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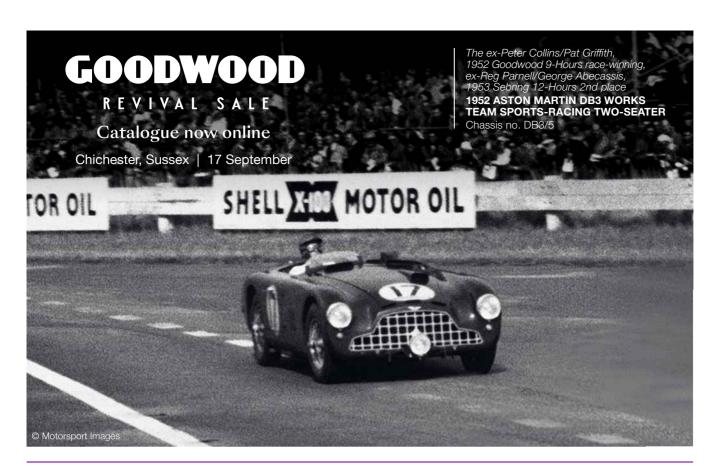
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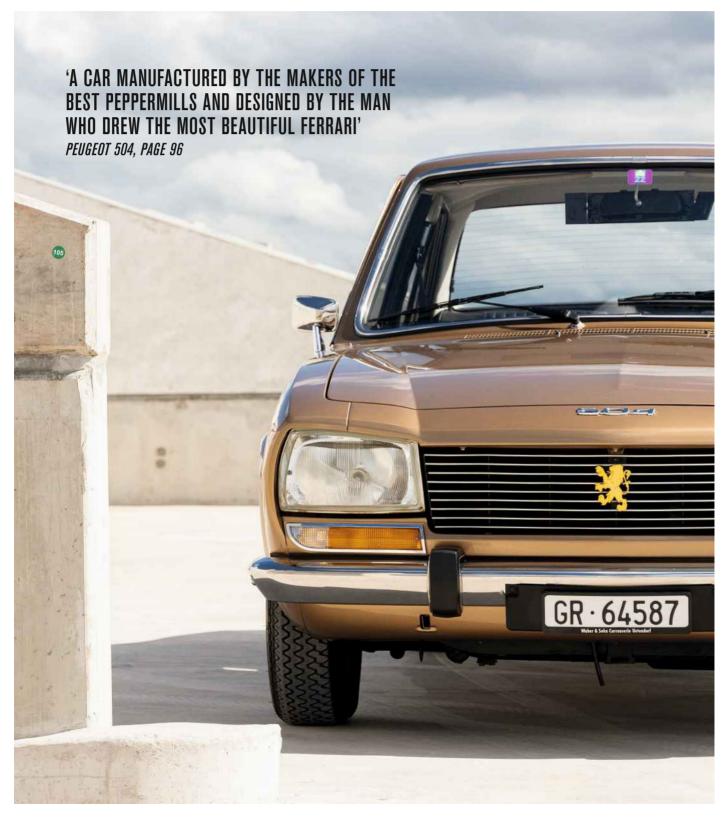








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SCAN ME



EDITOR'S WELCOME

No decade for young men

THE CULTURAL TOUCHPOINTS that unify every British child of the '70s are myriad. On the telly there was Blakes 7 (Glynis Barber, say no more), the memory of your parents hurriedly covering your eyes during the sexy bits of I, Claudius and, because things weren't quite bleak enough in real life with non-stop power cuts and non-start bin emptying, there was The Survivors to cheer everyone up of any evening. The pop charts were full of nowdisgraced lascivious men in stacked heels, represented by now-disgraced impresarios and introduced by now-disgraced disc jockeys. Driveways were packed with Marinas, playground arguments were largely over who was the sexiest member of Pan's People and, inexplicably, Joe Bugner was everywhere. And that is only the tip of the iceberg of the misery.

Of course it wasn't *all* bad: there was the summer of 1976, and most of all a Corgi 1:43 Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow in every toy box. Mine, like most of my friends', was the far-rareron-the-road MPW two-door (in Silver Sand, I think). If any car reflected the fortunes of the decade itself, the Shadow was it. It went into 1970 as a glamorous five-year-old, the pinnacle of sophistication and class both mechanically and in status, and came out of the 1970s as the slightly tawdry wheels of choice of the more successful northern working men's club comics.

As if things couldn't get worse, this glorious machine that once laid claim to be The Best

Car In The World then had to endure years in the wilderness as the wedding car of choice. How did everyone – except the wedding hire companies – forget the sheer magnificence of the Silver Shadow? Has there ever been a more dramatic fall from motoring grace?

Which is why I am so delighted that the Shadow seems to be enjoying a long overdue rehabilitation. Because of my age, I simply can't support all the elements of the motoring 1970s that a younger generation now deems acceptable – like russet, saffron and all the other BL euphemisms for excrement-coloured paint – but the re-gentrification of this oncearistocratic Royce (Rolls is for proles, as they used to say) is a cause I can get right behind. The number of its champions has been quietly but steadily growing under the radar, except for Harry Metcalfe whose campaign is rather more public, and prices have been rising accordingly.

Good; everyone deserves a second chance.



James Elliott, editor in chief

FEATURING



STEPHEN BAYLEY

'When I was a boy, the Peugeot 504 was a symbol of middle-class bohemianism. Eye-to-eye with one 50 years later, I saw something that put me in mind of a Ford Cortina with a French education.'

The Chairman of The Royal Fine Art Commission Trust rediscovers the 504 not as a car, but as architecture. See pages 96-102.



ALEX TAPLEY

'Climbing up, crawling through and sitting in the tail-gunner's seat of a Lancaster bomber to take photos was a daunting experience. To sit there, imagining flying at 60ft with the nation's fate on your shoulders while knowing you could get shot out of the sky at any moment, was very sobering'. Singer Dambusters tour: pages 88-94.



JOHN SIMISTER

'Machinery from the 1930s is the theme for me this month. The waterborne Bugatti with a water speed record to its name can still freak out its driver, and the Singer Le Mans had a wartime owner who spent a night over Germany, busting dams.'

John joined Alex Tapley (above), and also piloted the Bugatti-powered boat on pages 112-118.



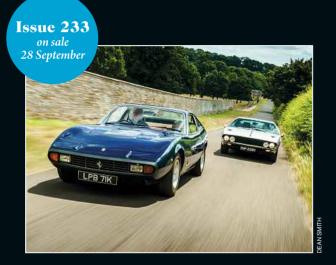
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LAMBORGHINI vs FERRARI

Espada and 365 GTC/4: former misfits battle for new-found style supremacy





PLUS

Alfa Romeo P3: seminal 1930s Grand Prix car explored Testing the incredible Singer DLS Mark Dixon celebrates a centenary in the late Tony Dron's Austin Seven VW's crazy Half-Track Fox

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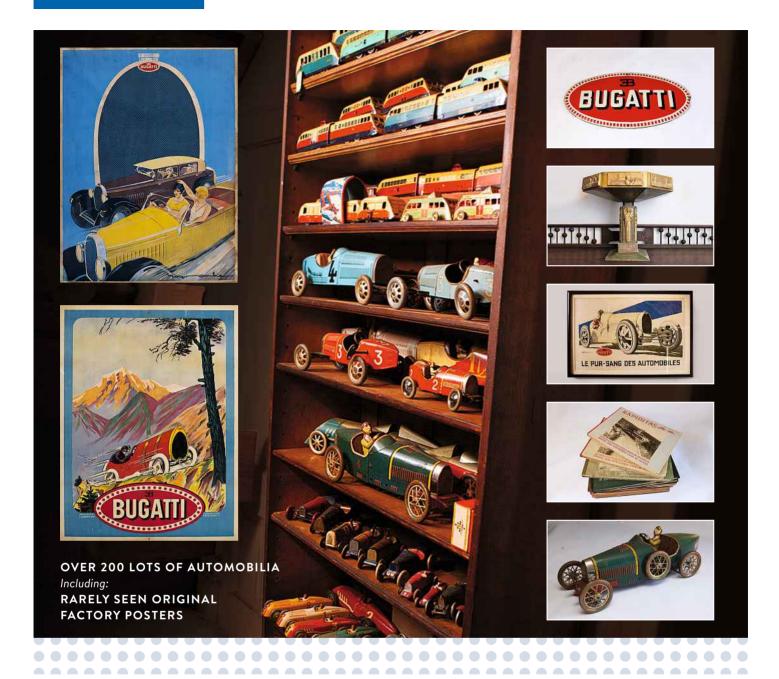
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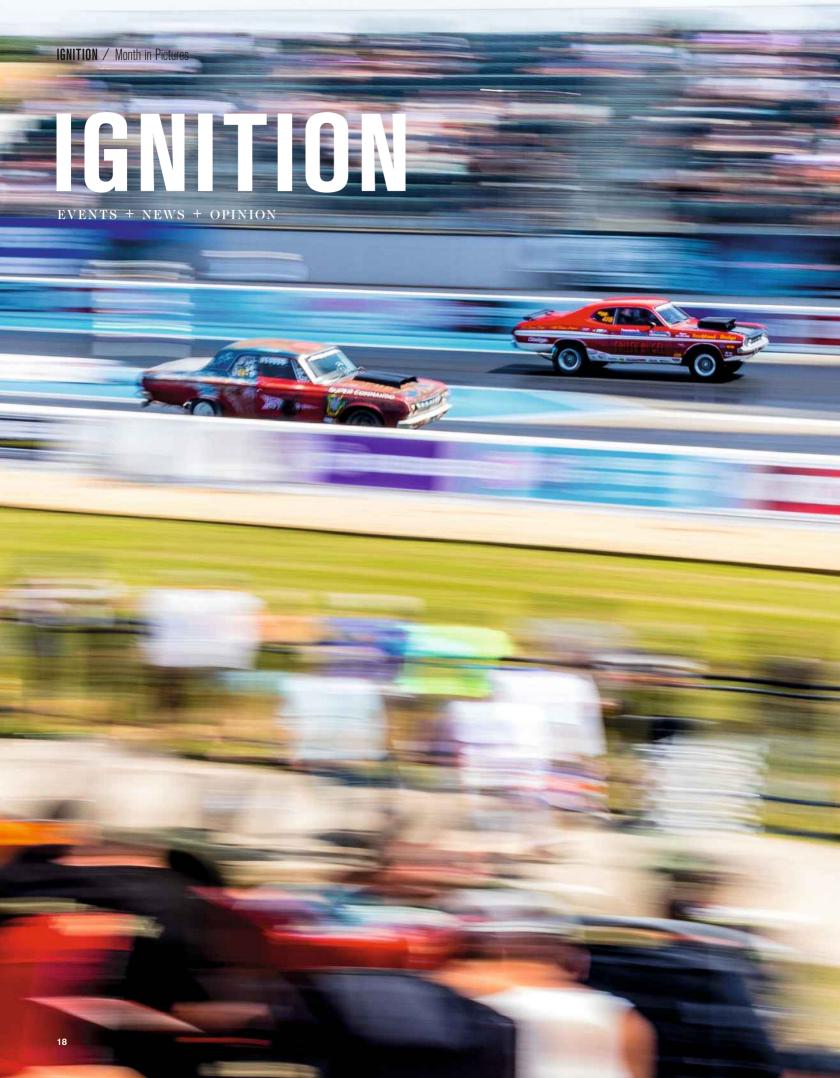
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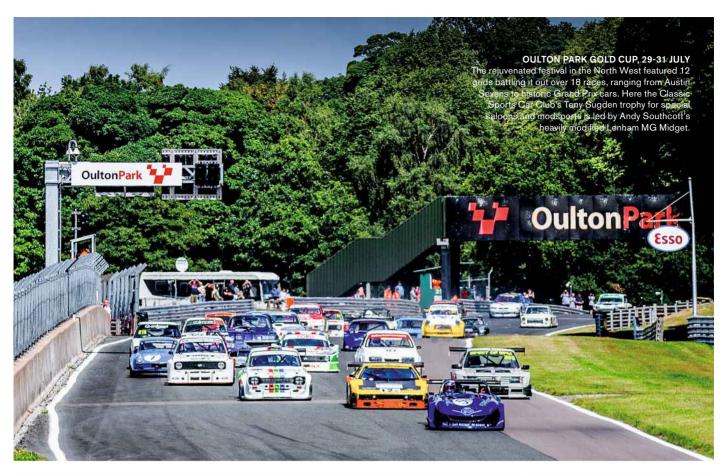




Dragstalgia, 8-10 July

Dragstalgia is Santa Pod's annual celebration of the US phenomenon that first appeared in the UK at Blackbushe Airport, Surrey in 1964. Big crowds attended a sun-drenched event in 2022 and they were treated to everything from fuel-altered to funny cars, live music, show 'n' shine and jet cars. The main image shows Pete Christmas's Dodge Demon Fallen Angel head-to-head with Neil Francis's Plymouth Savoy Rust Bucket. The event also hosted an auction of drag racing memorabilia by the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame, which announced its latest inductees. They are the National Street Rod Association, the Stones Drag Racing Team, Jon Morton, Mark Flavell and the late Henk Vink. Images: Michael Holden



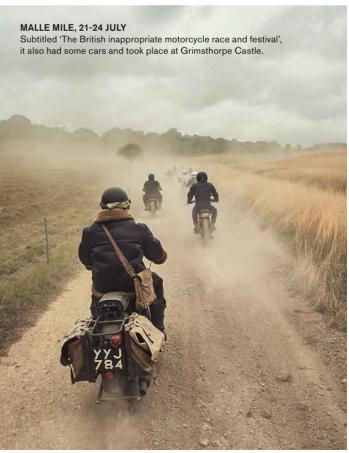






















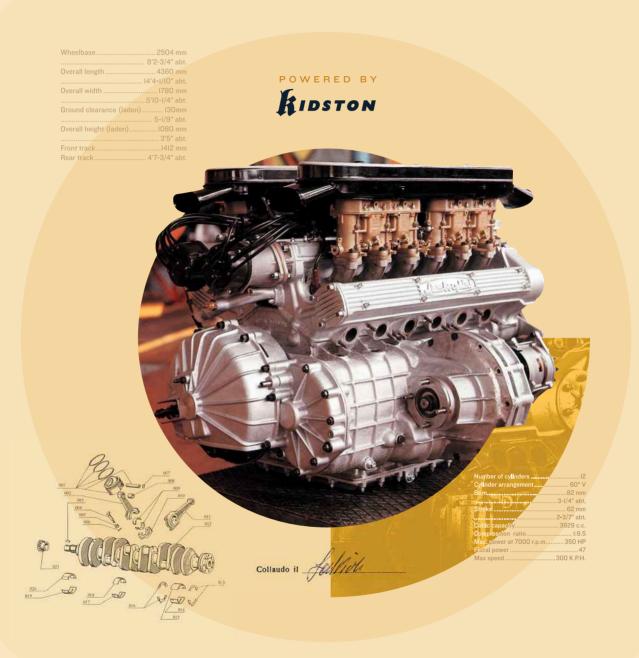




CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT: BLUE PASSION; CHARLIEWOODING, JEFF BLOXHAM, CHARLIEWOODING; EIFEL RALLYE FESTIVAL; PAUL LAWRENCE; HAGERTY

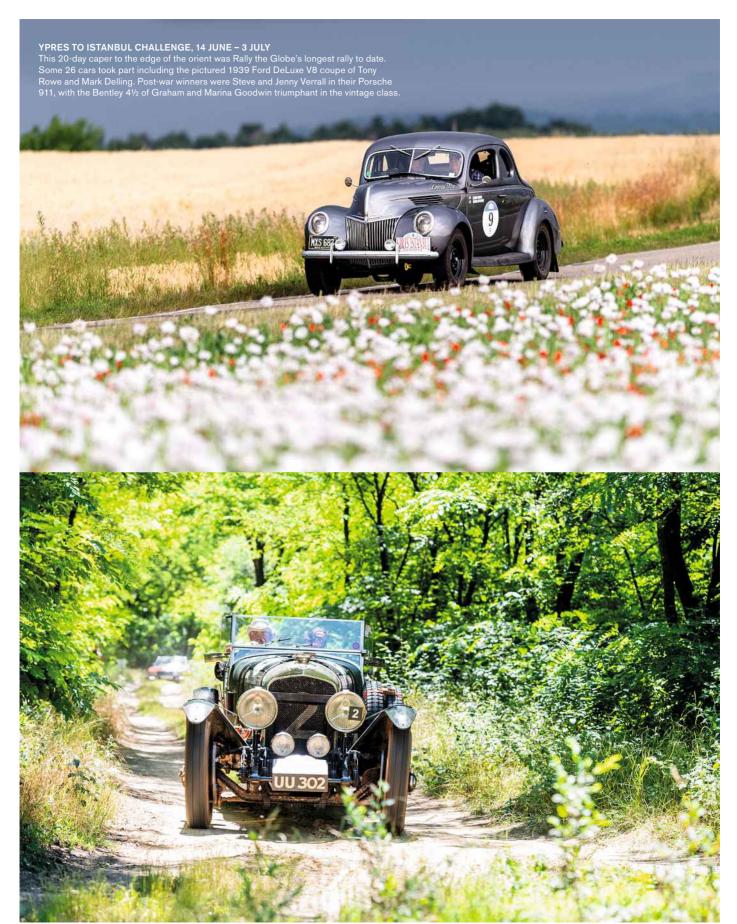
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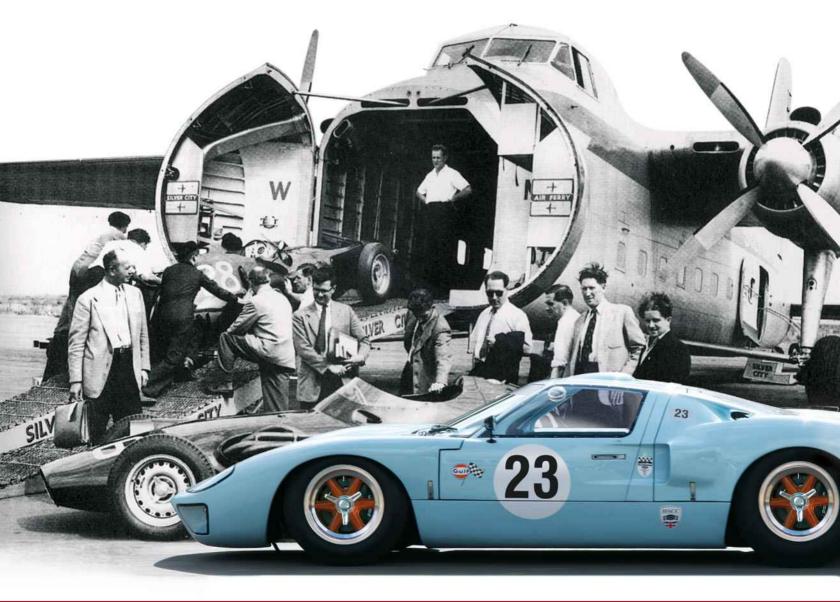
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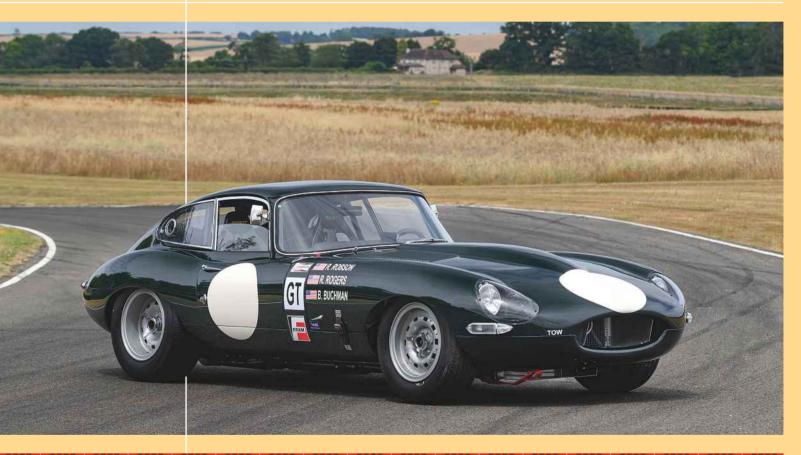












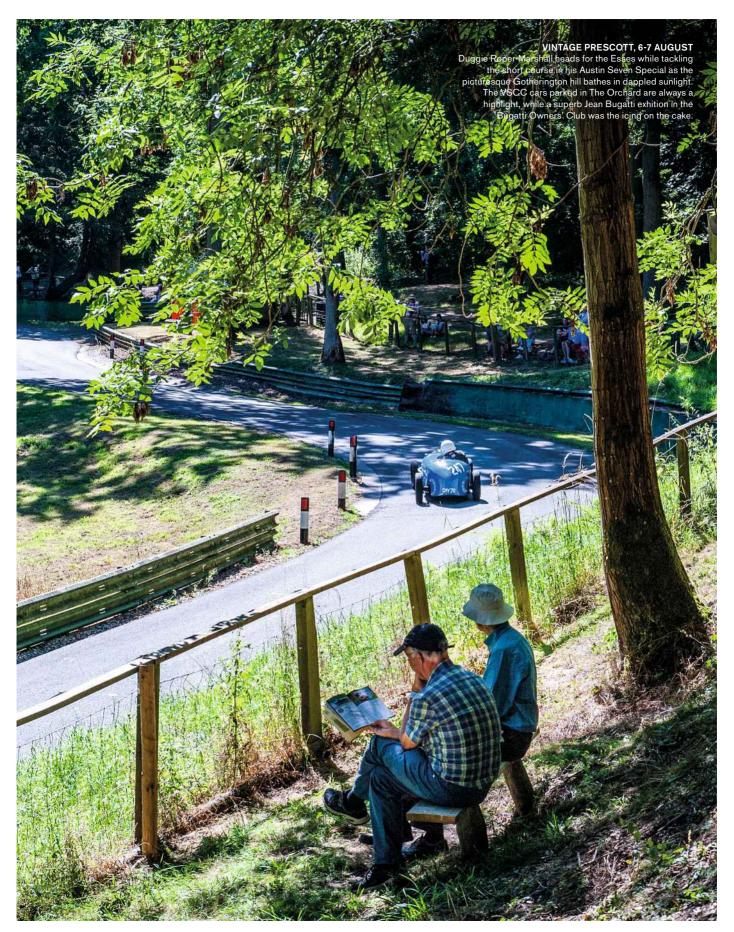
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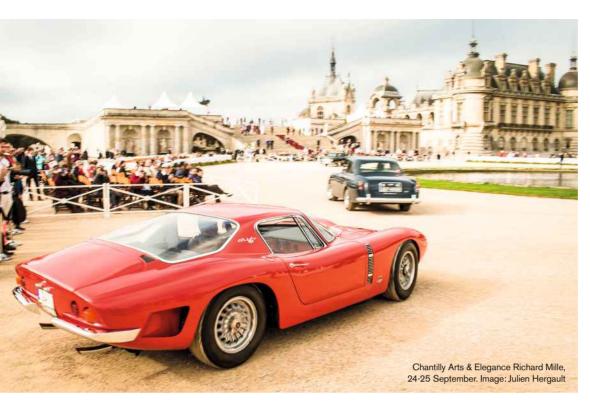
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COMING UP...

The last weeks of the summer bring with them some of the most keenly anticipated events on the motoring calendar

31 August – 4 September Salon Privé

Blenheim Palace hosts one of the UK's premier concours, following which the entries will be joined by a curated group of club cars – and by a collection of WRC machines that will tackle the Salon Privé Hill Sprint on the final day.

salonpriveconcours.com

1-5 September

Lime Rock Historic Festival

The 40th Historic Festival will feature two days of racing, and a concours, held on the track's Sam Posey Straight, with classes for everything from Outlaw 911s to Malaise-Era muscle cars.

limerock.com

1-13 September

Temple Rally

Pre-1986 cars follow a winding 4000km route from Athens to Rome, taking in ancient sites and enjoying good grub along the way. endurorally.com

2-4 September

The Concours of Elegance at Hampton Court Palace

Sixty of the world's finest historic cars assemble at Hampton Court Palace, the favourite residence of King Henry VIII. Special features will include a display of Ferrari Formula 1 cars, brought together to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the marque's first win in F1. concoursofelegance.co.uk

2-11 September

International St Moritz Automobile Week

This revival of a gathering first organised in 1929 features seven separate events, including a 1km sprint, and a rally for all-analogue classic supercars. The festivities end with the famous Bernina Gran Turismo, in which 80 cars race around more than 50 bends as they climb 459 vertical metres from La Rösa to Ospizio Bernina, high in the Swiss Alps.

i-s-a-w.com

4 September

Brooklands American Day

The annual gathering of US-made vehicles will this year include a special tribute to the 1932 Ford, with enthusiasts aiming to arrange the biggest display of Ford 'Deuces' ever seen in the UK.

brooklandsmuseum.com

4 September

Shere Hill Climb

An eclectic group of cars and bikes – 240 in total – head for the Surrey Hills to tackle a mile-long course. There's a grass autotest, too. sherehillclimb.co.uk

4 September

Regis TAP

The 12th Regis TAP (Tour and Picnic) starts at Eartham near Chichester and runs through the South Downs, with stops including a visit to the fabulous car and automobilia collection of Robert and Tanya Lewis. bognor-regis-mc.co.uk

6-10 September

The Picos 1000

The roads around the Picos de Europa in northern Spain will provide crews on this regularity rally with four varied legs over four days. bespokerallies.com

9-11 September

Concours d'Élégance Tegernsee

Beautiful cars old and new abound at this concours, but 'Best of Show' is always the stunning lakeside venue in the Bavarian Alps. concours-tegernsee.de

10-11 September

Beaulieu International Autojumble

The vast sale of motoring bits and bobs returns. You're guaranteed to come home with something you never knew you needed.

beaulieu.co.uk

15-18 September

Gran Premio Nuvolari

This year is the 130th anniversary of Tazio Nuvolari's birth, and to mark the occasion the regularity rally held in his honour has been extended to feature a prologue in his home town, Mantua.

16-18 September

Detroit Concours d'Elegance

Three days of activities in Detroit culminate with the Concours itself, held at the city's Institute of Arts. Classes include one dedicated to the cars penned by legendary GM designer Harley Earl.

detroitconcours.com

16-18 September

Circuit des Remparts

Vintage and classic cars slide around the twisting roads of Angoulême, the walled, hilltop town in western France.

circuitdesremparts.com

16-18 September

Rallye Père-Fils

A regularity rally based in Monaco and requiring no prior experience – which is just as well, given that the average co-driver on this father-and-son event is barely out of short trousers.

happyfewracing.com



16-18 September

Goodwood Revival

The organisers of the Revival always have a surprise up their sleeve, and this year they have turned the Lavant Cup into a race for MGBs only, to mark the model's 60th anniversary. goodwood.com

16-18 September

Classic GP Assen

Competition cars and bikes from the '50s, '60s, '70s, '80s and '90s race around the TT Circuit Assen, known to fans of motorcycle racing as 'The Cathedral'. classicgp-assen.com

17 September Rallyday

Jimmy McRae and Nicky Grist are among the special guests set to appear at Castle Combe's popular rally car show. castlecombecircuit.co.uk

17-18 September

Only Shelby Meeting

The first event in Europe for Shelby cars will take place at Montlhéry, south of Paris. onlyshelbymeeting.com

19-30 September

Sahara Challenge

This 12-day rally begins and ends in Malaga, Spain, but is principally run in Morocco and passes through the Atlas Mountains as well as the Sahara. endurorally.com

24 September

VSCC Prescott Hillclimb

The VSCC's final speed event of 2022 on Prescott's Long Course. vscc.co.uk

24-25 September

Kop Hill Climb

Cars and bikes blast up the hill in leafy Buckinghamshire, while soapbox racers whizz down it. Entrants range from 1904 Pope-Toledo to 2022 Lotus Emira, and highlights will include an Austin Seven centenary cavalcade and McLaren Speedtail. kophillclimb.org.uk

24-25 September

Chantilly Arts & Elegance Richard Mille

Kicking off celebrations for the centenary of the 24 Hours of Le Mans, with concours classes including 'Speed & Aerodynamics on the Mulsanne Straight'. chantillyartsetelegance.com

24-28 September

Copperstate Overland

Classic off-road vehicles venture into the back country of Arizona and beyond, but you don't have to be a survivalist to take part: there's a full support crew and the catered camps are plush. mensartscouncil.com

25-29 September

Lonville Classic

A taste of la dolce vita in Tuscany, featuring pretty roads and a schedule that allows for a loosen-the-belt lunch each day. lonville.com

27 September – 2 October

The Derek Bell Tour

Octane's columnist leads 20 cars on a jaunt through the South of France, finishing in Saint-Tropez at the exclusive Rendez-Vous Riviera car show and party. v-events.co.uk



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From top

Guinness exhibition is close to Arts and History Museum; Vampire T11 was used for ground-based training; a view through Guinness Storehouse's seven floors; Ford Mark VI armoured car.

National Museum of Arts and History, Dublin, Ireland

Ireland's turbulent past explained – and a Guinness to enjoy

Words Barry Wiseman

DUBLIN IS AN entrancing city for the tourist, with much to see. For instance, there's the beloved Molly Malone statue and the imposing General Post Office, used as headquarters for the leaders of the Easter Rising in 1916 and still bearing scars of the ensuing battle. This building has a foreboding atmosphere, hardly surprising given its history of drama and bloodshed. It makes the visitor want to know more about the past of this country and its people, many of whom are happy souls but tinged with bitterness about the past.

First a happy part – the Guinness Storehouse and the World of Guinness Exhibition. You'll learn during a couple of hours of wandering around that Guinness is not black, but actually a very dark red and that, as the ads say, 'It's good for you'. Guinness claims to make three million pints a day, just at this brewery. The interesting tour ends in the seventh-floor Gravity Bar, with grand views over the city.

Dominating the view is the former Collins Barracks, all 18 acres of it, including a massive cobbled parade ground. Once home to up to 4000 soldiers, it is believed that it may well be the longest-serving army base in the world. It operated from 1702 to 1997, then it stood idle before being renovated, re-purposed and then re-opened as the National Museum of Decorative Arts and History.

This imposing, sprawling treasure-house contains examples of silverware, furniture, weaponry, costume and carriages, important collections of stamps and coins, and a whole lot more. One particularly colourful room touches on the United States Civil War, where many thousands of Irish immigrants fought on both sides. Ireland even manufactured uniforms for the Confederates, with whom the Irish sympathised to some extent, and managed to ship them out through the fearsome Union Navy naval blockades.

An exhibition of interest to motoring enthusiasts includes a Ford Mark VI armoured car. During World War Two, the government of the Irish Republic found a desperate need for military equipment despite the country's official neutrality. An Irish army officer designed an armoured car based on an existing truck chassis, and a batch was built locally using the popular Ford V8 engine. It wasn't exactly 'armoured', though, given that ordinary steel

plate was used for the protective duties. They had two-wheel drive and were somewhat unstable in use, which made for exciting travel for the crew of three. These vehicles were eventually used on UN peacekeeping duties in the Congo before finally being retired in the 1970s. The example here makes the visitor feel sympathy for the crews using it. This is not a machine to inspire confidence!

Nearby is a Universal, otherwise known as a Bren gun carrier, one of 113,000 built between 1940 and 1970 (Mark Dixon described his experience with one in *Octane* 228). A number of these versatile vehicles served with the Irish Defence Force during the war, and they were used by many Allied armies, including the Soviets. Fitted with the ubiquitous Ford V8 engine, some were later designed to carry mortars while others towed anti-tank guns. It is thought that only three of the 226 carriers used by the Irish army exist today.

Another vehicle exhibited is the M3 Panhard armoured car, used in Ireland in the 1970s for internal security. Forty-four of these versatile vehicles were in use before they were replaced. And then, if we look up, we see suspended overhead a De Havilland Vampire T11 jet aircraft, used by the Irish Air Corps for groundbased training.

Around the museum are exhibits that describe and illustrate Ireland's troubled past, with many fine photographs to help explain the feelings held today by the Irish people. There is plenty to interest the whole family here, and a well-stocked shop. And then, having developed a taste for Irish history, you'll probably want to plan a long and relaxed road trip to take in the country's huge number of historic sites.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ARTS AND HISTORY

Collins Barracks, Benburb Street, Dublin 7, DO7 XKV4. Open Tues-Sat 10am-Spm, Sun and Mon 1pm-Spm. Admission free, donations welcomed. Pay and display parking €5 for four hours. More on www.museum.ie. GUINNESS STOREHOUSE St James Gate, Dublin 8, DO8 VF8H. Open Mon-Thurs 10am-Spm, Fri and Sat 9.30am-6pm, Sun 9.30-Spm. Admission from €22 including a drink in the Gravity Bar. www.guinness-storehouse.com.

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HMA voting looms, three new awards announced

There's still time to enter for the biggest, most wideranging Historic Motoring Awards event yet staged TIME IS RUNNING out to enter the 2022 Historic Motoring Awards as the official closing date of 31 August draws near. Make sure you don't miss out on your chance to nominate everything from your favourite cars to the best photographers for the only truly international awards dedicated to rewarding excellence in the classic car world.

The nomination process is very simple: just go to www.historicmotoringawards.co.uk, search the categories for the one that best suits your nomination and follow the straightforward instructions. And yes, you are very welcome to nominate yourself.

Now in their 12th year, the awards continue to evolve excitingly year-on-year to embrace even more of the classic car hobby and industry. One of the great innovations of the past few years has been the introduction of the Apprentice of the Year award. Supported by the Heritage Skills Trust, this picks out just one of the outstanding youngsters who will be the future of the classic car industry.

New for 2022 are two new photography awards. First there is the professional category for anyone whose work you have admired, be it for shooting car features, Historic motorsport or in any other discipline. Then there is the amateur award. We know there are thousands of accomplished hobbyist photographers, so this award acknowledges their talent and dedication – for pictures of the Goodwood Revival 'scene', a photo of a favourite classic or anything else in our world. To qualify as an amateur, you simply need not to have been paid for any photos or photography in the past year.

Another new category recognises that the rising stars in our world are not just people. With so many brilliant new events being launched every year, we want to find the best of them and give a big boost to an event still in its infancy but definitely going places.

Best use of social media (whether by a business, or a club or organisation) is expected to be a hotly contested class, while the awards will also be tipping their hat to the new-car manufacturers who best support the classic car world. Last of the new awards is for the Team of the Year, open to any business, manufacturer, club or other organisation.

There are plenty of other exciting changes for 2022. First of all, the Historic Motoring Awards welcomes aboard a fabulous new title sponsor in Classic Insurance Services. The



insurer that is the number one choice of the industry brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the table. Other overall sponsors include the Prestige Driver app and Salon Privé, while organisers are delighted to welcome back long-term supporter and seatbelt guru Quickfit SBS and our chosen watch partner, Omologato.

After the nominations close, they will be whittled down to a shortlist for each category. This will then be put to a star-studded international panel of judges. Except, that is, for two awards – Amateur Photographer and Car of The Year – which will be decided by *Octane* readers and a public vote.

This year, thanks to a move to a roomier venue just off Leicester Square in the heart of the capital's West End, far more of you can come and see what all the fuss is about. The glamorous black tie ceremony will be hosted by Amanda Stretton at The Londoner on 16 November. Tickets start at £250 and include Champagne drinks reception, four-course meal, plus, of course, the awards ceremony and auction. See historicmotoringawards.co. uk/historicmotoringawards2022/en/page/tickets to book your spot.

Stunning star cars head to Salon Privé

With just a week to go to the spectacular Salon Privé at Blenheim Palace, visitors are guaranteed a feast of motoring legends. Even as *Octane* went to press, details were breaking cover of just some of the sensational line-up of cars at the event presented by Aviva on Bleinheim's beautiful South Lawn from 31 August to 4 September.

They include a brace of Italian beauties with links to the legendary Mille Miglia. The first is what is thought to be the sole surviving Graber-bodied Alfa Romeo 6C 2300B Mille Miglia. It is one of just a quartet produced in 1938-39 and has been meticulously restored. The other jewel actually took part in the race in 1955, the year that Stirling Moss and Denis Jenkinson tore up the record books in their Mercedes. Wearing bespoke Vignale coachwork specially designed for the famous road race that originally ran from 1927 to 1957, the Fiat 8V Berlinetta is still wearing its race number of 431, representing the time the crew left the startline.

