



Lagonda

THE MAGAZINE OF THE
LAGONDA CLUB

Number 185 Summer 2000

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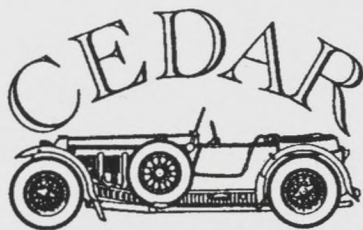
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FRONT COVER

Christopher Claridge-Ware at the start of the
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print the story of this heroic drive in a later
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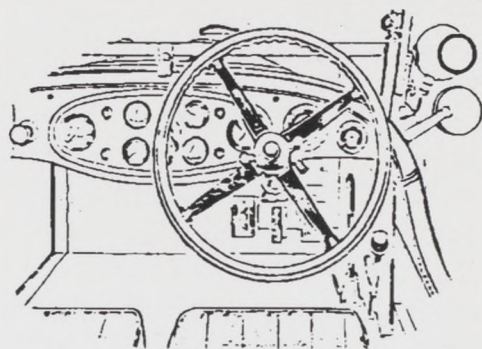
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From the Driving Seat

by Ken Painter



SUMMER, DONT YOU JUST love it? So far this year we haven't seen as much of the sun as we would like - and in a car with no hood or windscreen, that is something one tends to notice. At least the Cadwell Park and Mallory Park race meetings have been held in glorious summer weather and those Lagonda racers who took part enjoyed some exciting racing. Is it my imagination, or are there less Lagondas on the track than normal this year? I do know that Nick Hine has not been as successful in getting his entries accepted in 2000 as he has been in other years, but there are also some new faces from the Lagonda world who are competing regularly, so what is happening to our racing fraternity?

If your summer motoring programme is anything like that of the Painter family, you will still be in the middle of a hectic schedule of weekend events, which will probably come to a stupendous climax at our Annual General Meeting at Aldermaston. This will be a somewhat quieter event than the Centennial celebration, but I, for one, enjoy the setting and it certainly gives us plenty of space in which to enjoy ourselves. Mrs Editor is looking forward to the weekend too. It will be just over a year since her successful hip replacement operation and she has continued to make good steady progress. As a measure of her recovery, she has travelled further and more often in our Maserati this year than she has done in any of the last twenty years - and this in a car with rock hard suspension, no

doors and fairly high sides. All the same, she continues gently to nag me to get the 2 litre restoration finished. I think I know where her true loyalties lie!

Arnold Davey reports regularly on the ever-widening availability of leaded four star petrol and, for those with internet facilities, it is worth checking the published list fairly frequently, since new outlets seem to open up every day (www.come.to/Motordata). The garage in my village ceased selling petrol recently, but any gloom at this was instantly dispelled when the next nearest garage to Painter Towers suddenly displayed a "We Sell Leaded Four Star" poster. I must admit the gloom is beginning to settle again as the price should now be over £1 per litre, but as I write this, his pumps are unable to cope with anything more than 99.9 pence a litre. I expect he will have overcome this little local difficulty by the time I take out my next mortgage for a refill, the last race meeting we attended cost us £82 exactly, perhaps it is time I bought a nice economical V12.

I too have bought the packs of tetra ethyl lead from Tetraboost, but so far I haven't needed to use it. Arnold's comments about the safety instructions neglected to say that you should wear fuel-proof gloves and goggles when adding the jollop to your tank, it really is frightening stuff to handle, but, with a car that is impossible to run on unleaded and which enjoys the sort of engine speeds which make the other additive makers start dusting off their exclusion clauses, it does mean that the family flier

can continue to run for a good few years to come. When the hectic summer season comes to an end (see paragraph above), I should be able to find time to fit unleaded heads to my motorcaravan. I tried one tankful of unleaded in it and it returned about 3 mpg less than usual. LRP doesn't suit it at all, although our Volvo estate showed no difference on the stuff - then I discovered (on the internet again) that Volvo now say that it can run on unleaded anyway. Isn't it incredible that a year after the withdrawal of leaded, we still face almost total confusion. Everyone seems to have their pet theory and I suspect that theories are what they will remain for the time being. If, like me, you have studied the limited technical information put out by the additive manufacturers, you will probably feel, like me, that you are better informed but still none the wiser.

All that seems certain is that valve seat recession becomes a problem at engine speeds over 3,000 rpm and a serious problem at speeds over 3,500 rpm. The additives seem adequate for

reasonably light use over these revolutions, but all bets are off if you indulge in motorway speed driving (M25 at rush hour?) or use your vehicle for towing. Since I do both with my motorcaravan and my Italian mistress will rev to 6,500 and more, I am not inclined to gamble on what reasonably light use actually means in my case. Suddenly £1 plus per litre and highly poisonous jollop for those areas between leaded suppliers doesn't seem too high a price to pay.

To finish, it is clear that some would-be contributors are unaware of the deadlines for each magazine. This isn't like a daily newspaper and printed overnight, the timescale between my receiving your copy until the day the magazine falls through your letter box is roughly two months, so just to make your - and my - life easier in the future, I propose to end every Editorial with a boxed announcement of the deadline for copy for the next magazine - just like this:

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First Annual Spring Social & Drive In Reynard House, Maulden. 20th May 2000

John Batt reports on a great party

THE SUPERB condition of our paddock, due to the efficiency of the American MTD ride-on mower which came home with us after our eight years in Ohio, prompted Susie to suggest we might hold a Club Social. A great idea for a new style event!

Following budget approval from the Committee for marquee, toilets food and drink (including Real Ale of course!) the date of 20th May was chosen which avoided Bank Holiday without clashing with other events. John and Ruth Stoneman assisted with planning, Arnold promoted the event in the Newsletter plus our flyer, so all was set. Meantime, arrangements were made to be sure of good weather which actually turned out to be the case!

And so, Saturday 20th. dawned bright, dry and warm in fact we had what turned out to be about the best day in an otherwise quite miserable month. The barbecues positioned by the Club flag pole were smoking nicely as people began to arrive for 'gates open' at noon. Carl Heighington was first to arrive in his ex.Ody 2 Litre. Neighbour David Nevoll (Scimitar GTE) took charge of dispensing the Hook Norton Ale, offered at only £1 a pint, whilst the Stonemans prepared a pile of sausages and burgers. Salads, plus cakes and desserts for afternoon tea, were cunningly laid out in the marquee near the Club items stall. This arrangement nicely promoted regalia sales in the capable charge of Vivienne Breen.

25 Lagondas came along representing almost every model produced. In size order these were. Rapier: Malcolm Charles; 2 Litres: various including Tim Wadsworth's new Overhead Inlet example; 16/80: notably

the tourer of the Syke's from Woburn and Ron Gee with his unique 'Crutty Sark' VPD 2 door; Martin Pollard had the 3½ Tourer and the Whenmans came up in their nice red Le Mans replica. It was good to see the ex.Colin Mallet LG45 saloon now owned by John and Ruth fresh from a significant overhaul, the tourer of Geoff and Diana Gates, whilst Bill and Audrey Ambro had their immaculate LG6 DHC. This contrasted sharply with the stark 2 seater LG6 Special of Lawrence Hannam and sister Joan, with polished aluminium body complete with aero screens. The V12 was represented by the Oppenheimer's Standard Saloon and DB model by the Gilkes over from Banbury with their 3 Litre. Robert Watts was to have brought an AML V8 but came in a modern since both his cars were under repair but will be ready in time for Coys in July.

To add variety, always an essential at any event with 72 people gathered to enjoy the day, other interesting cars on view ranged from John Hearne's 1903 Humber Forecar to my brother Nigel's new toy, a Mazda Miata MX5 Celebration model! In between we had an Austin 16 saloon, Alvis 12/50 Tourer fresh back from the New Zealand Millennium Rally (see John Turner's amusing report in the last magazine on experiences down under with the LG6), the Woollard party of four in 3 Litre Bentley, also Robert and Christine Miles who brought their lovely 4¼ post W.O.saloon.

It was nice to see French blue in the shape of the Gabriel's T44 Bugatti and new 2 Litre members Mark and Sadie Yeomans with son Christopher showed their treasured Austin Atlantic - the Lagonda should be ready for the September Aldermaston AGM. Friend



Part of the 25 car line-up, the marquee and flag



John and Ruth Stoneman preparing the barbecue, Jeff Ody's S/C 2 litre behind them.

Rodney Perrigo and family brought a superbly maintained lhd Triumph Stag and my son Julian the family '79 MG Midget, one of the very last produced. The only car missing we had hoped to see was the newly acquired 16/80 Weymann saloon of Betty Stone. She came in the Saab with their two dogs to preserve the Lagonda's leather interior! Garry however did bring their ex.Monte Carlo rally Supercharged 2 Litre. Incidentally Garry does superb trimming and is now rushing to finish the 16/80 of Lawrence Drake in time for Coys. He drove over here with only one seat! I should also mention Jim Ruggles, Roger Cooke, John and Alison Boyes and Warren King with their cars, all adding variety to the show. There were several other vehicles here too, not forgetting my own two Lagondas and of course our '31 Model 'A' Ford Street Rod, all polished and ready for the Isle of Man Northern Millennium Rally!

A feature of the day was to be a 'Spares Exchange'. The Club boards were on display in the marquee and interesting parts for sale on view by owners' cars. Tony Longmate did well from his spares display laid out in front of the recently completed 4½ Special. I hope we can expand the idea of a spares exchange on future occasions as another way to encourage event support. It seems

successful with other clubs.

The £1 "Split the Pot" draw totalled just over £100 so we decided on two prizes. £25 went first to young Joseph Oppenheimer then to Pam Longmate. Well done to the lucky two!

Special thanks are due the ladies who contributed to the excellent selection of food and for all their hard work and enthusiastic help in making this new style day such a success. Vivienne Breen did a magic job on the regalia stall which finally returned £365-72p, thanks to members' support. Ruth Stoneman, ably assisted by John, worked wonders with the (two) barbecues, Shirley Dalton ensured everyone got to know each other whilst Susie coordinated the array of food.

A thank you from myself. It is always the lot of the host(s) to tidy up, which often becomes the chore to spoil the day! Not so here since everyone did their bit. When we finally sat down to dinner around 8 o'clock with Sheffield friend Dave Elliott and Jeff and Gill Ody who were staying the weekend, only the marquee remained outside as evidence!

Finally there was a pleasant surprise to end the day - England actually won a Test - against Zimbabwe!

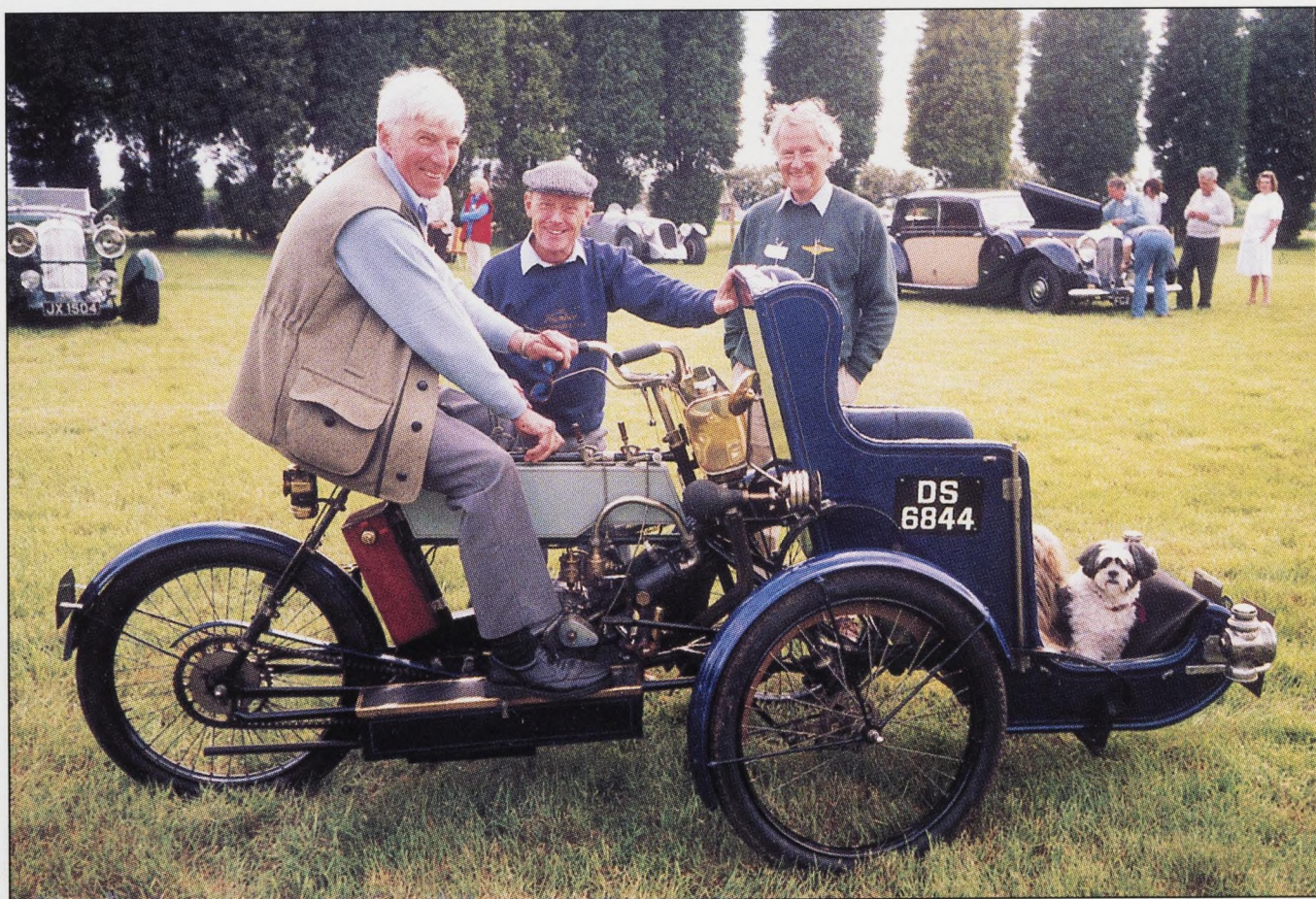
Do come and join us next year.



