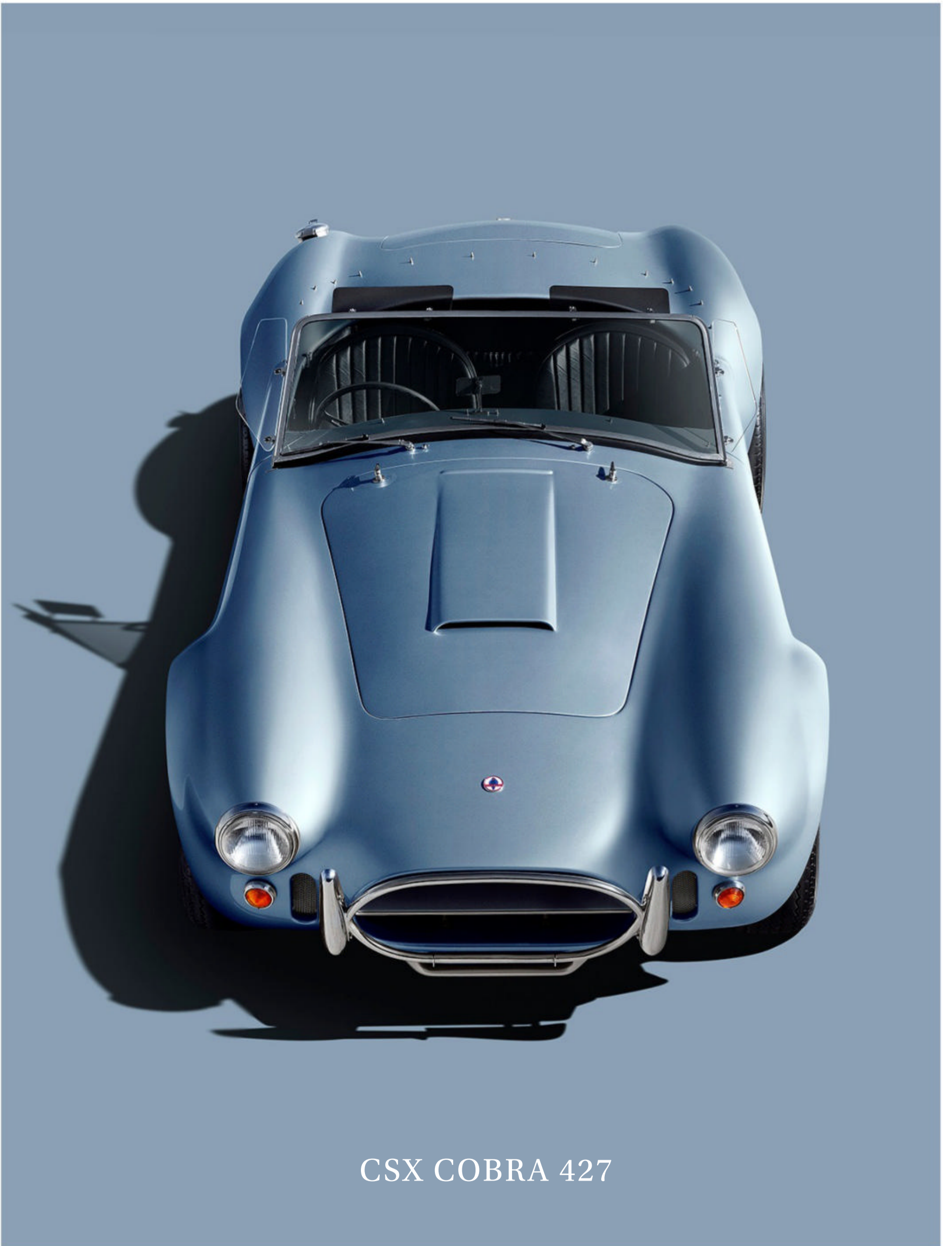


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RETROMOTIVE

X

14

JAGUAR XJ13 RE-CREATION

28

PININFARINA AZZURRA SPIDER

42

MASERATI BORA

56

CSX COBRA 427

70

CHRIS RUNGE

86

AMX GREMLIN & JAVELIN

102

FIAT 8V SUPERSONIC

118

TRANS-AMERICA ROAD TRIP

102

FIAT 8V SUPERSONIC



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ISSN 2209-0533

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Greetings and welcome to Volume 10! I must have sat down to start writing this column at least 10 times in the last few weeks. Yes — I am easily distracted and have been known to procrastinate on occasion, but neither is the reason for delay.

Someone said if you want something done, ask a busy person. I say, use Airtakser or pretend you didn't hear them because in this day and age, time seems to be one slippery sum-bitch that you can't seem to pin down. Never before have so many things, both living and inanimate, been competing for my attention. It's been very busy here at Retromotive HQ and along with our print magazine we now have a digital offering too, which means lots and lots of content to produce!

Firstly, I want to say a big thankyou to those of you who answered the call to submit your stories at the start of the year — I appreciate the time, honesty and thoughtfulness you put into submitting these, sometimes very personal accounts of your life with cars. I didn't anticipate such a long lead time in getting them out to our audience, but as I write this, our new site is up and running and these magnificent stories are starting to filter out through our new digital magazine.

As mentioned above — Retromotive has gone digital. Rest assured though, Retromotive will continue to be first and foremost a print magazine, but now subscribers who opt in for the digital magazine too will not only receive a digital version of their print magazine — containing additional rich content such as extended image galleries and videos - there will also be additional digital issues each month between print magazines. For example. Subscribers that opt in for the digital and print magazine starting with Volume 10 will be able to access it online any time — (desktop, laptop and tablet — the app is coming soon for mobile IOS and Android platforms). Then in December subscribers will have access to Volume 10 Issue 2. A digital only magazine full of the same type of content and features you have experienced in the print magazine. Next in January, subscribers will have access to Volume 10 Issue 3. Another online only magazine. When February

rocks around you'll receive your new print magazine — Volume 11. And so on and so forth...Cool hey?

Still want more? If you want a free set of steak knives, you're shit out of luck. The next step up is Retromotive Membership. Membership is by far the best value and I think you'd be hard pressed to find anything else like it out there. As part of the yearly membership you'll receive, along with your print subscription, one of our newly re-designed slip cases, an A4 print of the cover car of each issue without the Retromotive banner, special packaging, access to all digital magazines (including our entire backlog) plus another printed magazine — The Annual.

It's now also easier to monitor and maintain your subscription. We have options for full year payments, quarterly and monthly. You can change and upgrade at any time by signing into the site and reviewing the options on your account. Gift subscriptions are also super easy now with the option for the recipient to receive notifications of their gift on specified dates.

We have dropped the Retro-Mail title and numbering system from our newsletter as it was providing some confusion with the magazine numbering and the revamped newsletter has now resumed a consistent weekly dispatch. The newsletter contains info about upcoming print and digital magazines, plus links to the latest free articles on our site put together by our ever-increasing band of contributors. You can sign up via our website.

Our 2020 reader survey is still going, so if you are new to the magazine or haven't had a chance to have your say — please do so! So far, we have received some great feedback and are already implementing some of the ideas and suggestions to make Retromotive better. If you'd like to have your say, sign up to the newsletter on our site — we'll have a link to the survey at the bottom of our weekly updates until the end of the year.

That's it for now. As always, thanks for your support and get in touch with any feedback about how to make your Retromotive experience better.

Cheers, Nathan 14-09-2020



When he is not out shooting or putting the magazine together, Nathan likes to pretend that he'll actually finish the series 3 Land Rover that sits in his garage gathering dust. Follow Nathan on Instagram @retromotive_magazine @nathan_duff_photography



Photo: ©Shaun Maluga

IT ALL STARTED WHEN...

SHAUN MALUGA

Like many of his generation, Leslie remembers that, as a kid, the experience of riding in a car was a great event. When he landed a job in a local garage at the age of 14, Leslie was lucky enough to regularly service a then new Austin 7 utility. It was one of the first new cars to come to his hometown, Wowan, Queensland, after the Second World War. Since that day he has spent a lifetime working on cars and machinery.

Les had owned several motorbikes, but his first personal car was a 1925 Chrysler Tourer cut down to a utility. It was a 'good old car', he recalls fondly. At a guess, he has probably owned 30 cars over his lifetime. An FC Holden was unequivocally one of his worst. 'You dare not take your eyes off the road because it would be heading for a guidepost for sure.' Other cars of note include a Ford 10 and a Standard Vanguard that was built like a tank – 'if you drive it into a tree, God help the tree!'

A 2002 Land Rover Discovery stands out over the years as one of the best cars he has owned. Mostly due to its roadholding qualities and low maintenance cost. In six years of ownership he only had to replace the battery before he sold it for something more modern. When asked what he would choose if he could have any car in the world, he even reverted to the Discovery. 'It's one of the best cars you can own, provided you are prepared to buy the petrol for them.' Les has owned 20 or so Land Rovers in his life. He acknowledges that they are not a comfortable vehicle, however he recalls that even when they were 15 to 20 years old, they could keep up with the more modern vehicles in their 4WD club. One trick he enjoyed was to pull up outside a property gate, hop out and then use the hand throttle on the dash. He would then open the gate and let the car drive itself through before jumping back in.

One car Les always wanted was a 1953 Wolseley 4/44. An uncle purchased one new and came to visit not long after Les and his wife Daphne were wed. He loved it so much he said, 'I'll have one of them one day.'

The design is what drew him in. After the war Morris, who had previously purchased Wolseley Motors, merged with Austin Motor Company to form the British Motor Corporation. According to Les, they took the best out of all the cars they had and built the 4/44. 'It still rides as well today as most cars on the road.'

Leslie's son, my father Barry, found Les's 1953 4/44 Wolseley when out on a rural work trip in Thangool, Queensland. The seller had three Wolseleys and Leslie had a Massey Ferguson tractor. Leslie wanted a Wolseley and the guy wanted a tractor, so a deal was made. Les remembers, 'so I did get one, it only took me 50 years to get there.'

At a sprightly 83 years of age, Les went to work getting the Wolseley to a roadworthy condition. The paint was abysmal, and he had to strip it right back to metal. The suspension and brakes required refurbishing, but the engine didn't need too much work. Les notes that 'English cars of that time, they had oil leaks built into them.' The Wolseley still sports its original leather interior, which had been well cared for over the years.

Being a pensioner, money for a project like this could be a little tight. Les sold two or three tractors and put the money directly into the restoration of the Wolseley to ensure that there weren't really any monetary constraints for him in the build. He thanks retirement for the fact that it only took 12 months to get the car roadworthy and registered. 'It's the beauty of not being employed. It's the best job I've ever had.'

The Wolseley is not used as an everyday car. It sits a little low for Daphne to get in and out of regularly, but it is perfect for the odd weekend trip to a swap meet or drive into town. Leslie probably won't restore another car, but he also doesn't show any signs of slowing down. At 87 he still does a lot of physical work around his property and on the cars he owns.



Shaun Maluga is an Australian born, New York City based photographer with a penchant for automotive photography. When not shooting cars, he is happy photographing everything from the streets of NYC to portraits, weddings, events and travel. Follow his work on instagram @shaunmaluga @fujifimxpro2



Photo: ©Isamu Sawa

THE ANALOGUE WRIST

ISAMU SAWA

*Correction - "As a (humble) self-proclaimed watch collector; I own a dozen or so 'curated' watches - mostly of the vintage kind with historical significance. On deep reflection (during COVID-19 lockdown), I realised recently that 'most' of them are just superficial. Cool in their own right from a historical horological perspective but without the real, meaningful connection to me on a deeply personal level." Quoting myself, these were my words from my last column (featured in Volume Nine). I now stand 'partially corrected'...

I won't deny, it's certainly been challenging during these (dare I say) 'unprecedented times' to find new stories for my column. I usually meet like-minded enthusiasts and unearth unique stories at 'social gatherings' which we've all been taking for granted; till now...

So I have 'cheated' this one time, 'looking within' (myself); while in 'lockdown', and re-discovered a watch in my very own collection that 'actually' has "deep, meaningful connection."

My timepiece is a 2012 'Magrette Regattare Moana Pacific PVD' powered by a (Japanese) Miyota 8215 automatic movement. This Limited Edition watch (of 500) was kindly gifted to me by the founder of Magrette (pron. Mar-gret-tee) Timepieces, Dion McAsey - a boutique dive and sport watch brand based in Auckland (City of Sails), New Zealand. Founded in 2007, the brand's timepieces feature styling cues found in Italian style divers from the likes of Panerai and Anonimo but with some distinctly New Zealand charm and philosophy.

In 2012, I was invited to partake in a group photographic exhibition along with eight other high profile photographers from Melbourne, Sydney, New York and London; to explore the theme of 'wood'.

My subject matter was heavily influenced by the 'Regattare'; which had a unique design feature. On the case back was a small plank of engraved Ancient Kauri wood, individually numbered along with the Magrette

logo inlaid with Paua shell (similar to black mother of pearl). Ancient Kauri trees, often massive at up to 60m tall and 12m in girth are discovered underground; buried as a result of an unexplained act of nature at the end of the last Ice Age.

Only found in the top half of the North Island of New Zealand, the preserved Ancient Kauri found in peat swamps are known to be more than 45,000 years old and is the oldest workable wood in the world.

As an alternative source for old-growth wood supply, once the logs are discovered, they are skilfully excavated using heavy machinery and manpower. Intrigued, I wanted to document the industry that had emerged around this ancient timber. After some research, I came across 'Ancient Kauri Kingdom' - a business who pioneered the commercial extraction, milling and manufacture of Ancient Karui wood. With their help (and enthusiasm) I travelled (in hope) to Awanui, a river port in the far north of New Zealand to capture images worthy of the story and exhibition theme.

Before my departure to the land of the 'long white cloud', I emailed Dion at Magrette about my forthcoming adventure, explaining the connection back to his timepiece. I casually asked if the 'Regattare' was still available for purchase? His response was: "...unfortunately the Regattare Moana Pacific PVD has sold out, but I will have a look in my workshop to see if I can find the components to make a special one up..." I replied in excitement, asking for the price? "No charge this time" he replied, "let's just say it's to help towards your passion...it has a good story behind it..." The watch arrived in time for the opening of the inaugural exhibition; the object itself becoming a talking point on the night - 'almost' more than my final exhibition photograph of the Ancient Kauri (pictured).

