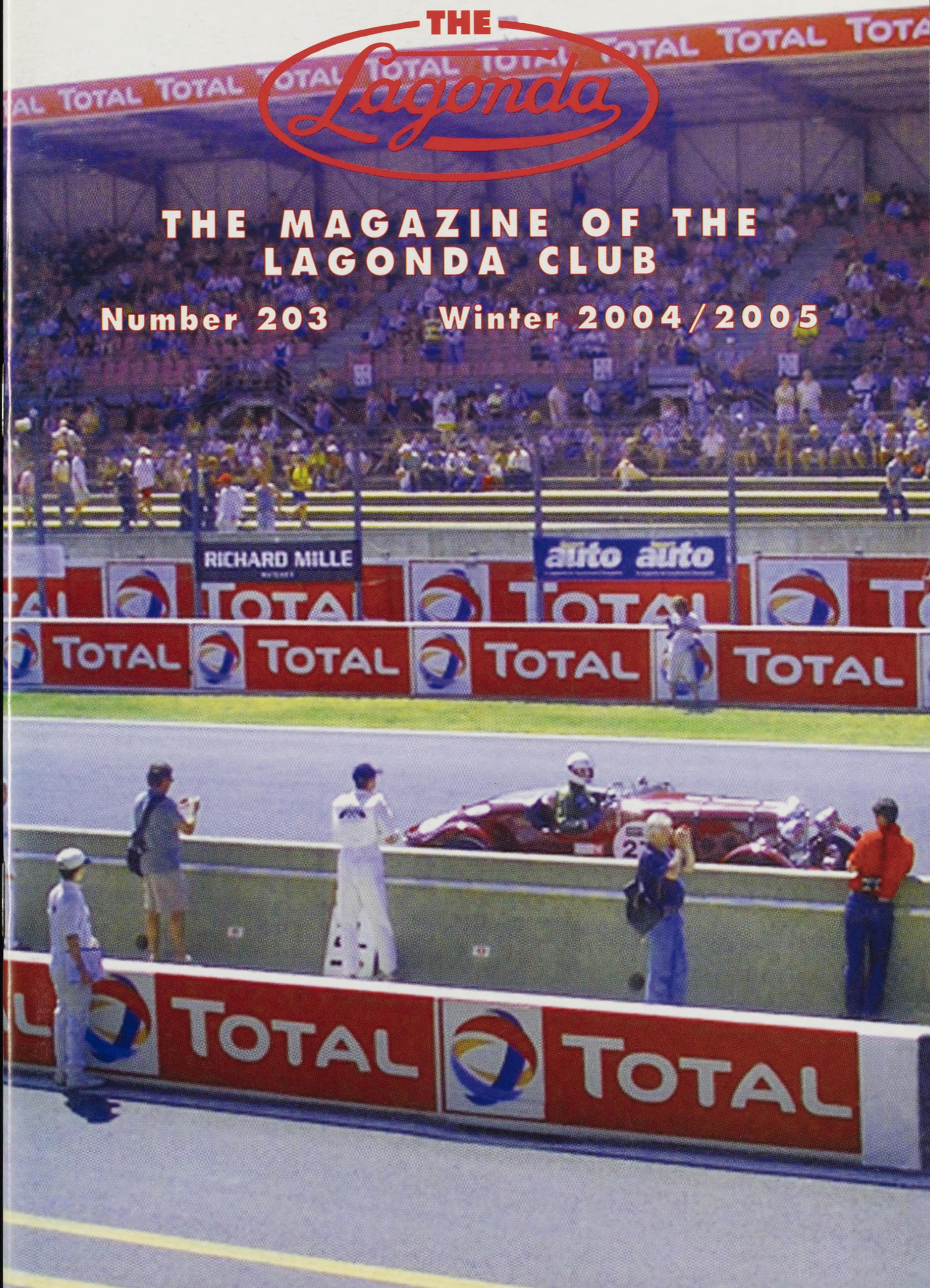




THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB

Number 203

Winter 2004/2005



DAVID AYRE



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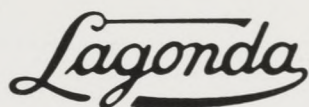
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FRONT COVER

Colin Bugler passes the pits at le Mans, see “Letters”.

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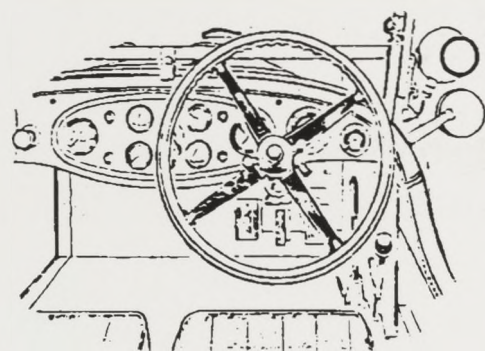
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From the Driving Seat

by Ken Painter



SITTING HERE, FEELING MY AGE, I reflected on the fact that I was just 29 years old when I found myself "volunteered" as the editor of the Malaysian and Singapore Vintage Car Register Magazine. Nearly 37 years and four club magazine editorships later, I am still very much enjoying my editorial duties, but it is a sad fact of life that very few young people can afford to buy a car such as a Lagonda any more, so clubs and their committees are becoming the refuges of old fogies such as me. The Lagonda Club Board is made up mainly from the pensioner class, although, to be kind to them and to me, many of us were in full time work when we first took on our roles.

I was just 21 when I bought my first Lagonda. It was priced at £100, but the dealer knocked £2.10s off the price when it was discovered that the petrol tank filler neck leaked when the tank was more than three quarters full. £100 was almost two months' wages for me then and the car was no concours queen, but you would have to be very wealthy indeed if you could buy a similar car for two months' wages today. Unless you are bequeathed a car by a wealthy relative there are few opportunities for

the younger generation to afford a car and to join clubs such as ours, so I suppose we must accept that our type of cars are now mainly the playthings of the older generation. Anyone for bowls?

Another and sadder aspect of our advancing years is the death of a member who has served the club well for many years. We have lost Phil Ridout and with him has gone probably the most knowledgeable 2 litre expert of all. It was always a keenly anticipated pleasure to meet up with Phil at the Beaulieu Autojumble and I never failed to marvel at the way he seemed to smell out the rarest and most obscure parts for a 2 litre when I could find nothing for my car. His enthusiasm remained undimmed over the years and I shall not be the only one to miss him. Clive Dalton gave a moving eulogy at his funeral and this is printed in full on the following page. Phil's legacy will surely be the 2 litre manual he was preparing and which was so tantalisingly close to completion. It is good to know that his draft has been passed on to other hands and will be made ready for publication in the near future.

**LAST DATE FOR COPY FOR THE SPRING MAGAZINE IS
... SATURDAY 26TH MARCH 2005 ...**



Phil Ridout

Clive Dalton gave this eulogy at the funeral of our much loved and sadly missed friend

ALL OF YOU HERE will have your special memories of Phil. What will be said now is a compilation of lot of peoples' memories but will inevitably omit some important facets of him. Remember them carefully and share them later. They will be treasured

Phil was born in Harrow on 22nd April 1921. It is perhaps not without significance that it was the beginning of the Vintage Era.

His father was the Post Master at Buckingham Palace who got to be well known to the Royal Family and who moved about with them when they went to Sandringham and other places. Phil still had some tokens of their appreciation given to his father. There is also a well known advertising photograph showing Father presenting the first National Savings Certificates to the two princesses the elder of whom is now the Queen.

Mother was a Miss Saphin from a family of Clockmakers. Phil inherited the clockmakers tools and very well knew how to use them. He spent many years tracing both families back to 1775.

As a child Phil was very soon into model trains, into upgrading them to electric, into crystal sets and into radio, much encouraged by his father. He was a 'Ham Radio' enthusiast on the middle 1930s with the callsign G2DKI. It was all Morse in those days.

Following School his father got him into the Post Office and as a young lad one of his jobs was to visit the Banks and City Offices changing the Accumulators that then used to run private exchanges.

He went to Technical College to read Electrical Engineering which of course led eventually to Membership of the Institution of Electrical Engineers MIEE.

He was soon doing serious work in the Post Office and must have been held in high regard, because in 1939 at 19 years of age, he was given the task of setting up a training school to teach Morse Code. He took over a telephone exchange at Dollis Hill Research Laboratories, set up the school with its equipment and then proceeded to train batches of students. This was extremely valuable work. The monitoring of Morse transmissions by radio provided the vital input to Bletchley Park and lead directly to the cracking of Enigma. It is thought that he kept a log book at this period but it has not surfaced yet.

About three years later he was working with crystals and time keeping. Sylvia Fisher recalls joining his frequency measuring lab in about 1943 and working there for some time. On a weekly basis he would visit the massive pendulum clock at the Science Museum conferring with the museum experts regarding the accuracy of his and their timekeeping. The transmitting station at Rugby appears in the record at this time. A little later he taught Sylvia to drive in a Swallow-tail MG.

Phil lived in Harrow until 1949 when he would have been 28 and then moved to Yatton, Bristol and then to Filton whilst working at Backwell Research Station. This work was then on the leading edge of data transmission and involved the design of Modulators and Demodulators and Voice Frequency signalling. He was soon a world expert. This was an important period for one other reason. He bought the High Chassis Lagonda UL 8564 and then joined the Lagonda Club on the 25th April 1954. Stan & Vicki Fletcher well remember his excitement. They had acquired an Alvis



*Lagonda wreath at Phil Ridout's funeral. The wreath in the shape of the two litre register badge.
Photo: Pat Elliott*



Phil Ridout, on the right, in conversation with Peter Jones. The car is the "white" two-litre which they built-up jointly, photographed at the New Forest lunch meet 2003.

Photo: Pat Elliott

12/50 at the same time and both cars came to the funeral the Alvis now in the hands of Robin Hiscock, one of Phil's executors.

This was not his only car, he had a Bristol 405 too for which he would simply pop down the road for spares. When it moved to other hands not only did he transfer all his documentation but also maintained his membership of the Club to help the new owner.

He left Bristol in 1961, going back to Elstree. It must have been this period when he started going to the West London Pub meets in Avery Row when people would come in their city suits and park their Lags out in the street. Such names as Harry Gostling appear now.

There is one story which must date from this period and it concerns Ivan Forshaw's Napier. This well known car required a crankshaft which in those days were simply not available like they are now. Phil and Ivan conceived the idea of going along to a scrapyards and selecting a likely looking lorry engine with the right number of cylinders. They proceeded to remove its crank which Phil then took back to his workshop and remachined to suit the Napier. In Phil's effects there is a cassette tape of engine noises. The label on one side reads: "Napier engine first running" and on the other side "Napier Engine - with car movement". His favourite engine sound was, however, the V16 BRM.

