



**THE MAGAZINE OF THE
LAGONDA CLUB**

Number 186

Autumn 2000





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In this instance all went smoothly, but AXX 757 does have a 200 BHP engine thus ensuring that the bride and groom could make a rapid departure!

Simon Bull's Invicta has semi-retired from racing and is being used as a "Q car" for everyday use in London and long distance touring, surprising many a modern with its 230 BHP and 125 MPH top speed.

A 1904 Martini is currently being fully rebuilt. This is a fascinating project, because we are having to re-manufacture a vast number of new parts. We are tempted to wave the magic wand over the engine and see if we can double its original power, as we have with the Meadows engine, but the owner feels it might not be in keeping for the London to Brighton.

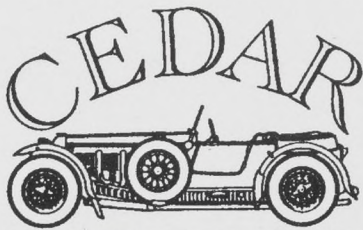
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THE LAGONDA CLUB LIST OF OFFICERS 2000/2001

e-mail: lagclub@totalise.co.uk

Web Site:

<http://www.lagonda-club.com/>

President: D. R. Hine

Vice Presidents:

A. Davey, A. W. May, H. L. Schofield

Chairman: Clive Dalton

e-mail: caminsitu@aol.com

Hon Secretary:

Colin Bugler, Wintney House, London Road,
Hartley Wintney, Hants, RG27 8RN
Tel/Fax: 01252 845451

e-mail: lag-club@totalise.co.uk

Hon Company Secretary:

Brigadier Stephen Matthews, Whitehall Farm,
Whitehall Drive, Arborfield, Reading RG2 9NE
Tel/Fax: 0118 976 1307

e-mail: calleva@btinternet.com

Hon Communications Officer:

John Stoneman, 21 Main Street, Little Thetford, Ely,
Cambs. CB6 3HA. Tel: 01353 649494
e-mail: john.stoneman@btinternet.com

Hon Competition Secretary:

Peter Whenman, White Cottage, Phoenix Green,
Hartley Wintney, Hants RG27 8RT.
Tel: 01252 842589 (between 7.30 - 8.30 pm)

Fax: 01252 648500

e-mail: peter@vintagecoachworks.co.uk

Hon Registrar & Newsletter Editor:

Arnold Davey, 86 The Walk, Potters Bar, Herts. EN6 1QF.
Tel: 01707 651302.

The Spares Service:

Alan Hancock, The Old Mill House, Horsted Keynes,
West Suffolk, RH17 7AZ
Tel/Fax: 01825 791526

Hon Editor:

Ken Painter, Church Farm Cottage, The Street,
Rickingham, Diss, IP22 1EQ.
Tel/Fax: 01379 890653

e-mail: kenpainter@expertise333.freemove.co.uk

Other Committee Members:

John Batt, Reynard House, 49 Amptill Road, Maulden,
Beds MK45 2DH Tel/Fax: 01525 402935

John Breen, 12 Blackmore, Letchworth, Herts, SG6 2SY.
Tel/Fax: 01462 677129

e-mail: john@breenj.fsnet.co.uk

Kevin Lloyd-Bisley, St. Margarets Cottage,
Woodlands Lane, Windlesham, Surrey, GU20 6AS.
Tel: 01276 452723

e-mail: kevin@excel5.freemove.co.uk



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FRONT COVER

Arnold Davey is presented with a silver salver in recognition of his 40 years' service on the Committee. *See the Editorial for further details.*

Technical Advice:

Peter Whenman, address, col 1

Alan Brown, Knarr Mill, Oldham Road, Delph,
Nr Oldham, Lancs, OL3 5RQ. Tel. 01457 820267.

Kevin Lloyd-Bisley, (DB Models), address, col 1.

Colin Mallett. Tel: 01728 688696.

Paul Nickalls (Rapiers)

Tel: 01497 820818 Fax: 01497 821818

USA Representative:

Rudy Wood-Muller, P.O. Box 403, 51 Bill Hill Road,
Old Lyme, CT 06371, USA

Tel: 001 860 434 1996

e-mail: lagondausa@aol.com

Netherlands and Belgium Representative:

J. J. Dolleman, Prenssekade 1 2312 DA Lieden,
The Netherlands

Tel: (+31) 715 123918 Fax: (+31) 715 145922

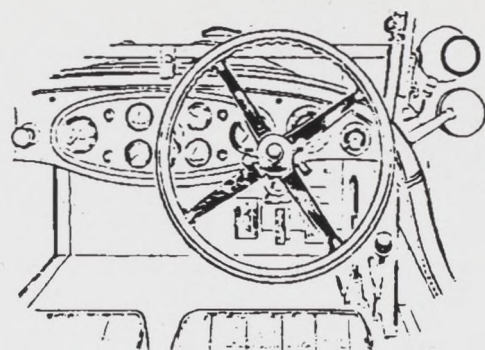
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From the Driving Seat

by Ken Painter and David Hine



DUE TO CIRCUMSTANCES beyond our control, it is not possible to include the usual report on the Annual General Meeting in this issue, so it will appear in the Winter edition. As you will already have seen from the cover picture, Arnold Davey was presented with a silver salver and made an Honorary Life Member of the Club in recognition of his forty years of service on the Committee - now the Board of Directors. We can not allow this very important moment to pass without full and prompt coverage in the magazine, so, just for a change, this editorial is given over to the address our President, David Hine, made at the Annual General Meeting.

"Although last year represented 100 years of Lagonda, this year saw the 40th anniversary of Arnold Davey's appointment to the Committee and he has served continuously ever since.

Arnold joined the Club in 1957, when he owned the Rapier BLT 599, which is parked outside the room and can be seen through the window. He now owns the M45 DHC, BJP 317, which was formerly owned by Andre Kenny. He took on the production of the Register of Members about 30 years ago, when it was all laboriously hand typed and all the cross-referencing of registration numbers etc. had to be done manually, a truly monumental task. He endeavoured to unravel the labyrinthine complexity of engine numbers and chassis numbers, as he appreciated their significance to the provenance of our cars long before we members did.

As if this wasn't enough, at around the same time, he took over the production of the newsletter, a unique and very special contribution to our Club and quite different from the rather sterile efforts of other one-make car clubs. He produced the early editions under the nom-de-plume "Flashbulb" and then, as now, it displayed very competent journalistic talent for keeping people up to speed on affairs Lagonda - both the cars and the people - all liberally sprinkled with his views on the changing world as he sees it and his succinct commentary upon human frailty! Jim Whyman, who was Chairman of the FBHVC and who received a complementary copy, actually joined the Club when he resigned his position, so that he could continue to enjoy it!

Arnold began and continues to this day, to amass a vast amount of information on our cars, their history and the histories of the characters involved in their development and production, much at his own expense. This culminated in the production of the definitive book on the marque Lagonda, a fantastic feat and so very readable. To take two examples: first, his comments on the steering of the 11 h.p. cars: "The steering was revised to incorporate a proper worm-and-sector steering box. This was a great improvement. No longer could an unexpected sneeze spell disaster." Secondly: his account of Lagonda's win at Le Mans in 1935. This caused me pain - because I was reading it in the loo and realised that I had been

there far too long!

Arnold's lecture to the W.O.Bentley Society was a milestone. His "Images" book last year and his many articles testify to his knowledge and enthusiasm. In all of this he is ably assisted by his wife Wendy, who types his manuscripts and supports his unique enthusiasm.

Fortunately the Lagonda Club suffers from few traumas and upheavals, so when they do occur, they seem all the more serious. Arnold's experience over forty years and his wise and thoughtful counsel has been a tremendous support to the other officers and Chairmen, as I can testify personally from my time in post.

Add to all of this, the many letters he writes to members in answer to their queries about their cars. I write at least every year and I know that many of you do too.

Arnold is, by nature, undemonstrative, but his actions speak volumes. He is the lynchpin of our Club and the unsung hero of our time. Arnold, as a token of the esteem held for you by The Lagonda Club, we are delighted to grant you lifetime membership and to make this presentation to Wendy and to you."

Arnold was then presented with an engraved salver and Wendy was presented with a bouquet of flowers.

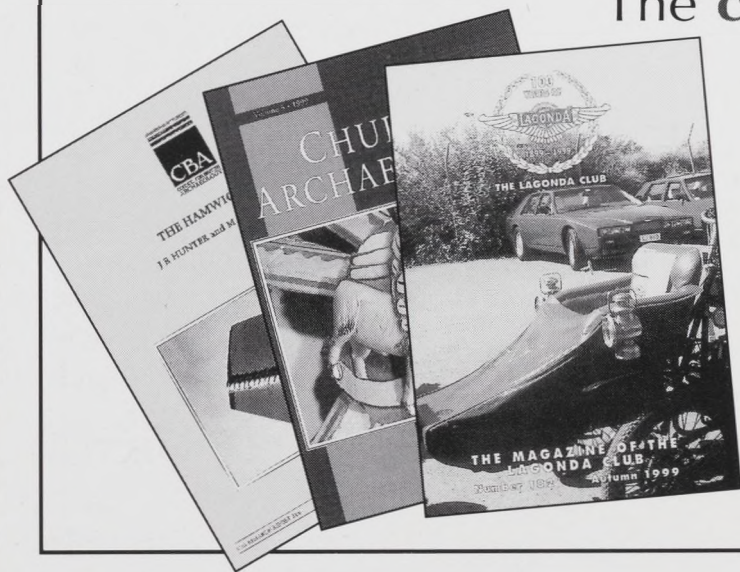
In his response to the President, Arnold expressed his surprise and gratitude to the Club, he wryly remarked that he had so much Lagonda material and memorabilia, he could really do with a larger house! Writing the book was great fun and the "Old Lags" a great fund of knowledge. One had lost several fingers in an accident in the wood-working shop and related how the Managing Director had helped him sue the company at a time when there was no workers' compensation scheme.