So this is how my timepiece came to be and why it has 'very' special meaning...and it's definitely not 'superficial'...



Born in Japan and raised in Australia, Isamu Sawa, or Issey to his friends, is a commercial photographer and a watch collector. He enjoys connecting with other like-minded enthusiasts (read "obsessives") sharing their passion and watch stories... Follow his work on Instagram

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IDLE TORQUE

BRUCE MCMAHON

An unhappy childhood in Denmark, meeting strange antipodean folk in England and a never-ending thirst for freedom saw 19-year-old Hans Tholstrup land in Australia with a .45 pistol and precious else.

The Dane would become one of this country's most prolific adventurers – even after authorities took his mate, that comforting automatic pistol, off the young overlander back in 1964.

Today the 75-year-old Hans, living in southern Queensland, still calls himself a new Australian: 'I choose this country because it's the best and I love it.' And he's since seen more of the island continent from land, air and sea than most native-born Australians, with a litany of adventures from walking across deserts to establishing the world's first solar car race.

For those who came in late, Hans Tholstrup's feats include:

- First to fly single-handed around the world and without navigation aids
- First solo four-wheel-drive, east-west crossing of Australia
- Driving the 1977 London to Sydney marathon in a Mini Moke
- First open boat trip around Australia (world's longest outboard trip). 'Kept Australian on the left'
- First south-north crossing of Australia, with Mini Moke aboard a rubber raft for Bass Strait
- Founding the Wynns Safari
- Jumping a double-decker bus across 14 motorcycles
- First solar car to cross a continent (Perth to Sydney).

There was a swag of intrepid exploits from the 1960s on. Three tilts at the Bathurst 1000 (in Datsun 1600s and then a Falcon GTHO), motorcycle marathons across the world and a fair share of romantic exploits for the good-looking daredevil.

Hans doesn't easily recall dates, the years even, of individual adventures but knows he was never afraid – nervous a couple of times, yes – but never fearful. 'There's

only one thing that scares me, always has, still does and that's losing face. Dying does not scare me because I don't have to live with dying, it's gone.

And if something puts you in a panic mode do not do it. You will not function to survive if you panic.'

Hans' childhood was a tough, strict-disciplined experience before his mother ran off with a Spitfire pilot ('and a Kiwi at that') and his father shot himself. His uncle adopted him and, to improve his English language skills to study economics and business, the teenager was sent across to Cambridge. 'There I met these extremely weird creatures. They fished off the bridge when it said no fishing, they walked on the grass when it said don't walk on the grass ...they did everything I believe in; they were Australians. Not only were the guys fantastic, and the attitude fantastic, but the girls were hot.'

His first vehicle here was a Triumph Bonneville. He moved from station work to prospecting and then buffalo hunting in Arnhem Land in a short-wheelbase LandCruiser with a Chevrolet V8.

Hans turned south to explore more of his new home, racing a Cooper S in his spare time, before John Conomos, then boss of Daihatsu Australia, asked him to drive a Charade in an economy run. It changed his life.

'John knew I raced cars and could drive because I got his little 1000cc Daihatsu four-wheel-drive across Australia, across the Simpson, the full bit, and you can't do that if you're a complete moron with cars.'

The novice was converted when he and Evan Green won that 1980 economy run in the Charade with 5.4 litres per 100 kilometres. 'When you win something you get a bit excited,' says Hans. So he studied more about how far a litre of fuel could get you, rather than how fast. 'I think you're concentrating more on an economy run and you're more drained at the end of the day than at the end of Bathurst.'

He toned down his rip-roaring days and studied up on



Bruce McMahon's first car was a 1949 Riley Roadster before Volkswagens, a Porsche 911, Range Rovers, Fiats, Alfas, utes and more. He was a regular spectator at Formula 5000 races at Lakeside and Surfers Paradise and regarded Formula Pacific as some of the best of open-wheeler racing.

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fuel economy. Drove a Sydney taxi for two months to learn traffic light timings and traffic flows for one run before turning his attention to solar-powered cars. 'It's very clear to me that the earth is in deep shit, when it doesn't have oil any more, if it doesn't prepare for that day. But to me, and others who are not necessarily petrolheads, we do appreciate the individual transport capsule we call cars today. I don't want greenies to push that we only have public transport – that works for only one destination.'

To help prove electric vehicles could be viable Hans, alongside Larry Perkins, drove the solar-powered, Perkins-built Quiet Achiever from Perth to Sydney in 1982. That led to Hans creating the World Solar Challenge in 1987, a solar car race from Darwin to Adelaide.

But he's now persona non grata with the challenge, upset that today it includes a hybrid class where batteries can be recharged by generators. He bristles

at the thought of his World Solar Cup being shared between a real solar car and a hybrid.

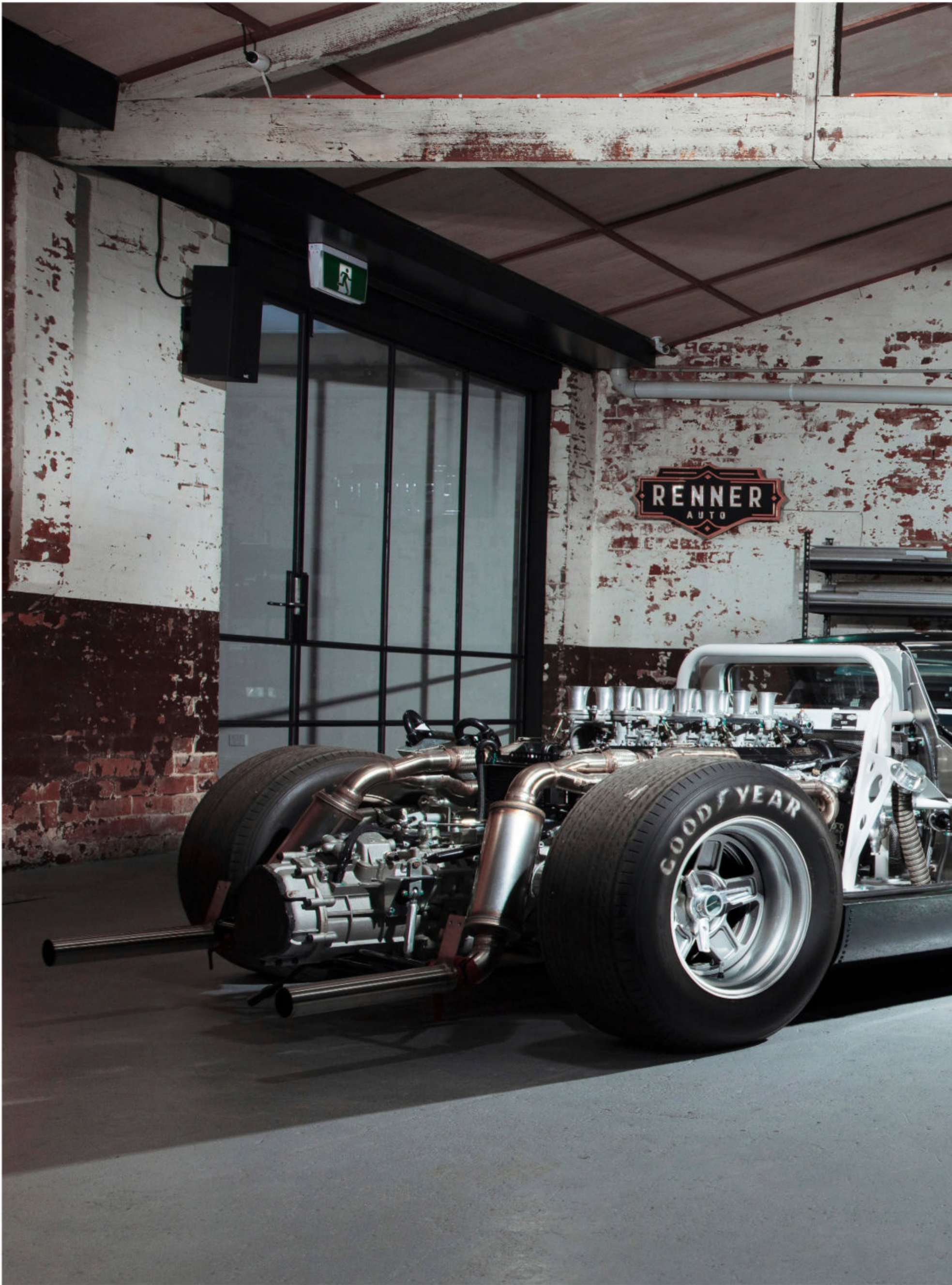
Long-distance driving though remains a love, even in a three-year old Mitsubishi ute. His favourite car of all time is the original Cooper S – though if money's not involved he'd take a McLaren 720.

'I have meditation, though that's not the right word, in a car I don't get anywhere else. Your thought patterns, style of thinking, the ideas you get when you're driving are totally different.'

The outback remains a favourite destination. 'It suffers no fools.'

Few ever saw the man as a fool. Yet a reflective Hans Tholstrup says, for all the adventures and all the accolades, he agrees with fellow Australian Germaine Greer that if he had his time over he would rather have had a family. 'At the end of it there is no substitute for a good family, a loving family and a few good friends because that is all that really matters in this world.'







JAGUAR

XJ13

★ WORDS **BRUCE MCMAHON**

★ IMAGES **NATHAN DUFF**

Right: This gorgeous dashboard conveys the essence of Jaguar with the strong suggestion of Le Mans. The steering wheel is a work of art in itself.

Historic racer and classic collector Aaron Lewis is a driver first and foremost. The business of restoration, he says, can be frustrating.

‘The rebuild is the painful bit, for some people that’s the enjoyment. I’m a driver – I know what I want, and know what I want the end result to be, but I’m not a mechanic. Restoring cars or doing mechanical work to improve cars can be painful. It always takes three times as long and costs four times as much as you think.’

And Aaron points to his newest project – a replica Jaguar XJ13, low and sleek and British Racing Green. ‘This one has cost me far more than it should have to finish, and I’m talking like one hundred grand more. No way on the

earth you’d spend the amount of money I have on this, partly because the engine detonated on the dyno. Also, various things ending up costing more than they should, typical of one of these builds.’

Aaron laughs and suggests it’s better to buy a finished car, a goer or even one that needs a little work. Among his current collection of goers is a bunch of fine replicas – a GT40, a Ferrari P4 and an XKSS but it is the XJ13 now demanding his attention.

The Cessnock businessman has owned two XJ13 replicas; the first a Rod Tempero recreation from New Zealand and the second this one, originally a rolling chassis out of Race Car Replica’s sheds in Detroit and built up with Jason Ferraro in Melbourne over three years.





This metallic British Racing Green treatment was also seen on early 1980s Series III XJ6s. Again, Jaguar's illustrious Le Mans history is evoked.





THIS IS THE PERIOD WHERE RACE CARS HAD MECHANICAL GRIP, SLIPPERY AERODYNAMICS

‘I wanted to get one car road-registered and one built as a race car, then drive both cars back to back and keep the one I liked the most,’ says Aaron. But he decided to ship the aluminium-bodied, fuel-injected Tempero car off to New York where it’s worth \$US400,000-plus and concentrate on the fibreglass-bodied RCR car. This one runs a six-litre Jaguar V12 with Webers and six-speed Graziano transaxle, as used in Lamborghini’s Gallardo. When that first engine blew it was developing around 310 horsepower at the wheels; that was before it was fully tuned so Aaron’s looking at a 400hp motor when all sorted.

America’s RCR version, using modern suspension set-ups and brakes, was designed to be registered in the States and survive regular road use. Here Aaron’s interest in

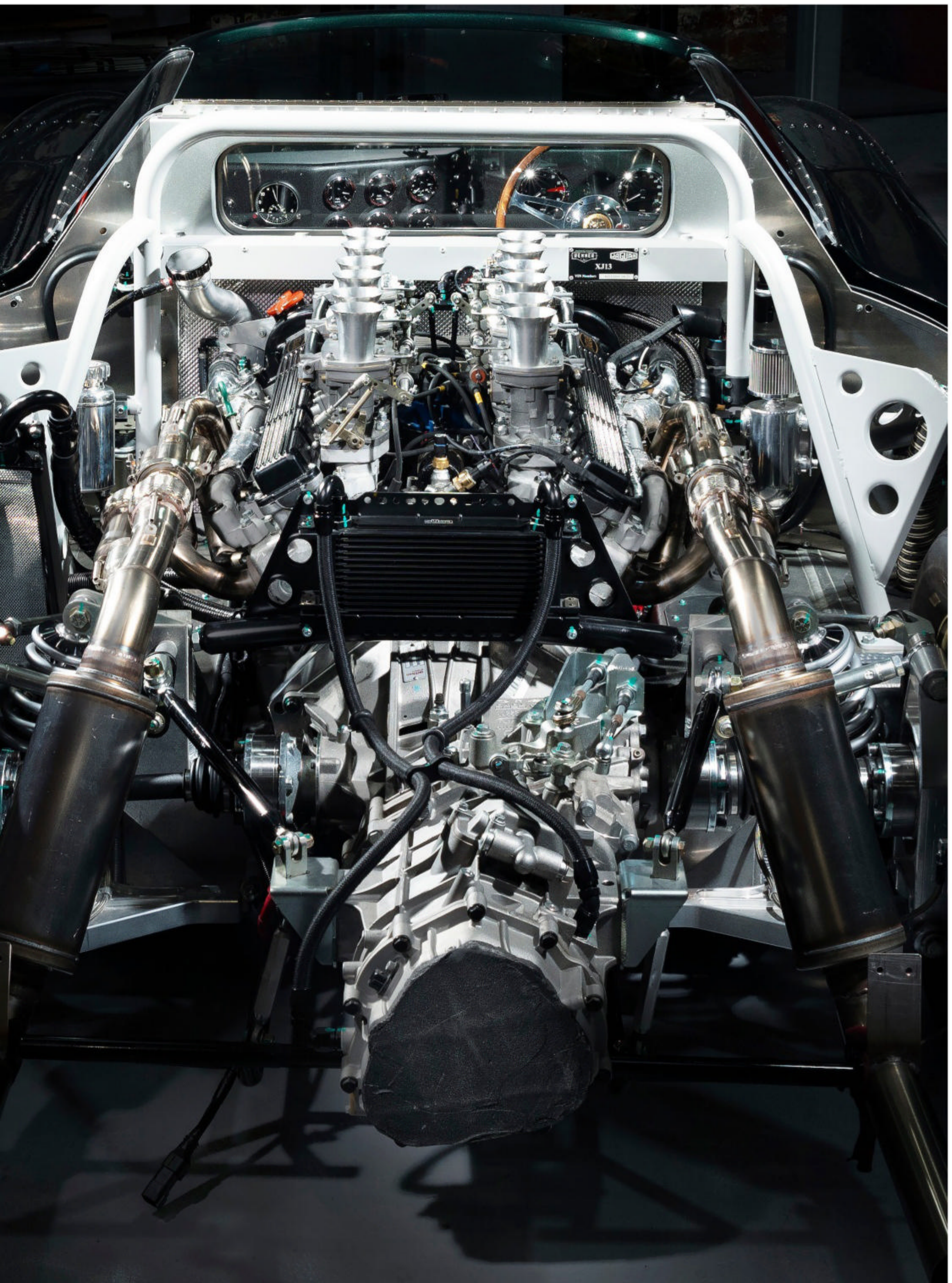
having the car registered is more about being able to drive to race tracks, as he does with his track-customised E-Type.

