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'There's oil on the corner before the  
Mulsanne Straight. I went through flat-out  
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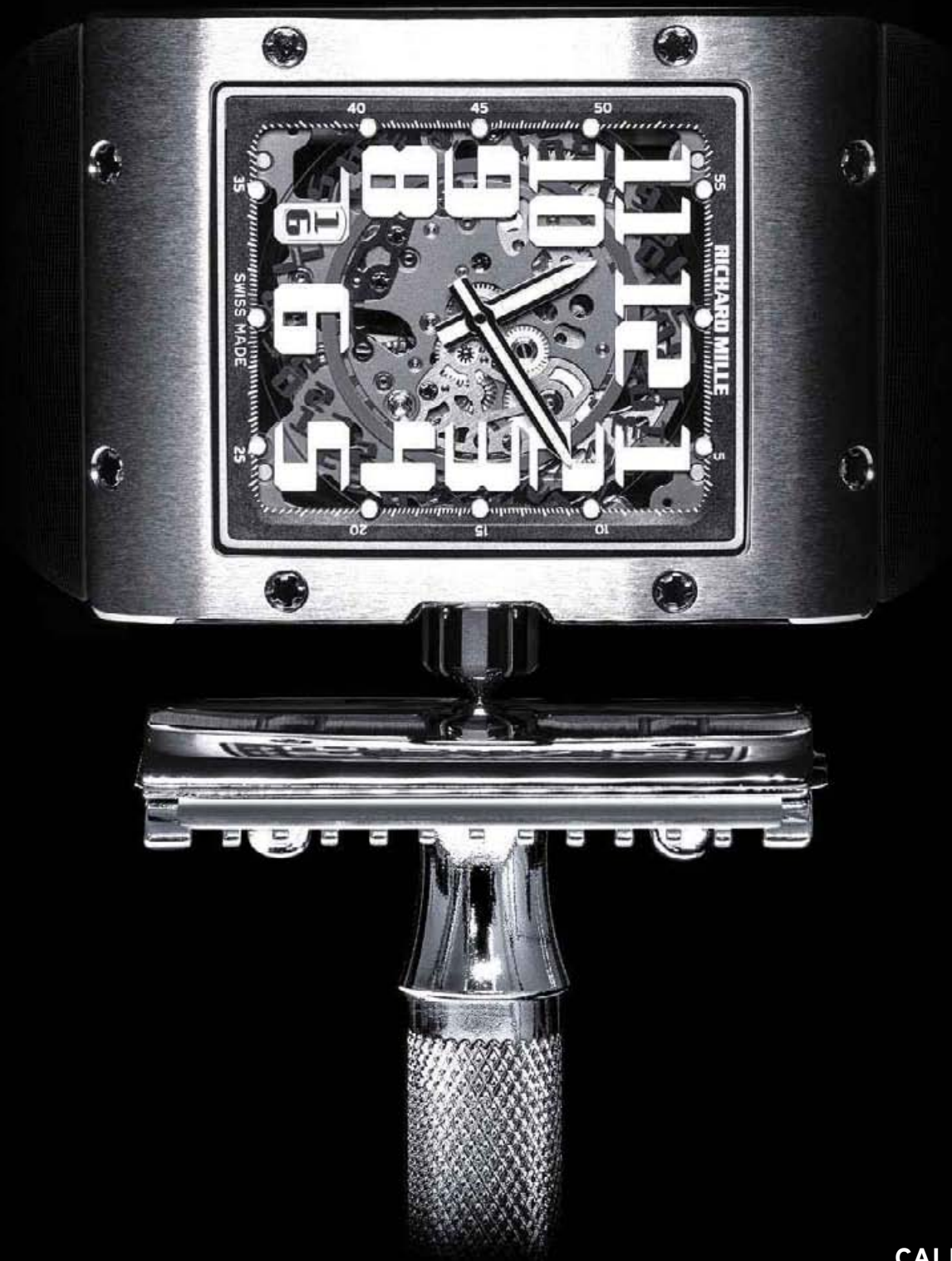


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# RICHARD MILLE

A RACING MACHINE ON THE WRIST



CALIBER RM 016



JAMES LIPMAN



## EDITOR'S WELCOME

# The accidental car collector

**IN THE OCTANE** office, freelance contributor Delwyn Mallett – the man behind the *Icon* page since the first issue – is a bit of a legend. Through sheer enthusiasm, and a bit of luck along the way, he's ended up with a remarkable collection of cars, including a Porsche Speedster, two rare Abarths, a Cord, a Tatra – and the Gullwing you see on the front cover.

Delwyn bought it in 1974 for about £2300 by trading-in a BMW 2002, just as his career in advertising was taking off. His friends thought he was mad – why would anyone want an old clunker like that?

Of course he stuck with it, and the stories he tells of his 40-plus years with the Gullwing are priceless. It's all too easy to venerate these cars and overlook their faults, but Delwyn is realistic about the problems and foibles his car has suffered over the years. Nevertheless, his enthusiasm for the Gullwing shines through in his excellent feature, which starts on page 70 and is bolstered by extra pages on the Gullwing in motor sport, expert opinion on market values, and a look at some quirky other cars that have featured gullwing doors.

We've also been lucky enough to drive the Louwman Museum's restored Pegaso Z-102, something we've been waiting to do since it

made its debut at the Amelia Island concours in March – and won Best of Show. It has to be one of the wildest-looking machines we've featured over the years, with neat little touches throughout the design that set it apart even from contemporary low-volume sports cars of the late-1950s. That's on page 90.

Finally, some sad news. You may remember the Bugatti 100P aeroplane that we featured in issue 131, its creator Scotty Wilson having dedicated years to researching the project, which never flew in its day. Incredibly, Scotty turned Ettore Bugatti's drawings into reality – but a recent test flight ended in disaster when the replica 100P crashed, killing Scotty and destroying the aircraft. Our commiserations to his family, friends and all those involved with what was an inspirational project.



David Lillywhite,  
Editor

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### DIEDERIK PLUG

'Built in Britain, lost and found in France, restored in Belgium – the story of the one-off 1964 Vixen GT was as rewarding to write as it was to drive this impressive little brute. Well, almost.' Dutch automotive journalist Diederik was blown away by the fascinating Vixen GT. *For the full story, turn to pages 156-164.*



JAYSON FONG

### JOHN SIMISTER

This has been a diverse month for John, at one extreme driving Bentley's 1925 works Le Mans car back to Le Mans and watching it race, at the other driving Ford's new Focus RS and its ancestors, with three early Mille Miglia Healeys in-between. 'They're all cars with four wheels and a gearlever,' he says. *The huge Ford RS story starts on page 120.*



HOWARD SIMMONS

### GERRY JUDAH

'Museums have to trust you... their cars are worth millions of pounds and just to be allowed to whack them upside down high in the air and in all kinds of weather is incredible.' Gerry Judah explains how he goes about creating Goodwood Festival of Speed's huge sculptures every year. *Find out more in the free Art Supplement.*



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On track with works driver Gijs Van  
Lennep in the '73 Le Mans 911



JAMES LIPMAN



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Issue 161  
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### PLUS

Richard Meaden drives the 1969  
Shadow Mk1 Can-Am

Our favourite sub-£5000 classics  
Pebble Beach Best of Show winner  
Jaguar XJ13 recreation

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# Bonhams

# IGNITION

NEWS + EVENTS + OPINION

## XJ13 rep takes to the track

*Exacting recreation with an original quad-cam V12 now runs and drives*

Words Richard Heseltine Photography Jayson Fong

NEVILLE SWALES' long-held dream of recreating the Jaguar XJ13 moved a step closer to being realised following the car's big reveal at Curborough Sprint Course on 9 August. This six-years-in-the-making sports-prototype took to the twisty Staffordshire circuit in front of Jaguar alumni which included the likes of Roger Shelbourne and Frank Philpott, who worked on the original car in the mid-60s.

This exacting replica is based around a quad-cam V12, one of only six units made in period. Swales has been at pains to build a car that is closer in ethos to the 1966 original, rather than aping the outline of the XJ13 in its current configuration. The sole prototype received physical alterations when it was rebuilt following Norman Dewis' well-documented accident at the MIRA proving ground in 1971.

Unfortunately, the replica's day out was curtailed by a small fire. 'There was very little damage,' Swales says. 'It probably looked spectacular, but it really wasn't; just a scorched fuel line. To be honest, this has been one of the happiest days of my life. We're not there yet. There is still some development to do and my dream is to get David Hobbs, who did a lot of XJ13 testing in the 1960s, and Mike Kimberley, who often sat alongside him, in the car. They have been incredibly supportive of the project.'











# Pilot killed in Bugatti 100P crash

*Instigator of project to build replica of the experimental Bugatti 100P aircraft perishes shortly after take-off*

**Words** Mark Dixon **Photography** The Bugatti 100P Project

A **SEVEN-YEAR** dream to build a flying replica of Ettore Bugatti's 100P experimental aircraft – which never actually flew – was tragically curtailed when the replica crashed shortly after take-off in the USA on 6 August, killing the pilot and instigator of the project, Scotty Wilson.

The aircraft was making its third test flight since completion when it came down just north of Clinton Sherman Airport, Oklahoma, in apparently perfect conditions. About a minute after take-off, witnesses saw the 100P lose

power, bank sharp left and invert before plunging into a bean field, where its wooden structure caught fire. A chase helicopter, which had been intending to film the 100P in flight, landed nearby but was unable to rescue Scotty Wilson, who died on impact.

*Octane* has closely followed the 100P project, known as *Le Rêve Bleu*, or Blue Dream, over the last few years, and we published a full feature in issue 131. Scotty (pictured above) was a warm and helpful interviewee, a former USAF fighter pilot with 11,000 hours of experience in several

types of aircraft, including F4 Phantom and F16 Fighting Falcon fast jets. His British colleague Simon Birney, who together with Scotty and fellow-Brit John Lawson made up the core team, emphasises how accessible Scotty made himself to anyone interested in the project. 'He had a wonderful way with people, always responsive, always inspirational.'

The 100P project was an attempt to reverse-engineer the original aircraft, work on which stalled at the outbreak of WW2, and which is now preserved at Oshkosh in Wisconsin. Instead of two Bugatti straight-eights arranged in tandem inside the fuselage, the replica used a pair of Suzuki Hayabusa motorcycle engines. In every other respect it was as true to 100P designer Louis de Monge's vision as possible, including the construction in balsa laminated between hardwood panels.

The tragic irony of the accident is that it occurred during what was intended to be the 100P's final flight, after which it was to go on display around the world. There was never an intention to fly it at public airshows, for, as Scotty explained in *Octane* 131, 'It would not be a crowd-pleasing exhibit. It is small, quiet, doesn't have a smoke system and doesn't do aerobatics. Further, the plane is quite complex and was never meant to fly repeatedly. The original would have flown only a few times.'

It's small consolation that the 100P team had already proved that the aircraft could fly. *Octane* joins many thousands of enthusiasts in sending heartfelt condolences to Scotty's widow Leslia and to Scotty's two sons.



**Clockwise from top**  
Scotty Wilson and the Bugatti 100P during construction; rear view of the finished aircraft; its successful maiden flight in August 2015.







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# NEWS FEED

*From White Elephants to Buick's Car of the Future – and don't forget the 50th anniversary celebrations at Santa Pod*

## Buick Y-Job history to be officially documented

Buick's 1940 'Car of the Future', the Y-Job, has been announced as the 14th vehicle recognised on the USA's National Historic Vehicle Register, which will result in its design and history being thoroughly documented. Overseen by design director Harley Earl, the Y-Job demonstrated future trends and technologies, particularly in styling. It forecast streamlining, the elimination of running boards, and the use of alligator-type bonnet and wheels of smaller diameter (13in) than were common then.

## Santa Pod to celebrate 50th anniversary at Euro Finals

The 50th anniversary of UK drag strip Santa Pod Raceway will reach its zenith at the FIA/FIM European Finals on 8-11 September. One of the highlights will be the Friday evening twilight Top Fuel qualifying session.

## Motor sport journalist John Blunsden dies aged 86

John Blunsden, best known as owner and managing director of Motor Racing Publications, has died at the age of 86. He produced over 250 books, was motor racing correspondent of *The Times* – covering almost every Grand Prix for 20 years from 1970 – and was

known for his comprehensive track tests of then-current competition cars. A stroke in 2012 left him partially paralysed and unable to walk or write but he retained his keen interest in motor sport.

## New Jaguar race series

The HRDC is launching a new race series for pre-65 Jaguar Touring Cars (MkVII to Mk2), named the Coombs Heritage Challenge, in honour of driver and tuner John Coombs, with the blessing of his widow Ellie Coombs. More on [www.HRDC.eu](http://www.HRDC.eu).

## Art of Motoring exhibition at the Royal Automobile Club

The work of 15 motoring artists will be displayed at a free-to-enter exhibition at the Royal Opera Arcade Gallery at 5b Pall Mall, London, from 31 October to 5 November. It has been organised by the Royal Automobile Club.

## TVR White Elephant at Manchester classic show

The 1998 one-off prototype TVR known as the White Elephant is to be displayed at the Footman James Classic Car Show Manchester on 17/18 September. It was built as personal transport for then-boss of TVR Peter Wheeler, to evaluate an experimental 400bhp 5-litre V8 Holden Bathurst race engine.

## Six shortlisted for new concours Best of the Best

The new Peninsula Classics Best of the Best Award, which brings together Best of Show winners from six of the world's leading concours events, is set to be announced as *Octane* goes to press. The contenders are:

- **1903 Mercedes 60hp Simplex:** *Royal Concours of Elegance*
- **1932 Isotta Fraschini Tipo 8A S Sport Cabriolet:** *Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance*
- **1930 Cord L29 Brooks Stevens Speedster:** *Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance*
- **1937 Talbot-Lago T150C SS 'Goutte d'Eau':** *Goodwood Cartier Style et Luxe*
- **1965 Ferrari 166 P / 206 SP Dino 0834:** *Cavallino Classic*
- **1968 Alfa Romeo Tipo 33 Stradale:** *The Quail, A Motorsports Gathering.*

We will reveal the winner in the next issue and on Facebook.

## Firle Hill Climb Revival

A hillclimb in the South of England with period dress and historic cars? Not Goodwood but the much smaller, more low-key Firle Hill Climb Revival, which revives the Bopeep event that ran until 1967. It takes place on 18 September, with 90 cars from 1904 to 1986. [www.bopeepdriversclub.com](http://www.bopeepdriversclub.com).

## THEY SAID

### 'Until we meet again – blue skies'

*Closing words of the Bugatti 100P team's tribute to its leader, Scotty Wilson, following his fatal crash during a test flight.*

### 'It was mega!'

*Historic racer Nick Padmore on his winning drive in the Williams FW07 in the FIA Masters Historic Formula One at the Nürburgring.*

### 'If he became an undertaker, people would stop dying'

*Mario Andretti (several years ago) on the famously bad luck of F1 driver Chris Amon, who has died from cancer aged 73 (see obituary on pages 18-19).*

### 'Sparks! Arcing! Sparks! Amazing 1/4-mile killing spree in an EV rail'

*Motoring journalist and TV presenter Jonny Smith after breaking the record for a road-legal, battery-powered car over the standing quarter-mile – 8.711 seconds, 151.58mph.*

### 'I actually had tears in my eyes coming back down from my first run'

*Hans-Joachim Stuck, son of the Silver Arrows racer Hans Stuck, on what it was like to drive a V16 Auto Union at Shelsley Walsh, 80 years after his father had done the same run in the same car.*

### 'For the first time in my life, I was lost for words'

*Rock star Brian Johnson after being invited to chauffeur his hero, Sir Stirling Moss, on the Ennstal Classic in Austria.*

### 'You're in early!'

*A bemused David Lillywhite, Octane editor, on finding managing editor Chris Bietsk still in the office after working through the night on this issue.*

## Nominate now for the Historic Motoring Awards

*Don't miss your chance to nominate the best of the historic car world*

There's still time to nominate someone or something you hold dear for the International Historic Motoring Awards, hosted by *Octane* in conjunction with EFG Private Bank at the new venue of The Guildhall, London.

Nominations should be made via the awards website for the following categories: Industry Supporter; Personal Achievement; Motoring Event; Motorsport Event; Race Series; Rally or Tour; Club; Publication; Specialist; Restoration; Museum or Collection. The shortlist for Car of the Year will be revealed in the next issue.

To nominate, please visit [www.historicmotoringawards.com](http://www.historicmotoringawards.com).







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## Chris Amon 1943-2016

*Well-liked, supremely talented and famously unlucky Formula 1 driver has died, aged 73*

Words Maurice Hamilton

IN THE SAME way that Sir Stirling Moss is acknowledged as one of the greatest drivers never to win the Formula 1 world title, Chris Amon, who died aged 73 on 3 August, will be recalled as never having won a championship Grand Prix despite his outstanding talent. The two drivers are comparable because they had the total respect of their peers: Moss in the 1950s and 1960s, Amon in the 1960s and 1970s.

Amon is one of the few drivers to have beaten Jim Clark in a straight fight. The fact that this happened in the Tasman Series in the Antipodes and was not part of the F1 championship summed up Amon's career – not that he cared unduly about the absence of global kudos. For Amon, a modest and kindly man, the fun was in racing and in possessing car control verging on the sublime.

It could hardly have been otherwise when, as a teenager, he cut his teeth racing a Maserati 250F – often in the wet – in his native New Zealand. His throttle control was so obvious that Amon was invited by Reg Parnell to join his small team in the 1963 World Championship. At the age of 19, Amon arrived in Europe to race against drivers he considered heroes, but with whom he was instantly at home due to his speed and impeccable manners on the track, and his easy-going demeanour at a time when socialising was an essential part of the F1 fabric.

Amon formed a natural alliance with Bruce McLaren, not only thanks to their Kiwi origins but also due to Amon's ability as an exceptionally gifted test driver. The pair made a natural fit for Ford in the on-track fight with Ferrari for sports

car supremacy, McLaren and Amon taking a GT40 MkIII to victory at Le Mans in 1966.

The irony was that good fortune played its part here – as it always does in the 24-hour classic – and yet Amon will be remembered for the appalling luck that accompanied him everywhere else. The F1 records show that Amon finished second three times and managed eight third places during 96 Grands Prix before his retirement part-way through 1976. But the results will not give an indication of how Amon would have won more than a dozen Grands Prix but for an agonising catalogue of misfortune.

Enzo Ferrari had been quick to spot Amon's potential despite patchy F1 results, Chris joining the Scuderia as a fourth driver in 1967. By the end of the season, he was the sole entry (Lorenzo Bandini having perished at Monaco, Ludovico Scarfiotti falling from favour and Mike Parkes injured).

Amon carried the responsibility with such ease that he should have been champion in 1968. He retired seven times from 11 races. At Spa-Francorchamps, he had been on pole by four clear seconds; at St Jovite (another 'driver's circuit') he led easily despite having no clutch, the gearbox giving out after 73 of the 90 laps.

Amon's ability to exploit superb handling made up for the shortfall from the glorious-sounding V12. Ferrari's chief engineer Mauro Forghieri described Amon's skills: 'As far as I'm concerned, he was as good as Clark. As a test driver, he was the best I have known and it's a fact that we never gave him a car worthy of him.'



### Top and above

Chris Amon in the Ferrari 312 68 V12 at the 1968 French GP at Rouen; Amon's 1966 Le Mans victory in the GT40 MkIII came about, ironically, through rare good luck.

That applied even more in 1969 when six mechanical failures, often while leading, prompted Amon to go after reliability with the Ford-Cosworth V8, albeit one in the back of a March. It was a classic Amon move at the wrong time, Ferrari switching in 1970 to the flat-12 that would power more than 20 wins and a couple of championships.





57

Even when Amon had had enough of March after just one season, a switch to Matra meant more wonderful 12-cylinder harmony but little else. And yet, when the driver could compensate on the twisting road circuit at Clermont Ferrand in 1972, a truly dominant drive was foiled by a puncture. At Monza, he slipstreamed his way to the front and seemed in command until an attempt to remove a tear-off resulted in the entire visor coming away. As Mario Andretti once joked of Amon's luck: 'If Chris was an undertaker, no-one would die.'

Amon's poor decision-making was highlighted towards the end of his career by an uncompetitive and over-complicated car built under his own name. He retired to New Zealand and returned to working the family farm while maintaining a key role as development driver for Toyota's road cars.

Looking back on a F1 career that, on paper, only boasts a handful of non-championship wins, Amon said: 'It's true that things didn't go my way but I don't look back with any sense of frustration. It was such a dangerous era that I'm eternally grateful I survived.'

**'FOR AMON, A MODEST AND KINDLY MAN, THE FUN WAS IN RACING AND IN POSSESSING CAR CONTROL VERGING ON THE SUBLIME'**



MICHAEL BAILE

# New Moss Edition Knobbly

*Lister is building ten magnesium-bodied continuation cars*

Words Mark Williams

Lister Motor Company is building a run of ten magnesium-bodied Lister Jaguar Knobblys to 1958 works specification.

The Stirling Moss Edition Knobblys are works continuation cars built in the same way as the car in which Sir Stirling Moss won the sports car round of the British Grand Prix at Silverstone. None of the original works cars survives.

Lister is already building ten aluminium-bodied Knobblys – all now pre-sold – but the next ten will

adhere rigidly to Brian Lister's original plans for the works cars, Lister having rekindled the skills needed to work with magnesium – which is light but hard to form.

The chassis is built on the same jig as used in 1958, and the bodywork formed around the same styling buck, for complete authenticity. The D-type spec engine and gearbox are both produced by Crosthwaite and Gardiner.

Each car will carry a solid silver plaque with Sir Stirling's signature engraved into it, and each will be personally handed over by him. Customers have a choice of a race-prepared car or one in road-going specification.

'The Knobbly remains one of my favourite racing cars,' said Sir Stirling. 'These magnesium-bodied continuations redefine the word "special". They will be winners on the track – just as they were in their day.'

The Stirling Moss edition will weigh 841kg and reach 60mph in under four seconds, with a maximum speed of 184mph. It will be priced from £1 million, with first deliveries this autumn.



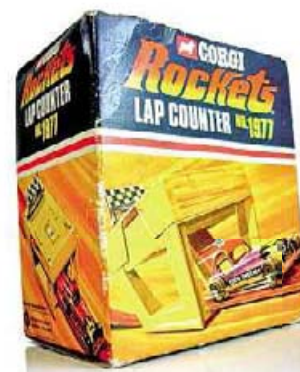
**Top and above**  
Following the 2014 Lister Jaguar Knobblys, ten further continuation cars will be built to full works specification.

# New gearbox at last for Campbell's Sunbeam

*Fundraising drive to complete Beaulieu's 150.87mph record-breaker*

The National Motor Museum has raised £35,000 to have a replica of its Sunbeam 350hp's original gearbox scratch-built by gearmakers Beard & Fitch – the last stage in the rebuild of Donald Campbell's first ever record-breaker.

Although the original gearbox, and all records of it, are long-lost, anecdotal evidence suggests that it would have been from Beard & Fitch. Indeed, one of the company's directors can be spotted in pictures from the 1920s record attempts. The Sunbeam currently uses a '60s truck gearbox.



## AUTOMOBILIA

# Corgi Rockets

Mystery still surrounds the abrupt demise of Britain's answer to Hot Wheels in 1971. Some suspect it was because of legal action brought by Hot Wheels' manufacturer Mattel against Corgi Rockets' parent Mettoy over patent infringement. More probable is crashing sales as the high-speed, track-racing toy car craze evaporated as suddenly as it had appeared.

Hot Wheels changed the toy car world forever in 1968. These tiny models were designed to hurtle around tracks at scale warp speed. Their go-faster capability was due to low-friction thin wire axles and hollow plastic wheels, and the track layouts were designed for either perpetual motion or stunts.

Sales of Matchbox and Corgi cars were poleaxed. Hot Wheels was briefly a blockbuster toy in 1968 and '69, and Corgi decided to go into battle with its own system, unveiled in October 1969. The principles were similar, and the track sets offered daring and action, including a Skypark car park and a Super Booster to power cars off the startline.

Each car came with a plastic chassis detachable with a so-called Golden Key. The first seven were transformations of existing Corgi Juniors cars, and paintwork was in mirror-like Polychromatic finish.

The line-up is a snapshot of everything interesting from the period: Jensen Interceptor, Morgan Plus 8, Jaguar XJ6, Aston DB6, GP Beach Buggy, Bertone Carabo. A couple, including a cute rendition of the Chevrolet Astro 1, were unique to the Rockets range.

History didn't adjudge Corgi Rockets a success, as production lasted less than two years. But two Rockets sub-genres are rather special. One was the Stock Cars, with the competing, rough and ready cars of Derek Fiske and Todd Sweeney neatly replicated. The other was a series themed around the 007 film *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*. The No 978 James Bond Gift Set, containing bespoke editions of Ford Escort Mexico, Mercury Cougar, Ford Capri and Mercedes 280SL, is hugely sought-after: one sold at auction in 2015 for an astonishing £2640.

Individual cars are keenly collected, if in pristine condition or still sealed in original blister packs. The track sets and accessories, by contrast, are not, although they do benefit from terrific period box art. One 'sleeper' is the scarce Electro-Rockets, of which the Alfa Montreal is something even most Corgi geeks are barely aware of. **Giles Chapman**





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# Audi revives Group S prototype

*RS 002 runs at rally event, 30 years after Group S was cancelled*

Words John McIlroy

**AUDI BROUGHT** a unique piece of its competition history back to life at Germany's Eifel Rally Festival, when the RS 002 prototype appeared as a moving exhibit for the first time.

The RS 002 was a skunkworks project carried out by Audi Sport engineers between 1985 and 1986. It was officially a prototype Group S car – destined to use a six-cylinder engine with around 300bhp – but since it was created without the direct knowledge of Audi's management, its make-up was more akin to a full-house Group B car. The odd-looking bodywork sits atop a spaceframe chassis and a 2.1-litre five-cylinder that was most likely a reworked unit from the S1 E2 rally car.

Audi experimented with a number of mid-engined prototypes in 1985, testing them behind the Iron Curtain in Czechoslovakia, but the projects were scrapped when spy photographs revealed the firm was considering what would have been a radical switch away from the

Quattro's production-based (and compromised) layout.

The RS 002 emerged later, and Audi Sport revealed that it had been developed at the division's alternative base in Neckarsulm, far away from Ingolstadt, without the knowledge of then-chairman Ferdinand Piech.

The car has been a static display in a customer centre in Ingolstadt for much of the past 25 years but Audi Tradition embarked on a restoration earlier this year. Walter Röhrl and co-driver Christian Geistdörfer gave it a couple of parade runs at the Festival.

'The RS 002 was quite impressive,' said Röhrl. 'It felt smooth and easy to drive. But nothing was taken forward with this car; no testing was done, and I don't believe the front would have looked like this either.'

Audi Tradition's work means that the RS 002 has now joined several other Group S prototypes in being seen in public, to represent a 'what might have been' era of rallying.

## Also planned for Group S



### Lancia ECV

One of the most advanced, with a carbonfibre/kevlar chassis and unusual twin-turbo 'Triflux' engine. ECV1 above was followed by less angular ECV2.



### Toyota MR2 222D

It sort-of looked like an MR2 but was very different under the skin, with over 600bhp. Toyota Team Europe built 11 prototypes, three of which survive.



### Ford RS200

Original RS200 engineer John Wheeler took on Ford's abandoned Group S project and completed it years later, using the planned Cosworth engine.



### Opel Kadett 4S

Four-wheel-drive Kadett was tested for Group S. Others included Mk1 Golf GTi Quattro, Seat Ibiza, privateer Lada Samara S-Proto, Moskvich and FSO.



## THIS MONTH WE LOVE...

# The Jabbeke Highway

So many times we talk about the Jabbeke Highway – indeed there are two mentions in this very issue – that you have to wonder where we'd be without it.

It was the cash-strapped post-war British car manufacturers that made best use of Belgium's then-new Gent to Oostende A10 motorway, with enthusiastic time-keeping help from the Royal Automobile Club of Belgium, and a willingness by the authorities to allow teams onto new sections.

The concrete section of the A10 past Jabbeke was straight and flat; publicity-savvy Donald Healey was first to make use of it when, in 1946, his Healey Elliott achieved 110.65mph, making it the 'fastest car in the world in series production'.

In 1953, the Pegaso Z-102 clocked 155.34mph, spurring Jaguar to raise the ball to 172.4mph with its XK120 streamliner. Triumph and Sunbeam went back and forwards with TR2 and Alpine, Rover's JET 1 established the first record for gas turbine cars at 151.965mph, and Veritas set a Belgian record of 128mph for a 2-litre car.

In the early 1960s, heavier traffic forced the runs to stop – and now the speed limit is 120km/h...



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# Bulgari's Buickfest

*Jewellery magnate hosts Buick Club's 50th birthday party*

Words John Simister Photography Buick Club of America

**AN ITALIAN IN LOVE** with American cars, particularly Buicks, seems a surprising combination. The Italian in question is Nicola Bulgari, of the jewellery and watchmaking family, who recently opened his NB Center for American Automotive Heritage in Allentown, Pennsylvania. This former drive-in cinema, now beautifully restored and extended, houses his collection of 150 American cars through the ages, including Buicks from 1923 to 1996.

He has another NB Center collection in Rome with 100 cars, but it's the new US facility that has been in the news. Over the weekend of 27-30 July it hosted the Buick Club of America's 50th anniversary celebrations, which coincided with the opening of the headquarters and national laboratory of the US's Historic Vehicle Association that shares the site.

For the opening, HVA president Mark Gessler unveiled a display that incorporated four significant Buicks: a 1910 Buick 'Bug' Indianapolis racer and three concept cars, two

of which were recent (the 2015 Avenir and the 2016 Avista), one of which was the highly influential Y-Job from 1938. Piloted by Bulgari, and with recently retired General Motors global design vice-president Ed Welburn in the passenger seat, the Y-Job led the other three around the NB Center's network of roads.

So, why Buicks for Bulgari? 'I know of people who buy expensive supercars and then spend thousands of dollars to hire racetracks where they can drive them at 200mph,' he says. 'I really don't understand it. For a fraction of the price you could have a pre-war Buick that is glamorous, powerful, responsive, reliable and luxurious, without being ostentatious. And it's usable, every day. What more could you want?'

## Clockwise from above

The man himself, Nicola Bulgari, drives Buick's experimental Y-Job with GM's former global vice-president of design, Ed Welburn, riding shotgun; any colour you want, so long as it's a 1930s Buick; aerial view of the Heritage Center.



## HOW TO...

## Find a classic 'screen



You're driving your rare classic car without a care in the world. Suddenly you're on a piece of recently resurfaced road, loose chippings are everywhere and one whacks your windscreen. If it's laminated, it now has a big chip or, worse, a crack. If it's toughened, it's now an opaque mass of shattered fragments. What now?

Clearly you need a new windscreen, as also you might if your old one is simply scratched or has gone cloudy around the edges. How on earth will you get one for your 50-year-old car of which barely a handful now survive?

It's not widely known that Pilkington, parent company of Triplex, among others, has with commendable foresight kept the wooden shaping jigs it has used since the 1950s when manufacturing glass for new cars. Today it has centralised them at its hub for classic glassware, the Pilkington factory at Queenborough, on the Isle of Sheppey, north Kent. The jigs held there are not just for British cars with Triplex glass but for many European and Japanese classics too. So if, for example, you have a Ferrari 275 GTB, a Citroën Ami 6, a Lancia Flavia Vignale convertible or even an Amphicar, you're in luck.

Otherwise, your windscreen will have to be specially made. For this, Pilkington needs an old windscreen to measure, accurate drawings, or the car itself. Or, if you happen to have had your car 3D-scanned so that all of its curves are committed to computer, that will do nicely. With these measurements a new jig can be made, over which the temporarily heat-softened glass will later droop.

So, what is the process? First, two thin sheets of flat glass are cut to the required outline. Next they are heated to over 500°C and each is laid in turn over the jig. Once cooled, one of the now correctly curved sheets is placed over the other with a polyvinyl butyral (PVB) plastic layer, opaque at this stage, in between. The edges are sealed together and the assembly enters a pressurised autoclave oven, where it is cooked for 2.5 hours at 145°C and 10bar of pressure.

After this, the PVB is both clear and bonded to the glass, and once the edges are smoothed the new windscreen is complete. Making a one-off windscreen (or rear window) is not a cheap process, but should anyone need another it will be much cheaper next time. Meanwhile, stay away from loose chippings.

John Simister





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1997 McLaren F1 GTR (ex-Le Mans) ● 2004 Porsche Carrera GT  
*Please note that to respect client confidentiality not all motor cars available may be shown*

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## MAN &amp; MACHINE

# John Carpenter's Assegai

*Kotze's Alfa-engined South African is back on track*

Words and photograph Paul Hardiman

**THIS IS THE** only Formula 1 car made in South Africa by Cape Town garagista Tony Kotze, and winner of a Silver Star in the SA Drivers' Championship.

Built to the 1.5-litre formula in 1961 for the South African Gold Cup series under the Bond Cars banner, it's influenced by both the Lotus 18 and the Tipo 156 'sharknose' Ferrari. Kotze entered the Assegai – named for an African spear – in its only GP, the 1962 Rand Grand Prix in Kyalami, but it failed to qualify.

The wheels are Cosmics, the gearbox a rear-entry Hewland Mk5 and the engine is Alfa twin-cam. It's an overbored 1290 rather than a sleeved 1600, and the engines have different deck heights, as Carpenter found out...

After more racing with five owners in ZA it had been brought to the UK by Peter Ferriss and for many years was in the Brooklands Museum. Carpenter bought it last year from a Historics auction: 'When I saw it I thought "That's beautiful, so sad it's not racing..." It had appeared three times at the Goodwood Revival in the early 2000s and once again in 2010, but had never been properly restored.'

So John, a former race mechanic himself, had former Fittipaldi-era McLaren F1 mechanic Kerry Adams at Kendle Adams Motorsport, with Sam Kendle, rebuild the car, which included new wishbones and brakes for safety. The steering rack mounts are the originals, hand-fabricated by Kotze, as are the pannier fuel tanks. But the team ran into a problem when the new engine arrived. The deck height

is lower on this Giulietta motor, meaning they had to get new cranked manifolds fabricated to clear the top chassis tubes.

First time out was at Monaco Historics in May, with the old, standard motor producing just 105bhp. Iain Rowley of Delta Motorsport brought it home fourth in class and 12th overall, in a field of 22 finishers. John then had a new 160bhp motor built for the Silverstone Classic, and Historic Formula Ford ace Richard Tarling took it 10th in the pre-'66 GP cars race. It was lying third in the next when the fuel pump packed up with a quarter of a lap to go – but not before Tarling, a former Formula Palmer Audi champion, had knocked two seconds off the car's previous best lap there – 'He just loves the car,' says Carpenter.

Sadly, Tony Kotze passed away in April, aged 85, shortly after learning that his creation would be racing at Monaco. 'I spoke to his son, who told his father the car was racing there, and he understood before he lapsed back into a coma from which he never awoke.

'It's so well proportioned – that's what's so pleasing about it. It just needed a bit of tlc, which was what Kerry Adams provided. If Kotze had had the funding I'm sure he would have made it competitive, but when you're up against world-class drivers like Clark, Hill and Ireland, that's a hard act to follow. Just getting it to Kyalami was an achievement, as it was for us getting it to Monaco. I hope one day it will race again in South Africa – and I'd love to do some Tasman races with it.'

## Life's a beach

*A new beach race joins the sandy fray. Will more follow?*



### THE RACE OF GENTLEMEN

The pre-war beach racing at Wildwood, New Jersey, was revived in 2012 for pre-war cars and bikes by the Oilers Car Club – for 2016 it expands to Pismo Beach on the West Coast. Pismo 15-16 October; Wildwood June 2017.



### VHRA PENDINE SANDS

The VHRA's Pendine Sands Hot Rod Races have been a phenomenal success. The first running was in 2012, and in 2013 it won Best Event at the International Historic Motoring Awards. Next one will be in June 2017.



### WESTON BEACH RACE

Once a year, the beach at Weston-Super-Mare is ploughed into a six-mile motocross track, complete with 'mountains' and jumps. Hundreds of riders, amateur and pro, and thousands of spectators. 7-9 October.



### JERSEY SAND RACING

Who would expect this of genteel Jersey? The Jersey Motorcycle & Light Car Club runs a series of beach races for an unlikely selection of (mostly budget-priced) cars and bikes. Well worth a visit or even a go.

JAMES LIPMAN





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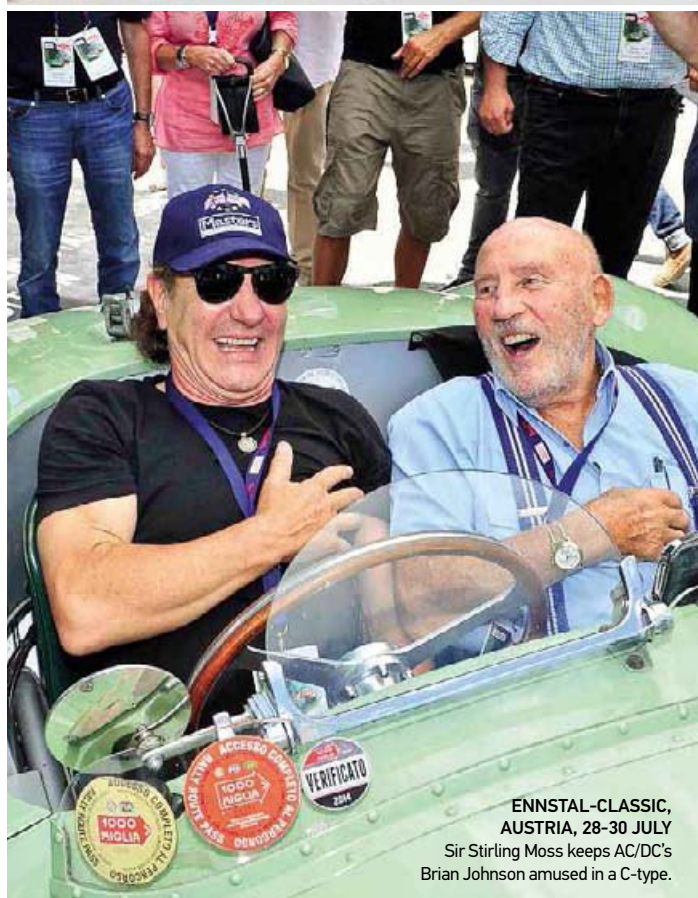
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**FLYWHEEL FESTIVAL, BICESTER HERITAGE, UK, 2-3 JULY**  
Rolls looks cross at playing second fiddle to Landie during former RAF base's massive gathering of cars and aircraft.



**ENNSTAL-CLASSIC, AUSTRIA, 28-30 JULY**  
Sir Stirling Moss keeps AC/DC's Brian Johnson amused in a C-type.



**CROFT NOSTALGIA FESTIVAL, 6-7 AUGUST**  
Nostalgic doesn't mean uncompetitive – Anglia nips past Cortina in HSCC racing.

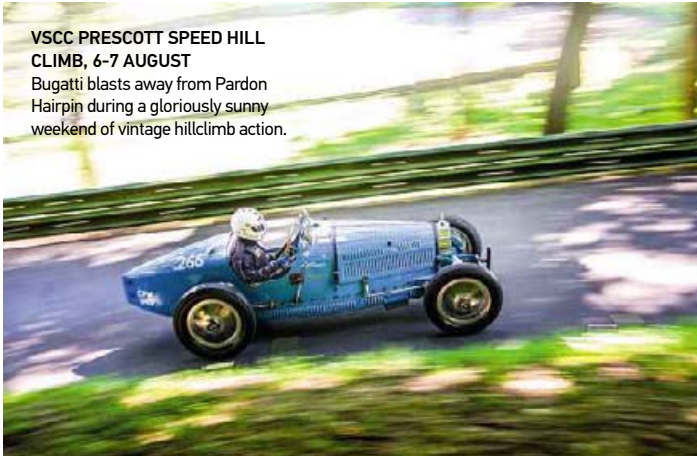


**SHELSLEY WALSH, UK, 16-17 JULY**  
Hans-Joachim Stuck repeats his father's 1936 drive in the Auto Union Type C, wearing dad's old leather helmet.



**VSCC PRESCOTT SPEED HILL  
CLIMB, 6-7 AUGUST**

Bugatti blasts away from Pardon Hairpin during a gloriously sunny weekend of vintage hillclimb action.



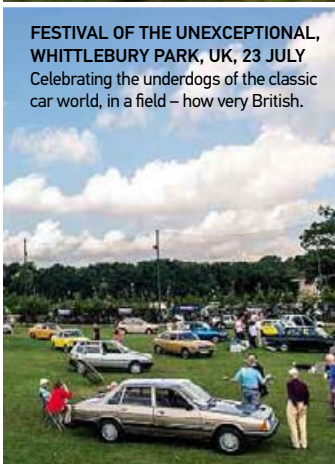
**BONNEVILLE SALT FLATS,  
UTAH, 8 AUGUST**

The World's Fastest Triumph – motorcycle racer and TV star Guy Martin clocks 274.2mph in the Triumph Infor Rocket Streamliner.



**FESTIVAL OF THE UNEXCEPTIONAL,  
WHITTLEBURY PARK, UK, 23 JULY**

Celebrating the underdogs of the classic car world, in a field – how very British.



# THE MONTH IN PICTURES

*The summer's in full swing and there are events happening left, right and centre. Here are just a few highlights*

**IGNITION,  
GLASGOW SECC,  
5-7 AUGUST**

Local boy David Coulthard looks pleased to be home.



**CARFEST NORTH,  
BOLESWORTH CASTLE, 29-31 JULY**

Doughnuts of the non-edible kind from Red Bull Racing's RB7 at this family-friendly festival, raising money for Children In Need.





# Silverstone Classic

*Silverstone, Northants, UK 29-31 July*

Words David Lillywhite

**IT'S VAST.** The Silverstone Classic is utterly huge, and this year it seemed to be bigger still. It's off-putting at first, but the trick is to jump onto the many classic shuttle buses to get around, particularly between the old pits and the new Wing paddocks – both of which were in use for the Classic – and between the many viewing grandstands around the full GP circuit.

The advantage of all this space is the ability to host a wide selection of Historic races, making the Silverstone Classic the world's biggest classic motor racing festival. This year there were 20 separate races and over 1000 individual entries.

The number of extra attractions has also grown significantly since Silverstone Classic's early days. The Village Green was the obvious focus, with food stands and pub alongside big wheel, merry-go-round and trade stalls.

Close by were the many car clubs, plus manufacturer stands from the likes of Morgan

and Aston, and a huge display from Porsche, showing off its restoration competition winners and a display to mark 40 years of transaxle cars.

Then there was a Range Rover Register off-road experience, eBay's restoration stage, Mike Brewer's car clinic, F1 drivers vs footballers car-football match for Prostate Cancer UK, the many track parades (including 50 Years of the HSCC) and of course live music in the evenings.

Onto the racing, from the nimble Historic Formula Juniors to the thundering 50 years of CanAm race and the ballistic Group Cs, which raced into the twilight on the Saturday evening.

In-between, the pre-63 GTs (think Cobras, GTOs) of the Royal Automobile Club Tourist Trophy, the pre-56 Sports Cars, the pre-66 HGPCA Historic Grand Prix cars, the pre-56 and pre-61 Sports Cars, the pre-66 Touring Cars, the Masters Historic Formula Ones, the 66-90 Historic Touring Car Challenge cars, the

**Clockwise from top left**

Family fun; Legends of Modern Formula One; bands included The Stranglers and The Boomtown Rats; Falcon leads Mustang into Becketts; Matra MS650; Village Green; Freddie Hunt, son of James; huge Porsche club presence.

90s Endurance Legends, the Super Touring Cars, the Legends of Modern Formula One...

Stand-outs in all this? Now that's asking! But the Masters Historic F1 was stunning to watch, with genuinely close battles at the front that saw Nick Padmore take victory – just – in both races. *Octane's* own Richard Meaden won the pre-66 Touring Cars in a Lotus Cortina, and the 90s Endurance Legends showed just how good this new series has already become.

Two- and four-wheel legend Stuart Graham presented the Scarf and Goggles award for 'most admirable car competing at the Classic' to Harm Lagaij for his Shadow Mk1; and on the subject of two wheels, World GP Bike Legends featured former champions Wayne Gardner, Freddie Spencer, Phil Read and Troy Bayliss. Amazing!

Over 100,000 visited the Classic over the three days, with record attendances on the Friday and Saturday. Quite an achievement.





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# 1000 Mile Trial

*Edinburgh to Goodwood 11-15 July*

Photography F&R Rastrelli (Blue Passion Photo)

**IN AN EVENT** spanning five days, the 2016 Royal Automobile Club 1000 Mile Trial was won for a record third time in a row by John Abel. He was partnered this year by Iain Tullie but the pair drove the same Lagonda LG45 that took Abel to his previous wins.

Crews assembled on 11 July in Edinburgh to be welcomed aboard Her Majesty's Yacht *Britannia* for a pre-event dinner, then headed east out of Edinburgh the following morning. After a civilised coffee at the National Museum of Flight and a later lunch at Floors Castle, Paul Crosby and Andy Pullan in their MG TB had pulled out a lead of a second over Anderson/Powley. In the afternoon, the competitors headed into England via the Cheviots and Kielder Water before resting for the night close to Hexham in Northumberland.

On Wednesday, a 200-mile-plus day, they headed south via Barnard Castle, Bolton Abbey near Skipton and finally Ilkley Moor before reaching Sheffield, the scenery changing from rolling, heather-covered moorland to the craggy, limestone-strewn hills and dales of Yorkshire. A few showers tried to spoil their fun, but the road books had been printed on waterproof paper... Franco and Rubinia Majno suffered a magneto failure here in their Bugatti Type 13 Brescia, but were able to source replacement parts. Seren and Elise Whyte, in an



**Clockwise from top, and below**

Halt en route with aristocratic backdrop; winners Abel and Tullie splash onwards in Lagonda; Hore/Cussons in Bentley short-chassis 4½ Litre; Degenaar/Vrie in *Bluebell*.

Austin Seven, developed head gasket problems, forcing them out of the event for two days.

The Trial now visited the High Peak district and dropped through Derbyshire, Warwickshire and into Oxford for the overnight halt. Crosby/Pullan had regained the lead after a couple of errors from Anderson/Powley, while in third were the Lagonda crew of Abel/Tullie, a noisy differential persuading John to drive less flamboyantly. Many villages turned out in force – the village of Boylestone really pushed the

boat out with, it seemed, the entire population coming out to cheer. The final regularity of the day came through Wychwood Forest before the last time control at Blenheim Palace.

The penultimate day would bring drama at the Bicester Heritage site. The challenge of Stephen Owens/Niall Frost in their Jaguar SS100 was cut short when a driveshaft snapped, sending wheel and hub along the asphalt. Event leaders Crosby/Pullan in the MG TB fried a distributor. On the final day, at Goodwood, Abel/Tullie were baulked by a wedding procession, handing the event to Shoosmith/Harley. But, with unbelievable generosity, the ladies asked for their time to be discounted, enabling John Abel to seal his third win.





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## INTRODUCING THE 2016 OCTANE TOUR

*The best journey to this year's Concours of Elegance*

Join us for the fifth running of the Octane Tour. Last year we headed north to Scotland for an enthralling run through the glens and over the hills to the Concours at the Palace of Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh – it was a blast!

This year the Tour is back south again, heading once more to Windsor Castle, the majestic setting for this year's Concours of Elegance. Following a delicious Cliveden House breakfast you'll

set off through the leafy lanes and backroads of Berkshire and Surrey on a specially selected route designed to entertain both car and driver. About 2½ hours later you'll arrive at Windsor Castle at the Long Walk to park in a special Octane Tour display, then it's off to the Concours followed by a well-deserved lunch.

Entry to the Octane Tour is open to owners of sports and GT cars, ancient and modern.

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## Dragstalgia

*Santa Pod Raceway 15-17 July*

Words and photography Julian Hunt

**BILLED AS AN** 'Adrenaline-Fuelled Blast From The Past', Dragstalgia is the premier nostalgia event on the UK's drag racing calendar. It's Santa Pod's equivalent of the Goodwood Revival.

Period-correct vehicles were to be seen everywhere in the July event, not only race cars and bikes in pits filled to capacity, but also in the car parks and camping areas. Spectators and race teams truly made the effort, with many in period attire.

On track the action was plentiful with Slingshot Dragsters, Outlaw Anglias, Nostalgia Funny Cars, Aircooled VWs, Willys Coupes and many more taking to the famous quarter-mile. Returning this year were crowd favourites, the Fuel Alterededs. Two from the USA, Ron Hope with *Rat Trap* and Randy Bradford with his Fiat Topolino, both celebrated their 50th year of racing as they took on the UK's Nick Davies in *Havoc*. With mid-to-low six-second passes at 220-230mph and, thanks to their



short wheelbases, going every which way but straight, the Fuel Alterededs always entertain.

Also celebrating its 50th year as a drag strip was Santa Pod Raceway itself. To mark this milestone, 91-year-old 'King' Harold Bull, who drove the first-ever timed pass made at the Easter meeting in 1966 in his *Stripduster* dragster, lined up on the start line next to 79-year-old Ken 'Flathead' Cooper. 'King'

**Clockwise from top**

*Rat Trap* creases tyres; mutant Volvo; 91-year-old Harold Bull in *Stripduster* rep; Allard Chrysler; Bradford's Fiat.

Harold built *Stripduster* himself, powering it with a Morris Minor engine that he bought for £1 and to which he added a supercharger. Fifty years later both are strapped into recreations of their original cars, are started by a wave of the flags instead of the modern timing system, and take a trip to the finish line. It was one of the most memorable moments of the meeting.

If that wasn't enough nostalgia, there was more history in the making in the form of Europe's first ever dragster, the 1961 Allard Chrysler, which has just emerged from a full restoration begun in 2007. Again started by 1966 chief starter Stu Bradbury and his flags, it made its first pass under its own power since 1964. Bradbury, chairman of the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame, also gained the inaugural 'Spirit of '76 Award' for his outstanding contribution to nostalgia drag racing.

Off-track there was plenty to see and do with a Show & Shine arranged by the National Street Rod Association, autograph sessions with past stars, and many displays of nostalgia-inducing machinery. Into the evening, bands and DJs played by the beer festival. Great stuff.



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# COMING UP

*A selection of highlights from a motoring calendar that's fuller than ever before*

## 27-28 August Wings & Wheels

Entertainment on the ground and in the air at Dunsfold Aerodrome in Surrey, and in a good cause, too: money will be raised for Help for Heroes and Brooklands Museum. [wingsandwheels.net](http://wingsandwheels.net)

## 26-28 August CarFest South

The Chris Evans-led travelling circus comes to Laverstoke Park Farm in Hampshire, home of 1979 Formula 1 champ Jody Scheckter, with music, a vintage village and 'cars, cars, cars'. [carfest.org](http://carfest.org)



Classic Car Boot Sale, 1-2 October  
Image: Botond Istváni

## 1-3 September Salon Privé

Fabulous cars – old and new – and fabulous food in the fabulous setting of Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire, which will roll out the red carpet for the Miura in the year of its 50th birthday. [salonpriveconcours.com](http://salonpriveconcours.com)



Sywell Classic: Pistons & Props, 24-25 September. Image: Pete Austin

## 1-5 September Lime Rock Historic Festival

Two days of racing with 300 cars on Saturday and Monday, sandwiching a concours held on the track's Sam Posey Straight. The fun begins on the Thursday with a parade through surrounding towns, while this year's centrepiece is a display of Mercedes racing cars including the Mille Miglia-winning '722'. [limerockhistorics.com](http://limerockhistorics.com)

## 2-4 September Historic Grand Prix Zandvoort

F1 and F3 favourites of a bygone era, plus sports cars, pre-war monsters and more at Zandvoort, the fast Dutch seaside circuit. Excellent value, too, with a three-day pass costing €40 in advance. [historicgrandprix.nl](http://historicgrandprix.nl)

## 2-4 September The Concours of Elegance

The Concours returns to Windsor Castle for 2016, four years after its first visit to the Queen's weekend home, and exceptional cars from an 1896 Benz Velo 'Comfortable' to the 1988 Peugeot Oxia will help HRH celebrate her 90th birthday in style. The 66 concours entrants will vie for the Pullman Trophy, and will be joined by top-notch club cars from around the UK. [concourseofelegance.co.uk](http://concourseofelegance.co.uk)



Kop Hill Climb, 17-18 September  
Image: Kop Hill Climb

## 3-4 September Bo'ness Speed Hill Climb

... & Motoring Heritage Weekend, to give this re-branded favourite its full, new name. The traditional action on the hill will be supplemented with a show featuring attendees from dozens of local and national car clubs. [bonesshillclimb.org.uk](http://bonesshillclimb.org.uk)

## 3-4 September Beaulieu International Autojumble

The vast sale of motoring bits and bobs is 50 years old this year, and represents as great a threat to our bank balance as ever. Buyers come from all over the world to look for automobilia, an elusive part, and indeed complete cars and bikes. [beaulieu.co.uk](http://beaulieu.co.uk)

## 3-4 September Chantilly Arts & Elegance Richard Mille

A relative newcomer it might be, but this glamorous concours – a prize-winner at the International Historic Motoring Awards two years in a row – is inked into the diaries of motoring enthusiasts around the world. Held at the beautiful Château de Chantilly in northern France, the concours itself takes place on the Sunday; Saturday is given over to the Supercar Rally and the now customary Bonhams auction. [chantillyartsetelegance.com](http://chantillyartsetelegance.com)

## 9-11 September Goodwood Revival

The pinnacle of historic racing, with fierce competition on a circuit unchanged in layout since 1970. This year Goodwood honours the late Sir Jack Brabham, and there's an Austin A35-only race to enjoy in addition to grids packed with priceless racers and GTs. Further attractions, including a vintage funfair and WW2 aircraft in flight, are too many to list. [goodwood.com](http://goodwood.com)

## 16-18 September Spa Six Hours

A wonderful weekend of wheel-to-wheel action on the storied and challenging Belgian circuit, whatever the weather. The main event sees pre-1965 cars – GT40s, E-types, DB4s, 911s, Mustangs and more – racing into darkness, headlights blazing. Great stuff. [spasixhours.com](http://spasixhours.com)

## 17-18 September Kop Hill Climb

Classic cars and bikes charge 3848 feet up the hill in leafy Buckinghamshire, more than 100 years after it was first tackled by the likes of Malcolm Campbell, Henry Segrave and Count Zborowski. [kophillclimb.org.uk](http://kophillclimb.org.uk)

## 22-24 September International Grossglockner Grand Prix

First held in 1935, Europe's longest hillclimb consists of 92 bends, 14 hairpins and 15 miles of fantastic Alpine tarmac. Last year the the Grossglockner, Austria's highest mountain, welcomed a field packed with pre-war machines as the event celebrated its 80th anniversary; this year the focus is on cars built between 1950 and 1975. [grossglockner-grandprix.de](http://grossglockner-grandprix.de)

## 24-25 September Les Grandes Heures Automobiles

Not a race, but an extraordinary meeting of racing cars at Linas-Monthéry circuit just outside Paris. The grids feature many of the cars and motorcycles that graced Monthéry in period, as well as a number of their 'heirs', as the organisers put it. There's plenty of action, with each entrant running at least three times in the course of the weekend. [lesgrandesheuresautomobiles.com](http://lesgrandesheuresautomobiles.com)



Malta Classic, 6-9 October  
Image: Martyn Goddard





Chantilly Arts & Elegance Richard Mille, 3-4 September. Image: Richard Mille

### 24-25 September

#### Sywell Classic: Pistons & Props

Pistons & Props has managed to turn itself into one of those 'something for everyone' events: aerial displays, car and motorcycle racing on the runway, live music, a vintage funfair and a shopping village are all on offer.

[sywellclassic.co.uk](http://sywellclassic.co.uk)



Zoute Grand Prix, 6-9 October  
Image: Zoute Grand Prix

### 30 September – 2 October

#### Bernina Grand Prix

Deep in the Swiss Alps, a revived historic hillclimb on the Bernina Pass near St Moritz. Pre-1982 cars are eligible. Can't compete? Well spectating should be spectacular.

[bernina-granturismo.com](http://bernina-granturismo.com)

### 1-2 October

#### Classic Car Boot Sale

Traders descend on King's Cross in London to sell all manner of vintage stuff from their classic cars as music plays and food cooks.

[classiccarbootsale.co.uk](http://classiccarbootsale.co.uk)

### 6-9 October

#### Malta Classic

Coming under the 'Malta Classic' umbrella this year are the Hill Climb at Mellieha (6 October), the Concours d'Elegance in Mdina, and the Malta Classic Grand Prix, also in Mdina.

[maltaclassic.com](http://maltaclassic.com)

### 6-9 October

#### Zoute Grand Prix

Another multi-attraction event, with less chance of warm sunshine but a guarantee of top-quality cars. Over four days the Zoute Top Marques motor show, the Zoute Rally, the Zoute Concours d'Elegance, and the Zoute GT Tour turn the seaside resort of Knokke-Heist in Belgium into a car-lover's playground.

[zoutegrandprix.be](http://zoutegrandprix.be)

### 13 October

#### Octane Drivers' Club Track Day

Before Mother Nature declares the British racing season well and truly over for another year, we decamp to West Sussex to enjoy Goodwood circuit one more time. If you'd like to join us, places can be booked via the Octane website.

[octane-magazine.com](http://octane-magazine.com)

### 16 October

#### HERO Challenge

Based at Throckmorton Airfield in Worcestershire, this one-day event for pre-1986 cars offers a 'Clubman' class with easy-to-follow roadbook as well as more serious competition in the National B class, which requires a competition licence and features map-based navigation.

[heroevents.eu](http://heroevents.eu)



HERO Challenge, 16 October  
Image: Francesco Rastrelli



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# Aston Martin's future is here

*As important as the DB4 and the DB9 once were – perhaps even more so – the DB11 pioneers a new seven-car range*

**Words** David Lillywhite

**WE MAKE NO APOLOGIES** for featuring the DB11 again. This is the first full drive of a production car, a car that brings in a critical new era for Aston Martin. It's arguably the most important car in the company's history, because the design and technology behind it will form the basic of another six new models, and – assuming it's successful – it will financially support the last three of those new models.

Everything has gone into this. It's still pure Aston Martin in looks but a clear step forward – and in technology terms it's a massive move on from the current range. The new all-alloy sub-structure uses more pressings than the outgoing VH architecture, with added alloy castings to further enhance its strength and versatility. Within virtually the same exterior dimensions as the DB9, an extra 65mm in the wheelbase and more efficient use of space means there's significantly more leg and head room both front and rear. The engine is an all-new 600bhp twin-turbo V12, the transaxle the same ZF eight-speed auto, and the electrical architecture is sourced from Daimler.

Aston wants there to be more distinction between each model in the range, which meant enhancing the DB11's GT characteristics. So improved comfort, more relaxed behaviour at

high speed and a better ride at any speed were all high on the wish-list. That it's more civilised is clear from the first push on the 'crystal' key starter, because there's now a soft-start push-and-hold option to mute the exhaust on start-up. Fear not, however: the neighbour-baiting exhaust flare is still there on a standard start.

It's equally clear that the ride is smoother than the DB9's, less prone to jiggling over rough surfaces, while the exhaust rumbles subtly above the faint whirr of the transmission. Definitely quieter than the DB9. The steering feels more fluid, though ironically it's now electrically assisted rather than hydraulic, and the brakes are wonderfully progressive.

Through the corners it's precise but not razor-sharp in the softest 'GT' mode, a trade-off of the GT character, and every now and again the test car would lurch slightly mid-corner as if the rear dampers were overwhelmed. It was such a subtle effect that five seconds later you'd wonder if it really happened – but it did, and ex-Lotus handling guru Matt Becker said later at the press launch that software engineers were on their way to tweak out the behaviour.

A flick of the suspension mode switch into Sport mode eliminates the 'lurch' with only the smallest compromise to the ride, the engineers deliberately avoiding the tooth-rattling firmness of previous Sport settings. If you want that, there's Sport-Plus, best left for the track.

There's nothing about the DB11 that's not an improvement on the DB9, and that includes the interior, which is even more exquisite. And of course the DB11 is quicker: 200mph and 0-62mph in 3.9 seconds. Retailing at £154,900, it signals an exciting new era for Aston Martin.



**Top and above**

No rear spoiler to corrupt the lines thanks to new AeroBlade aerodynamic technology; interior is a huge step on from DB9's; all-new aluminium structure.



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# AUCTIONATA

# Old dog, new tricks

*A special edition to mark the Morgan 4/4's 80th birthday*

Words James Ball

**A HISTORY LESSON** first: the Morgan 4/4 was introduced in 1936 – 80 years ago – sporting a distinctive flat radiator. Then, in 1955, the sleeker cowl-rad 4/4 arrived on the scene with its eye-catching curved grille and sloping rear end. And ever since then, Morgan has kept effectively the same look and many of the same manufacturing methods.

Don't be fooled though. Sure, Morgan's new 80th Anniversary edition here looks as though it's stepped straight out of 1955, but the 4/4 has evolved over the years. Under those classic looks are some modern mechanics. Yes, there are leaf springs on the back and Morgan's traditional sliding-pillar suspension on the front (plus liberal use of wood in the body frame), but there's also a Ford Sigma 1.6 under that long bonnet, hooked up to an MX-5 gearbox. The Ford unit achieves a claimed 44.1mpg and pushes out a humble but usable 110bhp.

So, what's different here? Well, the 80th Anniversary edition is actually mechanically identical to the standard 4/4, except for a side-exit sports exhaust – a small but very noticeable addition. Although it provides only a very small performance boost, perhaps 1-2bhp over standard, its delightful noisy burble adds plenty of character.

Visually, the 80th has been tweaked with

many design elements echoing the earliest 4/4s. The brass centre wheel nuts and grille draw on the early cars, whilst the matt-finish walnut dash and foil detailing add a more modern flair.

To drive it's a solid, direct experience. With no power steering, and next to no suspension travel, the 4/4 forces you to pay attention. Every bump and every corner demands focus and forethought as that side-exit pops away on the overrun and lets out a decent growl when you're changing up through the gears.

Cornering is equally positive and, with the 4/4 weighing just 795kg, there's plenty of grip and the feedback through the Moto-Lita gives you confidence turning in. Not only does it drive like a classic car – it even smells like one. The combination of leather, wood and hot metal permeates the cockpit as you peer down the long louvred bonnet.

Has Morgan simply given its 4/4 a spruce-up and called it a special edition? Well, yes, in a sense, but having driven the 80th Anniversary from Geneva to Malvern, we're in a good position to note that it feels a surprisingly different experience from the standard 4/4, thanks to well thought-out design choices – and that throaty side-exit exhaust.

At £39,995, and with the 80 examples already sold, we expect residuals to be strong...