Alison and John Boyes with Clive and Martin Pollard during lunch



A light hearted moment! Tim Wadsworth, Martin Pollard and Carl Heighington



Clive Dalton and Phil Diffey admire John Hearne's 1903 Humber Forecar - very much like Wilbur's!

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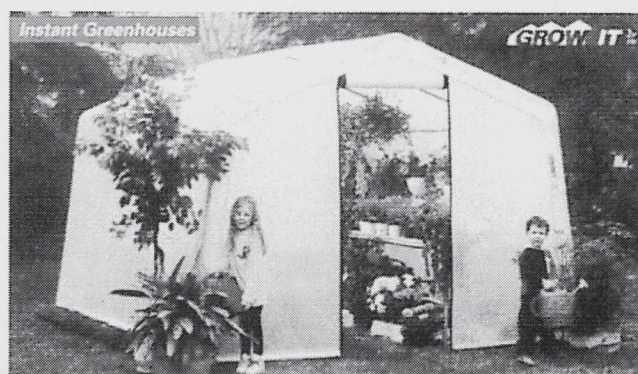
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A Lagonda Fell into my Lap!

Colin Latham reflects on Lagondas and other cars

IS IT NOT a cheek that I - a retired electronics engineer who writes books on the history of radar, who has never owned a Lagonda and whose detailed knowledge of that superb marque is minimal, should be taking up valuable space in the Lagonda Magazine? Perhaps it is, so I must explain how it came about and why I was invited to do so.

Over the past two years I've been working with Bournemouth University and my co-author Anne Stobbs (writer and ex-war-time WAAF radar operator), on our latest book, "Pioneers of Radar". This is a compilation - with explanatory notes - of the personal reminiscences of the British boffins who developed radar to the state where it helped crucially to win the war. Without doubt, but for their efforts the history of the last half century would have been very different and far less happy for us all.

We have tried to portray the prewar and wartime atmosphere by including everyday events including some references to the motor cars of the period. Some of our contributors - then dashing young scientists and engineers, many of whom became highly distinguished and well-known later - mention their sports cars, and two in particular their Lagondas. Joshua Sieger is especially remembered for his big (4½ litre?) Lagonda, reputed to do no more than 12 mpg - not really a car to be used in wartime (but he did!).

Though no picture of that particular car was available we would have liked to have one of any Lagonda of that period if it could be obtained easily. But we had a full quota of pictures already and as it seemed only possible by copying from published books and going through the time consuming routine of seeking permission, we decided reluctantly to give it a miss and concentrate on the

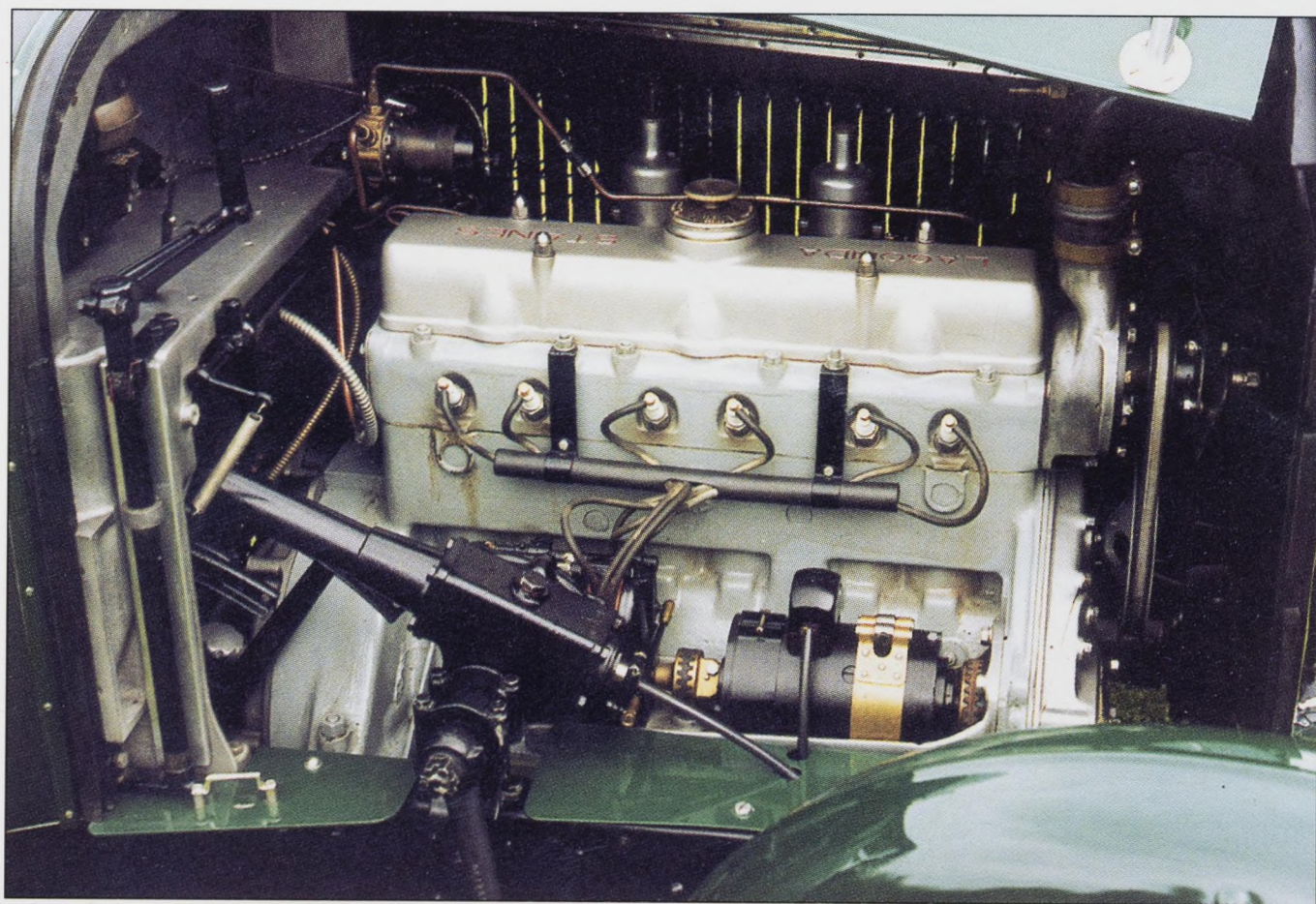
essentials to meet the publisher's rapidly approaching deadline.

On the fine Saturday morning of August 15, just five days before that deadline, my wife and I drove, as we often do, out into the country. For no particular reason she suggested that 'to make a change' we might head for a certain quiet and remote lane on Anglesey where we knew we could park and take our dog for a walk down to the shore of the Menai Straits. As I left the main road and took the lane I still had the book on my mind and rather regretted once again that we'd had to scrub the idea of a Lagonda photo. But, by golly what was that, parked on the left under a tree? - a prewar British sports car? Bentley perhaps? No - good heavens! - how amazing! - a lovely Lagonda - unattended, hood folded back and absolutely sparkling with chrome and BRG paintwork as if it had just rolled out of a showroom! I stopped, parked, goggle-eyed; was this real or an apparition? I dithered a bit, wondering if I should take a picture without the owner's permission but decided not; and anyway the light wasn't too good under the tree. Then Shep, my Border collie, said come on, what about his walk that's what we'd come for, not to muck about gawping at old motor cars - so I gave in and off we went.

Shep and I covered the half mile to the shore where he teamed up with a lovely Dalmatian and, in the way that dogs do, exchanged friendly sniffs in the most intimate of ways. Soon the Dalmatian's owners appeared and, as dog owners do, we soon exchanged a few friendly remarks about our dogs, the weather and how good the sailing boats looked this morning. As we parted I asked, on impulse, if that could be their Lagonda parked up there in the lane? It



Charles Hobbins and his lovely 16/80 tourer.....



and its immaculate engine.

was, and from that moment the style of conversation switched from dogs to numbers of cylinders and engine capacities and suchlike. We introduced ourselves properly, found that we lived only some six miles apart on Anglesey and on the very next morning Dr Charles Hobbins kindly and willingly brought his car up to my home where we flattered it with camera shots from every angle. Two are shown here and thanks to him there'll be a Lagonda picture in our book after all. What luck!

When I look at high quality prewar cars such as the Lagonda I find that I have admiration for opposing schools of engineering design. Of course I admire the superb overall appearance and, in more detail, the fine construction of the Lagonda; who could fail to do so? But also - perhaps because my father, a professional mechanical engineer, had me working on his cars during my schooldays from the early 'thirties onwards - I can see only too clearly the ways in which design concepts have improved. Look at that great unsprung assembly of huge brake drums, front axle and massive leaf springs. How stiff a suspension it must be and how heavy the chassis has to be made to resist the inevitable twisting forces on a rough road. And those large-diameter brake drums operated by cables: are they adequately compensated so that shoes in each drum make contact at the same moment and at the same pressure when the pedal is pressed? I doubt it. And to what degree does the braking force vary as the shoes bite and the backing plate tries to rotate with the drum? That's why, I presume, designers went to inner-and-outer type cables where both parts go to the drum and it's only the force between them that works the brake irrespective of any movement of the whole assembly. But those cables used to get bunged up and too stiff to work properly: hurrah for hydraulic brakes!

So while I respect greatly the classic British sports car concept I also have to admire those designers who broke away from it and led the way to modern cars in which softer but controlled suspension achieves wonders of performance with

monocoque bodies made from craftily bent-up sheets of thin metal. When, in 1938, I was shown a new small Opel saloon with its soft suspension and stiff body I didn't know quite what to think. Because it was foreign I tried not to be too impressed but soon had to admit that it was one of those makes that, like Citroen, was showing the way forward.

A funny thing about cars is that the degree to which they are a pleasure to drive may have little to do with their specification, however exotic. Some cars of quite modest performance have just the right 'feel' that makes you want to go on driving them for joy and for ever. I suspect that Lagondas are like that. One such of mine was a 1935 Riley Falcon with Wilson preselector gears. Another was a 1934 Singer 9 coupe with non-synchromesh gears and yet another, of entirely different character but absolutely enchanting, was a 1931 Studebaker that I had for a couple of years whilst living in India. I should have brought it home.

British post-war cars suffered badly on the Indian roads and did not get a very good reputation although many prewar Standards and Morrisies had served well. In 1952 I saw a new Triumph stranded with two broken wheels the centre of the pressed steel had cracked all round the fixing bolts but the Studebaker ran endlessly on the roughest roads with no complaint from the twelve wooden spokes of each wheel. American designers sure knew a thing or two,

Notwithstanding the foregoing (as some insurance policies used to say) having recently had such a smashing Lagonda in my garden my appetite has been whetted, well and truly. I think that if I win the Lottery I'll pay a visit to the Lagonda restoration experts and see what I can find. Then I might be qualified to write a proper article about Lagondas.

P.S.

Here's the commercial bit: if anyone is interested, the radar book is available through bookshops from Sutton Publishing, Stroud. (It follows our "Radar: a Wartime Miracle", same publisher, 1996).

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"You're not just a Number with us"

W.O. Bentley and the V12 Lagonda Engine

David Hine corrects a 63 year old mistake

A FEW DAYS AGO I received one of those rare letters which sets you up in excellent humour, not just for a day but for weeks! It was from Michael Valentine the well known owner of EYY 2, a superb V12 Lagonda drop-head coupe. He had just installed the new camshafts and he wrote "she is thrusting forward like an eager starlet". He went on to describe how his engine was much smoother on tick over and revs much more freely with improved acceleration and a more purposeful sound to it.

