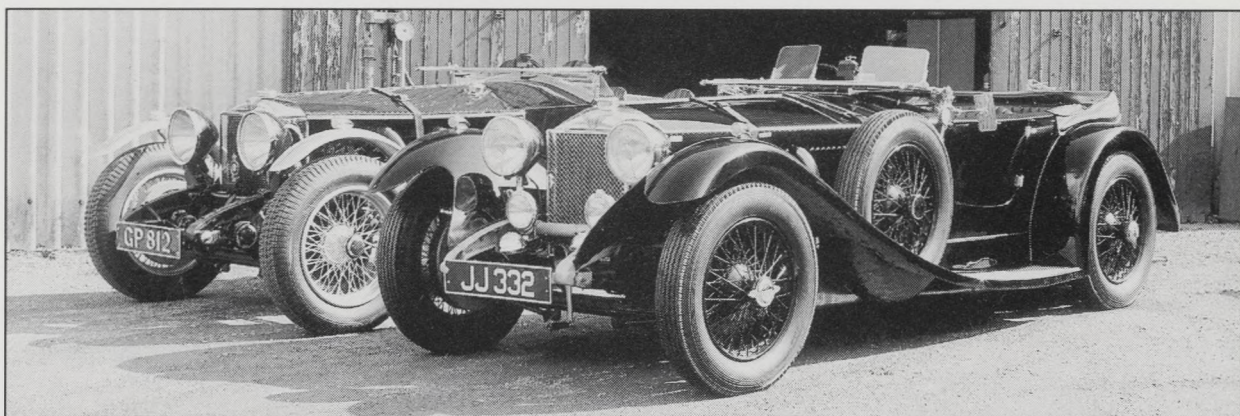
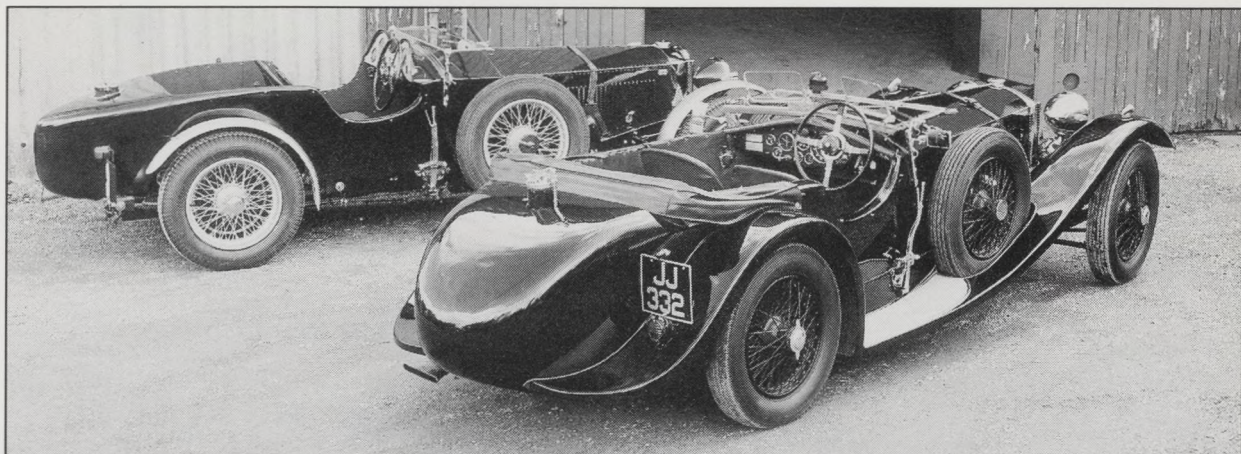


The background image shows a vintage Lagonda car with a red and white body. A man with white hair, wearing a green jacket and white trousers, is bent over the rear of the car, working on the wheel. A woman in a colorful patterned jacket stands in the background. The scene is set in a grassy field with trees in the distance.

THE *Lagonda*

**THE MAGAZINE OF THE
LAGONDA CLUB**
Number 190 Autumn 2001



A Tale of Two Tails

(See *Motor Sport* May 1988)

Together for the first time the two Invicta team cars with pointed tails.

S62 "Speedy" On the left was campaigned extensively by A. C. Lace from 1932, and after the 1933 TT was sent back to Van den Plas to have its present pointed tail body fitted in time for the 1934 Ards TT. Sold by us, "Speedy" is now being prepared to re-enter the competition fray after 67 years and has one of our well known 200 BHP engines.

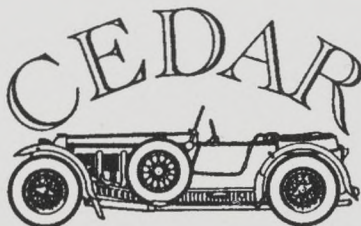
S90 "Simplon" On the right was fitted with its pointed tail body by Carbodies, in time for the 1931 TT when it was driven by Tommy Wisdom and then continually raced by Dudley Froy until sold in 1933. "Simplon" has had a little sympathetic TLC and is now ready for magnificent touring. **For Sale**

Contact us if you are interested in the definitive S Type Invicta with an impeccable history.

It is fascinating to have these two "Works" cars in the "Stable" at the same time to be able to compare. They are getting on very well together and we are hoping that it may lead to the pitter-patter of tiny Invicta feet! Why not bring yours to join the party?

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THE LAGONDA CLUB LIST OF OFFICERS 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: lagclub@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 Sussex, RH17 7AZ

Tel/Fax: 01825 791526

e-mail: lagondaspares@onetel.net.uk

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 Ampthill 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

Jeremy Oates' wonderful 11.9 racer replica at the AGM.

Photo: Tim Gresty

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.

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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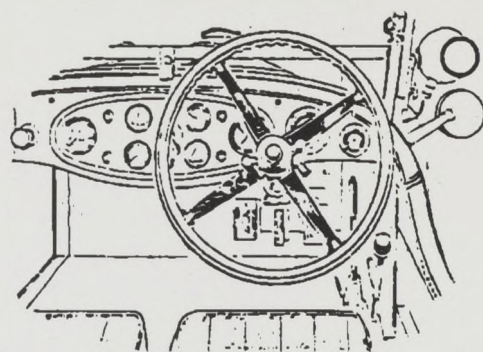
From the Driving Seat

by Ken Painter

IN LATE AUGUST I borrowed Bryan Hyett's lovely Lagonda 3½ litre tourer so that I could use it as a wedding car for Anne, a family friend. For those of you who are interested in the histories of our cars, I sold it to Bryan many years ago. He is constantly urging me to borrow it and he is never in any hurry to have me return it. My Italian mistress was banished to the garage of a kind neighbour for a month and my skeletal 2 litre had a younger cousin to keep her company.

We had a wonderful time! The wedding was held on a beautifully sunny day and the bride was transported in style to and from the service. She and her new husband were totally overwhelmed, not just by the beauty of the car, but by the incredible response of the people along the car's route. They stood on the pavement and waved and cheered, drivers of other cars blew their horns and flashed their lights. Anne said that she felt like a princess and she certainly looked like one!

The day after the wedding, we took the Lagonda to a local show and were given vip treatment, even though we had not booked an entry. We are not great fans of these static shows, but we were surrounded by an admiring crowd for the entire day and were invited to take it into



the show arena twice. Not bad for a pair of gatecrashers.

All good things must end and, all too soon, the car was returned to Bryan, but whilst there was still a large space in the garage I took the opportunity to remove some more of the rotten original timber framing from the 2 litre. This should have been a simple task, but I pushed just a little too hard on a bolt I was drilling out and most of the back half of the body frame collapsed like a house of cards!

At first I thought that I was facing disaster, but I have now spent a happy week or so, gluing bits of broken wood back together and replacing the parts that turned instantly to dust with polyester body filler. Every broken part is now repaired and is strong enough to be copied. In some cases I could only save the original from one side, but I had already become quite adept at making mirror image copies, so this will not cause any more difficulties. So, it has been a "one step forward, several steps backward" time for this long drawn-out re-creation of a Weymann saloon, but that wonderful time with the 3½ litre has really reminded me just how much I miss driving behind a Lagonda badge. Watch this space!

**LAST DATE FOR COPY FOR THE WINTER MAGAZINE IS
... 24TH DECEMBER 2001 ...**



The 50th Anniversary Weekend and AGM of the Lagonda Club

Tony Loch reports on an historic occasion

THE WEEKEND STARTED on Saturday 22 September with a Club lunchtime social gathering and picnic at the Old Warden Aerodrome. About 35 Lagondas turned up to enjoy a natter, to catch up on what members had been doing and to visit some of the Shuttleworth House attractions.

Other members went to the Bentley Drivers Club race meeting at Silverston where there was the usual Bentley/Lagonda handicap race. Once again it was won by Bentley (they do the handicapping after all), with the first Lagonda coming 3rd overall.

In the evening many members and their guests attended the Anniversary Dinner in the Sculpture Gallery at Woburn Abbey. At one moment the Committee were worried that they had been too ambitious but that was totally unjustified as something like 140 people sat down to an excellent meal in wonderful surroundings. Unfortunately because of the international situation none of our American members were able to attend and the Chairman, before his welcome, asked for a brief period of silence while we thought about our absent friends.

Following the Loyal Toast and a toast to the Club Valerie May gave the main speech, telling us about how she had been inveigled into becoming Secretary to the Lagonda Club in 1957, a post that she so enjoyed that she continued for 34 years and even involved her husband as Editor for 20 years. There was a hint that she retired only because her dining room table was required increasingly for its proper purpose. A full version of her speech is printed on page 11. All too soon we were told that our carriages, well, coaches,

awaited us for the return to our various hotels.

On Sunday morning some polishing cloths and dusters were in evidence in the hotel car parks before a splendid array of Lagondas assembled back at Woburn Abbey for the AGM and Concours d'Elegance. It is always difficult to count how many Lagondas come because they kept arriving and departing, but one count gave 78 plus 2 Invictas while the estate staff said they had clocked 85 coming through the gate.

They ranged from Jeremy Oates' replica 11.9, 1921 Brooklands 200 mile racing car, that he brought on a trailer to show us how the build is going, to David Brown's (no relation) 1987 gold plated V8, with practically every model in between.

At 11.30 am the AGM room was filled to capacity with at least 100 members and the crowd was such that others decided not to come in. The President started the meeting by welcoming everybody to this unique event, the 50th Annual General Meeting of the Lagonda Club following the amalgamation of the 2 litre Lagonda Register and the Lagonda Car Club in October 1951. He went on to say that because the Club's visit to Le Mans in 1995 had been such a success he had started talking to the Le Mans organisers about a repeat visit in 2005, the 70th anniversary of the Lagonda win. There is now a much better programme of minor events before the start of the "24 hour" and there was a very real possibility of the Club having a recognised place in the programme. He suggested that members should start saving, fettling and long term planning.

The meeting then got down to the



Lagondas and their owners at Shuttleworth.

Photos: Tim Gresty.



agenda. The accounts were accepted without comment and Board members John Batt, Clive Dalton and Ken Painter were re-elected. This concluded the official part of the meeting and a discussion on spares followed. A request was made for more of the Club's funds to be put to their provision. Alan Hancock, the Board member responsible for the Spares Service, said that he now held a stock of nearly every item in the catalogue and that funds were available to provide other parts if only members would suggest what was wanted. It transpired that a coloured illustrated spares catalogue is being produced which should be available early next year. It was agreed that the possibility of putting the spares on to the Club's website would be investigated but a system would have to be devised to restrict sales only to members as this was now the Club's policy to avoid corporation tax. (Non-members could buy spares if their order included a year's member's subscription)

The meeting closed with a vote of thanks to John and Suzie Batt for organising the weekend and to John Breen for organising the Concours.

While the cars were being judged many members either toured the Abbey, with its wonderful displays of pictures, porcelain, silver and gold, or visited the other attractions, including the Safari Park.

On sale in the Club tent were new items of regalia including crested cufflinks, money and tie clips, key rings and what every member should now apparently have, a lavatory seat with a Lagonda winged badge on the lid.

At 3 o'clock the results of the Concours were announced (details below) and the rain held off just long enough for the prizes to be presented by Valerie May. So ended what must have been the best AGM weekend in the history of the Club. At least the only member present entitled to say that said so.

AWARD WINNERS 2001 AGM CONCOURS.

2 Litre Class	Winner Martin Graham-West Second Jack Wright	YY 1662 (Continental) PJ 3812 (LC S/c)
16 / 80 Class	Winner Betty Stone	FG 8787 (Saloon)
Rapier Class	Winner Tony Metcalfe	JY 4416
3 and 3½ Litre Class	Winner John Clement	PJ 8375 (3L)
4½ Litre (M45 & LG45) Class	Winner David Westall Second Tony Mayes	AXA 416 (M45) AXF 984 (M45 Tr)
LG6 and V12 Class	Winner – No award made	
Post War Class (DB and V8 cars)	Winner David Brown	DB 4000 (V8)
Car Club Trophy	Winner John & Kay Brown	EH 8145 (14/60 Tourer)

Awards of Merit:

- (1) Jeremy Oates for progress on the 1921 Racing Car replica project.
- (2) Peter Blenk for originality of ex Ted Townsley LG45 Tourer FPL 89.