He recounted how, when Berndt Holthausen was writing his German book, he used a great deal of the information already published in "Lagonda, a History of the Marque". In that book he (Arnold), had said of Bill Oates who had crashed his Lagonda on a rally (in 1920) that he had "over-fortified himself against the cold". Berndt had, of course, written his book in German, but when this phrase was re-translated into English it read: "having turned up the heater too high"!

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V8 Lagonda Millennium Display

Roger Ivett brings us right up to date

IT WAS COLD, it was overcast, it was Silverstone 24th June, 2000. But twenty six V8 Lagondas turned out for the display and parade at the AMOC's St John Horsfall race meeting (in 1998 we had thirty five attend!), and there were some new faces.

The oldest car present was that of Peter Biggs, the 1969 prototype MP/230/1, which was once David Brown's personal transport. There were three of the seven Series 1 cars produced between 1974 and 1976. A belt on David Baber's engine failed just as he arrived, but this was attended to on the spot by Factory engineers, who were present for the racing.

As one might expect, Series 2 cars were in the majority and numbered seventeen. The earliest being Peter Brooks' 1980 Brussels Show car, and the latest T. Hamdani's Chassis 13461 with massive BBS alloy wheels. G. Bloemendal brought from Holland, one of two V8 Lagondas he owns, in its own space-age colour co-ordinated transporter (he builds them), and Rudolf Ernst arrived from Hamburg with a fine Tickford saloon, which has replacement analogue instrumentation.

Another car, that of Gordon Procter, sported an attractive brand new analogue dashboard in white, courtesy of

Excalibur Engineering. I personally prefer the original dashboard(s) (there is after all a choice of three!), which are part of the cars' novelty, but I can understand why they might be changed. It can be very frustrating if the instruments don't work!

Only two of the Series 3 cars attended. A well known gold-plated example belonging to David Brown's namesake, and that of the Patrick Motor Museum, on a rare outing, with less than 2,000 miles on the clock. I had the pleasure of bringing one of the restyled Series 4 cars, which was loaned to me for the event, while Arnold Davey had to rough it in my Series 2. Two other Series 4 cars took part.

It was great to see so many of these relatively rare cars together. They have a small but dedicated following, and deservedly generated a considerable amount of interest. Some owners were members of the AMOC, some of the Lagonda Club, but many were neither. A full list of those who participated is given below. I hope to contribute some more items on these cars in the future, editor willing.

Have a look at my 'Lagondanet' website: (<http://freespace.virgin.net/roger.ivett/index.htm>).

CHASSIS NO.	REGISTRATION	OWNER	COUNTRY
SERIES 1			
MP/230/1	JPP 5G	PJ BIGGS	UK
L/12001/RCAC	OVS 49M	KHA SMITH	UK
L/12003/RCAC	JPM 601N	S DRAPER	UK
L/12004/RCAC	1 BLU	DS BABER	UK



Sorry, can't identify this one.



A. J. Gray's Series 2.

CHASSIS NO.	REGISTRATION	OWNER	COUNTRY
SERIES 2			
LOOR 13019	KFX 428V	PA BROOKS	UK
LOOR 13021	AFX 512A	RJ WATTS	UK
LOOR 13025	LAG 10F	GA JUDD	UK
LOOR 13028	KSK 959	GI GRANT	UK
LOOR 13046	IIL 1513	AJ GRAY	UK
LOOR 13049	GYV 999W	R IVETT	UK
LOOL 13080	GS-91-NN	G BLOEMENDAL	HOLLAND
LOOR 13100	3620 JH	JD HAZZARD	UK
LOOR 13126	MYV 760X	BW THISTLETHWAITE	UK
LOOL 13150	923 DVN	AM HILDEBRAND	UK
LOOR 13196	B774 WNG	JR BROCKLEHURST	UK
LOER 13360	A92 SYV	GE MARSH	UK
LOOR 13298	ACZ 9058	G MATHER	UK
LOSR 13406	LAY 172	SR LAY	UK
LOOL 13423	HH-LG 230	R ERNST	GERMANY
LOOR 13436	C490 SMO	GH PROCTER	UK
LOOR 13461	C191 BYW	T HAMDANI	UK
SERIES 3			
LOHR 13525	DB 4000	MD BROWN	UK
LOOR 13538	JAP 456	PATRICK MOTOR MUSEUM	UK
SERIES 4			
LOKR 13579	F701 PVS	DLJ PRICE	UK
LOKR 13585	WLM 297	W PHELPS	UK
LOOR 13642	2 DHL	RI DUDDING	UK





T Hamdani's Series 2.



G. Bloemendal's Series 2 in his fantastic transporter – your Editor wants one!

An Open Letter to David Hine

Dear David,

Many thanks for your kind remarks in your fascinating article about the V12 in the last issue (No 185) of the magazine. Putting in the new camshafts did not seem too difficult, but like most V12 tasks it needed a great deal of work, time and care. (plus forty $\frac{3}{64}$ " split pins, I joke not).

YYY 2, my V12 DHC, with the benefit from new cams, is indeed now thrusting forward like an eager young starlet, which, at the age of 62, may seem a little improper and she was very keen to accept an invitation to the Cartier Style et Luxe concours at Goodwood, as being rather like an invitation to the Cannes Film Festival. Unfortunately an extreme attack of nervous flatulence on starting up led to a gigantic backfire, cracking her nearside inlet manifold and even damaging her hot spot! But she was determined to go and galloped off to Goodwood. Once there, she flaunted herself on the lawns of Goodwood House throughout the Festival of Speed, which, I regret to say, she thought was the celebration of a personal additive, connected with getting leadless!

She was in the concours class for "Grandes Routiers", presumably cars good to cross France in, but despite being topless for most of the weekend and showing off her opulent upholstery, she lost the prize, to her surprise (not mine), to a Type 57 Bugatti convertible. She thought this was a car which would be good for two small, deaf Frenchmen to cross France in, probably to Molsheim for repairs and to complain about the brakes.

Back home afterwards she had an inlet manifold and hot spot transplant. The replacement organs were supplied

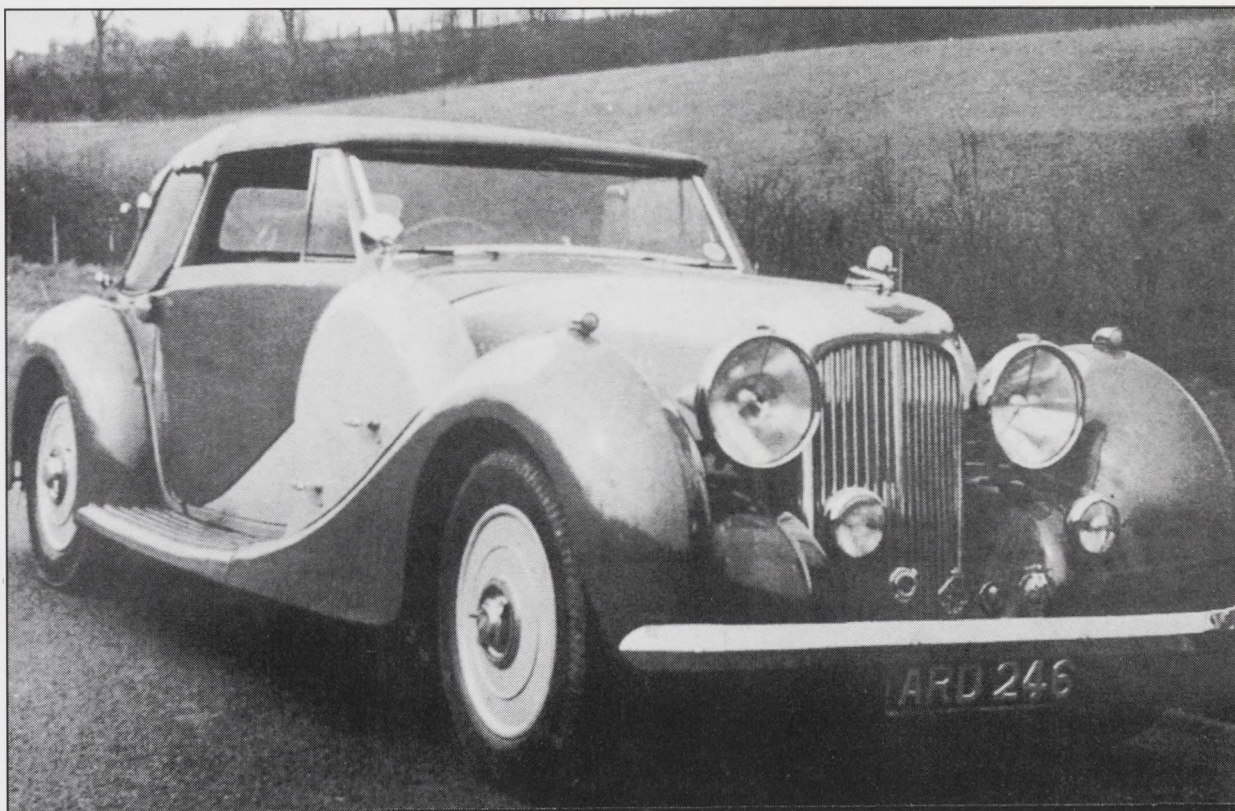
miraculously by Peter Whenman, from his organ bank, left over from a four-carburettor conversion. I think the fractured manifold was originally caused, after earlier over-tightening of the hot spot manifold, by my over-weakening the mixture, just prior to fitting the new cams. The moral is, don't do this, the new cams demand a good rich mixture.

Fitting the new organs in situ was the most fiddly, difficult job I can remember. If anyone has to do it, which with any luck they won't, experience (all bad) taught me that you must first fit and bolt up the aluminium inlet manifold and only then fit the cast iron hot spot manifold.

Your article, David, was brilliant and I agree with your analysis of the V12's power deficiency. If I compare the output of the contemporaneously designed 2½ litre Riley engine in my Healey, the V12's output from 4½ litres should be about 180bhp, roughly what your new cams have now achieved in Alistair Barker's engine.