One of the highlights will be the 75th Anniversary of Ferrari class, which will showcase greats of both road and track from Maranello. Among them will be one of just two aluminium-bodied Ferrari 275 GTB/4 S NART Spyders built by Luigi Chinetti's outfit in the USA. That will be joined by the stunning works racer 365P,

winner of the 1965 Targa Florio (Bandini) and Nürburgring 1000km (Surtees).

Slightly more sedate will be an impressive pair of pre-war Brits making their concours debuts. One is the famous experimental Bentley EXP 4 (bottom), as featured in *Octane*, which is said to be making its first ever concours appearance. Originally a test-bed for four-wheel braking, it was the first short-chassis Bentley to use a 4½-litre engine and was campaigned for decades by Margaret Allan.

It will be joined by a special Lagonda taking its fist UK bow for 60 years. The V12 Rapide drophead is one of only 17 with the 'Sanction IV' engine and one of only two wearing this James Young body.

Of course, the event is just as well known for its modern cars and launches and one of the big displays for 2022 will be Radical Motorsport celebrating its 25th anniversary with the mighty SR10 and SR3 XX. These futuristic track machines will take part in dynamic demonstrations on the event's public Classic & Supercar Sunday on 4 September, with entry from £50 for adults. Saturday 3 September is the Lockton Club Trophy day, which previously attracted 1000 cars and is limited to models from the many marques displayed on the showlawn.

You can find further information on the individual days and ticket purchases at salonpriveconcours.com.







NEWS FEED

Three anniversary parades at Goodwood Revival; exhibitions in Turin celebrating rallying and in LA celebrating Warhol; Bond cars and props at auction; 'pony car' stamps from US



Hill's racers, Austin Sevens at Revival

Three highly contrasting track demonstrations will wow the Goodwood crowds at this year's Revival meeting on 16-18 September (goodwood. com/motorsport/goodwood-revival). They will range from more than 100 Austin Sevens marking the original people's car's centenary to a convoy of more than 40 thundering ex-Graham Hill racers to honour the 60th anniversary of his first World Championship win. These will include 'Old Faithful', the 1962 Championship-winning BRM P578, which will be driven by his son (and '96 F1 Champion) Damon. The Championship-winning Lotus 49 is also expected to make an appearance. The collection will take part in a multi-lap parade on each day, accompanied by a speech from the Duke of Richmond.

The third of the parades slotting between the weekend's 15 races will celebrate Ferrari's 75th birthday, with 'approximately' 75 Revival-era Ferrari racers. The Revival also celebrates ten years of the Settrington Cup and, to mark the occasion, the J40 Motor Company will present 'the greatest J40 exhibitor display ever seen' – plus a new continuation model.



Turin rally retrospective

The Museo Nazionale dell'Automobile's rally exhibition opens in Turin on 27 October and runs to May. It will showcase car types that won World Rally Championships from the 1960s to the 1990s, some from the Gino Macaluso collection. A hall of fame will celebrate drivers such as Mäkinen, Mouton and Sainz.



Coventry Motofest

This two-day festival dedicated to Coventry's rich motoring heritage will take place on 10-11 September, themed around the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The Jaguar E-type prototype, ECD 400, is expected to be one of the stars of the concours in the atmospheric Coventry Cathedral ruins. See coventrymotofest.com.

Rally in support of Africa

Entries are open for the Hope Classic Rally, which gives 100% of its profits and sponsorship to the WeSeeHope charity for its work in Africa. Entry costs £1500 per person for a place on the event with lunch at Bicester, reception, dinner and overnight stay at the Fairmont Windsor Park Hotel. See hopeclassicrally.org.



VSCC insurance deal

The Vintage Sports-Car Club has signed an exclusive three-year deal for Hagerty to be the club's insurance partner, offering policy incentives and member benefits.



Andy Warhol's Mercs in art

A new exhibition has opened at the Petersen Museum in Los Angeles, California called Andy Warhol: Cars - Works from the Mercedes-Benz Art Collection. Appearing for the first time in 30 years in North America, the display features five of the eight Mercedes-Benz vehicles depicted in Warhol's final commission. They include a 1937 W125, a 1954 W196 and a 1970 C 111-II. Forty original Warhol works from his unfinished Cars project are shown alongside the vehicles. The artist's own 1974 Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow is also on display.



Pony express delivery

The US Postal Service is marking the heyday of the 'pony car' era with five new stamps featuring some of the most famous examples of the breed. To be launched at the Great American Stamp Show on 25 August, they can be bought from usps.com/shopstamps.

Credit where it's due

Sincere apologies to Scott Muir (www.black-goose.com) who supplied the superb photo of the Heuer Camaro for last month's *Chrono* pages and should have been credited, but was not.

Buy Bond cars and props

To mark the 60th anniversary of the James Bond films, Christie's and EON Productions are holding a two-part charity sale with vehicles, props, watches and more. Lots at the live sale on 28 September include Aston Martin DB5 replica stunt car (£1.5-2m), 1981 V8 (£500,000-700,000) and DBS Superleggera 007 James Bond Edition (£300,000-400,000). The online auction starts on 15 September. See christies.com/james-bond.

Espresso bongo

HR Owen Bugatti London has opened an espresso bar – appropriately called Ettore's – at its Mayfair showroon. This means that the doors of the normally invitation-only location are open to the public for the first time. Visitors can buy 'The Ettore Shot', served in a 'Bugatti Carbon Fibre Espresso Cup', which then allows exclusive access to the Bugatti showroom lounge.

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Paddy Hopkirk MBE b.1933

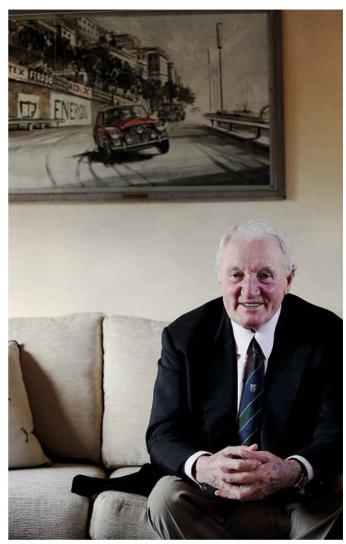
ONE OF THE BIGGEST names in world rallying, and one of the motorsport stars of the 1960s to most effortlessly cross over to becoming a household name, this impish, scurrilously entertaining, sharp-witted Belfast-born Northern Irishman will be missed by all in the Historic rallying and wider classic car worlds.

Starting locally, his rally career got off to a blistering start and he earned a works drive with Triumph only a couple of years after making his debut. However, after an unsuccessful season Hopkirk defected to Rootes and then moved on BMC and the Austin-Healeys in which he first tasted international success.

Of course, BMC also exposed him to the all-conquering Minis with which he would become synonymous. He was catapulted into the national spotlight after winning the 1964 Monte Carlo Rally in 33 EJB and he and the car then appeared together on *Sunday Night at the London Palladium*. Two years later, in 1966 he was at the helm of one of the three Minis controversially disqualified from the Monte – along with Roger Clark's Ford – for a lighting technicality. The irregularity may have been minor, but was real according to the regulations. It prompted such fury because, with the first four cars – all British – banned (along with Rosemary Smith, who had finished sixth to take the coupé des dames), the victory was handed to Pauli Toivonen in a French Citroën.

After the Mini glory years, Hopkirk famously gave up potential victory in the 1968 London-Sydney Marathon to drag occupants out of cars after a crash and to run down the road to warn other traffic of the obstacle. He also rallied big Triumphs with some success (setting a record for the fasting traversing of Chile), but professed never to have liked the cars.

In later life, his appearances at Historic events were plentiful, but his competitive outings were less frequent as he focused on his many businesses, most prominently his famous line in automotive accessories.



LYNDON Mol



Ten years of Elegance

Hampton Court Concours' big birthday bash

THE TENTH anniversary Concours of Elegance at Hampton Court on 2-4 September has a big bias towards British greats, with the lastest star car announced being the Prince of Wales's own Aston Martin DB6 Volante. The car, which famously runs on E85 biofuels, will be joined by other Brit greats from the pre- and post-war eras, including two more special Astons, a DB4 GT Zagato and a one-off DB5 V8 prototype that will feature in a future issue of *Octane*.

Other British stars will include pre-war greats from Vauxhall, Lagonda and Bentley, while there will also be a fine showing of Italians including a Ferrari 250 GTO, ex-Stirling Moss 250 GT SWB, and the UK debutant 'Tre Posti' prototype to honour 75 years of the marque.

As well as the 70 cars in the main concours – the winner of which is decided by a poll of the owners – more than 1000 other cars are expected to be at the A Lange & Söhne-backed event over the weekend.

For more info or tickets, visit concoursofelegance.co.uk.

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MAN & MACHINE

Prancing perfection

Ex-traffic policeman Mark Ryan has created his ideal Ferrari

Interview James Elliott

AFTER A 30-YEAR career in the police in Scotland, the last 20 as a traffic cop, in 2010 I bought my dream car, a manual Ferrari F355 GTS. As soon as I had joined the police I knew I wanted to be in the traffic department, but I did ten years on the beat in Rosyth first. I joined Traffic in 1991, achieved a class one advanced pass in training and was named driver of the year. We drove SD1 Vitesses, Senator 24V 3.0-litres and Granada 2.9 Injection 4x4s proper rear-wheel-drive power machines. Then in 2001 I became an instructor, teaching advanced, pursuit and royal protection driving, having driven most of the royal family at some point. I still do part-time blue light reassessment for the police, though the cars aren't as exciting. Something like the F355 had always been coming. When I was 14 my dad let me drive his company Vauxhall Cavalier up and down the driveway in Kirkcaldy. At 15 I started washing cars for a local dealership and after two years I bought a Mini from them. Almost 100 cars followed, including an RS2000, a 2.8 Injection Capri, a Lancia Beta Monte-Carlo, even a Lotus Esprit S2 that I bought at 20 then traded for an Austin Montego when I got married.

Yet the F355 turned out not to be my dream car and I moved it on after just two years. A 360 Spider replaced it, then an Aston Martin V8, then another Esprit. I currently have an E92 BMW M3 Dakar edition, one of only a handful left in Britain, plus a 2018 Abarth 124 Spider

and a BMW i3. And somewhere along the way I formed Driving Scotland, a group for all enthusiasts. It now has 120 members and no snobbery or elitism – it's great.

The moment I saw this Blu Sera metallic 308 for sale I was in love and traded in my Mondial for it. The Magnum PI thing is a horrible cliché but I was addicted to that show. I couldn't care less about the characters or the plot, I just gazed at the car. I bought it in 2016 and drove it more than 1000 miles in the first year, but something wasn't right in the engine. A tweak turned into a partial rebuild, then a full engine rebuild, and then a total restoration of the car inside and out. I'm not someone with unlimited funds, so I'm scared to add up what I spent: there were 67 invoices from the restoration company and the engine was another £15k.

Clydesdale Classic Cars in East Kilbride did the restoration and were fantastic, fabricating a custom grille from aircraft grade steel yet using the original Ferrari badge. To my mind it didn't look right at the front so I sourced a deep-chin spoiler and twin Carello spots to go behind the grille, so it looked a bit like a 288GTO. I finally got it back in May and, now on four twin-choke Webers, it drives beautifully.

For me the defining moment of the project was the wheels, which are comparable to period split-rims. I got them when a lady came up to me at a show, admired my car and offered them to me because her 308-owning brother had recently passed away. I accepted them, of course, and promised her that the first thing I would do when it was finished would be to take her for a spin. And that's exactly what I did.



WHY WE LOVE...

Owners' handbooks

Can you imagine a cartoon like the one on the right appearing in an owner's handbook today? Amazingly, the stiff-upper-lip marque that was 1940s Rover used this drawing – and many similarly witty illustrations – in its first handbook for the new Land-Rover. That's one of the joys of the traditional handbook: they were as idiosyncratic as the people who wrote them.

My personal favourite is the Gordon-Keeble handbook I found by chance in the longestablished library of a car magazine I used to work for. It included this immortal statement: 'When starting the car from cold, resist the temptation to leave the engine idling while you return to kiss your wife or mistress goodbye.' Talk about knowing your target customer.

Good old-fashioned printed handbooks have not yet disappeared from the gloveboxes of new cars, although it is surely only a matter of time; already, some are mere pamphlets that have QR codes you need to scan to obtain more info. At the other extreme, certain German marques have books running to 500-600 pages.

Pernicious litigation has a lot to do with the excess verbiage. As the popular meme has it: 'In the old days, car handbooks told you how to set the tappets. Now they warn you not to drink the battery acid.'

Mark Dixon





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GEARBOX

Ben Hedley

The Cambridge-educated engineer is CEO of the Little Car Company and has a sideline in death-defying sporting escapades



- 1 This is Boris, a drunken eBay purchase. He goes out on the town with me, travels everywhere with me in the passenger seat (it makes border crossings interesting) and has become my mascot.
- 2 I did the Caterham Academy last year and this was my book of the season from Jon Bryant's Snappyracers. I'm doing the Roadsport Championship this year.
- 3 Bugatti wanted our 75% scale Bugatti Baby II on its stand at Geneva in 2019. It arrived the night before, but the guy who was meant to assemble it had gone so there was me with a £35k Lego set, a glue gun and this Leatherman. I finished it at 4am and it was signed off by Stephan Winkelmann at 8am.
- 4 At 30 I started doing triathlons and then moved on to Iron Man events: a 4km swim, 180km cycle and then a marathon. The craziest run I did was the 2016 Marathon des Sables, a six-day, 250km ultramarathon across the Sahara.
- 5 My late father Tim had formal watches but always eschewed them for the blunt practicality of his \$10 Casio, which I now keep as a memento of him.
- 6 I keep this mug for when I can't believe that the small electric vehicles we have built 150 of so far are officially Bugattis and not just a toy with a Bugatti badge on it. The next big thing for us is the Tamiya Wild One Max, based on the 1980s remote control car. That will be road-legal.
- 7 I did a 4000km rally from Chennai to Mumbai in Tuk Tuks... during monsoon season. It was carnage and the most dangerous but brilliant driving I've done. I wore these Elvis shades all the way round.
- 8 I was originally a snowboarder, but broke my neck and rode a desk for a decade before going on a road trip (with Boris) to sample the most dangerous winter sports I could find. I somehow blagged my way into the Speed Skiing World Cup, got into the top ten the following year and captained the British team for a bit. I'd planned to retire on my 40th birthday and, the day before, I crashed at 115mph and woke up in hospital with another [non-spinal] broken neck. I got a happy birthday message from my hero Eddie the Eagle, though.
- 9 These are models of all the cars I've owned. The first MG was awful, but the red one has a hot Rover V8 and five-speed 'box and I still have it. Same goes for the Porsche 911 (964 C4), an £8500 eBay punt 15 years ago − EVERY warning light was on! It's been brilliant and a nightmare. The Legacy GTB was great for touring and the Nissan GT-R is my daily driver. It's been to Litchfield and has 630bhp.



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Join Derek and 20 cars on a relaxed tour through Provence that starts with lunch on the beach in Cap d'Antibes and finishes with a weekend in Saint-Tropez. Entry to the tour includes tickets to 'the party at the polo', *Rendez-Vous Riviera*, at The Saint-Tropez Polo Club on the Saturday and then on the Sunday a closed-road parade through the village. The itinerary includes the finest hotels, gourmet food and some of the best driving roads in Europe.

Entry is open to all classic and modern supercars.













JAY LENO

The Collector

ne of my favourite sayings is 'the great thing about handmade stuff is that hands haven't changed'. If they made it once they can make it again. This is why the years 1900 through to 1976 are considered the golden age of classic motoring. Before electronics, most things were mechanical. Mechanical things break, electronic things degrade. I can look at a mechanical part and deduce that it is broken. With a computer – or even a relay – all I can do is replace it. I have no idea whether it will work or not.

An example is the 1922 Model T a friend gave me that was given to him as a young man. It was parked 45 years

ago next to his garage with a tarpaulin thrown over it. He never got around to doing anything with it, so he gave it to me. We parked it in my garage, its first time indoors for more than half a century.

After it had been sitting in my workshop for a year or more we decided to try to start it. We poured gas directly into the carburettor (the tank was too filthy to use), and after a couple of pulls on the starting crank it fired. All it needed was spark, gas, air and a little

compression and it was ready to go. It didn't even need a battery because it had a magneto. Try that half a century from now with your new supercar!

A few columns ago I talked about a Wills St Claire I'd found. It had brakes only on the rear, so I could retard progress but not stop. The brake drums were worn thin. After searching for new ones, we decided to make our own. This brings up the question: is it easier or harder to make something today that was made years ago?

Well, I have a 1925 Doble steam car – one of only about 40 made – and it has a steam-driven fan which cools the condenser to turn steam back into water. These two turbines have extremely tight tolerances and must have taken a lot of effort to manufacture back in 1925.

Mine were damaged beyond repair. However, the manufacturer's name was still on the turbines, so I tracked them down and rang them up. I spoke to the president of the company, and he told me that his grandfather had made those turbines. When I asked if he could make me two new ones he said no, it would be too difficult. So I tried shaming him into it. 'Gee,' I said, 'what would your grandfather say If I told him his grandson, with all this modern technology at his disposal, couldn't make something you made almost

100 years ago?' He paused for a moment, muttered some obscenities, and told me to send him the damn parts. They turned out beautiful. Expensive but beautiful.

The reason I had to redo the Doble's engine was that I had bought what was described as high-temperature steam oil. It wasn't. Unlike a Stanley, a Doble runs on superheated steam and requires special oil, otherwise you score the cylinders: it runs much hotter than an internal-combustion engine. We ended up having to make new valves, pistons and con-rods.

It has to be said that the biggest gamechanger in our hobby when it comes to irreplaceable parts has to be 3D

THE RESULT IS

A CAR THAT STOPS

JUST AS BADLY

NOW AS IT DID

WHEN IT WAS

BRAND NEW'

printing, which allows us to make parts more easily. I bought a 1914 Premier, built in Indiana, 25 years ago. The man I bought it from got it cheap because it needed a water pump. He never found one, so I got the Premier for what he'd paid almost 50 years earlier. I took off the corroded and porous pump, scanned it for our 3D printer, built it up where the porosity and corrosion were most evident and printed a new one. That's been on the car for 15 years and works fine.

Another example was a car that featured in *Octane* 215: my 1934 Rolls-Royce with a 27-litre Merlin engine. When I got the engine, somebody had it running with a huge but crude four-barrel Holley carburettor on it. We wanted something a little more sophisticated, so we used our 3D printer to make an intake manifold from scratch. Then we could run six huge Webers instead. Besides, I had never heard of anybody running a Merlin with Webers. I thought it would look pretty cool. And it did.

We first made it in plastic to see if the Webers would fit and, when they did, we recast it in aluminium. All that said, there is still nothing more valuable in our hobby than a good machinist. They have saved my life as well as my cars a million times.

To get back to the Wills St Claire. We pulled the old drums off the car and disassembled them. The first thing we then did was to roll some ¾6in chrome-moly flat stock into 14in-diameter circles. Then we machined the backing plates, and welded the flat stock to the backing plates, inside and out. We heat-treated it, machined it again, heat-treated it again then did the final machining and truing it up on a lathe. The result is a car that stops just as badly as it did when it was brand new. Now I gotta make some brakes for the front!



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 huge collection
of cars and bikes
(jaylenosgarage.com).
Jay was speaking with
Jeremy Hart.

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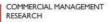


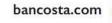
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DEREK BELL

The Legend

am currently in deepest, darkest France. This morning, I wandered off into the village where I am staying and bought some bread for breakfast, took in a scenic vista or two, and then set about enjoying my day.

I am used to being around people. I like being around people. I am a social animal, but there is something lovely about switching off from the world. It has taken me 80 years to appreciate this, but I rather like this version of life. Nevertheless, I suspect the need to get my bum into something fast will kick in soon.

It has been like this since I started out club racing

'ALAIN JUST

WANTED TO BE IN

MOTOR RACING, AND

LE MANS BECAME

THE CENTRE OF

HIS UNIVERSE'

a Lotus Seven in 1964 with the car's co-owner, my great mate John Penfold. I suppose mine was the traditional route into motor sport back then. I was a farmer's son earning £20 a week and I scrimped and saved until I was able to get a racing car, or at least half of one. Thanks to support from family, and I like to think a reasonable amount of talent, I was able to proceed through the ranks. Reaching Formula 1 became the target and I got there inside five

years. Getting there was one thing; staying there was something else entirely.

And the reason for me mentioning this? Well, this isn't meant to sound maudlin, but you do tend to look back when you get to a certain stage in life. I was always one for looking to the future, and really I still do, but I suppose the point is that now I reminisce more than I did. I have a great family who are scattered around in various time zones, I still get to drive amazing cars, and I am able to travel.

Mine has been a fantastic life, and I like to think I earned it. Another man who had an amazing time of it, but whose approach to making it in motor racing was diametrically opposed to mine was Alain de Cadanet, who died in July. Boy, he lived a life.

We became great friends in middle age, the irony being that I wasn't very impressed with him early on. I remember being at Le Mans in 1972 with the Gulf/Wyer team. I was walking through the paddock. There, among all the race transporters, motorhomes and so on, was a horsebox with what appeared to be an ex-army surplus canvas awning sprouting out of it. I am not sure if it was his means of transporting his racing car or the team caravan, but that incongruous monstrosity was

Alain's. It looked so out of place, so horribly unprofessional, that I thought it sent out all the wrong messages. My boss, John Wyer, certainly did. He was quite vocal about it.

Fifty years later, as I sit here, the memory makes me laugh. Alain and his wingman Chris Craft were there with the Duckhams Special. It was designed by a prefame Gordon Murray and based on an old Brabham F1 car. It was quick, too, if only in a straight line. The point is, all the money went on the car and Alain didn't give a stuff about presentation. He never did until later in his career. Not that he was in the least bit career-orientated.

Unlike me, he was from the cool set in London. He wasn't interested in going through the ranks in single-seaters. He just wanted to be in motor racing, and Le Mans became the centre of his universe.

Alain exuded charm. He always claimed he didn't have two pennies to rub together yet he somehow managed to hold on to an Alfa 8C for decades. He was a born wheeler-dealer, buying and selling all sorts of amazing exotica, sometimes several times over. I doubt he ever

made a loss. When he was racing, people used to get very cross with him over unpaid bills, but he would apply his silver tongue with devastating effect and invariably get his way. He wasn't unscrupulous, or a bit of a rogue, he was just Alain.

I came to like him enormously. He was compulsively good company and incredibly funny. We became pals through my wife Misti being very close to Alain's wife Alison. They became godparents to my youngest, Sebastian, and us to their boy Aidan. I don't think a week went by when we didn't speak at least once, and he was still making me laugh until three weeks before he lost his battle with cancer. And without wishing for this column to turn into another tribute-cum-obituary, another dear friend, Dennis Defrancesci, also died recently. He was the anchor of our Porsche Precision Driving School with Derek Bell way back when. He was a delightful and unforgettable man.

And that's the thing. Losing friends isn't great, but it's way worse for the family who have to pick up the pieces and take on the practical side of things while grieving. However, I am sitting here grateful for the life I have and remembering a couple of buddies with a smile and a cheer. I know that is what they would have wanted.



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, '87 and '89), and
Le Mans five times (in 1975,
'81, '82, '86 and '87).





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STEPHEN BAYLEY

'WHAT SHOULD

INTERESTING CARS

ACTUALLY BE? THE

ANSWER IS AN

ACRONYM, BUT NOT

A GT. IT'S AN SUV'

The Aesthete

uring a four-week stay in Venice, I did not see a single car. The city is not well-adapted to the automobile. The old joke, usually attributed the humourist Robert Benchley, is that, on arrival, he panicked and wired his editors at *The New Yorker*: 'Streets full of water! Please advise.' Some, however, say the source is the rascally actor David Niven.

No matter. Venice is a challenge to both old and new conceptions of how cars might work in cities. At the beginning of the last century, the madcap Futurist and full-time contrarian FT Marinetti campaigned for the canals to be filled in, the better for him and his deranged

chums to drive loud racing cars through La Serenissima while firing machine guns at passing aeroplanes. That came to nothing.

Marinetti was also an influence on Mussolini, who opened the Ponte della Liberta, the 3.85km bridge that connects Venice to the mainland, in 1931. Its purpose was to allow cars to get as close to ancient Venice as possible, even if only to the desolate Piazzale Roma and its melancholy parking garages.

Leaving Venice on a high-speed

train (via a bridge built in 1846, better suited to 2022 than Mussolini's more recent effort), I could not ignore the absolutely stationary traffic jam: huge, elegiac and futile. 'An extinction-level event,' I mumbled to myself as I lifted a small glass of chilled Raboso to my lips.

In the queue was a brand-new, very glossy black 4- or 8-series BMW coupé, just as stalled as the shabby Iveco Daily van in front of it. A handsome car, to be sure, but I began thinking: what can be the meaning of 'GT' nowadays? Even Italy has speed cameras everywhere and the road from Venice to Trieste, which should be one of the most romantic in the world, is a nasty concrete-edged rut where you drive as joylessly as if a rat in a behaviourist experiment by the sinister Dr Skinner.

Venice and the idea of the GT are inseparable. The city was a chief destination of the original Grand Tourists, the 18th Century gap-year explorers sent to Europe to do a bit of whoring, gambling, see a bit of art and bring back both fond memories and (often dubiously acquired) paintings to Chatsworth or Stourhead. These English Grand Tourists created the idea of travel as a pleasurable recreation when, hitherto, it had been regarded as a hazardous chore to be avoided if at all possible. They made a cult of glamour.

So when Italian manufacturers wanted to name a category of car designed to travel fast over long distances in great style, it was inevitable they should come up with *Gran Turismo*. Some of the most beautiful cars ever made have been in this category. But that black BMW 'GT' stuck on the bridge? Its design is empty rhetoric, a culture that has been fatigued, even exhausted, by circumstances including suffocating legislation and universal congestion.

Would anyone really consider a trans-European road trip now? That man in the BMW, €100,000 lighter than he had been, might as well have been in a horse-drawn

phaeton or on stilts. He didn't look glamorous. He looked stupid.

So the question is, while cars still exist, what should interesting cars actually be? This clearly was part of the brief recently sent from the marketing department to Ferrari's centro stile. The answer is an acronym, but not a GT. It's an SUV, although if you use that term to describe the new Purosangue, the Ferrari people give you strange (and not altogether friendly) looks.

True, Ferrari has made four-

seaters before. Enzo himself used to drive a 250 2+2 in the early 1960s. In 1980, the Pinin concept showed that a four-door Ferrari need not lose the lascivious beauty that defined the long F. And four-wheel drive appeared on a couple of experimental Ferraris in 1987, reappearing (not altogether successfully) on the clumsy FF in 2011.

Still, there are people dismayed by the Purosangue, people who see it as a market-led betrayal of hard-won exceptionalism. There has been a bit of forehead-slapping. But, instead of betrayal, it's a design that makes the most of contemporary possibilities, limited as they might be. 'Touring' was once the paradigm but travel is now a hazardous chore, as it had been before 'Grand Touring' was established. Speed is a false promise, as the man in the black BMW on the Ponte della Liberta had discovered. Instead, today, space and practicality are inspirations. This is what designers now play with when once they were fussed about wedges and wings.

A Ferrari SUV does not mean the end of Ferrari. It means the end of the SUV as a tributary of the mainstream. In the car's late autumn, the SUV is what it has become. If that's the case, I am very glad we have the option of Ferrari's extreme interpretation of the genre.

It would still be useless in Venice.



STEPHEN BAYLEY
The individual for whom
the term 'design guru' could
have been coined, Bayley
was the founding director
of London's Design Museum
and his best-selling books
include Sex, Drink and Fast
Cars and Taste: the Secret
Meaning of Things.

ROBERT COUCHER

THE GULLWING

WASN'T EVEN

LAUNCHED IN

GERMANY, BUT AT

THE 1954 NEW YORK

AUTO SHOW'

The Driver

o dismiss the Mercedes-Benz 300SL Gullwing as a show pony and the Roadster as an extravagant boulevardier, as some might be tempted to do, is too simplistic. But it can't be denied that the cars were aimed primarily at wealthy Americans who wanted to splurge \$6820 on a 'foreign automobile' with which to impress their friends at snooty golf clubs. Hell, the Gullwing wasn't even launched in Germany. It was unveiled in February 1954 at the New York auto show.

That made sense because it was the irrepressible US Mercedes importer, Max Hoffman, who came up with the idea of a roadgoing version of the successful W194

racing Gullwing. He promised Benz that he'd take 1000 examples with his first order. So the suits in Stuttgart put Rudolf Uhlenhaut on the case and, genius engineer that he was, he couldn't help but come up with something that disrupted the traditional sports car market: the world's first supercar. Arguably.

As you will read in our lead feature, Mercedes-Benz made a spectacular return to racing after its factories were smashed during WW2. Pre-war, the Silver Arrows

were embarrassingly dominant and, come 1952, the W194 racer marked the competitive rebirth with Snoopy Dog looks and a not particularly powerful engine. It proceeded to win all the important endurance races including the Mille Miglia, Le Mans, the Nürburgring and the Carrera Panamericana, thanks to its light weight and slippery body. Ferrari and Jaguar were bested.

I've been fortunate to have driven a number of Gullwings, and they have varied quite dramatically depending on their set-ups. All were tight and lusty, but original-spec ones became surprisingly squirrelly at very low speed, their tails swinging out in slow corners making the Porsche 356 I then owned seem remarkably planted in comparison. But rather than my recounts of brief experiences, let's have the thoughts of two long-time Gullwing stalwarts.

Resident *Octane* contributor Delwyn Mallett has loved and loathed his Gullwing for 50 years. 'I bought the Mercedes in 1972 and used it as an everyday car, driving it 12 miles into central London where I was in the advertising business around busy Soho. I drove it to the Nürburgring as well as on numerous holidays through France, and it proved reliable, comfortable and fast. I remember reading that Tommy Sopwith and Rob

Walker bought 300SLs when they were brand new and drove them back from Stuttgart. No doubt the drives back to the UK were flat-out and both commented that the brakes were a bit marginal. And yes, the brakes on mine are pretty terrible – I never know which way they will pull. Years ago, I found a new set of drums because mine were radially cracked. This helped, but you still have to be careful. That's drum brakes for you.

'The handling is also a challenge. You essentially sit on the rear axle, and when pushing on through fast corners you can feel the twin-pivot rear end jack-up. So never lift off! Tyres make a big difference. I've recently replaced

mine and it has transformed the ride and handling. And the Gullwing does get hot inside. Very hot. On many occasions, stuck in heavy London traffic, I had sweat dripping off my nose in a cockpit unfit for human life. I had to open the Gullwing door on a few occasions and could just feel the other drivers thinking "flash git". Yet still I really enjoy the Mercedes on longer, traffic-free runs.'

International car man Simon Kidston grew up with a Gullwing

and has owned four over the past 16 years. 'Recently I bought back my father's original 300SL in one of the worst deals I have ever done. I gave an immaculate car with Rudge knock-off wheels for the rather shabby car my father's had become, irregularly serviced by the local taxi garage. No matter; I have all his purchase papers and documents, and I love that it's back in the family.

'Supercars serve no real purpose other than being "super", so you can't categorise the Gullwing with something like a Lambo Miura. It's just too usable, an excellent GT. I have shipped my Gullwings to America for the Monterey Week and they have always been well-behaved. They're at their best on long, fast journeys.

'They do benefit from a few subtle upgrades. The H-K Engineering five-speed gearbox is non-invasive and really helps with cruising. You can fit discs but I'm fine with well set-up drums. Some Americans in hot states fit air-con but I just remove the side window screens and ensure the complex ventilation cables behind the dash are correctly linked. If not, they just deliver red-hot air.

'Dropping the ride height helps quell oversteer and decent tyres are a must. Do all that and you can use this single-minded endurance GT as a daily driver.' Forget supercar, then. The 300SL is not even a show pony.



ROBERT COUCHER
Robert grew up with classic cars, and has owned a Lancia Aurelia B20 GT, an Alfa Romeo Giulietta and a Porsche 356C. He currently uses his properly sorted 1955 Jaguar XK140 as his daily driver, and is a founding editor of Octane.



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A post-vintage Volvo

I COULDN'T AGREE more with Robert Coucher's thoughts on Volvo (*Octane* 229). We have been a Volvo family for more than a few years now, starting with a couple of V50s followed by an S60, an XC60 and most recently a 2016 XC70, which I like best of all the current models.

I purchased a PV544 last
October from a dealer in
Pennsylvania who specialises in
vintage Volvos and Saabs. The
idea was to have a running project
car that I could work on and drive
as well. A little research showed
that a previous owner was a
member of the Vintage Sports
Car Club of America and that, in
2012, the car had competed in
the Trans-America Challenge
New York to Alaska Road Rally.

Since purchase I have made

several improvements: some upgraded instruments, Bilstein shocks, wider wheels, Bosch fog and driving lights, a new manifold gasket and a pair a Sparco seats left over from an earlier project. I recently acquired a kit to convert the front drum brakes to discs but am awaiting cooler weather before starting that adventure.

My long-term goal is to replace the present B18 engine (which is in excellent shape) with another Volvo engine I started working on before I got this car. The block is from a 940 turbo while the head is a 16-valve unit from a 740. In lieu of fuel injection, I will be using twin 40 DCOE Webers. Should be interesting. Richard Johnson Maryland, USA



Ducking the issue

Few could claim to be fonder of the 911 than me, so Matthew Hayward's article on the 2.7 RS in *Octane* 231 was a great pleasure.

One aspect that especially interested me was Tilman Brodbeck's role in the creation of the model, and the magical aura that surrounds it. What seemed to be implied was that the 'ducktail' spoiler was Brodbeck's invention. Having recently studied and written about the early-1960s Abarth GTs (Abarth-Simca and Fiat Abarth Bialbero series) I think this not to be the case. Such an aerodynamic device had featured on corsa versions of these ten years before such a thing first sprouted in Weissach. I wrote about it here: davidbuckdenlooksback.blogspot. com/2022/02/more-magic-fromcorso-marche.html.

Applying the principle that there's nothing new under the sun, I pursued a vague recollection of a further precedent, also of Italian origin. *Tombola*! During development of the 246 SP Dino in '61, Ferrari incorporated a lip spoiler to overcome marked rear-end lift. Having proved the concept, the following year's 250 GTO featured a more prominent version of the device.

In the minefield of any debate involving pedantry of this type, a lot depends on how you define the item. Others will probably cite similar, earlier appendages, perhaps with differing functions.

I then wondered if I could come up with an example of a novel feature that has come to define a British car of the RS's era. I'd better put a stop to this train of thought, having alighted first on the 'quartic' steering wheel of the Austin Allegro. David Buckden, Kent



Mad, bad, brilliant BMW

I have owned many classics from the 1960s, '70s and '80s in an eventful 65 years of engineering, but in my opinion my current car, a low-mileage 1998 BMW Z3M Coupé, is a styling and engineering icon.

If this car had come off a Jaguar, Alfa or Ferrari production line it would be admired for its Marmite styling alone. It's remarkable that BMW, in the mid-1990s, went ahead with building such a low-volume, limited-edition car, and made it work so well.

George Redpath, Suffolk

Citroën's sickness cure

The Citroën DS cover story in *Octane* 226 really brought back memories for me. In 1970, we moved to Johannesburg from Sri Lanka. I was seven and had pretty much spent all my life vomiting when in any moving vehicle – car, ship, plane – so when we arrived my parents bought a Citroën DS.

We criss-crossed South Africa, up to Zimbabwe and the Victoria Falls, to the Transvaal, Kimberley, Pietermaritzburg, Durban, the Drakensburg Mountains, Swaziland, Lesotho and more.

I remember endless straight red dirt-track roads. Almost every Friday night my parents pulled down the back seats, my brother and sister and I would be tucked into sleeping bags and we would set off for the weekend. I don't remember ever feeling car-sick, so it must have worked.

