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NEWSLETTER

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

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This month's Guest Contributor is:

Pierre Alexandre

No. 529

February 2025

For full details please refer to the Club EVENT's page on the Website <https://www.lagondaclub.com/events/>

February

8 th	LC Anglia Pub Meet. The Axe and Compass Arkesden, Saffron Walden CB11 4EX contact Len Cozzolino
15 th	VSCC Exmoor Fringe Trial Exford.
22nd	VSCC Pomeroy Trophy Grand Prix Circuit at Silverstone

It's that time of year again and your Board had to decide on this coming year's subs. It was decided to make a modest increase to £57 for the basic subscription now that the worst of the high inflation is behind us. The hard copy Newsletter supplement of £29 for UK members and £51 for Overseas remains unchanged.

Hands up who knows what the FBHVC is ? The letters actually stand for The Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs who do a great job representing the interests of all us old vehicle fanatics in the corridors of power, both in the U.K. and in Europe.

There is no doubt that our freedoms are under threat from the eco lobby and others who see old vehicles as inherently unsafe. To demonstrate the strength of the movement and the benefit it brings to the U.K. economy, the Federation are conducting a survey (as they do every 5 years). You are urged to complete it.

Depending on your responses, the survey should take approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete. Kindly ensure that you finish it in one sitting. The survey will go "live" on February 10th. Please complete it as soon after that as possible

at: www.fbhvc.co.uk/survey

Nothing to report in the way of sporting activity but the Club's trophies have been awarded for 2024 and will be presented at The Northern Dinner, which I am sure you all know by now is on 9th May at the Izaak Walton Hall. Full details were in last months letter and on the Club Website.

Some advanced date for your diary. Alastair Gunn, our Lagonda Club Scottish Representative advises that Stephen Leckie (L17) is holding another 'Coffee and Classics Chat' event at his house Easterleigh, Ferntower Road, Crieff PH7 3DH on Saturday the 26th of April from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Tea, coffee and food will be available at a discounted rate on the day.

Our February Letter (in impeccable English) is from French member Pierre Alexandre.

My first encounter with "Wallace" occurred in late 2020 while I was looking for a rapid pre - war sports car. Enjoying every week my young Morgan 4/4 Super Sport and driving from time to time my old and rusty Bentley R-Type, I was considering to buy a very early Bentley 3 litre but I had to rapidly change my target and to assess a more accurate choice without abandoning the beautiful design of a tourer.

Spending some time reading English advertising websites allowed me to discover a blue Lagonda 2 litre low chassis. As a complete novice in such a matter, I quickly got in touch with Len Cozzolino to get more details about the car offered for sale by an English merchant.

Len fairly explained to me that he knew very little about this specific vehicle and that much more information was available to Club members: Within an hour, I became one of your fellow members and started to exchange with Len who shared with the ads of available cars at that time within the Club.

Among the cars offered, my eyes were caught by a beautiful green tourer registered JH3138 in the same family for 57 years. This 16/80 was sold by the widow of Maurice Jobson who got it from his father in 1961. The car was until 1952 owned by Wing Commander Miles Lonsdale Formby who, during the second world war, worked closely with Sir Barnes Neville Wallis in the development of his famous 'bouncing bomb'. That's why I chose "Wallace".

The car was literally exfiltrated on December 31st, 2020 just few hours before the gong of the Brexit. In early January, the car was delivered in Paris in front of Napoleon's memorial in the Invalides. Where else?

I proudly drove the 16/80 to my underground parking near place des Vosges, just enough miles to discover that it was not designed for Parisian traffic jams and worst, that I was unable to move from one gear to another! 24 hours later, the car was transported in my garage near Fontainebleau where I could avoid traffic fury but not the shame of single speed moves.

As an experienced motorist, I knew perfectly well how to deal with a non- synchronized gearbox having driven my 1922 Citroën B2 for years but with the Lagonda, I was facing a dilemma: starting easily with the second gear on but rapidly reaching a speed limit or laboriously driving with the third gear and having very limited ability to cruise at low speed. Despite many attempts, many calls, many readings and many weeks, the situation remained unresolved.