The success of the new cams had not been in doubt because two pairs had already run in the team car replicas of Karl Putsch and Alastair Barker. However these were already modified engines and Michael's car was the first standard car to have the new cams put in by the owner himself, in his own garage just using his own spanners and pliers!

When you talk to experts in the vintage car world about the V12 Lagonda engine they are all agreed that it was W O Bentley's masterpiece but that "the war stopped its development." This explains its very modest performance. I am writing this article to propose that this is apocryphal folklore and that a terrible mistake was made in 1937 which spelt the doom of the new engine and ultimately the marque Lagonda.

My story goes back to 1965, a period when worn out saloon Lagonda cars could be purchased for £ 35-40, virtually the scrap value of the aluminum bodies! This was a great time for young enthusiasts and Herb Schofield and I had built up a LG 45 special for competition work, powered by the ubiquitous Meadows six cylinder engine. The chassis was simple and easy for us to renovate in our back street garage in

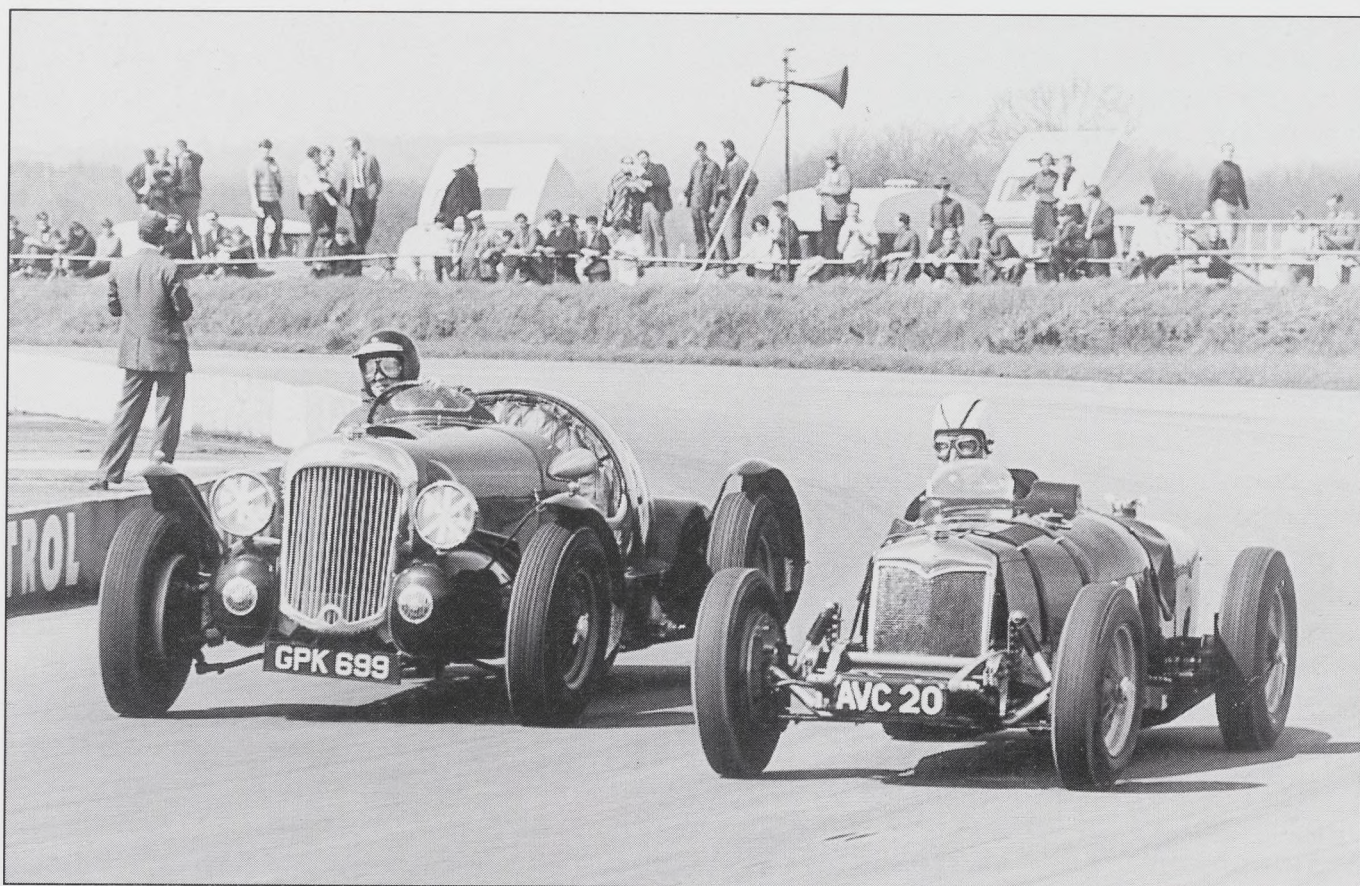
Oldham, the forerunner of the " Northern Lagonda Factory " .

We didn't recondition engines because they were so plentiful. However even these worn smokers produced huge amounts of power, much more than we could cope with as novice drivers ! The racing went well for two years, with a fine collection of pots and then we were ready to move on to what we thought would be the ultimate racer, the V12 Lagonda. Our enthusiasm was not dimmed by the warnings we received from our elders and betters in the Lagonda Club. They spoke of disintegrating con rods and engines that rarely ran on more than nine of their twelve cylinders.

Ted Townsley was one of these prophets of doom but he realised how keen we were and he gave, yes gave, us a complete car less the engine to get us off the ground. The picture shows a scene, early in 1967 when Ian North and John Beardow delivered the beast for slaughter to our lockup in Oldham. Alan Brown is making a start and I am smiling in the middle. Another V12 saloon, a deville model, was also acquired as a donor vehicle and an advert produced an engine up in Carlisle for £50. This was an incredible stroke of luck, even though we took it for granted at the time. A lot of V12 engines had been removed from cars to make way for diesel or Jaguar replacements but usually after years of abuse and final disintegration. The one we found was in good condition and had been stored dry and warm at the back of a garage for many years. All I had to do was a decoke which turned out to be a relatively simple job as much thought had been put into the design to make the removal of the camshafts and heads almost fool proof.



The V12 chassis arrives at the Oldham garage



A youthful Herb Schofield in their first race with the car at Silverstone, the independent nature of the front suspension is clearly demonstrated!

The glorious day dawned when the engine was lowered into the chassis at Jack Buckley's garage and immediately fired up with an ear splitting howl. We were so excited that we rushed to throw the rest of the car together with the sexy Le Mans body that Jack had built for us.

Our primitive standard of workmanship, which had been perfectly adequate for the rugged LG 45 chassis was no match for the problems of a worn out but sophisticated V12 chassis. Our first outing on the road was the journey to April Silverstone 1968, yes we had entered while the car was still a pile of bits. We actually got there and back and got many accolades for presentation, but the journey was a nightmare with stiff but loose steering, leaking hydraulic brakes, undamped independent suspension and all the small problems of a new special.

The one consolation was the engine. It ran faultlessly with good oil pressure and no rattles.

Even when one of the distributors packed up and we had to complete our journey home on six cylinders instead of twelve, it did not complain, it just went very slowly! Soon the chassis problems were sorted and the next month found us competing at Curborough Speed Trials. We had both expected the V 12 to storm ahead of all competition, even with a standard engine. We were somewhat dismayed, to say the least, that our times were well down on the ones we had set in the LG 45 the previous year and I was deep under the bonnet trying to ascertain the reason for lack of urge.

Now our Herb was standing by smoking his pipe in a supervisory role when I heard him hiss "W.O." This meant nothing to the callow youth that I was and I carried on. When Herb hissed even more urgently "W.O. Bentley" the penny dropped and I straightened up to be face to face with the great man himself. I was immediately struck by his humble appearance. He was bareheaded wearing a crumpled mackintosh and had (to me) an inexplicable air of sadness about him. We stared diffidently at each other for

several seconds and then he began to speak. It was soon obvious that he thought we had one of the original team cars from the 1939 Le Mans race and I hesitated to disillusion him.

He became more animated as I expressed my disappointment with the power output we were getting. He explained that we were using far too low a rev. range and that these engines produced very little until the revs were between 3500 and 4500 R.P.M. "It's the camshaft design, we never did get it right" were the actual words he used.

With that he turned and walked slowly away. I watched after him as he made his way through the crowd, speaking to no one and nobody to him. He got into a battered old Morris Minor and drove away, I never saw him again.

A couple of years later, driving to work, I heard on the eight o'clock news that he had died, the end of an era, the announcer said. Thirty years have passed since those exciting early days. During that period Alastair Barker took over our car and has raced it enthusiastically every year covering many thousands of miles. The V12 engine did have new con rods fitted (more on this later) and has performed reliably. However we have never felt it achieved the power output it should have done for such a sophisticated unit. We read Donald Bastow's book "W.O. Bentley, Engineer", together with Arnold Davey's books and magazine articles. They all told of the same story, the unsuccessful search for the missing urge. Sure, the Le Mans cars performed creditably in 1939 but they had broken valve springs after the race and W.O. had been very strict about the drivers keeping the revs below 5000 rpm. He was a worried man!

After the win at Le Mans by Lagonda in 1935 the venture capitalist Alan Good bought the Lagonda company from the receivers. He took on W.O. as Technical Director and asked him to produce a car that would catapult Lagonda cars to the top of the league. Unlike Barnato, who W.O. had had to suffer at Bentley Motors,

Alan Good did not have unlimited resources. He had borrowed sufficient money to finance a big development programme, but it had to come in on budget and be completed very quickly to start paying off the debt.

W.O. conceived the ultimate engine, which would be very powerful but docile. The 4.5 litre V 12 was an engine which would be ideal both for a limousine or a sporting coupe. The design team he put together consisted of a few of his old pals from the Bentley Motors days and a group of men from Rolls Royce headed up by Stuart Tresillian. The RR men worked to very exacting if over-complicated standards.

The writer has the impression that teams were set up to design different parts of the engine because of the time pressure they were under. One could almost imagine that W.O. and his pals designed the block of the V 12 engine whilst the cylinder heads and camshaft assemblies were done by the RR gang !. There is certainly some evidence of poor communication between the two groups with some compromise engineering to get things to fit as the prototype engine was hurriedly screwed together.

The Block is made of cast iron and carries the crankshaft in four main bearings. This allows the engine to be quite compact but it must have been a courageous decision by W.O. to go for only four bearings for such a large number of cylinders. However time has proved him correct. The crankshaft was balanced with huge weights which were bolted on to the forged shaft. This looks awful but again performed well with no problems up to 6000 rpm. The wise use of a Lanchester damper no doubt contributed to the smoothness of this engine.

The cylinders were also integral in this block and the water cooling passages were enclosed with aluminium plates fastened on with hundreds of 2 BA nuts, reminiscent of the 3 litre Bentley engine. The oil supply to the bearings is very neat with a drilled steel tube passing through

the "Vee".

Earlier in his career W.O. had pioneered the use of aluminium pistons with great success. Their successful use in aeroplane rotary engines during the 1914-18 war was due to his inspiration and persistence. This must have given him a great affection for the metal and he decided to use it for the con rods to minimise the reciprocating weight. This was not a novel idea to use aluminium for con rods but what was unique was to run the aluminium rods directly onto the crankshaft without white metal bearings.

Aluminium is not a forgiving bearing material and this design called for lots of lubricating oil, preferably very clean oil as well. To ensure this, the crankshaft had its own oil pump with a twin oil pump to service the rest of the engine. The instruction book states that the engine oil must be changed every 2500 miles which is an almost ludicrous request and must have been ignored. Also incredible was that no decent oil filtration system was incorporated into the design simply a small wire mesh strainer about 3" long by 2" diameter. The strange thing is that the designers were conscious of the poor quality of lubricating oils in the 1930's because they incorporated a relief valve by-pass in case this strainer became blocked. Why they did not use a proper full flow filter similar to the one used on the six cylinder Meadows engine is a complete mystery.

To attempt to solve this mystery one has to speculate how W.O. acted as a manager. Stuart Tresillian was a very short tempered man which must have been difficult for W.O., who hated confrontation. W.O. had to kill off some of Tresillian's wilder design concepts but must have let him have his head in others. Once past the prototype stage there must have been pressure from Alan Good on W.O. to keep costs down and avoid re-design if a cheap way could be found around problems. The RR team were either brainwashed or still owed some allegiance to their old company. This is because their drawings all had

numbers prefixed by LeC which is short for Le Canadel the RR design office in the South of France.

