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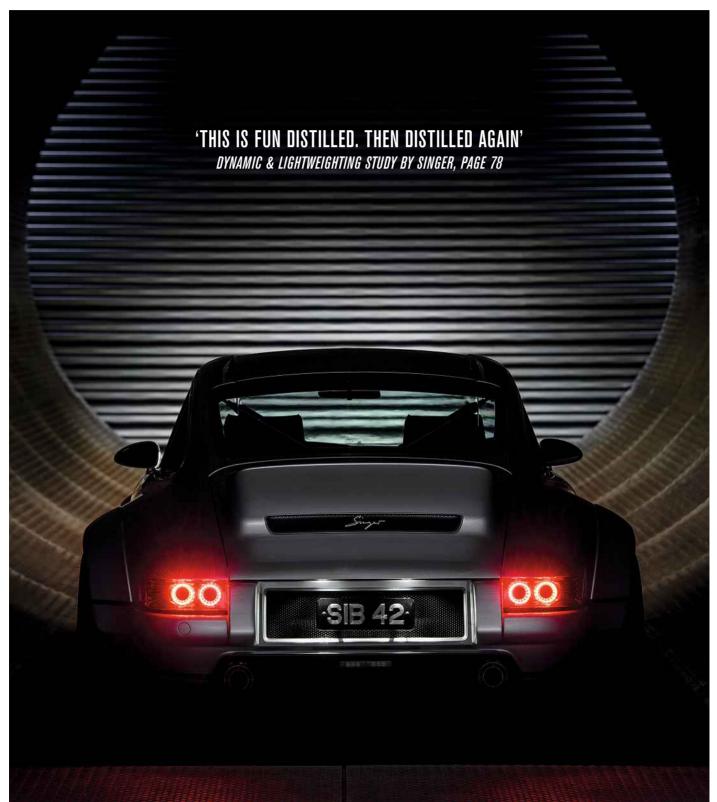
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RICHARD MILLE



A Racing Machine On The Wrist



EDITOR'S WELCOME

The road less travelled to Sant'Agata and Maranello

THERE ARE CERTAIN classic cars we would all like to own, but the vast majority of us simply lack the courage. Ironically, this disease seems to be especially prevalent among motoring journalists, people who, even more ironically, spend their lives telling you what to buy and then get dissuaded from taking the plunge themselves by their own words and repetition of history's dire warnings. Think Alfa Montreal and Citroën SM and most Lotuses, but most of all think Lamborghini Espada. I am as guilty as anyone, having backed out of a deal to buy one for £15,000 a good while ago after someone who checked it over for me mentioned that the possibly imminent engine rebuild might cost double that.

I am delighted therefore that two of my kind – Octane's deputy editor Mark Dixon and contributor Richard Heseltine – showed rather more gumption when they co-owned an Espada a few years back, pictured above on the day they bought it in 2013. Having completed one memorable trip in it to Le Mans, they reluctantly sold it a few years later when one had to finance a house move, but the next owner demonstrated that their faith in the car (and its robust reliability and huge practicality) was justified. Soon after it changed hands, the Lamborghini was promptly driven on a mammoth roadtrip across Europe visiting seven circuits, five Cols, ten museums and three Italian factory tours (Pagani, Maserati, plus, of course, Lamborghini). And that car is the very one featured in these pages.

It is alongside what I have long considered the most underrated of Ferraris, forever and unfairly stuck in the shadow of the Daytona. It is a lot more shapely than its predecessor 365 GTC and a great deal more curvaceous than the wedge-shaped 365 GT4 2+2 that it handed the baton over to. The benefit of occasional rear seats and rarity (just 505 produced) simply add to its appeal. I spent some time recently with someone who owned one and loved it before tripling their money when they cashed it in. And even at that mark-up it was a bargain, I reckon.



James Elliott, editor in chief

FEATURING



RICHARD HESELTINE 'The Espada continues to pull on the heartstrings and remains my favourite Lamborghini. The Ferrari 365 GTC/4 appeals for different reasons, a true GT from a time before the term became shorthand for a track-orientated blunt instrument.' *Richard compares two thoroughbred underdogs: turn to pages 56-66.*



TIM SCOTT

'There is quite a contrast between a wonderfully preserved 90-year-old Alfa Romeo racer and a completely re-engineered Porsche 911, but both are satisfying to photograph in very different ways! See Tim's pictures of the Alfa Romeo P3 on pages 68-76 and Singer's DLS project on pages 78-86.



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Learning how to be a concours entrant with a Ferrari 330 GTC

Surf wagons of Portugal

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Single issue price: £5.70 (UK). Full annual subscription (12 issues): UK £59.98, Europe (inc Eire) £69, RoW £88. Octane ISSN 1740-0023 is published monthly by Autovia Ltd. USPS 024-187

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Printed in the UK by Walstead Roche. Distributed by Marketforce, marketforce.co.ul

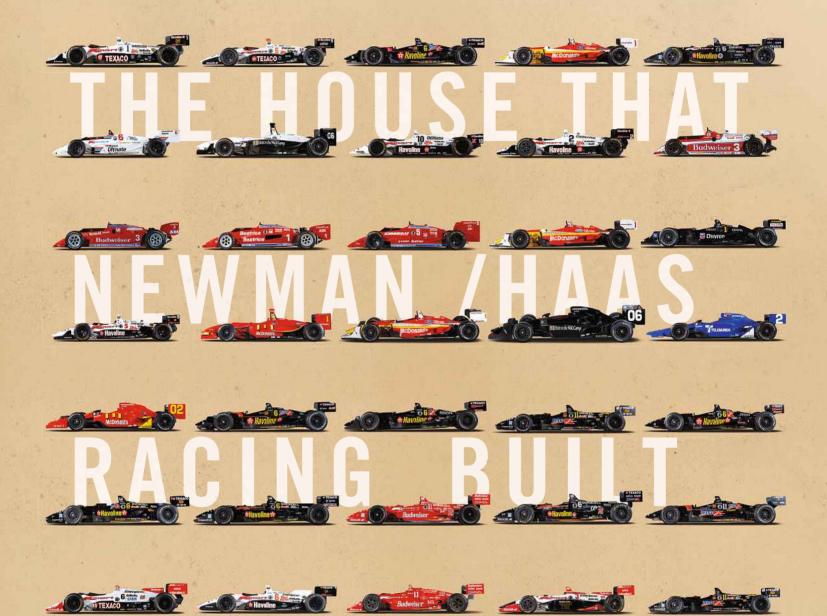


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The Historic Motoring Awards 2022 shortlist

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Dougal Cawley James Wood Julian Barratt Sandra & Martin Button Yohan Poonawalla

INDUSTRY SUPPORTER OF THE YEAR

Hagerty Historic & Classic Vehicles Alliance Motul Richard Mille Rolex

The Historic Motoring Awards 2022 shortlist (continued)

MOTORING EVENT OF THE YEAR

Beaulieu International Autojumble **Bicester Scramble** laguar Centenary Celebration Kilomètre Lancé / St Moritz Motoring Week Rétromobile

V Classic

MUSEUM/COLLECTION OF THE YEAR

Blackhawk Museum Brooklands Museum Caramulo Experience Center Haynes Motor Museum Mercedes-Benz Museum

RESTORER OF THE YEAR

Ecurie Bertelli Hilton & Moss **HK-Engineering RM** Auto Restoration Vintage Bentley/William Medcalf

BEST USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Goodwood Revival Rétromobile **REVS**-Limiter Simon Kidston Tom Hartley Inr



MOTORSPORT EVENT OF THE YEAR

Grand Prix Historique de Monaco Oulton Park Gold Cup Rally the Globe Generations Rally 2022 -The Generation Game **Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion** VSCC Herefordshire Trial

APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR

Callum Staff – Ecurie Bertelli Ellie Gentry – Gentry Restorations Jack Langley - Richards of England James Small – Bristol Classic Car Restoration Kieran Coleman – David Cornwallis Lewis Giddings – Woolmer Classic Engineering Maximillian Houghton – Somerford Mini Tomasz Mika – Fiennes Restoration William Foster – Moss Jaguar

RISING STAR – PERSON

Georgia Peck Georgina Wood Gianfranco Gentile Shami Kalra William Heynes

PUBLICATION OF THE YEAR

Aero Dynamic – How Bristol Won at Le Mans BRM: Racing for Britain Fit for a King: the Royal Garage of the Shahs of Iran Formula 1's Unsung Pioneers Secret Fords Volume 2

MANUFACTURER CONTRIBUTION

Bentley laguar Land Rover McLaren Mercedes-Benz Porsche

TEAM OF THE YEAR

Collecting Cars Girardo & Co HERO-ERA Longstone Tyres Zoute Grand Prix

DHICK

HCVA

SPECIALIST OF THE YEAR

CKL Developments Classic Motor Cars **HK**-Engineering Superformance Vintage Tyre Supplies

CLUB OF THE YEAR

Austin Seven Clubs' Association BMW Car Club GB Bugatti Owners' Club Peugeot Sport Club UK Vintage Sports-Car Club

PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT

TICKETS ON SALE NON Angela Hucke Francis Galashan Jonathan Procter Norman Foster, Baron Foster of Thames Bank Peter Neumark

PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHER

Aston Parrott Andy Morgan Drew Gibson Michael Holden Max Serra

RISING STAR – EVENT

Audrain Newport Concours & Motor Week Concours on Savile Row Footman lames Coffee & Chrome Collective Rendez-Vous Riviera Valletta Concours d'Elegance

CONCOURS OF THE YEAR

Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este Concours of Elegance Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance Salon Privé Sydney Harbour Concours d'Elegance

BESPOKE CAR OF THE YEAR

Alvis Graber Coupé continuation Bizzarrini 5300 GT Revival Corsa 'Jubilee' Jaguar E-type by Jaguar Classic 'Sunshine Gullwing' Mercedes-Benz 300SL by HK-Engineering Tolman Engineering Peugeot 205 GTi

CAR OF THE YEAR

1901 De Dion-Bouton 1930 Lancia Dilambda 1934 Aston Martin Mk2 1938 Mercedes-Benz 540K Autobahn-Kurier 1952 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Gullwing (W194) 1955 Aston Martin DB3S Coupé 1956 Ferrari 250 GT TdF Berlinetta Zagato 1956 Ferrari 250 GT Berlinetta Competizione 1956 Porsche 356 Outlaw by Dean Jeffries 1971 Citroën SM Espace by Heuliez



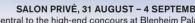
Monterey Week, 11-20 August

18

The busiest week on the classic calendar boasts non-stop events for more than a week, not to mention the raft of sideshows such as the auctions. Clockwise, from above: a Cobra holds its line coming out of The Corkscrew during the Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion; a Steyr 220 Glaser Roadster on the Pebble Beach Tour of Elegance; Dodi Khalil's derelict BMW 502 was the star turn at the Concours d'Lemons; Lee R Anderson Sr's 1932 Duesenberg J Figoni Sports Torpedo took the top award at the main event, the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance. Images: Rolex / Tom O'Neal; Evan Klein







1 MIND

AVIVA SALON PRIVÉ, 31 AUGUST – 4 SEPTEMBER Central to the high-end concours at Blenheim Palace (though the last two days opened it up to car clubs and the public) was the Platinum Collection, featuring two McLaren F1s and a host of other exotica. Below, left to right: Fantuzzi Ferrari 365P took Duke of Marlborough award; Aviva Best of Show Zagato Ferrari 250 GT TdF; 1907 Lorraine-Dietrich was the People's Choice. Images: Salon Privé

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AUTOMOBILE CLUB DE VILLARS, 20 AUGUST Jonathan Procter's new club was launched over the Ollon-Villars Hillclimb weekend and was attended by Sir Jackie Stewart and Giacomo Agostini, among a host of others.

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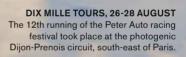
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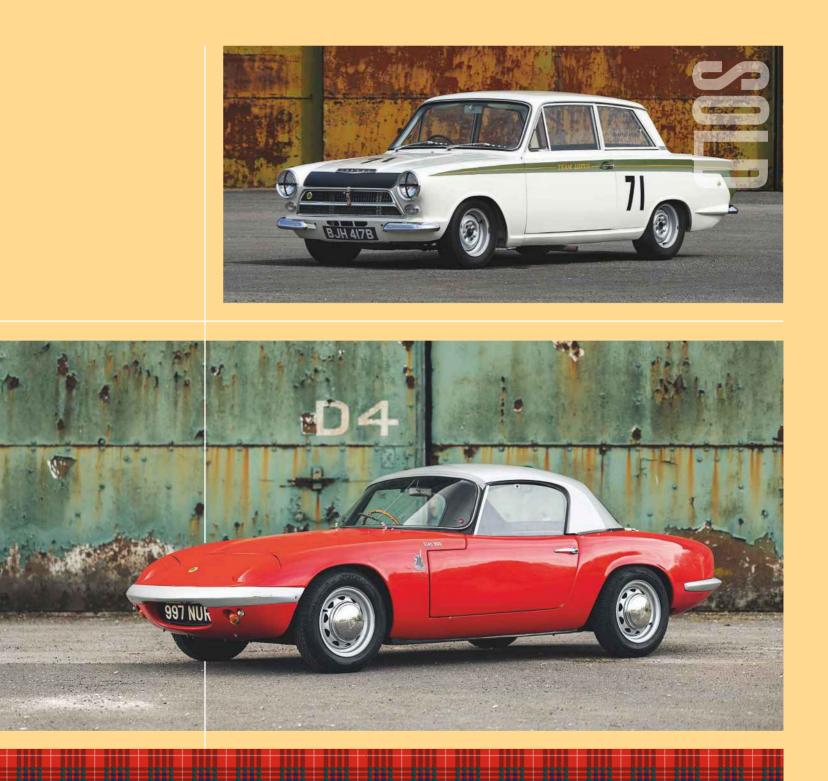














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COMING UP...

This Autumn's highlights include an epic adventure in South America, and a new festival of motoring literature and art

1 October

Swiss Classic British Car Meeting

More than 1600 British cars and bikes head to Morges on the shores of Lake Geneva, along with some 25,000 visitors. Rolls-Royce is the featured marque this year. **british-cars.ch**

1 October

Rendez-Vous Riviera

Coinciding with classic yacht regatta Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez, this event sees classics and modern hypercars gather at Saint-Tropez Polo Club, where guests will also enjoy culinary and musical treats. **rendezvousriviera.co.uk**

1-2 October

Ardennenrennen

Classic VWs and Porsches are hustled from Liège to Bastogne and back, following a route that includes many stretches of road that featured in races of old. ardennenrennen.be

2 October

Pioneer Run

The Sunbeam Motor Cycle Club brings together over 300 pre-1915 motorcyles for a trundle from Epsom down to Brighton. **sunbeam-mcc.co.uk**

2-7 October

Modena Cento Ore

A 1000km blast from Milano Marittima to Modena, plus circuit races at Mugello and Misano. **modenacentoore.canossa.com**

2-8 October

Tour du Péloponnèse A winding tour of Greece's Peloponnese peninsula, with visits

to fabulous archaeological sites. tourdupeloponnese.com

3-8 October

Tour de Corse Historique Closed-road stages account for some 380km of this rally around Corsica. **tourdecorse-historique.fr**

6-9 October Zoute Grand Prix

The seaside resort of Knokke-Heist in Belgium is transformed into a car-lover's playground. The programme includes a concours, a rally and an art exhibition. **zoutegrandprix.be**

7-9 October

Estoril Classics

Peter Auto closes its racing season with this popular meeting at Estoril in sunny Portugal. **peterauto.fr**

7-9 October

Barber Vintage Festival Fans of classic bikes descend on the circuit at Alabama's Barber Vintage Motorsports Museum – which has extended opening hours for the duration of the festival. barbermuseum.org

8-9 October Welsh Trial

Drivers and bouncers get their eye

in at the first event of the VSCC's trialling season, in Presteigne. **vscc.co.uk**

8-9 October

Classic Car Boot Sale At Granary Square and Coal Drops Yard in King's Cross, London, classic vehicles go on display and traders pitch up to sell vintage clothing and all sorts of ephemera. classiccarbootsale.co.uk

9 October

Brooklands Autumn Motorsport Day

The grounds of Brooklands are packed with competition cars, and there's a chance to see many of them in action on the adjacent Mercedes-Benz World circuit. **brooklandsmuseum.com**

9 October

Bicester Heritage Scramble The specialists based at Bicester Heritage open their doors to visitors, and classics flood the site for the final Scramble of 2022. **bicesterheritage.co.uk**

12-14 October

Fall Rallye Chattanooga

A scenic trip through Tennessee, North Carolina and Georgia, based in Chattanooga and finishing in time for the Chattanooga Motorcar Festival. canossa.com

13-16 October

Targa Florio Classic With classes added for post-1991 GTs and Ferraris, there will be a more modern look to the field at this year's running of the Targa Florio regularity race. targa-florio.it

14-16 October

Chattanooga Motorcar Festival A three-day festival featuring racing on a street course alongside the Tennessee River.

chattanoogamotorcar.com

20 October – 12 November East Himalaya Rally

Crews in pre-1980 cars travel through India, Bhutan and Bangladesh, taking in sights including tea plantations and hillside monasteries. **destination-rally.com**



20-23 October

Auto e Moto d'Epoca

Padua's exhibition halls will again be filled with classic cars, bikes, parts and automobilia for sale. **autoemotodepoca.com**

22-23 October

Motor Racing Legends at Silverstone

Late-season action at Silverstone, with races including the Amon Cup for Ford GT40s. silverstone.co.uk

22 October – 20 November Lima to Cape Horn

Pre-1986 cars travel almost the entire length of South America, from Lima in Peru through Bolivia, Argentina and Chile on the way to 'the End of the World', Cape Horn. endurorally.com

24-27 October

West Country Cloverleaf Regularity rally for pre-1977 cars,

meandering through the prettiest parts of Devon and Cornwall. rallytheglobe.com

28-30 October

Las Vegas Concours d'Elegance

Jay Leno will serve as grand marshal at this year's event, which is set to include a special celebration of the Ferrari F40. **lasvegasconcours.com**

2-6 November Classic Daytona

A wonderful opportunity to see some of the old monsters of motorsport thundering around Florida's most famous circuit. hsrrace.com

5-12 November TransMaroc

This rally begins and ends in Marrakesh, but travels into Morocco's desert. Don't be daunted, though: instruction will be given to those new to driving on sand. **zaniroli.com**

6 November

Porter Press Motoring Literary & Art Festival

Held at Whittlebury Park near Silverstone, featuring motoring art displays and talks by such luminaries as Sir Jackie Stewart. **porterpress.co.uk**

6 November

London to Brighton Veteran Car Run

Pre-1905 cars puff and pop their way from Hyde Park to the South Coast, this year celebrating the first British victory in international motorsport, with the 1902 Gordon Bennett Cup-winning Napier joined by its surviving sister cars. **veterancarrun.com**

11-13 November

Lancaster Insurance Classic Motor Show, NEC

Iconic Midlands show, with hall after hall of club displays, cars for sale, autojumble, live stage, restoration theatre and more. **necclassicmotorshow.com**

16 November

Historic Motoring Awards The great and the good of the old-car world convene at The Londoner Hotel in Leicester Square for this year's ceremony. historicmotoringawards.co.uk



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Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre

A walk into the past – with surprises and the chance to ride in a legend

YOU COULD SAY that people's fascination with old bomber aircraft is a guilty pleasure. After all, these aircraft were built with one purpose – to cause maximum disruption and damage – but it has to be said that without Bomber Command, the result of World War Two could have been very different.

Almost a million people from more than 60 countries were involved with Bomber Command, which lost some 8325 aircraft and 55,573 crew carrying out their duties. That was 56% of all aircrew, and with an average age of 22.

A great proportion of bomber stations were in Lincolnshire and you can experience how life at one might have been at the Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre. Walking through the entrance, the first sight is the Lancaster bomber *Just Jane* (see *Octane* 232), the nose peeking out of a huge hangar. The nose art reminds us of some of the methods used to raise the spirits of aircrews and *Just Jane* has a painting of Jane sitting on a bomb below the cockpit.

Jane was a British comic strip character in the *Daily Mirror* newspaper, 'strip' being the operative word, as Jane was involved in all kinds of misadventures, most of which resulted in her losing her clothes! It wouldn't do nowadays, but in the war years it was very popular.

The Lancaster itself is undergoing intense

Words and photography Barry Wiseman

restoration work, but is available to the public for 'Taxy Rides' on the airfield (see website for details). The Mosquito NF11, parked behind the Lancaster, offers similar experiences.

This main hangar is full of interest, including a Barnes Wallis bouncing bomb and the controls of Guy Gibson's Lancaster. There is also a fine line-up of motor vehicles.

The airfield gives a real feel of what life was like in its heyday, with a billet hut, briefing hut, a Home Front exhibition and a peaceful memorial chapel, all reeking of atmosphere.

Naturally, the control tower is an important aspect, with radio and Morse code sounds to add to the experience. Some 12% of bomber crews found themselves in prisoner-of-war camps, and the Escaping Society Museum highlights the efforts that they made to escape and return to duty.

A further building houses a workshop, where a Hampden bomber is being rebuilt, one day destined to join the Lancaster and Mosquito. Curiously, there is a Goggomobil saloon bodyshell parked in the middle of all this.

In a far corner, another building houses a collection of vehicles, mostly of commercial origin. There is a huge AEC tanker that held 2000 gallons of fuel, sufficient to refill a Lancaster. Hidden behind this behemoth was a sight to take one's breath away. A Squire? Well, nearly. It is a 1986 Kennedy Squire. Only seven real Squires were built between 1934 and 1936. Although fantastic-looking and well-built, they were just too pricey. Sadly, Adrian Squire was killed in an air raid in Bristol a few years later.

In the 1980s, Kennedy's (now Vicarage) built 16 replicas, using the ladder chassis/ash frame/ aluminium body construction of the original, along with Alfa Romeo 2.0-litre engines and transmissions. The remainder of the build consisted primarily of British-sourced parts. This would be just the kind of car raffish RAF chaps would want to drive – but that's not all. Behind the Kennedy is an MG TA Cochrane Special, reputedly a unique car, built to aircraft standards by a de Havilland engineer in 1954. These two cars are worth the visit alone.

The Centre has a pleasant NAAFI/café and a well-stocked gift shop.

LINCOLNSHIRE AVIATION HERITAGE CENTRE

East Kirkby, Spilsby, PE23 4DE – or you can fly in; check website for details. Open Tuesday-Saturday, 9:30am-5pm from Easter to end of October, 10am-4pm for the remainder of year. Adult admission £10, senior £9, children (6-16) £4. More infomation at www.lincsaviation.co.uk.



2023

2023

Start

Deauville

PARIS

he fourth in *Rally the Globe's* popular 'Carrera' series of events will take eleven days to explore the array of scenic delights and perfect driving roads that France has to offer.

Starting in Deauville in the north of the country, the *Carrera Riviera* will wind its way through river valleys, vineyards and rolling fields, past ancient chateaux and a mountain range or two, and will take advantage of the fine regional cuisine en route to Cannes on the Mediterranean Coast. Expect hotels oozing luxury and character, and plenty of convivial competition along the way.



Rally HGlobe

For more information and to register your interest visit www.rallytheglobe.com

Bonhams

VINTAGE SHAMROCK

The Carrera Riviera is open to cars of pre-1977 specification, with a separate classification for pre-1946 specification cars.

GENERATIONS

CLOVERLEAF



Beaulieu bounces back

After two seasons of debilitating cancellations, the Autojumble felt like a return to normality

HUNDREDS OF classic car events suffered during the pandemic through cancellation, postponement or constraints that changed their nature in a fundamental way, but for hardcore enthusiasts few left a bigger hole in the calendar than September's traditional Beaulieu International Autojumble. As one of the oldest and most loved events in the diary, its cancellation in 2020 and significant depletion in 2021 were disappointing, so its bustling energy and buzz for its 55th year on 10-11 September seemed to symbolise a return to normality.

More than 26,000 people turned out to buy, sell, meet old friends, socialise, enjoy the special displays and attend the Bonhams auction. Most noticeable was a huge increase of international traders and visitors over 2021, many spending two or three full days seeking out tools, parts, automobilia, retro lifestyle items, clothing and, of course, complete cars in various states of repair.

Octane's own Mark Dixon, a Beaulieu veteran, was among the traders in the grounds of the National Motor Museum. He said: 'It was very well attended and all the old faces were there. It was good to see so many visitors from the Continent and further afield, too – my fellow stallholder even sold some 1930s Wolseley parts to a couple of enthusiasts from India. There are still great finds to be made: a friend bought a really nice 'chain gang' Frazer Nash steering wheel for £50, and I heard of many other bargain buys. But it's the banter with fellow stallholders and punters that makes Beaulieu such a joy, and it was there in abundance this year.'

One of the most fun elements of an event that seems to transcend wealth is the Best Stand award, given to the display that best captures the spirit of the event. It was taken by a second-timer, Jon Bowsell. With eye-catching vintage dress and a winning sales patter, he charmed the crowds with brutally honest descriptions of the items on his stand, which ranged from toy cars to an aeroplane propeller.

After receiving his award from Lord Montagu, Jon said: 'I've always dabbled in selling old car bits, but I'm relatively new to the autojumble business. I used to trade online but, as I live only eight miles up the road, it made sense to start at the International Autojumble last year. People come here to buy all sorts of retro items, not just car parts, so I have brought along quite a mix. It might look like junk but, with vintage car parts, I find at Beaulieu that people are prepared to buy things to fix them up themselves.'

Away from the main showfield there was plenty to entertain, including a colourful Nifty Fifties car display. They weren't all Yank tanks as you might expect from the name, but included a Morris Oxford MO that had come from Belgium, an E-series Vauxhall Cresta, a Hillman Minx Series I, a very early Morris Mini-Minor, an ex-RAF Land Rover Series I, a pair of Wolseley 1500s and an Austin A40 Somerset. The Morgan Sports Car Club also put on a fine display.

The large Automart and Dealermart offered the usual mix of popular classics and vintage rarities, with a very low-mileage 1988 MG Metro (£10,995) rubbing shoulders with a 1916 Saxon Roadster, a 1937 Tatra 75 convertible in need of complete restoration, and a 1932 Lagonda Low Chassis Continental.

The Bonhams auction was similarly eclectic, a restored 1950 Austin K4 petrol tanker in National Benzole Mixture livery selling for £24,725, while a 1963 Lagonda Rapide went for £51,750. Other highlights included a 1949 Fordson 7V van kitted out as a retro catering van (£29,900) and a 1931 Rolls-Royce 20/25hp (£155,250). A one-off 1914 Ford Model T motorhome – with a wood-burning stove, four berths and a Welsh dresser – attracted a lot of interest and made £63,250.

We now live in a more uncertain world and have no idea even what the coming Winter may bring, but for now, as the crowds dissipated after a vintage Beaulieu, it felt like this unique gathering had clutched enthusiasts in a warm embrace and whispered 'everything is going to be all right'.

Clockwise, from facing page, top

Well-sorted Morgan was a tempting proposition in the Automart; winner of the Best Stand award, Jon Bowsell; the post-Beaulieu tidying-up begins; Nifty Fifties display featured plenty of family favourites; vintage pedal cars are always popular; boxes and boxes of oily bits to rummage through; Beaulieu is the place to find new/ old-stock parts; no shortage of items for the 'man cave'.



NEWS FEED

Motoring arts and literature festival; bumper book price; hillclimb hero; Le Mans sale; MGB bodyshells; Hagerty hub; trademark acquisition; Indian show; club secures rarity; Ace tie-up



Festival for the motoring arts

The UK's first ever motoring, literary and arts festival will take place on 6 November. Arranged by Porter Press International, the event will boast a range of speakers from Lord Hesketh and Peter Stevens to authors, drivers, engineers, designers and collectors. It will also have exhibitions by motoring artists and photographers.

The motorsport-themed venue for the festival is Whittlebury Park, close to Silverstone, and organisers hope it will echo the likes of the Cheltenham and Hay literary festivals, but with a single, motoring focus.

Former F1 entrant Lord Hesketh – who launched the career of James Hunt – will talk candidly about his heady and hedonistic team in the mid-1970s, while Stevens will share insight on his creations that include the XJR-15 and McLaren F1.

Philip Porter said: 'This is an idea I had about three years ago but the pandemic put it on hold. Now we are raring to go and I hope this will build and build as a significant annual event on the motoring calendar.'



\$46k Bugatti book

The first copy of a \$900 limitededition Bugatti book made an astonishing \$46,000 for charity when it was auctioned during the Chairman's Dinner at the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance. *The EB110 & The Last Bugatti Racing Cars* was written by Johann Petit and Pascal van Mele, and edited by Julius Kruta.



Shute for the stars

Robin Shute, the only British driver to take overall victory at the legendary Pikes Peak hillclimb – a feat he has achieved three times, including the past two years – has been awarded the Segrave Trophy by the Royal Automobile Club. See the next edition of *Octane* for a full and exclusive interview with the Norfolk-born speed king.

RM heads to Le Mans

RM Sotheby's has partnered with the Automobile Club de l'Ouest to hold an auction of significant cars at the 100th running of the famous 24 Hours next June. Just 24 cars, all with significant history, will be offered in the sale, which will be held on the racetrack!



Shell company

As the 60th anniversary of the MGB nears its end, British Motor Heritage is just finishing its annual batch of replacement bodyshells for the evergreen sporting favourite. It is the biggest build for four years and comprises 16 GT and 14 Roadster shells.



Hagerty's Bicester hub

Hagerty is set to open a new clubhouse at Bicester Heritage as a hub for clients, members and enthusiasts. The building is currently undergoing a 'bespoke refit' and the grand opening is scheduled for early 2023.

Officially Austin

Burlen, owner of the J40 Motor Company, now has the right to use the Austin trademark on its pedal cars and parts. On the back of that, a new company (Austin Pedal Cars Ltd) was formed to launch its J40 continuation car.



New Indian concours

A new concours has been announced for February 2024 at The Oberoi Udaivilās, Udaipur, beside Lake Pichola. The Oberoi Concours d'Elegance will be curated by Manvendra Singh Barwani, with Pebble Beach chair Sandra Button as chief judge.



STAR quality

The Sunbeam Talbot Alpine Register has bought and recommissioned a rare 1939 Sunbeam Talbot 3 Litre. Knowing it was going to a good home, the Northumberland owner greatly reduced the asking price and the car will be on show at November's Classic Car Show at the NEC.



Motul deals an Ace

Oil company Motul has launched a partnership with the famous Ace Café, just off London's A406 North Circular in Park Royal. The company's branding can now clearly be seen from most angles.

11th - 13th November

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Best of the best crowned

Competition Ferrari declared king of the concours

A SPECTACULAR 1956 Ferrari 250 GT Berlinetta Competizione has scooped the prestigious annual Best of the Best prize. Brian Ross's car, which had taken the Best of Show trophy at Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este earlier in the year to qualify for the competition, beat off challenges from seven other international concours winners to secure the accolade in the Peninsula Classics competition. Though usually announced at Rétromobile in February, for the first time the award was made at Quail Lodge on 14 August, before Monterey Week kicked off.

