access provided free of charge by Essex County Council) and strongly suggest that, if they haven't already done so, fellow-Members hurry to do the same. It's great stuff! On the "home page", which is the first one you get to,



there's a cartoon of an 11.1 (which Lag mag do I remember seeing that in?) and a short list of the contents with 'buttons' to press which let you wander around amongst the other goodies; a short Lagonda history, info on membership, a list of the present Club Officers (you stand up at that point), info on the spares scheme and so on.

Incidentally, Ken, I'm sure Colin or someone will have told you by now that the Website address printed in the last magazine had the 'slashes' pointing the wrong way. It should read:

<http://www.btinternet.com/~colin.mallet/lagonda.html>

Whilst I'm on the subject of addresses, can I suggest that the Club's e-mail address should be on page 3 of all future issues of the Magazine? And on the Club's headed notepaper? And on the masthead of the Newsletter with the Website address? (As far as the magazine is concerned, yes! Headed paper would have to await the next print run and I have passed your suggestion to Arnold for the Newsletter. K.P.P.)

Nobody should think they have to be a school-kid or a teenage computer nerd to drive these things. I'm very comfortably into my 70s, with 42 years in the Lagonda Club, but have no problems finding my way round the place. Admittedly, I was an Electronics Engineer when I was working and that gives me some familiarity with the contents of the various boxes, but that's rather like saying that a Mechanical Engineer is the best person to drive a Lagonda because he's more familiar than the rest of us with the goings-on under the bonnet.

If any member lacks the appropriate youngster to give them a hand they will find that, if they go along to their local library, the folks there are enormously helpful and will very happily show any enquirer how to get information through the computer, just as they would guide them through their bookstacks. Let's all transform any small technophobic feelings we may have into technophilia. There's a lot of talk around the club at

the moment about the need to attract younger members and my personal feeling is that we owe it to them, as well as to ourselves, to show an enthusiasm for the best of new technology to go with our love for the best of the old.

I don't know what the situation is in other U.K. Counties or other Countries but, as I said earlier, Essex County Libraries offer half-hour sessions on the Internet totally free of any charge. Buy now whilst stocks last at this never-to-be-repeated price.

Yours sincerely

**Dennis Nichols**

Dear Ken,

I enjoyed the "Guru" letters and they have prompted me to make a few comments from experience of 18 years driving that fine old 2 litre Speed Model that used to belong to Dr Arnold Young, Needham, Symonds, Jupe, Suttie and Mills, back in your Singapore Days.

The car is in top condition, as near original as possible and running better than ever, having been on a 750 km run down our Southern Highlands.

When I was in England in April 1997 I was able to spend a wonderful afternoon with Dr Arnold Young down near Torquay. He was in good spirits and we reminisced Lagondas for some hours. I also called on Colin Bugler and Peter Whenman. Unfortunately I ran out of time and would have liked to have called on you and on Henry Stonor. Henry had kindly sent me some great history of events in the days the Lagonda was in Malaya and Singapore.

The only bit of local news for Lagondas is that I am now President of the VSCCA this year, so it will be busier than ever with many good motoring events.

I hope this finds you in good health and that we will continue to enjoy your editorship of such a fine magazine. Very best wishes for Christmas.

Kind regards

**Peter Docker**  
New South Wales



Dear Ken,

I'm glad the ancient "curry wager" has borne fruit and hope the Guru will continue his writings to help us repair and maintain our favourite motor cars. To enlarge on his comments, I offer some notes on oils, a controversial area where angels, if not grease monkeys, may fear to tread.

Yours sincerely

Mike Pilgrim

*Peter and Mike's contributions appear, with additional material by Alan Brown, on page 36 as "Uncle Guru's Reply". I have a confession to make, the original article was not written by me, but by Don Courtney and Arnold Davey. K.P.P.*