#### From top

The 80th Anniversary model's interior looks classic but is a world away from the 1936 4/4's; brass finishes and logos are unique to this car; it still drives like a Morgan!





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## Angling for the Alpina alternative

*BMW M4 too hardcore, too obvious? The answer lies here*

Words Will Beaumont

**THE SUSPICION IS** that modern Alpinas, because they're made on the same production line, are just ordinary BMWs with some expensive badges on them. That new Alpinas are much less special than their predecessors, that the finish isn't as good, the materials are sub-standard and the mechanical parts aren't as comprehensively transformed.

Step inside the B4 Bi-Turbo Convertible and those worries immediately disappear. Although the interior looks similar to a 4-series, the plushness of the leather, the soft Alcantara wheel, metal buttons in the carpets etched with the Alpina logo and the traditional blue dials elevate the space into another league of luxury. That's before you've found out that Alpina has ditched the single twin-scroll turbo found on

the BMW version of this 2979cc straight-six in favour of two sequential turbochargers. The Alpina-built engine produces 404bhp from 5500 to 6250rpm and 443lb ft of torque between 3000 and 4000rpm.

The B4 also gets an Akrapovic exhaust, 20in wheels with 20 spokes, bespoke Michelin Pilot Super Sport tyres, Brembo brakes and revised springs, dampers and anti-roll bars. There are software changes too: the traction control has been sharpened and the speed limiter that restricts BMWs to 155mph has been removed so the B4 can reach 187mph.

But the B4 isn't just a collection of expensive parts. Everything that goes into the Alpina works together to create a cohesive package. The B4's exceptional ride, despite its huge wheels, is an

example of just how successful Alpina's efforts have been. With the Comfort driving mode selected, only the very worst road imperfections make their way into the cabin. Smaller ones may be heard but are never felt.

Although the soft suspension doesn't allow excessive roll, in its normal mode the B4 can feel top-heavy on the exit of corners, taking a fraction longer than feels natural before it flattens out. Sport and Sport+ slacken off the traction control, add some weight to the steering, change the engine's response and stiffen the dampers, eradicating that top-heavy feeling.

With the roof down you can hear distinctly what the sportier modes do to the engine. With every gearchange a loud burble is emitted from the quad tail pipes, tainting the lovely straight-six sound you hear when you're on the throttle. The frequency of the gearchanges, thanks to the close ratios of the eight-speed automatic gearbox, exacerbates the issue.

The Alpina's Michelins provide huge amounts of grip, and the throttle allows a satisfying amount of adjustability to your chosen line through corners. The B4 can be persuaded to slide, but with the ample grip it's easy to make brisk progress along a plethora of different roads.

At £62,950 the B4 Bi-Turbo Convertible costs almost the same as BMW's M4 Convertible, but the two have a significantly different character. The more powerful M4 can be unnervingly aggressive; by comparison the Alpina's exceptional ride, well-appointed interior and approachable nature make it more relaxed than the M4. And that makes it a very competent Grand Touring convertible.



Above and right

Paddle-shifters allow manual selection of the gearbox's eight very close ratios, should you feel the need; cabin has bespoke, high-quality Alpina leather and Alcantara.







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# A very superior Brough

*Impressive new bike brings back a revered name*

Words Marc Potter Images Gareth Harford

**BROUGH SUPERIOR.** The Rolls-Royce of Motorcycles. The chisel-jawed granddaddy hero of great British classic bikes, and Lawrence of Arabia's steed of choice. Legendary is an over-used word, but it certainly applies to this great British marque.

You can't go to a Bonhams auction without another Brough making auction history. The last one, a 1938 BS4, broke the record for a British motorcycle sold at auction, bringing an impressive £330,000 in April 2016. Small fry for cars, but big news in bikes.

A new motorcycle hasn't rolled through Brough factory gates since 1940, when the doors of the Haydn Road factory in Nottingham closed for the last time. Until now, that is – because Brough Superior's SS100 is back.

The name was bought by eccentric British businessman Mark Upham back in 2008, and this month the first bikes are rolling off the production line in a new factory not in Nottingham but in Toulouse, France.

The new SS100 defies its modern retro class by delivering a package that proves very surprising when you open the throttle wide. It uses an all-new and Brough-bespoke engine,

a 997cc, 88-degree V-twin which produces 130bhp with the Sport pipes, ECU and air filter fitted to our test hack.

We say 'hack' because the prototype pictured has done 50,000km of testing, but it's essentially the same to ride as the production bikes apart from a few details. This prototype bike is a bit rough around the edges, but the production examples are clearly works of art and finished every bit as well as a 'Rolls-Royce of Motorcycling' should be.

The design nods to the past with a strong stride to the future, and comes complete with a hand-built aluminium tank which takes a day to make. The frame is made from titanium and there's a version of the Fiori front fork system constructed from a combination of billet, magnesium and titanium. No expense is spared, and neither should it be given the bike's £50,000 price tag at current exchange rates.

But this bike isn't just about style and craftsmanship. It works, too. The chassis has that rare combination of quick steering but stability in fast corners, despite any hesitation you may have about that funny front end. On the open roads the bike is torquey – there's a



#### Above and below

Speedometer look is inspired by original 5in Smiths instrument but contains a modern information screen; 130bhp V-twin should give 'adequate' performance.

hefty 88.5lb ft of torque. The four-disc Beringer calipers are designed to look like the original Brough Superior SS100's drums and are immensely powerful. The SS100 works fluidly and far better than you would ever expect from a firm's first attempt at a motorcycle.

It may be built in France from European and US components, but the Brough still gives off a strong British vibe. George Brough and his friend, Lawrence of Arabia, would be proud.





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more info : [www.zoutegrandprix.be](http://www.zoutegrandprix.be)



## PROGRAM **ZOUTE** GRAND PRIX® 2016 6 - 9 OCTOBER 2016

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### **ZOUTE SALE®** by Bonhams – 6-7 October 2016

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### **ZOUTE CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE®** by Bank Degroef – Petercam – 8-9 October 2016

The sixth edition of the Concours d'Elegance will take place on Saturday at the Approach Golf and on Sunday at the Fairway 1 of the prestigious Royal Zoute Golf Club, where a limited number of quality entries in pre- and post-war classes will be selected by the organising committee and judged by an international jury.

### **ZOUTE GT TOUR®** by EY – 9 October 2016

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# ZOUTE CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE

by Bank Degroef Petercam

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Current ownership since 1938.*



# JAY LENO

## *The Collector*

**D**riving my McLaren F1 the other day I realised one of the reasons that Gordon Murray's a genius, besides the obvious ones, is the fact he built this car with no radio. Driving any number of modern supercars, from McLarens and the NSX to Porsches, they all have these elaborate sound systems and they all integrate the phone, contacts, navigation, almost to the point where you just become a completely distracted driver.

The great thing about driving the original F1 is you can get away from it all. You can take the car out on the road and escape civilisation. In the old days, taking an aeroplane flight somewhere was somewhat relaxing because the boss could not reach you. But now planes have wifi and people email you in-flight and you're just constantly in contact all the time. It's kind of the same way with a lot of modern supercars. You may say, why not just turn it off? But you don't. You just feel it's there and you have to use it.

If I'm in a boring car, then I'm going to want an elaborate sound system, because... it's a boring car. But in an exciting automobile – and I realise I'm probably the odd man out here – it just seems to detract from the whole driving experience.

This has been a while coming. The first car that I really thought was distracting was the Nissan GTR, because it had a dashboard that you could configure. It had G-force meters, differential temperature gauges and all sorts of stuff that takes your mind off driving... and driving a car like a GTR needs all your attention.

I drove my Model T recently, and the only gauge it has is an ammeter, just so I know if the battery's charging. That's all it has. And it just sort of made me laugh. Because I really don't need to know kingpin temperature and differential temperature. Just get in the car and drive. You know, it made me smile.

We're told computers would free up time so we could do other things. Literally it's done the opposite. It's just enabled people to fill our free time with more work to do. Back in the '90s, I would get in a car and just go for a drive. And I would come home and then I would find out – oh, so-and-so's trying to reach me, or whatever it might be. But at least I had that time to really enjoy the car. With modern supercars people can send you an email, a

video, any number of things that take away from enjoying listening to the engine and just getting involved in driving the car.

I was driving my 1961 Daimler Dart the other day and I had no radio at all, and it was just such a pleasant experience. Just the wind going by and the smell of trees and flowers and whatever there is out there. Not artificially induced, just what's in the air. And it really enhanced the driving experience.

It is not just the distractions of use but the complexity of the in-car technology. As someone who considers themselves a fairly astute car person, I find it extremely frustrating to spend a half-hour looking at the manual, trying to figure out how to turn on the radio. It makes me feel like I know nothing about cars at all. And none of it is intuitive.

In the old days you would get in an MG, a Triumph or a Corvette, and without knowing anything about it you would turn the knob, you'd hear a hum and then the music or the talk or whatever would start to play. Now, you've got to sort of hold the brake while pressing the air conditioner button with your left hand, which will then... I mean, none of it is intuitive.

Same thing trying to set the clock.

In the old days you'd look at the dashboard and you pulled the stem and you turned the clock hands. Once again, I've got the manual open, I'm going to page 188 *Setting the Clock* – oh! I see, I've got to go to this screen and then hold this button down for five seconds... and that will then turn into something else.

Given that we have successfully spent decades improving car safety with seat belts, airbags, crumple zones and collision-avoidance features, we now seem hell-bent on creating distractions to make driving more hazardous. I think the autonomous car was designed because the sound system is so complex that people are spending all their time trying to adjust the radio, or to find the station they want, so the car is off driving itself.

It won't be long before the driving experience is effectively a passenger experience and we can use all this technology whilst the car does the driving. Right now we are expected to drive and have all this connectivity and to not hit other road users. It might be short-term but it's a dangerous mix.



### JAY LENO

Comedian and talk show legend Jay Leno is one of the most famous entertainers in the USA. He is also a true petrolhead, with a massive collection of cars and bikes (see [www.jaylenosgarage.com](http://www.jaylenosgarage.com)). Jay was speaking with Jeremy Hart.

# MAXTED - PAGE

FINE HISTORIC PORSCHE



## *The 1973 European GT Championship winning & 1974/75 Le Mans 24 hours* **Porsche Carrera 2.8 RSR - M491 | Chassis # 911 360 0885**

We are thrilled to announce the sale of this world-famous, championship-winning Carrera 2.8 RSR. The iconic Oldenkott Samson-liveried / Kremer Racing RSR which, by the end of 1973 season, was immortalised forever, when it was featured on the official Porsche celebration posters by Strenger: Porsche Cup '73 & Europe GT Championship '73.

One of only forty-nine genuine, factory production, M491 light-weight RSRs built by Porsche, chassis #0885 was supplied new on 28th March to the Oldenkott Tobacco Company and then delivered to Kremer Racing to run Clemens Schickentanz in the 1973 European GT Championship. This highly successful RSR went onto race also in the 1974 and 1975 Le Mans 24 hours, entered by Louis Mezmarie and also competed in the 1975 Tour de France.

This truly iconic Porsche remains presented today in the most authentic and well-maintained condition possible. The car is UK road-registered with V5 title and current MOT, complete with a continuously recorded ownership history and the most exceptionally well-documented history file.



## *Ex Petty / Foyt / Hulme* **1973/1974 Porsche IROC Carrera 3.0 RSR | Chassis # 911 460 0042**

One of only fifteen RSRs specially built by Porsche in 1973 for the inaugural 1973-1974 IROC, International Race of Champions series at Riverside, USA. A one-make race series conceived by Roger Penske, in which twelve championship title-winning drivers of the day were allocated to race an identically prepared car in each round of the series. Light Green Chassis # 911 460 0042 - was raced at Riverside three times in 1973-1974 and was driven by Richard Petty, A.J. Foyt and Denny Hulme.

This beautifully presented and well-documented example has been consistently well maintained and is fitted with its correctly numbered Type 911/74 3.0-litre high-butterfly injection (315bhp) engine. Recently inspected and fully authenticated by Jürgen Barth, #0042 has excellent provenance with comprehensive history files, UK registration / V5 title documentation and is EU taxes paid.

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# DEREK BELL

## *The Legend*

**M**y career in motor sport has witnessed its fair share of peaks and troughs, but on balance I did alright. With success come accolades, and last month I was truly humbled to receive an honorary fellowship degree from the Royal Agricultural University, my former alma mater.

You may wonder why, given that winning at Le Mans or elsewhere is far removed from farming, but motor sport wasn't really on my radar as a young pup. By that, I mean I was obsessed with racing cars and the men who guided them, but it seemed highly improbable that I would ever follow in their wheel tracks. Theirs was a different world to mine. I grew up on a farm and my future seemed preordained: I was going to be a farmer, hence I enrolled at the College – as it was then – in 1962 in order to learn my trade.

In the run-up to receiving my fellowship, I was worried about what I would say in my acceptance speech. I do a fair amount of public speaking, but the prospect of standing in a church in Cirencester in front of a sea of newly minted graduates filled me with dread. How could I possibly relate to them? I was all out of ideas, but then the big day arrived and it was one that I will never forget. Before the actual 'do', I visited the University and long-dormant memories came flooding back. When it came to stand before the congregation, if you can call it that, I recalled how students during my time there once carried the Chancellor's Fiat 500 upstairs up to his study. That seemed to go down well.

I then moved on to how obsessed many of us were in reaching the magic ton down the long campus driveway. I should point out that back then I was armed with a Ford 10, which managed maybe 35mph with a following wind. There were some students, though, who had sports cars.

One, whose name escapes me, had a Lotus Seven and he was particularly determined. So much so, one day he wound it up to what may well have been 100mph, but he overshot the driveway and connected with something immovable shortly thereafter. As an aside, I turned up in a Porsche Cayenne and was asked if fancied having a go at setting a new record. I gunned it a little, but nowadays progress is hindered somewhat by bloody speed bumps.

Standing there in my gown and mortar board, it dawned on me that there are so many parallels between motor racing and farming. I was driving tractors and Jeeps as an eight-year-old, and learned a fair amount of mechanical sympathy from that. I also discovered teamwork and a strong work ethic.

I told the fresh batch of graduates to aim high, never to give up and to love what they do. Like me, it may be that their true calling lies outside agriculture. My best friend during my time on campus was Gordon Roddick who, along with his wife Anita, established The Body Shop. Back then, we were barely out of our teens. As such, neither of us could possibly have foreseen our future paths.

It was only later that I learned from the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Chris Gaskell, and Chair of Governing Council Jeremy Lewis, that I was the first sportsman ever to be honoured by the University. I was amazed to hear that, given that several Olympians had passed through its doors.

Returning to my day job, I attended the British Grand Prix within a week of the ceremony and came away with mixed emotions. I do love seeing the current crop of F1 drivers wrestling their cars in the wet. You cannot fully appreciate

their talent watching on TV from the safety of a sofa; you really need to see them in action up close.

I must say, though, that I was bitterly disappointed that the race began under a safety car. These are highly paid and inordinately gifted drivers. They know the dangers. I gather from the commentary that more than one star name complained over the car-to-pit radio about how long the safety car stayed out. Would the FIA mind parking it so that they could get on with actually racing?

I suspect that the race directors would have been pilloried had there been a major accident shortly after the start, but this is motor racing. Not crashing into another car, especially in tricky conditions, is part of a driver's skill set. If it isn't, they shouldn't be out there. I would hate for a driver to get killed, or even injured, in a Grand Prix but I would equally loathe it if motor sport's top tier became too safe.

If you remove the element of risk, then you risk losing a lot more besides.



**DEREK BELL**

Derek took up racing in 1964 in a Lotus 7, won two World Sportscar Championships (1985 and 1986), the 24 Hours of Daytona three times in 1986, 1987 and 1989, and Le Mans five times in 1975, 1981, 1982, 1986 and 1987. He was speaking with Richard Heseltine.

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OBSESSED IN  
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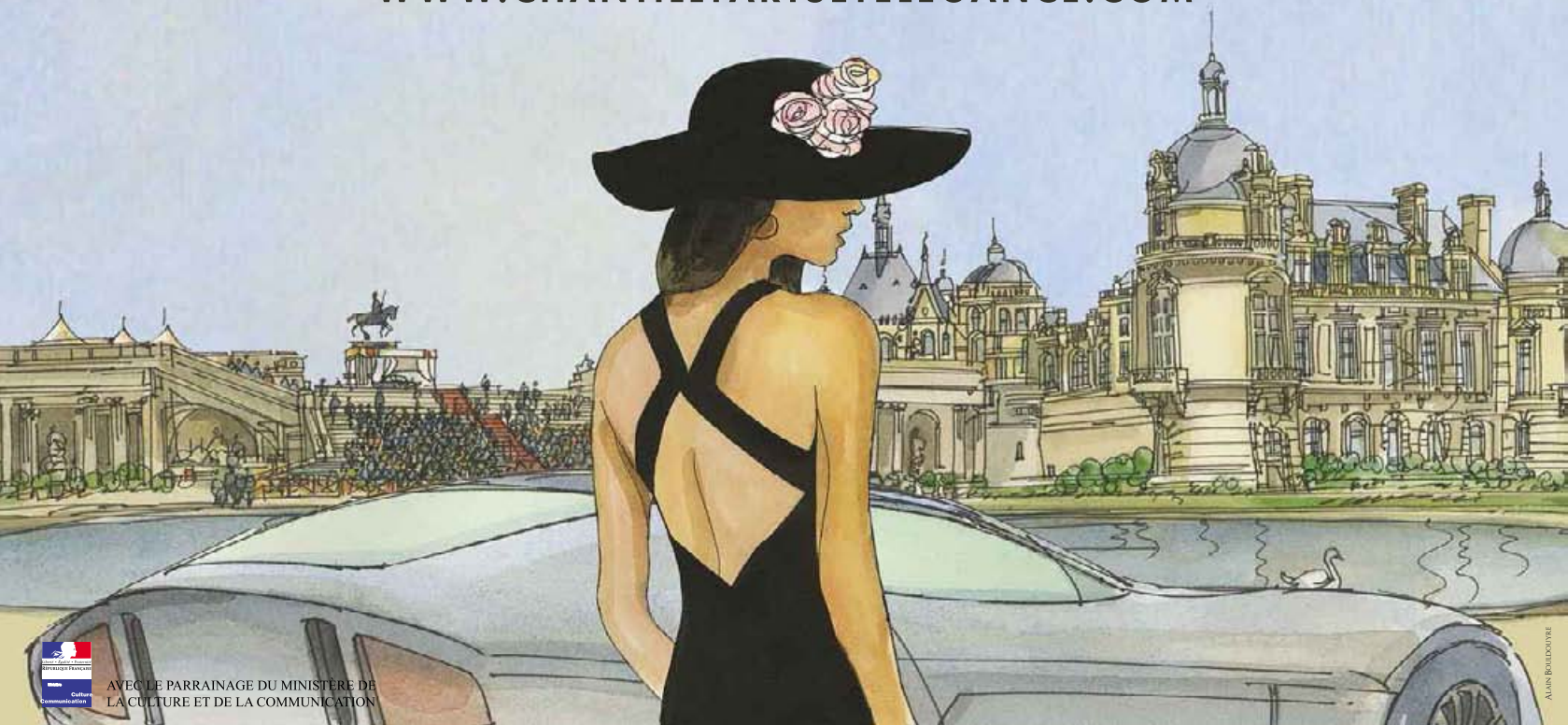


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# STEPHEN BAYLEY

## *The Aesthete*

**T**he Best American Writer is Tom Wolfe. Yes! I can call him Tom because I'm pleased to say I know him a bit. Anyway, Tom was 85 in March and, for me, is the greatest living writer not just of American, but of English. He is better than literature.

His incubator, *Esquire* magazine, said his work is 'so thrilling, and funny, fresh and new that it changed everything'. That's an understatement. Tom's vivacious 'New Journalism' translated low culture into high art, making conventional novelists seem flat-footed.

And no-one sensed better what cars meant in the late 20th Century: that first sentence above is a take on the title of one of Tom's first and greatest stories: *The Last American Hero is Junior Johnson*. Yes!, Johnson being the great NASCAR racer.

Wolfe's Junior Johnson article was published in the March 1965 edition of *Esquire*. Tom, a college boy, went to his first NASCAR race at Wilkesboro, NC, wearing a tailored green tweed suit and a dashing Borsalino fedora. This was a rare mis-reading of local customs and, altogether, an unsuccessful attempt to go native.

Still, the alienation achieved may have enhanced his sense of detached wonder: at Wilkesboro, Tom witnessed and was impressed by Junior Johnson's innovation of 'drafting', or what more effete Europeans call slip-streaming.

And if the sight of a bellowing '63 Chevy tailgating a Holman Moody Ford at 175mph was not interesting enough, Tom was very taken by Johnson's character. The son of a famous bootlegger who had spent a third of his life in jail, notably for the biggest booze bust in US history, Johnson was, additionally, a dirt-racer, chicken farmer, 'coon hunter and all-round good ole boy of robust tastes.

After winning 50 NASCAR races in exceptional style, Johnson retired to run his own team, where he managed Cale Yarborough and Darrell Waltrip. President Reagan pardoned him in 1986 for a bootlegging offence from 30 years earlier and, newly confident, Johnson began selling his own-brand Midnight Moon Moonshine in 2007.

But this was not Tom's first adventure with cars. A visit to Los Angeles had introduced him to hot rods. Wolfe, a white-shoe Southern aristocrat with a PhD from Yale, was amazed at the scene. His report appeared in *Esquire* in November 1963 with the epic title *There Goes (Varoom!*

*Varoom!)* *That Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby*. Until this point innocent of automobile culture, Tom became fascinated by the noise, glamour and symbolism, noting in a now-famous formulation that to Californian kids cars meant 'freedom, style, sex, power, motion, colour, everything'. Another understatement.

Later came Tom's veneration of the road trip. Inspired by Jack Kerouac's 1957 classic *On The Road*, the writer Ken Kesey – *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* – Kesey had bought a 1939 International Harvester school bus (which he christened 'Further') and decided to drive from LA to New York with a group of intoxicated, tranquillised and hallucinating friends called The Merry Pranksters. Tom turned this into potent mythology.

They customised Further with a roof-top turret made out of an old washing-machine drum, a shelf out back to carry a motorbike and a generator, and a distinctive psychedelic paint-job. Fuelled by beer, LSD, benzedrine and marijuana, the bus set off from La Honda, California, on 17 June 1964.

Twelve days later, in some disarray, The Merry Pranksters and their bus arrived in New York to be received by Kerouac himself with his chum, the poet, Allen Ginsberg. The bus made a final trip to Woodstock and died in an Oregon field.

Even if he did not participate, the trip was described with hypnotising accuracy by Tom in his essay *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* which, with Hunter S Thompson's 1971 *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*, is the best account of two-lane blacktop camaraderie. 'You're either on the bus or off the bus', in words Tom put in Kesey's mouth.

True, Ginsberg said, 'I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness.' But the exhilarating thing is, the madness of drafting 7-litre wallowing Detroit barges at improbable speeds on rebel yell ovals did Junior Johnson no harm whatsoever: like Tom, he is a robust 85 and they had a re-union last year. Given his habits, Kesey too endured.

Tom Wolfe saw romance in a NASCAR Chevy and also in a '39 International Harvester bus: Southern redneck heroics on the one hand, West Coast counterculture nomads on the other. There's America's breadth expressed in vehicles and no-one understood that better than Tom. Mother dog! Yes! Varoom! Varoom! His style is addictive...



**STEPHEN BAYLEY**

Author, critic, consultant, broadcaster, debater and curator, Stephen co-created the Boilerhouse Project at London's V&A, was chief executive of The Design Museum, and fell out with Peter Mandelson when he told him the Millennium Dome 'could turn out to be crap'.

# ROBERT COUCHER

## *The Driver*

I'm a serial monogamist when it comes to classic cars. Certainly I've bought and sold a number of classics when relocating countries, being fired or running out of money – the one that I sorely miss is the 1959 Alfa Romeo Giulietta Sprint that I imported from Cape Town. It was a fabulous car and I spent years having specialist Chris Robinson make it handle and its hot 1600 engine give its best. Long gone, sadly.

Over the last 40 years it seems I've owned 12 classic cars, inheriting a further two – not nearly as many as most of the other anoraks who work on this magazine! The number one offender has to be contributor Delwyn Mallett, whose long-term Mercedes-Benz Gullwing is the subject of this month's cover feature.

Delwyn and I met though Porsche 356s ages ago, and he seems to have owned an example of pretty much every classic any of us would want to have. The thing is, he still does because he never sells any of them, much to the consternation of his wife, Carol.

The classic I enjoyed for the longest was the 1964 Porsche 356C with original factory-fitted Golde electric sunroof. My father had owned it for many years and allowed me to drive it as soon as I passed my driving test on the day I turned 17 years old! A bit tired, it was nevertheless a Porsche, making it the coolest car to drive to my last year at school. I had to park it hidden away, otherwise the teachers would have taken umbrage at a bolshie teenager wearing shorts and arriving in a silver sports car.

After classes I'd leap into the Porker, fully open the sunroof, turn up the Becker radio and roar into my girlfriend's school to pick her up. I think she preferred the car to me. After a stint in the Army I moved to Johannesburg and drove it up to the Highveld, some 850 miles north. A bunch of us drove through the night because crossing the Karoo Desert during the heat of the day was too harsh. The 356 had pathetic six-volt headlights, which actually were no problem because the moon and starlight were so bright.

When up in Jo'burg working for the Ogilvy & Mather advertising agency (yes, I used to have a real job), I soon discovered the 356's standard-spec 75bhp engine was badly affected by the 5751ft altitude. So, whilst my young friends spent their off-time partying, I was down

in the wrong end of town in a workshop helping an ace Porsche mechanic re-jet the leaky old carburettors. And running a classic without air-con as a daily driver in Johannesburg could be uncomfortable, especially as I had to wear a suit and tie when visiting clients. I got around that by covering the driver's seat in a towel, taking off my jacket and dropping my trousers down to my ankles when driving to meetings. It worked.

Moving to London in 1988, I first imported the Alfa Giulietta but had to sell that after a few years. I then persuaded my father, now preoccupied with his Porsche 911 SC, to relinquish the 356 to me at a modest price.

And so began the mother of all mechanical rebuilds and upgrades known to the enormous Stoddard Porsche parts catalogue. Everything was worn out and about to let go. Over the years it was rebuilt by all the leading UK 356 experts, including the late Tony Standen and Barry Curtis as well as the lively Andy Prill and Steve Monk.

All eccentric and great company, they taught me all there is to know about these Zuffenhausen flyers. I became intimate with every nut and bolt on the Porsche and, as well as it being my daily driver, I rallied it all over Europe, including on the tough Tour Auto on two occasions.

With improved suspension and brakes, the rapidly rusting (and lightening) Porsche now mustered 125bhp from its 1720cc engine, with the most savage backblast blasting from its free-flow extractor exhaust. Never having so much as kerbed a wheel in my 25 flat-out years with the 356, I ran out of talent and managed to 'park it aggressively' at Becketts corner at Silverstone in October 2002. The smashed Porsche with its comprehensively rusted shell was not worth saving.

The monster 356 engine was kept and transplanted into a Porsche 912 but that car was not the same, and the magic had gone. But that led to the next automotive love of my life, my 1955 Jaguar XK140 SE FHC.

I'm somewhat surprised to note that I've owned the XK since 12 August 2006. A beautiful car that was in nicely restored condition, I have again had the engine, brakes, suspension and bodywork totally rebuilt over the last ten years. My long-term Jaguar is now absolutely superb, as I found out yesterday on a fast 165-mile drive through the sunny English countryside. I don't plan to take it anywhere near Silverstone Circuit, ever!



### ROBERT COUCHER

Robert grew up with classic cars, and has owned a Lancia Aurelia B20GT, Alfa Romeo Giulietta and Porsche 356C. He currently uses his properly sorted 1955 Jaguar XK140 as his daily driver, and is a founding editor of this magazine.

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LACK OF AIR-CON BY  
COVERING THE SEAT  
IN A TOWEL AND  
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# TONY DRON

*Organisers want entertainment but handicaps are the enemy of true sport*



**HERE'S A BRIGHT IDEA.** With sporting governing bodies around the world performing dismally, let's imagine how much more exciting all sports could be if they were run like motor racing. In athletics Usain Bolt, the 100 metres world record holder, would be the first competitor to come under scrutiny.

Usain and his rivals would have to do their sprinting with 'performance equalisers' – carefully calculated weights to be carried on their backs – to make the racing closer.

Footballer Harry Kane has been scoring far too many goals. A slippery pair of footie boots without studs would soon curb his excesses. You think this is stupid? That's the trend in motor racing these days, yet nobody seems to see what's wrong.

The best brains in automotive engineering work tirelessly to make cars more efficient. It used to be called 'improving the breed' and even now the rapid developments of motor sport are still being passed on to production cars.

A governing body that penalises that success, in the misguided pursuit of 'entertainment', by slapping a weight penalty or some sort of performance restrictor onto the best cars, has lost the plot. Let the best car win, please.

Moving on, motor racing is increasingly accused of sexism. F1 is attacked by outsiders who ask, why are there no women drivers at the top? Tennis fans are especially guilty of this but it's tennis that has the sexist establishment, not motor racing. Female drivers are encouraged

to rise as far as they can in motor racing but other sports, notably tennis, discriminate between the sexes.

To avoid the stigma of sexism, tennis should abandon separate championships for men and women. Until men and women are permitted to compete against each other on equal terms at places like Wimbledon, motor racing should laugh off any accusation of sexism.

This is my last chance to air such obviously sensible ideas: I have decided it's time I packed in regular work, so this will be my last column.

After 43 fantastic years of active race driving, meeting all sorts of interesting people, I am trying to write an autobiography. Already focused on the past for that reason, this week I was taken back nearly 40 years by the obituary of Lord Evans, the outstanding boss of Faber & Faber. I remember meeting him as Matthew Evans, in 1979, soon after he had been made the MD of the famous London publishing house.

An impressive character, Evans did not suffer fools gladly, as I found out after he had signed the order form for his brand new Saab. Having secured the deal, I told him proudly that it was my first sale. Noting that he was deeply unimpressed, I tried to look like a hardened old hand from that point on.

My time as a car salesman was unexpectedly enjoyable. After six years of survival as a professional race driver, my modest income had dried up abruptly when I tried to move up from Touring Cars into Endurance Sportscars.

**'FOOTBALLER HARRY KANE HAS BEEN SCORING FAR TOO MANY GOALS. A SLIPPERY PAIR OF FOOTIE BOOTS WOULD SOON CURB HIS EXCESSES'**

I failed to find a paying drive. Surviving from month to month with a mortgage to pay, I needed a decent job, and fast, but nobody wanted to employ me until I contacted Ian Williamson, who had just been made managing director of Saab's new showroom in Piccadilly.

Against his better judgement, Ian said, he offered me a job as an export and domestic salesman of new Saabs. He was being kind, only because I had raced a Ford Escort Mexico for him in 1973 when he was the general manager of a Ford dealership. That had given me my big start as a Touring Car driver. Six years later, he was offering me another career-saving chance. Ian was a tough nut to work for but I owe him big time for saving my bacon twice.

He was happy for me to keep on racing at weekends and it turned out that in 1980 I was selling Saabs from Piccadilly while also being paid to race in the BMW County Championship by the very good people at nearby BMW Park Lane and, on top of that, I drove a works Porsche 924 Carrera GTP at Le Mans.

That Porsche (pictured), which I shared with Andy Rouse, has just been wonderfully restored by Porsche Cars Great Britain and is about to be displayed at a series of major events. Unusually, it only ever did one race: the 1980 24 Hours of Le Mans.

Back in 1980, my curious way of life wasn't planned and I wasn't being clever – things just turned out that way and I don't imagine that anybody before or since has been in such an odd situation.

Now, I must try to finish that autobiography. If you have been, thank you for reading this column in more recent times.

## TONY DRON

Having started his racing career in Formula Ford, Tony made a name for himself in 1970s Touring Cars and since then has raced an astonishing variety of sports and historic machinery. He is also a hugely respected journalist.





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THE **ROBERT WHITE** COLLECTION

Bonhams is delighted to announce the single-owner auction of the collection of the late Robert White. The collection contains a vast treasure trove of collectible mechanical items including motorcycles, motor cars, vintage Leica cameras, motoring mascots and several rare wristwatches. Proceeds from the sale of this incredible collection will be used to build new cancer facilities at Poole Hospital.



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# KEVIN WHEATCROFT

*The man who runs Donington Park, keeping father Tom's legacy alive, shows us his most precious objects*

Interview and photography Richard Dredge



1



2



3



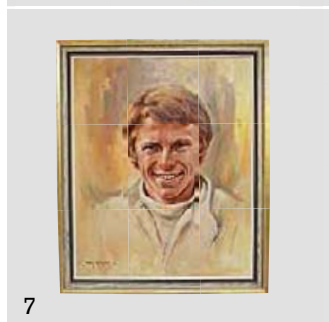
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6



7



8

1. These are the Daimler-Benz works team's contracts for the 1939 Donington Grand Prix, never held because of the war. Other contracts were printed but we think these are the only two survivors. I've also got every programme, poster, painting, ticket, timekeeper's notes and telegram printed for Donington between 1931 and 1939.

2. Dunlop sponsored my father in the 1960s when he ran his first F1 team. This jacket is from 1968 and he wore it at every race meeting for the next 40 years. It's still like new and I wear it on special occasions.

3. I grew up fascinated by the *Titanic* story and 20 years ago I started buying anything *Titanic*-related. This life ring now forms part of a big collection. Once I found a case in an antique shop containing a complete captain's uniform from the White Star Line, monogrammed EJS. The property of *Titanic* captain EJ Smith, perhaps?

4. This Longines watch, engraved 'Tom 1', was the first luxury item my father bought in his life as a successful businessman. He gave it to me on my 21st birthday and it means a huge amount to me, so I wear it on special occasions. It's about 56 years old.

5. My friend John Bailey and I designed this, and we've awarded it to some of motor sport's greatest achievers since 2002. The last recipient, posthumously, was our race director, Robert Furnell, in 2012. We'll resurrect it one day; I'd like it to go to Dad as he did so much for motor sport that hasn't really been recognised.

6. Ayrton gave me his helmet after his incredible 1993 European GP victory at a rain-soaked Donington Park. He sent the letter to my father, congratulating him on the way he'd organised the meeting so well.

7. This portrait in oils has hung in my office for 43 years. Every day I think of Roger Williamson and what might have been. My father could see Roger's champion potential as soon as he saw him racing. We were going to build him an F1 car and we bought him a drive in the works STP-March, but Roger was killed in the 1973 Dutch Grand Prix. He was 26 years old.

8. I first saw this six-wheeled Mercedes in 1970 at an auction in Monaco when I was 10. I cried when my father was outbid but I bought it 44 years later. An experimental vehicle from the 1930s, the G4 was only supplied to the German Government. Four survive of the 57 built. Previously part of the Imperial Palace collection in Las Vegas, the car will be on display soon.



# CLASSIC CAR INSURANCE?



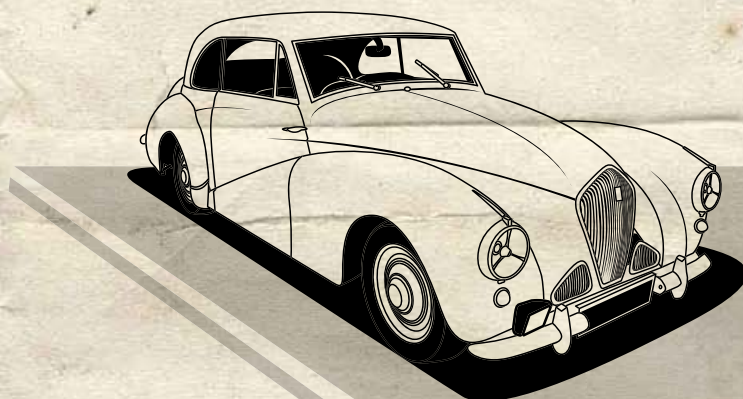
## THE HARD WAY

- ☐ Ring an insurance broker that's not Hagerty. Spend half an hour explaining why your classic isn't just "an old banger".
- ☐ Politely decline home, pet and travel insurance. Patiently explain that you only need agreed value classic car insurance. To get off the phone, promise to get a quote for your home "in the near future".
- ☐ Go out to the garage, pull off your car's cover, snap several photographs. Email photos but hear back that "the photos are too dark" or "we need six and you only sent five".
- ☐ Cough up a £15-50 "certification" fee, on top of your policy premium.
- ☐ Wait on hold half an hour while their staff reviews the information. Lose the connection. Ring back, get transferred to three wrong departments. Get put on hold again.
- ☐ The Agreed Value certification finally arrives. You begin looking forward to repeating the entire tedious, maddening process, fee included, if you want to increase your value again.



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# The look of Landies

**ENJOYING A HOLIDAY** in Scotland, I've been catching up with recent *Octanes*, as always starting with the *Octane Cars* pages (as we say in the Netherlands, a shared pain is half the pain). David Lillywhite's masochistic Citroën SM project is a favourite, along with the Land Rover Series 1 and early Discovery of Mr Dixon and the Range Rover of Mr Couch. These Land Rover classics, and the ones that I meet on the roads of Scotland, have made me think about the current product range of this proud British make.

I have always admired the Land Rover Defender. Being 6ft 6in tall, unfortunately I am unable to drive one, but it is one of the most iconic cars on the road. I can understand how difficult it was to keep producing this car in the face of today's environmental and safety laws. But the question that really worries me is: 'What's next?' Recent developments in Land Rover's other models do not reassure me that the next Defender will be better looking than the current one.

Today I was driving through the Scottish countryside, on my way to a big farmers' market in Kelso. On the way, I took pictures of Defenders of all types and ages. Then I went onto the stand of the local Land Rover dealership, which had all the current range on display. Aggressive-looking cars in shiny colours with massively big wheels. Why are all cars nowadays equipped with angry-looking fronts? What has happened to designing friendly, open faces?

It seems like only yesterday that Land Rovers and Range Rovers expressed an unwritten class, elegance, style, performance and functionality. Plus a certain humbleness and modesty. 'Great but modest' – is that maybe a typically British characteristic?

I know that all the latest versions are technically way more advanced and better to drive. I also know that the Evoque in rough terrain 'can handle almost all the roads that a Defender can' (as the local salesman told me). Great! But can anybody tell me with a straight face that the angry-looking convertible Evoque is a true reflection of the brand values of Land Rover?

I get shivers thinking about the new Defender which, according to the salesman, is due in 18 months. 'Expect something totally different', he confirmed to me. That is what I am afraid of.

Here are a couple of pictures I've taken in Scotland of what in my opinion are true Land Rovers.

*Frank Goedhart, The Netherlands*



The Letter of the Month wins a beautiful Toccata watch by Raymond Weil, **worth £595**

This elegant, classically styled men's timepiece features a quartz movement inside a stainless steel 42mm case, and a stunning blue galvanic dial with appliqué indexes and date window, protected by a sapphire crystal. It is water resistant to 5atm and supplied on a black calf leather strap with an alligator grain finish.

Raymond Weil is one of a handful of Swiss watchmakers that remain in family hands. The Toccata name reflects the Weil family's interest in music, which has led to many of the watch collections bearing musically themed names. [www.raymond-weil.com](http://www.raymond-weil.com)



## Silverstone's salad days

One of the major differences between me and Dickie Meaden is that I'm an old codger and he clearly isn't. This is why he imagines that Becketts was always a 'kink' (LEC Formula 1 car test at Silverstone, *Octane* 158), while I remember enjoying the sight there over many years of drivers tackling Silverstone's sharpest and slowest corner, as it happens always sandwiched between the Maggots and Chapel kinks.

Thankfully I wasn't there when David Purley's throttle jammed open between those two, but I have fond memories of Ronnie Peterson drifting his Jägermeister BMW out of Maggots before braking heavily for the tight right-hander. Arguably, the Super Saloon battles between Mick Hill's Beetle-Chevy and Colin Hawker's DFW were even more entertaining.

Leaving aside the old, er, crap facilities, Silverstone used to be magnificent for this fan. The two-fingered salute to mud-bound spectators represented by the BRDC's shiny new palace in 1999 rather ruined that, now capped by the élitist and barely accessible 'Wing' development.

I live only 34 miles from Silverstone but prefer to visit Brands, Donington, Oulton; even Knockhill!

*Jamie Buchanan, Buckinghamshire*

## A matter of grave concern

For some time I have been aware of disquiet regarding the wording on the headstone of our first Formula 1 World Champion

driver, Mike Hawthorn [above].

The inscription towards the bottom of the headstone reads: 'A Gay Gallant Sportsman'. In view of the altered meaning of the word 'gay', I approached those whom I thought should be paramount in helping to make a decision as to whether the wording should be changed: Sir Stirling Moss, and Jean Ireland (née Jean Howarth, Mike's fiancée at the time of his death).

Both wrote back to me. Sir Stirling states: 'I think you are absolutely right about Mike's headstone. Susie and I had a discussion and we came up with "A Fun-loving and Gallant Sportsman". I would certainly be happy for you to use my name in asking for support for this.'

Jean Ireland says: 'I agree that the word "gay" is no longer appropriate in this day and age. My suggestions are: "Charismatic, Brave, Gregarious, Dashing, or Gifted and Gallant."'

I invite enthusiasts to email me at [nigel.webb.jmh@gmail.com](mailto:nigel.webb.jmh@gmail.com) and let me have your thoughts on the subject, to gauge whether the consensus would be to make changes or not. I would suggest that a simple yes or no would be preferable to an essay.

*Nigel Webb, Surrey*

A poll of the *Octane* office revealed that we are unanimous in feeling that the wording on the headstone should be left unchanged. Mike has no surviving immediate relatives to be consulted about his headstone, which is in West Street Cemetery, Farnham, Surrey. **Mark Dixon** →



Townsend family on tour: a vintage Ford Model A is a great way to see the Peak District.

### Farm gates, homemade cakes

Thank you for printing the letter from Steven White about his Ford Model A private taxi in *Octane* 155. It gave us a splendid idea for our mother's birthday present.

Early in July we were fortunate to have a dry and sunny afternoon for one of Steven's routes around Derbyshire. The Farm Gates and Homemade Cakes tour was a very picturesque drive through the quiet lanes of the White Peak, with Steven's knowledge of the pubs, villages and farms that we passed enthusiastically shared.

The village of Hartington provided a great place for the tea shop stop and his Model A looked just the part parked up in the village [above].

I'm currently working in South Africa, so it was also interesting to hear from Steven that his car had been assembled here in Pretoria.

**Mark Townsend**  
Midrand, South Africa

Find out more about these tours at [www.vintageadventuretours.co.uk](http://www.vintageadventuretours.co.uk).

### Brands and the Beeb

Tony Dron's recollections in *Octane* 159 of writing to Bryan Cowgill at the BBC about its lack of F1 coverage brought back memories of days long past and the paucity of televised motor racing at the time. At Brands there would be a single camera sited around the halfway point of the pit straight, so, following the introduction of the Grand Prix loop, we had to wait for the cars to re-appear through Clearways in order to discover any changes in position.

The commentator at that time was Raymond Baxter, always fluent and articulate. A regular downside was that, no matter what the action unfolding on our screens, there would be a switch to horse racing. At first sight this doesn't seem to be too bad but invariably the horses were still in the paddock and the race not due to start for a further 10-15 minutes! Cue much frustration and some impolite observations about the BBC.

Later years brought more camera positions so at last we had views of Dingle Dell et al. I recall many races, all of which seemed to involve Jim Clark in lower formulas such as Junior or F3, and alongside John Miles in Lotus 47s.

Jim Clark became a hero of mine, and so Lotus was a brand I felt associated with. The memory of him driving a 47 led to my first Lotus being a Europa S2. We had many ups and downs, of course, but a cross-country drive always brought about a rapprochement with the car!

I think that if you have never driven a Lotus you have never truly appreciated what steering can be – it's no wonder that McLaren recruited so many ex-Lotus engineers.

**Neil Davey, Devon**

### Driving lesson

Regarding *Letter of the Month* in *Octane* 157 about Donald Graham and his RAF colleagues, I do not doubt in any way that these guys are heroes and we owe them a great debt for our freedom. What I do take exception to is the flippant regard for drink-driving

and its acceptance if no-one is killed or seriously injured.

Drink driving isn't acceptable now and wasn't then. It was lucky that no-one was hurt, but that was down to good luck rather than good judgement.

**Ian Waterfield Greater Manchester**

### Phantom parking problem

I very much enjoyed the feature about driving to Monaco in a Rolls-Royce Phantom Coupé in *Octane* 158.

Glen Waddington's comment 'I don't think I've ever struggled so much to park a car in my life' struck a sensitive chord. I bought a delivery-mileage Phantom DHC from my friends at P&A Wood in 2011. It was, by a huge margin, the most expensive motor car I have ever bought and I planned to keep it for ever.

I loved it in so many ways but I sold it last year with huge regret. The reason: I simply could not use it enough to justify keeping it. The problem was not the size of the car per se but the huge coach doors. They required so much width to enter and exit that parallel parking was impossible unless you could find an end-of-row space, very difficult to do. And you needed a car park as the vehicle is longer than street parking bays!

Paul Wood told me that the coach doors are often the reason given by owners for disposal, so I was clearly not alone.

**Ronald McKellar, Hampshire**



### Tinplate tribute

I was interested to read the short article about Hongqi cars in *Octane* 158. I was always fascinated to see photographs and descriptions of these in *World Cars* annuals and the like during the '70s and '80s.

Attached is a photo of a friction-drive tinplate toy 'Red Flag Convertible' [above] that I bought in a Liverpool collectables

shop some years ago. I've no idea what I paid for it, but it was probably £10-20. I'd be interested to know what it might be worth now – although I've no intention of parting with it.

**Tim Adams, Liverpool**

*The Red Flag limousine is one of a number of Chinese tinplate toys made in the style of Japanese toys of the 1950s and '60s. It came in both open and closed versions; although not as valuable or sought-after as the Japanese originals, it would be worth in the region of £50-75 today.*

**Andrew Ralston**



### Get a Jeep for Junior

Following Robert Coucher's feature on Jeeps in *Octane* 157 and subsequent correspondence in *Letters*, it was an early, bullet-holed war veteran Jeep that helped me learn to drive when I was 12 years old.

Owned by the local high school, it was used as a general maintenance vehicle. In the winter a snowplough was attached to clear the narrow sidewalks. My brother taught me to shift and I believe I got it up to third gear on our driveway!

What a great little thing to learn with. Just my size; simple, light controls; and no doors, so easy access. Everyone ought to drive an early Jeep. It's at the root of what motoring is all about. Wind in your face, and 30 seems like 50.

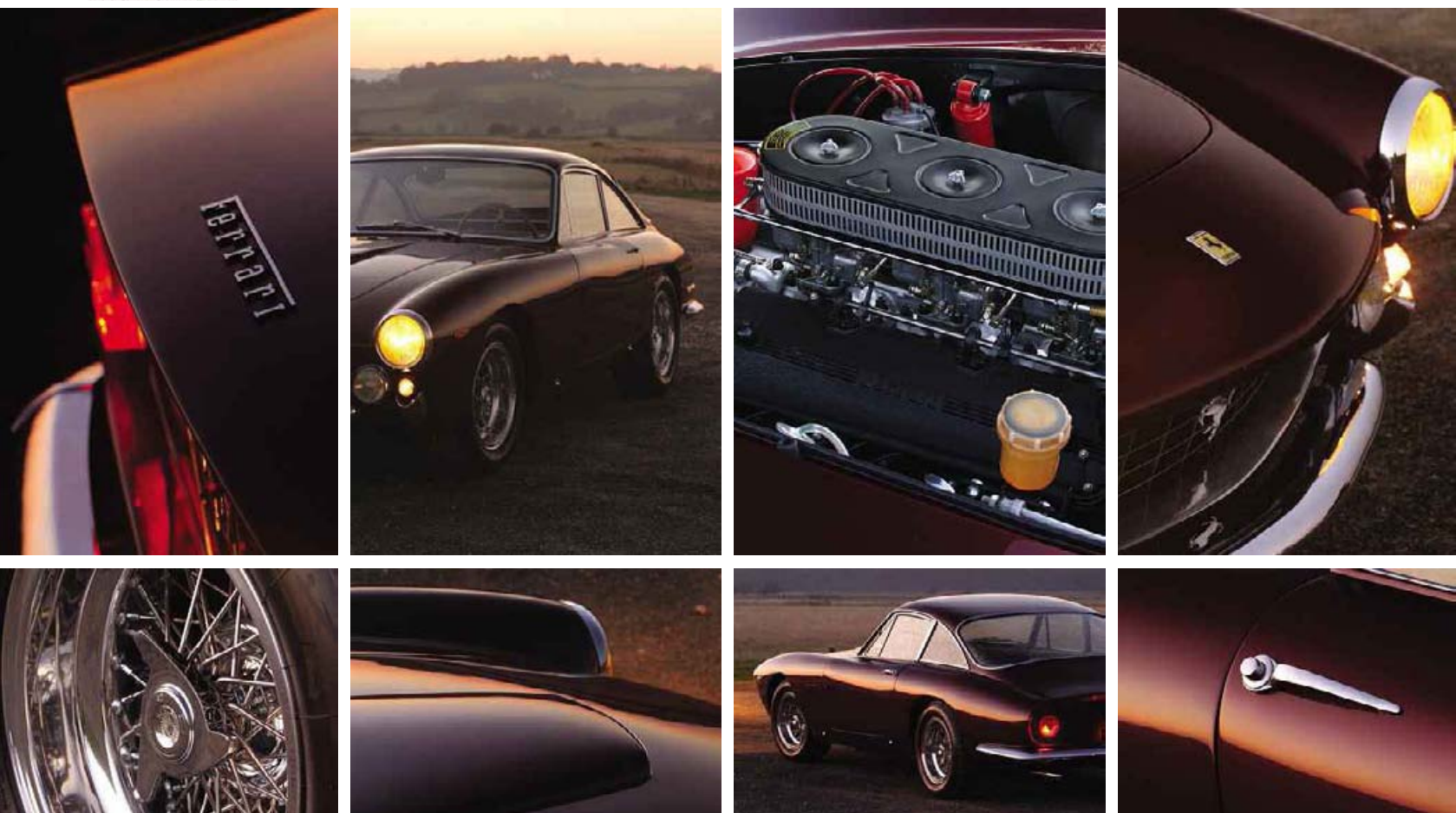
**Jeffrey Barnes Singapore**

### Write to

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[letters@octane-magazine.com](mailto:letters@octane-magazine.com)

Please include your name, address and a daytime telephone number. Letters may be edited for clarity, and views expressed are not necessarily those of *Octane*.





## Ferrari 250 Lusso Berlinetta

*PRODUCTION 1962-64*

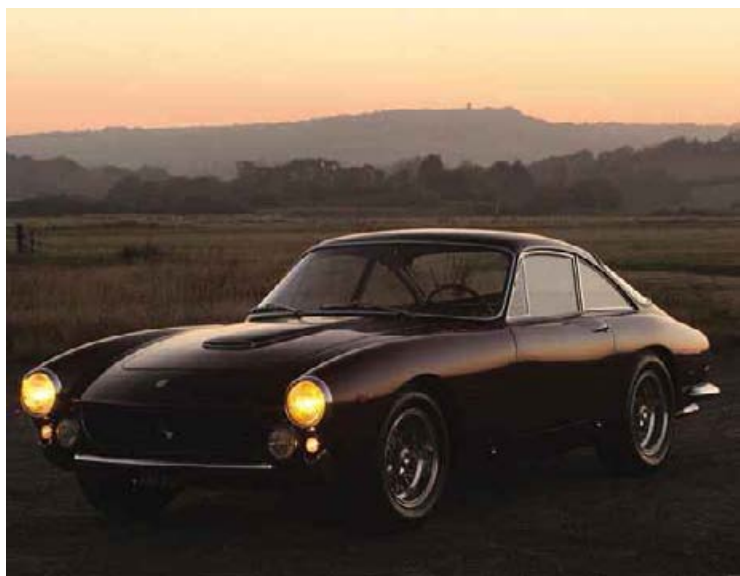
**T**he 250 Lusso Berlinetta could be judged as one of the most beautiful Ferrari models ever to come out of the factory in Modena.

Styled by Pininfarina. Introduced at the Paris Salon in 1962, named "Lusso", Italian for luxury. Built on a short wheel chassis similar to the 250 short wheel base and GTO models, powered by a V12 3.0 litre engine with a three-Weber twin-choke carburettor set-up, giving a maximum top speed of 150 mph.

Production ceased in 1964 and was the last of the Ferrari 250 series road cars.

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We have a unique and extensive knowledge of working with Ferrari and process more than 1,000 consignments each month. Our unrivalled knowledge, along with the full support of Ferrari S.p.A, means we are totally committed in providing the best help and advice to our customers.



Images courtesy of John Mayston-Taylor collection

# WING AND A PRAYER

*Octane's Dekwyn Mallett saw a Mercedes-Benz Gullwing in Swinging London during the 1960s and vowed that one day he would own one. His dream came true in 1974 – and here he describes what it's like to have lived with the car for more than 40 years*

**Photography** James Lipman









**T**he Sixties. London is in full swing and I'm at the centre of it – geographically, at least. As my friends and I stroll from our advertising agency office towards Harrods, we come to an abrupt halt. A bright orange Mercedes-Benz 300SL Gullwing, the first I've seen 'in the tin', pulls up outside the famous Knightsbridge store. The passenger door springs up and a gorgeous creature, wearing what will come to be known as hot pants, unwinds herself from the interior. Traffic stops. Jaws drop. I vow to get one (a Gullwing, that is). Little do I know, then, that I will end up owning this very car.

MY FIRST BRUSH with a Gullwing came at art school, where I discovered the French New Wave movie *Ascenseur pour l'échafaud* (*Elevator to the Gallows*). Featuring the seductive Jeanne Moreau, a soundtrack by Miles Davis and a subplot involving a teenage *blouson noir* joyriding around Paris in a stolen Gullwing, the film was altogether an irresistible confection for an impressionable hipster like myself. It wasn't, however, just the pose factor that attracted me to the Gullwing: although nobody in my family showed the slightest interest in cars, I had from my Dinky Toy days been motor-mad.

Mercedes pilot Stirling Moss was a hero of mine, but it was the *Shell History Of Motor Racing* films directed by Bill Mason (Nick's dad) that really fired my imagination and turned me on to German cars in particular. And it was the episode titled *Clash of the Titans*, an account of the epic battles between the state-sponsored teams of Mercedes and Auto Union, that sowed the seeds of a fascination with all things Porsche and Mercedes.

In 1974, after several years working as an advertising art director, my personal financial circumstances were on the up but those of the nation were definitely on a downward curve. The pound was floundering against world currencies (sounds familiar?), particularly the German Mark, and inflation stood at a 30-year high. We had recently joined the European Community and a referendum on whether we should stay in was just months away.

Mercedes ran a full-page press ad in national newspapers featuring a Gullwing that had sold at auction for around £5000, pointing out that as an investment it had outperformed the stock market. As if I needed an excuse.

My daily driver, a BMW 2002ti, moved on and for roughly the price of a replacement, around £2300, I became the proud owner of

an 'inflation-proof' Gullwing. Actually, 'proud' doesn't quite do it: I had attained automotive nirvana. At half the price of a really good one, my car – which was painted silver when I acquired it – was clearly not the best in the country, but it was mine!

My friends, of course, thought I was quite mad. In the 1960s and '70s to the general public old cars were just that – old, and the lot of those who couldn't afford new. Some were appreciated in a 'haven't seen one of those for years' way, but they conferred no status upon the owner outside of a small circle of enthusiasts. And they were categorically not an indicator of wealth.

MUCH HAS CHANGED in the 40-plus years since then, but the Gullwing's place in my affections – and my garage – has not. At its launch in 1954 the 300SL (for our purposes the term is interchangeable with 'Gullwing') introduced the world to the concept of the supercar, and super it still is. Very super.

Even today it is an arresting sight, and the angry bark of the fuel-injected straight-six as it hits its stride above 4000rpm remains utterly exhilarating. That its performance can still thrill should be no surprise: the roadgoing 300SL





was derived from the W194 competition car of 1952, and even as it was 'civilised' for street use it grew more powerful than its parent car.

Each 300SL engine was run-in on a dynamometer for 24 hours, six under full load, then disassembled, checked, rebuilt and returned to the dynamometer for another eight-hour session before being declared *drehfest* – meaning that if supplied with clean fuel, oil and air, the engine would deliver its maximum 240bhp at 6100rpm as near to indefinitely as damn-it.

On the road the Merc certainly feels as if it could run forever. Through the 1970s, apart from my daily commute, the Merc was used properly on long Continental blasts where, unleashed, it felt much more at home with its high-ratio rear axle option.

On an early trip across pre-euro France I stopped for juice at a rural petrol station and in my schoolboy French asked for *cent Francs* worth. The elderly lady serving me shook her head at such an impossibility and, like De Gaulle turning down Britain's application to join the Common Market, emitted a series of emphatic *nons*. With a sigh, not sure that my wallet could take the strain, I uttered '*plein, s'il vous plait*'. Satisfied with her victory, she began

the filling process, only to register astonishment as her ancient pump ran out of figures long before the Merc's mammoth 127-litre tank had been brimmed. From the cascade of French that followed I gathered she was most apologetic for doubting my original request.

It was an expensive misunderstanding, but one soon forgotten; in its natural environment and on the right day, the Gullwing assaults the senses so completely and so wonderfully that from behind the wheel it is impossible to focus on anything else.

The ownership experience is not all admiring looks and Grand Tours, though. For those of you who despair of current Gullwing prices, here's the good news...

It is hard to get into, harder to get out of, and harder still to negotiate as one's flexibility decreases with age. The much-commented-on fold-down steering wheel facility is almost useless in practice, as it only creates extra space when the front wheels are in a precise straight-ahead position.

Cabin heat is high at best and almost unbearable on warm days. The side windows are removable but have to be stowed somewhere other than the boot, which is totally given over to the spare wheel and that fuel tank.



**Clockwise from top left**

Car and owner in 1973, and in 2016 – the glasses and jacket may no longer be the height of fashion but the Gullwing looks as good as ever; the car had been painted silver by the time Delwyn bought it, but sported a rather more outlandish get-up in the hands of a previous owner.



40 YEARS WITH A GULLWING



**1955 Mercedes-Benz 300SL 'Gullwing'**

**Engine** 2996cc straight-six, OHC, Bosch mechanical fuel injection **Power** 240bhp @ 6100rpm **Torque** 217lb ft @ 4800rpm  
**Transmission** Four-speed manual, rear-wheel drive **Steering** Recirculating ball **Suspension** Front: double wishbones, coil springs, anti-roll bar.  
Rear: swing axle, radius arms, coil springs **Brakes** Drums, servo assisted **Weight** 1252kg **Performance** Top speed 135mph. 0-60mph 8.8sec





Even with the windows out the good aerodynamics preclude any cooling drafts through the interior.

From new, heat transfer to the fuel injection pump caused fuel vaporisation and difficult starting when hot, a problem that in my car's case has got worse over the years.

The rear-view mirror is mounted on the dash and the stalk is too short to provide a decent view out of the rear screen. With luggage stacked on the rear shelf (the only place to put it, remember), there is no rearward vision at all. The steering is also very heavy at low speed.

Rob Walker was the first owner of a Gullwing in Britain, his car delivered on the last day of 1954, and several observations from his report for *Motor Sport* magazine bear repeating here.

'When I first had the car I found cornering a little difficult. In fact, I had one or two distinctly uneasy moments when the car suddenly felt as if it was on ice... I mentioned this to Stirling Moss, who told me that they handled very well indeed but the swing axle takes a bit of getting used to, and I must say I don't find any trouble now and never think about it.'

Not possessing the skills of Rob Walker (and certainly not those of Sir Stirling), even after four decades in the saddle I have never quite got over the feeling of anxiety when

approaching bends at speed; I certainly do 'think about it'.

In a later road test for the same magazine, the editor Bill Boddy commented: 'The brakes, while stopping this 24cwt car very reasonably from three-figure speeds... are rather slow, then fierce, in action, as the servo takes effect, and consequently to apply them hard on a slippery surface is a practice to be avoided whenever possible. Too hard an application of the brakes produces a smell of hot lining within the car and tends to cause snaking.'

This I can vouch for, having experienced a sphincter-loosening incident one wet and windy night on a badly lit stretch of autobahn. As I arrived too fast at an unexpected diversion from one carriageway to another, the car adopted a wriggle that a rattlesnake would have envied. I finally came to a stop, pulse racing, in a coned-off zone – mercifully without damage.

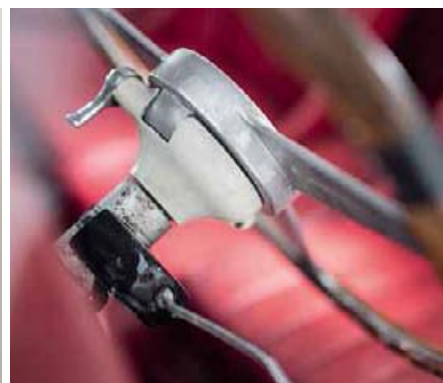
In all sorts of ways, then, the Gullwing is not perfect, but the car's spectacular virtues have always outweighed its practical flaws. Familiarity has not bred contempt; I might occasionally have cursed the aforementioned fuel injection pump or the high, wide sills or the rear visibility, but far more frequently I am scarcely able to believe my own good fortune on opening the garage door of a morning.

**'NOT POSSESSING  
THE SKILLS OF SIR  
STIRLING, I HAVE  
NEVER QUITE GOT  
OVER THE FEELING  
OF ANXIETY WHEN  
APPROACHING  
BENDS AT SPEED'**









**Clockwise from above**

It's not only the Gullwing's looks that set the pulse racing: the 2996cc straight-six offers proper racing car performance; the semi-useless fold-down steering wheel mechanism at least makes a good talking point; Delwyn's most significant modification to the car was the addition of these '30' and '40' stickers to the km/h-only speedo; the gearstick knob wears its age well.

And as I sit in the studio while my car is being photographed for this story, I find myself gazing at it more intently than at any time in the past 40 years. What a pleasure it is.

I banished the bumpers to the garage loft some years ago when I stopped using the car in town. The car simply looks better without the heavy chrome exclusion zones at either end, revealing the voluptuous curve of its derriere and the way the line of the nose sweeps gracefully under the car at an angle which, if continued through the wheel opening, aligns beautifully with the sill – itself subtly contoured from front to rear.

At art school I was frequently challenged for what seemed to some students an unhealthy obsession with cars. I would respond that they were not mere transport but 'kinetic art', pieces of mobile sculpture; little did I imagine that in only a few decades old bangers would actually attain the value of old masters.