In his professional life some will remember when we first had satellite communications with America in 1962. This was done via Goonhilly Down in Cornwall and Phil was heavily involved. The rising and setting of the satellite provided some interesting effects.

BT eventually moved their research labs from Dollis Hill in North London out to Martlesham in Suffolk. Some of Phil's friends moved at once but Phil followed after an interval to live at Monk Soham. He found it "remote" but had his workshop in a Nissen hut in the garden. He was now a group leader for BT

research station. He was much respected by his employers who wanted to promote him to higher office. He refused these offers as he so loved his technical work. BT therefore did a very rare thing and gave him what they called a Merit Promotion. This meant that he would have management grades of pay but continue to lead his team of technical people.

1986 brought retirement and a move to Andover but he carefully maintained his friends - carefully. He used to amaze a small group of them by driving up 160 miles every month to Suffolk for a pub lunch. He swore that a good fill of East Anglian beer kept him going. To questions of falling asleep on the road he replied that he just drove faster and the adrenalin kept him awake.

He had a wide range of other interests besides the Lagonda Club. He mastered computers but in a slightly puritanical way in that they were useful but to be kept in their place and not made use of for frivolous purposes like keeping in touch with friends. He preferred the phone for this. He loved his Amstrad, hated Microsoft Windows and thought that the World Wide Web was a gross waste of address space. He was a member of the Radio Society of Great Britain, RSGB and the Radio Amateur Old Timer Association. A visit to the National Trust would usually set him off on another line of new research. He liked music especially Traditional Jazz such as Chris Barber, Aker Bilk and Lonnie Donegan.

The most significant of his interests has to be the Lagonda Club if only measured by his direct contribution to it. He joined in 1954 and remained to the very last day. He had just two Lagondas but maintained for many years that "happiness was owning only one". These were the High Chassis 2 Litre UL 8564 and for a time the blown car GT 910 now owned and much used by Jeff Ody. He became the World's expert on 2-litres spending decades learning and recording information about these cars. He was the

Club's resident expert and must have taken thousands of phone calls from people wanting to learn more about their cars either newly purchased or broken down or in restoration. His last phone call at 9.30 pm on the Thursday evening was to James Woollard to discuss camshafts and his first phone call the following day was to have been to Mike Pilgrim to talk about fuel pumps.

His advice was so freely given too. Despite an air of "how could you possibly not understand such a simple thing" the response that followed was invariably detailed, accurate, friendly and very much to the point.

He had an amazing memory both for events long ago and for minute details of a 2 Litre. The diameter, number of threads per inch and tightening torque of the 2 Litre half shaft ring nuts recalled instantly. In this particular case, however, he had designed and made a set of special tools for the job, four feet long. Pictures of them were sent to a recent enquirer to accompany a floppy disc of information. Typical.

He was an excellent photographer. He had his own dark room and much of his work in this field has been published. Geoff. Seaton's illustrated book on Lagondas contains many examples. Polished castings and chromed bolt heads were, however, not his thing.

From the Club's point of view these talents are absolutely wonderful. He started revising the 2 Litre Instruction Manual in the early 1990's but although he never finished it, perfection being unattainable, he did leave it all in good order ready for other hands to pick up easily. All the words are finished and he left vastly more photographs than are required to complete the book. All that needs to be done now is to select the photographs and to prepare it all for

publishing. Those familiar with The Gearbox Book will realise what a treat is coming.

He kept a master plan on paper of his garden showing the location of all the plants in the borders, where they came from and when they flowered. He could talk knowledgeably and in detail about gardening and plants and was familiar with and used their Latin names when appropriate.

Phil compiled a book now in the hands of his executors in which the contents of every room in his house are described in detail including what is in each container and instructions what to do with it.

Fair. He would follow the Traction Engines and record their sounds. The music of a Fairground organ was the introduction at his funeral. He also liked the beer too. At the Fair he has been described and "just like a dog with two tails".

Phil's idea of a really happy meeting was to stand around by the cars (preferably 2 litres) with a pint of beer in his hand. He missed Prescott only twice in forty years and would bring his own tankard to the AGM. He loved to relax down at his local Rooksbury Lake watching the dabchicks after which he would meet up with his pal Rodney Horner for a pint. Rodney used to be half of Liddell and Horner who specialised in exotic cars. Phil's idea of a holiday was his annual trip to the local pub at Worth Matravers on the Isle of Purbeck. It was, however, where the 2 Litre Register was formed.

He was a lovely, complex, interesting, brilliant and very well-organised man. His memorial will be the much visited 2 Litre Handbook. Paper endures rather better than stone.



The Suffolk Dinner

Saturday 19 March 2005, 6.45pm for 7.15pm

at

The White Lion Hotel

Market Cross Place, Aldeburgh

Roast Parsnip & Honey Soup



Marinated Brie with Pecan & Raisin Bread

or

Pressed Terrine of Mediterranean Vegetables with Niçoise Salad



Crispy Confit of Duck served with Chorizo & Braised Lentils



Poached Pear with Honey Comb & Vanilla Syrup

or

Chocolate Truffle Torte, Orange Sauce & Chantilly Cream



Coffee and Mints



This year we welcome John Batt as our after-dinner speaker.
Gary Guiver Gong award for the Rapier coming furthest. Dress optional.
A vegetarian Pithivier of Asparagus with Soft Poached Egg is available
in lieu of Duck **if stated when you order tickets.**

Tickets £26 each, cheques payable to Mike Pilgrim, from Little Orchard,
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ALSO – on Sunday 20 March



Meet for lunch, from noon onwards, at the Old
Mill House, Saxstead Green near Framlingham

Bring your Lagonda!



A short history of KW 4820 (ex DUD 698)

Chassis number OH 9266, engine number 1515, OHL 999.

Dick Graham experiences at first hand the problems in sorting out the history of a vintage car

TO WRITE THIS I have used Bill Hartop and Arnold Davey's notes, our own history file and a careful study of the car.

Description

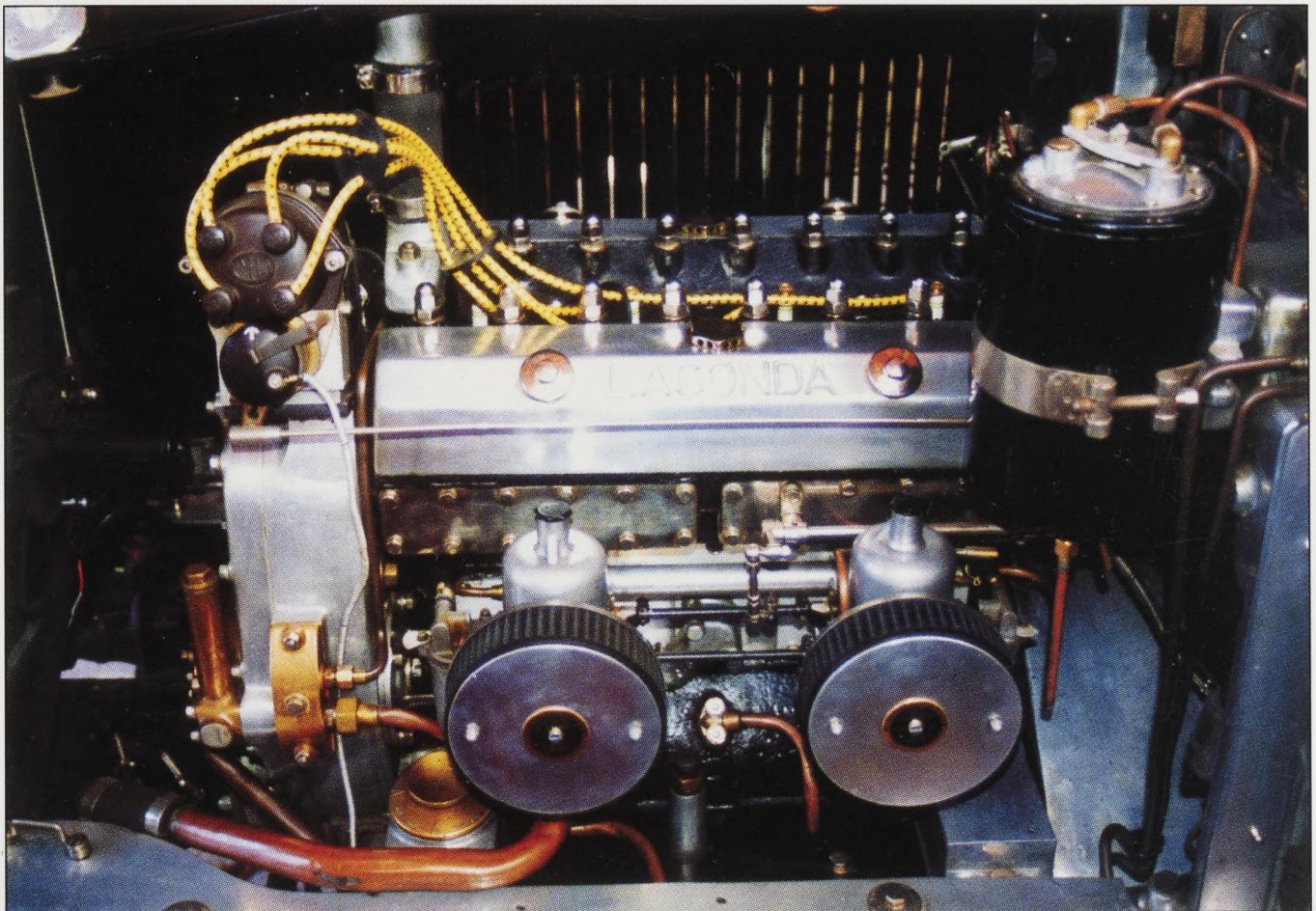
The car appears to be standard low chassis, ie the chassis, axles, bulkhead, engine, dashboard and seats appear, as far as I can tell, to be very much the same as most or all other low chassis cars. The body is slightly peculiar, and is described by the Club as T 1 1/2 - somewhere between a Type 1 and a Type 2 with three doors but no skirts. Also it lacks fabric covering. The Club records show it to have been built from two cars - but there appears to be no evidence on the car other than that one chassis rail may be a foreigner. The chassis has a different number stamped on each rail - on the offside OH 9266 and on the near side 9768 (without the OH). On the bulkhead there is a date or number 17/6/30 cast in - it looks like a date, but if all Lagondas have got this how can there be any doubt about dates? The engine's timing cover is stamped both 1515 (amateurishly) and OHL 999. In Arnold's notes he thinks that the second number should actually read OHL 2999, but there is no visible evidence for a 2. I recently found OH 1515 stamped on the block. The car had no ID plate when I bought it.