One day, a bit disappointed, I made an attempt to declutch less and the magic kingdom of Lagonda suddenly appeared to me: changing gear became a fascinating game, perfectly described in Rebecca by Daphné du Maurier words: "Breeding, brains and beauty."

Driving a right-hand drive car, on the right-hand side road, with a right-hand side inverted non-synchronised gearbox and a central throttle pedal, in the modern traffic, requires a minimum of concentration but when you're lucky enough to get four in a row, you discover the unbeatable music of the straight six Crossley designed engine revamped by Lagonda. Magic.

In April 2021, my dog Oscar and I had enjoyed more miles with "Wallace": it brought me to ask my friend Pierre Brandin, who's garage specialized in Facel Vegas was nearby, to conduct a global check of the car and to do some minor work to improve it furthermore

One of the first news to come was a sad one: compressions were unequally distributed and some were really low. A Lagonda deserves the best so I decided to move forward to understand where the weaknesses were located. The answer was a bit comic: the pistons were not all the same....

The initial "To Do" list shared with Pierre was ranging from testing cylinder compressions to replace missing fastener « Lift the dot » for tonneau cover without forgetting the black plastic covered electrical wire running horizontally between the two Lucas P100 replacement by two vertical discrete green cotton cables.

Pierre decided to replace the shabby, but small, front rubber wipers by more fancy large chromed ones that I found a little bit unsightly. I still haven't replaced them but I have a pair of original Lucas fog lamps, converted to receive a 21w orange bulb, although they remain in the cardboard box at the time I'm writing!

The compressions were unequal but the more concerning information was that two cylinders had particularly low compressions. We then decided to investigate to understand the source of these unbalanced results.

Rapidly, the engine was stripped off and totally disassembled. The report was alarming: cylinders were scratched, crankshaft was oxidized but fixable, some aluminium components were either corroded or broken, the block was showing micro-cracks in various locations. On the top of that list, the piston's skirts were scorched, the rings were broken and two pistons were clearly different from the four others! Material, height and manufacturing were not the same.

At that stage, it was obviously impossible to reassemble the parts of an engine that everyone at the workshop was wondering how I could have driven such a crazy car for a few weeks without breaking it!

Many items were sourced from the Club and that was undoubtedly an irreplaceable stream for rare and precious items. Still, additional sub-contractors were required for the parts unavailable at the Club or needing a repair knowledge: resurface the block and impregnate it, rectify the crankshaft, regulate bearing shells, repair the aluminium parts, manufacture six new pistons and remodel the radiator.

Besides the engine itself, Wallace was showing signs of age: radiator was leaking, brakes were tired, rear hubs had been modified and were exhausted.

Radiator was sent to Touraine Radiateurs who did a perfect job within weeks and decided to attend the Parisian Show "Retromobile" to display their expertise and Wallace's radiator. Their savoir-faire will later-on be challenged for another component of the car.

Brake components, including four new drums, were bought directly from the Club and mounted on the car while the rear hubs will follow the same path with a gap of one year.

Most of the subcontractors were located around Paris but Pierre didn't manage to locate someone able to manufacture the pistons. Over time, various options were developed, from England to Italy via Germany to finally land in South America. More precisely in Argentina.

I trusted Pierre and thought that Argentina was selected for its competency in manufacturing stunning reproduction of Type 35 Bugatti; I was thus dreaming of Swiss-like knowledge in precision engineering and waiting frantically for the new pistons.

After six months of delay, that was during the spring of 2022, the six pistons and their rings eventually arrived from Argentina. Ole!

Week after week, I should say, month after month, the repaired, the remanufactured and new parts were piling up in Pierre's warehouse, neighbours of Facel Vega HK 500 or Facellia parts.

Once Pierre had collected all the parts he needed to reassemble the repaired block, he smoothly started to manage a blank test and I must admit that it was a very brilliant idea. Once the new South American pistons had rejoined the English block, Pierre was proud to announce this diplomatic victory but he also complained that the pistons were not moving appropriately in their respective locations: their displacement was not parallel to the axis of cylinders because boring of piston pin's site had not been made properly.