A team of 25 judges – including Octane's Jay Leno, Nick Mason, Ken Okuyama and Ralph Lauren – selected the Ferrari from a shortlist of 1957 Ferrari 250 GT Berlinetta Tour de France, 1974 Lancia Stratos HF Stradale, 1926 Suiza H6B Cabriolet, 1934 Avions Voisin Type C27 Aerosport Coupé and three variants of the 1938 Mercedes-Benz 540K.

The winning car is one of just nine and was campaigned on the Mille Miglia and in the 1959 Tour de France. Modified by Scaglietti, it differs from similar models that have a lowered nose, smaller grille and faired-in headlamps. It has a prototype 12B V12 engine.

Having languished for decades in a museum, it was restored by Sam and Emily Mann before appearing at the Cavallino Classic. Ross bought it in 2016 and shipped it to Bacchelli & Villa in Italy for further work and then certification by Ferrari Classiche.

He said: 'It is a magnificent recognition of the multiple years spent trying to get my hands on this 250 GT and the hard work that went into the years-long restoration process.'

The Hon Sir Michael Kadoorie added: 'With such an illustrious selection of finalists this year, judging was especially challenging.' A few days later, on 19 August, the same luxurious venue hosted its annual Motorsports Gathering, one of the cornerstones of Monterey Week in California. The elite 200car concours was won by William Pope's 1956 Jaguar D-type, while the prestigious *Octane* Choice award was awarded to a 1959 Citroën Squall Prototype dubbed 'The French BAT' and owned by Thomas Hale of Connecticut. *Octane*'s Italian correspondent Massimo Delbò was on hand to award the trophy, a beautiful sculpture by Jonny Ambrose.

From top

The winning Ferrari; a few days later a D-type won The Quail, A Motorsports Gathering; Massimo Delbò hands over the *Octane* trophy.



MPs get in touch with our heritage

Brooklands and HSA show them the ropes

A GROUP OF MPs has visited Brooklands Museum, met the apprentices at the on-site Heritage Skills Academy and tackled the Test Hill in a VSCC-organised driving test, to get a better understanding of the importance of preserving the UK's motoring heritage and sustainability.

The event, supported by Aston Lark and also including a Morgan driving experience, was set up by the Association of Heritage Engineers, which hosted members of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Motorsport on 22 August.

Guests included Lord Strathcarron, Karl McCartney MP (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department of Transport), Greg Smith MP, James Sunderland MP and Mark Garnier MP.

APPG co-chair James Sunderland MP said after the visit: 'Brooklands is hugely important to Britain. We are grateful to Brooklands Museum, the staff and apprentices of the Association of Heritage Engineers, and to all the volunteers who continue the spirit of competition on this historic track.'

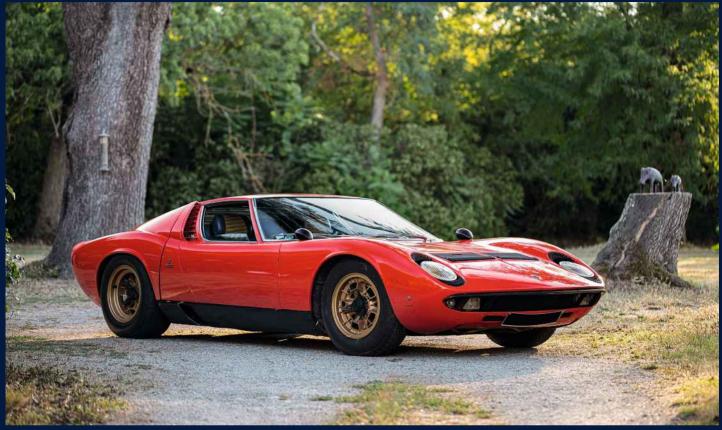
AoHE MD Dominic Taylor-Lane added: 'Being able to engage with groups and individuals within Parliament is absolutely key to being able to explain and demonstrate how valuable heritage, hand and artisan skills are to a genuinely sustainable future.'

Below

After an introduction by MD John Pitchforth, MPs met the apprentices at the Heritage Skills Academy.



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What a way to beat the blues

Bereavement led Peter Tomalin to an Aston Martin Vantage

'TO LOSE ONE parent may be regarded as a misfortune; to lose both looks like carelessness,' as Lady Bracknell had it. My year of living carelessly was 2020, which was a pretty rotten 12 months all round, I think we can agree. And for me 2021 wasn't shaping up to be a whole lot cheerier, with the small matter of an impending 60th birthday on the horizon. Now, events like this can cause a chap to reflect a little, and the upshot of my ruminations was a resolve to crack on with life, and not to put off a moment longer all the things I'd been wanting to do.

Uppermost on the list was to buy a sports car, and, thanks to a modest inheritance, I reckoned I could afford to spend £35,000. My shortlist: Audi R8 V8, Porsche 997, and either Aston Martin DB9 or V8 Vantage – all pretty much mid-Noughties contemporaries. As a staffer on *Octane's* sister mag, *evo*, I'd driven all four extensively in period. The Audi and Porsche had the edge dynamically, but AM's early Gaydon era was a new golden age for the marque, nurtured by Ford cash and intelligent management, and the resulting cars were charismatic and capable. To my mind DB9 and Vantage echoed the sublime DB Astons of the '50s and '60s, cars that I'd adored as a youngster.

There was one other factor. In the early '80s my father had passed up the opportunity to swap his Mk2 Jaguar plus a few hundred pounds for a DB6, and he'd always regretted 'the Aston that got away'. So while the head said Audi or Porsche, the heart replied Aston Martin, to which there was no comeback.

I spent a day with a Vantage and a DB9. The smaller car was the slightly more sporting in character, the DB9 was more the GT and had that fabulous V12 engine. But in the end the Vantage's tauter lines and dart-like profile clinched it. That and the risk of bigger bills with 12 cylinders (I may have been spooked by rumours of DB9s ingesting the shrapnel of fragmenting catalytic converters).

So V8 Vantage it would be, and back in February 2021 my £35k budget would buy either a really nice, low-mileage 4.3 or just about stretch to a slightly leggier 4.7. There were pros and cons to each, but in the end, I confess, it came down to colour. The vast majority of early Gaydon Vantages are various shades of grey, but there were a couple of nonmonochrome colours that really appealed – a lovely pale metallic blue and the shade you see here: Toro Red.

So when an early 2006 car in Toro arrived at Gaydon-era specialists McGurk Performance Cars, I was there even before the photos appeared on their website. As John McGurk fired that throaty V8 engine into life and edged the Aston out of the showroom into crisp, late-Winter light, I just knew I was going to buy it.

The weirdest thing? The night before, I'd been perusing the registrations available online and had discovered that R200 AMV was for sale for a few hundred quid. I'm not generally a fan of personalised plates, but I thought something with AMV in would be quite cool. I'd almost pressed 'buy it now' but decided not to tempt fate. And here I was, staring at R100 AMV. It was obviously meant to be.

Eighteen months and 5000 miles later, I still have to pinch myself sometimes when I catch sight of the Aston parked outside. Few cars of any era, to my eyes, have such wonderful proportions and such gorgeous detailing, and in the 'golden hour' the paintwork simply glows. The fact that it drives so well is almost a bonus. My only regret is that Dad never got to see it; he would have absolutely loved it, too.

WHY WE LOVE...

Detours

OK, OK, I'll admit, I don't love them *every* time. I'm not a total masochist, and those awful, sudden late-night trunk route closures can wreak havoc with your plans to get to bed before it's time to get up again. But, even then, I'd never have discovered the charms of Welwyn Garden City's ancient roundabouts had I not been funnelled off the A1 at 11.15 one evening on the way home from London.

This morning's trip to Milton Keynes was enlivened no end by an unadvertised road closure: seems I have to thank the provision of superfast broadband for this one. Rather than the boring A509, suddenly I was exploring country lanes and villages I hadn't seen before, even though they're within 15-20 miles of where I live. Sure, I arrrived a little later than intended, but only by about ten minutes. And it was fun.

It was thanks to a detour that I discovered one of my favourite roads – the B6047 across Leicestershire from Melton Mowbray – when the A1 (again) suddenly disgorged southbound travellers at Grantham. I've used it many a time since, sometimes even in favour of the regular, faster route as it's such a roller-coaster riot of a road. So next time you're diverted, think of it as an opportunity, not an inconvenience. You never know where you'll end up. **Glen Waddington**



The Autumn Auction

Saturday 8th October, Frome, Somerset.



1985 MG Metro 6R4 Group B Works Rally Car

The 1986 Austin Rover Motorsport test and development car, also recce car for the 1986 season. Three private owners with extensive period rally history. Offered with period RAC/MSA logbooks and UK V5C document. Estimate: £260.000 - £310.000



1936 MG N-Type Magnette
 Rare and desirable six-cylinder variant. Delivered new to American beauty queen
 Hazel Forbes. Fully restored to original specification and toured in recent times.
 Estimate: £50,000 - £55,000

1964 Ferrari 330 GT Series I

UK-delivered from new, originally finished in Blu Scuro with a red leather interior. In current ownership since 1971, dry stored since 1988. Ideal basis for full restoration. Estimate: £60,000 - £70,000



1951 Jaguar XK120 Roadster

Delivered new via Henlys of Manchester. Competitor in the 1977 Mille Miglia and other period events. Highly original, well preserved with excellent history. Estimate: £45,000 - £55,000



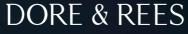
1965 Jaguar C-Type by Proteus

Jim Marland all aluminium "Le Mans" specification body. 3.4 litre engine with triple Weber carburettors. Under 50 miles from new with recent service. Estimate: £65,000 - £75,000

INVITING FINAL ENTRIES

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Matt Bishop

The former 'F1 Racing' editor and current Aston Martin F1 chief communications officer also happens to be snooker-loopy



1 My husband Angel is a chef and worked at Ducksoup, the restaurant that produced this book, in which he is namechecked.

2 This is a model of my Rally Red Hi Po 1967 Corvette C2 Sting Ray 327/350. It has the Muncie box, side exhausts, power brakes and steering and I use it a lot.

3 Carlos 'Lole' Reutemann was my childhood hero – I loved his mercurial nature – and this Lotus 79 model was a gift from Peter Windsor. I later met Carlos twice and he was everything I could have hoped; I choked up when he died.

4 This wine-stopper was sent to me by Dan and Evi Gurney, 36 being the number from the most beautiful F1 car of all time, the Eagle-Weslake T1G.

5 My mother, who died in 2013, was a remarkable woman who wrote five novels, two in the 1960s before my father left and three later in life. After she was diagnosed with cancer in 2009 she wrote this to express her feelings because no-one close to her could understand what she was going through. It is beautifully written and was critically acclaimed.

6 This was from the bluestone quarry on South Africa's Robben Island, where the prisoners were used as forced labour. It is an inhospitable, bleak, barren, windswept, shade-free place and after our ex-prisoner guide described life there I picked up this stone to remind me how lucky I am.

7 I worked with Lewis Hamilton at McLaren and he gave me his boots from Abu Dhabi in 2011, where he won. I rate him with Fangio, Clark and Senna as a driver, and with anyone on the planet as a compassionate and decent human being.

8 My best friend in motorsport is Alex Wurz, whom I first interviewed in 1997 and who gave me this helmet for my 50th birthday. He handpainted all his lids; this was the one from his 2009 Le Mans win.

9 I have files of letters, but love these two: Emerson Fittipaldi's simply for namedropping brilliance – he mentions his pal George Harrison in the first line! The one from Cliff Allison was sent to me the day he died, which is pretty poignant.

10 Seb Vettel has been a great ally. He uses his platform to make the world a better, more inclusive place and as a straight man with three kids was the first F1 driver to be on the cover of *Attitude*. I'll miss him when he leaves Aston Martin.

11 My great passion apart from cars and motor racing, one I inherited from my concert pianist father, is snooker. This is a John Parris cue and it was given to me by former World Champion Judd Trump.

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JAY LENO The Collector

henever people come to my garage and I give them a tour, I always ask: how would you like to sit in the most comfortable car in the world? They look around for a moment, trying to figure out which car I'm talking about, but almost never get it right. When I tell them it's my 1971 Citroën DS, they think I'm joking – until they sit in it. To a person, they say: 'Oh my God, why can't my car be this comfortable? Why is that so hard?'

I got my DS more than 15 years ago and it needed work. I was determined to re-create the one I had driven 40 years earlier while working at what we then

called, in America, a foreign car dealership. I wanted to re-create the exact suppleness and smell of the original leather. I remember as a kid working hide food into the leather and maybe not eliminating all the cracks and creases, but feeling as if I had brought the leather back. That's what I wanted to do.

Searching the internet, I found a toll-free number and spoke to a guy, in New Jersey somewhere, for about half an hour and he explained to me that he had a source for the

exact leather in the colour I was looking for. I sent off a cheque and waited. When it arrived, I held my breath as I opened the box. It was exactly what I was looking for.

I called the guy to thank him. He was happy that I called, saying everyone else calls to complain and I was the first one to call and thank him. I think it's really important to do this because specialists in this hobby do it for love, not necessarily just the money. It's much easier to sell modern stuff than it is holding on to something that might take you a year to move.

As we became friends I asked him where he got the leather. He explained that he was just the middleman and had a source. In France? I asked. No, he said, in Burbank, California. What? I'm in Burbank, California! He gave me an address which was about three miles from my shop. I quickly went down there and rang the bell. The guy who answered showed me what he had, including the correct leather for my 326,000-mile 1968 Mercedes 6.3. And yes, I still ordered my Mercedes leather from the middle-man guy because hey, fair is fair.

If the DS has a flaw, it's that it's a little under-powered. A luxury car with a four-cylinder engine and 100 horsepower is going to be a tough sell in America. Add a lack of dealers and parts availability, and, well... At the opposite end of the scale you have the American version of luxury. My 1967 Imperial, built by Chrysler. An automobile that epitomises the term 'boulevard ride'. It's hilariously huge and, powered by a 440ci V8 with 375bhp, it quietly leaves the Citroën in its dust.

The Imperial prides itself on a total lack of road feel and its power controls. One-finger steering! The slightest touch of the brake brings you to a screeching halt – as they show you a tiny woman in a high-heeled shoe applying the brakes. Although the Imperial's seats are not as comfortable as the DS's, it crushes it with the other features. Every passenger gets their own cigarette lighter and ashtray. Or, as Chrysler

'A LUXURY CAR WITH

A FOUR-CYLINDER

ENGINE AND 100

HORSEPOWER IS

A TOUGH SELL

IN AMERICA'

calls them, 'ash receivers'.

Where European cars couldn't compete with America, especially back in the day, was with heating and air-conditioning. The Imperial has dual air-con units front and back, so powerful that if you turn them both on at speed you have to press the gas harder just to maintain progress. Power windows, central locking, automatic high/ low beam, auto transmission, power seats and a power trunk

opener – who can compete with that? And when it came to advertising luxuries, the Mad Men on Madison Avenue were untouchable. Especially

in comparison to the austere advertising of the Brits. Jaguar came the closest with dignified print ads such as 'Grace, Space and Pace'. As good as that ad campaign was, it was hard to beat Art Fitzpatrick, the acclaimed artist behind some of the greatest automobile ads of the past 50 years. In his illustrations the people always appeared 10% smaller and the cars 10% bigger.

Buick had my favourite: 'For the man who carries success with ease!' Driving his Fireball V8 with a Turbine Drive transmission, which quickly became Dynaflow, and 'venti ports' on the side. These four holes on each fender – inspired by WW2 fighter planes – signified that you had a V8 under the hood.

Every American manufacturer had its own name for its transmissions: GM had Hydra-Matic, Packard had Ultramatic, Ford Cruise-O-Matic, Chrysler had PowerFlite, which became TorqueFlite. Power brakes were described thus: 'Imagine a woman's touch stopping a five-thousand-pound automobile.' Much as I enjoy all that hyperbole, I've got to admit that the Citroën DS is still the most comfortable car in the world.

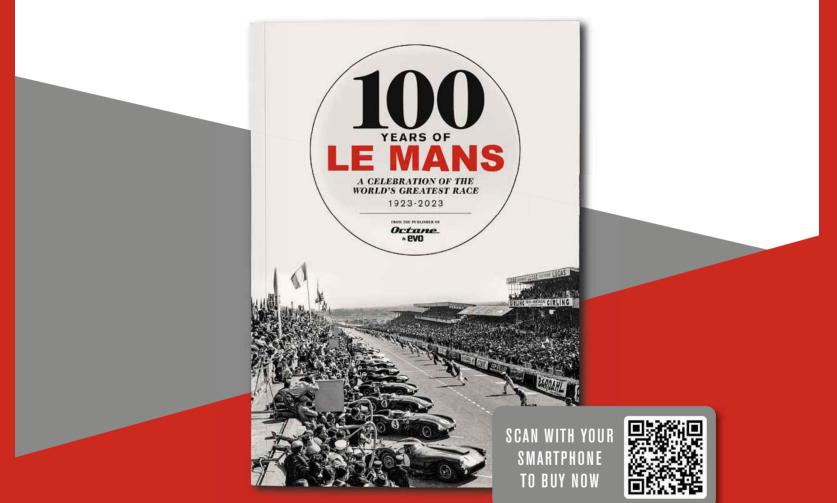


JAY LENO Comedian and talk show legend Jay Leno is one of the most famous entertainers in the USA. He is also a true petrolhead, with a huge collection of cars and bikes (jaylenosgarage.com). Jay was speaking with Jeremy Hart.



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DEREK BELL

The Legend

have mentioned Group C a few times in this column over the years. I have also written about the Porsche 956 and its 962 descendant, too. Well, I am about to do so again. This period of the World Sports Car Championship, which I appreciate went under a variety of aliases during the 1980s, was pivotal to my career.

The same was true of the IMSA GTP equivalent in the USA. I loved that era of sports car racing, particularly because it bore witness to something of a career renaissance for me. From 1982 to the dawn of the '90s, I raced these fabulous cars all over Europe, North America, Asia; heaven

WE ATE OUR FOOD,

DRANK OUR BOOZE,

BULLSHITTED ABOUT

THE OLD DAYS, AND

GENERALLY HAD

A GREAT LAUGH

knows where. And the point of me mentioning this? 1982 marks 40 years since Group C came into being, and 30 years since it withered and died. It also marks four decades since the 956 first ventured trackside in competition. That year saw me claim my third victory in the 24 Hours of Le Mans alongside my great mate Jacky Ickx, and the die was cast. I won't go into a blow-byblow account of how fantastic I was

thereafter, but it was heartening to learn recently that I won more races in the 956/962 than any other driver. I don't know for sure, but I suspect I did more races in them than anybody else, too. The point is this: it is a car with which my name is inextricably linked, and I am quite proud of that.

Obviously, with this being an anniversary year, Porsche wasn't about to let it pass without a party and in August I was invited to a special day at its superb Leipzig circuit. There I was reunited with some of the cars I raced in period, the 1982 Le Mans-winning Rothmans car among them. Also there were two other figures who were central to the story: Hans-Joachim Stuck and Jochen Mass. I won a lot of races with Stuckie, not forgetting the world title in 1985, which we shared, and Jochen was a fellow works driver. He was a fierce rival and remains a good friend.

It isn't exactly as though I haven't driven a Group C Porsche recently, yet it never ceases to amaze me just how much I enjoy getting my bum back into one. It's like meeting up with an old flame. You may have a few more miles under your belts, but so what? I am of an age where I appreciate that I am part of motor racing history. I don't mean that in a smug way, more that I have long since retired as a professional wheelman so I am part of Porsche's past. As such, it's nice to be afforded these opportunities as they arise. I am grateful for them. And I am sure that Hans and Jochen feel the same.

The fact that we are old boys was rammed home when I was introduced to the media. There were obviously journalists and TV crews from Germany, but also France, the UK, and so on. It was quite telling that even the middle-aged scribblers appeared unfeasibly young to me. There were also a couple of very youthful writers who didn't have so much as a line

on their faces. They seemed to walk around moon-eyed and perpetually amazed. They were so enthusiastic, which was wonderful to behold. It's just that it's a bit disconcerting when you start talking about your feats of derring-do and it dawns on you that their parents were probably still at school at the time.

As much as I enjoyed being ontrack, perhaps the real highlight occurred by chance once the event was being wound down. The

wonderful Astrid Böttinger from the factory museum had arranged for us to dine in a nice restaurant nearby, but filming commitments, interviews and so on for all of us had taken far longer than expected so she ordered some pizzas and beer. All of us drivers, the mechanics and so on then set up a couple of tables in the pitlane, ate our food, drank our booze, bullshitted about the old days, and generally had a great laugh as the sun began to set.

This reminded me of the old days, of an era when we used to do this sort of thing all the time after a race. It didn't matter if you won or lost, you either celebrated with your team or commiserated with them, and in relatively modest fashion. You didn't leave the track and make for the airport the moment a race was over, or even before it was. Everything was that bit more informal, especially the catering. Some of the stories I could tell you about post-race shenanigans are... Well, they're probably best left unreported.

This column is being put together shortly before the Silverstone Classic, where I will once again be out in a 962. Henry Pearman offered me a go in the car I shared with Stuckie at the start of the 1987 season and it would have been rude to say no, wouldn't it?



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

'BUCKMINSTER

FULLER DIDN'T CALL

HIS DYMAXION A CAR.

IT WAS A MODULE

IN A GROUND

TRANSPORT SYSTEM

The Aesthete

rchitects are almost always fascinated by cars. Not because they have outstanding mechanical aptitude – very few architects I know could explain weight-transfer or droop, for example – but because the generalities and details of car design allow almost endless opportunities for the fuss that architects like to make about the nature of things.

The better part of my own education was in the hands of an architect who was, I think, the first person in Liverpool to own an Eames chair. I'll never forget the day he imprudently opened the door of his NSU Ro80 in a North Wales gale and the blast blew it off its delicate hinges, to his bewilderment.

Norman Foster has a superb collection of cars. His one-time collaborator, Ken (Gherkin) Shuttleworth, admits that Issigonis was his inspiration. He has toyed with the idea of a Lotus Seven replacement. The Bugatti EB110 was drawn by Giampaolo Benedini – architect of the *Fabbrica Blu*, its Campogalliano factory – who took on the car job when Marcello Gandini refused to compromise with his client's demands.

Architects and cars is a story redolent of the complex interplay between design disciplines and revealing, too, of the ludicrous foibles of the architectural ego.

The imperious Walter Gropius was founder of the Bauhaus: spiritual home of the machine aesthetic, rightangles and Platonic forms. While snagging the vast Siemensstadt workers' paradise in Berlin, he got a call from Frankfurt's Adlerwerke. Beginning with bicycles and then typewriters, in 1914 it was estimated Adler produced a fifth of Germany's cars. Now they wanted the great Bauhausmeister to refresh their product.

What Gropius produced was gross Edwardian retrokitsch with scant acknowledgement of functionalism, aerodynamics or lightweight construction, but masses of Hitler-era swagger, a straight-eight, seats reclining into a bed, an aggressive eagle mascot and a grille that predicted Germany's obsession with get-out-of-my-wayor-die aesthetics. Gropius boasted that his Adler Sport-Reise Coupé 'won top prizes in all the big beauty contests'. Perhaps aware that it also traduced his school's less-is-more dogma, in 1931 he took out a handgun licence to protect himself from outraged purists.

Three years after the Adler was presented at the Paris Salon in 1930, the Bauhaus was closed by the Nazis and, in the United States, R Buckminster Fuller revealed his 'Dymaxion' car. Except he didn't call it a car. It was a module in a 'ground transport system'.

The specification was fascinating, but the execution was stupid. The Dymaxion was 19½ feet long and its 11 modular passengers were transported by a Ford V8 working very hard to drive the front wheels. Its frame was made of massively heavy C-section parallel flange channels. Its resting position was nose-up, like the taildragging passenger 'planes of its day. Steering was handled by a single rear wheel. This allowed media-genic demonstrations of pirouetting at parking speeds but.

> since Fuller knew nothing of air management, the nose would lift and the rear-wheel steering stopped steering. And so the ground transport system became a violently unstable flight transport system. On its way to display at the Chicago World Fair, the Dymaxion rolled over, killing Francis C Turner, a Gulf Refining Company racing driver who was struggling to make sense of the squirrelling death-trap.

> Le Corbusier was perhaps the most influential architect of the last

century. He had a long association with Voisin, the advanced manufacturing techniques of which, he believed, should be applied to architecture so that a house would be *'un machine à habiter'* (*'a machine for living in'*). In 1936 he proposed the Voiture Minimum in a competition arranged by the Société des Ingénieurs de l'Automobile: a little house for motoring in.

It was a neat design with a slant nose and a sloping tail, not dissimilar to the Volkswagen (and, indeed, to every contemporary small-car project). It never got built (although I had a wooden 1:1 model made for the opening of The Design Museum in 1989), but that was no deterrent to the architect's ego. Corb cited a rough sketch of 1928 (some suspect it was faked) and claimed it to be the source of the Citroën 2CV. Academic research has now shown this to be retrospective boastful fantasising and that his influence on Pierre Boulanger and Citroën's Toute Petite Voiture team was a matter only of his perfervid architectural imagination.

The failure of Gropius, Fuller and Corb to make a credible car puts in doubt architecture's status as the premier design discipline. And confirms my own belief that the best car designers were among the most impressive creators of the last century.



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

'NOW THEY'RE

SEEN AS A

"LIFESTYLE" CHOICE,

COOL OLD SALOONS

ARE AS DESIRABLE

AS SOFT-TOPS'

The Driver

s time goes on, I seem to be less drawn to outand-out sports cars and more towards bigger and more comfortable motors. Ones with more than two seats; there's something satisfying about driving a car that's fun behind the wheel but also offers room to enjoy in a multitude of ways. I grew up with small Alfas, Porsches and Lancias and all were great to drive. Then I got hold of a heavy, dipsomaniac 1991 Range Rover Vogue SE, which I loved. That alloy V8 sounded glorious and the old thing could be hustled along with the panoramic view out of its windscreen tilting alarmingly into the corners. The best way to drive

it was to recline into 'loaf mode', one arm on the armrest, wafting along... at 15 to the gallon. And the thrill of engaging low-ratio and easing past modern cars, four-up on icy inclines, was always amusing. Seems I'm not alone.

Over the last decade, the worldwide sales of modern sports cars have dropped by some 30%. This obviously preceded the effects of the pandemic by a number of years. To be fair, a major reason for this is the lack of interest in such

cars in China, where size matters. And as many doors as possible – apparently two doors indicate you can't afford four, or five. The biggest sports car market remains the USA, where about half are sold (Ford's Mustang is *still* the top seller), followed by Germany and, somewhat surprisingly, Japan. But sales are in decline in the US as well as in Europe and the UK. Obviously we know the reason why: it's the rise of the dreaded SUV.

As with my old Rangie, SUVs and 4x4s have evolved into fun-to-drive soft-roaders, especially as they have become sportier. Let's face it, motor cars are status symbols and bigger ones attest to your power, not just on the road. With the runaway success of PCP finance (no-one owns SUVs, they are bought on the drip!) and the rise of turbodiesels (their days admittedly now numbered), pretty much everyone could afford to be King of the Road. A green Range Rover communicates the fact that you might live in town but, of course, you go shooting on the Yorkshire moors. Though most are seemingly now black with blacked-out windows, so maybe that indicates you have a thriving cannabis factory on the top floor of your terrace in Fulham.

And these (until now) cheap-to-own status symbols are becoming sportier all the time and effectively cutting

into the traditional sports car market. A Lamborghini Urus is no longer ridiculous, it's a sales hit and so Ferrari is following with its Purosangue. Annoyingly, one painted in gleaming Rosso Corsa with skis on the rack will look cool in any snow-covered Alpine resort. Along with the rise of this Frankenstein sector, manufacturers are producing too many sports cars. The market is shrinking, prices are dropping – just look at McLaren.

The classic car market peaked in 2015. Top of the pile were open sports cars, followed by two-door coupés, with four-seaters the least valuable, if not the least fun. Insurance company figures indicate that, pre-pandemic,

the average annual mileage of classics doubled from an admittedly low base, suggesting that enthusiasts were driving their cars more. This was helped by the growth in fabulous motoring events, from smart Goodwood to everyman gatherings such as the informal meet on Wimbledon Common. And with the rise in the number of speed cameras and legislation, classic cars make more sense at real-world speeds.

Now they're seen as a 'lifestyle'

choice, cool old saloons are as desirable as soft-tops. My Alfa Giulia saloon was just as much fun as my Alfa Giulietta coupé. But it's not surprising that, within the fall in sales of two-seater sports cars, +2 coupé models have held up more strongly. Like the Lamborghini Espada and Ferrari 365 GTC/4 in this issue (see pages 56-66), having two extra seats in the back is a boon, particularly if you have a stonking great V12 in the front! Having enjoyed driving examples of both, I can assure you their performance is certainly not compromised.

When buying my Jaguar XK140 Fixed Head Coupé some 15 years ago, I really wanted the more resolved XK120 but the 140, with its plus-two seats, was more affordable and now I'm happy with the choice. A 120 is claustrophobic, strictly a two-seater, with very little boot space. With my +2 140 I can sling ample soft rally bags into the rear or, indeed, my young daughter who absolutely loves her 'little seats' in the back.

Bargain-priced four-seaters are coming into their own, from Fiat Pandas (Fiat Jollys just scream 'I have a big yacht') to Peugeot 504 Coupés, and, I have to admit, classic 4x4s such as Land Rover Defenders and Toyota FJs are very desirable. Four-seaters aren't necessarily about speed, but they're all about fun.



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.





JOIN THE ADVENTURE



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2023 will see crews travelling in a more or less clockwise direction as we venture into some less familiar territory to take in areas like the Mid Argyll and parts of both Western and Eastern Ross. Of course, we will also be visiting

some of the more traditional 'Malts' areas as well, so places like The Great Glen, Spey Valley and The Cairngorm Mountains also form part of the itinerary. Competition will be varied and set at an introductory level while still providing entertainment and excitement for the more experienced.





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Letter

ofthe

month

I THOUGHT Octane readers might find the history of my 1987 Ferrari Mondial interesting. It was stolen in The Netherlands in 1994 and completely disappeared until 2020 when, by chance, it was found in the bottom of the river in Amsterdam during a training exercise for Dutch Army divers. Judging by its condition, it had likely spent all those intervening 26 years under water.

Thanks to its backstory, when the Ferrari was pulled out of the river it instantly became very well known, and lots of collectors, enthusiasts and museums were keen to get hold of it. They were all thwarted by Dutch law, which deemed that it should be crushed, but in late 2021 I discovered that it might be possible to buy it and I didn't hesitate. Rather than try to restore the car (it was much too far gone), my plan was to clean it up as best I could and turn it into a static exhibit: to preserve it as a piece of art, much like the lake-find Bugatti in the Mullin Automotive Museum.

After four months of intensive cleaning and preservation work, the canal-find Mondial is now a showpiece in my garage, where it sits alongside my 1988 Ferrari Testarossa.

Linas Palovis, The Netherlands









LETTER OF THE MONTH WINS A MOUNTNEY STEERING WHEEL UP TO THE VALUE OF £300

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To find out more, visit www.mountneyclassic.co.uk or call +44 (0)1295 270770.