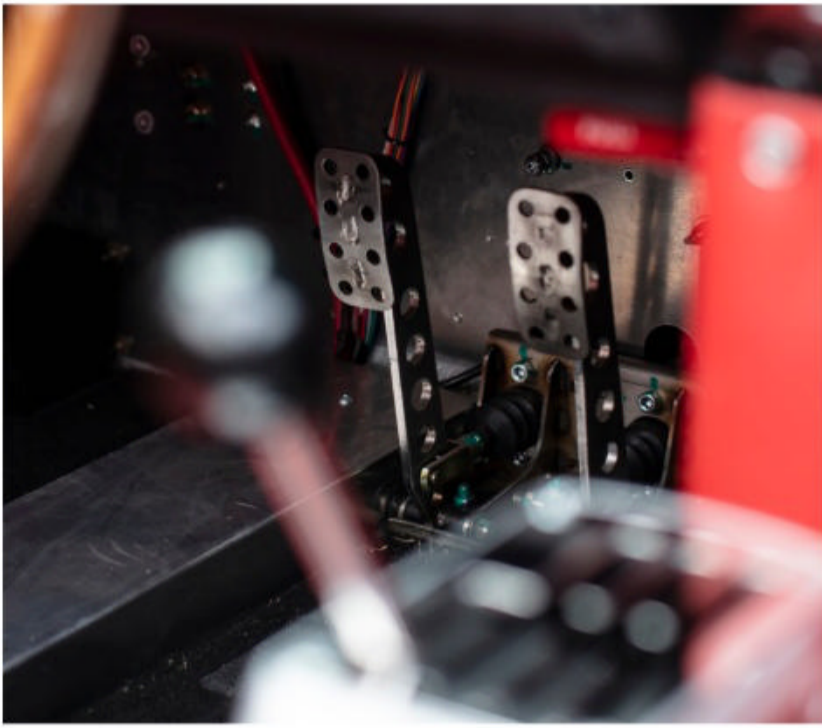
There are an estimated 20 Jaguar XJ13 replicas around the world, some closing on \$1 million price tags and more. The original was a one-off, a 1966 Jaguar prototype designed to rival the likes of the GT40 at Le Mans but never raced as development was overtaken by new regulations and factory cost-cutting; the XJ13’s engine though did spawn a production V12 which ran in Jaguar road cars for 25 years. Aaron believes there is a mythology around the free-flowing, 260km/h XJ13, as handsome as a Ferrari P4 of the same era. This was, he says, the last period where Le Mans contenders had some semblance of roadability about them.

‘It’s border-line but, yes, you could drive these

LEFT: From this angle, the XJ13 could be the D-Type reimagined.







*THE ORIGINAL WAS A ONE-OFF, A 1966
JAGUAR PROTOTYPE DESIGNED TO
RIVAL THE LIKES OF THE GT40 AT
LE MANS BUT NEVER RACED*

to the track and I think that has got appeal, that you could actually get in it and have a fang on the road.

I think the shape is a big factor, their version of aerodynamics then was a slippery shape for very high speeds whereas we soon learnt that aerodynamics and downforce was where the lap times came.

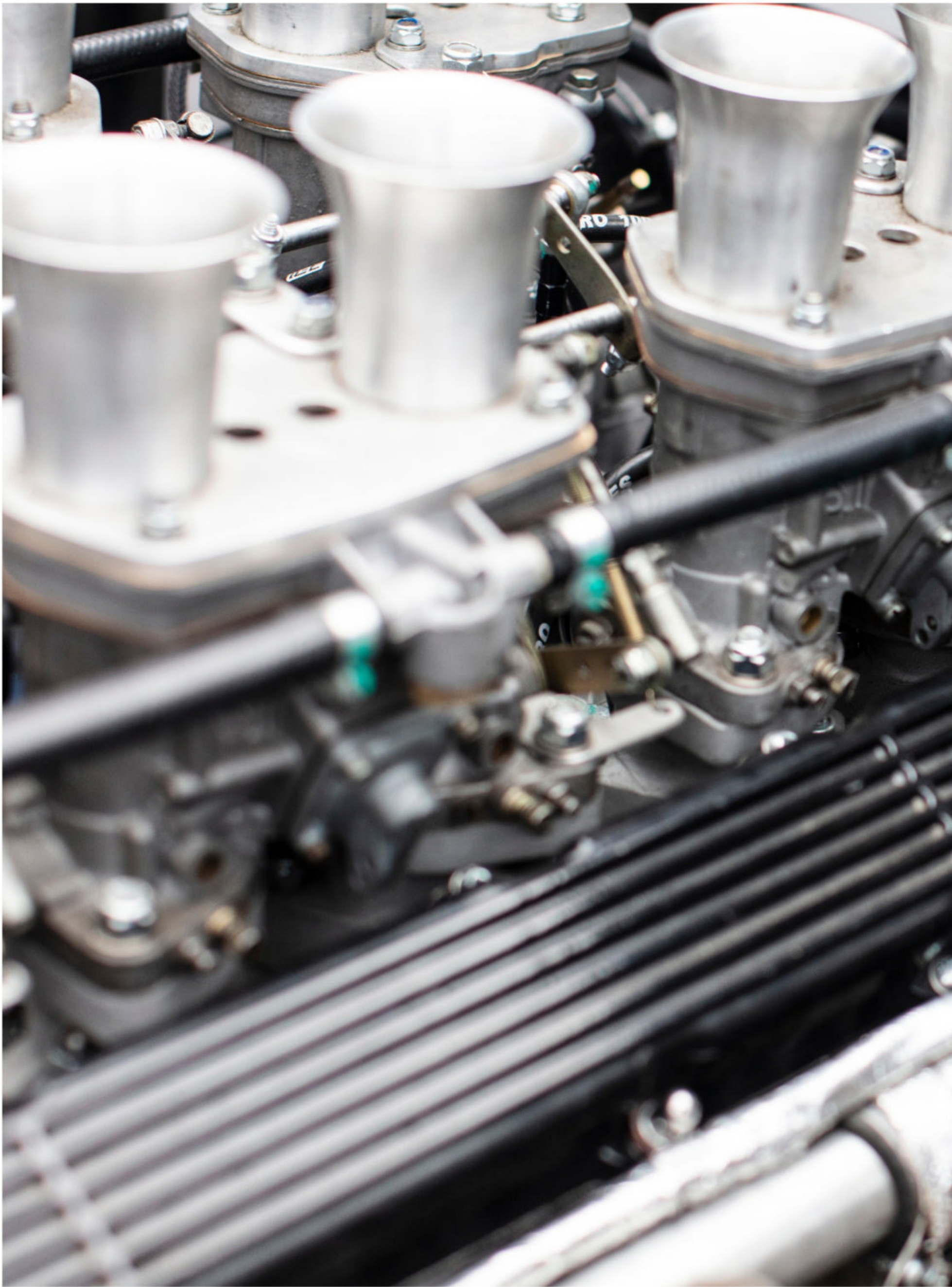
‘This is the period where race cars had mechanical grip, slippery aerodynamics and the first of the wide tyres. They went up a lot, they went from seven and eight-inch rims to 10 and 12-inch rims in the space of two years. ‘Right at that time, if you look at Can-Am cars, they started sprouting wings and race cars went from something like slippery, beautifully-rounded cars to slab-sided square machines with wings hanging off them and

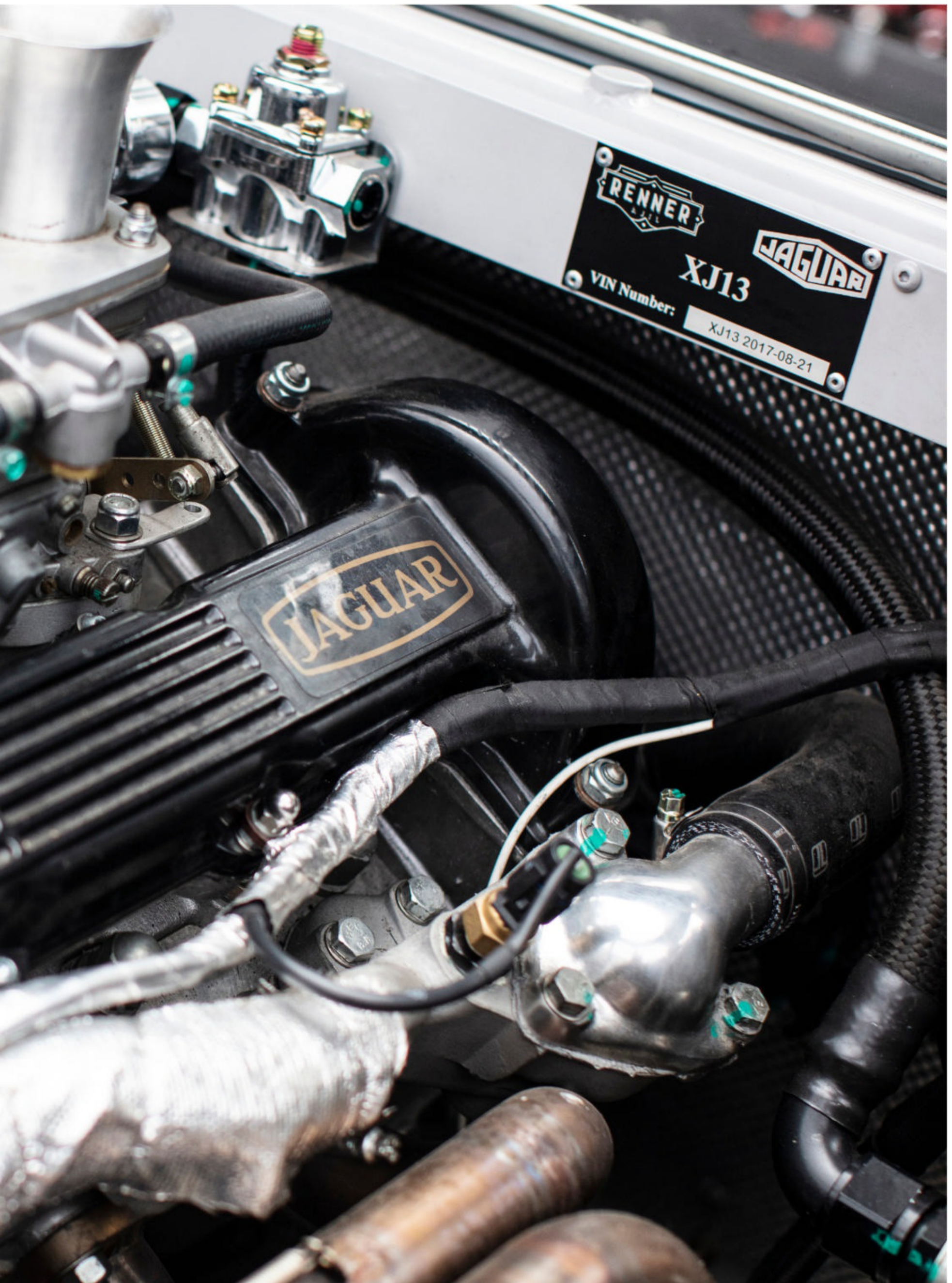
massively wide tyres.’

The XJ13 is one of a number of race and road cars in Aaron’s shed though there is a preponderance of Jaguars; the only new car he’s ever bought is a Project 7 F-Type and his company car is a second-hand XKR. His family, and his mechanic father, owned a swag of Jaguars ranging back to the early 1960s.

While Aaron began racing in a Lotus 7 replica, he attacked the first six Targa Tasmanias in a variety of Jaguars and still drives his much-loved E-Type from the Hunter Valley down to Phillip Island for track days. He’s owned and worked over that E-Type for more than 30 years; that’d probably be the last car out the door in a garage sale he reckons. Or at least until he’s got the XJ13 well sorted.

LEFT: There’s plenty of beauty in the details. Note the gated gearchange, drilled pedals and racing harnesses.





PININFARINA

AZZURRA SPIDER

WORDS **BRUCE MCMAHON**

IMAGES **NATHAN DUFF**





T

he Pininfarina Azzurra Spider – née Fiat 124 Sport Spider – is a pretty car of timeless character; deserves decent and timeless drives.

And 50 years of marriage warrants proper celebration so Australian couple Michael and Christa Wapler headed

to Germany, picked up a low-mileage, very original 1985 Azzurra Spider, drove across the Alps and toured the Italian countryside. Under the Tuscan summer sun and more.

‘We’d always dreamt about driving Italy in an Italian car,’ Michael says.