We already suffered six months of delay to receive beautiful grey pistons, proudly stamped "Lagonda 1932" in white letters on the side, we had to admit that the guys did not perform a good job once and that there was little chance they would improve for the second batch. Exchange in English with remote jet-lagged Spanish engineers didn't help much. So we were looking again for a qualified company able to manufacture six new pistons within weeks at a decent price.

But in the meantime, an unexpected call will happen... *to be continued.*

ADVERTISEMENTS: All advertisements should be sent to Len Cozzolino (len.cozzolino@lagondaclub.com). They are free to members for up to 100 words and 1 picture in the newsletter. Repeat adverts are £25. Longer adverts and additional pictures are always available free in the Website under Classifieds and carried for 6 months or until car/parts are sold.

FOR SALE:

2L items for sale by John Fitton (Member) 01823 451960
jandj.fitton@gmail.com

- A pair of 2 litre LMB high lift camshafts in excellent condition having had little use £950
- 2 litre HC water plate, new, undrilled £100



16/80 Items from Laurence Drake (Cambs) 07889 976968

- Pushrods for 16/80, alloy, excellent. Any reasonable offer.
- Foot pedal (from a 16/80) for an ENV preselector. Excellent and ready to fit. £25.
- Pistons new old stock, perfect for 16/80s (65mm bore): +30s x6. (I think originally for Hillman Aero Minx.) £150 the set.

Wanted

Looking for a Lagonda M45 pillarless saloon. Hello, I'm looking for a M45 ST. Budget dictates a scruffy/project model.
 Matt 07986 753383 matwizb@yahoo.com (Member)

NEW MEMBERS We welcome the following new members:- * Rejoin*

C 24	Katharina Chalupa	2521 Trumau, Austria. N/O	
E 14	Andrew Enoch	Milwich Heath, Stafford, Staffordshire 1930 2L Tr	OH 9782 RF 7829
F 17	Tom & Iszy Foley	Station Road, Mouldsworth, Chester, Cheshire 16/80 Tr	S11017 AYV 399
M 68	Daivik Mohan	Gurgaon, 122002 Haryana, India 1933 3L Sln	Z10271 APC 101



THE DB GAZETTE

Another Month! Time has flown. We are all busy again after the Seasonal Break.

I had a pleasant surprise in that the proposed visit from a member, new to the Lagonda Club occurred just after the Season returned to normality, if you can follow me! I had been threatened with a visit to discuss all thing post 1945 Lagonda by this chap, whom I had never met but who seemed absolutely charged with enthusiasm during extended correspondence and his attitude prevails!

You would have to be keen, to drive an old car half way around Australia at Xmas to discuss other old cars, wouldn't you? I don't intend revealing the identity of my visitor but I'm sure you will hear news from him over time if you own or have an interest in 2.6 or 3 litre Lagondas.

We pored over records of cars stored in Australia and my new old-friend plied me with wine and gleaned what information I was able to impart. This chap is not new to motor restoration, simply new to post 1945 Lagondas. Well, we all were once! Then life storeys were written and plenty of lies were told and suddenly, we are all experts in the field! My new old-friend departed South in a Cloud of Silver, his old car, and headed home!

Recent sales of restorable cars here has prompted me to write about the way forward for newish owners of this portion of the marque. Please don't think this will be a lecture on how to restore anything, simply a few ideas and principles that one might adopt prior to committing restoration. One might class this as 'research'?

Please feel free to disagree with me and write something else on this important topic, send it to me and I'll plug it for you. Bear in mind, Safety and other first principles that need to be your guide at all times as well as a makers manual of repair procedures.

Simplicity is another aspect to follow. Sometimes we don't think long enough about a procedure prior to commencing. Take this example - task undertaken is to inspect front brakes for instance, on a DB 2.6 that has not turned a wheel for twenty years. One simply places jack under wishbone and raises wheel just clear of ground. Then takes an electric rattle gun and attempts to remove wheel nuts that have been untouched for years. This should allow wheel to rotate and nuts to be removed but hey, surprisingly, the wheel does not rotate and the wheel nuts do not release!

What could the matter be? Wheel/hub is held by brake shoes which are held by seized wheel cylinders or glued to brake drums by accumulated rust OR, you have ignored the hand book which casually mentions left hand threads. 'Never monkey with the RED NUTS!' I was taught this in the first days of my apprenticeship.