The many details that mark out this particular mobile sculpture as my own are picked out by the studio lights: the ancient, handwritten '30' and '40' stickers affixed to the speedometer that displays only kilometres; the patinated leather driver's seat in which I have spent so many hours; the gearstick knob cracked with age. After 40 years I know this car as well as I know my wife. Or so I thought...

Recently I was passed a letter by 300SL guru Martin Cushway. The letter, a request for information by the chap from whom I bought the Gullwing, had been sent to Martin's father, Ron. It mentions that the car, 'orange with a wide black stripe down the centre', was reputed

to have once belonged to Steve McQueen.

The letter was written in 1969, long before 'ex-McQueen' motors had come to be regarded as holy relics, so nothing to be gained. Neile Adams, the star's wife of many years, mentions in her biography that McQueen owned (and crashed) a Gullwing in Germany when shooting *The Great Escape*, but as far as I know no photographs have surfaced of him in proximity to a Gullwing.

Considering how relentlessly McQueen was photographed at the height of his fame, this casts doubt on the claim – but who knows? The car that first floored me all those years ago at art school continues to find ways to surprise. *Cont*

*IF ANYONE can shed light on the car's early history, please get in touch via [chris@octane-magazine.com](mailto:chris@octane-magazine.com). Delwyn's car was first registered SHM 14F in the UK, and the chassis and engine numbers are 5500850 and 198980. Photographs of the car with Steve McQueen gratefully received!*





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# SOARING AWAY

*The 300SL Gullwing evolved from a purebred racer –  
but the road car was very successful in competition, too*

Words Delwyn Mallett Archive photographs Daimler AG

**THE MERCEDES 300SL** (for *Sports Leicht*) was conceived in 1951 as a stop-gap racer to carry the factory's banner while it prepared to re-enter Grand Prix racing in the 1954 season.

Utilising engine and mechanical components from the newly introduced 300 saloon, head of the racing and experimental department, Rudi Uhlenhaut, conceived a light but exceptionally strong tubular spaceframe upon which to hang the mechanicals.

A slippery coupé body, with a Cd of only 0.25, was draped over the frame but its geometry made no allowance for doors. As a consequence the first cars had 'hatches' in the roof, hinged at the centre line, through which entry was rather clumsily gained. Although these were oddly positioned as doors, their dimensions did in fact comply with race

regulations, but protests by Italian and French authorities prompted a slight redesign of the frame so that the hatches could be extended downwards, taking on the shape of a gull's wing. A description soon universally adopted.

The 300SL's first race was the 1952 Mille Miglia, where Karl Kling finished second to a Ferrari and the great pre-war ace Rudi Caracciola came fourth.

The next outing was a sports car race in Berne, supporting the Swiss Grand Prix. Four cars were entered, each, for the first and only time, painted a different colour. They filled the top three spots but a locking rear brake caused Caracciola to crash heavily, finally ending his racing career.

The Le Mans 24 Hours, 'the most famous race in the world', was a test of stamina passed

with flying colours. 300SLs finished first and second in the pairings of Hermann Lang and Fritz Reiss, followed by Theo Helfrich and Helmut Niedermayr, respectively.

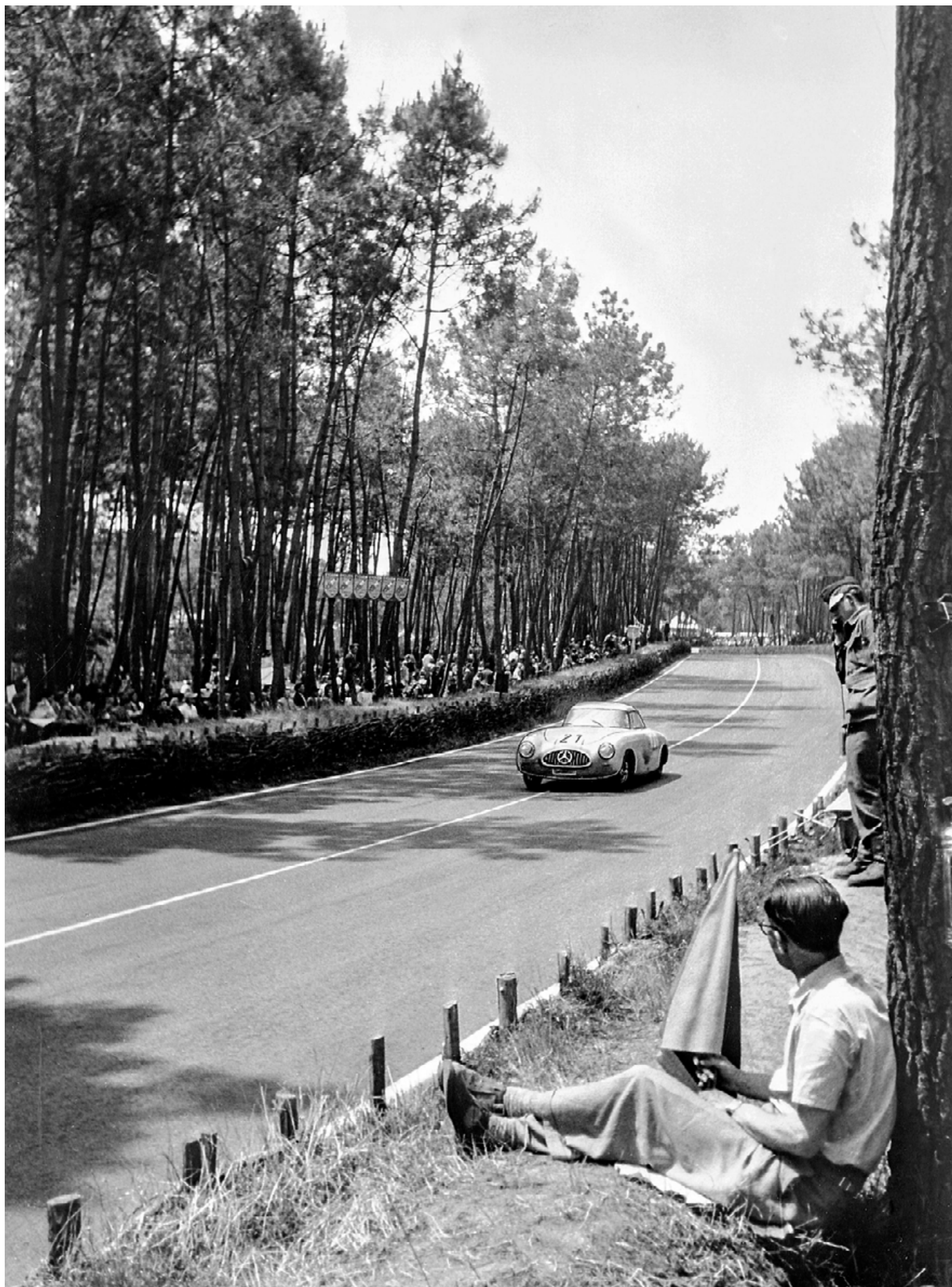
For the next event, a 142-mile sprint around the tortuous Nürburgring, the four-car team had their wings clipped, so to speak, in that they were fitted with lighter open-roadster bodies. In the absence of serious competition they again romped home first and second.

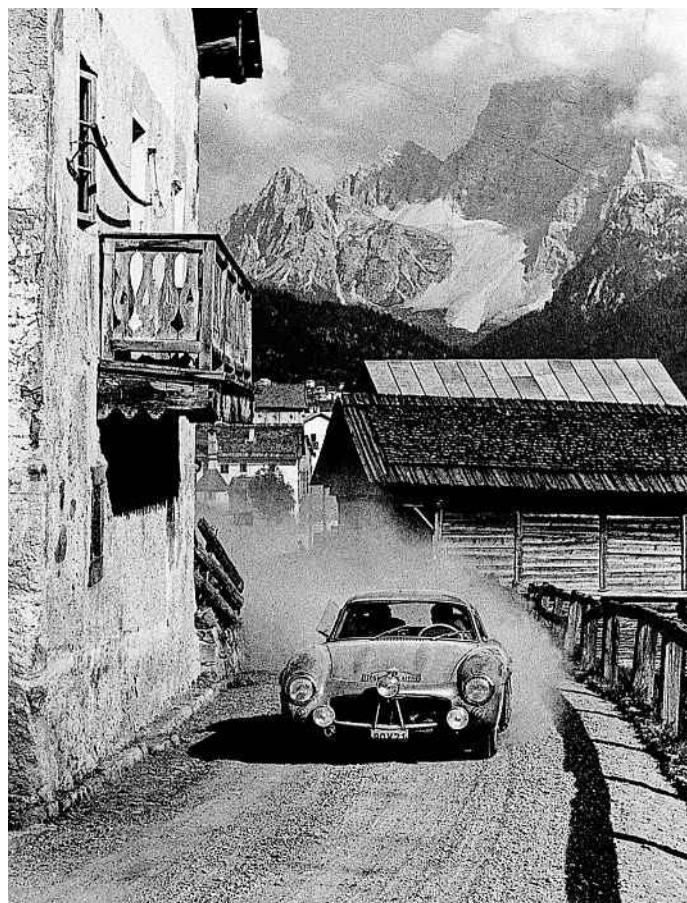
Coupé bodies reinstated, the year was rounded off with a hard-fought victory in the

## Top and facing page

Drivers run to their cars for the traditional Le Mans start in 1952, as yet unaware that the two 300SLs in the foreground, nos 20 and 21, will finish second and first overall respectively; car 21 blasts around the circuit en route to victory.







**Clockwise from above left**  
Roadgoing SLs dominated rallying in the mid-50s: here is Gendebien on the 1955 Liège-Rome-Liège; Mairesse on his way to winning the 1956 Liège; and Shock taking victory on a snowy 1956 Rallye del Sestriere.

gruelling 2000-mile Carrera Panamericana road race through Mexico. Sounding more like a music hall variety act, Kling and Klenk (Karl and Hans) won the race, despite a buzzard bursting through the screen at around 135mph and stunning Klenk. Hermann Lang finished in second place.

Mercedes was back, and victorious 300SLs were retired from competition as efforts focused on the Grand Prix cars.

Heavier than its predecessor but also more powerful, the road-going 300SL arrived in time for the 1955 season and was soon mixing it with Ferraris and Alfa Romeos in the Grand Touring categories. Although the Mercedes factory never entered works cars, it offered generous support to its many private owners. Frequently overlooked in the light of Moss and Jenks' record-breaking 1955 Mille Miglia victory in the 300SLR is John Fitch's fifth place overall and win in the GT category. 300SLs also placed seventh and tenth.

More successes followed. Belgian Olivier Gendebien won the Liège-Rome-Liège Rally



and a Gullwing came home first in the Tulip Rally. Werner Engel finished the year as European Touring Car champion in his 300SL.

The Grand Touring category was even more hotly contested in 1956. Another victory came in the Liège-Rome-Liège Rally, this time for Willy Mairesse. The Acropolis and Sestriere rallies fell to the SL, and Stirling Moss brought one home second in the Tour de France.

In the USA, which was the Gullwing's most important market, Paul O'Shea won the Sports Car Club of America Production Class D championship in 1955 and 1956, with Class C victory going to Harry Carter in 1957.

Inevitably, with no further development by the factory, the magnificent Mercedes 300SL was gradually outclassed as the field moved on. But what a legacy it left behind. **End**



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# ALWAYS A HIGH FLIER

*Market expert Dave Selby explains why the Gullwing has never become 'just another old car' in terms of value*

Brochure image Daimler AG

**MARKET WATCHERS LOVE** the 300SL Gullwing for some very simple reasons. In the first place it's a high-value car produced in relatively high numbers. Second, a Gullwing is a Gullwing, although you may disagree with that. Third, it's the original blue-print of the modern supercar – and you're allowed to disagree with that, too.

In an era when no Ferrari model had exceeded 100 units, Mercedes produced 1400 Gullwings, which was a huge achievement for something so exotic, and so exotically priced. Today there are around 800 survivors and, in a market where broadly 10% of stock turns over each year, the trading volume provides a great barometer of the investment-grade segment. Buyers and sellers like this too, as it means that market movements are more visible than with other, rarer cars of similar value.

But there's more to it than that. All Gullwing road cars are essentially the same thing, with no 'significant' developments or upgrades during their production cycle. That's not so with the 300SL Roadster, which was upgraded with an alloy block and all-round disc brakes. These variations have an affect on value and

**Below**

'Performance ahead' is the slogan on this '50s brochure – and that's certainly been true of Gullwing values.

desirability, but with the Gullwing there are no such distinctions.

Compare the Gullwing, too, with the Ferrari 275 GTB. Although nearly 800 of those were produced there are myriad permutations – two-cam, four-cam, six-carb, long-nose, short-nose, steel body, alloy – and there are wide variations in value between them.

With the Gullwing it's down to the constants of condition, provenance, matching numbers, originality, and ultra-low mileage... More or less. Moreover, there's greater transparency than with Ferraris. The Classic Department of Mercedes-Benz helped publish Eric Les Moines' *Register* book, placing chassis numbers and ownership details in the public domain. The scholarship is there at your fingertips.

So what does the Gullwing tell us? Like virtually every other supercar, the Miura, F40, Porsche 959 and McLaren F1 included, the Gullwing passed through a used-car phase when it was worth a fraction of its original purchase price. There could be a lesson in that history for those interested in modern out-of-the-box 'investments'.

Yet, for all that, there's still complexity. Chassis frames, engines and other parts were available from Mercedes-Benz after production ceased. There are made-up cars out there, fakes

even. But with diligence, and thanks to the published research, buyers stand a good chance of being able to inform themselves. It also helps market analysts get behind the 30% variation in price points for superficially similar assets that aren't, and filter out those that are not representative.

Neither is the Gullwing an actual measure of its market segment. It's a Mercedes, which has its own particular marque dynamics. Nevertheless, as a barometer it's one heck of a useful tool, even if its swing-axle rear made it tricky on the limit. I forgot I wasn't supposed to talk about it as a car. That's beyond my remit.

## PRICE POINTS

### AT LAUNCH

In 1954 the new Gullwing was priced at £4392 in the UK, exactly the same sum that would have bought a factory-bodied Bentley R-Type saloon. As Ferraris were not yet 'production' cars, so not list-priced in the UK, the only way to spend more was on a coach-built Rolls or Bentley, topping out at £7041. Cheapest car in Britain was the Ford Popular at £390. So much for context. For more meaningful price/performance comparison, an Aston Martin DB3S was £3684, just £20 more than a D-type Jaguar, with a Jaguar XK140 fixed-head at £1616. A Porsche 550 Spyder would have set you back £3847.

### USED-CAR PHASE

In the mid-1960s, when a new Austin-Healey 3000 cost £1045, you could have bought a Gullwing for under £1000. By the early 1970s a Gullwing had recovered to its original sale price.

### BOOM

As the market took off in the 1980s, Gullwing values climbed from £30,000 to peak at around £300,000 in 1991. In fact the Gullwing held on longer, as other segments had already declined.

### BUST

As the market bottomed out in the mid-1990s, values broadly halved, with lesser examples trading at auction for under £100,000 and only a few exceptional cars exceeding £150,000. The auction high point by far in this phase was £184,100.

### RECOVERY

It took until the early 2000s for values to surpass their previous peak. In 2012, most examples in open trading were changing hands for under £550,000. Today, better cars are exceeding £1 million. However, at auction there are also less exceptional cars trading at under £700,000. At the top end, for an early car with hero racing-driver associations, you can talk £2m and up. **End**





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# GULLWING GALLERY

*Mercedes-Benz did it first, but skyward-opening doors became the must-have motif for exotica to follow*

Words Giles Chapman

## 1/ ASTON MARTIN BULLDOG

Aston sought to grab the limelight with this ultra-wedge-shaped supercar at the 1980s Los Angeles motor show, powered by a twin-turbo version of its faithful 5.3-litre V8 engine and featuring enormous gullwings. This fully functioning car was an impressive feat, styled by William Towns and engineered by Aston's own tiny in-house team. Not quite so impressive, though, was their dry-cleaning bill. Every time the car ventured out in the rain, testers got coated in road grime which dripped off the gullwing doors whenever they were opened. The idea was to make 25 cars, but it never happened.

## 2/ MERCEDES-BENZ SLS AMG

The iconic doors (there, we've used the i-word only once in this story, so far at least) were, of course, one of the key design themes to Merc's 21st-century '300SL' revival. The company, however, considered them all over again with the utmost care. For one thing, these doors are fully manual, because AMG engineers chose to avoid the 41kg weight penalty of electric motors and mechanisms. Meanwhile, as a safety fallback, if the car detected violent, pre-accident g-force, the door fixings were automatically loosened so they could be easy to remove, should stricken occupants need to be dragged out. Which is comforting to know.







### 3/ DELOREAN DMC-12

Northern Ireland's finest sports car is arguably even more famous than anything Merc has ever achieved with its doors-open stance. You've simply got to love the car with its *Back To The Future* connections and the trash-novel back story. Rumours persist that the doors could trap you in a rollover, although no such emergency has been reported. With luck, replacing the gas struts every two years will get round the worry that the mechanism can sometimes fail.

### 4/ MARCOS GT XYLON

A boffin-mobile if ever there was one, and Jackie Stewart's first racing car, the first three dozen Marcos cars made up to 1963 were mostly equipped with tiny gullwing doors – only the second production cars in the world to have them. They gave decent access to the cockpit of this zany, plywood-hulled sports-racer with its four-piece windscreen and bug-like headlights. As on the 300SL, the gullwings allowed Frank Costin's design to achieve excellent rigidity for frenzied club-racing dogfights.

### 5/ LAMBORGHINI MARZAL

It is, perhaps, more penguin than seagull with its doors open, as they're hinged along the roof edges rather than in the middle. Yet the Marzal is

nonetheless an unforgettable show car. It was a huge four-seater, the whole of the glazed passenger compartment sides flipping up to allow access to both front and rear seats. The 1967 Marzal show car led directly to the Lamborghini Espada, although the doors – its most characteristic components – were the one part not to make the transition.

### 6/ PAGANI HUAYRA

Much of its body bristles with active aerodynamics and so the gullwing doors on the Huayra are almost one of its more mundane features – except, of course, for that all-important entry at the world's most expensive hotels, marinas and race tracks, where your arrival will be enhanced immeasurably by them. It's a tribute to the amazing strength of the car's carbon-titanium structure that the substantial doors open down to sill level, giving a true idea of

how far sports-racing car design has progressed since the arrival of the 300SL 64 years ago.

### 7/ BRICKLIN

Serial entrepreneur Malcolm Bricklin barely managed to make 3000 of these luxury coupes in 1974/75 before the venture ate up all the finance provided by Canada's somewhat naïve if well-intentioned New Brunswick government – a portent of what was to befall the DeLorean DMC-12 shortly afterwards. The gullwings here remain unique – the only ones on a production car to open electrically at the touch of a button. It wasn't long before Malc bounced back, though, this time foisting the crappy Yugo 45 on a bizarrely receptive America.

### 8/ EAGLE SS

Trying to pick just one kit car with gullwing doors is quite a task – there's an awful lot of rickety glassfibre detritus from the '70s and '80s to rake through. The Eagle SS, hailing from Lancing in West Sussex, is largely an original, although it was derived from an American kit that itself was copied from Britain's own Nova. Under all that showy, shovel-fronted plastic was the usual Volkswagen Beetle platform with air-cooled flat-four, so the joke factor very nearly makes the car endearing.





9



## 9/ DE TOMASO MANGUSTA

Don't be fooled by the knee-high stance and stunning Giugiaro-at-Ghia looks. The Mangusta was a brute with its rearward weight bias and abundance of horsepower from its Ford V8. It must, however, be applauded for its clever gullwing adoption, not for the passenger doors but for the dual engine compartment covers that lifted up, ice cream freezer-style, either side for servicing of the mid-mounted engine and access to the spare wheel and minuscule luggage compartment.

10



## 10/ PEUGEOT 905

More gullwing windows than doors, these two curved shutters were raised to admit drivers Derek Warwick, Mark Blundell, Mauro Baldi and others to Peugeot's World Sportscar Championship challenger in its glory days between 1991 and '93. The V10-powered car grabbed Le Mans victory in 1992, with another one coming home third. Incredible aerodynamics were the key; the lack of conventional door structures played its part here, allowing a heavily gathered, sweeping side profile that helped knead the airflow to the car's advantage.

## 11/ ED STRAKER'S CAR

When TV producer Gerry Anderson peered ahead to the cars of 1980 for his 1970 sci-fi show *U.F.O.*, the gullwing door still seemed futuristic and gasp-inducing. So naturally the car provided for Commander Straker, head of the secretive SHADO alien-defence organisation, had to have them. The Ford Zephyr-based film prop looked stunning before



the cameras. Its gullwing doors appeared to open electronically as Straker pushed a button; in fact they were fakes, raised by a stagehand out of shot.

## 12/ AUTOZAM AZ-1

Much the rarest of all the interesting Kei sports cars, more usually represented by the Suzuki Cappuccino or Honda Beat; fewer than 5000 were made, a tenth



of them wearing Suzuki Cara badging rather than Mazda's Autozam branding. The tiny two-seater with its turbocharged, 657cc, mid-mounted engine had a tubular steel structure to support those lift-up entrances, with unstressed fibreglass panels. Much of its development took place in the UK but the timing of its introduction was terrible: it emerged in 1992 straight into a recession and was axed after just two years, more's the pity. **Cash**



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# A SPACE ODDITY

*The one-off 1952 Pégaso Z-102 Berlineta ENASA Cúpula looks like a spaceship yet was built by a company more used to making trucks. Octane was allowed an exclusive drive – or should that be flight?*

Words Martin van der Zeeuw Photography David de Jong

**THE KEYS ARE** in my pocket, but I don't feel the urge to get behind the wheel and drive off. Not yet. I just gaze at it in awe, like a little boy who is seeing a real fighter jet or a fire engine for the first time. My eyes slowly follow every line, every detail. My brain is trying to reconcile the logic of a traditional motor car with the unpredictability of this bright-yellow phenomenon's design.

Is it beautiful? Yes, it is. And no, it isn't. But it is definitely breathtaking. Who on earth penned this 1952 Pégaso Z-102 Berlineta ENASA Cúpula (yes, Berlineta with one 't' – it's Spanish). Pablo Picasso? Henry Moore? Was it made on Earth at all?

In fact, the exaggeratedly curved lines of this Plexiglas-domed yellow spaceship with its 'redwall' landing gear, all seemingly inspired by 1950s UFO hype, were drawn at a factory. Even more shocking: it was a factory that made trucks and buses.

The Spanish ENASA (Empresa Nacional de Autocamiones SA) was formed in 1945 when Hispano-Suiza was nationalised. ENASA was led by the Spanish industrial engineer Wilfredo Ricart, who came from Alfa Romeo. The Barcelona-based company manufactured trucks, buses and military vehicles under the Pégaso brand, named after Pegasus, the winged horse in Greek mythology. To boost its prestige, ENASA introduced a sports car, the Pégaso Z-102, in 1951 – the Government was backing the company financially and Spain wanted to prove that it still counted as a nation in post-war Europe.

For the same reason, Pégaso's new sports cars were usually fitted with dramatic coachwork by famous coachbuilders such as Touring and Saoutchik. You wouldn't be blamed for supposing that the Berlineta Cúpula has a Touring Superleggera feel to it and, while

there is some truth behind that, the story is confusing and sometimes even unresolved.

Photographer David de Jong reminds me that we have work to do. I press down the large chrome ball next to the driver's door, after which the door pops out slightly for it to be opened. Sitting in the light green interior, I feel low-down but quite comfortable. The dash looks conventional, even slightly Italian, but it's the only conventional thing about the cockpit. Vanity boxes are fitted left and right below the dashboard and there's a metal toolbox near the passenger footwell.

Opening the door window presents a challenge. Instead of a handle, two thin vertical rods are connected to the glass and these have to be clicked out of small holders, then moved horizontally and pushed outwards to open the window. Who ever dreamed up that?

A more immediate problem is finding the starter button. 'It's the left one,' says Ron van Dongen, chief engineer at the Louwman Museum, pointing at ten ivory-coloured piano keys on the dash. Trusting him, I turn the ignition key and press the button, after which a sudden loud bang scares the hell out of me. But somehow I must have done the right thing because there's now a hoarse and uncivilised but roughly consistent engine sound.

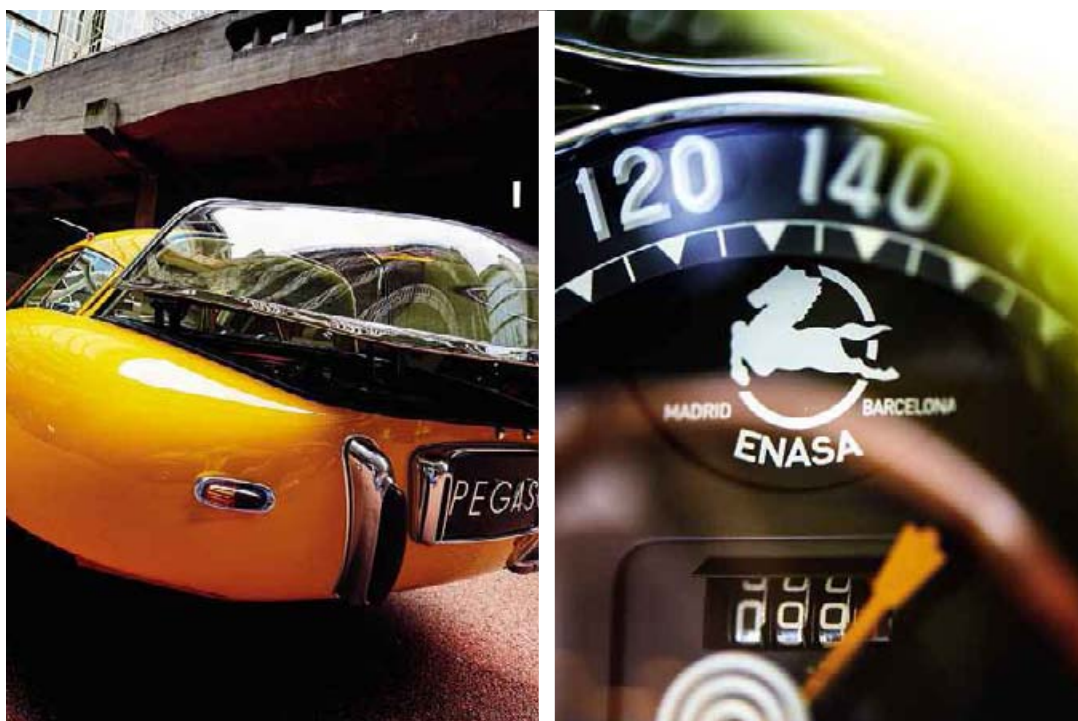
Despite the Pégaso being a left-hooker, the dogleg five-speed gearbox works the other way round: first gear and reverse are off to the right, while four and five are on the left. For someone brought up on the Continent, it's like driving a right-hand-drive car with a manual 'box. To achieve better balance and stability the Pégaso has a rear transaxle, with the gearbox *behind* the differential.

Getting the car into gear isn't easy, however, not least because the 'box doesn't have synchromesh. First gear →









*‘The clutch is heavy, the steering is heavy, the gearchanges are heavy; this is a really tough car to drive, at odds with its appearance’*

engages OK, but the golf-club-like lever doesn't want to move into second, and double-declutching doesn't work either. My ego flies out of the window – there must be another way.

First, let's see if we can solve the design mystery. When Pegaso started producing sports cars, there was a close co-operation between Wilfredo Ricart and Carrozzeria Touring's CEO and chief designer Carlo 'CiCi' Bianchi Anderloni. The 1952 Pegaso brochures show artist's impressions by Touring's designer Federico Formenti of cars that resembled the Cúpula but were never manufactured. Formenti also designed the equally UFO-inspired Disco Volante by Alfa Romeo, incidentally.

One of the joint projects between Pegaso and Touring was the 'Thrill' Berlinetta (two 't's), also designed in 1952 and presented a year later. The Thrill and the Cúpula could easily be from the same family and there are two unproven theories about this. One is that the Thrill project was executed by Touring and that the Cúpula design was left to ENASA as a work experience project. The second is that the sketches of the Thrill were left at Pegaso after one of Anderloni's visits and were used as a starting point for the Cúpula's design. Neither theory is particularly credible but there must have been some sort of mutual inspiration.

**Above and facing page**  
Back to the future, 1953-style:  
almost nothing about the  
Pegaso is conventional,  
including its colour.

The most reliable conclusion is probably that the Berlinetta ENASA Cúpula was a Touring-inspired design by Formenti, with a Touring-inspired type of body construction as well, based on a tubular chassis. Astonishingly, however, the Cúpula's body is made of steel rather than aluminium, apart from the bonnet.

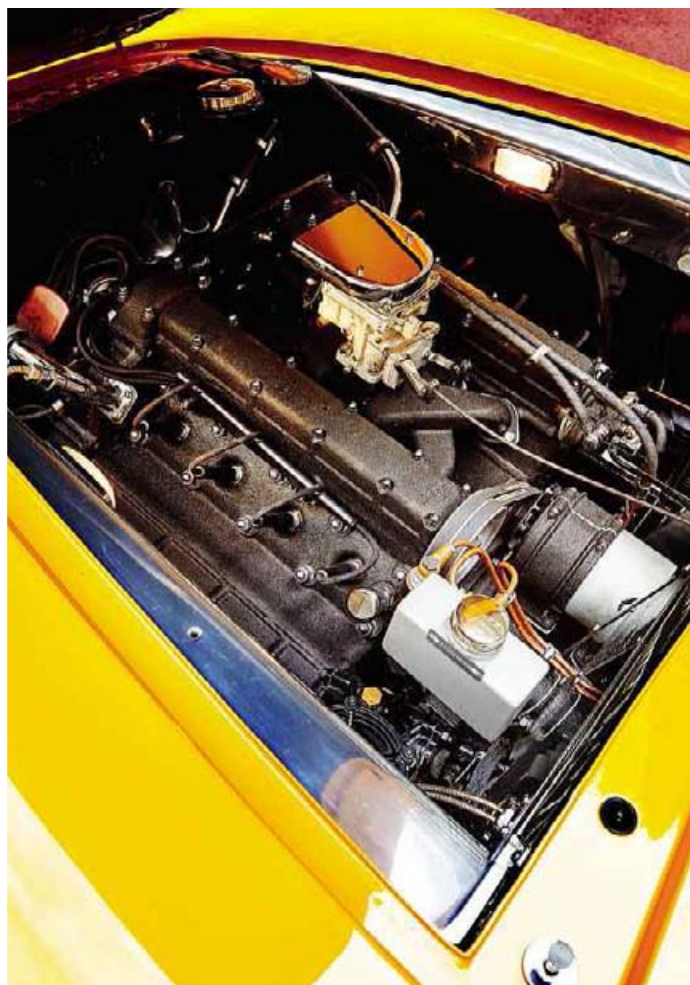
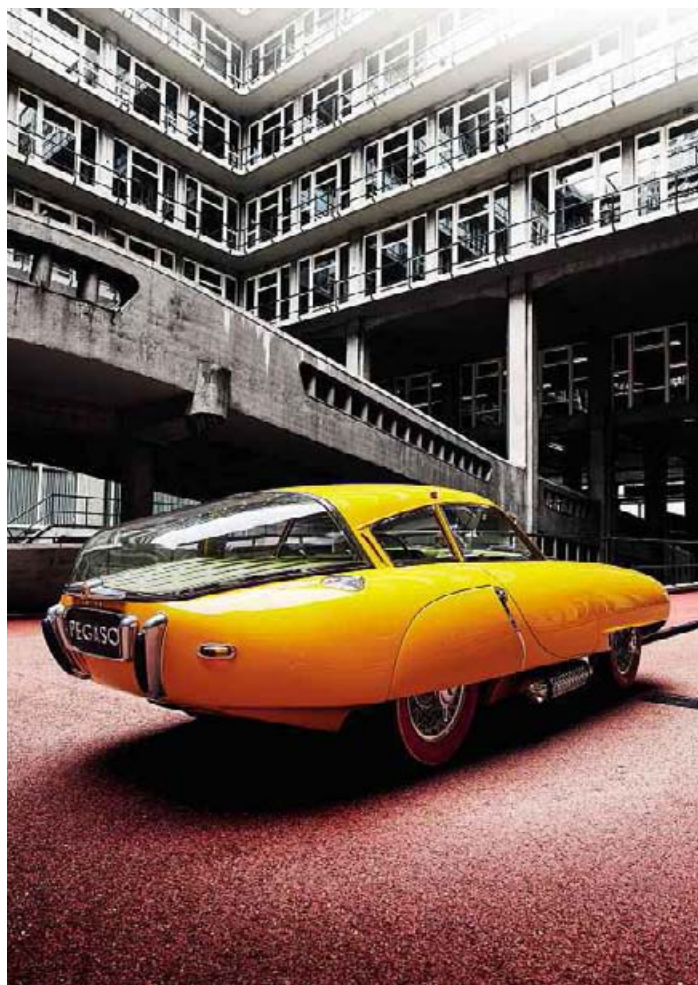
The origin of its design is not the only myth surrounding the Cúpula. It is said that there was a second Cúpula – or rather a 'first'. This car, painted cream and with a light green interior, was presented at the 1952 Paris motor show and in London shortly afterwards. It differed from the yellow one in having the door-opening buttons positioned higher and the rear dome lower down. The most credible suggestion is that this car was a prototype that was partly or completely scrapped after the show and/or was used as the basis of the yellow Cúpula, which made its debut at the World Motor Show in New York in February 1953. Therefore this car can be regarded as the only Berlinetta Cúpula ever built.

'You have to consider this as being a freshly delivered, new car that still has to be run in. The mechanics of the gearlever and connecting rods are a bit too tight and we still need to loosen them up,' says Ron van Dongen. So I give it another go, following his instructions, and it works. Welcome back, ego! →









Now I am able to feel the power of the Pegaso as it rapidly accelerates, still boasting that raw sound of its 2.8-litre, 250bhp desmodromic 32-valve V8 – it had a supercharger back in 1953, but that was experimental. The clutch is heavy, the steering is heavy, the gearchanges are heavy; this is a really tough car to drive. The experience is greatly at odds with the Pegaso's elegant looks, despite the sporty exhaust pipes mounted on each side. Would you believe that the later 3.2-litre Pegaso Z-102 was the fastest production car on the planet in its day? Even faster than a Ferrari? Apparently so.

Since I'm driving on a circuit-like private road in the grounds of the Louwman company – actually the Dutch Toyota and Lexus importer – where the Louwman Museum also used to be before it moved to The Hague in 2010, there is some room to play. The car's handling feels very tricky, to put it mildly: even trickier than a Porsche in that the rear doesn't break away but simply jumps out, not helped by the narrowness of the track. The suspension can be adjusted but it's clear that driving this car quickly demands a lot of skill.

Although the Pegaso sports cars were very fast, they never really succeeded in competition. Worth mentioning, however, is that in 1953 a Pegaso broke the speed record set by a Jaguar XK120 at Jabbeke, Belgium. Pegasos were also extremely expensive and ENASA lost a lot of money on them. Despite an attempt to produce a second model,

the Z-103, fewer than 90 sports cars were built and around 1958 the factory switched back to only making commercial vehicles. In 1990 ENASA was taken over by Iveco and soon afterwards the Pegaso name was dropped.

For our static photographs, we've moved the car to Rotterdam – and stepped back in time. The Groot Handelsgebouw (it means 'wholesale trading centre') was built in 1953, the same year as the Pegaso was first presented. One of the icons of the post-war reconstruction of Rotterdam, a city that lost its 'heart' during a 1940 bombing raid, it was designed by local architects Hugh Maaskant and Willem van Tijen as a kind of 'wholesale beehive' and was inspired by the Merchandise Mart in Chicago. Located next to Rotterdam's central station, it has been a listed building since 1991.

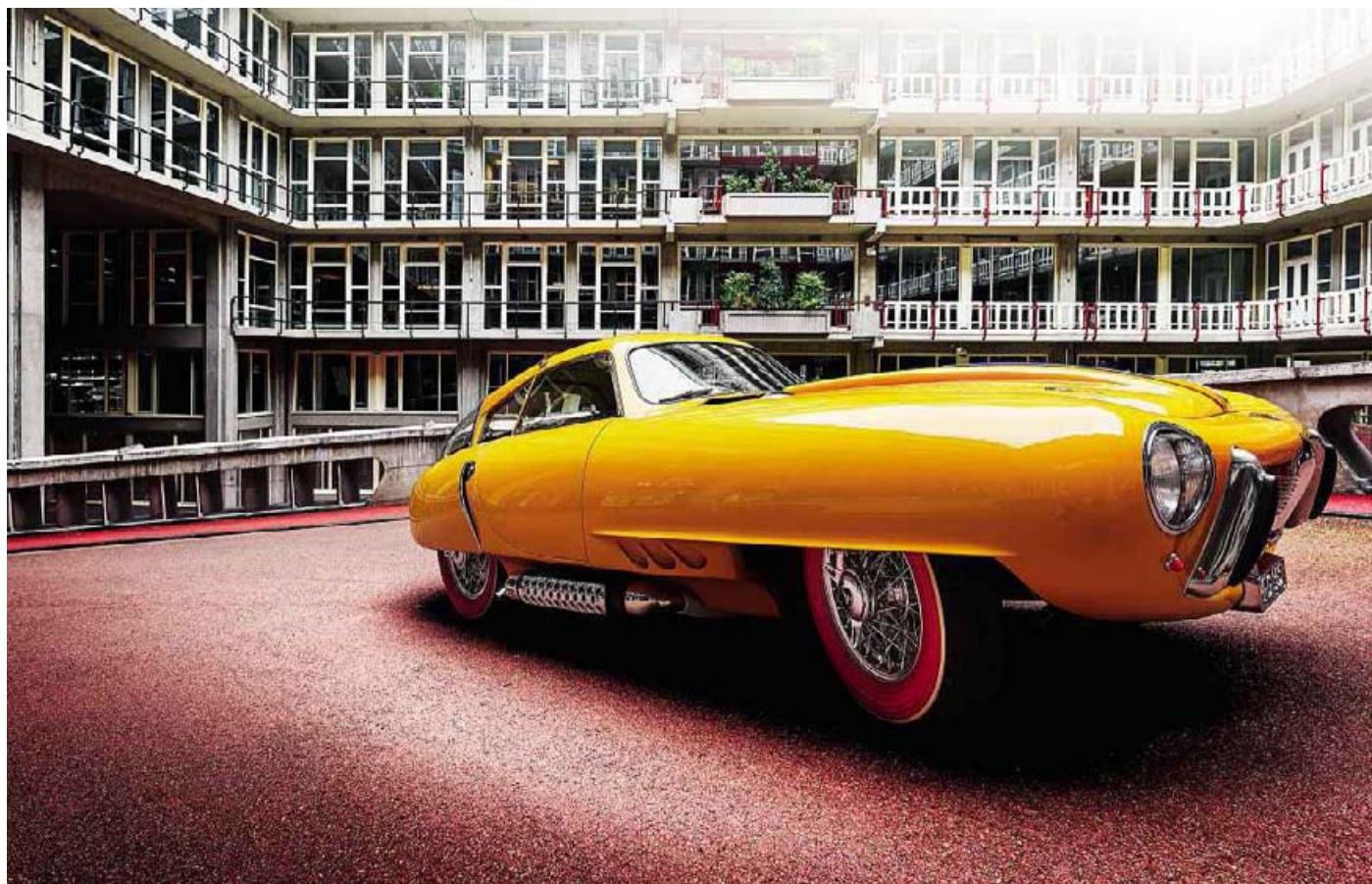
Nineteen fifty-three was also the year that the Pegaso was bought by its first owner: Rafael Trujillo, president of the Dominican Republic from 1930 until 1961. He purchased it straight from the stand at the New York City Automobile Show in April 1953, two months after the car had first been in New York for the World Motor Sports Show at Madison Square Garden. In-between the Pegaso went on display at the Third Annual Autorama in Hartford, Connecticut, and made the c120-mile journey from New York under its own steam on public roads. Quickly, too: its driver was fined for speeding at 130mph, an event that made the newspapers. →





**Clockwise from above**  
Wild enough interior for you?  
Logo is based on Pegasus,  
the winged stallion of Greek  
mythology; vanity boxes and tool  
case tucked into door pillars.





### 1952 Pegaso Z-102 Berlineta ENASA Coupé

**Engine** 2816cc naturally aspirated, desmodromic 32-valve V8, DOHC, Weber 36 DCF1 four-barrel carburettor

**Power** 250bhp @ 6300rpm **Transmission** Five-speed manual, rear-wheel drive **Steering** Rack and pinion

**Suspension** Front: torsion bars. Rear: De Dion axle, adjustable **Brakes** Drums

**Weight** c1200kg **Performance** Top speed c140mph. 0-60mph 8sec

During Rafael Trujillo's ownership the Pegaso got its nickname of 'El Dominicano'. Trujillo was assassinated in 1961 and the Dominican Government then confiscated the car. A while later it was sold and passed through the hands of several owners, being restored and painted silver with a red interior during the 1970s. Then, in the mid-'80s, German collector Peter Kaus bought it for his Rosso Bianco museum. Kaus presented the car at Pebble Beach in 1994, at Rétromobile in 1996, and in Schwetzingen, Germany, in 2005.

In 2006 the Dutch Louwman Museum acquired the Rosso Bianco collection, including the Pegaso, but it wasn't put on display because its 1970s restoration didn't meet the museum's high standards. Only in 2009 was a project initiated to fully restore the Pegaso to its original form as it was presented in New York in 1953, an undertaking that would take six years to complete and would involve the USA, Italy and The Netherlands.

Patrick Huiberts of the family-owned Classic Restorations Holland recalls: 'It was one of our most specialised jobs. Many parts had to be made from scratch, such as the boot handle, the rooftop lights and even the rubber pedal pads. The Plexiglas dome also had to be remanufactured, using a specially made mould. It was like putting together pieces of a large puzzle.'

But the hard work paid off when the restored Pegaso won 'Best of Show' at Amelia Island this year. And yes, the redwall tyres are original.

Back in The Hague, Evert Louwman tells me: 'This is the most beautiful Pegaso ever made, and having it in our collection means a lot to me. It is so modern for its day, even more modern than a contemporary Ferrari. Imagine parking a Chevrolet next to it.' He is spot-on. Seeing this car must have made a life-long impression on people.

As is proven when Louwman continues: 'A man came up to me at Amelia. He told me that his father sent him to an English public school, where he felt quite lonely. Every month his father mailed him some car magazines and, in *Popular Mechanics*, he found a picture of this Pegaso. So he cut it out and stuck it underneath the lid of his writing desk, and every time he felt a little homesick, he sneaked a look at the picture and it made him feel happy again. Now, after all these years, he saw the car for real and cried from joy. It not only made his day: it made his life.'

**End**

*THANKS TO* Ronald Kooyman and Ron van Dongen of the Louwman Museum ([louvmanmuseum.nl](http://louvmanmuseum.nl)); the Huiberts family of Classic Restorations Holland ([classicrestorationsholland.nl](http://classicrestorationsholland.nl)); Eva van Beveren of the Groot Handelsgebouw ([ghg.nl](http://ghg.nl)); and Ramsey Jansen of Kokon Architects in Rotterdam.



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# THE PERFECT RESTORATIONS?

**Octane returns to Clayton Classics to examine its restoration practices, and inspect the E-type rebuilds and upgrades for which it's renowned**

**CLAYTON CLASSICS** are significantly raising the standards on the original E-type in many different ways, though you'd be hard-pushed to spot the differences immediately – other than the more accurate panel gaps and higher-quality paint finish, that is.

But under the skin, Coventry-based Clayton Classics build-in important safety, comfort, reliability and performance improvements as part of a restoration rather than as later additions, which means the changes can be more fully integrated into the car – though there are still plenty of sympathetic upgrades that can be fitted to an already completed E-type, too.

'E-types are fabulous cars but were flawed in their initial design, which anyone living with one will understand, says Geoff Insley, Clayton Classics' founder, who has driven more than 70,000 miles in his E-types over the last 20 years. 'Our improvements are designed to make the car more comfortable and reliable, enabling it to deliver its true potential.'

Clayton Classics will more often than not buy project cars which they will restore to sell, but to date they are yet to finish building an E-type before a customer comes along and purchases the car, finishing the build to their own specification. They will also take in customers' cars for part or full restoration, with the same high-quality finish being the only standard they will work to.

The process starts with the dismantling of the car, taking hundreds of photographs and labelling every component, assessing

each one for originality and condition. The bodywork is then stripped of all paint via soft bead-blasting or removal by hand, the latter process being preferred for larger panels such as the bonnet, to avoid any chance of causing distortion.

This process exposes all previous repairs, usually the bane of the restorer's life because they can mask how a car was originally constructed. This is where the Clayton Classics team's experience with E-types becomes invaluable, because however bad the car, however awful the previous repairs, it will always be possible to reconstruct the car correctly using a special body jig that guarantees body geometry and alignment – something that a less-experienced restorer could get wrong.

With the necessary repairs identified, decisions are made on whether to replace or repair the various panels, and the demanding task of letting-in new metal and replacing panels can begin. This isn't just a case of matching original quality, because Clayton Classics strive to improve the alignment and fit of the panels over the factory's quality – and that takes expertise and great patience.

So, once repaired, the panels are trial-fitted (with new window and door rubbers in place), adjusted, trial-fitted again, and so on, until perfect closure loads and body lines are achieved – and only then can the panels head to Clayton's state-of-the-art paint facility for their first coats of primer, base coat, top coat and lacquer... each one hand-flatted



**‘As the build progresses, so the subtle, often unseen, improvements continue’**



between stages to achieve a perfect finish.

The same goes for the brightwork, which is trial-fitted and fettled before it heads off to be re-chromed. And while all this is going on, the mechanical components are being cleaned, stripped, inspected and refurbished, and replaced if necessary.

This is when the interesting stuff really starts to happen, because groundwork at this stage allows any modifications and improvements to be fully integrated into the car. Clearly there's no point refurbishing early braking systems if the car is destined for a more powerful set-up, though of course none of the original parts will be discarded.

Similarly, this is the stage at which a standard gearbox might be put aside in favour of a five-speed conversion, steering swapped for a hydraulically or electrically assisted system, or an engine could be upgraded for more power, perhaps even with mapped ignition and fuel injection. Cooling systems are upgraded to overcome their original design flaws, and heat- and sound-proofing applied throughout the car – something that would otherwise require complete stripdown if applied later.

Though often overlooked, it's the electrical upgrades that are most crucial to the reliability of the car, and those upgrades are at their most useful and comprehensive when fitted at this early stage in a rebuild. Electrical reliability is ensured by upgraded wiring looms with modern, high-quality connectors; an all-new uprated electric distribution system with multiple fuses (again to a higher quality than the originals); and additional relays to operate any high-current components and remove electrical loads from more susceptible places. These also allow the fitment of modern halogen or LED headlamps,



an alternator conversion or upgrade, electric cooling fans, additional interior lighting, high-quality in-car entertainment system, tracker and alarm, air-conditioning, electrically assisted steering, ignition and fuel systems upgrades and more – adding such items at a later date without this preparation could easily compromise the quality of the wiring.

As the build progresses, so the subtle and often unseen improvements continue. Inertia seat belts are fitted, their mounting points adjusted for increased comfort and safety, and all-new Sundym glass goes in rather than re-use old, scratched and possibly weakened windows. Seats are often replaced with items





that look almost the same as the originals but provide more support and adjustment, as well as headrests for safety – it's a mark of their quality that almost every customer specifies them over original seats. Similarly, bespoke steering wheels are extremely popular.

With all this completed, the Clayton Classics team always ensures the car receives a minimum of 500 shakedown and test miles before handover. Customers are encouraged to be a part of this process so that the car can be fine-tuned to their requirements – and, once the team is satisfied, the customer is issued with a lifetime guarantee for all mechanical parts.



As with all the work it carries out, the Clayton Classics team works to only one standard and that's the very highest, no matter if the job is a full restoration taking 12-18 months or a smaller job that is in and out within a few days. And that's why a Clayton Classics E-type is so very good.

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# MONGOL HORDES

*Toughness is vital, speed is useful in the 8500-mile Peking to Paris rally. This year it was enjoyed and endured by 107 teams*

Words and photography Gerard Brown











A Mongolian proverb says: 'Do not start if afraid, once begun do not be afraid.' Another says that a journey can start with a single step – or in this case, with the turn of a key. As far as we know, though, there is no proverb to cover mechanical meltdown. For that, Peking to Paris rallyists are on their own.

The 2016 edition of this triennial event rolled into Place Vendôme in the French capital on 17 July, with new winners in both the Classic and the Vintageant categories. They headed a field which had numbered 107 cars one month and five days earlier, as they were flagged away from the Great Wall of China outside Beijing. Oldest was a 1915 American La France (it didn't finish), youngest a 1977 Mercedes 280E.

From Beijing the rally made its way through Inner Mongolia and the Gobi Desert to Mongolia itself, which once again proved to be the crucible of the event. This is where Peking to Paris legends have been forged and, despite the inevitable encroachment of the tarmac, enough long and very rough sections remain to make a tough test of endurance.

This time, Mongolia was uncharacteristically cool and damp, with rain and mist replacing the scorching blue skies and dry winds of 2013. So the desert bloomed, the grassy steppes were filled with thousands of grazing animals, and

there were mud and a few more water crossings to grapple with. The stages in Russia and Belarus proved very entertaining, helped by the hospitality of those countries' organising clubs and, indeed, the police. And, unbelievably, by the finish only 10 cars had dropped out. Here are some of the highlights in pictures.

#### Above, and clockwise from below

BMW 2002tii of Ib Sorensen and Mogen Lauritsen in the Swiss Alps en route to Lausanne; Rudi Hug's 1941 Chevy on Albula Pass; diverse transport in Beijing; citizens of Chusovoy in Russia welcome 1954 Bristol 403 of Paul Hickman and Sebastian Gross; crews faced eight nights of camping in Mongolia and Russia, albeit with hot showers and nightly three-course meals.







**Clockwise from top left, and below**

Helmut Rothenberger and Michael Schmidt enjoying their 1928 Bentley Super Sports on a rallycross circuit in Tyumen, Russia; the first Mini ever to compete on this epic event takes on the Dolomites – impressively, Paul and Chris Hartfield would finish 22nd in the post-1941 category; traditional ceremonial start from the Great Wall near Beijing; Australians Paul Smith and Martin Kass make their way to Novosibirsk through the Siberian pine forests in the rally's youngest car, a 1977 Mercedes-Benz 280E; competitors enjoyed fabulous backdrops and testing driving in the Italian Alps.







Clockwise from right  
Mongolian fuel stations have improved since Philip Young first ran the rally through here in 2007; souvenir photos everywhere; Bill Cleyndert/Jacqui Norman Bentley blasts away from campsite at Murun, Mongolia; Ingo Strolz and Werner Gassner await a tow after slipping off Mongolian track.





**Clockwise from above**

Andrew and Ann Boland retired their Ford Model A in Ulaan Baatar but vowed to be back; Sunbeam Alpine of David and Jo Roberts is unpacked for service in Budapest; Francesco and Alessandro Guasti watch their Alfa Romeo Giulia hoisted onto a lorry at Chjargas Lake, Mongolia – though it went on to finish the event.







**Clockwise from above**

Overall winners Mark Pickering and Dave Boddy celebrate in Place Vendôme; Alex Vassbotten and Ole Havn with their well-laden 1933 Alvis Firefly; Marco Cajani and Alessandro Morteo take their Alfa Romeo Giulia for a mud bath; Bruce and Harry Washington won the Vintageant class in this Chrysler 75 Roadster.

**Below**

The winning Pickering/Boddy Datsun 240Z from Australia slides spectacularly through Slovenia. **End**







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BRISTOL BULLET

# BULLET POINTS

*The first new Bristol in more than 10 years weighs 1135kg and has a 370bhp V8. Sounds promising?*

Words Mark Dixon Photography Paul Harmer





OL CARS



The Royal Borough of Kensington  
and Chelsea  
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**P**ity the poor chaps at Bristol. There they were, gearing up for the launch of their exciting new speedster, when some rotter spotted the prototype in a layby in the middle of nowhere and took a few snaps. Despite their entreaties, the pictures ended up splashed all over the internet within hours.

Those photos didn't do the car justice. For one thing, it was riding on a set of slave wheels rather than the production-spec alloys that (as we now know) suit it much better. But the Bullet, as it has been dubbed, is one of those cars that you really have to see in the metal – or, in this case, the carbonfibre – to appreciate. The spyshots frankly left us underwhelmed. Having spent some time with the real thing, we're rather taken with it.

Sadly, because the one-and-only Bullet prototype was not quite ready to be discharged at high velocity when we photographed it, we can't bring you full driving impressions just yet; they will have to wait until later this autumn. But low-speed outings around a country estate and – exclusively to *Octane* – on the streets of Kensington offered a tantalising glimpse of what could be on offer here. The Bullet has a 370bhp BMW V8 pushing along just 1135kg. As the saying goes, what's not to like?

The obvious retort to that rhetorical question might be 'the styling'. We're not totally convinced by the LED headlights, with their miniature central cores that seem visually at odds with the big 19-inch alloys immediately aft. It's one of the conflicts that arise when trying to incorporate some major retro styling cues – the 404-style 'jet engine' air intake and vented bonnet – in a contemporary vehicle. The narrow splitter and diffuser front and rear are fixed, by the way, but Bristol says that active aero could be a future development.

That small reservation about the lights aside (and, it has to be said, the LEDs are impressively bright), this Bullet makes quite an impact, and in a good way. The finish of the body is superb, with even shutlines and a flawless paint job. The side profile and rear three-quarter views are particularly striking and, while the combination of circular tail-lights and raked-forward rear fins references the Bristol 405 of the mid-50s, the Bullet presents them in a much sexier, more exotic kind of way – think Ghia Supersonic meets Bertone BAT car.

A mention of Italy is appropriate here because Bristol says that the Bullet was designed in-house, with advice from an unnamed Italian stylist at a *carrozzeria* 'which isn't Zagato'. It's not Touring, either, even though you may discern hints of Touring's current Alfa Romeo Disco Volante Spider (see *Octane* 155) in the Bullet, particularly the headrest fairings and the rear detailing. The colour is not dissimilar to the Disco Volante's, either, although Bristol claims that its own particular shade of metallic blue was inspired by the original Bullet prototype from the 1960s.

The what? Yes, there was a previous Bullet; two incarnations, if you count the 1920 Bristol Bullet racing biplane that was built by the parent aviation company. The earlier roadgoing Bullet is something of a mystery. The current owners of Bristol found it languishing under a

cover when they acquired the company in 2011. It wears a 1966 VIN plate, suggesting a 409/410 chassis, and it's often claimed that it was a factory development vehicle used for testing engines. The truth seems to be that it dates from the Toby Silverton era of the early 2000s and was the prototype for two production versions, known as Blenheim Speedsters. One car went to the USA; the other – which has a full-height windscreen, conventional hood, and looks like a modernised 405 drophead – is in private hands in the UK. We featured that in *Octane* 131.

As the young people say, 'Whatever.' The new Bullet clearly draws inspiration from its predecessor but it is a massively more sophisticated car. Leaving aside the fact that it's better proportioned, with a short wheelbase that's more reminiscent of the 404 coupé than the later saloons, it is totally different in construction. Rather than the aluminium traditionally used for Bristol coachwork, the new Bullet has a carbonfibre body tub. It's no coincidence that Bristol's current owners have a carbonfibre plant on the south coast of England, and being able to use this material-of-the-moment explains the Bullet's remarkably low kerbweight.

Following Bristol's insolvency in 2011, it was rescued by Indian-born businessman Kamal Siddiqi, whose Kamkorp group of companies also includes Frazer-Nash Research Ltd. Mr Siddiqi is a self-confessed petrolhead and serial entrepreneur, who trained as an automotive engineer; his three sons are also young engineers. Mr Siddiqi's main automotive passion is for electric and hybrid technology – future Bristols will undoubtedly be going down this road – and the Bullet has been the pet project of eldest son Noamaan.

Noamaan explains that carbonfibre allowed Bristol to do things that would have been much more difficult in aluminium, notably with the radii of body curves and creases. 'The styling posed some real problems for homologation, in terms of safety requirements, and carbonfibre was more amenable than alloy for meeting those needs.'

The chassis consists of bonded box-section aluminium, while the drivetrain is essentially BMW: a 4.8-litre V8 mated to six-speed manual or automatic gearbox. The V8 has been given a bespoke engine management system and it's dressed up with Bristol cam covers and inlet shroud; Bristol has dubbed it the Hercules, in tribute to the aviation company's famous 1300bhp, 14-cylinder radial engine. It sounds beautiful, the note from its twin exhausts striking just the right balance between muscle car and gentleman's express, and while you can't fail to be aware of →

#### Right from top

Side and rear three-quarters are arguably the Bullet's best views; interior is superbly trimmed, with much use of machined alloy.

*'The Bullet references the 405 of the mid-50s but in a much sexier, more exotic way – think Ghia Supersonic meets Bertone BAT car'*









it when on the move – the Bullet's bathtub-like cockpit sees to that – it's always addictive rather than annoying.

Getting into or out of that cockpit requires a certain dexterity, due to the bodyshell's wide sills, but the doors open generously wide and you can at least plonk a hand on the rear deck to steady yourself without fear of leaving a dent, before dropping into the figure-hugging but not bum-pinching tight seats. The steering column is fixed on this prototype, so the small-diameter wheel cuts across your view of the instruments if you're tall, but that will be addressed for production cars.

Inside, it's appealingly simple, if a little unsubtle in the detailing, with much use of machined aluminium. There's a pool ball-sized alloy gearknob, a knurled alloy handbrake grip that looks like a nerve gas canister from a James Bond film, shiny alloy steering wheel spokes – the list goes on. In such traditional and manly company, the plastic multi-function turn signal switch looks distinctly out of place; paradoxically, it left us wanting more machined alloy.

There's also leather. Lots of leather. Every surface bar the dashboard – which can be finished in polished wood, herringbone-pattern carbonfibre or unidirectional carbonfibre – is swathed in the stuff. It's good to see a nod to Bristols of old in the shape of the dash binnacle, although the glitzy, thick-rimmed bezels for the instruments might not have been to the taste of the long-time MD of Bristol Cars, the late Tony Crook, whose experience as a WW2 RAF pilot doubtless explains why he preferred functional, non-reflective black.

What Mr Crook would have made of the Bullet's touch-screen display can only be imagined. A large 'Bristol' logo illuminates when you turn on the ignition, and the press

pack talks of wireless streaming of audio, Bluetooth connectivity, digital radio and all the rest of today's must-have gizmos. We could live without most of that, although – as anyone who has struggled with the built-in satnav systems of certain supercars will testify – the ability to 'screen mirror' your favourite satnav application from your smartphone could prove rather useful.

Still, these are toys for the modern generation, and the Bullet itself is undeniably a toy, much in the manner of Jaguar's Project 7: something that's best enjoyed for short ➔

#### Above and below

Bullet looks like nothing else on the roads and will always be a rare sight, with only 70 cars planned for production.







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### 2017 Bristol Bullet

**Engine** 4799cc fuel-injected BMW V8 **Power** 370bhp **Torque** 370lb ft

**Transmission** Six-speed manual or six-speed automatic

**Steering** Rack and pinion, power-assisted **Suspension** Front: upper cantilever arms and lower wishbones, inboard coil-over-damper units. Rear: double wishbones, coil-over-damper units

**Brakes** Ventilated discs **Tyres** 245/35 ZR 19 **Weight** 1135kg

**Performance** Top speed 155mph (limited). 0-60mph 3.8sec



### Left and below

Bullet sits well next to classic examples in the company's showroom; it's a joy to drive around the city at night.



blasts in temperate climes. The Bullet's impressive power-to-weight ratio certainly promises plenty of amusement. Indeed, while the chassis incorporates Electronic Stability Control, we suspect that it won't be difficult to break traction in several gears. Perhaps the Bullet's unsuitability for rainy weather (there's no kind of soft-top whatsoever, although a rain hood is promised) will prove a blessing in disguise for some drivers.

At the time of our photoshoot, the Bullet prototype was still very much a work in progress. The unique alloy wheels, whose spoke pattern echoes the Bristol shield logo, are pre-production samples and reputedly 'soft as butter'. No surprise, therefore, that Bristol is being ruthless in refusing to let anyone drive it. Even from the passenger seat, however, you can sense the Bullet's rigidity, and it has impeccable credentials: design is by Multimatic, the Canadian outfit that does a lot of work for Aston Martin, among others. Multimatic produced the suspension and carbonfibre tub for the One-77. 'Nuff said.

Despite Bristol's reputation for making true driver's cars – albeit sometimes at the expense of aesthetics – in today's world it's tempting to conclude that the way the Bullet goes is almost secondary to the way it looks. During our evening shoot, the reactions of the blasé, seen-it-all-before West Kennites were instructive: in a part of London where supercars are just part of the street furniture, the Bullet stands out because it is, well, unique.

It won't remain unique for much longer, with deliveries slated to begin in early 2017. Just 70 examples are planned for production (neatly commemorating 70 years of Bristol Cars, since the 400 was launched in 1947), although it won't officially be available in the USA for reasons of homologation. The price, while steep, isn't ridiculous for this sector of the market: £200,000 plus taxes, which will bring it up to about £250,000 all-in. Sounds a lot? Maybe, but there's a petrol station in Kensington that charges £1.79 a litre for unleaded. Everything's relative.

We'll be frank: when we were invited to the launch of the Bullet, we had mixed emotions. Small-volume supercars by the revivals of famous names don't have a good track record. But we came away feeling cautiously optimistic. Of course, we'll have to wait until we've actually driven the Bullet before we're totally convinced. From what we've seen so far, however, if this Bullet has your name on it, you're unlikely to be disappointed. **Car**





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# RED SHIFT, BLUE BLOOD

*Ford's latest Focus RS, the company's quickest-ever road car, comes from a long line of compact Fords with RS badges. We gather the Escort and Focus bloodline together at the historic Dagenham factory, and drive them all*

Words John Simister Photography James Lipman







**T**wo letters. What do they mean? Depends on the car manufacturer and its predilections. Most famously they appear on fast Porsches (Rennsport), showing a bias towards the racetrack; and on fast Fords (Rallye Sport), with rallying the image to be portrayed. Not that RS-badged Fords shied away from racetrack action as the tag grew in scope.

Ford has just launched its latest Focus RS, hailed by the popular press as the most perfect hot hatchback on offer today. Maybe, maybe not; it depends on your taste in such cars, and how firm you like your ride. But it is undeniably a mighty thing, with 345bhp – 345! – fed through all four wheels and a powersliding ‘drift’ mode on offer at the press of a button. It will do 165mph, passing 62mph just 4.7 seconds into a headlong rush towards a maximum speed higher than that of any previous quantity-production European Ford.