I have an old letter from the Ministry of Transport confirming that the registration number KW 4820 was issued by Bradford Council on November 3rd 1928, so it is obviously from a high chassis car. Perhaps this is where the

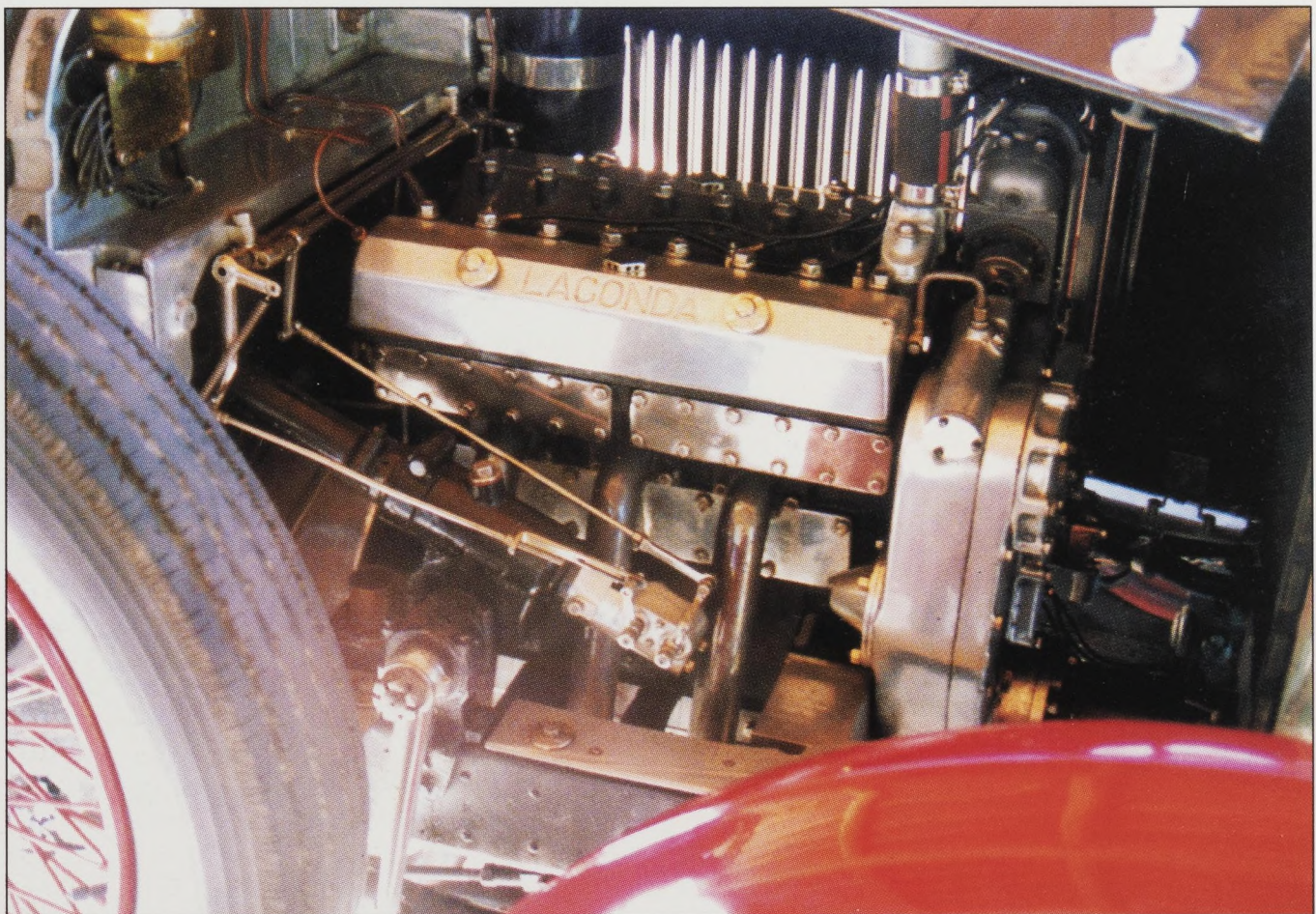
idea that it was made from two cars comes from; the second car chassis OH 9266 having donated only the log book to make sure that it was "Vintage", or quite possibly because it was the only log book available. It is also of course possible that the slightly archaic body could have come from the earlier car - but were any high chassis tourers made with three doors? The car looks like the 1930 lightweight low chassis car GF 1347, right down to the design of its windscreen, but with an extra door. It is also very like PL 7593. I am fairly sure the body has never had any fabric on it, as the doors fit so tightly there would be no room for it. It didn't have fabric when it was bought in the 1980s, and we have to assume it didn't have it in the 1960s since no work had been done since then. When I bought the car it had a single 1 1/4 SU, though it had had a Zenith in 1988. It produced 57bhp, the gearbox has standard ratios and the rear axle is 4.1:1. It had had a three branch tubular exhaust manifold made in the 1980s, and it was dark green before 1988.

History

I know nothing about pre-war owners. The registration number KW 4820 was sold by Central Garages in Bradford, attached to some other car! I have quite a list of post-war owners, starting with Arthur Jeddere Fisher in 1949. I wrote to him recently and he replied "not guilty of owning an unblown 2 litre - never thought they worked without a supercharger" so someone got that wrong! He did however admit to helping other people with log-



Two pictures of KW's engine bay





... and two pictures of the car itself.



books etc, so it is possible he may have had some hand in the car. One way or another, it gained the registration DUD 698 in 1949 - possibly simply as a fiddle to be able to pay the lower flat rate of road tax (newly registered cars were cheaper to tax). The list of owners from then on goes like this: C. E. Lyne 1952, (London) Edward S. Mallett 1954-5, (Guildford) M. J. Wharrad (Surrey), C.H.Doggett (Herts) G.P.Mould (London). Mr Mould allowed it to moulder in the streets of Central London, and it was rescued in 1968 by N.J.Fletcher, a Cambridge Undergraduate from the Police compound. Somehow Mr Fletcher knew of the earlier registration number, as he tried very hard to get KW 4820 assigned to the car but without success. He owned the car for twenty years, and must have done a fairly major dismantling operation to straighten a bent chassis rail. There is quite a lot of correspondence in the file between him and Ivan Forshaw in 1968-9. At that time Mr Fletcher believed that this was the earliest low chassis car in existence, no doubt based on the registration number. I believe that he went to Canada in 1970 and the car was left laid up for eighteen years. The car was then bought by Denzil Hughes of Berkshire in 1988 who did a complete restoration. He was successful in having its "original" registration number reassigned. He won with the car a round of the Benson and Hedges concours in 1991. It then went abroad to W. Bots in Belgium, and to me in Italy in 2000.

When I bought the car it needed an engine rebuild. I thought at first about supercharging, but then after long conversations with Julian at LMB we decided to bore and stroke it to 76 x 130 (2.4 Litres). It has new steel crank and rods, forged pistons giving 9:1 compression ratio, new cams to Mr Wadsworth's design, twin 1 1/2" S.U carbs (modernish, unfortunately). This

all adds up to 105 bhp, with very slightly less tractability than before. Is this the most powerful 2 Litre engine ever built? (I'm not sure, Tim Wadsworth's 2 litre, which hasn't been overbored, gives 100bhp at the back wheels. K.P.P.)

When the car came back the problems were not over as a gearbox rebuild was required - I managed to get decent second-hand first and second gears. First gear had been totally destroyed by wear, and second gear by ham-fistedness!! It is a standard ratio gearbox, and though it is tempting to think about a close ratio set I think the standard ones suit our terrain better.

The new engine combined with a lighter flywheel and an operating clutch brake has transformed the driving of the car. It is now a fairly fast car even by modern standards, and gear changing is very much simpler. In its original form, when changing down for the steepish hills which abound in this area one virtually came to a standstill while waiting for the engine revs to rise. 90mph seems on the cards, as we have seen 80, still accelerating rapidly - it is my courage that runs out rather than the steam. The brakes are very good now - Julian suggested adding radius arms to control the effects of front spring flexing, but they would have been rather visible. I have fitted the second bump stops which were missing, and that seems to have been moderately effective.

Straight line stability is not good at high speeds, having read Hine on shimmy I am wondering whether I lack sufficient castor, and will do a survey of the front suspension geometry shortly. My slight experience of shimmy seems to have been cured by blowing the tyres up. The only problem with the car now (apart from its terrible turning circle) is running on - perhaps the compression ratio is just a bit too high, but it doesn't always do it, any ideas?

Reviving a 2 Litre Lagonda

Nigel Paterson wakens his sleeping beauty

I BOUGHT BU 6754 just over two years ago. The car was advertised for sale in Classic Car Mart in 2002, several months before that it had been advertised in the Lagonda Club Newsletter. It was described as an original car that runs and drives well. I went to look at the car and could not resist its good looks. It had all the features of a vintage sports car that I have admired from an early age: the low windscreen, the drop side, the P100's, cycle wings and a long bonnet. I bought the car that day and arranged for it to be delivered to Gloucestershire. My Alvis Firebird tourer, which I had always said I would never sell, was advertised in Automobile and sold quickly.

When the Lagonda was delivered I had to drive it the final half mile to my house. Of course it broke down immediately! Bypassing the fuel pump switch cured the problem. At the house there is a sharp upward reverse and a right angle turn into my garage. After several attempts, much juddering and a temporary loss of clutch pedal movement it came to rest in the garage. Here it sat for the next 9 months while I gave the car a thorough going over, a clean and many repairs.

The advert for the car was accurate and it was very original. It drove, but was far more difficult than my Alvis, which has an excellent gear box with synchro on all 4 gears. Many 'repairs' had been done to keep the car going, but these were mainly straightforward to replace with authentic parts from the Lagonda Club and from autojumbles. The car had only covered about 5000 miles in the last 50 years in one ownership, but seems to have always been kept going and run regularly. It had been looked after and had not been allowed to deteriorate by

leaving it to stand idle for a long period of time.

