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APRIL 2024 | EDITION 387

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# H&H CVC Ltd



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The Club meets at the Conservative Club, High Lane on the **THIRD** Wednesday of each month @ **8.15pm**

**Annual Club Subscription - £20**

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## HALL OF FAME AWARD RECIPIENTS

2012 - Chris Parr

2014 - Bob Plant

2015 - Ray Etchells

2016 - Fred Dean

2020 - David Bowden

2022 - Jane Harrop

2023- Steve Divall

& Mike Coffey

## Disclaimer

Please note that the opinions of the Editor and any Contributors are not necessarily those of the Committee or Directors of the Club .

### **April 2024**

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April – Club Night – A “sort of” quiz – “Looking at Sockets in a Different Light” by Ken Coxey. Teams of four people, with an entry fee of £1 per person and a prize of £20 to the winning team. Finger food to be made available on the night.

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> April – National Drive It Day – The Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs’ designated day to dust off your pride and joy, give it a polish and to drive it down the road(s). Route to be set by Richard Burnham. Visit the FBHVC website to purchase a plaque/plate and contribute to Child Line.

### **May 2024**

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May – Club Night – A General Knowledge & General Motoring Knowledge Quiz. Teams of four people, with an entry fee of £1 per person and a prize of £20 to the winning team. Finger food to be made available on the night.

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May – 1<sup>st</sup> Evening Run of the year. Details to follow.

### **June 2024**

Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> June – Peaks & Dales Annual Charity Run. Open to all “classics”, the start will be from Marple Memorial Park (Scout Hut – SK6 6BA) and the run will have a route, to be set by Richard Burnham, of circa 65-70miles in length. The destination will be Peak Village Retail Outlet, Rowsley, DE4 2JE. Bookings and further details about this event can be found on the Club’s website.

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> June – Club Night.

### **July 2024**

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> July – Club Night. Annual Club BBQ & Impromptu Car Show.

Wednesday 24<sup>nd</sup> July – 2nd Evening Run of the year. Details to follow.

### **August 2024**

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> August – GVEC Classic Car Show, Manor Park, Glossop - £5 charity entry fee per vehicle.

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> August – Club Night.

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> August – Poynton Show.

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> August – Final Evening Run of the year. Details to follow.

### **September 2024**

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> September – Annual Club Show – Brookside Garden Centre – Open to H&HCVC members and non-members.

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> September – Club Night.

### **October 2024**

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> October – Club Night – A talk by Ken Coxey about “Communication”.

### **November 2024**

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> November – Club Night.

### **December 2024**

No Planned Activities At This Time.



### **April 2024**

Saturday/Sunday 20th & 21st – Sandbach Transport Festival.

### **May 2024**

Saturday/Sunday 11th & 12th May – Glossop Rotary Club Classic Car & Vehicle Show. Organized by High Peak Classic Car Group at Lyme field Garden Centre, Broadbottom, SK14 6AG. In aid of Willow Wood Hospice & Rotary Foundation.

Spring Bank Holiday Weekend 24th to 27th May – The Austin A30/A35 Owner's Club International Rally. To be held at Chesterfield Panthers RUFC, 2012 Dunster Road, Chesterfield, S41 9BF.

Spring Bank Holiday Weekend 25th to 27th May – Smallwood Vintage Rally.

Spring Bank Holiday Weekend 26th to 27th May – Capesthorpe Hall Classic Car & Motorcycle Show, Macclesfield.

### **June 2024**

Saturday/Sunday 1st & 2nd June – Classic & Performance Car Show. To be held at Tatton Park, Knutsford, Cheshire, WA16 6SG.

Saturday 1st June – “Classics at the College”. To be held at Ellesmere College, Shropshire. Tickets £20 per car from 1st February 2024. To book search “Eventbrite classics at the college 2024”.

Saturday/Sunday 1st & 2nd June – Astle Park Rally, Chelford.

Sunday 23rd June – Lymm Historic Transport Day. 10:00 to 16:00, Lymm May Queen Field, The Peppers, Lymm.

### **July 2024**

Saturday/Sunday 6th & 7th July – Stars & Stripes American Vehicle Show. To be held at Tatton Park, Knutsford, Cheshire WA16 6SG.

Saturday/Sunday 13th & 14th July – Cheshire Steam Rally, Daresbury.

Sunday 21st July – Cheshire Classic Car Show (Morris Minor Day), Capesthorpe Hall, Macclesfield.

Sunday 28th July – Ashover Car & Bike Show, Chesterfield.

### **August 2024**

Saturday/Sunday 10th & 11th August – Astle Park Rally, Chelford.

Saturday/Sunday 17th & 18th August – Power & Passion Car Show. To be held at Tatton Park, Knutsford, Cheshire, WA16 6SG.