The design of the twin oil systems almost symbolised the two team concept. The excellent design innovations include the detachable sprockets which drive the camshafts. These sprockets have little pegs to rest on when the cams are removed for a decoke. The chains therefore remain in tension and the timing is not lost ! The other major step was to have the cams operating directly onto the valves without the use of rockers. However, they did not make things easy for themselves by incorporating adjustable tappets between the cams and the valves. This led them to design a detachable gallery of some complexity to carry the camshaft and tappets.

The drawing Le C 134 shows the draughtsman asking permission to specify the tappets (cam followers) with a top radius of $1\frac{1}{4}$ " and these went into production. This was because things were getting congested and such a radius gave him a much larger operating surface than a flat follower of the same width. So the engine was produced from scratch in an incredible six months and was in full scale production by 1938. There were problems with the aluminium con rods clamping onto the crankshaft when cold, which must have caused red faces, but these were overcome by increasing their clearance and diverting most of the output of the two oil pumps to them!

In late 1938 after 100 engines had been produced the Board sanctioned some design changes and the Sanction II engine arrived. The oil filler cap was moved to the top of one of the cam boxes and the big end bearings were made wider by removing the web on the crank pin. However a significant change was the introduction of longer valves to facilitate the use of longer valve springs. This can only have been done because Sanction I valve springs must have been failing in service. The valves were $\frac{5}{32}$ " longer allowing the number of coils in the

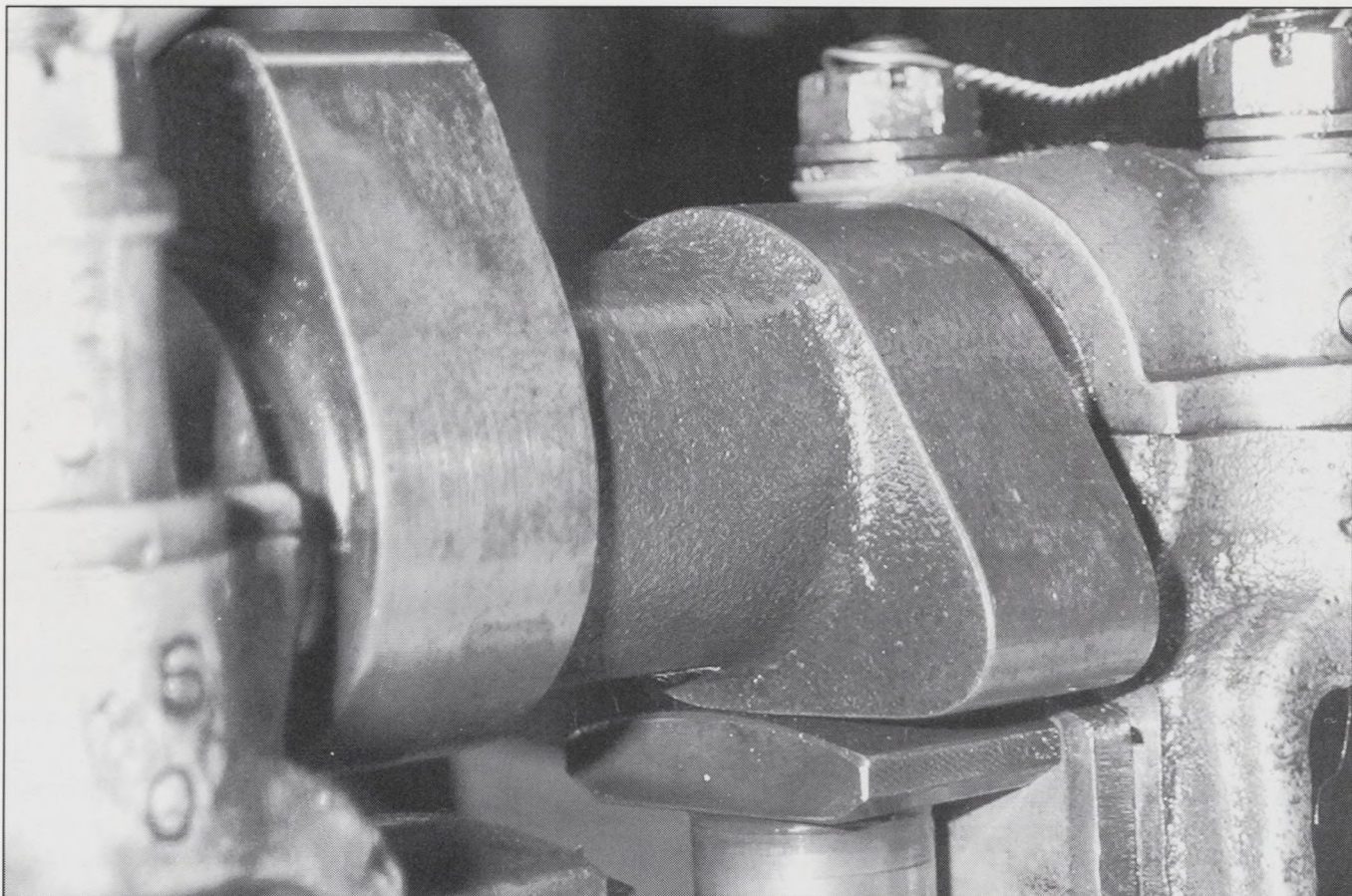
springs to be increased by one and softer steel to be used. The tappets and tappet guides had to be shortened by the same amount.

After 1968, when I had met W.O., his criticism of the camshafts remained at the back of my mind for the intervening 30 years. I recently read his book and noticed the camshaft problems he had with the $6\frac{1}{2}$ litre Bentley engines and speculated that he would have been happy to leave this aspect of the engine design to the RR "gang" in 1936. However he must have reflected in later years that there was absolutely nothing else wrong with his engine, so it must have been the cam design that caused the lack of power.

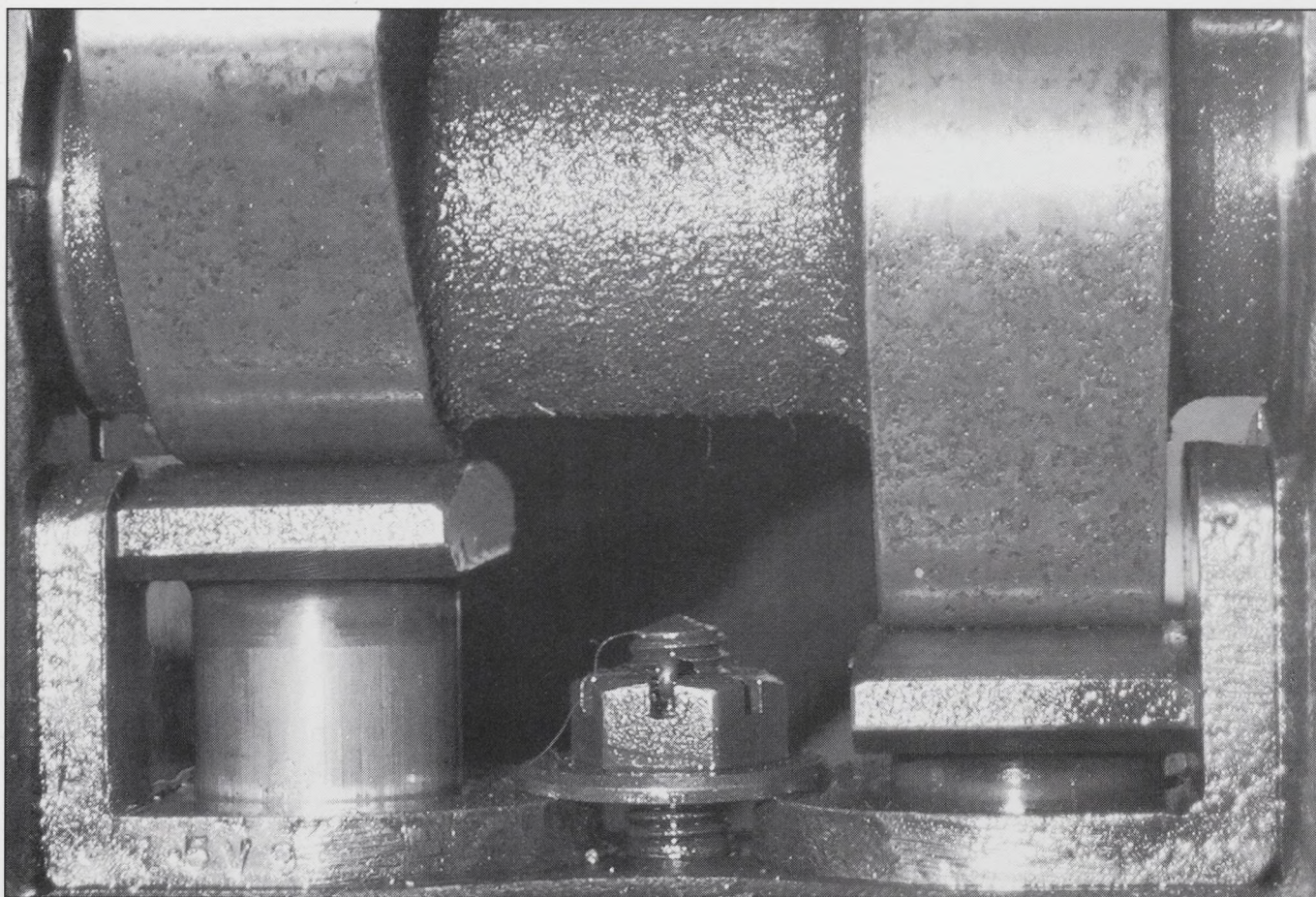
Alastair Barker and I discussed the matter for some months and decided we needed an expert. Stephen Mathews had a contact at Jaguar who put us on to Peter Ling who, we found out, was responsible for the cams on the Le Mans winning V12 Jaguars amongst other things. It was great good fortune that the gallery design meant that we could take a complete assembly to his office. He was able to study the cam and its tappets actually operating on his desk.

As soon as he saw the curved tappets he said he thought they called for a hollow sided cam. i.e. the flanks of the cam lobe should be concave to match the radius of the curved tappet so that they "mated" just prior to the valves opening. He pointed out that the lift on the inlet valve was only 0.38" compared with the lift of the exhaust valve which was 0.425". We agreed that the new cams would have the maximum lift possible i.e. 0.45", this being the full stroke length of the tappet. (cam follower) The base radius has to stay the same as any reduction would cause the tappet adjusters to foul the underside of the gallery. The valve springs can accommodate a lift of 0.49", then they would bind up.

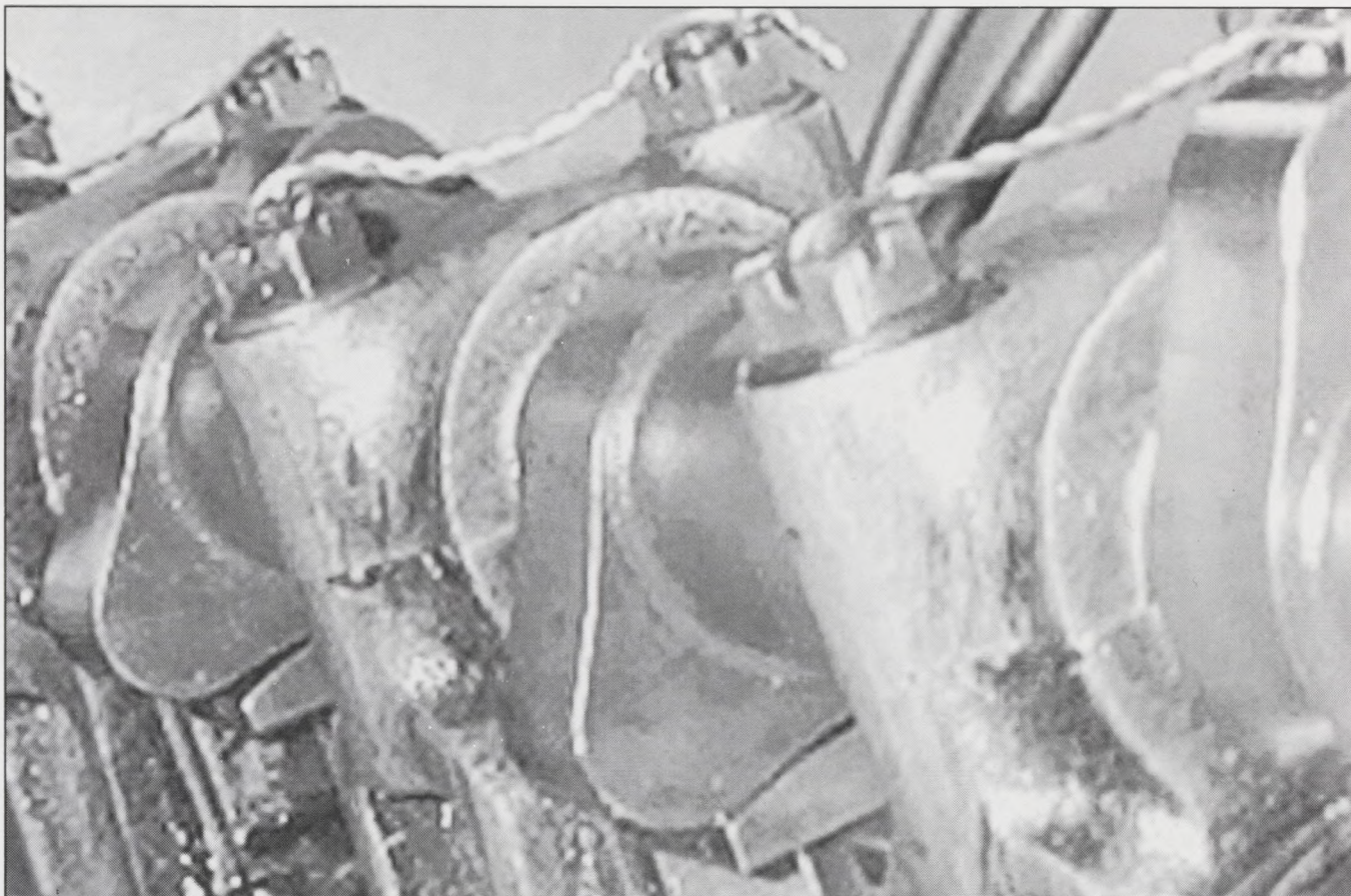
I was very excited when I received the new drawings from Peter in December 1997 and Leonard Reece and Co. were asked to produce new camshafts from