‘It’s a very beautiful country with very beautiful country roads. Think of Tuscany and its thousands of hills and mountains – exceedingly beautiful and if you can drive an open car there in the summer it’s just a delight.’

Michael and Christa already had a Fiat 124 Spider at home in Adelaide and were in the market for an equivalent classic for a pigeon pair. Or an Alfa Romeo 105 maybe, something in that vein. Preferably Italian.

A search on the website anamera in June 2015 found a Pininfarina Azzurra Spider just 10 kilometres outside Stuttgart. It looked right, was claimed to be original and Michael sent off an email to say he was interested. The only drama was the Waplers weren’t due to set off until March 2016 when there were plans for 50th wedding anniversary celebrations in southern Germany with relatives and friends from around the world.







*'We'd
always
dreamt
about
driving
Italy in
an
Italian
car.'*

Turned out the Azzurra owner was happy to hold the Italian roadster; it could sit in his garage until the Australians arrived.

'And it was exactly as it is. We'd bought it sight unseen and had to trust what the owner told us.

He turned out to be the managing director of a car leasing company, knew a bit about cars and lived in an extremely wealthy part of Germany. The zebra crossings there are black and white marble – not painted.'

Michael laughs.

The German seller was the second owner, had it for 18 months but didn't have time to drive it and his Alfa Romeo 105. (The car was first sold into Luxembourg, the theory being that a dealer, knowing Azzurra production was coming to an end, decided to sell it quick smart into Europe.)

'So he gave me all the papers and the keys and we drive off – just took off, no test drive. The car had only done 24,000 kilometres so you don't expect many surprises. You take the chances and drive it off.'

Azzurra Spiders were built for the North American market in Pininfarina's Turin factory; Spiders for the European market were tagged Spider Europas and carried a Pininfarina badge.

The Italian car designer and coach builder took over full production of Fiat's 124 Sport Spider – a sibling to the 124 Coupe – in 1981 before Fiat dropped the model from its line-up to make room for the X19 in mid-1982. From July 1982 through to 1985 Pininfarina built some 6000 Spiders, adding extras such as electric windows and using the Fiat 131's rack and pinion steering to replace the 124's discontinued recirculating ball.

RIGHT: The Azzurro is tiny by 21st century standards.







*La
dolce
vita
in
a
classic
car
and
classic
country*

The 2.0-litre engine, body and suspension remained much the same as in that original 1966 Fiat Spider. The twin overhead camshaft, five-main bearing engine designed by Ferrari engineer Aurelio Lampredi produced some 105 horsepower

and remained a versatile, reliable powerplant through to the likes of the Lancia Delta.

‘It was a super design in 1966 when the MGB had the usual pushrod engine,’ notes Michael. ‘Fiat was way ahead with engine design and everything else. The MGB had drum brakes and live rear axle with leaf springs. The Fiat has a live axle too but with coil springs and Panhard rod.’

So the Waplers had an enchanted month-long tour through stunning scenery – at one stage staying in an 11th century hillside castle restored by folk who, in a strange coincidence, made money selling tiles to Adelaide home owners.

Michael, with a deep interest in Tuscan history, also allowed he had a whale of a time in magnificent museums. ‘And the restaurants,’ he adds.

The Pininfarina Azzurra was then driven up to Hamburg, crated and shipped south to Brisbane. There the red roadster’s headlights were adapted for right-hand-drive conditions before the car was driven to Adelaide to join the Fiat 124 Spider; the pair of Italian convertibles now promised to the Waplers’ grandchildren.

‘I’d been to Italy before with a hired car – that was only half the fun. Here, when the wedding anniversary came up and the car came up, it all gelled at the right time. We thoroughly enjoyed it all,’ Michael recalls.

La dolce vita in a classic car and classic country.











MASERATI

BORA

✦ WORDS **JOHN WRIGHT**

✦ IMAGES **NATHAN DUFF**

Maserati has not been the only automotive manufacturer to appropriate the names of winds for some of its cars, but the quartet of Maserati GTs from the 1960s and 1970s, were more deserving of the implication ‘goes like the wind’ than some others – the Lincoln and Ford Zephyrs, the Holden Camira and even the Volkswagen Scirocco (with its gratuitous additional ‘c’ after the capital S) all come to mind. The 1963 Mistral (strong, cold north-westerly blowing from the Rhine Valley into the Mediterranean) built on the 3500 GT’s credentials, though lacking that car’s timeless grace. The 1966 Ghibli (hot, dry wind blowing

across the Libyan desert) was in the same tradition, as was the 1972 Khamsin (another hot dry wind patrolling North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula). But the most interesting of Maserati’s like-the-wind models is the 1971 Bora (cold north wind, a breath of very fresh air if you like), a truly revolutionary supercar. Before the Bora with its lissome Giorgio Guigaro bodywork, Maserati production cars had been conservative, sometime to the point of being outdated. The Bora was bracing in the rarefied world of Italian supercars (even though that term still awaited coinage). Here was the company’s first mid-engined model, half a decade after Lamborghini astonished



BORA — COLD NORTH WIND, A BREATH OF VERY FRESH AIR IF YOU LIKE

the world with its Miura. This was also the first Maserati to feature all-independent suspension. Paradoxically, despite being owned by Citroën since 1968, this suspension was not that company's trademark hydropneumatics arrangement but by coils all round with front and rear anti-roll bars. Nevertheless, the Bora did have a hydraulic pump and an accumulator just like a Djesse, which were used to power the steering, brakes, pop-up headlights, driver's seat height and the pedal carriage.

In many respects, the Bora was unique. Unlike any other Italian GT of the day it was quiet. The V8 may have been only a short distance behind the fortunate occupants of a Bora, but the engine and the rear suspension were fixed to a tubular cradle joined to the front monocoque by damper blocks. The engine sat under a carpeted aluminium cap and the engine cover was double-glazed. In 1971!

It was also rare among GTs in delivering braking commensurate with the performance. Big vented discs were used at each corner. As anyone familiar with big Citroëns from the 1955 Djesse onwards, there is a superbly firm, short-travel brake pedal mediating an astonishingly powerful system. Citroën management wisely chose not to use the

small trademark brake button but installed a conventional pedal. I mentioned the pedal carriage: the driver's seat was fixed, while the pedals moved backward and forward and the steering wheel was telescopic. This was the first production car with a pedal box that slid in response to the push of a button – distance, zero to three inches in scant seconds.

(Maserati buyers who wanted a more Citroënesque experience could later choose the less expensive, less rapid Merak which shared its soon-to-be-notoriously complex V6 with the SM. Complex? Try timing chain adjustment every 5000 miles! Or, of course, they could choose an SM. It was almost certainly the Citroën connection that held Bora and Merak values relatively low for so many years, compared with comparable Ferraris.)

The Bora's all-aluminium 4.7-litre V8 traced its lineage to the 450S racer. Its quad camshafts were chain-driven and there were four valves per cylinder. Maximum power was 239kW (320bhp) at 5500rpm (yellow line on the tachometer; the redline was at 6000) with 454Nm (335lb/ft) of torque at 4000. The 4.7 was joined by a stroked, higher torque 4.9. There was a quartet of 42 DCNF/14 downdraught Webers and Bosch electronic ignition. A five-

LEFT: Profile reflects the mid-engined configuration. Engine traces its lineage back to the legendary 450S racer, so there's plenty of Moss and Fangio as well as Citroën in the Bora.







FOR MANY YEARS MASERATIS WERE LITTLE MORE THAN HALF THE PRICE OF COMPARABLE FERRARIS

speed transaxle was used.

Zero to 60 miles per hour took 6.3 seconds and the standing quarter-mile 14.5. (The Merak's corresponding numbers were 10.6 and 16.5.)

By 1971 standards, the Bora's elegant 15-inch Campagnolo light alloy wheels were wide at 7.5 inches. Early cars boasted removable polished stainless steel hubcaps. Initially, tyres were Michelin XWX 205/70 all round. But the Bora displayed a tendency to 'tramline' and wider 215/70VRs were fitted at the rear with the choice between Michelin XWX and Pirelli Cinturato CN12.

The roof and A-pillars are of brushed stainless steel. Leather adorns seats, dash, doors, centre console and the rear bulkhead. Fast glass and air-conditioning were standard equipment.

Contemporary reviewers commented on the solid, high-quality feel of the Bora and it was almost certainly produced to a superior standard than any of its Italian rivals.

What a treasure of car, especially in Verde Indy like Greg Gialouris's car shown here! Greg acquired it in December 2013 and from May or June of the following year until November 2018 it underwent the most painstaking ground-up restoration imaginable.

How Greg came to own his Bora is a tale in

itself. At the time he had a contract to buy a brand new Audi R8 sitting on his desk. 'I thought I'd let the salesman stew,' he laughs. It was, he recalls, a rainy Saturday and he just started looking on the internet for a Bora. Amazingly, despite the fact there only ever four or five in Australia, he found this car. 'When I saw it advertised, I went for it – it didn't matter how bad it was, I just had to go for it. I got hold of the guy on the phone and did a deal on the spot. Then I went down to Melbourne and picked it up.' So the Audi R8 never made it into Greg Gialouris's collection. Like many of us, Greg had long loved Italian cars. He retired from the real estate business at 54 some 13 years back. 'I grew up in country New South Wales,' he says, 'Lismore. My first car was a Fiat 124, not the coupe, the sedan.' He chose well because the 124 was International Car of the Year in 1967, an utterly joyous little driver's car (impossibly superior to, say, an HR Holden Special!). 'Except the cable-operated clutch,' says Greg. And the rust...

After the Fiat came Alfettas. But it would not be until 2001 that Greg proudly bought his first Maserati, a brand new 3200GT and that bracing Maserati breeze blew into his life. He now owns four Italian cars, of which the Bora

LEFT: The fixed, raked-back seats were inspired by the 1928 chaise longue (designed by architect Charlotte Perriand while working for De Courboisier), reflecting Citroën brand values; a soupçon of French sits well with Italian tradition. Build quality was superior to that of contemporaneous Italian supercars. There is wonderful texture in the details.







THE BORA WAS ALMOST CERTAINLY PRODUCED TO A SUPERIOR STANDARD THAN ANY OF ITS ITALIAN RIVALS

is unquestionably his favourite.

When Greg got his Bora, which had arrived from England in about 2009 – the model was never sold new here – like so many Ferraris and Maseratis it was finished in bright Italian racing red. From the beginning, he was dedicated to the task of returning it to its original state. This required much time spent on internet fora and talking to Maserati club members. ‘It wasn’t as if I could ring a mate and say, can I drop over and have a look at yours!’

I have seen different numbers quoted for total Bora production, but Greg’s 524 seems the most reliable. He thinks just 27 right-hand-drive cars emerged from Modena. This one is now in a far better condition than when it left the factory – for example, galvanised plate means rust will never again be an issue.

‘I was particular,’ he says, ‘but my restorer Race Motorbodies in Padstow (Sydney) was very particular. I helped with the work myself, including the sandblasting and sourcing all the parts that were available. Many had to be especially made. Michael Mitchell rebuilt the engine. Being involved in a hands-on fashion for all those years the restoration took has given Greg a profound sense of belonging with this Maserati.

‘Compare it with a Countach or a Mangusta,’ he says, ‘and it is obviously built better.’ The Bora is also enticingly rare.

For many years Maseratis were little more than half the price of comparable Ferraris, but more recently an increasing band of devotees have come to enjoy the unique positioning of the trident marque. This Bora, for example, is a more civilised cruiser with more space for occupants and their luggage than you would expect of a contemporaneous mid-engined Gran Turismo, doubtless reflecting Maserati’s lack of direct involvement in motorsport; great as so many Ferraris are, you only have to read Brock Yates’s celebrated biography of Enzo Ferrari to realise his lack of passionate interest in the road cars sold in his name and his contempt for his customers.

So it seems fair to suggest that Maserati, by the time the Bora was conceived under the new Citroën management, was focused on creating new models that would be user-friendly in everyday conditions. Although Greg Gialouris’s superb specimen will never be a daily driver, it has been exposed to the rain and you have the feeling that it would take kindly to regular journeys on the Hume Freeway or across the Snowy Mountains.

LEFT: Verde Indy with beige leather is surely one of the most subtle and delightful colour combinations.





CSX COBRA

427

★ WORDS **COLIN FABRI**

★ IMAGES **NATHAN DUFF**





Some classic sports cars are rare, like the Ferrari 288 GTO with just 270 built, or even rarer like the 44 Jaguar XJR-15s of the early '90s; on the face of it, Duncan's original 1965 AC Shelby Cobra – being one of 260 '427' models, clearly fits in this rare category as well. However, it is the only factory right-hand-drive 427 in existence, making it instead one of one (1 of 1). There is definitely more to this Shelby Cobra story!

Most would know that the AC Shelby Cobra was a successful marrying of the English AC Cars body with Ford V8s and associated running gear by Shelby American. Carroll Shelby originally approached AC Cars in 1961 to discuss the idea of putting a small block Ford V8 into AC's Ace body. His purpose was to produce a car that could compete with the Corvettes in US sportscar racing. A single example was built, originally with a 260 cubic-inch V8 – Model CSX 2000 and later upgraded to the larger 289. Consequently, a deal was struck to continue the relationship and AC Cars then exported bodies to Shelby, complete with chassis, paint, and trim. One hundred and twenty-six were built and designated Mark I. The first 75 got 260 engines and the final 51 289s. AC also marketed the Mark I in Europe as the Cobra in both RHD and LHD form meeting the design specifications from Shelby American.

In early 1963 the Mark II Cobra chassis was redesigned primarily to accommodate rack

and pinion steering with a host of other design aspects improved upon as well. Sales were highly successful with more than 500 examples being built from 1963 to 1965, all with 289s.

In 1965 the Cobra underwent another chassis redesign, this time the chassis was made from four-inch tube (up from three-inch). This was primarily to take the power and torque of the big block 427. Coil spring suspension all round would improve traction and handling. This Mark III also had significant design input from Ford in Detroit. Fifty-six were built out of the planned 100 (for competition purposes). A further 260 (chassis CSX 3101 to 3360), were all built in LHD and sold in the US for road and track use. Some of these '427s' were actually fitted with 428 cubic-inch engines, with a longer stroke and smaller bore, as a lower cost alternative for road use only and were not suitable for competition use.