Sunday/Monday 25th & 26th August – Cheshire Classic Car Show (Jaguar & Mercedes Benz Day), Capesthorpe Hall, Macclesfield.

### **September 2024**

Saturday/Sunday 14th & 15th September – North Rode Rally, Bosley, Macclesfield, CW12 2PW

# CHAIRMAN'S EDITORIAL

Keith Yates

As I don't have any psychic powers I obviously don't know how you, dear reader, go about reading this magazine. Do you start at the front and work your way to the back or do you bob around it and pick and choose? Well, whichever way you go about it you may start to think that there's something missing, something isn't quite right. Put your mind at ease, there is something missing and yes, it doesn't feel quite right – Graham Scattergood's MG Catch Up is no more, certainly not for the immediate future anyway. Graham has quite a lot going on at present so he's decided to step away from his Committee position and also his MG piece in the magazine. The good news is that Graham and Chris (now making a slow but steady recovery from her recent traumas) will remain active members of H&HCVC so we'll continue to see them at club events. I would just like to thank Graham for everything that he's done for our Club and for his continuing support.

So, all of you MG guys out there; are you up for it? I honestly don't know how many MGs are owned by our members but there must be a fairly good number and there is presumably some interesting stuff going on in MG world. How about letting us all know about this and writing about it in these pages? I'll be waiting for your call then.

On a similar theme to the above, is there anybody out there that would be willing to take on Graham's "Advertising" portfolio that he held on

the Committee? This role could be done without becoming a member of the Committee and would entail working with existing advertisers and looking for new ones. Please let any one of the Committee members know if you're interested in this role.

Having mentioned things MG, it reminds me that one of my reporters in the field has recently sent me a brief report on the March 2024 Classic Car Show at the NEC. I understand that the MG Cyberstar made an appearance at the show and was something of a hit with the crowds. In certain lights, at certain angles and perhaps with beer goggles on, the car looks a bit more like a small Aston Martin than what one would expect an electric MG sports car to look like. It certainly isn't everybody's cup of tea – yes, it's made in China and it's fully electric – but it's a good looking car and I believe that it will be a hit amongst the more affluent EV enthusiasts that want "something for the weekend" other than Lycra and an expensive bicycle. It also goes to show that at least one motor manufacturer can actually build a good looking EV and that these things don't have to be enormous and take styling cues from a brick public toilet.

Whilst rambling on about EVs, a recent headline was saying that their owners have started to find that tyres are not lasting as long as would perhaps be expected. This phenomena was being put down to the weight of these vehicles but I'm not at all convinced. It seems to me that, these days, there are far to

many vehicle owners that just don't bother to conduct weekly checks (or any checks for that matter!!!) on things like coolant, oil, windscreen wash or tyre pressures. If tyres are (probably) under-inflated then they will wear quicker than a correctly inflated tyres. Also and given the appalling state of British roads (even motorways), then it's hardly surprising that tyres are suffering – hit a pothole, at 70mph with an under-inflated low-profile tyre and there's a very good chance that damage will be done to the tyre, wheel rim and suspension components.

Now then, I'm afraid that my alter ego, Mr Grumpy, needs to make a brief return. I've never made a secret of the fact that I'm no fan of greedy politicians, regardless of party, that continue, as they always have done, to treat UK motorists as the "goose" that can be depended upon to keep on laying "golden eggs" for them. This has been punched home recently when I came to pay the annual RFL and insurance on my Mazda MX5. Yes and before I continue, it is clearly my own choice to own one of these fabulous little cars – a 2000 reg, NB Icon with the 1800S engine – but I only use it to cover about 500/600miles pa and consider it to be a "modern classic". Anyway, I came to pay my RFL in March and it was a staggering (nee extortionate) £325 – yes, that's right, three hundred and twenty five pounds!!! I also paid 12% Insurance Premium Tax when I renewed the Mazda's car insurance too. I consider that this is outrageous when set aside what I'm getting back as a motorist – roads, road markings and signage etc, etc all in truly disgraceful states of repair/disrepair. I read, at the time of the

Budget, that the Chancellor was trying to convince us that his was the party that was the "friend of the motorist". Well I'm here to tell you that you and your party are no friend of this particular motorist – I'll include the other mob (s) in that too! Basically, the many millions (or is that billions these days?) that we, the motorists, collectively pay over to the Treasury just disappear into the giant pot of "general taxation" that undoubtedly sits underneath the "Magic Money Tree" that politicians always have available to them for projects etc that never really seem to benefit the UK public. Grump over but all of this has persuaded me, after 8/9yrs of ownership, that I'll have to now seriously consider moving the Mazda on to a new owner during 2024.