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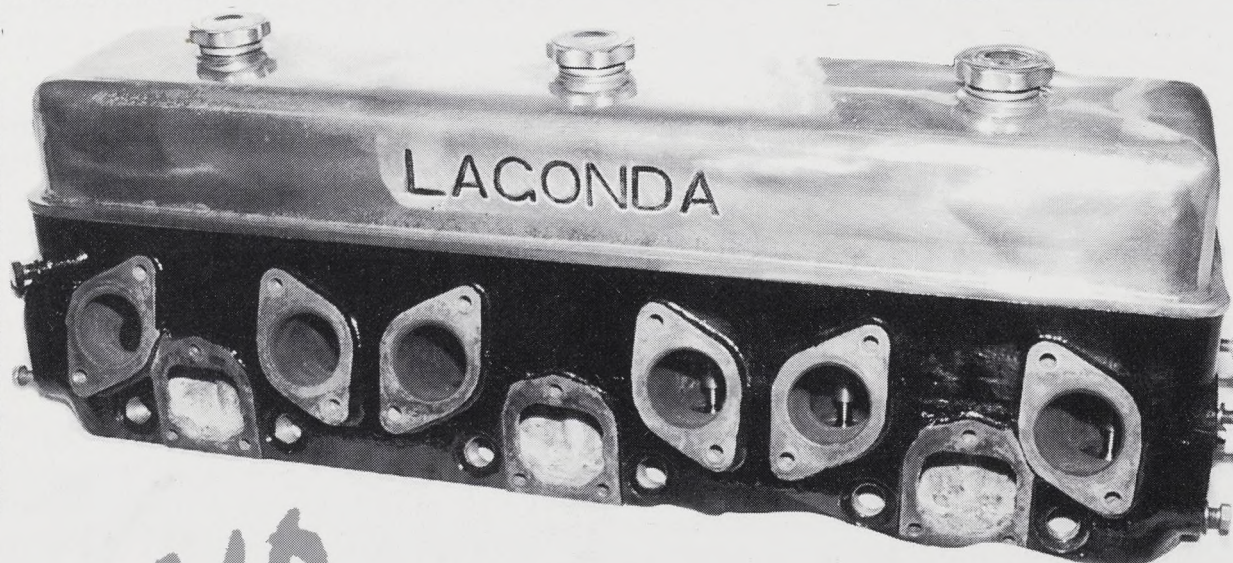
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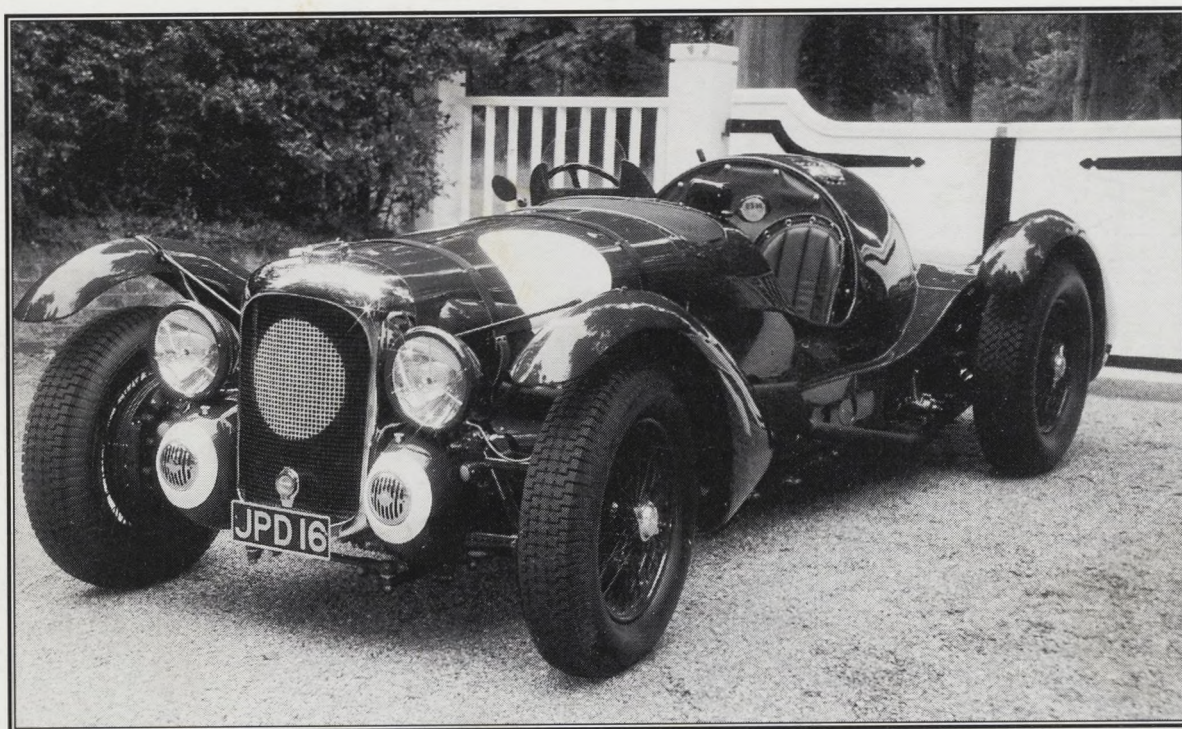


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