The car never broke down, though goodness knows how my father then managed to work all week. It was the most beautiful car with amazing suspension, height-adjustable to get over the roughest terrain. Not to mention that you could drive it on three wheels if it got a puncture. We called it The Bluebird.

Lois Pelham-Lane, London

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The quickest Alfa 75

I read with enthusiasm the excellent 'Buying an Alfa Romeo 75' article by Matthew Hayward in *Octane* 223 and wanted to bring to your attention one model of the 75 range that was not mentioned. It's the 3.0-litre Potenziata, also known as the QV or Cloverleaf in the UK.

Introduced in 1990, it had a number of differences from the standard 3.0 litre 75 model, which the QV model also embraced. These were firmer suspension with different springs and shocks, replacement of the Bosch L Jetronic fuel injection with a Bosch Motronic ML 4.1 digital ignition and injection management system as fitted to the SZ Coupé, and revised ignition and engine timing.

Alfa literature at the time quoted 198bhp for the Potentziata, although that figure is the subject of some contention. The final drive ratio changed from 3.545 to 3.727 to give a sharper throttle response and improved acceleration, reducing the 0-60mph time to 7.3 seconds.

I bought a Potenziata in early 2018 to join my other daily drivers [pictured above]: a 1990 75 Twin Spark and a 1966 Giulia Super fitted with 2.0-litre Berlina running gear, the latter now owned for 24 years.

Stuart Stubbs,

Queensland, Australia

Inclusivity plea

I concur with Footman James' research on the need for inclusivity within the classic car industry (*Octane* 230). Especially as I come from a traditionally so-called ethnic minority – second-generation British born and bred – which, as a group, the research omitted to highlight.

I've enjoyed fantastic dealings with many classic car sellers, but there are still times when I visit a dealer as a potential customer and get quizzed by staff as if I have come to pick someone up, drop something off or am lost. Even once I've established my status as a buyer, I'm presumed to have little or no knowledge of older cars. Any rampant back-pedalling is fruitless because by then it's too late: I'll give discriminatory sellers a wide berth, politely, regardless of their inventory.

So, while this may not apply to many dealers and their staff, next time a stubble-ridden, mature Asian chap in jeans and a T-shirt wanders into your establishment, please do not assume he's here to, say, deliver a box of spares you've ordered. Instead treat him in the same way you'd want to be treated yourself. You never know, he may then actually spend some money with you. It's time each and every one of us becomes inclusive for the sake of our dear classic cars industry's survival! Sanjay Shabi, London

Darwin award

I always enjoy Octane's columnists and the standout for me in Octane 230 was Stephen Bayley. His reference to the Comper Swift aeroplane was amusing, but it does require correction. Comper Swift G-ABRE, piloted by a Mr CA Butler, made the November 1932 record flight from Lympne (in Kent, not London) to Darwin (1956 miles nearer than Sydney) in nine days, two hours and 20 minutes (source: British Civil Aircraft 1919-1959 Vol 1 by AJ Jackson). Perhaps 'England to Australia' would be a more accurate description than 'London to Sydney'.

In Aeroplane Monthly, February 2017, it was reported that Comper Swift VH-UVC has been restored in New Zealand in a 'pseudo-authentic scheme to replicate G-ABRE'. Even in the southern hemisphere they continue to celebrate those possessing a quirky genius.

For the record, just two original Comper Swifts now exist in the UK. One, G-ACTF Scarlet Angel, is at the Shuttleworth Collection. *Mark Humphreys, Surrey*

An older new Volvo

After reading the story about John Pearson's Volvo P1800 racer in *Octane* 229, I wanted to share the story of how I came to own my 1970 1800E.

I had a 1984 240 Turbo for sale. A guy asked if I might trade for an 1800. I didn't really know about them but said: 'Sure, bring it over.' When he pulled up in the car in the picture (below), I couldn't find the pink slip quick enough!

I did a quick inspection, drove it around the block and that was that. This was in 1996 and it's been a great car ever since. Perry Pessia, Oregon, USA

The Mistral that got away

The preview in *Octane* 229 of the 1964 Maserati Mistral Spyder at Silverstone Auctions, estimated at £475,000-550,000, took me back to an auction in Mannheim, Pennsylvania in 1974. There I encountered a 1965 Spyder from the local Ford dealer. It was presentable apart from paint bubbling in the rear wheelarches, signalling some corrosion.

I spoke to the seller before it came up for bidding, who said it would be sold without reserve because his mechanics could not get the spark-plugs out. They feared the need for an expensive cylinder head replacement and the complexity of a job above their skill level. It sold for \$4500.

This is my most painful example of 'the one that got away'... apart from my brother's Lotus 11. After a summer racing at Watkins Glen, Lime Rock and Nelson Ledges, he sold the race-prepared car, trailer, suit and helmet for just \$1200.

Kevin H Park, California, USA

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It's 70 years since Mercedes-Benz won at Le Mans in the 300SL Gullwing. Here we go again

Words Glen Waddington

Photography Craig Pusey and Marco Nagel, courtesy of Mercedes-Benz Classic



y the Porsche Curves, with the iconic pit building over mv shoulder, I pinch myself as I watch Bugattis, Bentleys, BMW 328s, Talbots, even a Lagonda snaking their way around Circuit de la Sarthe. At speed, with commitment. Hallowed territory indeed, and those cars which earned their right to race here nearly a century ago - still look right, even silhouetted as they are above the painted surface of the modern track. It actually brings a lump to my throat. Doubtless the 200,000 or so visitors to Le Mans Classic will feel the same as they devour the sight of 750 racing cars of all eras, battling in a variety of grids, day and night over a very special long weekend.

My turn soon, and in a very special Mercedes-Benz. It's 70 years since the Stuttgart

works team scored a 1-2 here on its first time back at Le Mans in 22 years, with the pairings of Hermann Lang and Fritz Riess (the winners) and Theo Helfrich and Helmut Niedermeyr. The third pairing of Karl Kling and Hans Klenk retired with electrical trouble nine hours in, though they had notable success later, as will become apparent.

Their mounts were the new Mercedes-Benz W194, the first Mercedes to be badged '300SL' and the progenitor of the subsequent 'Gullwing' production car. Ten were built; their victories included that 1-2 as well as wins at Bern-Bremgarten, the Nürburgring Eifelrennen, and the Carrera Panamericana (Kling and Klenk) in Mexico. One finished second on the W194's very first outing, the 1952 Mille Miglia.

Some regard the W194 as the most significant post-war Mercedes-Benz made: it

marked the company's return to competition, after all. While Mercedes-Benz's most treasured possession remains the Moss/Jenks 300 SLR '722' that will forever hold the Mille Miglia lap record, and although the 1955 Uhlenhaut Coupé just became the most expensive car ever to sell at auction (it made £115m and is in the top ten of anything sold at auction), it's important to remember that it all started here - and it didn't go on for long. The Uhlenhaut car was unraced because Mercedes turned its back on competition after the Pierre Levegh crash at La Sarthe in 1955. And the car I'm sitting in right now is chassis number 0005, driven to second place 70 years ago in the Carrera Panamericana by Hermann Lang and Erwin Grupp, behind Kling and Klenk. It has belonged to Mercedes-Benz ever since.

Octane has been invited to take part in a demonstration lap or two at the tenth Le Mans



Classic; there'll be a co-driver, but I'll be in the hot seat. The privilege isn't lost on me: Circuit de la Sarthe exists in its entirety only once per year for Les 24 Heures du Mans, and again biennially for the Classic – the inaugural event, in 2002, marked the first time since 1923 that the full 13.6km circuit had been used for anything other than the 24 Hours. It didn't run in 2020, for obvious reasons, so this is the first Classic in four years. To drive here, usually you need to *race* here.

And I'm trying not to think about the potential value of this car (£10m? £20m? More?). Given that Mercedes-Benz is waiving its usual stipulation that, to drive one of its racing cars, you need a racing licence, I'm happy to submit to scrutiny, so there's a brief test in the 300SL Roadster with which I became familiar on the 2019 Silvretta Classic (see Octane 196).



I set off with Kurt Thiim, twice DTM Champion, serial (and successful) Mercedes works driver, 1991 Le Mans entrant, and father of Nicki Thiim of the current Aston Martin works team. Though at first he seems surprised to be vacating the driving seat, the affable Dane smiles as he hands me the keys. And on our return he calls out: 'He's a good driver!'

Praise indeed. 'Sure, you got in and just drove it. It's an old car, the brakes aren't so great, yet you were confident and smooth.' Damned by the talent as a 'safe pair of hands', then. But bearing in mind the provenance of what I'll be driving on the track, I guess that's a good thing.

You can read more about that particular car's background on page 68. As a type, the W194 was a rearrangement of existing parts in a radical new lightweight body/chassis combination, all designed by Rudolf Uhlenhaut. The axles, transmission and overhead-cam engine came from Mercedes-Benz's W189 300 Adenauer limousine; additional power here came from the triplecarburettor set-up of the exclusive 300S version. The result was 170bhp, 20bhp up on the 300S, though still somewhat underpowered in comparison to the 205bhp Jaguar would claim for its C-type, not to mention the thumping 300bhp of the fourth-placed Cunningham C-4R's Chrysler V8. Uhlenhaut's solution was an extremely light yet torsionally stiff tubular frame, enclosed by a streamlined light alloy body. The engine is set well back behind the front axle, in line with the gearbox, for optimum weight distribution.

As for that body, its high sills made access to the cockpit difficult. The rules and regulations for endurance racing said little about the small doors and access hatches of the development 'I'll be in the hot seat, and the privilege isn't lost on me: to drive here, usually you need to race here'

Main image, and top right It's 70 years since the Mercedes-Benz W194 'Gullwing' scored a 1-2 victory at Le Mans – the marque's first outing there in 22 years; Waddington (white shirt) with Kurt Thiim in 300SL Roadster.



cars and the brainwave came from Monsieur Acat, a marshal for the Automobile Club de l'Ouest, which organises the Le Mans 24 Hours. He'd presented a sketch suggesting that the entry hatch be extended downwards – and so the gullwing door was born.

There are no locks on chassis 0005's door, just a tiny lever that twists to release a couple of bolts so you can lift it clear and enter over the sill. It's unlined, a single sheet of alloy over a simple frame; the Plexiglas window includes a vent flap, so there's one each side, plus a hinged slot in the roof above the rear screen. That's 1950s racer air-con.

There doesn't seem to be an accepted method of clambering across that broad, square sill; I plonk my behind on its carpeted top and fold in one leg at a time, then snuggle back into the checked tweed bucket seat. Removing the steering wheel makes that more

straightforward than it sounds, if no more elegant. The wheel looks older than 1952 ought to suggest, with four raw aluminium spokes in cross formation and a slim, dimpled wooden rim. It clicks and locks onto the steering column, and through it are visible the speedo and rev-counter, each in a pod at the top of the facia, with a set of four auxiliary gauges ranged below. There's a push-button starter, chromed switches and levers for lights and indicators, and the gearlever is a long, cranked wand that extends almost horizontally towards you from a point in the centre tunnel hidden well below the dash. I'm used to the remote shift in the production W198 Gullwings and Roadsters, but I'm told by Mercedes-Benz Classic's technician that even the earliest W198s had this arrangement.

A couple of throttle stabs, then hit the starter and the engine fires gutturally. It's loud, and the Merc's structure vibrates. There's time for a preliminary getting-to-know-you foray around the perimeter roads before donning a helmet and heading out for the first lap, enough to note the surprisingly slop-free steering, brakes that, although servoless and therefore stiff in action, are consistent, and the gearshift: not light, but slick, deliberate and mechanically satisfying, up-and-down, a bit like an Alfa 105's. It's far less sticky than the later Gullwing's remote action; just don't go hunting for first unless you're stationary.

Then, suddenly, there I am, watching the Bugattis and Bentleys by the Porsche Curves, our access point a little unconventional but keeping the paddock free for the next racing grid. There's a convoy of historic SLs and I'm at its helm, the only non-racer taking the wheel – behind me are Klaus Ludwig (triple Le Mans winner, fabled in DTM and FIA GT) and Ellen



Lohr (the only female DTM race winner, rally driver, truck racer and Dakar legend).

It's warm in here at a standstill as the signal comes, and I lower the door, check my helmet (there's no seatbelt, let alone a harness), dink-dink left and up into first and begin to move. Onto the track, accelerating, and feeling that straight-six in my chest as much as hearing it bellow through the structure. Quickly into second, climbing via third, finally into top along the pit straight, pulling a good 80 or 90mph, not racing but, hell, I'm in one of the world's most storied cars and blasting past the packed grandstands at Le Mans. And I'm kind of in the lead...

A gentle right through Dunlop Curve, then left-up-right through Dunlop Chicane, shifting down, discovering that the tough brakes make heel-and-toeing surprisingly easy, and that the steering needs man-handling but is linear in its

response. Through the Esses, back on the gas and off again before Tertre-Rouge, then hard along the Mulsanne Straight (officially Hunaudières), keeping the pedal down in fourth, heading around the rev-counter, revelling in the brawny wail of the engine and the shriek of the gears.

Not the best line through both chicanes, admittedly, but I'm not about to beat myself up about it. I've driven at Silverstone, Brands, Donington; I've tested cars at Paul Ricard; spent all day lapping the Nordschleife; even had a low-speed lap at Laguna Seca in a Ferrari 250GTO. But there's something genuinely special about being *here*. Particularly on a day when the old N138 is closed for racing business; the last time I crossed this tarmac was in ordinary traffic in a modern car.

I slow for Mulsanne and find myself relaxing, just a little, and my scalp tingling as I get the

power down a little early and feel those swing axles roll under and tighten the line. Nothing scary, just a helpful forewarning of what could happen, and what would be far worse if I backed off. And I'm not about to do that.

Up comes the slight right kink ahead of Indianapolis, a broad left before the tight right through Arnage – the beginning of the most technical section of the track. And it goes OK, heel-and-toeing down on the brakes, keeping things smooth as I find the apex, gather the lock and hammer out. The W194 is so lively and engaging, much sharper than the subsequent W198 road cars that allowed Max Hoffman to establish Mercedes in the USA as more than a builder of limos. If it makes me feel this good, imagine how Lang and Riess felt.

Mind you, as we back off before the Porsche Curves, ready to come back in via the pits, I realise that my eight miles or so are as nothing



'That double victory proved Mercedes-Benz's supremacy, which continued throughout the season'

in comparison to the 277 laps completed by 1952's winners. So I'll be sure to make the most of my night stint later.

THAT DOUBLE VICTORY in 1952 proved the supremacy of Mercedes-Benz's novel racing car, which continued throughout the season around the world. The Three-Pointed Star was back. It also completed the pack: until then, Mercedes-Benz had won almost all the world's greatest races; only the Le Mans 24 Hours had eluded it.

The three cars at Le Mans wore different colours around the radiator to distinguish them: chassis 0009, race number 20 (Helfrich and Niedermayr) sported a red strip; chassis 0007, number 21 (Lang and Riess) a blue one; chassis 0008, number 22 (Kling and Klenk) was distinguished by its green band.

After the start, Ferrari and Jaguar took the lead, then André Simon and Alberto Ascari set lap records in turn until, two hours in, the clutch of Ascari's Ferrari 250S gave up; Simon then led in the Ferrari 340 America, ahead of Robert Manzon and Jean Behra's Gordini. Towards evening the Frenchmen moved into the lead, while an alternator malfunction forced pit delays for Kling and Klenk. Finally,

at half-past midnight, Klenk removed his helmet. The Hamilton/Rolt C-type that initially shared the lead had gone out after four hours, incidentally, with engine failure.

The little 2.3-litre Gordini was still at the front. After a pit stop, however, Pierre Levegh took over in his 4.5-litre Talbot – followed at a distance of 65km by the 300SLs of Helfrich/Niedermayr and Lang/Riess. By noon the day after there were only 19 cars left. Levegh was still leading and refused to allow his co-pilot René Marchand to relieve him. Behind him the two 300SLs thundered on, lap after lap. Then, just 70 minutes before the end, a damaged con-rod forced Levegh out between Arnage and Maison Blanche.

From then on the two 300SLs were unassailable. In the early hours, front-runner Helfrich's error handed his position to Lang. Either way, Mercedes-Benz was going to win the 24 Hours of Le Mans for the first time and, for the Lang/Riess pairing, it was the most significant triumph of their careers.

'HI, I'M KARL.' Karl Wendlinger: Le Mans veteran, former Formula 1 driver, 1989 FIA GT Champion, German and Austrian F3 Champion. And now he's my co-driver.



The sun has gone down, it's time for my second lap, though there's a slight delay while we wait to join the track from the service road. The pit building glows behind us, leading me to wonder how well I'll be able to see out there. Is it lit? Will 1952 candle-power suffice?

I ask Karl what it was like to compete here: tiring, I suggest. 'The regulations mean you can't be out for more than an hour before a driver change, but if your co-driver isn't feeling good, you might be back out before another hour. You sit and eat something, maybe, but you don't get to sleep during the night. And though the race begins at four o'clock, you get up about eight to start your planning.'

It's gone midnight now and, while I haven't been racing all day, I can tell that the energy coursing through me is nervous, rather than the kind you feel during morning exercise. But I'm alert, and it's time to go: helmets on, doors down, dink-dink left and up into first ...

At night, the feeling out on the track is even more special: the pit buildings are alive in neon, and the painted kerbs stand-out in floodlighting like they're in a video game. But inside the Merc it's still 1952, its crisp suspension allowing welcome body movement that keeps you informed about the surface



Clockwise, from top left

Le Mans, 1952, the winning Helfrich/ Niedermayr car ahead of Kling/Klenk's no20, which subsequently retired; ready for the night-time lap – Waddington sits alongside Karl Wendlinger.



NEXT STOP: MEXICO

Mercedes began development for the Carrera Panamericana three months after its great Le Mans triumph, in September 1952. On Austria's Grossglockner mountain, the 300SL was prepared for the high-altitude conditions it would face in Mexico, where much of the route was 2000m above sea level, and the Puerto Aires pass fully 3196m up. There, the engineers sought more power (in the thinner atmosphere) for the 3100km race, and managed to extract an extra 10bhp, for a 180bhp total. In early October the team set off by ship for Veracruz, Mexico, with three Mercedes-Benz W194 300SL competition cars plus back-up vehicles.

The first of the race's eight stages began on 19 November 1952 at 7am, over a distance of 530km from Tuxtla to Oaxaca. Hermann Lang, Karl Kling and John Fitch followed one another out at short intervals. Infamously, during this stage the 300SL of Karl Kling and Hans Klenk collided at over 200km/h with a vulture, which smashed through the windscreen, leaving co-driver Klenk with a bleeding scalp. He briefly lost consciousness, but Kling managed to bring him round by shaking him and Klenk asked him to carry on with the race. The pair reached the end of the stage in third place, and their car was fitted with a new front windscreen with vertical metal bars on each side for additional 'vulture-proof' protection.

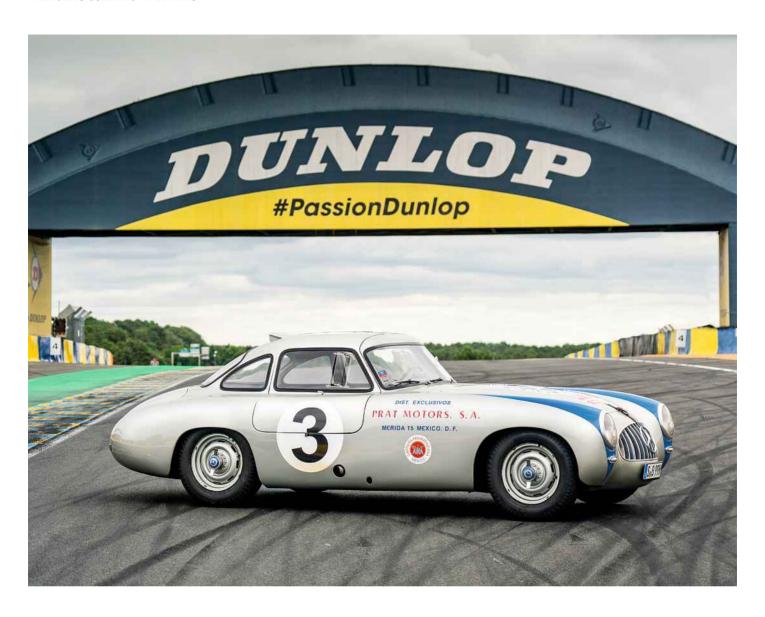
After eight breakneck stages, Kling and Klenk reached the finish in Ciudad Juárez on 23 November 1952 in a time of 18hr 51min 19sec. In chassis 0005, the car featured in these pages, Lang and Grupp crossed the line in second place, just 35 minutes behind. It was another SL double victory, one of the most important successes for Mercedes-Benz in the 1950s, at only the third Carrera Panamericana.





From top
The three team cars: (L
to R) Lang and Grupp,
Klenk and Kling, John
Fitch and Eugene
Geiger with W194
Roadster; Kling and
Klenk at an early service
stop; vulture collision
smashed screen – and
wounded Klenk's head.





rather than wallowing in sickly fashion or bobbing your head uncomfortably. It feels light on its feet, nimble as you might expect for a closed coupé that weighs 1130kg: for a sense of scale, it's broadly similar in length and weight to an early 911, though fully 6in wider. And this one, being a Carrera Panamericana car, is tuned to 180bhp, 10bhp more than the Le Mans machines.

But what daylight deprivation really focuses you on is the noise, the ticking and chugging at low speeds replaced by sizzle and snarl as revs rise before hitting the full-on, all-pervading blare from 4000rpm and up. I recall Ellen Lohr's earlier advice: 'My hearing is shot as I never had the correct ear-plugs,' she had winced as one of the Group C machines ripsawed its way past us. But this is my second and (likely) final lap of Le Mans, and I want to hear absolutely everything.

Powerful overhead lighting is spaced at intervals so you rely on the W194's headlamps for a few seconds in-between; that and the

occasional intervention of the camera car mean some of my lines aren't ideal. I have to brake deep into the Esses, noting how stable the SL is when you *really* need it to be. Then again, at Mulsanne it elicits a fair old wiggle at the rear, but the steering is quick and I laugh out loud as the car straightens out and my heart rate recovers. Karl 'cool' Wendlinger seems unmoved: 'It's good, you caught it, not a great line but everything is OK.'

We're in the latter stages of the lap now, so it's into second to accelerate hard then one last haul against those tall gears along the Route de Mulsanne (as the straight from there is known the rest of the year), getting it right again through Indianapolis and Arnage before slowing down to cool the brakes and the engine in time to head back through the pits.

I've brought the W194 back in one piece and had the drive of a lifetime – yet it was nothing more than just another couple of laps for this incredible car. Any chance of the full 277, for old time's sake?

'Inside the Merc it's still 1952, its suspension allowing body movement that keeps you informed about the surface'



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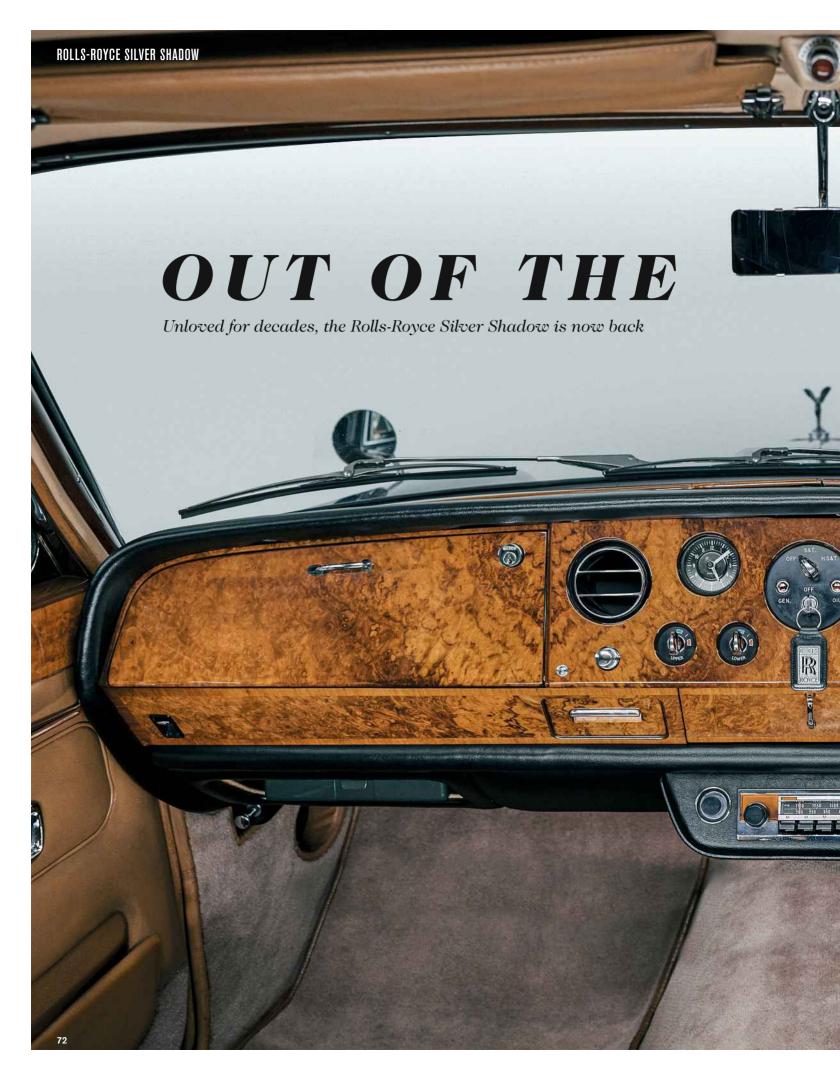
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here's a definite 'back to the '70s' vibe in the UK at the moment. Paul McCartney has just headlined at Glastonbury, Kate Bush has been topping the charts, rampant inflation is sparking industrial unrest, fuel prices are at record levels – and the Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow is a cool car again. How come?

In the 1970s, a Shadow was *the* car to aspire to. It would almost be easier to compile a list of celebrities who didn't own one than to name those who did. In particular, if you were a working-class kid made good, the Shadow was the ultimate sign of success: everyone from Jimmy Tarbuck (with his registration COM 1C) to, yes, Paul McCartney had one. The class-busting symbolism was perhaps less significant across The Pond but the Shadow was equally revered over there, with mega-famous owners including Johnny Cash, Dean Martin and Frank Sinatra. Even counterculture types such as Andy Warhol couldn't resist the lure of owning The Best Car in the World.

That was then, however. Time passed and the conservative-looking Shadow had started to look dated in the thrusting, greed-is-good world of the late '80s. It didn't help that Rolls-Royce built so many of the damned things: more than 38,000 if you include the badge-engineered Bentley variants. And, it has to be said, the Shadow's glamour started to fade in parallel with the reputations of their once-popular owners. Jimmy Savile had a Shadow. Enough said.

Which is all terribly unfair, because the Silver Shadow is a truly exceptional car. Just ask *Octane* contributor Harry Metcalfe, whose proverbial dream garage of exotic motors also includes a 1970 Shadow. Harry drove his Shadow to the Arctic Circle for a feature in *Octane* 181 and subsequently wrote: 'The trip was one of the most memorable ones I've done and the Shadow has become a firm favourite in the garage as a result, despite being surrounded by a gaggle of supercars... I've ended up using it more than I intended, even taking it into central London, which revealed it to be a supremely relaxing way to travel in town.'



Those last few words sum up the appeal of a Shadow today. It is the ultimate feel-good classic, and much more suited to modern traffic conditions than you might expect. Let's explore the reasons why.

WHEN ROLLS-ROYCE announced the Silver Shadow in 1965, there were some who considered it 'not a proper Rolls-Royce'. The car looked completely different from the 'Royces of old: instead of being curvaceous (radiator grille aside), it had a three-box, slab-sided modernity, and – very significantly – it was smaller in every dimension than the Silver Cloud it replaced: 4½ in lower, 6¾ in shorter and 3½ in narrower.

Just think about that for a moment. When was the last time you heard of a car manufacturer bringing out a prestige model that was considerably *smaller* than its predecessor? But Rolls-Royce knew then what today's automakers have forgotten: that more and more people driving cars means less space on the roads, which ought to necessitate smaller

vehicles. Car ownership was increasing exponentially during the 1950s and '60s, and the Shadow was Rolls-Royce's response at a time when its customers were becoming owner-drivers rather than chauffeured passengers.

That didn't mean any sacrifice in interior space. In the early '60s, during a short-lived liaison between Rolls and BMC (the latter bought-in the former's F-60 straight-six for its Vanden Plas Princess), Rolls-Royce evaluated a new BMC 1100 and found its cabin was just as roomy as a Silver Cloud's! The Silver Shadow offered more space inside than a Cloud, thanks to monocoque construction that allowed a lower floorpan as well as a lower roofline. It was still a large car in its day but the supersized dimensions of 2022's vehicles mean that a mass-market, mid-range family saloon will likely be longer and wider, if not necessarily taller.

Styled in-house by Crewe's design team, led by John Blatchley, the production Shadow evolved from a series of slightly ungainly prototypes into a deceptively simple and elegant form. The car featured here, a very early example that

'WHY ARE THEY SO DURABLE? THE OBVIOUS ANSWER IS BECAUSE THEY WERE BUILT TO ROLLS-ROYCE STANDARDS'

was ordered on 15 December 1965, shows this to perfection. First owned by the then-Earl Spencer – grandfather to Lady Diana – it features red-and-white coachlines in which the red was specifically matched to the colour of the jerkins worn by his carriage drivers ... Which helps explain why the Shadow wasn't delivered until 18 February 1967; the current owner, Mike Martin, has around 60 A4 pages of factory build records just for this one.

Mike bought the car on 19 September 1979 and it has covered 191,000 miles. Already the reasons for the Shadow's resurgence as a car to own and drive are becoming self-evident: it's not particularly large, and if it's looked-after it will be incredibly reliable. The specialist who has looked after Mike's car for 40 years, Ray Hillier of Hillier Hill in Olney, Bucks, also has a customer with a 1971 Bentley convertible that has covered 300,000 miles.

Why are they such durable machines? The obvious answer is that they were built to Rolls-Royce standards. After delivery from Pressed Steel in Cowley, the bodyshells were subjected to two days of inspection and fettling, before being sprayed with 15 coats of paint. Interiors were trimmed in Connolly leather and burr walnut veneers, while electric windows, power seats and even a remote fuel filler release were all standard. This was heady stuff in 1965 but it was also a nod to the all-important US market, where such gadgets were commonplace on relatively ordinary cars.

There was nothing revolutionary about the drivetrain – which in itself helps explain the model's proven durability. The basic engine was the 6230cc V8 first used in the Silver Cloud and Bentley S2; it was designed in-house to a conventional specification, with overhead valves actuated by short pushrods from a single camshaft mounted in the vee. Carburation was by two SU HD8s. By American standards, it was not particularly special, but it was exceptionally well put-together.

Even Rolls-Royce bowed to US expertise for the Shadow's automatic gearbox, however, which was a GM400 (four-speed on early cars, changed to three-speed in 1968). It was one of the toughest features of the car; garagiste and rally driver Bill Bengry, who drove a near-stock Shadow on the 1970 London to Mexico World Cup Rally, ended up using it to slow the car repeatedly when the brake fluid kept boiling on steep mountain passes.

The combined braking and suspension system was, in fact, the most radical feature of the Shadow. Both employed high-pressure hydraulics – up to 2500psi – based on

components built at Crewe under licence from Citroën, although the suspension operated in quite a different manner. Rather than being entirely hydraulically suspended, like a Citroën DS, the Shadow had coil springs all round, with hydraulic self-levelling assistance. This meant that the springs could be kept soft to give a good ride, but the self-levellers would come into operation when passengers or luggage were carried, or the fuel tank refilled. It turned out that the front self-levellers weren't really necessary and they were deleted in 1969.

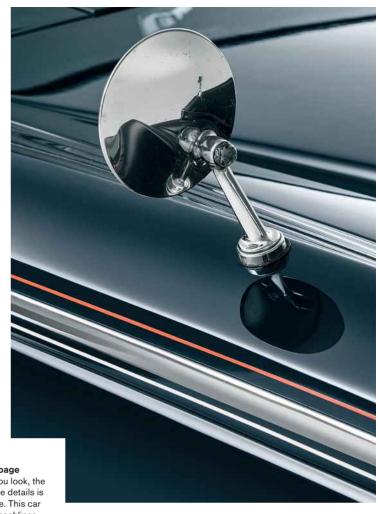
Suspension front and rear was mounted on subframes, insulated from the bodyshell by cylindrical wire-mesh Vibrashock mounts rather than the more usual rubber pads. They may have been reminiscent of Brillo pan-scourers but the density of the mesh acted like miniature variable-rate springs to give unparallelled isolation from road-induced noise and vibration. Incidentally, Shadows built for the UK and Europe had slightly firmer suspension than those sent to the USA, and there was a special heavy-duty option for countries with less-developed roads. Presumably without any sense of Swinging Sixties irony, this was referred to as the 'Colonial' specification.

ENOUGH TECHNICAL STUFF. What is a Silver Shadow like to drive? Let's take Harry Metcalfe's Shadow for a spin; it's by no means a concours car – he bought it on eBay five years ago for just £4100, and spent £2500 on sorting it out – but Harry likes his cars to be 'right' and so it's a good 'un.

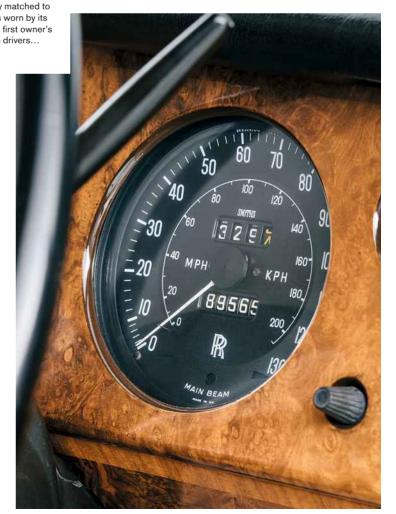
Close the driver's door behind you and you're ensconced in a surprisingly cocoon-like cabin that engenders an instant sense of wellbeing. Being a 1970 example, it doesn't have the 'Chippendale' dashboard of the earliest Shadows, such as Mike Martin's, and safety crash-pads encroach top and bottom, but it's more classic than the compromised design of the Shadow II, where a bank of rectangular warning lights sits slightly incongruously with the circular dials and ignition panel.

Turn the delicate little ignition key and the engine fires immediately, making its presence felt more than you'd expect. Harry's is one of the last cars to be fitted with the original '6½' engine, before it was enlarged to 6.75 litres in 1970 to cope with forthcoming US emissions legislation, and he reckons it's actually punchier than the bigger one. Certainly, it provides what Crewe would describe as 'adequate' take-off from the line, the automatic gearbox slurring almost imperceptibly between changes.











By far the most striking characteristic is the steering. Apart from recent Bilstein dampers, this car is as it left the factory and it has the recirculating ball system that was superseded by rack-and-pinion for the Shadow II. It is *very* power-assisted and has no 'feel' whatsoever... and yet, somehow, that doesn't seem to matter. It's surprisingly precise and, because you must use the gentlest of hands to guide the car with that big, thin-rimmed wheel, it positively obliges you to adopt a relaxed approach. An aggressive driving style just won't work; instead, sit back, breathe slowly and minimise your inputs. You'll find you can cover ground pretty quickly with a total absence of stress.

On the move, the engine becomes almost inaudible, and you can literally hear the ticking of the electric clock, plus the occasional tiny squeak of leather (Ray Hillier says that cars fitted with the rarer Parkertex velvet are notably silent). The ride is exemplary – even though Harry's car is still

wearing the Bridgestone winter tyres that were fitted for his Arctic adventure. Their relatively stiff sidewalls may account for a slightly compromised secondary ride – the response to minor road imperfections that you tend to notice more at lower speed – but there's no doubt that the Shadow is one of the all-time great 'wafters'.

