

Lagondaforum: Recollections from Tony Tockock who worked at AM Lagonda

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Written by SRD at Nov 02, 2012 11:18 am

I was recently directed over to the Lagonda site, for an excellent article by Ron Press and it links in nicely with recent discussion on the drive-shafts and greasing etc.

<http://www.lagonda1949-1958.co.uk/TonyTockock/Tockock.html>

There is an interesting article by Tony Tockock who worked at AM Lagonda from 1950 through to the 1960's and was involved with some of the later problem sorting on the Rapide. Here is a short piece from this article, from the horses mouth so to speak. Would have been interesting to have been a fly on the wall at the meetings...

"As can be imagined, most of the work in the service department involved Aston-Martins. However I was very involved with the Rapide Lagondas in 1961/1962. For its size, it had very good performance with a possible top speed of 125m.p.h. I demonstrated the car at several motor shows and found that people were quite impressed with the ride and comfort.

As is usual with all new cars there are always problems which are not diagnosed during development and prototype stages. Unfortunately there was one most irritating fault, a clonking from the rear drive-shafts. At one stage, when the first Rapides were on the road, four of them were in the service department for this problem. I was told to drop all other work and to get involved to sort the matter out. The clonking was coming from the inboard axle drive shafts which for some reason were wearing out very rapidly. On contacting the drive shaft manufacturers Hardy Spicer, they agreed to send some with closer tolerances and we also used grease which would stand up to high pressure. These two rectifications certainly eased the situation but it was not a complete cure.

At a service meeting for further discussion on the clonking problem, it was agreed that we would approach Hardy Spicer to send an engineer to see if he could throw any light on the difficulty. This they agreed to do. I was at the subsequent meeting which was held in the drawing office.

As the layout plan of the chassis was unfolded, the Hardy Spicer man said immediately that he could see the cause of the problem was that the drive shafts were running on two planes instead of one. Tadek Marek did not agree with this finding but eventually gave in after some lengthy discussion. The reason that the drive shafts were running on two planes was because of the position of the rear chassis bulkhead which created a major job to rectify.

To my knowledge, it was never modified. Having driven many hundreds of miles in the Rapide I found it a remarkable car."

The article was written back in 2007, not sure if this gentleman is still with us.

Would be interesting to meet him and hear more about the Rapide when first made.

Re: Recollections from Tony Tockock who worked at AM Lagonda

Written by TVJL at Nov 02, 2012 11:32 am

it's great stuff, isn't it. But, given your scale of interest and love of research, I'm very surprised to learn that you've only just discovered Ron's site. 🤖

Re: Recollections from Tony Tockock who worked at AM Lagonda

Written by SRD at Nov 02, 2012 11:40 am

I do my best Tim, but not up to full speed yet though, too many distractions at the moment, especially 126 !

I will see if Ron knows more about this man, would be great to get more personal details on our cars. He left AML in late 1963, after the majority of the Rapide's had been built. Will let you know what transpires...

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Written by SRD at Nov 05, 2012 5:03 pm

For those fortunate enough to own a Rapide, Tony wrote a book, called "A Mechanics Dream", where there is supposed to be a section on the Rapide.

Published by AM Heritage Trust at 25 pounds. Have ordered a copy, should make interesting reading.

Still trying to trace the gentleman at the moment, last heard of 18 months ago.

Re: Recollections from Tony Tockock who worked at AM Lagonda

Written by David at Nov 11, 2012 1:30 pm

I have Tony's address. You might need an introduction

Re: Recollections from Tony Tockock who worked at AM Lagonda

Written by SRD at Nov 11, 2012 2:51 pm

David - many thanks.

I have been passed all his details, and plan to write to him.