Peugeot perfectionism

As the owner of two Peugeot 504s in the late '70s, a Ti and a GL, it was good to see Stephen Bayley's architectural essay on these fine cars in *Octane* 232.

I take issue, however, with his comment 'to say it drives like a light truck is to bring modern light trucks into disrepute'. 504s had, and still have, excellent ride and handling. Neither of my cars had the power steering that reduced the lock-to-lock turns to 3.5, but I never found the steering to be anything other than light and accurate.

Peugeot was meticulous in these matters. It made its own shock absorbers to ensure quality and consistency, and the 504's ride was as good as that of a Rover 2000, Lancia or Citroën DS. Road-induced noise was low.

The Autocar said in its issue of 8 April 1971 that 'Peugeot engineers have contrived to develop this seemingly ordinary layout into a remarkably successful blend of good riding qualities, excellent handling and first-class stability'.

I do, however, agree with Stephen about the ergonomics – and he did not mention the 504's dreadful propensity to rust. *Andrew Maw, Staffordshire*

Present from the past

Octane has done it once again. A few months ago there was a letter and photograph from someone reminiscing about a Lancia Fulvia that he had owned 25 years ago and I realised that, despite a colour change, it was the same car I had owned in 1974.

What has excited me in issue 231 is the feature on the Heuer Camaro Chrono, similar to my own, which I would have been wearing at the time that I was driving that Lancia.

In 1971 my parents were keen to give me a wristwatch for my 21st birthday. In my eyes Steve McQueen could do no wrong and he heavily influenced my desire to own a Heuer. I am afraid that I didn't find the Monaco particularly appealing but I really liked the Carrera.

We were a working-class family and it seemed unreasonable to

stretch my parents' budget for one of those, but Steve McQueen's influence would not be dimmed and I decided to ask for a Camaro, which was a few pounds cheaper than the Carrera. From memory I believe that it was £37 and I still have pangs of guilt about asking my parents to stump up that much. Putting the cost into context, I changed jobs a month before my birthday and managed to double my salary to £14 per week.

I wore the watch daily unless I was involved in heavy-duty manual work at home and never risked taking it on holiday with me. Since I retired, I've tended only to wear it a few times each week, as I feel that after all this time, like me, it is probably a bit delicate and needs to be treated with a little respect. David Yeo, Devon

Canuck champs

Richard Meaden's throwaway line about one of the works MGC GTS cars [*Octane* 231, and pictured below] being driven by 'the less-than-stellar' pairing of Craig Hill and Bill Brack at Sebring in 1969 does both of them a serious disservice.

Bill Brack was the Canadian distributor for Lotus and a BMC dealer in the Toronto area, who competed successfully in Minis, a Lotus 47, ex-Graham Hill Lotus 42B Indycar and Lotus 70. He won the Player's Challenge Series in 1973 and '74 and, when the series was upgraded to Formula Atlantic, he won it two more years in a row. It took some kid named Gilles Villeneuve to finally beat him to the championship.

Craig Hill is also a member of the Canadian Motorsport Hall of Fame. Having cut his racing teeth on dirt tracks and asphalt, he was the Canadian Formula B champ in 1969 and '70 and graduated to the Player's Challenge Series in a Lotus 69B and then a Brabham BT 40, and finally a March 75BT in Formula Atlantic.

Meaden's research must have come solely from the results sheet because, in qualifying, Hill and Brack were almost four seconds faster than Hopkirk and Hedges. Yes, sister car '699F' finished 26 laps ahead, but I cannot imagine that was all due to driver talent. *Rob Tanner, Ontario, Canada*



Classic writing

Thanks for a lovely article on Bill Collins and his Ferrari 250 Lusso [*Octane* 231]. Robert Coucher kept the reader interested till the very end, with Collins showing no signs of egocentrism.

Then came that final paragraph, quietly letting us know his famous sisters' names and therefore their occupations. It was so informative, without modern media edginess and brashness. *Chris Wadsley, Norfolk*



Cars, boats and planes

Further to Nick Smith's letter in *Octane* 230, and then Matthew Davis's in 231, there is another subject that I've long noted overlaps with both cars and boats: flying.

It is particularly appropriate to mention this now, in light of your obituary to Alain de Cadenet in *Octane* 231 – anyone who has not seen Ray Hanna's Spitfire almost decapitate him should look for the clip on YouTube!

There are many fliers who sail. Back in the 1980s, when the Red Arrows used two red Lotus Carltons for ground travel, at least half the aerobatic team were also competent yachtsmen.

As cars become more amorphous and blob-shape development (arguably started by the Ford Sierra) continues in the quest for lower drag co-efficients, we can look to both sail and wing designs, which are fundamentally the same. A sail is simply a vertical wing (slow airflow results in high pressure, high airflow produces low pressure) and exponents of controlling this understanding are frequently competent in both disciplines. *Stephen Godber, Nottinghamshire*

A subtler Shadow

Your feature on the Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow in *Octane* 232 reminded me of my late grandfather's Bentley T. When his building business, Siggs & Chapman in Croydon, took off, he wanted to treat himself with a Rolls-Royce but my grandma thought it too ostentatious and forbade that choice... so he bought a Bentley! The T was in fact his second Bentley, replacing an S2 Continental Flying Spur, '2 TPA', and he kept it until he gave up driving many years later.

I well remember how big it seemed in the 1970s but now they look quite modest and those lines so clean and simple. Funny how cars like this, in the doldrums for years, along with the likes of the Lamborghini Espada and Ferrari 400/412, are now appreciated – and appreciating. It's just a pity that fuel prices are so high.

Grandad was always being asked 'What'll she do?' – miles

per gallon, not miles per hour. He always replied 'Eight around town and ten on a run'! The way the rear end sat down like a speedboat as he launched it down the road might have been a factor. *Peter Vaughan, Lincolnshire*



Road trippin' in the USA

Massimo Delbò's trip across America in the Lancia [*Octane* 231] brought back memories.

In the 1970s the summer university vacation was a popular way to work one's way across the States. I sold ice cream in Memphis from a truck [pictured above] for a few weeks, then latched onto the 'drive away' car business. Going to Chicago via the 'Brickyard' I collected a Chrysler Imperial that needed to be delivered to Seattle. This was a cheap way to travel because those behemoths were big enough to sleep in.

Early one morning I drove into a 'greasy spoon' for a wash, brush-up and breakfast, the Chrysler and an *Easy Rider*-style bike being the only vehicles parked outside. As I was finishing my over-easy eggs, the local sheriff swaggered in, beer gut hanging over his revolver belt and on his head a Stetson.

'Ah can smell hash in here and you better get your ass ouda town.' His assumption that a long-hair in fashionable loonpants must be the custodian of the bike was a safe bet – his face when I got into the Chrysler was a picture of utter bewilderment. *Graham Warren, Granada, Spain*

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THE MISFITS

Lamborghini's Espada and Ferrari's 365 GTC/4 have long existed in the shadow of more exalted siblings. **Richard Heseltine** says it's time they received greater recognition Photography Dean Smith Right

From this angle, you can see exactly how the Espada's unconventional proportions compare with the more classical dimensions of the the Ferrari.

aradise is a word used promiscuously by travel magazines, but this may well be it. There's an azure sky, tufty clouds, and fields of wild flowers stretch into the distance to complete the masterpiece. More importantly, though, the scenic vista is dissected by smooth asphalt, a series of long straights connected via flowing corners. Perfect.

Then our featured cars hove into view, though their V12 powerhouses have already trumpeted their arrival. Not that they're anti-socially loud; no, here we have the muted bark of a chain-driven Italian V12 of the old school, tickled along rather than redlined, overlaid with the voice of another. It's the sort of noise that echoes a vanished time, of beautiful people heading to beautiful locales in their beautiful Italian GT cars.

Make no mistake, the Ferrari 365 GTC/4 and the Lamborghini Espada are true *Gran Turismos* in the old-fashioned idiom, although it's fair to say that this pairing isn't the most obvious you could make. And that's exactly the point. Other examples of each marque are better known, more valuable, less the underdog. Yet these two are undeniably exotic, they each exert their own kind of appeal, and they are comfortable enough to spend hours aboard without adopting the sort of contortions your leading yogis can only dream of. They were aimed at moneyed silverbacks, after all. It's just that the establishment in Maranello and the arrivistes over the hill in Sant'Agata typically had their own way of doing things.

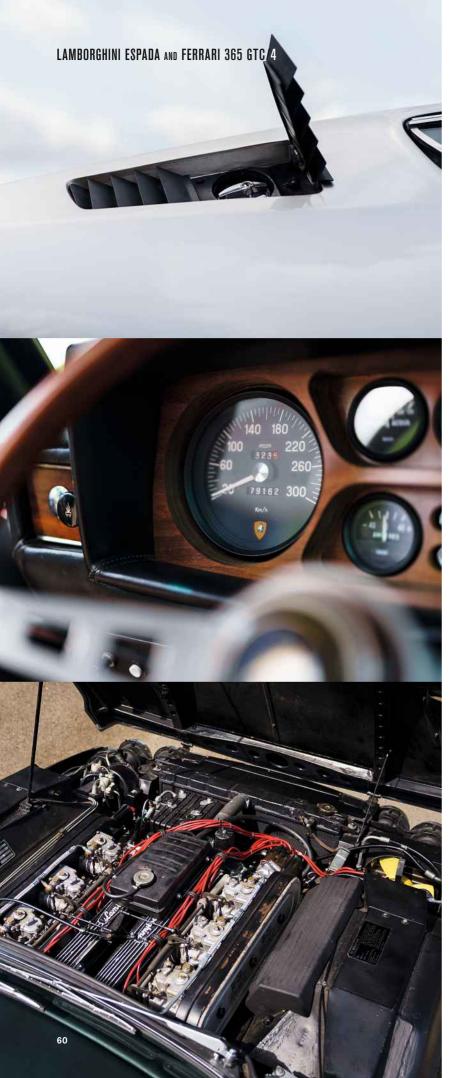
Although it shared its 4.4-litre V12 with the Daytona, the GTC/4 had different cylinder heads, a lower compression ratio and sidedraught rather than downdraught Weber induction. This sacrificed top-end power, European-spec cars packing 15bhp less at 335bhp, but resulted in a lower bonnet-line. The biggest deviation from the Daytona was the placement of its five-speed 'box, mated to the engine rather than slung out back as a transaxle. The all-wishbone suspension embraced selflevelling gas/oil struts at the rear, and the car boasted ZF power steering that had been denied the Daytona.

The end product emerged taller, longer and a mite wider than the Daytona, too, but then it had the edge in accommodation, although to label it a 2+2 was a stretch. Pininfarina was never big on crediting individual stylists, though the GTC/4's outline has more recently been attributed to Filippo Sapino (Pininfarina also constructed the bodies). Introduced at the 1971 Geneva motor show, it remained in production for just two years, during which time 505 were made.

The Espada had been introduced at the same venue in 1968, two years after the seminal mid-engined Miura and a year after the radical Marzal that inspired it. It was met with muted hoopla by the automotive media, possibly because its styling had been diluted and stretched







'THIS PAIRING ISN'T THE MOST OBVIOUS YOU COULD MAKE. AND THAT'S EXACTLY THE POINT'

somewhat in comparison to the Marzal. Mechanically, the car borrowed heavily from the 350/400GT and the Islero (which also appeared in 1968), with power coming from the firm's proven quad-cam, all-alloy 3929cc V12.

Devised by Giotto Bizzarrini and refined by Gian Paolo Dallara, this jewel of an engine was fed by a sextet of twin-choke Weber carbs and produced an alleged 325bhp. It was mated to an in-house five-speed 'box and finaldrive unit, with the option of a limited-slip diff, all housed in a punt-type chassis comprised of sheet steel pressings. Additional tubular structures acted as mounting points for engine, transmission and suspension: unequal-length double wishbones, combined spring/damper units and anti-roll bars at both ends. Steering was via ZF wormand-sector, and Girling disc brakes featured all-round.

Much of the Espada's construction was farmed out, with Marchesi of Modena fabricating the chassis. These were then transported to Bertone in Turin for the steel and aluminium bodies to be fitted, before heading to Sant'Agata for the installation of running gear and final assembly. Lamborghini continued to develop the model, introducing the Series II edition (or 400 GTE in some promo material) in 1970, complete with a lower floor to increase rear headroom, a more logical (well, ish) dash layout, and larger vented discs. Power was raised to 350bhp, but this hike was of the fanciful variety.

A third iteration arrived in 1973, with power-assisted steering and air-con as standard. A further dashboard revision and suspension tweaks completed the makeover; a three-speed TorqueFlite automatic transmission option came a year later. By the time production ended in 1978, 1217 cars had been made. With the exception of the rare LM002 off-roader, and one-off show cars such as the Faena, Portofino, Genesis and fabulous Estoque, this was Lamborghini's sole 'proper' four-seater until the advent of the Urus SUV in 2018.

Standing just 46in high but 73.2in wide and 186in in length, the Espada's executive-saloon proportions shouldn't work (it's 4in lower than the Ferrari, but 3in wider and 7in longer). Yet it's hard not to be swayed. The

1970 Lamborghini Espada

Engine 3929cc V12, DOHC per bank, six Weber carburettors Power 325bhp @ 6500rpm Torque 276lb ft @ 4500rpm Transmission Five-speed manual, rear wheel drive Steering Worm and roller Suspension Front and rear: double wishbones, coil springs, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar Brakes Discs Weight 1759kg Top speed 150mph 0-60mph 6.5sec

Above and below; and facing page, bottom Espada features a broad flightdeck of a dashboard; Ferrari was nickhamed 'hunchback' yet is by far the more traditional of the two; Lamborghini V12 was Bizzarrini's masterpiece.

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rear three-quarter view is especially accomplished: the 'floating' glass tail panel subsequently reappeared on another of Marcello Gandini's masterworks, the Maserati Khamsin. Everywhere you look there are exquisite details, such as the stylised Espada scripts on the rearmost flanks, and the faux louvres in the C-pillars, which conceal the fuel-filler caps. The aluminium bonnet, with its two NACA ducts that funnel air to the cabin (sort of), is vast but is lightly creased so as not to appear completely flat.

The Espada remains an acquired taste, of course, but so does the Ferrari, even if it's the more conventionally attractive of the two. Yet some quarters of the media continue to claim that it represented a damp squib after the Daytona. That's a mite unfair given that the Daytona was – and remains – a landmark design in marque lore. As an aside, the car was nicknamed *11 Gobbone* in its homeland. That translates as 'hunchback'. Up close it's nothing of the sort; more a poetic blend of soft curves.

Inside, the large windows and spindly pillars afford a panoramic view, and the round instruments in square blocks add a modernist flourish. The ski-slope-like centre panel is home to the switchgear and the gaitered gearlever. You sit low, raked back, but the driving position is comfortable and the pedals aren't quite as skewed as they are in the Lamborghini. It's a nice office, and it's hard not to fall for the tartan seat inserts, but even with airconditioning it can get a wee bit toasty in here.

The Espada may have been aimed at the more mature customer, but few concessions were made to ease of ingress, thanks to the low roofline and the severe rake of the steering wheel. The dash on this Series II car is handsome, the 190mph speedo and 10,000rpm rev-



counter being the main points of focus. You are forced to adopt a slightly legs-splayed driving stance, although the steering column is adjustable (with the aid of spanners). The gauges' lower calibrations are obscured by the wheel-rim, but north of 8000rpm you would probably be too busy concentrating to care.

The seats are ultra-comfy and there is genuine space for rear-ferried passengers. Make no mistake, this car will seat four adults. Then you fire it up and the other side of the Espada's character emerges. At idle the V12 isn't superloud, which is in keeping with the gentleman's express ideal, and at low speeds the Lamborghini feels disappointingly uncoordinated. However, once above 20mph or so, it undergoes a metamorphosis: the steering becomes light and precise and the gearchange shorter in its movement across the gate, as well as easier to guide. What is telling is that you're not intimidated by the car's size. Time was when the Espada appeared ludicrously wide, yet these days it's narrower than many hatchbacks. You can position it with accuracy, and on typically rutted B-roads it doesn't tramline. Contrary to what preconceptions might have you believe, it feels taut, without any banging or crashing through the structure. This is a car that metaphorically shrinks around you; it isn't a point-and-squirt weapon, but the Espada is infinitely more agile than it is widely given credit for.

On being afforded sufficient space to stretch its legs, the V12's strident bellow is enthralling. Seriously, it's worth having an Espada just to listen to it running the sonic spectrum from playful bark to feral howl as you pile on the revs. The brakes, too, are superb considering their vintage, with plenty of pedal feel. While there are a few



'THE ESPADA REMAINS AN ACQUIRED TASTE, OF COURSE – BUT SO DOES THE FERRARI'



1972 Ferrari 365 GTC/4

Engine 4390cc V12, DOHC per bank, six Weber carburettors Power 335bhp @ 7500rpm Torque 312lb ft @ 4000 rpm Transmission Five-speed manual, rear wheel drive Steering Worm and roller, power-assisted Suspension Front and rear: unequal-length wishbones, coil springs, telescopic dampers. Front anti-roll bar; rear self-levelling Brakes Discs Weight 1450kg Top speed 155mph (claimed) 0-60mph 7.3sec

Alle MARTIN



Left, from top Ferrari's boxy instrument housings look more modern than 1971; rear seats are less commodious than the Espada's; another Modenese masterpiece of a V12.

annoyances, not least random switchgear that is baffling at a glance, it's hard not to emerge smitten.

The same is true of the Ferrari but for different reasons. The owner of this example, one of 31 sold in the UK with right-hand drive, suggests that it drives much like a modern car. It does, too, albeit with one or two caveats. Like the Espada, turning the ignition key doesn't result in surround-sound fanfare. It's far too dignified for that, although a quick blip is rewarded with an eye-widening roar. The long-travel throttle pedal is on the stiff side, but then the car is packing six twin-choke Webers. Ease it into gear, let up the clutch and the GTC/4 is utterly docile.

The hydraulic steering assistance helps massively at low speeds, while acceleration is keen without trying particularly hard. It isn't slow by any definition but there's no sense of theatre either; no speedboat-like elevated nose and tail-squat antics. Speed merely builds, overlaid with a rich, blue-blooded and full-bodied soundtrack. When cruising, it is audible but never intrusive. The V12 powerhouse is wonderfully flexible, the gearchange precise if not quite in the same league as the Espada's. There is no dogleg operation as in the Daytona, with only fifth being out on a limb.

Such is the torque spread (317lb ft of it), you don't need to race up and down the ratios. Even in top, it pulls cleanly and without hesitation. Given its Maranello origins and the era from whch it dates, the GTC/4 is easy to drive: unthreatening in a manner that many comparable exotics are not. Driving one isn't a battle of wills, nor is it a white-knuckle thrill ride. The car turns-in crisply, free of lurch, and its manners are predictable. The steering doesn't demand constant corrections. Having had prior experience of the model at three-figures, I can tell you that high-speed stability is commendable.

The brakes – vented discs – work well, with decent pedal feel. The only area where the GTC/4 shows its age is in its ride quality – in a good way. Compared with most latter-day exotica, where your spine acts as a shock absorber, it's reasonably pliant. You feel bumps, of course, and you certainly hear them, but overall the Ferrari is lovely. It's a car you can imagine driving long distances, which is what a GT car is about after all.

As to whether it's a better car than the Espada, that is an impossible question to answer. The GTC/4 is a fine all-rounder and every inch a classic GT. It is also that rarest of things: an underrated Ferrari. It's hard not to abandon yourself to the Espada, though, as much for its grounded spaceship looks as the way it makes you smile.

The Ferrari is a car that appeals as much to the head as the heart, but the Lamborghini pulls off the rare feat of making no sense at all yet all the sense in the world. For better or worse, the Espada is unlike any other car. And that's why we love it.

THANKS TO Jonny Ambrose, Neil Lefley and the Ferrari Owners' Club of Great Britain (ferrariownersclub.co.uk). The Lamborghini is for sale: email jonnyambrose74@gmail.com.

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A COLOURFUL PAST – AND PRESENT

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Having raced throughout Europe and in the Indianapolis 500, this Alfa Romeo P3 is still enjoying an active retirement, nearly 90 years on Words Massimo Delbo Photography Tim Scott



ennie Taylor is the owner of this fabled 1934 Alfa Romeo Tipo B 'P3'. It belonged to her late husband, the long-term Alfa Romeo collector Hugh, from 2005, and Jennie is committed to furthering his passion for chassis 50007, ensuring it continues to remain in the public eye.

'The car is loved everywhere,' she says. 'In 2019 I took her to Cavallino Classic in Florida and people were so excited to see her that they couldn't stop thanking me for bringing her "back home" to the USA, as they said, as she was famous for her Indianapolis days. In March 2020 we went to the Amelia Island Concours and had a wonderful show there, too.' Jennie is rightly proud, because her P3 was campaigned in both Europe and the USA either side of World War Two.

The origins of the Alfa Romeo Tipo B 'P3' date back to Autumn 1923, when engineer Vittorio Jano was headhunted from Fiat by Alfa Romeo. Underlining his genius, and the impact of his loss to Fiat, exactly 12 months later Alfa Romeo was being credited as the most advanced race car manufacturer while Fiat had announced its withdrawal from competition. Jano created the P2, the first Grand Prix car specifically designed to win races, which went on to establish much of Alfa Romeo's legendary status as a racing car manufacturer. It was powered by a supercharged 2.0-litre twin-cam straight-eight, good for 156bhp, and would dominate the racing scene for a good six years.

Its age was beginning to show by the early 1930s, though, and Jano began the development of two new models based on Alfa Romeo's 1750cc supercharged straight-six. One car adopted the same bore and stroke as the 6C (65 by 88mm) but with eight cylinders, obtained by pairing two fourcylinder blocks, linked by a train of gears placed in the centre and driving two overhead camshafts and a single blower, positioned on the right-hand side. It entered history as the 8C 2300, nicknamed 'Monza' because of its success there.

The second was the Tipo B Monoposto, nicknamed 'P3', which used an eight-cylinder engine of 2654cc, the same bore but a 100mm stroke, with plain bearings, timing gears mounted between the two blocks of four cylinders, and drysump lubrication. The two valves for each cylinder were inclined at 104°, and there were two superchargers on the left-hand side of the car, each supplying a separate manifold at the front and rear of the engine. The three-speed gearbox fed immediately into a differential, which split the drive through a pair of propshafts in a horizontal V-formation to each rear wheel via a pinion-and-crownwheel set. The car's total weight was an unusually light 700kg that, thanks to 215bhp at 5400rpm, made for an excellent power-to-weight ratio and gave a maximum speed of about 140mph.

The P3 made its debut in 1932, winning four of its six races; in 1933 it was entered in only two races but won both

'THE P3 MADE ITS DEBUT IN 1932, WINNING FOUR OF ITS SIX RACES'

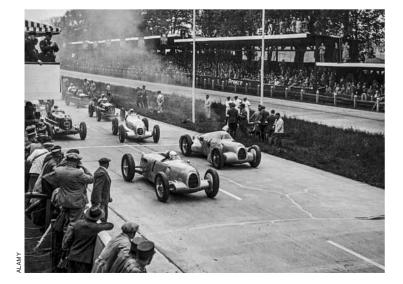




Left, from top Alfa P3 still wears the red paint applied for Indianapolis in 1939; owner Jennie Taylor loves driving her car.



Below Tazio Nuvolari's greatest race was at the Nürburgring in 1935, when he beat nine superior Silver Arrows cars in his P3 to win the German Grand Prix.



- the financial crisis at Alfa Romeo that year forced the company to stop racing, keeping the six P3s it had built at rest, yet its development continued. In 1934, to cope with the new Grand Prix rules of unlimited engine capacity and a maximum weight of 750kg, the engine was enlarged to 2905cc (its bore was increased to 68mm), giving 255bhp at 5600rpm, the wheelbase was lengthened to 2670mm, and the tracks, wheels and body all made larger.

The new version, which was only 30kg heavier, featured improved brakes and dampers, and made its debut at Monaco on 2 April. Five cars were entered and one took pole position, driven by Count Felice Trossi. Its first victory came just three weeks later in Alessandria, at Circuito Bordino, with Louis Chiron beginning a string of wins, brought to an end only by the arrival of Auto Union and Mercedes late in the season.

Meanwhile, the young Enzo Ferrari had been establishing his team in Modena. Scuderia Ferrari was successful from its founding in 1929 and raced mostly Alfa Romeos. By early 1932, Trossi (nicknamed 'Didi') had become its president, following Mario Tadini and Alfredo Caniato. He would be fundamental to the history of Enzo Ferrari.

Trossi was not only a wonderful driver but a visionary, too, bringing sponsorship to the racing team and providing stability for Ferrari in its relationship with Alfa Romeo. It was in 1932 that, for the first time, Alfa Romeo had provided

1934 Alfa Romeo Monoposto Tipo B P3

Engine 2905cc DOHC straight-eight, dry sump, two Weber 42 BS carburettors, two Roots superchargers Power 255bhp @ 5400rpm Transmission Three-speed manual, rear-wheel drive via dual prop-shafts Steering Worm and peg Suspension Front and rear: beam axles (live rear), semi-elliptic leaf springs, friction dampers (twin at rear) Brakes Drums Weight 730kg Top speed 165mph

a Tipo B P3 Monoposto to Scuderia Ferrari, which Tazio Nuvolari raced in the Coppa Acerbo in Pescara. He won. For the 1934 season, Ferrari received the evolved Tipo B, of which nine were manufactured. Chassis 50007, which you see here, is one of those.

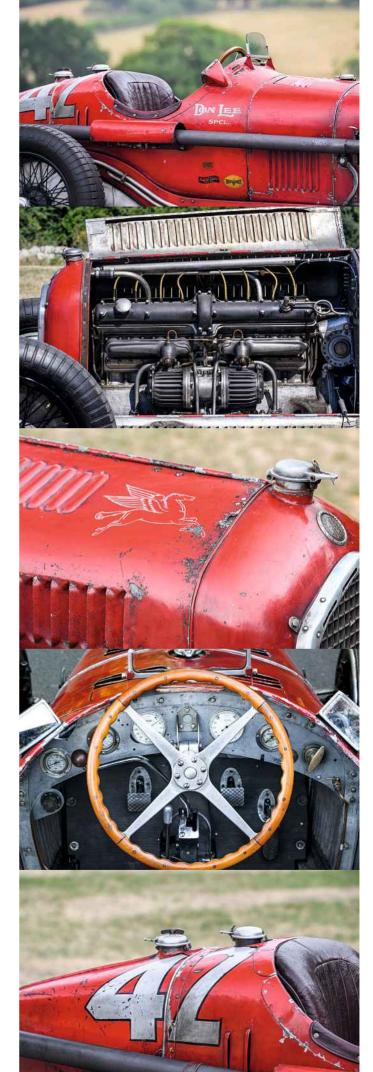
Although it is not always possible to ascertain which car was raced where and by whom, what we *do* know is that chassis 50007 was assigned the Scuderia Ferrari number 047 and raced during the 1934 season in Prancing Horse colours. Its drivers were Louis Chiron, Marcel Lahoux, Luigi Marinoni, Guy Moll, Mario Tadini, Didi Trossi and Achille Varzi, and the car took part in 27 races from 2 April to 21 October. The 2.9-litre P3s scored 20 victories in 1934, and their drivers filled the podium on four occasions.

For the 1935 season, the Scuderia Ferrari P3s suffered increasingly in the face of the growing dominance of the German teams, even though the engine capacity was increased, first to 3.2 litres and then to 3.8, and the stellar team of Scuderia Ferrari included Antonio Brivio, Louis Chiron, Gianfranco Comotti, René Dreyfus, Tazio Nuvolari, Carlo Maria Pintacuda, Mario Tadini and Didi Trossi. The highlight of the season, by far, was the legendary success of Nuvolari in the German Grand Prix.

The Spanish Count Jose Maria of Villapadierna and Avecilla first saw a P3 at the 1934 Penya Rhin race in Spain, held at Montjuïc near Barcelona. He had privately entered a Maserati 8CM and was impressed by the Alfa's speed. Villapadierna was not only a driver but also one of the wealthiest men in Spain, and his lifestyle, burnished by famous actresses such as Ava Gardner and Rita Hayworth, was often reported in magazines. He founded the Villapadierna Team, his cars painted yellow (the Spanish racing colours) with green bars (his colours), and raced in 19 Grands Prix. He was the first reported private owner of chassis 50007, which he collected in the Autumn of 1935. He raced the P3 during 1936 in the Pau, Tunis, Penya Rhin and Budapest GPs, plus the Deauville and Tunis races.

Competing drained even Villapadierna's great wealth, and period newspapers reported on the Count's arrest at the French border on the charge of forging his aunt's name on cheques for the sum of £41,700 (about £3million today). And in April 1938, with Spain in the grip of Civil War, chassis 50007 found its way to the UK, via Bugatti dealer Jack Lemon Burton and then the Alfa Romeo UK importer Thomson & Taylor, which paid £625 (about £45,000 today) plus £40 for spares. The car was then sold to the USA in early 1939, delivered to Frank T Griswold of Pennsylvania.

Griswold was an enthusiastic member of the Automobile Racing Club of America, part of the community of passionate racers led by the Collier brothers, and had a deep passion for Alfa Romeo. It's most likely that he bought the P3 during a journey to the UK and, after having it refreshed by Alfa Romeo in Milan, worked on it personally in his home workshop. That same year, he entered his



ALFA ROMEO P3

This page, and opposite Jennie Taylor inherited chassis 50007 from her late husband. The car still wears the paint of its Indianapolis years – it's pictured there in 1939, with Louis Tomei at the wheel.







P3 (repainted in red) in the 500 Miles of Indianapolis, but didn't have the correct licence so couldn't take part.

Refusing to back down, after parking the P3 in his assigned space, Griswold stormed the pitlane looking for a qualified driver, and found Luigi Gilbert 'Louis' Tomei. Tomei later remembered, during a 1943 interview with *National Auto Racing News* magazine, that he went to Indianapolis without a drive, nor a serious plan to drive, but 'hoping to land a good mount'. He knew Griswold and, although perplexed and sceptical because of the age of the P3, he went for a lap and came back impressed not by the speed but by how well the car was tuned. He qualified 30th and remembered how the car was not easy to drive, as 'it wasn't designed to perform on high-speed turns on an oval, requiring constant adjustment of the steering wheel, and was very hard on the shoulder muscles'.

The car ran perfectly, if not particularly rapidly, for the whole race, suffering some spark plug problems in turns. Two-thirds of the way through, the exhausted Tomei pitted and went looking for a relief driver, finding Mel Hansen, who'd retired after crashing his own car. He completed the race and finished a respectable 15th. The P3 was then sent to Derham of Rosemont, renowned for its coachbuilding work on Duesenbergs. There it was modified, with fairings over the front and rear suspension and a new grille, which the current custodian still has in her possession.

Griswold imported a new spare engine directly from Italy and the P3 was driven in the 1940 Indy 500 by Al Miller, who qualified 30th but failed to finish because of a burntout clutch that was later discovered to have been installed with a loose bolt. The P3 continued to race after its second Indy outing and won the World's Fair Grand Prix at Flushing Meadows, with Griswold driving.