We think of it as a European Ford, anyway. Ford doesn’t. It’s a world car, with RS and ST models nowadays developed by Ford

Performance with outposts all over the globe. The Focus RS was engineered primarily in Europe, true, but under the control of an American. Tyrone Johnson is one of the keenest, most articulate engineers I have ever met. In a long but fascinating presentation of how the Mk3 Focus RS came to be, not a single utterance of management-speak or fast-car cliché passed his lips.

So here we are at Dagenham, in a Ford plant nowadays devoted to building diesel engines but steeped in auto-history. The shunting engines have been here since the 1960s, the original Thames-side factory building since 1931, both long before the re-routed A13 dual carriageway marched across the middle of the Dagenham Estate on its concrete pillars.

Lined up are the new RS and the milestone models of its ancestors, the compact category of RS-badged Fords. The newer, the bluer: the Mk3 RS is in livid Nitrous Blue, almost the colour of a motorway sign but with a faint mica fleck, while the Mk2 is in darker Performance Blue metallic. Next to it is a Mk1, in Imperial

Blue with a purpler tinge than the Mk2’s hue.

Actually, this isn’t any old Mk1. It’s the very first of 4501 examples, all of them the same colour. Identically painted is its predecessor, the much-loved RS Cosworth version of the otherwise unloved Mk4 Escort. It has four-wheel drive like its newest descendant, but in this case with the longitudinal engine that goes with the fact that this is an Escort bodyshell atop an abbreviated Sierra Cosworth platform.

Now, on our reverse temporal journey, the blueness dissipates. Our Mk3 Escort, badged RS Turbo and the first forced-induction RS production model, has dark blue fade-out side stripes on its standard-issue white paintwork. Our Mk2 is also white, the Diamond White finish of most of these homologation-special, Cosworth BDA-engined RS1800s. And finally we have the first of the line, the Escort RS1600 in Sebring Red, also BDA-powered.

Most of us think that the RS story starts here. Certainly the story is neater that way. But the truth is slightly different, and it involves Germany. We’ll come to it later.







#### Left and facing page

In Britain, at least, it all started with the simple, leaf-sprung, rear-wheel-drive, BDA-engined Escort. Red Mk1 used to be Roger Clark's runaround; white Mk2 is the only RS1800 to be sold new in the Irish Republic.

## BEGINNINGS: THE REAR-DRIVE YEARS

**FORD PERFORMANCE** is today's creator of fast Fords, a result of the Blue Oval's latest worldwide reorganisation. It incorporates the former Special Vehicle Engineering (SVE) operation, formed in 1980 and originally based at Dunton, Essex, and its US and German counterparts. The previous Focus RSs came from SVE, by then known also as Team RS, but its first project was the revitalising of the Capri for the dinosaur coupé's last few years, followed by some of the XR-badged cars.

SVE was itself a reincarnation of what we'd now call a skunkworks: AVO, or Advanced Vehicle Operations, which existed from 1970 until 1975, when it was sidelined after economic fallout from the Yom Kippur war. AVO was based at Aveley, Essex, just a few powerslides away from Dagenham, and was the brainchild of Ford of Britain's PR supremo, Walter Hayes. Earlier fruits of his publicity-seeking brain had been the GT40 and, with FoB's competitions chief Henry Taylor, the Escort Twin-Cam.

Most of the Twin-Cams were assembled at Ford's Halewood factory, where their unique parts and special build needs caused quite a lot of disruption. So Hayes' idea was for a catch-all facility to develop and build all of Ford's sporting models and projects. Initially it was run by Ray Horrocks, who later went to British Leyland, along with Henry Taylor, Bob Howe in planning and Rod Mansfield as chief development engineer, the last of whom later set up SVE. Stuart Turner took over after Horrocks left, masterminding AVO from the competition department at Boreham.

AVO's first project was the Escort RS1600. It was intended as a low-volume car for motor sport, and its productionised version of the Cosworth BDA (Belt Drive Anglia, because that's where the roots of its cylinder block lay) was arguably the first twin-cam, 16-valve engine to be fitted to a production car. AVO worked hard to make it civilised for the road, overcoming problems such as huge oil consumption following the conversion from dry to wet sump. 'The cambox would occasionally fill up with oil,' recalled Mansfield years later, 'so there'd be a lot of smoke.'

There is no such blue haze around our RS1600 today. It's a 23,000-mile, 1970-built jewel with a special place in AVO history. Shortly after the RS1600, Ford launched the Escort Mexico to celebrate the Escort's win in the World Cup Rally. The Mexico was effectively an RS1600 with an 86bhp pushrod 'Kent' engine. But Ford hadn't actually completed any Mexicos in time for the launch advertisement's photoshoot.

'So they used this car,' says owner Mike Gattrell. 'It was originally going to be white, as the chassis plate confirms, but it was plucked from the line and painted red, with hand-painted Mexico stripes. In the ad it's posed in front of a shipping container; "We brought it back from Mexico", it says. Then it was Roger Clark's runaround for a while. I'm trying to get the original Essex registration number back.'

**FIRST IMPRESSION?** It's tiny. And extremely pretty, as two-door Mk1s are, especially with lightly flared front arches, wide wheels, front quarter-bumpers and a blacked-out grille. It


## 'THE STEERING BECOMES LIGHT AND SUPER-PRECISE, THE GATEWAY TO AN EARLY ESCORT'S CAREFREE CHUCKABILITY'

was restored 20 years ago but not too deeply, so it wears an authentic patina. The cosy black cabin features a proper RS steering wheel, fronting an instrument panel stuffed with two big dials and four small ones, the plastichrome peeling from their rims. 'I might get them rechromed,' ponders Mike. I'd leave it as it is.

It's a snorty, rorty thing, the air-filter box not entirely masking the gulps of the two Weber 40 DCOEs. Once past parking-speed heaviness the steering becomes light and super-precise, the gateway to that intuitively predictable, carefree chuckability that is an early Escort's dynamic signature. A similar oily precision is felt when snicking through the gears.

The engine has plenty of torque low down, the impression heightened by the Escort's lightness (it weighs just over half as much as the latest Focus RS, shockingly), but right now it's hard to get it delivered cleanly as Mike's brand-new carburettors aren't optimally set up yet. Once past 3500rpm or so, though, this first British RS really flies. It's the 1970s equivalent of a really good hot hatchback, saloon body shape notwithstanding.





**'YOU JUST KNOW THAT  
ON A GRAVEL RALLY STAGE  
IT WOULD BE UTTERLY  
HILARIOUS, WEBERS  
GOBBLING, STONES FLYING'**



So the RS1800 should feel similar, if more extreme. After all, beneath its bigger, squarer body, a Mk2 Escort is almost exactly the same as a Mk1. However, strange happenings were afoot in the world of RS Fords in the post-Energy Crisis world. Homologation specials were still needed as the base for a continued rallying campaign – indeed, RS1800s continued at the top level of International rallying right up to 1981 – but AVO was being wound down and Ford was not keen to encourage sales of the specialist, expensive-to-build RS1800 when the more profitable, more civilised and equally quick RS2000 (Pinto engine, ‘droop-snoot’ nose) was also on offer.

As revealed in March 1975, the RS1800 featured a larger version of the BDA engine, with a new aluminium block bored out to 1834cc. Strangely, though, it produced less power (115bhp) than its 1601cc predecessor (120bhp) although torque had risen, along with the complete car’s weight. Why was this? Instead of two sidedraught Webers the RS1800 made do with a single downdraught one, Ford hoping that buyers would then avail themselves of the extensive Rallye Sport options list to reinstate the optimum number of venturis.

This retrograde step contrasted with the enhancements elsewhere, such as the Capri

front suspension and a tougher crossmember. As with the Mk1, the bodyshell was strengthened and radius rods added to the rear suspension. The first 25 or so examples were built at Aveley on the bases of Halewood-built Escort 1600 Sports, but that changed from January 1976. Ford had by then added an RS Mexico to the range, built at Saarlouis, Germany, and effectively an RS1800 but with a single-cam Pinto-type engine. So it made sense to use that as the base instead, as it already had the other enhanced parts.

Eighty Saarlouis-sourced RS1800s were finished at Aveley while AVO faded away, the last in September 1977 with, in total, just 110 RS1800s built. All were right-hand drive; all but one were registered in the UK.

Our car here is the one that wasn’t. DZP 700 went to its first owner in the Irish Republic on 1 October 1976, but buying it was a battle. Ford initially supplied a Mexico, hoping it would do the job and circumvent the lack of RS knowledge among Ireland’s Ford dealerships, but Friel’s Garage in County Donegal persevered and eventually the RS arrived, complete with luxury Custom Pack.

Today it has the Weber 45DCOE carburettors it deserves, and a few other modifications such as Bilstein dampers, lowered rear suspension, a

bigger-bore exhaust system and a Sierra-type five-speed gearbox, all administered in the late 1990s. Peter Christie bought it three years ago, and enjoys the fact that the four lower ratios mimic the RS originals while fifth gives the senses some respite at motorway speeds.

Not much, it must be said. Also on the mod-list is a World Cup crossmember, much prized by Escort rallyists. One of its features is that the engine is bolted solidly to it, so there’s quite a vibratory din in the cabin to go with the 150bhp made possible by the engine’s freer breathing.

This is a properly fast, hard-edged machine, surely most of the way to credible rally specification. I’m sitting low and laid back, tapping through the gears via short, solid lever movements and the dabbing of a firm, decisive clutch. It revs with a torrent of vigour, snorting its way out of bends with a tail-flourish, a paragon of precision. You just know that on a gravel rally stage it would be utterly hilarious, Webers gobbling, stones flying.

#### Clockwise from facing page

RS1800 features the archetypal RS steering wheel; its aluminium-block engine originally had a single carburettor; RS1600 has a fine cluster of dials and earlier RS wheel; its BDA engine is based on an iron block.



#### Ford Escort RS1600 (launched 1970)

**Engine** 1601cc four-cylinder, iron block, aluminium head, 16-valve DOHC, two Weber 40DCOE carburettors  
**Power** 120bhp @ 6500rpm **Torque** 112lb ft @ 4000rpm **Transmission** Four-speed gearbox, rear-wheel drive  
**Suspension** Front: MacPherson struts, coil springs, track control arms, anti-roll bar. Rear: live axle, leaf springs, radius rods, telescopic dampers **Steering** rack and pinion **Brakes** Discs front, drums rear **Tyres** 165 R13  
**Weight** 785kg **Performance** Top speed 113mph. 0-60mph 8.3sec

#### Ford Escort RS1800 (in standard form, launched 1975)

**Engine** 1834cc four-cylinder, aluminium block and head, 16-valve DOHC, Weber 32/36 DGV twin-choke carburettor **Power** 115bhp @ 6000rpm **Torque** 120 b ft @ 4000rpm **Transmission** Four-speed gearbox, rear-wheel drive **Suspension** Front: MacPherson struts, coil springs, track control arms, anti-roll bar. Rear: live axle, leaf springs, radius rods, telescopic dampers **Steering** rack and pinion **Brakes** Discs front, drums rear **Tyres** 175/70 R13 **Weight** 914kg **Performance** Top speed 115mph. 0-60mph 9.0sec





### BRING ON THE TURBOCHARGERS

**AND THEN FORD** Escorts went front-wheel drive. Had to; it was the way of the world. The first warmed-over Mk3 was the XR3, a dynamically unpleasant device until SVE sorted out the suspension and gave it fuel injection to make the XR3i. Ford's German motor sport arm meanwhile came up with the RS1600i, a homologation special with different suspension tweaks and solid instead of hydraulic tappets for the transverse CVH (Compound Valve-angle Hemi) engine, making it even harsher at high revs.

The RS1600i wasn't a great success, so SVE took over and tried a different tack. The result was the RS Turbo, back with hydraulic tappets but featuring a Garrett T3 turbocharger, fully mapped engine management and power up to 130bhp from the XR3i's 105. A Ferguson-designed, viscous-coupled, limited-slip differential, its manufacture a joint venture between GKN and ZF, helped channel the power to the road, and radius rods helped locate the front track control arms better than the anti-roll bar could on its own.

So here is our first turbocharged RS, setting the template for all the 'proper' ones to follow. Body-colouring the bumpers, the single-bar front grille, the rear spoiler and the wheelarch extensions lends it a modern air not replicated in the cabin, although the Recaro seats are superb. The forced induction smooths the engine's power delivery, making this a sweetly spinning CVH as well as a punchy one. There's surprisingly little delay in the turbo's response, and this Escort can be hustled along with gusto.

That limited-slip differential does some strange things, though. It inverts the normal front-wheel-drive behaviour by pulling the nose onto a tighter line under power, in a novel re-interpretation of power oversteer. There's the pull and tug of torque-steer on an imperfect road, too, but you soon adjust to its ways and find yourself having a terrific time. In its dynamics it resembles a primordial Honda Integra Type R, which is no bad thing.

Five thousand RS Turbos like this one emerged from the Saarlouis factory before a 1986 facelift rubbed away the quirks and, in the process, spoiled the surprisingly supple ride. Last November an RS Turbo near-identical to Steve Perkins' example here, but with just 5568 miles recorded, made £60,188 at auction. 'Unbelievable,' says Steve, who has owned his Escort for 25 years.

**OUT WITH THE** Mk3, in with the Mk4. A year after the 1990 launch of Ford's most critically panned model range ever came a pair of warmed-over versions of the Mk4 Escort, reprising both the XR3i and the RS2000 names. But there was little Rallye Sport in that RS; the real thing came a year later, in 1992. The SVE-developed Escort RS Cosworth featured the







**'IN ITS HANDLING DYNAMICS THE RS TURBO RESEMBLES A PRIMORDIAL HONDA INTEGRA TYPE R, WHICH IS NO BAD THING'**



Above and left  
Final RS Escorts gained  
turbos, setting the tone for  
Focuses to follow. RS Turbo  
facia was one of the last to  
have a central radio speaker.

Cosworth YB engine of the about-to-be-obsolete Sierra RS Cosworth, as well as its floorpan (slightly shortened) and its latterly added four-wheel drive system.

Ian Callum, later aligned with Aston Martin and nowadays Jaguar's design chief, styled the beefed-up body with its spoilers, slots and louvres and its bulging arches, pulled rearwards in the case of the back ones, and Karmann built it. The engine, still based on a Pinto block, gained power over its Sierra application, but initially it was boosted by an outsize turbocharger for reasons of homologation.

In 1994, the required 2500 examples having been built, Ford downsized the turbo from a Garrett T35 to a T25. This had 60% less rotational inertia but retained enough air-compressing capacity for the road car's 227bhp. The idea was to banish the original version's yawning turbo lag and make the Escort Cosworth a properly entertaining road car.

Which it did. Our example here, owned by Ford as are all the Focus RSs, has a full-force







shove from low revs which continues far up the rev range and through all the gears. The YB motor is not known for its silken delivery but this example is the smoothest I've tried, the sonic edges filed away from its low-speed burble. In place of the meatily shifting Borg-Warner gearbox of the early Sierra Cosworths is Ford's MT75 unit, remarkable for combining a hefty torque capacity with a light, easy shift redolent of, well, an RS1600's.

You sit low and firmly clamped in huggy Recaros, at one with a machine which feels both solidly weighty and pointily agile. Its balance is mostly that of a rear-drive car but without the uncertainty of a boost-induced tail-wag; just precise, minutely adjustable responses tainted only by an unnatural lightness to the steering's on-centre response. The view aft is dominated by the T-shape of that vast rear spoiler, while those seats and a panel of extra gauges help distract your senses from the cabin's mundane roots.

This, then, is an Escort only in name and in some visuals. And after the Escort Cosworth, the RS trail went cold for a while. Until 2002, in fact, when SVE's rebranding as Team RS, headed by Dutchman Jost Capito, brought us the first, and long-promised, Focus RS.

## Ford Escort RS Turbo (launched 1984)

**Engine** 1597cc transversely mounted four-cylinder, iron block, aluminium head, 8-valve SOHC, Bosch KE-jetronic fuel injection, Garrett T3 turbocharger **Power** 130bhp @ 6000rpm **Torque** 133lb ft @ 3000rpm  
**Transmission** Five-speed gearbox, front-wheel drive **Suspension** Front: MacPherson struts, coil springs, transverse links triangulated with tie bars, anti-roll bar. Rear: MacPherson struts, coil springs, transverse and trailing links, anti-roll bar **Steering** rack and pinion **Brakes** Ventilated discs front, drums rear **Tyres** 195/50 VR15  
**Weight** 971kg **Performance** Top speed 126mph. 0-60mph 7.8sec

## Ford Escort RS Cosworth (launched 1992)

**Engine** 1993cc longitudinally mounted four-cylinder, iron block, aluminium head, 16-valve DOHC, Weber-Marelli engine management, Garrett T25 turbocharger **Power** 227bhp @ 5750rpm **Torque** 221lb ft @ 2500rpm  
**Transmission** Five-speed gearbox, four-wheel drive **Suspension** Front: MacPherson struts, coil springs, transverse links triangulated with tie bars, anti-roll bar. Rear: semi-trailing arms, coil springs, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar **Steering** rack and pinion, power-assisted **Brakes** Ventilated discs all round **Tyres** 225/45 ZR16  
**Weight** 1275kg **Performance** Top speed 140mph. 0-62mph 6.1sec



**Clockwise from above**

Escort Cosworth's engine is mounted longitudinally, unlike that of lesser Mk4 Escorts; its cabin has white dials, airbag steering wheel and burgeoning complexity; RS Turbo engine bay is dominated by intercooler pipe.







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**'THE NEW RS JUST GOBBLES UP STRAIGHTS  
AND SPEARS WITH MISSILE-LIKE HOMING  
ABILITY AROUND BENDS. THERE'S A LAUNCH  
CONTROL FOR SEARING GETAWAYS, TOO'**





## RS LINE BACK IN FOCUS

**FORD'S FOCUS WAS** a watershed car. After the debacle of the Mk4 Escort, Ford gave power back to the engineers, and the accountants no longer ruled. The first evidence of this was the excellent Mondeo, followed by effective salvage jobs on the Escort and Fiesta and the launch of the highly entertaining Ka; but 1998's Focus, with its 'control blade' rear suspension, eager engines and detailed attention to friction and bush construction in the suspension, blew its mainstream hatchback rivals into history.

Its styling was pretty striking, too, all exaggerated flank-sculpting and a dashboard of intersecting curves. A warmed-up version, dubbed ST as were (and are) other fast Fords, appeared in 2001 while the RS was still being developed from the concept car shown a year earlier. Ford's World Rally Championship operation, run by Malcolm Wilson from his workshop in Cumbria, helped with development, and the result was conceptually rather similar to the Escort RS Turbo: front-wheel drive and a limited-slip differential.

This was a surprise. The pundits expected four-wheel drive, but Ford believed that the front wheels alone were more than able to handle the 212bhp generated by the 2.0-litre 'Duratec' engine with its surprisingly high (for a turbo) 10.0:1 compression ratio. The Quaife ATB (Automatic Torque-Biasing) differential was the key to that belief. Hold that thought.

That power output sounds quite gentle by today's standards, but the aftermarket tuners quickly found ways to ramp it up, maybe even double it. With that modesty of muscle came commendably restrained looks: a deep front valance, pulled-out wheelarches and wide OZ wheels the main RS identifiers. Inside, blueness rampaged over the seat and door inserts and sections of the steering wheel's rim, including a centre-point marker. There was also a starter button, meant to evoke a competition car's fitment; the spring-loaded start position remained in the ignition switch, but it no longer worked. Cheaper than engineering a new switch, we were told.

The suspension's uprating included Sachs racing dampers, but one of the first things you notice is the civilised, light-footed ride. The next is a trace of turbo lag, despite the ample off-boost compression, but thereafter the feeling under the accelerator pedal is one of linear, mechanical connection rather than attachment by an elastic band. Closing the throttle triggers a chirrup from the turbo's wastegate; very old-school.

This is a deliciously eager engine, full of torque delivered with a deep, meaty burble. And that ATB differential? I remember some of these Focus RSs, including the one I drove on the press launch near WRC HQ, tugging this way and that as I powered out of a bend, others







having a more determined pull towards the bend's apex after a late-braking entry. Either way, the nakedness of the Focus RS's dynamics, with no electronics to smother them, drew me deeply into the drive and it was massively entertaining. But, as you'd expect, making the engine deliver more power made the drive a lot more unruly. Then the pleasure was gone.

Hindsight, and the benefit of driving the next two Focus RSs, has put the Mk1 into context. Today it feels especially light and compact, free of inertia, cajoling you into throwing it around as you might the Escort RS1600. There's a low-friction feel to its every movement, and a fabulously firm response to pressure on its brake pedal. Yes, if I accelerate hard out of a tight corner in second gear it feels as if it wants to trip over the outside front wheel, but slightly straightening the super-crisp steering or easing the accelerator sorts it out instantly. This car just wants to play. I'd have one in a heartbeat.

AND THEN THE Focus got fat. The Mk2 model, launched in 2009 after another long

wait, gained nearly 200kg over its predecessor. It also gained an extra cylinder and half a litre of engine capacity, plus a massive power jump to 301bhp. Other gains included colours other than blue, including a lurid metallic lime green which adorned the first example I drove on the press launch, this time in the Alpes Maritimes.

Something it did not gain was four-wheel drive, once again much speculated-upon given the power increase but rejected by Jost Capito. 'We'll make 305bhp work with front-wheel drive,' he had said, 'or there will be no Focus RS.' The first Mk2 Focus RS prototypes did have







#### Ford Focus RS Mk1 (launched 2002)

**Engine** 1988cc transversely mounted four-cylinder, iron block, aluminium head, 16-valve DOHC, Ford EEC-V engine management, Garrett GT25 turbocharger **Power** 212bhp @ 5500rpm **Torque** 229lb ft @ 3500rpm **Transmission** Five-speed gearbox, front-wheel drive, Quaife limited-slip differential **Suspension** Front: MacPherson struts, coil springs, lower wishbones, anti-roll bar. Rear: multilink with deformable control-blade trailing links, coil springs, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar **Steering** rack and pinion, power-assisted **Brakes** Ventilated discs and four-piston calipers front, discs rear **Tyres** 225/40 ZR18 **Weight** 1278kg **Performance** Top speed 143mph. 0-62mph 6.4sec

#### Ford Focus RS Mk2 (launched 2009)

**Engine** 2522cc transversely mounted five-cylinder, aluminium block and head, 20-valve DOHC, Bosch engine management, Borg-Warner K16 turbocharger **Power** 301bhp @ 6500rpm **Torque** 325lb ft @ 2300-4500rpm **Transmission** Six-speed gearbox, front-wheel drive, Quaife limited-slip differential **Suspension** Front: MacPherson struts with separate RevoKnuckle steering pivots, coil springs, lower wishbones, anti-roll bar. Rear: multilink with deformable control-blade trailing links, coil springs, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar **Steering** rack and pinion, power-assisted **Brakes** Ventilated discs and four-piston calipers front, discs rear **Tyres** 235/35 ZR19 **Weight** 1468kg **Performance** Top speed 163mph. 0-62mph 5.9sec

#### Clockwise from above

Mk2 looks more aggressive than Mk1; excess of silver plastic in Mk2 fascia; blue is the theme of Mk1's curvy cabin; 212bhp from Mk1 engine seemed a lot in 2002.

four-wheel drive, but they lacked the edgy, agile feel Capito wanted and they weighed too much.

Reporting on the new RS in *The Independent*, I wrote: 'He thinks the messages a powerful front-wheel-drive car sends through its steering wheel, far from being a corruption of directional purity, help you feel the power and the grip. The trick is not to let that spill over into the tugging and fighting that blighted the first Focus RS.'

'So it's RevoKnuckle to the rescue. This is not a big-fisted superhero from Marvel Comics but a clever front suspension system in which the steerable hub is separated from the suspension strut, which itself no longer turns. Similar to the system in the Renaultsport Mégane, it ensures the engine's considerable torque – 325lb ft all the way from 2300 to 4500rpm – doesn't try to pull the front wheels in unwanted directions when grip is uneven.'

Seven years later (it feels less), I'm trying this second-version Focus RS, its body muscled-up over the regular article's in much the same way as the Mk1's, again. After the previous generation's extravagant curves and swages, the Mk2 is straight-laced and sober outside and in, RS addenda excepted. The dashboard is a simple slab with an excess of silver plastic embellishment, and the whole car feels the more substantial artefact that it is.

But, goodness me, it's fast. It snicks under six seconds to the metrically mandated 62mph (100km/h), but seemingly never gets near to running out of puff. The five-cylinder sound is a deep, crisp-edged, half-octave harmonic with added firecrackers on every upshift, and you can pile on the pounds-foot almost ludicrously early in a fast corner. The Mk1's Quaife differential features here, too, but this time the RevoKnuckle lets it do its best without collateral histrionics. Thrust isn't strong enough a word. Eruption is better.

For all that, though, this isn't as subtle and satisfying a drive as the Mk1 offers. It's more

brute force and bluster, more a case of activating the controls than feeling your way through them. And then Ford finished the production with 500 examples of the RS 500 version, all satin black and featuring 345bhp. Even the RevoKnuckle might find it hard to handle that.

NOW THERE'S a new one, the latest in this rather fabulous line of fast Fords. Its 2.3-litre Ecoboost engine – back to four cylinders – is similar to the 2.0-litre unit found in several European Fords but it most closely resembles that of the latest Mustang. To cope with the extra output, up to 347lb ft of torque being available in 15-second overboosted bursts, the cylinder head is made of tougher aluminium and the block's cast liners are high-tensile castings.

Tasty factual snippets abound with this latest RS, all told with relish by Tyrone Johnson. It does, finally, have four-wheel drive, using a GKN torque-vectoring system which sends around 70% of the torque to the rear wheels unless circumstances dictate otherwise. Of that 70%, up to all of it can be sent entirely to one





## FOCUS RS MEETS THE ANCESTORS

rear wheel if needed. However, on a long straight the Focus becomes front-wheel drive, with the clutch controlling drive to the rear held at a 'kiss point', ready to engage.

As for the engine, late in the testing programme the engineers found the enormous intercooler to be too efficient, leading to condensation in the inlet tract, so part of it is blanked off. And then there's the RS's structure, significantly stiffer than a standard Focus's. It's still based on the platform that began with the Mazda 3 (Ford owned Mazda at the time) and then underpinned the Mk2 Focus. Another user of it was Volvo, also then Ford-owned, for the S40 which had a four-wheel-drive version.

Today, the RS uses some of the rear subframe hardware from the 4WD Volvo, which has led to the strange situation in which Ford now pays Volvo a royalty for the subframe that Ford designed. 'It's still cheaper than designing a new subframe,' says Johnson, 'and Volvo still uses some Ford parts so we have a negotiating lever.'

The latest Focus RS has the busy, feature-filled interior, and the air of microprocessor-controlled efficiency, typical of a current car. Obviously it's extremely rapid, more so than it initially feels thanks to the even torque delivery and almost non-existent turbo lag. And it still has a manual transmission, a six-speeder like its immediate predecessor's, so you can't help bonding with it. All Focus RSs sold worldwide will be manuals, and all will be built at Saarlouis.

On the road, the RS just gobbles up straights and spears with missile-like homing ability



**Above**

Latest Focus RS is well equipped with dials and digital sophistication. We're glad it still has a manual gearbox.

around bends. Sport mode firms the already-firm dampers by 40%, and is counter-productive unless you're on a smooth circuit. There's a launch control for searing getaways; you floor the throttle, dump the clutch and the RS does what is best thereafter. And there's that drift mode in which, tellingly, the dampers automatically set themselves to non-Sport mode to improve your feel of the powerslide you can so entertainingly generate, and then

easily hold thanks to the ultra-quick steering.

On one level, this latest RS makes you feel like a hero. It flatters your driving, makes it all very easy. Is that a good thing? For some people, it surely is. Others might crave more, well, responsibility for the way the car moves, a deeper influence on the process.

Objectively, the newest RS is the best. It's the fastest, the safest, the greenest, the cleverest, the one that makes dynamic extremes the most accessible and gives the best chance of not falling over the edge. It is, as Tyrone Johnson says, 'a true RS for the modern era'.

But it's the modern-era bit that troubles me, having grown up in another one. The new RS is a brilliant achievement, no question, and the obvious culmination of the thread started by that feisty little RS1600. I, though, would favour a Mk1 Focus RS in my garage, a car that perfectly blends the best of old and recent. And next to it I would like an RS1600. Because pleasures were so much simpler back then.

*THANKS TO the RS Owners' Club, Ford's heritage operations in both England and Germany, and Oliver Rowe in Ford's UK press office.*



### Ford Focus RS Mk3

**Engine** 2261cc transversely mounted four-cylinder, aluminium block and head, 16-valve DOHC, Bosch engine management and direct injection, Honeywell twin-scroll turbocharger **Power** 345bhp @ 6000rpm  
**Torque** 325lb ft (347lb ft on transient overboost) @ 2000-4500rpm **Transmission** Six-speed gearbox, four-wheel drive **Suspension** Front: MacPherson struts, coil springs, lower wishbones, anti-roll bar. Rear: multilink system with deformable control-blade trailing links, coil springs, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar  
**Steering** rack and pinion, power-assisted **Brakes** Ventilated discs and four-piston calipers front, discs rear  
**Tyres** 235/35 ZR19 **Weight** 1524kg **Performance** Top speed 165mph. 0-62mph 4.7sec





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**Above and below**  
RS Fords, German-style:  
Taunus 17M, on right, was the  
first RS-badged Ford, Capri  
RS2600 was one of the best.  
Taunus cabin sports wooden  
steering wheel and gear knob.

## IT STARTED HERE, ACTUALLY

*Here being Germany, where Ford's Cologne operation came up with the idea of adding some visual sportification, the vital two letters and no extra power to a two-door Taunus*

**FORD OF BRITAIN** and Ford of Germany were quite distinct in the 1960s, although less so as the decade progressed. The first shared design was the 1965 Transit, followed by the Escort and Capri of 1968, but the large cars remained separate until the 1970s. Britain had its Zephyrs and Zodiacs, Germany its 17M and 20M Taunus models. And it was such a Taunus, in two-door coupé guise, that was the first Ford to be badged RS.

The cars bore an RS badge on the tail, with a chequered-flag motif, as well as racy side stripes, but there was no mechanical souping-up over the former TS models. It was simply a marketing exercise, the better to pave the way for a rallying programme which included three entries, and some success, in the 1968 London-to-Sydney Marathon. All the Taunus RS models had versions of the Cologne V6, of 2.0, 2.3 or 2.6 litres. The 17M was the first to appear, and Ford keeps a 1970 example, painted in oh-so-period yellow, in its Cologne collection.

It is not an obviously sporting machine, but with its short gearing it feels livelier than you might expect from 1998cc and 90bhp in a body rather bigger than a Cortina's. It has a typically Ford, light and precise gearchange, quite vague steering and an accommodating ride, and is full of familiar Ford details re-interpreted in an unfamiliar way: Aero-flow rear-pillar vents, facia graphics, a front end with shades of Mk3 Cortina or, more accurately, the squarer German equivalent that took on the Taunus name after this P7-series Taunus was axed.

The RS breed, then, began with a whimper rather than a bang. Germany, however, created its own homologation-special RSs separate from British

ones. The most famous is the Capri RS2600, which used Weslake aluminium cylinder heads and Kugelfischer fuel injection to generate 150bhp. These and other modifications were homologated for racing, and made for a sensational road car. The Cologne collection has one of those as well, also in yellow. It's a rorty, revvy, punchy machine with razor-sharp steering and a fabulous balance. Might this be the most desirable RS of all? For this writer, undoubtedly.







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Photo: Stirling Moss Collection

"Jenks and I did a recce of the whole 1000 mile Mille Miglia course in 1955 and committed it to the "bog roll." From this, Jenks gave me hand signals enabling me to take blind bends and steep hills often without lifting. A mere 7 minutes and 48 seconds quicker and we would have averaged 100mph for the entire journey!"

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# THE OTHER RS FORDS

*Beyond those we've mentioned, Ford applied the two letters to...*



## CAPRI RS3100, 1973

This British counterpart of Germany's RS2600 used an overbored Essex V6 which produced the same 150bhp. In its ultimate racing form it was stretched to 3.4 litres and used a Cosworth four-camshaft conversion.



## ESCORT RS1700T, 1980

Based on the Escort Mk3, this was a rear-wheel-drive Group B rally car with a longitudinally mounted BDT (a turbocharged BDA, effectively) engine. It wasn't a success, so it was shelved in favour of the RS200.



## RS200, 1984

Ford's next Group B rally machine was a purpose-designed two-seater with four-wheel drive, a mid-mounted BDT engine and a chassis/body unit built under contract by Reliant. After the demise of Group B, influenced in part by a couple of high-profile RS200 accidents, the remaining cars in the production run of 200 became luxuriously trimmed, but still very unrefined, road cars.



## SIERRA RS COSWORTH, 1986

Originally built in the Sierra's three-door hatchback body, the breed morphed into a four-door saloon in the Sapphire body, gaining four-wheel drive towards the end of its life. The RS500 'evolution' version of the three-door, with a bigger turbo and four extra injectors (unused in the road version) is much prized today. In Group A saloon racing the Sierra Cosworths were unbeatable for a time.




## FIESTA RS TURBO AND RS1800, 1990

The Fiesta XR2i was hopeless, so Ford's second attempt at matching leading French rivals involved a turbo and the expert hand of SVE. It was rough, ready and prone to erratic torque steer, and it did not sell well. In 1992 the turbo engine was replaced by a 1.8-litre Zetec 16-valve unit with similar power, less torque, less pace but more civility. It has disappeared from history almost without trace.



## ESCORT RS2000 AND RS2000 4x4, 1991

Not really true RS models, just a Mk4 Escort with a 2.0-litre, 16-valve engine, a pair of power bulges in the bonnet and opportunist naming. That said, the RS2000 was unrecognisably better to drive than lowlier Mk4 Escorts. Four-wheel drive arrived in 1993 with a visual facelift, Escort Cosworth-like rear suspension and a rearward torque bias. Engine remained transverse, however. 





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# Imagine all the people, driving round in *this*

*You may say they are dreamers... but experts estimate that John and Yoko's 'Imagine' hearse will fetch at least £250,000 this autumn*

Words David Lillywhite Photography Stephen Kim

**OF ALL THE CARS** that John and Yoko could have owned, a 1956 Austin Princess hearse might seem the least likely. But just say you're willing to accept the pair's automotive foibles; would you then expect the rear of the hearse to have been refitted with aircraft seats?

That is indeed the case, though, as is clear opposite. Flick over a couple of pages and you'll see Lennon's signature on the hearse's logbook, should you need proof. Track down a copy of the 1972 *Imagine* film, and you'll see the hearse transport John and Yoko across their country estate. More of that in a moment...

For the last eight years, the hearse has been on show at the Austin Rock and Roll Car Museum in Texas, having been donated by its owner Milton Verret – an Austin-based entrepreneur better known for his turbine cars, including the STP Lotus Type 56 and the 'Jet Vette'.

Now the museum is selling the hearse, with Milton's blessing, and promising a portion of the funds to the

UNICEF charity. This is how we've finally had the opportunity to see it in the metal before it heads to the RM Sotheby's London sale on 7 September.

It's an imposing vehicle, with a suitably dignified appearance despite a little 'patina' to the bodywork, chrome and interior. It's clearly going to be forever known as 'the Lennon hearse' but more pragmatically it's an Austin A135 Princess – though around the time this one was built, the Austin badges were dropped, to help sales against the competing (but much more expensive) Rolls and Bentleys.

The Beatles had a thing for the limousine versions of these Austins, but in their case neither name nor price made much difference: the appeal was in wider-opening rear doors, which allowed them to leap into the back and escape frenzied fans suffering acute Beatlemania.

Most of the limousines would have been built by Vanden Plas but Lennon's hearse, chassis DH2-12785, headed for Arthur Mulliner Ltd of Northampton, almost →









Clockwise from left  
Lennon at Tittenhurst for  
*Imagine*; five airplane  
seats visible; John and  
Yoko squeezed into front  
alongside driver for  
*Imagine* film sequence.

certainly on the instructions of the buyer, Ann Bonham & Son funeral directors, also of Northampton. Indeed, the company still exists at the same address today.

Mulliner also exists, as the bespoke division of Bentley. Arthur Mulliner was the third generation of the family to run the coachbuilding company, which had been formed in 1760. Better-known Chiswick-based HJ Mulliner was an offshoot by Arthur's cousin Henry Jervis Mulliner.

Anyway... Ann Bonham & Son kept the hearse right through the 1960s, and it wasn't until 3 August 1971 that it was registered to one John Ono Lennon – he had changed his middle name from Winston to Ono in 1969 in a ceremony atop the Apple Building at 3 Savile Row, London. This was the Beatles' HQ and is the address given in the hearse's logbook, along with a 'kept in Berks' addendum in red, referring to John and Yoko's 72-acre country estate, Tittenhurst Park near Ascot, Berkshire.

The couple lived at Tittenhurst from the summer of 1969 to 31 August 1971, when they moved to New York, selling the house to Ringo Starr. It was one of the settings →



***'In the Imagine film you'll see the hearse transport John and Yoko across their country estate'***





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## JOHN LENNON'S AUSTIN


for the 1972 *Imagine* film, half-fiction, half-documentary, used to promote Lennon's album of the same name.

In it there's a two-and-a-half minute sequence in which the hearse pulls up outside the house, and John and Yoko climb in via the front passenger door onto the bench seat. The car drives across the landscaped gardens and onto the banks of the then-new guitar-shaped lake (commissioned by Lennon without planning permission), where the couple get out and walk to a boat moored at the shore.

There doesn't seem to have been much of a gap between the purchase of the hearse and the move from Tittenhurst, and at sometime after the shooting of the film, it's thought, Lennon had the five aircraft seats installed too.

But by 17 August 1972 it was gone, sold to Oscar-winning film producer William McGaw of La Jolla, California, who used it to tour Ireland with his family, before shipping it home. He registered it EMAJIN and kept it until 1987, when it was sold by Sotheby's.

'Wherever we went it attracted crowds,' McGaw said at the time. 'I think everyone responds instinctively to Lennon's marvelous understanding of the absurd.' Why was he selling? 'It is not the most practical car in the world – and maybe now is the time,' he said.

Milton Verret bought the hearse in 2005 at Julien's Auctions in Los Angeles – 'the auction house to the stars'. Now the hearse is back in London and estimated to sell for £250,000. Imagine that. 



### 1956 Austin A135 Princess hearse

**Engine** 3995cc straight-six, overhead valves, single carburettor  
**Power** 130bhp @ 3700rpm  
**Torque** 212lb ft @ 2200rpm  
**Transmission** Four-speed non-synchro gearbox, rear-wheel drive  
**Suspension** Front: independent, coil and wishbone. Rear: semi-elliptic leaf springs, anti-roll bar  
**Steering** cam and peg steering box  
**Brakes** Drums all round, hydraulically operated  
**Performance** Top speed 79mph. 0-60mph 23sec  
**Weight** 2200kg approx

**Above left and left**  
 The Austin's original logbook, showing John Lennon's signature and Apple Corps' Savile Row address; 4-litre engine is basic but smooth.





# JAGUAR E-TYPE

REBUILD ADVERTORIAL

## E-Type Independent Rear Suspension Rebuild



**M**y name is John Bennett and I own a 1967 Jaguar E-Type, Series 1, 2+2, which has an original 4 speed gearbox. I have owned it for 10 years. I have recently noticed a clonking noise whenever I accelerate.

I have spoken to other E-Type owners, with suggestions ranging from radius arm bushes, diff bearing, and rear shock absorber mounts. I came to the conclusion that a full rebuild would be the best way forward.



Having contacted SNG Barratt, I found them extremely helpful and knowledgeable which has enabled me to fully rebuild the unit. I have listed below the parts I purchased from them and hope this will help other owners who are considering similarly rebuilding their E-Type independent rear suspension.

**//** Thank you John for your kind words and we are delighted that we were able to supply all the parts required for this rebuild. We at SNG Barratt, take great pride in offering the very best service to both existing and new clients. **//**

**Julian Barratt, Managing Director, SNG Barratt**



1. **Koni Rear Shock Absorber** (Series 1-2) part no C25951KONV1.
2. **Rear Coil/Road Spring** part no C25939.
3. **Diff Pinion Oil Seal** (all models) part no 3840\*.
4. **Diff Rubber Pinion Oil Seal** part no 3840R.
5. **Diff Outer Pinion Bearing** part no 3843.
6. **Diff Pinion Seal Gasket** part no 607183J#.
7. **Collapsible Spacer** part no 12456.
8. **Diff Inner Pinion Bearing** part no 3844.  
**Diff Case Bearing** part no 3845.  
**Diff Outer Bearing** part no 8495.  
**Diff Output Bearing** part no 11101.  
**Diff Output "O" Ring** part no 8950\*.  
**Diff Output Oil Seal** part no 8436A\*.  
**Rear Brake Cylinder Assembly** part no 8778SS/1.

9. **Timken Rear Bearing Kit (3.8 early model)** part no JLM9732# (for other models please contact SNG Barratt). An uprated Polybush option is also available, contact the SNG Barratt team for more information.
10. **Rear Cradle Mounting** part no C17198.
11. **Rear Sub Frame Mounting** part no C17198\*.
12. **Rear Anti Roll Bar Link** part no C20765.
13. **Anti Roll Bar Bush** part no C10940.
14. **Outer Fulcrum Kit** part no C16029FK.  
**Inner Fulcrum Repair Kit (seal/washers etc)** part no C17167FK for Series 1 3.8 later models - please enquire.
15. **Diff Cover Gasket** part no 3931.
16. **Hand Brake Pad Set** part no JLM9518\*.
17. **Radius Bush** part no MHC3160AA (using existing arm).

18. **Shock Absorber Top Ring** part no C19027.
19. **Rear Spring Seat** part no C19820.
20. **Rear Shock Absorber Upper Sleeve** part no 8688.
21. **Hand Brake Retraction Fork** part no 9750.
22. **Rear Brake Caliper Seal Kit** part no 10510\*.
23. **Rear Brake Disc 3.8 model** part no C15223\* for other models - please enquire.
24. **Rear Radius Arm with Bushes** part no C23824.
25. **Half Shaft UJ** part no JLM9639\*.
26. **Pair of Half Shaft Covers with Bung & Fittings** part no C23616P.
27. **Anti Roll Bar Bush** part no C16633.

Please note some parts shown above are only for single items and may require multiple.

**Recommended Oils; EP80/90. ISD Oil Additive POW.**

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# PERFECT 10

*At Le Mans in 1925, the works Bentley ran out of petrol after leading the race. In 2016, it's back for another go – and we drive it there*

Words John Simister Photography Jayson Fong











**I**T'S ALL ABOUT the hood, a racing car's fate sealed by a few square yards of strong beige canvas. Why? Travel back with me for 91 years, to the 1925 Le Mans 24 Hours, and I'll tell you.

The Bentley 3 Litre of Captain John Duff and factory test driver Frank Clement had won the previous year's race, so racing driver Dudley Benjafield persuaded WO Bentley to enter a works car for 1925 to run alongside the repeat entry of Duff and Clement. 'WO' had initially thought the idea of a 24-hour endurance race a mad one, but Duff and Clement had entered the first-ever Le Mans 24 Hours in 1923 – their Bentley 3 Litre was the first entry received by the organisers – and they finished fourth.

Not such a mad idea after all, then... and, after 1924's success, Bentley was surely the favoured marque to win again in 1925. Test runs and calculations were carried out, fuel stops scheduled; all looked good for a repeat performance. But for 1925 there was a new rule. Le Mans was a race for cars exactly the same as you could buy and use on the road. And to emphasise the point, cars had not only to be fitted with a hood, but the hood had to be erected by the driver at the start of the race – it

was the first year of the 'Le Mans start' – and stay in position for the first 20 laps.

The *Tricolore* dropped at 4pm on 20 June 1925. The drivers sprinted across the track, constructed their hoods, started their engines and roared away. Bertie Kensington Moir, sharing the Number 10 Bentley with Benjafield, got off to a cracking start with only Duff's Bentley ahead of him. Ten minutes later, the end of the first lap saw Segrave leading in his Sunbeam, Moir second, Duff third. On lap 12 Moir snatched the lead, only to be re-passed by Segrave a lap later. On lap 14 Moir was once again in front, but the next lap saw him head into the pits to refit the detached oil-filler cap.

Back out into the race, hood still up, Moir battled on to catch the new French leaders. So did Segrave, a sticking throttle now remedied. The Bentleys' second drivers waited for their machines to arrive at the end of the 20th lap, ready for their stints... and waited... and here was Duff on foot, out of breath from his mile-and-a-half run. His petrol pump had failed and he needed spares. Thus equipped, he ran back. Total time lost: an hour and a half.

Then Moir arrived, also on foot. His car had run out of petrol at Pontlieu (well north of the

modern circuit and now swallowed up by the Le Mans city sprawl) on the 18th lap and, as no liquids could be added to a car during the first 20 laps, Bentley Number 10 was out of the race. For the fastest car in the event, it was game over before Benjafield got to drive a single lap.

How? Why? Because, when erected, the hood functions as a very effective parachute, thus making the Bentley's already awful aerodynamics even worse. So fuel consumption goes up, and nobody had considered that fact.

Then, at 5am on Sunday morning, Clement in Bentley Number 9 was nibbling away at the leaders again when a float chamber departed from one of the bronze-bodied 'sloper' SU carburettors and the engine caught fire.

So that was that for 1925, but Bentley's time at Le Mans would come again. As for the Number 10 race car, MH 7580, it got sold on and vanished into the outside world.

THAT WAS THEN. This is now, and MH 7580, the first works Bentley, is en route to Le Mans again. Not only that, it is going to race in the 2016 Le Mans Classic and avenge the ignominy of nearly a century ago. This daring scheme is the idea of owner and serial vintage-





#### Clockwise from below

Bentley boys stoke up on coffee and croissants; old roads through towns are more fun; Simister exercises Number 10 on a Route Nationale; saloon shadows sports car with a château behind; driving onto Portsmouth-Caen ferry in the 4½ Litre.



Bentley fancier Jonathan Turner and vintage-Bentley restorer and knowledge repository William Medcalf. This dynamic duo is already well schooled in extreme old-Bentley activity through the Peking-to-Paris rallies and the exploits (including racing on stubble fields) of the Benjafield's Racing Club.

Jonathan is MH 7580's proud owner, and someone who believes in using – really using – his cars. It's what they're for, he says, and they're tough enough to take it. The 3 Litre was very shiny when he bought it, having been beautifully restored by William Medcalf's company but not looking remotely like the ex-works Bentley racer that it is. That's how its previous owner wanted it, showroom-fresh.

So William got the 3 Litre back in his emporium that's centred around a converted petrol station in Liss, West Sussex, and 'unrestored' it back to how it would have looked after its Le Mans adventure and a few decades of neglect. He was delighted. 'At last I can make it a racing car again,' he thought.

Dulling of the paint here, race numbers applied and partly rubbed away there, the shine taken off the wood... it's brilliantly done, a story reinstated in the best foil I've yet seen to the

*'William has a phrase for successful selection in a vintage Bentley gearbox. "Find it or grind it" is his motto'*

(true) notion that a car is original only once.

I meet the Bentley at the Medcalf garage on the Wednesday evening before race weekend. The Bentley and William, Jonathan, Jonathan's sons Freddy and Harry, friend David Hall (son of famous rally driver Anne Hall), photographer Jayson, and able mechanics Jamie and Dominic, who will be following in William's stately blue 3 Litre saloon, which contains a mountain of spares and camping gear. The rest of us will be distributed between MH 7580 and Jonathan's 4½ Litre, a potent battle cruiser and Peking-to-Paris veteran.

Cut now to Thursday, a few miles inland from the Caen ferry port. Would I like to drive the 3 Litre? Of course I would, and the weight of history and the importance of not breaking it sits on my shoulders not at all. Early-morning fog shrouds the middle distance of the old road

that runs next to the new Route Nationale. Focusing on the road is made harder by the square-mesh gauze screen ahead of me, where my eyes naturally alight given the fuzz beyond. The screen is a period racing fitment, designed to stop solid objects while allowing the passage of air to reduce wind resistance, which it achieves with eerie whistles.

Jonathan is next to me in the matching leather bucket seat. 'Remember to pump this when the pressure drops below about 2psi,' he's telling me, pointing to the plunger that pressurises the fuel supply. 'And be firm with the gearchange.' (William has another phrase for successful selection in a vintage Bentley gearbox: 'Find it or grind it' is his motto.)

Centre throttle, outside handbrake, check. Magnetos on, check. Press starter button and four big cylinders blatter into life, 16 valves







fluttering, sloper SUs hissing. Surprisingly light clutch disengaged, wait for the gearwheels to slow to a halt, engage first. Clutch up – it's progressive as well as light, so clearly not the cone original – and we're off, two boys in the back trusting me not to pitch them in the ditch.

Patience and firmness are the keys to tidy gearchanges here. First to second benefits from a double-declutch on the way, but the next two upshifts needs just a momentary pause in neutral before sliding the hefty, ultra-precisely acting lever into the next slot. With a little practice it all works fine, but the double-declutching for the downshifts does call for very accurate timing. This is made all the harder by the foot contortions required for heeling-and-toeing as a roundabout approaches and you need to brake at the same time. It's better, if slower, to do all the braking first.

Having refined the technique of making the Bentley work, I can enjoy the sounds of the engine and its languid but insistent torque. As for the former, imagine a 45rpm recording of a tuned Austin-Healey Sprite played back at 33⅓rpm, with the bass turned up. As for the latter, it's the chief reason the Bentley feels so indomitable up hill and down dale. That's especially true once past a heady 2000rpm,

#### Above and facing page

Number 10 turns by Notre Dame in Sées; centre throttle concentrates the mind; open road, then time to relax for David, Freddy and Harry; approaching Hôtel de Ville; William fiddles as Dominic stands by; passing the pits.

upon which the exhaust note hardens and everything gets livelier, with a hearty blare aft.

The wheels wear large, squashy, straight-grooved tyres from the Universal Rubber Company of Pennsylvania, mounted on bigger wheels to mimic the look of Number 10's original rubberwear and raise the already long gearing to seven-league-boot levels. They probably do little for the steering's precision, but a gentle wander either side of the intended heading is the way of a vintage car. So I relax, and let Number 10 do its thing as it lopes along.

This is a fabulous way to travel, wind blowing, engine singing, keeping up with modern traffic and sometimes passing it. Holding 70 or 80mph is easy. People wave at us in towns as the tuneful whine of hefty gear teeth bounces off walls along with that big-chested exhaust note. Now Jayson, looking back from the 4½ ahead, wants me to turn the lights on for photographic effect. They don't work. Glad we found that out; they'll be useful come the night race.

FRIDAY IS PRACTICE day, but not until we've fixed the lights. Jamie and Dominic have a good part of Number 10's bodywork in bits as they chase the cause of constantly blowing fuses. I go in search of some more, returning to find they have located the problem: a wire trapped under a floor panel. The tyres are pumped up to 50psi; 'I hope they're up to being raced,' remarks Jamie with a furrowed brow. Our race number is 32. 'Dammit, I forgot to ask for it to be Number 10,' says Jonathan.

And now he's heading out for the Plateau 1 practice session, for the pre-war cars, to qualify for the three 43-minute races run for each of the six *Plateaux*, or grids, covering Le Mans racers in segments up to 1981. That's 18 races which, with time in-between for displays and the collecting of stranded cars from the previous race, makes exactly 24 hours. Each plateau gets a race in the morning, the afternoon and at night. Peter Auto run a tight and punctual event.

Ours is the equal-oldest car in the race, an honour shared with a Bugatti Type 35. And Jonathan can't contain his excitement. 'It's the first time this car has been on this track since 1925, and I'm driving it!' he exclaims as he comes back into the pits. So, how did it go? 'I can't decide whether to brake for Mulsanne's →







## BENTLEY TO LE MANS CLASSIC

Corner and take it in third, or carry through in fourth. I don't want to kill the brakes. It's certainly not the slowest in the class, although some little low thing shot past. It reached 2600rpm on the straight. It's overgeared, really, but we have these wheels for the look.'

So far, so good. Later, William does the night practice, after which Number 10/32 is 46th fastest out of 63 in the Plateau, averaging 64.4mph for the lap.

**SATURDAY AFTERNOON**, and the sun is beating down. About seven of us have piled into or onto the Bentley for the run from paddock to holding area, and now Jonathan is on his own as he lines up the worryingly hot Bentley for the Le Mans start. It's 4pm and this year, brilliantly, Plateau 1 is the first to race. The flag drops, the drivers run to their cars and – what's this? Jonathan is standing on the driver's seat, pulling the hood closed, contorting himself as he tries to clamp the header rail, fumbling with the left clamp, then into the seat, start engine, roar off last-but-one.

The crowd goes wild. The commentator too,

explaining in a tumble of words how it was in 1925, and how this is the first time anyone has started a Le Mans Classic with a hood-erection. Maximum authenticity. But has it put paid to the Bentley's chances? It hasn't; after the LM start spectacle at each Plateau's first race, the cars form up on the far side of the circuit for a rolling start and are let off the leash at the Ford Chicane, just before the start line. There's time, then, for Jonathan to get the hood properly attached before it blows away.

Here's the Bentley now, running neck-and-neck with another (a 4½ Litre), sounding the fruitiest of all the Bentleys as it thumps past, engine obviously cooler now, Jonathan pumping his fist in the air because it's actually racing at Le Mans for the first time in 91 years! Three laps in and he's due for the obligatory pitstop, but it's getting very busy in the pitlane – a very quick Talbot here, an MG there,

### Clockwise from below

Hood-up lap completed; 10 minutes into first race; Jonathan and Harry get the comfy seats; busy traffic in Plateau 1; ready for the start – left to right, mechanics Jamie and Dominic, William Medcalf and Jonathan Turner.

another Bentley about to block the Talbot... and here's Jonathan. Driver is clearly running a lot hotter than car, but there's still stamina left for a live pitlane interview. 'I got past a couple of people,' he's saying, 'but there's much more wind resistance with the hood up.' As was the case in 1925, too.

Another Bentley comes in – it's Martin Overington, who runs the Hotel de France, and his 1929 Blower is the quickest Bentley in the race. So much so that he cooked the front brakes in practice and his car is now using front brakes cannibalised from our saloon. It also has a neat line in extra engine cooling, an MGB radiator hung on the side of the engine bay. Meanwhile William is out in Number 10, is lapping well in his first-ever race at Le Mans, and will finish 41st. Progress.

'The tyres are absolutely shite,' he says after the race. 'We'll put the saloon's wheels [with stickier Blockley tyres] on for tonight. I had a great race with Lars Rolner in a 4½, passing and repassing, but I got him in the end. It's on the limit everywhere, flat-out in the Porsche Curves, and it was pulling 2800rpm on the straight.' →





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A P A S S I O N

R E A L I S E D







A quick calculation reveals this to be 91mph, showing the merit of some light engine tuning. Higher compression, gas-flowing the ports and careful balancing have together raised output from the standard 85bhp to 105.

AFTER THE NIGHT race, Jonathan is buzzing. 'I had a great tussle with an Aston and a Blower. These tyres are better and it's really flying.' William is revved-up, too: 'There's oil on the corner before the Mulsanne Straight. I went through flat-out and it drifted a long way... yee-ha!' Number 10 finished 26th. Clearly our pilots are getting the hang of this.

And so to the last race on Sunday morning. William starts this one. 'I wasn't sparing the horses, I was on it the whole time,' he enthuses at the pitstop, but Jonathan plans to take it easy for the final stint. And yes, Number 10 holds together and crosses the line in 28th place, Jonathan punching the air with both fists, 1925's ignominy finally avenged. 'History is being made, boys,' shouts William. 'We've waited 91 years for this!'

It gets better. Once the total distances covered

## Clockwise from top left

Three happy Turners; Talbot tails Number 10 in night race; champagne sprays outside Jack Barclay in Berkeley Square; Jonathan relies on Number 10's straight-line stability as it finally finishes Le Mans; night race imminent.

in the three races have been aggregated, it turns out that Number 10 Bentley has finished an amazing 22nd overall in Plateau 1. And then there is the Index of Performance, that complicated Le Mans speciality which takes notional engine power into account. The Bentley, unbelievably, is in sixth place, sandwiched between a Riley TT Sprite and a Morgan and beating all the other Bentleys. And it hasn't missed a beat all weekend.

NOW IT'S MONDAY. We're scything up the A3 and into London with a posse of other Bentleys: the saloon, Jonathan's 4½ Litre, three other racers from the Le Mans Classic and several others we've gathered up at the Medcalf Collection emporium en route. We're heading for the Jack Barclay Bentley dealership in Berkeley Square, just like the Bentley Boys used to do after their Le Mans adventures.

The square is packed with people and yet more vintage Bentleys, a sea of mobile phones recording our arrival and two victory laps as the evening traffic is temporarily thwarted. Taxis hoot (more in irritation than celebration, we suspect), two motorcycle policemen give the thumbs-up and the crowds cheer as we line up the Le Mans racers outside the showroom.

Champagne corks pop, the bottles' contents are liberally sprayed. Number 10 is the centre of attention, the star of the moment. And, unseen by we temporal folk, over in the corner the ghosts of Bertie Kensington Moir and Dudley Benjafield are grinning from ear to ear. **End**

## 1925 Bentley 3 Litre short-chassis Speed Model

**Engine** 2996cc, inline four-cylinder, cast-iron monoblock/head, SOHC, 16 valves, twin SU G5 'sloper' carburettors **Power** (standard) 85bhp @ 3000rpm **Transmission** Four-speed non-synchrom gearbox, rear-wheel drive **Suspension** Beam axles, leaf springs, friction dampers **Steering** worm-and-wheel **Brakes** Drums all round, mechanically operated **Tyres** 33x5 **Performance** Top speed c90mph **Weight** 1525kg





Image courtesy of trebor photography

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# FOXY LITTLE NUMBER

*Rumour has it that this one-off helped inspire the Ford GT40...  
Octane tests the unique Vixen GT, found as a total wreck  
and restored with the help of its original builder*

Words Diederik Plug Photography Maurice Volmeyer









Last March this olive green sports car was presented to the public at the Antwerp Classic Salon, after a four-year restoration project. Pundits searched their archives in vain for information on the small, mid-engined coupé. Just like the general public, they couldn't work out what car this was, let alone where it came from, nor – and certainly no less important – what it might have led to. Didier van der Linden has the answers: this is a Vixen GT, built in the early 1960s, in Britain. And yes, it could well have a place in history more significant than its simple uniqueness.

Van der Linden not only restored this car into much more than its former glory, he also unravelled its fascinating history. That history begins with Ian Stronach, a former racing driver and certified petrolhead from Manchester, England. Stronach was a well-known name in the British club-racing world during the 1960s and 1970s, but elsewhere just one of many unsung heroes who spent their entire careers racing without ever reaching the pinnacle.

Stronach drove in Formula 2, Formula 4, Formula Libre and Formula 5000, popular classes in the overcrowded British racing world of those decades, in which many much more famous racing drivers also took part. He drove in single-seaters made by Eagle and Kincraft – and built his own cars as well. He won a race or two but he was better known for being a gifted engineer.

Sometime in the early 1960s Stronach decided to build his own car. He wanted it to be light, fast and mid-engined. And he wanted to build a coupé – which was quite unusual at a time when most racing cars of such a configuration were barchettas. Stronach started his project around 1962 by building a steel tubular chassis and adding a modified nose section from a Cooper-Jaguar MkII, sourced directly from John Cooper. It took him two years to finish the project.

And no wonder it took him so long. Stronach had a racing career to pursue. Moreover, his car was completely handbuilt. He designed and welded the spaceframe himself, and also created the bodywork from scratch. 'He even designed the car with an integrated rear spoiler – the first time any car had such a feature,' Didier claims.

Stronach did use *some* existing parts, at least: the suspension came from Triumph and, to power his creation, he had his sights set on a 3.5-litre V8 from GM. He couldn't find a suitable example, though, and had to settle for one of his racing engines – a 1.6-litre Ford Kent four-cylinder with supercharger, good for 160bhp. Christened the Vixen GT, and finished in a bright red racing colour, the car (chassis number V1/X1) was finally finished in 1964. Tests at Oulton Park proved it could easily get to a top speed of around 120mph.

IT WAS SOME 48 years later that Didier van der Linden found the car stored in a farmyard in Strasbourg. 'I was looking for a restoration project. I wanted to buy an aluminium car,

because I had already restored a few cars, but I had never worked with aluminium before. I found this car on the internet. The caption read only "Prototype, 1964" but nothing was mentioned about its history or even its name. When I saw it, I could not figure out what it was and the owner didn't know either.'

The car was in a pitiful state, Didier remembers. 'The bodywork was complete, but the aluminium was badly damaged and corroded in many places. The paint had completely disappeared, it had the wrong wheels, no engine and the interior was full of sand. The only original items still attached to the car were the braking system, suspension, steering wheel and seats. The other parts came in a big bag.' Still, Didier decided to buy it. 'I didn't know what it was, but I could see it was a sports car with racing-inspired suspension. I was intrigued.'

It took Didier a year to retrace its history. He discovered that Ian Stronach had parted with his creation after only a short time. After that the Vixen was owned – and raced – by a succession of drivers. Didier found Vixen owners whose names will sound familiar to British members of the club racing community, even if they didn't ring any bells with him: Bob Baxters, Roger Cole, Roy Hill.

'Hill took the car to Europe,' Didier explains, pointing at a sticker on the windscreen. 'This is a paddock sticker from Zandvoort, sometime in the 1970s.' After Hill, American photographer Wayne Philips took possession of the Vixen. He then sold it to British racing car manufacturer →



**Clockwise from left**  
British racing driver Ian Stronach, pictured in the 1960s;  
under development – the unique Vixen GT that Stronach  
built; as it is today, restored and better than new.

















#### Clockwise from below

Period Zandvoort sticker on the windscreen has been preserved; the V8 that was always intended, this one a 4.0-litre Rover evolution of the 1960s Buick design; hand-fabricated pedal assembly contrasts with simple switchgear; curvaceous flanks admit air to mid-mounted engine; owner and restorer Didier van der Linden in the Vixen GT.







*‘We’re sure that Eric Broadley took more than a little inspiration from the Vixen for his Lola MkVI – the basis for Ford’s famous GT40’*

CTG in Dorset, which subsequently sold it to British driver Graham Capel. The last name in the long list of Vixen owners Didier could find was that of French racing driver Lionel Aglave, who took the car with him to France in 1980.

Further to all of that, according to Didier, his car has a further unique claim to fame. And it’s a significant one. ‘Ian Stronach told me that one day he went for a drink at a friend’s house. That friend was a technician at Lola racing cars. While he was there, Lola boss Eric Broadley came by to visit. He saw the Vixen standing in the driveway and asked Ian if he could take a closer look at it. According to Ian, he spent more than an hour scrutinising the Vixen in detail. Soon after that, Lola presented the MkVI. That car looked suspiciously similar to the Vixen. And, as we all know, that car was used as the basis for Ford’s famous GT40 project. Ian and I are very sure that Broadley took more than a little inspiration from the Vixen for his Lola MkVI.’