Much has been written about the iconic AC Shelby Cobra and this is only a quick history. So where does Duncan's car fit in? It is chassis number CSX 3150 (The CSX means Carroll Shelby Export) and those of you not snoozing through the history section above would have spotted that it was originally a US-delivered Mark III 427 Cobra in left-hand-drive form and in the colour called 'Silver Mink' (not to be confused with the 1968 HK Monaro GTS colour!). The car was transported to the Brussels motor show in 1966 by Ford Advanced Racing, who in their wisdom decided to spray

LEFT: Appropriately, there are suggestion of the body-builder's physique to the Cobra. In an earlier era the car would have been seen as the ultimate 'man's car'!







IT WAS ORIGINALLY A US-DELIVERED MARK III 427 COBRA IN LEFT-HAND-DRIVE

it red. From this show it was purchased by a prominent London QC and driven around the UK for many years. Further into its life it was sold into Scotland and at that time the new owner approached AC cars in the UK and had them convert it to right hand drive. This was the same factory where the chassis was originally built. So, it exited the AC factory a second time, now as a 'factory' right-hand-drive vehicle. The new owner also had the car resprayed dark blue.

Continuing its international journey, this Cobra was put up for sale in 1973 and purchased and imported to Australia by a cheese farmer where it was used for many years as a runabout both on the road and the extensive Bega property. The car was then sold to a new owner who had the wisdom to return it to its original Silver Mink.

When Duncan purchased the car in 2018 his main goal was to get it back to complete originality. Whilst it was close, it needed some research and parts-sourcing to complete the task. Period-correct original Halibrand magnesium wheels and the original front oil cooler were some of the larger items sourced and installed. What sets this car apart from almost all other 45-year-old examples is that it has not been restored but is simply in pristine original condition, having travelled only 7000 miles and been well looked after its entire life. Respraying has been the extent of

major work done and the body has never been removed from the chassis. To my eye, it looks like it would have on the showroom floor, or more correctly the Brussels motor show floor. Being currently displayed in its own private glass-walled room and in climate-controlled conditions reinforces the showroom look. Even though Duncan has some other precious metal in the nearby garages, it's pretty easy to tell who the favourite child is.

Silver Mink is a stunning and rare colour and compliments the shape and form of the car. Imagine a sheet of the finest silk draped over an open top sports car and you get the gist. The paintwork is of the highest show-car quality, the all-aluminium hand-formed body panels of this 'Narrow Hip' version (33 of the 260 were Narrow Hips) are stunning and without flaws. The shut lines are impressive for the '60s – or even the '80s. The engine bay is immaculate. Power is transmitted to the rear wheels via a four-speed Ford Top Loader gearbox. The 427 models can be easily differentiated from the 289s due to the weirdly positioned and kinked gear lever required as the gearbox is forced further back due to the larger engine size. Duncan's Cobra is fitted with the most desirable 427 side-oiler GT40 engine. I am surprised to hear Duncan does drive it around, 'mainly in winter as it gets a bit hot in the footwell in summer.' He admits the power output of 430 brake horsepower

LEFT: Shelby American's Silver Mink paintwork is very different from the colour offered by GM-H on its 1968 HK Monaro GTS with subtle blue infusing the silver.







SILVER MINK IS A STUNNING AND RARE COLOUR AND COMPLIMENTS THE SHAPE AND FORM OF THE CAR

is a lot for the 920kg body: spinning wheels and sideways action is available in any gear if provoked. While discussing the performance, Duncan confirms the significance of that extraordinary power to weight ratio, 'Road & Track timed the acceleration of the AC Shelby Cobra in 1965 and the 0-60mph of 4.5 seconds wasn't beaten by any other car they tested until the Porsche 959 in 1987.'

Duncan had originally trained as a pilot and was working with Ansett until its demise in 2001. Finding himself requiring a career change he stepped into the family mining equipment business which has obviously paid off, giving him time and money to pursue his passion of collecting and racing classic cars. A real bucket list event occurred for him in 2012 when he had the opportunity to drive another original AC Shelby Cobra – this time a 289 – at the Goodwood Revival, a three-day motor race meeting held at the Goodwood Circuit and open to vehicles of the circuit's original operating period of 1948-1966. To add to the significance of the event, the 2012 coincided with the 50th anniversary of Carroll Shelby's introduction of the original AC Cobra in 1962. With 30 original AC Cobras racing at the famed Goodwood circuit, this would have been a once in a lifetime event for Duncan or indeed anyone lucky enough to attend and he is very grateful to the Bowden family, and

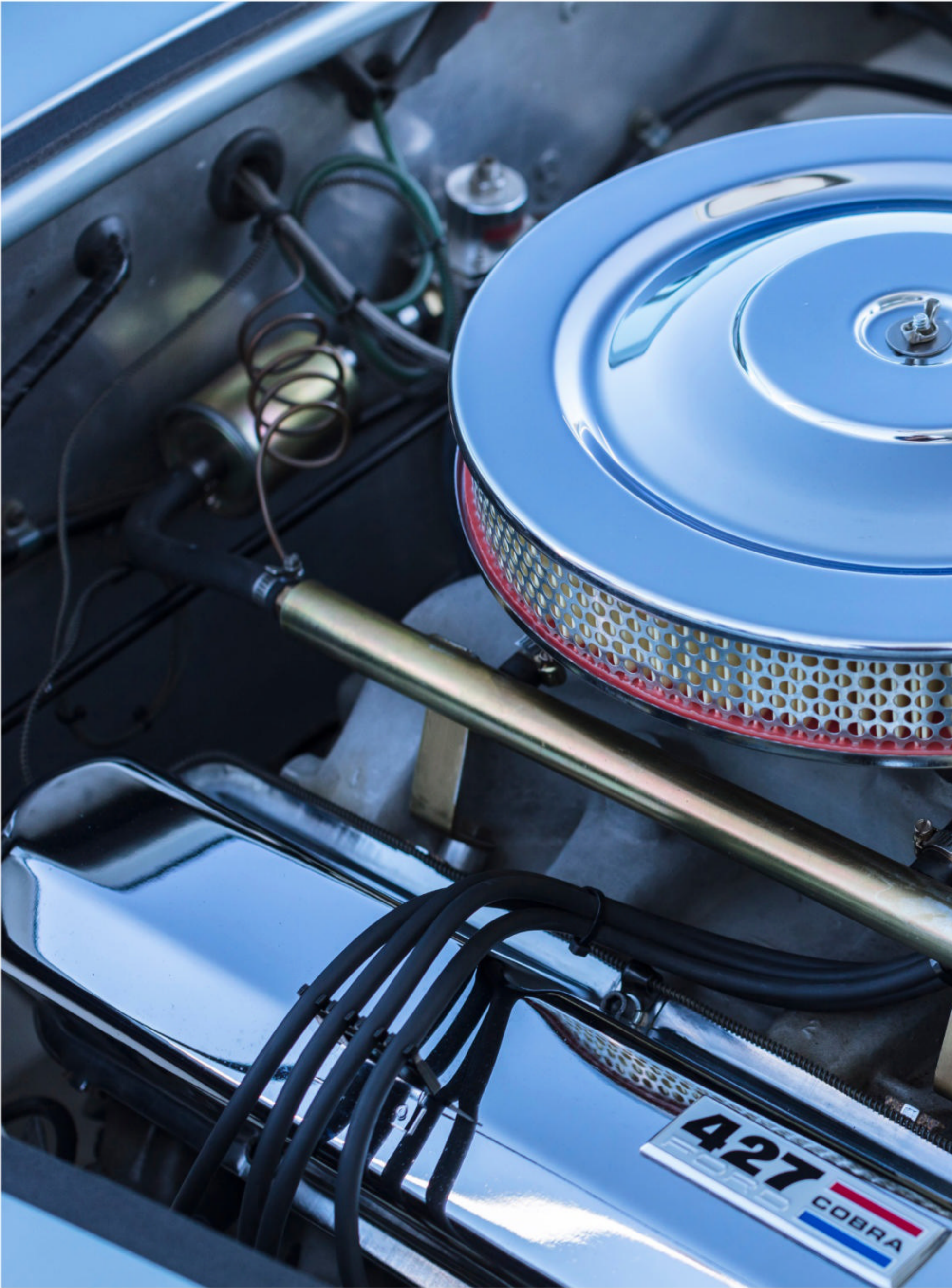
owners of the original 289 Shelby Cobra, for making this happen.

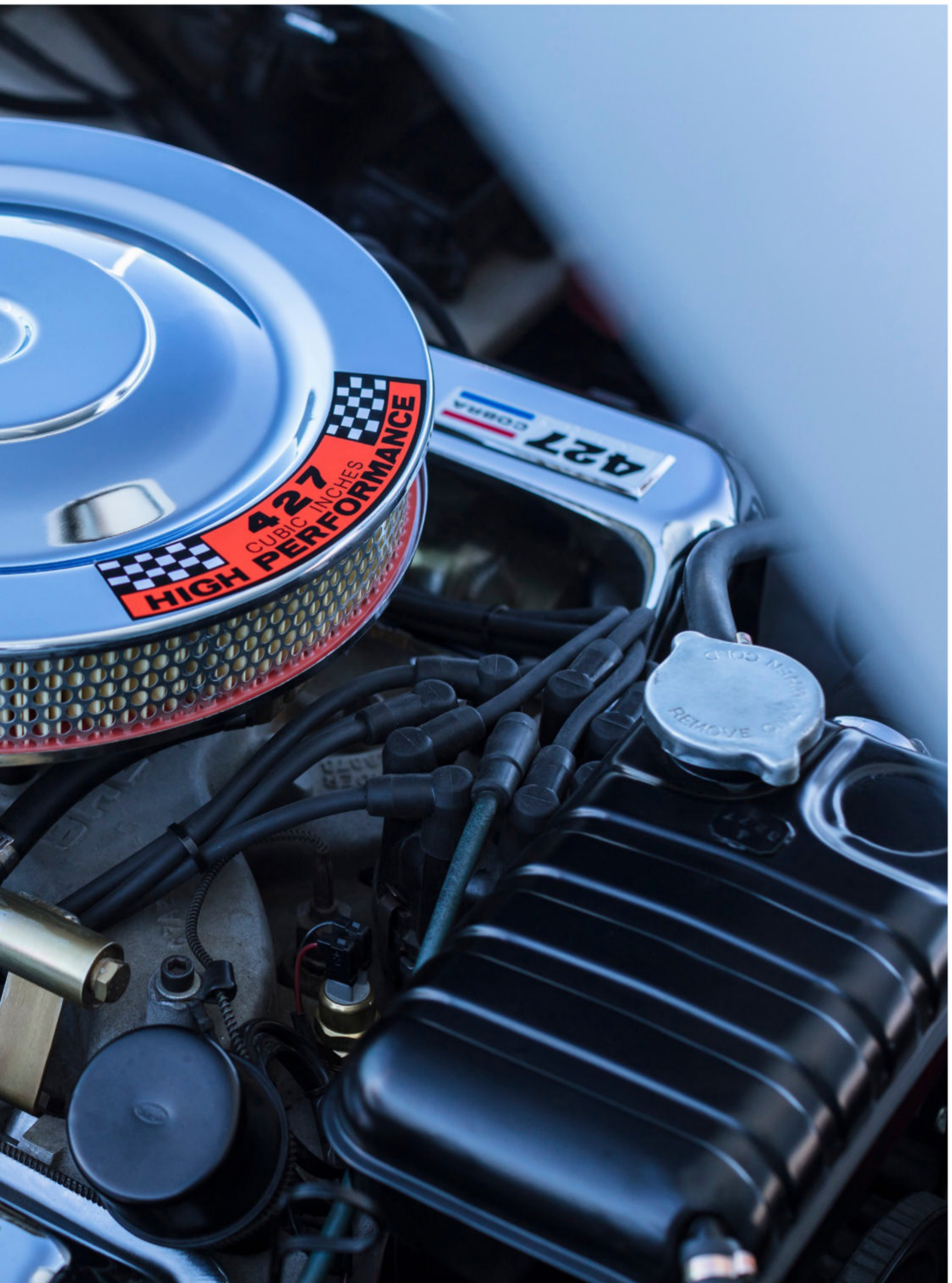
I ask the question whether the car gets driven, and surprisingly I find it does. Duncan takes it out semi-regularly for a drive to his favourite coffee shop or occasionally to a show day. To casual car buffs they probably see a stunning Replica, not ever expecting to see an original on the road and never expecting this 1 of 1 RHD Cobra to be just that.

Duncan's spacious entertainment room overlooking the AC Cobra has stunning memorabilia and photos adorning the walls. One spectacular photo shows Ken Miles driving a 427 Cobra at iconic Lakeside, just north of Brisbane, in 1965. With the open top and skimpy helmet of the day, it's easy to recognise Ken as he comes onto the straight with some serious attitude on the car and dirt spraying from the spinning rear tyres.

After we say goodbye and drive away, I reflect on what I have just seen. Duncan's AC Cobra is not only a super rare vehicle, but one that has been beautifully honoured by its owner, reverted to its original glory with meticulous detail and displayed and driven as it was intended. My visit today with this original and stunning AC Shelby Cobra has now been retrospectively added to my bucket list – and ticked off.

LEFT: Cobra is almost brutally minimal. Carroll Shelby's reimagining of the British sports car with American muscle coincided with Bristol's use of a Canadian Chrysler V8 in its 407 and preceded the Jensen Interceptor by nearly half a decade.









CHRIS RUNGE

COACH BUILDER

★ WORDS COLIN FABRI

★ PHOTOGRAPHY SEAN FANIN & ALEX BELLUS





Simply put, Runge Cars are vehicle art, individually produced with the oldest skills of hand-forming a metal skin around a performance chassis.

What sets Runge Cars apart is that the owner and builder, Chris Runge (pronounced Run-gee), designs and then forms the panels with an old school English wheel. His skills might be understandable if he was in his late 60s and taught by a master craftsman...however, he isn't and wasn't, instead starting Runge Cars in his early 30s and teaching himself to form panels on a home-built wheel.