After the war, Griswold became the North America importer for Alfa Romeo automobiles, Lodge spark plugs, Borrani wire wheels, Weber carburettors and Nardi steering *'THE P3 CONTINUED TO RACE AFTER ITS SECOND INDY OUTING AND WON THE WORLD'S FAIR GRAND PRIX'*



wheels. Yet in 1945 he sold the 11-year-old P3 to Los Angeles-based Tommy Lee, owner of several Alfa 8Cs.

Tommy was the son of Don Lee, a radio and TV entrepreneur and the biggest Cadillac distributor on the West Coast, with 46 dealerships. Don was also the owner of Mount Lee, which he bought as the site of a television transmission tower; it's where the famous Hollywood sign is located. Tommy Lee brought the car to Rosamond dry lakes, where it was driven by Ernie McAfee and recorded a speed of 137mph. He then entered it in the first post-war Indy 500, as the only Grand Prix car in the race, in 1946.

Modified with an 8C 2300's more conventional transmission, the so-called 'Don Lee Special' qualified well, with driver Hal Cole starting on the second row, but lasted only 16 laps before retiring because of a fuel leak. In 1947, Ken Fowler drove it at an average speed almost 3mph higher than the previous year, before he had to retire on lap 121 because of a failed rear axle. In 1948 it was Luigi Chinetti's turn, but marshals denied him a drive because they considered his tail-sliding style to be a sign of inability and so he was replaced by Fowler, who failed to qualify. It is for this race that the team fitted the car with an antenna on the tail as part of a radio system for pits-to-car communication.

The P3, with five Indy entries to its name, was sold in California in 1948, two years before Tommy Lee's death. It no longer had its original engine, as that had been installed in one of Lee's 8Cs and passed on to friends who wanted to create a hot-rod from it. Luckily, the rest of it was still intact and bought by David Uihlein of Wisconsin, who preserved it in its original condition, as last entered at Indianapolis. Uihlein's custodianship was fundamental in chassis 50007's history, as it is thanks to him that the car survived mostly untouched, taken care of by somebody who appreciated the word 'preservation' even during the peak years of 'overrestoration'. Uihlein bought the original engine back in 1994, 48 years after it had been separated from the P3, and oversaw an extremely sympathetic restoration in England.

The engine was rebuilt by Jim Stokes, with newly cast cylinders (the originals were cracked) and a new crankcase (the original magnesium one was kept and is still with the car). A correct P3 axle drive was manufactured and installed, too. In 1998, the car proudly sported the last of its mostly original Indy paint (in places you can still spot some of Villapadierna's yellow beneath it) and was running again, being shown with success at several concours events.

'My late husband spent years talking to David, trying to convince him to sell the P3, without success,' Jennie Taylor tells me. 'Every time, he got the same answer: "When I decide to sell her, you'll be the first person I'll call – but not yet." When he finally got the call, he took the first possible flight to the USA, just to avoid any risk of losing her.

'The P3 was driven on numerous occasions, often at Goodwood, always keeping in mind its originality and the need to preserve it. For me, it was my newspaper car as, once in a while, I loved to drive her at our old property to collect the newspaper from the main gate. Because of her loud voice, Hugh always discovered us, but never got really upset about it. I'm well aware that, sooner or later, I'll have to let her go, but there are so many memories linked to her, including a sunrise drive at Palm Beach, that I'll allow myself a little extra time before making that decision.'

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Singer has been responsible for some incredible reimaginings of the Porsche 911. This is the most radical yet words James Elliott Photography Tim Scott

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'PORSCHE'S OWN AIR-COOLED MAESTRO HANS MEZGER WAS INVOLVED WITH THE ENGINE; RACER MARINO FRANCHITTI HONED IT TO PERFECTION'

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s a plain English kind of guy, I often struggle in the modern world. And in particular with its current obsession with elevating everything to concepts, taking workaday products that do a job and substituting practical utilitarianism for a status wrongly thought to be loftier, an 'idea' or

'vision'. Aren't actual tactile, working things the very opposite of ideas? Surely the practical realisation of a vision is more impressive than the vision itself.

I'll admit that I struggled when Singer first burst onto the scene in 2009. There were just so many portentous words when 'we've made a 911 much better' would have done it for me, and so many strictures over what you could actually call the thing in print. Needless to say, the name issue remains convoluted; here's the lowdown from Singer's own website: 'Singer Group, Inc. (Singer) restores and reimagines 1989 to 1994 Porsche 911s, based on the 964 chassis at the direction of its clients. Singer does not manufacture or sell automobiles... Out of respect for Porsche, and to respect Porsche's trademark rights, this incredible machine should never under any circumstances be referred to or described as a "Singer", "Singer 911", "Singer Porsche 911" or a "Porsche Singer 911", or in any other manner that suggests that it is anything but a Porsche 911 that has been restored and reimagined by Singer.' There you have it, then.

Anyway, more than a decade on from Singer's arrival, here I am, gazing lovingly at a Porsche 911 resulting from Singer's Dynamics & Lightweighting Study (DLS), fresh out of driving it and actually physically tingling with the joy of the experience. Stuttering and reaching for words that aren't there as I struggle to describe it to photographer Tim Scott, it is as if I am ten years old again. Cripes!

To spare myself the embarrassment of breaking the world

hypocrisy record, I am going to use the example of the car's owner to embody the appeal of Singer and the DLS. He has asked not to be named so I won't, but he is hawkishly intelligent, charming, witty and hopelessly devoted to intense detail. As a high-flying businessman in the luxury goods sector (including watches) he needs to be. He splits his time between the UK and Hong Kong and has an 18-strong car collection (not hesitating for a second when asked how many, always the sign of a proper petrolhead) encompassing Porsche, Ferrari, Aston, E-type and Gullwing.

He's a serious driver, too. Having won a spot in a celebrity Honda Civic race in 1992 in an *Autosport* competition, he raced for years, culminating in Ferraris, Porsches and Audi R8s, until a big crash in front of his wife at Macau in his runup to competing at Le Mans 2013 put paid to that sideline.

Oh, and he now has two Porsche 911s restored by Singer. The first is car 57 from the Classic Study, called Le Mans by its owner and an especially distinctive example evoking Porsche's first win at Le Mans (Attwood and Hermann in 1970), a venue just a couple of hours from where our man was born: 'In 2015-16 I was in LA and called in, and when I saw what they were doing, I thought, yeah, this is something special. It really is like a fine watch in the trouble they have gone to. And the performance... The secret is being fastidious with the parts people don't see.

'We specced it red with a single white stripe, balsa-wood gearknob, black exhaust manifold. Those who know will know. In 2018 I organised a tour to coincide with Le Mans Classic and paid for some laps before the event started. It was total madness, people driving like lunatics! The Classic drives brilliantly, but the DLS takes it to another level...'

In an inspired act of upselling, when our man went to collect his first car from LA, Singer svengali Rob Dickinson ushered him into a backroom and excitedly showed him a partial clay and some CAD of what would become the DLS.

Opposite and above

Stance counts for much of the instant appeal, but you could spend a long time soaking up the details – both outside and in. Hook, line and sinker. 'When they told me the price, I thought very hard, but seeing as I hadn't raced for five years, I told myself that what I had saved from that would cover it.'

The Dynamics & Lightweighting Study was reportedly started at the behest of Singer customer Scott Blattner wiith the objective to develop 'the most advanced air-cooled 911 in the world'. It would be lighter, more powerful, and better in every way; it would be re-engineered from the ground up. It was announced in 2018 and the online media frenzy mounted steadily, seeming to reach a crescendo last Autumn when it put in some laps at the Nürburgring.

The roll-call of credits speaks volumes of its thoroughness and intensity: Porsche's own air-cooled maestro Hans Mezger was involved with the engine, racer Marino Franchitti and Singer CEO Mazen Fawaz led the testing and development team that honed the dynamics to perfection, and Singer set up a new facility with a 100-strong team in the UK to deliver the study. Williams Advanced Engineering, the tech offshoot of the F1 team, was at the coalface. Brembo, Recaro, Momo and Bosch all offered expertise and products beyond their existing ranges in a unique collaboration that rapidly explains where the \$1.8m goes.

The car is powered by a bored and stroked 4.0-litre flat-six with four valves and twin injectors per cylinder, plus titanium sodium-filled valves (remember when they were a bad thing?). It revs to 9300rpm and delivers 500bhp, which propels the car via bespoke slashed Michelin Pilot Sport Cups – 245/35 ZR18s at the front, 295/30s at the back – on bespoke, lightweight forged magnesium BBS centre-lock rims. Clad in carbonfibre, even with an integral 40mm FIA 'cage, the DLS weighs just 990kg – compare that with a stock 964's 1375kg. That is a scarcely believable weight-saving, coming from virtually every component being weighed and lightened or replaced with a lighter one. The gearbox is also magnesium and it shows in the performance. Although there aren't official figures for the DLS, it's safe to assume that, thanks to its 500bhp engine that can offer more than 300lb ft of torque, it is capable of breaking 200mph (a 40mph gain on the 964 donor car) and can sprint to 60mph in under four seconds. That's heart-quickening pace.

Its skin is almost as impressive as what is underneath it. The restrained redesign is as classy as it is subtle, but look closely and, though the silhouette is unmistakeable, *everything* is different. Better than that, everything is more efficient, more engineered, more considered. Note the new front splitter, and that half the front lower light cluster, where once there were side/driving lights, is now a discreet vent to help cool the Chironesque front Brembos.

There is a barely noticeable aerofoil on the reprofiled roof, offering both aerodynamic advantage and downforce. What about the traditional whaletail spoiler? Well, now it is stubbier and more steeply raked, more like a 1973 RS's ducktail, and it works a lot better than the 964's mechanically deployed affair. Again, it is the detail that takes it to another level. Flush-fitting glass for fractionally less wind resistance: most wouldn't bother, Singer did. \$1.8m, remember.

Without wishing to encourage those who suggest 'stance' is the only measure of a car's greatness, this car has it in spades. With flared 'arches, filled almost to overflowing by the wheels and tyres, and its low, forward-leaning mien, even stationary it looks as though it will grip the road like a barnacle. The DLS results in a supremely clean tweak of the original, though 'tweak' is to understate that every one of those carbonfibre panels differs from the base car's.

Inside it is a similar story: bespoke lightweight Recaros and Momo wheel; a nice, prominent, upright gearlever; Swiss-cheese pedals, tab door-pulls, wind-up windows, prominent door bracing and a neat instrument cluster. Most of the dials look traditional, but the glistening central revcounter (running to 11,000) is pure chintz. In fact the whole DLS is immaculately detailed and beautifully finished. The suggestion of rear seats is squeezed in ahead of the roll-cage, but it's really a comfy pad for your overnight bag.

Of course, once Singer had spread its jam on the scone, then the similarly focused owner needed to add his own dollop of cream and he knew exactly how he wanted this car detailed. Can you spot it in the colour, the interior, the numberplate and even that ivory(ish) gearknob instead of stock carbonfibre? This car is an homage to the 718 RS60 that won at Sebring in 1960 (the year the owner was born), wearing race number 42 and bringing Porsche its first 'LOOK CLOSELY AND, THOUGH THE SILHOUETTE IS UNMISTAKEABLE, EVERYTHING IS DIFFERENT'

SINGER'S DLS PROJECT

victory in the 12 Hours (Hermann again, with Gendebien and Bonnier), a race in which our man years later came second in a 911. Stars in alignment and all that. 'Sebring' is etched into the kickplate, the registration number is SIB 42.

'I think Singer sees it as a challenge to achieve even an owner's most minute, some might say unreasonable, spec,' says the owner. 'As luck would have it, [broadcaster] Jerry Springer was restoring an RS60 and the guys were allowed to share his paint and interior colours.'

With only 75 units planned, all were sold before any restorations had even been completed at Singer's new UK facility, the first customer car landing in March 2021. Our owner first saw his when it was unveiled at the Goodwood Festival of Speed. His first ride in it was up the hill with Marino Franchitti – the linchpin in the car's development – at the wheel, and his first drive was the Monday after the Festival when Singer organised a trackday at Goodwood Motor Circuit. Now he will ship it to Hong Kong and use it.

'When we were waiting at the start-line at Goodwood, Marino was taking me through every detail, such as the shoulder bolsters for the seat, the pedal positions etcetera, and it was fascinating. He was a helluva nice guy. Then, on the Monday, I drove it. It really lived up to expectations. It's so poised on the road, the power delivery and traction are like driving a GT3 car. I scared myself a bit because I haven't been on a track for a decade and coming down the straight I said to myself "OK, let's see what this can do" and it just kept accelerating and beforeI knew it I was at Madgwick.'





Above and left Recaro did the special seats; engine is a

4.0-litre version of the flat-six that screams to an other-worldly 9300rpm.

'THE INNER DEVIL MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE NOT TO ENJOY THIS 911 TO THE FULL'





My turn. The joyously resuscitated start-up procedure of turn-key-and-push-button is pretty common in modern performance cars but still makes every beginning feel special. Instantly you hear the rasp of the exhausts, the angry-hive intensity as it settles. The clutch and steering are both reassuringly weighty, the pedals the most immediate and feelsome that I have ever experienced.

As you barrel along, the car feels wide only by period measures; it still feels tiny and threadable by today's standards and, with insanely responsive throttle and brakes that would instantly pull up a hard-charging rhino, it's all too easy to imagine jinking between slower traffic on a motorway. And other traffic will be slower, because the inner devil makes it impossible not to enjoy this 911 to the full. Every gearchange via that high lever feels like another step towards being crowned 'world king', the action so tight and precise that you question whether it could really be a remote lever. This is fun distilled. Then distilled again.

The next Singer project is to be a Turbo. That will be great, but less to my taste, I imagine, because it will inevitably sacrifice some of the visceral nature and spine-tingling sound of the naturally aspirated flat-six. That said, for me the most impressive thing about Singer's work, thanks in part to its revised suspension (double wishbones at the front and excellent rally-spec EXE-TC adjustable dampers), is that it does all this extra stuff, plays all these bonus tracks without giving any quarter on comfort, or the hard mechanical connection of the 964. This is why I can immediately picture myself dashing across France to the Alps, then down to Italy for a few days on the Amalfi coast. The goal may have been to build the ultimate air-cooled 911, but the result might just be the finest analogue GT ever created.

So a decade on you can consider me a convert. How could anyone with affection for anything mechanical not adore this fanatical, microscopic approach to detail improvement? It reminds me of Zagato in its pomp: entirely ignoring the aesthetics the company was renowned for, its genius was in tightening everything up, pulling in the corners, lightening, simplifying, sharpening responsiveness, allowing a car to become what it might have been without the interference of accountants and the constraints of mass production. With this Singer reimagining of the Porsche 911 we have that Zagato effect times ten.

And that's why the intro to this story didn't end up being about manual window winders in a \$1.8million car (though weight-saving, obviously) or comparing the price of a Dynamics & Lightweighting Study restoration to secondhand 964s on classified sites (from a risky £50k, since you ask). Yes, the DLS may once have been an idea, a concept, a philosophy and a vision, but let's jettison the fancy lingo now because it is real and tangible and electrifying, and for me that counts for double.

Above

The same, yet different in every way: even the aerodynamics are on a whole new level, with flush glazing, re-profiled roof and new tail spoiler.



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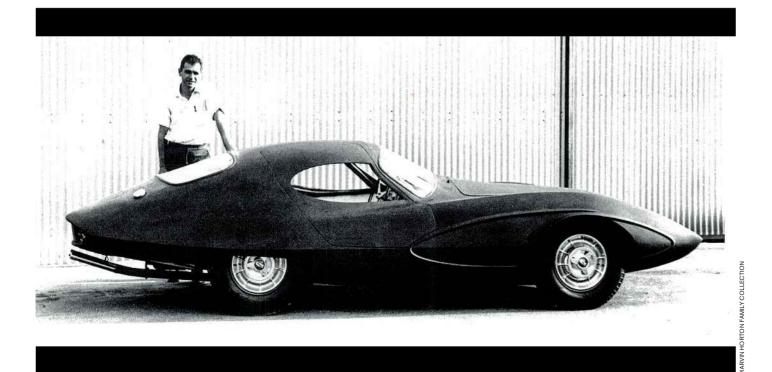
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WHEN THE USSA TOOK ON FEBBBBBBB



88

Mark R Brinker recalls the astonishing story of the Strother MacMinn Le Mans Coupes, an American attempt to build a Le Mans winner – and what happened to them afterwards

IT TOOK A CREW of three men, a tracked Kubota skid-steer and nearly eight hours of grunt to unearth a long-forgotten automotive marvel from the frozen soil of Brooklyn Park, Minnesota. Buried for years among the elements under rubber sheeting and engulfed by trees and shrubs, an original surviving example of Strother MacMinn's incredible Le Mans Coupe was finally exhumed. It was Marvin Horton's 1960 round-tube-chassis car, inexplicably found to be in solid condition.

It is significant that the Le Mans Coupe was designed by Strother MacMinn, an American designer whose impact on the automotive world was a result not of his own creations, but rather his influence through thousands of students during his long tenure (1948 to 1998) teaching at ArtCenter College of Design.

The string of MacMinn disciples reads like a *Who's Who* of American design, spanning half a century: Frank Stephenson, Chris Bangle, Ken Okuyama, Freeman Thomas, Wayne Cherry, J Mays, Peter Brock, Chip Foose, Robert Cumberford, Larry Shinoda, Stewart Reed, Chuck Pelly, Jack Telnack, Ron Hill, Shiro Nakamura, Bob Gurr... As a result, MacMinn is widely acknowledged as the most important US automotive design scholar of the 20th Century.

Designer and MacMinn student Raffi Minasian said: 'Mac wrote, illustrated, and chronicled the importance of design as part of the modern car experience. He, more than anyone, took the ideas of car design and made them part of concours, journalism and photography. His impeccable eye made a better *Road & Track* magazine, made your imagination of reading car articles go in all sorts of directions, and made design something artistic, not just technical. It was, as he often liked to say, jazz, not classical. The fluidity and openness of jazz was like car design to him.'

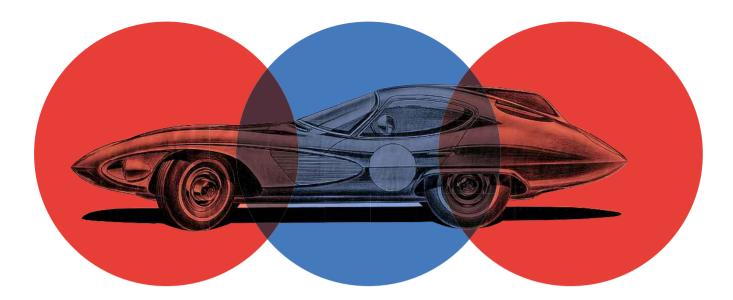
Of all MacMinn's designs, the Le Mans Coupe is unquestionably the one he is most remembered for. In *Sports Car Guide* in 1960, Robert Cumberford wrote: 'This is the most exciting sports-car design actually constructed in the United States in years. Its elegance and



Clockwise, from facing page

Strother MacMinn, circa late 1959/early 1960, with Alton Johnson's Le Mans Coupe still in grey primer; (left to right) Ron Ponech, Strother MacMinn, Stewart Reed, Doug Wilson and Rolph Kneefel looking at finished 1:8-scale models of cars, circa 1968, at ArtCenter College of Design; MacMinn with student Noritsuna Watanabe.





'THE ROAD & TRACK ARTICLE FOUND THE LE MANS COUPE THEORETICALLY SUPERIOR IN PERFORMANCE TO A FERRARI V12'

high style enhance rather than detract from overall performance. Correct aerodynamically, the body shape puts to shame anything else which has been constructed for the Chevrolet V-8 engine, including the best efforts of General Motors. This is not too surprising. MacMinn taught many of the GM designers most of what they know.'

The noted writer and historian, Ken Gross, said: 'I read John Bond's *Sports Car Design* articles for years, but I didn't take them seriously until I saw the Le Mans Coupe on the cover in 1960. I was gobsmacked. MacMinn's design was simply stunning.'

The story of the Le Mans Coupe did not begin at MacMinn's draughting table but rather at the headquarters of *Road & Track* magazine in 1957. John R Bond was a writer, engineer, automotive enthusiast, and the publisher of Road & Track from 1949 to 1972. Frustrated by the lack of success of American iron at the 24 Hours of Le Mans, Bond published a four-part series exploring what it would take to compete seriously at the world's most prestigious endurance race. Bond's motivation was not simply to race at Le Mans. No, he wanted an American car to score an outright victory. To go from concept to reality, Bond wasted no time enlisting MacMinn to ink the design.

The first article was published in November 1957. Bond described the physical parameters required of a winning car while complying with Le Mans racing rules. He proposed that a Le Mans winner be designed with a full roof to reduce wind resistance and that construction should focus on minimising weight, overall size, and frontal area to 14.5sq ft. He postulated that horsepower requirements should be calculated for a top speed of at least 180mph on the Mulsanne straight. The only artwork provided was three rudimentary drawings by Bond.

The second article appeared in January 1958, with more specifics: an 88in wheelbase and a Corvette powerplant ('the only engine choice... because of its compact size and low weight'). Total weight with driver and fuel was projected at 2100lb (953kg). The article included details regarding frame design and construction, as well as suspension and brakes. Two chassis drawings were provided.

The third article was published in February 1958, focusing on body shape. To derive the ultimate silhouette, Bond teamed Mac with a panel of 12 aerodynamic experts. The team determined that the initial frontal area goal was unachievable and that 16sq ft was realistic. They also concluded that the windshield



should be laid back 66° from vertical. For the first time, four drawings of MacMinn's stunning design were presented with accompanying text.

The final instalment was written by MacMinn and appeared in the April 1958 issue. This article provided additional MacMinn sketches, and projected data on specifications and performance: 0-60mph in 5.0 seconds and a top speed of 182mph. The article found the Le Mans Coupe theoretically superior in performance to a Ferrari V12: 'Using every known method of calculating and comparing, it seems quite possible that an American car for Le Mans could be built which could break the Le Mans lap record and would be capable of 115mph for 24 hours.' However, the article concluded: 'Although we are going to complete a rough chassis mock-up for photographic purposes and weight studies, $R \notin T$ has neither the time nor finances to build such a car.'

Yet *Road* & *Track's* crew didn't need to mock-up anything. In what must have been a shock to Bond, MacMinn and the $R \notin T$ staff, two Southern California teams had read the articles and responded to the challenge. The Le Mans Coupe was no longer a two-dimensional exercise. Cars were being built.

One was a one-off, built by Edward (father) and Frank (son) Tifft. But another, larger team, got under way just 40 miles away: Marvin Horton, Ed Monegan and Alton Johnson. Horton, an electronics professional and amateur sports car engineer, was the driving force behind the project. According to Horton's wife, Mary: 'Marvin could do anything. The Le Mans Coupe was a major focus of his activities in the late '50s and early '60s and was the biggest car adventure of his life.' Monegan was Horton's friend, with considerable expertise building high-speed boats. Utilising MacMinn's drawings, in 1958 Horton and Monegan constructed a wood frame that served as a male body plug, and in the August Horton contacted MacMinn for an onsite visit. Mac was so impressed by what he saw that he loaned Horton his design-study model. In February '59 Johnson joined the team. Johnson had won a GM Fisher Body Craftsman Guild contest and was an employee of Victress, with significant experience working in glassfibre.

Operating from Horton's home in Pacoima, California, the female mould was completed by June '59. Horton and Johnson then struck a deal: in exchange for his work, Johnson would receive the first glassfibre bodyshell. Johnson's longtime friend Doug Ward said: 'I was around when Alton was working on the project. Alton grew up poor and was entirely self-taught. He was an extraordinary artist and craftsman.'

To the best knowledge available, six 'Team Horton' bodies were produced, resulting in three completed cars, two partly completed cars, and one bare bodyshell.



Facing page, from left, and above

Marvin Horton (left) and Ed Monegan (right) seen here circa 1958 at Horton's home in Pacoima, California, with the completed wood frame that functioned as a male body plug and the 1:24 scale model that MacMinn loaned to Horton; MacMinn's model survives and is under the custodianship of fellow designer Bob Gurr; Alton Johnson smoothing the glassfibre body of his Le Mans Coupe.



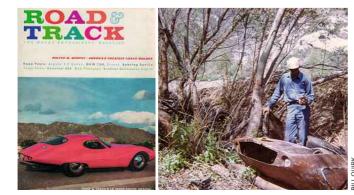
ALTON JOHNSON'S LE MANS COUPE Completed car no.1, with a Team Horton Body

By August 1959, Johnson's Le Mans Coupe was in running condition and was taken to Riverside International Raceway for an airflow observation test. Johnson drove the car with Doug Ward in the passenger seat. Ward recalled: 'Alton's car had a tach but no speedo. During the Riverside filming, the tach hit 4800 and we were clocked at over 150mph. A few weeks earlier, Alton and I had raced a high-speed train with the tach pinned at 5800. We were obviously doing a lot more than 150.' Johnson's car became the August 1960 cover story for *Road & Track*, and appeared in *Hot Rod, Custom Cars* and the first issue of *Sensualist*.

Sometime later, Johnson crashed his Le Mans Coupe above Malibu Canyon. Ward said the car went off backwards at speed and a guard-rail cut the roof off. Johnson and a passenger were ejected but escaped uninjured as the car plummeted into the canyon. Ward said: 'I have no idea how Alton and his friend survived. The crash was so violent, it broke the engine in half.' Johnson returned to the crash site but was unable to retrieve it.

In September 2011, Erich Schultz attempted to recover Johnson's car but fell and suffered fractured ribs. Restorer Doug Adler recalls his classmates, in 1989, coming back from a clean-up project of Malibu Creek State Park. 'They had found red racecar body parts, dragged them out, and discarded them in a dumpster. At the time I was unaware of Johnson's Le Mans Coupe and only years later realised what they probably threw away.'

Above and right Johnson in car no.1, which became an instant sensation when it appeared on the cover of *Road & Track*; Johnson returned to the crash site in Malibu Canyon but was never able to recover the car.





CARL SCHOONHOVEN'S LE MANS COUPE Completed car no.2, with

a Team Horton body Carl Schoonhoven of Chatsworth, California, was a friend of Monegan and acquired a Team Horton body. Schoonhoven constructed his Le Mans on a Jaguar XK120 chassis, which

Le Mans on a Jaguar XK120 chassis, which forced him to widen the body. This one was completed in the early 1960s, equipped with a full interior and roll-up windows. Photographs of Schoonhoven's car appeared in the November 1992 issue of *Classic & Sportscar* and the October/November/December 2000 issue of *Space Age XK*.



OB WENZELBURG

WALTER JACKSON'S 'WITCHCRAFT' DRAG RACING LE MANS COUPE Completed car no.3, with a Team Horton body

Thanks to Geoff Hacker's research and Bob Wenzelburger's racing photos, we know about a drag car built with a modified Le Mans Coupe body. Research suggests this car, known as *Witchcraft*, was constructed with a glassfibre shell sourced from Team Horton. *Witchcraft* was built and campaigned by Walter Jackson in the late 1960s, and raced in 1968 over at least two California drag strips, Fremont and Lions.

MARVIN HORTON'S ROUND-TUBE-CHASSIS LE MANS COUPE Partly completed car no.1,

with a Team Horton body While Johnson's car was the one featured in the

August 1960 *Road & Track* cover story, the article also devoted much ink to Horton's round-tube-chassis Le Mans Coupe. 'On the coupe, he [Horton] elected to use wishbones and longitudinal torsion bars (machined from pre-1949 Ford driveshafts) for the front suspension, but a transverse leaf spring provided weight support for the independent rear. A space-tube frame tied in with a structural aluminium-reinforced glassfibre driveshaft tunnel provided the lowest possible seating between side members, and a firm body mounting. His program is due for completion about mid-summer of this year (1960).'

In a sad twist of fate, Horton was diagnosed with leukaemia and never completed the car. Instead, he sold the project to David Hagemeister in the mid-1960s, before he died in 1970, aged 37, leaving a wife and five children. Fast-forward to October 2020, when Hagemeister was in his mid-80s and still owned Horton's partially completed car, including the Team Horton body and Horton's round-tube chassis.

After 15 years of dogged pursuit, with help from David's son Tim, the author was able to purchase Horton's car. Serious equipment was required to excavate it from Minnesota soil. Restoration will soon begin, with plans to finish Horton's coupe for a world debut with exhibition laps at the Le Mans racing circuit to honour MacMinn, Bond, and Horton.

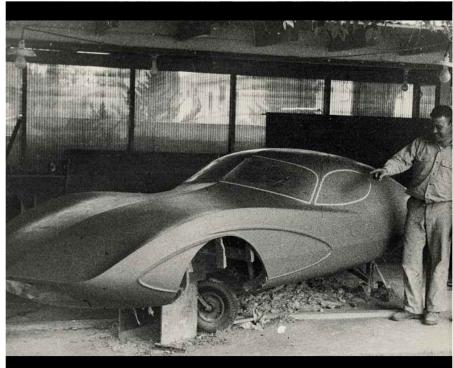




ARVIN HORTON FAMI

Clockwise, from above

Part-fabricated round-tube chassis in 1960; Horton all smiles regarding the progress of his Le Mans Coupe body; Horton's body and chassis on display at the author's shop in Houston, Texas; David Hagemeister in his yard with Horton's partially completed car, which he had cherished for more than 55 years.

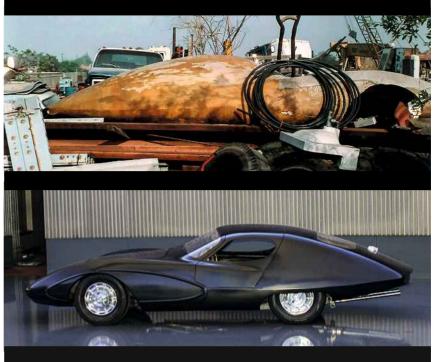


ARVIN HORTON FAMILY COLLECTION



MARVIN HORTON'S SQUARE-TUBE-CHASSIS LE MANS COUPE Partly completed car no.2, with a Team Horton body

When Hacker interviewed Monegan in 2006, Monegan shared that Horton had also built a square-tube-chassis Le Mans Coupe. According to Hacker, Monegan's description of the chassis closely matched that of the oneinch square-tube chassis under the Le Mans Coupe that Hacker purchased on eBay in 2006. Hacker's partly completed Le Mans Coupe came with a stack of original velum drawings. As purchased by him, the glassfibre body had a canopy entry roof. This Le Mans Coupe is now the subject of a comprehensive restoration.



TEAM HORTON BARE BODYSHELL

The one that got away, never fitted to a chassis - until now

A surviving Le Mans Coupe bare bodyshell was discovered by Doug Adler in 2010 in the Mojave Desert. According to Adler, this body was one of the original Team Horton shells ordered by a Bay Area customer, with plans to build a Land Speed Record car. Having never been fitted to a chassis, it remained in storage for decades. Adler displayed the body at the Petersen Automotive Museum and the ArtCenter College of Design before selling it to Dennis Kazmerowski in October 2021. Kazmerowski has since been busy building the Le Mans Coupe of his dreams. It featured in June at Detroit's prestigious EyesOn Design event to stunned onlookers. The plan is to have the car finished for the 2023 concours season.