Tyre choice is important, of course. Originally, crossply tyres were specified because of their greater sidewall compliance, but radials are now almost universally adopted. Dougal Cawley, proprietor of vintage and classic tyre supplier Longstone Tyres, himself drives a late Shadow I (see Man & Machine in *Octane* 219) and says: 'If you're a passenger, you may prefer Avons, but for the driver it has to be Michelins. The Avon is all about ride comfort and the Michelin gives just a little more directional stability and makes the car handle better, although Shadows were never renowned for their sharp handling.'



That said, it's possible to improve the handling greatly by fitting an aftermarket kit, the most famous of which is made by Harvey Bailey Engineering. Developed several decades back by suspension guru Rhoddy Harvey-Bailey – the car pictured here had one fitted 30 years ago – it consists of uprated springs and anti-roll bars and was endorsed by no less a driver than the late Tony Dron, who installed it on his own Shadow. Other kits have more recently become available from specialists such as IntroCar, a package that has particularly impressed Ray Hillier of Hillier Hill.

ROLLS-ROYCE MAY at times not have been the most forward-thinking of manufacturers – the Shadow was its first model to feature disc brakes, for example – but it was very good at constantly improving a design over time. At launch in 1965, the Shadow was produced as a four-door saloon, and also as the Bentley T, the bonnet of which

was subtly reshaped in order to match its curvier and lower-profile radiator grille.

In 1966, two-door body styles were added. Most of these were by Mulliner Park Ward, with an attractive and sportier Coke-bottle treatment of the flanks, but there was also a small run of two-door cars by James Young, which looked much more like the regular saloon.

In 1967 came a convertible version of the Mulliner two-door, and this and the hardtop equivalent were re-launched as the Corniche in 1971, with a raft of changes that included the new 6750cc V8, a more modern facia and a smaller three-spoke steering wheel.

That year turned out to be a particularly miserable one for Rolls-Royce, when a crisis in its aero engine division drove the whole company into receivership; fortunately, the planned launch of the Corniche went ahead and is credited with restoring a lot of confidence to buyers





1967 Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow

Engine 6230cc V8, OHV, two SU HD8 carburettors Power c200bhp (never officially stated)
Transmission Four-speed automatic, rear-wheel drive Steering Power-assisted recirculating ball
Suspension Front and rear: double wishbones, coil springs, telescopic dampers, self-levelling hydraulic assistance Brakes Discs Weight 2116kg
Top speed 118mph 0-60mph 10.9sec

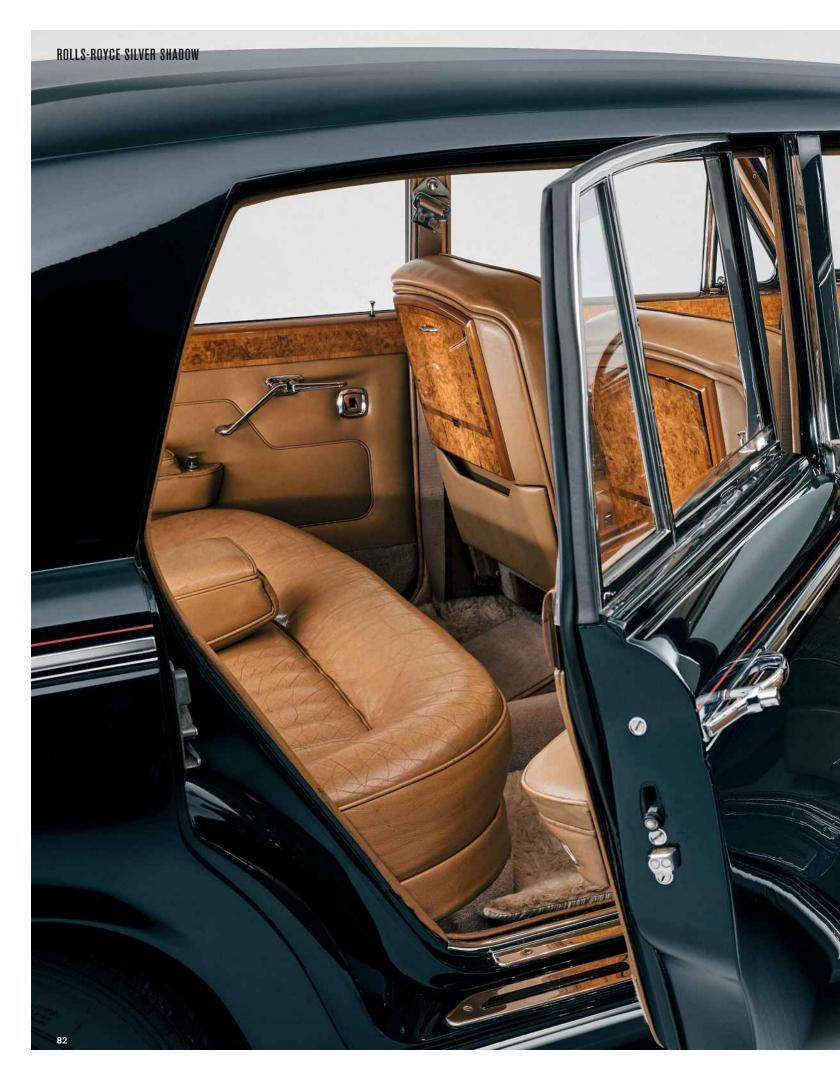
and suppliers. Appropriately, journalists were flown to the South of France to test it; such apparent profligacy made more sense when the car division's managing director pointed out that the whole event cost less than half the retail price of a single Corniche (about £12,800).

As the '70s progressed, the Shadow and its siblings were always evolving – faster-acting steering, better ventilation, impact-absorbing bumpers – but by far the biggest changes came in 1977, when the Shadow II and Bentley T2 were launched. US-style deep, rubber-faced bumpers and a 'bib' front spoiler were the most obvious external mods while, under the skin, rack-and-pinion steering improved the handling significantly. The air-conditioning system was said to have the cooling effect of 30 domestic fridges, while the heater was powerful enough to warm a three-bedroom house! Which, when you consider that a Shadow II cost 25% more than the average UK house in 1977, seems highly appropriate.

Shadow II and Bentley T2 production continued until 1980, when both were displaced by the all-new Silver Spirit and Mulsanne, respectively, but the Corniche convertible enjoyed a phenomenal swansong, soldiering on until 1995 (all Corniches were rebranded as Continentals from 1985). It had no directly comparable rivals by that time and was particularly popular in California, which accounted for a full quarter of total sales. Remember Robert Wagner and Stephanie Powers in TV's *Hart to Hart*? The series ran from 1975 to '84, and the Harts owned a dark green Corniche convertible, still the ultimate status symbol for 'a self-made millionaire' who was also 'quite a guy'.

We shouldn't forget the long-wheelbase Shadow, either, a relatively rare model introduced in the late '60s and given its own identity as the Silver Wraith II in 1977. And we definitely can't forget the Shadow's most outrageous variant, the Camargue, based on the Shadow platform but with Pininfarina styling apparently inspired by Lady Penelope's 'FAB 1' from *Thunderbirds* and with an equally out-of-thisworld price tag. At launch in 1975, it was the most expensive production car you could buy. Talking of which...

'WHAT'S IT WORTH, mister?' It's not very long ago that you could pick up a decent Shadow for £10,000 – but, then, that seems true of so many classics. The reality now is that you'll have to double that figure for anything in good shape, and you could easily spend twice or more again for a really nice one. Mike Martin's ex-Earl Spencer Shadow is insured for £55,000, the 'Lady Di' family connection probably accounting for about 15-20% of that valuation.







'CONDITION IS
EVERYTHING, PLUS
OF COURSE SERVICE
HISTORY, BUT COLOUR
IS LESS IMPORTANT
THAN IT USED TO BE'
RAY HILLIER

Ray Hillier, who, with Tony Hill, co-founded Hillier Hill in 1985 and originally trained as a Rolls-Royce service apprentice in the 1970s, agrees that the Shadow and its siblings are no longer cheap classics. 'A top-notch one is worth £40-000-50,000 now and a nice original and usable car is probably mid-to-high 20s. Condition is everything, plus of course service history. Colour is slightly less important than it used to be. Certain colours – dark green, for example – will always be popular, but the '70s browns that were once reviled are now back in fashion.'

Bentleys generally command a premium, because fewer of them were built and many people prefer their more understated look. Ray predicts that any two-door Bentley is likely to prove a sound investment. 'They're rarer than some Astons, and right-hand-drive convertibles particularly so. I think values are going to fly.'

When it comes to choosing between early or late cars, whether Rolls or Bentley, it really is horses for courses: the first-generation cars are arguably more elegant, while the later models have better handling and are more evolved.

The parts situation for all models is generally very good, thanks to specialists such as Flying Spares and IntroCar, and there are good-quality repair sections available for common



rust spots such as wheelarches. Your biggest potential bill could be for repairs to the high-pressure hydraulics and, if you want to have the many seals changed for peace of mind, a full service costs around £3000 plus VAT.

Discounting the rarer coachbuilt models, you still don't need to spend a huge amount to own a Silver Shadow or T-Series, one of the finest saloon cars ever built. They are not perfect but – as Harry Metcalfe, Dougal Cawley and Mike Martin can attest – they are the sort of cars with which, to use the modern cliché, you 'make memories'. And, while high fuel consumption has always been their Achilles' heel – road-testers typically returned 11-12mpg – you may well feel that it's a price worth paying.

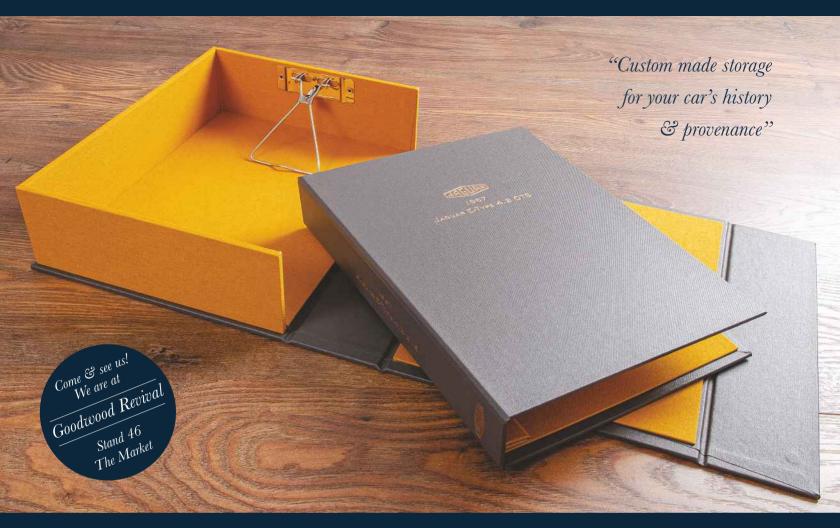
There is one tantalising alternative. The idea of converting a classic car to electric power is anathema to many, but a Shadow might be the exception to the rule. Its V8 petrol engine is not the car's defining feature; replacing it with an electric motor is not such a heretical suggestion.

Think about it: near-silent operation, better weight distribution (so less understeer), and of course today's all-important green credentials. The Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow is a superb town car already – but how much better could an electric version be. For enthusiasts like us, an electric Shadow really could be The Best Car in the World.

THANKS TO the car owners and to Ray Hillier, hillierhill.co.uk.



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IF ONLY CARS COULD TALK, and tell us what they have seen. That's what my friend (and fellow Singer owner) Simon Worland said when he discovered surprising things about his 1935-built, 1936-model Singer Nine Le Mans Special Speed.

He already knew that its first owner was Ronnie Marsh, Midlands racing driver and heir to the family meatpacking business, and that Marsh had it race-prepared for Le Mans in 1936. That race never happened, France being in a state of civil unrest at the time, and Ronnie replaced the Singer with something speedier.

What happened to CRE 945 after that had always remained fuzzy so, 38 years after he bought it as a major restoration project, Simon decided to have a good look at the documents that came with it. A project with Year Six at his local primary school in Stoke Poges, attended by Simon's daughter Anabel, was the catalyst.

The children were studying World War Two, something that happened almost inconceivably long ago for them. So Simon brought his Singer along to make the era a touch more tangible, and they started researching past owners' names. The first recorded, in what was possibly a replacement logbook, was based at RAF Wickenby in Lincolnshire. He would soon be based at RAF Scampton nearby. His name was Richard Trevor-Roper.

IT WAS LATE evening on 16 May 1943. Nineteen Avro Lancaster bombers of 617 Squadron were readying to take off from Scampton in three waves, their mission to smash the Möhne, Eder, Sorpe, Ennepe and Diemel dams in western Germany's industrial Ruhr region. The 'Dambusters' mission was one of the most famously daring and ingenious offensives of the war in Europe. At 21:39, Wing Commander Guy Gibson in the first wave's lead Lancaster AJ-G began to taxi onto the grass runway, flanked by AJ-M and AJ-P. The impossibly daring 'Operation Chastise' had begun.

In each aeroplane's distended belly was stowed what looked like a giant oil drum, the 'bouncing bomb' devised by Barnes Wallis of Brooklands-based Vickers-Armstrong. To bounce correctly along the water surface, and to hit the dam at the right speed and position, the bomb – codenamed 'Upkeep' – had to be 'back-spun' at 500rpm then dropped between 475 and 425 yards in front of the target from a Lancaster flying at 220mph just 60ft above the surface. The Lancaster, suddenly nine tonnes lighter, then had to climb hard and turn to clear the dam and the aftermath of the drop, flak shells bursting all around.

Each Lancaster's rear gunner was the most vulnerable crew member of all. In the tail of AJ-G, Gibson's aircraft, was Flight Lieutenant Richard Trevor-Roper – the highest-ranking gunner of the whole operation.

En route to the Ruhr was the ever-present fear of interception by enemy aircraft, so the Lancasters flew at 1500ft over England, dropped briefly to 60ft over the North Sea to test each aircraft's pair of Aldis lamps whose downward-angled beams were set to merge at exactly that low height above the water, then continued at 100ft over the Netherlands and Germany. This kept the aircraft below the reach of radar, but it called for hyper-accurate



1935 Singer Nine Le Mans Special Speed

Engine 972cc OHC four-cylinder, two SU HV carburettors Power 38bhp @ 5000rpm

Transmission Four-speed manual non-synchro gearbox, rear-wheel drive Suspension Front: beam axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs, Hartford friction dampers. Rear: underslung live axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs, transverse Hartford friction dampers Steering Worm and nut Brakes Drums Weight 800kg

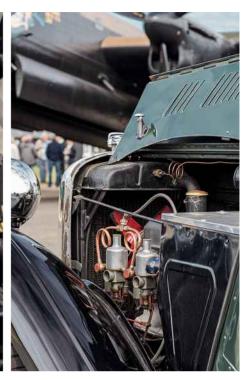
Top speed 80mph (est) 0-60mph 28sec (est)











navigation to avoid power lines. AJ-M, avoiding flak, actually flew under one.

Combined with this stress was the claustrophobiainducing crampedness of the gun turret and the relentless noise. Would there be space in Trevor-Roper's head to look forward to another run in his just-bought Singer? Probably not, a moment's inattention and he might have been too late to react to enemy fire.

AJ-G and its two companions, followed by the second and third groups of three that completed the first wave, were heading for the first of the five dams scheduled for demolition: the Möhne. Once there, Gibson did a recce run, declared that he 'liked the look of it' and lined up for Operation Chastise's first bomb drop, Aldis beams coalescing as they should.

Enabling the bomb-aimer, Pilot Officer FM Spafford, to release Upkeep at precisely the right moment was a brilliantly simple sighting device. It had an eyepiece at one end and a pair of pegs at the other, mounted on two diverging wooden strips. As soon as the pegs aligned with the dam's towers, Spafford would press the release button.

He did so at 00:28 on that moonlit night. Trevor-Roper saw Upkeep bounce three times and then, ten seconds later, create 'a terrific explosion' and a huge sheet of surging water. Was the dam breached? Not yet.

Nor was it after AJ-M's run, under heavy fire: the bomb dropped late and bounced over the dam to destroy the power station beyond in a 'gigantic flash'. The heavily damaged Lancaster then crashed, with just two survivors – one the rear gunner – who had baled out. Chastise was not going well, so Gibson decided to fly just ahead, and to the right, of AJ-P on its approach to the dam to distract the enemy gunners. As AJ-G flew over the dam it turned left so Trevor-Roper could engage the guns in the nearby

meadow while AJ-P released its load. Still the dam held.

Next, AJ-A, again protected by AJ-G and also by AJ-P. This was the Upkeep that breached the dam, but in such slow motion that the fifth aircraft, AJ-J, also dropped its bomb even as the Möhne was crumbling. This first of the targets was now well and truly destroyed.

Gibson, and the three aircraft of the first wave still with an Upkeep on board, then headed for the Eder dam, 14 minutes away. It was undefended but the approach required a steep dive from 1000ft. The last Upkeep did the job, and the surviving Lancasters of the first wave headed home. Two were shot down, including AJ-A. Gibson's AJ-G landed back at Scampton at 04:15, with three small holes in the tail just ahead of Trevor-Roper's turret.

And the other dams? The second wave targeted the Sorpe, but didn't breach it. The third wave finished that job, but the Ennepe remained intact and there were no resources left to tackle the Diemel. The RAF had inflicted huge damage on Germany's infrastructure, but more non-Germans (593, many of them in forced labour) died from the Möhne dam's breach than Germans (476).

Richard Trevor-Roper was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his role in Operation Chastise. He went on to fly on other missions, but was posted as missing after a bombing raid on 30 March 1944 over Nuremberg. His death was confirmed in June that year.

SO IT WAS THAT, on 30 June 1944, ownership of Singer Le Mans CRE 945 passed to John James of 9 Squadron at RAF Bardney (now closed), again in Lincolnshire and near RAF Coningsby to which 617 Squadron had relocated. The Singer's next owner, from 1947, seems to have been a civilian in Suffolk, as were the two after that until 1958 when Nicholas Galpin at RAF Cranwell, near

Opposite and this page Singer bowls along old A15; Trevor-Roper's entry in Scampton card index; Lancaster's fight deck; it's hoped that 'Just Jane' will be flying by this decade's end; the view from the rear turret; antique SUs feed Singer's feisty little engine.



'Simon's car is in peak condition. Even a new Singer Le Mans can't have felt any better than this'

Sleaford in Lincolnshire, bought it. Flight Lieutenant Galpin was an instructor on Sabres, Hunters and Lightnings, but he didn't keep the Singer long: he sold it to Michael Gibbons, a Canberra pilot for 12 Squadron at Coningsby, later that year.

Late in 1959, he sold the Singer for £25 to his navigator, Arthur Creighton, having fallen for an MG TA. Creighton – who died in 2019, shortly after Simon had made contact with him – had just passed his driving test and fancied a sports car, but he sold CRE 945 just a few months later to another Coningsby Canberra pilot who later became an Air Vice-Marshall. It then passed through four more owners until bought by Alan Manton of Hemel Hempstead on 24 April 1969. Simon, at just 19 years old and having already restored a BSA Bantam, bought what was by then a derelict ruin from him on 20 April 1983.

ARMED WITH ALL this history, and the knowledge that RAF Scampton is soon to close, Simon and I have planned a Lincolnshire pilgrimage. At Sam, because we

have to be 150 miles away by 9am mostly via B-roads in an 86-year-old car, the fruity sound of a 972cc, overhead-camshaft Singer engine snorting through a pair of tiny SUs announces Simon's arrival at my house. The weather is dry, the hood is down (it's almost never up) and the sidescreens are stowed. My overnight bag fights for space with a toolbox and an oil can.

Simon drives; his car is in peak condition with the light patina of a nicely aged restoration. It has a remarkable ride for something running on solid axles and friction dampers. It has no rattles. Its punchy little engine is much smoother than you'd expect from a design with a two-bearing crankshaft, and keen to rev higher than caution suggests is wise. Its Alfin-drummed hydraulic brakes are strong and consistent. The clutch doesn't judder and it never overheats. Even a new Singer Le Mans can't have felt any better than this.

So we arrive at our first stop, East Kirkby's Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre with an excellent café, in surprisingly good shape. We're here to see the centre's

Above and opposite Surface of A15 ghost road appears to have seen no maintenance since the 1940s; Singer's long-ago restoration has matured nicely; Singer owner Worland sits at Gibson's desk with canine guard at his feet; Upkeep bomb resembles a giant armoured oil drum.

1945 Lancaster known as 'Just Jane', built at Austin's Longbridge factory for the RAF's Tiger Force in the Far East. Japan surrendered unexpectedly early, so this Lancaster never saw wartime service. After a life involving the French Naval Air Arm, air-sea rescue in New Caledonia, display in Sydney and a return to Britain, 'Just Jane' was eventually bought by brothers Fred and Harold Panton after it had spent ten years as 'gate guardian' at RAF Coningsby.

The Pantons had bought a part of the defunct East Kirkby aerodrome, which they developed into what we see today. And they particularly wanted a Lancaster to commemorate their brother Christopher, killed during an air raid on Nuremberg in March 1944. Could it have been the same raid that claimed Richard Trevor-Roper?

'Just Jane' is about to go on one of its regular, and very noisy, taxiing runs – the plan and the hope is to get it into flying condition towards this decade's end – but there's time for us to bring a Lancaster and the Singer together as might have happened nearly eight decades ago. And for me to contort myself into the rear gun turret: surrounded by Perspex, I feel simultaneously claustrophobic and exposed. Imagine that at night, flak bursting all around, an inescapable nightmare.

From here we head west towards Coningsby, nowadays home to the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight which includes a flying Lancaster. The Singer was based there in the late 1950s; Arthur Creighton told Simon it was serviced at nearby Finney's Garage, owned by a racing enthusiast who kept an ERA in the showroom. That business is no longer in the village but has moved to a road just outside it. The Finney family sold it a while ago, we learn on arrival, but the name endures.

Arthur also told Simon of Saturday morning amusement with him and Michael Gibbons in the Singer, performing multiple circuits of the Caenby Corner roundabout where the A631 crosses the A15. Cyril the AA patrolman, regularly on duty with his dog by the AA box, had to salute the Singer's AA badge on every lap to his increasing ire. Nowadays the box has vanished with no trace, and the roundabout is fiendishly busy.

Six miles south of it and the same distance due north of Lincoln is RAF Scampton, base for the Dambusters raid and our next destination. We arrive and follow our guide to one of the hangars that housed the Lancasters nearly eight decades ago. History is all around: an Upkeep, a Tallboy as used to sink the Tirpitz, relics of war both hot and cold. And upstairs, Guy Gibson's office and the adjacent dispatch room, just as they were in 1943. Under Gibson's desk sits a life-size model of his black labrador, although the poor canine whose name can no longer be mentioned was run over the day before the raid, and buried at midnight on the 16th.

This is where the mission took shape. Here we find records and photographs of crew members, and a surviving example of the bomb-aimer's wooden sighting device plus a bomb-release button to squeeze. Nearby is the former officers' mess, now-semi-derelict, then the scene of both extreme jubilation among those who returned and extreme sadness for those who didn't.









TODAY'S A15 skirts round the Scampton base, the kink in the formerly dead straight road built to make room for the longer, and hard-surfaced, runway needed for jet-powered bombers. Part of the old road still exists, running south as far as the airfield's perimeter; it's more derelict even than the old officers' mess, but passable. CRE 945 would surely have driven on it during the war so I drive it there again, trying to imagine what might have been going through Richard Trevor-Roper's head.

And then we head south-east to stay the night at Woodhall Spa's Petwood Hotel, which became 617 Squadron's officers' mess after the move to nearby Coningsby. It's not messy at all; it's a mock-Tudor sanctuary and, as we see when we arrive, is currently accommodating an outing by members of the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club and their vintage-era machines. The Singer is tiny in comparison, but warmly welcomed.

Tomorrow, under threatening skies, we'll visit the International Bomber Command Centre just south of Lincoln before heading home. The atmospheric exhibition there provokes deep thought, the spire-like memorial is the tallest one in the UK that marks a war. Its 102ft height exactly matches a Lancaster's wingspan.

By the spire are layers of memorial walls, 270 panels bearing the names – nearly 58,000 of them – of all who have died while serving in Bomber Command. Including, of course, Richard Trevor-Roper, past owner of Simon's Singer. Yes, if only cars could talk.

THANKS TO Andrew Panton at the Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre, Karen Gibbard at RAF Scampton – and acknowledgement to The Dambusters by John Sweetman, David Coward and Gary Johnstone, which tells the story of Operation Chastise in deep detail.



Top and above
Singer pauses outside
the Scampton hangar
that housed 617
Squadron's Lancasters;
the Petwood Hotel
served as the officers'
mess when 617 moved
to nearby Coningsby.



Stephen Bayley explores the ineffable Frenchness of the Peugeot 504

Photography Paul Harmer

'STRUCTURALISM' IS A mode of thought much favoured by French academics. Irreverently, it may be said to be a more intellectual approach to what we more matter-of-fact *rosbifs* call 'inter-disciplinary'.

But it's a little more than that. The Structuralist *point-de-vue* is based on the assumption that everything has layers of meaning. That objects must be understood in a complete context. That there are not simplistic monocausal explanations of things. A belief that we are all mediators and translators of the world we occupy and see.

Sometimes this leads to dizzying bafflement, of being difficult for the sake of being difficult. For example: 'We must observe the sliding of the signified beneath the signifier in the behavioural programme of the post-social society during the capitalist inter-regnum.' I have just made that up, but you see what I mean. Yet sometimes it all leads to clarity. Let's see how we get on here.

The 1968 launch of the Peugeot 504 was delayed until the Salon de l'Automobile in the autumn of that year because of *les événements* of that spring. These events were the radical uprising that began at Paris's Nanterre University, when academics and students suspended their studies of bafflement and took to the streets.

There were barricades, riots, occupations of schools and factories. Young women in cashmere V-necks and pleated skirts lit up a Gitane and cheerfully chucked cobblestones at gendarmes. Eventually, a quarter of the population was in a frenzy and it got so bad that President de Gaulle briefly escaped to a French military base in Germany.

Then it all settled down as mysteriously as it had arisen. Les soixante-huitards, the 'sixty-eighters', resumed their studies. Workmen in bleu de travail put the roads back together. But it was le moment décisive: a turning point. Nothing would be quite the same again. Students were empowered, the mighty apparatus of La République had been made to wobble precipitously. Within a few years, hatchbacks would appear. Within ten years, Paris saw the building of the Centre Pompidou and expectations of architecture were changed forever.

And so we have the Peugeot 504, a car very much of its moment yet which also looks backwards. It was the successor to the 404, which was manufactured between





PEUGEOT 504 DECONSTRUCTED



Clockwise from above Structuralist Peugeot is at home in a concrete structure; seat design reflects corduroy favoured by 504's architect clientéle; engine and dashboard are paeans to the analogue age; Bayley models bleu de travail.

1960 and 1975, itself a very self-conscious successor to the 403, which dated back to 1955.

The 404 benefited from Pininfarina's open-source design, in which the noble *carrozzeria* cheekily sold the same drawings to BMC where they were interpreted as the Morris Oxford and the Austin Cambridge. Arguably, the French got the better of the bargain. Both the 403 and the 404 were popular as column-shift taxis in Paris and, being simply specified while robustly made, assisted the French colonial project in Africa during its long autumn.

The 504, which lived until 1983 in Europe and 2006 in Nigeria, was more ambitious than the 404, although still technically straightforward. The torque-tube propeller shaft gave a solid link between engine and final drive that smoothed turning moments, greatly enhancing both comfort and durability for customers on the Boulevard Saint-Germain and in Ouagadougou.

It also boasted deliciously comfortable long-travel suspension and complementary seats of positively decadent squidginess. The 'Break' estate version ran on a wheelbase 6.3in longer and had a raised rear roofline,

while the 'Familiale' had seven seats. Wagons and pickups had live axles, saloons and coupés semi-trailing arms.

The existing Pininfarina connection was reinforced when the production of the very pretty 504 coupés and cabrios was sent to Grugliasco, just outside Turin. Perhaps no enterprise of comparable size has ever been responsible for so much industrial beauty. It was not, of course, Pinin Farina who did all the drawing, any more than it was Enzo Ferrari who engineered all those cars. Instead, Farina of 1967 was assisted by elfin helpmeets who were not given much personal publicity. Neither did they ask for any.

Outstanding was Aldo Brovarone, born in Piedmont in 1926. Having moved to South America to work as a graphic designer in Buenos Aires, he came into contact with the mercurial and recently immigrated Piero Dusio who founded Autoar, or Automoviles Argentinos. Dusio's beautiful Pininfarina-designed Cisitalia from his pre-Argentina era, the original 'GT', later became the first car to be acquired for the permanent collection at New York's Museum of Modern Art, scriptural home of the newly emergent 'design'.



'A tiny raised section at the back modestly reflects the Dino's flying buttresses'

By 1952, Brovarone was back in Italy. Two years later he joined Pininfarina as an assistant to Francesco Salomone and Franco Martinego. At first his work was restricted to colouring-in the sketches of others, but soon he graduated to the autograph design of Roberto Rossellini's Ferrari, the Alfa Romeo Superflow and a oneoff, *fuoriserie*, Ferrari 375 America for Gianni Agnelli.

And it was for Ferrari that he did his most exceptional work. A 1965 show car called the Dino Berlinetta Speciale essayed the Dino 206 and 246 of 1967, to many the most beautiful cars ever. This was a completely original shape. The front wheelarches are emphatic, as they were on the contemporary Ferrari 330 P3 sports-racer, in my view the most beautiful racing car of them all. At the rear, a vertical glass is bent on a heroic concave radius, framed by lateral fins that taper to the tail.

And this feature you see on Brovarone's 504: a tiny raised section at the back modestly reflects the Dino's flying buttresses. And there are character lines a-plenty. There is the ghost of a Coke-bottle curve, less emphatic than the contemporary Vauxhall FD Victor's or, two years





Left and opposite
Linear facia and a
light, airy aura
contrast with today's
claustrophobic
cocoons, but steering
wheel is clearly not
the one that left
Sochaux; angles of
car park walls echo
those of the bootid.

later, the Ford Cortina MkIII's, but nonetheless apparent. The 504's trapezoidal headlights established a facial character that just about remains recognisable in the Peugeot physiognomy of today.

But before CAD, even Pininfarina's sculpturally adroit designers had difficulty in realising voluptuous three-dimensional forms. The 504 meets the eye as a shape conceived in two dimensions – front elevation and side elevation – and only later on the production line amalgamated into a three-dimensional mass. Peugeot had no Scaglietti to render Pininfarina's flat drawings into voluptuous shapes.

We find this 504 Berline, belonging to a Swiss collector, at Lance McCormack's Romance of Rust in Brentford. This is a workshop in the heart of Duke of London, a collective of boutique car dealer, pizzeria, cinema and wine bar. McCormack is a master metal-basher, trained as a boy at the coachbuilder Mulliner, who has fastidiously re-bashed this Peugeot. But even his great artifice was not able to disguise that, in most cars of this era, doors, bonnets and boots open with the creaky imprecision of a vintage tin toy.

It was, structurally speaking, irresistible to shoot the pictures in a concrete parking garage, an architectural form reaching its maturity when the 504 was launched. Happily, there was one adjacent to Romance of Rust: serendipity. Parking garages speak a simple, uncomplicated language. There is only one purpose: to be a hotel for cars.

In Nikolaus Pevsner's *History of Building Types* of 1976, car parks do not feature. To this great architectural historian, they had not achieved artistic distinction. Indeed, the very first car park, Auguste Perret's Garage

de la Société-Ponthieu-Automobiles of 1905, looks like something else entirely. But parking was soon to engage modernists' imaginations. The Soviet architect Konstantin Melnikov had a bold concept in 1925 for a garage over the Seine. Nine years later in Venice, Eugenio Miozzi's Autorimessa demonstrated the Futurist vision.

By the 1950s, parking garages were emerging as a distinct building type. There's the amazing Parking Facility No.5 of 1952 by Chicago's Loebl, Schlossman and Bennett. And when in 1959 Frank Lloyd Wright completed New York's Guggenheim Museum with its amazing helical ramp, quite a few visitors recalled that the architect had tested this design on Max Hoffman's car showroom at Park and 56th, cruelly demolished in 2013.

The genre reached its apogee in Gateshead with Owen Luder's Trinity Square of 1967, immortalised in Michael Caine's *Get Carter* the year before the Peugeot 504's arrival. Brutalism was the favoured language of car park designers. No-one is saying that the fine 504 is in any way brutal, but it has a character determined by a culture that architects understand.

The 504, especially in its Break or Familiale versions, became a favourite of architects. In 1968, this tribe was identifiable by its corduroy suits, suede desert boots, statement glasses and polo-neck sweaters. The more prosperous of them might have owned an Eames chair, or had barometers and a ship's clock attached to tongue-and-groove panelling and illuminated by spotlights.

English intelligentsia liked French cars. Indeed, French stuff in general. By 1968, Terence Conran's Habitat stores were well established; here you would find Duralex glasses and other fine examples of vernacular chic.



Conran's B-roll, soft-focus Francophilia involved long journeys after lunch along a plane-tree-lined *Route Nationale* in a gloriously floaty and hypnotising Citroën DS. And it found many takers among the discoverers of wine bars, quiche lorraine and profiteroles, a chicken brick and a butcher's block.

But Peugeot's Frenchness was more to do with workmanlike bleu de travail and rationality than with grande luxe or the gastronomy that will forever be associated with the Citroën DS. Or, if not the roadmender's or binman's bleu de travail, then at least bourgeois refinement. In 1968, Peugeot had not realised its global ambitions and was still in essence the original family business based in Sochaux in the Franche-Comte. The take-over of Citroën was still a handful of years away.

Sochaux is near to the source of *poulet de Bresse*, the de luxe chicken for Conran's chicken brick. And to explain the 504's artisanal background, I don't believe a tourist has ever intentionally visited Sochaux. You need only know that the Peugeot business began as iron-founders, evolving into manufacturers of saws, bicycles and peppermills. Some spirits cannot be eradicated.

Despite its success in rough-and-tumble rallying, noone could, at least by today's standards, describe the 504 as a driver's car. To say it drives like a light truck is to bring modern light trucks into disrepute. Although it is a very fine passenger's car: what the seats lack in structure they compensate for with astonishingly embracing softness. This is what I thought about, sitting in the back.

And I pondered, too, how far ergonomics have advanced since 1968. Today, the meanest Korean thing you find at an airport's car-rental pool has thoughtfully arranged secondary controls that all fall to hand without the necessity of the close formal analysis of the *tableau de bord* required to understand how to operate the Peugeot.

In the 504, there are knobs, sliders, buttons, each an articulate witness to the unsophisticated innocence of the analogue era. And one forgets that, while today, solid-state electronics have made cars very tidy in terms of wiring, in the 504 a gnarly bundle of colourful cables is only just out of sight underneath the steering wheel.

And as for in-car entertainment, that was really restricted to Pierre resting his hand on Chantal's left knee as he put his right foot down. You see, the cassette deck also appeared in 1968 and, at first, there was some resistance to such a wantonly decadent innovation. You wanted sounds? You tuned to RTL.

The Peugeot 504 was an exact contemporary of the more gorgeous, but less sensible, Jaguar XJ6: each the end of something old rather than the beginning of something new. Cars such as the 504 were votaries of a value system and a design ethic that was soon to be atomised by globalisation, the extinction of old class rules, Computer Aided Design, intelligent ergonomics, crash protection legislation, democratised electronics and eco-activism.

To experience a 504 today is as infinitely touching as the Yoshida Fire Festival that, every year, marks the



From top
Bayley sinks into the
504's seductively soft
back seat; he says it's
more a passengers' car
than a driver's, although
it won many a rough-andtumble rally in Africa.

end of the Mount Fuji climbing season. But while devotees will climb Fuji again next year, the Peugeot 504 is not coming back. So savour the experience of a car manufactured by the makers of the best pepper-mills, designed by the man who drew the most beautiful Ferrari, and which exudes a Frenchess as effable as the smells of a (possibly now illegal) Gitane and of garlic cooking in hot oil. All that has now been lost.

Why did I enjoy the Peugeot 504? Let the most accessible Structuralist, Jean Baudrillard, explain: 'We need a visible past, a visible continuum, a visible myth of origin to reassure us as to our ends, since ultimately we have never believed in them.'