The story starts with Chris growing up on a family hobby farm in Alexandria, a small rural town about two hours drive North West of Minneapolis. Home-schooled from the fifth grade, his first job at age 12 was yard work at a neighbouring farm, then for the same owner, working on second-hand medical equipment that he dismantled for shipping to African hospitals to be re-assembled over there. He spent his youth snowboarding as much as possible and from the age of 15 competed in

many high-profile events such as the US Open. While his first vehicle was a GMC pickup truck, he was always fascinated with air-cooled engines, in particular the VW Beetle's. He bought his first of many Beetles at 16 and this was a crucial step in getting him started on the hobby and job of fixing them up, then selling them for a profit. By 18 he had bought his first air-cooled Porsche, a 1978 911 SC.

In 2006 his snowboarding contract was up for renewal but instead he opted to work with his father in a newly designed business to clean commercial fuel tanks. In Chris's words this initial business was 'a complete flop', but eventually he resurrected it by redesigning the fuel cleaning equipment.

All the while he was still buying and restoring old 911s and 912s and in 2010 he came across a 1967 912 for sale. When he arrived at the location to look at the Porsche, he discovered the property was owned by a widowed lady who showed Chris the disused barns on the property. These turned out to be brimming with metalworking equipment. Chris was

LEFT: Every car is hand-made for an individuality unobtainable on a production line.





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*'THEY ARE HANDCRAFTED ONE-OFF BUILDS
SPECIFIC TO THE CLIENT'S DESIRES.'*

fascinated with it, especially a home-made English wheel. A deal was struck for the Porsche and the majority of the metalworking equipment, sealed with the request from the lady that Chris use the English wheel himself, as her husband had once done.

This reinforced the idea Chris had formulated to build his own vehicle. Always enamoured with hand-built vehicles from his heroes, like Walter Glockler, and now having the tools to potentially create something of his own, all he needed was the skills. Enter hard work and experimentation as Chris bought sheets of aluminium and went to work on forming the panels he envisaged. Whilst he often started with sketches, the panels were mainly formed by eye over a wooden buck, the buck also constructed by eye. Chris's original intention was to attach the hand-formed panels to a VW chassis, but after much testing and measuring, he scrapped that idea and went looking for something more suitable. Hitting Google, he searched for 'mid-engine VW chassis' and the Formula Vee idea was born. Further searching

found him a Formula Vee race car for sale nearby and it proved to be the perfect solution. Not only were the dimensions of a Formula Vee more suitable for his imagined design but the underpinnings were well sorted and already performance based.

First a wooden buck was created to sit over the Formula Vee to create the shape to which the panels would be formed. When I asked Chris about building the buck his response was 'it's easy, the same process as building skateboard ramps'. I later found out he had skateboarded from the age of eight and built many ramps with his father, at one stage convincing him to convert one of their barns to house a skateboarding 'Vert'.

Chris continued to experiment with the wheel, teaching himself how to stretch or shrink the aluminium sheets to create the curves he wanted – starting at the front of the car and making panel by panel till he got to the back and then repeating the process. He works in 1.3mm 3003 grade aluminium which is just soft enough to allow the bending process







but strong enough for purpose. It's hard to emphasise how Chris learnt these complex trades by trial and error – he laughs when he tells me he used a single anvil type at the base of the English wheel as he didn't know he could change it to different radius anvils, which he didn't realise had come with the equipment. This simply made the task more difficult and no doubt honed his skills further.

Chris's process is to first sketch a basic outline, then measure the chassis and pickup points. Next comes a full-size plywood buck. He cuts the aluminium sheets with tin snips to a rough shape, then painstakingly presses out the curve he needs on the English wheel, forming the aluminium into multiple curves out of one or more pieces, depending on the application, then Tig welding to complete the final larger panel. Lastly, the fine grinding and polishing take place to produce the final panel look that you see here.

His first car was completed in August 2012 after which a friend took some photos, posting them on Facebook. From this he received an

invitation to show his creation at Minnesota Cars and Coffee, a regular car show that attracts about 700 cars, and he subsequently received his first commissioned order.

His first two cars were conventionally painted but feedback from others strongly suggested he should polish the panels like fighter planes of a past era. From car #3 onward he polished all panels giving them the striking look you see in the pictures. These polished panels show no indication of where they were welded, so perfect is the job Chris has done. With polished panels there is simply 'nowhere to hide', unlike paint which can be patched before painting to hide any imperfections.

The next stage of development saw Chris create his own tubular steel chassis to allow more flexibility in design and to accommodate differing height drivers. Further development has seen the use of locally built flat four air-cooled engines complete with VW case transaxles and custom internals. So far Chris has built 10 vehicles, the most recent eight on his own custom chassis. He has orders

LEFT: There is plenty to cherish in the details and evocative colours.

WITH POLISHED PANELS THERE IS SIMPLY 'NOWHERE TO HIDE', UNLIKE PAINT WHICH CAN BE PATCHED BEFORE PAINTING TO HIDE ANY IMPERFECTIONS.

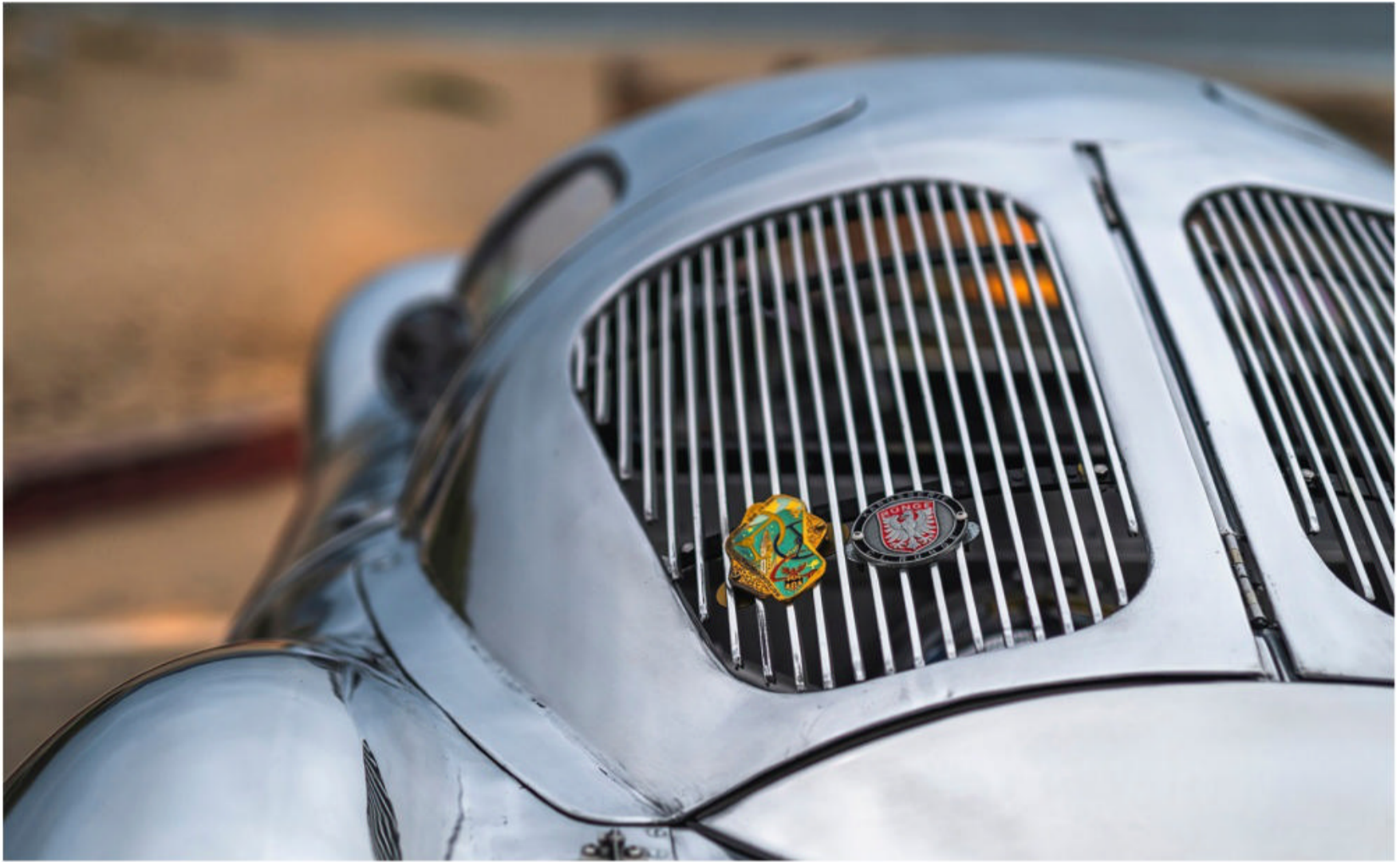
for another three. The latest car (RS010) is a stunning coupe, featuring a 2.3-litre 200-horsepower mid-mounted engine, four-speed transaxle, Porsche 356 brakes, aircraft switchgear and aircraft vented cockpit. Weighing in at around 820kg this equates to more than 240 hp per tonne, the recipe for a super quick and responsive drive.

It's clear the Runge cars are special to any observer. Nevertheless, I was keen to see what Chris himself thought was special about his creations. 'They are handcrafted one-off builds specific to the client's desires. I learn their story, their background, especially childhood memories and work with them to incorporate what they loved about that time. I recently worked with a customer to build into the car the switchgear from an aircraft special to him, as his father had been a fighter pilot.' This is bespoke building at its best and some of the highest profile car builders of our time could learn some forgotten concepts from Chris.

Looking at the pictures on these pages, it's

easy to assume Chris is an artist specialising in vehicles – just check out any picture, any angle. But that's not his story; rather he lives for the technical aspects, the quality side of the vehicles, the performance and handling. Challenges of perfecting airflow and creating removable sub-frames are examples of what makes him tick.

So where to from here? Chris wants to reduce the current build time of a Runge car from around 30 months down to half that, which he believes he can achieve by building one car at a time. He also wants to create smaller, quicker build items in parallel with the car builds, such as furniture, custom firearms cases and luggage. His 15-year-old son now helps on the builds, his daughter creates the YouTube and other social media videos and his wife does the administration work for Runge Cars. So now anything is possible, and no matter what drives him, his polished end result is exquisite functional art at its best.



ABOVE & BELOW: Chris painted his first few cars before responding to suggestions just to polish the aluminium. But you'll never spot a hint of the elaborate welding required to complete each car.







ABOVE: With 200 brake horsepower and a kerb weight of 820kg, this Runge is at least as fast as it looks.



AMC GREMLIN

AMC JAVELIN

★ WORDS COLIN FABRI

★ PHOTOGRAPHY NATHAN DUFF



Nigel Keats is originally from the UK and is into English cars, so at first it may be hard to see where his passion for AMC may have come from. After joining the Navy, and at the age of 19, Nigel purchased his first sports car, a 1966 Sunbeam Alpine. In the UK, at the time, insurance was expensive for under 25s and especially for cars with larger capacity engines, so the 1.5- litre Sunbeam was a logical choice. Nigel enjoyed it for a few years and then sold it to fund a backpacking holiday around the US. He was keen on becoming a pilot and the plan was to attempt this in the US where the costs for this type of training were far less than in the UK. Whilst this part of the plan did not pan out, the holiday did cement his love of backpacking, so after returning to the UK he set off again, this time for Australia. Here he met and married an Australian girl, and after gaining a visa he settled into late '80s Australian life. Time moved on, as did that relationship, and he again decided to pursue his dream of becoming a pilot. In 2008 Nigel gained his commercial pilot's licence.

While cars continued to be of interest to

him, he never had either the money or the knowledge to perform restorations. His focus changed however in 2012 when he met Leisa, who he describes as a soul-mate. Leisa had a passion for AMC cars and used her Matador coupe regularly.

Leisa's Matador (she still has it!) is a 1974 coupe with a three-speed auto and 390 cubic-inch engine. When he and Leisa were out driving in 2013 it developed an overheating problem that needed urgent investigation. This was the start of further work and a decision to remove the engine was made. Next came body work, rust repairs and a complete respray and restoration. Restoration work was largely carried out by Gary, a local AMC guru. Gary was always helpful in passing on his specialist AMC knowledge, and Nigel and Leisa worked with him on the car on weekends. Gary's brother was also the go-to person for AMC parts in Australia, and a long-term friendship was forged with them both. In another twist of fate, Nigel and Leisa were renting a property from a guy who was keen on Cadillacs and had a small collection. His best friend was a very good welder and had been flown to Perth to







WHEN NEW, AMC SIMPLY COULDN'T COMPETE IN PRICE WITH THE OTHER MARQUES ON THE MARKET

work on Frank Sinatra's old Caddy. When that job was complete and he returned to Brisbane, he began body repairs on the Matador. When stripped back it was found to have rust around the top section of the coupe, and at one stage they were cheekily asked, 'how do you feel about a Matador convertible?'

In 1960, Australian Motor Industries (AMI) signed an agreement with the American Motors Corporation (AMC), to assemble a limited range of AMC cars here in Australia. Import tariffs encouraged assembly of international vehicles in Australia from 'Completely Knocked Down Kits' (CKD), which was the term for a complete package of parts sent from the manufacturer. This practice had been going on since the 1920s and has seen models from Triumph, Mercedes-Benz, BMC, Leyland, the Rootes Group and Toyota among many others, being assembled in Australia. During the '60s and '70s, AMI released the Rambler Ambassador, Matador, Javelin, Hornet and Rebel models under the 'Rambler' brand name (rather than AMC), making the accurate name for Leisa's Australian-delivered car a Rambler Matador.