EDWARD TIFFT'S LE MANS COUPE One-off completed car, with a Team Tifft body

Inspired by Bond's articles, Edward and Frank Tifft began constructing their Le Mans Coupe in the summer of 1958 from their home in Gardena, California. Using their own buck and then a mould, they made only a single body. The completed car was known as both the 'Tempest' and the 'Dolphin.' The car remained with the Tifft family for many years.

THANKS TO Geoff Hacker PhD, who shared his extensive research files after 15 years interviewing those involved with the Le Mans Coupes.



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THE OCTANE INTERVIEW

Andy Bell

The boss of leading pre-war Aston Martin specialist Ecurie Bertelli divulges nearly five decades of expertise as he prepares to hand over the reins

Words Simon Hucknall Photography Jordan Butters

AS FAR AS interview locations go, this one is less than ideal. I'm buried deep in the passenger bucket seat of an 86-year-old Aston Martin Speed Model. This pre-war car is wearing a race number and is currently being driven on the public road, though I'm not sure if its pilot is transitioning too well from Snetterton to the B5388, judging by the very post-war velocity. Like me, the chap behind the wheel seems to be enjoying every moment of our short blast, even though he's probably driven more pre-'39 Aston Martins - 302 at last count - than anyone else in the world, and should be unfazed by the experience. As with his approach to everything else pre-war Astonshaped, Andy Bell's passion remains palpable.

'Our business has its roots in the 1960s and has been run on blood, sweat and enthusiasm ever since.' We're back at Bell's office now and, less than a month before the youthful-looking 68-year-old retires, he's describing the often tortuous path that has resulted in his company, Ecurie Bertelli, becoming a world leader in the restoration and preservation of Aston Martins from the pre-war era. 'We can now resurrect cars from practically nothing, and that gives customers the confidence to use them more. In essence, Ecurie Bertelli can keep pre-war Astons running no matter what the problem is.'

And pre-war Astons have run through Bell's career, too, almost from the start. Raised in Walton-on-Thames, he enjoyed a 'comfortable middle-class' childhood. His father was a chartered quantity surveyor, and mother a state-registered nurse, with neither having any links to the motor industry. 'But my father was a keen motorist – my love of cars came from him. My party trick at the age of three was to identify any car that came by me, blindfolded. We went to Goodwood regularly, especially the Easter and Whitsun meetings. I would sit in the back of a Talbot 90 and we'd have sausage sandwiches for lunch; I still have the lapel tickets from the last meetings that I went to with my father.'

Bell's father was also a keen sailor, and built a cabin cruiser for the family ('I remember putting it through Sunbury dock at the age of nine'). He was also a member of Chichester Yacht Club and, when father and son visited the coast, they'd often admire a Bentley 4½ Litre parked opposite the Crown & Anchor pub, belonging to the respected motoring film-maker, Bill Mason. Little did Bell Jr realise then that Mason's son, Nick – set on a path to stardom with rock band Pink Floyd – was to perform a pivotal role in Bell's early career.

None of this would have played out had Bell's formal education taken him in a different direction. O-levels in seamanship and navigation at London Nautical School were followed by a degree in Occupational Psychology at Cardiff ('they were the only people who'd have me after I failed my A-levels'), deemed a good choice by his partly medical family. But that all changed when Bell spotted a job advert in *Motor Sport* magazine.

'I was fascinated by old cars from an early age, so when I saw Morntane Engineering's ad for a mechanic, with "no experience necessary", it caught my eye immediately.' Morntane was run by Derrick Edwards with his secretary



Judy Hogg. It had evolved from an earlier pre-war race preparation business – Ecurie Oppidans – which they'd managed in the 1960s and early '70s. One of Oppidans' clients was a young Nick Mason, drummer with the aforementioned Pink Floyd, who had asked them to maintain his battered Aston Martin International and soon became part of the scenery. 'Morntane was partly established to get Nick into the old-car scene,' says Bell. 'For Derrick's part, he saw Nick as funding his motorsport for the next ten years, and I think that Nick saw Derrick as a way to introduce him to the world of racing and classic cars. It was a very good union.'

And it was one that the 23-year-old Bell was soon to experience first-hand. His interview at Morntane's Kentish Town premises in the summer of 1977 went well. 'The only mechanical experience I'd had was removing the cylinder head from my Austin-Healey Sprite. But I'd seen Derrick and Nick racing their [Aston Martin] Ulsters a few weeks before at a VSCC meeting, so I was able to say that I enjoyed watching them race.' It was enough to secure Bell his dream job and very rapidly he was immersed in Morntane's far-from-conventional way of life.

'My first job was sweeping the workshop floor ready to paint it, because Morntane had only just moved to the unit,' says Bell. 'But I was soon working on cars – though only taking them apart, rather than putting them together!' The trainee mechanic was surrounded by the cars he'd idolised as a youth: Nick Mason's Jaguar D-type was parked next to a Ferrari 250 GTO; a racing Connaught shared space with two pre-war Aston Martins.

But when it came to driving the cars, it was the level of trust given to the 23-year-old Bell that surprised him. 'We were always encouraged to drive the cars at Morntane. The very first [pre-war Aston] I drove was a twoseater Le Mans, which Nick owned at the time. I drove it around Kentish Town, and it was the first time I'd experienced a centre-throttle. It was one of the thrills of my life. I also drove the D-type, and even LM7 [one of the ex-Le Mans Astons], with Derrick teaching me how to double-declutch and use the tricky gearbox.'





From top, and facing page Derrick Edwards and Judy Hogg with the Morntane Engineering team during a visit from former Aston Martin company owner Bert Bertelli in 1977; Andy in 1996 with his first Aston, rebuilt as a racer; in his first race, at Brands Hatch in 1979, which he won on handicap; today, surveying the workshops he has overseen for 30 years.



That level of trust reached new heights in 1979, when Bell was sitting on the start line at Brands Hatch in an Aston Martin Ulster. 'Derrick was very keen that we should drive the cars so that he could fill the grids at AMOC [Aston Martin Owners' Club] meetings – though there was never any guarantee that Derrick told owners that a junior mechanic was going to be racing their cars.' Either way, Bell put the Aston first on handicap in his debut race, starting a long racing career from which he retired only a few years ago.

Not all of Bell's driving escapades in early Astons ended so well, though. 'Derrick was a good mechanic, but a brilliant bodger. After he blew up an engine in his own Ulster and rebuilt it, he'd asked me to run it in on the M1. I was only driving at 50mph, but caught in the lorry tracks and the car was weaving about. The police actually pulled me over because they had no record of the car's number, CMC 614 – Derrick had never bothered to register it. After a 15-minute grilling, when I was informed I'd committed about eight different motoring offences, I somehow managed to get away scotfree, with nothing more than a stern warning.'

But Bell was never put off by Derrick's rather happy-go-lucky approach to business: 'Morntane was the most delightful introduction to the world of work that you could imagine. I was surrounded by pre-war cars and the company was owned by a world-class pop star, who was very friendly and with whom I got on well. I looked after his house when he was on holiday, babysat his children, drove his cars and even lived in his wife's old house in Camden, rent-free. To suddenly find yourself in that situation at the age of 23 was truly extraordinary. For ten years, I led the life of Riley.'

But by 1987 it was clear that Nick Mason's involvement with Morntane was drawing to a close. A period of upheaval began, which was to last nearly six years and end with a new company name. Mason sold 85% of his share to one of the company's customers, Japanese businessman Koji Nakauchi, and Morntane became part of his UK-based Middlebridge Group, the ambitious plans of which led to difficulties for the otherwise buoyant Morntane and resulted in both Derrick Edwards and Judy Hogg leaving the business.

Bell helped them set up a new business, called 'Ecurie Bertelli Ltd'. It was financed by one of Derrick's old friends from his Ecurie Oppidans days, Jack Weiss – only for the early '90s crash in car prices to affect Weiss's fortunes significantly. Bell recalls Weiss's plan to sell the business to Aston Martin, until the deal fell through when Ford bought AML as part of its Premier Automotive Group.

Now, 30 years on, Ecurie Bertelli remains not only operational but pre-eminent globally as a pre-war Aston Martin specialist, and that 'BELL PUT THE ULSTER FIRST ON HANDICAP IN HIS DEBUT AT BRANDS HATCH, STARTING A LONG RACING CAREER'

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ANDY BELL INTERVIEW

is testament to the financial risks that Bell took personally in 1993 to retain the company name, while starting an all-new business.

'The fact that I'd been working on pre-war Astons for 15 years was a definite advantage. I knew a lot of people, and a lot of people knew me.' Bell estimates that, of the 450 pre-war Astons that survive globally, he has worked on 350 of those since his early Morntane days, and typically Ecurie Bertelli now sees around 100 cars through its doors each year.

The company has also become far more autonomous than ever before and, after investing heavily in new technology such as a CNC lathe, can manufacture any part for a pre-war Aston. Bell has carefully curated a remarkable Aston Martin archive, including original works drawings, enabling Ecurie Bertelli to produce precise copies of original components. But the archive also catalogues every car built in the pre-war period, including who's owned the car, and where it's been raced.

And racing's clearly still close to Bell's heart. 'I wanted to build a supercharged engine [based on the 2.0-litre] for competition,' he says. 'So I bought three Godfrey-Roots K200 blowers on eBay. The 2.0-litre's dynamos are driven off the inlet side of the engine, so we removed the dynamo and made a gearbox to go on what was the dynamo drive and screwed a K200 to it. It's perfectly positioned, so when we dyno-tested it we got 165bhp and 185lb ft of torque. We dropped the supercharged engine into a 1.5-litre chassis for a customer and it was by far the fastest pre-war Aston in the world. Quicker than a [Bugatti] T35 – and that's saying something.'

Perhaps the best news is that Ecurie Bertelli will continue to evolve after Bell leaves this month. Robert Blakemore is the son of a customer with whom Bell has a long association. They've been working together for six years, and Blakemore will take on full responsibility for the business. 'Robert's increased the profile of the company. He's made closer links with the [AM Works] factory and invested in new technology; basically, he's accelerated a process that would have taken me many more years to put in place.'

There's young blood at the company, too, with ten employees directly involved in car restoration/preparation, most of whom are under 40 years old. EB has also been taking apprentices from Bicester Skills Academy, reinforcing its focus on sustainable skills.

And Andy Bell? Retirement to Ireland beckons and, as well as taking with him a recently acquired, highly original Jaguar XK120 ('I always wanted to own a six-cylinder car'), he'll be accompanied by his beloved Aston Martin 15/98. But today he has a final mission, and it's waiting for him downstairs: to drive his 303rd pre-war Aston Martin.





Above and left

Andy Bell is about to hand over the reins to his successor, Robert Blakemore; Ecurie Bertelli has a huge archive of engineering drawings, so almost any part can be made from scratch.



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One innovative Austrian inventor fancied an alternative to the ski-lift. The VW Half-Track Fox was his solution, and it's just been restored Words Matthew Hayward Photography VWCV Classic Vehicles





as there ever been a more universally adored – not to mention more versatile – van than the Volkswagen Type 2? The 'split-screen' bus isn't just an automotive icon, but also a seriously important piece of cultural history. Its legacy remains powerful to this day, keeping the Volkswagen scene both vibrant and huge. Having said that, we've never seen one quite as versatile as this before.

Say hello to the Half-Track Fox, described as 'probably the most off-road-capable Bulli ever to be seen on the mountain slopes of this world'. Fresh from an extensive restoration, it currently resides in Volkswagen Commercial's Hanover heritage collection and its restoration has been a labour of love for the team.

Versatility was among the Type 2's major selling points when Volkswagen launched the new model – based on the underpinnings of the Beetle, or Type 1 – in 1950. The original inspiration for the Type 2 van is credited to the Dutch Volkswagen importer, Ben Pon Sr. It was during a visit to the factory to discuss importing the Type 1 into The Netherlands that he spotted a *Plattenwagen* (a custom-built factory parts transporter) running around, which used the Beetle's running gear.

The original sketch for the Type 2 – or '*Bulli*', as it is nicknamed in Germany – featured revolutionary cab-forward styling and the rear-mounted flat-four-engine, making a sideopening door the best option. It could transport cargo or people, or be used as a camper van. One of the few things it didn't boast from the factory, however, was the ability to drive up a snow-capped mountain. This was a problem that Vienna-based inventor, engineer and keen skier Kurt Kretzner set out to rectify.

Kretzner's problem was that there were very few readily available off-road vans for sale in Austria. He wrote in the original sales literature for the Half-Track Fox: 'At first, I had a look around, but couldn't find the vehicle I was dreaming of. So I decided to build it myself. Specialist machinery did exist but it wasn't easy to operate, so this resourceful engineer built his own. It had to be easy to drive, just like a normal van – yet this one came with a twist.

His original brief was that he wanted 'an ideal helper for everyone: mountain hut keepers, hunters, foresters, doctors, maintenance engineers for ski-lifts, TV and radio masts, pipelines and the like'. What better starting point than the much-loved Volkswagen Bulli? This particular example began life as a standard Type 2, built at the Hanover plant in 1962 and delivered to its new owner in Vienna. It spent the first few months being used as a road van before Kretzner began his conversion.

Over the next four years it was completely transformed by the inventor into what you see here. Gone are the rear wheels, and in their place is a chain-driven double axle. The outer tracks are driven by internal 13-inch wheels,





Clockwise, from top left Half-Track is limited to 35km/h on the road; front cockpit is standard Bulli; traction on snow is provided by specially made wheel-driven tracks; there's no stopping it.

1962 Volkswagen Type 2 Half-Track Fox

Engine 1192cc air-cooled OHV flat-four, Solex 28 PICT-2 carburettor Power 30bhp @ 3400rpm Torque 56lb ft @ 2400rpm Transmission Four-speed manual, rear-wheel drive, limited-slip differential Steering Worm and roller Suspension Front: trailing arms, transverse torsion bars, telescopic dampers. Rear: swing axles, trailing arms, torsion bars, telescopic dampers Brakes Drums Weight 1500kg (est) Top speed 22mph VW HALF-TRACK

'THE HALF-TRACK FOX BACKS UP ITS LOOKS WITH GENUING OFF-ROAD CAPABILITY



Right There's no record of the Half-Track Fox's original rear cabin, so VWCV created wooden benches and storage.



and were designed, developed and built by Kretzner. His unique track design features aluminium links fitted with 2cm rubber feet designed to make the Type 2 drivable on the road without damaging asphalt.

Kretzner had denied himself a fully tracked vehicle, like a bulldozer, because it would have been difficult to drive. Their unconventional steering demands a different set of driving skills, which would detract from the Fox's planned ease of use, so Kretzner kept his van's standard set-up at the front. Obviously it had to be modified in order to keep ahead of the huge traction of the rear tracks, so a second steering axle was fitted behind the original. Both feature dual 14-inch wheels with all-terrain tyres.

Each axle had its own set of brakes, too, but the biggest advantage of the new set-up was the 10m turning circle. To fit all this hardware under the Type 2, the lower portion of the body was significantly modified, with new full-length fenders to cover the tracks and which drastically altered the Bulli's looks. The changes to the body also meant a reduction in interior space, leaving just enough room for some bench seating.

Due to the changes in the rear axle, the gearing was significantly lower than a standard Type 2's, but the biggest change came in the form of a limited-slip differential – vital for maximum off-road ability. Despite all the extra hardware, the engine remained entirely untouched, meaning the Fox had to make do with the Type 2's unmodified air-cooled 1.2-litre, 34bhp flat-four.

Ultimately, though, this would prove to be sufficient given the Fox's road-legal maximum speed of just 35km/h. What's it like to drive? Christian Schlüter, product manager at VW's commercial vehicle division (and a die-hard Bulli enthusiast), drove the Fox after its restoration. 'There's a rattle and hiss as the sound of the chain-drive combines with the familiar sound of the boxer engine. At low speeds, the rubber blocks of the tracks are strongly perceptible, and the road-legal maximum speed of 35 km/h is to be approached only by the daring! First gear is a very short ratio, therefore in everyday driving you can start in second. Otherwise, everything inside feels like a VW bus and can be operated in the same way. It shows its true qualities off-road and on snow, where it can also be driven more swiftly than on the road. The track links bite into the ground and the front tyres can be equipped with metal spikes.'

The Half-Track Fox looks like a VW Type 2 on steroids. It backs up those looks with genuine off-road capability, and is as easy to drive as you could expect of a van converted in such a specific way. Surely Kretzner was onto a winner? His advertising certainly suggested that should be the case: 'The new, ideal, easyto-drive Half-Track Fox that lets you safely and comfortably master all difficult terrain. Snow, sand, stony ground, mountain meadows, small streams and woods can all be driven through in this vehicle.'

Yet Kretzner built only two Foxes before moving on to other projects in 1968 – and this one is believed to be the sole survivor. It was Kretzner's personal vehicle, and was apparently a regular sight around Vienna until the mid-1980s. It became a bit of a local legend, and was purchased by the Porsche Automuseum in Gmünd in the late 1980s. It then found its way into the possession of a Frankfurt VW Bus collector in the early 1990s, who in 1994 passed it into the stewardship of the German Type 2 club Bullikartei eV.

Although it was still running and driving at the end of the 1990s, the Fox was soon decommissioned, and Bullikartei began the process of restoring it in 2005. It was



Left and below In its element in the forest; restoration work was carried out by VW's own commercial vehicle heritage department in Hanover.

disassembled, but the club struggled to make progress as most of its members are spread throughout Germany. It remained in pieces until it was acquired by VW Commercial Vehicles' own classic vehicles department in Hanover in 2018.

The process of restoring the Fox to its former glory began in haste. Schlüter notes: 'The vehicle was completely disassembled and the body showed some maintenance issues. The reassembly was based on drawings and pictures.' The team was passionate about getting the Half-Track Fox back up and running, being guided by the principle of *'Erinnern. Erleben. Erhalten'* ('Remember. Experience. Receive').

As with all restorations carried out at VW's Hanover factory, the body was completely stripped and all the necessary metalwork repairs carried out before it was protected with a cathodic dip. And then, just as it was in 1966, the body was finished in matt orange paint – chosen by Kretzner to make his special vehicle instantly recognisable in the Austrian countryside, and also the reason for its name.

The Fox's track links were made by Kurt Kretzner, so they are unique and irreplaceable, and the tyre sizes required intensive research, yet most of the other components – even on the dual front axle – were standard to the Type 2, which made their restoration much more straightforward.

Although originality was important, there were very few details, photos or even drawings of the interior as it would have been back in 1966. The team created a brand new and unique rear cabin for the Fox, making use of beech and pine for this Alpine explorer. Not just pretty, but practical as well, with plentiful storage for tools or skiing equipment.

After more than 25 years of sitting still, the Fox finally stretched its legs in the mountains for the first time during the ski season in early 2022. 'The vehicle was a popular project within our small team of mechanics because of its exclusivity. A lot of ideas, work and passion went into it,' says Schlüter.

The Fox will remain in the VWCV heritage collection and is set to star in next year's VW Bus Festival, a three-day extravaganza held in Hanover. Fancy being among the 100,000 Bulli fans who'll be there to see it? Find out more at vw-bus-festival-2023.de.

'THE BODY WAS STRIPPED AND ALL THE NECESSARY METALWORK REPAIRS CARRIED OUT'





CLASSICS



This year marks 100 years of the Austin Seven. Mark Dixon drives



a rather special example to a very special event Photography Barry Hayden



1932 Austin Seven

Engine 747cc sidevalve four-cylinder, Zenith carburettor Power 10.5bhp @ 2400rpm Transmission Three-speed manual, rear-wheel drive Steering Worm and wheel Suspension Front: beam axle, transverse leaf spring located by radius rods, lever-arm dampers. Rear: live axle, quarter-elliptic leaf springs, lever-arm dampers Brakes Mechanically operated drums Weight c500kg Top speed c50mph 0-40mph c37sec he ability to find pleasure in driving any car, no matter how humble, is surely what defines a real petrolhead, and no-one epitomised that more than the late and much-missed Tony Dron. A contributor to *Octane* for many years,

he described back in early 2011 what it's like to race a unique Drogo-bodied Ferrari 250GT SWB Competizione at the Goodwood Revival; a few pages further on, he was writing enthusiastically about his latest car purchase, a barn-find Austin Seven saloon.

Tony bought his first Seven at the age of 11, which he planned (but failed) to turn into one of the Specials that were hugely popular in the 1950s. His first actual road car was a 1932 Seven Box Saloon, purchased for £30 in 1964. His final classic was also a 1932 Box Saloon, one of the last built on the 6ft 3in 'short' wheelbase, and it's the car pictured here.

'Despite being 6ft Sin tall, I was always very comfortable in Sevens,' he said when he introduced it in *Octane* 93. But then Tony always did like small cars. Among his recent daily drivers were a Citroën 2CV, a Daihatsu Sirion and a Ford Fiesta; further evidence of his total lack of car-snobbery.

Tony passed away on 16 November 2021, after a long struggle with lung disease. But in July that year he managed to drive his Seven single-handedly from his Cambridgeshire home to a Seven Club rally at Beaulieu, a round trip of 330 miles spread over three days. If he'd survived a bit longer he would certainly have tried his damnedest to bring it to the Seven centenary celebrations this July, when nearly 1000 cars and their owners congregated in the beautiful English Cotswolds.

If Tony couldn't be present, then at least his car could be. I'd been a friend and colleague for over 30 years and felt that driving his beloved Seven to the event would be some kind of tribute, as well as, literally, an emotional journey for me. To my eternal gratitude, his widow Charis liked the idea, too, and a plan was hatched. I'd collect the Seven on my car trailer, take it over to my place in Oxfordshire and then drive it the 30 miles or so to the rally.

I've warned photographer Barry Hayden that a Seven was not designed to carry the modern photographer's typical kit of portable lights, massive tripod and bulging bag of lenses. This would have to be a guerilla job and so, early one Saturday morning, Barry stuffs a carry-on bag behind the Seven's seats, while we attempt to stuff ourselves in front of them.

Tony was famously lanky – six-foot five and slim as a racing snake – so he had the driver's seat cushion adapted to form a steeply raked wedge, which raised his knees high enough to drive. While not quite so tall, I'm also over sixfoot and I fit quite well, although dragging my feet past the driver's door is still an effort. Tony was clearly more flexible.

For a cheap family car, the Seven's dash has more switches and dials than you could shake a stick at – and a starter motor that trespasses into the passenger footwell. The pedals are of the organ-stop variety and, anticipating the Seven's notoriously on/off button of a clutch pedal, I've chosen some faux-racing boots. I'm cursed with great clod-hopping feet, and you know what they say about men with big feet... Yes, they have big shoes.

First things first. Check that the ignition advance/retard lever, pointing up from the steering wheel hub, is moved fully to the left for full retard (Tony was very particular about the correct use of advance/retard) and that the hand throttle lever, which points down, is also positioned left but not all the way. Ignition switch to 'on' – there are actually two 'on' positions, one for 'Summer charging' and one for 'Winter', because the Seven was made in the days before control boxes for dynamos – then pull the choke out and press the starter button (mounted alongside the transmission tunnel) and the Seven's tiny engine fires straight away. It really does sound and feel like a sewing machine, and a dip on the throttle is reminiscent of running up some curtains on an old Singer.

Fortunately, the route between my house and the Seven rally can be strung together from picture-perfect country lanes and B-roads, passing through the tiny hamlet of Adlestrop, made famous by Edward Thomas's poem ('Yes, I remember Adlestrop...'). These are very much Seven kind of roads, and even on a summer Saturday we see hardly another car as we bumble past fields ripening with grain and along sun-dappled avenues of trees.

That's just as well, since the Seven's engine was rebuilt only 35 miles ago and I'm under strict instructions to run it in gently. Easier said than done, thanks to a massive gap between second and third gear ratios in the three-speed 'box: on uphill grades, you have to make a tough choice between revving it hard in second or labouring in third. When Tony became too ill to carry on working on the car, his local club, the Cambridge Austin Seven and Vintage Car Club, rallied round and its members put the dismantled engine together again. Most touchingly, the CAS&VCC chaps refused to take any money for their labours.

With a few miles under our belt, the shorttravel clutch – it seems to have literally a halfinch of movement – now holds no fears, although hill starts can sort out the men from the boys in terms of clutch control. Still, at least I never have to ask Barry to get out and walk:

Facing page and below

Tiny dimensions, supple suspension and 40+mpg fuel economy mean a Seven is still surprisingly relevant for rural driving on minor roads; interior is well-equipped for a cheap car of its era, but notoriously 'on-off' clutch and big gap between second and third gears will challenge a novice.



TONY DRON'S AUSTIN SEVEN







Facing page, clockwise, from top left Louis Parkin and girlfriend Becky with Louis' 1927 Box saloon; superbly finished Sevenbased Ashley 750 Special; *tricoleur* rad on visiting Continental two-seater; Sevens as far as the eye can see; John Day in his RAF radio car; Seven spares still plentiful; South African Seven racer 'Duck' one of many rarities on display.

a 1932 *Light Car* road test of a Seven over Dartmoor recorded that 'only on some of the very much steeper acclivities in the heart of the moor was it necessary to shed the passenger'.

On a beautiful day like this, with no time pressures, it's a pleasure to travel by Seven. The hulking monstrosity of an oncoming modern car holds no fears on even the narrowest of lanes, since the Seven is so tiny that there always seeems to be room to squeeze into the hedge, and its supple suspension copes well with countryside tarmac. You can see why they make good trials cars. There's a fair bit of body sway as you wind up to a giddy 35mph and the car seems to want to steer from its 'hips', although the front end is satisfyingly pointy.

Brakes? Well, let's just say they are adequate. Stopping for a T-junction at the bottom of a steep hill causes momentary anxiety but, at the time, I hadn't yet read *Motor*'s 1931 report that 'to get reasonably short pulling-up distances, we found it necessary to apply the foot and hand brakes simultaneously'.

Nevertheless, we survive. Rolling into the rally location, the Fire Service College just outside Moreton-in-Marsh, we're amazed to see hundreds and hundreds of Sevens parked everywhere we look. The College is a big site – it used to be an RAF airfield, which has since mellowed thanks to tree growth (rather like Bicester Heritage) – but the Sevens are pretty much filling it. Every age, every type, every condition from barn-find to concours: they're all here. The organisers had registered more than 1000 Sevens to attend, and it looks as though most of them have made it.

We're ushered to an age-appropriate spot the car's age, not ours - among a host of other 1932 models, and unfurl our legs for a stroll around. It's quickly apparent that the Austin Seven Clubs' Association has done an incredible job. It's not just the cars: there are trade stands, autojumble stands, activities for children, and a superb 'pop-up' Seven exhibition in one of the college buildings. Occupying several rooms, it tells the Seven story, from conception by Herbert Austin and the 18-year-old Stanley Edge in September 1921 to the end of production in July 1939, and it's packed with memorabilia. Fittingly, it will transfer over to the British Motor Museum at Gaydon after the rally, where it can be seen until next Summer. It's well worth a look.

But, of course, the cars are what it's mainly about. More than 300 works and coachbuilt



'STOPPING FOR A T-JUNCTION AT THE BOTTOM OF A STEEP HILL CAUSES MOMENTARY ANXIETY'

versions of the 300,000 Sevens built have been recorded and it seems as though representatives of all of them are here. Besides every variation of saloon, tourer, sports car and racer, there are line-ups of signwritten delivery vans and Sevenbased Specials. Among the latter, my favourite is a beautifully put-together Ashley 750 sports car. The finish of its swoopy glassfibre body is outstanding and it illustrates what so many aspiring owners hoped to achieve with these kits, but rarely managed.

Another car that catches the eye is John Day's RAF radio car. 'It was built when the RAF were experimenting with radio transmission, using Morse code, and is one of just three known survivors,' John tells me. 'It's a fun car to own because I can take it to military shows as well as classic car events.'

It's good to see that Seven owners are far from all being the pipe-and-slippers brigade, too. Louis Parkin, aged 23, and his girlfriend Becky have brought along his 1927 Box Saloon, bought with a legacy from his late godfather. 'He left me money for a round-the-world plane ticket but dad persuaded me that I'd be better investing it in a Seven! We bought this car on eBay and I've since found out that it was used in the original 1950s TV series *The Larkins*. I also own a Seven Ulster rep, which I built-up during lockdown. I've just raced it at VSCC Silverstone and we're about to go on holiday to Normandy in it with other VSCC youngsters.'

Seven people are such a friendly bunch that it would be very easy to spend all day chatting, and maybe sinking the odd pint or two – Tony Dron was very much a fan of proper ale – but we are supposed to be working for *Octane*. Sadly, therefore, we have to miss the Spitfire flypast in the afternoon, and instead head back into the Cotswolds lanes for a photo session.

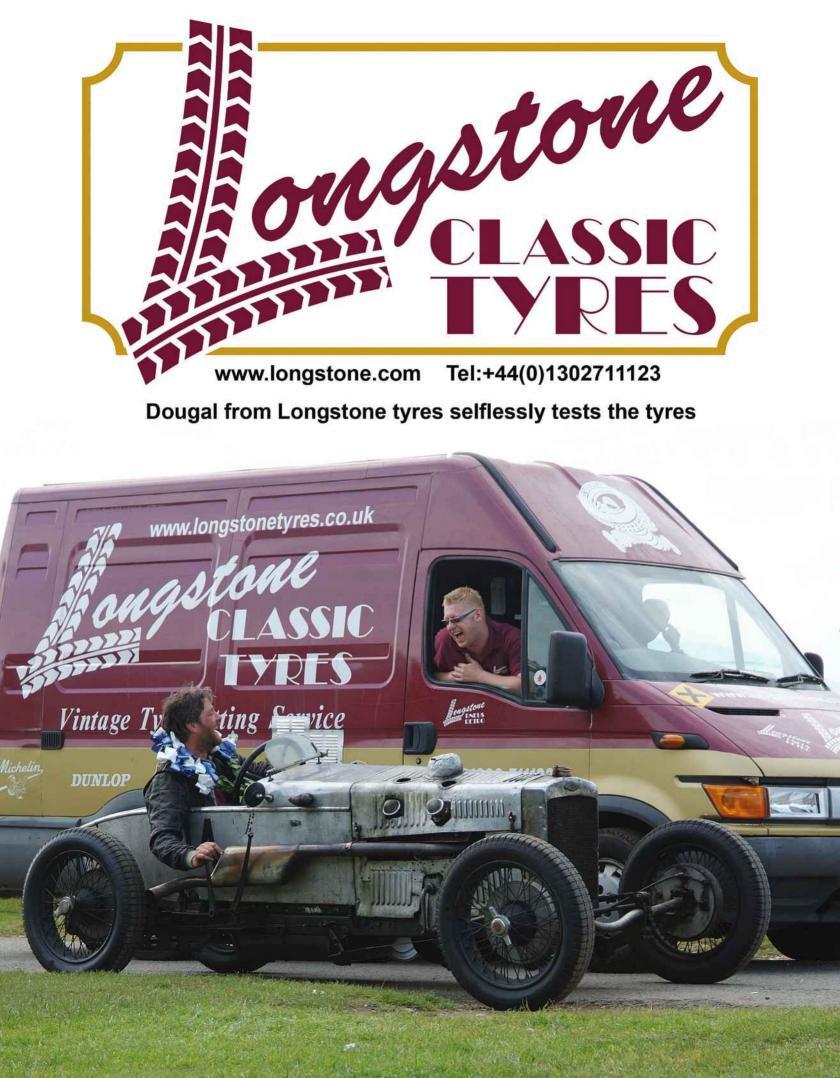
Other than being perhaps rather tidier than they were in the 1920s, these byways haven't changed a lot in the last century, and driving a Seven makes you realise just how relevant such a car can still be for rural transport. Tony liked nothing better than driving this Seven to his favourite pub – a tradition that his widow Charis has just started to revive.