Nearly done now but here's a little aside for you. The afore mentioned reporter in the field has also informed me of a new motor museum that I didn't previously know anything about. Taunton, in Somerset, it would seem, has a new motor museum that opened in October 2023. It is positioned right in the centre of the town and is located in a repurposed department store. The frontage is said to be small but it does go back far. It has two floors and about 100 or so cars from the 60s, 70s and 80s. The museum and cars are said to be immaculate and there is a good cafe too. Not sure if you can get any scrumpy cider there though.

To the end at last. David and I do hope that you fully enjoy this April edition magazine and that, now Spring is upon us, we can all look forward to getting those classics out there, trouble free and on the road.

## **This Month's Front Cover ...**

... shows a scene from the Lakeland Motor Museum and provides a small example of the museum's sizeable col-

lection of petroliana and automobilia items. Well worth a visit if you happen to find yourself in the South Lakes area.

## **Calling on Cooks, Cook's Helpers, Diners & Mechanics**

The Peaks & Dales Charity Run will, as everybody should know by now, take place on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2024 (Father's Day). Behind the scenes planning etc is progressing satisfactorily but, at this time, we're in need of a cook and cook's helper. The usual bacon butties, the food of choice at any classic car event, will be on sale at the start of the run (at the Marple Memorial Park Scout Hut). We (the Committee) would like to recruit a bacon cook, to fry the bacon, and a helper, to put the bacon on barm cakes and make sales, for the morning. A free bacon barm will be made available to the successful applicant(s).

Pete (Vice Chairman) Norbury is currently looking into the possibility of organising a Sunday lunch and perhaps a late November/early December evening do at Oaklands Hall, Hyde. If you would be interested in attending one/both of these potential events then please let Pete know ASAP so that he can make enquiries into costings and availability etc.

The Club Chairman has a small collection of genuine, manufacturer's workshop manuals from the early to the mid 1960s – precise publication dates are not apparent. These are all in good condition and are complete. The cars covered are as follows:-

BMC Austin A99 & A110 (Westminster). A genuine Owners Handbook could also be made available.

BMC/MG MGA 1500, 1600 & MGA 1600 (Mkll). This comes with a 1995 copy of MGA Restoration Guide by Malcolm Green.

Lotus Elan (mid-late 1960s).

Rootes Group Sunbeam Rapier (Series III to IV), Alpine (Series I to IV) & Supplement (Series V).

There is also a 1982/83 copy of MGB Guide to Purchase & DIY Restoration (Supplements on MGC & MGB V8) and a copy of Practical Classics on MGB Restoration.

All of these manuals were previously owned by a late car enthusiast and restorer. They are all being made available and are offered to the best bidder, the intention being and for the purpose of raising funds for H&HCVC. Ideally, these should go to someone that has one of the cars listed – a nice addition to your car. If you are interested, or know someone that is, then please contact Keith Yates to progress.





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# FAMOUS CAPRI OWNERS

Paul Barratt

Ford must surely be the finest of all car manufactures. Though not every model has been a roaring success, they have hit the target time and time again. They have a knack of choosing a demographic and hitting the target with just the right car. The Mondeo became the vehicle of choice for the sales rep, the Cortina the best selling family car, the XR2 for the boy racer, the KA the cheap to insure young persons car, the Anglia, Escort, Granada, Transit, Focus, the list of mega sellers goes on. Even right at the infancy of motoring they had the Model T, selling over fifteen million and becoming the best selling car in history, a record kept right up until the 1970s. Even today there are more Ford Fiestas on UK roads than any other car (it's a real shame that production of the car is coming to an end) with the Focus being second. It is a truly remarkable record when you think about it. And in amongst this group of

prime motoring marvels, with just under two million sold in it's eighteen year production run is ..... the Capri.

Marketed as a car for the every-man who wanted something a little different and from a time period when designers and manufacturers were not afraid to have a go at something new. Again, the Capri soon found it's target audience and back in the day, quickly gained a roguish reputation, a car for the wide-boy, someone with desires of being a Flash Harry, a chancer hitting the roads with a devil may care attitude, all enhanced by the cars numerous TV appearances. Bodie & Doyle handbrake turning their Capri, of which they had several models throughout the Professionals series, in pursuit of villains. Dennis Waterman, in Minder, had his in white with a black vinyl roof and Del Boy's bright green one in Only Fools & Horses. Certainly, if you watch a lot of

classic TV as I do, when a new character with any of these aforementioned traits is to enter an episode and you hear the tyres screeching then it's a safe bet that they will turn up in a Capri. Even in recent years it has still happened. The Alfie Moon character in EastEnders had one. I guess all this can easily give current Capri owners something of a bad name, obviously unwarranted I hasten to add! It comes as no surprise then that such a popular car had it's fair share of famous (and infamous) owners, a few of which are listed below.