There, if you like, is the classic car proposition as described by the loftiest Parisian *intello*. In short, the stuff of dreams. And thus, the Peugeot 504: a new car of 1968, but also a rather old one. So, here's a paradox those Structuralists would have relished.

Thanks to Romance of Rust, romanceofrust.com, and Duke of London, dukeoflondon.com.

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BAN 70N	CH2I STY	EXL 3Y	HOL 647E	LAK 3R	MO22 ELL	REN 70N	TA22 ANT
Banton	Christy	Exley	Holgate	Laker	Morrell	Renton	Tarrant
84 TES	CLA 2K	FEG 4N	HOL 5T	LAM 80N	NAN 5	RON 4ID	T3 NCH
Bates	Clark	Fegan	Holst	Lambon	Nans	Ronald	Tench
BOG 5	60 LE	FOR 7H	HOP 600D	LAN 670N	NEE 50N	RO54 NNA	TUR 13Y
Bogs	Cole	Forth	Hopgood	Langton	Neeson	Rosanna	Turley
BOU ID	60 OKE	FOS 73R	HOW 4T	LAR 6E	NI ALL	RU 6	TYN 4N
Bould	Cooke	Foster	Howat	Large	Niall	Rug	Tynan
BOY 3R	600 MBS	GAO I	HUX I3Y	LAU 23N	ORG 4N	RUS 70N	W46 NER
Boyer	Coombs	Gaol	Huxley	Lauren	Organ	Ruston	Wagner
BRU 70N	C00 7E	GAY IE	HYD I	LAW I3R	ORG 45M	SIO UGH	W33 DON
Bruton	Coote	Gayle	Hydi	Lawler	Orgasm	Slough	Weedon
BUF 70N	COP 13Y	G3 ARY	I KEA	LUM 13Y	OXL 3Y	SP2I GGS	WES 13Y
Bufton	Copley	Geary	Ikea	Lumley	Oxley	Spriggs	Wesley
BUII ARD	CUR 7IN	GOW 3R	L I VA	LYN 377E	PAG 3T	574 LEY	WES 50N
Bullard	Curtin	Gower	Iva	Lynette	Paget	Staley	Wesson
BUT 70N	D3 NBY	HA66 ART	JAV I3R	MAC 134N	PAR 70N	S7 AMP	W357 LEY
Button	Denby	Haggart	Javier	Maclean	Parton	Stamp	Westley
CAR 3N	DO20 THY	HAR 7E	JUL 13T	M4 DGE	PAX 70N	STO 88S	WOO 770N
Caren	Dorothy	Harte	Juliet	Madge	Paxton	Stobbs	Wootton

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Alan Gow

Meet the BTCC boss who turned unknown drivers of souped-up repmobiles into household-name heroes of the racetrack

Words Ben Barry Photography Jonathan Fleetwood

DISTIL THE 1990s British Touring Car Championship to its essence and it's a hard sell: four-door saloons usually driven by sales reps were thrashed around the racetracks of Britain by men that most of the population – at least initially – had never heard of.

In reality, '90s BTCC became unmissably exciting. Humble Cavalier, Laguna and Primera bodyshells were among others dropped low over monster slick-shod 19-inch alloys, behind which you'd find sophisticated suspension, sequential transmissions, extensive carbonfibre and highly tuned 2.0-litre four-, five- or six-cylinder engines eventually pushed right back to the bulkheads and lowered to improve weight distribution. Every boy racer wanted the wheels, the single wiper, the sunstrip.

More than anything the racing was epic, helping BTCC drivers become household names (well, my mum can't reel them off, but you get the point), and they were soon joined by guest Formula 1 drivers. Even Nigel Mansell, who was reigning F1 World Champion when he suffered one of the biggest shunts of his career driving a Mondeo around Donington Park, surely an impossible scenario today.

Eight-figure budgets, huge crowds, big TV figures, the TOCA Touring Car Championship computer game, Murray Walker's frenzied delivery struggling to keep pace with the action and the offs... it was 'Go, go, go!' as the man himself would have said.

Alan Gow steered the championship from behind the scenes, and for fans the straighttalking boss remains as synonymous with the series as championship winners Harvey, Tarquini, Menu, Biela and Cleland. It was 30 years ago this year that the TOCA organisation he co-founded became the promoter of the BTCC series and kickstarted that golden era, so it's a timely opportunity to catch up, learn how it all came together, where it all went wrong and where it's all heading now. Gow is as well placed as ever to comment on all the above; the 67-year-old remains at the helm of BTCC as chief executive while simultaneously serving as the president of the FIA Touring Car Commission.

He meets *Octane* at the Thruxton race circuit both to talk and to give his beloved 'step-front' 1966 Alfa Romeo GT Junior some exercise around a circuit that – handily enough – is operated by a company of which he's chairman.

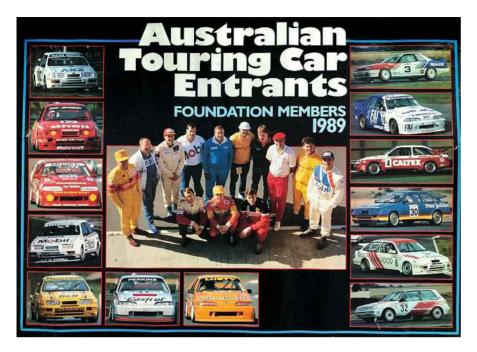
The 1.3-litre twin-cam Alfa makes a useful ice-breaker as photographer Fleetwood and I pore over its Giugiaro-penned lines. 'It's a two-owner car, originally from the south of France, and has a genuine 36,000km,' explains its proud owner. He'd forewarned us that the Alfa wouldn't be coming should there be any hint of rain, so protective is he.

'It's never been restored, even though it's immaculate and totally rust-free. It's just a gorgeous little car. [Marque specialist] Ian Ellis looks after it for me and always says so. I've loved the 105-series since I was a kid, and this one is definitely a keeper.' A concours 1960 Volkswagen Beetle is also tucked away at home.

Gow did not grow up in Britain dreaming of Alfas and air-cooled Volkswagens, however. He grew up in Australia and admits he fancied himself as a race driver, quickly blowing up the Holden Torana XU-1 that was his first race car (a Vauxhall Viva-based coupé with Bathurst-















This page from top, and opposite

Australian series set tone for BTCC; racing legend Peter Brock is to the right of Gow; racer and close friend Allan Moffat tries an unsuccessful skull cooler; Gow did several 24-hour 2CV races in the 1990s; Tarquini in Alfa 155T at Thruxton, 1994; Gow's Alfa GT Junior is unrestored; Donington 1992.

winning pedigree). Perhaps more surprisingly, he enjoyed some success as a water-skier.

'From my teenage years I'd be water-skiing every weekend, and eventually I entered some international events in Australia,' he reveals. 'I thought I was pretty good, but up against the world's best I looked pretty ordinary!'

Instead, Gow found his success with management and series promotion. He became a key figure behind the scenes in motorsport, working closely with multiple Bathurst winner Peter Brock – a little too closely at one point.

'Peter reported a noise coming from the differential of his Holden Commodore race car while testing at Phillip Island, so I climbed into where the rear seats would have been to hold onto the rollcage and listen,' Gow chuckles. Forgetting he had a passenger on board, Brock set off at race speed. 'Once I got over the shock it was just fantastic to watch him at work,' says Gow, who admits he was too choked up at Brock's death competing on the Targa West in 2006 to deliver the eulogy at his state funeral, preferring to pen some words instead.

Long before then, Gow, Brock and eight others created TEGA, which secured the rights of the V8 Supercars race series in Australia – and unwittingly laid the foundations of 1990s BTCC in the process. 'We sold out at the end of 1989 and I came over here to look around for 12 months, as every Australian does.'

In the UK, Gow worked with multiple BTCC champion and engineer Andy Rouse on a road-car project. Rouse had raced in Australia both for Brock and for Australian Touring Car champion – and latterly team owner – Allan Moffat, a close friend of Gow's. As Rouse focused on the new car's engineering, Gow liaised with Ford dealers to sell the Rouse-tuned, road-legal Sapphire Cosworth 304-R.

In 1990, the pair joined forces with Prodrive boss David Richards and Vauxhall's David Cook and by 1991 they had negotiated the rights to the BTCC with the Motor Sports Association. 'The MSA immediately recognised this as a good idea,' remembers Gow. 'It was the governing body, not the promoter, but there could have been some conflict of interests as my partners were involved with BTCC teams. To make sure that didn't happen, running the championship was largely left to me.'

When TOCA ran its first season of BTCC in 1992, it spelt the end of the Group A era that had been dominated by E30 BMW M3s and Sierra Cosworth RS500s. These, confusingly, had raced in different classes, and any class







could provide the outright championship winner even if it hadn't dominated the head of the field. In Group A's place came the 2.0-litre Super Touring cars, putting everything on an even footing with the prospect of closer racing and, so the theory went, more affordable costs.

It was the BTCC teams rather than the FIA who proposed the new rules, initially dubbed 'the 2.0-litre regulations'. The Super Touring tag came later and was adopted worldwide. But while the new foundations were promising, Gow describes the BTCC of the time as 'a good but incredibly under-developed championship'. He hoped to unlock its potential using lessons learned from V8 Supercars.

BBC Grandstand television coverage was key, and kick-started a virtuous circle of more manufacturers, stiffer competition and action-packed racing. As trackside attendance reached 40,000, ten manufacturers joined the grid for 1994, more than competed in F1 races of the period. BMW, Ford, Vauxhall, Toyota, Mazda, Renault, Peugeot, Volvo, Nissan and Alfa Romeo all battled on track. Add the privateers, and fans could enjoy races with maybe 30 cars – at least for the first lap or so, given the often high rates of attrition.

The naturally aspirated racers weighed around a tonne, and some produced over 300bhp. With so much at stake, entrants looked for an advantage anywhere they could or were quick to protest when others got there first: Alfa Romeo with its controversial and quickly

banned adjustable front and rear spoilers for the 155, Audi's all-wheel-drive A4.

'It was the mid-to-late 1990s, a domestic championship, and the manufacturers were spending stupid amounts,' Gow reveals. 'Ford spent £12million, Nissan wasn't far behind. It was unsustainable and we knew it, so we were trying to bring the cost down. Then someone would build bigger hospitality units, or pay more for better drivers or engineers. It became a pissing competition.'

When American-based company Octagon made TOCA an offer impossible to refuse in 2000, the BTCC bubble was about to burst. Only Ford, Honda and Vauxhall fielded works squads for that year's championship. 'Octagon bought the Brands Hatch group of circuits and the lease for Silverstone as well, and they thought they'd come over here and make a fortune out of motorsport,' remembers Gow. 'They were in the business for three-and-a-half years, did very badly, and walked away with their tail between their legs.'

The British Automobile Racing Club ultimately picked up the wreckage of TOCA, bringing back Gow and putting him in charge. That was 2003, two years into the new, more affordable BTC Touring regulations that failed to lure back manufacturers as intended. 'At my first race back there were just 12 cars on the grid and one-hour highlights only on some regions of ITV. It was horrible,' says Gow. 'I have spent all that time since then rebuilding it.'

'FANS COULD ENJOY RACES WITH MAYBE 30 CARS - AT LEAST FOR THE FIRST LAP OR SO, GIVEN THE OFTEN HIGH RATES OF ATTRITION'

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ALAN GOW INTERVIEW

Right, from top

Alan Gow extols the virtues of his Alfa, just 36,000km from new and hailing from the south of France; today's BTCC racers are hybrids such as this Toyota Corolla, seen here at Goodwood's Festival of Speed driven by James Cole.

And so the series boss has worked through the S2000 regulations, the NGTC regulations, the unprecedented uncertainty of the pandemic, and most recently one of the biggest shifts in the championship's 64-year history with a switch to hybrid regulations for 2022. Gow is quick to draw parallels with the Super Touring era and prevailing market forces.

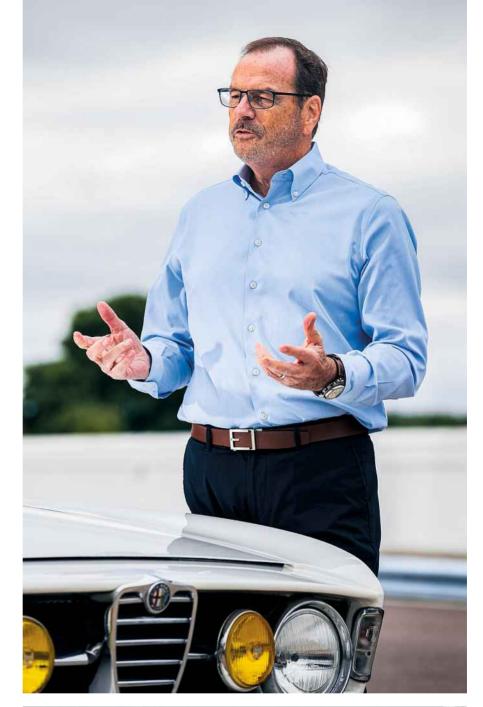
'When the BTCC switched to 2.0-litre regulations, that was the way the market was going,' he explains. 'We have to do the same now. You can't keep racing irrelevant vehicles for the public or manufacturers, and people tend to underestimate the sponsors - they're even more demanding these days. The first question they ask is, what are you doing about electrification or sustainability? Thirty years ago it was about how many cigarettes I can sell.'

With the rise of Historic motorsport, there's been a groundswell of interest in the Super Touring era - not that it ever really faded. The Classic Touring Car Racing Club runs pre-2003 machinery, with 1989 and 1995 BTCC champion John Cleland racing a Vauxhall Vectra and multiple race-winner Anthony Reid a Nissan Primera against a grid of gentlemen drivers. Wouldn't it make sense to unite old and new on one generation-spanning bill?

'I'm not really interested in the Historic element,' comes the level-headed response. 'Our support races are largely manufacturerbacked, it's a very demanding race weekend, and we'd need [a Historic series] to meet certain very high standards. Having gentleman drivers doesn't fit our bill, so it doesn't suit me. I don't think it would suit them either.'

On the other hand, the series boss is more open to full electric racers when the UK outlaws new petrol and diesels entirely in 2035 (following a five-year grace period for hybrids), if only because he knows better than to rule anything out of what is likely to be an unpredictable future. 'If you'd told me ten or 15 years ago that we'd be racing hybrids, I'd have scoffed. Motorsport never looks at itself ten or 15 years ahead, five years is about the most, so who knows? I can't imagine I'll be around in 2035 to have to address that issue, adds Gow. matter-of-factly.

The BTCC will need a big personality to step up to the plate when Gow, the championship's guiding force for much of the last three decades, eventually steps down. For the rest of us the search is easier, especially if that all-electric future one day comes to pass. Just tap '1990s BTCC' into your YouTube search bar. End





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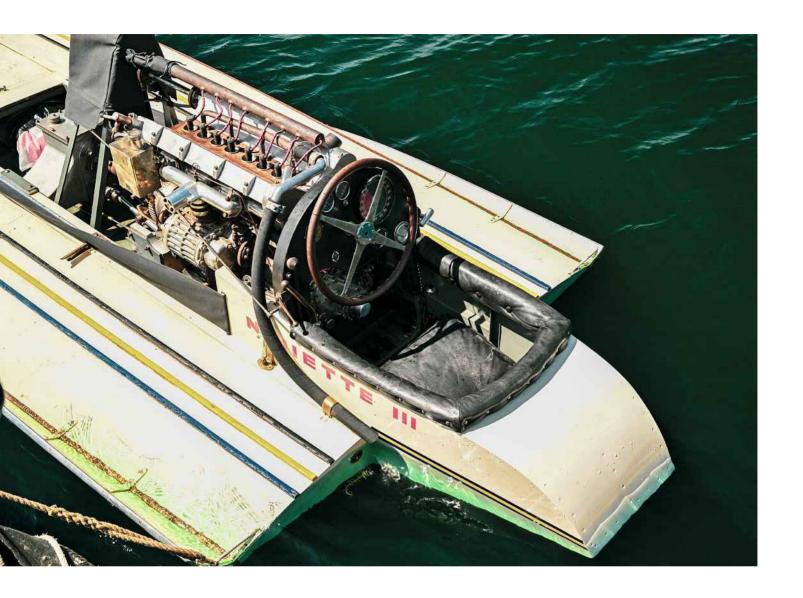
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straight-eight Bugatti engine, supercharged. A wooden boat about 15ft long, the single occupant of which kneels on the rearmost extremity, apparently a little below water level. A world speed record set in 1933. And all these things combined in one – somewhat intimidating – artefact.

These are among the ingredients whipped up in the mixing bowl that is my head as I steel myself to push the throttle lever forward and, in doing so, regain the ability to steer at the expense of an increased rate of arrival of the lake's far shore. But I have to do it; I owe it to you, the reader, because not many other writers are ever likely to get the chance to streak across the water in Niniette III, commissioned by Prince Carlo Ruspoli for his attempt on the World Water Speed Record for 1.5-litre power boats on Lake Como in November 1933.

Niniette was the nickname of Ettore Bugatti's second daughter, Lidia. There were, most Bugatti experts agree, five water-borne Niniettes, plus a sixth Bugatti-engined powerboat (skinned in aluminium and built by a different boatbuilder) that might or might not have borne the name. This third of the line is the only one left, the others having met their end in a wartime US bombing raid on the outskirts of Venice, where they were stored. And nowadays there is a modern 'Bugatti Niniette' superyacht, built by Palmer Johnson.

Ruspoli's new record speed was 93.305km/h, or 57.989mph. That's fast for a small boat. It's actually a 'one-step' hydroplane, its underside beginning with a conventional keel shape at the prow but changing to a flat bottom about a third of the way along. This shape causes the prow to rise as soon as you're moving beyond walking (or fast-swimming) pace, followed by a rise of the stern beyond 20

knots (23mph) or so. That's the hydroplaning part, minimising water-drag aft of the step.

Niniette III has been sympathetically and painstakingly restored by Tim Dutton, Bugatti magician at the Buckinghamshire marque specialist founded by his father Ivan, and his team of craftsmen. Tim is about to take the hydroplane on its maiden hydroplaning run on one of the Queenford Lakes, near Wallingford in Oxfordshire and close to the Thames. Anything could happen. He has already learnt that Niniette's front-mounted rudder, perhaps positioned there to make the steering more carlike, or perhaps to avoid disruption of the water-thrust from the propeller, dangles uselessly above the water in the acceleration zone between pottering and hydroplaning, when the prow is pointing up the most. Which means you can't steer it until you're at speed.

'So you have to make sure there's a good straight stretch of unobstructed water,' Tim



1933 Niniette III hydroplane

Engine Bugatti T51A 1493cc DOHC straight-eight, Zenith carburettor, Roots supercharger, magneto ignition Power 130bhp Transmission Wet multiplate clutch, 1:1 ratio transfer box to propeller, no reverse Structure Plywood skin on wooden framework, with steel reinforcement at high-stress points Steering Front-mounted rudder actuated by chain and cables Length Approx 15ft Top speed 58mph

says, before checking exactly where the lake's buoys are, stepping off the jetty, paddling across Niniette's decking and taking up his kneeling pose, water lapping perilously close to the cockpit's edge. He turns on the fuel pump, presses the starter button and *crackle-boom!* The supercharged twin-cam motor with its eight little cylinders inline bursts into life, its two open exhaust stubs blattering away, the engine slowing as Tim eases the clutch in to set the propeller turning, then speeding back up as he gives it a touch of throttle.

A touch more and the tail sinks into the water-hollow instantly created, the bottom of that hollow still circulating menacingly around Tim's posterior. The prow is up and Tim can't steer, so he slows until he's close to the lake's north shore, turns and then opens her up. To a point; it's a bit too soon to emulate Ruspoli's run. The tail duly rises, the prow settles and hydroplaning is occurring, with a fine tail of spray. It works.

Tim must now slow down gently, because if he's too abrupt the wash he's created behind will catch him up and engulf him. It's another thing to remember in this new and unfamiliar sub-world of Bugatti-powered machinery.

RUSPOLI WAS KEEN on anything nautical and organised regattas in the Venice area. Having discovered the thrills of racing fast motor boats with his 1500hp, Fiat-engined craft named Savoia, he commissioned Celli, a Venetian builder of gondolas, to build the first of what became a series of Niniettes. Numbers I, II, IV and V were designed to race around marked courses and had 5.0-litre Bugatti 50B engines. Niniette III had a different purpose: to break speed records, which required maximum straight-line stability, less need of manoeuvrability and an engine size suitable for a class in which victory could be achieved.

So Niniette III was smaller, with an engine of just 1493cc, which gave around 130bhp with the help of its supercharger. Its plywood hull featured strakes on its underside to help keep

it straight, and a cowl over the engine helped ease the passage of the craft's superstructure through the air. Ruspoli had already been introduced to Ettore Bugatti by his brotherin-law, Duke Armand de Gramont, and an arrangement was forged in which Bugatti would lend engines and other mechanical parts for the boats that Celli would build.

So it was that Ruspoli and Niniette III broke the record on 1 November 1933 on Lake Como, reaching 93.305km/h. On 17 December he had another go, this time on Lake Maggiore with 94.830km/h the result. The streamlined cowl was left off for both runs; Niniette ran better without it. After that no more is heard of Niniette III, the engine of which was probably returned to Bugatti at some point before war broke out, apart from its wartime survival in the Celli factory while its sister craft were obliterated in another depot.

And Prince Ruspoli? He became a wartime fighter pilot who went from perhaps reluctantly



Clockwise from opposite
Cockpit looks like you can sit
in it but you have to kneel;
looks serene when stationary;
water laps around Tim
Dutton; Prince Carlo Ruspoli
aboard Niniette III in 1933.







Left and below
Tiny fuel tank is just big
enough for a record run,
with gauge to confirm;
small propeller is set
under epoxy-coated
wooden hull; owner Greg
is marooned but happy.

'It's working well, the two pilots so far are intact and not too wet. What could possibly go wrong?'

fighting for Mussolini to dropping leaflets from the air encouraging those below to accept that the game was up. He also played a high-level part in liaising with the Allies to get Italy functioning again after the conflict, then moved to Argentina where he died in June 1947, just 40 years old.

In the 1950s, Celli family member Dino decided to revive Niniette III. He painted it red and white, installed a 1.5-litre Lancia Aprilia engine tuned-up with twin carburettors, and moved the rudder to the back. But it wasn't competitive against more modern hydroplane designs, so Dino sold the engine and Niniette was dormant once more. He went on to design his own successful hydroplanes over the next two decades. Eventually, in 2006, Dino's son Giorgio sold Niniette III to Guido Romani, a collector of historic racing boats who had spent eight years persuading Giorgio to part with it.

Ten years later it passed into the hands of its current owner, whom we shall call Greg from New York. Greg, thrilled with his purchase, naturally doesn't divulge the price but says 'it was phenomenal value to someone nuts enough to bring it back to life'. Post-purchase, he took it straight to Tim Dutton.

SO WHAT HAD GREG bought? A hydroplane with flaking paint, no mechanical parts but a surprisingly intact structure, which would need a lot of detective work and the ability to scale components from photographs using clever CAD programmes. This was a world familiar to Tim Dutton and his team, albeit not with a hydroplane as the subject.

'We've kept as much of it original as possible,' says Tim. 'The longerons are original and so is most of the decking, but we had to make new corners.' Niniette is made mostly of glued-together plywood, much of it five-ply and 6mm thick, with steel bracketry for reinforcement around the engine bay and cockpit and that skeleton of longerons – themselves of doubled-up 19mm plywood – to support the skin.

All through the restoration Tim has striven for a patinated look, so the edges of old paint underlayers remain. He has emphasised these and traces of woodgrain by rubbing leather dye over the surface, then wiping it off. You can't see the glue that holds Niniette together, though, so modern epoxies can be used such that the hydroplane 'should last another 100 years' as Tim's right-hand restoration man, Simon, observes. Epoxy coats the underside, too, in place of the original doped fabric, so the wood's beauty is on display.

Even epoxy couldn't adhere to the wood around the engine, however, thanks to oil that had soaked in from the usual Bugatti leaks. So that wood had to be replaced. And the engine itself? 'It's basically new,' says Tim, who's well known for creating complete replacement Bugatti engines, 'but we've aged it a bit.' He points out the long magneto drive (the magneto sits in that pylon-like cage in front of the engine) just like the one in a T51 GP car, and the multiplate clutch that's again standard racing Bugatti issue. Even parts of the steering system use cables and guides from a terra-firma Bugatti's brakes (Type 35, specifically), although the chain-and-sprocket part of the linkage is more chandler than car shop.

Just forward of the clutch is perhaps the





most challenging part of the restoration: the gearbox that sends the drive back to the propeller. The input and output shafts diverge by 15°, and the Dutton workshop built the entire thing from scratch. A specialist in Birmingham created the period-style propeller; it was the last piece in a five-year restoration during which two years were lost to Covid.

Greg is enthusing over details: the four metal lifting loops, the aluminium capping over the copper strip that seals decking to hull, the flexible spray-diverters that keep water away from the engine and the pilot. He'd thought they looked like a lash-up before learning that they were entirely correct.

Ballast has been added to the sharp end in an effort to trim Niniette's attitude (a longer phase of steerability, less chance of a wet cockpit), and now Greg is to try his new toy.

He starts the engine and Niniette immediately rockets off until abruptly

restrained by the rope still tying it to the jetty. 'Clutch, clutch!' yells Tim; it hadn't been disengaged when starting. On the second attempt, Greg eases off smoothly, there's no drama and soon he's hydroplaning. Then it stops. The tank is tiny and it's out of fuel. A tow back from one of the lake's resident water-ski motor boats, then lunch. Greg is a very happy Bugatti owner.

YES, I'M GOING TO have a steer. Except when there is no steering to be had, of course. I've seen Niniette working well, its two pilots so far are intact and not too wet, and what could possibly go wrong? Now I'm kneeling in the cockpit, shoes dripping from the boarding process. All eyes are upon me. Throttle lever left, clutch lever right, rev-counter ahead, a lot of engine further ahead.

Fuel pump on. Position of kill switch noted. Press button to activate starter: that's a Dutton

addition, as is the electric water pump. 'Now it runs too cool,' he said earlier, 'and we still haven't worked out how they used to start the engine. Where would the starting handle go?'

The engine catches and settles to a tickover speed high enough to let Niniette move off without touching the throttle as I ease the clutch into engagement. Otherwise you'd need three hands, given the likely need to steer. Niniette and I are moving at a brisk walking pace, steering is happening and I push the throttle forwards. Up rears the front, off we shoot across the lake on a heading I have just checked for unobstructedness. The apparent pace, the swirling of water aft and the loss of steerability are exhilarating in a fatalistic way.

I ease the throttle back, regain steering and make a large-radius turn to aim towards the south shore. Niniette III doesn't do tight turns. Now, the beans. Tim said it was doing 3000rpm while he was hydroplaning, and thinks the





Above Bugatti T51 Grand Prix car shares engine and more with Niniette but not the You-You behind; Simister gets Niniette hydroplaning.

propeller, designed to propel cleanly up to 5000rpm in a piece of inspired guesswork, may be undergeared as we would say in car-speak. He also thought Niniette's steering a touch too sensitive at speed; 'It feels like a racing car going too fast in the wet,' he said.

The beans, yes. What happens next in this almost 90-year-old machine is thrillingly alien. The no-steering phase is dismissed in a few seconds, then the prow settles as the stern rises and I have a much better view of the shore I will reach too soon. The engine bellows its approval, we're hydroplaning and it feels terrifyingly fantastic. I don't want it to stop, but rather than attempt an objective assessment of yaw rate versus steering input (it's not as if I'm swimming with relevant in-brain comparative data), I need to think about slowing down without being engulfed.

This happens soon enough to allow another large-radius turn back to the jetty and dry land. I sense the relief among those I had left behind. I feel the same, and Niniette is still intact.

Later, it is winched out of the water and placed on its 'sledge', a faithful copy of the wooden construction designed to ease Niniette's entry to Lake Como down an unusually steep slipway. Nearby is a 1932 Bugatti T51A, Marc Newson's car with a rich Grand Prix history and a lot of metal DNA shared with Niniette. Bobbing in the water beyond is a beautiful Bugatti You-You in perfectly varnished wood, one of a series of gentle motor launches built after World War Two. Originally it had Bugatti's sole design of single-cylinder engine, but this one is electric.

Electrification is a not a fate that will befall Niniette III. Greg had originally planned just to have it in his collection but now, having driven or piloted or skippered or helmed it, he'll be exercising it regularly on the lakes near his US home. At 58mph? It will be hard to resist.

THANKS TO Tim Dutton and Laura Shirley at Ivan Dutton Ltd; Alexander Evans for historical background; (brave) owner Greg.



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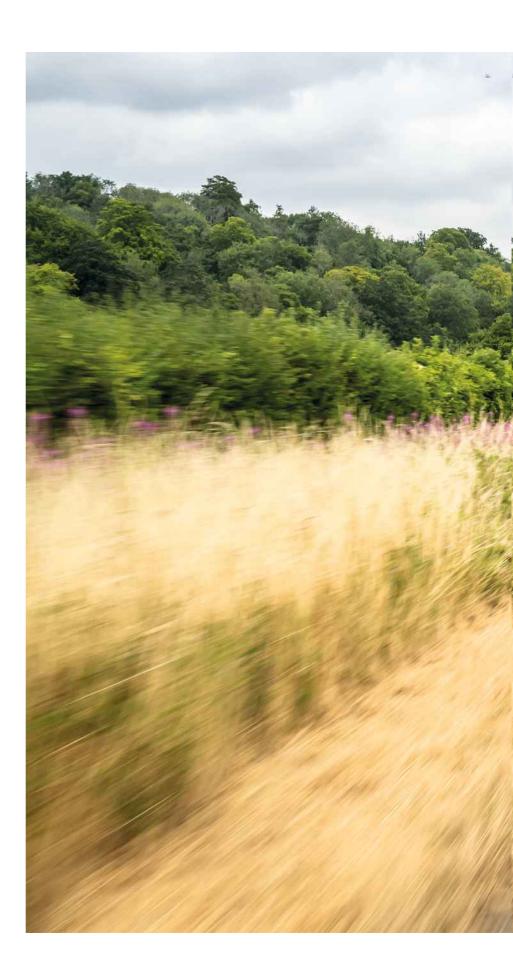
ou know when you spot a really good motor car at 50 yards. I don't mean some flashy, over-restored boiled sweet; I mean a car that is honest, straight and clean, and the demeanour and stance of which tell you that it's a well-sorted piece of kit that's going to be good to drive.

I was at Jaguar specialist Twyford Moors in Hampshire a couple of months ago and spied this attractive Jaguar Mk1 parked on the forecourt. So I went and introduced myself to the owner. It turns out that Anthony Gilsenan has been the custodian of this 1959 Jaguar for 27 years and has subjected it to a continuous, rolling restoration. Ah, a long-term, committed owner – this sporting Jaguar is probably going to prove even better than it looks.

SIR WILLIAM LYONS was in the motor-manufacturing business to make money. He was a notorious penny-pincher, cutting costs wherever he could. That meant he produced motor cars at affordable prices, but his real genius was that the cars were beautifully styled and extremely well engineered. Motor racing, Le Mans success and sexy sports cars grabbed the headlines and were all good fun, but Lyons' mission was to produce in volume and the saloon car segment was where that lay – compact, aspirational saloons aimed at the burgeoning middle-class driver.

He'd had success with Jaguar saloons since the late '30s, cars such as the 1.5, 3.5 and later 2.5-Litre and the huge MkVII, but with the arrival of the Jaguar 2.4 saloon in 1955 (the Mk1 nomenclature was used retrospectively after the Mk2 appeared in 1959) he introduced another game-changer for Jaguar: unitary construction. The 2.4, joined by a 3.4 in 1957, was the first roadgoing Jaguar freed from an old-fashioned separate chassis.

Attached to the modern, light and compact structure was independent front suspension featuring double wishbones, coil springs, telescopic dampers and an anti-roll bar, all carried in a separate subframe mounted to the body by rubber bushes to insulate the occupants from noise, vibration and harshness. It was not





MORSE'S FIRST JAGUAR

1959 Jaguar 3.8 Mk1

Engine 3781cc straight-six, DOHC, twin SU HD6 carburettors Power 210bhp @ 5500rpm Torque 216lb ft @ 3000rpm Transmission Four-speed manual with overdrive, rear-wheel drive Steering Worm and roller Steering Worm and roller
Suspension Front: double
wishbones, coil springs,
telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar.
Rear: live axle, cantilevered
leaf springs, Panhard rod,
telescopic dampers Brakes Discs Weight 1380kg Top speed 120mph 0-60mph 9sec

This page and opposite S-type 3.8 has ousted original Mk1 motor; rolled, spatless rear 'arches and a Mk2's wide axle arches and a wikz s whole axie signal underlying potency; central dials inhabit super-shiny dash; red interior goes well with a white wedding dress.









'I took it to Roland Stoat for the bodywork. He found that the driver'sside floor was made of glassfibre'

a solution unique to Jaguar at the time, but it was an effective, even world-class, refinement tool that reached its zenith in the XJ saloon that was voted Car of the Year in 1970.

The rear suspension was a simplified development of the D-type's, featuring inverted semi-elliptic springs cantilevered into the main body frame, with the rear quarter section carrying the live axle and acting as a trailing arm. A Panhard rod took care of transverse forces. It was a clever arrangement, which used simple components and relieved the rear bodywork of torsional stress.

One anomaly, though, was rear track a hefty 4.5in narrower than at the front. The marketing blurb told us that a narrow rear track helped high-speed stability, but it did look peculiar. More likely, reckoned insiders, was that Lyons bought a job lot of Salisbury rear axles of a given size and got his engineers to make them fit (badly) into the rear of the Mk1.

Drum brakes slowed the first Mk1s, but Jaguar's famous, race-proven discs-all-round arrived in 1957 to seal the Mk1's reputation as a fast, secure and comfortable sporting saloon. Grace, space and pace, indeed. The Jaguar was a true 100mph machine in 3.4-litre form, well able to blow the doors off the then-current Humbers, Rovers and Standard Vanguards. Even more remarkably, it could stay with sports cars such as Jaguar's own XK 140 while offering

room in the back for an extra two adults. No British saloon had managed this before.

The Mk1 was effective both on the racetrack and as a rally weapon. It was driven by the best, including Stirling Moss, Mike Hawthorn (that ended badly), Tommy Sopwith and Roy Salvadori, cementing Jaguar's racing prowess while selling in good numbers to the fast fellows in the growing number of affluent suburbs. Then, having sold a little over 35,000 Mk1s to enthusiastic press-on drivers, Jaguar unveiled the Mk2 in 1959. It was an evolution with more glass area, a more modern dashboard and a back axle of the correct width. And then sales of Jaguar's compact saloon *really* took off.

HIS BACKGROUND is in engineering, but Anthony Gilsenan's career is in advertising, marketing and PR. Naturally, then, he had to have a suitable *Mad Men* motor car. 'I had the first Beacham Mk2 [a restomod from New Zealand]in the UK, followed by another Mk2. But I always wanted a Mk1, a much rarer model with looks that I prefer. I found this car advertised at a London dealer in 1995 and it looked good in black, so I bought it.

'It was fitted with a 3.8-litre engine from a Jaguar S-type, along with an all-synchromesh geabox with overdrive. It was certainly fast but unfortunately the bodywork was in a poor state. So began the long restoration. I took the

Jaguar to Roland Stoat at RS Coachworks in Berkshire to have the bodywork done. He found that the driver's-side floor was made of glassfibre. He did a super job including the sills and the rear spring hangers, and fitted correct spatless rear wings, which were properly rolled and lead-loaded. I then fitted wire wheels. These are now the second set from Motor Wheel Service International, and I think they look great in black to match the body colour.

'Over the years I have done pretty much everything. The underneath is Mk2, including the front subframe, suspension, disc brakes and a limited-slip diff. It runs on Koni Classic dampers, which are great, along with a thicker front anti-roll bar to tighten up the handling. The clutch is hydraulic and the brakes are servo assisted, so it really stops. The 3.8-litre engine has been rebuilt to standard spec but it does have a special exhaust made by the chap who produced racing exhausts for John Coombs. I absolutely love the sound it produces.'