There's a pleasing circularity to the fact that Tony began his motoring life with Austin Sevens, and finished it with them, too. But the coincidences don't end there. A few days after the rally, Charis emails to say she's found the receipt Tony was given when he bought their car. It's dated 16 November 2010. Tony passed away on 16 November 2021.

Top and right

Good ground-clearance means that Sevens are still hugely popular for vintage trialling; *Octane*'s 6ft 1in dep ed easily fits compact cabin – and Tony Dron had no trouble at 6ft 5in.









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ASTON MARTIN first entered Le Mans in 1928 and managed to rack up three second places and two thirds over the years. Come 1956, David Brown decided to get serious and put his chief designer Ted Cutting on the case to create the DBR1. The body evolved from the DB3S but with a much lower profile. Despite a longer wheelbase and wider track the car was 300lb (136kg) lighter, thanks largely to its 20-gauge magnesium allov bodywork. The new spaceframe utilised the DB3S's suspension and disc brakes. Fitted with a 2.5-litre DOHC engine with a lightweight aluminium block and twin-spark ignition, it produced around 220bhp, fed to the rear wheels via a five-speed gearbox.

The DBR1 finished seventh at La Mans in '56. In '57 it failed to finish there, but won the Nürburgring 1000km and again in '58 with Moss and Brabham driving. Aston Martin's finest hour finally came at Le Mans in 1959. With a strong line-up of drivers (Roy Salvadori and Carroll Shelby, Maurice Trintignant and Paul Frère, Stirling Moss and Jack Fairman), the 2992cc-engined Astons outlasted strong competition from Ferrari and Porsche, finishing first and second, the win going to Salvadori and Shelby.

David Brown changed into his Sunday Best and enjoyed a victory lap, having won overall as well as winning the Index of Performance, the Index of Thermal efficiency and the Biennial Cup. After winning the Tourist Trophy later in the year, Aston Martin took the World Constructors' Championship - and Brown promptly withdrew his company from motorsport. Just five DBR1s were constructed and DBR1/1 sold in 2017 for \$22,555,000, a world record for a British-built car.



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OCTANE CARS

Making the most of it



1999 PORSCHE BOXSTER Glen Waddington

'A SUMMER OF excuses', I predicted. And sure enough, at every opportunity I've enjoyed a blast in the Boxster - when I haven't been using my BMW Convertible, that is. But I bought the Porsche with the intention of pressing it into regular service rather than saving it for Sunday Best, and since the last instalment there have been a few longer trips, not least to Scarborough with Mrs W for a rock concert, and a hugely enjoyable foray to my folks in Lancashire via the Peak District, achieved in less time than it'd usually take via the M6. This car was made for a quiet evening on the A515, revelling in the twists out of Ashbourne and

the spearing straights en route to Buxton.

Then came a call from my old uni mate, Andrew Wilcox, someone I hadn't seen for a decade or two but who now works at the Classic Motor Hub near Bibury. What a great excuse for a drive across the Cotswolds: for me, that's the B4031 via Croughton, Aynho and Deddington, then out towards Chipping Norton and the A361 to Burford. Scenic and twisty, and a fabulously sunny afternoon for it, too. Perfect.

The former Historic Motoring Awards class winner and finalist holds regular 'Coffee & Classics' events, with space for 250 cars of all types. Before the onslaught of visitors, Andy showed me around the impressive workshops and showrooms; there's also a shop and café, so it's a destination for car enthusiasts even if there isn't an organised event going on. But it's even more impressive when visitors begin to arrive in their cars. The atmosphere became a heady mix of petrolheadonism and summer barbecue, all with the backdrop of Classic Motor Hub's extensive inventory of cars for sale, and the soundtrack provided by a singer and guitarist. Very cool.

Highlight cars on the night included (for me) a highly patinated Tatra 603, a beautiful Lancia Flaminia convertible, a superb Citroën SM, and (as you might expect) every type and era of 911. The next Coffee & Classics (and the last for this year) is on Sunday 2 October. Book your spot via classicmotorhub.com and enjoy the trip.

I did. Even the journey home was fun: mid-summer, not quite dark even by the time I got home at gone 11, a wonderful fast drive along the A40 back to Oxford (normally clogged in daytime

Above, and top right

In its element, at speed, top-down on a summer day; at the Classic Motor Hub's evening gathering, with 250 cars and a musician providing the party soundtrack.

traffic: it really flows when it's not busy) and the Brackley roundabouts along the A43 pretty much all to myself. Boxster heaven.

All told, we're now at well over 3000 miles in six months of ownership, still no problems evident, still averaging more than 30mpg. There's been an MoT test, with a pass easily achieved after nipping up the handbrake adjustment. Yes, the tear in the rear 'screen is still held together with Gorilla tape, but the damage hasn't got any worse, it remains water-tight, and with the roof down you'd never know it was there. Maybe my opinion on that will change come winter but I'm having too much fun to notice.



'What a great excuse for a drive across the Cotswolds. Scenic and twisty, and a fabulously sunny afternoon for it, too. Perfect'



OCTANE'S FLEET

VINTAGE TYRES

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
- roor mumph are

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
- 1900 Ford Muslang 20

JAMES ELLIOTT

- Editor-in-chief
- 1965 Triumph 2.5 Pl1968 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
- 1000 MOIOCUCS DEIIZ 240

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
- 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
- 1940 Tatta 187
 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-up1969 Plymouth Roadrunner
- Various motorbikes

HARRY METCALFE

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

Major surgery



THE TROUBLE WITH classic cars is that the longer you own them, the greater the chance of a big bill appearing. I've owned this Lamborghini Countach QV for 12 years, it's been regularly driven (20,000km in my hands) and enjoyed, so it comes as no surprise that it's now in the middle of major mechanical surgery at Tyrrell Classic Workshop.

When I first bought it the gearbox was a bit noisy, but every Countach I'd driven was similar, and therefore it was hard to say whether this particular QV was worryingly noisy or just annoyingly noisy. As the years ticked by, the gearbox whine moved almost imperceptibly up the scale and got to the point where, after a quick passenger ride, Iain Tyrrell advised me to cease driving the car immediately and to return it to his workshop so the gearbox (and engine, as both have to come out together) could be removed and stripped for inspection.

It's quite an operation to achieve that, as they have to be extracted vertically and a serious grade of engine hoist is required. Fortunately, Iain had one handy and it didn't take the team there long to have the whole thing sitting on a bench.

It soon became obvious why the gearbox had become so noisy:



basically the output shaft had worn out and one of the gears had lost its hardened coating and was looking distinctly poorly. It was lucky no gear-teeth had snapped off as, if they had, they would have got caught on some of the other whirling gears and smashed the gearbox into little pieces.

A few weeks later, I received the surprise news that Lamborghini had all the required gearbox parts in stock in Italy, so they were ordered and the gearbox is now being rebuilt and should be ready to refit in a couple of weeks.

Well, it would be had I not also asked Iain to do a leak test on the engine. Even though I thought it was in rude health, the test revealed that some of the valves weren't sealing properly, so while the engine was out, it seemed silly not to take the cylinder heads off, strip the valve-train and do everything needed to put them right again.

My justification for doing all this work is that I really enjoy the Countach and, with values steadily rising, it would be foolish not to make it as good as I can. I've never been one to own cars just for the sake of it and, while I'm apprehensive about the final bill, I can't wait to hear that big, angry V12 bellow again.

I know it's going to sound better than ever without the gearbox whining away. It won't ever be a restful car to drive, of course: this is a bonkers 1987 Countach QV with a slight attitude problem and I wouldn't expect anything different.

Above and below

Engine out for cylinder head overhaul; gearbox noise was due to worn teeth.



Shoebox detox



1950 FORD CLUB COUPE delwyn mallett

MY RAT ROD-ISH (read 'shabby' if you don't appreciate the Rat Rod aesthetic) 1950 Shoebox Ford has entered a new phase in its life-cycle. My on-off resto (now spread over several years due to more pressing work on other parts of the Mallett fleet) has reached a point where the bits that qualified it as a 'Rat' have almost rusted into oblivion.

I've been working from the bottom up, with new sills, door bottoms and wheelarches in past years, but with rust pustules bursting through the leading edge of the hood (I slip into the American idiom when talking about the Ford) and trailing edge of the trunk, I thought it time to engage the services again of Steve Miller and his welding torch.

As always, the 'bubbles' of rust turned out to be giant craters when the grinder was applied. Particularly bad was the area around the trunk's locking mechanism. At one point Steve had to get into the trunk with a torch and shut the lid so he could see how the mechanism engaged. The fleeting desire to rush off and leave him trapped for a while was resisted!

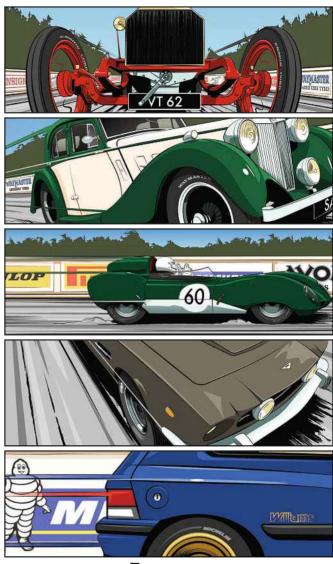


Above and below Metal surgery and new badging: the plan is to keep the Ford as a Rat Rod, but less ratty...

At the front end I asked Steve to delete the cheap-looking Ford emblem from the hood, as I have always preferred the '49 model to the '50. It not only had a cleaner design to the grille but displayed F-O-R-D in an arc of heavy chrome letters instead of the pseudo-heraldic plastic job of the '50. I have the letters but fitting them won't be as easy as expected. Nothing ever is.

Although I bought the letters a decade ago, I hadn't opened the package. I expected simple round locating pins on the back, not substantial tenon-shaped projections, for which I'll have to accurately create elongated slots, two per letter. My training as a graphic designer will not allow *any* wobble in the spacing and angle. Not sure I'll be brave enough to drill the first hole in my now pristine hood. And another decision looms: do I try to source and retrofit an entire '49 grille?





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1967 TRIUMPH GT6 ANDREW ENGLISH

CHROMIUM IS A chemical element occurring naturally in many forms, but in hexavalent form it's toxic and carcinogenic. And it covers significant parts of an old car, including bumpers, doorhandles and windscreen surrounds. Funny thing though, as Nigel Hayward, production manager at S&T Electroplating, points out: 'We don't use a lot. In fact, the chromium is really just a thin lacquer to seal in the nickel-plate underneath.

I could have kept Trixie-the-Triumph GT6's bumpers as they were, but there was a dented front blade and in original chromeplated steel these Mark 1 GT6/ Spitfire units are that dread acronym NLA (No Longer

Available). You can get them in stainless, but that yellow-tinged polished metal finish is incredibly vulnerable to scratches and the wrong colour, which will look terrible against Trixie's clottedcream coachwork. Uh, and the fit can be so-so. So if you have something that fits, then fix it and fit it back.

Besides, it's nice to think that when Trixie rolled off the line at Canley in 1967, these were the bits of metal that were fixed to her - as Mrs English, a fine-art restorer, says: 'All you can do with originality is lose it.'

Hayward points out that while we call it 'chromium plate', what's really there is copper and nickel and a lot of elbow grease. Time in the electroplate tanks shows just how: copper 16 to 18 hours; dull nickel half to one hour; bright nickel half to one hour; and chrome, three to four minutes. 'Chrome is a microns-thick top layer,' he says.



Most chrome-platers have done away with the dull nickel stage these days, but 'we do it the way it's always been done,' says Hayward, who explains that dull nickel's value is its excellent corrosion resistance. If S&T's checking and rechecking process is impressive, the attention to detail and sheer polishing work is stupefying as items go back and forth in the process until they are perfect and you can see your coffee-stained teeth in it.

When you see it done, you also see where your money goes, which helps as this is not a cheap option; about twice the cost of a brand new set of stainless-steel bumpers. I've got them back now and dare not even open the crepe bandage-style wrapping.

Fitting them back on is going to be a devil of a job, too. Partly because you have to undo the fuel tank to get at the nearside rear mounting bolt ...

Does anyone know how to get a Mark 1 GT6 tank out? I certainly can't see how it's done and one experienced GT6 owner advised me to cut away the rear crossmember. And that just can't be right, can it?

Above and left

Originality is preferred when it comes to chrome-plated fittings, but the process of achieving perfect brightwork is surprisingly complicated.



VINTAGE TYRES

'House purchase forces reluctant Mustang sale - email me at mark@ octane-magazine.com if you fancy my lovely '66 notchback. Asking price is £18.500' Mark Dixon

'My BMW Z4 sat idle for three weeks while I was on holiday - as did I. It started on the button when I arrived home; if only work was so easy to get back to' Robert Hefferon

'My moan in Octane 231 about the car I most rearet having had to sell appears to have thrown up an exciting opportunity. Watch this space...' James Elliott

'Dropping the Integra in for an MoT revealed a slight imbalance in the rear brakes. A caliper strip-down plus new discs and pads solved the issue' Matthew Hayward

VINTAGE TYRES

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1963 MASERATI 5000 GT



1964 ASTON MARTIN DB5 COUPÉ



1991 FERRARI TESTAROSSA F110



1991 DE TOMASO PANTERA SI



1973 FERRARI 246 GTS DINO



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



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OVERDRIV

Other interesting cars w

Big as a whale



I'VE ALWAYS LOVED the

way that relatively affordable American classics can look so exotic in the UK. Even driving around Northamptonshire in this delightfully chic 1966 Chrysler Newport feels like an event, especially as the sun is shining. This is the ultra-elegant Pillarless Coupe, which looks and feels vast. It's not just a striking shape, with straight edges and subtle curves, but it's covered in just the right amount of stainless steel detailing.

The Chrysler is actually around 5.5m long, but the low roof and ground-hugging suspension seem to give it an even bigger appearance. Entering the cabin via the long door - with both side windows rolled down - there's the most fabulous view of its slender dashboard, thin-spoke steering wheel, and stainless knobs and switches. Like so many US cars of the era, the '66 was offered with a huge number of bodystyles and

options, including three different V8s. This Pillarless Coupe still has its original mid-range 383ci lump, which pushes out around 270bhp. It certainly feels healthy enough today and, although I'm not sure if the exhaust is standard, it sounds epic either way! Not too loud or booming, but deep and guttural - which is incredibly enjoyable around town with all the windows down.

I feared that vague steering and sloppy suspension would make it a bit of a boat to drive, but I couldn't have been more wrong. The suspension is soft, and it glides over rougher surfaces, but it's easy to place on the road and you soon get used to the size. The steering is light, and the threespeed automatic column-shift transmission makes this big car so easy to drive. Its grip limits are low but, as long as you drive it with a bit of respect, it's actually pretty composed.

Given a bit of long, straight road, it would be rude not to open the taps a little. The TorqueFlite needs some persuasion to kickdown but, as soon as it does, the Newport really does get a move on while sounding somewhat like a NASCAR racer. It's clear that this particular car has been very well kept, and the UK-based previous owner of 16 years has maintained the mechanicals well. Although little is known about its history before it was in the UK, an old window sticker for a Monaco-based dealer suggests that a previous owner may have made the most of its glamorous looks.

Although the paint isn't perfect, and it has obviously been resprayed at some point in its life, that really doesn't detract from the car's appeal. The interior feels mostly original, too, and some minor sun damage just adds to the car's character. While stopping at the (sadly now closed) Buddies USA Diner to take these photos, I soon become aware that Octane's resident American car appreciator Mark Dixon (on photography duty on the day) has taken a real fancy to it.

I FELL FOR THIS car's charms as soon as I laid eyes on it, so the Newport really didn't need to win me over. A few hours in the driving seat have opened my eyes: there's far more substance to this somewhat overlooked classic than I had thought. It's one of the best-driving cars of its type that I have tried. Thankfully for Mark's bank balance, and perhaps even my own, since I drove the Newport, it has sold.

I've certainly come away from the experience a little more open-minded about well-sorted American classics. And there are plenty of others for sale at Hill Farm Automotives near Kettering - tel: +44 (0)1536 219129 which offered this one.

Opposite and below

Long, low, edgy styling is both striking and characterful; interior is slick and stylish; 383ci Chrysler V8 – that's 6.3 litres on this side of The Pond.





'I'm not sure if the exhaust is standard, but it sounds epic either way – incredibly enjoyable with all the windows down'





Best on a black run



2022 TOYOTA GR SUPRA JARAMA JAMES ELLIOTT

IT MAY SHOCK YOU, but these pictures aren't of me pottering in the GR Supra: an 'inquisitive' daughter wiped my pictures out and the normal stock shots were no good because this was the specific edition of GR Supra that I had. It's the 3.0 Jarama Race Track edition, yours for a smidgen under £55,000. Naming any car after a racetrack can bring with it a level of obligation. And risk. The last thing you want to do is create something too track-focused for the road, or too soft for the track, and there is a thin line between achieving both or neither.

Such risk can easily be avoided, however, by completely ignoring that obligation. With only 30 scheduled for the UK out of a total build of 90, the Jarama (the track where this-gen Supra was launched in 2019) doesn't mess with the standard car's mechanicals but *does* boast striking Horizon Blue paint. On the inside it is much like the GR Supra Pro, but with blue stitching.

It is no surprise, therefore, that performance and the driving experience are just as good as, but no better than, a standard GR Supra. That means it is perfectly serviceable though conspicuously constrained in London, where none of its 335bhp (er, I mean 'qualities') can be explored. Then, taking it up the M1 for a feature photoshoot, I found that – once I had painstakingly turned off the more intrusive 'safety' features – the 3.0-litre turbo straight-six is so understressed that you are soon playing with the eight-speed 'box to relieve the tedium.

What is curious is the number of quizzical stares: people still don't yet recognise this car, but Toyota clearly intends to stick with it, with a four-pot and a manual having joined the range. Of course, you could say the same about this year's GR86: you don't see many on UK roads and recognition is scandalously low, but that's a wonderfully balanced car and I am pleased they are persevering with it.

Do I feel the same about the GR Supra? Well, without Jarama on hand, I couldn't tell you for sure how good the GR Supra is, but it was huge fun when I went off-piste and hit the B-roads instead of coming back down the M1. Got home much quicker, too.





A new era for MG



2022 MG4 GLEN WADDINGTON

'GOOD VALUE AND a brand they're not embarrassed about': sounds as if Guy Pigounakis, commercial director of MG UK, isn't aiming very high. But then he talks about how MG is currently the 12th best-selling carmaker in the UK (ahead of Land Rover and Skoda; behind Nissan) and there's a suggestion of bullishness in his hopes for the future. Reaction to the brand new MG4 has been 'better than we'd dared hope'.

This is how far MG has come since its ignominious days as part of the Phoenix Consortium, which ended debt-ridden in 2005. China's Nanjing Automobile Group bought it out and restarted production of the MG TF in 2007, then merged with China's largest carmaker SAIC and launched the new (and now largely forgotten) British-built MG6 saloon in 2011.

MG is in the ascendency again with a disparate range of SUVs, a supermini, and an electric station wagon. It can sell every car it brings to the UK, but its future is all-electric. Starting with this, a compact hatchback (bang-on VW ID.3 dimensions) on a bespoke EV platform that keeps its weight low by placing the battery within the wheelbase, and the motor out back under the boot, driving the rear wheels. It offers 50:50 weight distribution and currently two battery options: 51kWh (218mile range, 0-62mph in 7.7sec, £25,995) and 64kWh (up to 281 miles, 7.9sec, from £28,495).

I'm not going to talk about the way it looks; that's up to you, though the bold snout could be that of a Lamborghini Urus from a distance. If you squint. More importantly, it's spacious inside for five and the boot'll fit your shopping in it. The seats feel supportive enough, the doors close solidly, panel fit is good inside and out, and the interior layout is mostly logical, smart and decently robust. It's extremely well-equipped though not luxuriously finished – but, then, this is a £26,000 EV. VW's ID.3 is fully ten grand more, and that's no palace inside, either.

Unusually, the launch vehicle is base spec: no attempts to flatter with gussied-up tart's boudoir trim. And it soon impresses. It's easy to find a comfortable driving position, the controls (including touchscreen and wheel-mounted buttons) work logically, and, as soon as we're zooming in that still-other-worldly way, its suspension refinement becomes obvious: very well-silenced in its movements and the ride is unusually buoyant and supple.

Left and below

Quick acceleration, fun to drive, simple and intuitive interior – just beware a spin on wet roads...

It also feels far lighter on its feet than the 1.7-tonne kerbweight would have you expect, and the steering is both quick and linear in its response.

Any demerits? Well, overall it's pretty quiet (no engine noise, obviously) but the body can boom a little over turbulent stretches of tarmac, and there's a slight tendency to corkscrew over uneven surfaces taken at a high-speed cruise (the kind of thing British trunk roads throw under your wheels all too often). Acceleration on damp roads even elicited the odd unexpected tail-slide, perhaps paying homage to MGs past, but enough to worry the trousers of those brought up on Fiestas and Hyundais.

The killer punch comes with pricing: not only does the MG4 fare competitively against the ID.3 and (smaller, older, range-limited) Renault Zoe, it demolishes them on projected residuals. Which allows MG's demo costs for a contract plan to suggest a £4000 deposit and £300 per month over three years and 30,000 miles. MG's target buyer is not the established EV fan but those who, until now, have feared trading from their petrol-powered superminis. This makes that idea much more palatable. In fact, for anyone keen to make the leap, there really isn't a more useful option for the money.

In the pipeline are a long-range version and a dual-motor four-wheel-drive model that promises 0-62mph in 3.9 seconds. Yes, it really is a new era for MG.







"A classic car is more than a car, it's an experience. All these beauties are Mille Miglia eligible!"



Alfa Romeo Giulietta Sprint 750B 1956 The Giulietta Sprint is without a doubt a serious contender for the title of "Most Iconic Postwar Alfa Romeo". Price: 138 000 Euro Alfa Romeo 1900CSS 1956 Only 6 coupés were assembled in the Imperia factory in Nessonvaux, Liège. Recently restored by an AR specialist in Italy in cooperation with the R.I.A.R. (Italian AR Registration Club).

Price: 315 000 Euro

Fiat Abarth 1957

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Price on request



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Roberta Cowell

Racer, pilot and Britain's first male recipient of gender reassignment surgery

ON THE MORNING of 11 October 2011 the carer for sheltered accommodation in Hampton, to the west of London, let himself into a third-floor flat, where he found the body of 'Betty' Cowell, its 93-year-old occupant. Once billed as 'the most talked-of woman in England', Betty's fame was less to do with her achievements as a racing driver and Spitfire pilot than the fact that she spent the first 33 years of her life as a man and was the first male Briton publicly acknowledged to have had a sex-change.

That first third of Robert/Roberta's life, as she later put it, was spent being 'aggressively masculine' and reads like a *Boy's Own* story. Robert Marshall Cowell was born in Croydon, South London, in April 1918, as one of three siblings. His father, Major-General Sir Ernest Marshall Cowell KBE, CE, was a distinguished military surgeon in both WW1 and WW2 and later Honorary Surgeon to King George VI.

Robert went to Whitgift School, where he played 'rugger' for the first XV and, having torn around the family property on ten-bob motorbikes and old bangers since the age of nine, was an enthusiastic member of the motor club. Holidays were spent hanging around local car manufacturer Trojan and blagging his way into Brooklands by confidently strolling past the gatekeeper clad in overalls and carrying a bucket full of water, then offering help to whoever was working on a racing car.

After leaving school at 16 he worked briefly for General Aircraft before enrolling on an RAF short-service commission, becoming the youngest officer in the service. But he was soon invalided out and declared permanently unfit for flying duties due to acute motion sickness.

From 1936 he studied engineering at University College, London, where he met his future wife Diana Zelma Carpenter, a motor racing enthusiast and the first woman to graduate from UCL with an engineering degree. At 17 he'd started competing in trials and at only 18 acquired his first proper racing car, a supercharged single-seater 750cc Austin. He was soon running and maintaining three cars, including an Alta 52S, a Brooklands Mountain Circuit lap record holder, which he took to Belgium for the 1939 Antwerp Grand



Prix. Car-mad teen Denis Jenkinson, *Motor Sport's* future Continental Correspondent, occasionally acted as an unpaid mechanic for Bob at Brooklands.

On the declaration of war Bob was rejected by the RAF, so enlisted in the Royal Army Service Corps. After a year, and commissioned as a Captain, he was posted to Iceland, spending several months in charge of the Heavy Repair Shops. His persistence paid off, though, and he managed to transfer to the RAF and pass the medical board's tests to train as a pilot. He flew Spitfires over France on D-Day before moving to Typhoons and crash-landing after being hit by ground fire on a low-level strafing run over Germany. Captured, he spent the last five months of the war in Stalag Luft 1 before being liberated by the advancing Russians.

On his return to England Bob threw himself back into racing, featuring in a whole-page profile in the October 1946 issue of *Motor Sport*. His wife Diana had borne two daughters during the war but Robert was a very troubled man, suffering acute bouts of depression and convinced that he was a woman trapped in a man's body. Psychoanalysis didn't help and eventually he contacted Michael Dillon, author of a book on gender identity. Dillon, at the time a fifth-year medical student, was the world's first transsexual man and fell in love with Cowell, eventually performing a then-illegal inguinal orchiectomy (castration) on him as the first step on his path to transition.

Sir Harold Gillies, the pioneering plastic surgeon who had operated on Dillon, later performed a vaginoplasty on Cowell, thereby completing the transition. This enabled Cowell to obtain a letter from a Harley Street specialist stating that she was now a woman and on 17 May 1951 her birth certificate was altered to read 'Roberta Elizabeth' and 'Boy' was changed to 'Girl'. Henceforth Bob would be Betty.

Dillon's offer of marriage was spurned and Roberta lived with her friend Lisa Morrell and her army of cats. Roberta also cut herself off from Diana and her daughters, never seeing them again despite their efforts to contact her.

Desperately short of money, Roberta sold her embroidered story to *Picture Post* in 1954. An autobiography followed, the fees for the two netting her around £270,000 in today's money, but after the failure of businesses that she had started before transitioning, in 1958 Cowell was declared bankrupt.

She continued to race intermittently and broke the women's record at Shelsley Walsh in 1957 in a Jaguar-powered Alta. She continued flying but plans to set a new speed record for crossing the South Atlantic fell through when she couldn't find engines for her De Havilland Mosquito. Roberta gradually slipped into 50 years of obscurity in London's suburbs, making the headlines again briefly in 1972 when she incurred a one-year driving ban after being stopped on the M1 after driving for 30 miles in the wrong direction. Only six people attended her funeral and it was two years before the national press noticed she had passed.

Although she's regarded as a pioneer by the LGBT community, Roberta's book is startlingly homophobic and scathing about transsexual women who were not, as she spuriously claimed of herself, intersex from birth.

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Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

Seven decades of public service, photographed more than any other person in history, and a driving enthusiast, too

ELIZABETH ALEXANDRA Mary Windsor ascended to the throne at a time when the nation was still scarred by bomb sites, wartime rationing had not fully ended, working women were frowned upon and footballers' 'wages' were capped at £14 a week. Television was a luxury that few could afford and, if they could, the black-and-white image on a tiny 10in screen was frequently a fuzzy grey.

Few then could have anticipated the reign of Queen Elizabeth II would be so long but, remarkably, she delivered on her pledge to serve until she dropped. Despite her obvious frailty she accepted the resignation of her 14th Prime Minister and the appointment of the 15th on her last Tuesday. She died on the Thursday. No-one under 70 had known any other monarch. Footballers' 'salaries' are now measured in millions, TVs are measured in feet, and her subjects could record her funeral in broadcast quality on their mobile phones.

Hosting 152 state visits, she entertained 13 out of 14 US Presidents (Johnson didn't make it) as well as many dozens of foreign heads of state, some admirable and not a few less so. Despite her personal feelings she was civil and courteous to all of them. Even staunch republicans could not help but admire her personal qualities and dedication to the duty that the accident of birth had landed on her.

She was crowned in 1953 and was a beacon of light illuminating the smog-laden drabness of an impoverished post-war nation, a glamorous monarch who shone as brightly as any Hollywood star, with a radiant and infectious smile that she never lost. There is no doubt that more images of Queen Elizabeth II



have been produced than of any other woman (or man) in history.

It would perhaps be a touch undignified to describe Queen Elizabeth II as a petrolhead, although her husband was keen on sports cars, but from an early age she displayed enthusiasm for motoring. As an 18-year-old during World War Two, when it was far from common for ladies to drive, she insisted on joining the Auxiliary Territorial Service and trained as a driver mechanic, learning to drive Army trucks and getting her hands dirty changing wheels.

In 1950 she accompanied her father George VI to Silverstone and the first World Championship Formula 1 race – her first and her last. For sporting pleasure she would always prefer her horsepower to have four legs rather than four wheels. Yet she enjoyed driving until well into her nineties and was the only person in Britain allowed to do so without a licence.

It's reported that she was a pretty press-on driver, too. She scored points for feminists when, well-aware that Saudi women were then forbidden to drive, she personally chauffeured Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia around Balmoral at breakneck speed in her Land Rover, scaring him in the process and ignoring his entreaties to slow down.

Traditionally the Royal bolides had been Daimlers, dating back to her great-grandfather Edward VII's patronage, starting in 1900 when he bought the first of a run of 80 that would in ensuing years join the Royal fleet. In the 1950s Queen Elizabeth could be seen driving her children around Windsor in a Hooper-bodied Daimler Regency Empress. However, the 'statemobiles' became Rolls-

Above

The then-Princess Elizabeth joined the Women's Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1945 to 'do her bit'.

Royces in the mid-1950s, Phantoms IV, V and VI; since 2002 there have been two rather magnificent Bentleys.

Her motoring life was therefore one of contrasts, at one moment gliding in sybaritic luxury, the next bumping across the grounds of one of her large country estates in a wellused Land Rover. And she loved Land Rovers, driving them all, from the Series I to the Defender as well as Range Rovers. She also owned and drove Rover 3-Litre and 3.5 saloons. Estate cars were a favourite; a Ford Zephyr 'woodie' was specially built for her in 1956, very American in looks, with a higher than normal wood-framed roof and appliqué side panels. It currently resides in a museum on the Sandringham Estate. Vauxhall PA Friary Estates were also favoured for many years.

When Elizabeth ascended to the throne, Britain was the second-biggest manufacturer of cars in the world; when she died there were no British-owned marques of significance. Perhaps a little sadly, the hearse that carried her from Aberdeen to Edinburgh featured a prominent three-pointed star in its grille, unmissable in the long-lens close-ups of the cortège as it wended its way through the Scottish countryside. The Bentley state limousine that followed the hearse was built after the company was sold to Volkswagen, and her beloved Land Rover is owned by Tata, based in Mumbai.