Next on the car adventure list, Nigel and Leisa headed over to the US for a 'purchasing' holiday. They spent three weeks and covered more than 4000 miles. The plan was (at a minimum) to come back with an AMX but also to see what else was available; perhaps they would buy as many as three or four other AMCs. First up, they flew into Atlanta and drove a hire car through to Georgia where they picked up a 1976 Gremlin X (now named Georgia), a beautiful Kermit-green coloured hatchback you can see in these pages. Ditching the hire car, they decided to drive Georgia the long way around to LA via Orlando, Cape Canaveral and Phoenix, eventually dropping the car to the shipping company. Not all went to plan though, as 20 miles into the trip, steam escaped from the bonnet and was tracked down to a crack in the radiator. A quick repair and overnight stay in Orlando and the trip was then completed with no more dramas. With the Gremlin X, the trip was made with no number plates as you can't purchase registration without a US address. The car received a great reaction everywhere they went and in one location local cops posed for photos next

RIGHT: These cars combine unique AMC character with typical 1970s texture in an enchanting and unique fashion.







THE AMC CARS HAVEN'T YET HAD THE RESURGENCE ENJOYED BY OTHER US MUSCLE CARS

to car. However, stopping at Tombstone, just outside of the O.K. Corral, they got pulled over by a cop, originally going in the other direction. First comment was 'very cool car, but no plates.' Nigel went through the story of what they were doing in the US. 'The cop then went and got on the radio, eventually came back, handed back our licences and said – have a nice day, probably the paperwork was all too hard.'

Next up, another hire car run to Phoenix to check out a Javelin which they subsequently purchased, and drove it sightseeing all the way to LA for the second drop-off. Then it was off to Seattle for yet another Javelin purchase, further extending the holiday. With AMC cars bought, as well as Cape Canaveral, Route 66, and the Grand Canyon all visited – the couple's bucket list was ticked off and they headed home.

The first three cars – the Gremlin X and two Javelins – were in reasonable condition and as described. But the first Javelin they bought from just outside of Phoenix wouldn't start. They checked all the hard stuff – everything including starter motor and other electricals –

then called a mechanic and embarrassingly paid him to tighten one of the battery connections. Although the cars were pretty much as described, this Javelin's paint was way worse than the photos showed. Back in Australia, it was returned to bare metal with very little rust found. It got new carpet and some simple maintenance – belts and hoses replaced, and so on – and came up beautifully.

The AMX search was a different story and the final decision was to purchase a project car located in Arizona. It wasn't a runner, but was being sold with a mountain of spare parts including two engines. The deal was done and the car and parts were picked up and dropped off to LA for shipping. The AMX model was a two-seater GT-style sports car with the small car/ big engine formula and was produced between 1968 and 1970. Marketed as the Rambler AMX in Australia, it was offered with V8 engine options ranging from 290 cubic inches to 390, with up to 340 brake horsepower to propel 1350kg. With this power to weight ratio, the AMX was always going to be a quick car with road tests of the day recording 0-60mph acceleration time in

RIGHT: AMCs were generally less extravagant than most of their peers. There were compact Ramblers long before the Big Three launched the Valiant, Corvair and Falcon in the fall of 1959 for 1960.







AMC WAS JUST ONE OF THOSE QUIRKY MANUFACTURERS WITH OFF THE WALL IDEAS

6.6 sec, impressive for 1968 and squarely in muscle car territory.

Nigel believes the AMC cars are much underrated and when new, AMC simply couldn't compete in price with the other marques on the market at the time. In terms of performance and features the top of the line 390 Javelin was easily a Camaro equivalent. The AMC cars haven't yet had the resurgence enjoyed by other US muscle cars, and Nigel puts this down largely to the fact that there isn't a lot of memorabilia available, unlike for example, the Ford Mustang. AMC also did not seem to capitalise well on marketing opportunities, such as the classic river jump scene with an AMC Hornet in the 1974 Bond movie *The Man with the Golden Gun*. (Compare that of Lotus with the massive brand recognition it got from marketing of the classic underwater *Esprit* in the 1977 *The Spy Who Loved Me*.) In the US though, the Matador did have some NASCAR success with Penske Racing running factory-backed Matador hardtops and gaining several wins between 1973 and 1975, the majority with Bobby Allison at the wheel.

Nigel clearly has developed a real soft spot

for the Matador: 'From the doors back it's just beautiful, the front bonnet and strange headlights are not to everyone's taste and perhaps they needed to be finished off a little better, but AMC was just one of those quirky manufacturers with off the wall ideas.' When asked about the AMC engines, he thinks they are just fantastic. 'People look under the bonnet and say, has it got a Chrysler engine? Well, no, actually, it's the other way around, Chrysler bought AMC so they could use that engine.'

For the future, Nigel wants to sell the Gremlin X and Javelin and just keep the AMX and Matador as their 'His and Hers' cars. Leisa and Nigel currently live on a yacht on the north side of Brisbane and have their cars stored elsewhere.

The AMX restoration is well advanced with the engine now complete. Nigel will be putting in a 401 cubic-inch (6.6-litre) V8 from a Javelin and adding an LSD and other upgraded parts to create his own take on the car. He tells me he 'just needs seven days a week for about three months and all will be fine.'

RIGHT: Nigel Keats thinks AMCs are underrated. With unique details and 390 cubic inches of engine, the Javelin makes a great case for itself.





A photograph of a red Fiat 8V car parked in front of a large concrete pillar. The car is shown from a low angle, highlighting its front end and wheels. The pillar is a light grey color and has some small plants growing on it. The background shows a curved concrete structure, possibly part of a building or bridge.

FIAT 8V



SUPERSONIC

★ WORDS STEVEN KITTERLL

★ PHOTOGRAPHY MIKE GRAMBUSH







The impact of the Second World War could be felt across the globe. In the automotive sector, many factories were shut down or even destroyed. Quality materials used prior to WWII were in short supply and the day-to-day operations of once thriving companies were struggling across the board. Custom and small coachbuilders like Bertone, Pinin Farina (the company was renamed Pininfarina in 1961, when 68-year-old Battista ‘Pinin’ Pininfarina formally handed the business over to his son Sergio) and Ghia fell the hardest without the manufacturing support from the larger automobile factories, grappling to secure work and meaningful opportunities.

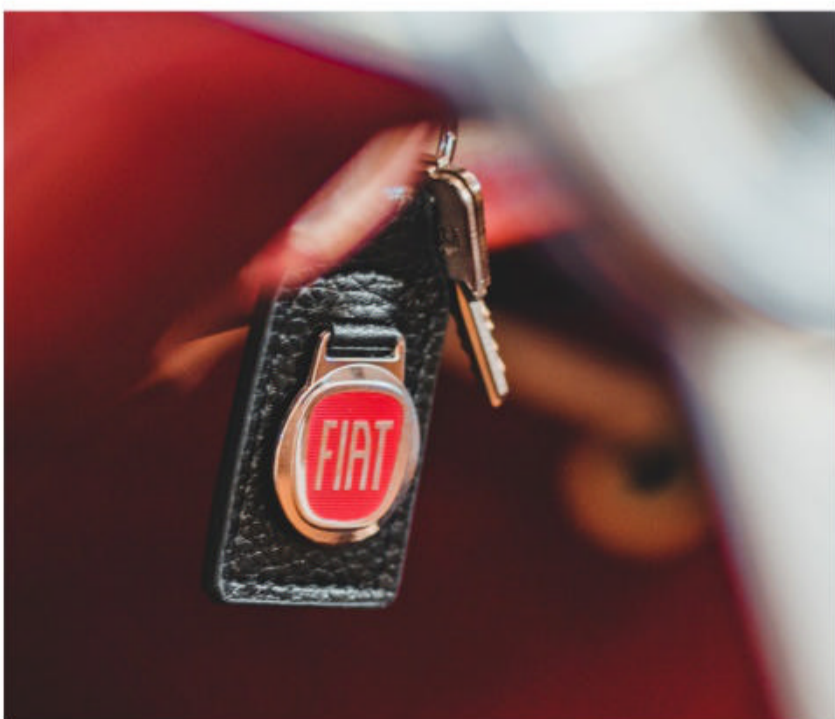
However, overseas manufacturers in the United States jumped at the opportunity to work with Italian coachbuilders. Enter Virgil Exner who was the current head of the design department at Chrysler and had a watchful eye on the work of these specialty craftsmen in the hopes of a collaborative venture. Ghia was approached

by Chrysler, offering a Transatlantic styling partnership that gave Ghia steady cash and Chrysler the benefit of a European design and approach.

Meanwhile in Italy, Fiat had introduced the 8V chassis, which garnered attention from carrozzerias who wanted to design custom bodies to marry with this new platform. Companies such as Zagato, Vignale and others bid to Fiat with ideas to attire this car, which would become limited production 8V models. Luigi Serge, who was then the Commercial Director of Ghia, was one of those trying to attract the attention of Fiat. Giovanni Savonuzzi, the company's new Technical Director, was his ace in the hole with a background in aeronautical design. Savonuzzi had started his career with Fiat and enhanced his reputation with the groundbreaking Cisitalia 202 (the first car to become a permanent exhibit in the New York Museum of Modern Art) and other successful racing coupes. He had a wonderful sense of form and



RIGHT: Unmistakable Fiat character shines through in the 8V. Note, for example, the lovely painted dashboard. Mass-produced Fiats from the 103-series 1100, through the 1800 and 1500 all had striking treatments reminiscent of this magnificent limited edition sports car. Woodrim wheel is almost certainly by Nardi.





SAVONUZZI'S DESIGN FOR THE FIAT 8V WAS CONTEMPORARY AND MODERN, UTILISING A TWO-DOOR COUPE BASE THAT WAS SOMEWHAT RADICAL IN SHAPE

influence seen over his storied career. Cues he took on the 8V could later be found on the VW Karmann Ghia VW, Volvo P1800, as well as on Fords and Chevrolets alike.

Savonuzzi's design for the Fiat 8V was contemporary and modern, based on a somewhat radically shaped two-door coupe. A graceful yet flashy figure it was, giving this relatively small car a larger than life presence. With aerospace characteristics it would be referred to as the 'Supersonic' and would later become known as the paradigm for 'jet-age' styling. During the fall of 1953, Luigi Serge travelled to Detroit to meet with Chrysler executives to pitch some of his ideas. Also present at the meeting was a gentleman by the name of Paul Farago, a designer and engineer who was extensively involved with Chrysler's styling department.

They were impressed with the new designs and with full support from Exner, Farago placed the first order for a Ghia-bodied Fiat 8V Supersonic. Carrozzeria Ghia of Torino was contracted for approximately 30 to 40 of the 114 8V examples built, of which the most striking were the 15 bodied to Giovanni Savonuzzi's stunning initial design. All 15

Supersonics had subtle detail differences. Production only lasted about two years but the car was a brilliant fashion statement which had made a virtue of commercial necessity.

This was a compelling proposition: a high-powered sports car dressed in a light, bespoke Italian alloy body, sitting atop a Siata-fabricated chassis with four-wheel independent suspension. Under the bonnet sat a stout alloy V8 engine of advanced overhead-valve configuration. There was a four-speed manual gearbox. Successfully raced by gentleman drivers all over the world, this Fiat 8V and Supersonic models were iconic during a memorable period for automobiles.

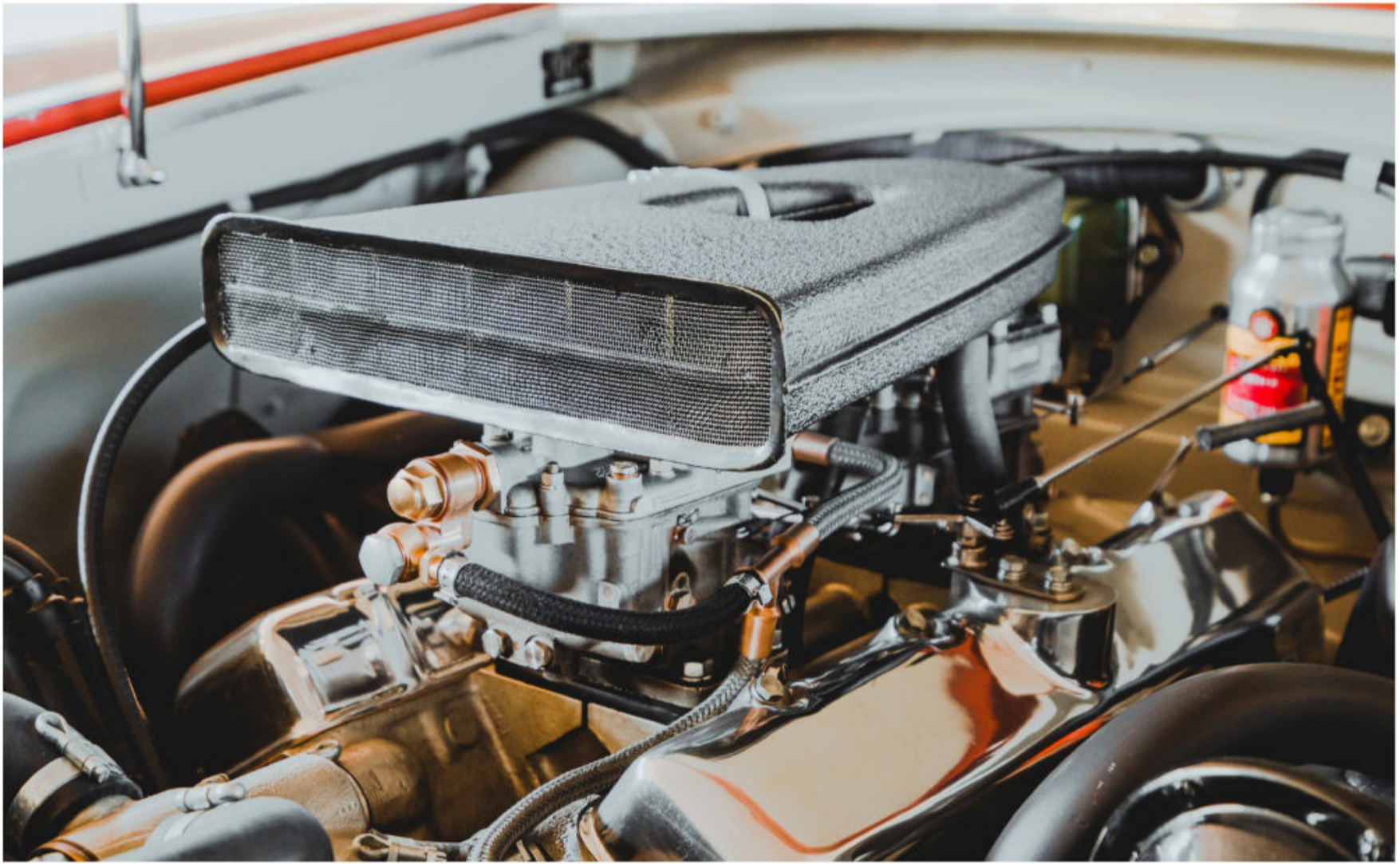
Many special and one-off designs later, S/N 000040 was built for Lou J. Fageol, the son and heir of Fageol Motors Company, founded in 1916. Claude and Frank Fageol focused on motor trucks, farm tractors and a diverse range of cars out of their factory in Oakland, California. There were four Fageol brothers, each with his own vision for modern transportation from buses to luxury automobiles. Many of their endeavours were halted by the Great Depression, but expansions into tractor design, railway bus shuttles and

LEFT: Battista 'Pinin' Farina (the surname change to Pininfarina came later) rewrote automotive design with his Cisitalia 202: for the first time, the guards rose higher than the bonnet. This technique is used beautifully on this most special Fiat, suggesting a new optimism for postwar Europe: the automotive world embodies such dreams!