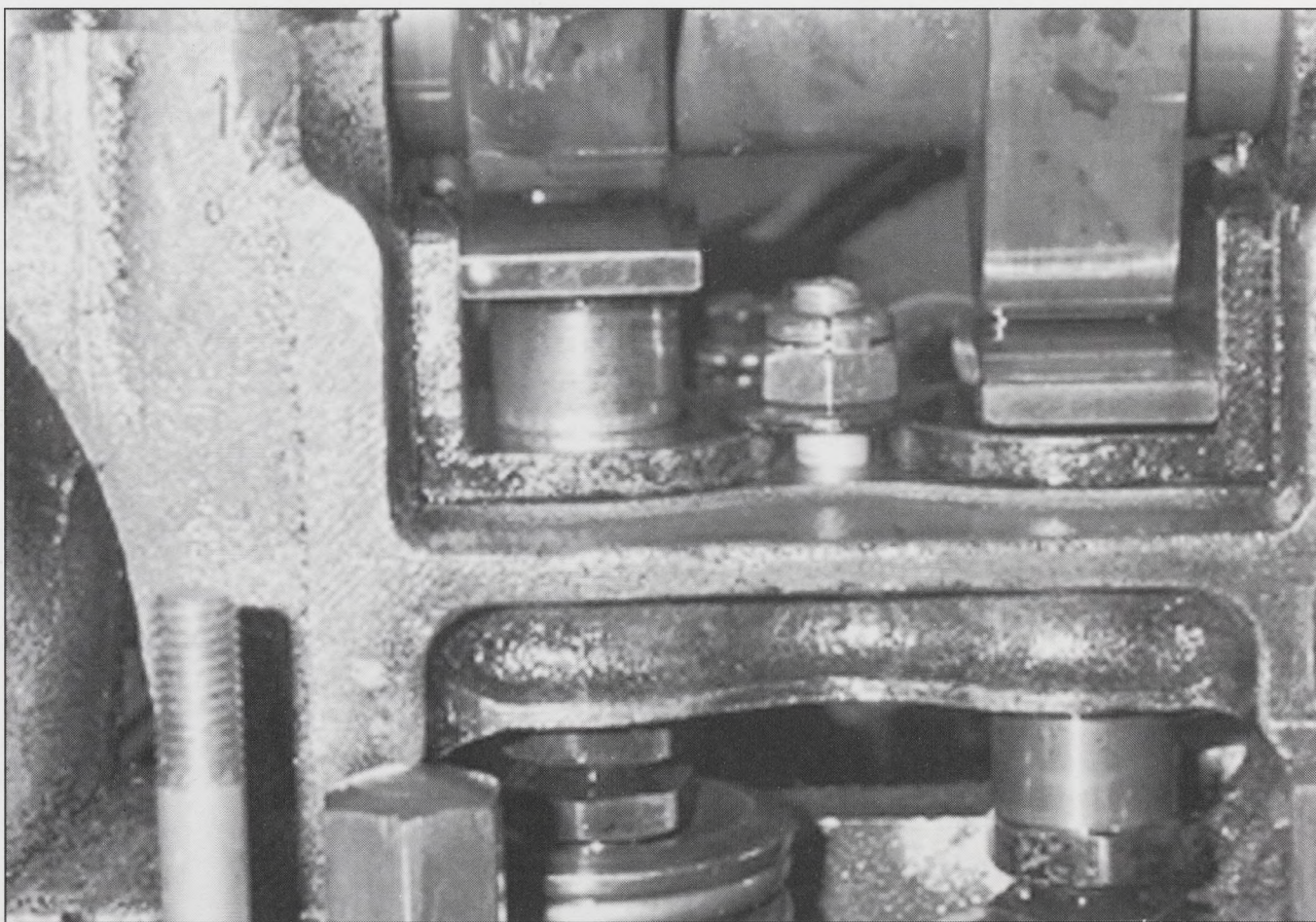
Sanction 2 cams and tappets, the cam does not mate with the tappet, but rolls onto it. Note the S2 cut-down tappets, which are no good for the new camshaft.



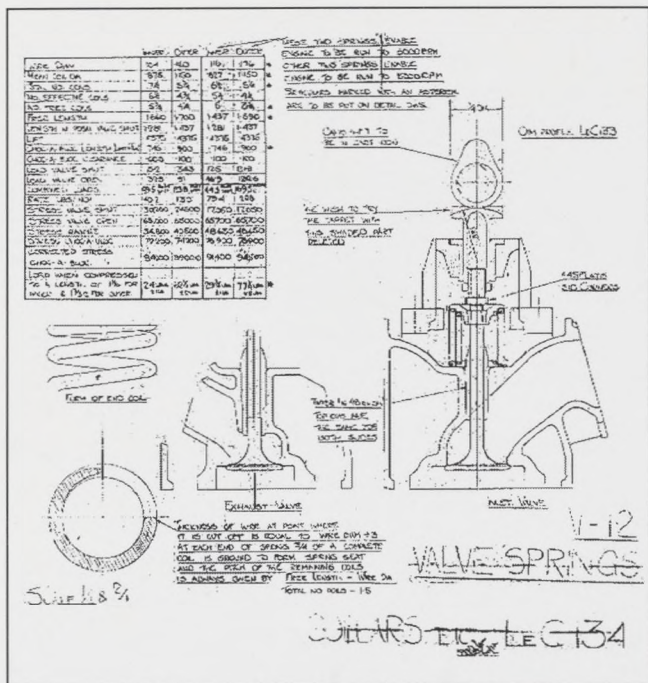
This shows how little of the stroke of the tappet is utilised, leading to a very brief opening of the inlet valve, which the writer believes is the reason for the poor performance of the V12 engine.



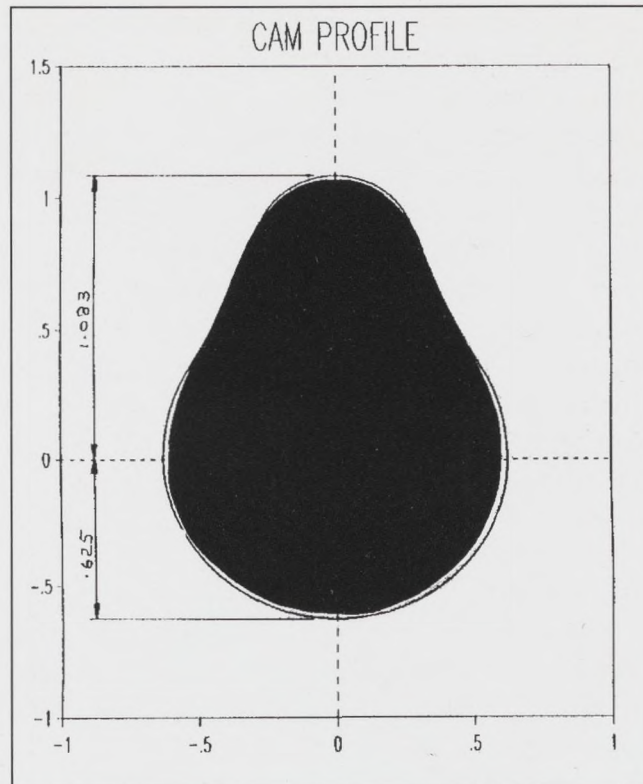
The new "pear shaped" cam mates perfectlyl with the SI cam follower (tappet).



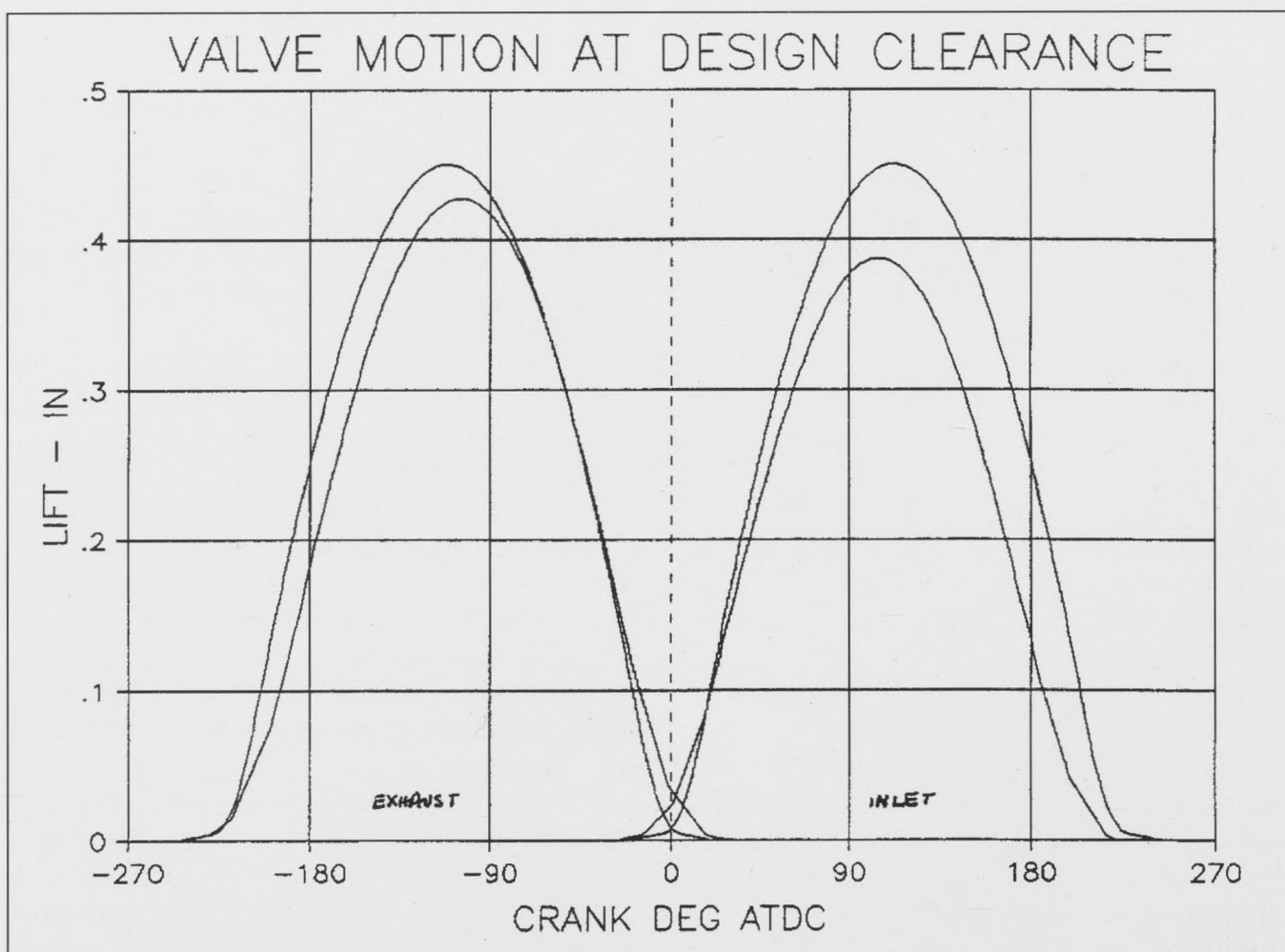
This shows the full stroke of the tappet being used.