When she was a young woman, that city was called Bombay and was still part of the Empire. How times have changed.



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Starting from scratch

Shami Kalra is behind the successful motorsportfocused brand Omologato **WHAT DO YOU DO** when you've got £9.61 in the bank, it's Friday night and there's nothing to eat in the house? If you're the irrepressible Shami Kalra, the man behind Omologato watches, you sit down, design a watch and start your own business.

He explains: 'We'd been making watches for other people for years, but we'd had a downer of about 12, maybe 13 months. And it got worse and worse and things were getting pretty compromised financially. My wife and I sat at the kitchen table that Friday night with less than a tenner between us and I thought "I've got to do something." So, being a motorsport guy and somebody who designed watches, I put the Gulf Martini stripe on the right-hand side of a navy Breguet sunray dial and I thought, "Bloody hell – that's nice. I'd buy that!"

Shami called an old industry contact who'd made watches for him for years with the opening line: 'Listen, I think I want to start my own brand.' He still relays his contact's response with a broad grin: 'He laughed and said "You're crazy! But you know what? I'll back you."' With that promise of £5000 credit and his hastily sketched Gulf design, he was in business.

After getting the URL for a few pounds and a website on a 30-day free trial, Omologato was launched with less budget and fanfare than the average village fête. 'I used my @AutoPap account on Twitter,' says Shami. 'With about 4000 followers, I thought half of them ought to be my market at least!' He tweeted about his new watch company and its first offering. Tumbleweed. Nothing. Total radio silence.

Then (and he remembers the time because he has the order framed and on his wall), at 7.36pm the following day someone clicked 'buy' on £750 of watches. He rushed upstairs to tell his wife and daughter the news. Then, an hour later, another order. 'We finally took £1000 that night,' he says, 'and within the space of 90 days, we'd done £90,000. It was just fricking unbelievable.'

The range is entirely quartz and has an average price of about £375, and, typically, Shami is unapologetic about the democratic appeal and pricing of his watches. He says: 'The guy who puts the wheel on a race car should be able to afford a watch as much as the guy who drives the race car. I want everyone who loves racing to be able to have a watch.'

As the business has grown, Shami's been keen to be as practically involved in motorsport as he can be. He also talks a lot about karma. And it's this desire to help practically and do things the right way that's behind his latest partnership with Les Amis du Circuit de Gueux, the group working to renovate and preserve the old circuit at Reims.

He'd designed his new Reims watch in February this year, registered the name and was about to push 'start' on production. He takes up the story: 'I thought, man, I just can't launch it. Those guys are sitting there all day, trying to sell a poster or a patch for €5, and I come along and say to them "I'm just gonna make money out of your history" - it just didn't sit right with me.' He halted production while he tried to get in touch with the Reims volunteers. 'I started with "Hey, I really want to speak with you." Nothing. So the next day I tried "I really need to speak with you because I want to raise money for you." Nothing. So then I sent "Hey Reims, I want to give you €10,000" on Twitter and they got in touch!'

Since then Shami's visited the circuit as the guest of the volunteers and, in early August, handed them their first cheque. The partnership is typically 'open access all areas' Omologato. 'I remember when I went to my first British GP when I was broke. Every door was shut. I've never forgotten how that felt and I wasn't going to do that with my watches. So if you go to Reims on a Friday with your watch on, you're the guest of Eric, Jean and Luc who run the place. They'll give you a personal guided tour of the areas the public are not allowed to go to.'

Just before he leaves, Shami shows me one last picture: 'This is the little shop at Reims where they sell stuff to help fund the work. Look, that's our logo in the window.'

The pride in his voice is obvious. It's all come a very long way from a kitchen table, a sketch pad and just an idea.

WE LEAVE THE COMPLICATIONS TO THE SWISS.



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ONE TO WATCH

Pulsar 1st Generation Chronograph V657-X063

Mere civvies can revel in its military precision; just don't look at the movement

THE SUCCESSOR TO the Seiko 7T27-7A20 - Gen 2 Chronograph, the civilian Pulsar V657 is as near-as-spit identical to its RAF-issued brethren. The main differences are the missing pheon (the broad arrow denoting Government property), issue numbers on the caseback, and the lack of a circle containing the letter L (for Luminova) on the dial.

The Seiko V657 movement is best described as 'workmanlike'. OK, that's a lie: it's so ugly you'll need dark glasses to change the battery (a SR920SW or a standard 371, since you asked) and counselling afterwards. Yet it does have the virtue of being able to take a fair bit of hammering without throwing the histrionics other, prettier movements might.

The X063 does all the usual, useful chronograph things, with the 12 o'clock subdial measuring tenths while the 9 o'clock subdial is a 60-minute counter and the dial at 3 is the chrono seconds. The difference between this and many other chronos is that the centre seconds looks after running (rather than chrono) seconds. Also, the $1/_{10}$ th hand thoughtfully stops whizzing round after it's done a minute's workout to conserve the battery.



Press the stop button and it remembers the actual tenth you've reached and snicks forward to indicate it.

The big difference with this watch, however, is the price. Although they remain popular watches – and are becoming ever more so as firstand second-generation Seikos continue their steep ascent – you can still pick up a decent V657-X063 on auction sites (and perhaps even at your local Cats' Protection League shop on the high street) for under triple figures. That's for the civilian version, of course: a watch that's seen the inside of an RAF cockpit (or, to be fair, one that just made it as far as the stores) is likely to set you back in the region of £350-£450, depending on its condition.



MHD DAILY DRIVER

Cheltenham-based MHD has brought out a new chronograph in the tyre-tracks of its original CR1 (now sold out). Where the old watch was a classic, clean dual-register chrono, there's rather more going on with the Daily Driver. The 316L stainless case is a four-parter with knurling you can see through the case-top cut-outs. The theme continues in the matt sandwich dial that reveals the undercoating of Superluminova. Inside is the Seiko VK64 mecaquartz – the snick of a mech with quartz reliability and accuracy – behind a proper screwed-on stainless caseback. £355, mhdwatches.com



NEW WATCHES

STUDIO UNDERDOG STRAWBERRIES & CREAM

Doing something different but lovely is a challenge for any watchmaker, let alone a new one. Yet Studio Underd0g (the 0 is important, see the website) has snuck under the industry radar to launch watches that qualify. The latest is its Strawberries & Cream variation, based on the manual-winding Seagull ST-1901 movement. It takes serious guts for your first venture into watchmaking to be a mechanical column wheel chronograph. To pair that with an asymmetric dial design, square pushers and to make it gorgeous is something founder Richard Benc should be rightly proud of. **£575, underd0g.com**



FARER STANHOPE II

Farer's Stanhope (named after explorer Lady Hester Stanhope) has been around since 2018, so it's good to see the firm doing some subtle re-working with the old thing. Where Farers are often bright and striking, this one is much more subtle and elegant. And because

the firm has scaled back the brightness, features such as the coloured second markers on the running seconds subdial and the red hand stand out against the piqué dial. It runs an elaboré grade (the posh one) of the Swiss SELLITA SW216-1 with blued screws and a custom Farer embossed bridge. £875, farer.com

Mannheim Maimarktgelände





Following the success of their new Herald range in 1959, Triumph looked to appeal to the more sporting motorist with the six-cylinder Vitesse. Initially the car was offered as a 1600cc and then in 2-Litre form, the latter dubbed "The Two-Seater Beater" by the marketing department! Dutch-based 1:18 resincast specialists Cult Scale Models offer us the latter in desirable convertible form, with a choice of Wedgewood Blue or Primrose.



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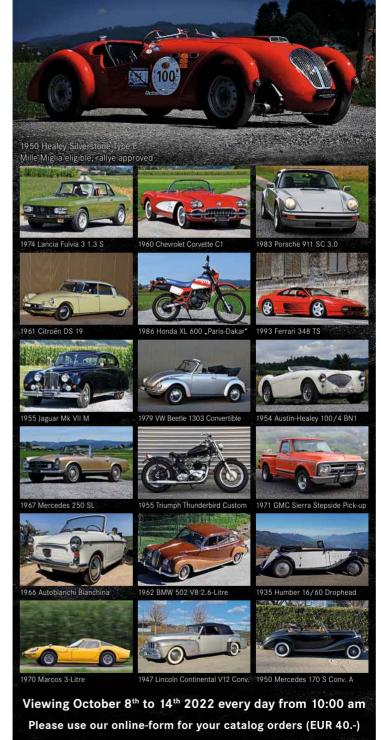
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Books REVIEWED BY OCTANE STAFF AND CONTRIBUTORS



Marcel Pourtout, Carrossier

JON PRESSNELL, Dalton Watson, £110, ISBN 978 1 85443 286 5



As coachbuilders go, Pourtout was far from being one of the biggest and yet it was an amazing survivor, in business from 1925 until 1994. Even today, one of the Pourtout

descendants keeps the family trade alive with a small body repair shop in the Parisian suburb of Rueil-Malmaison, to where the *carrosserie* moved in 1936.

Pourtout is best remembered today for its glory years in the 1930s, when it employed the talented Georges Paulin as its designer. This was the era of the stylish Peugeot Darl'mat roadsters and coupés, and luxury commissions such as the spectacular Delage D8-120s and the Embiricos Bentley. It's amusing to learn that Paulin worked only part-time as a designer, having qualified as a dental surgeon – it seems that dentistry brought in a lot more money than the automotive design work! Sadly, Paulin was executed by the Nazis during their occupation of France, and with him died the creative flair that had elevated Pourtout to the top table.

Naturally, ex-pat British author Pressnell, a long-time resident in France, covers all the 'halo' cars in appropriate detail. But they were a relatively small part of Pourtout's total catalogue. Post-war, when all the specialist coachbuilders struggled to find wealthy customers and to adapt to the new fashions of the 1940s, Pourtout took the practical step of moving into Tour de France-style promotional vehicles – such as the Scotch tape truck pictured below – and then, when that market diminished in the 1960s, into more conventional conversions of commercial vehicles. Along the way there were bizarre one-offs, such as the 1947 rhomboid-chassis, push-me-pull-you Alamagny. Fortunately, or perhaps not, this 'car' survives.

Pressnell's lavishly produced 488-page book is not just about vehicles, however. The Pourtout family was prolific – during latter-day gatherings, family members were required to wear numbered badges for identification – and Pressnell wisely begins with a chapter that gives pen-sketch bios of the chief characters. Perhaps the most interesting section, in human terms, concerns the war years, when the family fled Paris to escape the advancing German forces: the 19-year-old Janine Pourtout was required to steer a flashy Renault Saprarsport that had been a concours showcar just a year earlier, towed behind another car to save precious petrol, and was 'roundly abused by other fugitives'.

An engrossing book, immaculately presented and extremely well researched, and one that is actually very good value for money. MD





Saab Celebration

LANCE COLE, Pen and Sword Transport, £30, ISBN 978 1 52677 523 8

Cole is well-known for previous works on Saab, including 2019's Saab Cars – the Complete Story, which charted the margue up to its 2012 demise. This time the theme is Saab style, beginning with the Sixten Sason era. Cole's insights are erudite and well-drawn, giving this 160-page full-colour landscape-format hardback an authoritative air, and the matt finish of the slipcover is slick to match. Photo choice isn't always quite up to that high benchmark, having a tendency towards snaps, but it's thorough, great value for £30, and a must for Saab fans. GW



Fast Lady MICHAEL W BARTON, Butterfield Press, \$40, no ISBN

Dorothy Levitt's flame burned brightly, but very briefly. Taken on as secretary by Napier's Selwyn Edge c1902, she was soon demonstrating – and then racing – cars, motorboats and even aircraft. But by 1908 her fame had dimmed. She ended up working in a gambling den and she died, aged 40, in 1922.

The foreword to her own 1909 book *The Woman and the Car* hints at a lively private life; sadly, her diaries have long been lost, and so Michael W Barton has done a forensic job of piecing together her story from third-party sources. Beautifully produced and pricey, this little book is a fascinating read. **MD**



Collector's

book



The Last Overland

ALEX BESCOBY, Michael O'Mara Books, £20, ISBN 9781 78929 463 7

The title references a famous 1950s book, *First Overland*, which charted an epic drive by a group of students from London to Singapore, using two Land Rovers named *Oxford* and *Cambridge*.

A few years ago the derelict Oxford was repatriated to the UK and given a 'patina' restoration, which inspired documentary film-maker Alex Bescoby to borrow it and recreate the journey in reverse. He contacted the author of First Overland, Tim Slessor, by then into his late 80s but keen to be a part of this new expedition; a recurring theme in Bescoby's book is how his regular meetings with the still-vital Slessor impacted on his relationship with his own grandfather, a once-vigorous man now diminished by dementia.

It adds a layer of emotional depth to what might otherwise be a straightforward travel book.

Bescoby is clearly not a petrolhead – more than once he refers to *Oxford* as having both a dynamo and an alternator – and the now-fashionable denigration of Britain's imperial legacy will grate on some ears. But it's a pacey read, and one that may well have you reaching for the mapbook to plan your own ultimate drive. Job done. MD



Ace Bristol Racing

JOHN McLELLAN & TONY BANCROFT, Sixteen-Ninety Press, 1998, value £195



Limited to 1000 copies, each one numbered and signed by the author, this was a relatively

expensive book at £55 when it came out nearly a quarter-ofa-century ago – and it's still the 'go to' reference work for these cars, and one that's pretty hard to find.

It broadly does what it says on the tin – or, rather, the front cover. It charts the story of the AC Ace Bristol in motorsport chronologically, and it is rounded off by appendices that include a chassis register and tables of race results.

The book's most striking feature is its production quality for the time. About 50-60% of the content is images; most of them are in monochrome, inevitably, but there is a colour centre section. Unusually, there are no photographs taken outside the period it deals with.

John McLellan, who wrote the book with the assistance of Tony Bancroft, edited the Bristol Owners' Club mag from the 1960s; he was also a playwright and theatre director. Sadly, he died in 2021, aged 86. **Ben Horton**





Fiat in Motorsport

TONY BAGNALL, Veloce, £35, ISBN 978 1 787111 85 1

Few marques have had such a lengthy and varied involvement in motorsport as Fiat. From early Grand Prix racers and aero-engined record-breakers to road racers, rally cars and endurance racers, it has been prolific for decades. 160 pages scarcely seem enough to cover the topic, yet those pages are densely packed with period photos and illustrations, a personal favourite being an elevational drawing of 1910's fire-spitting S76, known as the 'Beast of Turin'. Each chapter concentrates on a specific era, and appendices deal with technical details and results GW for specific cars.

Mike Spence: Out of the Shadows

RICHARD JENKINS, Performance Publishing, £27, ISBN 978 0 9576450 9 7



Spence has been described as one of the 'forgotten drivers' of Formula 1, and little has been written about his short, if significant, career – now rectified, and complete with a foreword by his contemporary and rival, Sir Jackie Stewart.

Much work has gone into sourcing original information and quotes, where possible, though obviously any references to the likes of the late Colin Chapman – Spence was signed as a Lotus driver on his debut in Formula 1, before moving to BRM – have had to be sourced elsewhere and attributed. There has been a great deal of input from the Spence family, including stacks of snaps from the family albums, which endow the book with an extremely intimate air.

Every chapter kicks off with a soundbite, for instance on his F1 debut: 'I was trapped underneath and fuel was flooding everywhere. I was completely trapped. I lay there listening to everything ticking away. I had to yell at the marshals to put their cigarettes out.' It was clearly a very different era.

This, the only authorised biography, is packed with images, eclectic in its coverage, heavy on

the racing, of course, but with chapters on his marriage, his Maidenhead dealership business – and his untimely death at Indianapolis in 1968. Spence was unlucky, having hit a wall at high speed, killed not by the impact but by a front wheel as it swung back. The ensuing final chapter, titled *Epilogue*, features the words of those who knew him best, and is extremely moving.

The content, and the subject, are worthy of a more luxuriously finished cover. But then you'd be paying much more for a copy. So rejoice instead in a rare and extremely readable bargain. **GW**



930 TURBO BY ANTOINE DUFILHO

French artist Antoine Dufilho found success with sculptures of cars made using precision-cut, closely spaced metal cross-sections. The effect is neat: familiar shapes and lines are thrown into sharp relief one moment and vanish the next as your vantage point changes. Recently, though, Dufilho has produced a handful of pieces using metal tubing instead of sheet metal, returning to an idea he had previously deemed too difficult to execute well. And this tube-section rendering of the original Porsche 911 Turbo is great fun – less enigmatic than the sculptures made in the usual manner, but brilliant as an exercise in conveying a sense of speed. **£POA. antoinedufilho.com**





'ENDURANCE 24' Sweater by T-lab

Ahead of Jack Frost's inevitable return to the UK, Cheshire-based outfitter t-lab has expanded its range of clothing inspired by the 24 Hours of Le Mans to include this cosy half-zip sweatshirt. £59. t-lab.co.uk



TAMIYA RADIO-CONTROL KAMEI VW GOLF MK1

Tamiya's latest is a 1:10-scale replica of the magnificently garish Kamei-sponsored Mk1 – 'the fastest Golf in the world' when it made its race debut at the Hockenheimring back in 1977, and good for 137mph. Car only £129.99; R/C bundle £225 jadlamracingmodels.com



WRC GENERATIONS VIDEO GAME

Hybrid engines were introduced to the WRC this season, and the behaviour of the 2022 cars was modelled for *WRC Generations* – but the developers have thoughtfully included 37 fuel-swilling classic rally cars for us to 'drive', too. £39.99 (PlayStation, Xbox). game.co.uk



1933 CADILLAC V16 MODEL BY BROOKLIN MODELS

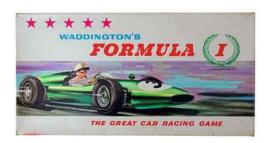
Nicola Bulgari, inveterate collector of American classics, recently acquired Bath-based Brooklin Models so that he could produce delights such as this – a 1:8-scale replica of arguably the finest engine built by any American car manufacturer in the pre-war period. £495. thenbcentercollection.com





MONACO GRAND PRIX POSTER By Robert Falcucci

Early in his career, illustrator Robert Falcucci worked at Renault, making ads, and by the time he produced the poster for the 1931 Monaco GP he had got *very* good at grabbing your attention. Original examples of the poster are vanishingly rare, so we expect this Falcucci-approved reprint from 1960 to be snapped up. **£POA. pullmangallery.com**



FIRST-EDITION FORMULA 1 BOARD GAME

Sixty years ago, Waddington's released a table-top approximation of F1 racing that proved to be a landmark in board game design. It sold well enough that a tatty but complete copy can still be picked up for just a few quid, but it's nice to come across a first-year copy in really good shape. £120. tomsk3000.com



1965 FORD MUSTANG STATION WAGON

By Cult Model Price £179.95 Material Resincast

A Mustang what? Ford never produced a station wagon version of its massively popular Mustang – presumably because that niche was already covered by the Fairlane – but designer Robert Cumberford and a couple of associates had one built privately by Costruzione Automobili Intermeccanica in Italy. Sadly, it disappeared a long time ago, but its elegant looks have inspired several replicas since. Chinese maker Cult Model has based its tribute on photos of the original, in the correct dark green with New York plates; it's also available in red with gold centre stripes, which is more eyecatching but arguably detracts from the design's handsome simplicity. The model itself is relatively simple, too – posable front wheels are the only 'feature' – but it's nicely finished and reasonably priced.



1953 Frazer Nash Le Mans GCAM £185.70 Chunky and slightly clumsy – but also charming – handbuilt of the 'Nash that scored a Le Mans class win in 1953.



1952 Packard Parisian Coupe Avenue 43 £111.95 Subtle metallic paint and perfectly applied bright trim really set off the Packard's 'Flash Gordon' lines.



2020 Mercedes AMG GT3 Spark £69.95 This replica of the Riley Motorsports Daytona 24Hr entry is phenomenally well finished, and superb value.



1951/53 Jaguar MkV rally car Matrix £107.95 Lovely model of an unlikely rally car – but the Vard/Jolley/Bigger saloon finished fifth overall on the '53 Monte.



1967 Dodge Deora concept Autocult £111.95 Immortalised long ago as a Hot Wheels toy, the Deora custom pick-up is sure to find new fans via this excellent model.



1965 Alfa Romeo Giulia Torpedo Matrix £103.95 Italian *carrozzeria* Colli chopped the Giulia into a beach car, beautifully modelled here by Matrix.

Classic model



AUSTIN HAMPSHIRE

Battery-powered toys aren't much use without batteries, so it's not surprising that Ever Ready thought it would be a good idea to have some toys on sale alongside its torches, batteries and other products. Rather than making them in-house, Ever Ready sensibly turned to long-established Cascelloid of Leicester, founded in 1919.

From 1935 onwards, the firm marketed its toys as 'Palitoy Playthings' and was a pioneer of injection-moulded plastics. Products from the Ever Ready and Palitoy collaboration included a London Underground train set and an Austin Hampshire car, which was advertised to the toy trade in 1950.

These may not have been a runaway success in their day but the Austin is highly collectable now, if only because the car was ignored by other toy companies. The Palitoy A70 Hampshire is much bigger than the A40 Devon that was offered by Dinky. Seven inches long, it has a one-piece moulded body, open underneath to reveal the motor, steerable front axle and battery compartment. To conceal the innards, the windows are not transparent but are represented by tinplate panels. Ingeniously, the boot handle is also the on/off switch for the electric motor, while the packaging takes the form of a garage display.

Ever Ready didn't pursue its range of motorised plastic toys; perhaps the price of 16s 11d (about 85p) was too much in the era of post-war austerity. But Palitoy continued with its other lines, especially dolls, and would go on to enjoy much success in the 1960s with Action Man.

PETER BRADFIELD LTD



1956 Bentley S1 Continental by Park Ward

This is an impeccable conversion from a FHC was undertaken by specialist engineers, A.B Price Ltd in 1987 using an original car for patterns and datum points. The aluminium coachwork is faultless and has been enhanced by a further cosmetic restoration in 2002. Driving is a delight and the car effortlessly wafts you along in almost complete silence cosseted in a sumptuous leather, while the chassis is soaking up any road imperfections and covering ground at a good pace. Offered for sale at less than half the price of one of the 54 original cars, RKO 222 is exceptional value and in lovely condition. Inspection and test drive recommended.



1938 Bentley 41/4 Litre All-Weather Tourer

The 4¼ Litre Bentley is widely regarded as the most sophisticated motorcar of the 1930's. This is one of 19 fitted with original 'All-Weather' coachwork by Vanden Plas that combines the good looks of a tourer with the practicality of a drop-head. It is in outstanding condition having had a significant restoration. It is still registered on its original number, drives very nicely, is fitted with a modern overdrive and has a substantial history file.

Also available:

1934 Invicta SType • 1954 Bentley RType Continental 1964 • Porsche 356SC Coupe

See website for more details

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THE MARKET

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Record total for Monterey

California sales exceed \$469m as some interesting trends emerge

AN OVERALL FIGURE of \$469m, as reported by Hagerty, puts this year's Monterey auctions as the biggest – in terms of total sales – of all time. It smashed the previous 2015 benchmark of \$394.5m by an almost 19% margin. Within this landmark result, a total of 113 cars surpassed the \$1m mark.

RM Sotheby's promised a record-breaking auction and that's exactly what it delivered, with a staggering \$239,258,340 tally over three nights. The top seller for RM – and for the whole Monterey Car week – was the 1955 Ferrari 410 Sport Spider by Scaglietti (pictured above), which brought \$22,005,000. There were plenty of exceptional results, but one of the most eye-opening was a 1995 Porsche 928 GTS, which sold for \$406,500, more than double the previous record for the model – not including the *Risky Business* movie car.

Broad Arrow Auctions, which had been acquired fully by Hagerty before its inaugural sale, performed well at the Monterey Jet Center, with \$55.1m in sales and an 88% sell-through rate. There were several bigmoney modern Ferraris: \$967,500 for a 2011 599 GTO and \$3,910,000 for a 2015 LaFerrari (see auction tracker on the next page). Top seller was a rather more traditional 1957 Ferrari 250 GT TdF at \$5,500,000, but more significant was the 1995 F50, which set a new record for the model at \$5,175,000. Gooding & Company sold \$105.7m with an 83% sell-through rate. Leading the pack was a 1937 Bugatti Type 57 Atalante Coupé at \$10,345,000, with another high-selling 599 GTO (\$940,000) and F50

(\$4,625,000) pointing to an influx of younger buyers. Bonhams' single-day auction gave a solid \$27.8m, 88% sale result. Yet another Ferrari took the top spot, - a 1955 250 Europa found a new home for \$2,095,000 - closely followed by a 1969 Lamborghini Miura P400 Coupé, which sold for \$1,957,500. The headline E-type Lightweight failed to sell.

Gooding & Company returned to London once again for the Concours of Elegance. Charlie Ross helped to generate total sales of £22,811,938 and a solid 79% sale rate. Leading the auction was a 1960 Ferrari 250 GT SWB (previewed in *Octane* 232) and, while most lots were either strong or simply passed over, a no-reserve 1967 Maserati Mistral (below) was bought for a very tempting £36,000.



TOP 10 PRICES AUGUST 2022

£18,605,000 (\$22,005,000) 1955 Ferrari 410 S RM Sotheby's, Monterey, USA 18-20 August

£8,760,000 (\$10,345,000)

1937 Bugatti Type 57SC Atalante Gooding & Company, Pebble Beach, USA. 19-20 August

£8,275,500 (\$9,905,000)

1937 Mercedes-Benz 540K Special Roadster by Sindelfingen RM Sotheby's, Monterey, USA 18-20 August

£7,724,000 (\$9,245,000)

1924 Hispano-Suiza H6C 'Tulipwood' Torpedo by Nieuport-Astra RM Sotheby's, Monterey, USA 18-20 August

£6,617,500 (\$7,815,000)

1957 Ferrari 500 TRC RM Sotheby's, Monterey, USA 18-20 August

£6,421,500 (\$7,595,000) 1966 Ferrari 275 GTB/C

RM Sotheby's, Monterey, USA 18-20 August

£6,421,500 (\$7,595,000) 1954 Ferrari 375 America Cabriolet by Vignale RM Sotheby's, Monterey, USA 18-20 August

£6,338,000 (\$7,485,000) 1953 Ferrari 375 MM Spider RM Sotheby's, Monterey, USA 18-20 August

€6,151,500 (\$7,265,000) 1938 Talbot-Lago T150-C SS Teardrop Coupé by Figoni et Falaschi RM Sotheby's, Monterey, USA 18-20 August

£5,779,000 (\$6,825,000) 1958 Ferrari 250 GT Cabriolet Series I RM Sotheby's, Monterey, USA 18-20 August

DAVE KINNEY'S USA ROUND-UP

1972 Mercedes-Benz 600

RM Sotheby's, Monterey

18-20 August

The 600 is big, outrageously over-complicated, expensive to fix and, in essence, a personal (or even governmental) limousine in an era when only sports cars bring huge money. They were technologically advanced when made and built like the proverbial bank vault on wheels. Anyone who was anyone owned one. Every dictator, almost every rock star and bunches of preachers, high-profile businessmen and assorted other crooks and characters owned them in the day.

So why would you want one now? The other side of the coin is that they were, and are, a stuck-in-time high-tech wonder from the dawn of the Space Age, built like no other car will be again. Almost handcrafted, using the very best materials available, only 2190 were created over 18 years, which works out at fewer than 125 per annum. When sorted properly or beautifully original like this example, they are amazing cars.

Naturally they were expensive to buy, and good ones still bring good money. Restoring one of these is the definition of a labour of love, as the lack of financial return is a near-100% probability. Now that you have

1973 BMW 2002 Targa Gooding & Co, Pebble Beach



A very nice example of a rare variant. Karosserie Baur designed and built 2317 examples of the Targa, with a removable top and rear window that could be lowered. This one was bare-metal repainted in its original shade in 2017 by Oldenzaal Classics in The Netherlands. Likely bought for less than the cost of restoration, at \$67,200 it seemed a good deal.



been properly warned, this 5267-original-miles car was stunning and very likely worth the \$313,000 purchase price, for they are every bit as important to the history of Mercedes-Benz as any other limited-production car the marque has produced – not as popular on the auction circuit, granted, but just as important. Forget owning an entire country, this car will make you feel like a potentate, though with a much lesser chance of an uprising among your fellow countrymen.

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

2008 Audi R8 Quattro

Broad Arrow Auctions, Monterev

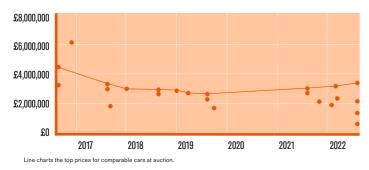


The list of collectable Audis is not as long as some manufacturers', but it continues to grow – and the prospects of the R8 joining that list look good. This low-miles example was owned by racer Juan Pablo Montoya and is one of the best l've seen this year. Sold for \$1000 more than its new price at \$123,200, it was possibly worth a bit more still.

AUCTION TRACKER FERRARI LAFERRARI

A must-have for any bluechip collector looking to own the complete set of Ferrari halo cars, the 950bhp LaFerrari debuted at the 2013 Geneva motor show, offering F1 hybrid technology with a claimed top speed of 217mph and a list price of $\pounds1.15$ million.

Setting aside the final example of the standard coupés built that was sold new by Ferrari for \$7,000,000 at a charity auction in December 2016, the current benchmark was established at Monterey four months earlier, when the first cars appeared at auction as embargos on reselling expired. Bonhams was first off the mark, achieving \$3,685,000 (£3,188,000) for its Rosso Corsa LaFerrari, before Mecum raised the bar to \$5,170,000 (£4,472,000) 24 hours later for a matte black example – both cars showing under 250 miles. Top auction results have



softened since those highs, although recent sales indicate an uptick, including Broad Arrow's Monterey Jet Center auction last month, where another as-new example with only 143 miles (pictured) raised \$3,910,000 (£3,382,000).

Tom Hartley Jnr explains the wider market: 'We have been very active with the model - Ferrari's first hybrid supercar - since launch, selling more than 30 different examples. At their peak, we sold Coupé variants for over £3,000,000 but this was when the model was still under manufacturer's warranty. Because of the general concern about running costs of a hybrid, upon expiry of the warranty term we concluded sales on several examples for less than £2,000,000! It's worth noting that replacement of the battery will cost about £140k.

'Ferrari has been fantastic in launching its extended warranty: for $\pounds16,000$ you can have a 24-



month extended warranty that includes two services. Bravo Ferrari, and we're now seeing prices climb back up and have recently sold a 1000-mile UK-supplied Coupé for circa £2,500,000.

'Only 499 examples of the Coupé were produced – plus 209 open Apertas, the most desired today. We've sold three Apertas, all of which were delivery-mileage and all circa £3,500,000.' **Rod Laws**

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America's first sports car

Bonhams, Newport, Rhode Island, USA 30 September

PROPELLING MANY gentlemen racers to victory during the early days of motorsport in the USA, Mercer quickly gained a reputation for building fast, competition-ready cars. Although the company had roots going back to the early 1900s, its first car arrived in 1910. These were expensive machines, marketed as 'the Steinway of the automobile world'.