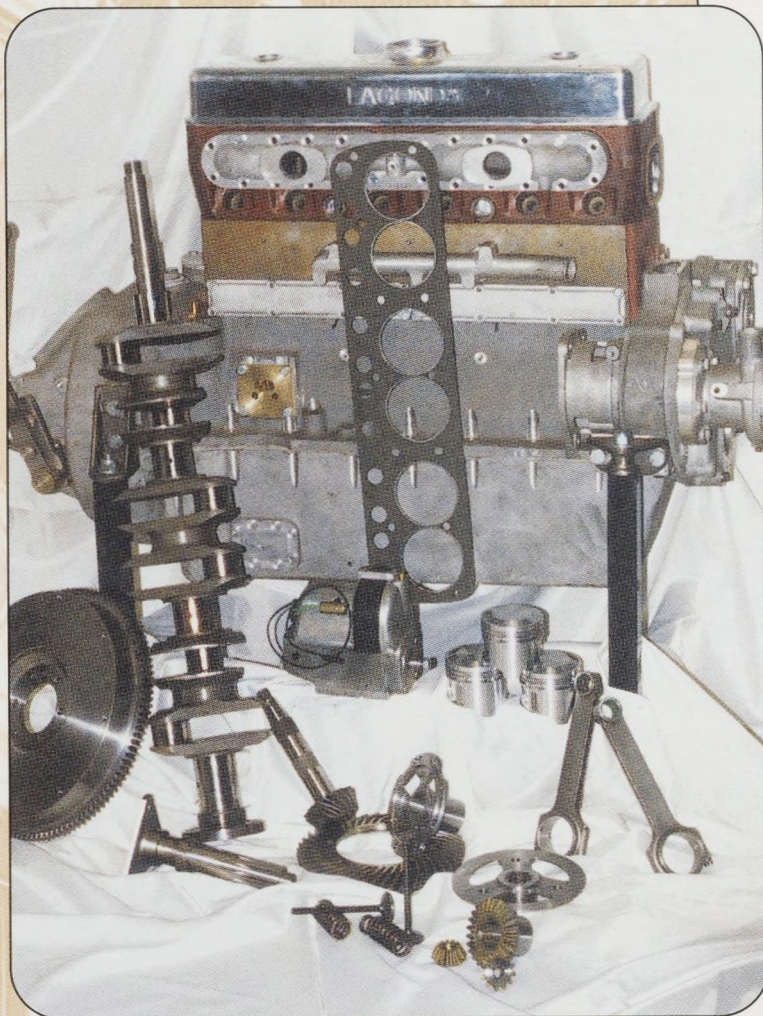
The car is a 2 litre low chassis, supercharged speed model. The supercharger was removed before the 1950's, but all the other mechanical and body features of the supercharged car are present. It is a real time warp and retains its original fabric covering, hood and seats (although all rather ragged). The first decision was whether to restore or rejuvenate what was there. I decided on the latter policy as there are many restored (and lovely looking) cars around, but not so many that have gently matured over the past 70 years, so that they now have the patina of age that is impossible to imitate. Everyone who sees the car says leave it alone.

The wiring was a mixture of original with domestic wires added, whenever sections had failed. The whole system was stripped out and replaced. All switches were removed, the contacts chemically cleaned and replaced. The fuel system was removed, cleaned and the carburettor rebuilt. The carburettor is fitted onto what I think is the original inlet manifold for the supercharger, with some slight modifications. The SU fuel pump was replaced with a new Japanese pump, which will be totally reliable. The original mechanical pump must have been replaced many years ago. Its mounting flange is blanked off. About half a kilogram of crud was sloshed out of the petrol tank, before the washings ran clear. I used paraffin, followed by petrol for this (not safe, I know). The tank sender was seized, but was easily freed and rewired to the dash gauge, which now works perfectly. An extra in-line filter was added to ensure nothing (apart from petrol) gets to the carburettor.

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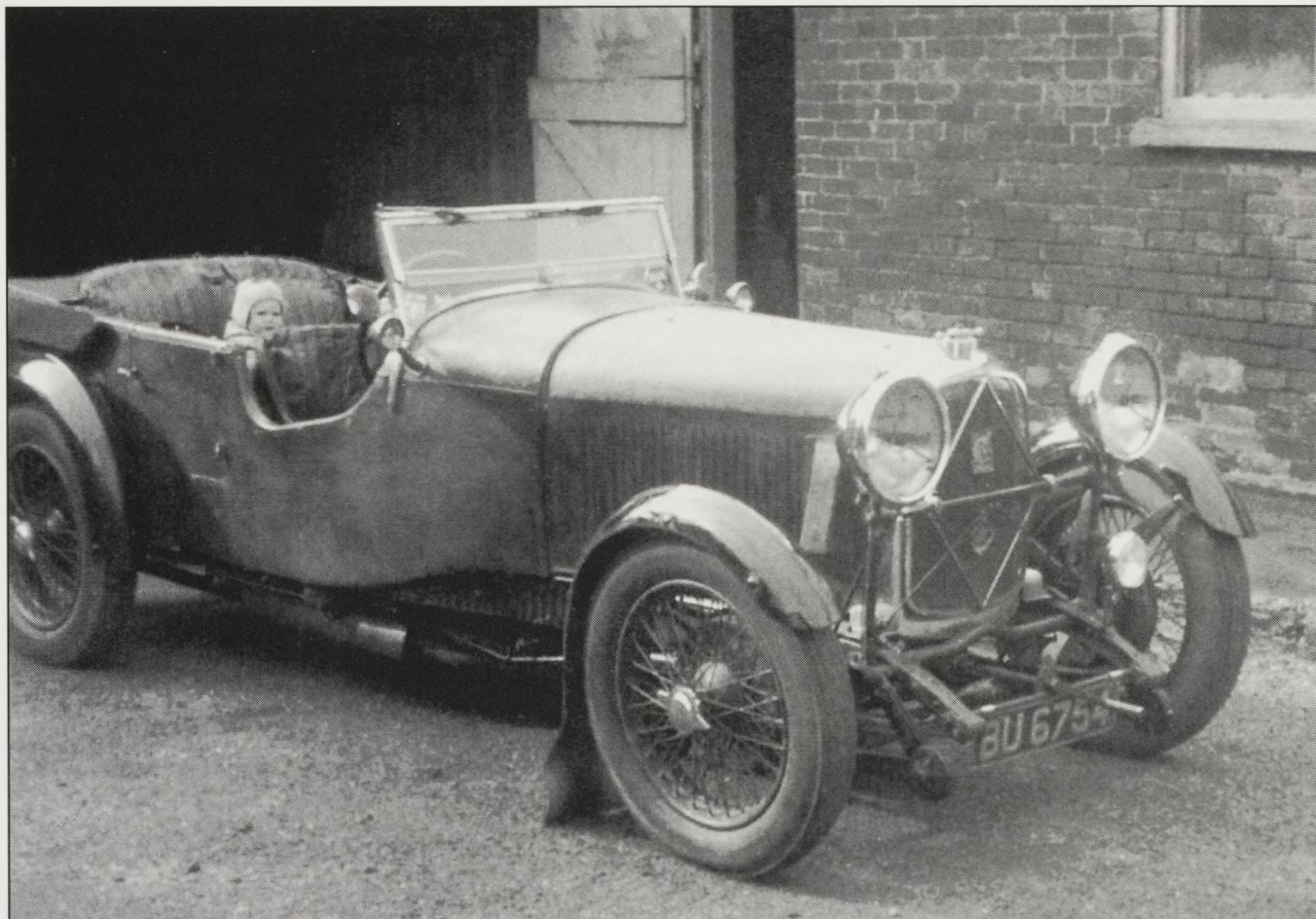
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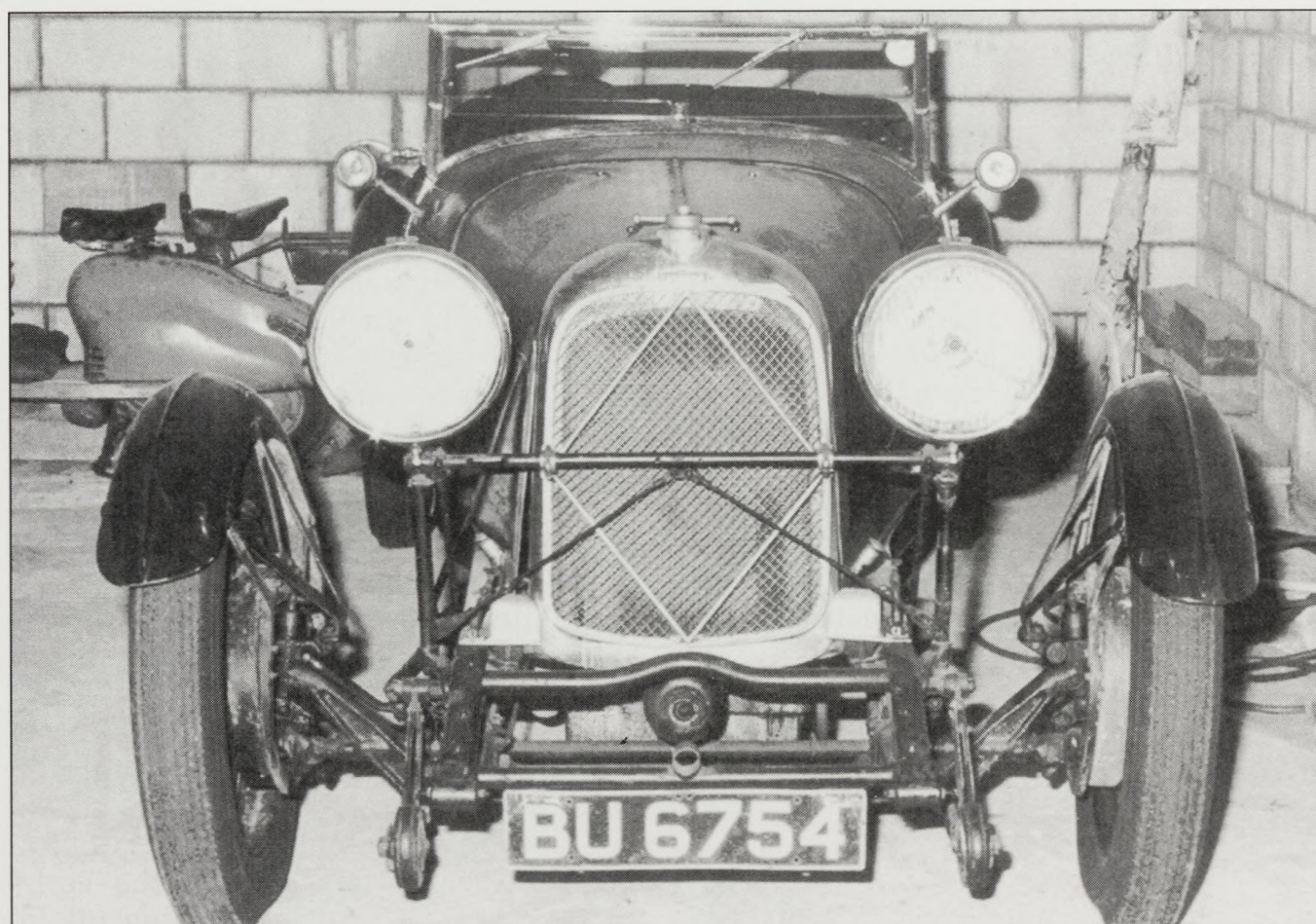
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BU in 1957 (top) and in 1989



The brake shoes were worn down to the rivets, so were re-lined, using bonded shoes. The compensator box and pulleys were cleaned of all of the hardened grease and repacked. New rear cables from Speedy Cables Ltd were fitted. The exhaust system was an assemblage of bits, the threads on the manifold had worn, the down pipe was tied in place with wire and sealed with exhaust putty. A complete new stainless system, with manifold, was supplied by Jeff Leeks (the welding on the manifold is much admired).