And so it continues. Clearly Anthony has invested a good deal of time and money in UFF 325, but it's the careful honing and detail improvements that indicate more than just maintenance. This is heart-and-soul stuff. Polybushed suspension, of course. High-torque starter motor, naturally. New radiator and efficient electric fan, certainly. Complete retrim in soft red leather, beautifully done. LED





N SET: AN

'The young actor Shaun Evans, who played Morse in his early days, took to the Jaguar with ease and drove it well'

dashboard lightbulbs, why not? E-type seatbelts, just the job. He has also fitted neat rear-view mirrors on each side, added sound-deadening liners to the doors, and affixed a 3.8 badge to the boot-lid. And the Jag absolutely has to have that natty roof aerial and Webasto sunroof with visor, to add the final flourishes.

'One Christmas I had some quiet time, so I decided to strip and re-varnish all the wood veneer in the cabin,' says Anthony. 'The wood was slathered in a thick yacht vanish and looked rather crude. There are 27 individual pieces that make up the interior, so there was quite a lot of rubbing-down and varnishing to be done,' he laughs. The result is superb, set off by the red leather upholstery and the gleaming black paintwork.

'I did fit a set of Harvey Bailey front springs and an anti-roll bar, but the springs proved to be too harsh so I dialled back to standard Mk2 springs, which are better-suited to my road use. I have thought about power steering, but the wood-rimmed Moto-Lita steering wheel works effectively if you wear leather gloves. They increase grip enormously. Also, the Blockley radial tyres recently fitted lighten the steering weight enormously, so the lack of power steering is not an issue.' This 78-year-old is clearly in excellent shape.

It's obvious that Anthony is a bit of an entrepreneur as he chats about his business interests and other things. 'Once I'd restored the Mk1 I realised its black paintwork and red

interior would be an ideal mobile backdrop for a bride's white dress, so I set up a wedding-car business. I've been doing it for years and it has more than paid for all the work the car has needed. It's been fun to invest in the Jaguar and I enjoy driving a beautiful bride to the church. And the newlyweds always enjoy the Jaguar.

'Then, about ten years ago, a television production company contacted me. They'd heard I had this black Mk1 which they wanted to use as a police car in the first *Endeavour* television programme, featuring Inspector Morse as a young man. They made up new numberplates and a police sign to mount on the radiator grille, and we began seven days of filming in and around Oxford. I had to be on standby with the Jaguar.

"The young actor Shaun Evans, who played Morse in his early days, took to the car with ease and drove it really well. Unfortunately, Roger Allam [playing Detective Inspector Fred Thursday] had the habit of slamming the front door shut. On one occasion he slammed it so hard the window glass came down and stuck. With 37 people on set I had 15 minutes to remove the door trim and get the window back up again. Some pressure."

We meet at Glorious Goodwood on a lovely sunny day to take photographs. Not Oxford as in the *Endeavour* series, but Anthony's home turf where the B-roads perfectly suit the Jaguar's mien. He hands me the diminutive ignition key and suggests I have a drive. I must

confess I'm a sucker for a Mk1 Jaguar. It appeals to me more than the slightly blinged-up Mk2, especially with all the period upgrades on this example – specifically the wider rear axle and beautifully turned rear arches.

I sense Anthony is a little nervous about letting me drive his well-loved motor car, so let's be gentle. The 3.8-litre engine fires instantly thanks to the high-torque starter motor and the well-tuned, original-spec 1¾-inch SU carbs. The engine feels sharp, responsive and light of flywheel. The twin-pipe Coombs exhaust is a little naughty, but nice.

The red leather seat is by no means a 'bucket', more a softly sprung chair, and the hydraulic clutch feels firm. I make a bit of a hash of finding first gear as the rubbery gearlever linkage requires a bit of learning. As I wind it up through the gears and into overdrive top, my immediate realisation is how much more refined this unitary body is over the separate chassis and body of the preceding XK models. This ground-breaking Mk1 is significantly more genteel: it's quiet, the body feels taut, the suspension mounted on the rubber-bushed subframe is pliant and the solid rear axle is subdued over transverse ridges. UFF 325 feels much younger than its 63 years thanks to both its innate design quality and Anthony's committed attention to detail.

Picking up some speed on the B2146 and B2141 between Petersfield and Mid Lavant, one of the finest road sequences in southern



England, the Jaguar starts to reveal its depth. This engine is just marvellous. I'm not sure what has been done to its innards but it revs with gusto. All the while the Mk1 feels neat and tidy on the road. The worm-and-peg steering is a bit vague around the straight-ahead position, but once you've got a bit of lean on early in the corners to add weight to the steering, the slack is eradicated and it sharpens right up.

The initial understeer and the entry/exit angles are very simply and enjoyably controlled by the throttle, aided and abetted by the (again slightly naughty) limited-slip differential. This really is the 'right stuff'. I can feel Anthony beginning to relax so I squirt the Jaguar through

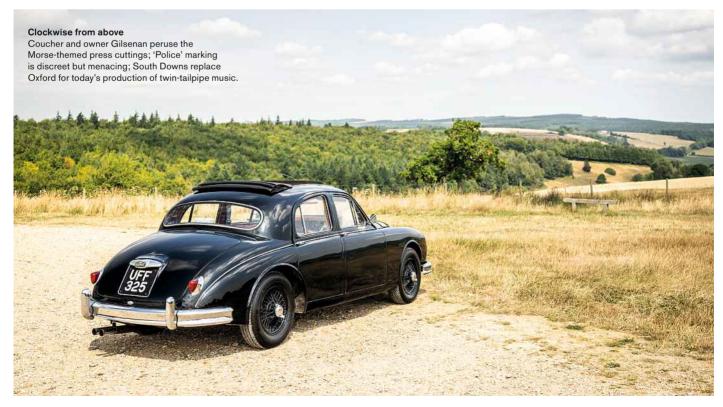
a sequence of corners with good sightlines. God, this is fun. The Jaguar just wants to drift and dance, its engine zingy, the suspension taut, the body tight, the exhaust note full of bravura at high revs, the brakes immense.

I could tell from 50 yards that this 3.8-litre Mk1 was going to be good. From the driver's seat it's even better, thanks to the heart and soul that Anthony Gilsenan has put into this fabulous Jaguar over the 27 years since he saved it from ruin. One man's endeavour, indeed.

THANKS TO Twyford Moors, wwwjagxk.com. And if you need a smart wedding car, contact Anthony at www.agclassicweddingcars.co.uk. 'Anthony relaxes, so I squirt the Jaguar through a sequence of corners with good sightlines. God, this is fun'













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EVOLUTION WAS the name of David Brown's game with the launch of the third-generation DB2/4 in 1957. Called simply the DB MkIII (the DB3 was a racer) even at the time of its launch, it was in essence an evolution of the previous DB2/4 but with some decent improvements. Here was the fastest and most refined of the Feltham Astons, but at the same time it was surprisingly practical, with a hatchback and rear passenger seats.

An elegant new front grille replaced the previous rather tacked-on design, and its shape represented a new face that would be incorporated into all future Astons. The MkIII featured the final development of the Claude Hill-designed separate chassis, clothed in attractive aluminium coachwork, while a new instrument panel placed the main gauges in front of the driver and bucket seats replaced the flat bench. Mechanically, the 2.9-litre WO Bentley straightsix was redesigned by Tadek Marek, making it both stronger and more powerful. In standard tune it produced 162bhp (the DBA engine) and an optional twin exhaust system raised this to a claimed 178bhp. With triple SU carburettors (the DBD engine) it produced 180bhp; optional triple Webers (the DBB) brought 195bhp. Front disc brakes were supplied by Girling part-way through the production run, and an optional overdrive by Laycock-de Normanville added longer legs for decent high-speed cruising. Five cars were made with automatic transmission.

In total, 551 Aston Martin DB MkIIIs were produced until 1959. Of these 462 were hatchbacks, 84 Drophead Coupés and just five Fixed Head Coupés.



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Shockingly good news



1966 FORD MUSTANG MARK DIXON

IF I HAD any chickens, I'd be letting them roam free, and the fox take the hindmost. The one thing I wouldn't be doing is counting them. That's because I've just changed the front shock absorbers on the Mustang, and – get this – it seems as if the mystery suspension squeak that has plagued me on-and-off for the last year has been cured.

That said, I'm still waiting for a rather heavily built lady to perform her operatic encore. When art editor Rob Hefferon and I took the Mustang to France earlier this year (see Octane 228), the squeak didn't materialise until the moment we drove up the ramp into France from Le Shuttle. Even though we jacked up the front end next morning (as pictured top right) and took turns trying to isolate the source of the squeak, we couldn't locate it. While it didn't exactly spoil the trip, it was a constant irritant.

Most of the front suspension bushes have been changed, and new 'perches' (the rocking platforms on the lower wishbones for the coil springs) recently fitted. The list of possible culprits was diminishing but I'd yet to rule out the dampers. What made me slightly sceptical was that, on left-hand turns, the squeak went away briefly – and I couldn't see how a shock absorber could be affected like that.

Nevertheless, the joy of owning a Mustang is that parts are easy to source. As usual, Mustang Maniac, mustangmaniac.co.uk, came up trumps: I ordered a pair of standard front shocks and they arrived next day, total cost £123 including delivery.

I must admit, since the shocks are from the American-as-applepie Scott Drake company in Nevada, I was disappointed to find that they were made in China, and exhibited a little soot residue on the pistons where they're welded to the top mount. But I figured that I might at least find out whether the squeaking was shock-related or not, even

if the dampers themselves turned out to be a false economy.

Fitting them was carried out on my drive, during a couple of balmy evenings that made me imagine I could be in LA. So far I'm impressed. The ride has firmed-up a little and, yes, there's no squeaking as yet. I've put the best part of a tank of Esso Supreme through the engine on various trips and all is quiet.

For the time being, though, those chickens can remain numberless and the Fat Lady can take her time preparing for her final number.

Clockwise, from above

Hopefully, Clarkson will approve; fruitless squeak-source investigation in France; driveway damper replacement; enjoying some quiet motoring again.











OCTANE'S FLEET

These are the cars – and motorbikes – run by the magazine's staff and contributors

ROBERT HEFFERON

Art editor

• 2004 BMW Z4 3.0i

ROBERT COUCHER

International editor

• 1955 Jaguar XK140

ANDREW ENGLISH

Contributor

- 1962 Norton Dominator
- 1965 Aston Martin DB5
- 1967 Triumph GT6

GLEN WADDINGTON

Associate editor

- 1989 BMW 320i Convertible
- 1999 Porsche Boxster

SANJAY SEETANAH

Advertising director

- 1981 BMW 323i Top Cabrio
- 1998 Aston Martin DB7 Volante

MARK DIXON

Deputy editor

- 1927 Alvis 12/50
- 1927 Ford Model T pick-up
- 1942 Fordson Model N tractor
- 1955 Land Rover Series I 107in
- 1966 Ford Mustang 289

JAMES ELLIOTT

Editor-in-chief

- 1965 Triumph 2.5 Pl
- 1968 Jensen Interceptor

JOHN SIMISTER

Contributor

- 1935 Singer Nine Sports
- 1961 Saab 96
- 1972 Rover 2000 TC
- 1989 Mazda MX-5 Eunos

MATTHEW HOWELL

Photographer

- 1962 VW Beetle 1600
- 1969 VW/Subaru Beetle
- 1982 Morgan 4/4

MASSIMO DELBÒ

Contributor

- 1967 Mercedes-Benz 230
- 1972 Fiat 500L
- 1975 Alfa Romeo GT Junior
- 1979/80 Range Rovers
- 1982 Mercedes-Benz 500 SL
- 1985 Mercedes-Benz 240 TD

EVAN KLEIN

Photographer

• 2001 Audi TT Quattro

OCTANE'S FLEET

RICHARD HESELTINE

Contributor

- 1966 Moretti 850 Sportiva
- 1971 Honda Z600

DAVID BURGESS-WISE

Contributor

- 1903 De Dion-Bouton
- 1911 Pilain 16/20
- 1926 Delage DISS

MATTHEW HAYWARD

Markets editor

- 1990 Citroën BX 16v
- 1994 Toyota Celica GT-Four
- 1996 Saab 9000 Aero
- 1997 Citroën Xantia Activa
- 1997 Peugeot 306 GTI-6
- 2000 Honda Integra Type R
- 2001 Audi A2

SAMANTHA SNOW

Advertising account manager

- 1969 Triumph Herald
 13/60 Convertible
- 1989 Mercedes-Benz 300 SL

JESSE CROSSE

Contributor

- 1968 Ford Mustang GT 390
- 1986 Ford Sierra RS Cosworth

MARTYN GODDARD

Photographer

- 1963 Triumph TR6SS Trophy
- 1965 Austin-Healey 3000 MkIII

DELWYN MALLETT

Contributor

- 1936 Cord 810 Beverly
- 1937 Studebaker Dictator
- 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
- 1973 Porsche 911 2.7 RS
- 1992 Alfa Romeo SZ

SARAH BRADLEY

Contributor

- 1929 Ford Model A hot rod
- 1952 Studebaker Champion
- 1956 Chevrolet 3100 pick-up
- 1969 Plymouth Roadrunner
- Various motorbikes

HARRY METCALFE

Contributor

• 20 cars and 15 motorbikes To follow Harry's adventures with his cars and bikes, search for Harry's Garage on YouTube.

Seams much better



1973 PORSCHE CARRERA RS 2.7 DELWYN MALLETT

IN MY PREVIOUS report in Octane 227, I noted my dismay at how much rot was exposed after the Carrera's bodyshell was blasted and that I had given Steve Kerti the nod to start cutting out the gangrene and commence restorative surgery.

My next visit to Dunkeswell, Devon, home of Classic Fabrications (classic-fabrications. com), provided an even greater shock. Much of my beloved RS was gone! I guess I should have expected it - I had seen the size of the replacement panels - but the gaping voids left where the new was to replace the old knocked me back a pace or two. After Steve had laboriously drilled out hundreds of spot-welds to liberate the inner wings and had cut off the nose and boot floor, there was very little front end left. It looked like an anatomical dissection prepared for medical students.

Better news was that, contrary to his earlier diagnosis, Steve now felt that the genuine Porsche outer wings were good enough to save, requiring only the odd 'improvement' here and there. I had them fitted when I bought the car and had it restored in 1981, and I had grown rather fond of them. The front wings bolt on and are fairly easy to remove but the rears are peculiar to the RS, being wider than the standard 911 wing of the day and with a different contour to the wheelarch.

The RS was the first roadgoing Porsche to feature wider wheels on the rear than on the front and, rather than investing in a new









pressing for what was intended to be a limited-volume run, Porsche achieved the extra wing width by taking a standard 911 panel, cutting out a substantial arc of metal and welding in the new flared shape. This left a telltale seam on the inner surface and it is not unknown for RSs to have been restored with the incorrect profile on the rear wings.

You can't see it without removing the rear wheels and peering up inside the wheelarch, but it's satisfying to know that the factory weld is there. I dreaded

From top

Looks holesome after blasting; RS seam in rear wheelarch; new inner wings welded in; 911-shaped again.

the thought of Steve removing even more outer body panels.

With the new front inner panels in place and a new nose bridging the gap between them, the RS began to look less like a pile of scrap and more like a car again. Temporarily adding the front wings and bonnet to judge fit and alignment added to the effect. It's a major step forwards but there's still a long way to go.



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1961 MASERATI 3500 GT TOURING COUPÉ



1965 ASTON MARTIN DB 6 MK I COUPÉ -NO. 1-



1970 ISO GRIFO 7 LITER SERIE II COUPÉ



1960 **FACEL VEGA HK 500**



1965 MASERATI MISTRAL 3700 COUPÉ



1943 ALFA ROMEO 6C 2500 SS SPIDER EX "SLEEPING BEAUTY"



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Tyred and emotional



BOY, WAS IT HOT at the weekend. Perfect weather for being out in the BMW with the roof down. Thing is, it had been garaged for three weeks since our last trip. It's kept a couple of miles away in a lock-up, while the Boxster lives on the other side of my office wall. And something had slipped my mind.

As we headed out, I was revelling in its refinement. Sure, it has one of the smoothest engines in existence, but I suddenly noticed the ride and the lack of underlying vibration. Then I remembered: my new tyres!

What an astonishing transformation. During my 11 years or so with the 320i we have travelled only about 14,000 miles, and the tyres were pretty fresh when I bought it. Rubbish, but fresh. I can't even remember the brand, though it reminded me of a bottle of soy sauce I'd once seen in a Chinese supermarket. It took until this year's MoT for them to show up as an advisory, not because they lacked tread depth, but simply because they were old and the sidewalls were perishing.

Of course, there had long been good reason to replace them, not least the amount of squealing they were responsible for in even modest cornering. They seemed otherwise quiet, and any deficiencies in ride quality I put down to early-1980s German suspension engineering.



But I was wrong to make such assumptions. After the advisory, I called my old mucker Ben Field, once a motoring journalist on the same mag I used to work for, and for the last few years MD of

Vintage Tyres at Beaulieu. We discussed sizes (my 320i is on the optional BBS cross-spokes and matchingly optional 205/55 15s), Ben recommended the Vredestein Sprint + and sorted a fitting date:







Above

Rock-hard old tyres are removed; Ollie shows Glen what a locking wheel nut looks like; lovely machinery at CPE.

not all the way down at his Beaulieu HQ but more locally to me at Classic Performance Engineering, Vintage Tyres' agent at Bicester Heritage.

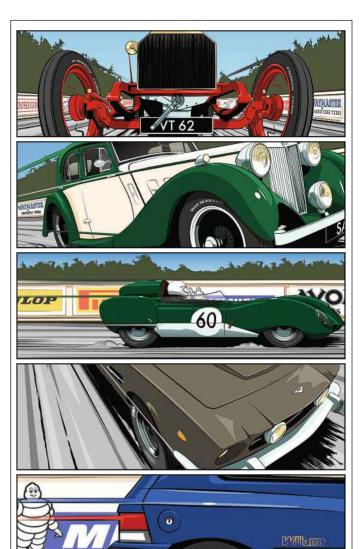
There I met technicians Ollie and Steve and learned a few things. One, that the tiny key on the keyring is for the locking wheel nuts (a little barrel sits over the top of the nut, one per wheel). Two, that those BBS wheels are superbly made and in brilliant condition. Three, that the new tyres are also unusually well made. Four, that the old tyres were utter crap.

'People think that balancing weights are used to correct wheels that are out of true, but really it's the tyres,' Steve told me.

'Yes, one of the new tyres has gone on with no balance weights at all,' said Ollie, 'while that back one had 90g on it before and now has only 15g. And 90g is a lot.'

The latter might explain the slight coarseness I'd perceived as a drivetrain issue, and also the fact that, years ago, Mark Dixon had followed me and commented that I had a buckled back wheel. The one with all the weights...

All that's in the past, along with the mild wheel shake I used to get around 65mph. The change is scarcely believable: a better primary ride (less reaction over long undulations) and a better secondary ride (less harshness over bumps). Gone is the old tyres' combination of sog with slap, gone is any hint of vibration. Also gone is the squealing - now it feels buoyant, and so much smoother. The new tyres even look better, a classic-style tread and rounder shoulders restoring the BMW's 1980s stance. I just wish I'd fitted them a decade ago.



Even better on the right rubber

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Singer now on song



1935 SINGER NINE SPORTS JOHN SIMISTER THE SINGER didn't make it to the Brooklands British Car Day in April. I had reassembled the engine with its new valvegear (camshaft, rockers, valves, the lot), and fitted the torque reaction rod that I devised to cure the clutch judder in reverse gear. This was a total success, so reversing up my driveway was no longer a torture. But still the engine's pep wasn't what it should be, so we took my Royer 2000 TC instead.

What to do next? I knew the distributor was sub-optimal, requiring a static timing setting far retarded from where it should be to avoid excess advance once

under way. Might this be it, with the timing never anywhere near ideal? I sent the distributor off to Martin Jay, aka The Distributor Doctor, for a rebuild. 'It would have been impossible to set up,' he reported. 'It's very worn and there's far too much advance.' A week later it was back, as good as new. And at last the engine feels somewhere near right.

Meanwhile there have been other improvements. When I owned the Singer last century, I was irritated by the painted badge bar and luggage rack. They should be chromed and now they are, along with the stalk for the new

mirror and sundry other fittings. Micro-Finishers in Bedford (microfinishers.co.uk) did an excellent job for a good price and without a huge lead time.

This done, the Singer was booked into local trimmer Hukes for a new hood cover. Hukes made the last one in the early 1990s but between my ownerships it went missing. A smart new cover now hides the reinstated hood, and the six sidescreens have responded well to a thorough clean.

Then there was the mystery of the mutated Hartford friction dampers. Last time around, I expensively replaced all four. This time, on investigating the rear suspension's lack of pliancy, I discovered that an interim owner had purloined that end's four-disc Hartfords for something else and replaced them with lessabsorptive two-disc items. Correct, and new, Hartfords are now reinstated.

Finally, the tail. For decades, only the combined numberplate/stop/tail light has illuminated when braking, so I have fitted new internals to the two outer lights and now have a full complement of brake lights. While doing this I noticed some truly terrible wiring junctions, which promptly shorted out while I was testing the lights. Remedying the resulting melted mess called for complete new wiring from halfway along the chassis rearwards.

I finished the job with a new rear numberplate, featuring digits the correct 3½in high instead of 3½in and repositioned on the rear crossbar instead of under it. The three-function light is now above the plate, in the middle, instead of lurking at one end, and the whole thing looks much more proper. Next: de-cracking the seat leather.





Above, and from left
Simister looks pensive at Chiltern Hills
Rally; engine now optimal; wrong and
right Hartfords; new tail chrome.





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2000 HONDA INTEGRA TYPE R MATTHEW HAYWARD

THE INTEGRA has been driving better than ever this summer, and the air-con has proved an effective heatwave antidote. Now it's time for some long-awaited TLC.

Keeping on top of rust is a key part of DC2 ownership. This one has been well maintained, but the previously repaired rear wheelarches were starting to bubble up again when I bought the car. This had barely changed a year later, but a further year on, the driver's side 'arch is looking considerably more troubling. I'd planned to get the wheelarches sorted out soon after buying the Integra, but I guess I was just having too much fun driving it.

Kicking the can down the road is never the best idea, though, so I contacted a few of my usual body shops. Most were booked solid for three months or more, so it would be a while before the wheelarches could be made well again.

I took the Honda when I was helping out on last month's M3 CSL photoshoot with Jordan Butters, who took the lead pic above. As I turned round in a nearby industrial estate, I spotted several interesting Japanese classics and various older Fords outside a small industrial unit. All looked immaculate, so as soon as I'd finished on the shoot I went back for a closer look. It turned out to be a small father-and-son body shop, Platinum Paintworks, and after I'd chatted with the son (who's very much into Japanese classics) we took a look at the Honda's arches. His thoughts echoed my own: the previous repairs had held up well, but now was the time to strip them back and do them again. He had a great attitude and filled me with confidence, so I booked it in there and then. Of course, there will be a three-month wait...

Last time I mentioned an ABS fault, which I thought would be an easy fix. Checking the fault codes (done by jumping two pins on the



Above Custom-made rear ABS sensor has fixed what had become quite a worry.

diagnostic port, which gives a flashing code on the dash) revealed a problem with the left front ABS sensor. I've done this so often that I was over-confident in my diagnosis, so I didn't bother to check the resistance reading of the sensor before ordering a new one. Which was a mistake.

What I hadn't twigged was that every ABS fault code the car had ever had was apparently still stored in the system. Had I waited for the blinking light to complete its cycle, no fewer than ten fault codes would have flashed up. Clearing them involves turning the ignition on then pressing the brake pedal when the light flashes on/off. Now one code remained: the right rear sensor.

Finding a front sensor was easy, but a rear? No chance. Honda's supplies of these dried up years ago, and remaining new ones change hands for £400-plus. Secondhand items are a bit of a lottery but still sell for £70 or more. An eBay search revealed that a UK-based company, R-Motion, sells a custom-built cable for £185: not cheap, but good value next to other options and a small price to pay for working ABS. Mike at R-Motion even got in touch with handy tips for swapping it over without causing any further headaches.



'Spring-loaded guide flaps were causing the rear screen to catch on the bulkhead when lowering the roof. Removing them has helped – a little!'

Robert Hefferon

'Took the Triumph to an ace Wimbledon meet, but it was tinged with sadness as it was the first for me since its creator, my friend Charles Evans, died'

'My XK140 had developed a rattle. First thought: something loose in the suspension. Now seems it's a brake pad rattling in the calliper. And so new pads have arrived'

'I have emptied the tank of my Mercedes 230 and refilled with racing fuel. I hope this means the carburettors will not be clogged when the car is unused' Massimo Delbò







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SPENDING A DAY ambling through the French countryside is one of life's great pleasures, and what more suitable tool for the job than a Renault 5? We're on the verge of seeing a brand new electric R5 at the end of the year, and with 2022 marking the 50th anniversary of the legendary original, the company has invited *Octane* to its factory in Flins to drive a few examples from the back catalogue.

This delightful bright green 5 is known as the 'Retrofit' and, as you might have guessed, it has been converted to electric power. It's one of a small batch of cars

built for Renault to celebrate the occasion. The company responsible for it, which also developed the electric Méhari and 2CV we've featured in the past, plans to offer the conversion commercially in the near future, at a price of around €15,000 fitted. For such a conversion to be legal in France, it has to be homologated and installation must be by an approved dealer. Also, the power of the motor must not exceed that of the original internal combustion engine.

As with several of these electric conversions, the Retrofit retains the host car's original gearbox. It

means that the suspension, the drivetrain and most of the mechanicals remain untouched. Even the standard cooling system is adapted to chill the electric motor. There's a small electric heater in place of the original water-fed matrix, though, and an electric pump to provide vacuum for the brake servo.

The relatively small 10.7kWh battery pack is mounted in the boot, leaving considerably less usable space, and weighs 90kg. However, the removal of the engine, exhaust and fuel tank make the overall weight gain a negligible 30kg. It's a technically

interesting prospect – and could it be argued that the R5's engine is far enough from being its defining characteristic that the conversion won't rob the car of its soul? Only one way to find out.

It takes a minute to get accustomed to the controls. The clutch pedal is needed only to engage a gear (second or third to start) and you set off using the throttle as you would in a normal electric vehicle. There's instant torque, if not quite the kick of a Tesla. It's mapped to provide similar performance to the R5 TL's R4-derived 956cc, 45bhp engine, so it's not particularly



quick off the line. Once up to speed in second gear, a shift up to third gives it slightly longer legs and you hear the motor's high-pitched whine switch to a more relaxed hum. Shifting up and down through the 'box doesn't feel natural, though, requiring an unpleasant amount of force on the original linkages.

Out on the country lanes it feels perfectly happy cruising at 80km/h, with 100km/h about the upper limit. It doesn't take long to appreciate just how comfortable

the RS is; it shrugs off larger ruts and undulations, and even the worst broken surfaces won't faze the chassis. Roll it gently into corners and it'll lean over to a comical degree, yet it remains extremely well tied down and is great fun at very modest speeds. Its compactness is charming, too: this car takes up even less than its fair share of the road.

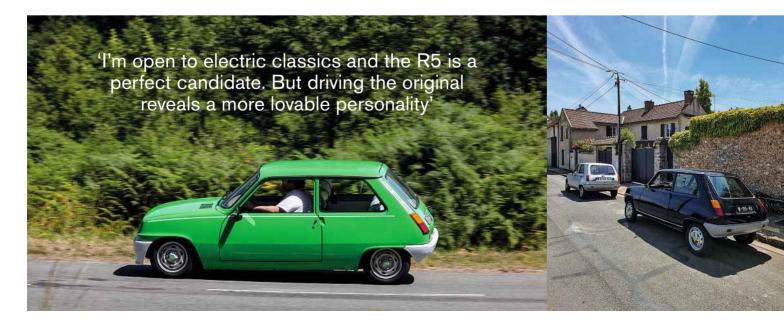
Fifty years on from its launch, this is still a striking piece of design. I'm open to the idea of an electrified classic, especially if it's purely a city runaround, and the R5 feels like a perfect candidate. Yet a fly is approaching the ointment: a drive in a beautiful, original-engined R5 TL.

It turns out that much of the car's character is wrapped up in the sound and smell of the engine, as well as your interaction with it. Within 30 seconds it's clear that driving the original R5 reveals a wholly different and more lovable personality. It instantly raises more of a smile, and engages you on so many different, more

Clockwise from above left

Electric motor's cover marks R5's anniversary; Hayward's head tries to rule heart but fails; original and beautiful petrol-fuelled R5 is why.

visceral levels. As a means of travelling from A to B, the electric Retrofit makes perfect sense: it's clean, quiet and has the classic, charming R5 looks. For someone who loves driving, though, the 50-year-old original leaves it in the French countryside's dust.





Turned up to 707



2022 ASTON MARTIN DBX707 MARK DIXON

THE DAY I SAT down to write this piece on the new, improved DBX - dubbed 707 because its V8 now puts out 707ps (697 imperial bhp), not in homage to a late-'50s Boeing - an email pinged into my inbox from Aston Martin's PR people. 'Send your senses into overdrive. Pupils dilating, breath cut short, heartbeat racing on a flying lap, dopamine spiking, endorphins queuing in the heel of your pedal.' Eh?

All that purple prose may not seem terribly British, but fortunately the DBX707 is very Aston and very British. Externally, it's been gussied up with a deeper grille and some fiddling with the side-skirts and aero generally, but a huge raft of changes has been introduced under the skin to make it not only faster but more assured and, very importantly, more user-friendly. For example, to select the driving mode you no longer have to go into a sub-menu on a touch screen; instead, a simple rotary control does the job.

The standard DBX, with 542bhp on tap, is pretty brisk but the 707 has off-the-line urge to match that of its eponymous jetliner: 0-60mph in 3.1sec. The 4.0-litre, twin-turbo engine also makes a fabulous bassy snarl with the active exhaust switched on. Highly praiseworthy, too, are the

Left, from top

Grille on DBX707 is deeper for extra cooling; interior feels as premium as you'd expect; Racing Green option is Aston head of design Marek Reichman's favourite. standard-fit carbon ceramic brakes, which exhibit not a hint of grabbiness even when cold. There's more progressive steering feel than in the original DBX as well, sharpened a little by those bigger rims, and on-road dynamics are as good as you'd expect of an Aston.

But the 707's really impressive feature is not its gorgeous engine, nor its impeccably crafted interior, but its superb ride quality. Despite our test car being fitted with the optional 23in alloys (22s are standard), the 707 copes amazingly well with broken, potholed, rippling tarmac - that is to say, about 80% of British roads. It's a double-whammy, in fact: you can leave the dampers in their Comfort setting and yet the car remains very well-composed but, conversely, it doesn't become harsh and choppy if you set them to Sport. Dampers in Comfort, Drive set to Sport+ seems the ideal combo for an enjoyably brisk but not frenetic journey.

Surprisingly, while the 707 looks a bit of a beast from the outside, it doesn't feel that large from the driver's seat. Narrow country lanes are never going to be its natural habitat but they're not unmanageable either. Parking aside, it's quite a practical family car, if you're able to blow £190k on such a thing. Interestingly, despite its 155 extra horsepower, the 707 returns fuel consumption figures similar to those of the standard DBX.

Also available in rather more subtle paint shades than the eye-catching metallic Racing Green with Lime accents pictured here, the DBX707 is a remarkably lovely thing. Even if you don't particularly like SUVs, and you don't have endorphins queuing in the heel of your pedal.

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2022 MERCEDES-BENZ \$3500L GLEN WADDINGTON

SEEMS I'M OUT of sync with the luxury car market. These days it's all about connectivity. Rather as *Octane* readers tend to prefer reading a paper product instead of logging-in for an online fix, I prefer to be disconnected from rude reality. The main musts for me in such a car are ease of use, silence, space, and a ride softer than a Disney Princess's bed.

We'll tackle the first of those right now: ease of use. I'm happy to use a key to unlock a car, or maybe even plip it on a remote. Pull open the door, get in, belt on, turn key, into gear, handbrake off and you're away. I had to think hard about that sequence because it's automatic: I don't have to think about it as it takes place. In

S-Class world, I'm there with the 1979-on W126 generation. Easy.

This, the latest S-Class, is the seventh generation, and it plays the 'ease of use' card hard. So the car unlocks based on your proximity, and if you swing the door so it's almost closed it'll do the last bit on its own. Locate the start button, grab Drive and pull away. You don't even need to disengage the parking brake; that's sorted for you. Brilliant.

But there are settings that you might want to fiddle with first. Sat-nav, maybe. Or music. And you have to wait a few long seconds for the system to come to life. Even selecting your preferred drive mode ('Individual' for me, everything in Comfort setting except Sport for throttle and gears) must be done every time you switch on. That's another couple of stabs at the screen.

These attempts to help get in the way of things, and waving your finger at a screen is more



distracting than locating a button the old-fashioned way. With barely a thought. That's my kind of autonomous.

Perhaps somewhere within these digital machinations there's a way of ensuring all your choices are stored and adhered to without having to reset them every time you switch on. If there is, it didn't make itself obvious.

There are more discomfiting aspects, too. Only one thing is more intrusive than that tug at the wheel when the car decides your cornering line for you, and disabling Active Lane Assist means more stabs, every time you start the engine. That other thing? The potentially brilliant cruise control recognises speed limits even those no longer in play. On the M54, it decided we'd gone from a 70 to a 40 and anchored on. In the outside lane. I pulled over sharpish and hunted through the submenus to quell that 'aid'.

Apart from that, I enjoyed the big £100k Merc's wafting refinement on a four-hour drive to Snowdonia. It was capable of entertaining on the twistier sections of A5, and of

stupendously torquey overtaking manoeuvres when caravans got in the way. The ride, on air, stumbled a bit over lumpy sections yet was otherwise unobtrusive, and the seats remained as completely comfortable in the shadow of Tryfan as they were when we got on the A14 near Kettering. Only a hint of wind noise around the driver's door impeded the silence.

Mercedes has worked hard to keep this leviathan's weight down, it is one of the most aerodynamic cars currently on sale, managed well over 700 miles on a single tank and showed a remaining 120-mile range even then. It is *utterly* solid in its build and, heck, I even like the retro-futuristic cod-deco styling of its interior.

The latest S-Class is at the forefront of old tech, while the all-new EQS chases battery fanatics who care less about range – and it will be most interesting to make a comparison when I drive that car in the near future.

Top and below

Retro-futuristic cabin is ultracomfortable but driver aids can drive you mad; bulky but slippery Benz can do 800 miles on a tank.





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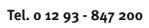
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Gone but not forgotten

WORDS DELWYN MALLETT



Friedrich Geiger

To many, he's Mr Gullwing - though he wasn't always credited

AT £115 MILLION it's the most expensive car ever sold at auction. In most reports the 1955 Mercedes 300SLR has been referred to as the 'Uhlenhaut Coupé', accurately reporting the moniker attached to it back in its day. Uhlenhaut was, of course, the immensely talented project engineer responsible for the exotic mechanical specification of the famed 300SLR sports racers derived from the Mercedes Grand Prix cars. But the SLR Coupé is far more than just a sophisticated mechanical package: to many it is quite simply the most beautiful racing car to ever turn a wheel.

Yet Friedrich Geiger, the man who penned its sinuously seductive curves, was never mentioned in the press reports of the sale. Ironic to consider that this artefact has commanded a price that puts it on a level with fine art masterpieces yet the artist who 'drew' its form should not be credited.

Friedrich Geiger was born in 1907 in Seußen, 50km to the east of the Stuttgart home of Daimler-Benz. By his early twenties he had completed a strict German apprenticeship as a cartwright and was declared a Master Craftsman. In parallel he studied vehicle construction at the Meissen Engineering School and, on his graduation in April 1933,

he joined Daimler-Benz as a design engineer at its 'special vehicle department'.