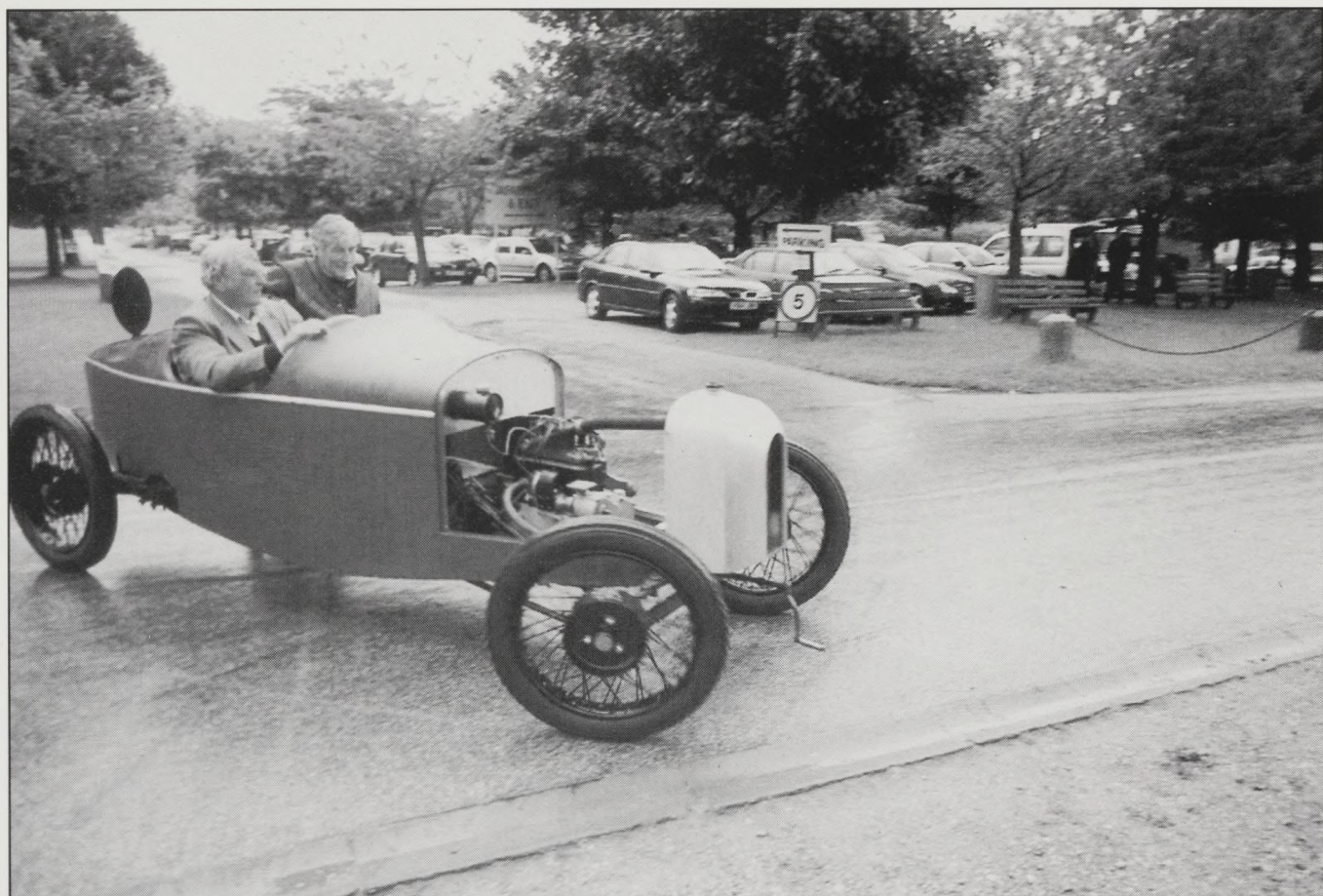
The cars line up at the AGM.

Photo: Arnold Davey.

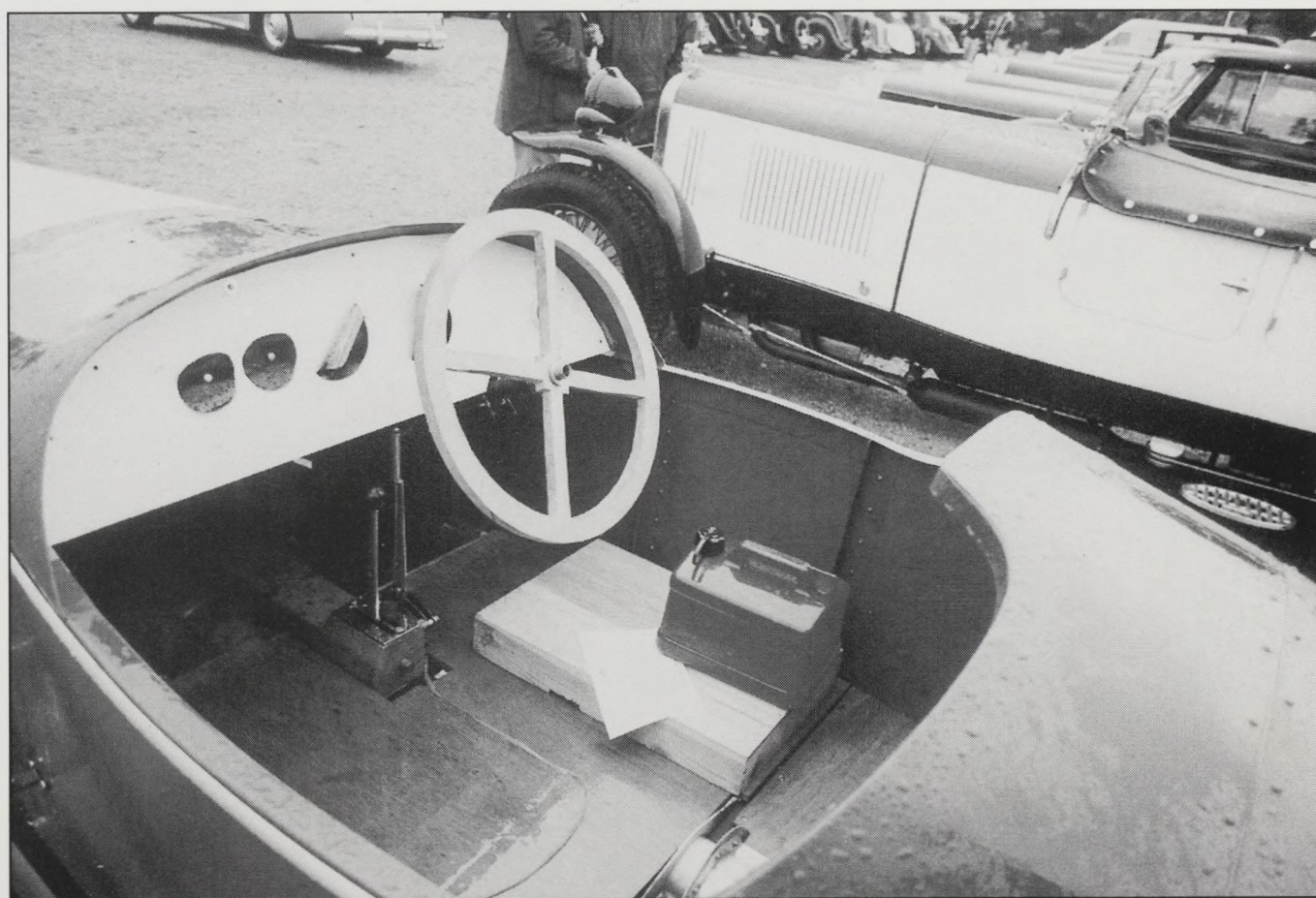


A contrast in styles, David Brown's DB V8 and Betty Stone's 16/80.

Photo: Tim Gresty



The Oates' racer is mobile at last!



But the interior fittings are somewhat spartan at the moment.

Photos Arnold Davey.



It was standing room only for the AGM



The happy band of award winners.

Photos: Tim Gresty

From Small Beginnings . . .

Valerie looks back

FELLOW MEMBERS, the Committee thought it would be interesting for you to hear about my reflections on the Club's earlier years from my viewpoint as its ex-Secretary.

There has been a certain inevitability to my involvement with Lagonda cars. From my early childhood the name Lagonda was one with which I was familiar as my uncle worked for the Lagonda Company at Staines. In 1949 with schooling finished, I joined a firm of chartered accountants in London as secretary to the three partners, one of whom was Charles Elphinstone. Occasionally and then more frequently, I became involved with typing letters and envelopes for yes... the Lagonda Club, as Charles was the Club's Treasurer. And so Lagondas re-entered my life.

Clive has already reminded you that the Lagonda Club was formed in 1951 by the amalgamation of the Lagonda Car Club and the Lagonda 2-litre Register. I know very little about the Club from 1951 until 1957 but suffice to say that member Mike Bosworth is listed in the first edition of the "Lagonda" as the 2-litre Register's joint secretary with Clifford Rees. I have a booklet dated January 1949 compiled by "Members of the 2-litre Lagonda Register for all those who believe that the older Lagondas are amongst the world's best motor cars". In June 1950 the List of Members and Cars numbered 318, 21 non-owner members and five Honorary members Peter Densham was the Secretary followed by Jeddere Fisher and Alan Audsley. Mike Wilby took over until the Winter of 1955/56, after which a secretarial agency was used because no-one from the membership was willing to take on this position.

Then in 1957, just before Tony and I were married, Charles asked me if I would like to become the Club's secretary as a hobby whilst still working full time! Charles knew Tony was an MG and vintage car enthusiast, and so we became members and began our long association with the Club.

At first it was not easy to obtain all the club property from the agency and it took the combined efforts of Mike Wilby and Richard Hare to extract the Club's books, files, correspondence, original instruction manuals and magazines from the garden shed where they had been stored. Unfortunately, one of the Club's early Minute books never was retrieved.

The Lagonda Club secretariat was set up on our new dining-room table - small portable typewriter, a loose-leaf book containing members' names and addresses, a card index recording members' cars and a box of stationery, not forgetting the essential box of carbon papers for taking copies of letters. All to be cleared away when the table was needed for its intended purpose. Most of the Club's mail came to our home and, with the help of my parents, we stored all the memorabilia, spare stationery and back issues of the magazine. Surprisingly, the dining-room table office system seemed to work - no different probably from how other small motor clubs then operated.

At that time the Committee met once a month in Bob Freeman Wright's office in Holborn (Bob was Club Chairman at that time) and gradually names like the Eight Clubs, VSCC, AMOC, handicaps, etc. and all started to make some sense to me.

In those early days the Club's communications were then much as they



Valerie and Tony May relax at the Dinner



Just one of the tables of guests.

Photo: Tim Gresty

are today. But the quarterly magazine was at first a joint publication of the 2-litre Register and the Lagonda Car Club before assuming its present identity as "The Lagonda" with the December 1951 issue. From this time until 1962, the difficulties of producing a magazine to a professional standard took its toll as six gallant Editors tried their hands before retiring. Again with a sense of inevitability and knowing that with Tony's work in the advertising industry he was well used to producing all sorts of publications, Tony was invited to take over the editor's role and so for the next two decades the Club's magazine was copy edited and designed on our kitchen table. We must have been mad!

Tony would want me to mention the support that he received from Mike Wilby who cajoled articles from Club members with great regularity as well as writing pieces himself on historical Lagondas. Mike Gaber, too, deserves a mention. Amongst all of this Tony also assisted Arnold Davey by co-writing with him the "The History of the Marque Lagonda", as well as handling the negotiations with the publisher.

A word about membership, when I became Secretary there were, as far as I can remember, about 700 members worldwide, 100 or so of those being American members. There were not then many from Europe, which is certainly different from today. Membership now stands at around 820. But of course, this is very much related to the number of Lagondas that still exist. In those early days Lagondas, like most other pre-war cars, were not expensive to buy and continued to survive through the help given by the Club's spares and technical service. Any mention of which must include the name of Ivan Forshaw. His long, hand-written and patiently detailed letters offering technical advice became legendary - many of which are still kept today. At AGMs, Ivan's quietly humorous review of the spares scene was always relayed to a full house. Maurice Leo too also supplied spares and valuable advice in these early days.

During my long association with the Club with its many and changing

members, there are so many people I would like to recall that it would finish up sounding like a school register. However, I would just like to mention also Henry Coates, "Rex" Rexford-Welch, Billy Michael, Tony Loch, Alan Elliott, Herb Schofield and of course, James Crocker with his ready supply of after-dinner jokes but more importantly for his wide-ranging knowledge of motoring matters and wise counsel at important stages in the Club's development. Arnold Davey joined the Club in 1960, as you all know, and has now written his 272nd newsletter, although numbering of the issues did not start at the beginning.

As regards our overseas members, we must not forget Bob Crane, a great enthusiast who was the Club's American representative from 1957 until his death in 1985 aged 82.