I also agree that there appears to have been a cockup in the drawing office - the sort of thing that happens all too regularly in offices - as the curved cam followers do not match the standard cams. Perhaps those who do not want to fit new cams could get flat topped cam followers made. These would certainly produce some of the benefits of the new cams. They should also help to cure the problem of the groove caused by the standard cam in the middle of the cam follower, a groove which, I believe, can only be due to percussion wear caused by valve bounce resulting from the sudden valve opening, as the valve smites its follower. Your photographs

Peter of Dalkeith



1938 LAGONDA V12 convertible, by James Young, with stunning Art Deco bodywork; the wings being scalloped with tear-drop shapes picked out in a separate colour. This is an important proto-type, illustrated in several books. Chassis: E3046. It has been off the road since about 1962, and will require almost complete restoration. The engine has had a TOTAL rebuild, no expense spared, costing some £10,000. It has new front wings, new radiator, new dash, and much else. It is complete, with its original number plates.

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"She flaunted herself all day"



... but lost the prize to a type 57 Bugatti.

vividly illustrate the differences between the two cam designs, even if they do reveal the use of a self locking nut in the manifold gallery!

One problem the new cams have not solved, is the virtual absence of torque at low revs, but there is certainly some improvement in this. One should reflect that engineers have still not sorted this problem in many short stroke engines, sixty years later.

I was interested in your comments about lubrication and the con rods sticking when cold. They were, incidentally, made of duralumin, not the low grade aluminium Lagonda allegedly used (see photo of my inlet manifold!). My original handbook shows a Smiths bypass oil filter at the back of the vee of the engine, but the errata sheet says it is no longer fitted. Removing this was *prima facie* an extraordinary decision and must have been responsible for much unnecessary wear and the potentially disastrous collection of sludge in the oil-ways, for which these engines are notorious. Constant oil changing, as recommended by Lagonda could not have avoided this problem in

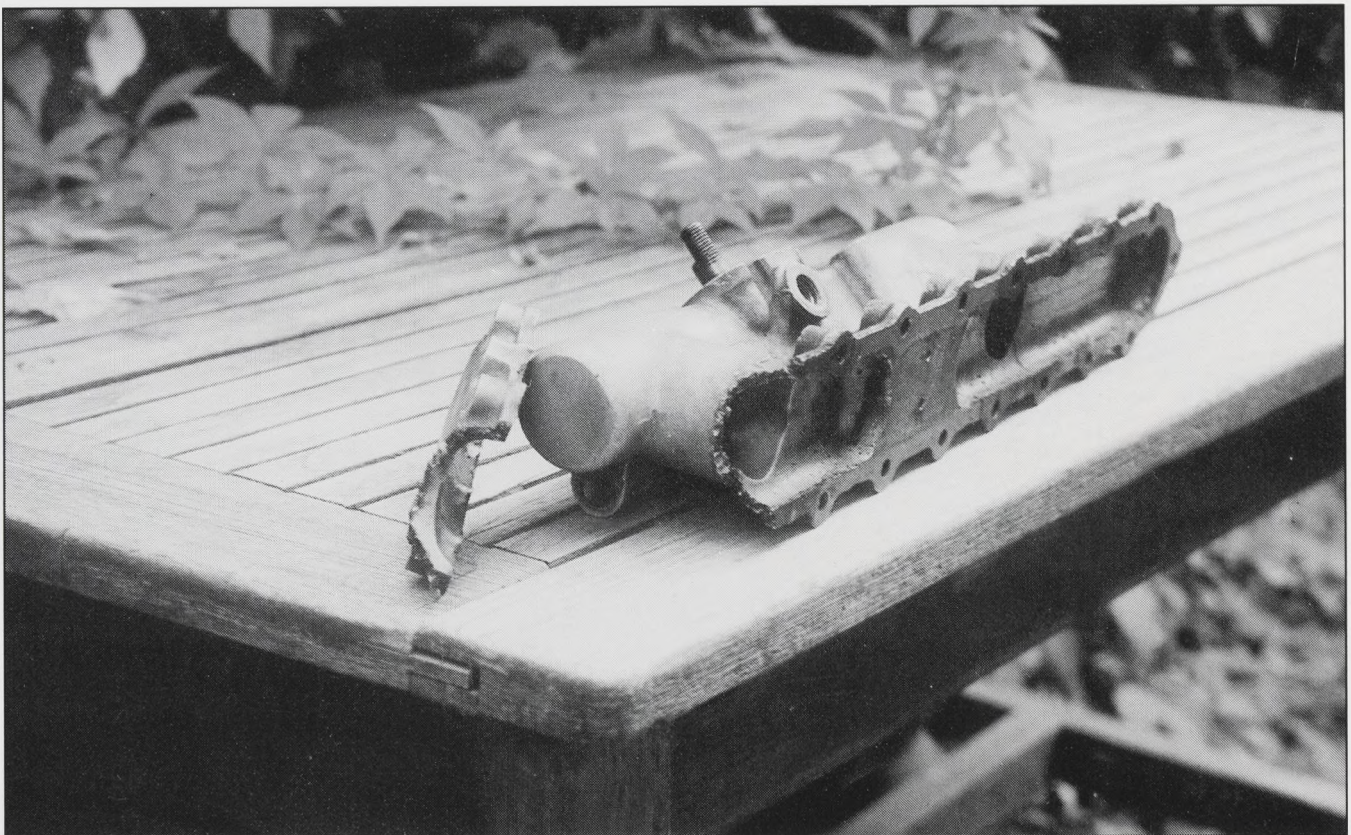
the absence of filtration and any V12 user who has not fitted the modification allowing a modern disposable filter to be used in place of the original strainers is strongly advised to do so.

Another second thought on the design of the lubrication system was the joining together of the high and low pressure systems, which was done early in, or before, production, so that there was no purpose in the duplication of the systems.

David, I congratulate you most strongly on your magnificent initiative in getting the new camshafts designed and manufactured. They are so superbly accurate that they just drop into place instead of the standard cams. The slotted cogs solve a design defect which prevented accurate valve timing if there was any stretch in the chain. What a pity that the new cams weren't in the Le Mans cars, so that they could have won in 1939. Would have cheered old W.O. up no end, though the war was shortly to ensure that as a new supercar the V12 Lagonda had had its little day.

Yours sincerely

Michael Valentine



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"You're not just a Number with us"

The Ted Townsley Memorial Driving Tests, Elvington, July 1st 2000

Fun and frolics in Yorkshire, reported by Herb Schofield

THIS EVENT, FORMALLY KNOWN as the Northern gymkhana, has been re-named in memory of Ted Townsley. Ted, as you know, was a very active and supportive member of the Club in the North of England. It is very sad therefore to report that the meeting this year was poorly supported, which was a great pity, especially in view of the fact that Elvington is now privately owned. As a consequence of this, the fees have shot up and unless we get better support next year, we will have to reconsider the future of this type of event, which would be a pity, because it is FUN.

The actual tests were well organised by Alan Brown, who turns up every year with his old dog (now missing one ear, a number of teeth and a tail; answers to the name of "Lucky"). He lays on a selection of 'easy on the car' driving tests for us.

Members arrived early to take advantage of the food and drink available in the Naafi-style canteen. The museum, by the way, is well worth a visit. Ted was an active supporter of the museum and was instrumental, together with Eleanor, in us originally receiving permission to hold our driving tests there.

At 3.00 pm a visiting Spitfire made three passes and a victory roll over the airfield, not for our benefit I hasten to

add, but in honour of a gathering of World War II fighter veterans.

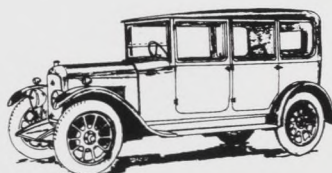
I won't go into great detail regarding the tests, except to say that Hoggard and Hall in 3 litre and LG45R respectively were fast and smooth and Thring in Edwardian Talbot was very neat. The tests were marshalled by Brown, the writer and Ann Shoosmith, who had just recovered from pneumonia and now thought it a good idea to stand for a couple of hours on a chilly airfield!

It was good to see that one or two old friends of Ted had turned up; Ken Winder, the Davenports and the Riders, en-route to a fighter pilots' reunion meeting in Bedfordshire. We were especially pleased to welcome Peter Weir, who had come down all the way from Oban in Scotland, together with son and Ted's old original 4½ special, which we hadn't seen for thirty years.

I can only hope that next year more of our members will make more of an effort to attend, otherwise we will be in danger of losing this very enjoyable traditional Club meeting.

Results

1st	John Thring	Edwardian Talbot
2nd	Don Hoggard	3 litre Lagonda
3rd	Nigel Hall	LG45R





Part of the splendid line-up of Lagondas at the Coys' weekend.



... and a few more!

A Weekend at Coy's Silverstone, July 2000

David Blackburn reports:

AS USUAL, HAVING DISCOVERED that I had not long to get the Lagonda 'sorted' to make the trip to Silverstone for the Coys' Weekend, I had to burn some midnight oil and some rubber on the M62 between Wilsden and Oldham, after one of the new mudguard stays decided to have metal fatigue on the way to Elvington for the driving tests. The nearside wing promptly disappeared under the car. Fortunately it caught under the sump and scraped along the road, before Julia managed to bring the car to a halt. In the confusion and noise she couldn't remember where the brake pedal had gone!. Alan Brown took the wing to Jack Buckley, who very kindly re-shaped it to its original profile and strengthened the original stays. After all the racing backwards and forwards - the car passed its MOT on Thursday - Friday we were to set off for Silverstone.

Friday morning dawned, very hot and sunny. Julia and I loaded the Lagonda with camping equipment and bags and managed to squeeze in one very excited nephew, David. Having checked the usual - tickets, passes and plastic cards - we eventually left West Yorkshire in glorious weather. The journey south was uneventful, nephew David had fallen asleep, he had apparently not slept the few nights before in the excitement of travelling in a vintage car.