Drawing Lec 134, clearly showing the high lift "pear shaped" camshaft, which never saw production. The writer believes this would have given superb performance. (LeC 133 has been lost!).



Peter Ling's profile eclipsed by the 1936 Lec 134 profile, they were very similar.



This shows the difference between the new camshaft (upper curve) and the standard, flat sided cams, (lower curve).

them. The only additional modification I asked for were adjusting slots in the drive flange for fine timing adjustments. Peter's cam profiles were quite different from the production cams. They were pear shaped with hollow sides and a much larger "nose" radius. With this shape he had been able to reduce the valve overlap to practically zero to enhance the low rev torque, whilst at the same time he had increased the area under the lift curve by almost 25% for the inlet valve. He had calculated that the maximum acceleration of the valves would be 31000ft/sec/sec at 5500 rpm which was in line with current practice.

When we came to install the new cams in Alastair's Sanction II engine, we hit an immediate snag. We found that, far from altering the radius on the tappets, the production tappets had been cut down by $\frac{1}{4}$ " in width, presumably to save weight and remove a part that the low lift production cams were not using. Our new high lift cams were impacting on a sharp edge as it were. We found some Sanction I tappets, shortened them by $\frac{5}{32}$ " and we were back in business. The performance of the car was greatly improved with much better low rev torque and a very satisfying 175 bhp. at only 4500 rpm on the rolling road. We were over the moon!

Then I made a really weird discovery. I was casually looking at drawing LeC 134 done in 1936 and observed that the drawing of the camshaft profile was very pear shaped and quite unlike the production cams we had been studying. I blew up a copy and, lo and behold, it was almost identical to the profile generated by Peter's computer when one profile was placed over the other.

This could only mean one thing. The original designer/draughtsman in 1936 knew exactly what he was doing and drew a pear shaped cam to fit his curved tappets. Someone tragically changed this specification to "standard" flat sided cams when ordering the production units.

They cannot have realised what this would do to reduce the valve opening and all subsequent V12 engines have been short of breath!

Now, hollow sided cams were not new to RR engineers and they were currently in use in contemporary RR engines. The draftsman clearly intended to match the convex tappets with concave cam sides. This design enables the nose or "business end" of the cam to impact initially at the extremity of the tappet width and operate with maximum effect. The curved flanks also allow a larger radius for the nose of the cam which increases the open time for the valve. By contrast a flat sided cam would "roll" onto the tappet and dwell for a long time nearer the centre of the tappet before the nose comes into contact further inboard. (Hence the decision to crop the unused portion off the SII tappets). The valve would then be opened and closed very sharply as the nose of the cam passes over the apex of the tappet profile, giving a very short open time.

This is pure speculation on my part, but I have observed some very strange wear patterns on this tappet apex and I wonder if valve bounce in this fully open position may have caused the spring breakages which plagued the competition engines.

My confidence in the Peter Ling camshaft design received a further boost in October 1999 when I met Karl-Wilhelm Putsch on our Alpine Rally. Dr Putsch has completed many high speed rallies with the new cams and he states that it is now possible to ascend the Alps in top gear in his V12 where second gear used to be necessary. He has achieved speeds of up to 115 mph and drivers of dark red Italian cars that he passes want to see under his bonnet!

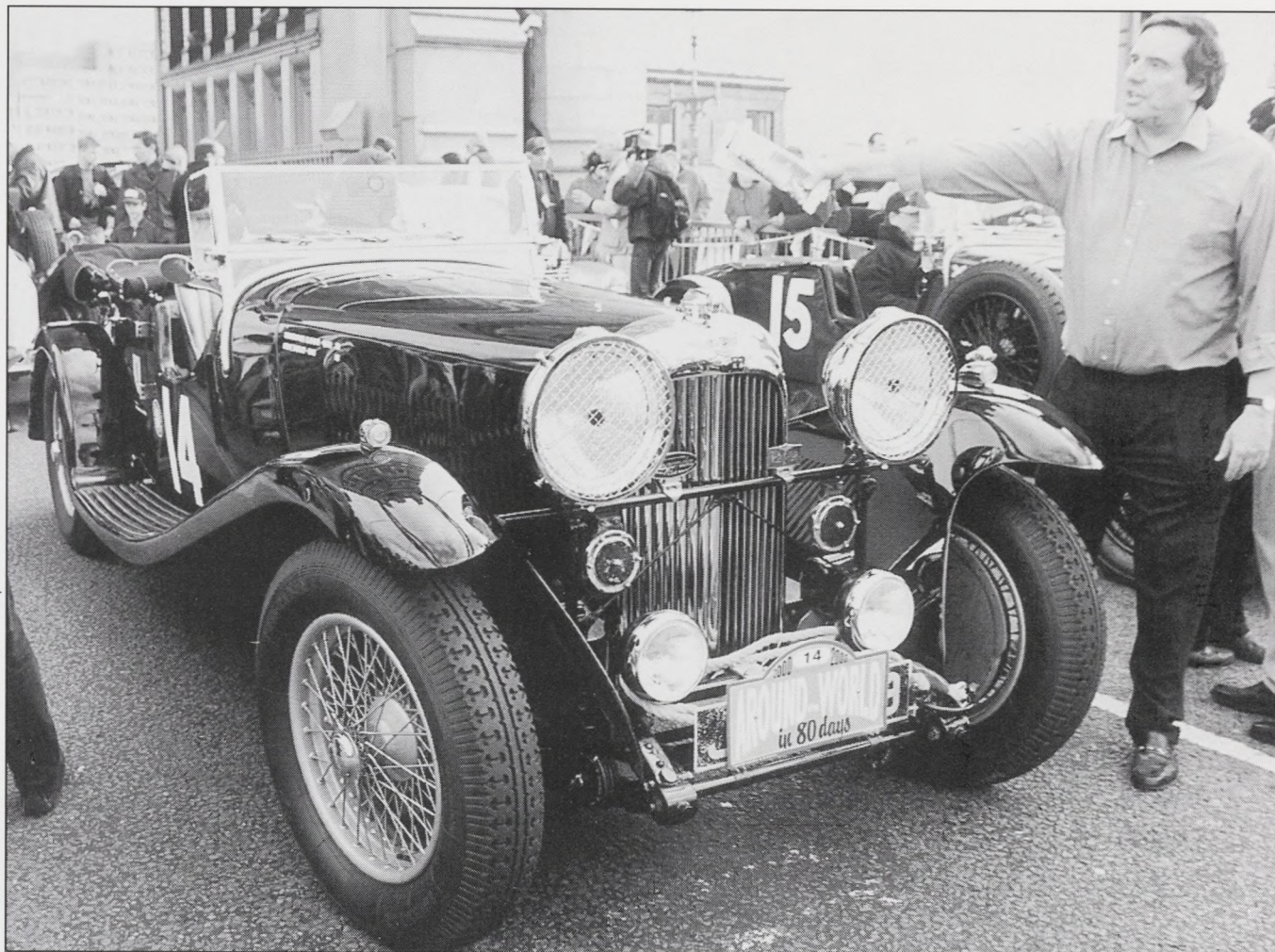
I feel W.O. would have been proud of us for releasing so much more power from his masterpiece. It's another "if only". If only they had spotted this mistake in 1938 then the V12 Lagonda really would have been a world leader for decades.



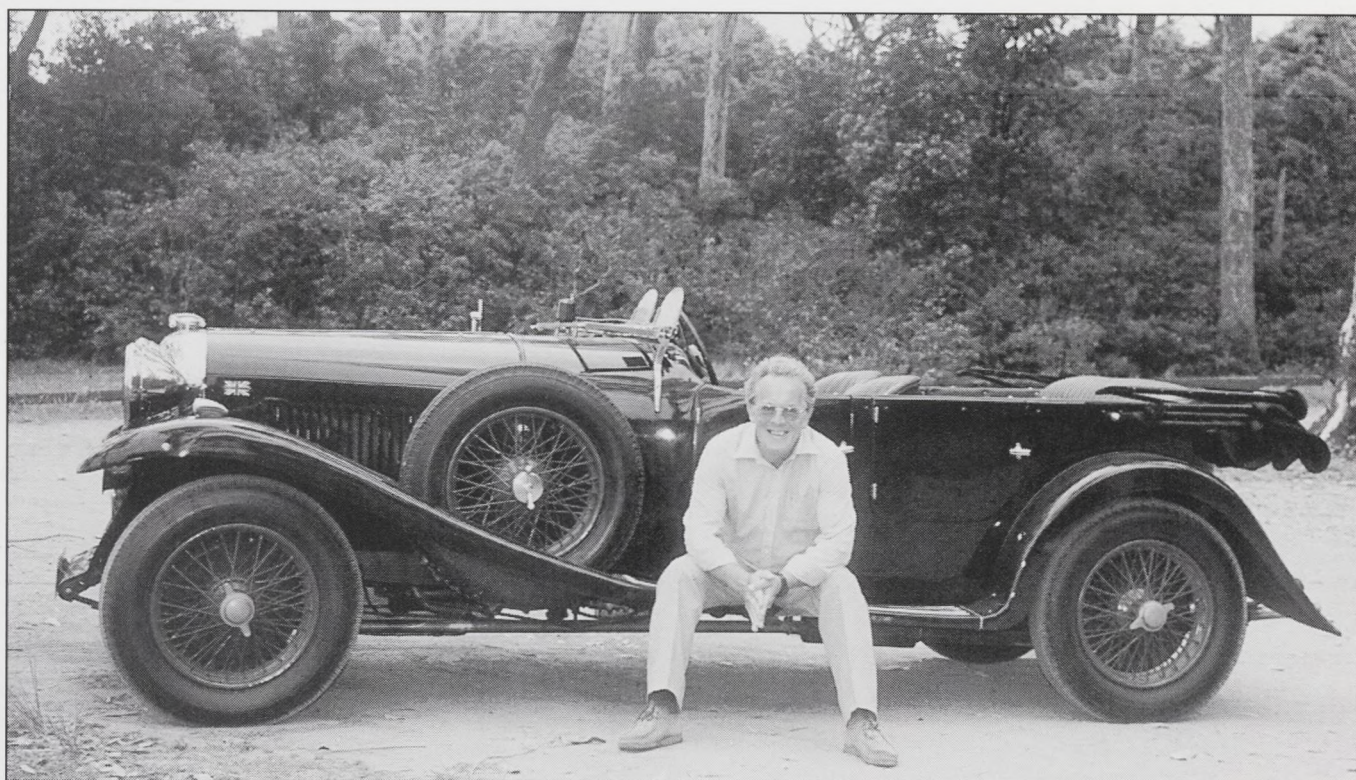
Roger Firth's LG45 Rapide, parked outside the most famous pub on the Isle of Man TT course, see his article on page 26.



Another Millennium Rally picture, Tina Tratalos getting all steamed up. Photo, Tim, Gresty.



Another shot of Christopher Claridge-Ware leaving Tower Bridge at the start of his fantastic rally.



A happy Mike Truter in far-away Oz, enjoying the 16/80 previously owned by your Editor when in Singapore. The side-mounted spare dates from the time when the Painter family were planning to drive the car overland from India to England.

The Lagonda Club Northern Millennium Rally, Isle of Man, 11th to 16th June 2000

Roger Firth reveals all

IN THE ABSENCE OF THE REPORT from the official rally scribe, Ken Painter has given me 24 hours to prepare a report, as this is now holding up publication of the next magazine.

As most will know, the Northern Members know very well how to enjoy themselves and so I decided after consulting your Northern Secretary, Herb Schofield, to organise a rally on The Isle of Man to celebrate the millennium on behalf of the club.

The entry list will give you a taste of the variety of cars and people and we were extremely privileged to welcome three members from Europe and three from Ireland, with the addition of John Longridge who was a member in 1960 and, I suspect, well before that, he was such good company and let's hope we see more of him. Unfortunately at the last minute, Herb was unable to join us as Ann was extremely ill with Pneumonia and, I am pleased to tell you that she is now well on the way to recovery and her jokes are improving by the day. Janet Simpson had reoccurrence of her knee problem and was unable to come along, and Leslie Mackie had to leave Ann at home, as she was also unwell, but did send us a drink each, for which we say many thanks.

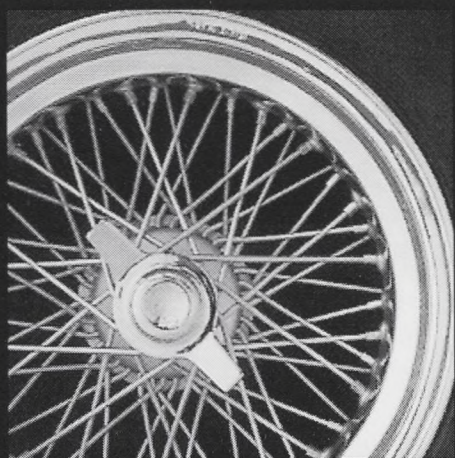
As our friends from Europe and the south were travelling on Saturday, arrangements were made to stay overnight at The Lancaster House Hotel, Lancaster and 16 cars with their occupants took advantage of this. We had an extremely good time here and the swimming pool and leisure centre were put to good use. Eventually we retired after midnight to recharge our batteries for the events to come.