I retired in 1991 having been Secretary for 34 years and here we are, another ten years on, with the Club now firmly in the modern technological world with its own office. A far cry indeed from our dining-room table. As non-Lagonda owner members, Tony and I, and our family as well, have over these many years met, corresponded with and enjoyed the companionship of so many delightful Club members both here in the UK and abroad. Some of these have now passed on but we still remember them with great affection.

So from its humble beginnings the Lagonda Club is today, 50 years on, recognised as one of leading one-make car clubs, thanks initially to that group of keen enthusiasts who in 1951 did not wish to see the marque disappear. Their goal was to keep Lagondas on the road for the enjoyment of their owners by means of a reliable Club spares service, regular communications to members and the provision of a calendar of sporting and social events. Since then the Club has flourished through the continuing enthusiasm and support by its members and by the consistent dedication of the Club's officials through that half century. An achievement in which we can all take pride.

Jersey Festival of Motoring

7th-11th June 2001

Jo Moss takes a trip to the Channel Islands

THIS MEETING IS FOR CARS BUILT PRIOR TO 1965, and is organised to give participants the choice of either entering the touring events around the island, or competing in a sprint and two hill climbs.

I was delighted when Judith Genée, president of the Jersey Old Motor Club, invited me to enter the Invicta in the competitive events, as we have been to Jersey before and loved it there.

We drove to Poole on Thursday 7th June and met several friends who were also travelling on the Condor Fast Craft, including another Invicta Club member, David Cantor, who had entered his 1926 Austin 20 Tourer for the touring event. The Fast Craft is certainly very impressive and definitely lived up to its name!

Once we got to Jersey, we were greeted by the organisers and given our information packs. We then found our hotel and, as Thursday was a 'free evening', went of to our favourite pub, 'The Old Portelet Inn' for a nice meal.

Friday was the first official gathering of entrants, who met at the 'Living Legend' for an informative show about the history of Jersey, then back to St Helier for drinks and a buffet lunch at the Town Hall. We then went to get RRM scrutineered quickly, so that we could join the afternoon run to St Jobas Manor and gardens, which is a lovely house set in beautiful grounds. The owner had a collection of cars, including a Rolls Royce Phantom with coachwork made in polished copper - it was stunning.

Our first competitive event, the

Victoria Avenue Moonlight Sprint, was held on Friday evening, with the idea being that it would be dark for the timed runs. It was the first time I had ever done a sprint with headlights on! We were 3rd in class, behind Roy Spiers' very quick 1936 Alvis 4.3 special and John Warden's light-weight 1937 Delage D6.

Saturday saw the first of the two hill climbs, Westmount, which has several sweeping bends and a hairpin, all surrounded by stone walls! We came 3rd again, but this time we were within half a second of John's Delage, and 14th fastest out of the forty or so competing cars (beating an 8 litre Bentley, as well as several of the post war cars) All the touring cars were displayed on the grass behind the paddock area, and the variety and quality of cars was excellent.

An informal BBQ and party was held on Saturday evening at the 'Living Legend'. Our table turned out to be quite a lively one, with VSCC stalwart Hickey Hickling and wire wheel specialist Steve Hopkins keeping us company!

On Sunday, we had Mount Bingham hill climb to contend with. This really is a challenging hill, with a fast section from the start, leading into an evil chicane, then a sweeping left hander, over a blind brow, to the final 90 degree left between two stone walls to the finish - not for the faint hearted! Practise was a nerve-wracking experience, trying to remember where all the corners were, but on the timed runs RRM handled well (I was even complimented on how smooth my second run looked!) We managed to beat the Delage by over a second to take 2nd place, just two

seconds behind Roy's Alvis. I was also fastest lady driver overall, which made a super end to the competitive events.

The Gala Dinner was held on Sunday evening, in the newly built Agricultural and Horticultural Headquarters, in a huge hall with a selection of beautiful pre war cars parked around the inside walls and the tables in the centre. Our table included Peter Hannen, who had won the event outright, his speech on accepting his trophy was most amusing. He said that he had the 'unfair advantage' as he had come in a Maserati Birdcage, and the rest of us had come in things like Invictas!

We all gathered back at the ferry terminal on Monday morning, to come home on the Fast Craft, at the end of what had been a fabulous few days. I think we all felt that it was over far too quickly and we can't wait to go back again next year!

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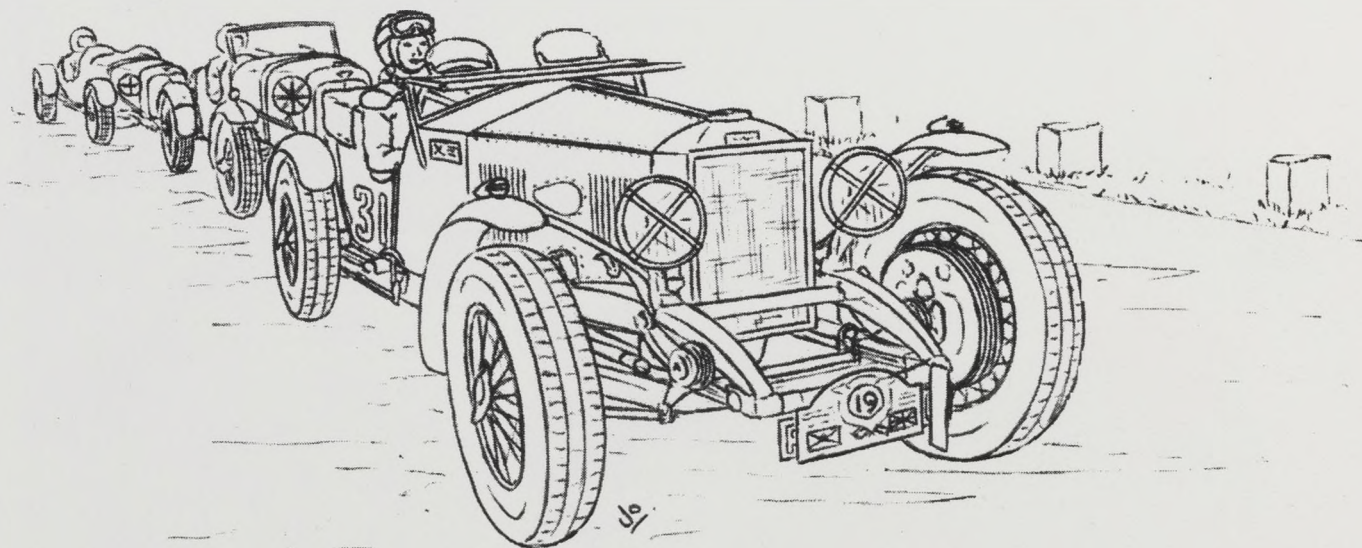
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Ted Townsley Memorial Driving Tests, Saturday 7th July 2001

Herb Schofield

THE MEETING WAS HELD as usual at Elvington Air Museum and airfield. Last year I complained about the poor attendance at this most traditional of Club events and, guess what, we got the number of entries up to 17 this year, which, with the addition of a number of spectating Lagondas, made for a good meeting. Some good cars too.

We greatly admired Shaw's LG6 saloon, restored to the very highest standards and a great credit to the owner and to David Royle and Co, who carried out the restoration work. Another example of what you can do with the LG6/V12 chassis was shown by Golding, who presented a superb example of coachwork to his own design, which made for a highly effective and attractive motor car. Hanson brought along his little 11.9 coupe and was rewarded with a second placing.

Firth's cars are always well turned-

out and his M45 tourer was no exception, correct in every detail, down to the spare wheel cover which actually does improve the looks of the car in my opinion.

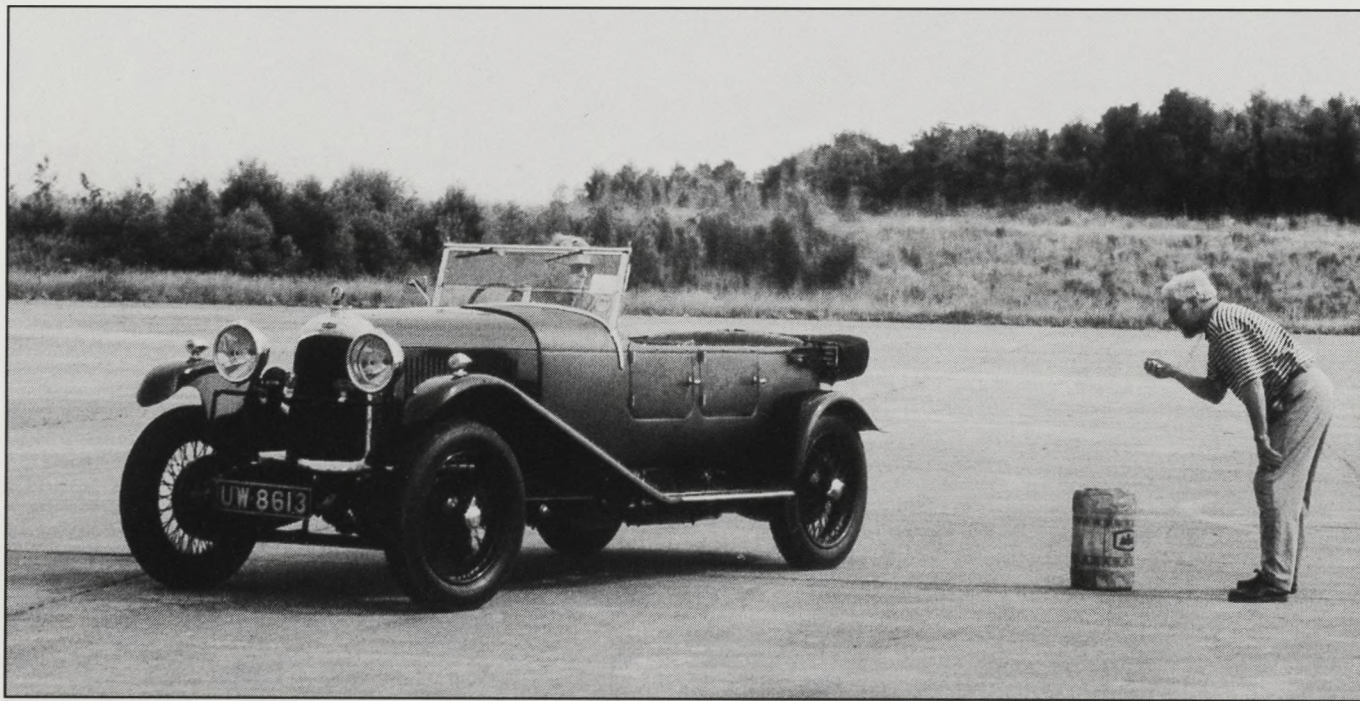
As far as the tests were concerned, Ronald (2 litre HC), won, as he usually does. Hoggard (3 litre), nearly made it, as he usually does! But blew his chances by making a mess of one of the tests. The Hooper brothers were enjoying themselves in their D.B. 2.6 drophead. Doc Turner was instructing wife Ruth in the art of driving an LG6 drophead in driving tests and she showed how quickly she had learned by beating him!

A good day out and long may it continue as a Club event.

Organised by Alan Brown and Herb Schofield.

Photographs by Tim Gresty.

In Attendance: Eleanor and John Townsley



Ronald in his HC 2 litre, closely watched by Marshall Schofield.



Progress! Hanson's 11.9 coupe and Golding's LG6 tourer. No, it isn't an LG45 Rapide.

Photos: Tim Gresty



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Mid-Summer Welsh Gardens Tour

Susie Batt and friends enjoy some lovely Welsh scenery

A SMALL GROUP OF FIVE LAGONDAS enjoyed a four day Gardens Tour of mid-Wales in early July, ably organised by Emma Hobbins with allowances for the dreadful FMD problems.

Starting from 'Aran Hold', the Hobbins house beautifully sited on Anglesey's southern shore, the route first went to Plas Brondanw the home of Clough William-Ellis. He lived there for over 70 years surrounding himself with architectural topiary and alleys of box and yew, curling flights of steps, various fountains and many statues. A lovely setting. This was followed by a drive over spectacular mountain scenery past lakes Bala and Vrnwy to a picnic stop for lunch.

Next, a visit to Glansevern Hall near Welshpool, to see the recently restored garden featured in the June issue of 'Homes & Gardens'.