This was only a few months after the National Socialist Party came to power, led by Adolf Hitler. The significance of this was that the Party wanted large armour-plated limousines and designing these behemoths became the responsibility of the special vehicle department. Hitler also instigated an expansion of the Autobahn network, which encouraged the production of high-speed cars. Still in his midtwenties, Geiger was also responsible for the spectacular flowing lines of the fabulous 500K and 540K special roadsters.

After WWII, Mercedes underwent a period of restructuring and Freidrich left the company in 1948 before returning to the Sindelfingen styling department two-years later.

At the luxury end of Mercedes' output, the 300-series was vying with Rolls-Royce to be 'the best car in the world', and its drivetrain, through expediency, formed the basis for the company's return to international motorsport. Under 'Rudi' Uhlenhaut's direction, a radical tubular spaceframe was constructed to hold the 300 saloon's running gear, and in 1952 the 300SL – Sports Leichtbau – triumphed at Le Mans and in the Carrera Panamericana (as you

Left, from top

Friedrich Geiger headed Mercedes-Benz's styling department until the end of 1973; seen here (centre) with the R107 design study, Hans Jooss (head of model construction, left) and body engineering chief Karl Wilfert.

can read from page 60). This excited the US importer Max Hoffman, who famously pledged to take 1000 300SLs if the factory would build them. An offer they found impossible to refuse.

The racecars had introduced 'doors in the roof' as a means of boarding the beast and, although aerodynamically efficient, the simple, slab-sided, bodies were very much the product of the wind tunnel rather than a stylist. Geiger, with his artist's eye for form and the subtlety of a curve, transformed the car into the legendary 300SL 'Gullwing'.

Launched to the public in 1954, the car was a sensation. The starkness of the racer's slab sides was relieved by introducing a gentle sweeping curve from stem to stern at the waistline, the addition of 'eyebrows' over the wheelarches, and a large vent to the rear of the front 'arch to extract engine heat. The Mercedes tri-star floated prominently in the reshaped and deeply recessed radiator opening.

When Mercedes decided to make a coupé version of the 300SLR sports racer, Geiger once again worked his magic, producing a minimalist masterpiece of sinuous curves that, as the cliché goes, looks like it's doing 100mph (or, in this case, should that be 176mph?) when standing still.

In 1957 an open-top version of the 300SL appeared, perhaps even more beautiful than the closed car, with a few styling tweaks to the surface treatment, extending the cooling vents' chrome bars into the Roadster's conventionally opening doors, all imparting a feeling of forward momentum.

By then Geiger was head of the styling department but, unlike the modern breed of designers, he was not one to strut his stuff. Throughout his career, Geiger was content to remain in the background, nurturing and guiding his very talented staff as they designed some of the finest and most refined road cars of their day. To mark his 100th anniversary, author Günter Engelen, writing in *Mercedes-Benz Classic*, aptly summarised the man: 'Friedrich Geiger was rather the type of reticent conductor who was capable of bringing out the very best from his chamber orchestra without being overly ostentatious.'

This unpretentious yet gifted man retired from Mercedes-Benz on the last day of 1973. A talented painter, he continued with his art, leading a quiet life with his wife Johanna, whom he had married in Meissen Cathedral in 1936. Friedrich died on 13 June 1996.





1960 Aston Martin DB4 £425,000



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ON 1 MARCH 1983, Dutch newspapers carried an advertisement introducing a new and apparently miraculous recording medium with a bold claim: "This will be a memorable day in the history of sound. For the first time music will sound in the living room as pure as in the concert hall: without the extra noise of the needle in the groove, without dust particles, scratches or dents."

The 'Compact Disc' was a joint development by Dutch company Philips and Japanese giant Sony, and it was the Japanese consumer who got first dibs at the novelty in December 1982.

The first commercially produced compact disc was pressed at Philips' Polygram factory in Langenhagen, near Hanover in Germany, on 17 August 1982. It was a recording of Chopin waltzes by Claudio Arrau, who was on hand to press the start button. The first pop CD was *The Visitors* by ABBA, their last studio album and digitally recorded. By November a catalogue of 150 albums, mainly classical, had been pressed.

Immediately the 'Is vinyl better than CD?' controversy started. Hi-fi buffs, in love with the sound of the stylus in the groove and their expensive decks, amplifiers and speakers, swore then – and continue to do so to this day – that analogue is better than digital. Here, 'better' is largely a subjective assessment; both formats have their sonic advantages.

Pub quiz facts: a stylus travels roughly 1500 feet per side of a vinyl album, but to reassemble the on-off binary code bumps and pits of a CD, the laser sampling them 44,000 times a second covers more than 3.5 miles.

Digital recording on to magnetic tape preceded the CD by around a decade, but it

was the advent of Philips' video LaserDisc in 1979 that prompted it and Sony, which was working on a similar device, to pool their resources. They agreed to co-operate in standardising the technology, size and capacity of the compact disc in order to avoid the video-cassette format battle that had ensued over VHS versus Betamax (and indeed Philips' own completely different format).

Given the complexity of the technology involved in the evolution of the CD, the size of the hole in the centre was determined in an endearingly analogue fashion. Joop Sinjou, head of Philips audio products, reported that 'The fastest decision in the development stage was about the diameter of the hole. I put a dubbeltje on the table and that was the size.' No one argued. A dubbeltje was a Dutch ten-cent coin, 15mm across, worth a tenth of a guilder.

The first public demonstration of the new technology was on BBC's *Tomorrow's World* in 1981. Kieran Prendiville, demonstrating the disc's so-called 'indestructibility', attacked one with a stone before playing, significantly, a different disc (the Bee Gees' *Living Eyes*). This event has gone down in folklore memory as the 'strawberry jam-spreading demonstration', which was actually on another programme and could have been confused with DJ Mike Read on Breakfast TV pouring honey and coffee on a disc before washing it off and playing it. But the point was well made – try that with your vinyl album and see where it gets you.

Despite the hype, early adopters would soon

Above

Sony's first CD player is demonstrated to the press at Japan Electronics 1982 in Tokyo.

learn that even a greasy fingerprint could make a CD skip a beat or two, or refuse to advance. And rubbing with stones is not recommended.

Take-up of the CD was initially slow because you also had to invest in the very expensive hardware. So not unti 1985 did the first millionselling CD arrive, in the form of Dire Straits' *Brothers in Arms* – digitally recorded at every stage. It was also the first album to sell more on CD than vinyl, and many argue that it was this band more than any other that contributed to the success of the format.

In 1988 CD sales overtook those of the vinyl LP, and the following year they also kicked market-leading pre-recorded cassette tapes into the weeds. Sales grew exponentially, making the cheap-to-manufacture but premium-priced CD the biggest and most profitable money-spinner that the music industry had ever seen.

The MP3 player, followed by streaming, did for the CD what the CD had done for vinyl. CD sales in the US peaked around the millennium at 900 million a year (2.455 billion worldwide), but by 2020 US sales had declined by 97%. It looked like the CD was destined to be relegated to its secondary role of twirling in fruit trees to deter birds. But it seems that sales are now bouncing back, albeit only marginally. They'll never get back to millennium levels but just as the once-doomed vinyl disc has hung in there, so has the CD.

Meanwhile ABBA, who split in December 1982 shortly after their first CD was pressed, have now turned back the clock 40 years and made a concert comeback – via the latest technological miracle of digital avatars.



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Maserati 250F

Pegaso Z-102B Saoutchik Coupe

Porsche 911 Carrera 2.7RS



Bugatti EB 110 (coming soon)

3-----

225S Vignale Berlinetta

250 MM Vignale Coupe

275 GTB Alloy Longnose

Ferrari F40 & F50 (coming soon)

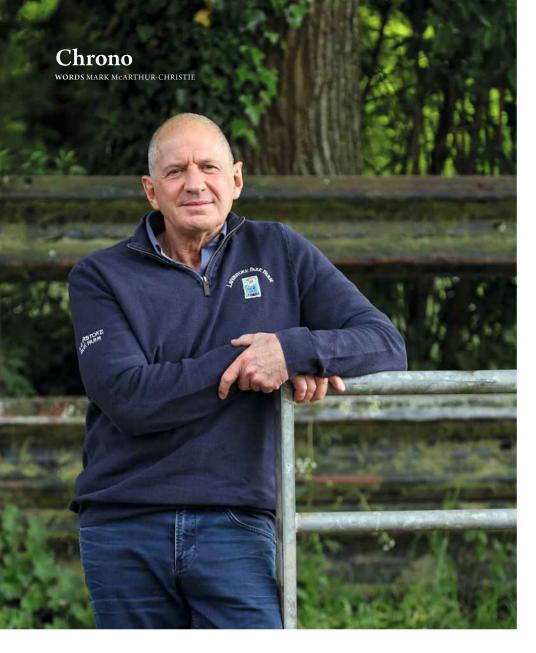
Lancia 037 Stradale

Lancia B24S Cabriolet

Maserati 3500GT Vignale Spyder

Porsche 993 RSR 3.8

Shelby Cobra 289 Competition specs



Scheckter's timely stash

For someone claiming little interest in watches, the F1 star has quite a collection

IT'S NOT A PROMISING start. 'What was my first watch? When I was young, you mean? Jesus, I don't know.'

I'm talking to past F1 ace Jody Scheckter in his office at Laverstoke Park. Starting with McLaren in 1972, moving to Tyrrell and its remarkable six-wheeled P34, then on to Wolf and finally Ferrari, he notched up ten Grand Prix wins and took the Drivers' Championship in 1979. Since then he's started, run and sold a multi-million-dollar firearms training company in the USA, commentated on F1, and run an award-winning organic farm on his estate. One

gets the sense this man doesn't sit still for long.

Today, racing trophies and photos on the shelves rub up alongside the estate's awards for prize lamb, cheese and wine. Scheckter's desk is strewn with pens, power adapters and papers, and there's a lined A4 pad covered in angular, incised doodles and quick calculations. And a faded box, slightly smaller than a shoebox, with 'Breguet' on it. Perhaps things are looking up after all.

'I don't wear a watch,' he says, dashing my hopes, 'but when I used to, it would be a Casio or a Nike or something practical.'

To be fair, Scheckter did warn me. Before we met he emailed to say: 'I'm not a watch buff. I have about six watches and I think only two are connected to racing directly.'

He reaches across and picks up the box as I catch a glimpse of a sticker on the side that I think says, simply, Grande Complication. 'I used to collect watches though, years ago,' he says, taking off the lid.

Rather than taking out a sleek, padded inner box, he reaches in and grabs two handfuls of loose watches and dumps them on the desk. My expectations are low: probably a few old Casios, Nikes and other quartz bits and bobs. Actually, not. There are several Patek Philippes, a Rolex Day-Date, an IWC Ingenieur, a TAG Heuer Monaco, a Carrera and what looks like a brace of Breguets in the pile.

He impatiently stirs the heap of watches with his index finger, dividing it into sheep and goats. 'Yeah, these are some things that were given to me for racing,' he says, flicking his hand towards the knot of watches on his right that includes the Rolex, TAG Heuers, the IWC and, slightly incongruously, a TW Steel. 'These are the ones I quite liked, though,' he says, gesturing at the other pile: four Pateks and two Breguet Grand Complications.

Impressive haul that this is, something's missing. There are pictures of Scheckter with what looks like a white-faced Camaro ref. 7743 or 7220 in the 1970s. When I spoke to Derek Bell (Octane 217), he showed me his gold ref. 1158CH Carrera – the Heuer Holy of Holies that Scheckter should also have as an ex-driver for the marque. Did he get a similar 1158 when under Heuer sponsorship in 1978 and '79? He shakes his head. 'You mean when I was racing?' he asks. 'No, I don't remember that at all.' Is his 1158 lurking out there somewhere, having lost its history along the way?

I ask him about the Rolex. It looks like it's never been worn, despite being dumped in a box with about 15 other watches. 'That? I got it for getting pole in Monaco. They give you a watch – at least, they used to – if you came in on pole. I think it was '79 or thereabouts.' I comment that it seems in remarkable condition for a 43-year-old watch. Scheckter says he's never worn it. 'It's too small for me, and I've never really liked that sort of thing.'

There's an IWC Ingenieur chrono he had from the Race of Legends in 2005 at the Norisring, a TAG Heuer Monaco from the Motor Sport Hall of Fame in 2011, a TAG Heuer Carrera and an old Elysse self-winder with his name on the dial. He's not fussed about any of them.

But the watches he's bought himself – 'I just liked the look of them' – from various auctions over the years have a theme. They're all understated, plain and classic. A Patek 5015, a 5009J, a 3960J, a 5034 Travel Time, a Breguet Classique Perpetual Calendar ref. 5327 and a Classique Moonphase ref. 3137BB. Even without their F1 ownership pedigree that's a horological royal flush, and then some. Not a watch buff, perhaps, but one hell of an eye for the good stuff.

Maybe Jody Scheckter is more of a watch enthusiast than he likes to let on. As I'm walking down the stairs to leave, I hear him call out to one of his team: 'Come and take a look at my watches. I was just showing them to that guy from the magazine...'

WE LEAVE THE COMPLICATIONS TO THE SWISS.



Chrono

WORDS MARK MCARTHUR-CHRISTIE

ONE TO WATCH

Sinn 356

This German aero watch is good value and free of frills. Just resist the upgrades

IWC MAKES some gorgeous flying watches, as does Zenith, but they'll put quite a dent in your wallet. You don't have to spend the price of a Stansted sandwich to get yourself a proper, high-quality flieger.

If you distilled a pilot chronograph – a flieger – down to its essence, you'd end up with this 356. Colour? Why do you want colour on your watch? High-contrast black and white is best. Posh case materials? No, you're getting bead-blasted stainless steel. What's that? Sapphire crystal? Nasty, shatterprone things – acrylic is what you want. And easier to read than the front page of *The Sun* thanks to simple syringe main hands, stick chrono pointers and plenty of lume.

The 356 is, like its Stuttgart automotive numbersake, German. Founded in Frankfurt in 1961 by former Luftwaffe instructor, pilot and racer Helmut Sinn, the eponymous firm has been making flying instruments ever since. They're utterly without frippery or fuss; Sinn just makes stuff that does the job.

On the side of the three-part case you'll see 'SUG' engraved. SUG is still the only German casemaker to land DIN EN ISO 9002 certification. But there are options beyond the basic: you can have your 356 with a copper dial (the 356 Sa Pilot II), a GMT (Pilot UTC), clutter it up with a power reserve indicator (the Sa GR) or, if you must, a sapphire glass on the Sa model. Original is best, though, so try for a 356.7994 powered by a Valjoux/ETA 7750 (rather than the later Sellita) and an acrylic crystal (polish out scratches with Brasso or Polywatch) at around £1200.



NEW WATCHES



DAMASKO DC86

You'd think it wouldn't be too hard to find a watch with a central chronograph minute hand for the stopwatch. It's such a useful complication. After all, it's far easier to read a counter that tracks the full circumference of the dial than struggling with a fiddly sub-dial somewhere. But no: since the sad demise of the wonderful Lemania 5100 movement, central chrono hands have been scarce. So it's splendid to see another German maker, Damasko, making the DC8X using its chronograph cal. C51. Like most Damaskos, it has a proper heft to it and will last a lifetime. §3826, damasko-watches.com



SERICA 5303

Paris-based Serica has just two ranges of watches: Field and Dive. Both are simple, robust three-handers but the firm is doing something interesting with its diving watches: it's using the Soprod Newton movement. Introduced two years ago, it's intended as an alternative to the ETA2824 – and it's one of the few at this price to use a balance bridge secured at both ends (more stable for the balance) and a double-cone Incabloc as its shock absorber. The 300m water-resistant 5303-1, 2 and 3 are mechanically identical but give you a choice of different dial colours.

€1075, serica-watches.com



MEISTERSINGER SINGULARIS

Who says you need two hands to tell the time? Münster-based Meistersinger has been making single-handers for more than 20 years and, if you've not seen one before, they're a lot easier to use than you might think. The dial is divided into five-minute segments so, because of its 43mm, diameter you can read almost to the minute. And when was the last time you had to be somewhere at 11.43am anyway? Inside this one is the Cal. MSA01, developed by Synergies Horlogères with a 120-hour power reserve thanks to two mainspring barrels running in series.

£4690, meistersinger.com



Our passion is classic competition cars

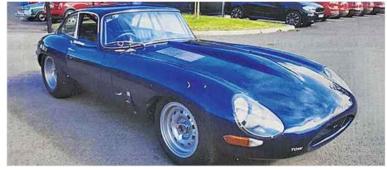




2008 Porsche 997 GT3 RSR

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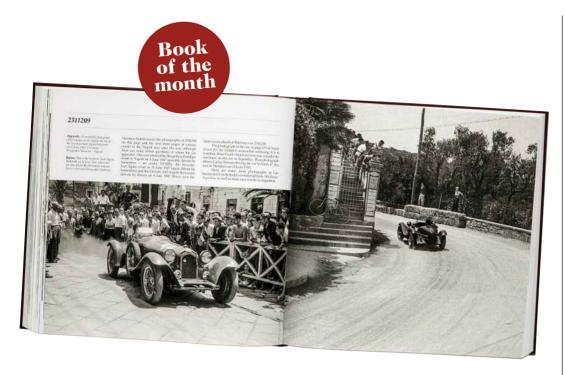


1970 ex-Ronnie Peterson March 701 (8) Ronnie's 1970 F1 championship car. Continuous ownership. Race-ready w/ Richardson DFV, FIA HTP and good spares. P.O.A.



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The 8C Story Continues

SIMON MOORE, Parkside Publications, £300, ISBN 978 0 9820774 3 6



As the title implies, this isn't a standalone work; it's an addendum to the author's previous works on the classic eight-cylinder Alfa Romeos of the 1930s. Simon Moore published his first volume, *The Immortal*

2.9, way back in 1986 and, even though it was then considered a milestone in automotive research, he's been continuing to study them ever since.

So, in 2000, we were presented with *The Legendary* 2.3, followed by a new edition of *The Immortal* 2.9 in 2008, and then *The Magnificent Monopostos* in 2014. You'd have thought he'd have mined every possible source by now, but no: new information and photos are always coming to light, and this 518-page doorstep of a volume proves it. Some addendum.

The previous works were chassis-by-chassis histories of each individual car, and this new book collates all the stories, anecdotes and previously unpublished images in the same way. It mostly doesn't repeat any of the background given in the other volumes so, if you don't own at least one of those earlier books, you'll be at a disadvantage – a brief summary of each car's history might have been useful here. However, not knowing the individual back-stories doesn't detract too much from the browsing experience because the new material is engrossing enough in its own right.

Take, for example, chassis 2211136, an 8C Monza racer that was broken up in Switzerland after an accident in the late 1940s. The chassis was turned

into a haycart that wasn't scrapped until the late 1980s – and there's a photo of the cart! Then there are the colour images of 8C 2300 chassis 2211102 parked with a Land Rover in 1950s Nigeria; the then-owner had reputedly bought the Alfa for £17, and recalled bringing back a dead leopard in the back seat, after shooting it because it had killed two boys.

As so often, it's the stories of the people involved with the cars that really draw you in. A fabulous 1933 image of the Monte Carlo Concours shows an 8C cabrio that was entered by the young Baroness Maud von Thyssen-Bornemisza. Two years later, recalled to Paris by her husband while conducting a tryst with a former Georgian prince down in Spain, she was badly injured in a car crash when the prince's Rolls-Royce left the road. 'Spanish newspapers noted that she was not wearing any underwear at the time of the crash and dubbed her "the princess without panties".

Thanks to generous print runs, both of Moore's earlier books on the 2.3 and 2.9 (but not the Monoposto volume) are still available new for about £300. When they sell out, prices will rise; so, if 8Cs are your bag, start adding to your library now. MD





Ton Up!

PAUL D'ORLEANS, Motorbooks, \$24.99, ISBN 978-0-7603-6045-3

It's easy to imagine that the café racer was exclusive to 1960s London, However, here Paul d'Orleans traces its history much further back, illustrating how the 'racing crouch' stance so typical of the culture was already evident in riders of the earliest motorcycles, having evolved from horse-riding and cycling - and not to mention the birth of 'the age of speed' when Brooklands opened in 1907. Naturally, the Americans had a hand in the movement, too, but it's really the advent of the 1950s rockers that cemented it. Fascinating stuff, even for four-wheeler fans. GW



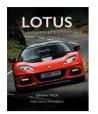
Ghia Masterpieces of Style

Edited by LUCIANO GREGGIO, Giorgio Nada Editore, £48, ISBN 978 88 7911 722 7

This picture-heavy 168-page hardback is the latest from Giorgio Nada Editore on the great Italian coachbuilders. Like the others, it's a full history of Ghia, not just focusing on the beautiful cars - of which there are many – but the people, deals and various relationships with manufacturers. It ends with a small chapter on how Ford absorbed all of the useful parts of Ghia after the 1973 takeover. If you want to know why this meant more than just using the name on top-of-the-range Ford Granadas, then we'd suggest picking up a copy. MH



Collector's book



Lotus The Complete Story

JOHNNY TIPLER, The Crowood Press, £40, ISBN 978 0 71984 005 0

This book might more accurately be titled *My Life with Lotus – the Complete Story*, because there is an awful lot of the author in this overview of the Lotus marque. As he admits in his preface: 'Stories and images reflect events I've attended, road trips I've done, and venues visited over the years.'

That means an abundance of photos taken and interviews conducted at the Goodwood Festival of Speed and a handful of other places. On the one hand, the plethora of recent images gives a rather amateurish impression; on the other, they bring some colour to what could otherwise be a very monochrome story – and they are at least photos that you won't have seen before.

If you can get past the 'me, me, me' approach, then there's plenty

of meat to tuck into in a work that clearly has to cover a large expanse of well-trodden ground. Tipler breaks the story down into natural chunks – the Hornsey Years, the Cheshunt Years etc – and leavens it with digressions that prevent it all getting too 'heavy', including interviews with, for example, Historic racer Malcolm Ricketts.

Fair dos: this book is a bit different from all the other Lotus histories – and the use of those aforementioned happy-snaps does keep it bright and cheerful. MD



Springbok Grand Prix

ROBERT YOUNG, LP Magazines, 1969, value £150



Everything about this humble little book is very appealing – its size, the period graphic art on the

cover and the good-quality photographs inside.

It was published in South Africa in 1969 by an outfit that more usually produced magazines, and the format is substantially more than just a pamphlet, though smaller than the typical racing book.

Covering a ten-year period from 1959, Springbok Grand Prix includes race reviews and results within its 159 pages. Written in a pacy, magazinestyle of journalism, it's a lovely thing to own.

For the collector, its rarity also makes it something special and its price tag

reflects that. It has long been hard to find, yet its subject matter – single-seater racing in South Africa during the 1960s – has become very popular.

People just seem to have an affection for this period and genre of motorsport, in a country where world-famous drivers such as Jim Clark and Graham Hill battled it out with local heroes such as Sam Tingle and John Love. Yet, even now, not that many people are aware that the book even exists.

Ben Horton





Bugatti in Denmark

FRANK STUDSTRUP, Editocar, £55, ISBN 978 87 973354 1 3

Published to coincide with the 140th anniversary of the birth of Ettore Bugatti, this 226-page hardback notes that the first Bugatti arrived in Denmark in 1912 – only three years after the company was founded by Ettore. Total output of 8000 in 30 years amounts to three days of Ford Model T production; 20 of those reached Denmark by 1940, thanks to importer Hersleb Christiansen's foresight, and one set the first Danish speed record. Here is a quirky insight into the early cars raced and enjoyed in Denmark, and how the enthusiasm evolved into a modern Bugatti club, re-established in 2018. GW

Lamborghini: at the Cutting Edge of Design

GAUTAM SEN, Dalton Watson, £185, ISBN 978 1 85443 317 6



As with other Dalton Watson books, first impressions suggest that this 784-page, two-volume set is well worth the £185 asking price. Gautam Sen, with Branko Radovinovic

and Kaare Byberg, set out to explore the entire history of Lamborghini's design language. We all know just how radical the Miura was in period, not to mention how breathtaking the Countach was (and remains today), but this book delves into their development and helps to understand how and why they worked so well.

That means that much of this book's text is made up of first-hand recollections from Marcello Gandini, Luc Donckerwolke, Walter de Silva and other designers, not to mention plenty of quotes from engineers and others involved in the models, too.

As you would expect, the first volume concentrates on the classic era, from the company's formative years building tractors through to the Countach. There are comprehensive chapters on all of the road cars but, as this is a history of design, there's plenty of importance given to the many concepts and one-offs,

such as the Flying Star II, and some fascinating Miura styling proposals from Touring.

The second volume continues through the 1980s, when some of the concepts became even more outlandish. Bertone's Lamborghini Genesis (a V12 MPV) springs to mind here. The long drawn-out and somewhat messy development of the Diablo is explained in brilliant detail, with several sketches we've never seen before. Then came the Audi years, in which the company has grown and flourished. The stories are less of a mystery than the old days, but with countless concepts and limited-production models there's just as much to explore. If you adore Lamborghini, don't hesitate to buy this book.





MINI MAGIC BY JOHN KETCHELL

Paddy Hopkirk is sadly longer with us, but it will be a long while yet before he and his exploits on the 1964 Monte Carlo Rally fade from the collective memory. John Ketchell's energetic painting captures the Hopkirk/Henry Liddon Mini-Cooper S zipping along ahead of the Saab 96 of Erik Carlsson and Gunnar Palm, despite being weighed down by the giant tin of beluga caviar that Hopkirk picked up en route in Minsk.

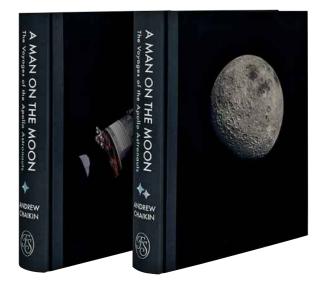
Prints from £49 (original already sold). historiccarart.net



GTI Mk1 SOCKS BY HEEL TREAD

Heel Tread's latest offering borrows the jolly plaid pattern that greeted some lucky buyers of the archetypal hot hatch, the VW Golf GTI Mk1.

£10.12. heeltread.com



A MAN ON The moon by Andrew Chaikin

Fifty years on from the end of NASA's Apollo programme, it remains hard to grasp the enormity of its achievements. Chaikin's tome, eight years in the making, does a superb job of chronicling the Apollo missions and explaining how it *felt* to make history, and the text is complemented in this special edition by some of the most awe-inspiring photographs ever taken. £160. foliosociety.com



FENDER GEORGE HARRISON 'ROCKY' STRATOCASTER

'When we all took certain substances,'
George Harrison recalled, 'I decided to paint
[my 1961 Stratocaster] in Day-Glo colours.'
The cheerfully ridiculous guitar, known as
Rocky, was played on some of The Beatles'
biggest hits and became a fan favourite.
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a dead-on, aged replica costing £23,000,
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and made in Mexico rather than the USA)
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£1849. fender.com





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SCALEXTRIC WILLIAMS FW11

Scalextric's collection of Turbo-Era Formula 1 cars now includes the Williams in which Nigel Mansell pipped Nelson Piquet to victory at the 1986 British GP – the last to be held at Brands Hatch. £53.99. scalextric.com





FORD ESCORT Mk2 RS2000

By Model Car Group Price £72.95 Material Diecast

Cars don't have to be flashy or fancy to make great large-scale models; in fact, a relatively humble subject presented in the big 1:18 scale really allows you to appreciate its design in a way that's less easy with 1:43 miniatures. A Mk2 Escort (even an RS2000) may not have the cachet of a Ferrari or an F1 car, but seeing it reproduced at this size brings home what an elegant and clean-looking machine it is.

Produced in Bangladesh – fast becoming the 'new China' for manufacturers of model cars – this diecast metal Escort has a satisfyingly solid feel. It's definitely no-frills underneath but the all-black interior has been fully yet delicately modelled, as has the relatively sparse exterior trim. Also available in yellow or white (the latter with black 'vinyl' roof), it's a very fairly priced and good-looking piece.



2022 Alpine A522 Spark £69.95

Spectacularly fine model of Alonso's Bahrain GP car, produced just a few months after the actual race.



1964 Austin-Healey Sprite LM MEA 43 £133.95

Distinctly 'rustic-looking' next to the other models on this page, this French handbuilt does have a certain charm.



1966 Ford J-Car Spark £64.95

Complete with 'duct tape' over the bonnet ducts, this is a super replica of the J-Car as it tested for Le Mans.



1979 Aston Martin V8 Tecnomodel £116.95

Available in other race liveries, too, the Bell/Preece/Hamilton Aston is nicely presented here in Silverstone 6h guise.



2021 Ferrari 488 GT3 Looksmart £104.95

The mind-bogglingly intricate livery of this Spa 24 Hours winner has been reproduced perfectly here. Incredible.



1984 Volvo 240T lxo £47.95

Who says Volvos can't be sexy? Check out this great diecast model of a Monza 500km European Touring Car racer.

Classic model

IMAGE: VECTIS AUCTIONS



DODGE CHARGER

by Sabra

There was a time when American cars were very popular subjects in the UK toy market. By the later 1960s, however, Dinky and Corgi were moving on to exotic supercars such as Ferraris, Lamborghinis and De Tomasos, and this left a gap – which an Israeli manufacturer attempted to fill with the Sabra range.

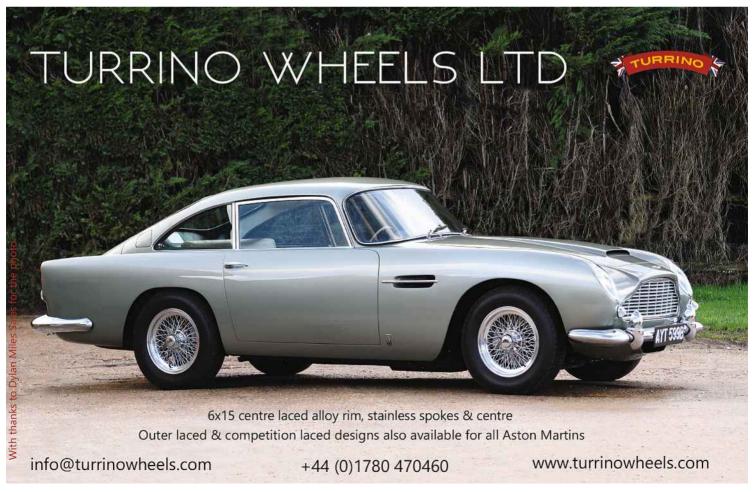
Sold in export markets as 'Detroit Seniors', all but one of the 20 basic castings in the range were based on US subjects. They were originally commissioned by Cragstan, a New York-based toy distributor, which placed an order for three million units from Israel's Habonim toy company. This was beyond Habonim's production resources and the company came under the control of Koor, one of Israel's largest industrial concerns.

The Sabra range eventually expanded to something like 50 different variations. Several models were finished with Hebrew lettering to appeal to the local market, and the volatile situation in the Middle East is reflected in the choice of vehicles in United Nations livery, such as the Dodge Charger pictured here. Packaging was ingenious, too, taking the form of a Perspex box with 'garage' door.

The range initially proved popular in the United States but, in the longer term, Detroit Seniors lost out to the vastly more popular Hot Wheels. Production of the Sabra/ Detroit Seniors range ceased in 1975 – yet, with models of desirable cars including the 1967 Dodge Charger, 1966 Plymouth Barracuda and 1967 Chrysler Imperial convertible, Sabra had earned its place in diecast history.







Octane





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1988 AC Cobra MK IV Immaculate condition.



2015 Land Rover Defender 1 of 100 Autobiography editions.

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THE MARKET

BUYING + SELLING + ANALYSIS



Makinen makes record £146k

Collecting Cars sets new Evo IV benchmark as Japanese icons soar

CERTAIN RESULTS really make you sit up and take notice. We've seen examples of the legendary Mitsubishi Evo Tommi Makinen Edition (above) breach the £100,000 mark in the past, but with Collecting Cars setting a new £146,500 benchmark for the model – of which 2500 were built – it's clear that these were not fluke results.

Nowhere has seen Japanese classic values explode quite like the USA though, exemplified this month by the sale of an attractive, if far from perfect, 1997 Toyota Supra Turbo for \$230,000 on Bring a Trailer. Dave Kinney explores this result on the next page.

In the USA, Mecum posted \$40million in sales with 81% at its Pennsylvania auction – its best result at this location to date. Although it was topped by a 2021 Mercedes-AMG GT Black Series at \$473,000, closely followed by a 1985 Lamborghini Countach LP5000S at \$467,500, a string of excellently prepared Corvettes littered the top ten.

It's been a quiet month for blockbuster sales in the UK, but there has been plenty going on. Historics managed to take £2.64million at its Summer Windsorview Lakes auction, selling 71% of lots. A couple of Italian exotics that achieved interesting results included an orange 1973 Alfa Romeo Montreal at £72,800, with a highly original right-hand-drive

1974 Lamborghini Espada just eclipsing it at £77,500. At the other end of the scale there was a particularly nice Austin 1100 at £10,304.

H&H managed a similarly strong £2.2million result at its Buxton venue, which was led by a 1934 Bentley 3.5 Litre (below). Clothed in a Figoni et Falaschi-style body created by Rod Jolley, it sold for £117,000. Other highlights included a 1971 Mercedes 600 Grosser at £95,625, plus the rarely seen 1954 Swallow Doretti for £50,625.

Manor Park Classics held its best sale to date, moving 80% of its July catalogue. The auction was a fertile hunting ground for people seeking Hagerty Festival of the Unexceptional cars: a 1975 Fiat 128 made £5290 and a very original 1978 Datsun 120Y Coupé sold for £9430. Far from unexceptional was a 1996 manual Ferrari 355 GTS, which, fresh from a £4500 service, looked good value at £71,300.



TOP 10 PRICES July 2022

£2.945.500 (€3.418.000)

1954 Maserati A6 GCS/53 Spider by Fiandri & Malagoli Artcurial, Le Mans, France 2 July

£1,684,500 (CHF 1,955,000)

1991 Ferrari F40

Bonhams, Gstaad, Switzerland 3 July

£1,363,500 (\$1,650,000)

1970 Plymouth Hemi Superbird Barrett-Jackson, Las Vegas, USA. 2 July

£892,000 (€1,035,000) 2005 Porsche Carrera GT

Dorotheum, Vösendorf, Austria 2 July

£883.500 (€1.025.120)

1958 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Roadster Artcurial, Le Mans, France 2 July

£664,500 (\$800,000)

1969 Ferrari 365 GTB/4 Competizione conversion Bring a Trailer, online 9 July

£590,000 (\$707,500)

2020 Ferrari 488 Pista Spider Bring a Trailer, online 18 July

£585,500 (\$695,000)

2001 Ferrari 550 Barchetta Pininfarina Bring a Trailer, online 16 July

£579,500 (\$706,000)

2011 Porsche 911 GT3 RS 4.0 Bring a Trailer, online 29 July

£571,500 (\$680,000)

1988 Lamborghini Countach 5000 QV Bring a Trailer, online 6 July

DAVE KINNEY'S USA ROUND-UP

1997 Toyota Supra Turbo

Bring-A-Trailer, Illinois

7 July

The fourth-generation Supra, launched in 1993, exited from the US and European markets in 1998 but continued on sale in Japan past the turn of the century. Although much more desirable to the enthusiast thanks to its technical sophistication, racy handling and the twin sequential turbos of the top models, it sold in much lower quantities than the previous generation. Price was one reason: a well-equipped Turbo model such as this one, recently sold on the Bring-A-Trailer website, could cost close to \$50,000 when new. That was a particularly big ask in 1997.

Fast-forward 25 years, and the fourth-gen Supra is now a big deal that many collectors covet. This very same car, a Limited Edition Fifteenth Anniversary example with a removable roof, sold in May 2021 at a Gooding & Company 'Geared Online' auction for \$77,000 – a huge amount for any Supra. It doesn't have the more valuable manual transmission, it has three previous owners and is listed as having two previous, albeit very minor, accidents. It has aftermarket suspension, too. It sold for a scarcely credible \$230,000. What can make a car triple in



price in 14 months? The first and simplest answer is too many people with too much money chasing too few examples. Another is FOMO: if I don't jump in now, I might never be able to afford the one I want. A third possible reason? Bring-A-Trailer is currently perceived by many as *the* place to buy and sell a car, and a golden ticket to make a profit. So, is the fourth-generation Supra the new 300SL? I just don't see it in the long term. I think we've reached peak Supra, and perhaps peak market.