Sunday morning, and many were up

early pretending not to look too keen with the polishing cloth, but I did notice that at least one of us spent some 40 minutes on this task, but the finished results were very worthwhile. Following breakfast, we hung around for an hour or so explaining to each other the difference from model to model and in some cases how to improve on its performance, one 2 Litre, it was claimed, went as well as a 4½ and after a while the bonnet was lifted and everything was revealed. During the morning we were joined for a fleeting visit by: Cyril Hollingworth in his recently restored 3 litre tourer, explaining to us why his O.S. front wing was bashed in and producing a broken Perrot Shaft as evidence, in my opinion, that these should be given a thorough inspection at every opportunity.

I had advised everyone of my mobile telephone number, just in case of any mechanical problems and, thankfully, none were received. We left the hotel at 11:15 to make our way to Heysham, meeting for lunch at The Duke of Rothsay Hotel which is a stones' throw from the ferry terminal, where we had to report at 1:15. The only problem here being that in a rush to make sure that everyone else had sufficient information, paperwork etc, I had left my own ferry tickets at home, but young Hine put his charm on and persuaded a rather dishy looking booking-in clerk that I was really telling the truth and surprisingly she believed him, thanks Nick.

Everyone had been made aware that we had a mystery guest joining us and names such as Paul Daniels, The Duke of Edinburgh, Nigel Mansel, Posh Spice and many others were suggested in an endeavour to outguess each other, but all was revealed, in the form of Alan Brown.



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He had been telling everyone at The Northern Factory that he was too busy to join us and, even up to the Thursday before the rally, he was sticking to his story, but behind the scenes, I had offered to lend Alan my M45 tourer, to surprise us all.

The ferry was delayed for around 1½ hours, as this particular weekend is the end of the TT and very busy indeed, but following a reasonable crossing, we eventually arrived in Douglas then travelled south for some three miles to The Mount Murray Hotel and Country Club at Santon. We were greeted by the hotel management with Bucks Fizz and, following booking and preparing ourselves, we took dinner, which was to an extremely high standard. Unfortunately the ferry from Belfast was also delayed, and our friends from The Emerald Isle did not arrive until after 10:00, fortunately, they had eaten on the ferry, anticipating their late time of arrival. Stories were exchanged in the bar and I understand that some retired at around 3.00.

As the event was intended to be a holiday, whatever I had arranged was not compulsory and you were free to do your own thing. Monday morning arrived and various people were spotted sampling the Manx kippers. There was considerable haze around and we were due to meet at Ramsay for the welcome carvery lunch. Most of us took the TT course in an anticlockwise direction eventually arriving at the Bungalow and Snaefell in misty conditions, some visiting the motorcycle museum. We then made our way down to Sulby and the world famous Jurby Junk, which is on the old airfield at Jurby and sells the most incredible amount of junk. Some members were seen purchasing the most incredible head gear for the Gala Dinner. At noon, we all met at the Grand Island Hotel. Ramsey where we partook of the lunch and some prepared their best sides for Sheila Waiting, who was taking the rally video. The weather here was glorious and many were taking advantage of this in the hotel

grounds and not leaving until 5:00. At around 2:15, some of us made our way to George Daniels' home and workshop where we were privileged to have the opportunity to see the most intricate hand crafted watches, which are made here, what a magnificent experience. Something we will all remember for a long time. Thank you, George. Eventually back to Mount Murray where the evening was free, to do your own thing.

Tuesday was the day of The Wilbur Gunn Treasure Hunt, which took place from the Grand Stand along the TT course up to Snaefell. Some 16 questions required answering and throughout the day our cars were made most welcome by everyone on the Island, they are such nice people. The Current Bun was shining all day and eventually we all made our way back to Mount Murray to have the results declared. It was made quite clear by the organiser (me) that his decision was final, but some lady members were not prepared to accept this, two sisters in our party not agreeing with the answer to the last question, started physically attacking the organiser until he changed the answer to suit them. The unconventional way in which the results were declared meant that David Ayre was winner, as he was the first to purchase a pint for the organiser and Ann Rider won the Thomas Crapper prize for butting in at the right time. Following the results, we all said "Cheers" to Ann Mackie and wished her a speedy return to good health. The evening was again free to do your own thing, and some of us celebrated Christine Miles' birthday in splendid form.

Wednesday was a free day, with some people playing a round or two of golf. Some also took the steam train to Port Erin and Port St Mary, flagging it down at the Halt, just past the hotel. Others also took the electric train out of Douglas, towards Laxey and one member was spotted walking along Douglas promenade, holding the hand of another member's lady. Again, another free evening to do your own thing.



John Longridge and Lennie Kornet enjoy a drink at Peel



Margaret Browning finds three of the answers in the rally.



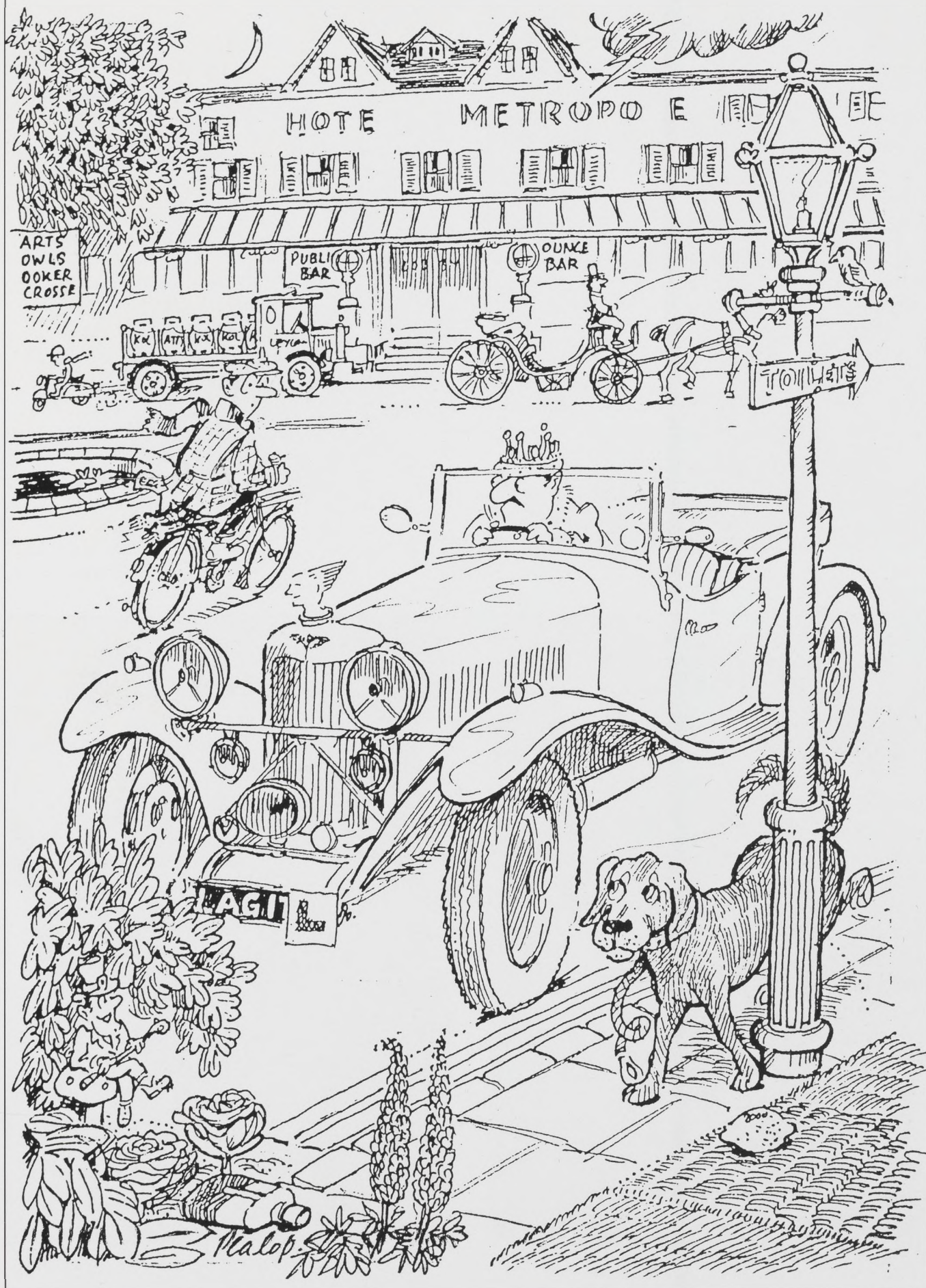
Funny hats at the gala dinner



Anne Walby prepares to attack the organiser, John Mackie stands well clear!

Photos by Tim Gresty.

HOW MANY ITEMS CAN YOU FIND THAT BEGIN WITH THE LETTER 'L'



Thursday, and our final day. A number of suggestions were made to fill in the morning and many visited Laxey and the largest working water wheel in the world, "Lady Isabella", named after the wife of the Governor of the day. It was used to pump water from the tin mines. Following the morning's activities, we all met at the Creek Inn, Peel, for lunch. Peel is the capital of the Island and, whilst it is full of double yellow lines, no-one takes any notice of them, especially Lagonda owners. It was a very fine sight, to see all the cars parked around the harbour, sometimes making it difficult for other drivers and the draymen trying to deliver to The Creek. Unfortunately, the Powers That Be had decided to cancel the Friday sailing to Ireland, so, just after lunch, we had to say goodbye to our friends from the Emerald Isle, waving goodbye with heavy hearts. We were asked to meet at Mount Murray at around 6:00, in time to see Andrew Rothwell and Alex Hazel rowing a child's inflatable dinghy across the hotel lake. We all expected it to sink and it was very close to doing so, just as they arrived back on land.

Thursday evening was our Gala Dinner night and, following drinks, we

all sat down to a six course dinner, with live piano music. Food and frolics, some people taking great delight in setting off their party poppers at times to the annoyance of others during the evening. Beryl and I were presented with a most delightful cut glass fruit bowl, which now takes pride of place on our sideboard, next to the picture of our LG45 Rapide. Thank you all, very, very much. Following some further time spent in the bar, we all retired, hopeful of a smooth crossing the following day.

Friday. The Isle of Man is still a little behind the times (thankfully), which makes the island rather special. You have to report at least one hour before the ferry departure time, or you are likely to be left behind, so, as our departure time was 9:00, we started to leave the hotel just after 7:30, to miss the small traffic jam which sometimes takes place in Douglas in the mornings. After a calm crossing, we arrived in Heysham at 12.45.

We certainly made new friends, had excellent weather and enjoyed ourselves very much, most people asking when we will be coming again. From my point of view, it was a privilege to meet you all and organise the rally on behalf of the

LIST OF ENTRANTS *(not all were able to attend)*

David Ayre and Steve Cooper	Invicta S Type
Norman and Mary Barber	Bentley 4¼ saloon
Alastair Barker and Clare Fisher	V12 Le Mans Replica
John and Susan Batt	1931 Model A Street Rod!
Peter Bloemendall and Lennie Kornet	16/80 tourer
John Breen and Bill Wright	16/80 tourer
Alan Brown	M45 T7 tourer
David and Mary Crabtree	2 litre H.C. S.M. tourer
Julie Daniels	Vauxhall 30/98 Velox tourer
John and Hilda Davenport	LG45 Rapide
Alec and Sylvia Downie	LG45 Rapide
Roger and Beryl Firth	LG45 Rapide
Peter and Lois Gilkes	DB 3 litre saloon
Tim Gresty and Margaret Browning	2 litre L.C. T2 tourer
Nigel and Jennifer Hall	LG45 Rapide replica
Franz, Barbara and Tamara Hatebur	DB 3 litre saloon
Alex Hazell and Alyssa Murdoch	LG45 2 seater special
David and Jill Hine	M45 T7 tourer
Nick, Emma and baby Alex Hine	M45 ST34 saloon



What a difference the years make! David Hine's M45 and Claire Fisher's DB 3 litre



John Davenport's LG45 Rapide at rest in the Isle of Man

Anthony and Penny Howat	M45 T7 tourer
David, Penny, Thomas and William Humphreys	2 litre H.C. S.M. tourer
John and Audrey Laughton	Rapier Abbot tourer
Leslie and Ann Mackie	2 litre L.C. S.C.
Robert and Christine Miles	LG45 DHC
Chris and Julia Moore	2/ 4½ H.C. S.M. tourer
Gordon and Ann Rider	M45R tourer
Mike and Lyn Riley	3 litre H.C. tourer
John Robson	Invicta S type TT car
Andrew Rothwell	2 litre L.C. tourer
Peter and Sarah Russell-Floyd	M35R tourer
Jonathan and Merav Oppenheimer	V12 saloon
Her Schofield and Ann Shoosmith	3 litre tourer
Janet Simpson	LG 45 tourer
Frank and Erica Storrs and John Longridge	LG 45 tourer
David Thirlby	Frazer Nash Anzani
Terry and Tina Tratalos	Bentley 4¼ saloon
Gerard Van Pelt	3 litre T7 tourer
Peter and Ann Walby and Irene Montgomery	M45 T7 tourer
Peter and Hilary Whenman	M35R 4½ LM Replica
David and Margaret Woollass	2 litre H.C. S.M. tourer



Beryl Firth introducing Alex Hine to members of the Lagonda Club



The group photograph



Nigel Hall presents Roger and Beryl Firth with their present

Letters

Dear Ken,

In his letter in the Spring magazine, John Ryder says: "What a wealth of technical data and 'practical' information tips were published..." in the magazines of the fifties.