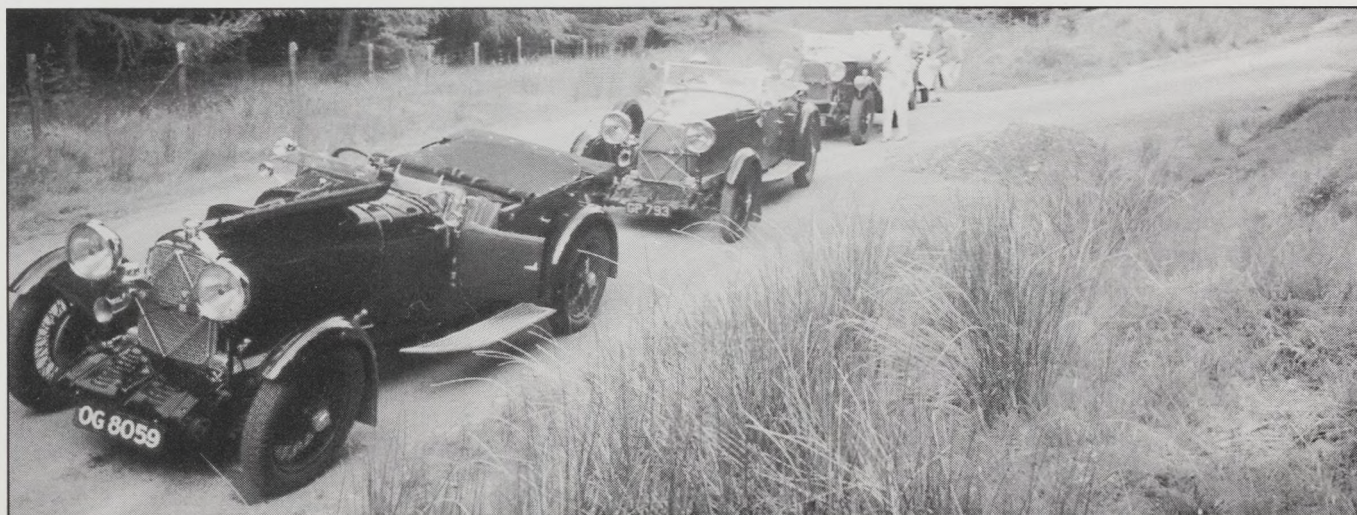
A most pleasant stay at Garthmel Hall and dinner at The Lion in nearby Berriew was followed next day by our enjoying the splendid views and space on show at Vaynol Park. The Colquhouns live nearby so it was nice to

be invited to see their lovely 'old' farmhouse at Lower Cil for late morning refreshments, before going on to Montgomery and a late lunch.

Powis Castle had been on the agenda but was closed to protect their wild deer from the threat of Foot and Mouth, so our next venue was the idyllic Glanrannell Park Hotel set in a magnificent estate beside a large lake. Then it rained - very hard! which is definitely not part of the story!

The highlight of the trip was to see the lost garden of Aberglasney near Llandeilo, recently the subject of a BBC2 documentary. It certainly came up to expectations and is highly recommended if one is ever in that area. By the time we returned home to Maulden the 2 Litre had another 800 miles on the clock and pleased to say all five cars ran without a hitch but aided with the usual tlc.

A great way to enjoy one's Lagonda, driving along out of the way uncluttered summer roads with like minded friends. The Blenks, Fittons; Wadsworths and the writer say thank you Emma and Charles. Let's do it again!



The cars stop for a picnic lunch.



Lunch at the Colquhoun's, Lower Cil.



Lunch again! This time in Montgomery.

AXD on the Winter Challenge

Richard Mann and his team brave the elements once again

THIS IS THE THIRD TIME that AXD and crew of James Mann, John Blake and myself have completed this Rally. My appreciation of the organisation, Classic Rally, who make this rally so enjoyable, has grown with our experiences. The overall master plan of route and timing, the highly detailed work of the marshals and the skill of the sweep teams are of a very high order.

We were following the Marathon and Vintagent route, which enabled one to go to bed every night, although not always for long. The people who we have now met on one or both of our previous two Montes made a very friendly, knowledgeable and skilful group and I am pleased to say that our car made it to the finish in Cannes without a scratch, but with plenty of adventures.

We were delighted to see Roy Williams in his LG 45, which went beautifully after an engine rebuild last summer (2000), although he had tested it on the London-Madrid Rally, so he was confident that she would go well. The other vintagents who went well and added so much by their variety were Paul Carter's 4½ Bentley, Brian Daley's Riley, Guy Hewitt's MG TC, Jos Frutyer's 3½ Bentley saloon, Tim Riley's Lancia Aurelia, Roger Gourd's Austin Ulster, George Melville's Alvis Firefly and "Monte" Males' Hupmobile.

The Brooklands starters made up the majority in our class and we had a large and enthusiastic crowd of wives, friends and relations to see us off, which made for an exciting start; down the M25, M20 and through the Channel Tunnel. Then a long drive to Nancy, not difficult from a navigational point of view, but useful in that it gives one time to shake down and get in tune with the rally. AXD now

running with her largely renewed engine motored steadily down quick roads, with no signs of stress, at about 70 mph for hour after hour. As a result, we arrived an hour before our check-in time. Early arrival was penalty-free.

The cars from various start points gathered the next morning at Gérardmer and the rally proper started, with narrow roads, steep climbs and descents, all with time checks and occasional regularities.

On the last regularity of the day, when it was already dark, I was driving on a narrow twisty mountain road and was blinded in my mirror by a modern car's lights and slipped off the road into a ditch. Luckily the car's 19-inch wheels helped keep the brake hangers off the ground, even though we were grounded on the sump. With James and John's help pushing and pulling, I drove the car out backwards and, much to our relief, found no damage. I must say that flashes of recovery vehicles came across my mind, but to our delight we were able to continue without a scratch – apart from a dent to my self-confidence which, I am pleased to say, was restored over the next morning. We then completed a gruelling day at Aix-les-Baines, after a day of perfect driving weather.

The next day, Tuesday, we did a loop through Albertville, Ugine and Col de la Forclaz and back to Aix, once again giving us hard climbs and descents through superb scenery and in perfect driving conditions, but change was on its way.

We had a late start the next day, which gave us time to re-adjust the clutch, which had complained bitterly after a quick driving test and had started to slip. The day was grey and it started to

snow before we were out of Aix. More climbs and descents, some on ice and snow; a serious climb up to Alpe d'Hulz saw our water temperature climb to 100° C, which produced some steam but did not impair the power output noticeably. An ice circuit test followed, which added variety, with many cars going sideways. We managed some nicely controlled skids and slides, all carried out in a snowstorm.

A quick change of both back wheels, as the tyres were getting worn, at a friendly garage and we had enough time to make the next check point with five minutes to spare. We were then meant to climb the Col d'Ormon, but having met several classic cars returning down the road, we received the news that the Col was closed because of icy conditions and accidents. Some of these involved cars sliding on ice after they had come to a halt, some hit others and one slid over and down the unprotected hillside. Luckily the occupants were not hurt, but the car was a write-off. We and the other vintagents were very lucky, being at the back of the field, so we did not have to drive in these very bad conditions and were able to get to the control points later in the day.

Entering Gap, where we were staying the night, was interesting. The long, straight, road became very slippery and we saw a Land Rover in the ditch, whereupon James remarked that it was a bit slippery, but he controlled the car well and we arrived without mishap. Brian Dale, in his Riley, said that he had seen a French car in front of him doing pirouettes, but he managed to avoid contact and also arrived safely.

The next day, Thursday, we had an early start, the main benefit being that

the town (Gap) traffic was very light and it was an easy drive to our Start Control some 50 km to the south. Shortly after the start, it seemed that there was an unusual, uneven, drumming sensation in the car and not long afterwards, a sharp 'crack' underneath the car, followed by a 'clunk' when I accelerated or decelerated. Our assessment was some sort of prop shaft problem and when we arrived for breakfast at Castellane James shot under the car and announced that we had lost several bolts from the drive flange behind the gearbox. To our pleasant surprise, the back-up crew were not busy and when I asked Peter Banham for some bolts he volunteered to fix it for us, so while we had breakfast the car was fixed – a very nice experience for us.

We then set off for Cannes and the celebration of the arrival on the Harbour front – great excitement – the vintagents rolled in in great style, having completed 1500 miles. To our excitement, we were scrutineered again, which only happens if you are in a medal position. Soon after, we discovered that we were 2nd in the over 2500cc Vintagent Class, with Roy Williams in his LG 45 just beating us into first place by two minutes. Lagondas 1st and 2nd in this class was very rewarding.

Once again, I and my crew felt that this was the best rally of the year, good organisation, testing roads, good humour, magnificent cars and tricky weather and road conditions, giving a tremendous feeling of achievement as one manages to clock-in on time at the control points and ultimately arrive at the finish.

I may say that regularities are not yet the strong part of our game plan, but there is always next year!



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Lagondas at the August VSCC Silverstone Meeting

Nick Hine reports direct from the hot seat

THE OLD LAGS PROVIDED A GOOD SHOWING at the VSCC meeting at Silverstone on Saturday 11th August. An overcast but dry first practice saw six Lagondas out on the circuit, with a couple of cold tyres providing a loss of form at Luffield bend for myself while others were caught out at Becketts. Nothing more damaging than a bit of pride, however. Tim Wakeley was less fortunate in his Rapier Special and had to return to the pits for an "early bath" after only three laps with a gearbox that insisted on selecting two gears at once. He was later seen in "civvies" with Peter Whenman who, although not out competing on the day still turned up to cheer us on.

The rain did not hold off though, and by midday a typical mid-summer drizzle had a persistent feel to it. The first race was therefore inevitably a slippery affair, but Peter Fletcher-Jones in his Rapier drove well to finish in third place with a best lap time of 1:38.36.

The next race with Lagondas involved was Race 3 – a five lap handicap race. The track was still wet although the water had stopped descending. This is what I would class as a "fast" handicap, with the quickest car being an ERA and the "slowest" (or limit man), in a 4.5 litre Lagonda. However this was going to be the big boys outing with all four of the 4.5 litre Lags starting. The first three cars away were Mark Butterworth in his full bodied LG45, Terry Brewster in the "Fire Engine" M45 followed by Alastair Barker's V12 Le Mans. I was a "few" seconds back (at least 20!) in "Wotsit", my now "Ultra light" stripped down

LG45 special.

The track was still very greasy although from my vantage point some 12 cars back all three of the front row got away without too much wheelspin. My time duly came and I was surprised by my clean start, given the track conditions, but Ben Fiddler had problems on the start. I made good early progress to make up four or five places by Copse corner.

It proved an exciting race with at least two spinners first time at Becketts, one of which forced me on the inside of the cones – a line I would be forced to take again before the end of the day. Up ahead Alastair forged an early lead with a clear track ahead to the big car's liking.

Lap two found Mark on the inside of the track at Copse with a locked front brake, while I was soon to come upon Terry amongst a gaggle of smaller cars and managed to claw my way past on the far side of the track. Lap three and four found steady cornering leading to a few more places, while up front Alastair was still leading a now closing pack. It was on lap four, at the very slippery Becketts, that Alastair found himself "side ways" to let a GN special, more used to this cornering technique, through on the inside.

All credit to Alastair, however, he managed to hold off the threat of the rapidly approaching faster field to finish a well-deserved 2nd, only 0.84 of a second behind the GN, with Alastair's best lap being a 1:34.07 on Lap 5. I clawed my way up to sixth, but only holding off the charging ERA by two seconds! The ERA had come through the field a full seven seconds a lap quicker

than me and roared passed me just beyond the finish line.

Terry finished 14th and Ben, in his usually very quick Rapier, finished 22nd, hampered no doubt by the massive power on a greasy track.

Mark was quickly back to the paddock where he immediately began to strip his front brake assembly to find the fault of the locking front brakes, ably assisted by our chief mechanic Alan Brown. Alan is always on hand to give salient racing advice about the perils of spinning (a la "pre-selector special" days), and will always be prepared to get down, and dirty, to help get a car ready for its next race.

Mark was indeed in a hurry as he was out again in Race 5. He made it, fault obviously fixed, for the eight lap scratch race for road trim pre-war sports cars, in which he was to finish a midfield 13th, with a best lap time of 1:29.20 on a rapidly drying circuit.

Colin and Valerie Bugler had, as always, become the focus of our paddock assembly and had brought their pretty, full-bodied, Rapier to compete in day's racing. Neil Jones, their able son-in-law, was in action in Race 7, another five-lap handicap, and finished in 17th place with a best lap time of 1:35.74 on the final lap. Unfortunately I was unable to witness his exploits as I was preparing myself for my final race of the day, also a five-lap handicap and race 9 on the programme.

I must start by saying that this type of handicap is what I race for – plenty of action and the feeling that you are actually driving a relatively quick car.

Both Colin and I were the only Lags on this now dry track but what a race it proved to be. If Race 3 was a "fast" handicap, this was a "slow" one. I was last fast car off a full 10 seconds behind the next fastest car of Trevor Sweete in a very powerful Invicta 3/4.5 litre, who himself was 10 seconds behind the main

body of the field. The Limit man was off nearly a minute ahead of me and I did feel a touch lonely on the start grid. I was not alone, though, thanks to the support from the stands, where I did see Shirley Dalton waving enthusiastically on my warm-up lap!

The seconds ticked slowly away until my flag drop and with no immediate competition I avoided the mad wheel spinning start and made a nice clean pull away though all the gears. For my first two laps I didn't see a soul and I was beginning to feel that the handicappers had been very hard on me. However, half way through the third lap I saw the field – and what a sight! All of them engrossed in their own personal battle with up to 15 cars swarming into Maggots Curve. I caught them at a rate of knots and had to thread myself apologetically between them, even cutting up our club secretary, who was tussling with the likes of Alvis, MG Lea Francis and Fiat. I could now see the Invicta also moving from track-side to track-side as he progressed through the field.

On the final lap, with a few corners to go, there were just six cars ahead of me and I moved up two more places through Brooklands and Luffield. After starting out 28th on the grid, I crossed the line in 5th place setting a fastest lap time of 1:23.87 on the final lap. There were only five seconds separating the first five cars with Trevor in the Invicta finishing second. Colin came in 22nd with a best lap of 1:38.04. A great race, exciting to be in and, I'm told, exciting to watch.