Dave Kinney is an auction analyst, an expert on the US market scene, and publishes the *Hagerty Price Guide*.

1971 Ford Mustang Mach 1 Mecum, Pennsylvania



It's one of just 531 Super Cobra
Jet 429-powered Mach 1s with the
Drag Pack, and it's a four-speed
manual with an R-Code Ram-Air
bonnet added in period. These
Mustangs were quite a sensation
when new. You might find one
in tidier shape for \$15,000 or
\$20,000 more, but someone loved
the dirt enough to take this one
home at a good-value \$38,500.

1985 Lamborghini Countach

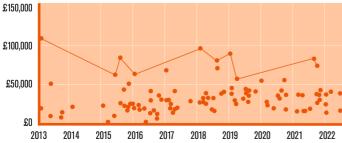


In single-family ownership since 1989, it was retro-fitted with Bosch fuel injection so it could be registered in emissions-stringent states. There has been a recent uptick in values for the later Countachs, and I saw a steady stream of punters sampling the driver's seat and savouring the lipstick-red leather. It sold for \$467,500, maybe to one of them.

AUCTION TRACKER CITROËN SM

Citroën's acquisition of a controlling interest in Maserati paved the way for the idiosyncratic SM, combining futuristic styling and technically advanced features with a hastily developed Maserati V6 engine. The declining fortunes of both companies following the 1973 oil crisis saw production come to an end in 1975, after only 12,920 of the left-hand-drive-only coupés had been built.

Artcurial's 2013 Rétromobile sale brought the current SM high of €127,600 (£108,000) for a car that seemed at the time to be something of an outlier, having undergone an unprecedented CHF250,000 restoration by Garage du Lac in Switzerland (covered by us in Octane 89). However, subsequent auctions indicated top cars were approaching this level five years later, when Rétromobile once again



Line charts the top prices for comparable cars at auction

provided Artcurial with another stand-out result. Its 1972 SM with a rare set of

Its 1972 SM with a rare set of resin wheels (pictured) changed hands for €113,240 (£96,000), with barely 4000km use since the completion of a two-year €150,000 overhaul at marque specialists in France. Artcurial also set the benchmark for the ultra-collectable Mylord Cabriolet – believed to be one of only five converted by Chapron – achieving €548,320 (£464,500) for a single-owner example in 2014.

Olivier Houiller of French Classics explains the wider market: 'Expect to pay £35-65k for a running SM. The market is steady and a bit slow at times, but cars with impeccable service history and proof of timing-chain and valve modifications are selling faster than original cars with original engines. Cars with the wrong colour combination or an automatic gearbox are either not



selling at all, or at a great discount.
'In the UK, US-spec SMs are cheaper, but make sure that it is a manual and that you can find all the parts to change the US headlamps.

'There are a few shades that divide opinion like bright red and some of the more obscure golds. The Continental Edison radio for the SM is rare and valuable. Expect to pay £3000 for one: it's a serious bonus if your car has it.' Rod Laws

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1929 Bentley 4½ Litre Short Chassis Le Mans

Back in the day a short chassis 4½ Litre Bentley was simply one of the best cars money could buy and accordingly they were sought after by racers, aristos, enthusiasts, and bounders alike. Marque expert Clare Hay sums it up nicely, "the 4½ 'Shorties' were the nicest handling Vintage Bentleys built, combining compact appearance with a high power to weight ratio"

This one was conceived in 1947 when chassis XF 3515 had its decrepit saloon body removed, was shortened to Le Mans spec and fitted with an open sports body. The car has a documented history detailing these early days, its 1966 departure for 30 years in the USA and latterly 10 years in the Channel Islands.

The beautifully proportioned Le Mans body was fitted in 2006 by VBE and shortly after was bought by celebrity enthusiast, Alan Titchmarsh beginning a 15 year ownership.

It is fair to say that it will not suit a straight laced matching number zealot but a more liberal minded driver will be rewarded by a really good car with an interesting history at a most attractive price. It has benefitted from extensive mechanical work and recent service by the talented Mr. Getley at Kingsbury Racing and is a delight on the road with light steering, an easy gear-change and high ratio back axle.

Also available:

1934 Invicta S Type • 1954 Bentley R Type Continental • 1957 Bentley S1 Continental DHC • 1964 Porsche 356SC Coupe

See website for more details



A racy 250 SWB

Gooding & Company, London, UK 18 August

WITH FERRARI'S sights set on winning pretty much everything, the 250 GT SWB was to be its ultimate roadgoing racer. This gorgeous yellow example, to be offered by Gooding & Company at its London auction, is one of the 46 alloy-bodied competition cars.

This one started its life as 1931 GT, which was built for the 1960 Le Mans 24 Hours. Factory build sheets show that it was originally fitted with the latest tipo 168B 'outside-plug' V12 engine in racing spec, and it was sold to North American distributor Luigi Chinetti. One of four cars he entered under the NART banner that year, it eventually placed an

impressive fifth overall and second in class.

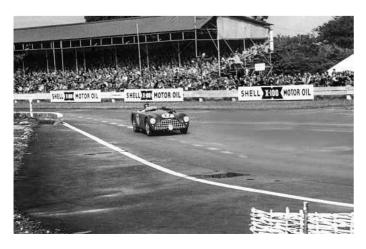
After it returned to the factory, along with a damaged SWB, it was renumbered to the current 2021 GT chassis number. Repainted in metallic grey, the Ferrari was sold on to French racing driver Pierre Dumay, who immediately entered it in the Goodwood Tourist Trophy, retiring after 45 laps. He also entered it for the 1960 Tour de France but failed to start. He sold the SWB soon after, and it went on to be used in various European events throught the 1960s.

By the 1980s it had found its way into the garage of collector and L'Oréal executive Lindsay Owen-Jones. He prepared the car for

Historic racing, and it was seen in action all the way through the 1990s. The current owner acquired the SWB in 2001 and has continued to race it extensively, including several appearances at Goodwood.

In 2013, it was sent to Lanzante Ltd in the UK for a full restoration, with Ferrari Classiche also brought in to oversee the project. During this process, conclusive evidence of the original 1931 GT chassis number was uncovered. It now features a correct 250 SWB Competizione engine, originally fitted to 1875 GT. This well-proven Historic racer is estimated to sell for £6,000,000-7,000,000. **goodingco.com**

Aston Revival Bonhams, Goodwood, UK 17 September



THIS YEAR marks the 70th anniversary of Goodwood's first endurance race in 1952. By sheer coincidence, or some very clever consigning, the very works Aston Martin DB3 that won the Goodwood Nine Hours will be offered by Bonhams at the Revival.

Driven at Goodwood by Peter Collins and co-driver Pat Griffith, this was the fifth of five 2.6-litre works cars. It has a rich period race history, including entries in the Monaco Grand Prix and Le Mans 24 Hours, also in 1952.

It made its debut at that year's

BRDC May Silverstone race meeting, where three of the four DB3s entered took a 1-2-3 finish in the 3-litre class to prove the car's potential. The next year, piloted by Reg Parnell and George Abecassis and then with 2.9-litre power (up from 2.6 litres), it placed second at the Sebring 12 Hours.

After it was retired from racing, the DB3 was road-registered and exported to Hong Kong. It returned to the UK in 1990, and since then it has taken part in many of the great Historic race meetings.

bonhams.com

OUICK GLANCE



1951 Jaguar XK120 Roadster

Dore & Rees, Somerset, UK 8 October, doreandrees.com

This right-hand-drive XK120 was entered into the first Mille Miglia retrospective rally in 1977 – it still wears the stickers – and, having been well looked after since then,

has avoided a full restoration. Although far from concours, it's an honest, characterful and very usable example. Coming from the current owner of 15 years, it's fitted with a 3.8-litre engine, but the original 3.4-litre unit will come with the car. Estimate £45,000-55,000.



2019 Aston Martin DB5 stunt car

Christies, London, UK

28 September, christies.com

It might look remarkably similar to an original DB5, but this is one of six stunt cars built for No Time to Die. It has a spaceframe chassis, a 'third party 3.2-litre straight-six' (an E46 BMW M3 engine and 'box) and a carbonfibre body. It's not road registered so would make a great museum exhibit for someone – or it could, we're sure, be a lot of fun on a private test track. Part of a charity auction, it's estimated at £1.5-2million.



1965 Morris Mini-Cooper S

Classic Car Auctions, Warwickshire, UK 24 September, classiccarauctions.co.uk

The first owner of this 1071cc Cooper S kept it for just a few months but it has stayed with the second owner throughout the following 56 years. Despite spending the last 30 years in storage it looks in remarkable shape, and it would certainly form a great basis for restoration. It's showing what is believed to be a correct 39,114 miles and, although in need of some love, this sought-after early model has an estimate of £28,000-32,000.



1985 Ford Escort RS Turbo

Silverstone Auctions, Silverstone, UK

27 August, silverstoneauctions.com

This is the only S1 Escort RS Turbo factory-painted in black. It was built by Ford's Special Vehicle Engineering department for Diana, Princess of Wales – and the colour (and base-spec grille) were requested by the Royalty Protection Command (SO14) to make it a little more stealthy. She used the car regularly from 1985 to 1988, and it's offered in concours condition. To be sold with no reserve, with a 'six-figure' sale price expected.

ALSO LOOK OUT FOR...

In March, rapper Drake opened \$200,000 worth of basketball cards in a fruitless search for a particular rarity, a card that was sold for \$2.4m as soon as it was found in May. This is the way of the modern collector card world: much-hyped 'golden tickets' are hidden in overpriced packs that are bought by speculators.

Seventy years ago, things were different. It didn't occur to anyone that the card pictured here might become valuable – least of all to the people at manufacturer Topps.

The company released its 1952 baseball cards in three series, but the third was printed too late

for distribution to be completed before the end of the season. Most examples of the card featuring New York Yankee Mickey Mantle sat in a warehouse until Topps disposed of its unsold stock by dumping it in the sea off the coast of New York.

In the mid-1980s, by which time Mantle had been inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame, sports card dealer Al Rosen took a call from a man who claimed to have a stash of uncirculated 1952 Topps cards. His father had apparently been a delivery driver for the company. Rosen bought all the good stuff, including this mint-plus-graded Mantle, which he then sold for



\$1000. In 1991 Rosen bought it back, and flipped it for \$50,000. You get a sense of where this is going... when the Mantle is sold (online) by Heritage Auctions on 27 August, it is expected to become the most expensive sports card ever. Estimate? '\$10m-plus.'

AUCTION DIARY

Please confirm details with auction houses before travelling

26 August

Barons, Southampton, UK

26-27 August

Silverstone Auctions, Silverstone, UK

27-28 August

Lucky Collector Car Auctions, Tacoma, USA

1-3 September

Worldwide, Auburn, USA

3 September

Gooding & Company, London, UK

3-4 September

Silver Auctions, Sun Valley, USA

7-10 September

Mecum, Dallas, USA

8 September

DVCA online

9 September

RM Sotheby's, St. Moritz, Switzerland

9-10 September

Mathewsons, online

10-11 September

Bonhams, Beaulieu, UK

14 September

Brightwells, online

origntwells, online

14-17 September

Mecum, Fountain City, USA

15 September

Brightwells, online (motorcycles)

17 September Bonhams, Goodwood, UK

22-24 September

RM Sotheby's, Marshall, USA

24 September

Classic Car Auctions, Leamington Spa, UK Historics, Bicester, UK Morris Leslie, Errol, UK

30 September

Barons, Southampton, UK Bonhams, Newport, USA

5 October

Charterhouse, Sparkford, UK (motorcycles)

5-6 October

RM Sotheby's, Hershey, USA

6-8 October

Vicari, Biloxi, USA

8 October

Tennants, Leyburn, UK

anis, Leybi

9 October Bonhams, Knokke-Heist, Belgium

14101440110

12 October Charterhouse, Sparkford, UK

ernouse, Sparki

13-15 October Mecum, Chicago, USA

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1954 Bentley R-Type Continental

£975,000 from Graeme Hunt, London, UK

JUST OVER 70 years ago, Bentley Motors pulled the covers off something very special at the Paris motor show: the R-Type Continental. This swooping fastback represented a new breed of post-war coachbuilt Bentley, which moved the company further away from Rolls-Royce by offering more performance and sporting ability than its cousins.

This was a car that had been developed with an eye on the ability to cross continents at great speed and in great style. During development, it was decided that the Continental needed to cruise comfortably at 100mph, which would mean a top speed of around 120mph. To make this possible, it needed to be lighter and more powerful. The body was to be clothed in aluminium, while the standard R-Type's 4.6-litre straight-six was tweaked, with new exhaust, intake and carburation giving increased power of 153bhp compared to the standard car's 140bhp.

Almost all were bodied by HJ Mulliner and based on a fastback design from Ivan Evernden and John Blatchley. 'Honed in a wind tunnel' might be overstating it, but it underwent testing and was shaped with high-speed stability as a priority.

Built in 1954, this delightful example is the final, best-developed D-series model. Due to the extra weight of the earlier fully specified Continentals, these came from the factory with a larger 4.9-litre engine to improve cruising speed. The car was restored in the early 2000s by PJ Fischer, a known marque expert. As well as completing the restoration to a very high standard, Fischer also fitted a number of very discreet upgrades at the same time. Although hidden away, there's a modern radio set-up, as well as a retractable sunroof. Perhaps neatest of all is the row of small bonnet vents to aid cooling.

After restoration it was sold to the current owner, who's letting it go after 14 years. Used extensively in that time, driven in tours and rallies all over Europe, it has been looked after by specialist P&A Wood.

If you're heading to Salon Privé, you will be able to view this magnificent machine, offered at £975,000, on Graeme Hunt's stand. **graemehunt.com**





SHOWROOM BRIEFS



1974 CITROËN GS BIROTOR £24,950

One of a handful of Wankelengined Citroëns that escaped the crusher, as the company attempted to buy back and destroy this failed venture. This one looks well kept and original. leriche.com (GBJ)



1988 PORSCHE 959 SC

With power pushed beyond 800bhp, this 959 is Bruce Canepa's ultimate expression of the Porsche supercar. The third built, it is fully restored, upgraded and well-developed. canepa.com (US)



1987 DODGE DAYTONA PACIFICA TURBO, €22,500

Not a car you often see outside of the USA, especially not with just 22 miles on the clock. It has been in a dealership collection for over 25 years, and looks – as you might expect – as new.

kenniscars.nl (NL)



1979 ROVER 3500 NZD \$15.990

Often jokingly referred to as the five-door Ferrari Daytona, the SD1 is a great-looking car – especially in Series 1 form. This V8 model was locally built in Nelson in Astral Blue, a unique NZ colour.

waimakclassiccars.co.nz (NZ)







The ex-Stirling Moss, Goodwood and Monaco eligible 1953 Cooper-Alta Grand Prix

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Ford Thunderbird

After 20 years, is this retro-styled T-Bird worthy of re-evaluation?

AS A BOND fan, whenever I see the retro-styled Ford Thunderbird I'm reminded of its fleeting appearance in *Die Another Day*. Driven by Bond's CIA counterpart Jinx (Halle Berry), it fits the larger-thanlife character and joyfully OTT film down to that last T. Yet, out in the real world, there's something slightly surreal about it – especially in the UK.

Although the 1950s and '60s T-Birds are fondly remembered, the model lost its way somewhat through the 1980s and '90s before the forgettable coupé version was killed off in 1997. The revival set out to make a return to the glory years, thanks to a heavy dose of retro styling and a revisiting of its convertible roots. The final design was completed in 1999 under the watchful eye of J Mays, and the first production models landed in 2001.

Under the skin, the Thunderbird was based on the Ford DEW platform that had underpinned the Lincoln LS and the equally retro-looking Jaguar S-type. As the Thunderbird was a prestige model, instead of sticking the Mustang's V8 under the bonnet Ford built its own short-stroke, 252bhp, 3.9-litre version of Jaguar's AJ30 V8 engine, mated to its own five-speed automatic transmission.

The Thunderbird was designed as a cruiser from the outset, with style, comfort and luxury to the fore. Buyers flocked to the dealers and Ford sold 31,368 Thunderbirds in the first full year. The reviews were mostly positive, too; *Motor Trend* magazine even crowned it as Car of the Year.

For the 2003 model year, Ford introduced an

updated AJ35 engine with power bumped up to 280bhp thanks to variable camshaft timing. Otherwise there were no major changes, just minor updates to the interior such as a revised gauge cluster from 2003, plus a few more colours and a new wheel option. After that initial flurry of interest, though, sales and production pretty much fell off a cliff.

There were a few special edition versions over the years, which are worth keeping an eye out for. The 2002 Neiman Marcus Edition got an interesting two-tone black-and-silver paintjob and a nicely appointed interior, while the 2003 James Bond 007 Edition got the same Coral paint and white hardtop as Jinx's film car. With neat numerical symmetry, Ford built 700 007s. All 2005 model-year Thunderbirds featured 50th anniversary plaques, and the Cashmere Special Edition featured a particularly nice grey interior trim.

Production finally came to an end in July of the Thunderbird breed's 50th year. Just over 68,000 examples of this last incarnation had rolled off the production line over four years. It hadn't quite been the success that Ford had hoped for, but it had found plenty of loving owners. Ford hasn't reprised the Thunderbird idea since then despite the affection in which it is held, nor is it likely to any time soon.

There's a small but loyal following for this final Thunderbird in the US, with a few decent specialists ensuring plenty of support for owners around the world. It's an acquired taste, much like *Die Another Day,* but it's one that seems good value right now, both here and in the US.

Matthew Hayward

THE LOWDOWN

WHAT TO PAY

Although it wasn't offered in right-hand drive, plenty of left-hand drive models have made it to the UK as grey imports.

Prices have firmed up in the past two years in line with the market, but you can still find a well-maintained example from around £10,000, rising to £15k for a minter.

Although finding one in the UK is easy enough, the selection of cars in the US is far superior. Prices are broadly the same and there is no shortage of pampered cars around the \$15,000-20,000 mark.

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

The Jaguar-based engine is a known quantity and generally very reliable. Any misfires are most likely to be caused by failing coil packs. Check for oil leaks around the valve covers, which is often the main reason.

Ensure that the electric hood operates correctly, especially if it is fitted with a hard top. Repair kits for the fragile latches are available.

Also, check the condition of the spare spacesaver tyre. They have been known to explode in the boot!

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1972 JAGUAR E-TYPE SERIES III "E-TYPE RESTOMOD"



1961 PORSCHE 356 B 1600S ROADSTER



1977 ALFA ROMEO 2000 SPIDER VELOCE - ALFAHOLICS GTA-R

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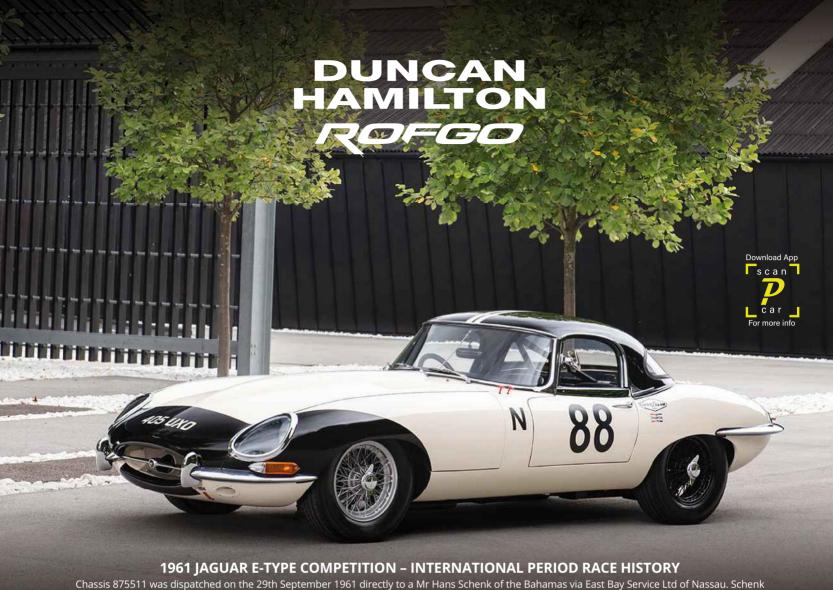
Top row, left to right: 1991 Mercedes-Benz 300SL by Ostermeier, 1967 Shelby 427 Cobra, 1964 Chevrolet Corvette, 1952 Jaguar C-Type by Proteus Second row: 2008 Alfa Romeo 8C, 1970 Maserati Ghibli, 1938 Aston Martin 15/98, 1955 Porsche 356 Speedster

Third row: 1949 Healey Silverstone, 1959 Jaguar XK150S, 1965 Shelby GT350, 1953 EMW 327

 $Fourth\ Row:\ 1914\ Rolls-Royce\ Silver\ Ghost,\ 1912\ Cartercar,\ 1949\ Bentley\ MKVI\ DHC,\ 1938\ Cadillac\ V16$



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Chassis 875511 was dispatched on the 29th September 1961 directly to a Mr Hans Schenk of the Bahamas via East Bay Service Ltd of Nassau. Schenk was a celebrity chef and racing driver of note in the Bahamas, and bought the car for the sole purpose of winning at the world-famous Internati onal Bahamas Speed Week. In its distinctive black and cream livery, and with sponsorship from Goodyear Tires and Champion Spark Plugs, Schenk was immediately on the pace, taking multiple podiums and wins in 'NP 975', including outright victory in the prestigious 1962 'Bahamas Cup' race. 1963 saw Schenk and NP 975 take a clean sweep of the Speed Week, winning race one, race two and once again the Bahamas Cup race. For 1964, Schenk sold his winning E-type to rival Tony Adams, who would score more podiums through until 1965. Today the car is in its period pre-63/Kinrara race specification, and comes with its original engine as spare. A unique and eligible car, with an exotic history – perfect for Goodwood's flagship Kinrara Trophy.







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2021 Porsche 911 (992) C4S Targa Heritage Edition

Guards red with Atacama beige leather interior and a black convertible top. 1 of 992 Heritage models produced worldwide. 1 owner, over £16,000 of extras | 39 miles



2015 Porsche 911 (991) GT3 (LHD)

White with black interior, clubsport package, front axel lift, 20" GT3 alloys, sport seats, 90L fuel tank | 161 miles



2018 Ferrari Superfast (LHD)

Rosso corsa with nero leather interior, 20" forged alloys in grey, passenger display plus loads more extras | 228 mile

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- Total matching numbers including chassis, body, engine, gearbox, front and rear axles plus steering box
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- With its full matching number status, very attractive original colours and a near perfect restoration by model experts, it's hard to think there's any other example that's comparable

£POA





1964 ASTON MARTIN DB5
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1971 FERRARI 365 GTB/4 DAYTONA
Original colours & total matching numbers as confirmed within its Ferrari 'Red Book'
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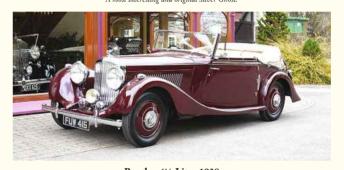


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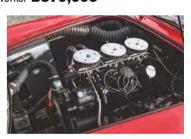
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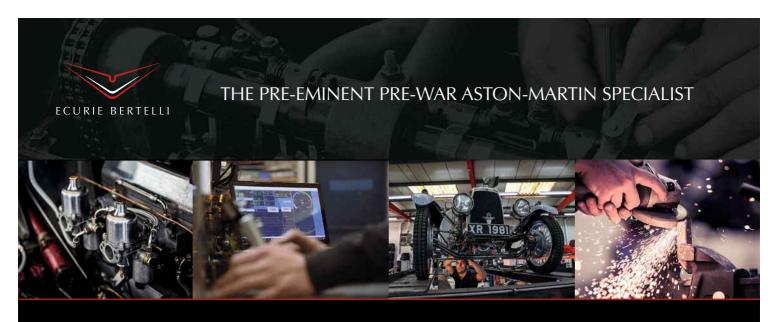
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2001 Ferrari 360 F1 Modena - One of 23

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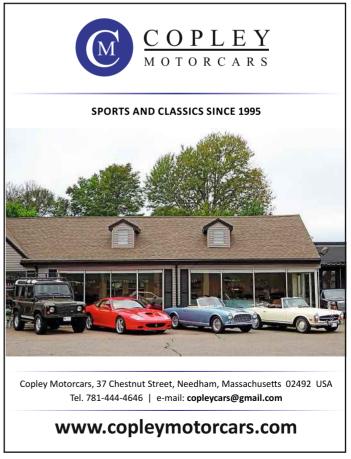
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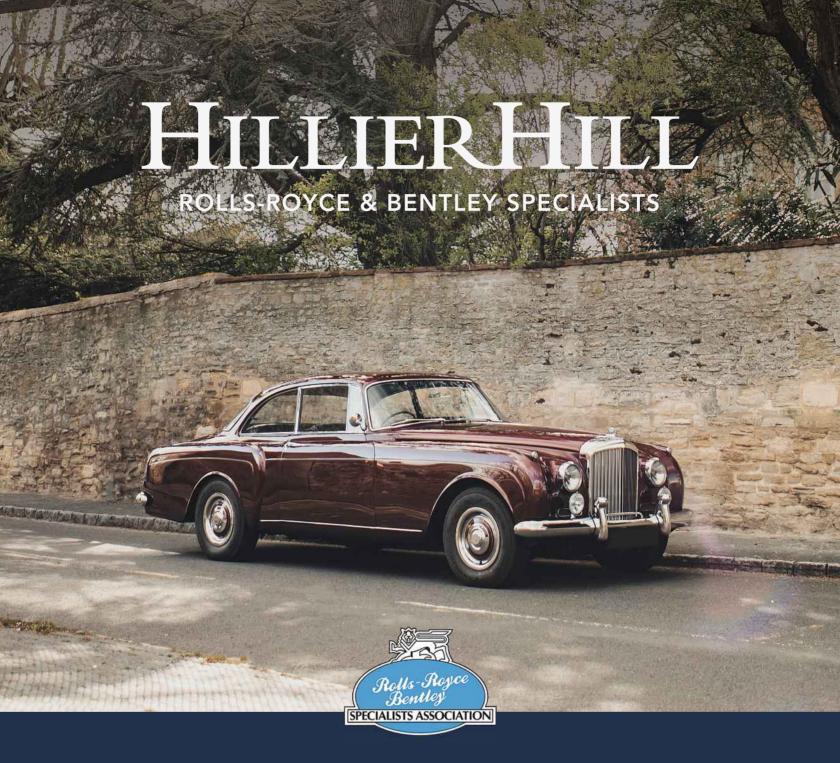
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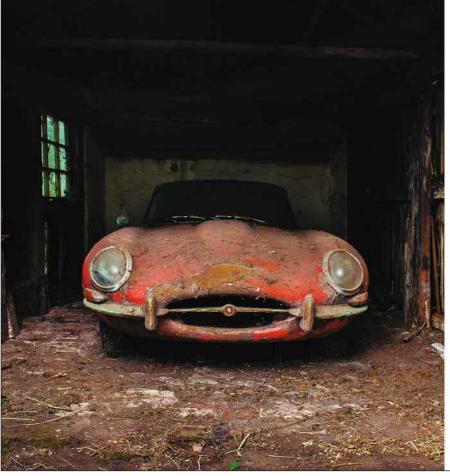
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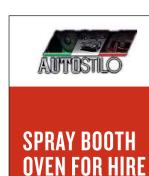
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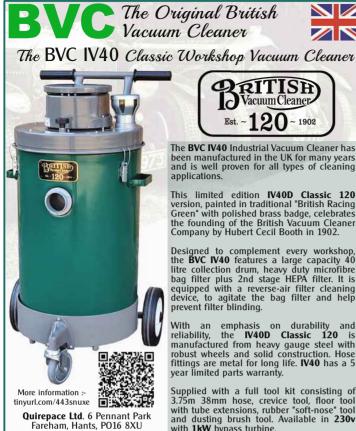


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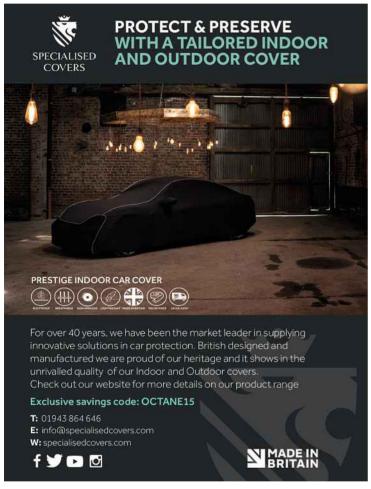
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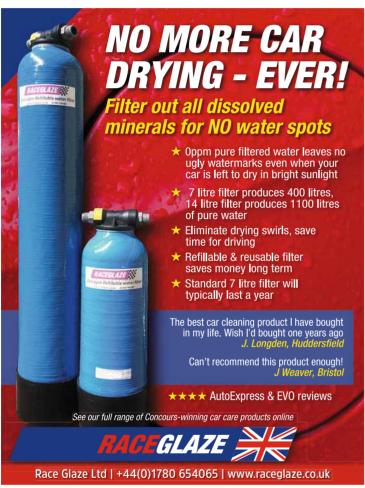






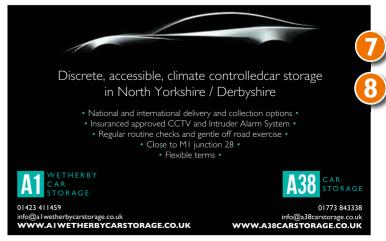






























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Anna-Louise Felstead

You'll see her on the concours circuit, rendering the scenes surreal in ink or paint

I KNOW EVERYONE says that no two days are the same in their life, and that's true, but it would be more accurate to say I have two completely different lives. I have my single-mum life when I am at home in Fulham, London, with my autistic son Freddie, and I have my classic car life when I could be anywhere in the world, painting live at Historic festivals and attending events. Neither is a life I could have imagined 15 years ago.

I was born and brought up in London but went to boarding school in Eastbourne from the age of seven. I was always obsessed with drawing and art and the facilities at St Bede's were superb, so I totally immersed myself in it. I went on to Francis Holland, did my Foundation in Brighton, on to Central St Martins and then the Royal College of Art for my MA. As graduation neared in 2003 I panicked about what I was going to do, then I was advised by the late, great war photographer Tom Stoddart to find a niche. I have always been good at drawing mechanical things and people, and my style has always been very reportage, so I started doing themed exhibitions on London's Glamorous Restaurants or behind the scenes at London Fashion Week.

At that point I had a day job at Reed Exhibitions, but I was always drawing people: in the hair salon, at the dental surgery and even strip clubs. Having arranged to do some live drawing at Stringfellows I turned up and Geoff – Peter's brother – said: 'Hello love, are you here for the

audition? Get your kit off and let's see what you can do.' I was appalled and really flattered at the same time!

I was always good at pushing open doors that were slightly ajar, and after a chance meeting with the right person I went full-time. I got a lot of work with the Royal Navy painting ships, Harrier jump-jets and helicopters. Then in 2008 I met the fantastically supportive James Wood, who told me I should go to the Grand Prix Historique de Monaco. He promised to introduce me to some people (by which he meant everyone!) so I went even though I was broke. I sat in the paddock and started drawing an Alfa Romeo. Soon someone tapped me on the shoulder and asked if I would do their car next. And that was it ...

Jason Wright also took me under his wing and I started not just painting historic race and rally cars, but competing in them, too. I love the cars now, especially pre-war cars because they have so much character. William Medcalf has recently indoctrinated me into pre-war Bentleys, but my favourite marque is Alfa Romeo.

Over time my work has become a bit more generic, which it has to be unless you want to restrict sales to a car's owner and maybe a couple of prints. At one point all of my work was of old cars, but with barely any events over the past two years I diversified into portraits and pictures of people's houses – whatever gets you through the lockdowns. That meant more time in my London studio where, having been known for my ink and paper work, I am expanding my repertoire with more oils on canvas.

I would say 60% of my work is still car-focused. This year I have been to Monaco and the Le Mans Classic, the Savile Row Concours and the London Concours. I had a stand at Salon Privé London, will go to Pebble Beach and take a stand at Salon Privé at Blenheim Palace. I am never happier than when working on location with my 18x24 sketchbook, my inks or my watercolours next to me, a tiny A5 portfolio and my stack of business cards. There are other things I want to do in the car world, but I don't know what they are yet! I designed the poster for the 2014 Concours of Elegance at Hampton Court, an area I would like to explore further – designing the Pebble Beach poster is on my bucket list.

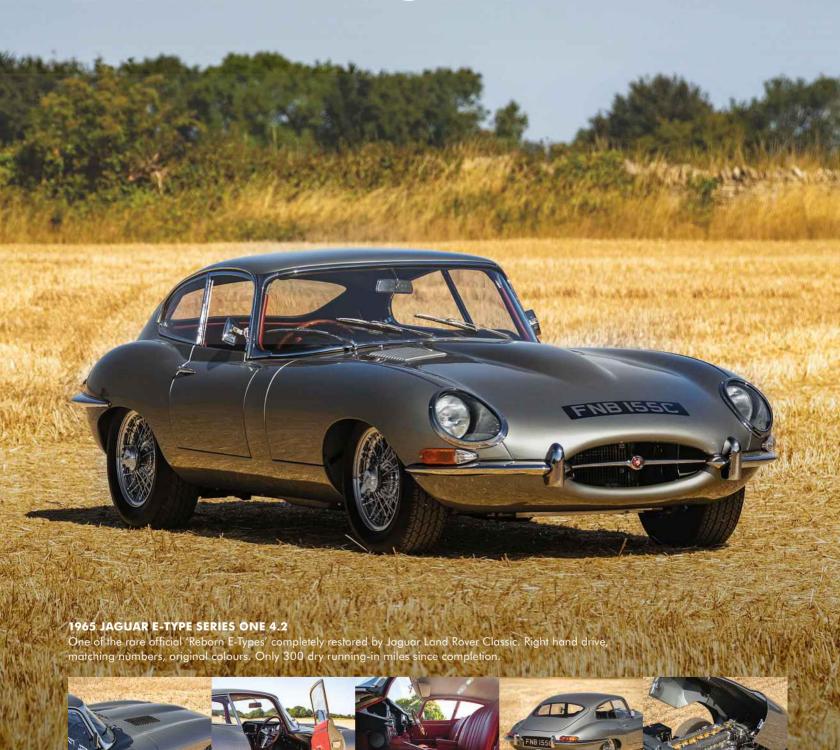
My other life revolves around Freddie and that's more normal, slightly. I get up at 6am and get him ready for school, which is near the showroom of another great friend and supporter, Joe Macari. I often drop in there after getting Freddie to breakfast club at 7.40am. I might force myself to run around the park before going to my studio, where I always work with music on whether it's Ella Fitzgerald or drum 'n' bass. Freddie goes to afterschool club, so after I pick him up at 5pm it's all about getting him home, feeding him and getting him off to bed. Then I do my admin – there is so much of it that if I did it in the daytime I wouldn't get anything else done. If I don't fall asleep in front of the computer at 9pm, as has been known, I will tend to work until 11pm and then go straight to bed.

There are other elements to my life, of course: I spend too much time on social media, but I love the way it connects people. Plus, Instagram now brings in 50% of my commissions so it's crucial for my work.

I also reflect on how charmed my life is most days. There's a lot going on in my personal life that is really challenging that perspective at the moment, but I've got my flat, I've got my kid, I've got my studio and I've got my little car world. And via my art career I have been able to do the most amazing things – yes, I've flown in a Harrier – and to meet the most amazing people including Sir Stirling Moss and Lewis Hamilton, by whom I was embarrassingly starstruck. What would I have to talk about if I just sat in my garret painting all day?

I am also thrilled that my style has become sufficiently established that people now recognise it even when I do non-car paintings. It is equally gratifying to be recognised a little on 'the circuit', though not always. At Salon Privé I met a lady who asked what I did. When I told her I was a motoring artist who worked on location, she responded: 'Oh, there used to be someone else who did that. Quite a fat girl, a brunette, who messily splashed the ink everywhere.' How dare she accuse me of being messy!

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