The engine leaked water from the 'Y' section on the top of the head and from the engine side plate, which consisted of a piece of sheet steel. The side plate was replaced with an aluminium casting from the Lagonda Club. It required much machining down so that it fitted in the gap next to the water pump. Unfortunately, when the steel plate had been fitted the original bolt holes were left with remains of studs and new holes in the block were drilled and tapped, so that holes in the new plate had to be carefully measured. Lucky it hadn't been pre-drilled! All is now water-tight. The 'Y' piece was less straightforward to sort out as the threads in the casting, inside the head had worn. The head was removed and sent for repair at a local engineering company. The studs are now secure and the 'Y' piece does not leak.

The head was skimmed lightly and new valves and springs etc were fitted. I opted not to have it converted to lead free, as I don't like the idea of interference fit hardened seats in the head. I hear they can work loose. The pistons and bores all looked in good condition, with no obvious damage to the flat piston tops or to the bores, so they were left alone. New gaskets were fitted all round. With the refitted head, the compression is 60-70 psi (hot) on all four cylinders. I guess this is OK for an unsupercharged car, but with the supercharged car internals.

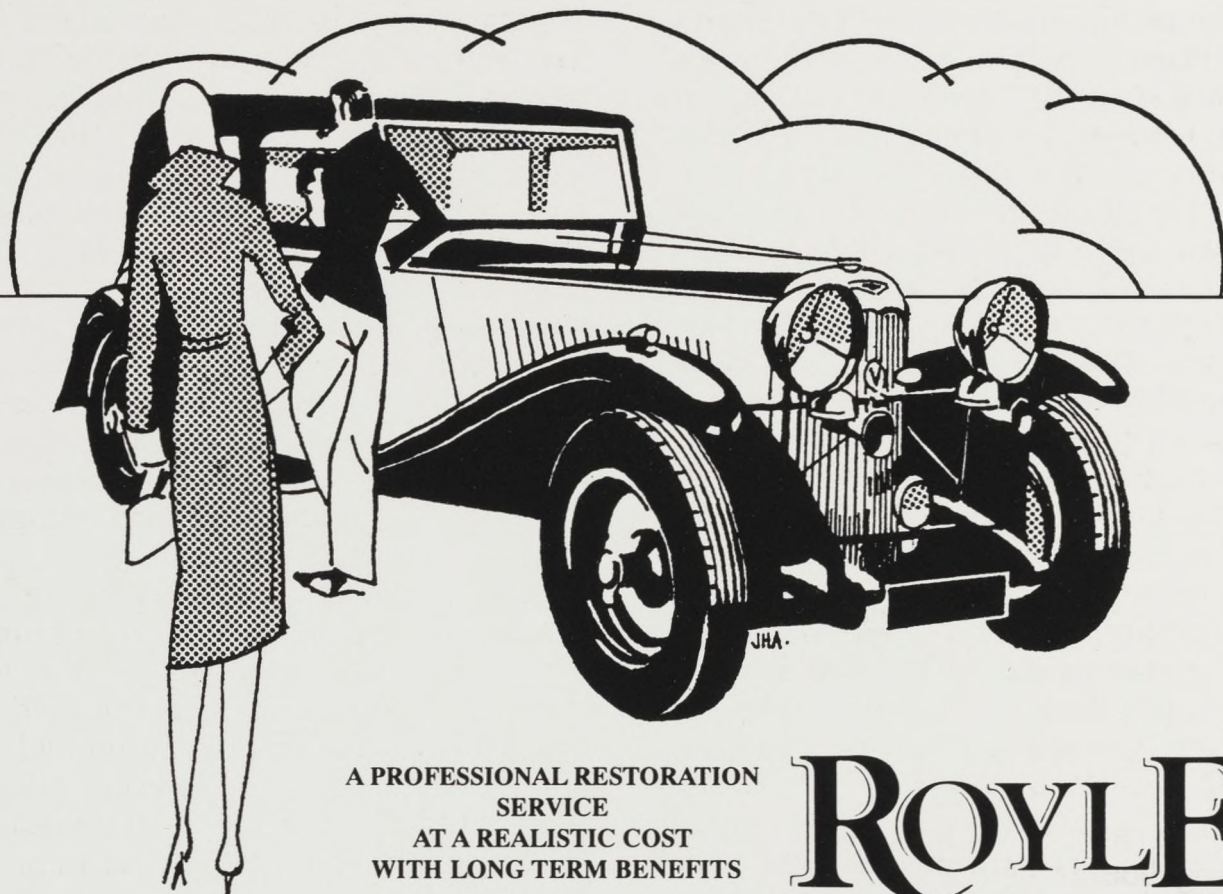
The oil was drained from the engine and the filters removed (it has the

original sump filter and an external filter, that contains a washable fibrous element. Because the car had been running very rich, some crankcase dilution has occurred and the oil was thin. Lucky it wasn't used apart from a bit of ticking over. However, the solvent action of the petrol/oil had cleaned out any thicker deposits and from what could be seen the engine was very clean inside. The camshaft side plates were also removed and here everything was clean as well, with not a trace of sludge. The camshafts had slight wear on the lobes, although nothing excessive.

Early on, I started picking up comments about axle tramp/shimmy with these cars, so I bought the anti tramp rods designed and supplied by Tim Wadsworth. He kindly guided me through their fitting and sorted out the bits I couldn't do. I have had no trouble of any sort in about 800 miles from the front axle/springs, so it seems that the rods must be effective.

I have replaced rubber bushes, checked and adjusted all of the engine settings, adjusted the clutch and stop and replaced the flexible couplings. I think that the oil in the Z type gearbox was vegetable-based, it was really thick when cold and smelt rather nice. I couldn't obtain fresh oil of this type locally, so I drained the box, removed the top cover, and washed it out thoroughly with paraffin, scrubbing as much as I could with a long, thin, flexible brush. All the gears were in good condition, with only minor damage. I replaced the oil with EP 90 and a bottle of Moly slip.

The body has received the minimum of repair. The timbers and aluminium panels are all sound, as are the cycle wings (these were restored in the 1950's). I have carefully cut out damaged sections of the fabric covering and glued in repair sections, using the fabric used on gliders, soaked in dope. I built this up in layers and coloured the dope to match the present car colour. The car is black and has been since at least the early 1950's. However, this is rubbing off in



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places to reveal the original maroon. New maroon carpets have been cut and edged in leather. I haven't made up my mind what to do about the front seats and hood. They are too worn to be repaired, as the materials are perished, but they are in keeping with the patina of the car. The hood is probably the original one and has many patches, with only a few rips. A new hood would look out of place. Since it spends most of its time in the down position and in a hood bag, I guess I will leave it alone.

I will probably get the front seats recovered, as the seats squabs are not original and the backs are almost beyond repair (but are comfortable with their foam rubber packing). The rear seat and side panels are all in an acceptable state for a 73 year old car and have received liberal treatments of leather reviver. The car does not have any side screens, running boards or front 'valence', so if any member has these parts 'surplus to requirements' please let me know. I found a couple of correct door handles and magnifying lens for one of the P100's at Beaulieu. The original spade ignition key was found in the oily deposit in the base of the metal shield under the gearbox.

I have been driving the car for the last 18 months. I found it hard to learn to drive compared with my Alvis Firebird, which had the modern pedal arrangement and an all synchromesh gearbox. However, I can now change gear reliably with only a very slight crunch, but I have to be careful to concentrate on the actions and not to get distracted by passengers. It starts on the button, even after standing for a month. It is rather slow, because of the lack of supercharger and the low compression of the engine. But, I'm happy pottering along at about 40mph and enjoying view of the long bonnet and headlamps. The oil pressure, when hot, is about 20 psi at 40 mph: at least there's something showing! The exhaust is clear with no smoke and there are no untoward noises, so, it seems that the engine is OK.

I found the original registration details at the Greater Manchester Records Office. It only took a two minute search using the internet. It was first registered on 5-2-1931, at Oldham Borough Council, by Wilfred Whitehead of 85 Windsor Road, Oldham. The original registration document is kept in the Greater Manchester Records Office, along with many other BU series records. This record tracks the movements of the car between 1931 and 1954. It shows that car was successively licenced by the following authorities in this period: Oldham, Cheshire, Lancashire, Manchester, Cheshire, ?, Cheshire, Rochdale, Cheshire, Surrey, E Suffolk, Essex and Kesteven.

A pile of tax discs came with the car and the Essex entry on the GMRO record corresponds with the tax disc for 1955. This is date that the car was bought by RS Simon. The Lagonda Club record also contains information about the car. It notes that the owner was killed in the war and it was then left in a commercial garage. This is thought to be Graham's of Deansgate. In 1946, it was sold to Neville Wilson and he kept it until 1949. In 1950 it belonged to H U Bailey and in 1952 to D E O'Molloy. All these owners were in Cheshire. The buff logbook starts in 1955, with the car registered by RS Simon in Essex. In 1960 it transferred to his brother, CS Simon, in Newark and he kept it until 2001. After the 1960 tax expired, it was untaxed until 1987.