*SUCCESSFULLY RACED BY GENTLEMAN DRIVERS ALL
OVER THE WORLD, THIS FIAT 8V AND SUPERSONIC
MODELS WERE ICONIC DURING A MEMORABLE
PERIOD FOR AUTOMOBILES*





ABOVE: This example is equipped with twin Pepco superchargers as well as four Zenith carburetors.



ABOVE: Period toolkit has lovely patina.

WITH AEROSPACE CHARACTERISTICS IT WOULD BE REFERRED TO AS THE 'SUPERSONIC'

the Twin Coach Company allowed their work to continue for years to come.

Like the rest of his family, Lou Fageol always had an eye for style and design. He was also known in the speedboat world, racing year round and even capturing the 1951 Gold Cup with his hydroplane dubbed the Slo-Mo-Shun V. Always pushing the envelope, Lou also built race cars that ran at Indianapolis and he even bought an unfinished Art Sparks custom car, intended for speed work on the salt flats. Although it never actually challenged the likes of a Mercedes Silver-Arrow or Auto Union by Sparks, Fageol completed the vision with one of his own twin Miller engines. This was dubbed the Fageol Supersonic.

There is no doubt of his power and influence with the industry's biggest executives, including K.T. (Kaufman Thuma) Keller, President of the Chrysler Motor Company from 1935 to 1950 (and Chairman from 1950 to 1956). Almost as soon as a car was delivered, Fageol would rip off the bumpers and fit his own custom alternatives. These unique, split triple-finned chrome bumpers had featured on some of his earlier designs. He also gave the Supersonic twin Pepco superchargers to accompany quadruple Zenith carburetors – essentially boosting the brake horsepower by 30 and the top speed to around 140mph.

After Lou's passing, the car made its way to

Paul Ross Jr of Kent, Ohio, a family friend. Ross later moved to the suburbs of San Diego, California, where the car sat in poor condition from the late 1980s until 2001, when his son acquired it and installed a small block Chevy motor. It wasn't discovered again until 2012 by the current owner. Being an 8V enthusiast, the native Belgian decided it was time for a full nut and bolt restoration. A painstaking task to prepare the car for a public display at concours around the world.

In 2015 it was displayed at the 65th annual Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance, taking home an impressive first in class award. This car, S/N 000040, had last been displayed on a concours lawn exactly 60 years earlier – the same 18th fairway at Pebble Beach. The following year it received an honourable mention at the Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este on the shores of Lake Como as well as the best restoration award at the Zoute Grand Prix Concours d'Elegance in Belgium. You might see a Supersonic at various events around the world, sitting static at the Pebble Beach Concours lawn, or around the shores of Lake Como. They even pop up once in a while at a major auction house like Bonhams, RM or Gooding and Company. But to see one in motion – in flight – really is a special sight. It commands your attention, your respect and your acceptance.







ROAD TRIP

TRANS-AMERICA

ROAD TRIP

• WORDS & IMAGES **SHAUN MALUGA**











A lot of people thought it was crazy, driving across America in a 50-year-old truck. I never quite got the concern. Perhaps it was because I had the luxury of an open-ended timeline, or perhaps I am used to driving old cars that tend to break down. Maybe I was just being optimistic... or naïve. I figured there was not much that couldn't be fixed on the road. After all, part of the charm of these old 4X4s is that they are simple and easy to work on and there was always the option of getting a tow to the closest mechanic.

When something exploded and I lost all power just outside Demming, New Mexico, I did start to wonder what my options would be if the entire engine was shot. I was sure it was just the clutch, but I began to worry. What if it was a broken crankshaft? What if it needed a full rebuild? What would the cost have to be for it to be a write off? I was nervously getting ahead of myself.

I had set off only 12 days prior and I was, at best, a fifth of the way across the country. We were moving from Venice, California back to New York City. My wife flew over and I was driving across with our dog in our 1970 International Harvester Scout 800a. I had spent the previous year restoring, replacing, and improving almost everything on this oversized tractor in preparation for the journey, but with any old vehicle, you can never be too sure what is going to happen.

The start of my journey had already been delayed. We were back in Australia renewing our visas and I had left the Scout with friends at Bullet Proof Restorations. They installed a Holley Sniper Fuel Injection system that I had previously purchased but ran out of time to fit myself. A shakedown revealed a few

small issues to sort out with the fuel injection system, so the start of the trip was delayed another week. My wife would argue that this was the first breakdown of the trip. She had a wager with friends on the number of times I would break down. I still maintain this one didn't count as the journey had not yet started. With the fuel injection woes sorted, I loaded up the Scout with the camping equipment and anything else we had left in LA. There was a lot. I made it all fit, but the Scout was very overloaded. Nevertheless, I set off for my first stop – Joshua Tree, California.

If I hadn't been there a couple of times before it would have easily been the highlight of the trip. Light, sandy tones of the landscape are punctuated by rocky boulders, soft blue skies and spiky Joshua trees. The sunsets are even more spectacular with pastel colours lighting up the sky every evening. My campsite, nestled between the boulders at Belle Campground, was fairly deep into Joshua Tree National Park. Phone service was non-existent. I had not spent any time with my camping setup previously, besides a trial run folding out the rooftop tent and awning in The Motoring Club carpark back in Venice. This meant any issues I ran into I had to work out myself. Despite needing to brush up on a few knots, I didn't have any major problems or concerns.

It was the middle of winter. As the sun went down and the desert temperature dropped, I couldn't help but feel a little lonely and vulnerable. It was too cold to enjoy being outside and on my first night, some uncharacteristically high winds blew through. It made for a very rough night of sleep but the tent held up well and gave me the confidence that I could sleep in some reasonably extreme weather conditions over the course of my trip if need be. Packs of coyotes







would also sporadically howl throughout the night. The coyotes were even more brazen at my next campsites at The Lost Dutchman and Superstition Mountains. Being up high in a rooftop tent was comforting even though I was never really worried about them getting too close. When my next campsite didn't pan out, I decided to head for Tombstone, Arizona. Tombstone was very touristy but in the best way possible. Actors, dressed in Old Western attire, occupy the main road comprised of old shops and bars. Horse and carriages line the streets and they re-enact the shootout at the O.K. Corral daily. I was camped up next to an interesting character in a tiny teardrop caravan. He was more than six feet tall and sported a large, white, smurf-like beard. He told me he was a gold prospector but also worked at a local BBQ joint. The small town and surrounding landscape were very picturesque and again I was treated with beautiful sunsets every day. Overall, the Scout was handling the trip well. Even being overloaded with gear, it was surprisingly stable at speed. The steering box had a little play in it, something I was hoping to rectify with a power steering conversion, but another thing I ran out of time to get installed. With any slight change in direction you could feel the weight shift and the wind catch the boxy aerodynamics before the steering would catch and right itself. Over time I learnt not to fight it and just guide it in the right direction. The road, engine and wind noise as well as the bouncy bench seat could be a little overbearing but having to stop every hour and a half to fuel up was usually enough of a reprieve. The Scout had dual saddle tanks, one on each

side of the truck that hold about nine and half gallons each. Nine if you don't want it sloshing out the sides as you bounce down the road. It was easier to run one side empty and then fill up at the next petrol station rather than trying to manage running both dry and having to manoeuvre the Scout around the petrol station to fill both sides.

On a good stretch of road between Tombstone Arizona and White Sands National Park in New Mexico, I was hitting 80mph trying to make a sunset hike along the dunes. The engine didn't miss a beat and was blaring away at what must have been around 3800 rpm. That may sound low but is actually pretty high for an IH engine. Suddenly there was a loud pop followed by catastrophic failure. The clutch shattered leaving me stranded on a section of Highway just outside of Deming, New Mexico. I suppose I got lucky, breaking down on a straight highway with plenty of runoff, phone service and close enough to a small town. I was definitely going to miss that sunset now. I had replaced almost every mechanical part on the Scout except the clutch. In hindsight, I was probably asking for trouble. I got a tow to a local transmission shop. They ordered in a new clutch for me and within 26 hours and I was back on the road.

Fortunately, this was the only major breakdown of the trip. Some other small incidents included the main fuel line blowing off the throttle body on one highway at night and the battery going flat due to a loose belt. Both easy enough fixes. Another time, I must have left the oil cap off after one of the many times I had to top up the fluids. There was a right mess when I



RIGHT: Jack Kerouac's 1957 novel *On the Road* celebrated the great American road trip. Author Shaun Maluga chose a 50-year-old Jeep for his ultimate cross-continental adventure.



ABOVE: How could you tell this photograph was taken in 2020?





got to my next destination and I had to fashion a temporary cap out of a reverse light lens and a roll of duct tape until I could get to the next auto parts shop.

I missed the sunset at White Sands but arriving earlier the next day meant I had more time to explore the park. White dunes of gypsum cover 275 square miles of desert and there are several hikes, varying in length. You can also rent luges from the ranger station and enjoy tobogganing down the dunes in select areas. The gold Scout also looked superb against the white backdrop of gypsum crystals.

I made it to Austin in time for an International Harvester meetup hosted by local Scout devotee, Lydia, in conjunction with New Legend, one of the companies that originally inspired me to get a Scout. The weekend started in typical car meet fashion with a car show and coffee in the car park of a hotel that happens to have a Scout II as a promo vehicle. Everyone then drove convoy through downtown Austin and out to get a BBQ lunch. It was a great sight to see 30-plus Internationals making their way through the city. The afternoon was then spent off-roading at Hidden Falls Adventure Park. My Scout was already bottoming out over big enough bumps with all the extra weight, so I decided to park it and ride in the back of Lydia's Scout II. The night finished off with more BBQ and conversation around a campfire at Ranch 3232 where everyone camped out for the night.

A real joy of Austin, despite the food and coffee, was the people. You have to appreciate the way cars bring people together. Scouts don't have the looks of a Jaguar. They don't drive

like a Porsche or have the reliability of a new Hyundai. But this shared love of something so hopeless, something so impractical, brought a bunch of people from different walks of life together for this one weekend.

A photographer/writer friend from NYC, Daniel Schwartz, joined me next for a loosely planned, two-week loop around Atlanta, Athens, Greenville, Asheville, The Smoky Mountains, Knoxville and Nashville. One thing I had forgotten or taken for granted was the conversations that driving an old car brings. I had owned a classic car for most of my adult life so had become accustomed to the chance conversations you have wherever you go. Whether I was stopped for fuel, in the parking lot of a Walmart or pulled up at a campsite, there was always someone wanting to talk about the Scout. Daniel seemed amazed at the regularity of random conversations we would have on a daily basis. Whether it was the Scout, the dog or the cameras, we were never short of conversation wherever we went. When we were in Greenville, we returned from a walk around the downtown area to find a handwritten note on the windscreen from local IH enthusiast, Britt, who had seen our journey online. We met up the next day for coffee before heading out. Another chance encounter was in Knoxville. We were at Walmart when I received a message on Instagram. It was a photo of my Scout in the Walmart parking lot. Someone had spotted us and sent a photo to their friend, Aaron, who owned a green Scout 800 in town. He recognised my Scout and we quickly met up for a burger and some beers before hitting the road to Nashville.







A tornado had ripped through East Nashville just a few days before we were due to arrive. We managed to get onto a volunteer list through Hands On Nashville to help with the clean-up efforts. I was simultaneously surprised at how much debris a group of us were able to clear in half a day, but at the same time overwhelmed by the amount of work left to do. A short drive and walk through East Nashville really highlighted the extent of the damage.

After Daniel flew back to New York City, I decided to head to Douglas ‘The IH Fixer’, a local mechanic near Lebanon Tennessee who specialises in IH vehicles. I had a few little things to do and felt better knowing I wouldn’t be stuck in the middle of nowhere without any support if I were to attempt the work myself. Also, the closer you get to NYC, the more expensive and harder it is to find the people who specialise in these old trucks. Douglas had the perfect setup. A relatively small space but just about any part you could need for a Scout on hand. His wife and I shared our love of dogs and tea while Douglas fitted

up an electronic distributor that I had been carrying with me since Venice. Once I got the timing dialled in on the ECU I was ready to head home to NYC.

It was now mid-March and the Coronavirus was spreading. We were not sure what that would mean in terms of border/city closures (not much it would turn out), so we thought it would be safer to get back to New York sooner rather than later.

To my benefit, the normally bustling roads of Manhattan were quiet. Driving a slow, 50-year-old truck with a terrible turning circle was not as stressful as it could have been. New Yorkers are notorious for honking if you haven’t started rolling by the time the light turns green. I found a temporary home at another Scout owner’s house a bit further north of Manhattan while I try and find somewhere more permanent to store it. In the end I spent 71 days on the road and travelled about 5500 miles according to the Scout’s trip metre. I say I made it all the way across with only one breakdown. My wife disrespectfully disagrees.

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