We found our designated camping area, pitched our tent, unloaded the Lagonda, then headed off to the circuit to find the marquee and offered our shop keeping services for the following two days.

Saturday morning was rather cool and damp. Fortified with a rather good cooked breakfast in the campsite golf clubhouse, the car packed with shorts and tee shirts, having been assured that the weather was to improve, to be as hot

as, if not hotter than Friday, we set off to the circuit. The day got progressively colder and after piling on layers of clothing we did our stint on the stall. The day was getting so chilly, we did a roaring trade selling all the Lagonda fleeces. We managed to convince David Hine to buy one of the last fleeces, then he was able to hand back his borrowed pullover to Nick. David had left home in sunshine, only to find the further south he went, the colder the weather. The 'shop' closed about 5 p.m., all the stock being stored overnight in the boot of Peter Biggs' V8 saloon!

Sunday was another cool and damp day and after looking at various exhibits and watching some racing, we went back to the marquee for another 'shop' stint. The afternoon seemed to be spent chatting to various Club members who had wandered in to assist on the stall and to keep warm. They were a big help in providing a back-up to those awkward questions we couldn't answer!

Most people headed home after the last race, including nephew David, who left with his Mum and Dad, we, being gluttons for punishment, were camping another night.

We woke on Monday to find it was rather wet and windy, however, we managed to pack the dry bits into the back seats under the tonneau cover. The extremely wet tent was stuffed into the boot. Not looking forward to a wet journey, we fortified ourselves with yet another good cooked breakfast. As luck would have it, the weather lifted and we had a dry, but cold, run home.

Thanks to Alan Brown and Jack Buckley for their help in getting the car back on the road and to John and Susie Batt for organising the tickets and car passes.



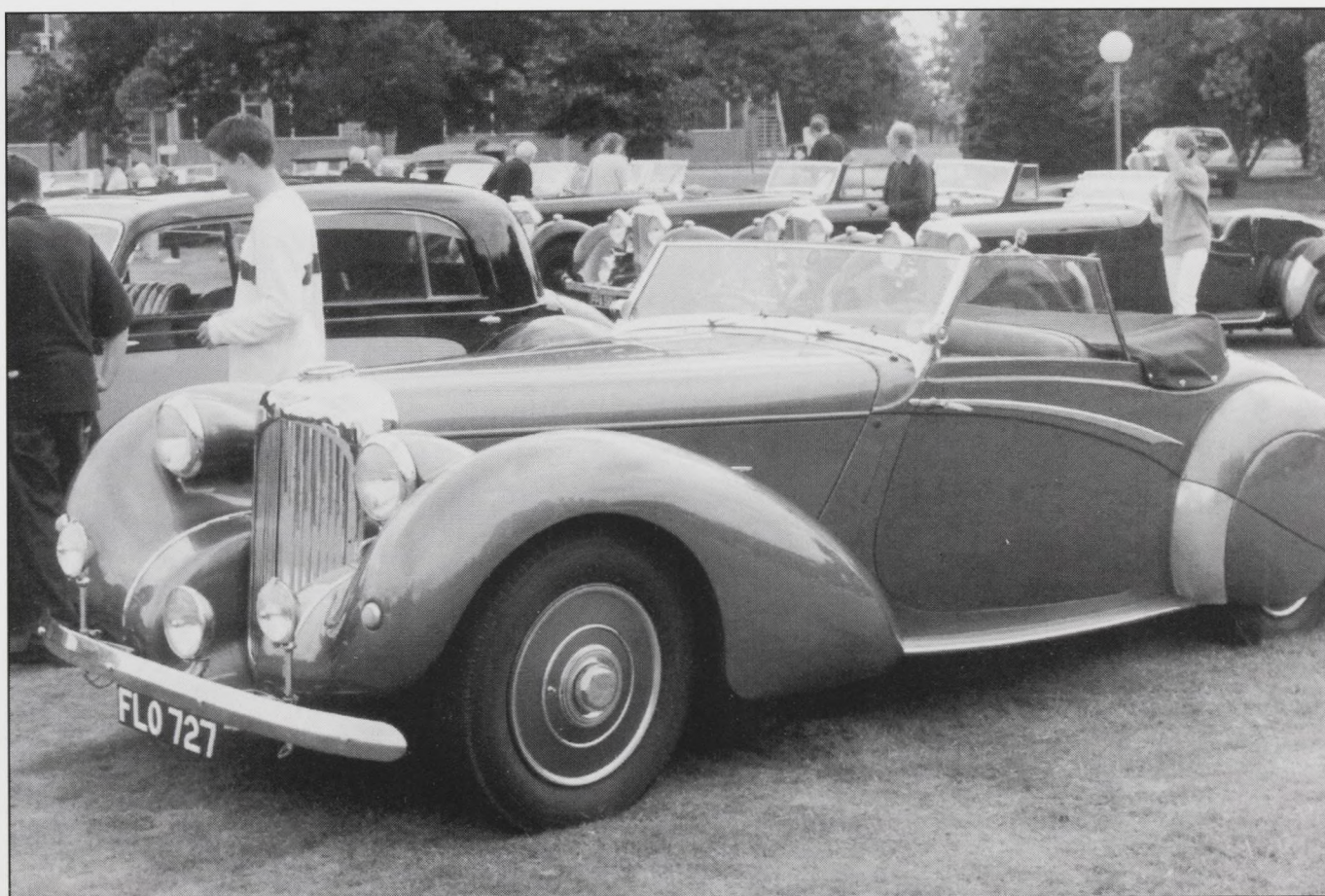
Crowding in the Marquee to keep warm.



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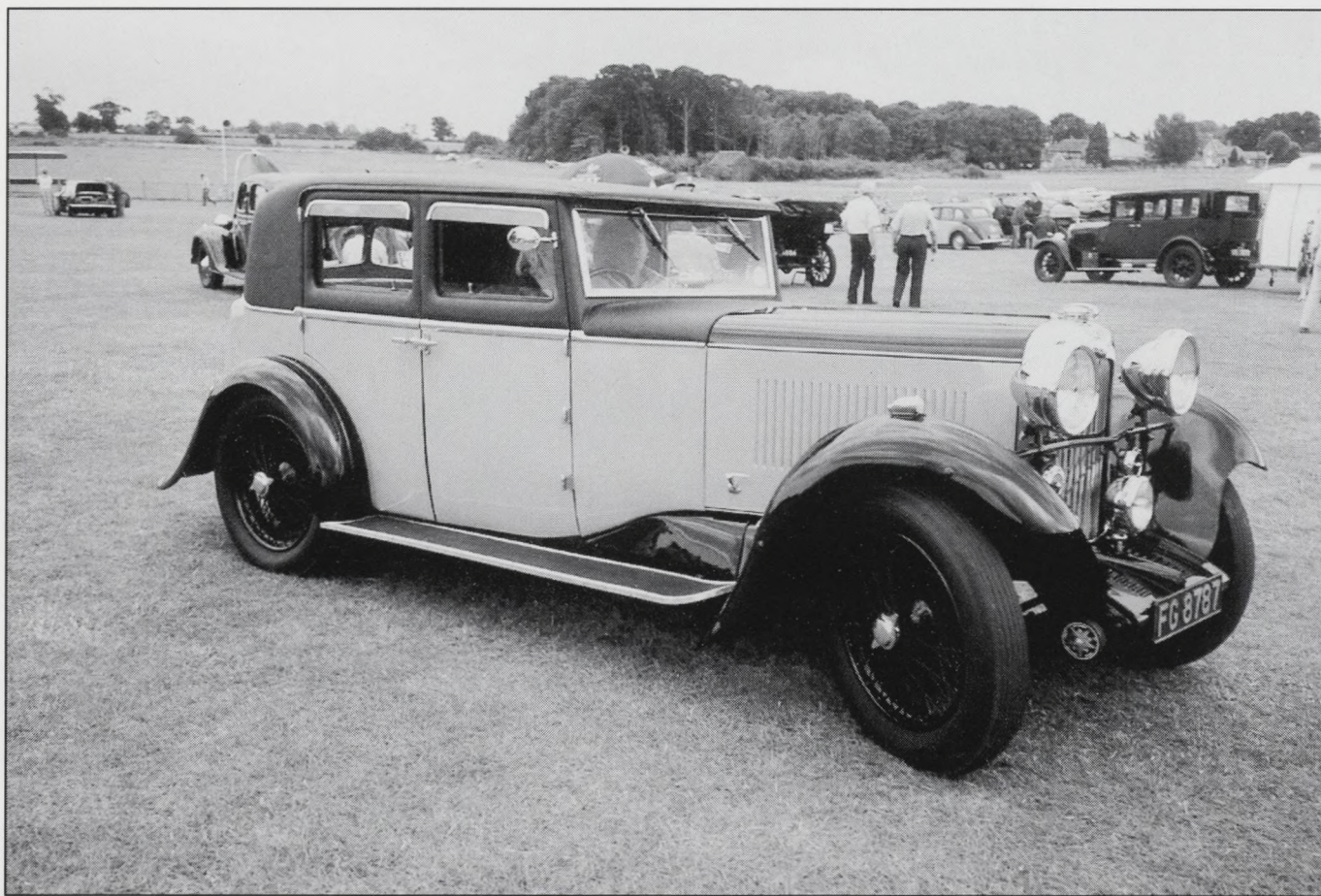
The Midlands section enjoy the use of the Mac. Marquee at Shelsley Walsh.



A 'taster' for the next edition. Maurice Leo's lovely V12 at the AGM. The modern lights were fitted by Davies Motors just after the war.



The Chairman's party at lunch, Shuttleworth VSCC Meeting. Clive Dalton, Shirley Dalton, Francis Gabriel, Richard Gabriel, Susie Batt.



Betty and Garry Stone, driving their immaculate, newly acquired, 16/80 Sports Saloon.