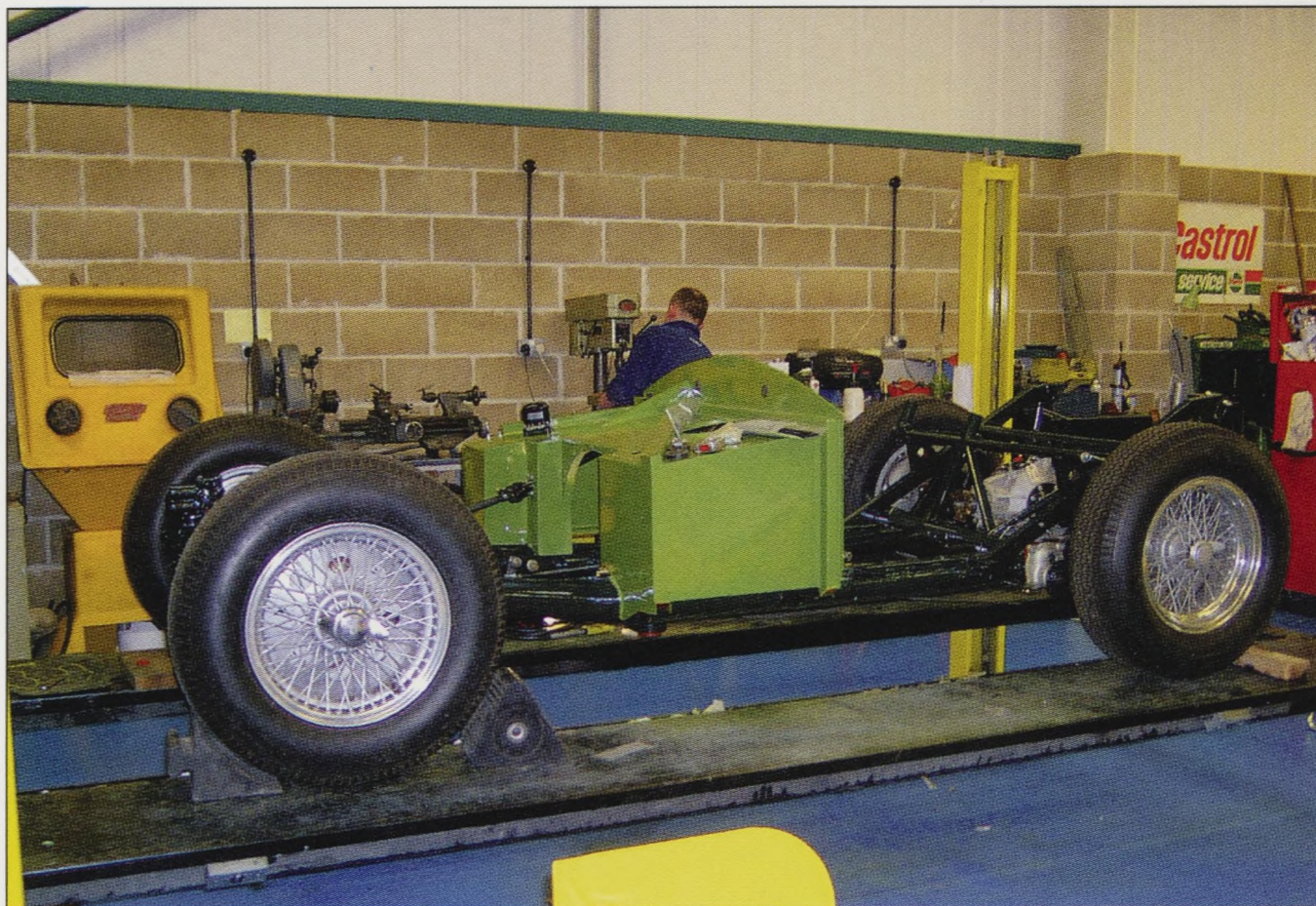
The car was used intermittently between then and 2002, covering approximately 2000 miles. Between 1955 and 1960 it covered about 3000 miles and has probably covered about 100,000 miles from new. James Woolard saw the car at Newark and said it was kept in a garage in clean state with the hood down. No work was done on the car between 1980 and 2001, although it was used regularly around farm roads.

If anyone knows any more about the car or has any contact details for the pre 1955 owners, please let me know.



Gerry Lawson has recently joined the club and has started the restoration of this VDP bodied 16/80. What a lovely project!





Can you tell what it is yet? This V12 sports-racer is being restored in Suffolk, sadly, not by your editor!



Lagonda Club Events List 2005

January 2005

- 16th VSCC Brooklands Driving Tests
28/29th VSCC Measham Night Rally Swindon

February

- 26th VSCC Pomeroy Trophy Silverstone

March

- 9th VSCC AGM Donington
12/13th VSCC Derbyshire Trial and Tour
19th **Lagonda Club/Rapier Register Suffolk Dinner Aldeburgh** Mike Pilgrim 01394 382773

April

- 10th **Lagonda Club Southern Area Spring Meet** Michael Drakeford 01483 567291
23rd VSCC April Silverstone Race Meeting
24/28 **Lagonda Club Devon Rally** John Fitton 01823 451690

May

- 6th **Lagonda Club Northern Dinner Monk Fryston** Roger Firth 0161 3039127
8th VSCC Wiscombe Park Hill Climb
14th BDC Sprint MIRA (provisional)
21st **Lagonda Club Spring Social Maulden, Beds** John Batt tel/fax 01525 402935
22nd **Lagonda Club Wessex Rally** Tim Jones 01249 658989
28th VSCC Race Meeting Oulton Park (replaces June Silverstone)

June

- 3/5th Jersey Festival of Motonng Judith Genee 0044 1534 863424
11th Pre-War Sports Car Team Challenge Silverstone BDC/Tim Wadsworth 01666 860368
12th VSCC Cadwell Park
13/20th **Lagonda Club Le Mans Trip** Motoring Adventures 01293 871568

July

- 3rd VSCC Shelsley Walsh
9/10th VSCC YorkshireSpeed Weekend Harewood HC & Elvington Sprint
10th **Lagonda Club New Forest Lunch Meet** Alan Elliott 01963 250353
24th VSCC Mallory Park

August

- 6/7th VSCC Prescott Hill Climb
20th Pre-War Sports Car Team Challenge Brands Hatch AMOC/Tim Wadsworth 01666 860368

September

- 1/4th **Lagonda Club Rally Vienna** RudolfErnst RudErnst@aol.com
3/4th VSCC Donington "See Red" Race Meeting
10/11th Beaulieu Autojumble Lagonda Stand - Red 300 Colin Bugler 01252 845451
17/18th **Lagonda Club AGM Aldermaston** Michael Drakeford 01483 567291
24/25th VSCC Loton Park Hill Climb

October

- 1st Pre-War Sports Car Team Challenge Oulton Park AMOC/Tim Wadsworth 01666 860368
15th VSCC Sprint Goodwood

November

- 5th AC Qwners Club Sprint Goodwood

Brian Savill brian@lag1680.fsnet.co.uk Michael Drakeford michaelwdrakeford@hotmail.com
Roger Firth Rogerfirth@dsl.pipex.com Tim Wadsworth tw@lagondahire.freemove.co.uk
Colin Bugler lagclub@tiscali.co.uk Alan Elliott alantilbury@aol.com
VSCC 01608 644777, AMOC 01865 400400, BDC 01844 208233, ACO 01223 357740

S.P.C.C.C. (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Classic Cars)

Ron Press does some more research

MY LAST SCRIBAL rambling on behalf of the S.P.C.C.C. was prompted by the fact that I had acquired a 1954 Series 1 DB3L drophead coupe with a power hood after our local garage proprietor, Ned, had casually asked if I was interested in buying the car after the recent death of the owner. What Ned should have asked was whether I was interested in buying the car and, acquiring a real headache, as some serious T.L.C. was needed!

Having never owned a Lagonda before, I thought that research was necessary and, with the help of Simon at Aston Service Dorset, factory records were checked to find out how many Series 1 DB3L's, with power hoods, were produced, how many had survived and where they now live. It was concluded that just four had been made

July 1954 Chassis Number 30 -
In New Zealand

July 1954 Chassis Number 57 -
In Dorset

Sept. 1954 Chassis Number 60 -
Fate unknown- later found in Germany.

Oct. 1954 Chassis Number 61 -
The car I was considering

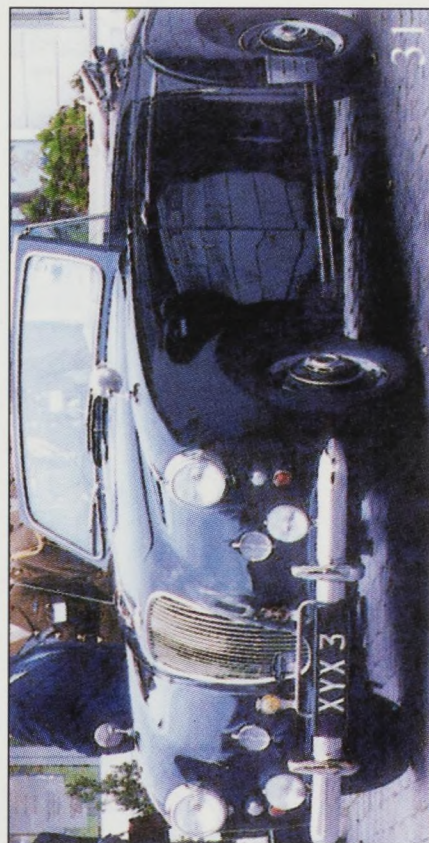
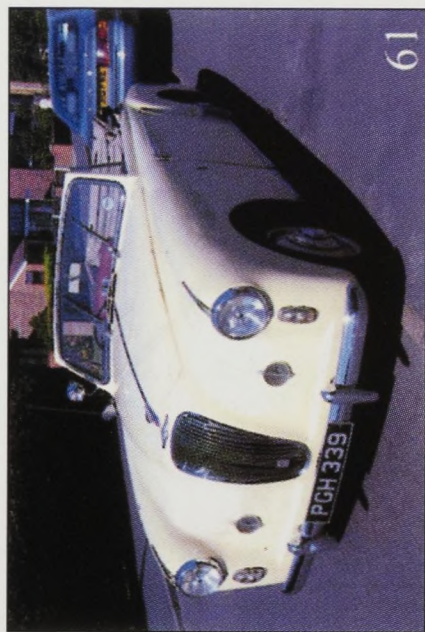
Shortly after my last article was published, Mr. Stephens (S3), sent an E-mail to inform me that Chassis No. 30 didn't live in New Zealand but in

Cornwall and that he had owned the car for about 25 years. Oh dear! Silly me, I hadn't checked an up to date Lagonda Register of members and their cars and had relied upon well out of date or scrambled information. A further check in the Club Register and Dorset records revealed that Chassis No. 51 lived in New Zealand and that Chassis No. 57 had probably been misread and should have been 51.