The effort Didier put into finding out about the car’s history is one thing; restoring it was quite another. ‘I had to start from scratch,’ he says. Luckily, he could call upon the man who had built the Vixen all those years ago. ‘Ian Stronach is 81 now, but he’s still a petrolhead and he’s mentally as sharp as a 20-year-old,’ says Didier. ‘He helped me a lot; he made a number of new technical drawings for me, to show me how he’d intended the car to be constructed. He gave me invaluable information about the parts he used and the way in which he used them.’ Still, restoring the bodywork was a daunting task. ‘It was like a giant jigsaw puzzle; I had to find out how everything fits together and missing parts I had to make myself.’

Only the roof and the nose are still those from the original car – the rest of the bodywork Didier made himself, using Stronach’s advice, old photographs and some technical drawings. In the process, he taught himself to work with aluminium, using homemade wooden models

for shaping the metal (of which dozens litter his workshop), much patience – and YouTube. ‘I must have watched thousands of instructional YouTube videos in which people explain how to work aluminium. I bought an English wheel and taught myself how to use it. It’s a matter of trial and error – and perseverance.’

It’s the result that counts and Didier has done an outstanding job. Compare the 2016 Vixen with pictures of the original car and you’ll find that almost every detail is right – and if they aren’t, there’s a good reason for it. All glazing, except the windscreen (on which the Zandvoort sticker is protected by a special coating), is of Plexiglas. The roof panel is removable, as is the louvred tail panel, which is flanked by two massive exhausts. The rear lights are from a Ford Cortina Mk1. Only the body colour isn’t anywhere near original.

‘It’s *Oliva Verde*, a colour used by Alfa Romeo in the 1950s,’ Didier explains. ‘I love Alfa Romeos almost as much as I do British cars, so







### 1964 Vixen GT

**Engine** 4.0-litre Rover V8, Viper 224 camshaft, four Weber 45 DCOE carburettors on crossflow inlet manifold  
**Power** 280bhp @ 6500rpm **Torque** 284lb ft @ 3800rpm **Transmission** Five-speed manual, rear-wheel drive  
**Steering** Rack and pinion **Suspension** Front and rear: double wishbones, coil springs, Bilstein telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar  
**Brakes** Discs **Weight** 880kg **Performance** Top speed 188mph

I definitely wanted that colour for my Vixen. But the striping is inspired by the colour scheme used by Roy Hill.' The nose is graced by a colourful, meticulously recreated Vixen logo, with its stylised fox's head.

Thanks to many, many hours spent painstakingly recreating this unique piece of history, Didier has built the sports car that Ian Stronach wasn't able to build. It is visually identical to the original, but technologically it's much better, safer and faster than it ever was – especially as it is propelled by the engine it should have had all along: a V8. This one is a bored-out Rover version of the 1960s Buick original; weighing only 144kg, it's significantly lighter than the cast-iron Ford engine that Stronach was obliged to fit.

The suspension has been reinforced and upgraded, with Bilstein dampers specially handbuilt for this car. Austin-Healey disc brakes are now fitted all-round, in place of the original inboard drums, and the original's Volkswagen gearbox has been replaced with a much stronger five-speed unit from a Renault 21 Turbo. Meanwhile, in the cabin the potentially knee-crushing crossmember under

the dashboard has been replaced with a safer, higher-mounted reinforcement.

Climbing aboard is quite a challenge, thanks to big, wide sills, both doubling as fuel tanks. Once you're ensconced in the tight seats with their racing harnesses, the cabin feels remarkably spacious – occupants of 6ft or less can easily fit inside the Vixen with headroom to spare. It feels like a cosy office. The pedals are adjustable and the perfectly positioned gearlever is logically placed for your left hand.

That V8, lurking only a few centimetres behind your shoulder, runs at around 1200rpm at idle, sounding just as it should, burbling away ominously until a push on the throttle results in a sharp whine. The acceleration is spectacular. Thanks to its low weight (a mere 880kg) and its 280bhp V8, the Vixen sprints away like a greyhound. The low driving position and overwhelming noise of the engine make the sensation of speed phenomenal.

Steering is razor-sharp, the car feeling kart-like. With its near-perfect weight distribution (48:52 front:rear), stiff suspension, solid stance and wide tyres, the Vixen is unfazed by any corner even at high speeds; oversteer isn't

present until you really, consciously push the car beyond its limit. The Vixen GT feels more like a Lotus Elise gone feral than a 1960s trackday special – the main difference being that, thanks to that smooth V8, you can also cruise at leisurely pace in fifth gear. Even then, flooring the throttle will kick the Vixen into a frenzy of deafening acceleration until you fear the revcounter needle will break off.

'I have driven it on the track at Mettet, in Belgium,' says Didier. 'It's very stable and mind-blowingly quick. The only problem I had was with the cooling of the front brakes. I'm busy devising a way to improve that for track use. But otherwise this car really is as good as Ian Stronach intended it to be.'

Didier van der Linden's Vixen GT is the only example in the world. But not for long. Ian Stronach originally planned a production run of three cars. He even built the tubular chassis for the other two cars, but never got around to actually building them. The original frames are now owned by Didier, who plans to build both. And what better way to celebrate the re-emergence of a once-forgotten yet historically important car? **End**



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BMW ALPINA B2S







# THE ART OF NOISE

*One of Alpina's earliest creations was this fierce, 3.0 CSL-based B2S. Robert Coucher gets to grips with an art collector's example*

Photography Paul Harmer

**THIS 1971 BMW ALPINA 3.0 CSL B2S** is a very significant and rare motor car. Finished in eyeball-searing Inca Orange, it is one of the first 169 CSLs. All these early cars were carburettor-fed lightweights, built to homologate the model for the European Touring Car Championship.

So that makes this one an ultra-lightweight, 135kg lighter than later CSLs, most of which were re-fitted with the weighty 'City Pack'. That burdened them with electric windows, power steering, chrome bumpers, glass side windows, a cable release to replace the bonnet pins, sound deadening and thick carpeting. The springs and dampers were softened, too.

So this 1971 first CSL iteration is the purest and the most motor sport-focused, leading straight to the CSL racing cars that enjoyed great

success. But this example is not just one of the 169 factory-spec CSLs. It is an Alpina B2S, developed with even more modifications, all road-legal. Chassis number 2211724 was supplied directly to Burkard Bovensiepen's Alpina tuning company, where his team set about it. It already featured the lightweight steel body (you can check that by gently depressing the centre of the roof), aluminium doors, bonnet and bootlid with simple opening stays, fixed rear Perspex side windows, no front bumpers (the rear ones are glassfibre) and definitely no heavy City Pack.

The six-cylinder engine was then given the full Alpina treatment: forged high-compression pistons, big valves, high-lift cam, triple Weber 45DCOE carbs, a tuned tubular exhaust

manifold and a road version of the racing ZF five-speed gearbox. Adjustable front and rear anti-roll bars were fitted along with progressive-rate springs, Bilstein dampers, a 45% locking differential with oil cooler, and larger ventilated disc brakes all round behind the intricate 8x14in, split-rim alloys.

The result? A lusty 250bhp in a tied-down chassis, and the promise of 0-60mph in 6.6 seconds and a top speed of 151mph, faster than the Aston Martin V8 of the day. This was a road-going racing car in its purest form.

BMW MOTOR CARS started to really come good in the late 1960s, with the arrival of the 2002 sports saloon and elegant Grand Touring CS coupés. The previous *Neue Klasse* BMW







saloons of the early '60s were hardly 'ultimate driving machines', being rather dull and sensible. But when stylist Wilhelm Hofmeister's E9-series 2800 CS was unveiled in 1968 (it was effectively an enlarged version of 1965's 2000 CS, with two extra cylinders and a much more assertive nose), classy elegance came to the fore.

In 1971 the BMW 3.0 CS and its fuel-injected CSi sibling were launched with a 2985cc version of the company's signature straight-six. Now the Bayerische Motoren Werke had a top-flight, sophisticated machine to take on the best from Stuttgart. But a little added vim is always a good thing, and that's where the privateer Alpina outfit stepped in to continue BMW's successful Touring Car campaign with the E9. BMW had

quit Touring Car racing after the 1969 season with its 2002 Turbo, but Alpina was ready to step in and its mildly modified CS coupé finished ninth overall at the 1969 Spa 24 Hours.

In 1970 Alpina formed the backbone of the E9 racing effort and ran cars in some ETCC rounds as well as the German championship. The engines now produced 300bhp through their triple Weber carburettors; this and the lightened shells helped towards victory at Salzburg and Spa against the Ford Capris. Sadly, though, the Alpina effort was withdrawn from the Nürburgring that year due to tyre problems.

In 1971 Schnitzer joined Alpina on Europe's racetracks, but Ford had got its act together and was dominant that year. In 1972 BMW poached

Jochen Neerspasch and Martin Braungart from Ford to set up a works motor sport department, but Alpina continued its own campaign. This bore fruit in 1973, the Alpina driven by Niki Lauda and Brian Muir winning at Monza against Capri drivers Jackie Stewart and Jody Scheckter. BMW's works team went on to take six ETCC titles between 1973 and 1979.

Ultimately the CSL evolved into the slightly mad 'Batmobile' with its deep front spoiler, air splitters atop the front wings, a full-width roof spoiler and a huge rear wing. As for Alpina, it's worth noting that its cars were sold with full BMW warranties, such was the mutual trust that grew from Alpina's motor sport relationship with BMW. The same is true today, the latest





models now branded simply as Alpina – a motor manufacturer in its own right.

Outside motor sport, BMW also became synonymous with pop art in the 1970s through the BMW Art Cars. Which leads to the long-running debate in the classic car world about whether rare and collectable historic cars are artworks. Or, at least, automotive art.

French racing driver Hervé Poulain pushed this along by commissioning American artist Alexander Calder to paint the first BMW Art Car, a 3.0 CSL that Poulain then raced at Le Mans. Since then, artists including David Hockney, Roy Lichtenstein, Andy Warhol and Jeff Koons have created further BMW Art Cars. We shall return to this shortly...

IN THE METAL, the orange B2S looks every inch a sports car of the 1970s. There's no front bumper, just a neat black spoiler. Those fat alloys are shod with period-correct 205/70 VR14 Michelin XWX tyres. BMW Alpina signage adorns each front wing. The shark-nosed B2S looks aggressive, of course, but Hofmeister's elegance of line still shows through with the airy coupé glasswork and just enough bright metal to be redolent of the time. And it is immaculate.

This B2S was found by BMW guru Barney Halse of specialist Classic Heroes. 'It spent most of its life in Switzerland,' he says, 'and was re-painted white some time in the '80s. That was common because these bright colours of

**Clockwise from far left**  
Looking small next to today's bloated SUVs, Alpina goes on a night-time London prowling; owner Kenny Schachter's other orange artwork; author Coucher blunders headlong into kinetic graffiti-fest.





the '70s fell out of fashion then. A friend of mine in France discovered it about ten years ago and it was in very good shape. Apart from the respray it was totally original, retaining all the lovely rare Alpina bits. None of the body panels had been removed and it was rust free, which is very unusual with the E9 cars.'

Barney was clearly thrilled with the find. 'We restored it using all the original components, right down to the rare Scheel seats, the Britax racing harnesses as fitted by Alpina and the additional instruments for oil and axle temperatures. Now it's back in the original Inca Orange, it's one of the best examples of a B2S I have seen. The only thing we had to replace was the exhaust but it's an exact replica of the Alpina system. Then we went carefully right through the car and detailed it.'

This 1971 CSL predates the first Art Car, but there's a relevance to its pop art looks because it's owned by international contemporary art curator, pundit and dealer Kenny Schachter. He attempts to articulate the CSL's appeal: 'My background is in industrial design, so as well as

art I love functioning mechanical creations,' he explains. 'Naturally I love cars aesthetically as well as for the physical experience of driving them, which can involve sweating and suffering. And I like cars inside.'

What does he mean? Two things, actually. 'I like having them inside my space where I live and work, and I like the inside of classic cars with their simple structures and alive odours.'

We have met at Kenny's central London home. It's also his vaulted gallery, creatively paint-spattered studio, office and motoring mews. When I walk into the gallery full of huge contemporary paintings I realise just in time that the weird-looking plastic chairs are not for sitting on. They are an 'installation', and the back-to-the-future sidelights are not just for mere illumination.

Kenny's interest in cars is so intense that his office is actually *in* the mews garage. His desk and computer are surrounded by the exciting shapes and smells of a Porsche 911 RSR, a Lancia Fulvia 1.6 Fanalone Lusso, a Fiat 124 Abarth and the lurid BMW Alpina. 'I like street

versions of racing cars because I drive them on the road,' he says, 'but they still have that focused race car set-up that's so challenging.'

IT'S TIME TO GET the B2S out to see what all the fuss is about. The four-seater coupé is not a big car by today's standards but you can see why BMW and Alpina had to work so hard at cutting the standard 3.0 CS's ample 1165kg kerb weight. The aluminium door swings open with lightweight ease, bar a touch of snagging from the pillarless window arrangement.

The Scheel bucket seat is extremely tight and heavily bolstered, so once ensconced it's a bit of a fight to climb back out again. But the seat centres are trimmed in grippy cloth and you're strapped in tight via the fiddly British-made harness. The drilled steering wheel with its Alpina crest juts out at an angle and is set high, →

**Facing page, clockwise from top**  
Race-flavoured cabin hints at Alpina's purpose; engine is almost in race tune; ZF gearbox has industrial-grade shift quality; Alpina-specific wheels, arches and signwriting; vital extra dials.

### 1971 BMW Alpina 3.0 CSL B2S

**Engine** 2985cc, SOHC straight-six, triple Weber 45DCOE carburetors **Power** 250bhp@6500rpm **Torque** 200lb ft @ 5500rpm **Transmission** Five-speed ZF manual  
**Steering** Worm-and-roller steering box **Suspension** Front: MacPherson struts, coil springs, anti-roll bar. Rear: semi-trailing arms, coil springs, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar **Brakes** Ventilated discs all round, servo assisted **Weight** 1165kg **Performance** 0-60mph 6.6sec **Top speed** 151mph











complemented by a wooden gearshift knob topped by another Alpina badge. The instruments are BMW's usual functional-looking VDOs, with extra Alpina clocks mounted in the centre of the wood-trimmed dashboard to register oil temperatures in the engine and rear axle. Very racing car...

I give the Webers two pumps of juice and start the big six. The engine is loud and forceful. It is mostly unsilenced and wants to spin up much more quickly than the docile and refined unit of a standard BMW. The clutch is firm and springy and first gear is positioned towards me and back, on a dogleg. With no power assistance the steering is heavy when manoeuvring. It lightens up on the move but is not one of the sharpest controls in the package. The seating position gives a good view down the long bonnet and the CSL is easy to place on the tight London streets.

Changing up through the gearbox, a five-speed ZF unit in place of the standard, undergeared Getrag four-speed cog-swapper, leaves no doubt that this 'box is a tough and functional affair. It requires long, deliberate movements and is accompanied by quite a whine from the layshaft.

The Alpina engine, though, is glorious and

## 'THE ROADS OPEN UP AND THE THROTTLE CAN BE PUSHED DOWN TO THE STOP, SHARPENING THE BELLOW INTO A HOWL'


very evidently a pure racing engine untroubled by restrictive exhaust back-pressure. It wants to climb straight up to the 6500rpm limit, becoming ever smoother as the revs rise. That said, this is a grunty, old-school straight-six which doesn't bother with creamy refinement. It's much more aggressive than that.

The big six seems more British than German in operation, like a six you will find in a C-type Jaguar or an Aston Martin DB5. The triple Weber carbs respond with an instantaneous reaction to the slightest kiss of the throttle pedal, unlike slower, more-modulated 1970s fuel-injection systems. And the big valves and high-lift camshaft allow the unit to breathe deep and long. It shoves the lightweight CSL

down the road with controlled aggression and soundtrack absolutely, deliciously unfettered.

As we escape London in the evening, the roads open up and the throttle can be pushed down to the stop, sharpening the bellow into a howl. Now I've got used to the industrial gearbox, driving the lusty BMW is a highly, physically enjoyable affair.

The previously jittery suspension smooths out as the speed rises. Now the Alpina feels flat, balanced and secure through fast corners as it attacks the roads, powerful all-round ventilated disc brakes adding welcome assurance. A final test, heading firmly into a traffic-free roundabout, shows this balance to be beautifully complemented by snatch-free oversteer through slow corners courtesy of the limited-slip differential.

This ultra-light Alpina B2S is a pure-bred, analogue thoroughbred that's intoxicating to drive. It combines the attributes of one of the finest BMWs ever made with the responsiveness of a racing car for the road, thanks to the attentions of one of the best German engineering outfits of all: Alpina. 

THANKS TO owner Kenny Schachter and Barney Halse of Classic Heroes ([www.classicheroes.co.uk](http://www.classicheroes.co.uk)).



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# 'WE CALL IT THE TOYSHOP'

Combine unique pre-war cars, classic racers and petrolheads, shake not stir, and you have a wonderful place to be

Words: John Simister Photography Dirk de Jager

**IT USED TO BE** a garden centre. Now the airy, glass-fronted building on Sint Jansveld in Wommelgem, a little east of Antwerp in Belgium, is full of proud old motor cars being worked on by experts as versed in computer-aided design as they are in magicking away imperfections in ancient bodywork or rebuilding an engine for a Rolls-Royce Phantom 1. Meanwhile, shiny and imposing machines sit in the showroom or out front for potential buyers to admire.

Here, at Historic Competition Services, old meets new. Fears that the skills needed to maintain, improve and restore vintage cars are being lost, as those with the skills fade out of the workforce, evaporate as soon as you pass through HCS's showroom, via more glass, and into the workshop. The gearbox that youthful-looking Ben Reynkeus is building looks ancient but the gears inside it are new, CAD-drawn by Ben to founder and owner Julian Messent's design for clarity.

You can see that Ben loves his work, as do his colleagues. This is central to HCS's ethos and that of Julian Messent. His business has been running only since 1 February last year, but it's humming. A glance across the workshop's immaculate epoxy floor past its bespoke wooden workbenches takes in the prototype Riley MPH, a Talbot-Lago 150C, a Talbot 105 Brooklands race car, an Alfa 6C 1750 Testa Fissa, a 1.5-litre supercharged Lagonda Rapier with 150bhp, a Delage D6-70 TT car on a ramp, a Lagonda M45 team car replica, a Lancia Augusta badly restored in the US and being sorted out properly, and... well, quite a lot more, as this shop is packed with wonderful and exotic machines from all over Europe.

Some are in for repair or restoration, some for maintenance, and five of them are being readied for the Mille Miglia. 'It's our busiest time of the year,' says Julian. 'We're working every hour God sends. It's six days a week at the moment, sometimes into the evenings. Right now there's that little red Lagonda Rapier to test. It's got modern gears which need modern gear oil, and it's been firing the oil out past the oil scroll. So we've fixed that. The customer will be here in a minute...'

HCS does all this with a staff of only seven: Julian, Diana, Ben, Jonathan, Mark, Steve and Richard. So how has Julian built this bustling business from nothing and in such a short time? Through relationships and loyalty, largely. He came to Belgium from Britain 23 years ago, and for 20 of those years worked with another historic-car specialist. In the end he and his business partner had different views about how to develop, so Julian took a big breath and walked away to set up HCS and do things the way he wanted to.

'And the customers followed. They were







**Above and below, clockwise**  
 Spacious workshop is bathed in natural light; Talbot engine awaits work; engineless SS100 fronts Talbot, Talbot-Lago and Bentley; the showroom; supercharged Lagonda Rapier faces Delage D6-70 TT car; visitors enter through glass doors.





wonderful and got right behind us from the start. I'm sure some even "invented" work for us, finding faults in their cars for us to sort out. Others gave storage space while we were setting up. I daren't call them customers, really – they're all friends who we will always remember. HCS really belongs to us all; we don't exist for ourselves. It's something special here.'

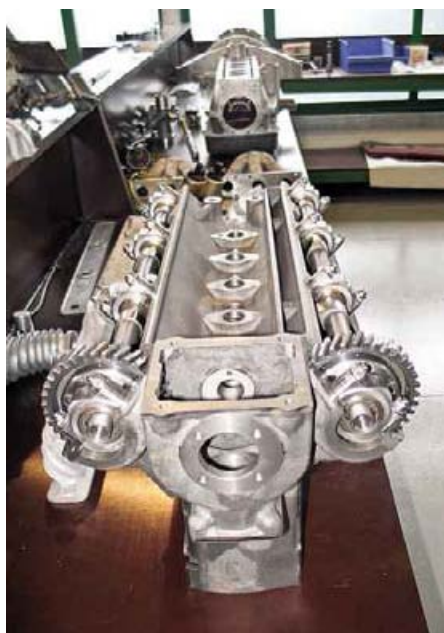
Where do these customers come from? 'Mostly they are Dutch and Belgian, but we have a lot from Germany and there are Swiss customers, Italian customers, even a couple of Americans. Every day someone new phones up. Being in the centre of western Europe, it's the ideal location.'

Julian admits he was lucky to find this site. 'The estate agent asked me: "What's your dream?" I said I wanted plenty of parking, a glass front and glass on the way to the workshop, so nothing is hidden and everyone can see what is going on. And this is what we've got. We call it "Customer Clarity".

'We took over the bare shell on 19 November 2013 and finished everything on 30 January 2014. Friends, wives, they all pitched in, and the landlord didn't even charge us for the first month. Two of us made 600 metres of 80x80mm square tube into many metres of bespoke workbenches, and we had to grind 1000 square metres of polished concrete floor so the epoxy would stick to it. Then the whole space had to be

#### Above right and below

HCS can supply a new engine block for an Alfa Romeo 6C 1750 Testa Fissa like this one; twin-cam cylinder head for a pre-war four-cylinder takes shape from new components.



## 'In our toyshop, everybody should feel welcome. We're all petrolheads'

heated to 17 degrees – in the winter – for a week before the epoxy was laid. After drying the floor for a week, we installed the machinery, most of it sourced from England.

'Oh, and we had to design and fit the garage doors in the middle of all that. Proper, structured organisation is how this type of business runs.'

Time for a tour, beginning with the 'dirty room' where components are cleaned and blasted as required. Next, the machine shop with, among other equipment, two Harrison lathes and a CNC milling facility for the components that HCS makes from scratch. Now the engine-building room, meticulously clean, air-conditioned and beautifully wood-panelled. That Phantom engine's white-metalled bearings had fallen apart and the cylinder head studs were corroded, so HCS had to re-make everything. New Teflon-coated Arias pistons await fitting, along with a new head.

Next to it an MG K3 Magnette engine is being built around a new head and block, with pistons, connecting rods and crankshaft all made by HCS, as is the new magnesium supercharger. There isn't enough manpower to do the whole process, though, so a foundry casts the casing in a pattern HCS has made, and Geoff Harris of British bespoke parts specialist Stemax – 'He's a good friend,' says Julian – does the machining. HCS has had some new Alfa Romeo 6C 1750 fixed-head monoblocs cast (*Testa Fissa*, as the Italians would say), a process which costs €50,000 just to get to the first proof casting, which is then chopped

in half to check its internal dimensions.

Back in the main workshop, the 12-plug Talbot-Lago T26 G engine belonging to a Czech owner hasn't been run for 30 years and will need a new crankshaft, as the originals are prone to shedding their bolt-on counterweights via the side of the engine. And there's a tiny Dagrada sports car with a Siata engine enlarged to 750cc and fed by brass Webers, fresh from a year-long rebuild.

Julian wants HCS to be about play as well as work, though. 'We're in the process of acquiring and adapting the building next to this one. It will have a mezzanine floor, a full bar and kitchen and Chesterfield sofas. It will be a gentlemen's lounge like the RAC Club. Gantries will overlook the showroom. Around the sides will be a panorama of Brooklands complete with banking, made in epoxy. People will feel they are coming into a toy shop manned by real enthusiasts.

'We'll have events here, and customers and friends will be able to use the club free of charge. We want to give something back to our customers because they give us happiness and life.'

He warms to the theme. 'Later, we'll have some drive-in Sunday mornings, and anyone with an old-timer can come in for coffee and cakes. When I was 17 I used to drive to Duncan Hamilton's garage and press my nose against the window, and they would never let me in. We want to be the opposite of that... enthusiasts catering for enthusiasts, mixed together in a professional but relaxed and friendly environment.'

[www.historic-competitionservices.eu](http://www.historic-competitionservices.eu)



# Goodbye to Gentleman Jack

*Everyone loved Jack Sears, who has died aged 86. But behind the gentlemanly manner there lay a steely determination*

Words Richard Heseltine Portrait LAT Photographic

**THE JULY 1964** Ilford Trophy race for GT cars at Brands Hatch might have been a mere footnote in motor racing history were it not for a comeback drive from 'Gentleman' Jack Sears which has since entered into legend. Fastest qualifier Bob Olthoff was a non-starter in the European Grand Prix support race following a shunt in practice so, as the cars lined up on the grid, Jackie Stewart was the pole-sitter aboard John Coombs' Jaguar E-type. Roy Salvadori slotted into the middle of the front row in Tommy Atkins' Cobra. Fourth-place qualifier Jack Sears moved up a place from the second row to flank them in his Willment Cobra. Then something extraordinary happened.

As Sears blasted past the pits at the end of the second lap, he saw a black flag bearing the number 32. It was his number. Sears pitted, believing there must be a problem with the Cobra, only to find himself on the receiving end of a stern telling-off from an official for starting from the wrong grid slot. This unscheduled stop in the pits was his penalty. An aggrieved Sears then lit up the Cobra's rear tyres, snaked down the pits – all the while shaking a fist – and proceeded to make up for lost time.

'I did things that day that I had never done before and never did again, because I was so angry,' he recalled in 2010. 'I gave it the full

treatment. I braked later, I pushed harder and suddenly I was two seconds a lap quicker than I had been in practice. I sliced past everybody.' And that included Stewart with four laps to go. 'I won the race and set a new lap record. It was as if someone else were driving the car.'

Sears would recall this race with a sense of wonder. That, and laughter. He would invariably go on to describe how car owner John Willment

*'I did things that day that I had never done before and never did again, because I was so angry'*

had voiced his displeasure to Deputy Clerk of the Course Basil Tye in the loudest way possible. Concluding that an apology was unforthcoming, he then brought matters to a head by manhandling Tye into an ornamental flower bed. Willment was subsequently fined

£100 and barred from the pitlane at any RAC-organised race meeting for the rest of the season.

If nothing else, this anecdote illustrates just how good Sears was in the heat of battle. The thing is, he didn't need to have adrenaline coursing through his veins in order to win. His brace of British Saloon Car Championship titles were merely two gongs in a bulging resumé. He may have been a gentleman, but beneath the urbane exterior was a core of steel.

Sears, who died on 7 August aged 86, was an amateur driver long before the term became a slur. His grandfather had established the family fortune building up a successful shoe business, while his father, Stanley, had engineering and farming interests in addition to a sizeable collection of veteran and vintage cars. Born into privilege, young Jack was educated at Charterhouse School, and was given a Morgan 4/4 while still in his teens. It was aboard this car that he embarked on his motor sport career in 1948, before replacing it with an MG TC, which rapidly gained a supercharger.

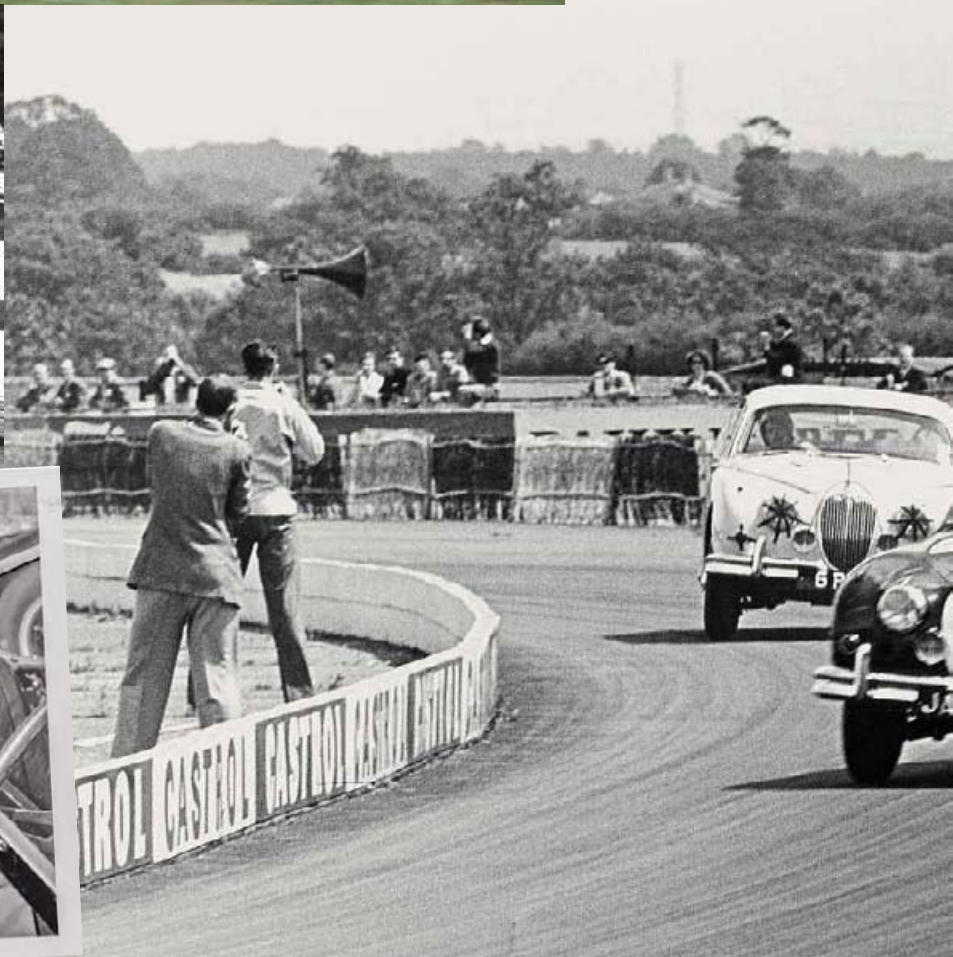
After graduating from the Royal Agricultural College in Cirencester, Sears acquired Uphall Grange, a 600-acre estate in Norfolk. Motor sport was merely something he was involved in when not farming, but he did it well, whether it was racing a Lister-Bristol or rallying an











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*'He asked Barbara Castle, who had been Minister of Transport, if our 185mph M1 run had prompted the 70mph limit. She said it had not'*

number of BMC or Jaguar products. And, armed with an unlikely Austin A105, Sears emerged as the inaugural British Saloon Car Championship winner in 1958.

The class-based series saw Sears and Jaguar man Tommy Sopwith both finish the season on maximum points, with the title being decided by a duel in identical Riley 1.5 saloons over two five-lap heats, the drivers swapping cars in between. Sears, customarily racing with his tie tucked into his shirt, won the shoot-out on aggregate by 1.6sec.

Sopwith retired from driving shortly thereafter, and Sears applied his skills to his Equipe Endeavour squad from 1960 to 1962 in an E-type and an Aston Martin DB4 GT, among other desirable machinery. He wasn't paid to drive but, as he was wont to say, he did at least stay in some of the finest hotels...

In June 1960 Sears, ever the all-rounder, landed a drive in a Yeoman Credit Formula 2 Cooper at Crystal Palace. An engine fire meant he missed practice so he was obliged to start at the back of the grid. He scythed through the field in pouring rain to finish third behind winner Trevor Taylor and Geoff Lawton. Team principal Ken Gregory offered him a permanent seat for the following year but, as a father of three with a farm to run, Sears concluded that he would stick to saloon cars and GTs thereafter.

In 1963 Sears joined the John Willment Automobiles squad and enjoyed class-winning success in a Cortina GT before upsetting the establishment aboard a 7-litre Holman Moody Galaxie from May of that year. The American battleship demolished the Jaguar opposition

first time out at Silverstone, with Sears driving the entire distance in top gear.

He would be near-unbeatable to the end of the season despite a flood of protests from rivals left trailing in his wake. None was upheld, and Sears bagged his second British Saloon Car Championship title at a canter.

While perhaps remembered more for his skills in saloons, Sears also excelled in sports cars and that same year saw him take class honours and fifth overall at the Le Mans 24 Hours alongside Mike Salmon in a Maranello Concessionaires Ferrari 330 LMB. He returned for the 1964 event amid a media maelstrom.

Sears recalled to the author in 2004: 'It's a minor claim to fame, I know, but I can say that I was the only man ever to race all three types of Cobra coupé. There was the AC car built for the 1964 Le Mans race in which Peter Bolton and I did 185mph on the M1 in the run-up. Tony Martin, the nephew of AC's chairman Derek Hurlock, was a newspaper man – on the illustrative side rather than a journalist – and he was there. He went back to Fleet Street and told all of his friends. It turned into a real story.

'The publicity was massive and Peter and I then had to live with being blamed for the 70mph speed limit [being introduced]. Some years later, Tony met Barbara Castle, who had been Minister of Transport at the time, and he asked her if our 185mph run had prompted the imposition of the speed limit. She said it categorically had not. It had been in the planning stages for years.

'Anyway, in the race, Peter was driving at night and had a tyre blow out. The car was badly damaged and he spent a night in hospital.'

At Le Mans in 1965, Sears and Dr Dick Thompson finished eighth aboard the Alan Mann-tended works Daytona Coupé, the sole survivor of the Ford-powered onslaught after all the GT40s had expired.

'I had rather more fun in the Willment Coupé, though,' Sears claimed. 'John had tried to buy a Daytona from Shelby but instead Carroll gave him drawings to make his own. My first outing was the '64 3-hour race at Snetterton. It was blanketed in fog, but I knew that circuit

**Clockwise from near left**

Sears oversteers, in this case manhandling a Mk2 Jaguar around Silverstone in 1960; in cheerful mood aboard a Cobra; concentrating on holding a DB4 GT on the limit; punting AC Cobra '39 PH' around Goodwood to second place in the 1964 Sussex Trophy; joshing with Bob Olthoff (middle) and John Whitmore (left) ahead of the BMC team's bid on the 12 Hours of Sebring – a photo presumably not taken, to judge by the heavy overcoats, in Florida.





## JACK SEARS

like the back of my hand. I knew exactly where I was and won by a lap. I won next time out at Brands, too. That was a lucky car for me.'

Unfortunately, Sears' luck ran out aboard another V8-engined sports car. A test session in a works Lotus 40 at Silverstone in September 1965 ended at Abbey Curve on the old GP circuit. Sears had been travelling at an estimated 150mph when the car left the road. He woke up in an ambulance en route to Northampton Hospital. His left arm had been severely damaged, Sears having been pinned down by the overturned sports-racer. The header tank had also split, which left him with scalding burns and they subsequently became infected. He would in time recover, but Gentleman Jack's driving career was over.

But that wasn't quite the end of the story. From the other side of the pitwall, he would go on to act as president of the BRDC. He was also a long-time chairman of the Ferrari Owners' Club. Son David, in turn, was a successful driver before he established a championship-winning F3000 team.

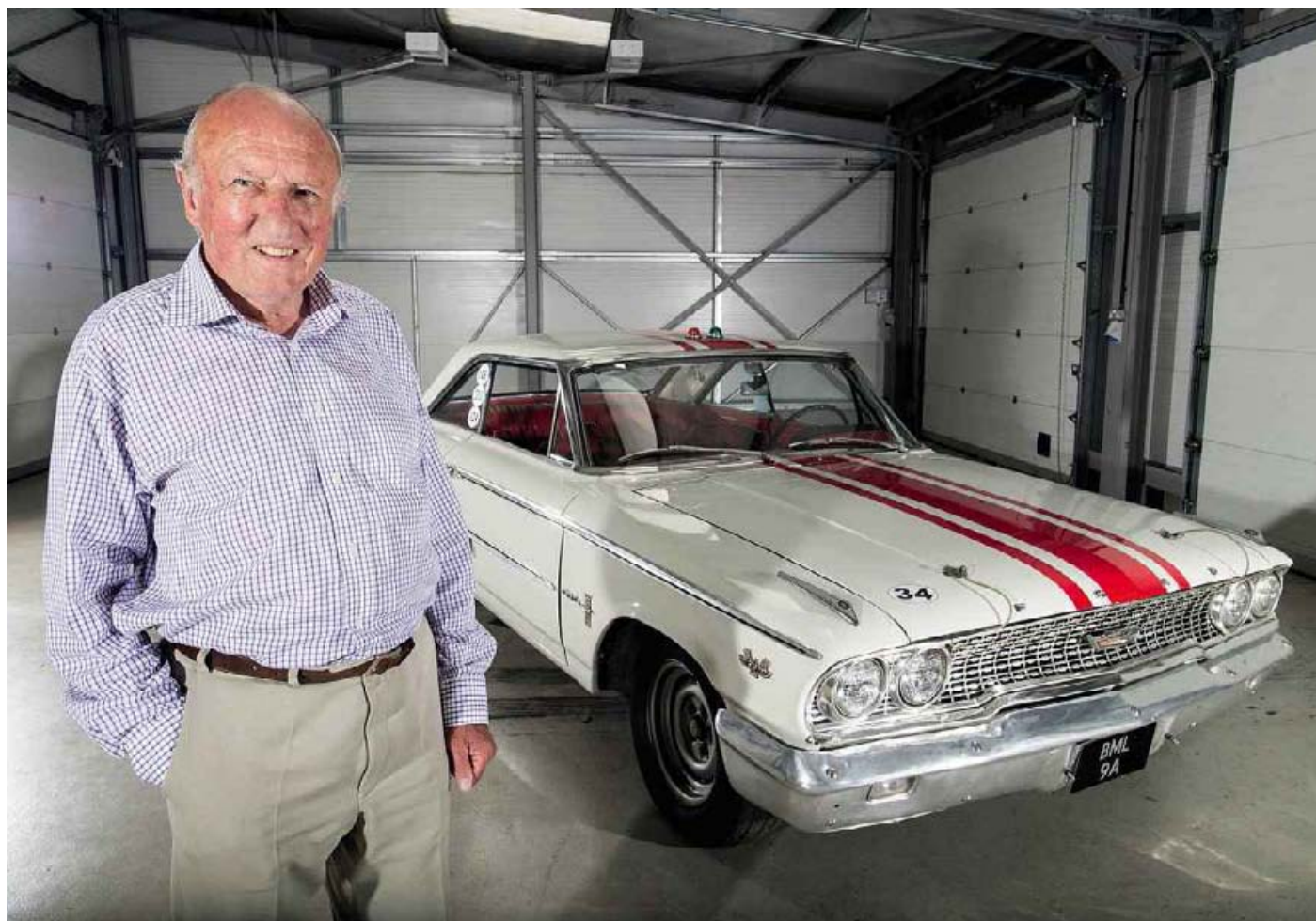
Modest, courteous and a gentleman to the end, Jack Sears was that rarest of things: a man for whom nobody in the pitlane had a bad word. That is a wonderful epitaph in itself. *End*

### Below

A wet Silverstone in 1964, and Sears is about to retire after being unable to avoid Tommy Weber's spinning Mini Cooper, which has pushed the front wing onto the wheel; Sears in recent years with his Galaxie, BML 9A, bought back from South Africa.



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MATTHEW RICHARDSON / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO



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**U**ncharted waters ahead. Except by a few intrepid explorers, that is. The Healey story starts with the 100-Four, right? That's what most people think, assuming there was no Healey life before the Austin connection. Then they dimly remember something about a Healey Silverstone, a racy thing with cycle wings and a stack of trophies.

But unless you're more than a certain age, and it seems I just about am, there's another world of Healeys that may well have passed you by. For company founder Donald Healey, though, they were his most completely in-house designs of all, and the ones over whose creation he had the most control.

To promote them effectively, while having a jolly good time in the process, he entered these early Healeys in many motor races, most notably the Mille Miglia. And now the three 1948 works entries are sharing workshop space at Warren Kennedy's Classic Restorations company, two of them (at the time of our first visit) being prepared for the 2016 event. What are the chances of that? Of all three not only surviving, but also being at the same place at the same time? Naturally, we had to have a look.

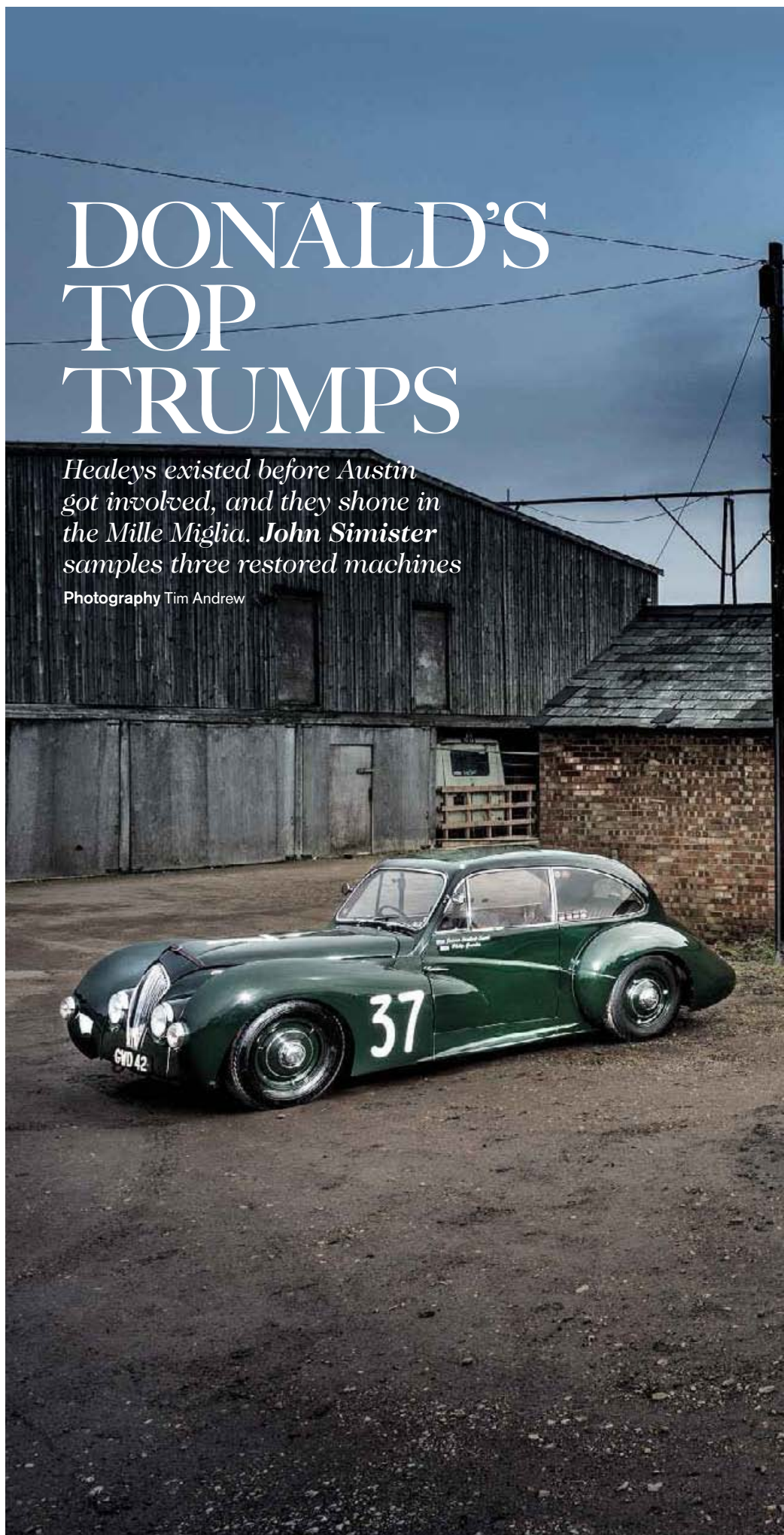
I KNEW A BIT about pre-Austin Healeys, thanks to a book – dated even then – I was given when I was about four years old. *British Motor Cars*, published in 1952, included a section on the Healey Tickford two-door saloon and the Healey Abbott drophead coupé, essentially the same cars apart from their roof arrangements, plus a more modern-looking two-seater sports car with an Alvis engine. So rare were these cars and their relatives that I have never deconstructed the pre-Austin Healey range any further than these and the Silverstone. How unanalytical, and how wrong, I have been.

There's a sad-looking, engineless Tickford in an alleyway next to the converted barn that forms Classic Restorations' main building. But I notice it only after seeing past the shiny svelteness of the two Elliott coupés and the Westland tourer sitting out front. These are the three 1948 Mille Miglia cars. A 1949 Mille →

# DONALD'S TOP TRUMPS

*Healeys existed before Austin got involved, and they shone in the Mille Miglia. John Simister samples three restored machines*

Photography Tim Andrew









## EARLY HEALEYS

Miglia car is also in residence, a rather less curvy concoction which we'll meet shortly.

What's clear is that the Elliott is not at all like the Tickford, apart from an overall swoopy roundedness and the radiator grille which, greatly stretched laterally, helped form the face of the Austin-Healey 100. The Tickford's windscreen has angles in its corners and the headlights are mounted in the front wings, whereas the smaller Elliott has a narrower, more rounded and almost panoramic windscreen and its headlights neatly flank the front grille.

Abbott, Tickford, Elliott, Westland... it's an eclectic mix of two coachbuilders, a furniture-maker and an aircraft manufacturer. There was a logic to this, but it's not what you might expect. Common to all, though, are a Riley engine and an unusual form of double-trailing-link front suspension. And a pace considered remarkable at the time.

I'M DRIVING THE Westland, a curvaceous vision in light metallic green and effectively an open Elliott. The green is an original colour, Healey being an early British adopter of hues daringly innovative and flamboyant in the greyness of post-war Britain. To be driving it is quite an honour, given who has sat here before me, holding this functional-looking, riveted-together, three-spoke steering wheel.

This wheel is adjustable easily for reach and

laboriously for height. A fine array of British Jaeger dials occupies a panel to my left, six instruments in all. Switches of pre-war style and function are scattered across any available spaces. Through the divided windscreen I can see the sharp ridges that crown the curvy wings.

Yes, yes, but who are these past luminaries? For the 1948 Mille Miglia it was Donald Healey himself, navigated by son Geoffrey and the Westland running at number 44. The following year motoring journalist Tom Wisdom took the wheel, with Geoffrey (quickly gaining knowledge as a development engineer) on the road book again. This time the race number was in a new three-digit format, denoting the start time: 355, as still worn today.

The Healey duo achieved ninth overall and second in the unlimited-capacity sports car class in 1948, despite a crash late in the race which left them with a half-hour delay and without lights as darkness fell. In 1949 Wisdom and Healey Jnr once again proved the Healey's prowess by winning the Touring class, just two minutes ahead of the second-place Alfa Romeo and averaging 69.6mph. And now, 68 years later, the Westland still feels pretty fit even after tackling last year's Mille Miglia retrospective.

Its 2443cc Riley engine, taken from the RM-series saloon and delivering 104bhp from its four very undersquare cylinders, features a pair of camshafts mounted high in the block and a

### Below and opposite

Lusty engine comes from Riley RMA; cornering style feels much more vintage than an Austin-Healey 100's; modern Mille Miglia rally equipment contrasts with traditional, Jaeger-dialled dashboard and split screen.







*‘These speeds enabled The Motor to declare the Healey to be the fastest car in the world in series production’*

pair of SU H4 carburettors. It's a lusty, torquey unit with a crisp, open-hearted blare to its exertions; its outputs were sufficient to propel the prototype of the Healey's more slippery Elliott incarnation to 104.56mph on the Como autostrada in Italy during a test of surprising distance (given post-war petrol shortages) by *The Motor*. This was increased to 110.65mph later in 1947 on Belgium's Jabbeke Highway in the same car, lightly tweaked with a cool air duct to the carburettors and platinum-tipped Lodge spark plugs, the better to ward off detonation on the low-octane 'pool' petrol obligatory at the time.

These speeds enabled *The Motor* to declare the Healey the 'Fastest Car in the World in Series Production', although the accolade didn't last long. Today this Westland just feels brisk as it snorts away through its SUs, and there's little point in venturing beyond 4000rpm or so as I manhandle the slow, deliberate gearshift between the three tuneful intermediates and a silent top via the short, cranked-back gearlever.

Recently I drove several Austin-Healey 100s, lovely cars which felt lithier, lighter and sharper than I expected. You might expect the Westland and Elliott to have a similar dynamic signature to that of the 100, so it's a shock to discover what a difference a few years of knowledge acquisition by Healey's engineers can make. There's a late pre-war feel to the Westland, not the beam-axle, bounce and flex variety but one still born of long, springy steering linkages and primitive geometry despite what looks to be a less conventional, and possibly more advanced, suspension design.

My arms and upper body suspect as much as soon as I manoeuvre GWD 43 out of the car park and heave it onto the main road. Now, here's a roundabout. I heave again at the steering wheel, to discover that once the slack and springiness is taken up and the steering engages properly, the response speed quickens dramatically and I have to unwind a little lock. Partly this is the the springiness unwinding itself, partly it's a touch of geometry-induced

roll oversteer, which you can exploit to help point the Healey further round the roundabout, especially if you than apply a dab of power to tighten the line further.

It's the same principle, but in a less-extreme manifestation, on faster, more open bends, and once you have learned the rates at which things develop you can have as good a time as those Mille Miglia entrants, past and present, did and do. The faster you go, the better it gets.

The steering is never actually pleasant but the Westland is stable in a straight line, it feels quite light despite the steering's heft, and it rides with a supple sort of gentle agitation. This example is running on radial-ply tyres of an unusual 180mm section on the distinctive Healey three-hole wheels; it must have been enjoyably slideable on its original 5.75-15 crossplies. The brakes are drums, obviously, but drums have unfair scorn heaped upon them in my view (I own three cars with drum brakes all round, all of which stop beautifully) and these have a smooth, firm, confident response.





BACK IN Warren Kennedy's office we sit at the same table and on the same dining chairs that once occupied the boardroom at the Donald Healey Motor Company. On the table is a letter from Healey to Bill Boddy, editor and lodestone of *Motor Sport*, dated 10 January 1946. Healey wanted to tell Boddy 'about the new car' for which a 10-second time to 60mph was claimed. The letter came from The Cape, Warwick, telephone number Warwick 503.

The Cape, in the area nowadays home to JME Healeys, was more of an assembly shop than a manufacturing operation back then. The cars developed there arose out of an idea hatched during World War Two when Donald Healey worked at Humber. Healey's colleagues included chassis designer Achille Sampietro and body designer Ben Bowden, and the three of them sketched out what became the first Healey, chassis number A1501.

After the war, Healey set up his company and got a local sheetmetal fabricator, Buckingham's, to make the chassis and two prototype bodies, one tourer and one saloon. The latter was fitted to the second chassis, A1502, and used thicker steel to prevent the cracking that A1501 suffered. A1501 was finished on the day that Healey wrote to Bill Boddy, while A1502 was the 'fastest production car', albeit then still a prototype, that *The Motor* clocked at 104.56mph on the Como autostrada. A1501's body was later removed and fitted to a revised, stronger B-prefix chassis to make GWD 43, the Westland I've just driven.

So, why is it called Westland? This aircraft manufacturer was happy to take on contract work after the war, and made the production chassis frames and the panels to clad them. The Elliott name comes from Reading-based furniture manufacturer Samuel Elliott and Sons, which produced the ash body frames for both body types, open and closed. Naming the cars after these companies helped Healey to negotiate advantageous rates for their work.

Once the cars were in production, it was Westland which assembled the Elliott body frame sections, panelled them in Birmabright aluminium (steel was rationed, aluminium was plentiful), and fitted the body to its chassis. It also fitted the engine, transmission and running gear, trimmed the cars and finished them off. Bill and Ray Buckingham continued to build about 20 prototype Healeys over the following years, however.

NOW, THE TWO Elliott saloons with their deep windscreens and distinctive half-moon rear windows. GUE 722, in an even more eye-blowing metallic green, was Count Giovanni 'Johnny' Lurani's car for the 1948 Mille Miglia. He shared it with Guglielmo Sandri, and the pair, as Lurani (a well-known journalist of the time) reported, 'got off to a great start, and we pulled out a good lead until Pescara. But shortly

afterwards the Panhard strut, which held the rear axle in place, broke.' So the coil-sprung rear axle had lost its lateral location, and there were still 1200km to go.

Amazingly, nothing else broke. The Healey battled on as the left rear wheel regularly clouted the exhaust on right-hand bends, passing 92mph on a motorway full of spectators, averaging 64.6mph for the whole event, winning the Touring class (as it had done earlier in the year in the Targa Florio) and finishing 13th overall. The third car, the dark non-metallic green Elliott, fared less well, retiring with a similar suspension fault in the hands of Nick Haines (driving 'off-brand' because he was the Aston Martin agent for Belgium) and Rudi Haller. This one, registered GWD 42 and now returned to its original colour after a mid-life coppertone hue, is currently sans engine as it undergoes pre-Mille Miglia preparation.

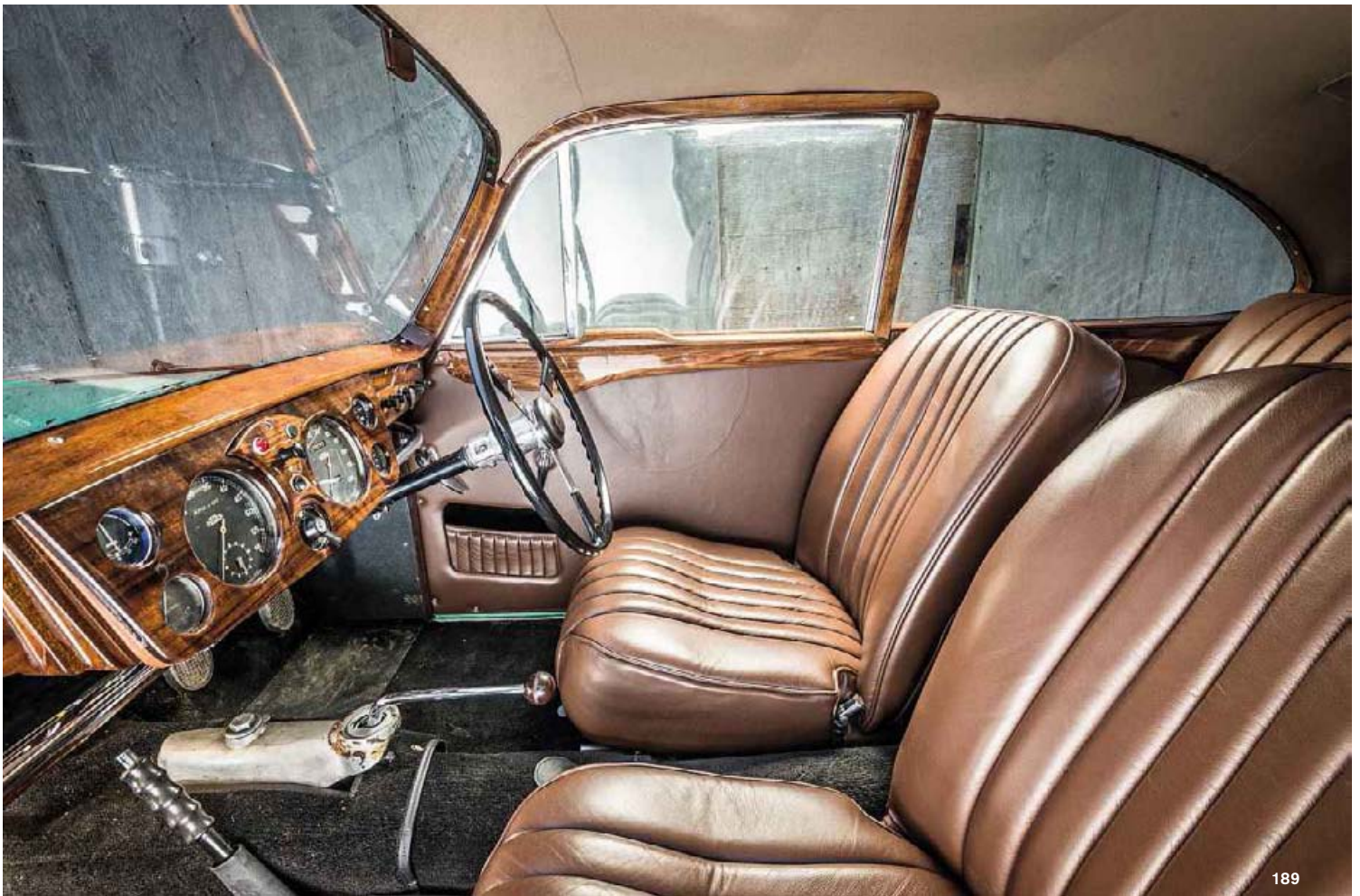
GUE 722, however, is finished, fully fit and the only Elliott not to be built with a sunroof. It has been a long-term restoration, its story starting in 1963 when the present owner bought it for £25. The rebuild started two years later, then in 1967 the restorer went bankrupt and the Healey was brought home to the owner's garage. Various restoration restarts flowered and wilted over the years until Warren Kennedy took it on. It has just been finished and Warren is about to take me for an exploratory drive to check it all works. →

Facing page from top  
Ex-Johnny Lurani Elliott has just emerged from restoration; interior is much plusher than Westland's.

*'Naming the cars after these various companies helped Donald Healey to negotiate advantageous rates for their work'*











## 1947 Healey Westland B

**Engine** 2443cc inline four-cylinder, cast-iron block and head, two high-mounted camshafts with short pushrods, twin SU H4 carburetors

**Power** 104bhp @ 4500rpm

**Torque** 134lb ft @ 3000rpm

**Transmission** Four-speed Riley gearbox, rear-wheel drive

**Suspension** Front: double trailing links, coil springs, lever-arm dampers acting as upper links. Rear: live axle located by radius arms and Panhard rod, coil springs

**Steering** worm-and-peg

**Brakes** Drums all round

**Tyres** 5.75-15 **Weight** 1017kg

**Performance** Top speed

102mph. 0-60mph 14.7sec

Inside it's obviously related to the Westland but is much plusher, with lashings of shiny wood veneer and an air of leather-padded cosiness. There's a rear seat but it's largely pointless, given that there is no legroom to speak of. We, seated up front, have our legs almost straight out in front of us, and the low scuttle gives a fine view forward. I pull the rear-hinged door shut; it clicks precisely home, with amazingly tight panel gaps outside. This is a terrific restoration.

We set off as the heavens open. The wipers

work and the rain stays outside. The art of banishing NVH (noise, vibration and harshness, a term popularised by Ford around the time it introduced the less-than-smooth CVH engine) was not one that Healey had mastered, and it's quite rowdy in here, but the Elliott feels strong and solid. This one isn't returning to the Mille Miglia, though, unlike its siblings. It will be taking life more gently, and its Panhard rod will be spared the stress.

Warren Kennedy's Healey collection is extraordinary, most of it having a direct Donald

Healey connection. Here's a Panelcraft-bodied Nash-Healey; the last 25 of those bodies clothed the Alvis-Healey after Nash switched to Pininfarina. And there's the Ford Fiesta Healey, the stillborn dark green prototype that predated the XR2. But he has formed a bond with GUE 722. 'I have as much love for this car as any of my own cars,' he says. After visiting Classic Restorations, I can see why. [Car](#)

*THANKS TO David Long and Shirley Wong for trusting me with GWD 43 before the Mille Miglia.*

## THE DUNCAN DRONE

*It's the same underneath but was much cheaper to buy*

One of Warren Kennedy's early Healeys looks more like a backyard special. It's actually a Purchase Tax special, designed to avoid the punitive post-war rate of that tax applied to cars costing over £1000. You could always fit a grander body later, as happened to at least two of the ten or so Drones built. They transmuted into tax-free Westlands.

The body, designed and made by Ian Duncan who also designed a Healey saloon with unbelievably deep side windows, has no double curvature in its aluminium panels, supplied bare when new. The spare wheel and headlights are exposed, and the squared-off front consists of horizontal wraparound tubes of aluminium under a near-flat bonnet. The seats are simple buckets; wind is deflected by aeroscreens but a full fold-flat windscreen was on the very short original equipment list.

Rather usefully the Drone, the prototype of which was called SPIV,

weighs about 270kg less than the Westland. Which means it feels quite perky, and not a little skittish on the tail. The exhaust emits a hearty bellow to go with the crisp throttle response, this and the firm springing encouraging a spirited approach to driving. It's great fun in a vintage-meets-the-future way, so it's especially sad that on the 1949 Mille Miglia this 1947-built machine crashed heavily into a wall after swerving to avoid the parapet of a narrow bridge hidden by spectators. Navigator Reginald Hignett died instantly, driver James Cohen a few months later.

The Drone, however, was repairable and today it's immaculate in its dark green ready for Warren's third time of entering the Mille Miglia with it. By the time you read this, the Mille Miglia will have happened. Warren and his wife Wilailak had a blast, and not just from the rush of the wind.





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# Jaguar MILESTONES

## JAGUAR'S MkX/420G

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The MkX/420G was the widest Jaguar ever until the arrival of the XJ220, but don't let its size fool you. It is still a Jaguar and was relatively advanced for its time. The 'Zenith' unitary construction bodyshell features helical torsion springs inside the door pillars to make it as easy as possible to open the substantial doors. The rear suspension is independent, adapted from the E-type; there are double wishbones at the front. The 4.2-litre engine has the triple SU carb setup and transmission options are manual, manual with overdrive, automatic, and auto with overdrive. With the 4.2, the Moss manual gearbox was superseded by a smooth all-synchro shifter.

All the grunt and heft (265bhp and 1900kgs!) is guided by power-assisted steering with later 4.2s receiving the trick Marles Variomatic Bendix variable-ratio steering box. And as well as the fully-independent suspension and disc brakes all-round, the Jaguar has a racy Thornton Powr-Lok limited-slip differential.

As the MkX/420G was aimed primarily at the American export market, most are in auto guise. But if you can find a 4.2-litre manual with overdrive you will have a very swift getaway car, wedding car, or hearse.