Simple Improvements to the V12 Engine and Chassis

Michael Valentine shows how to make the best even better

MY LETTER TO DAVID HINE made me think that others might be interested in various simple improvements I have made to my V12 over thirty-odd years, plus some other tips. The feature all these improvements have in common is that they are reversible - keeping any bits that have been removed means that anyone wanting to change the car back to how it came out of the factory could do so.

Engine

1. Cross the hoses at the rear of the vee, so that the right-angle kink in the original rubber hose, which must have reduced the throughput of water, is avoided.
2. Fit an electric fan between the radiator grilles and the radiator. This, being thermostatically controlled, comes on only when water is nearing Staines Boiling Point (80 on the dial), which is likely to happen in traffic queues. This avoids overheating in the engine and hypertension in the driver.
3. Fit a dipstick (Ford Capri one fits) instead of the unreliable sump float, thereby obtaining accurate information about the oil level. Unfortunately, you can only do this with the sump off (best of luck).
4. Fit the new camshafts,
5. Fit the modified oil filter casting, which enables proper filtration of the oil, using disposable filters.
6. Take the rev counter cable up the outside of the nearside of the engine and round the back of it, instead of along the inside of the vee. This gets rid of sharp corners, which lead to early breakages.

Brakes and Wheels

1. Always balance wheels most

carefully when new tyres are fitted. North Hants Tyres, where I bought my latest set of Michelins, have a machine big enough to take the V12's wheels, but most tyre places do not, so I have a static ballancer, which works quite well on the spirit level principle. As a purist, one should put round lead weights into the special containers for them on the wheels, but stick-on weights are much simpler and better.

2. Balance the brake drums, if they are out of balance they greatly affect the wheel balance. Mine were all wildly out and had clearly not been balanced when new. Fix the weights on with self-tapping screws, as the heat melts the adhesive on stick-on weights.

3. Invent a modification to make the brakes work better. A recent reline confirmed that only the top half of each shoe contacts the drum, because of Lockheed's poor design. I think an extra slave cylinder for the bottom pivot of the shoe is needed.

4. Be careful what tyres you fit, which you need to do quite often, as they only last about 8,000 miles, whatever the make. I have used Dunlop, Firestone, Coker and Michelin and, of these, prefer the Michelins, though do note that they need to be pumped up to 34/35 psi. Dunlops, I have found in the past to be not usually round and a seriously long way out of balance.

Chassis

1. If transmission vibration is a problem, get the propeller shaft balanced, as Lagonda did not realise that an engine rotating at 5,500 rpm would show up imbalance much more than a slower revving engine and never balanced them. Mine has balance

weights in profusion down one side. Imbalance in the short shaft between clutch and gearbox can only be cured by careful alignment of engine and gearbox, plus trial and error addition or subtraction of washers from the bolts on the flexible couplings. These should always be replaced exactly as they came off, if the shaft is removed for any reason.

2. Take off the rear jacks from the automatic system. They add three quarters of a stone to the unsprung weight and should not be used, as age has made them dangerous; they can burst (my front jacks did - I don't need to say I was not under the car). A repair kit is obtainable if anyone wants to restore them to action.

3. Fit telescopic shock absorbers to the front. Davies Motors had a standard modification to fit these and most V12s already have them. The top bracket can loosen and cause an infuriating squeak.

4. Fit stronger shock absorbers at the

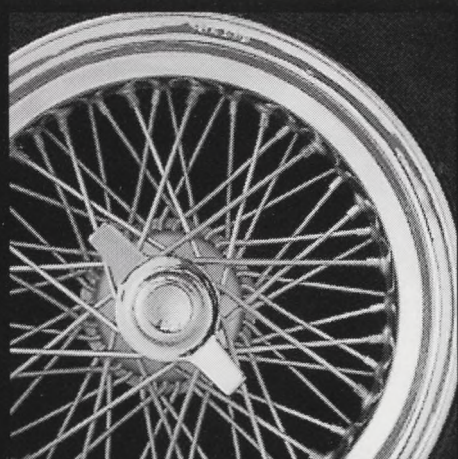
rear. The Vintage and Classic Shock Absorber Company modified two Morris Commercial shock absorbers to fit (sadly, non adjustable) and the stiffening up of the rear suspension has greatly improved handling.

5. Replace the central lubrication system by installing grease nipples. The idea of pumping unfiltered sump oil through tiny pipes to bearings which would start leaking as soon as any wear developed was just silly. Complaints about oil leaks are greatly diminished by this change and starved bearings get welcome lubrication.

6. Fit a stainless steel exhaust system and forget it. This obviates the kind of embarrassment I had in 1991 on a rally, when I had to look for an "auspuff" in Augsburg, eventually finding that an Audi auspuff fitted. London Stainless Steel Exhaust Centre fitted the new system.



The Midlands Section meet at Shelsley Walsh, 12th August 2000 with a guest Alvis in attendance.



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Anglesey To Angoulême

Charles & Emma Hobbins frolic in France

WHAT A DISAPPOINTMENT. Loire Valley June 2000 was off. But then the phone rang. How about Angoulême and the 'Race round the Ramparts'? John and Susie Batt, and Jeff and Jill Ody were to meet us at Putanges Pont Ecrepin on 13th Sept. for the first night in France. An even better treat to look forward to.

As the departure date drew close, the petrol crisis was at its worst, so we set off for Portsmouth in the 16/80 with trepidation and an extra seven galls of petrol in cans. We could only find one garage open on the way, to supply £15 of LRP; better than nothing.

Jeff's policy of booking hotels in small river towns really worked. Our room was beautiful; one window overlooked the market square and the other the river. After 'le petit déjeuner' we met Carmen and Kip Waistell with their sturdy 3 litre, which was entered in the 'Vintage Sport' event. The four cars headed south on 'yellow' roads.

Good progress, a stop for espresso and shopping, but then the road was blocked! It was a herd of cows. John, at that moment in the lead with Susie navigating, got the worst of it as his rear nearside wing was covered. We found an idyllic riverside picnic spot in the centre of an ancient village, and while we all got ratted, the locals admired the cars. As we enjoyed the real flavour of vintage motoring 'en route' to Angoulême, we were amazed at the number of French people who stood at the roadside cheering and clapping.

Angoulême was hot chaos. We struggled through the roar of high performance racing engines and Castrol R vapour to get our rally plaques and maps before collapsing at a roadside café for 'bière pression' and curried mussels.

Fig. (1) shows an old Renault seen in Angoulême with an endearing patina. Then a few words with Nick Brimblecome of the 'Grand Touring Club' who had organised our rally entries, before a swim at our beautiful out-of-town hotel. The Ferrari with racing 'pneus' parked outside belonged to the proprietor. "Are you racing tomorrow?" we asked. "Non, seulement pour le shopping, le pain et les oeufs!"

After four days of intensive driving we decided to miss the first part of the rally and joined shortly before the first stop, where we drank an inappropriate amount of freely provided Cognac and tonic. The rally went at a rip-roaring pace with large crowds gathered at the corners where we were most likely to spin off. Minor-road surfaces were very rough but I was saved by the anti-tramp brackets fitted last year. We arrived early for lunch at a large aerodrome on the outskirts of the town of Cognac. Pilots from the base performed a very impressive aerobatic display and they proudly joined us for lunch. Sweet and smoky Monbazillac wine was served with pâté de foie gras, then rich red Burgundy with stuffed pigeon breast, cheese and chocolate mousse. Marvellous!

Decidedly mouse-buttocked, the reluctant John Batt was dragged to his super-charged 2litre, only to find the police waiting for him. But this was not to be a spell in clink but a high speed police escort to make sure that heroes from overseas should reach the Concours d'Etat unhindered, for the entertainment of the citizens of Angoulême and to the greater glory of France.

However, John knew his chances at the Concours were slim as the other



The patinated Renault in Angoulême.



Charles, Susie Batt and Gill Ody enjoying the Rally "Cognac" stop.

entrants included Nigel Irving's immaculate Vauxhall Hurlingham, two Alfa Romeo Zagatos and a few Bugattis.

The scrutineers asked John a few questions: -

"How long have you owned this car?"

John: - "37 years"

"What is this mess on the rear wing?"

John:- "C'est la merde de vache, vive La France!"

"Ah bon"

The rest of us went back to the hotel for a swim and a power-nap before yet another round of free booze and grub in the evening provided by the organisers.

The evening buffet was held in the Angoulême Institute of Animation. It was an absolute bun-fight, very tightly packed with people and, so we thought, not enough to eat or drink. But as the numbers thinned out, vast tables of oysters, wine and delicious canapés were revealed, largely untouched. Trays of hot sausages arrived with exquisite miniature patisserie. We stayed on as Susie Batt had been given a secret nod by Nick Brimblecome to STAY. Prize giving finally started – exaltation in the Lagonda party as John was announced the winner of the Concourse d'Etat. "It was the lucky French cow shit", he said as he went to collect his vast Limoge china cup and his own height in Cognac bottles stacked sideways. The last thing I remember was kissing Nick Brimblecome goodnight.

The 'Circuit des Remparts' events started on the Sunday morning. Kip achieved his goal in the Vintage event. 10

laps without having to do a three point turn on the hairpin bends. (see photo) Of course road racing in France is illegal, as we all know. And so the police had installed a radar speed trap. But although the Ferraris and Maclarens do 215 kph down the high street they are unlikely to be caught as the speed trap has been very sensibly placed on the tightest hairpin bend. It was hard to tell who won what, but it was the atmosphere of classic and vintage racing round the streets that made it worthwhile. 'Monte Carlo sans la mer'.

"All I want now is an omelette and chips." said John.

And so we set off, riding on the bump stops, laden with Cognac and Loire whites. There were no omelette and chips till we got back to Caen. From then on it was all downhill:- rain, sleeping on the floor of the ferry, and more rain. Until of course we go back to what has got to be one of the best vintage car events in Europe:- Angoulême, Circuit des Remparts. Make a note! It is planned to assemble a Lagonda party to repeat the trip to Angoulême in 2002, again in conjunction with our friends at GTC.