I phoned Arnold Davey for some advice and he informed me of some of the pitfalls when using factory records. Build sheets, for instance, don't always show 'extras' as extras e.g. power hoods, and sales sheets don't always match factory information.

After 'eating humble pie' and volunteering to 'stay in and fill the ink-wells', I thought that I would ask Simon in Dorset to spend a few minutes rechecking and, almost immediately, when thumbing through the records, he mentioned that Chassis No. 31 had belonged to Prince Phillip but the 'extras' column was blank. I thought that it was inconceivable that H.R.H. wouldn't have all the goodies available at that time, and, now that I had a chassis number for the Royal Car, checked the Club Register and found that the car belongs to Peter Biggs (B31) and he verified that it did indeed have a power hood.

I am now in a position to confidently claim the whereabouts of 5 Series 1 (LB/290) cars which were



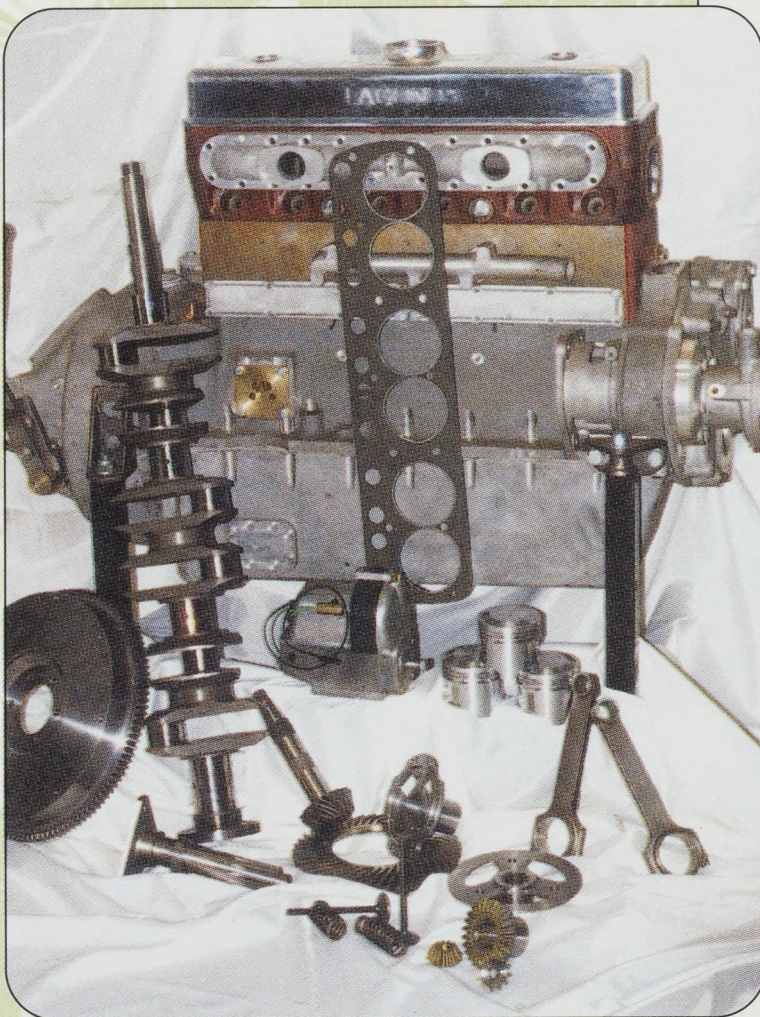
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originally fitted with power hoods but have 'learnt my lesson' as to claiming to know the total produced. Perhaps I should write out 100 times 'I'm not such a Clever Dick as I thought I was.'

The known survivors are as follows

Chassis No. 30 5/7/1954 65 HYM (S53) - in Cornwall.

Chassis No. 31 1/5/1954XYX3 (B31) - in Cambridgeshire.

Chassis No.51 27/7/1954 PGH316 (M51) - in New Zealand.

Chassis No. 60 25/9/1954 PGH322 (Dealer in Germany.)

Chassis No. 61 1/10/1954 PGH339 (P8) - in South Yorks.

Owners of survivors have sent me photos of their cars and Peter Biggs has sent me copies of interesting snippets about the Royal Car. He informs me that the car was shipped out to Australia in 1956 for the use of H.R.H. when attending the Olympic Games and that Tony Tocock, the David Brown Automobiles Division's chief Service Engineer, was despatched to Melbourne to ensure perfect performance of the Lagonda. Now, that's what I call service! Over 3000 miles were covered without mishap.

An interesting technical innovation of the time was the installation of a radio telephone in the Royal conveyance. Some people may argue that this was for security reasons but I think that it was provided so the Queen could give Prince Charles a call to ask him to put the kettle on and have a 'cup of char' ready for the homecoming of weary mum.

Peter has also sent a superb photo, given to him by Tony Tocock, of H.R.H. driving away from the Royal Yacht Britannia to the Olympic Games. (Note the special number plates).

Another of Peter's photos shows H.R.H.'s car, Reg. No. OXR1 outside what appears to be a pavilion but where this picture was taken is a mystery. Perhaps a club member who moves in exalted circles can help to solve the riddle of the location. This photo, too, came from Tony Tocock.

As Prince Phillip owned this Lagonda for several years I thought that there would be a good chance that a photo, taken during this period, might exist in the Sandringham Museum and so I sent an e-mail asking if a suitable picture was available and could be copied to aid my project. Disappointingly, I received a reply to the effect that the Sandringham archive couldn't help but my request had been passed on to the Royal Mews at Buckingham Palace. Amazingly a letter arrived, in due course, with close-up photo of Prince Phillip driving his car to view Olympic Yacht racing

Another photo, provided by Peter, shows Prince Phillip, when on official duties at an army museum, being reacquainted with his car after not seeing it for decades and the car had been driven to the venue secretly. To have seen an 'old friend' after so long must have been a wonderful moment.

There must be club members who are not aware that Aston Service Dorset will copy the post war factory build sheets and service records of any particular car for a fee of £15. The money goes to charity, a hospice appeal - which is a very worthwhile cause.

The factory sheets make very interesting reading and I have sent for several including, those of the Royal Car. I was amazed to learn that all work carried out on H.R.H.'s car was done free of charge. It only goes to show that there are definite advantages to being married to the Queen!

Way back in the 1950's, I remember learning that H.R.H. had given another



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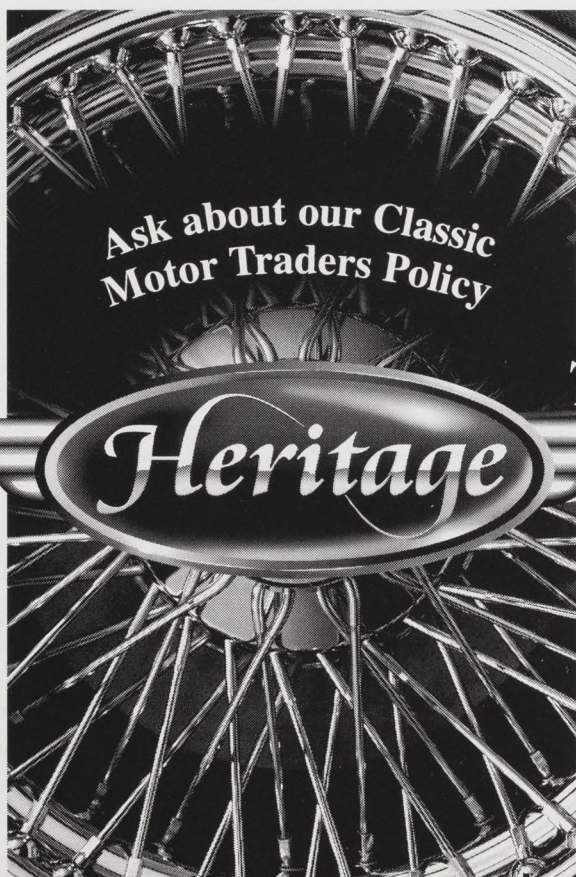
This isn't the clearest of pictures, but the caption "Towcar of the year 1952" amused your editor.

road user a 'friendly' nudge with his Lagonda. After assuming my Maigret pose, I read through the Royal Service sheets and my investigative curiosity led to the discovery that (27/6/57) repairs were carried out to the front of the car. It just goes to show that lapses of concentration can happen to anyone!

Christopher Van Zweeden (Z3) has been in touch and he informs me that he bought, at auction, LB/290/1/88, which has a power hood and was formerly owned by Mr. John H. Lancaster. The car now lives in Holland and is on the road and having refurbishment work carried out where required e.g. power hood hydraulic overhaul. It would be interesting to hear from other club members who own LB/290/1 power

hooded models so that a collage of photos of surviving cars could be assembled.

Christopher has also sent a copy of a publicity photo taken at Earls Court in 1954 of the Tickford stand showing a saloon and a drophead coupe with a power hood label; He would like to know the chassis number of the drophead coupe. It appears to be an LB/290/1 model with a flush-fitting fresh air intake instead of the projecting type of the earlier cars. Arnold Davey, Aston Services Dorset and the Tickford Club can only say that one of the cars may have had chassis number 44 and that the chassis was sent to Tickfords for bodywork to be fitted. Can anyone help to solve this conundrum?



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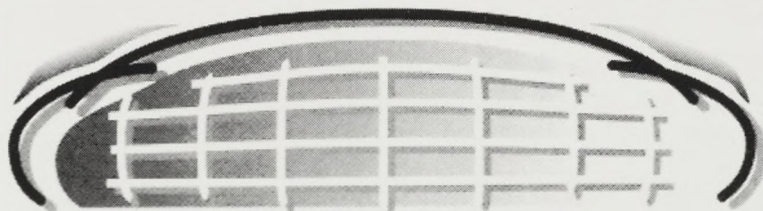
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Team Bugler during practice at le Mans, about to change drivers and, below, Colin drives off for his stint.





Team Bugler together in their "pits tent"



Many hands make light work, Nick Hine's car being loaded into the transporter for the journey home.

Letters

Dear Ken,

As the organiser of the 2004 Northern Dinner, perhaps you will kindly print my letter.