The last race of the day was a 10 lap scratch and saw Ben Fiddler, David Fletcher-Jones and Len Thompson in their Rapiers and Mark in his LG45. The grid was a "wet" one having been set in the drizzle earlier on. The track, now dry, led to an exciting start with many of the more powerful cars pulling through the field, including the truly awe-

inspiring Light Blue 3/8 litre Bentley driven by Andrew Day. This car pulled out an initial lead though followed closely and finally overtaken on lap three by the black ERA R14B driven by Goff Tidball.

Ben did very well, finishing first in class and 5th overall with a class fastest lap of 1:20.46 (11 seconds quicker than in Race 3); David came second in class in an impressive 9th place overall, with a 1:22.42 best lap, while Mark also did well in a very fast field to come home in 16th place with a best lap of 1:29.07. Unfortunately Len did not finish.

The race was won by the ERA with the Bentley second.

A great race to finish a great day. Many members were spotted throughout the day, too many to mention by name. However, despite all the vagaries of the English weather, we all had a fantastic day. My apologies for missing anyone out who was also competing, but it is sometimes difficult to spot other drivers and their cars when you are doing 80 mph down the back straight for a third of the day!



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Shelsley Walsh, 16-19 August 2001

Michael Drakeford reports on a very special weekend

MID-AUGUST SAW the Centenary Festival Meeting of the Midland Automobile Club at Shelsley Walsh. At the meeting was Jean Bugatti's 4WD car, seven ERAs and 15 Shelsley specials.

Covering three days this was a marvellous spectacle of man and machine pitting themselves against the elements on this famous hill. Friday managed the sunshine, Saturday the rain and Sunday the showers.

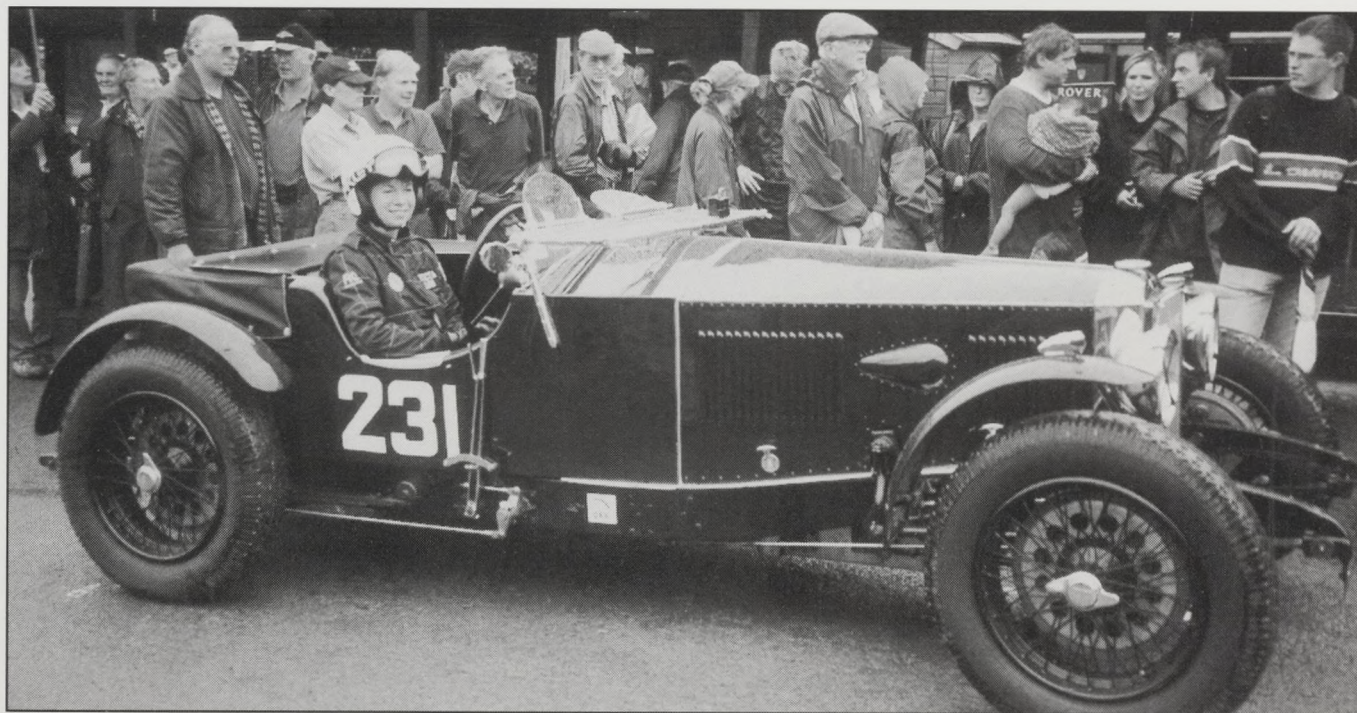
The interest for Lagondas centred around Margaret Brewster in the red Le Mans Replica BGB 988, a car well known to Shelsley, Robert Goodchild in the green LG 45, CXW 120 and Jo Moss in her Invicta 4½, RRM 500.

The wet conditions on the Saturday did not suit the big cars and care was the order of the day. Whilst lighter cars had more success there were the inevitable number who tried too hard and left the track. Happily it resulted in hurt pride

rather than badly damaged cars and people. The continuous rain on the Saturday made the track impossibly slippery and the fast pre-war time of the day was 41.79 secs set by David Leigh in the GN Spyder.

Best time of the day on the Sunday was set by the outright Shelsley record Holder and current British Hillclimb Championship leader Graeme Wright, who was timed at 25.97 secs in his Gould GR51-V6 single seater. His record of 25.28 secs was set in June this year. The fastest pre-war time was set by David Morris in the ERA R11B at 35.65 secs. Our contingent was a little slower in the wet on Saturday.

The photographs show the club contingent for what was an over subscribed event including one of the new screen in the paddock: which follows the cars up the hill.



Jo Moss relaxing before the start.



Left to right; Margaret Brewster and Robert Goodchild, Shelsley Walsh.



The new screen. Cameras now cover the course so spectators can watch the whole climb.

The Charm of the 2 Litre

John Fitton falls for a Lagonda

FOLLOWING OUR TOUR TO THE FRENCH RIVIERA in June 1997 in our Alvis 12/50, my wife and I decided that we would search for a more long legged comfortable tourer

We had always admired the Lagonda 2 litre High Chassis as probably one of the most elegant looking sporting cars of the Vintage period. However, listening to the usual pub talk: "Your Alvis will be at the top of the hill waiting for the 2 litre every time", I started looking at more powerful vintage machines. I researched the Sunbeam 3 litre twin cam very thoroughly and consulted the expert in the STD register. I found the twin cam, albeit a thoroughbred and worthy car, to be mechanically complicated and expensive to repair and maintain. The STD grapevine was informed of my interest and I was offered several cars ranging in price from £50K to £85K. Some of the cars, I discovered, were not original and therefore, at that sort of price I changed direction, since the emphasis in today's market is originality and history.

With encouragement from my wife Joan, I returned to the Lagonda marque looking at a 1930 3 litre and several 2 litres. These early test drives revealed the 3 litre to be marginally more powerful than the 2 litre – the extra weight of the 3-litre engine taking its toll. In response to my "Wanted" advert in "The Automobile", Joan and I made a trip to London to view Archie Thompson's 2-litre H.C. speed model. When Archie opened the garage in Kensington to reveal YX 2306, the car was an instant hit. The large garage was immaculate with several cars,

motorbikes and spares displayed in pristine condition. One could see that Archie was a fastidious man who cared for his vehicles. I made an offer that was refused and we walked away from the Kensington mews. We only got as far as the corner as Joan, who was critical of my approach to stand firm on my bid, persuaded me to return to make a higher offer since this was the finest 2 litre we had seen. Our second offer was accepted and the deal was clinched.

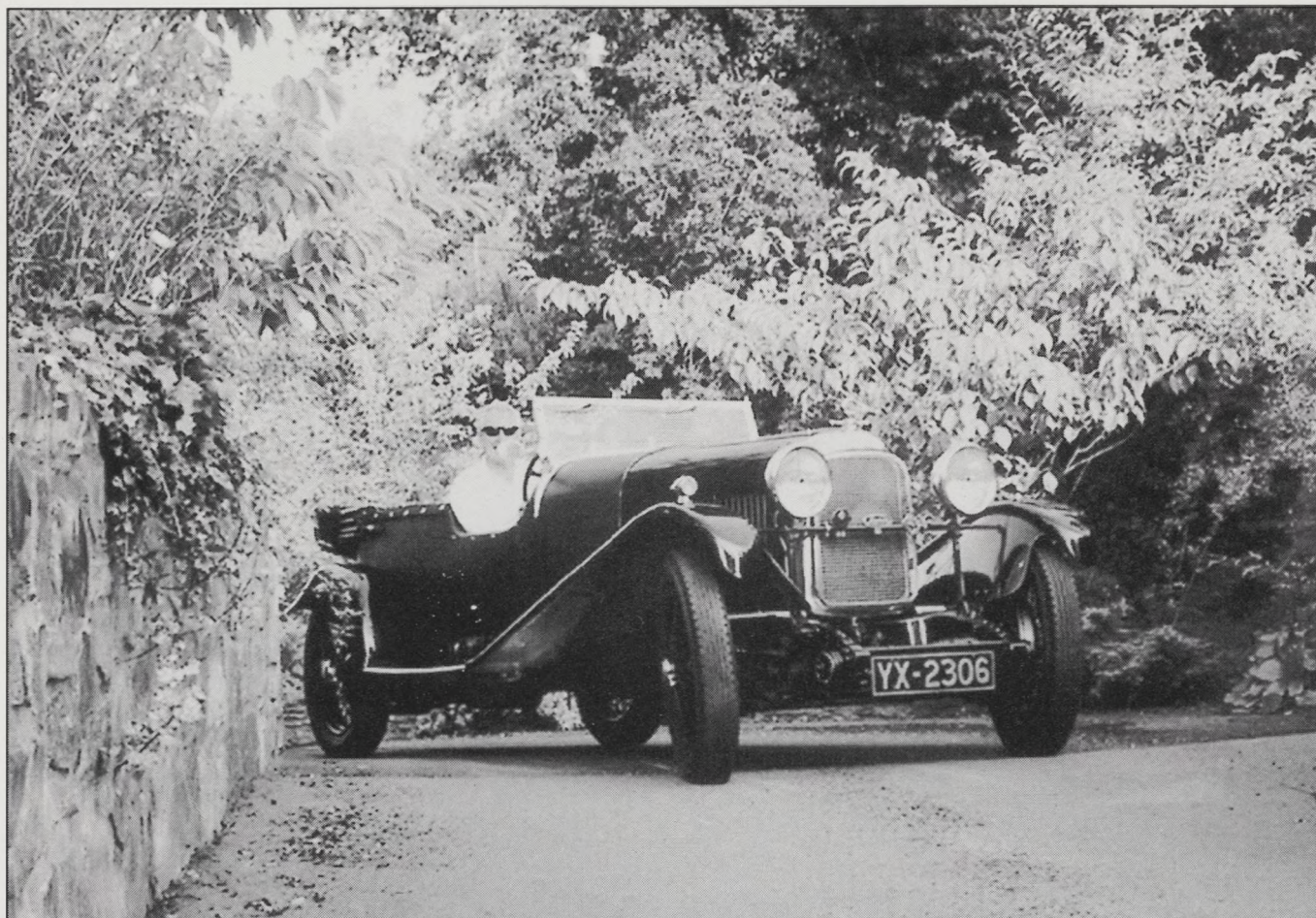
I discovered that Tony Brandon in Surrey had restored the car to a high standard in the 1970's. The car has been a delight to own and drive. Returning to the performance comparison with the Alvis 12/50, I would say "Yes, the 12/50 is quicker off the mark for short bursts but the Lagonda 2 litre is a more stable, taut and comfortable vintage tourer capable of safe cruising at higher speeds".