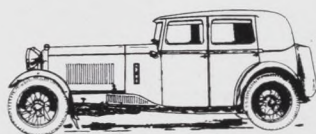
And gentlemen in England, then a-bed

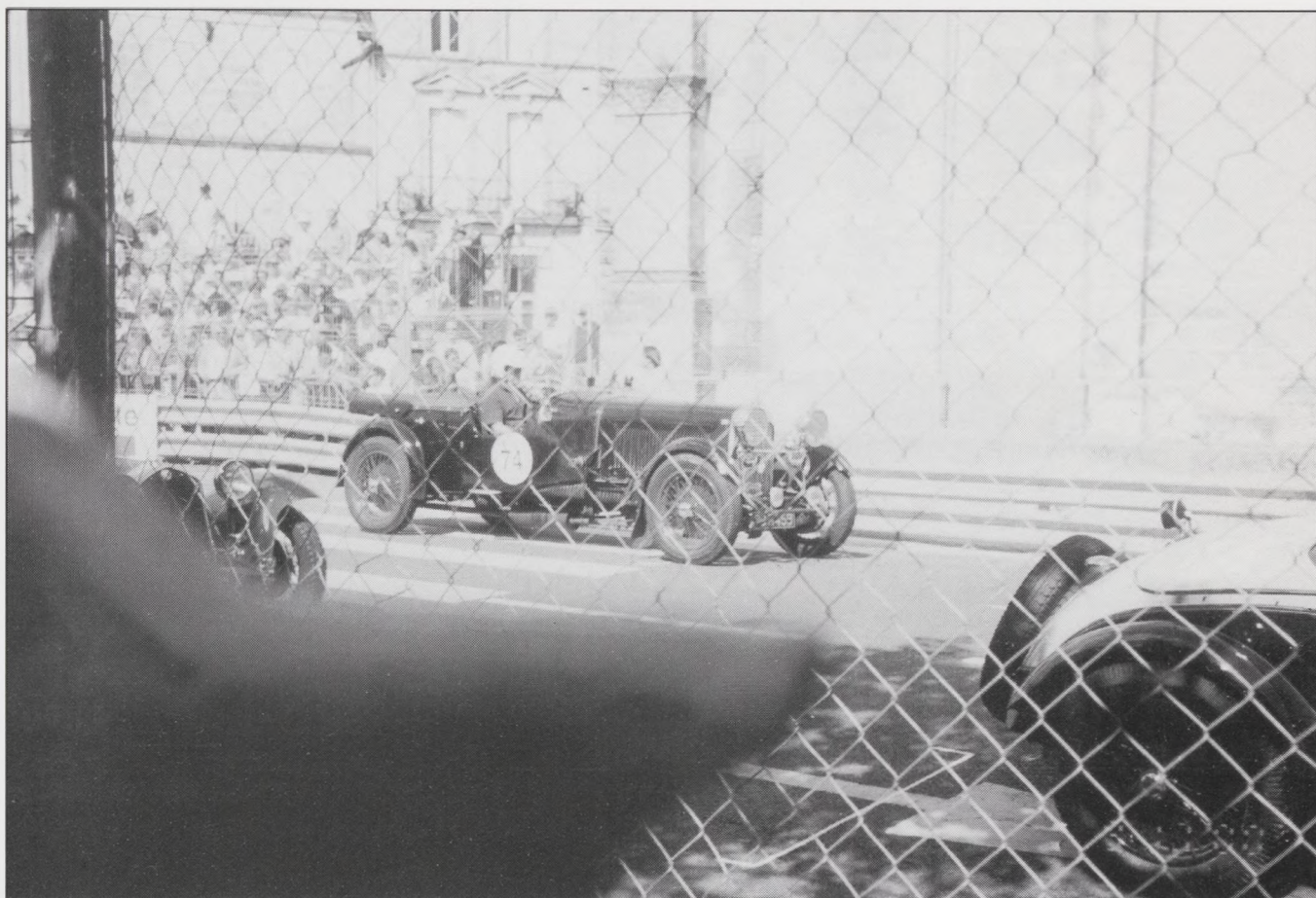
Shall think themselves accurst they were not there

And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks

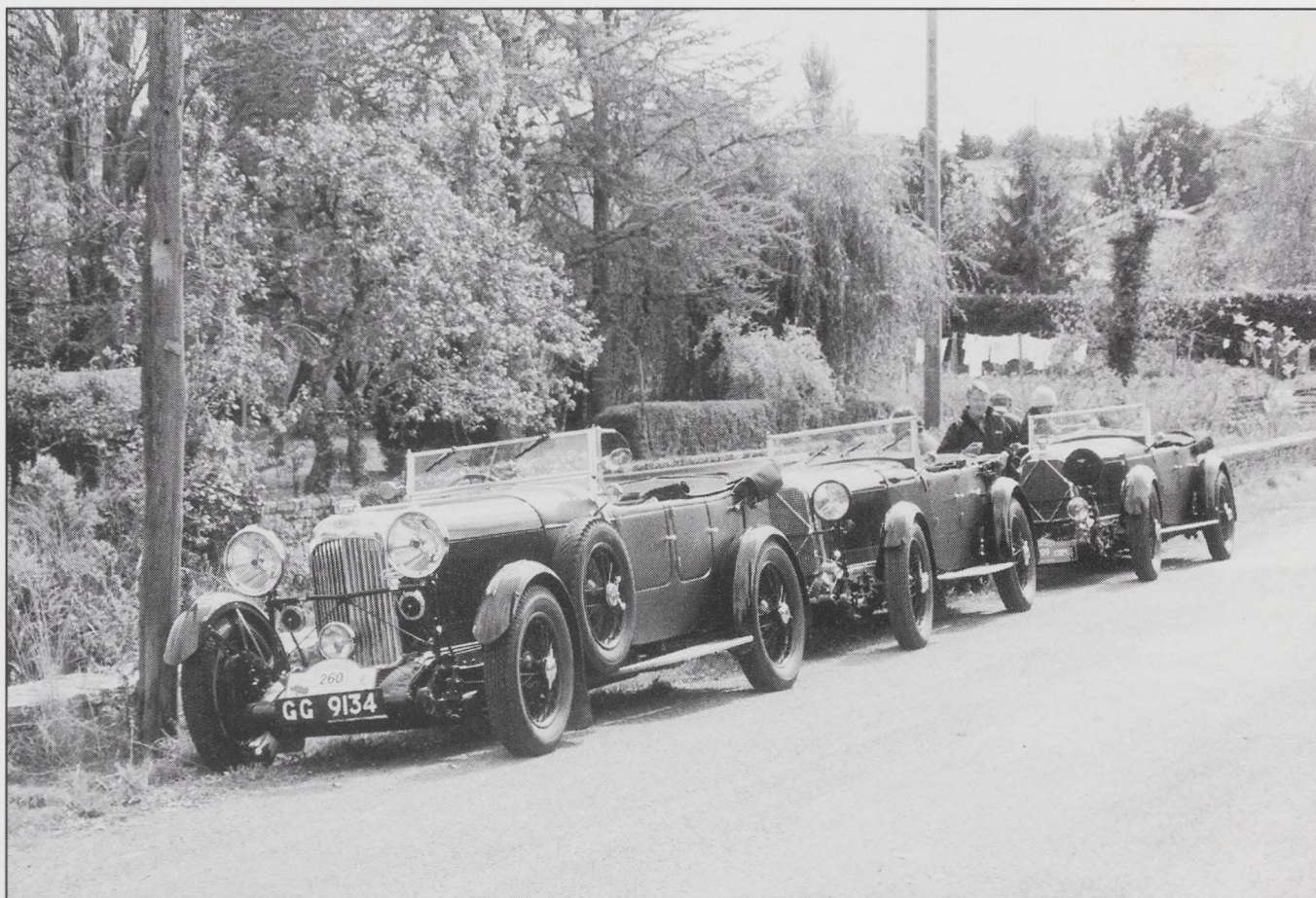
That drove with us upon 'Circuits de Remparts' day.

Henry the Fifth. (act iv; scene iii)