Many thanks for magazine number 202, always a pleasure to hear the envelope full of lovely surprises drop through the letter box. The magazine is only spoilt by the letter on page 35 by Pat Elliott whoever he or she is.

The 2003 membership register does not show a Pat Elliott as a paid up member of The Lagonda Club, and I am unable to find such a person joining since the list was published. I just wonder why you published such a letter from a non member and certainly someone who did not attend the 2004 Northern Dinner as a guest, and more so why you found it necessary to tender an apology. I have tippexed your apology out of my magazine.

What right has he or she to criticise a club in writing when they have not even had the decency to join that particular organisation?. Non paid up members of The British Legion, Mothers Union, Old Women's Institute or indeed any other organisation have no right to criticise the organisations and least of all have these printed in their publications, and I see our club as no different. As I did not receive the benefits of student education, (work was of paramount importance for my family to survive) clearly the educated see things a little differently.

The other letter on the same page from Jim Hazen puts matters clearly in the light hearted manner to which they were intended, please to have you in the club Jim, and why not come to the 2005 Northern Dinner, I will stand you a drink or two. Jim and others who may not have a set of the wonderful Lagonda Club Magazines, may be interested in the attached photograph of Alan doing his

party trick at the 1974 Northern Dinner, more youthful and a little neater in those days of course!.

I have received no criticism whatsoever of Alan Brown dropping his trousers, even though I know that our Editor has received a number of comments from Members, in fact many people are hopeful of a flash of encouragement again next year.

The day following receipt of the magazine, Sunday 21.11.04, the evening for me was a free one, I am only required on the 1st and 3rd Sundays these days, if 5, this is thrown open to the born agains. Decided to watch Last of the Summer Wine, of course for the splendid Yorkshire scenery only, dare I say that of the 10 men in the programme, for a large part of the 1/2 hour show, 9 of them had their trousers off!!!!, including the boys in blue, pleased that they are keeping up with a well tried and tested Yorkshire tradition, but I am not sure if the producer has been to any of the 41 Northern Dinners for inspiration.

This, a number of years ago was one of Alan's party tricks (great that it has been revived) and very much looked forward to by those present, Doctors, Lawyers one and all. As members of the club will know, Alan had a number of bad years when his health was rather poor, and following intervention by the medics who tinkered with his internals, he now has a new lease of life and is racing a Vintage Car again. This is good news for everyone, and people in the North will certainly encourage him to do whatever daft things he is intent upon doing and indeed would have been supported and encouraged wholeheartedly by our great pal the late Northern Secretary Herb Schofield. this I intend to continue.

Next year if Alan (Compo) Brown decides to entertain us and drop his trousers again, I will ask Beryl to make him a longer shirt lap so that a little more is hidden from the ladies in close proximity, and they can avoid having to close their eyes during his performance. "WE HAVE ENJOYED OUR PLEASURES, PERHAPS NOT WITHOUT CRITICISM, BUT MAY THE CRITICS ALSO EXAMINE THEMSELVES

Yours sincerely

Roger Firth

Editorial Note: I have explained to Roger that, following a recent decision at the AGM, members' partners are now offered membership as family members. As Roger was unable to attend, he was not aware of this. K.P.P.

Dear Ken,

It is distressing that a photo of A.B. type legs has caused so much stress in sensitive southern souls.

However, these self-same structures have appeared, albeit in black and white, in 1986 on the front cover of "The Lagonda" No 128 without inducing disapproval. The late Robbie Hewitt visited the Northern Dinner in 1975 ("The Lagonda" No 88, Letter to Editor) and was greatly startled by the gambades and other performances which took place, but nevertheless expressed a wish to return.

We must also remember those hardy souls who consider that The South begins at Hadrian's Wall. In between hurling tree trunks and producing sounds from pigs bladders or whatever, they are happy to show their McLegs without causing a furore. We, north of Watford Gap are struggling to contain the flow of the Nanny State and Political Correctness. So, Ken lad, publish and be damned! And with the priveledge of 50 years membership, I once more use the nom-de-plume of

JOROT

*(pronounced as if French,
you iggerant lot)*

Hello Ken;

As a Canadian of simple tastes and even simpler income, I was starting to regard the Club with some trepidation – pictures of immaculate cars in front of formidable homes being the norm – and then along came a cover with 5 happy owners, clad in refugee clothing and strange hair, clutching trophies and I thought "gee, I could like these guys...". Then shortly afterwards comes the infamous cover with the gentleman having what is known on this side of the pond as a "clothing malfunction". I enjoyed the cover – not that I'd follow suit (suitless?), but that the world would be a dull place indeed if people didn't occasionally do outrageous things. I'll add my voice to the "Do it again" side of the debate!

Cheers,

Alec Rivers-Bowerman
(16/80VdP)

Dear Ken

I was pleased you were able to print the article about the Le Mans Classic written by our two grandsons, Christopher (16) and Nicholas (15). We were intrigued that the first paragraph shows such a relaxed view of arriving at the circuit on a recovery truck. To Valerie and me this was certainly not the way we had planned to start Le Mans and our stress levels were fairly high. From then on everything was up and our Dodge Campervan was sorted out the next day. Particularly good was the fact that David Hine had arrived early and roped off an area of the camping ground for the tents and motor homes. We joined David and Alan Brown, Nick Hine and his co-driver, Duncan and Barbara Arthurs, Florian Brandt and family with his friend Robert Schramm, Mark Butterworth and various small Butterworths. Andrew Rothwell and Alex Hazell joined later with Andrew's 2 litre he had driven down and a well provided tent (if you counted the number of empty beer cans each morning). It gave a great family feel to be all together.

Ever since I read Sammy Davis's autobiography and, particularly, the part about the famous White House crash in the 3 litre Bentley, Le Mans has always had a special interest for me and, of course, the wonderful Lagonda win in 1935 just adds to the magic. Certainly the track, itself, is the most exciting circuit I have ever raced on - the combination of purpose built track which suddenly changes to public roads is very special. The Mulsanne Straight now has two chicanes to slow cars but, nevertheless, my LG45 was doing 4,500 in top gear (over 110 mph).

Our French member, Patrick Rollet, had a hospitality unit (including snacks and drinks) overlooking the start line and he kindly invited Lagonda members to view the track from this vantage point. The Le Mans start was particularly exciting and it was a wonderful feeling to be standing there waiting for the flag to drop and thinking about all the famous drivers who did this for so many years. The car went faultlessly all weekend without the need for a spanner - just a piece of insulating tape around the gear knob which decided to split in half! The attrition rate amongst all the classes of cars was quite dramatic so my car's performance was particularly gratifying.

Here I must thank Brian Bishop of Bishopgray for his meticulous preparation of the car and LMB racing for the new crank, conrods and crown wheel and pinion which were all needed when we did a major rebuild of the engine and transmission in 2001. My co-driver, Bob Wood, is well known for having raced an "S" type Invicta for decades. He thoroughly enjoyed another opportunity to race at Le Mans and I am very grateful for the expert driving and professionalism, which he brought to our team.

The finale for the weekend was very special - as we waited on the quayside at Le Havre a V12 Le Mans car and a DB3 litre drophead arrived. This turned out to be Peter Bigg's genuine team car (4th at Le Mans in 1939) with the ex Duke of Edinburgh DB. These were driven variously by Peter, David Wall, Brian Savill and Laurence Drake. The ferry was jammed with dozens of vintage and classic cars returning from Le Mans and it was a sight to remember.

Regards,

Colin

Dear Ken,

I was just about to write this note when Colin Bugler telephoned with the sad news that our friend Phil Ridout had passed away during the night. What a pillar of Lagonda 2 litre lore he was. There was virtually nothing he did not know about them and how we shall get on without his guiding wisdom I do not know. For me the news was especially poignant, for as recently as 9.30pm that evening I phoned him and he gave me some advice about camshaft profiles. I must have been the last person to speak with him.

We both worked at BT Research Labs at Martlesham through the seventies, although in different departments and we often lunched together. He was not only knowledgeable about Lagondas, for he was also a gifted data transmission engineer. So much so, that when he declined promotion in order to stay in close touch with the interesting technical work, he was given a "merit promotion" which enabled his valuable contribution to be rewarded, above the norm. How sad to see him depart, 83 is not a great age these days.

Yours sincerely

Mike Pilgrim





*Sorry Pat, I lied to you!
See the letter from Roger Firth for more details.*

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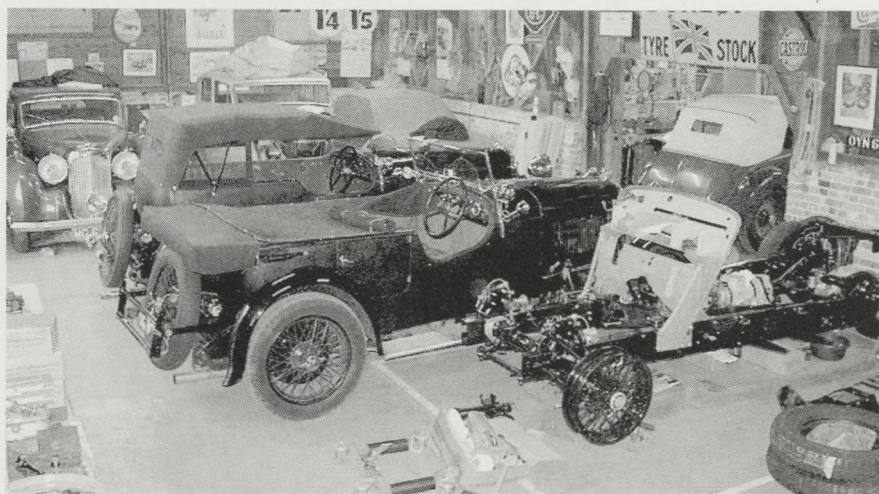
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From the Sublime to the Ridiculous



Who said we only know Invictas? Here we have a 1940 Lagonda V12 Rapide nearly finished and a 1926 Vulcan coming along nicely.

I let Mike, Rene and Bob out for some fresh air and they are smiling because the other 5 members of our team are still hard at work!

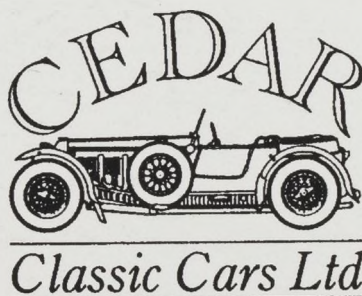
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A Very Happy and Prosperous New Year.*

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