The article by Peter Docker in the Summer 2001 edition of the Club magazine prompts me to comment on some aspects of performance improvements. I agree with Peter's views on power/weight ratio, engineering and driving qualities and would like to add the following points:

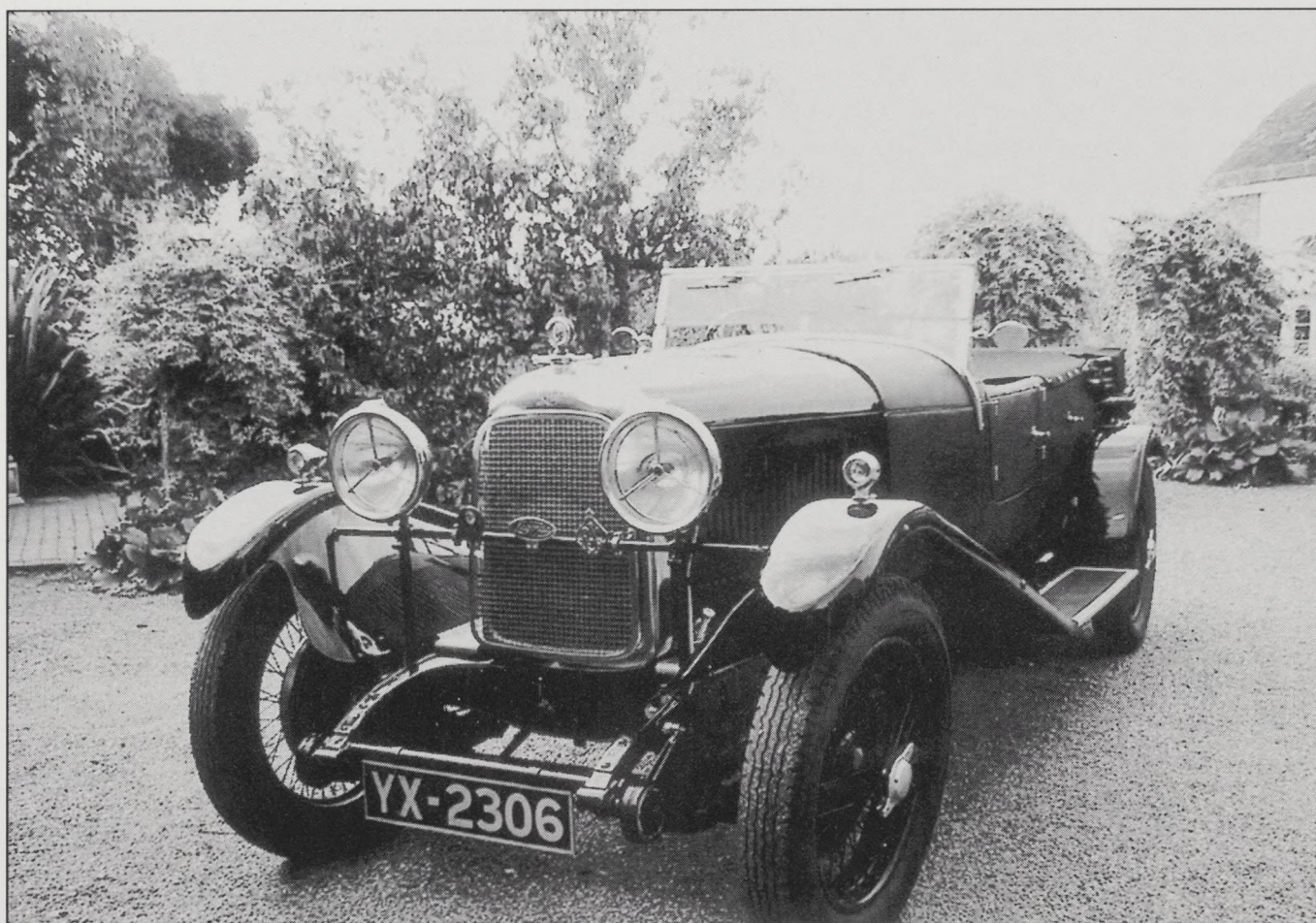
I do like the third gear ratio of the OH box and find it excellent for touring; consequently I have no desire to lower the ratio.

When carrying out changes to the engine, I would suggest doing one item at a time, then verifying the improvement by a test. I use a 1 in 5 test hill on the Quantock Hills where I live.

I found significant benefits to performance were achieved by altering the valve timing from the settings



John Fitton's lovely 2 litre - and his weather vane is shown at the foot of the next page!



defined in the handbook to the following:

Inlet valve starts to open: 10° BTDC

Exhaust valve fully closed: 10° ATDC

Inlet camshaft opening period: 236°

[approx]

Inlet valve fully closed no later than $45-50^{\circ}$ ABDC.

This setting is important in comparative slow running engines so that a reasonable "charge" is trapped in the cylinder on the compression stroke giving good low speed torque. With these settings applied, the mid point lobe of the camshafts should be 110°

I have no experience of increased compression ratio but feel sure it is of benefit as long as it is not pushed too high to compromise the smoothness of the engine. My cars compression pressures are 140lb/in^2 each cylinder for a CR of 6.3/1.

My experiment with changing from a Zenith triple diffuser to twin type 36UH did not prove very fruitful. There was a marginal increase in power above 2000 rpm, the autovac could not sustain the increased demand for fuel, and there was deterioration in smoothness of the engine.

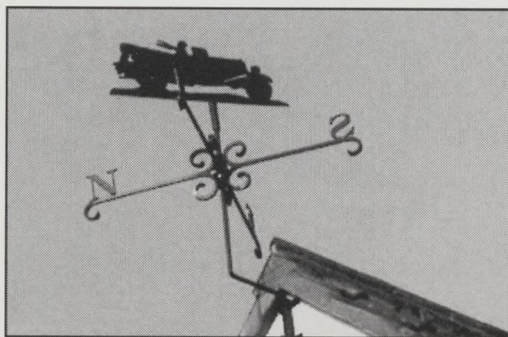
We all tend to be preoccupied with performance improvements and take for granted steering, brakes, and suspension. It is on this last point I will relate an interesting story. During the 1999 VSCC 65th anniversary at Malvern, Colin Mallet and I went out for a drive in my 2 Litre with Colin at the

wheel. Colin with his usual enthusiasm was praising the sweetness of the gearbox when there was an almighty bang, the rear wheels locked and the car slid out of control towards the centre of the road. We were fortunate that no other cars were in the vicinity and our speed was no more than 30 mph. The reason for this occurrence was that a main leaf had broken in a rear spring, the axle moved backwards, tightening the brake cables thereby jamming the brakes on. So this winter remove the gaiters and check your springs.

Finally, I would like to thank members of the Lagonda Club for their help and advice, particularly Phil Ridout for his technical guidance during numerous phone calls over the past 4 years. I am looking forward to Phil's book on the 2 Litre engine. Having been a member of a number of one-make Clubs over many years, I think that The Lagonda Club is one of the best, run by a dedicated management committee serving an enthusiastic and friendly membership.

At the moment I have no desire to "trade up" to an M45, being a lover of nickel-plated 4 cylinder long stroke vintage cars. Consequently, I am happy to endure the smiling face of David Hine as he passes me on the Swiss Alps ticking over in 3rd gear whilst I crawl up in 2nd!

In the video "Top Marques", Alec Downie refers to the 2 Litre as "a sporting car for the Gentry". If it's good enough for them, it's good enough for me!



Book Review

The Classic Car Paintings of Alan Fearnley. Price £40 (UK), \$60 (USA)

Published by David Porteus. Howell Press. ISBN 1 870586 42 5

THERE CAN BE FEW MEMBERS of the Lagonda Club who are not aware of Alan's superb workmanship. He painted the splendid picture of a Lagonda gathering at Brooklands which was featured on the cover of our Centennial Book and his work is internationally recognised and admired.

This book brings together 57 of Alan's oil paintings of classic cars, many of them featuring Lagondas and several showing his own M45 saloon. Throughout the book there are many of his pencil sketches, each featuring the cars in the paintings and helping to bring his story behind the painting of each picture to life.

Alan is noted for his careful attention to detail, but I am sure he won't mind me sharing a comment of his about the M45 featured on pages 20/21 – "I can't explain the bumper on the M45, page 20 – paint brush in gear – brain in neutral"! I counted 18 Lagondas or Invictas in the paintings and sketches, but there may be more!

His motor racing scenes capture the

sheer excitement of the moment in a way that many of his fellow artists fail to do. His action pictures are alive with movement and I am sure that his own experiences as a racing driver have contributed to his ability to portray the drama and tension so vividly.

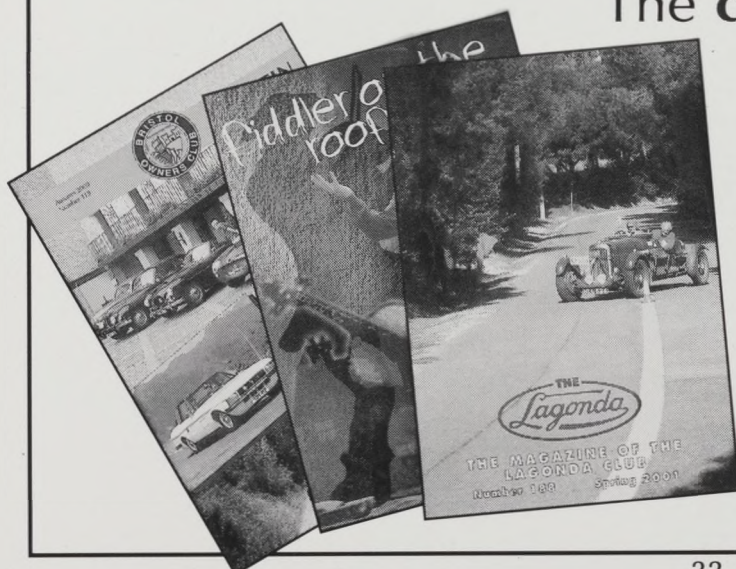
Much as I love his action scenes, I found the portraits of cars "at rest" totally absorbing. In some, the car is the main star, in others, it simply sets the scene and can even be relegated to the background. My all time favourite from this book doesn't actually feature a marque of car I have owned for any significant time. It brings a touch of humour to a picture of a rather lovely Rolls Royce, but you will have to buy the book to find out more!

This is a book every member of the Club will love to own, the paintings can be enjoyed again and again and the text adds to the enjoyment of Alan's work. It costs less than a tankful of fuel and I can guarantee that it will give you as much pleasure as a long drive in your Lagonda.

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Two of the superb
 paintings from
 Alan's book.
 Right "Ludgate Hill"
 and below: "Lagonda
 wins, Le Mans '35"



2nd Spring Social. Reynard House. Maulden. 15th July 2001

John Batt throws a party

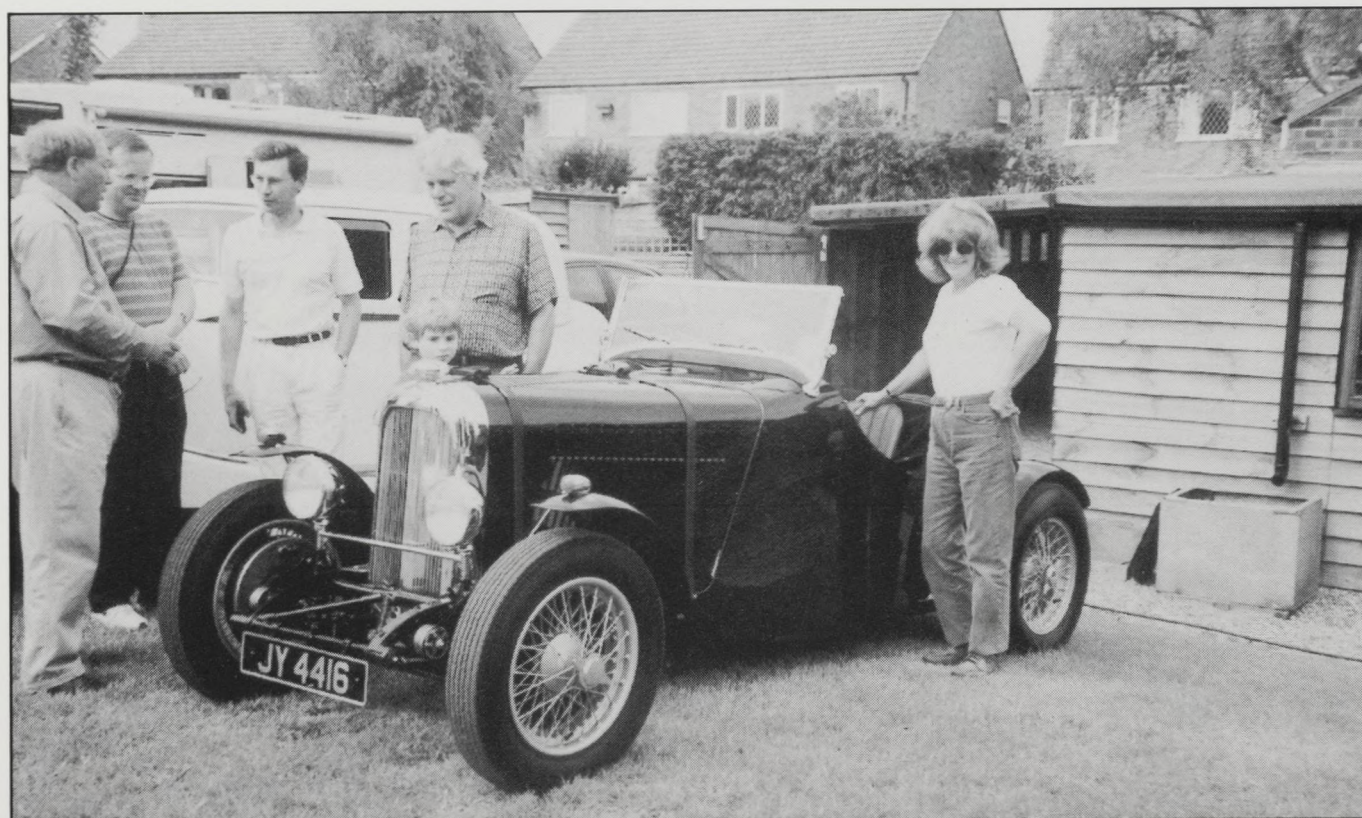
FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE restrictions were finally lifted 10 days prior to the despatch of the May newsletter, allowing access up the public right of way onto our land. A brief note in the Newsletter, with a flyer to local members plus those who came last year resulted in 49 people arriving, 15 Club cars also a nice selection of interesting classics and moderns. All enjoyed a splendid relaxed Saturday afternoon.