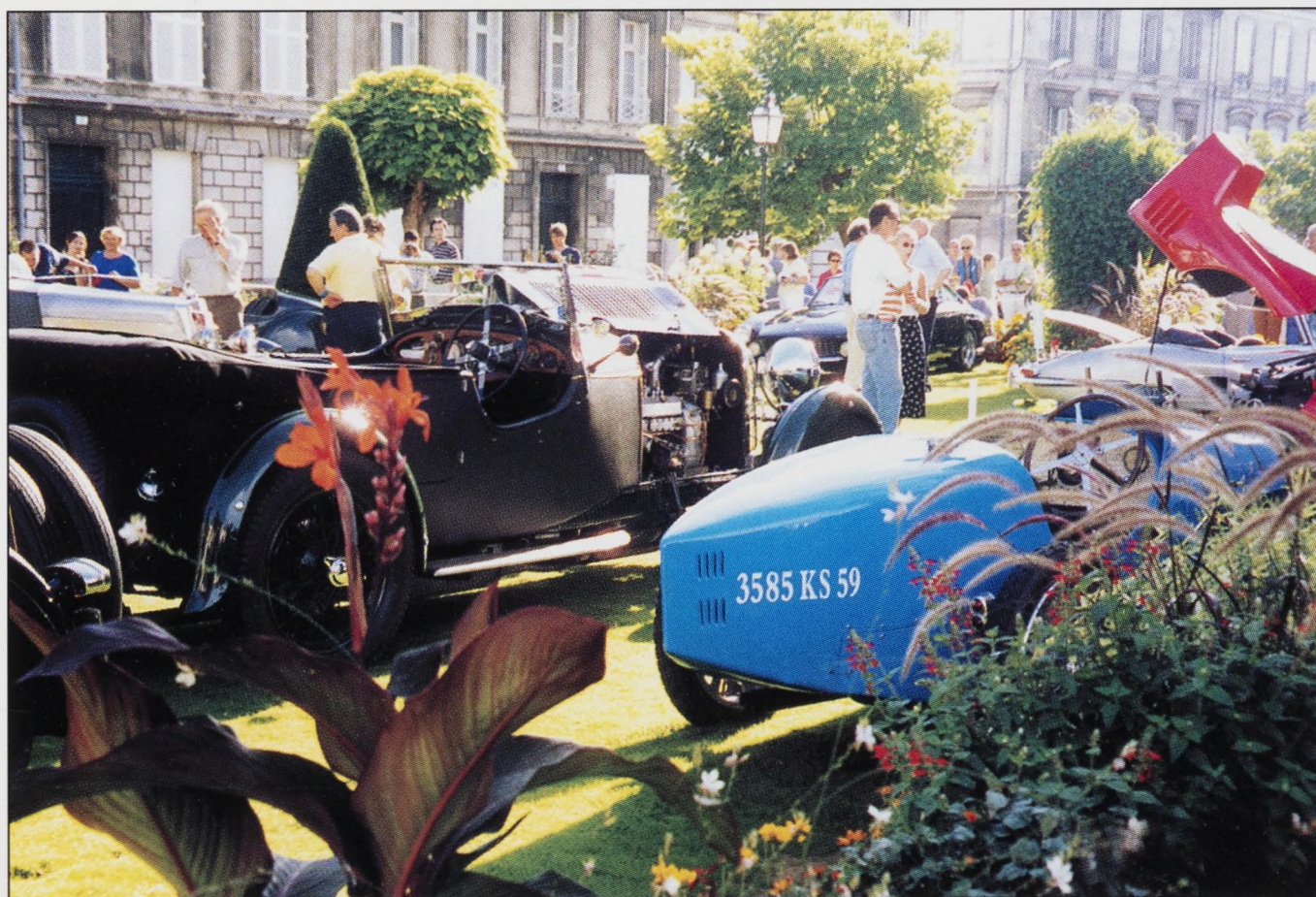
Kip Waistel on the track, sorry about the spectator's hat!



Homeward Bound.



John and Susie Batt en-route to the Concours. Note the rear wing!



At the Concours. Winning in this company was no mean feat.

Letters

Dear Ken,

Thought you might like an account of Lagonda's association with the Queen Mother's Birthday Parade. It all started with a phone call at the beginning of the year from a fellow who, as a redundant aeronautical engineer draughtsman now organises vintage car/aircraft shows and whom I had met at one such function at Folkestone. He had been commissioned by The Battle of Britain Fighter Pilots' Association, of which H.M. is patron, to provide transport for a number of such pilots. Was I available to take part? He had also been in touch with Ron Taylor. I suggested that I could get more Lagondas, but he said two was enough and give the others a chance! I liaised with Adrian Lead, whom you know has a 2 litre, but he also owns a motor business and he kindly provided his transporter vehicle. In the event it saved the day in that we became involved in a four mile crawl on the way up on the A2. We all (five cars) met up in Birdcage Walk, where a certain amount of chaos reigned and everything was late anyway; the dress rehearsal being delayed 1½ hours.

My two passengers were P.O. Ludwig Martel (a Pole) and Flt. Lt. Wally Cunningham DFC - NOT "Catseyes", but he was there also. The original plan was for all to assemble on the parade ground and the Q.M. was to do a drive round in her carriage, but at an early morning rehearsal for pedestrian units it was discovered that there was not enough space, so all horsedrawn and motorised units simply drove across Horseguards to the other side and into the Mall.

Cunningham, operating from 19 Spitfire Sqdn. from Duxford was shot down and spent 3½ years as a P.O.W.. He, incredibly, having taken part in "The Great Escape" was one of the survivors.

Martel was with 603 Sqdn. from Hornchurch and was escorting bombers

across the channel - above them at 21,000 feet. Higher up, unbeknown, were some ME109s, one of which disabled his Spitfire (over Hastings), which he managed to force land on the outskirts of Sandwich - a mile from where I now write. There he saw a windmill - b****r me, he thought, I'm in Holland! His Polish/English accent didn't impress the local Home Guard, who nearly ran him through, but he survived and was to fly the machine again in 48 hours! He eventually married an English girl - the windmill is still there, but now as a museum.

Our five cars were: 3 litre Bentley, 18/80 MG, Aston Martin, 2 litre Lagonda, 14/60 Lagonda; all contemporary and we were followed (lastly) by the veteran RRs carrying the V.C./G.C.s All very impressive! The army major i.c. the Parade - subsequently honoured - was a great character and his final exhortation in his classically military orders was "please bring a sense of humour, you will probably need it!"

Digressing now and another splendid magazine has just arrived - and what an interesting account from David Hine re the V12 camshafts. How satisfying for him having subsequently seen practice proving theory. In the early 60's I went to a BDC Firle Hill Climb with Geoff Hibbert and who should I meet but Darell Berthon, long time secretary of the BDC, who had been my Ghurka C.O. during the war. The last time I had seen him was on a stretcher in Burma! With the mixture of Lagondas and Bentleys at the meeting, mention was made of the V12 and Darell commented that W.O. had never been happy with the performance and that there had been problems within.

In the same magazine, David mildly rebukes John Ryder, for remarks in the last short paragraphs of his (John's) letter in the previous magazine, regarding the



Herb Schofield's "New" 3 Litre Saloon. See His Letter for Details.



Bryan Hyett, former Mayor of Wombourne, taking Peter Bilson the Mayor of Wolverhampton and Peter's wife Nicky for a ride in style in his 3 1/2 litre.

contents of the current issues. Way back in the 50's, one depended on the technical articles, primarily because, if you could get one, the Owner's Handbook was not particularly enlightening and spares were unobtainable, except via cannibalising. You may remember that I categorised and listed all such articles from inception to mid 1983 (Mag 117). I look on those as good days and it was great to learn that a part from a such-and-such ex W.D. truck, suitably modified, would fit one's 2 litre and the odd clever trick for getting the Bendix gear out!

Undoubtedly, there are some very knowledgeable members who have the space, time and equipment to carry out major work on their cars, but there are those - the majority - who don't and all I want is an up-to-date Owner/Driver's manual to adjust and maintain our cars. I set about making one up, based on a photocopy of an original one, issued with a High Chassis car, although mine is a Low Chassis. It's almost complete, but I've been waiting two years for what I gathered the Club was producing! I am fortunate enough to have adequate facilities to remove the engine singlehanded, but it's now old age which militates against crawling under or over a 2 litre - it comes to all of us and this I find amazing!

A full Workshop Manual will be great for those who want one, but there will always be a demand for "Technical Tips" articles in the mags, because no-one knows everything.

I fully understand, however, what John Ryder is saying about "high profile social events". I well remember an AGM programme which, had one partaken in all the "follies", would have cost from home and back to base something not much under £1,000 for a couple. This is just not on and takes one back to the formation of the Register from the then existing Car Club. Privately organised parties/trips, yes - but Club events?

All the best,

Yours aye

John Anderson

P.S. I had thought of offering a quarterly paragraph under the heading "Workshop Tips", but I've gone off the idea. *What do we have to do to get you back "on" this splendid idea please?* **K.P.P.**

Dear Ken,

Rather a disappointing letter from the Governor on page 25 of the 185 Summer edition of the magazine, very much misses the point and certainly contradicts himself.

If I remember correctly, James Crocker obtained the permission of Ivan Forshaw for the Club to reprint his splendid articles mainly on 2 litres, but extremely interesting and informative reading and, of course, essential reading if you do not have copies of the early magazines.

I will proffer a similar suggestion to that of John Ryder, in that the technical articles in the earlier magazines be reprinted for the benefit of ALL members.

With best wishes

Roger Firth

It's confession time! David never actually wrote that letter! In fact it was concocted over the telephone between him and me, so criticism of the wording or style should be directed to the Editor. It is not normal practice to create letters in this way, but we were close to press deadline and it seemed a good idea at the time. In point of fact, there are several new technical articles still on file and waiting for a suitable time for publication. We try to get a mix of articles whenever possible, but if you want a few magazines with an extra large amount of technical material, then you will be making the Editor's job much easier. As for the historical technical articles, there is no reason why they should not be reprinted and I will include at least one each time in future.