So a more correct procedure might be - take a wheel brace whilst car is still on the ground, attempt to loosen wheel nuts, RHS will have RH threads, LHS painted RED will have LH threads, just 'crack' the nuts, don't remove them yet. Now place vehicle on suitable stands and attempt to rotate wheels. If it seems that wheels won't rotate easily, you can move to the next step which might involve removing the wheels and locating the cause of 'binding' of the hub, as it is termed.

This may involve using a puller to remove the hub - complete with brake drum. If you are not confident about proceeding, go to a repair manual and study the procedure prior to attempting

any further dismantling of the hubs/drums. The use of uncontrolled force, IE big hammer, is not recommended. Some shock treatment may be necessary but damage to brake drums and hubs can result. You will need to have some form of lubrication at hand. WD40 or Tooheys! Oh! Did you release the brake adjusters?

Obviously what I am attempting to do with this description is to encourage owners -would be restorers - to start at the beginning, search the procedures listed in any of the manuals prior to jumping in and possibly damaging your newly acquired 'resto' and possibly burning out the enthusiasm you have stored away by creating a situation where you must rectify damage to the car.

The brief outline of removing a wheel is an example to use to set up a pattern of inspecting, followed by establishing a repair procedure that is sound and safe.

Discussing procedures with experienced restorers might be beneficial. The complexity of design of post 1945 models can be frustrating. Adopting a systematic approach, ie.brakes, steering, transmission, engine, bodywork, might help. Storage of parts removed is always a problem!

Sheds and orchards still contain wreckage of unplanned restorations, not only in Australia! Running out of enthusiasm is a common failing for restorers.

The suspension system of the Lagondas will try you but wait until you get to the engines. Seek help early!

To close this Gazette, a note from Antony Bowie, thanks Antony, regarding an article I alluded to last month concerning SMX 10, the first DB 2.6 DHC. Antony advises (and I have fact checked) that this February issue of 'The Automobile' will carry a story put together by Zach Stiling on the life of this car. Zach has a reputation for interest in all things automotive prior to 1950, I believe!

Send me your impression of his article, please.

Peter Henson H62 octane1@bigpond.com

SPARES NEWS – February 2025

E-mail: spares@lagondaclub.com, website: www.lagondaclub.com

BACK IN STOCK

- BDY420P - Rear light stanchions casting, offside, M45, LG6.
- BDY420O - Rear light stanchions casting, nearside, M45, LG6.
- GRS427 - M45 Timing Chain, short, 3/8" pitch x 5/8", 66 pitches (dup).
- GRS428 - M45 Timing Chain, Long, 3/8" x 1.25", 76 pitches (triplex).
- GRS434 - M45, LG45 - 3.31 ratio Crown wheel & pinion.
- STGV05 - Track rod drag link assembly V12, LG6.
- GSKV06 - V12 Main manifold inlet gasket.
- BDYX11 – Leaf spring button.

USED 4.5L SPARES SPOTLIGHT



4159 - 4.5L set of specialoid pistons & rings 88mm dia, £375.



4006B - 4.5L Silent Travel Taper Pin & Bracket, £50.



4388 - Andre Hartford pressure pots (pair), £180.



4392 - LG45 scintilla vertex magneto, 6 cylinder, (needs servicing) £400.



4182A - M45 Perrot shaft knuckle joint, ball and receiver, £75.



4047 - M45 Radiator Cap Lever, £50.

Please visit <https://www.lagondaclub.com/used-spares/> for more information.

(All prices excluding VAT and carriage).

NEW PARTS IN PROGRESS

- Winged radiator badges (curved and flat) –these are close to being finished – subject to final checks.
- Bishop Cam steering scroll

Please contact the spares team with any requests for new gaskets not already available.

Please e-mail Robin Cooke if you are interested in any of the following parts. Your support will influence the Committee's decision to proceed or not:

- ZM chassis - braking system (13 parts).
- Fuel tank senders (3-terminal type) 2L, 3L.
- Rockers, 4.5L.
- Various DB parts, please see the Post-1945 Gazette for details.