The hastily re-arranged day was based around a picnic formula supplemented by a barrel of Adnams Best which was almost as good as last year's Hook Norton Bitter!

The weather was again sunny and warm and the grass in the paddock short and dry so ideal for everything. Harry Taylor and family in DB 3 litre came the

longest distance from Nottingham whilst it was a pity Mike and Georgina Drakeford in their M45 had to turn back for home after being caught in a monumental M25 jam! The Gabriels brought their ex.Monte Carlo Invicta on its first outing for some years after a prolonged engine/gearbox rebuild. Smart car.

Robert Watts arrived mid-afternoon from Lincolnshire in his V8 after tending his sheep on the farm and so completed a nice selection of Lagondas. Rapier, 2 Litre and 2 Litre s/c, 16/80 Saloon and Tourer, M45, LG45, LG6, DB 3Litre and the V8. Arnold took photographs and his usual notes. All together a good day and we shall do it again next year - hopefully without any Government restrictions.



The Metcalfes display their "new" Rapier le Mans replica.



Above, the line-up of cars, below: the lunch-time picnic.

Photos: John & Susie Batt



Letters

Dear Ken,

I enclose some photocopies from a 16/80 brochure, which you may, or may not, have seen. Also some colour photocopies of the restoration of my 16/80. Sorry I didn't restore it as a saloon, the body went on to an Alvis.

Notes on Ron Gee's interesting article:

Pistons. I understood from Ivan Forshaw years ago that 1½ sets from a Hillman Minx fitted, but were flat topped. I believe I fitted them to AYL 413, a car I bought in bits from David Baldock. After restoration and use I sold it and it then featured in the TV series "Campoin".

Water pump. (Head-fitted type). I had problems with my present car UN 7664. The shaft had masses of end-float and leaked (so I also bought a Standard Vanguard unit, but didn't use it). On inspection, I found the rear pressure pad had worn away, the impellor had worn against a bolt head and the securing pin had sheared. Spare bits from home and abroad allowed a rebuild. Now very good and holds down the temperature well.

Oil pump. Had problems of nil oil pressure upon buying car. Inspection of the pump showed no visual problem, but a replacement unit brought immediate good results. Strange!

Starting. For two years I endured dreadful starting problems, trying a spare starter, new plugs, "Easistart" - then a simple answer: remove the lead blocks from the magneto and dry the trapped condensation. Excellent starting now.

Grease and oil. I have always used solidified oil on all greasing points and the steering box (since owning 2L L/C UW 1545 about 40 years ago. I also owned M45 saloon BTN 575 a few years ago).

Tyre pressures. I use 34 lbs/sq.in on my 16/80.

Notes on my present 16/80:

Chassis was some six inches longer than

standard.

Back axle ratio was very low.

Look at the wheels - like a Morris.

Some will criticise my conversion to a tourer, but my replica has given me so much enjoyment.

Yours sincerely

Brian Ricketts

Your editor went to see this car when he was searching for a 16/80 saloon some years ago, but turned it down because, as a saloon, it needed far too much work to bring it back to life. Brian was very brave to take it on and I congratulate him on rescuing what must, in all honesty, have been one of the least attractive Lagonda saloons ever made. Imagine, a very long wheelbase 16/80, with a huge and heavy six light body of the type sometimes seen on the 3 litre chassis, bolt-on 20 inch wheels and an incredibly low final drive ratio. Not the sort of car that has restorers clamouring for a chance to rescue it and it would not have been very exciting to drive. If ever a car needed to be transformed this was it. Well done, sir!

Dear Ken,

I wondered whether you would like the enclosed photo for the magazine. It was taken by John Moody, Chairman of the Midland Automobile Club, at the National two-day meeting at Shelsley Walsh in June. I ran the Invicta in the Classic Car Class and was the only pre-war car there (3rd on handicap).

Murray Walker was there because ITV were filming a documentary about his life and he started commentating at Shelsley. They borrowed my Invicta to film some paddock scenes and I met Murray afterwards - I was delighted and he seemed to be a really nice man.

All best wishes

Jo Moss

Dear Ken,

Thank you for publishing my article about the M45 propshaft in the Summer edition of the magazine. I hope fellow members enjoyed reading it.

Julian Messent has contacted me to advise that LMB Racing will be producing suitable bearings shortly. They will be of a size to allow the spider to be ground down to remove pitting and large enough in length to take up the necessary grinding of the forks to remove wear marks. These will appear in their next catalogue. I have asked that the semi-circular clips can be provided with the bearings, as they are quite often damaged when the bearing is removed.

A tremendous response to the problem for those with the shakes!

Now all I need is someone to make the caps for the Rotax distributor.

Regards

Michael Drakeford

Dear Ken,

It is indeed sad to hear that an English Princess is being forsaken for an Italian Mistress. Somewhere your morals or priorities have gone astray, or is it just a case of Old Timers Disease? Of course

we are all hopeful that this is a temporary condition and that there will be future reports of progress on your 2 Litre.

I am surprised to see my notes on the work done on my 2 Litre appearing in your prestigious magazine.

It was not written as a publication quality article and the sketches were certainly not drawn for that purpose. Also some of the historical facts I would have liked to have checked with someone more knowledgeable, like Arnold Davey, beforehand.

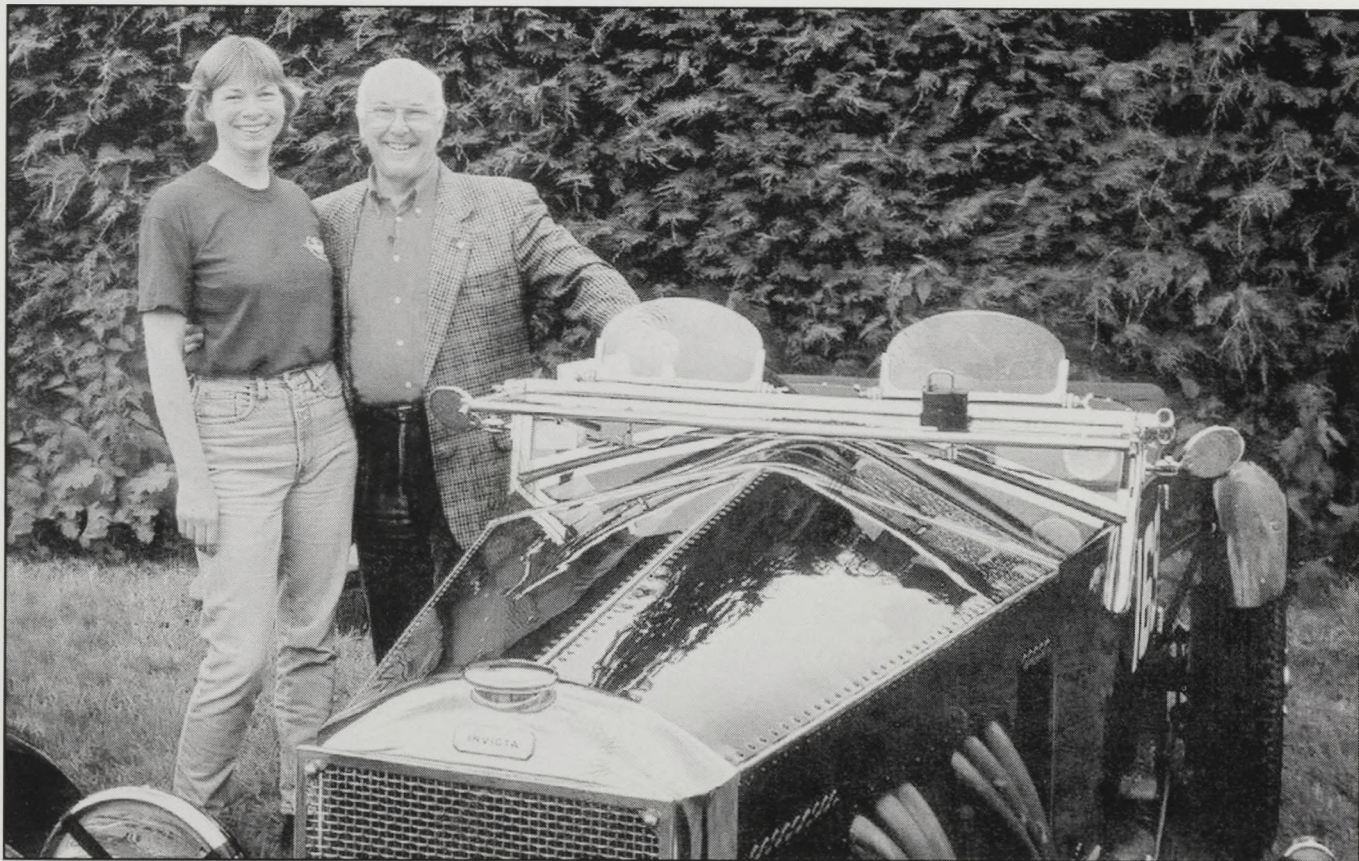
Incidentally I hope that the wear in the cylinders was 1.5 thou. and not 15 thou. as published

The 2 Litre RA9206 has now run some 2000 miles since January and has never performed better, so all its heart surgery can be said to be successful and the patient is fully recovered.

Of course I am appreciative that you should publish my rough notes in our magazine and hope that they may interest some other 2 Litre owners. Many thanks Ken

Kind regards,

Peter Docker



Please see the Editorial for reports on current progress! I must respond to some of the points made in Peter's letter above.

First, I omitted to make the point that Peter lives in Australia and expert help and advice on the more esoteric points of Lagonda lore are hard to find there. This made his notes even more valuable and his efforts all the more worth sharing. I will leave fellow members to judge whether his (un-edited) contribution should be described as "rough notes".

The omission of the decimal point when describing the cylinder wear was my mistake, not Peter's.

Finally, this is not "my" magazine, it is written by our members and I simply have the enormous privilege of assembling the articles and choosing the pictures.

K.P.P.

Dear Ken,

Herb does not know I am sending you these piccies!

The first one shows him filling his radiator at Monk Fryston prior to our returning from the annual dinner. You can see that he is using the cut glass water jug from the hotel dining room!

The car was showing problems with overheating and on the way home to Charlesworth, we broke down with monumental overheating and all the precious water from the water jug used up.

I called up the AA Relay on my mobile (remember, it was a Sunday morning and there was nobody about). Eventually this tiny man appeared and hauled Herb's saloon car aboard - and I took these piccies! The sort of thing you **never** want anybody else to see!

His car is now totally recovered, thank to Alan Brown's capable hands and we look forward to **another** journey, this time **trouble free!**

Yours

Ann Shoosmith

Dear Ken,

The Knarr Mill Mafia meet most Tuesdays at the "Old Bell", Delph, near Oldham - many join us for a pint.

Members were stunned last week by a very unusual occurrence, Northern Secretary Schofield was actually seen to produce (albeit of small denomination) from his secure leather money pouch and purchase beverage for others.

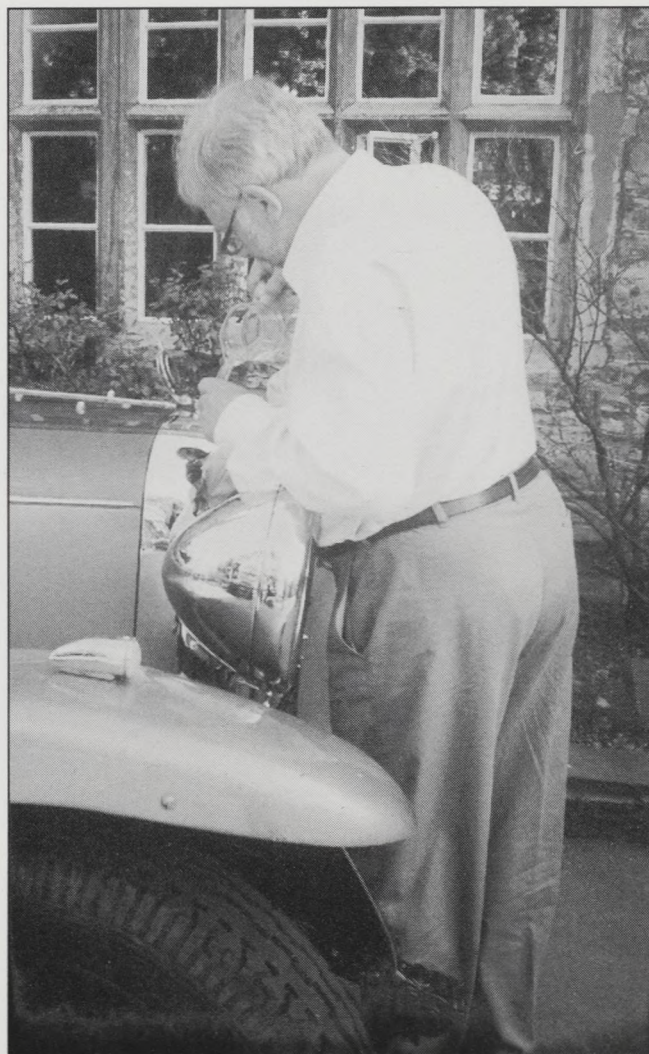
This rare event was not only greeted with much hilarity (it was clearly emotionally painful for Herb), but it was captured on film by Tim Gresty, our intrepid official photographer.