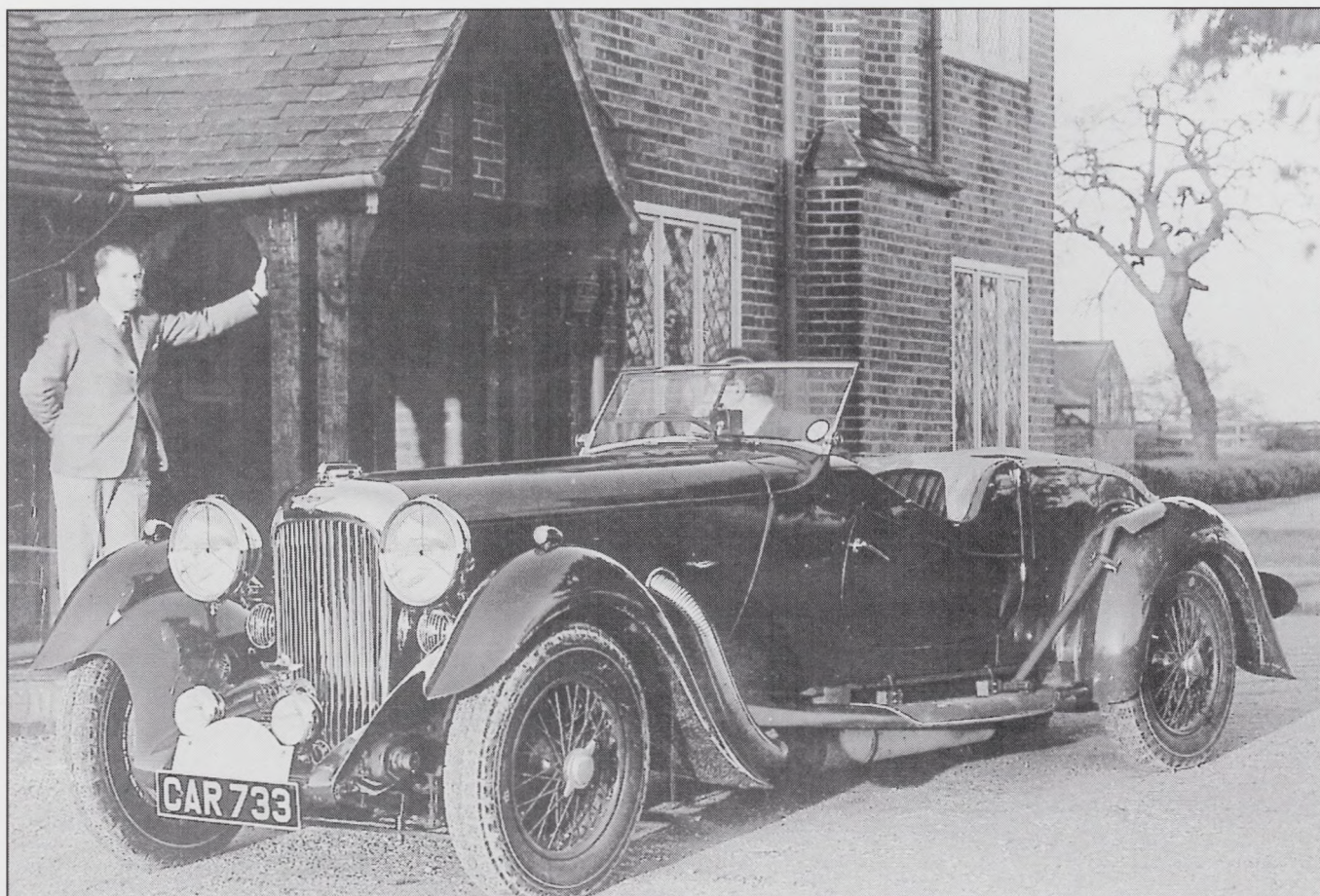
K.P.P.

Dear Ken,

What a wonderful Club we have (number two of a series).



1937 Lands End Trial (26/27 March) Christian Dietrichsen (Driver) problems on Beggars Roost.



Alan Good at the wheel of 12147, his entry in the 1937 Monte Carlo Rally., Charles Brackenbury standing in the doorway.

I had been advertising for ages, for either a 3 litre saloon, or M45 saloon, with no success. In March I received a telephone call from Jonathan Oppenheimer, to tell me he had a friend, who had a friend who, he thought, might be thinking of selling his 3 litre saloon, would I be interested? Anyway, to cut a long story short, I now have in my garage a 1933 3 litre saloon, type ST24A pillarless saloon, one family ownership from new, never been in the Club and in wonderful condition. What a lucky chap I am and all thanks to Jonathan Oppenheimer.

Best wishes

Herb Schofield

Dear Ken,

I read with great interest and pleasure David Hine's opus regarding the V12 design in the last issue of the magazine and, in particular, our 'meeting' with W.O. Bentley at Curborough. It was over 30 years ago now and the memory can play funny tricks. It is not my intention to criticise such a well researched article, but nevertheless, my recollections are somewhat different to his. We certainly did meet W.O., but this was very briefly at Bentley Drivers' Club Silverstone. He had been brought along as usual by Stanley Sedgwick, the BDC President. It is true that he certainly looked miserable, probably because he would have preferred being at home in his back garden. But the thought of him, an old man, driving up from his home in the South of England, in a battered old Morris Minor to Curborough in Staffordshire on a wet May weekend and briefly discussing with us the design faults of the V12 is, perhaps, pushing credulity a bit too far, but it makes a good story!

I think the chap we actually met at Curborough in the old macintosh was Brian Morgan, the renowned and respected restorer. He was, at that time, rebuilding the Lancefield Streamline V12, was a pal of W.O. Bentley's and I remember a discussion with him

regarding V12 engines.

The article did bring back many happy memories of those days in the 60's and early 70's and the fun we had at the Northern Lagonda Factory. You could still meet and talk to legends like W.O. Bentley, Arthur Fox, Bert Hammond (who worked with Wilbur Gunn) and any number of "Old Lags", who came to our AGMs and dinners. Most of all, I remember a long conversation with Frank Feeley, then virtually forgotten, now canonised, regarding his favourite designs (they were the LG45R and V12R). Happy days, happy memories - and a wonderful read!

Herb Schofield

Dear Ken,

I enclose a couple of pictures that have come my way recently, which may fill a hole in the magazine.

The first came from Colin Bugler, who bought it at an autojumble. It shows the Le Mans winner, BPK 202, in a trial. I have researched this and it turns out to be the Lands End Trial, held on 26/27th March 1937. The driver is Christian Dietrichsen, who owned BPK at the time and used her as his everyday car.... I am not sure of the location, but suspect it is Beggars Roost. If not, probably Hustyn. I tend to favour the former as Dietrichsen didn't finish in the trial and Beggars Roost comes quite early on, with Hustyn much later. Note that both driver and navigator have fags on, as do most of the spectators.

The second picture I found at an autojumble. The vendor thought it quite a nice picture of an LG45R, but didn't appreciate its importance. The car was the "works" entry in the 1937 Monte Carlo Rally and is seen here before the start. Driving the car is Alan Good and Charles Brackenbury, his navigator, is standing in the doorway of what is probably his house. The car already carries the rally plate and, expecting foul weather, a spade clipped to the nearside rear wing. As in the previous year's cars, there is an electrically heated "clear

Neither man is really dressed for the Monte. I suspect a warm woolly muffler,

Regards,

Fascinating stuff! I wonder, did they use Michelin tyres because they would have been easier to replace on the continent if they experienced any problems? K.P.P.



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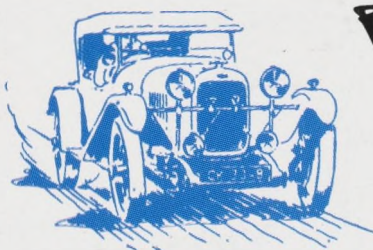
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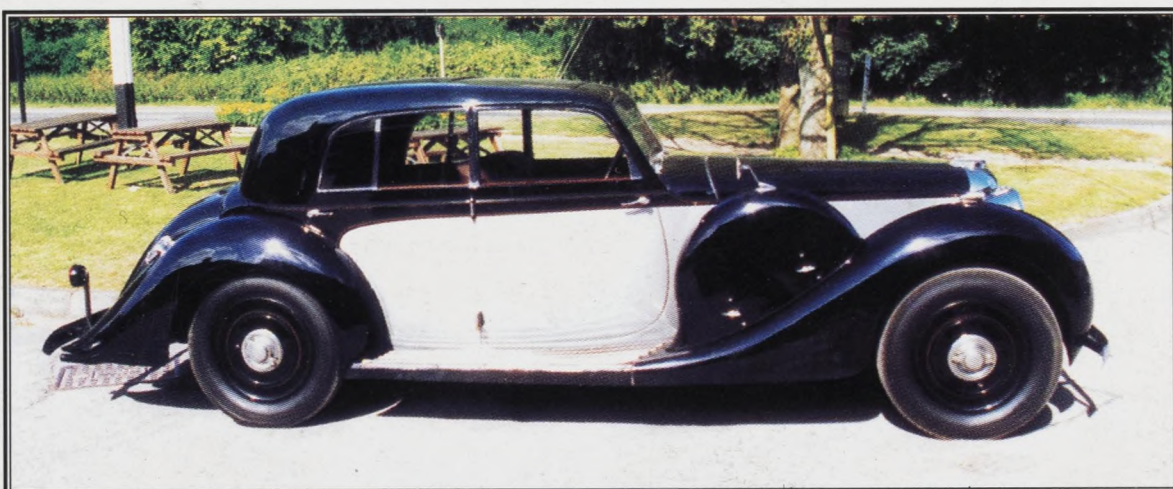
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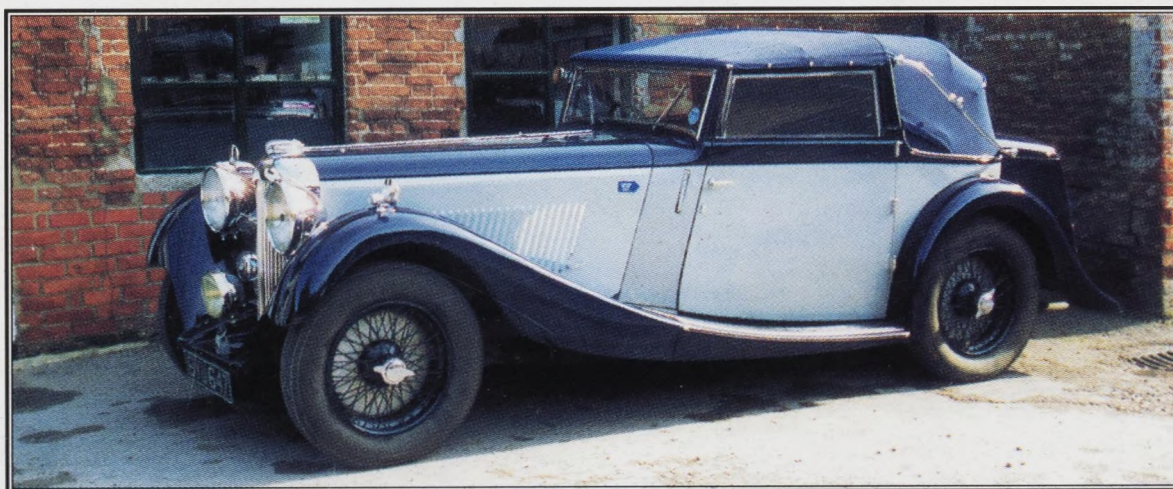
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