Quite a statement, but it's backed up by the number of enthusiasts who bought them. The Mercer didn't just offer speed, but agility, too. It was a winning formula on the racetrack.

Fittingly, this 1920 Raceabout will be offered at Bonhams' Audrain auction, which is held in

Newport – the birthplace of US motor racing. One of the most impressive models built, this is a late example of the long-stroke L-head Raceabout, which first appeared in 1915. Boasting 75bhp from a gutsy 289ci fourcylinder engine, it really was a thrilling car to drive, but only a handful were built.

As you would expect, many of those were lost to the ravages of time – not to mention accidents – which makes this a very rare specimen. Thankfully, this 'nickel era' gem survived the early years relatively unscathed.

Casino magnate and car collector William Harrah acquired the Raceabout from a Michigan

owner in 1963, for what would then have been an extraordinary sum of \$7500. It remained in his care until it was sold in the huge Harrah Collection auctions in the 1980s. It still wears a double-digit Harrah tag, and comes with its display plate from the museum.

It was purchased by classic-era car collector Al Ferrara from this auction, who in turn sold it to the current vendor. It is for sale after ten years in his stewardship. A truly special example, the car has been beautifully preserved over the many decades in these collections.

It will be offered without reserve against an estimate of \$400,000-500,000. **bonhams.com**

Homeward bound H&H Classics, Duxford, UK 19 October

WHEN THIS XK150 rolled off the Browns Lane production line in 1958, it was destined to live out its days in Johannesburg. The South African climate is generally very kind to cars, at least when it comes to rust, but this XK150 didn't just survive – it thrived.

It was owned by an architect and then passed to his nephew in 1960, who used the car for many years. It was then sold to Dennis Cronje, a 747 pilot with South African Airways, who restored it to a high standard in the early '90s.

At that point the colour was

changed to Sherwood Green from Pearl Grey, and it was given a triple-carb S-spec cylinder head.

The current owner bought the car in 2008, and decided to take the upgrades to the next stage. A fully rebuilt and tweaked 3.8-litre MkIX engine was fitted, while the gearbox was overhauled.

It returned to the UK in 2010, and has since been further improved with rebuilt suspension, new wheels and tyres, as well as being fully retrimmed in 2019. It's estimated to sell for £85,000-100,000. handh.co.uk



QUICK GLANCE



1984 Lancia LC2 RM Sotheby's, Le Mans, France

9 June 2023, rmsothebys.com An early highlight of RM's 100th anniversary Le Mans auction next year, this Lancia will be one of 24 lots – all with Le Mans History. The Martini-liveried LC2 here was driven at the 1984 event, with Bob Wollek placing it on pole position. After a hard-fought race, Wollek and Alessandro Nannini went on to finish in eighth position, behind a procession of seven Porsche 956s. It carries an estimate of €2,200,000-2,400,000.



1964 Ferrari 330 GT Series I Dore & Rees, Frome, UK 8 October, doreandrees.com

We're told that this 330 has been with the vendor since 1971 and was parked up in 1988. Jacked-up to have its rear brakes fixed, it has remained in the same spot ever since but is said to be very solid underneath. The engine runs, and it even had a new clutch just 100 miles before being laid-up. A few modifications, and the paintwork certainly leaves something to be desired, but it's estimated at a very reasonable £60,000-70,000.

The Hammond Collection of Microcars Charterhouse, Kent, UK

27 October, charterhouse-cars.com If you love microcars, then you might be sad to hear that this great little museum is closing. The collection includes 40 microcars, built up over 40 years by Edwin and Jean Hammond. Oddities include a Nobel 200, a Scootercar MkI, an AC Petite MkII, as well as the highly sought-after Messerschmitt KR200 and Berkeley SA322. Everything must be sold, including the vast swathes of spare parts and automobilia.



1969 Lamborghini Miura S Artcurial, Paris, France 16 October, artcurial.com

Not quite a one-owner car, but this Miura S has been with its current owner since 1974. Living in the Toulouse area, it has covered around 52,000km, and is said to be a matching numbers example. Described as wellpreserved and well-maintained, it certainly looks to be a very healthy example of an S – of which only 140 were built – in a great colour scheme. Artcurial has estimated that it will sell for €900,000-1,400,000.

ALSO LOOK OUT FOR. . .

In the late 1970s, lab technician Keith Townsend began spending his downtime building a working model of *Branksome*, a Victorian steam launch. After 5000 hours he lost track of the time he'd sunk into the project, but by early 1981 his exquisitely detailed miniature boat was done, and later that year Townsend decided to turn his hobby into a profession.

The Townsend creation shown here, which is due to be auctioned by Bonhams in London on 28 September, is typically beautifully made. But it's most interesting for being a remote-controlled model of a remote-controlled boat. It's a



1:8-scale likeness of *Bat*, a steam launch that puffed around Lake Windermere in 1904 with just a stoker aboard, the steering being done by radio by local men Isaac Storey and Jack Kitchen. It was the first confirmed instance of a fullsize boat being piloted by radio. Bonhams expects the model to fetch £5000-8000, which almost seems too little. When he built it back in 1985, Townsend had to charge £2950 to cover his time – the equivalent of £10,000 today.

AUCTION DIARY

Please confirm details with auction houses before travelling

26 August Barons, Southampton, UK

28 September Christie's, London, 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 Dore & Rees, Frome, UK

9 October Bonhams, Knokke-Heist, Belgium

12 October Charterhouse, Sparkford, UK

13-15 October Mecum, Chicago, USA

14-15 October Branson Auction, Branson, USA Broad Arrow Auctions, Gloversville, USA Mecum, Chattanooga, USA

15 October Dorotheum, Salzburg, Austria Richard Edmonds, Showell, UK Oldtimer Galerie, Toffen, Switzerland

15-16 October Bonhams, Stafford, UK (motorcycles)

16 October Artcurial, Paris, France

> 19-20 October H&H, Duxford, UK

20-22 October Barrett-Jackson, Houston, USA

> 21-22 October Cheffins, Cambridge, UK Mathewsons, online

23 October Aguttes, Sochaux, France

26 October Brightwells, online

27 October Charterhouse, Hawkenbury, UK

28 October Barons, Southampton, UK

SWVA, online 29 October RM Sotheby's, TBC

4 November Bonhams, London, UK

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



1961 Jaguar E-type Competition

POA from Duncan Hamilton ROFGO, Hampshire, UK

THE BAHAMAS Speed Week quickly became one of the most exciting and hard-fought racing events of the calendar during its 12-year run from 1954 to 1966. As well as attracting cars and drivers from all over the world, there was a fair share of locals taking part. The first owner of this competition-spec E-type was one such driver.

Mr Hans Schenk of the Bahamas took delivery of this distinctive E-type from East Bay Service Ltd of Nassau on 29 September 1961. It was bought with the sole purpose of entering – and winning – the Speed Week. Schenk was something of a celebrity chef in the Bahamas, but had also become an accomplished driver, racing competitively since 1957.

Preparation for its first event included the addition of a black nose and hardtop, with sponsorship from Goodyear tyres and Champion spark plugs. A couple of second-place finishes during this first outing put him in good stead for the next year. For the 1962 races competition was tougher – with several more E-types now on the Islands – but he was immediately on the pace. A second-place finish came in race one, with an outright win in race two. He rounded out the week with a storming victory in the Bahamas Cup. In 1963 Schenk won all three races.

The E-type was sold to his friend Tony Adams, who took the car to a respectable second place, only losing out to Schenk – then racing in his new Cobra. Adams again placed second in the Bahamas Cup in '65, marking an end to this car's racing career.

Adams would later take the E-type on a European driving tour, before finally settling in Australia. The car passed to a Perth-based owner, who had it restored in the late 1990s. It eventually returned to the UK in 2005, when it was registered as 405 UXO.

The E-type was discovered in 2017 by Duncan Hamilton ROFGO, which is currently offering it for sale. After the fantastic history was confirmed, it received a full restoration to 'Bahamas' spec by CKL Developments. With previous invitations to the Revival's flagship Kinrara Trophy, this is one very appealing and unique racing E-type. **dhrofgo.com**





SHOWROOM BRIEFS



1978 ASTON MARTIN V8 £110,000

Not only eye-catching in Mandarin Yellow, this very rare Series 3 V8 is one of the last built, with a few parts from the incoming Oscar India. It's been upgraded to 580X Vantage spec, too. juliensumner.com (GB)



2008 ALFA ROMEO 8C \$329,500

Not only is the Alfa 8C one of the most beautiful modern supercars, it's also one of the best-sounding. This black car is number 13 of 84 original US-market examples, with fewer than 16,000 miles. hymanItd.com (US)

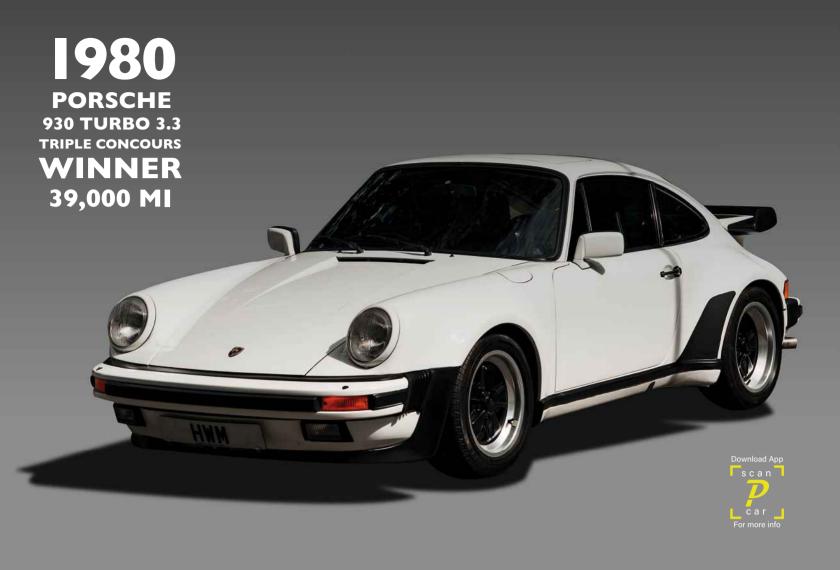


1969 FORD TAUNUS 15M COUPÉ, €19,950 Not that any Taunus is a corr

Not that any Taunus is a common sight, but the 15M Coupé is a real rarity. This historied 1700cc example has been fully restored and repainted in its original metallic gold colour. erclassics.com (NL)



1995 PORSCHE 968 CLUBSPORT, AUD \$157,995 The final evolution of the four-cylinder transaxle Porsche line, the CS was a real gem. This is one of only 19 made for the Australian market, and has covered 140,000km. classicthrottleshop.com (AUS)













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Vauxhall VXR8

Grab the last of the big V8 Aussie super-saloons, with a British badge

FOR MOST OF us, recordings of early morning TV's V8 Supercars provided a healthy dose of exciting Australian racing saloon action. The sight and sound of these big-inch bruisers thundering around Mount Panorama is not easily forgotten and, thanks to Vauxhall's clever use of badge engineering, our daydreams of attacking The Esses and The Dipper could be fulfilled behind the wheel of the VXR8.

Vauxhall had previously imported and re-badged the Holden Monaro Coupé to good effect. This was very much an old-school, 6.0-litre LS-powered muscle car (also sold in the US as the Pontiac GTO), which was very appealingly priced below £30,000. It was never a huge seller, but it found a solid number of enthusiast owners – many of whom added a supercharger for dramatic effect.

As a follow-up, Vauxhall launched the VXR8 saloon in 2007. Just as before, this new saloon was in effect a re-badged Holden Special Vehicles Clubsport, but from a technical standpoint it was a far more impressive package. Power initially came from the vocal and grunt-laden naturally aspirated 411bhp LS2 V8 engine, with a Tremec M10 manual gearbox. One of the biggest improvements was a new multi-link rear suspension, which made the original VXR8 a solid starting point...

In 2009 the substantially upgraded VXR8 Bathurst edition was launched: big brakes, adjustable suspension, a lairy colour scheme and powered by the 6.2-litre LS3. This could be optionally equipped with a Walkinshaw Performance supercharger kit, pushing power to 552bhp. Soon after this, the VXR8 briefly went off sale in the UK, as HSV was in the process of launching an updated version.

By 2011, a revised Vauxhall version appeared. It got a new face, and with it came plenty of serious upgrades under the skin. There was an automatic option for the first time, as well as a set of Magnetic Ride Control dampers, which really improved the handling. However, the basic 425bhp Clubsport started at £45,000, with the top-spec GTS nearer to £50k, so it was no longer the bargain it had been.

That really didn't matter, though. Vauxhall only ever planned to bring in a few hundred each year, but in 2013 it went even more niche with the introduction of the Maloo. Known in its homeland as a 'ute', this was a hilariously pointless, yet completely lovable, 425bhp pick-up. Perhaps more usefully, Vauxhall also started to bring in the handsome and spacious VXR8 Tourer at this point.

In 2014 there was the introduction of the blown GTS, which, thanks to a charge cooled supercharger, pushed power to 576bhp. At \pounds 55,000 it was still £20k cheaper than an E55 or M5, but sales were limited to a very small pool of enthusiast buyers. It continued in the UK until the plug was pulled in 2017, with the GTS-R the run-out model.

It's now five years since GM closed Holden's last car factory, marking the end of Australian car production. The VXR8 remains a real hardcore enthusiast choice, as it always was. If you can stomach the fuel bills, it's a unique and thrilling experience. Matthew Hayward

THE LOWDOWN

WHAT TO PAY

Although you might expect depreciation and walletcrippling fuel consumption to have hit the VXR8 hard, the low numbers brought into the UK mean that prices have actually held up pretty well.

Earliest versions have barely dropped below the \pounds 10k mark, and you're looking at closer to \pounds 13,000 to get a decent example, with the later 6.2 cars closer to \pounds 20k.

Facelifted 2010 cars are even rarer and command $\pounds25k$, even $\pounds50k$ for the newest supercharged ones.

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

All the engines are good for huge mileages in standard form, and up to 850bhp if tuned correctly. Many have been; just ensure it's been done properly – and the clutch upgraded, too.

Body panels are expensive to replace, as are lights and trim, so make sure it's all up to scratch. Corrosion isn't a huge issue, though factory rust-proofing wasn't great.

Various bushes are prone to wearing, so check for knocks and clonks. THE CLASSIC



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2004 FERRARI 575M MANUAL "FIORANO PACKAGE"



1987 PORSCHE 930 TURBO



1964 JAGUAR E-TYPE SERIES 1 3.8 FHC

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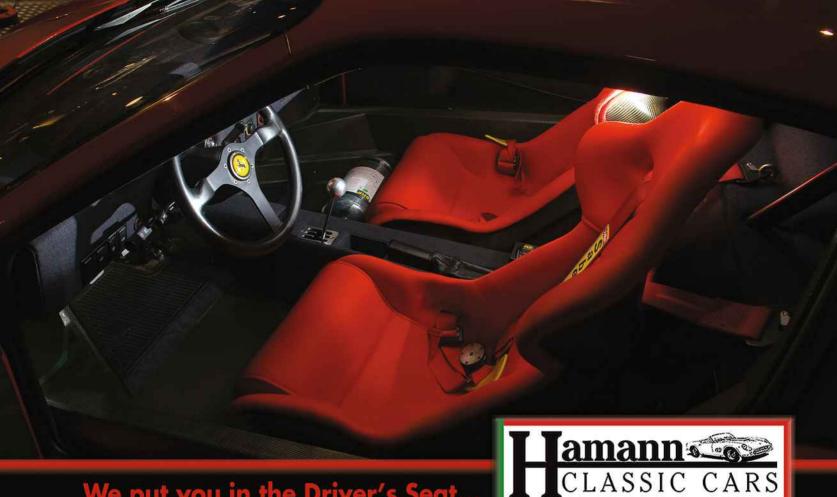
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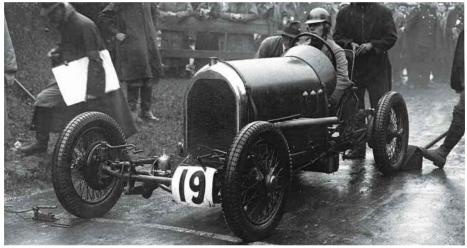
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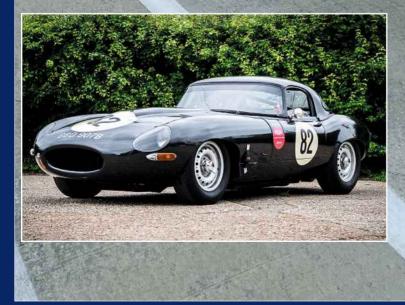
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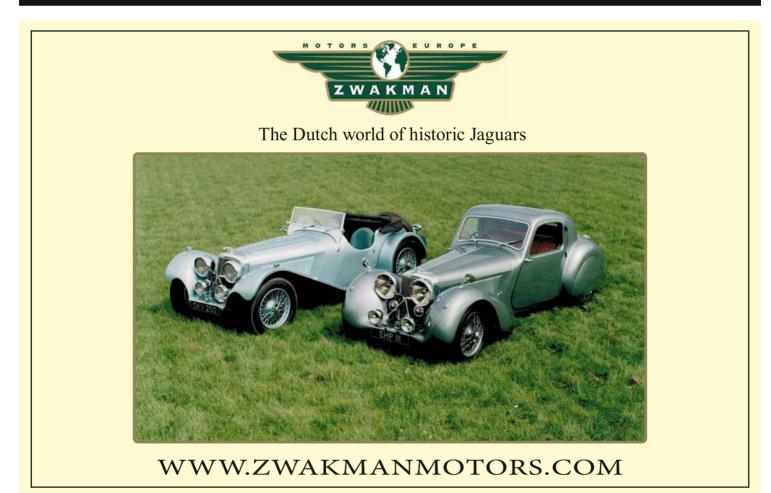


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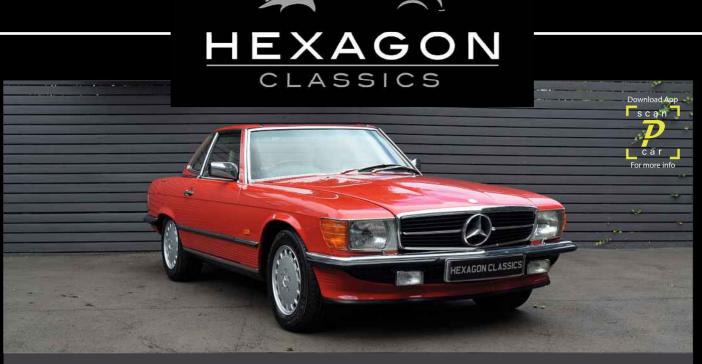
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Aston Martin DB6 Vantage, 1966 Anthracite Black Pearl with Dark Burgundy hide, 4,000 Miles Since RS Williams Restoration, upgraded 4.7 Litre Engine.



Porsche 911 Speedster, 1990 Guards Red with Linen Leather, 14,600 miles, G50 transmission, LSD, Supersport equipment, heated drivers seat.



BMW M3 Convertible, 2005 Silver Grey Metallic with Imola Red Leather, Manual, 45,900 miles, Professional Navigation, 19" Double Spoke M alloy wheels.



Mercedes SL55 AMG F1 Pack, 2004 Seal Grey Metallic with Grey Leather, 34,900 miles, Panoramic Sunroof, keyless go, Parktronic, factory, delimited, carbon pack.



Porsche 997.2 Targa 4 3.6, 2009 Jet Black with Sand Beige Leather, PDK, 7,950 miles, Navigation system, 19" alloy wheels, Bose, memory seats.



Porsche 993 Targa, 1997 Ocean Blue with Marble Grey Leather, manual, 64,500 miles, Varioram, <u>air conditioning</u>, 17" alloy wheels.



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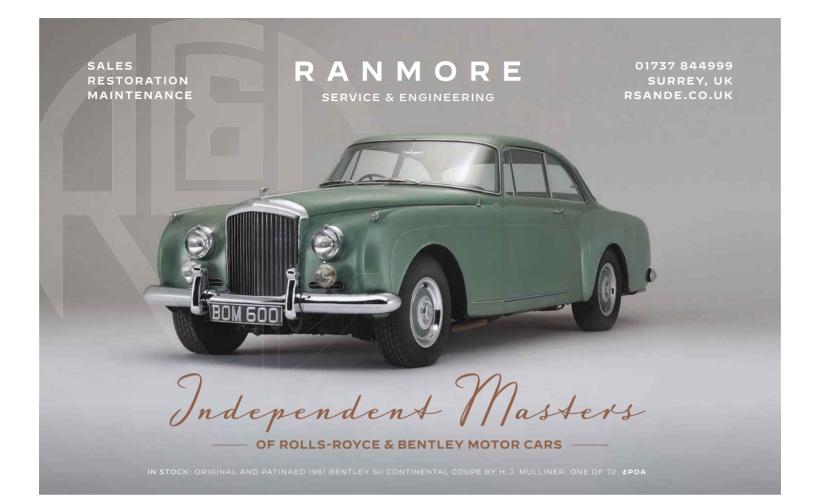


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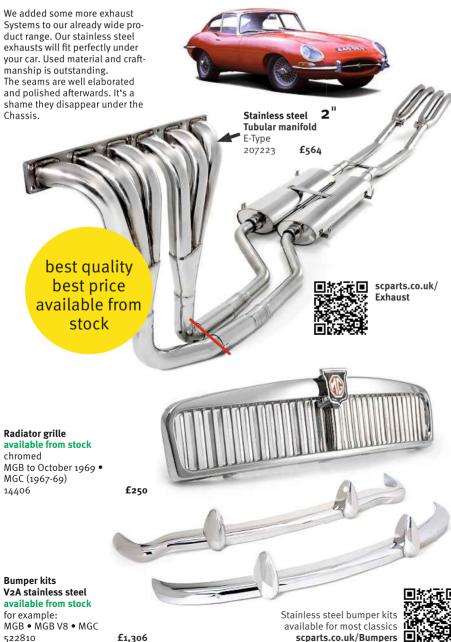
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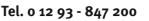
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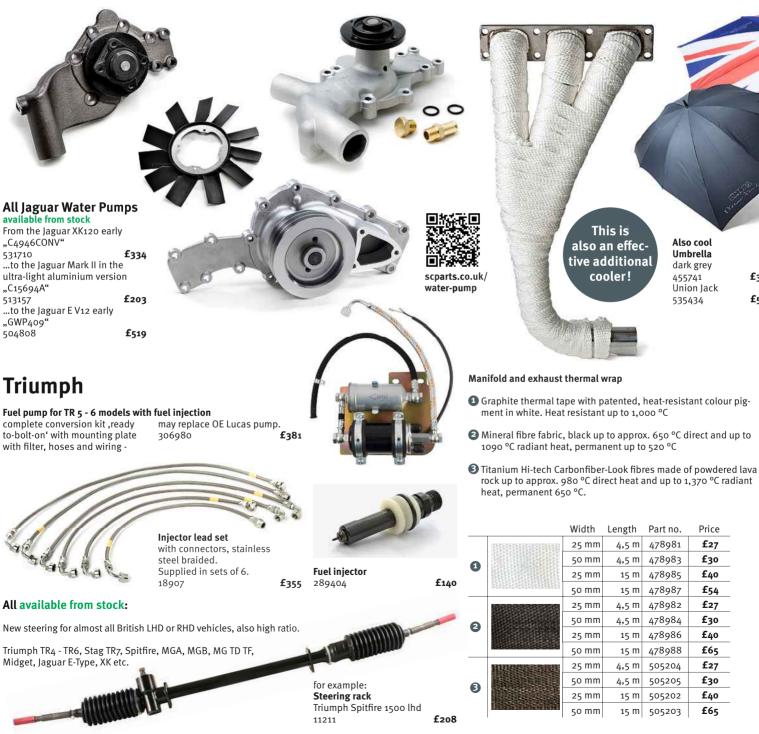
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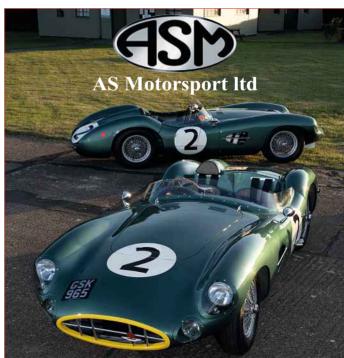


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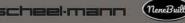
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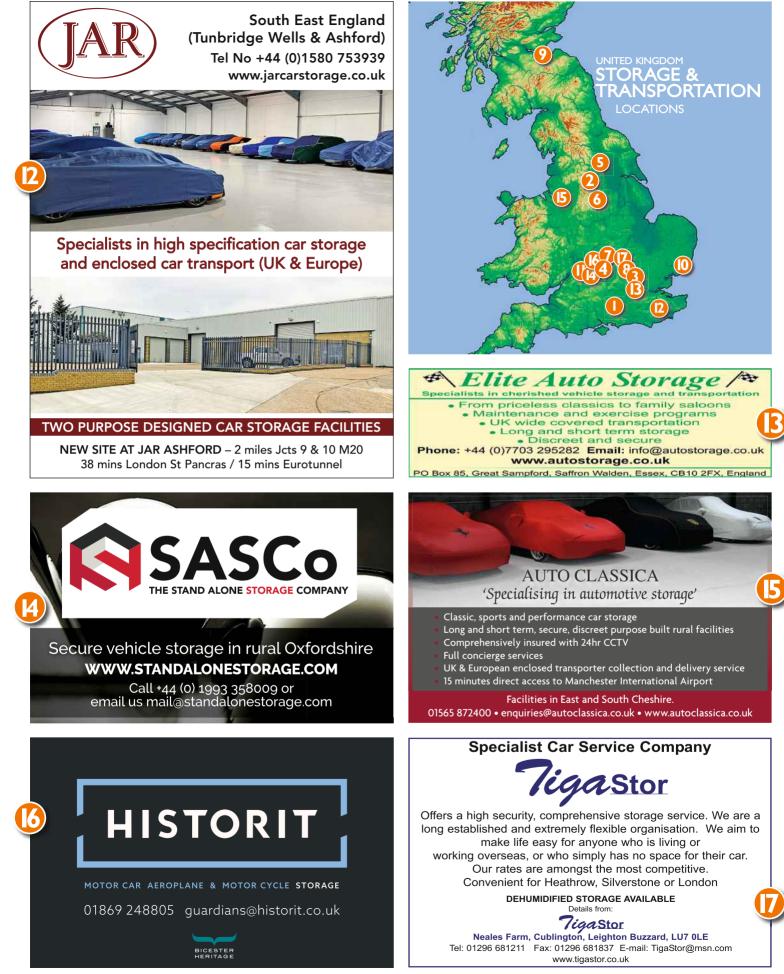
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Day in the life INTERVIEW JAMES ELLIOTT



Peter Hilton

The man behind Hilton Coachworks and Hilton & Moss on a life devoted to classic cars... and boats, walking and now trees

MY WIFE SARAH sets the alarm, so that goes off at 5.15am - I moan about it, but I like it, even if I don't respond to it. We usually have breakfast in bed and then I head into work, which is about ten miles away. I am often first in and last out; well, second-last out because I refuse to be a keyholder - I don't like the worry of it - so I have to leave at the same time as whoever is locking up.

Having opened our new 125,000sq ft HQ bringing together all our businesses, and finally being able to offer a complete service to classic car owners, it felt a bit like a culmination of my career so I have been trying to detach myself a little. It's not going that well, to be honest. I do fewer days in the office (probably three a week on average) and harbour dreams of just coming in to quietly restore my classic cars in the back, but I still feel that - despite all the incredible work done by the team here - I have a unique perspective on the business. More oversight, perhaps – they do great work and I just need to keep things moving in the right direction..

Whenever I walk through this site with all its different buildings or floors for sales, servicing, storage or restoration, plus the coachworks, it takes me back to the start. I'd been working at an agricultural engineers and was doing odd jobs for friends, but my specialism was paint. In the mid-'80s my grandmother loaned me the money to build a 600sq ft double garage behind my parents' house and it became my business. I was always a classic enthusiast and a TR5 was the first car I did up for myself. I still have it.

I worked like that for seven or eight years before getting a proper 2500sq ft unit with a spray booth and three or four employees. I bought a TVR Griffith and started talking to TVR about doing sales and accident repairs, which were many. I also approached local dealers to become a manufacturer-approved repairer, linked up with a Mercedes dealer and it just took off from there. At that point my dad was in the business as a book-keeper and he took on Sarah, who later became my wife.

It was all paint and accident repair at that point and it was going really well - the next premises was 10,000sq ft. We moved to this site in 2000, buying the freehold on a 20,000sq ft shell, then taking on the 10,000sq ft print shop next door, then started renting adjacent sites.

Along the way we acquired a couple of dealerships, a property company that looks after our 'relic' premises, plus a few other companies, a windscreen business, vehicle leasing company and modern car sales - Castle Sports Cars, TVR Centre Coachworks though the repairs were always at the core.

Because I've always been passionate about

'I WAS PRETTY NAÏVE ABOUT THE CLASSIC CAR INDUSTRY AND GOT QUITE BADLY BURNED EARLY ON, SO WE REALLY CHAMPION TRANSPARENCY NOW'

classic cars, around 2010 me and a couple of panel-beaters did a Stag just for fun and we got a taste for it. And that's how Hilton & Moss came about. I know now that I was extremely naïve about the classic car industry and I got quite badly burned early on, but that just means that we really champion transparency now, which is good for our customers.

Restoration is the flagship service and its halo effect stretches across the group, ensuring high standards in all areas. Mercedes-Benz is what I'd like us to focus on restoration wise. With this new building the idea is that we can sell classic cars, store them, service them and restore them - it's a massive opportunity for us.

We decided to do it about 18 months before Covid and the building came together over two years with us moving in in March. It's nice to be able to offer a real customer experience, too, and we recently hosted 80 Lotuses.I know it will work because I can trust the team here. We have superb people, from our body repair and classic car restoration operations to sales and marketing. It's a team of people that are restless to improve, never happy with good enough.

It's probably no surprise, but I am constantly thinking about work even when I'm not here. When I get home, I often just carry on working, but I do occasionally get into a TV series like Peaky Blinders to distract myself.

Away from the business, my big hobbies are driving classic cars, sailing and walking. And looking after trees. I've recently planted lots at home and they take a lot of looking after. I like chopping up wood, too.

I started sailing when I was ten on the North Norfolk coast and I'm commissioning a Swan 60 with a close friend. It's being built in Finland and we'll sail it back next Spring. I sail on the East Coast, plus around Salcombe and out of Menorca sometimes, too. I'm a keen walker and did a seven-day 90-mile walk called Pub to Pub - that suited me down to the ground!

In fact my perfect end to the working day is to pop into one of my favourite pubs for a pint on the way home.

Octane (ISSN 1740-0023, USPS 024-187) is published monthly by Autovia Ltd, 31-32 Alfred Place, London WC1E 7DP, UK. cals postage paid at Brooklyn, NY 11256. US Postmaser: send address changes to Octane, WORLD CONTAINER INC 150-15, 183rd S1, Jamaica, NY 11413, USA Subscription records are maintained at Autovia Ltd, 31-32 Alfred Place, London WC1E 7DP, UK. Air Business Ltd is acting as our mailing agent.

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