However, to be fair, Herb strongly rejects an insinuation of excessive financial prudence and has undertaken to invest in half a pint of beer for any new member who attends "The Old Bell". (Two half pints if you sell your Lagonda through him!)

Anon

We don't usually print anonymous letters, but this momentous event was of such historic importance it was felt that a permanent record should be made!

K.P.P.





Recycling can be Bad For Your Health

Arnold Davey delves further into the Club's old archives

WE HAVE SOME MEMBERS OF a meticulous turn of mind; I hesitate to use the word 'anorak' but they like to Check Up On Things. Some while back I related the extraordinary events that occurred at the village of Paston Green and its talking frog. Soon after, a member wrote to say he had been through all our published lists of members and couldn't find any mention anywhere of Armitage Shanks, the hero of that story. Could I furnish him with dates? I explained that since the club has historically only published lists at about four-year intervals, it was quite possible for a member to join, be reasonably active, sell the car and drop out, all without ever appearing in a list. He replied by return of post saying that's as may be but he couldn't find Paston Green on any map. I didn't reply to this. I don't see why I should be held to account for the shortcomings of the Ordnance Survey.

But Armitage Shanks was indeed a fellow to whom the most extraordinary adventures happened and his reason for leaving the club, although ultimately involuntary, was partly his own fault.

The affair with the frog and the WAAF officer led up to a pretty acrimonious divorce, at the conclusion of which he was left without a house or a modern car but fortunately still the owner of his splendid 2 Litre. He had to move into digs, in Pinner since you ask, and rejoined the "singles" market with a vengeance. One night, when he had gone to the local pub meet far too early, stayed too long and drunk too much beer, he rather foolishly, seeking a quick start in the morning, decided to reverse the Lagonda into his landlady's drive. What with too much booze and no reversing light, he made a pig's ear of it and

collided with an overhanging bough. Most of the damage was to his pride but he did put a nasty dent into one of his P100s. This was infuriating, as his new found poverty precluded the purchase of a replacement and to have the bent one beaten out and rechromed would mean the car would be off the road for weeks, which he couldn't countenance now that he was having to rely on it.

At about the same time he met and fell for a new girl friend, Anne Jynah, with whom he got on famously, although his parents found her a bit of a pain. Both he and Anne were living in digs and it was difficult to find much time to see each other, but as their friendship grew closer they decided that it would be a good idea to have a weekend together, following the Welsh Rally. Neither knew anything about Wales and they picked a hotel with a pin from the guide book adverts. It was in one of those villages with a twenty letter name containing only one vowel, the 'a' in Llan. The hotel turned out to be a bad choice. The owner had clearly absorbed every nicety of 'Fawlty Towers' but had taken it to be an instructional film on hotel management. He spotted at once that they had different surnames and instantly cancelled the double room Armitage had booked, substituting two singles as far apart as possible in the rambling building. This also brought in more money, of course.

It was dark by the time they had finished their evening meal but nevertheless they decided to explore the village, where Anne was delighted to find an antique shop. It was closed, of course, but the proprietor had left the lights on, presumably for security reasons and they spent some time

looking in the window. As his eyes accustomed themselves to the gloom, Armitage was intrigued to see, upside down on a shelf at the back of the shop, something that looked very like a black P100.

Sunday was spent following the Rally, of course, but they did find time to revisit the antique shop in daylight and Armitage was sufficiently convinced that it was the lamp he was seeking to reluctantly book another night at the hotel, so that they could catch the shop open on Monday.

Careful not to seem too keen, Armitage finally got his hands on it on Monday morning. It **was** a P100 and it had once been chromed but years of neglect had turned it black. The mounting bolt was missing and one arm of the bulb tripod was kinked, but the vital outer shell and rim were intact and undamaged. Armitage concealed his joy and set about the haggling expected of a tourist. The shopkeeper, of course, emphasised its rarity and intrinsic value while Armitage pointed out its dilapidated state and missing parts. Eventually they reached a compromise by which both parties felt they had been robbed and a deal was struck. While the shopkeeper was hunting for a bag big enough for the lamp, Armitage asked him where the lamp had come from, reasoning that there might just be a Lagonda lurking in the area. The shopkeeper embarked on a long convoluted tale involving the Big House, a ne'er-do-well son, a pregnant chambermaid, a fire and an insurance company defaulting. Armitage lost the thread of this quite soon and decided it wasn't worth pursuing since even if there was a 'barn discovery' in the vicinity, he couldn't afford to buy it.

With pressure of work and outings with Anne, it was several weeks before Armitage could begin to convert his old lamp into something presentable. First he had to discover the state of the plating on his new acquisition, so one evening he set to with an old shirt as rag and a

new bottle of chrome cleaner. The results were startling. He had barely given the rim a couple of rubs when there was a flash and a bang and he was no longer alone. Accompanied by a faint whiff of brimstone, the figure of a man had materialised in his room. Armitage was shattered and momentarily speechless.

"W-Who are you ?", he finally got out.

"I'm the Genie of the Lamp, squire", said the figure. "I am yours to command, and that".

Now Armitage knew all about genies from childhood books. They were about 9 feet tall with a turban and a wispy beard, clad in satin robes. This apparition was below average height, was wearing a boiler suit which had once been white, buttonless but held together with a stout leather belt. He wore plimsolls and a flat cap whose peak was black with greasy fingermarks. His tartan shirt was fastened with a tie which had been smart until the day when it had been called to double as an emergency fan belt. Recovering slightly, Armitage questioned this figure about his unexpected appearance and future intentions. The genie explained that his own organisation's rules demanded that genies had to blend in with their local surroundings. He expanded on this in reply to questions. What had happened was that in 1930 Joseph Lucas had been experiencing exactly the same financial problems as everyone else and had begun to go world-wide in exploring cheaper markets for their raw materials. Among potential suppliers they had found Al-Ad-Din Industries of Baghdad, who had supplied some hundreds of tons of scrap brass and by some mix-up had included in the shipment the founder's original lamp, which had been removed from the glass case in the boardroom where it normally lived, as they had the decorators in. The genie went with the lamp and hence was now dressed as a Birmingham metal worker of 1930. As for his intentions, they were the traditional ones, Armitage was to have three wishes granted.

Armitage was suitably wary.

"I've heard all these stories", he said. "You genies play tricks and I won't get what I've asked for".

"Nonsense", said the genie. "That's not true. People get exactly what they ask for. It's not my fault if they don't think it through or don't express themselves clearly. For example, I had a bloke the other week who wanted to be the first man on Mars. I fixed it up for him, but I still feel he should have asked for a space suit as well".

"I need time to think", said Armitage. "I've never been in this position before".

"Well, not too long then", said the genie, beginning to fidget. "I've got others to deal with, you know, chief".

As the genie was becoming more impatient by the minute and not wanting to antagonise him, Armitage hastily formulated his three wishes.

"I want to be very rich", he said. "And royal and married to a beautiful wife who loves me".

"About time too" said the genie, producing a Woodbine packet from a pocket of his overalls. He extracted the one remaining cigarette and put it behind his ear and then wrote down Armitage's wishes on the inside of the packet.

"Shouldn't be a problem with that, boss"

The genie then produced a length of welding rod from the leg pocket of his suit, waved it at Armitage and said something incomprehensible. There was another, louder, bang and the room went black. Armitage was aware of being transported as if by a hurricane wind and the room began to whizz round. Within a few seconds he lost consciousness.

Eventually, slowly, he came round, feeling that a lot had happened while he was out. He was lying in a grand four-poster bed between silk sheets. It was dark in the room but he became aware that he was not alone in the bed. He had also grown a walrus moustache, not quite in keeping with his normal appearance. As he collected his wits there was a discreet tap at the door and a liveried footman appeared, bowed to the bed and padded across to the window, where he pulled back the heavy curtains. The summer sun flooded in and revealed a room that was vast, bigger than the average house and with a ceiling about 15 feet high. The silk sheets had monograms on them, repeated on the curtains and on the bed head, featuring eagles, crowns and a motto. Armitage turned his head and saw that beside him, as requested, was lying a beautiful woman, by no means in the first flush of youth and not as he had envisaged. Then he remembered that he hadn't specified "young". The light in the room woke her and she opened her eyes and smiled at him.

"Good morning, darling" she said. She spoke in German and Armitage found he understood her perfectly and replied in the same language. They discussed the weather and then his wife suddenly looked alarmed.

"What's the time now?" she asked.

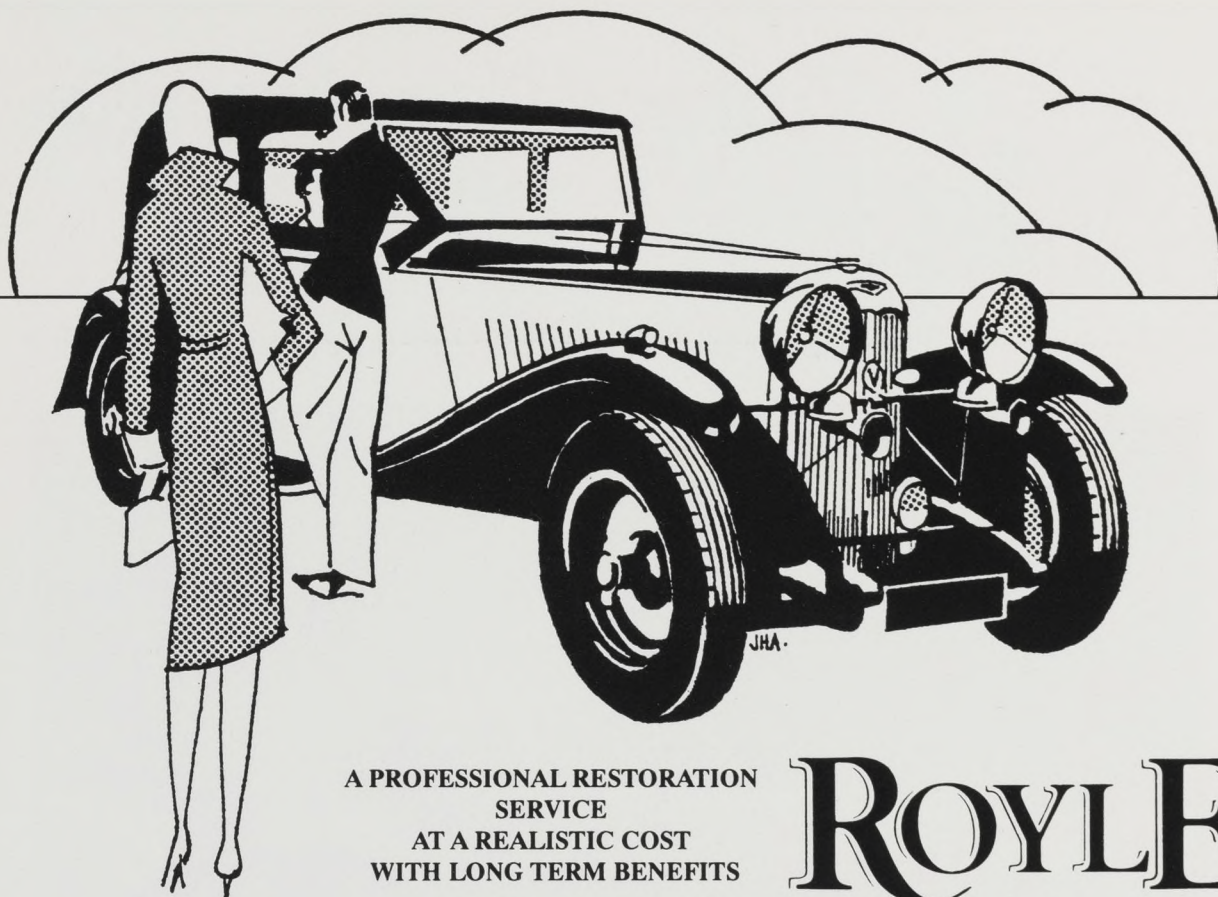
Armitage looked around for a clock and eventually spotted a small gold carriage clock on a table across the room.

"Half past eight", he said.

At this his wife jerked upright with a look of horror on her face

"Good God", she cried. "But we must hurry, Franz Ferdinand, we have to be in Sarajevo by noon".





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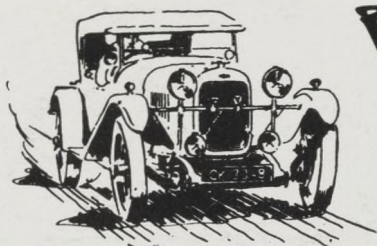
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