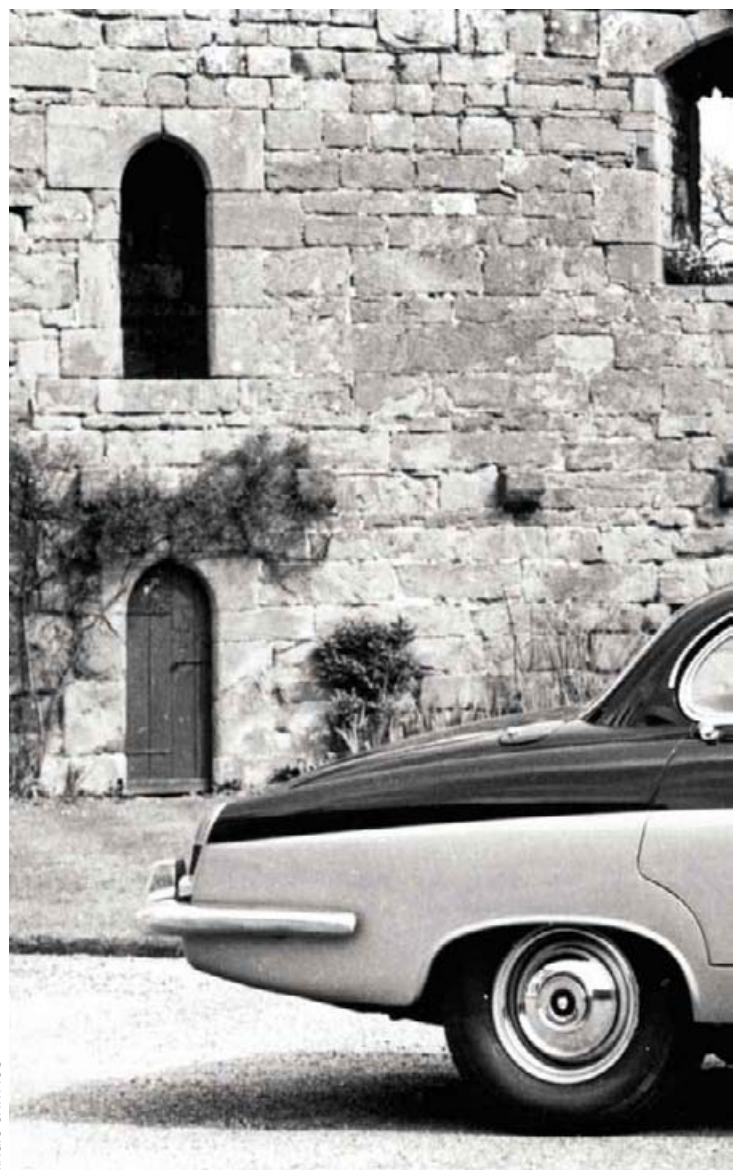
**Robert Coucher**



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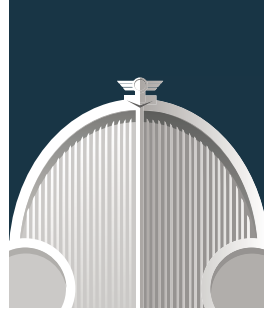
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# Octane Cars

BY OCTANE STAFF AND CONTRIBUTORS



## Going Dutch on the Saab



**1961 SAAB 96**

JOHN SIMISTER

**TYRES ON THE** wheels that transmit the power generally wear more quickly than those that simply hold up their end of the car. The difference is yet greater in a front-wheel-drive car, because the driving wheels also have to cope with directional changes and a nose-heavy weight distribution. So a front-driver's rear tyres can last for a very long time.

In the case of classic cars that cover fewer miles than an everyday modern, it can mean that rear tyres can still have plenty of tread even though they are ancient and their

rubber thoroughly hardened.

So, shortly after I bought my Saab 96 in Sweden in 2001 and drove it home, I replaced the very old, comically squealy Trelleborg Safe Ride crossplies with a set of Firestone F-560 radials, and never has a car been transformed so dramatically. The grip, the smoothness, the crispness of response... these skinny, humble radials were a revelation.

Throughout the Noughties, the F-560 was a good-value tyre very popular among owners of classic cars. It looked quite 'period', and Firestone had itself a useful market niche. But when the front ones finally wore out, I discovered that Firestone no longer made them. It had abandoned the market.

What could I do now? Pirelli and Michelin made the correct-

**Clockwise from above**  
Slippery Saab makes good use of 38bhp; floor mat needs anchoring properly; old-school tyre shop fitted new Vredestein Sprint Classics; old steel wheels are in good shape.



size replacements in period designs, but they were very expensive. The solution? A pair of Vredestein Sprint Classics, which looked right, came from a fairly well-known Dutch tyre company



and were very good value.

These tyres seem to have taken over Firestone's niche very effectively. You see them on many classic cars in many sizes, and they work well with good wet grip and a





supple ride. Meanwhile I still had the old Firestones on the back wheels, and they seemed fine with no signs of perishing. It helps that the Saab is garaged, out of sunlight's ultra-violet reach.

However, the tyre industry is uneasy about the ability of its products to stay fully effective for more than about six years because of the possible degradation of the rubber, be that by perishing or just hardening. That's the worst-case position, and tyres on classic cars kept in the dark should stay viable for longer, but a chat with a friend who just happens to work with Vredestein reminded me that the Saab's rear tyres were now 15 years old. That's too old.

So a deal was done and the Saab now has four new Sprint Classics. It's always nice when all four tyres

are the same, rather than a mix of brands, and within yards of setting off from Dawson's Tyre and Exhaust Centre in Bedford, the efficient fitting station where the truth and concentricity of the Saab's 55-year-old steel wheels was observed with wonderment, it was obvious that those old Firestones had become very age-hardened. The Saab's tail has turned from lightly jiggly to relaxingly supple.

It feels terrific: agile, grippy, all-of-a-piece. We should hope that Vredestein finds the classic-cars niche a profitable one, because the demand for appropriate tyres at affordable prices must surely be strong. The company may expand its range if it thinks there's a market, for example to include 155 R12, which would suit my Sunbeam Stiletto among many

small 1960s and 1970s cars. As for the Vredestein company itself, it has come through two bankruptcies – the first when wholly Dutch-owned, the second under Russian ownership. Now it's owned by Apollo Tyres of India. How the world order changes.

I'm writing this immediately after the Brexit vote. I fondly remember driving my newly bought Saab home from Sweden in 2001, waved through by customs on its Swedish plates despite my British passport. 'That's a nice car, look after it,' said the Swedish passport officer. Having been bought in the EU, the Saab attracted neither import duty nor VAT. The free movement of classic cars between mainland Europe and the UK might be about to end, I fear.

## OCTANE'S FLEET

*These are the cars – and motorbikes – run by the magazine's staff and contributors*

### DAVID LILLYWHITE

*Editor*

1971 MGB GT  
1971 Saab 96  
1973 Citroën SM  
1976 Zip Shadow Kart  
1996 Subaru Prodrive Impreza

### ROBERT COUCHER

*International editor*

1937 Bentley 4½  
1955 Jaguar XK140  
1973 Porsche 911S 2.4 Targa  
1988 Mercedes-Benz 560 SEC  
1991 Range Rover Vogue

### MARK DIXON

*Deputy editor*

1955 Land Rover Series I 107in  
1963 Ford Galaxie Country Sedan  
1964 Chevrolet Greenbrier  
1970 Lamborghini Espada  
1989/91 Land Rover Discoverys  
2001 Honda Insight

### GEOFF LOVE

*Publishing director*

1961 Morris Minor Convertible

### SANJAY SEETANAH

*Advertising director*

1981 BMW 323i Top Cabrio  
1998 Aston Martin DB7 Volante

### GLEN WADDINGTON

*Associate editor*

1983 Porsche 944  
1989 BMW 320i Convertible

### TONY DRON

*Test driver*

1932 Austin Seven

### JOHN SIMISTER

*Contributor*

1934 Singer Nine Le Mans  
1961 Saab 96  
1965 Rover 2000  
1968 Sunbeam Stiletto



## OCTANE'S FLEET

*More cars and motorbikes run by the magazine's staff and contributors*

### ANDREW ENGLISH

*Contributor*

1960 Triumph TR3A  
1965 Aston Martin DB5

### DAVID BURGESS-WISE

*Contributor*

1903 De Dion-Bouton  
1911 Pilain 16/20  
1926 Delage DISS

### MARTYN GODDARD

*Photographer*

1963 Triumph TR6SS Trophy  
1965 Austin-Healey 3000 MkIII

### DELWYN MALLETT

*Contributor*

1936 Cord 810 Beverly  
1946 Tatra T87  
1950 Ford Club Coupe  
1952 Porsche 356  
1955 Mercedes-Benz 300SL  
1957 Porsche Speedster  
1957 Fiat Abarth  
Sperimentale  
1963 Abarth-Simca  
1963 Tatra T603

### SARAH BRADLEY

*Contributor*

1929 Ford Model A hot rod  
1952 Studebaker Champion  
1956 Chevrolet 3100 pick-up  
1969 Plymouth Roadrunner  
Various motorbikes

### MASSIMO DELBÒ

*Contributor*

1967 Mercedes-Benz 230  
1972 Fiat 500L  
1980 Ferrari 308GTB 1985  
1982 Mercedes-Benz 500SL  
1985 Mercedes-Benz 240TD

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## Bentley in bits



**1937 BENTLEY 4¼**  
ROBERT COUCHER

**ON MY LAST** trip to Cape Town I enjoyed cruising about in my late father's 1988 Mercedes-Benz 560SEC. It had just been gone through by my brother-in-law, Dieter Noli, and is now running like new. I'd hoped to drive the 1937 4¼-litre Derby Bentley, too, but I couldn't because Dieter

had removed the carburettors.

As with the big-block Merc, Dieter has spent the last couple of years getting the Bentley back into shape after it has languished unused in the garage. This included rebuilding the dragging brakes, fixing the thermostatically controlled radiator vents, fitting new tyres and tuning the engine to start with the merest touch of the large button on the dash.

The really big job was attending to the differential, which had too much slop. With the attentions of ex-aerospace toolmaker Michael

von Zelewski, the diff was stripped, cleaned, its mesh checked with engineer's blue and reset to original tolerances. Back in the car it is now working correctly.

But Dieter was not happy with the Bentley's engine, which was running rich. He adjusted the twin SU carburettors but could not get the mixtures across all six cylinders to match. So he stripped the carbs and, with the help of local Bentley enthusiast, racer and expert Dave Alexander, they are on the bench of racer and engineer Dickon Dagget. Between them (Dickon rebuilt a vintage Bugatti a while ago in his workshop in Hout Bay) the Derby's carburettors should soon be in fine fettle.



### Clockwise from above

Brother-in-law Dieter is thwarted by recalcitrant carburettors; differential gearwheels needed adjustment to their mesh; crownwheel, halfshafts and casing await differential gears' return.







## Livin' La Vita Rossa



**1992 ALFA  
ROMEO SZ**

DELWYN MALLETT

I've attended the Prescott VSCC meeting for as long as I can remember but never the French-themed 'La Vie en Bleu'. Noticing that this year the organizers had added a touch of red to the programme with a 'La Vita Rossa' Saturday, I was prompted to spring my Franco-Italian Abarth Simca from its temporary rest, only to be thwarted again by sticking brakes.

I discovered that the rear discs were clamped solid by seized calipers after just a few months of inactivity, and this after a comprehensive rebuild. With rear jacked up and calipers off I then discovered that I needed special tools to wind the self-adjusting piston back into its pot. Once again Martin, the ever-patient proprietor of Rowledge Garage, came to my assistance with the appropriate tools and advice.

After many hours of to-ing and fro-ing and up-ing and down-ing between carport floor and garage bench, I had one caliper unstuck and functioning properly. With knowledge gained I assumed that caliper two would be a breeze. So it would have been if, in my

exuberance, I had not snapped off the lug that retains the handbrake cable. Despair. MoT out of the question. The caliper is working and the handbrake cable is located but even I, well known to travel on a wing and prayer, realise that it is not safe.

Fallback position. Take the Alfa SZ – it's Italian, it's *rosso*, it's faster and more comfortable. But it too needs an MoT, which it fails. Slight blow in exhaust and inoperative handbrake on one of the inboard discs. Brakes, again! Well, there's a surprise. What have I done to deserve this? I'm beginning to feel a bit like Lewis Hamilton must have felt after his spate of early season mechanical gremlins.

New exhaust downpipes are rushed from EB Spares in Wiltshire and, after consultation with the internet to establish exactly how to adjust the handbrake (obviously it had been done incorrectly previously), I'm MoT'd and ready to roll with just one day to spare.

Prescott. Weather beautiful, cars gorgeous. Alfa ran well. Chatted for hours with a very charming multi-car owner named Gareth, with taste as eclectic as mine and who, quite remarkably, had just sold his own Alfa SZ to my near neighbour! Yes, there are two SZs residing within a few hundred yards of each other.

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### 1964 Porsche Carrera 2

This car is the recipient of a complete, concours level mechanical and cosmetic restoration by Canepa. Porsche's fastest car of its day, the Cabriolet is one of only 28 built from 1964-1965.



### 1965 Shelby GT350

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### 1988 Porsche 959S

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### 1995 Porsche 993 Cabriolet

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### 1960 Mercedes 300SL

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### 2001 BMW Z8

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## Baur wow wow!



**1981 BMW 323i  
TOP CABRIO**

SANJAY SEETANAIAH

**AFTER EIGHT** months in the workshop, completion of the Baur's restoration may be in sight. But getting to this stage has seen the job list get ever longer. The engine needed nothing beyond a good clean, but further inspection of the bodyshell revealed more rust, this time around the front floors where they join the sills, the jacking points and the rear subframe's mounting points.

So we had the discussion. Now we have started, was there any point in stopping the paintwork at just the exterior, the engine bay and the boot? So the suspension, exhaust, fuel pipes, brake pipes and fuel tanks were all stripped from the BMW, and the whole of the underside metalwork has been blasted and repainted.

The next question was: what to do with the hundreds of parts that have been taken off the car? Do we just clean them up and put them back, or do we try to make them as good as new? So Chedeen Battick, owner of Automo where the Baur is being brought back to life, showed me what is possible.

There are various ways to make parts look like new again, but one of Chedeen's favoured methods is vapour blasting, which uses water vapour and a flow of water-borne abrasive. The flushing action of the water gives a fine finish and stops grit and dirt being impregnated into the component or being broken up into dust, unlike with dry blasting in which the finish comes from the force of the abrasive particles' impact.

So I decided, even with all the extra costs of a project in danger of escalating out of control, that we could not miss this opportunity. I agreed to have everything reconditioned... every single nut and bolt, as well as all major parts that weren't to be renewed. Other parts such as brake and fuel pipes

would be renewed, though. Most of the suspension parts, too.

The classic BMW part-searcher's best friend here is BMW Group Classic's [www.realoem.com](http://www.realoem.com) website, on which every part is listed for each BMW model. You can search every section of your car, see detailed drawings and a list of all the parts for that section, and discover how much it will cost. From a bodyshell to wiring looms to brake pipe clips to individual washers, all are here with their part numbers. Whether a specific part is actually available is another question, but at least with the part numbers you can look for it elsewhere if BMW doesn't have the part itself.

So we made a list of all the parts we needed. This is not as easy as it sounds: discretion is required not only to keep the costs sensible but also to avoid unnecessary work. Between us, though, Chedeen and I still came up with a list of about 100 parts.

Most expensive were the two fuel tanks at £800, but we needed them because blasting the originals revealed that they were badly corroded and clearly unusable. Our list also included a complete wiring loom, because the one on the car was showing signs of perishing and we wanted the restoration to last another 35 years. The engine loom and front loom came to £700.

Then there were a complete set of water and air hoses, a brake line kit and new pipes, all the fuel and injection pipes, all the rubber seals for windscreen, doors, boot, bonnet and roof, chrome trim for the doors and rear windows, the targa top and rear folding roof, suspension springs, dampers and struts. So another quick call to the bank manager was required as all parts had to be with Automo as quickly as possible!

The Baur has now been painted and it looks stunning, even as a bare shell. I think the Automo team are pretty proud of it, too. I can't wait to get it back – and, with luck, there will still be some nice end-of-summer days to enjoy it.

*Thanks to Chedeen Battick at Automo, Taplow ([www.automo.co](http://www.automo.co)); and Katrin Mölle and Benjamin Voss at BMW Group Classic.*



**Clockwise from above**  
Refinished underside gains new heat shielding; bodyshell looks like new in shiny red, with all rust surgically removed; engine needed just a check and a clean.





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# Octane Cars

BY OCTANE STAFF AND CONTRIBUTORS



## Down to the wires



**1965 AUSTIN-HEALEY 3000 MKIII**

MARTYN GODDARD

**WHILE SHOOTING** 'The Power of Four' story for *Octane* 155 I was much taken by the snazzy powder-coated wheels sported by the restored 'Healey 100. The wire wheels on my own 171 YNO have had almost zero attention apart from the odd clean since 1987 when I bought the car.

So I bit the bullet and booked the 3000 into JME Healeys to have all five wheels restored and coated. It was also good to visit 'The Cape' to have the car checked over and adjustments made after the engine bay restoration last autumn, as I was planning a long road trip for July – more on that next month.

It's now a routine drive to Warwick, which demands a 4.45am start to circumnavigate London on the M25 before striking north. Chris and the JME team didn't take long to whip the wheels off before

removing the tyres. I photographed the process before Dan Everard and I loaded the wheels into the company van and headed to Redditch Shotblasting. There I could document the shotblasting and preparation of the wheels for a coat of non-standard gunmetal powder coat (I like slightly darker wheels on the white car).



On arrival Dave Joynes was keen to show us around and explain the blasting and coating process. The company work is split between motorcycles, cars and antiques, and it was interesting to identify the numerous motorcycles in bits awaiting treatment. My first wheel was being blasted in a booth from which emerged loud hissing and whirring sounds, the grinding noises made by the pipes and conveyors carrying the blast material adding an aural backdrop.



**Clockwise from top**

Refurbished wheels rejoin Healey at JME; blasting away the rust, grime and old paint; wheels look like new in gunmetal powder coating; why it was all needed.

While waiting in the coating shop I noticed a set of Ferrari Testa Rossa cylinder head components, sporting a new red crackle coating and hanging on a rack after being fired in the oven. Later, in the blasting area once the shot had settled, I was greeted by a Star Wars character swathed in protective helmet and suit holding a pristine 'Healey wheel. Once all five rims had been blasted they were taken for coating next door.

On my return to The Cape ten days later, Andy had my 'Healey jacked up ready to fit the refurbished wire wheels. A nice touch was that he had balanced all the wheels and fitted the lead weights on the inside of the rims. This kept the visible part of the wheel pristine. I was pleased with the finish, the darker hue working well with the ice-white car.

While at JME the car had its pre-summer check-up and gained a clean bill of health for the summer road trip. The drive south was an uneventful cruise home on the motorway. I stopped for fuel at the Thanet Way service station. At the till the teenage cashier complimented me on the Austin-Healey. 'Smashing tidy motor,' she said. My thoughts exactly.



# WARREN KENNEDY



## **1954 ARNOLT BRISTOL (MILLE MIGLIA ELIGIBLE)**

Arnolt introduced his car in 1954 at Sebring. In the famous Sebring race, his racers came in 1st, 2nd, and 4th. FIVA and paperwork documenting its race history. Extensive history file. This car is serial number 3046. This is one of the original four factory campaigned race cars, and one of only two that were equipped at the factory with disc brakes in the front. It was originally sold when the factory was closed in 1963 to an American racer who then campaigned it in the Canadian race series coming in first in the 1964-65 season. It then ended up in the hands of noted vintage racer and car collector, Tom Mittler. The car is in exceptional shape. About 140 Arnolts were built and within that build, the "Bolide" was intended as a street racer. It was a lighter version, no door panels, no glove box, other weight reducing features. A factory race car that was road registered for the first time in 2009. The car entered and completed the 2010 Mille Miglia..

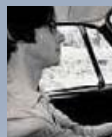


## **1956 FRAZER NASH CONTINENTAL**

The last but one car built by AFN and exhibited at the Earls Court Motor Show in chassis form in 1956. Fitted with the BMW V8 Motor, It was sold to Mr P Fletcher, and Kirwen-Taylor was commissioned to design a body for the 1957 Le Mans. The car was restored to its current state with a Le Mans Replica open body fitted in the 80's. A unique opportunity to acquire one of only 2 V8 BMW powered Frazer Nashes. The car has a complete history file, FIVA papers



## A Prodrive frenzy



**1996 SUBARU IMPREZA TURBO**

DAVID LILLYWHITE

**HAVE I MENTIONED** that my Impreza was an original Prodrive conversion? I know I have really – and although it was specified with only a few of the options, most significantly the Recaro interior, I still find it exciting to trawl eBay for Prodrive bits and pieces.

Initially I restricted my buys to mid-'90s Prodrive brochures and a Prodrive keyring (I know, I know). Then came a Prodrive exhaust, which I waited six months to fit for fear it would be inappropriate for a driver in his late-40s – but actually it's quiet at idle and simply adds a wonderful gruffness at speed.

Then I moved onto suspension. Every now and again the Prodrive struts (developed with Bilstein at the time) would appear for sale – wrecked and at silly prices, but Bilstein offers a rebuild service...

I idly contacted Bilstein UK to see if it would be worthwhile my

sourcing old Prodrive struts and got an answer that seemed to surprise even Bilstein. Deep in the company's huge warehouse, they found around 20 sort-of sets of the original Prodrive Bilstein struts. I say 'sort of' because there were left-hand and right-hand rears but only right-hand fronts – the only difference between sides being the location of the brake hose bracket.

Wow! New-old-stock, upside-down-damper struts; beyond gold dust! I collected them from the HQ in Leicester and even got a tour of the workshops, where Bilstein UK build bespoke and low-volume units for Bowler, Caterham, Xenos, Jaguar Land Rover specials and most of the world's armoured vehicles.

Most excitingly (for me at least) there's also a special home for old Bilsteins, where customer units in appalling states of repair are rebuilt; sometimes turned around in a day to get the customer back on the road or track as quickly as possible. And it turns out I'd missed Sir Stirling Moss, who'd had his Renault Twizy in a few days earlier for a suspension upgrade. Brilliant!



**Above and left**

Bilstein stripped the struts to check valving and fit double bearings for extra durability; an assembled Prodrive rear strut, ready to fit.

(£25), and I bought new Subaru top mounts from Import Car Parts (£50 each) to finish the job.

A happy Sunday afternoon at home saw all four struts DIY-fitted, and an even happier Sunday evening was spent 'testing' them. The difference is amazing: not only is the ride much better than with the original-spec KYBs but the handling is also hugely improved, with less roll and even more tenacious grip.

Next step is to get the alignment sorted, because I've only set the front camber by eye so far. Oh, did I mention the Prodrive Speedline Safari gold wheels that I found...?





# WARREN KENNEDY



## 1936 DERBY BENTLEY 4 1/4

Chassis number B130GA, I have personally owned this car for the last 5 year, having acquired it from the previous owner that purchased it in 1968. Over my ownership the car has been stripped back to the aluminium panels and repainted, the engine has been fully rebuilt, it has also been completely rewired and most of the chrome-work re-plated. The car is in outstanding condition. Full history file and a total mileage of under 80,000 from new.



## 1925 LANCIA LAMBDA

Imported from Australia about 5 years ago, it then undertook a full body restoration, all the outer panels removed the inner body frame restored and painted before the new outer skin fitted. the car has been maintained regardless of cost and has been a regular at many VSCC and other events since being in the current owners hands.



# Gone but not forgotten

WORDS DELWYN MALLETT

## MAX HOFFMAN

*Introducing the cream of European cars to post-war America, and chopping off their roofs, took a supreme salesman*

**IT WOULD BE** easy to categorise Maximillian Hoffman as someone who was lucky to be in the right place at right time – in his case a car-hungry USA during its post-war boom years. Although the country was gobbling up consumer goods as fast as factories could pump them out, Max was nevertheless an extraordinary salesman who sensed what the market wanted and then persuaded manufacturers to take a risk and make a model to his specification.

Hoffman did more than anyone else to introduce Americans to the European automobile. At different times he represented Alfa Romeo, Allard, Aston Martin, Austin, Bentley, BMW, Cooper, Fiat, Jaguar, Jowett, Lancia, Lea-Francis, Mercedes-Benz, Morgan, Porsche, Rolls-Royce, Rover, Simca and Volkswagen.

Born in Vienna in 1904 to a Catholic mother and a Jewish father, Hoffmann (then with a double 'n') as a youngster worked in his father's bicycle manufacturing business. He started two-wheeled racing in local clubs on a small-capacity DKW while still a teenager, eventually graduating to a full-house 350cc AJS.

He moved from two wheels to four with an Amilcar in the 1930s and continued to race until his car import business, Hoffmann & Huppert, demanded more of his attention. By the time the Nazis annexed Austria in 1938, Hoffmann was the importer for Rolls-Royce, Bentley, Alfa Romeo, Talbot and Delahaye, and the first agent outside Sweden for Volvo.

With his Jewish ancestry Hoffmann felt it wise to flee Austria, first to Paris and then, after France was occupied, to America in 1941 on a Portuguese ship. Unfortunately, 1941 was the year the US entered the war and ceased car production. With no cars to sell, Hoffmann borrowed some money and went into business producing costume jewellery out of metal-plated plastic. The business did well and by 1947 he had finally accumulated enough funds to open a car showroom on New York's prestigious Park Avenue.

His sights were set high: the first car on the Hoffman (now one 'n') Motor Car Company showroom floor was a Delahaye with Figoni et Falaschi coachwork. An exclusive contract to import Jaguars followed in 1950, as did a short-lived deal with Volkswagen. The weird little Beetle proved hard to sell and Hoffman bailed out of the deal, something that for obvious reasons he later regretted: 'My only mistake', he ruefully observed. His association with the Volkswagen-derived sports car from Stuttgart proved a much more profitable association for both parties.

In 1953 Hoffman asked Frank Lloyd Wright, America's most famous architect, to design a waterfront family home on Long Island Sound and a new car showroom. Wright was then designing the Guggenheim Museum, a spiralling inverted cone that would become a New York landmark. The Hoffman showroom, with its circular forms, revolving platform and inclined ramp, explored the same stylistic themes. As part payment for his work Wright, a long-term petrolhead, received a Gullwing and a 300 sedan. In 1957 Hoffman moved to larger premises and the showroom was acquired by Mercedes.

Famously, Hoffman persuaded Porsche to produce a stripped-down, cheaper roadster aimed primarily at California. The result was the immortal Speedster. He also encouraged Alfa Romeo to cut the roof off its delectable Giulietta. Less successfully, he talked a cash-strapped BMW into building the beautiful 507 V8 sports car, which turned out to be far too expensive and a commercial failure.

It is often reported that Hoffman persuaded Mercedes to build the



DAIMLER

### **'THE BEETLE PROVED HARD TO SELL AND HOFFMAN BAILED OUT OF THE DEAL, WHICH FOR OBVIOUS REASONS HE LATER REGRETTED'**

Gullwing by guaranteeing to pay for 1000 of them himself. However, automotive historian Karl Ludvigsen states, in a footnote in his magnificent volume *Mercedes-Benz Quicksilver Century*, that he accepts partial blame for disseminating what turns out to be a myth. It was actually its stylistically similar but mechanically mundane and cheaper sibling, the 190SL, that Hoffman offered to pay for.

He was never a Gullwing fan, this intuitive connoisseur of a car's dynamics considering that with its heavy steering it felt 'trucky'. Nevertheless, America took more than 1000 of the 1400 Gullwings built, and it was Hoffman who persuaded Mercedes to make a roadster version.

From the 1960s Hoffman was the exclusive BMW importer, eventually selling his business to BMW in 1975 and retiring a very rich man. His business associates found him completely trustworthy but not always easy, given his fanatical attention to the detail of a deal. One once declared that an afternoon with Hoffman was as strenuous as a whole week's work elsewhere. Max Hoffman died back home in Vienna, in 1981.



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**'THE NUMBER OF FOOTBALL MATCHES CHOREOGRAPHED BY ITS PIERCING TRILL IS BEYOND CALCULATION'**

## ACME WHISTLES

*Beloved of bobbies, revered by referees, feared by those who made the ultimate sacrifice*

**THE GAME OF FOOTBALL** changed forever in 1872 when Nottingham Forest football club bought a whistle to replace the waved handkerchief then commonly used by referees to control matches. The Acme whistle, made by J Hudson & Co, would come to dominate the sports world, and the number of matches choreographed by its piercing trill is beyond calculation.

Joseph Hudson, born in 1848 in Derbyshire, started life as a farm worker but joined the mass migration from the land to the 'smoke', settling in Birmingham in 1860, where he trained as a toolmaker. Hudson lived in a rented end-of-terrace back-to-back, and converted his wash-house into a modest workshop so he could supplement his income by making small items such as snuff boxes, corkscrews and whistles. The latter half of the 19th Century was a boom time for whistle-makers – and it was a whistle or two that would make his fortune. With his younger brother James, he formed J Hudson & Co in 1870.

In Victorian Britain, policemen on their beat, when faced with an emergency, had attracted the attention of their colleagues with a cumbersome ratcheted wooden rattle. In 1883 the Metropolitan Police, aware that a few forces were beginning to issue whistles, put out a tender for this more convenient attention-grabber and, after spotting their advertisement,

Hudson submitted a double-exit whistle of his own design.

The Met retired to Clapham Common to assess the submissions, where they established that a hefty blast on the Acme by one of their bobbies could be heard a mile away. Thus satisfied, they ordered 21,000 whistles from Hudson & Co, which caused the modest company to ask for a £20 advance so that sufficient brass could be ordered.

Not only was Hudson's whistle loud, it also had the unique advantage that its belled mouthpiece allowed it to be held between the teeth, leaving a policeman's hands free for a bit of physical with his truncheon or handcuffs. Indeed, an early advertisement for Hudson's Metropolitan Whistle, illustrated in the style of a 'Penny Dreadful', shows a top-hatted bobby felling a vagabond with an upper-cut to the jaw while, with his other hand, simultaneously fending off an attempted throttling by the partner in crime, all the while blowing his whistle as two more bobbies rush to his rescue.

The accompanying script exclaims 'Saved! By Hudson's Whistle'. Remarkably, as reported in the *Pall Mall Gazette* at the time, the constabulary had voted to be issued with whistles rather than revolvers! It was also reported that subscribers to the new telephone machine could call the *Gazette* and hear the whistle being blown.

Flushed with success, Hudson, a year later, produced an improved whistle for referees, with a sufficiently penetrating noise to cut through the roar of excited spectators and often the crackle of massed rattles that, although abandoned by the police, remained a favoured noise-maker for football fans. The result was a snail-shaped whistle containing a 'pea', with the exhilarating *Boy's Own* name of Acme Thunderer. The 'pea', in fact a ball of cork, accelerates the air within the chamber of the whistle and, by repeatedly interrupting the outward flow of air through the exit slot as it swirls around, creates a warbling trill that can, if puffed with enough force, reach the pain threshold of 125dB.

Acmes travelled the world, peeped by railway guards, ships' officers (a Thunderer rescued from the *Titanic* was auctioned for £3100 in 1991), fire brigades, prison warders and boy scouts; and for thousands of brave young souls it literally sounded the final whistle as their officers ushered them 'over the top' in the First World War.

With two winners, J Hudson & Co was soon the world's largest producer of whistles, gobbling up many rival manufacturers as the company grew. By the turn of this millennium more than 200 million Thunderers alone had left the Birmingham factory – with every one given a test toot before leaving the premises.



---

# Dick Lovett

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est. 1966



## 1968 Ferrari 330 GTC by Pininfarina

£POA

Dick Lovett are delighted to offer this wonderfully presented Ferrari 330 GTC. Intended to fill a gap in Ferrari's line-up between the four-seat 330 GT 2+2 and the 275 GTB, the two-seat 330 GTC debuted at the Geneva Motor Show in March 1966. Pininfarina's elegant coachwork combined elements of the 275 GTS at the rear with touches of the 500 Superfast at the front.

Beneath the 330 GTC's bonnet resides a 4.0-litre, 300hp version of Ferrari's familiar, two-cam, 60-degree V12, as used in the 330 GT 2+2.

With a top speed in excess of 150mph, excellent ride comfort and sure-footed handling, Ferrari could justifiably claim the

330 GTC to be the finest of high-speed conveyances for two people and their luggage. Total production of the 330 GTC amounted to 600 cars built between 1965 and 1968.

This particular 330 GTC underwent a comprehensive two-year restoration at Dick Lovett Ferrari, of which there is a full photographic record and invoices totaling £200,000.

This left hand drive example was delivered new to Milan in May 1968. Now finished in Grigio Ferro with Beige hide, it is a must see. Ferrari Classiche Certification has been submitted. Please contact us today for further information.



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## ZENITH COHIBA

*Premium watch that celebrates the finest aspects of the world of cigar-making*

I AM FORTUNATE enough to have spent much of my working life enjoying watches and cigars... naturally, in the name of in-depth research, you understand. As one of the few people I am aware of who has tried their hand at both watchmaking and cigar rolling, I can assure you that assembling a movement or making a cigar is a humbling experience which only deepens one's respect for the craftsmen and women whose nimble and dextrous fingers can create such icons of excellence.

Since I was a child I have collected timepieces. I wrote my first article about them in the late 1980s and, although I cannot claim to have smoked cigars during childhood, I have written about them for the last 25 years. I visited my first Cuban cigar factory in 1995 and I am currently in the middle of putting together my third book on the subject.

But beyond wearing a watch while enjoying a cigar, I had never had the opportunity to combine my twin passions – until this May, when I was asked to deliver a small speech on the lawns of El Laguito about the recent union between high watchmaking and fine cigars that is the Zenith for Cohiba watch. El Laguito is the Maranello of the cigar world, a place of pilgrimage that is not open to all. Of all the Havana cigar factories it is the most difficult to visit – it has no factory shops and is located far from the centre of town, behind high gates.

But this year Cohiba celebrates its 50th anniversary and one of the ways this important event is being marked is with a series of watches made by Zenith. And as someone who has spent their working (and resting) life enjoying cigars and watches, I was asked if I would say a few words. So even though, on the whole, I avoid public speaking, on this occasion I made an exception.

As well as being two of the finest diversions from the less agreeable aspects of life, cigars and watches have much else in common: the torcedor and the horloger work at benches in a way that would be familiar to their forebears from a century ago and more. Indeed, while on the topic of history, it is worth noting that cigars and watches were invented – or discovered – at almost exactly the same time.

The cigar and the watch are two of the great creations of the Age of Discovery, the period that historians define as the dawn of early modern European history: the time when Europe dragged itself out of the Middle Ages. Recently a panel of experts decided that the Nuremberg pomander, made in 1505, is the oldest known extant watch, although with 12 hours of power reserve and the dimensions and design appeal of a small cannonball it is almost unrecognisable as a watch today.

Likewise, the cigar is a very different thing from what it was when Cristobal Colon, a young mariner from Genoa, first came across it as he set foot on the island of Cuba in the autumn of 1492 and saw the local inhabitants walking around with trumpet-sized bundles of burning leaves in their mouths, twisted, said one observer, like a paper musket, giving off a fragrant smoke. They called these smouldering musket-like bundles *tabacos*. The leaves with which they were made were called *cojiba* – cohoba, or Cohiba.

Columbus's name lives on today over five centuries after he 'discovered' the New World, not least in the form of Zenith's Christophe Colomb, a highly complex timepiece with a gyroscopic 'gravity control' system. And a special series of five of these fiendishly complicated wristwatches have



**'FIVE OF THESE FIENDISHLY COMPLICATED WATCHES HAVE BEEN MADE FOR COHIBA WITH AN ENAMEL DIAL THAT RECALLS TOBACCO LEAVES'**

been made for Cohiba with an enamel dial that recalls tobacco leaves.

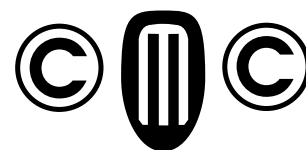
However, for those with more modest budgets, there is the steel Chronomaster 1969, using Zenith's legendary high-frequency El Primero Chronograph movement, the dial carrying the distinct egg-yolk yellow and black-and-white check that is the livery of the cigar brand. It is available in a series of 500. There were 50 gold pieces too, all sold.

As to the price, well, let's say that is about what one might pay for a Cohiba cigar these days. At auction, the first-anniversary Cohiba humidor fetched €320,000 for 50 cigars – that's around €6400 per stick.



Read more from Octane's watch experts in *Chrono* magazine, available free from iTunes.





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## Jaguar C-Type £POA

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## Places to go

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BARRY WISEMAN



Clockwise from left  
Transatlantic Air Race Harrier; Lysander model; replicas  
of Spitfire designer RJ Mitchell and his prototype.

# TANGMERE MILITARY AVIATION MUSEUM

*Going to Goodwood? Then try Tangmere for a different kind of thrill*

**FOR SPEED ENTHUSIASTS** staying in the Goodwood area for the Festival of Speed or Revival, there's a perfect way to make the break even more memorable – by dropping into Tangmere Military Aviation Museum, just a couple of miles from Goodwood itself.

Someone who did drop into the area was Lt Geoffrey Dorman. During World War One, he was looking for somewhere to land his FE2b aircraft to tend to its ailing engine when he saw a fine, open area and put down. He later suggested that this place would make a suitable site for an aerodrome and in 1917 the Government bought 200 acres of what was to become Tangmere Air Base and cleared it for use. The base developed and grew so that, during World War Two, Tangmere and nearby Westhampnett (more familiarly known now as Goodwood) were prominent airfields.

On 16 August 1940, over 100 Stuka Ju87 dive-bombers with fighter escorts headed for England. Many broke off and attacked Tangmere. During the raid, Pilot Officer Billy Fiske's Hurricane was shot down and he later died from his injuries: the first American volunteer pilot to lose his life in this war. He was a member of 601 Squadron, the 'Millionaires Squadron', with personalities such as Whitney Straight, Max Aitken, Loel Guinness and others. They all had wonderful cars and bought the local garage for its petrol.

Fiske was a true car enthusiast. He owned a 4.5-litre supercharged Bentley and claimed he could drive the 24 miles from his old college to Mildenhall Golf Club in 17 minutes. Details of his life, along with his original headstone, can be seen at the museum. He's buried at nearby Boxgrove Priory, another great place to visit.

The Battle of Britain Hall at Tangmere features the remains of Sergeant Dennis Noble's Hurricane, excavated from a Hove street. There are also retrieved Merlin, Junkers and Griffon engines, as well as displays about James Nicholson, the only fighter pilot VC of the war, and Douglas Bader, Wing Leader of Spitfire squadrons flying out of Tangmere.

The reception features a model of the airfield in the 1930s and some American memorabilia, including several smart uniforms. There's a small cinema, where a background film can be seen.



The next hall includes a fascinating moving model showing how beams of light were used to help the Dambusters maintain correct altitude for their bombing runs and how the bombs were set spinning before release. There's also an exhibition about the SOE agents and the skilled Westland Lysander pilots who took them into enemy territory.

The largest hall contains some of Britain's most important aircraft: highlights are the Gloster Meteor F4 that captured the World Air Speed Record of 615mph in 1946 and the red Hawker Hunter Mk3 flown by Neville Duke to a record of 727mph in 1953. They ooze history. Also displayed are full-sized replicas of the prototype Supermarine Spitfire and Hawker Hurricane Mk1. Next door is an immaculate Hawker Hunter F5 and an awesome English Electric Lightning F53. Huge!

Should you feel inspired to have a go yourself, there are flight simulators for visitors to use, including one where you can attempt to fly a Hunter under Tower Bridge. There's also a NAAFI-style café, a library and a gift shop, while outside are more aircraft and a tranquil memorial garden, containing tributes to airmen and SOE personnel, including Violet Szabo.

Not only is Tangmere packed with interest but it is run by enthusiastic volunteers, mostly ex-servicemen, who love to talk about the place. It definitely deserves to be better known.



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# LOVE THE CLASSICS?

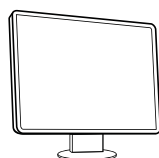
From Ferrari to Aston Martin, Porsche to Bugatti, *Octane* opens up the world of the fast, the prestigious and the unique classic cars from yesteryear. Don't miss out on fantastic features by world-class journalists and photographers, plus columns by Jay Leno and Derek Bell. If you have a passion for the greatest cars and the most interesting people and events that surround them, this is the magazine for you.



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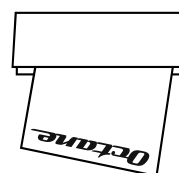
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# Books

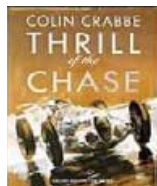
REVIEWED BY OCTANE STAFF AND CONTRIBUTORS



Book  
of the  
month

## Colin Crabbe, Thrill Of The Chase

COLIN CRABBE, Dalton Watson, £59, ISBN 978 1 85443 276 6



If ever there was a man to write a book of his life's work, it's Colin Crabbe. Briefly, in case you've not heard his name, it was Crabbe who famously rescued Silver Arrows Mercedes-Benz and Auto Union race cars out of

East Germany, and Jaguar XKSS and D-types (plus Maserati A6GCS, BMW 507, etc etc) from Cuba.

But that barely scratches the surface. Crabbe's early life was one of privilege, thanks to the proceeds of the family's famous Crabbe whisky company, and cars soon caught his attention – not least when his father and friends turned up unexpectedly at Colin's boarding school in a D-type and a DB3S.

Later, aged just 22 and on holiday in Australia, Colin bought his first race car, an eight-year-old 1956 Maserati 250F no less, from the father of F1 racer Alan Jones. 'I... paid the then enormous asking price of £1300 and virtually bankrupted myself in the process', notes Crabbe in the book.

By this point, he was already dealing in old cars as Antique Automobiles, and in 1966 he moved the business to the small Lincolnshire village of Baston, just down the road from BRM's HQ. With an extension to the former chapel that housed his showroom, Crabbe was able to add a full restoration facility; photographs from the period show the place rammed with pre-war Rolls-Royces, Bugattis, Hispano-Suizas and the like, with 1960s Ferraris, Maseratis, Alfas etc squeezed in between.

Tracking down rarities had become a speciality, and Crabbe began to travel the world in search of the

best cars. In Eritrea for example: 'I made some useful contacts, even an ancient local who claimed to have been a mechanic with the Alfa Romeo racing team. This I doubted but he then led me to a lock-up where a completely original 1954 Ferrari Mondial (0468 MD) was garaged. It was bought immediately...'

That same trip yielded a Maserati 4CM monoposto and an Alfa 8C 2.3 Special, and there were many more such escapades throughout the 1970s and '80s, including those forays behind the Iron Curtain and into Cuba, many involving comedic near-misses, brushes with authority and alcohol.

Each such adventure – involving not just car-buying but shooting, flying, racing and rallying – is given its own chapter, though many of these are just two or three pages long. Some could have done with more detail but the sheer variety is entertaining.

It's disappointing that the production of *Thrill of the Chase* is amateurish (punctuation is poor and we spotted a couple of names spelt incorrectly) but the derring-do tales certainly make up for it. **DL**



## Ferrari 312T Owners' Workshop Manual

NICK GARTON

Haynes, £22.99

ISBN 978 0 85733 811 2

Owning a Ferrari F1 car would be a fantasy for most of us – but you can read here how 23-year-old Colin Bach got his hands on Niki Lauda's 1977 Championship-winning car... Race prep specialist Rob Hall's comments on the realities of running one are just as fascinating; and so is the account of how a Tamiya 1:12 model was scaled up to make the replicas for the film *Rush*. That's all preceded by a pacey account of the 312T's history, including the infamous 1976 season. Riveting stuff. **MD**



## The Classic Car Book

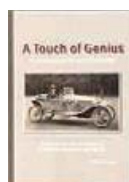
Edited by GILES CHAPMAN

Dorling Kindersley, £25

ISBN 978 0 2412 4048 9

It's easy to be sniffy about generic classic car books but, if they help inspire a future generation of owners, that's all to the good. We can see this one capturing the imagination of many youngsters because it's unusually varied – anything that features the 1963 Buick Riviera is alright by us – and remarkably well illustrated. There are hundreds of colour profile views of cars, plus lots of intriguing digressions to break things up, but the text (by several experts) is also accurate and not in the least patronising. A brilliant achievement. **MD**





## A Touch Of Genius

CHRIS DRAPER  
£35 from [cdraپر3@aol.com](mailto:cdraپر3@aol.com)  
ISBN 978 3 940732 28 6

We are indebted to *Octane* contributor Tony Dron for sending us this eclectic work about Salmson engine designer Emile Petit. As Tony says, 'Chris Draper is the renowned expert on Salmson ... He knows what he is talking about.' And what Chris talks about, in exhaustive detail, is Emile Petit's 1920s engines, notably the twin-plug San Sebastian series. Given that only about two-dozen survive, it's a niche subject – but it's well illustrated and immaculately researched. Salmson owners present and future will be grateful. **MD**



## No Way Back!

TERENCE TRACEY  
Porcupine Press, £20  
ISBN 978 0 620 70709 1

I must declare an interest here because I wrote (unpaid) a brief history of the Hillman Imp for the back of this book. Why? Because the idea of driving an Imp, a car almost programmed to overheat, from Johannesburg to Coventry in time to celebrate the Imp breed's 50th birthday seemed so engagingly bonkers. But Terence and Geoff Biermann did it, with several breakages and many scrapes on the 8700-mile route, and the tale is terrific. Imp co-creator Tim Fry's daughter Trinity designed the book, rather stylishly. **JS**



## Ferrari In Camera

DOUG NYE & GEOFF GODDARD  
Palawan Press, 1995, value today £1200-1700

Collector's  
book

This is an early release from Palawan Press, the company created by Virgin Records co-founder Simon Draper. I'm particularly fond of it because, as a young man, I visited photographer Geoff Goddard's house many times with my father, and we picked out the images that would ultimately be collected together in this book.

It was a trend-setter for two reasons: first, because of the extremely high production values; and second, because it was unusual to have such a comprehensive selection of Ferrari images in one book. Jesse Alexander had produced *At Speed* in 1972 but it

covered just one season. Here Geoff was presenting a lifetime's collection.

I'm a firm believer that a picture is worth a thousand words but in this case you also have text by Doug Nye, together making a wonderful marriage. *Ferrari in Camera* is one of the top ten motoring books ever published, and that will still be the case in 25 years' time. **Ben Horton**



## Formula 1 The Knowledge

DAVID HAYHOE  
£35 from [www.f1knowledge.com](http://www.f1knowledge.com)  
ISBN 978 1 845848 84 2

The subhead describes this book as *Records and Trivia since 1950*; a well-respected motor sport commentator sums it up as 'terrifying'. It is both those things and more, containing over 1000 pieces of statistical and other information. For example: four drivers had the surname Taylor in the 1959 British GP, and none was related. Other entries are much – *much* – more complicated but always fascinating. Impossible to read without blurting out 'Did you know? ...' **MD**

## ERA, The Autobiography Of R4D

J MAC HULBERT, Porter Press International, £60, ISBN 978 1 907085 40 6



Previous releases in this series of large-format hardbacks have focused on worthy but predictable subjects, such as Porsche 917, Jaguar D-type, et al. They are all superb productions but we particularly like this volume

dedicated to the most famous of a famous breed: English Racing Automobiles' chassis R4D.

This particular car has had an incredibly full career, beginning life as a B-type ERA in 1935 and then being rebuilt (with new chassis and suspension) as a C-type in 1937-38, before achieving final D-type status in 1938-39. It was ERA co-founder Raymond Mays' personal car – which is why it's the only example fitted with a steering box on the left-hand side rather than the right, so that the centrally mounted steering wheel's slight angle better suited Mays' shorter left arm, the legacy of a childhood accident – and it's been raced pretty much continuously since new, barring the inconvenience of the 1939-45 war.

R4D has been campaigned by names such as Ron Flockhart (captured in a superb picture, right, at Charterhouse in 1953) and Ken Wharton, but its most recent keeper is arguably also its most

enthusiastic. 'Mac' Hulbert bought R4D in 2001 and has since raced it extensively, often setting FTDs at venues such as Prescott and Shelsley Walsh. While most books in this *Great Cars* series have been written by professional car historians with input from the owners, Mac – who is a former academic and business consultant – has penned this one himself. It's clearly been a labour of love.

Like all Porter Press publications, the book is beautifully laid out and clearly 'signposted' from chapter to chapter, with fantastic period images. Rounding things off is a comprehensive studio shoot by John Colley of the car as it is today, with numerous detail close-ups.

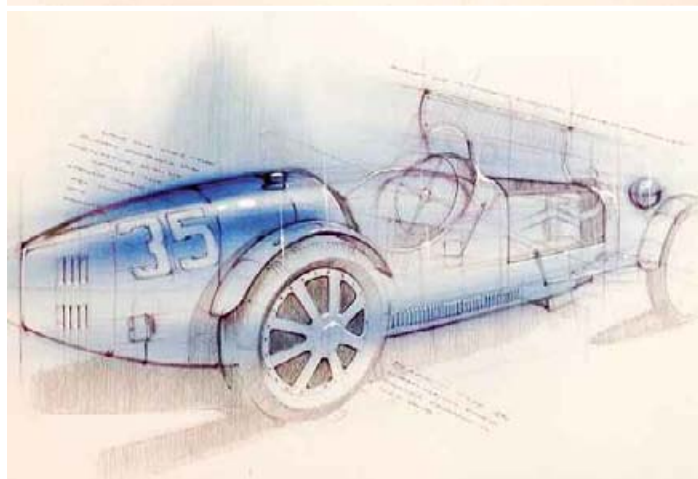
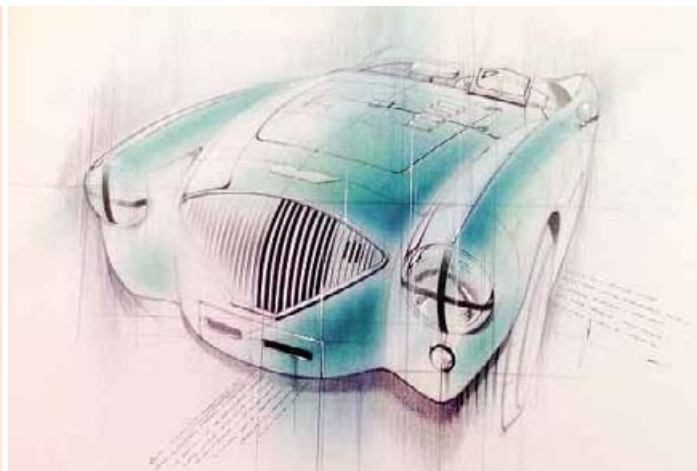
A pleasure to leaf through; a joy to own. **MD**





# Gear

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A man who clearly enjoys the contrasts in life, Adam Gompertz was once a designer at Rolls-Royce and at MG Rover during its final days. And then he became a Church of England priest, with a sideline as an automotive artist and a classic car show organiser. Beat that for diversity! Adam takes commissions for personal sketches of cars, planes, etc, from £200.



## SHINOLA RAMBLER TACHYMETER

The creeping regeneration of Detroit is typified by the success of companies such as Shinola. Its aim was to provide jobs to former car factory workers; it succeeded, and its watches and bicycles are now world-renowned. This new Rambler Tachymeter is Shinola's first to be equipped with both a chronograph stopwatch function and a bezel with a tachymetric scale; more importantly to us, it's a great-looking watch. \$875 [www.shinola.com](http://www.shinola.com)



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How we cringe now at the thought of racing in a polo shirt. But as something to wear when you're absolutely *not* racing, there's a lot to be said for Suixtil's latest polo shirt, based on the style worn by Stirling Moss in the 1950s and '60s. And you'll be delighted to hear that it's knitted in premium PIMA cotton and has real shell buttons engraved with the Suixtil logo. Time to channel your inner Stirling. **£70. [www.meandmycar.co.uk](http://www.meandmycar.co.uk)**



## MERCEDES 300SL BY GEOFF BOLAM

Well, it is the Gullwing issue... and these prints are satisfyingly unusual, produced by printing onto 3mm Dibond composite (polyethylene core sandwiched by aluminium sheets, as if you didn't already know that...). They're 7000 x 350mm, are a limited edition of 25, and can be produced to a specific paint colour.

**£450 plus p&p. [www.geoffbolam.com](http://www.geoffbolam.com)**



## BERTRAND GREGOIRE PETROLEUM SERIES

Toulouse-based Bertrand says his crazy sculptures 'are reminiscent of workshop memories of a grandfather who was a garagist. They are the early expression of the golden age of oil and consumerism.' The Castrol sculpture shown here is just one of a series of similar works, most around 2ft tall, depicting drivers, gangsters, bikers, movie stars and comic heroes. All are based around battered oil cans and salvaged car parts. What's not to like?

**POA. [bertrand-gregoire.com](http://bertrand-gregoire.com)**

## SIGNATURE STORE 3D CIRCUIT & CAR

We rather like these. 3D circuit maps laser-cut from Baltic birch, accompanied by the 1:43 scale car of your choice, in the frame of your choice (or opt for a pre-made circuit-car-frame combo from stock). You can even supply the car yourself. Turnaround is normally 7-10 days. **From £99. [thesignaturestore.co.uk](http://thesignaturestore.co.uk)**





## 1:18 scale 1966 Le Mans-winning GT40

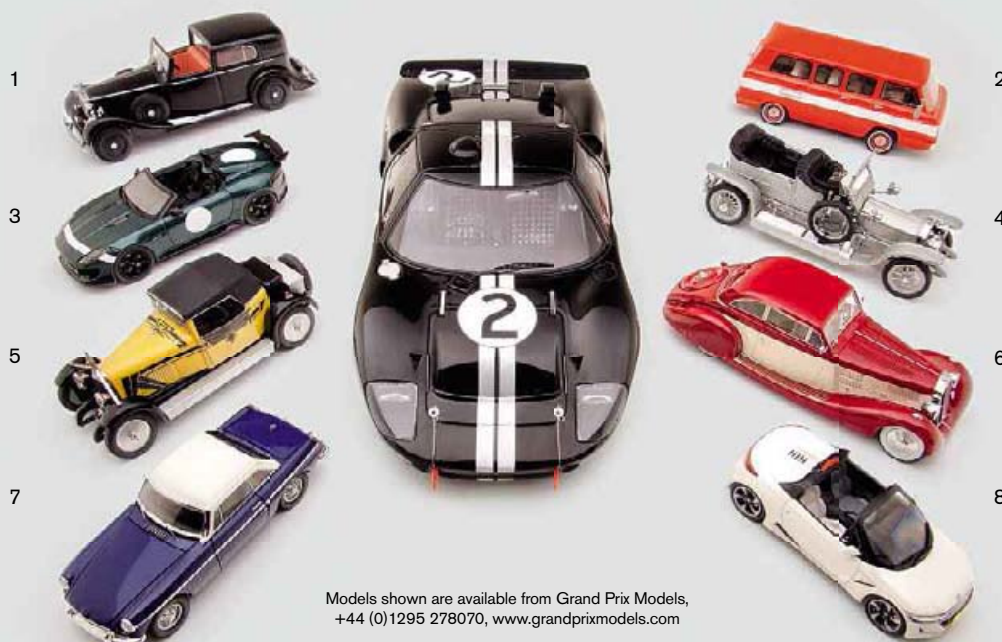
By Cult Models Price £131.95 Material Resin cast

The power of *Octane*: no sooner do we feature Ford GT40 MkIIA chassis P/1046 on our front cover (issue 158) than Cult brings out a 1:18 model of the car...

OK, so maybe the timing is coincidental, because this year marks the 50th anniversary of P/1046 leading two sister GT40s home to give Ford a one-two-three victory in the 1966 Le Mans 24 Hours. The winning car has recently been the subject of a fastidious and period-correct restoration, documented in *Octane* 158, and Cult's replica appears to have taken full advantage

of the research that went into that. Note, for example, the red-painted covers for the quick-lift jacking points (as seen in the picture below) that were fitted to make them more visible during pit stops.

There are no opening panels in this 'kerbside' model and, sadly, there's no engine detail because it's hidden below a cover, but the interior has been fully modelled. We would have liked to see the race number roundels cut where they overlay panel shutlines – but that's maybe a quibble too far, given the low-ish asking price.



Models shown are available from Grand Prix Models, +44 (0) 1295 278070, www.grandprixmodels.com

### 1:43 scale

**1. 1936 Rolls-Royce Phantom III Mulliner Sedan** By Oxford Price £24.95 Material Diecast

Oxford's bargain-priced diecast is its best yet, with full interior detail and a flawless paint finish. Superb value.

**2. 1963 Chevrolet Corvair Greenbrier** By Neo Price £70.95 Material Resin cast

We believe this is the first-ever scale model of the 'Corvan' and, over-thick wing mirrors aside, it's a nice piece.

**3. 2014 Jaguar F-type Project 7** By Premium X Price £49.95 Material Resin cast

Handsome model of the original Paris motor show car, with fine detail that extends even to the brake calipers.

**4. 1907 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost** By Neo Price £91.25 Material Resin cast

Neo has already made a 1:18 model of the Silver Ghost and this smaller version maintains a similarly high standard.

**5. 1928 Voisin C15 'Petit Duc'** By CCC Price £218.70 Material Resin and metal handbuilt

A couple of tiny blemishes apart, this is an attractive handbuilt of Gabriel Voisin's own car, in a vivid Art Deco livery.

**6. 1935 Delage D8 105S** By Matrix Price £83.95 Material Resin cast

Lots to like about this Matrix model: handsome Aerodynamic Coupé body, bright two-tone paint and fine detail.

**7. 1964 MGB hardtop** By Spark Price £48.50 Material Resin cast

The windscreen frame is a little heavy but otherwise Spark's 'B' is a good-looking model – and it's right-hand drive.

**8. 2014 Honda S660** By Ebbro Price £59.60 Material Diecast

Available in several bright colours as well as white, this is a neat diecast of the modern-day Honda Beat successor.

### Classic Models

## Royal Rolls-Royce Phantom V

by Spot-On



In this year marking HM The Queen's 90th birthday, there could hardly be a more appropriate model to examine than Spot-On's Royal Rolls-Royce.

The Spot-On range was a brave attempt by the giant Tri-ang company to take on the dominant Dinky and Corgi brands. Spot-On had a well-chosen selection of original subjects, such as the Armstrong-Siddeley Sapphire, Bristol 406 and Goggomobil, and a vast choice of accompanying accessories, all made to exactly the same 1:42 scale. But these toys were expensive and they failed to break into the competitive diecast market. Production lasted only from 1959 to 1967 and the tooling subsequently went to New Zealand, where some of the models were made for a few more years.

The Royal Rolls-Royce was the most elaborate and expensive car in the whole of the Spot-On range. It captures the huge presence of the original

and the attention to detail is remarkable. Door handles, bonnet and roof mascots are all represented by tiny separate components, the spring-loaded boot lid opens to reveal a spare wheel, and the figures inside the car include the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh in the rear. Best of all, there's a battery box underneath which, when switched on, lights up the front and rear lamps.

Not surprisingly, the Royal Rolls is now worth upwards of £300 in mint and boxed condition. An even rarer variation is the 'Royal Occasion' presentation gift set, which comes in a window box with six plastic figures of guardsmen. The box could be cut-up and reassembled into cardboard buildings to create a diorama of the royal couple attending a film premiere – but, since an unopened set could fetch a four-figure sum today, this would no longer be a very sensible idea!





# THIESEN

AUTOMOBILE RARITÄTEN

Hamburg · Berlin



**Mercedes-Benz 300 Sc Coupe, 1957**, very rare example with sunroof, completely restored to highest standard at a total mileage of only 48.000 miles.



**Alfa Romeo 2000 Touring Spider, 1960**, perfectly restored, excellent leather interior, chrome and paint with a wonderful surface.



**Jaguar XJ13 Proteus, 1972**, very authentic recreation of the legendary prototype, German road registration!



**Aston Martin DB8 Vantage Zagato, 1987**, power optimized by R.S. Williams, only 50 examples produced, complete history.



**Maserati Bora 4900 Coupe, 1975**, partly restored on pristine basis, original color, "matching-numbers".



**Porsche 911 Coupé, 1965**, prominent first owner, race history with documentation, FIA HTP-papers.



**Bentley R-Type Continental 4.9 ltr. by Franay/Chapron, 1955**, LHD, unique car, ex Autosalon Paris.



**Aston Martin DB5 Coupe, 1965**, ordered by Castrol Ltd., LHD, fully restored by AM workshop, engine upgraded.



**Lancia Flaminia Series I 2.5 ltr. Sport Zagato Coupe, 1959**, 1 of only 99 first series with covered headlights.



**Ferrari 250 GT Ellena Coupe, 1957**, 1 of 49, "matching", certified by Ferrari Classiche, Mille-Miglia eligible.

Alfa Romeo 6C 2300 GT Corto "Pescara Specs", 1937.  
Alfa Romeo 1900C Sprint "Supergioiello" by Ghia, 1953.  
Alvis Silver Eagle SG 16/95 Roadster, 1935, very fast.  
Aston Martin 15 / 98 Short Chassis 2 litre, 1939.  
Aston Martin DB 4 Coupe, 1961, RHD, good condition.  
Delage D6S II Etienne-Brandone Coupe, 1935, "One-Off".

Delage DMN Faux Cabriolet by Figoni, 1929, "One-Off".  
Isotta-Fraschini 8A SS Cabriolet Commodore, 1928.  
Jaguar SS I Tourer, 1934, documented, power optimized.  
Jaguar XK140 3.4 ltr. Roadster, 1954, extensively restored.  
Lagonda M45 Team Car Specifications, 1936.  
Lancia Aurelia B24 S Cabriolet, 1956, red, leather black.

Maybach DS 8 Zeppelin Cabriolet, 1933, 8 ltr. V12!  
Mercedes 15/70/100 PS Open Tourer, 1925.  
MB 600 Limousine, 1972, perfect original, one owner!  
MB 630K "La Baule Transformable", 1928, "One-Off".  
Porsche 356 A 1500 GS Carrera Coupe, 1957, restored.  
Porsche 911 RS 2.7 ltr. Coupe, 1973, original body.

Many more interesting cars in stock – please ask or visit our website: [www.thiesen-automobile.com](http://www.thiesen-automobile.com)



## Ferrari 250 GT SWB



This spectacular example is one of only 11 RHD Steel bodied cars built. It was totally restored by DK and has been exceptionally maintained since. The car is presented in its original colour and is Classiche certified confirming the engine, gearbox and axle to be matching numbers. This RHD 250 SWB is as perfectly suited to the Concours Lawn as to the Open Road. **£POA**

### Additional Motorcars Available for Acquisition



#### Ferrari Testarossa (LHD)

Early "Monospechio" & "Mono Dado" - Rosso Corsa over Nero Hide - Recent Full Major service - **£POA**



#### Ferrari 250 Lusso (LHD)

Original Colour - Classiche Certified - Extensive history file - UK Registered - **£POA**



#### Ferrari 275 GTB "Short Nose" (LHD)

"Short-Nose" - Classiche Certified - Original Colour Combination - **£POA**

Acquisition Consultancy | Sales | Service | Restoration to Perfection | Engine Building | Race Preparation | Rolling Road | Storage



Chorleywood Tube Station - 2 mins.



Heathrow or Luton Airports - 20 mins.



M25 Orbital J18 - 3 mins.



London City Centre 20 miles.



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## Ferrari 250 GT TdF



This Single Louvre and Covered Headlight variant is an exceptional example with extremely interesting period competition history. Classiche Certified (confirming it to be "matching numbers" throughout) and located in the UK.