Hasn't John rather missed the point? The mag still carries technical articles and articles on modifications and we have certainly had plenty of opinions about the demon wheel wobble recently! More importantly, the Club has commissioned more "in depth" material, now produced as technical manuals, which contain all the current knowledge and information on each specific model. No more hunting autojumbles for that elusive edition which carried the "how to do it" article you need years later, just contact our Hon Sec and buy your very own manual. Better still, buy two, one for the bookshelf and one for the garage.

Yes, I know that some models are yet to be covered by these manuals, but the work continues and one day all the major models will be included. Not so certain about the tricar though....

Of course, John could always contribute more material from his own extensive knowledge of the marque!

Yours sincerely

David Hine

(See also the letter which follows this one! K.P.P.)

Dear Ken,

A recurrent theme in the magazine has been overheating and boiling of Lagonda radiators. Recently I came upon a solution in the travelogue "Libyan Sands" by Ralph Bagnold who explored the North African desert by car in the 1920s. He says :

"On this journey into the western desert no water was to be had whatever, so that as well as having to carry petrol, we would have to carry water too, both for the radiators and for ourselves. On our

trip in the spring of 1927 the cars had boiled continuously, and the weather would be just as hot. We realised that the cars do not use much water by actually boiling it off in steam, but that the steam blowing violently down the narrow overflow pipe provided in all radiators carries with it a great quantity of water splashed up by the boiling. All this could be saved if the overflow were led into a special tank, even if the steam itself were lost. So we blocked up the overflows of the radiators, and in their place soldered large copper pipes to the filler-caps, joining them by other tubes down into two-gallon cans bolted to the running-boards of the cars, so that the only outlet from the radiator was at the end of a pipe immersed at the bottom of a can. When the water boiled in the engine a mixture of water and steam was carried over into the can where all the water was saved, and so, until at last the water in the can itself began to boil, the steam was condensed and saved.

The beauty of the idea is that it saves water in another way also, which we had not thought of; for, by leading the connecting pipe within reach of the driver's hand, it enables him, by feeling if it is hot or cold, to tell exactly when the circulating water is starting to boil. He then turns his car round till its head points into the wind, and stops to let things cool down. After a minute or so, when the steam has condensed in the radiator top and formed a vacuum there, the water rushes back out of the can with a loud gurgle - and the radiator is full once more. This solved our water problem. During that trip of 1100 miles we never once added water to our cars."

I hope the idea may prove useful to Lagonda owners. Be sure to listen for the loud gurgle.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Pilgrim
The gurgle guru

Dear Ken,

Having just moved myself to take an intelligent interest in the Club Register 2000 I am pleased to see the Model Count on pages 9-7.

I am reminded that, in the darkest hours of economic recession in the early '90 the most useful thing that I could find to do (having exhausted all the other useless tasks) was to start entering onto a database all the cars recorded in the Club Registers, commencing with the first (I trust) dated 1960.

The expected result was that I should be able to take any owner's name, or model, or chassis number, or registration mark, and call up the required record or list. Each record would show the car's owner at the time of each register. This all worked very well, except that the task out-ran the recession. I got as far as the 1979 register; with two more registers published since 1994, I find once again that I am less than half way through the job. To enter each register took about 40 hours, so I have to find 200 hours from somewhere, by which time, no doubt, another 5 registers will have appeared.

However, the results so far might be of interest, and I attach them for what they are worth. Do understand that the totals are cumulative, and are not (apart from 1960) the number of cars in each register.

Best Wishes,

Yours ever

A G Brend

LAGONDA INDEX CUMULATIVE ANALYSES AND SUMMARIES

	1960	'60-62	'60-68	'60-71	'60-79
	703	960	1162	1274	1430
	cars	cars	cars	cars	cars
Tricar	0	1	1	1	1
11.1	2	2	3	3	3
11.9	4	7	9	11	11
12/24	0	2	2	3	4
14/60	17	18	22	24	25
2 Litre	160	197	203	212	224
" supercharged	18	20	22	25	25
" Continental	15	17	17	17	18

16/65	1	1	1	2	2
3 Litre	52	74	85	92	99
" selector					
special	0	0	1	1	1
3½ Litre	27	31	37	38	40
16/80	73	92	100	110	118
Rapier	41	74	97	113	125
M45	99	132	144	154	168
M45R	17	24	25	25	27
M45A	0	0	0	2	3
LG45	66	104	125	131	152
LG45R	12	13	15	17	20
LG6	29	38	47	49	57
LG6R	3	5	5	5	5
4½ Litre					
unspecified	0	0	1	1	1
V12	34	56	81	93	108
V12R	6	11	15	15	17
W.O. Bentley					
2.6 Litre	0	0	1	1	1
DB 2.6 Litre	18	33	62	75	89
DB3Litre	8	11	32	42	63
DB Rapide	0	2	3	5	15
DBV12	0	1	2	2	2
DB unspecified	0	0	0	1	1
Post DB	0	0	0	0	1
Special (Wilby)	1	1	1	1	1
Unspecified	0	2	3	3	3
	703	969	1,162	1,274	1,430

Dear Ken,

Mr. Peter Garnier

Peter Garnier died in April this year. During his time as sports editor (1955-1968) and then editor (1968-1975) of Autocar I was grateful for his assistance on a number of occasions when I, as the lowly editor of our club magazine, was hunting down road tests and reports of Lagondas that had appeared in pre-war copies of The Autocar (it lost the definite article later on). My letters to him always received a courteous and helpful reply, together with his ready permission to reprint archive material in the Lagonda magazine. This material included the use of F. Gordon Crosby's atmospheric illustrations of Lagondas (or hybrid vehicles based imaginatively on the V12s and LG models) which found an

appreciative audience amongst our club members.

I was able to return Peter Garnier's courtesies by sending to him copies of our magazine which he acknowledged with appreciation. I always found it remarkable that a distinguished motoring writer and editor such as he, always found time in his working day to respond to my requests personally and promptly.

Truly a gentle man.

Yours sincerely,

Tony May

In the seventies, I edited the magazine of the Maserati Club and I endorse every word of Tony's letter. Peter responded to each and every request for permission to reprint material with kindness and speed. He even instructed the staff photographer of the time to send me originals of the pictures used in recent road test reports. In spite of his busy and high profile job he treated club magazine editors with great courtesy and I always felt that he was pleased to be able to help the clubs in this way. K.P.P.

Dear Ken,

I thought that I should address my concerns to members via the club magazine.

On the Tuesday evening of the Northern Millennium Rally, Isle Of Man, having finished dinner and retired to the bar for a quiet drink, I was approached by several younger members of the club who were clearly hinting that I purchase them further drink, and not being sure of what was their intentions, I suggested to them that if they were to go to the table outside the restaurant, they would find a number of bottles of Millennium Ale left over following distribution that very morning.

They duly collected these, and consumed them at quite a fast rate, continually trying to get me to participate in their frolics, after much persuasion I did consume some, following which I realised after they started to call me "Dad" that I had been slipped a Mickey Finn, not being content to leave it at that, they kept asking if I would leave them one of my Lagondas in my will, and

continued asking for the duration, hoping that I would agree to their demands. This was further compounded when I was introduced to a delightful young lady who they claim is due to be my Daughter In Law at the end of November.

Now being a laid back sort of chap, this came as quite a shock to the system, as I was not aware that such cheek existed within our membership, further, I have today received a letter address to "Dad" informing me that another one of the impoverished lot has popped the question, signing the letter, "Son".

I do think that other members should be aware that such members do exist, and if you are asked to participate in any form of refreshment with them, be on your guard.

Yours most sincerely

Roger Firth

Dear Ken,

We now have the Isle Of Man Rally out of the way, still some things to put to bed yet, and the withdrawal symptoms are still with me.

Please find enclosed a copy of the menu for the gala dinner, and if you are short of a filler, you may find the cartoon of some interest.

We have a Video of the event, and having just received my copy, it is extremely well done. This can be obtained from Sheila Waiting. Ballavolley Lodge. Ballaugh. Isle Of Man. IM7 SEA, the cost is £10 which includes postage, people outside the UK should add around another £2. I have written to Arnold about this, and hopefully he will advise people via the Newsletter.

With best wishes and kindest regards.

Yours sincerely

Roger Firth

A Letter to our Chairman:

Dear Clive,

I should very much like to thank all those kind people who went on the Northern Millennium Rally in the Isle of Man, for their good wishes to me on the

occasion of my going down with pneumonia and being too ill to come on the Rally.

I was feeling **so** miserable, with a roaring temperature and really fed up that Herb Schofield and I had missed the Rally - and then your ENORMOUS 'Get Well Soon' card came and cheered me up!

I gather you all had a fantastic time and the weather was kind to you!

Thank you everybody for your good wishes..... and just wait till NEXT time!

Ann Shoosmith

Dear Ken,

What a wonderful Club we have.

I was recently struck down by 'flu on the eve of my nephew's wedding in Manchester for which the Lagonda had been promised as wedding car. Not

wishing to disappoint the young couple, from my sick bed I frantically phoned round club members in the area to see if anyone could deputise for me. Not surprisingly they had all booked their following day's activity - it was, after all, Shelsley Walsh weekend. However two members offered to let me, a virtual stranger, drive their cherished cars if I felt well enough to drive up my modern from Wiltshire to Cheshire.

Come the day I was feeling somewhat better and took up Tim Gresty's very kind offer as his car is almost identical to my own. Bride and Groom delighted - mission accomplished, thanks Tim, if only every one in the world owned a Lagonda!

Yours,

Tim Wadsworth

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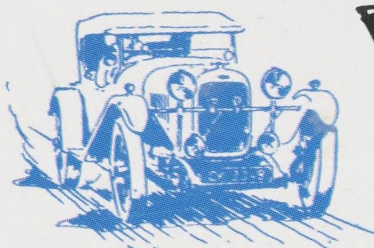
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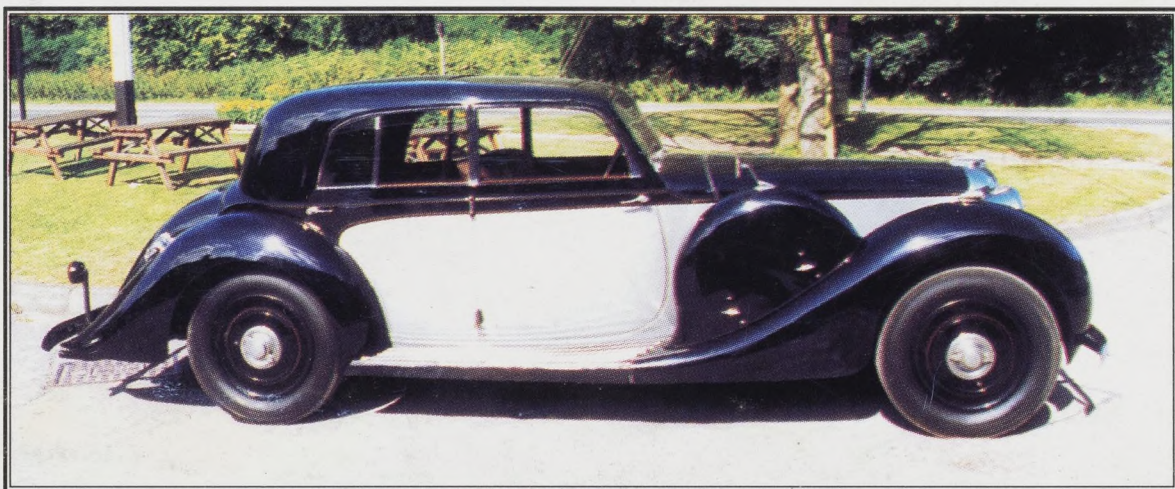
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