**£POA**

### Additional Motorcars Available for Acquisition



#### **Ferrari 275 GTB/2 "Alloy" (LHD)**

Alloy Body - Classiche Certified - Recent total restoration following a 40 year ownership - **£POA**



#### **Ferrari 365 GTS/4 "Daytona" Spyder (RHD)**

Recently Restored - Classiche Certified - 4,700 miles from new - Superb history - UK Registered - **£POA**



#### **De Tomaso Vallelunga (LHD)**

Rare Wide Body Variant - Red over Black Hide  
Recent Full Major Service - **£POA**

Acquisition Consultancy | Sales | Service | Restoration to Perfection | Engine Building | Race Preparation | Rolling Road | Storage

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**1955 Aston Martin DB2/4** Finished in Dubonnet Rosso with contrasting pale grey hide interior. This much travelled example has spent a considerable time in Denmark where it resided from 1995 until 2014. Following the death of the Danish owner it was purchased by one of our Belgian customers and has been in Liège for the past 2 years.. I have just had the pleasure of driving it back from Brussels immediately following Brexit and the car is very happy to be home. The paintwork is in acceptable condition but not pristine but the car drives beautifully and comes with a considerable history file and in the 90's was owned by Jack Moss of Four Ashes Garage. The interior is in exceptionally good condition as can be seen from the photographs and the car has proved to be mechanically sound following my journey from Brussels. We consider that this car is ready to be enjoyed for the remainder of the summer, after which the minor paintwork deficiencies could be addressed. Offered for sale at **£225,000**.



**Jaguar SS 100** Built in 2000 this Jaguar SS 100 Recreation finished in Mason's Black with matching black mohair hood and black hide interior. The car has been built to the highest standard by the previous engineer owner and the build has included various advantageous improvements to the chassis. Most of the component parts were supplied by Roger Williams of Suffolk Jaguar in Woodbridge in Suffolk. Since being built it has covered only 18,000 miles and is powered by the Jaguar 3.4 twin overhead camshaft straight 6 XJ engine which is more than sufficient to provide very exciting motoring. The build quality is exemplary and utilises all Jaguar running gear including a 5 speed manual gearbox and has been built as closely as is possible to the original cars. It does however have the advantage of Jaguar independent suspension and disc brakes all round although the brakes are beautifully disguised to appear to be the drum brakes originally used. Additional specification includes a beautifully made bonnet louvers, chrome headlamp grilles, 4 spoke original type steering wheel, aero screens and a fold flat windscreen with wind deflectors and both full mohair tonneau cover and additional mohair hood cover. The car is in stunning condition and it is obvious that great care was taken when this car was originally painted as the quality is superb. We consider that this car is fairly priced for one in this condition at **£69,500**



**1973 Aston Martin AM Vantage** Finished in Dubonnet Rosso With Contrasting Tan Hide Interior. This Is A Very Nice Well Serviced Example Of The Marque With Lots Of Recent Servicing And General Maintenance Invoices Amounting To Just Under £20,000. The Car Presents Well And The Interior Is In Exceptionally Good Condition; It Sits On 72 Spoke Chrome Wire Wheels And Has 3 Speed Automatic Transmission Making It Ideal For Town Traffic. On The Open Road It Shows A Good Turn Of Speed And Is A Nice Stable Drive. Only 70 Examples Of This Model Were Ever Produced Making It A Rare And Collectable Motor Car Which Will Not Lose Value. Competitively Priced at **£89,950**

**All can be found by visiting our website at [www.runnymedemotorcompany.com](http://www.runnymedemotorcompany.com) or please call Martin Brewer for more details on any of our cars. We are seriously low on stock, please telephone if you have an Aston Martin to sell.**



# MARKETS

BUYING + SELLING + ANALYSIS



RM SOTHEBY'S

## Will Monterey be the barometer?

*US craves certainty while hot hatches get hotter in the UK*



### DAVE KINNEY

Everyone in the collector car world, especially in North America, is looking forward to Monterey Car Week. It's not just the dozens of events and the meet-and-greet camaraderie when small California towns are saturated with cars and more cars. It's this: there are competing theories about the state of the market, and we need certainty.

Although few are predicting values to fall off the cliff, the idea that you buy on Tuesday and sell for a profit on Saturday has pretty much gone away. That said, while much of the action has shifted from 1960s Ferraris, the '70s, '80s and '90s Ferraris have picked up the torch. The naysayers, as usual, think the party is over and everything bought since 2014 is probably financially underwater. If only it were that simple, but the lead-up to and the analysis of Monterey is a game we can all play until well after the first cold winds of winter blow.

We'll stay in North America for a moment, and head to Mecum's 21-23 July auction in the state capital of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, where car sales were hot and the venue even hotter. While the main building in the Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex and Expocenter was air-conditioned, the acres of outbuildings mostly were

not. Mecum reports 70% sold of around 1000 vehicles on offer; once again, it was a massive Mecum sale of automotive treasures.

Just a few years ago, a Mecum sale would have been dominated by cars from the 1960s with a dollop of cars from the 1950s and a scoop from the 1970s thrown in. Today's Mecum still has plenty of '60s and '70s cars, but '80s, '90s and millennial special-interest cars are starting to rule. It's part of the demographic shift, which has always been present in the world of collector cars even though we've talked about it only for the past few years.

Among the sea of Mustangs and Camaros were a few exceptional examples and more than a handful of rare and unusual offerings. Although that describes Mecum in a nutshell, it's a high-energy event with lots of vendors and food stalls to keep the many attendees happy.

The top seller was a 1970 Ford Mustang Boss 429 Fastback. In period-correct Grabber Blue with a white vinyl interior, its top-notch condition and great colours really made it pop on the auction stage. It sold for \$242,000, just denying it entry into the quarter-million-dollar Mustang club. Three of the top 10 sellers were Mustangs, two were Chevelles, the remainder were Corvettes. Perhaps my favourite in the top 10 was the 1963 Chevrolet Corvette split-window Coupe that sold

## TOP 10 PRICES JULY 2016

**£1,163,500 (\$1,540,000)**  
**1929 Duesenberg Model J**  
**'Disappearing Top'**  
**Convertible by Murphy**  
RM Sotheby's, Plymouth, USA  
30 July

**£1,110,500 (€1,301,600)**  
**1977 Porsche 935**  
Artcurial, Le Mans, France  
9 July

**£813,500 (€953,600)**  
**1961 Mercedes-Benz 300 SL**  
**Roadster with hard top**  
Artcurial, Le Mans, France  
9 July

**£495,000**  
**1981 Porsche 924**  
**Carrera GTR**  
Silverstone Auctions,  
Silverstone, UK. 28 July

**£478,000 (\$632,500)**  
**2006 Saleen S7**  
RM Sotheby's, Plymouth, USA  
30 July

**£447,500 (€524,480)**  
**1937 Bugatti Type 57 Ventoux**  
Artcurial, Le Mans, France  
9 July

**£407,000 (€476,800)**  
**1973 Porsche 911 Carrera**  
**2.7 L RS Touring**  
Artcurial, Le Mans, France  
9 July

**£303,000 (AUS \$522,000)**  
**1973 Ferrari Dino 246 GT**  
Shannons, Melbourne,  
Australia. 11 July

**£249,750**  
**1958 AC Ace Bristol**  
Silverstone Auctions,  
Silverstone, UK. 28 July

**£249,500 (\$330,000)**  
**1938 Packard Twelve**  
**Coupe Roadster**  
RM Sotheby's, Plymouth, USA  
30 July



for \$132,000. This one-owner Corvette, presented in dark blue with a blue vinyl interior, was equipped from new with a 327ci, 340bhp motor mated to a four-speed manual transmission, a very desirable specification.

RM Sotheby's returned to Plymouth, Michigan, on 30 July for its traditional 'boutique' sale held before the madness of its two-day Monterey extravaganza. And yes, the people selling the 70 cars offered, netting \$6,445,725 in the process, do realise the bizarre nature of a business in which, for one month of the year, a handful of individual cars can each sell for more than the company's entire auction revenue from the month before.

Plymouth seems very laid-back compared with crowded and hectic Monterey, but the 80% sell-through rate says otherwise. It was heavy on American classics, with five of them among the top six sellers.

Top of the tree was a 1929 Duesenberg Model J 'disappearing top' convertible coupe by Murphy (pictured on the previous page). It sold for \$1,540,000, well over expectations but still within the guide-price range. The number-two car, though, was a much newer machine, a 2006 Saleen S7. This three-owner example, one of the last Saleens built, didn't quite reach its low guide price at \$632,500. In Electric Red with a black leather interior, and with under 300 miles recorded, this twin-turbo Saleen represented a model that was once one of the fastest street-legal American automobiles.

Every once in a while at auction, one of the cars that attracts the most attention might not be particularly expensive, overly exotic or showroom fresh. The sixth lot in this RM sale was a 1990 Renault Alpine, a car never offered in the US when new. This was a Japanese-specification version despite the left-hand drive, with a guide price of \$20,000-\$30,000. When it sold at the jaw-droppingly cheap price of \$15,000, plenty of punters were sorry they'd sat on their hands instead of having a go. Such is the nature of auction sales: sometimes an interesting lot escapes under the radar despite all the reasons it could have made twice as much.

H&H held its Chateau Impney Hill Climb Motor Car and Automobilia Auction on 10 July, with 72 automotive lots offered but just 22 sold for a total of £860,322. One interesting car which brought more than expected was Lot 61, a 1966 Costin-Nathan works prototype. This was the only aluminium-bodied example of the type

## 'HOT HATCHES ARE THE HOT SEGMENT OF THE MARKET RIGHT NOW. THIS 205 GTI RETURNED THREE TIMES ITS PRICE WHEN NEW'

(subsequent cars had glassfibre bodies) and it needed a total restoration. Nevertheless it sold for £80,230 against a guide price of £25,000-30,000. The fact that it's worthy of that restoration and a return to the racetrack is why it quite stubbornly did not go cheap.

Silverstone Auctions finished the month with sales at the Silverstone Classic event. The first, exclusively for competition cars, was held on Thursday 28 July while the more mainstream cars were offered on the Saturday and Sunday. Combined results show a £4,900,000 total and a 72% sell-through rate. The highest bid among the competition cars went on a 1981 Porsche 924 Carrera GTR with a Japanese history, one of 17 built. This 'true collector's piece' sold for £495,000.

At the Collectors' sale a 1989 Peugeot 205 GTI 1.9 sold for an extraordinary £30,938, setting a new record for the model. Hot hatches, especially with supremely low miles like this example, are the hot segment of the market right now. This one-owner, sub-8000-miles example returned three times its price when new.

Now, from notable French cars to a notable French sale. Artcurial reported total sales of €8,717,752 at its Le Mans Classic sale, held at the Le Mans 24 Hours circuit on 9 July, with significant extra sales expected after the auction. Of 115 automotive lots, 71 were reported sold to make a 62% sell-through rate. All were reported as bought by European collectors apart from one, a 1977 Porsche 935 factory-built competition car which, like 12 others that year, was raced by a customer team. It went to a US collector for €1,301,600, making it the most expensive purchase of the auction.

So it's *au revoir* for now, until Monterey.

### DAVE KINNEY

is an auction analyst, an expert on the US classic car auction scene, and publishes the USA's classic market bible, the *Cars That Matter* price guide.

## KINNEY'S TOP THREE



**Silverstone Classic, UK, 30-31 July. £249,750**

Delivered new to Canada, repatriated in 1990, converted to RHD and back in original colours. With its Cobra link, AC's lovely Ace remains a hot commodity in the marketplace.



**Silverstone Classic, UK, 30-31 July. £140,630**

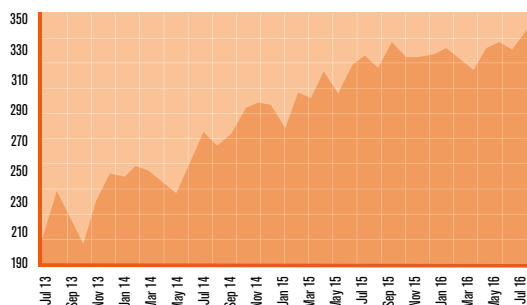
This 1962 E-type, chassis #62, has spent its life in Scotland since new. It has lost a few early features but is ready to enjoy. The price seems reasonable given the wealth of history.



**Mecum, Harrisburg, PA, 21-23 July. \$18,150**

You'd be proud to drive this 4.2-litre Maserati Spyder. It's a rare six-speed manual and shows just 36,000 miles. As with any 'modern classic', history and quality of care are vital.

## HAGI FERRARI INDEX



MONTH/YEAR  
Vertical axis is based on a benchmark of 100 set at 31 December 2008.  
The HAGI Ferrari index charts the prices of key collectable Ferraris.

The most dramatic thing about the market's most exciting rollercoaster ride is a very distinct lack of drama.

Yes, the HAGI Ferrari index hit a new high at the end of July, thanks to a 3.95% push which more than offset the previous month's deficit. And yes again, Ferrari's performance since index inception in 2008 once more pitches it ahead of the rest, but only by a small margin.

However, a couple of months ago it was a different story, and it may well be again next month. That's because we've seen a convergence across the market with all the original HAGI indices now within a whisker of one another.

Yet there's another new reality. The HAGI F's year-to-date growth stands at 4.79%; year-on-year growth is 5.08%. Compare that with three-year growth of 64.96% in a segment that

has returned annual average long-term growth in the order of 15%. Time will reveal whether 2015's 10.95% is within reach.

While there is still growth, volume – a classic leading market indicator – is half what it was a year ago. Indeed, current growth patterns are reminiscent of the later 1990s when the market ran in an altogether shallower trend channel.

Within Ferrari, as well as other segments, there are gyrations. Some select and rare later-era Ferrari supercars are trading up, particularly those rendered 'artefacts' by virtue of ultra-low mileages that make them unusable. Meanwhile, some traditional higher-volume market staples have shown weakness.

Like a glacier, there's less drag for matter at the top, more friction down below... and, of course, a debris trail left in its wake. For more, see [historicautogroup.com](http://historicautogroup.com). **Dave Selby**



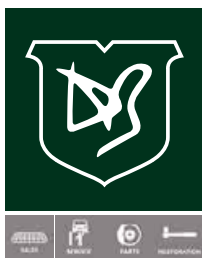


*Desmond  
J. Smail*



## 2007 Aston Martin Vanquish S 'Ultimate Edition' • £250,000

One of only 50 vehicles produced worldwide with only 20 RHD examples, the last hand built Aston Martin from Newport Pagnell, finished in Ultimate Black with Obsidian hide.



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**1968 DB6 VANTAGE VOLANTE MANUAL,**  
CALIFORNIA SAGE WITH NATURAL HIDE • **£900,000**



**1964 DB5 SILVER BIRCH, FULLY RESTORED BY**  
DJ SMAIL, IN PERFECT CONDITION • **£POA**



**1964 DB5 LHD GOODWOOD GREEN, ORIGINAL**  
LHD CAR WITH MATCHING NUMBERS • **£POA**



**1962 DB4 SERIES V VANTAGE, DESERT WHITE,**  
ORIGINAL CAR, COMPREHENSIVE HISTORY • **£POA**



**1961 DB4 SERIES III, RESTORATION PROJECT**  
WITH COLOUR AND TRIM CHOICE • **£325,000**



**2005 DB9 VOLANTE ANTRIM BLUE WITH SANDSTORM,**  
SUPERB CONDITION AND FSH • **£52,500**

Please join us on







## More than a minor project

RM Sotheby's, London, UK 7 September

**THIS 1967 ISO GRIFO** – a rare right-hand-drive UK-supplied car – was put away for 30 years after it needed restoration. And it obviously hasn't been stored well.

Paul Darvill of RM Sotheby's, who consigned the car, says: 'This is the second Grifo the seller has owned. He ended up with the ex-Earls Court Motor Show car after a friend had owned it, but he sold it in the first fuel crisis of 1973.'

'Later he bought another, this one, chassis GL640064/D.' Grifos were powered by the 327ci (5.4-litre) Corvette engine, in 300 and 365bhp guises. This first-series car is the GL300 version. Chris Lackner's Grifo register shows it was built in July 1966 and supplied on centre-lock Campagnolos, which it still wears today. The first owner was named Kubicki, and the VSC shows only two more.

'The current owner purchased it from a Mr

Roebuck in East Molesey, paying £8000 in 1986, and it was already showing signs of needing rust repairs. He planned to have it painted the same metallic burgundy as his first one, so it went to a restorer near his estate in Scotland, who'd restored a Morris Minor, but I think this car was a bit too daunting.

'So it got left – for 30 years – but recently the son persuaded the owner that they should go and rescue the car. So they dragged it out and recovered it to their barn near Lockerbie. It looks as if it has been outside under a tarpaulin, as there's nothing left of the bottom four or five inches of the bodywork, either floors or sills. It's held together by the roof and doors.'

The only work attempted appears to have been spraying one rear corner in primer. Inside, the carpets have disappeared and the steering wheel rim has delaminated, but the leather,



dash and instruments look in fair shape.

It's offered at no reserve when it comes under the hammer. Darvill is cautiously hoping for 'Twenty or thirty thousand', or at least enough to cover what it owes the owner – but it could fetch a lot more, even though restoration costs will be at E-type or Aston Martin levels.

[www.rmsothebys.com](http://www.rmsothebys.com)

### ALSO LOOK OUT FOR...



Ornamentation is not generally among the priorities of today's car stylists, whose aesthetic choices are inevitably limited by concerns like fuel efficiency and crumple zones.

Things were different in the pre-war period, when bigger was better and pedestrians were skittled with such alarming frequency that record-keepers could barely keep track of car-related injuries.

Back then, a statement car was

not complete until a dangerously pointy sculpture had been fixed to the bonnet. Perhaps the pointiest of all, and certainly the most beautiful, was the Hispano-Suiza *cigogne volante*, or 'flying stork', designed by the French artist Frederick Bazin.

The stork is considered a symbol of good fortune in many cultures, but it was Hispano-Suiza's mascot of choice for more specific reasons, having been painted on the Hispano-

built aircraft of the fearsome Escadron de Chasse 01.002 in World War One.

Most of the stork sculptures left would originally have been mounted to a radiator cap, but the 1920s bronze set to be sold by Bonhams in London on 19 September was made for display in a showroom, which explains its size: 41cm from beak to feet. And that in turn explains the pre-sale estimate of £3000-4000.

Chris Bietzk





#### MICRO-MILEAGE MERCEDES

**Silverstone Auctions/Salon Privé, Woodstock, UK. 3 September**

This Mercedes-Benz 190E 2.5-16 Evo II has just 885 miles on the clock and is number 452 of 502. It was supplied new in 1990 to a collector who stored it at the main dealer for its first 10 years. Silverstone achieved £292,500 at February's Race Retro for the last low-mileage Evo II it sold – from the same owner – so the £180-220k estimate isn't out of order. [www.silverstoneauctions.com](http://www.silverstoneauctions.com)



#### ACE IN THE PACK

**Bonhams, London, UK 19 September**

The Robert White Collection of cars, automobilia and artefacts includes a gold George Daniels calendar watch, a 1974 MV Agusta 750S, a 1930 Bentley 4½ Litre VdP-style tourer estimated at £500,000, and this 1959 AC Ace-Bristol. Recently restored and with factory overdrive gearbox, the D2-engined roadster is estimated at £180,000-220,000. [www.bonhams.com](http://www.bonhams.com)



#### HEDGE YOUR BETS

**H&H Classics, Duxford, UK 12 October**

Described as a 'hedge fund with a difference', this very original E-type S1 4.2 was recently disinterred from a Bedfordshire garden. It was under a tarpaulin and hidden by a holly bush which had to be cut down to liberate it. There's a factory hardtop, the engine is free, the aged tyres still hold air and it's RHD. It's estimated to sell for between £55,000 and £65,000. [www.handh.co.uk](http://www.handh.co.uk)



## Enter the Dragon

*Bonhams, Goodwood, UK 10 September*

The Aston Martin Speed Model 'Red Dragon' is the star of the show. It was built in 1936 as the ultimate 'Ulster' Aston Martin for Richard Seaman, to challenge Germany's sophisticated new BMW 328s in the most important UK race of the period, the RAC TT on the Ards circuit in Northern Ireland.

Unfortunately, a win with the 2-litre Aston wasn't to be. Seaman set the fastest lap in his class but the engine seized after 12 laps. The car was then sold to Dutch owner/driver Eddie Hertzberger, who raced it in the 1937 and 1938 Mille Miglia and in the Spa and Le Mans 24-Hour races.

Amateur racing driver Dudley Folland acquired the car after World War Two. Folland had started his racing career as 'Tim D Davies', driving a Frazer Nash in the 1935 Le Mans before graduating to the Aston.

John Polson, the specialist who consigned the car, says: 'Folland chose "Red Dragon" because it was the

most competitive British-built car available in the early years after the war.' Folland finished third in the Paris 12-hour race at Montlhéry in 1948; a few weeks earlier he and co-driver Ian Connell had been holding second in the Spa 24 Hours until Connell crashed.

Both races were won by the new Ferrari 166 Spider Corsa V12. Folland was so impressed by the Ferrari that he ordered one for himself – the first Ferrari in the UK – and in the meantime modified the Aston Martin with lightweight bodywork resembling the Ferrari's. In 1949 he ran the Aston again at Le Mans, and in more recent years it has become well known at AMOC events.

Now, still bearing Carmarthenshire-born Folland's Welsh red dragon, it's expected to fetch between £1.6 and £2m, more than the Ferrari 275 GTB also consigned to the Revival sale.

[www.bonhams.com](http://www.bonhams.com)

## AUCTION CALENDAR

### 27 August

Anglia Car Auctions  
King's Lynn, UK

### 27 August

Morris Leslie, Errol, UK

### 27-28 August

Lucky Collector Car Auctions  
Tacoma, USA

### 29 August

Shannons, Sydney, Australia

### 1-4 September

Auctions America  
Auburn, USA

### 3 September

Silverstone Auctions/Salon Privé, Woodstock, UK

### 3 September

Bonhams, Beaulieu, UK

### 3 September

Bonhams, Chantilly, France

### 3 September

Mathewsons  
Thornton-le-Dale, UK

### 3 September

Worldwide Auctioneers  
Auburn, USA

### 7 September

RM Sotheby's, London, UK

### 8 September

DVCA, Dorchester, UK

### 8 September

Coys, Fontwell, UK

### 8-10 September

Mecum, Louisville, USA

### 9-10 September

Leake Auction, Detroit, USA

### 10 September

Bonhams, Goodwood, UK

### 10 September

Motostalgia

Watkins Glen, USA

### 10 September

Auctionata, online

### 10 September

Dan Kruse Classics

Austin, USA

### 13 September

Charterhouse

Shepton Mallet, UK

### 17 September

Barons

Sunbury-on-Thames, UK

### 17 September

The Finest, Aspen

Snowmass, USA

### 18 September

Artcurial, Catz, France

### 19 September

Bonhams, London, UK

### 19 September

Shannons

Melbourne, Australia

### 21 September

Brightwells, Leominster, UK

### 24 September

Classic Car Auctions

Leamington Spa, UK

### 24 September

Dragone Auctions

Boston, USA





# 1971 Monteverdi High Speed 375L

*£250,000-plus. DD Classics, Kew, London, UK*

**THIS IS ONE** of only six Monteverdi High Speed 375Ls made, and has interesting ownership: it was first registered in the UK in 1971 to Alison Entwistle, wife of The Who bassist John Entwistle.

'The Ox' never passed his driving test but he loved cars and owned many, including a Citroën DS, and later a Ford Thunderbird, '57 Cadillac and a custom-built Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow estate which he used to carry his Irish Wolfhounds around Quarwood, his Gloucestershire estate. According to a letter from another previous owner, Entwistle was particularly fond of this car. It was later owned by Sir Jack Stewart-Clark, a Euro MP and owner of Dundas Castle.

Peter Monteverdi was already well known in motor sport when, in 1967, he launched a range of road cars under his own name, created to a classic formula: American V8, bespoke chassis and Italian styling.

Pietro Frua designed the 375L as a 2+2 GT over a sturdy rectangular-tube frame, with double-wishbone front suspension and a de Dion rear axle, coil sprung and

with disc brakes all round. The body was built by Fissore in Italy and the car assembled in Basel, Switzerland.

Powered by the same 440ci (7.2-litre) Chrysler Magnum engine as in the later Jensen Interceptors, with an alleged 375bhp, this Grand Tourer had a top speed of over 160mph and a 0-60mph time of 6.3 seconds. The High Speed 375L was the most numerous of Monteverdi's big coupé, and was made from 1969 to 1976 with production possibly as low as 50.

Danny Donovan, who recently opened a second showroom in Brentford having expanded from his Richmond premises, has just had it restored, finished in a very '70s colour combination of bronze metallic with champagne Connolly leather interior. All the chrome has been redone, the original magnesium alloy wheels refurbished and the new interior is by Surrey Trimming.

For all this luxury, craftsmanship and rarity, still with only 46,000 miles under its wheels, DD Classics is asking somewhere north of £250,000.

[www.ddclassics.com](http://www.ddclassics.com)



**1929 Aston Martin 'LM3' POA**

Aston Martin Team Car LM3 is for sale at Cotswold Collectors Cars in Gloucestershire, UK. One of the world's blue-chip collectables, it has run three times in the Mille Miglia and won its class at Amelia Island. [www.cotswoldcars.com](http://www.cotswoldcars.com)



**1980 Citroën Mehari £9750**

As well as the ultra-rare electric Zagato Zele (POA), European Classic Cars near Avebury had this Citroën Mehari (named after a fast-running camel!), said to be excellent all round – and less money than a Moke, at £9750.

[www.europeandclassiccars.com](http://www.europeandclassiccars.com)



**1969 Eagle Santa Ana POA**

This 1969 Eagle, the famous 'hose clamp car', was run by Smokey Yunick and driven by Joe Leonard to sixth place in the 1969 Indy 500, having run as high as second before a flying hose clamp punctured the radiator. It's also appeared at Goodwood Festival of Speed. [www.CanAmCarsLtd.com](http://www.CanAmCarsLtd.com)



**1951 Hudson Hornet \$175,000**

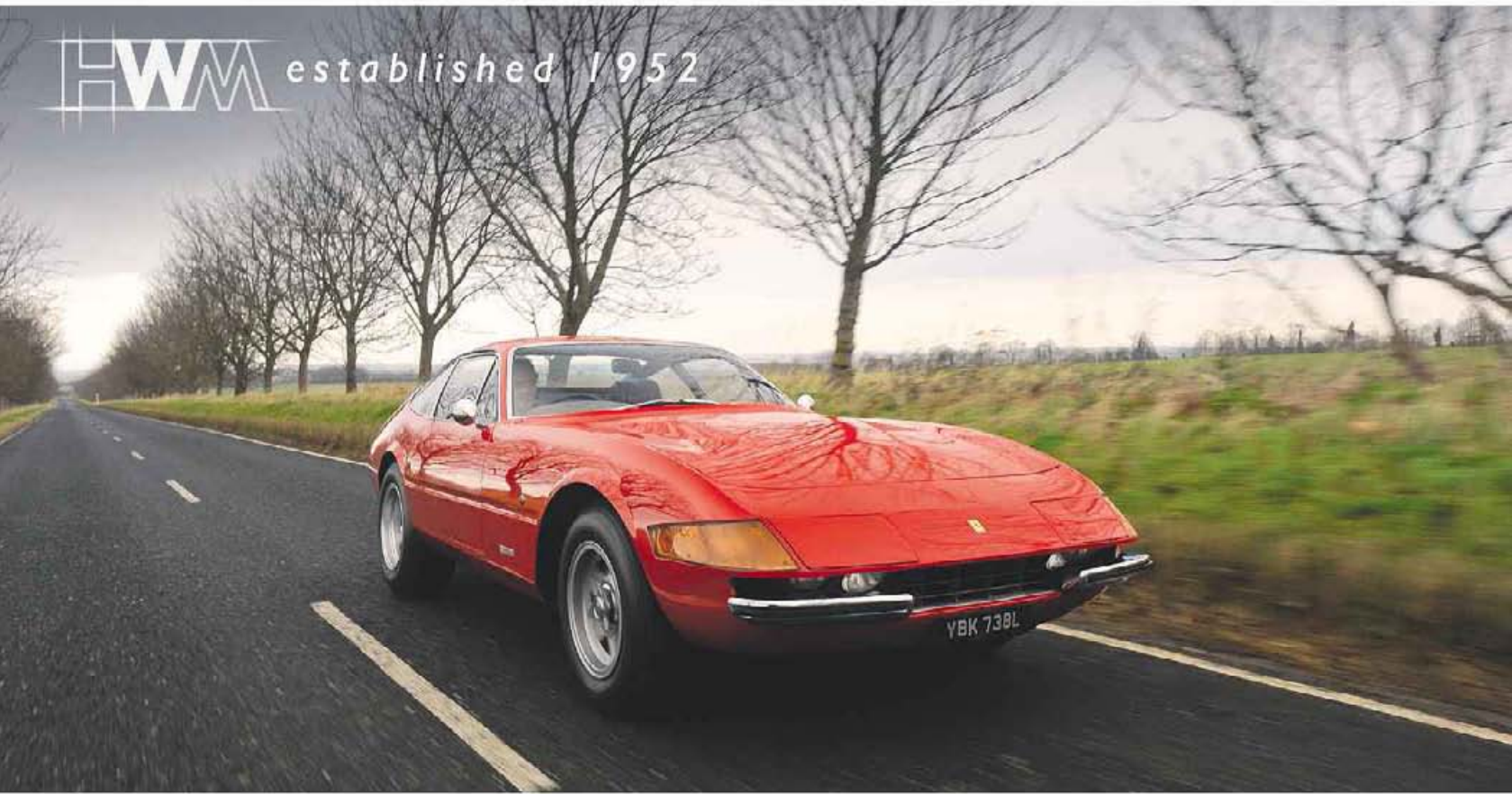
This 'step-down' Hudson is a replica of the 1953 NASCAR championship-winning Hornet, one of the cars that made Smokey Yunick famous – for its speed as well as for his creative interpretations of the rule book. [www.paulrussell.com](http://www.paulrussell.com)



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# 1982-92 Lotus Excel

*Much better than you might expect, and extraordinary value*

**SEVENTIES STYLE** or Eighties usability? It's a dilemma that has troubled enthusiasts for many years and, while deciding between an early LP400 Countach and one of the later QV models can be a tough choice for a multitude of reasons, we find ourselves in a similar quandary when looking at Lotus GT cars of the same era.

At a glance, anyone can see that the earliest M50 Elite of 1974 and later Eclat both bear a striking family resemblance to the Lotus Excel, introduced at the 1982 NEC Motor Show. Delve a little deeper under the skin, however, and you will discover a considerably different machine, and one that deserves a second look.

The Excel was the first Lotus model to bear the fruits of a recent technical partnership with

Toyota, and what a difference it made. Lotus kept its own carburettor-fed 2.2-litre four-cylinder engine but utilised the transmission, differential, driveshafts and even the brakes from the Celica Supra, along with various other components throughout. The car also gained a new rear suspension set-up as well as numerous cosmetic changes, including body-coloured bumpers and a new front-end treatment.

This was just the beginning of a long evolutionary journey for Excel, however, and towards the end of 1984 Lotus had further updates up its sleeve to take the fight to its rivals. It received a further re-style, refreshed interior as well as a new SE (Special Equipment) package in early 1986 – much of which was

undertaken by Peter Stevens as his first project for Lotus. As well as some functional aero tweaks, the SE also brought a 20bhp rise in power, bringing it up to a healthy 180bhp.

1986 also brought in another Lotus first, the automatic SA version, which made use of a four-speed ZF transmission to appeal more to US buyers. Build quality steadily improved throughout the production run, with tolerances significantly tightened up. That means finding a later model today, preferably in SE form, is your best bet. Production actually continued right up to 1992, by which point the Excel was a very well sorted car – if a little out-dated. Drive a good example today and you will still be struck by the sharp chassis set-up, as well as the torquey and exceptionally responsive engine.

It's easy to be swayed by the looks of the prettier earlier models, or the functionality of something from Stuttgart, but we would urge you to spare a thought for the Excel. Here's a car that is far better to drive than it has any right to be, less troublesome than any Lotus of old, and fantastic value for money. **Matthew Hayward**

## THE LOWDOWN

### PRICES

Even the best Excel will struggle to command more than £10,000 on the market and you can find good cars for considerably less. £3000 is the starting point for an early car in need of a little love, while £6500 should get you into a decent SE. Automatics are generally pretty rare, and are a little cheaper.

### WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

Electrical gremlins are to be expected, so don't be too surprised if there are a few blown dashboard bulbs. Other issues, such as inconsistent gauges and flickering warning lights, are generally due to bad earth contacts. Be wary of more serious electrical maladies, as they can be difficult to trace.

Engines are largely reliable but they don't like to be abused, so ensure any car you're buying has received regular oil and coolant changes. If a car is running rough, then it may be a case of setting-up the carbs, but a misfire could be caused by a tired fuel pump. Look out for electrical issues under the bonnet, as a failing distributor may also cause problems.

Most parts are surprisingly cheap and easy to source, as they were originally taken from 1980s Toyotas. The rear light clusters were shared with the Rover SD1, but other trim and parts unique to the Excel can be more difficult to track down.

The steel backbone chassis was galvanised from new, but that doesn't mean it won't be rusty today. It's best to get the car on a ramp to fully inspect the underside. As the body is glassfibre, there's little to worry about aside from the condition of the paint and previous accident damage, though do watch out for crazing and cracking of the gel coat.



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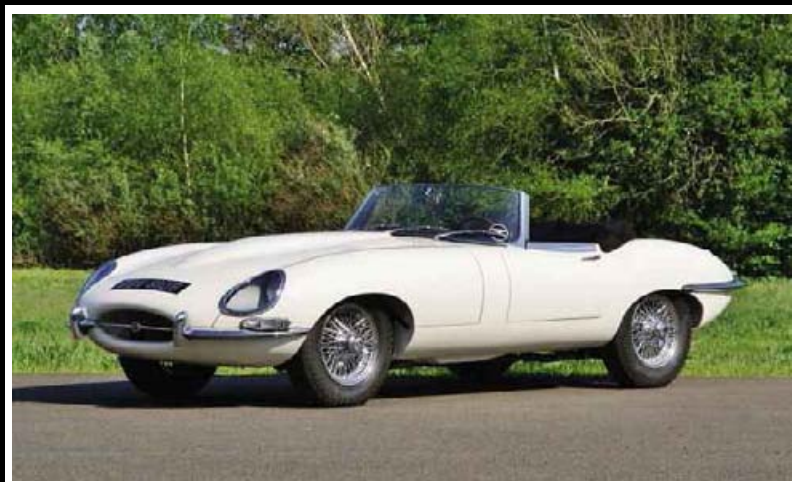
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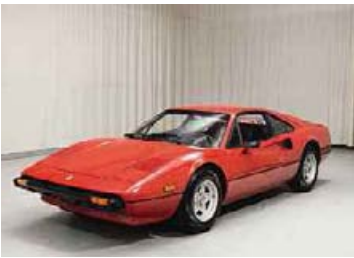


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1969 Aston Martin DBS Vantage: ZF 5 Speed Manual: Right Hand Drive  
1974 Aston Martin V8 Coupé Series III: Original EU Left Hand Drive: 41,057 Miles:  
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1956 Bentley S1 Continental Fastback: Unique Original Build Colour Specification  
1957 Bentley S1 Continental Drop Head Coupe: Concours Restored: 1 of 55  
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1960 Ferrari 250 GT PF Coupe: Series 11: RHD: 1 of 9 Produced: Concours Restored  
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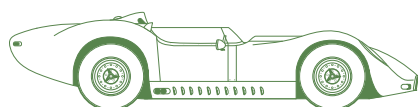
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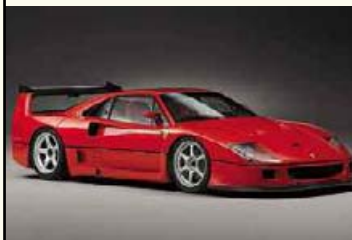
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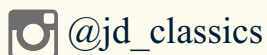






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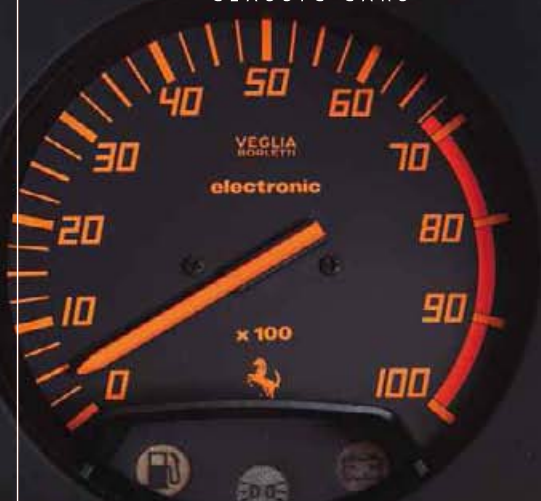
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Transmission: Manual

Engine Layout: Flat 12

Mileage: 14,228 miles

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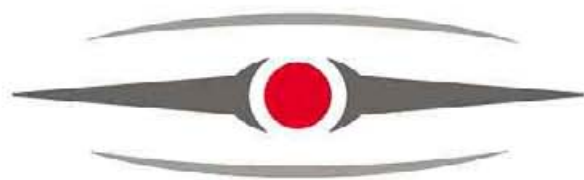
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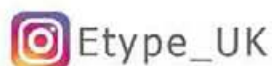
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1990 Aston Martin V8 Vantage "X-Pack"  
 (Last LHD X-Pack Built) LHD



2005 Ford GT LHD



1968 Aston Martin DB6 Volante LHD



2015 Ferrari 458 Speciale Aperta RHD



1971 Monteverdi 375L High Speed RHD



1967 Lamborghini 400 GT 2+2 LHD



2014 Ferrari 458 Speciale LHD



2004 Bentley Continental R Mulliner Wide  
 Body LHD



1956 AC Ace Bristol Roadster 289 V8 Cobra LHD



1961 Facel Vega HK500 Coupe LHD



1973 Porsche 911 S 2.4 "Sunroof Coupe" LHD

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#### Lancia Aprilia Volpini barchetta RHD - 1937

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Price: 388.000 Euro



#### Fiat 750 Giannini barchetta Ognex-Mille Miglia LHD - 1948

Participated 4 times at the Mille Miglia: 1948 - 1950 - 1952 - 1954. Initially with an aluminium siluro body. For the 1954 Mille Miglia with an aluminium barchetta body. Based on a Topolino A chassis and fitted with a Giannini prepared 750 cc engine. Now dismantled. Needs complete restoration. A fascinating project which will allow you 100% sure to participate at the Mille Miglia.

Price (as is): 175.000 Euro



#### Stanguellini 1100 mono-albero MM-barchetta LHD - 1951

One-off Stanguellini, initially being the only Vignale Cabriolet built on a tubular chassis. Sold new to Belgian race enthusiast who participated at the Liège-Rome-Liège and Tour de Belgique Automobile in 1951. Later in life transformed into barchetta exactly as 1951 Mille Miglia Stanguellini barchetta participant. Participated in 2007 at Historic Mille Miglia. In excellent condition immediately ready for more historic competition fun. Well described in Stanguellini book by Orsini/

Zagari. Price: 275.000 Euro



#### Facel Vega HK 500 manual LHD - 1960

This Facel Vega model was the dream come through for Mr. Jean Daninos in 1954 but it could be yours today! Best variant with 350 HP 6.3 liter Chrysler V8 coupled to superbly effective pont a Mousson 4 speed gearbox. Although restored approx. 25 years ago still a stunning beauty in "Lie de Vin" colour and beige leather interior. Comes with 2 sets of central locking wheels (wires and discs). Rare: only 489 examples produced.

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#### Lancia Appia Pininfarina Coupé LHD - 1961

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**1961 BRISTOL 406**



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**1983 BENTLEY MULSANN TURBO SPORTS STATION WAGON**



Finished in unmarked Mustard over Claret. Colour code bumpers and radiator, with chrome grill, auto, PAS, electric windows, seats, mirrors, air condition, cruise control, stainless steel sills, Bentley sports suspension, 4 head restraints with DVD players in the rear, 18 inch alloys. Flag Staff mast, drinks refrigerator. Sat Nav. 36,000 miles. Fitted umbrellas. Supplied new to the Channel Isles. Believed a one off. **£47,950**

**1965 ROLLS ROYCE SILVER CLOUD III**



Chinese eye two door coupe by Park Ward. Believed to be one of 65 RHD built. Body stripped down to bare shell and repainted in Midnight Blue. Re-chromed, re-trimmed in Bridge of Weir hide St James Maroon. New windscreen, woodwork re-polished, new headlining. Distinctive number plate. Fabulous car to own. Great investment. **£115,000**

**1983 ROLLS ROYCE SILVER SPUR**



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**1954 ALLARD P2 SAFARI WOODY STATION WAGON**



1 of only 10 built confirmed in Lush's book with 5 photo albums of the restoration and the only one with rear 3 door configuration. Re-ground crankshaft, mains and big end bearings, 3 speed gearbox on the right hand side. Hydraulic bonnet. Interesting history and lots of it. All instruments work including radio. New MOT supplied at sale. **£69,500**

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**1962 O.S.C.A. 1600 GTS Zagato**  
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**1954 Jaguar XK120 SE OTS.**  
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**1964 Porsche 356SC**  
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# WARREN KENNEDY



## 1950 NASH HEALEY

As a result of a chance meeting between Donald Healey and George Mason CEO of the Nash Corporation, a mating of the Nash 6 cylinder engine and the Healey chassis resulted in the Nash Healey, 104 Panel Craft Nash Healey's were built, and Donald entered one in the Mille Miglia of 1951.

This vehicle is one of my personnel cars that I found having been off the road in Florida some 30 years, The last car of the first batch built at the end of 1950. The car has completed a full nut and bolt restoration in time for the 2016 Mille Miglia. it has fitted the Le Mans Tri-carb cylinder head and ready for the 2017 Mille Miglia.



## 1948 HEALEY ELLIOTT

Works entry for the 1948 Mille Miglia, also during 1948 ran the very first race at Goodwood, and SPA 24 hour, also eligible for Classic LeMans. Over the last 8 years has entered the MM and ready for the 2017 MM Last year had a full strip-down and rebuild, new trim etc. call for more details.



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1983 LANCIA 037 GrB FIA



1962 JAGUAR E TYPE SEMI-LIGHTWEIGHT



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1974 MARCH 74S DFV 3 LITRE



1954 KIEFT 1500 EX LE MANS



1961 FACEL VEGA HK500 RHD

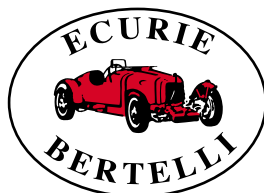


1967 NOMAD GT Mk1



1970 MGC GT SEBRING "WHY5H"

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# WARREN KENNEDY



## 1950 HEALEY SILVERSTONE

Chassis Number D49, this car was involved in an accident in 1965/66. the chassis was badly damaged and scrapped. Since 1966 the car has changed hands 5 times with most of the owners keeping the car for more than 10 years. A new chassis was made for the car in the 80's and having acquired it late last year we have set about it's restoration. Finished in a dark Green as it was when Mr Howard Wall a dentist from Preston Lancashire took delivery in 1950. One of only 105 Silverstones built 51D type and 54 E type Bodies. With a comprehensive history file, and full photographic record of the rebuild the car is ready for use.



## HEALEY WESTLAND

Chassis number B1606 was built November 1947, purchased by the previous owner in 1994 he ran the car until 2004 when it was taken off the road and it was subject to a 4 year restoration. since completion the car has covered over 20,000 miles to Healey events all around Europe. Now having just been refreshed it is an ideal candidate for entry in next years Mille Miglia.



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# WARREN KENNEDY



## HEALEY WESTLAND

Chassis Number B1666 was built early in 1948, the current owner over the last 20 years has undertaken some major events and runs in the car including cost to coast across the USA, his last big adventure was to circome- navigate south America. 8000 miles in 5 weeks. This showed it's mark on the car and a full nut and bolt restoration commenced. Now at the completion of this the car is ready for more adventures, maybe the Mille Miglia 2017?



## 1948 HEALEY WOODIE

Only about 10 of these cars were built, based on the Healey Chassis and running gear as fitted to the Westland, Elliott and the Silverstone, they were commissioned by Hector Dobbs a Healey/ Riley agent from Southampton. Built by Dibbins of Southampton. This is believed to be the sole survivor. Fully restored and ready for Goodwood Revival?



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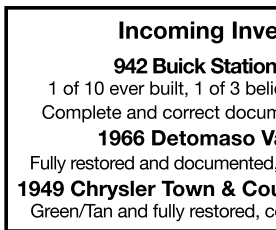
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**2012. Morgan Three Wheeler.** Natural grey metallic with contrasting Saddle tan leather interior and diamond stitching. One owner from new in excellent condition having covered only 2,414 miles with a full service history with ourselves. Bright pack, quilted seat stitching, black mohair tonneau cover, two eared spinners and immobiliser system. Just had annual serviced and new MOT. **£26,950**



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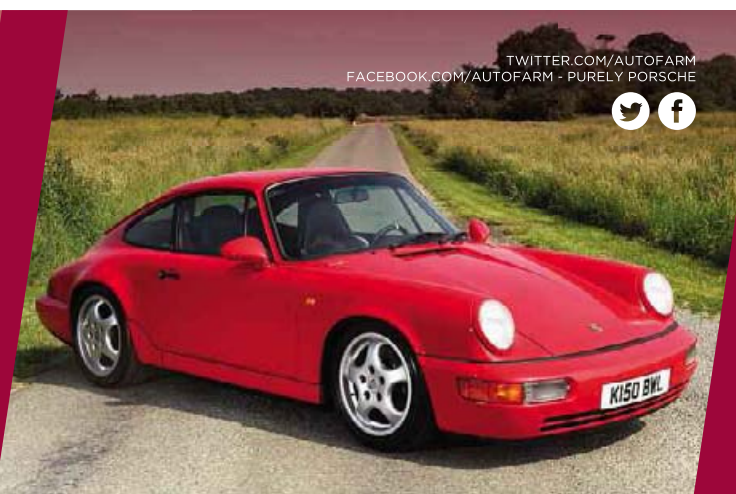
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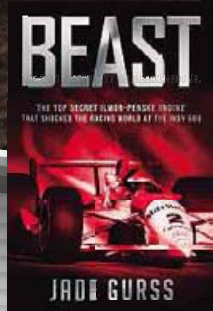
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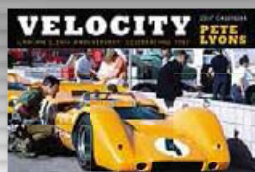
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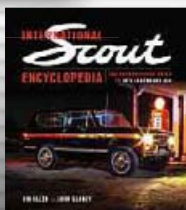


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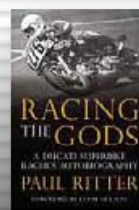
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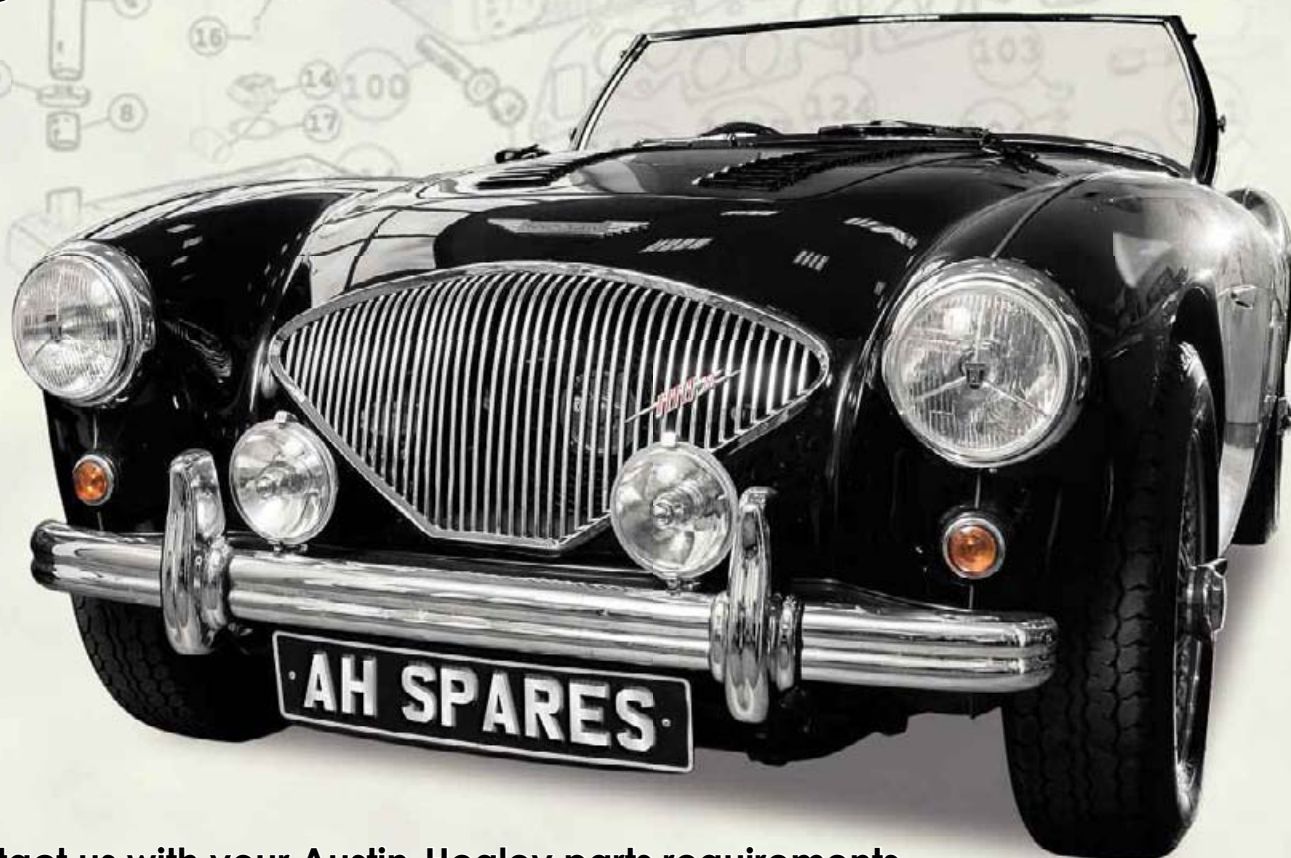




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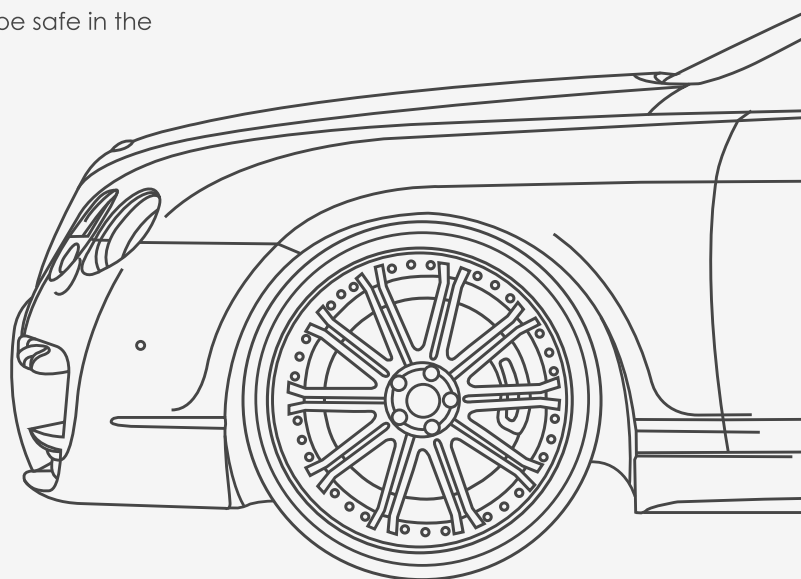
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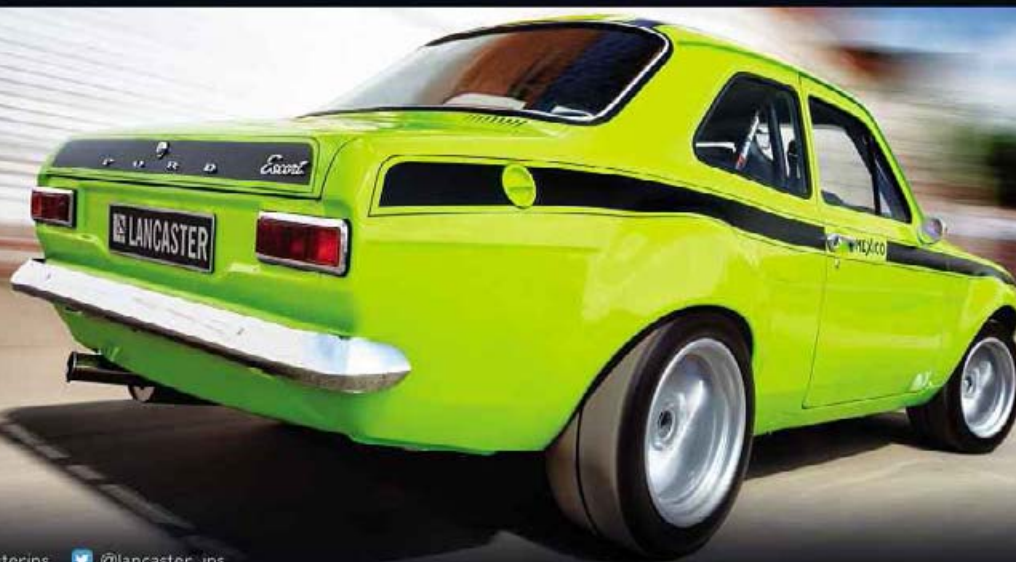
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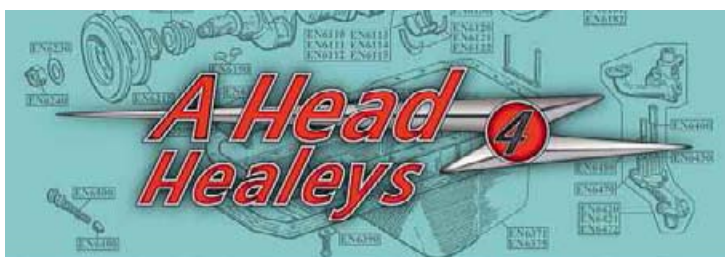
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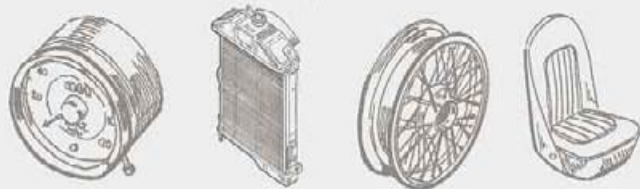
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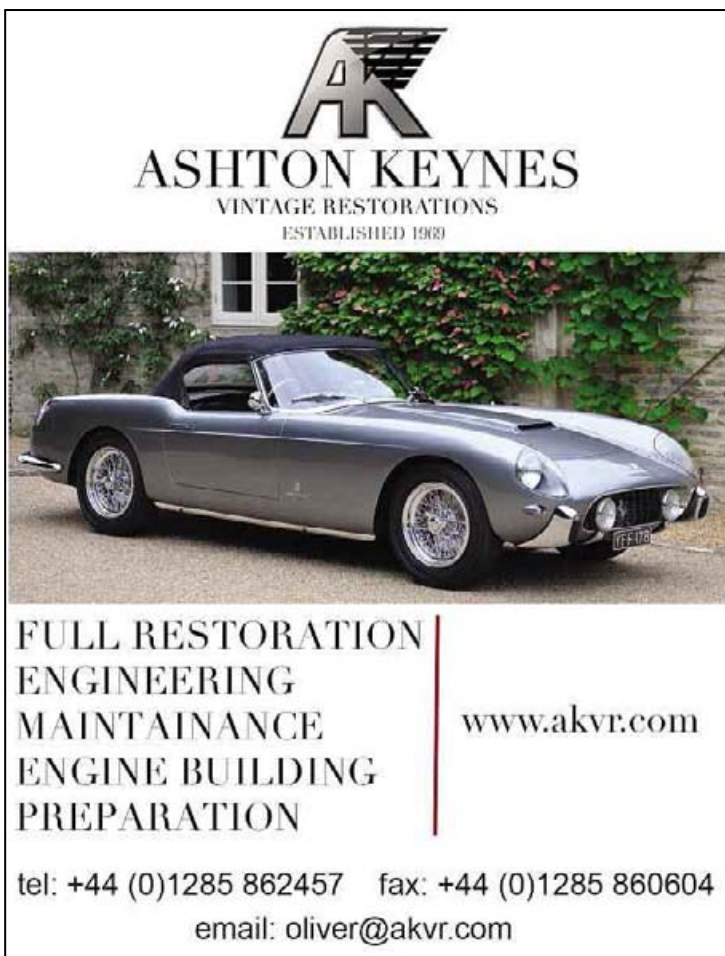
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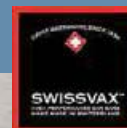
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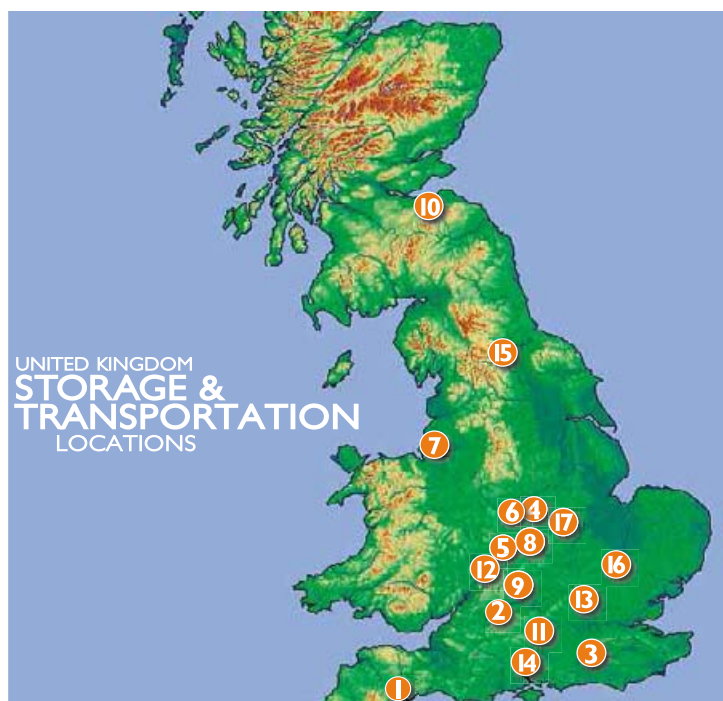
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# Day in the life

INTERVIEW BY GILES CHAPMAN PORTRAIT JAYSON FONG



## RICHARD FOX

*His company makes trophies for motor sport's top levels*

**THIS FACTORY OPENS** at 7.30am and closes at 4pm, so my 12 staff can miss most of the rush hour. Our silver-smithing workshop is one of London's biggest designer-makers but it's rare we'll do nights. You should 'craft' in the time allotted or you won't work at your best, and quality will drop. I'm strict about that.

Today, we have the Formula 1 Constructors' Trophy back here that I designed. Every year it returns to be polished and re-gilded. It's made from sterling silver and gold, and it's a 10-sided affair so every 'layer' is a decade... it gets heavier annually and there's 30 years' space left!

Each vitreous enamel badge on it is hand-fired by our enameller, and we'll remove them all for cleaning. They're bolted on with knurled nuts so, inside, it looks a bit like an inverted pineapple. It takes 14 hours to 'service'.

I first met Bernie Ecclestone in 1984. He approached the Goldsmiths' Livery Company looking for a young silversmith, and he liked my work best of the six people they put forward. I wanted two weeks to produce some ideas; he gave me three days. So I stayed up for 48 hours

to thrash out some concepts. That's how the Bernie Ecclestone Trophy came about. It's a triptych with an enamelled plaque in the middle, presented annually at the gala along with my Drivers' and Constructors' Trophies.

We hit it off immediately – he's a big leg-puller. He'll say, 'Richard, I've only got £5000 to spend,' to which I'll reply, well, you can only have one *this* big, then!

I've made over 600 motor sport trophies for Formula 1, NASCAR and World Rallying but I actually hated metalwork at school and I didn't study art. However, when I went to technical college in Leamington Spa we had to pick a complementary study, and to this day I've no idea why I chose jewellery. It just became more and more absorbing. In the evenings, I made a collection of bangles and rings for a mate's mum's boutique, and when she sold them all in a day – and gave me £200, a fortune in 1973 – my mind was made up.

So I embarked on a 3D design course, a year out in industry and my Master's degree at the Royal College of Art, and I left in 1981 with a

**'I WANTED TWO WEEKS TO PRODUCE SOME IDEAS, BUT BERNIE ECCLESTONE GAVE ME JUST THREE DAYS'**

toolkit, a big smile and little else. I set myself up in a cramped workshop in Farringdon, made my own workbench (still used as a packing table) and built the business from scratch.

I'm usually here at 9am. I work with my wife Serena, who designs our jewellery, although I am rarely at a bench because I'll be meeting clients, brainstorming or delivering our work.

After Serena designed some cufflinks for Rolls-Royce, they got interested in what else we could do. Now we contribute to many of their bespoke cars. People still recognise me from the 2014 Channel 4 series *Inside Rolls-Royce*.

I love having the Rolls people up here but I have lots of other visits too. Our bullion suppliers come to see us, and I also have regular spot-checks from Thames Water to make sure our silver-plating room – designed and built so chemical spills are impossible – is totally safe.

I'm a co-founder of Contemporary British Silversmiths. We have a great show at the V&A at the moment with our members' work in it. We started it because, 10 years ago, the industry was nosediving into oblivion. Big manufacturers were closing, work was going to the Far East. We were losing the skills of the people at the bench. It's absolutely vital to keep those going.

Apprentices are a tradition in silver-smithing going back centuries. My current one, Oscar, is in his third year; today he's preparing and setting gemstones into a prototype for me.

I was always passionate about motor racing because my dad took me to Silverstone and to hillclimbs. These days, if I've designed and made a trophy, I'll go to that race to follow it right up to presentation – it could be Bahrain, Texas or, most recently, Azerbaijan. Where it is, I will be, with my kit of screwdrivers, polishing cloths, gloves and cotton buds, just in case.

I somehow still make time for design. For the Azerbaijan trophy, the theme was a carpet with fire, and they loved it. We also do ecumenical work, but what I really like is to design my own tableware. That's my true indulgence.

My other one is my 1972 MGB roadster. It's the first car I ever bought back in 1984 and it's in the back of the factory now, the rebuild nearly finished. It's in Old English White with a red leather interior, and I have a matching period dinghy on a trailer to go with it.





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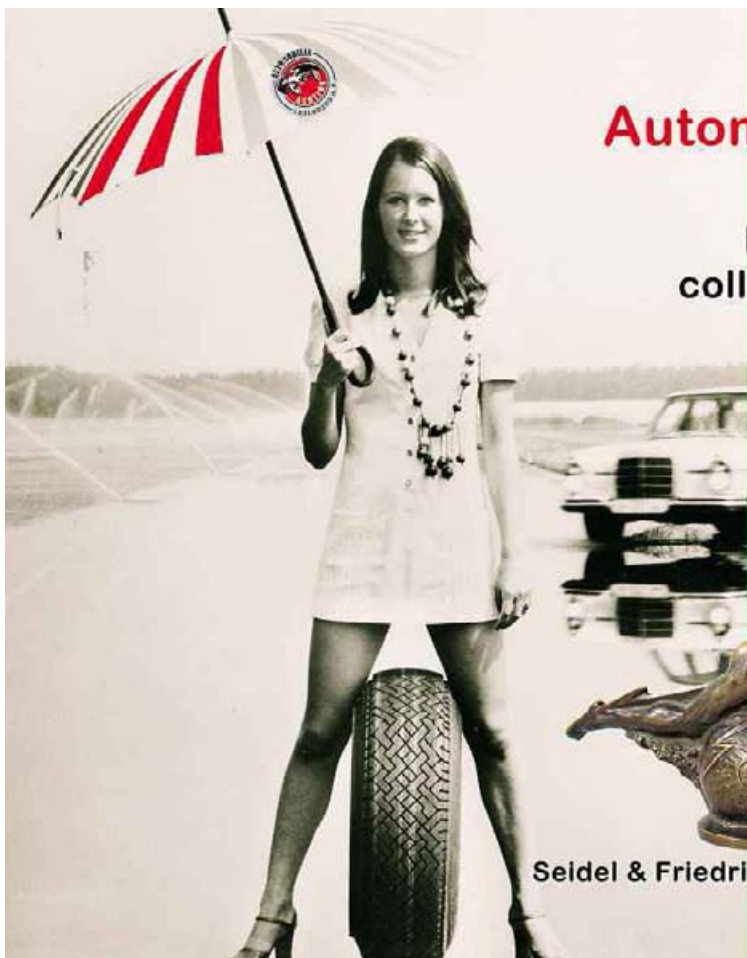


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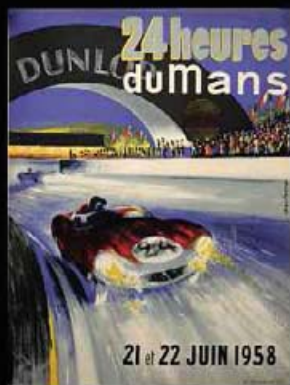
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In this sixth edition of **Art & Automobilia** we meet artists of wide-ranging talents who have, between them, done all these things. We hope you find their stories as compelling as we did.

Giles Chapman, Editor





**This page**

I took this picture of Jacky Ickx at a Formula 2 race at Crystal Palace in April 1968, two weeks after Jim Clark had been killed, so everyone was pretty tense and upset. He's just sitting here in the pits between a fence and the Ferrari race transporter. Jacky was going to drive the V6 Dino in the event, although he was yet to race. He was all alone and I thought he didn't look very approachable – even those fans nearby didn't seem bold enough to ask for his autograph – so I nicked this picture with my Zenit 58mm lens from quite a long way away. He's contemplative, maybe thinking about the events that had just killed the World Champion at Hockenheim.



# DAWSON'S CREED

*Ian Dawson pioneered a new genre of motor sport photography, and he did it for the love of the image. Here are some of his early pictures, published now for the first time*

Words Giles Chapman

At 31, photographer Ian Dawson began working for *Car* in 1975. The increasingly glossy monthly was the undisputed pacesetter in motoring magazines. Its covers were compelling, its stories arch, its page design fastidious and irresistible.

'And they actually gave the images some respect,' says Ian fervently. 'They used punchy shots and good portraits. *Autocar* and *Motor* had dreadful repro and witless use of pictures, so I was glad to be in *Car*.'

Ian credits his wife Marie for getting him the gig – the start of a relationship that exploded into a hectic life capturing the glamour and power of 1980s supercars, segueing lucratively into the jet-setting world of advertising shoots.

'She pretended to be my agent and badgered them to see my portfolio. I went to see the art editor, Pete Laws. He was quite surprised that all my action stuff was sharp. Their other photographers' action shots were often head-on

only, with a bit of lean on the car for movement!

'I got a Giant Test to do the following week in black and white – Jensen-Healey versus Ginetta G21. I got £90 for the job, film, processing, everything. I did my own printing and spent a week dodging, burning and huffing the prints in my darkroom. I thought to myself, wow, I'm off! It was a major break. I was never trained as a photographer.'

True. Ian was an artist, an alumnus of Camberwell School of Art with a post-grad in sculpture. In 1968, he was every inch the bohemian academic, teaching and making art, and spending the long summers in Greece. Then a fellow teacher asked him to help out making some films at an evening class.

'So I shot a couple of little nonsense films in black and white, about the relationship of ideas. One was called *Crease* and it was about ambiguous creases in a body. The other was *Rain*, water falling into water. It was four minutes long, which was quite enough.'

He'd learned how to use the kit, choose the lenses and load the camera. Now Ian was teaching photography, too. He began doing rostrum work to animate stills, and found many uses for his 21st birthday present from his dad.

'It was a Russian Zenit 2M single-lens reflex with a 58mm F2.0 Helios lens. It was built like a tractor, really crude, with a crunchy wind-on mechanism. There was a bubble in the lens glass but it didn't seem to make any difference.'

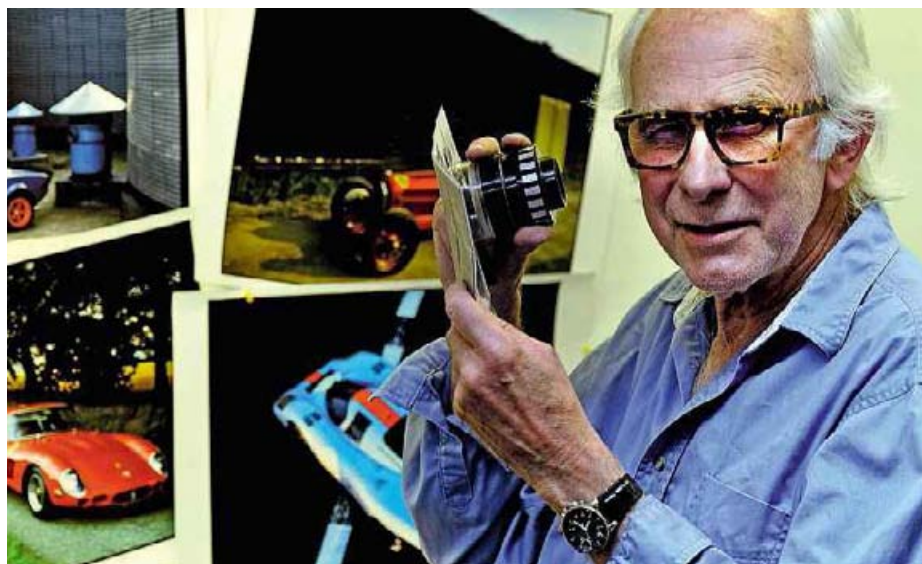
Ian's variously intense or dreamy students probably didn't know he had a secret passion for motor sport. With all his accumulated skills, he decided to make his own film about Formula 2. He called it *F2 – Close-up Heroes*.

'It was shot over two years between 1970 and 1972 at different tracks, not as a narrative – no linear continuity – but as an abstract "day at the races". It was 18 minutes long, no voice-over, no talking heads, but some BBC sound library effects of birdsong and swelling crowd noises. Like Marmite, you'll either love it or hate it.'

The little movie led to Ian being dispatched to Zolder, Barcelona and Zandvoort, well beyond his usual haunts of Brands Hatch and Crystal Palace, to shoot what he calls 'atmosphere stuff' for Brunswick Films. And while he was about it, Ian started taking 'reportage' pictures that – he hoped – would find a place and earn a shekel in magazines.

'However, I was always trying to find alternative images, different angles, but *Autosport* was really only interested in who was overtaking who on lap 16.' So as he roamed the circuits, barely recouping his travel costs, Ian was often taking pictures for nothing more than his own satisfaction.

Hence, he now sits on a huge archive of unpublished pictures of early 1970s motor sport. Here, Ian, who recently retired from full-time photography but maintains his archive at [www.creativeautoresource.photography](http://www.creativeautoresource.photography), shares the stories behind a selection of these never-before-seen images.







#### Left

This race start picture is rainy, gritty, busy, horrible. It's the Race Of Champions at Brands, 1973, and they're all in it – Hunt in the Hesketh, Reutemann in the Brabham, Tom Pryce in the Shadow, Denny Hulme in the McLaren, Lauda, Fittipaldi, Regazzoni, Mass, Hill. They used to mix the cars up on the grid to make a race, and there are Formula 5000 cars at the back. I really like the grain. I pushed the film three stops to get the heavy, sugary texture. It was, really, too grainy for most magazines. The web-offset screen on something like *Autosport* was so coarse that it would have fought itself appallingly.



#### Above

I was standing on the inside of Becketts at Silverstone when I took this one of Ronnie Peterson in the Lotus 72 doing about 150mph. I was right on the edge of the track at this full-bore, right-hand corner. Christ, if something went wrong, I'd have been wiped out. The only difference between the tarmac and the infield was a bunch of tyre markers. Of course, you had to sign an indemnity waiver, so you couldn't blame the circuit for your demise, but I never worried about it. There was a very good chance a car could come off here, I guess, but you'd be a numpty to stand in the wrong place. I used Kodachrome, so it has a colour saturated look. You've got this long shutter speed, and a reasonable amount of focus depth, but you can only get a certain area of sharpness, and making that the driver's face was tricky because every one had a slightly different cornering line... this is long before the days of autofocus. You wouldn't know if you had got it right until later that week when the stuff came back from the lab!

#### Right

I was taking myself off to races, wangling passes and hunting for pictures, and on this particular weekend I was at the Dutch Grand Prix at Zandvoort, mostly shooting footage for Brunswick. Here, though, is my 'snapshot' of Niki Lauda and Luca di Montezemolo standing next to the Ferrari 512. This was the race where Hunt first beat Lauda to take his first GP win in the Hesketh. I'm pretty sure Lauda and Montezemolo must have been discussing how easy it was going to be to beat this Champagne Charlie mob from England! They don't seem too bothered. Niki's eating a bread roll and Luca's hair – for which he was famous – is looking rather marvellous. I like the empty stands and sand dunes in the distance.







#### Left

This is Barry Sheene, and he was a real Jack-the-lad in the early 1970s; just look at the expression on this girl's face. He's obviously grabbed this poor Players No 10 promotions girl and plonked her down on his knee. He's riding round a circuit on one of those floats where all the riders are introduced to the crowd before the race. Look at him: his hair, his cap, his big grin; he was real anti-Establishment. It was wonderful. All bike racers were, then, a breed apart. I am being the voyeur here, I suppose, which is a little shameful in a way, but that's how you get these moments in the can.

#### Below

Here I was at the very last chequered flag of the very last Rothmans Formula 5000 Championship race ever held. It's a Chevron crossing the finishing line being driven by someone or other. From that point on, Formula 5000 ceased. It was great racing, open-wheeled single-seaters that were quick but not that nimble because they had great big cast-iron American V8s shoved in the back, pushrod heavy metal from Chevrolet, Buick and Chrysler. Nevertheless, I had quite a detachment from the detail of car and competitor. I was much more interested in the graphic quality than the narrative, and in this case the interest comes from the hard sun together with the motorcycle race markers on the tarmac and the start/finish line painted across the track, which of course you don't have any more. →






**Left**

Jody Scheckter, eyeballing me in 1975 from the seat of his Tyrrell. He's on the grid and waiting to go, and this is that pensive moment five minutes before the start of the race, with the umbrella over him. As the photographer, I was waiting for the action to begin too. He had quite a nervous character, and here he has on his Belstar helmet with a Nomex race suit that joined up with it, like a fireman's suit. I'm sure that one thing on his mind was the fear of fire, because Formula 1 cars of those days were notoriously dangerous places to be. He's just noticing me as I sneak my way in to get the shot. These days, they do the old grid walk and that's all you're going to get as a snapper.

**Above**

I took this picture with a reflex mirror lens, so you see this interesting texture on the backdrop as a result. A very long 500mm mirror lens with fixed aperture F8 gives you this nice doughnut effect. This is Barry Sheene and Kenny Roberts in the Anglo-American Challenge Cup. It's a strong picture, a lot of movement, pretty arresting, and think I was probably trying to cover the event for a bike magazine on spec. A bike is tiny compared with a car, but all I wanted to do was get a really successful picture. After I started working for *Car* magazine, I shot for various other titles also owned by FF Publishing, which included *Truck* and *Supercar Classics*. I certainly didn't mind doing an articulated lorry. It didn't matter what the vehicle was, about 70% of shoots had issues of one sort or another. Usually they were to do with the lack of the right light. 

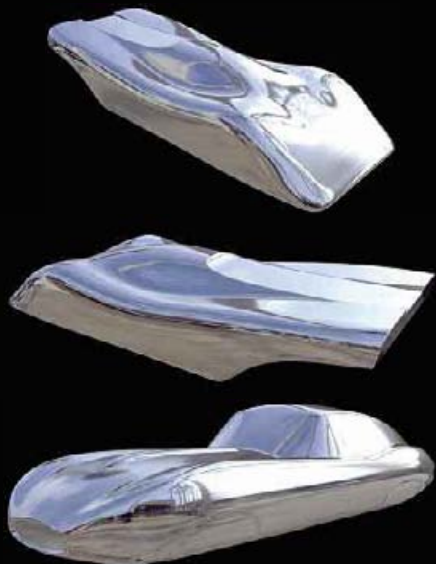


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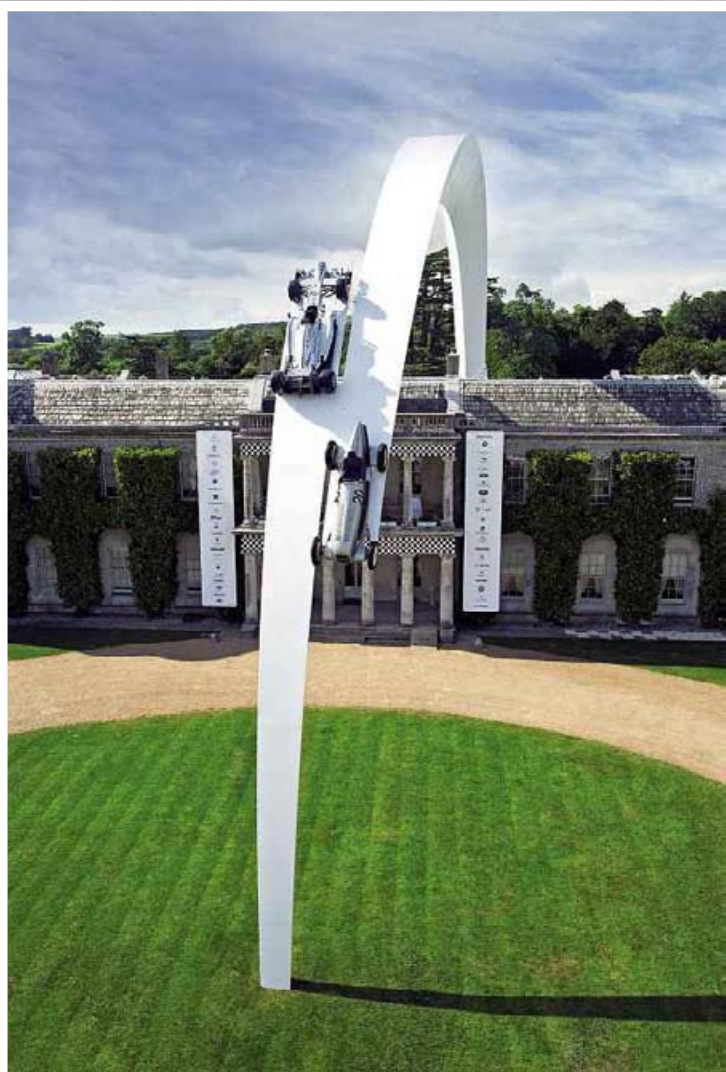
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**Clockwise from opposite, top**  
 BMWs shoot skywards as Mille Miglia 328 passes (2016); Gerry in his studio; Grand Prix Mercedes-Benzes arc over Goodwood House (2014); racing and concept Mazdas top a twisted terrace of beams (2015).

**T**he Latin inscription on Sir Christopher Wren's tomb in St Paul's Cathedral urges the reader to look around if you want to see his monument. That's all you need to do at the Goodwood Festival Of Speed for an insight into artist Gerry Judah.

Every year, his sculptures swoop and tower and gleam over proceedings, and then they are gone. If you don't see it in 'the metal' over that one weekend, then you never will.

'Yeah, this year's was an extraordinarily physical presence,' Gerry says, rocking back in a paint-spattered swivel chair in his north London studio. 'But you build it and then you rip it down. I'm not precious about that because I worked in film and TV for years, where everything is temporary. Actually, I like it: it makes the ideas stronger than the actual things.'

Gerry first met the Earl of March when the Goodwood heir was plain Charles Settrington, photographer. He was one of many 1970s and '80s creative types – David Bailey, Terence Donovan and pop video pioneers Godley & Creme among them – who wanted Gerry's input as a set designer, backdrop visionary and model-maker.

'I knew he was some sort of aristocrat, but we all worked equally, we were all just looking for ideas and making films and photos together. No reliance on computers – just direct collaboration. It was later that he tracked me down to make a sort of triumphal arch for Goodwood, and I realised there were these wonderful structures we could make with the actual cars themselves.

'Museums have to trust you, and that level of trust is quite extraordinarily humbling. Their cars are worth millions of pounds and just to be allowed to whack them upside down high in the air and in all kinds of weather is incredible. The work has to soar, and I want it to anyway. It's got to work well in the space, make people say "Oh, my God" because it's about the power of sculpture mixed with motor sport. It appears and looks cavalier but, of course, that's not how we approach it.'

The 65-year-old artist describes to me the physical creation of his Goodwood sculptures, ➔

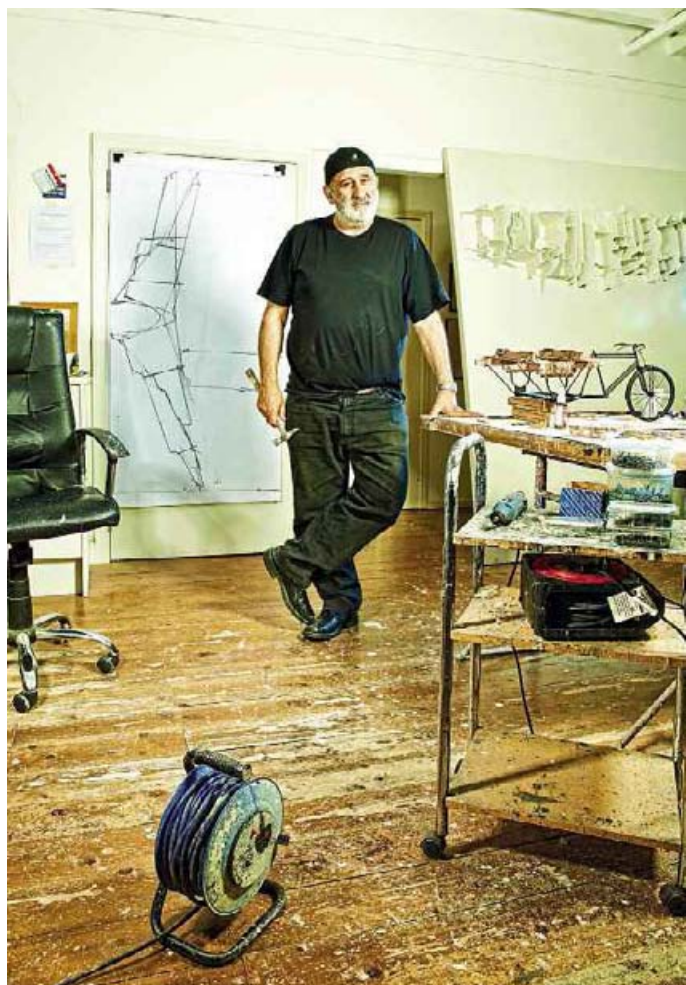
# REACH FOR THE HEAVENS

*Goodwood's towering Festival of Speed structures are the work of iconoclastic sculptor Gerry Judah.*

*But his work extends far beyond the automotive*

**Words** Giles Chapman **Photography** Howard Simmons





*‘The mashed-up creative process finished with Gerry’s shifting, twisting skyscraper of metal beams, a Le Mans car dangling from its peak’*



including the cutting process in Sheffield and the fabrication in a huge yard in Littlehampton. From Mercedes-Benz and Alfa Romeo to Audi and Jaguar, all the key sponsors have had their priceless racing icons suspended in the sky by Gerry. He recalls the orgy of ideas needed to find something that BMW felt hit home. And the Mazda exhibit where the mashed-up creative process started with the design of a 1962 Enzo Mari letter opener and finished with Gerry’s shifting, twisting skyscraper of metal beams, a Le Mans car dangling from its peak.

‘Suddenly the aspirations of the client and the twisting form gelled together, the sense of wonder and danger that has to be in a Goodwood cantilever.’

Gerry Judah has a steady intensity that beams straight at you when he talks, but then, as I absorb his words, he unexpectedly lightens up.

‘You know what, with a big sculpture, I sometimes think I can do it in an armchair. I mean, you start with a concept, something which doesn’t resonate with anything you’ve done before. Then it gels, it has some meat in it.

‘I can be driving down the motorway, suddenly get an idea, stop in a lay-by, sketch it on the scrappiest bit of paper in the car, snap it on my iPhone, email it to Bruno – the engineer

#### Above from left

Hammer in hand, Gerry gets ready to smash some more models to create sculptural wreckage; three Porsches appear to leave vapour trails at Goodwood (2013)

I work with in Sheffield – and five hours later a computer drawing comes my way. Because at this point, it’s all about the geometry, getting four or five lines into how it works. That’s all done with computers and phone calls and only *then* do you get down to sketching models, cutting up cardboard, plastic, plaster, resin, whatever, so you can make it work in 3D.’

Gerry describes himself thus: ‘My beginning, middle and end is sculpture.’ He also claims to be somewhat the itinerant artist, having changed his work and his studio location frequently since graduating in fine art from London’s Goldsmiths College in 1975, and then studying sculpture at the Slade.

His portfolio and list of exhibitions is enormous but, as he became more established, bolder and less reliant on working for other people, the story started to serve the work, instead of the reverse. ‘I’m a project artist, and too much of an egotist, so I like to blaze my own trail,’ he shrugs. From scouring London’s skips for waste wood to de-nail for John Napier’s

theatre set for *Nicholas Nickleby*, he has turned to complex, three-dimensional paintings that often draw on turning points in history.

The Imperial War Museum has embraced Gerry’s talents. One commission was for a model of the dreaded ‘selection ramp’ at the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp for its Holocaust exhibition. Another work, called *Crusader*, was a cross-shaped, hung-askew emblem of how war causes human suffering.

‘I took the white cross from war graves as the symbol, and I embellished it with contemporary war zones – Aleppo, Baghdad, Homs – because 100 years after World War One, the carve-up of the Ottoman empire, the Sykes-Picot Agreement, all of it, we’ve ended up still fighting the same conflicts in the Middle East. They’re on the same fault lines, about the same issues. It’s not over. We’ve got to stop fighting these conflicts.’

Some smaller variations on this acutely painful theme were produced for Gerry’s local church. They came to the attention of Canon Mark Oakley of St Paul’s Cathedral, no less, who, as Gerry says, ‘liked the energy’. He suggested there’d be space on the wall of the nave for Gerry’s work if it could commemorate World War Two in a similarly compelling way. →





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'I couldn't believe it. I immediately thought I'd like to do something specific for it. I had an idea for the crucifix with them within two weeks and they said yes, let's do it.'

With Christopher Wren's notional, quizzical, all-pervading approval, Gerry cleared his studio floor to make the piece. The organised frenzy the sculptor outlines is darkly impressive.

'I started making maquettes, developing it, cutting, pasting, painting. It's a steel armature clad in cardboard and plaster. All the buildings were accurately designed, computer cut-out and then glued on. And then I smashed them up. I painted the wreckage with acrylic gesso – a mix of plaster and paint that I make myself – and fused it all into the canvas.' It was installed in 2014 and St Paul's shows no sign of wanting to take it down. Visitors remain gripped by it.

The studio has witnessed several more of these three-dimensional paintings reflecting environmental catastrophes and conflicts. Sometimes the destroyed cityscapes, blitzed architect's models packed with tiny exposed stairwells and blasted-open lift shafts, take two years to complete.


'I build them and smash them on the canvas, and then glue them back together as detritus while adding new details like water towers. Then I smash them up again and then I build another city on top.' Bucolic they are not; the power of devastation is all-consuming.

Gerry's newest work is differently discomfiting. The charity Christian Aid took him to West Bengal to look at its projects around climate change – trying to overcome the drought and corruption that relentlessly hold poverty.

'It was where I was born and grew up. It's hard to take, and I'm doing a series of sculptures based on my visit. They are all rickshaws with different structures on them – power stations, pylons, temples made from ash and polluted materials that reflect the legacy and the future. They're lashed together as they would be in real life in India. They don't rely on technology, just whatever they can find and put together. And that's what I've done.'

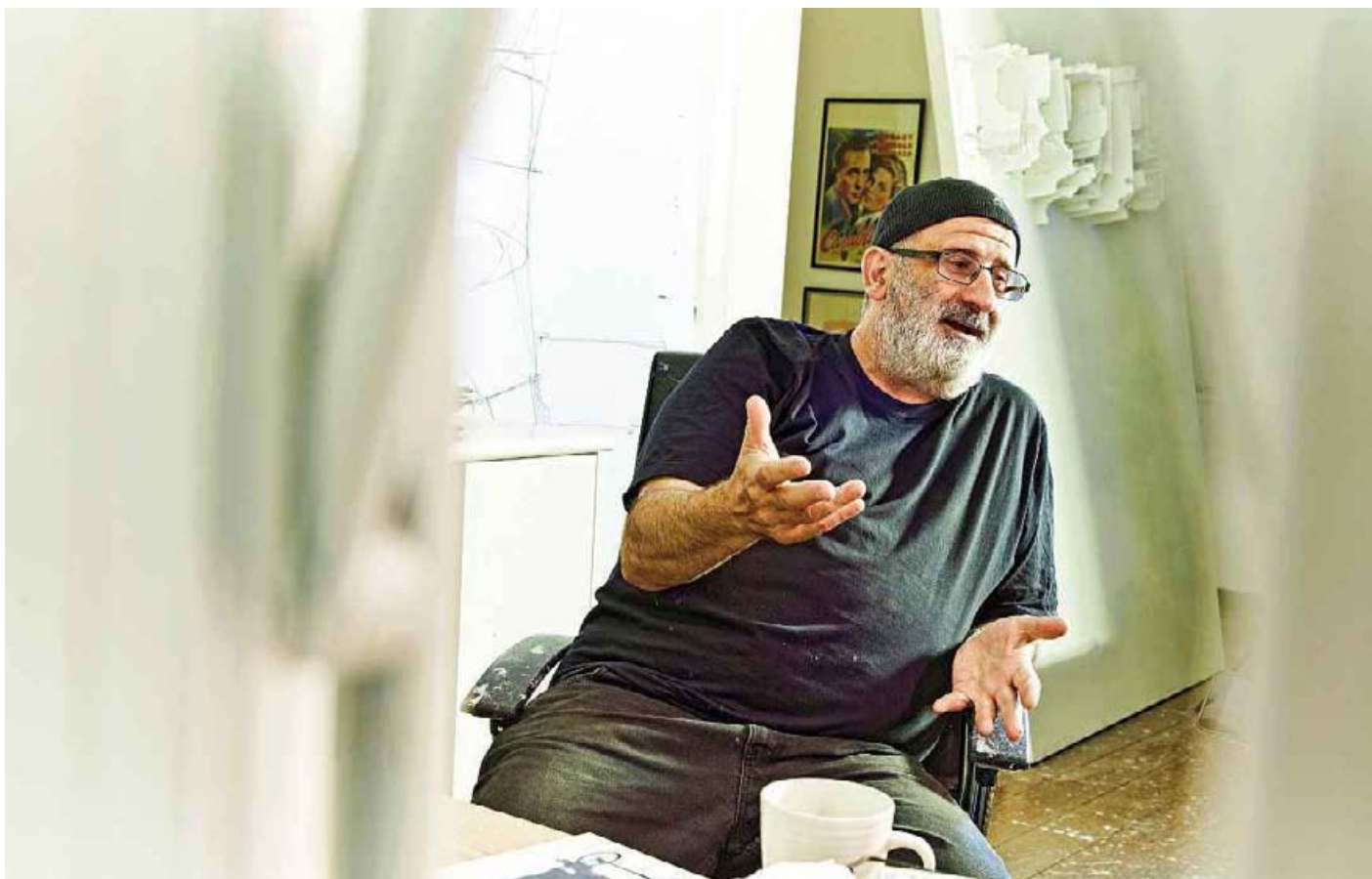
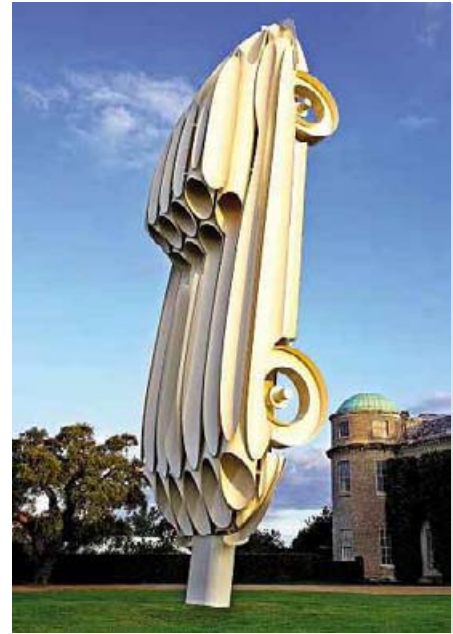
Jane Morrow, curator of the Wolverhampton Art Gallery, summed them up: 'These intricate, fragile and colourful works reflect the beauty of India amongst its degradation.'

Gerry is only vaguely interested in cars, emphatic only in his view that modern cars are hideous and samey because of the need to pack them with technology. 'We've accustomed ourselves to these ugly objects on our streets – we've adapted our eyes rather than objected.'

'But, then, I'm not a petrolhead. I want to just keep making stuff, and I'm not answerable to anyone when I'm working, dealing with uncompromising materials and trying to bend them to my will. I'm constantly in collaboration and confrontation with them.' 

#### Below and bottom

Tubular E-type (2011) was relatively compact by Goodwood standards and Jaguar was hoping to keep it; Gerry makes a point while outline buildings wait behind.





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# REALITY REDEFINED

*A photograph? A painting? Or something else?  
Using CGI technology, these artworks show  
history from vantage points impossible in reality*

Words Giles Chapman

The climax of Le Mans '66 was one of the most theatrical and then controversial endurance wins there's ever been. The Ford GT40 contingent was in line to beat the pants off Ferrari (and Porsche), so the Detroit giant's goal was as good as scored. Two of the three Fords were 21 laps ahead of the fourth-placed Porsche 906, despite a downpour of rain. So, just a few minutes before the finish, Ken Miles and Denny Hulme could afford to ease off a little to allow the McLaren/Amon and Bucknum/Hutcherson cars to catch up.

After all the dollars and effort Ford had lavished on its Le Mans assault, it was understandably keen to achieve a 'photo finish'. So the three GT40s roared over the finish line in a picture-perfect sequence, mere car-lengths apart – the blue Miles/Hulme one followed by the black McLaren/Amon one trailing it by a few metres, and the gold Bucknum/Hutcherson example in close pursuit. Bang-bang-bang.

The scenario is even more intriguing because of what happened immediately afterwards. Ken





**Clockwise from top left**  
Final image (below) starts with Audis, which are CGI'd into GT40s, before period backgrounds, road markings, people and weather are added.

**Facing page and below**  
Founder of Unique & Limited, Jan Rambousek, points his Hasselblad digital camera; eager spectators are photographed separately.

Miles was walking towards the podium when race officials announced that, in fact, he had come second. The McLaren/Amon car was the winner because it has started 40 yards behind the Miles/Hulme machine.

The crowd was snapping away furiously on their pocket cameras through the rain, while the professional photographers in the wake of the chequered flag were all set up for their conventional winning pictures. But no image remotely like this one produced by Unique & Limited was ever taken. It would have been a physical impossibility. No photographer would have been allowed in the middle of the track, there were no drones or miniature digital cameras with electronic timers, and there was nowhere from which a zoom lens could have homed in for such close-up drama.

Jan Rambousek's title for it, *Fords And The Furious*, is apt. But don't get this masterful image confused with any photograph. Recreating this moment in Le Mans history took the best part of five months, and occupied the time of at least five digital artists. It's one of

the latest images from the 28-year-old's Unique & Limited enterprise, based in Prague in the Czech Republic – a highly innovative visual approach born from his disenchantment with the world of advertising.

'We'd been doing advertising work for ten years, production for posters and press ads for agencies, and producing renderings for customers like Skoda,' he says.

'But in that industry, timescales and budgets are getting tighter. Quality and, really, creativity are getting worse. So we decided to get away from advertising. We wanted to do our own project, and I have always been passionate about history and fanatical about precision.'

The impetus to change direction arose in 2014. One of Jan's friends was trying to raise interest in saving the old Masaryk race track at Brno, and Jan used this as a springboard to launch Unique & Limited by recreating racing moments there of the 'Silver Arrows' Mercedes-Benz and Auto Union battle of the 1930s.

It was an immense undertaking. At one point, Jan's team was working with 70 extras

sporting 250 period costumes, plus a large photographic crew to oversee image capture.

The finalised images, including *The Bend That Broke*, were unveiled to great acclaim at the 2014 Goodwood Festival Of Speed. It was immediately obvious that they were something very special, and the prints sold strongly. →





‘The work is a mixture of images that we recreate and historical research, and with the Silver Arrows at Masaryk that was tough; there’s very little good reference material. The deeper back you got with a subject, the worse the quality of the pictures. We could find little good reference for the circuit in the 1930s, for example, and no colour at all.’

The Ford GT40 image showcases what happens when Jan and his colleagues fuse cutting-edge graphic technology with a fleeting historic moment to produce stunning artwork. They start with the incident itself, and in this case the GT40 dominance of the event in its final moments simply begged for treatment.

An intimate study of the event was made, which involved reading, picture research and detail capture using 250 period images, looking at footage and gathering eyewitness accounts. A concept study gradually emerged to give an overall feel of what the image was going to look like. Several different ideas were created before the right one was chosen.

Next, a pinpoint-accurate three-dimensional model of the GT40 was produced as the central reference points for the three cars.

‘We used every available source of data to build up the car in 3D. This takes an amazingly large amount of time because we work from scratch. No-one can provide that for us. Then we worked on the detail of the side of the car we wanted to show.’

‘When we started, the black car was undergoing restoration, but the blue one is in the Shelby Museum in the USA and they were extremely helpful. They took all the photos, and more, that we asked for.’

‘The GT40 was a racing car so it lived its own racing life. Even if you saw the car then, it is different now. But we have recreated it just as it was in 1966. Every sticker, every bit of typography on the tyre wall, is exactly as it was. It’s like being a detective as you search through the archives, because we are looking for what very specific parts, such as the brakes, actually looked like on the day. Unlike with the Silver Arrows, where all the drivers and key people have gone, you can still meet and talk to people who worked on the GT40. They make it easier.’

In this case, no actual photoshoot of the car was required. When that is called for, the team uses the latest Hasselblad cameras, whether capturing a car or the surviving parts of the location that was its backdrop.

The shading and texturing process followed, in which the GT40’s battle scars, tiny dents, blemishes and streaks of dirt commensurate with 24 hours of hard driving were added in the most intricate detail. And then the lighting and rendering was undertaken, adding an accurate interpretation of the ambient conditions – which in this case were wet and overcast but had to be extrapolated from black-and-white



**Clockwise from top**

Components of a picture are photographed separately before blending into final digital image; wet track surface is recreated with spray; period-dressed extras lean by black background.

period pictures or colour images that have faded from their original vividness.

The final step is the ‘compositing’ of the cars, the background and the fastidiously re-imagined aura, merging the real hard points of Le Mans with the CGI models of the cars, plus added layers of spray and smoke which add to the power of a scene no-one has ever seen before. A work like this absorbs 1600 man hours and contains some 11m polygon ‘pixels’.

‘We don’t actually want it to look just like a photo,’ Jan explains, ‘nor do we want to achieve the effect of a painting. Sharpness is important but we also want a depth of field. And we put a motion blur on the image so it’s not all totally crisp. What’s special with our work are the things that haven’t been captured before and couldn’t have been back then, moments that no-one has achieved graphically before.’

So far, Unique & Limited has produced about 24 works, many offered as limited-edition, signed, numbered and certificated prints in a variety of sizes, all on Hahnemühle Baryta 325 fine art paper. The biggest, most

impressive versions are often single editions, a solid silver plaque carrying Jan’s signature.

A major production, with people and even animals specially photographed for inclusion, could cost €30,000. On an individual basis, a collector would need to have serious money to create a specific historical moment for their private enjoyment. But Jan sees his technique going in some interesting new ways in future.

‘We’ve already been in touch with Ford, and we hope to do something with them and the print and the new GT too. We’d like to be more involved in projects with manufacturers and drivers. For example, we’ve been preparing a print of James Hunt in 1976, and talking to McLaren and Freddie Hunt about the details. It’s very important to us, very exciting.’

‘It’s been a big risk to do this, to leave advertising behind and invest the time into these extremely expensive productions. We want to educate people in the most incredible detail imaginable. So far we’re spending all the money we make on the work. At least that’s a satisfying way not to make a profit.’ **End**





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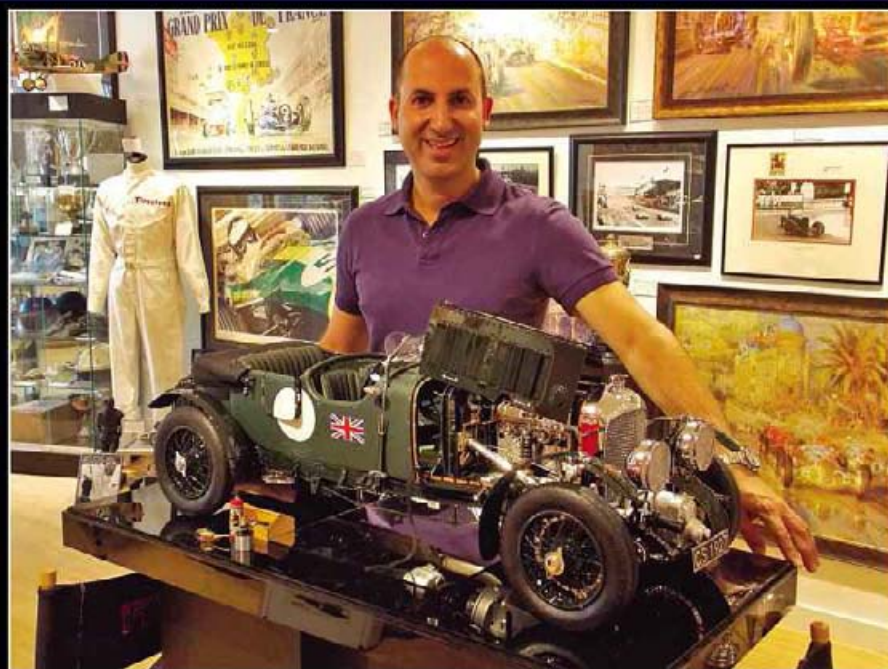
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# THE 'VINTAGE CAR HISTORIES' BY THE ARTIST KIKKI H.



Having spent 10 years focused on the equestrian scene producing stories in art, Kikki H. gained a reputation for her appealing artworks. She now devotes her time to producing intensely coloured images using acrylic based paints inspired by vintage motor racing. Kikki is often asked how she came to be heavily influenced by the world of racing, producing fine works of art that capture the very essence of the sport. Her home near the Nurburgring reinforces her passion and her involvement with vintage sports cars spans the decades. The appeal and look of vintage cars has led to the unique series of artworks entitled 'Vintage Car Histories'. Each piece of artwork reflects the weathered and beautiful patina only time can create on many of these cars. The instantly recognisable racing colour schemes, sponsors logos and drivers names all combine to create a slice of history in art.

## FORTHCOMING EXHIBITIONS

**14th-16th October 2016**

**Classic Expo Salzburg,  
Hall 1, Stand C.F.Mirbach**

**28th-30th October 2016**

**Alexandra Palace,  
London Classic and Sports Car Show**

**18th – 20th November 2016**

**Interclassic Brussels,  
Hall 3, stand 3.13**

Woolf Barnato, heir to a vast fortune from the Kimberley diamond mines in South Africa was the ultimate 'Bentley Boy'. He became Chairman of Bentley Motors in 1926 when the company was struggling for capital. W.O Bentley considered him the best of all the team's drivers with his three wins in three starts at Le Mans. Barnato was at a dinner party near Cannes in March 1930 when he bet £200 that at the wheel of his Speed Six he could beat the famous Blue Train to Calais with ease. The next day at 5:45pm, as the Blue Train left the railway station at Cannes, Barnato and his companion, Dale Bourne, left the Carlton Bar in Cannes and set off in the Speed Six. During the 185 miles from Cannes to Lyon, the two men encountered heavy rain which slowed their progress. At around 4am, between Lyon and Paris, they lost time searching for their pre-arranged refueling rendezvous. Despite this setback, some dense fog near Paris and a puncture which used their only spare tyre, Barnato and Bourne finally reached Calais at 10:30am. They had covered over 570 miles at an average speed of 43.43 mph, an impressive achievement on the dusty and rough roads of the time. Barnato had arrived in Calais so far ahead of the train that he decided to continue on to London. After crossing the Channel in a packet steamer, being waved through Customs and driving hard for almost 700 miles, Barnato parked his Speed Six outside the Conservative Club in St. James' at 3.20pm. Just four minutes later the Blue Train arrived at the station in Calais. The artwork illustrates the race against time to London depicted by the dial of Big Ben and the RAC logo, top left is the Carlton Hotel and crest of Cannes representing the start of the race. The Eiffel Tower and the coat of arms symbolise the journey through Paris, a Train Bleu ticket, a portrait of Woolf Barnato, a map, train tracks finished in sterling silver and the impressive Bentley wings logo complete this recollection of the historic event.



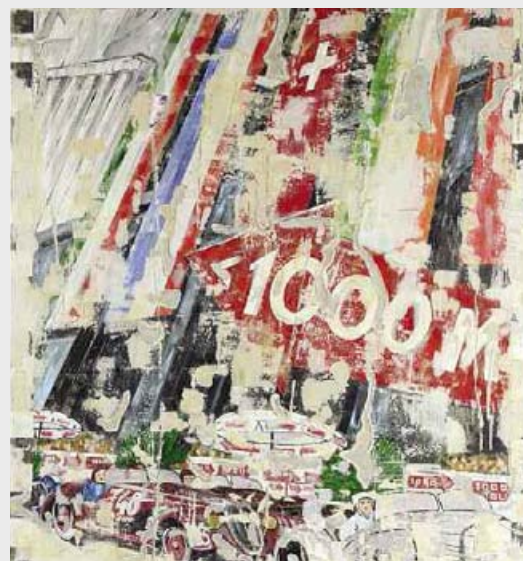
*The story of the race against the Blue Train and the Bentley boys was the inspiration for the artwork depicted*

Kikki H. is now recognised as one of the worlds leading automotive artists, having exhibited her work at some of the most important events such as Mille Miglia, Retro Mobile, Techno Classica Essen and having received invitations to attend Pebble Beach Concours of Elegance in the US. A classic car owner with petrol in her blood, Kikki H. has an affinity with the subject and understands the needs of her customers which include museums, car manufacturers and world renowned collectors.

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**The Jacky Ickx-Le Mans-Slick  
from the project 'crazy tires'**

A tribute to Jacky Ickx, who despite setbacks at the start of the 1969 Le Mans race, he came first and was given the unofficial title 'Monsieur a Le Mans'. The winning car was the GT40 in the Gulf colours emblazoned with the number 6, this tire with sterling silver finish commemorates this win.

**Ferrari 1998  
Winners in Suzuka, Japan from  
the project 'crazy tires'**

Depicting a historic win for Ferrari with Michael Schumacher at the wheel for the Formula 1 Grand Prix, Suzuka in 1998.







Left and below

You could ache for a Firebird that looks like this, imagining après-ski powerslides in the snow; poolside Catalina wagon looks even longer, wider and lower than the real one.



# ART'S ART

*Pontiac's in-house artist made the cars coolly covetable*

Words Giles Chapman

There's plenty to remember about Pontiac. The GTO that fashioned the muscle car fad, or the early Firebirds taking the battle to the Ford Mustang. 'We Build Excitement', went the Pontiac jingle, and car buyers felt it with every advert featuring the work of Art Fitzpatrick.

The crisp, clear, rich West Coast ambience, and the low, wide stance of the cars he depicted in his illustrations, subconsciously swayed millions into becoming Pontiac owners.

Fitzpatrick died last year, aged 96, shortly after opening a major exhibition of his work at the Gilmore Museum in Michigan. Onlookers got up close to 70 originals previously seen only in *National Geographic* or *Life* magazines, and Bill Krzastek, a 64-year-old classic car collector, was in a total reverie.

'It was highly influential to many a young automotive enthusiast such as myself,' he says. Not only did he draw the cars superbly but just look at the settings he surrounded them in: beaches, surfboards, dune buggies, beautiful women. It was a fiction you could be part of if only you owned one of these fine automobiles!'

'Fitz' was only part of the story. He was the 'car guy' in a legendary advertising industry duo, for it was former Disney animator Van Kaufman who created the backgrounds. The two painters' work became so intertwined that once they even composed an advert over the phone, sight unseen. 'I did the car and it fitted on Van's background perfectly. We were that much in tune with each other,' Fitzpatrick recalled in a 2012 interview.

After attending the lofty Detroit Society of Arts and Crafts in 1936, aged 18, Fitzpatrick's working life began as an apprentice designer at Briggs Body Co. Within four years he'd styled a complete car, the 1940 Packard 180.

By 1959 Fitzpatrick and Kaufman were contracted to General Motors' Pontiac division. Pontiac was about to embark on a decade-long image overhaul with its 'wide track' styling. In truth, the cars' dimensions differed little from the Detroit norm, but Fitzpatrick's renditions put clever emphasis on their width, shallow height and tapering length so that, to the public, Pontiacs were just a touch slicker than rivals.

His work was key to changing perceptions. While other advertising campaigns shifted to photography, Pontiac stuck with illustration, exploiting Fitz's subtle exaggerations and

Van's imaginative, aspirational settings. Pontiac general manager John De Lorean was so alert to their power that he personally banned all photos from the marque's advertising.

'A picture of a car moving doesn't mean a thing,' Fitzpatrick declared in a 2007 *Motor Trend* interview. 'They all move. You have to convey something about the car psychologically.'

'The Pontiac front end was the greatest thing they ever did. It was so different and distinctive. It allowed me to push the visual to the limits, making seven-eighth front views instead of seven-eighth side views, the old standard. That enlarged the image of the car to 60% of the page.' The side view had only taken 15%.

The campaign lasted until 1972. After 285 images it had run out of finely air-brushed road. Legislation to ensure 'truth in advertising' was closing in. And wide though Pontiacs of the era were, Fitz had made them appear wider still.

The pair then had a stint working their craft for Opel, so we Europeans could enjoy Fitz's style too. Later on, Fitzpatrick interrupted his retirement (Kaufman passed away in 1995) to produce two sets of commemorative postage stamps for the US Mail in 2005 and 2008, featuring 1950s American classics. He was also a revered consultant to Pixar's worldwide animated hit movie *Cars*.

In that 2012 interview, 94-year old Fitz laughed when he recalled that photographers told him they'd tried to copy his style. 'In 1968, our ads were the only art in magazines for automobile advertising. Every other campaign was done in photography.'

He had plenty of favourites. One featured a green '69 GTO convertible near a cove, with a just-emerged masked diver. Another showed a Catalina in the moonlight, with a couple enjoying themselves out on a raft.

'At the time, you couldn't find a Pontiac in a yacht club or golf club parking lot anywhere. Just a year later, you could find them everywhere. That was the point.' **Cont**











# PHIL GANNON AND THE 'GUILDSMAN'

*In the 1960s, Vauxhall ran a competition for budding car designers. Phil Gannon entered three times – and his final design reached production*

Words Giles Chapman Photography Howard Simmons

When you're invited into someone's home, whether country pile or council flat, the surroundings are always intriguing. But we're barely into the tea and pre-interview chitchat when my host Phil Gannon, with guileless pride, reveals his uncanny problem-solving indomitability.

'I built this house in 1974, single-handedly, in about 18 months,' he says. 'I had an extremely tight budget, £4000, and although I'd never done it before I picked up the skills for block-work and plumbing as I went along.'

I surreptitiously glance at where the RSJs probably are. Everything's holding up well. Later on, Phil will take me down the hall, which he built, into his cathedral-like workshop, ditto, and show me his delectable early Jaguar E-type

coupé. He bought that as a mangled wreck and then rebuilt the entire car. By this time, I'm not surprised to hear that, in order to get the correct, asymmetric bracing pattern on the floor panels, he made his own press rather than accept crappily incorrect replacement panels.

What it must be to have a practical, unflappable father. Phil's dad was exactly that.

'He was very patient, a make-do-and-mend man from 1950s austerity. He made all the furniture in our family home. I used to love helping him and he was a huge influence.'

I've tracked Phil down to Somerset to clap eyes on something else he created entirely from scratch. Aged 16, he was very good at metalwork and physics, and he even took O-level Art in his own time because of a packed school syllabus. I'm whisked back to 1965 with a

teenage Phil now, flicking through a daily paper.

'I came across this advert from Vauxhall for its Craftsman's Guild, a competition to design a car and build a model of it. It was open to anyone under 20.'

Phil didn't know the competition was already an American institution. It began as the Fisher Body Craftsman's Guild in Detroit in 1930, as a way to root out car-manufacturing talent. The metal-bashing division of General Motors would send out a set of plans to make a scale model of the horse-drawn coach in its emblem, and builders of the best efforts won prizes and paid scholarships. Plenty of entrants found positions in the car industry.

In the 1950s the emphasis switched to identifying design talent, with a challenge to create a futuristic car in 1:12 scale. Millions





**Clockwise from top**  
Phil looks fondly on the model he made 47 years ago;  
Matchbox models sit atop dimensional diagrams; interior  
features stitched leather and a single-spoke wheel.



sent for entry forms, thousands entered models.

Eventually, GM took its Craftsman's Guild scheme global, with localised versions at Opel in Germany and Holden in Australia. Vauxhall was involved too, with flamboyant, Corvette-driving design chief David Jones fully behind the talent-spotting contest.

'I'd always been interested in car design, so I decided I'd enter,' Phil recalls. 'There were three separate classes: A was for a large saloon car, B for a smaller sports car and C was a completely open category where you could do whatever you wanted, a three-wheeler, anything. The scale was fixed at 1:12, one inch to a foot, and Vauxhall sent sets of rubber wheels in two sizes.

'I chose the big saloon because I thought that Vauxhall didn't make sports cars then, they did mass-market saloons. What I made turned out a little cumbersome, typical of heavy 1960s Americanised styling. I could have done a lot better but the process was totally new to me.'

To Phil's delight, though, his lumbering limo made him one of the 25 runners-up to the top four entries in the 1966/67 heat. That meant his design had passed muster from panels of Vauxhall stylists, engineers and external celebrity judges. Phil was invited to a weekend away with the winners, runners-up and their parents. They stayed in the President Hotel in London's Russell Square, were treated to a top West End show – Dora Bryan in *Hello Dolly* – and had two trips to the Vauxhall factory in Luton. Saturday's was to see the production lines in action, and Sunday's was for dinner and prizegiving – after a visit to the design studios.

'My eyes were on stalks because it was a highly restricted area. We got to speak to designers and look at prototypes. It only encouraged me to be more competitive the following year.'

For the 1967/68 contest, Phil submitted both Class B sports car and Class C freestyle models. His brother Alec, five years Phil's junior and working entirely independently, entered a model in Class C too, a people-carrier predicting the Renault Espace. But only one of Phil's entries could progress to the elimination heat. He picked the sports car and was thrilled when it grabbed fourth place. As well as the prize weekend, there was a £100 cheque.

'Mind you, there was a covenant,' grins Phil. 'You couldn't spend it until you were 21, and it had to go on something educational.' And there was something else, something prophetic: he also had to sign over the design and publicity rights to Vauxhall.

For 1968/69, Phil's panic was rising. Now aged 19 and desperate to be a real car designer, both previous winners having landed posts in the Vauxhall styling studio, Phil knew this was his last chance. So he decided to *really* go for it.



**Clockwise from left**

Some of the many other Guildsman entries; eager teenagers see inside Vauxhall's design studio; model features Bertone-like strakes and jagged wheelarches.



*'The whole point was to cram it with new ideas. In-car screens and reversing cameras were far-fetched and space-age'*

Phil's previous models had been hewn from single chunks of wood. Lime was the best choice but was impossible to find, so he scoured Hertfordshire's timber yards for the next best thing: a large, seasoned and knot-free piece of Canadian yellow pine.

Meanwhile, with sketches and diagrams, the design for the car took shape: a luxurious two-seater GT likely to hit the road in 1980. The concept drew on all manner of things Phil had lapped up in car magazines. It had four-wheel drive like the Jensen FF, scissor doors like the Bertone Carabo, a side window line below the waist like the Lamborghini Marzal, a single-spoke steering wheel like a Citroën DS. There was a rising aerofoil to help braking, and a sat-nav screen with frontal radar scanners.

'The whole point was to cram it with new ideas,' Phil adds. 'In-car screens and reversing cameras were far-fetched and space-age back then, but now they're everyday reality.'

Then began Phil's 400-hour model construction, up close with his wood block on the workbench on chilly evenings in the garage, painstakingly hollowing it out to create the cockpit and shaping the distinctive, jagged

wheelarches. And he made his own male and female moulds to shape the roof in Perspex.

'I tried to do it in one piece, using my mum's oven. She was a bit panicky about the fumes and the fire risk. I tried to judge the temperature, warmed it up, and then quickly forced it by hand on to the wooden former while it was still malleable. It broke. So I cut the mould in two, front and back, and did them separately. I used blacking for the rollbar effect but there's a real rollbar in there, made from two steel rods.'

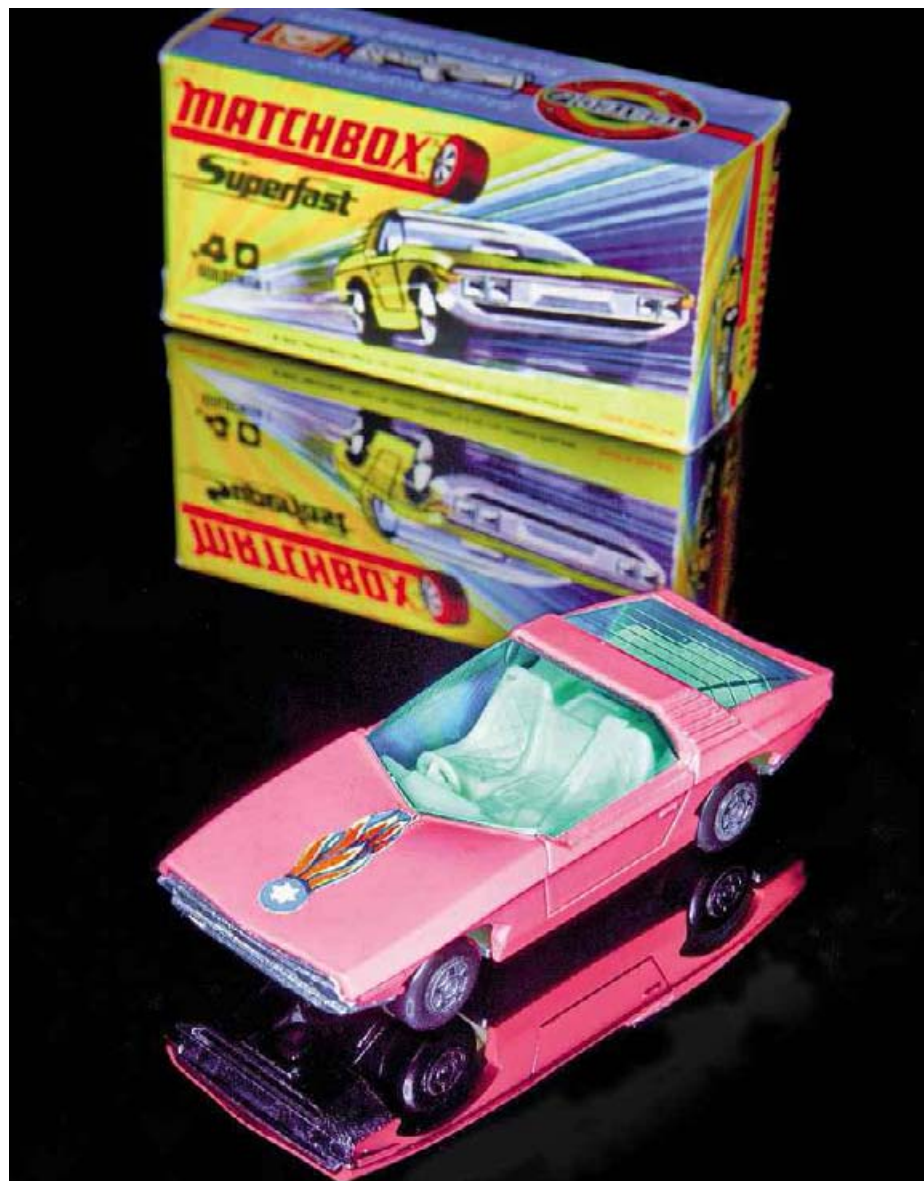
There was also an interior. 'I'd noticed the previous year's winner's model featured an interior,' Phil recalls, 'which was unusual because only the exterior design was requested.'

For this and the exterior detailing, Phil made ingenious use of everyday materials. The seats he hand-shaped from aluminium sheet and covered in cream chamois leather with black thread stitching. The exhaust pipes were lengths of Pyro copper cable finished with tailpipes made from .22 cartridge cases. Instrument surrounds used .22 cartridge cross-section.

Real walnut veneer adorned the dashboard, and Phil's favourite from the Quality Street tin – the hazelnut in caramel – provided the mauve





**Left**

Unknown to Phil at the time, and indeed Vauxhall, Lesney Products made a Matchbox model of his car. Shape is accurate, colour and graphics less so.

wrapper for the road-reading infra-red foglights. Indicators were day-glo card, the rear light strip was a reworked Christmas decoration.

Paintwork was in Humber Sceptre silver grey, echoing the photogenic metallics Phil had seen Vauxhall's designers using. 'To get a metal-like finish I had to fill the grain, rub it down, paint it again, fill it, rub it down, allowing the paint to dry long enough each time.'

Rather than use the standard Vauxhall-supplied hubs, he cast his own miniature alloy wheels in the metalwork shop at his old school. To get the desired inset rim/wide-wheel muscle car look, he artfully shod each one with two of Vauxhall's tyres melded together. A redline on the tyre walls added a sharp accent.

'My mum and dad were proud of what I did but they were biased, of course. Vauxhall was only 45 minutes from home, and I delivered the model myself so it wouldn't get damaged.'

After the monumental planning and design

effort came the verdict. MP Shirley Williams and car journalist Charles Bulmer were among the judges. Phil was awarded... third place.

'It was gutting for me in some ways, as I had put so much effort into it. We had yet another memorable weekend, of course, plus a £200 cash prize. They held another competition the following year but I was too old to enter by then. That was the end because, I guess, it must have become very expensive to stage. I understand they had 136,000 applications.'

It wasn't just the cost of the Craftsman's Guild that killed it off around the world. Teenage TV and sport distractions, and an educational shift away from crafts towards maths and science, were also responsible. And there were now several university courses for potential car designers, including three or four in the US and the Vehicle Design course at London's Royal College of Art.

Phil's model crossed the Atlantic for

inspection by top brass at General Motors, and was later displayed at the London Motor Show at Earl's Court before it was returned to its creator, who still owns it today. It has never sustained any damage and looks wonderful. It was also shown on BBC1's *Blue Peter*, although Phil never saw the show. By then, he was at work when children's TV was airing. And work was proving to be a contentious issue.

Landing a car design job proved impossible. The second- and fourth-placed '68/69 winners, respectively Christopher Greville-Smith and George Thompson, became Jaguar designers, but Phil was strangely overlooked. Writing to Colin Chapman at Lotus and Ford at Dagenham got him nowhere. He created a body design for a neighbour, Frank Coltman of the Progress Chassis Co in Ware, but the car was never built. Phil instead began a successful career as a chartered building surveyor.

In 1970, then, Phil Gannon's car designer ambitions were finished. Or so it seemed.

'Thirteen months after the competition, Vauxhall wrote to me and said they'd been approached by Lesney Products,' Phil recalls. 'They wanted to turn one of the models into a Matchbox toy. It was interesting news but I thought little more about it. However, one day in 1970 I opened a newspaper and there was an advert for Shell petrol. If you bought four gallons, you got a free Matchbox car... and there I saw the front of my model. It was a complete shock, the first I knew about it, so I rushed to the nearest toyshop and discovered my car was No 40 in the Matchbox range!'

'To my horror, it was in this shocking pink – the worst colour they could have chosen. They put a flame sticker on the bonnet and even added a tow hitch.'

Phil wrote to Vauxhall. The embarrassment was palpable; the company said it had no idea which car had been turned into a Matchbox Superfast model, and sent Phil an extra £25 as a bonus. This model of a model was stamped 'Vauxhall Guildsman' underneath and 'Guildsman 1' on the box, as though it were the competition winner. 'But my car never had a name,' chuckles Phil, 'just its Vauxhall-allocated number, 11570.'

So Phil's work finally made an impact on car fanatics, albeit young ones. The Guildsman was in the Matchbox line-up from 1971 to 1976, and several million were churned out. Priced originally at 17½p, rare variations of the toy car are today worth £120.

'It was extremely strange to hold it in my hand. The interior is pretty faithful, and Matchbox got the V-shaped dip in the bonnet right. That was a bit of "cleavage" to conceal the windscreen wipers each side...' **End**





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