Cliff Richard. I bet that's not a name you expected to see and certainly contradicts the previously mentioned character types. But yes, Saint Cliff had one which was even fitted with a rare KAT type body-kit, to give the car even more flair and flamboyance. Difficult to imagine him drifting along the streets in a beast like this whilst humming along to Mistletoe & Wine but there you go.

Harry Styles. Sticking with the pop star theme, the youngest member on this list is the mega successful One Direction star who had an early white Mark 1. Opinions were divided in the Capri fraternity, some thinking it poor form for a rich young 'un to drive such a classic with apparent flippancy, whilst others appreciating the fact that someone of that age will choose a car like that. It was seen soon after in a state of abandon in a car park.

Jackie Stewart. The British Formula 1 motor racing legend and winner of three F1 World Championships. Now he definitely adds some credence and coolness to the Capri. A much revered and re-

spected name in the world of motor racing, I wonder if he ever got tempted to open the throttle up and give it some welly whilst popping to the shops.

Peter Sutcliffe. The Yorkshire Ripper, well I did mention they may be infamous. The car even formed part of his police confession statement in 1981, 'I was in a Ford Capri, K registered, a lime green one with a black roof with a sun grill in the back window'.

Jimmy Savile. Still with the focus on infamy. Usually known for driving around in cars such as a Rolls Royce, Jim indeed fixed it for himself to have a Capri.

Brian Connolly. Back to pop stars now with the lead singer of glam rockers Sweet (there's got to be a way to Blockbuster). He declared that he hated travelling between gigs but loved bombing about in his Ford Capri. Connolly passed away in 1997 at the age of 51, the years of rock n' roll excess having caught up with him. A version of Sweet are still recording and touring to this day, with the last surviving member guitarist Andy Scott at the helm.

Phil Thompson. Many football players back in the day must have had a Capri but Liverpool and England captain Thompson stands out as he was pictured in the press, looking bewildered, beside his car which was flat on the tarmac without any wheels. They had been stolen. Thieves had left the car but had taken the wheels.

Barry Hearn. The sporting impresario who made millionaires of snooker players such as Steve Davis and Dennis Tay-

lor had a limited edition Tickford Capri. These were a turbocharged high specification version of the car, built in conjunction with Aston Martin, each had a luxury interior and a body-kit as standard. Only 85 were produced but this particular one is still known to exist, it's whereabouts being known in the Capri world, it even came up for sale on eBay at one point I believe.

Angela Rippon. Few people seem to remember that the erstwhile newsreader, presenter and most recently Strictly star did indeed present Top Gear back in the early days, and she talked about the car on the show.

John Deacon. Bass guitarist with royal rockers Queen wanted to buy himself a Capri back in the day, but fellow band mate Freddie Mercury (who ironically didn't drive) put him off, proclaiming it wasn't 'rock star enough'. Deacon, like all Queen members, has a fortune of mil-

lions, and writer of classics such as Queen's most successful song, Another One Bites The Dust (number one on the coveted American Billboard chart and a hit all over the world), has in recent times been seen driving a Toyota Aygo. He should have got the Capri. He retired from music shortly after Mercury's death, being of a sensitive nature the loss of his friend hit him hard.

That's a small list of quite an eclectic mix of owners. Feel free to let me know if you are aware of any others. And why not have a think, or do a little research, into well known owners/drivers of the classic car of your choice. You may unearth some admirable or interesting names.

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# Markku Alén

## and the 1988 R.A.C. Rally Thomas Wardle

Markku Alen was born in Finland. He started his World Rally Championship career in the 1973 Finish Rally, finishing second in a Volvo 142. His second drive in a W.R.C. rally was the British R.A.C., in the same year, managing third in a Ford Escort RS1600. Between the 1973 and 1988 seasons he won 19 World Cup rallies in seven countries. He competed in 15 consecutive R.A.C. rallies up to and including 1987; his best position being second in both 1985 and 1986, but a first place continually eluded him. This was THE rally he wanted to win! Would 1988 be his year?

Along with his team mate Mikael Ericsson, Markku Alen was competing in a Lancia Delta Integrale. These cars

were strong, reliable and fast and had only been beaten once in the previous two years of W.R.C. rallies. This rally was the best chance either had had to win this event, but it was five long days of intense driving with plenty of hazards to catch the unwary.

Sunday, November 20th and a 4am start from Harrogate. Eight "mickey mouse" stages were waiting for the competitors, mostly covered in snow. These stages were set in stately homes where large crowds, a large number of whom were not "real" enthusiasts and certainly not aware of the dangers, could be safely controlled into corralled safe viewing areas. This was in response to the problems of a few years earlier when Greystoke Forest, near Penrith, was timed for a Sunday afternoon. Thousands of "casual enthusi-

asts” descended on the forest causing dangerous overcrowding, one reporter alleged he saw a woman in stilettos pushing a pram along the forest track! The “mickey mouse” stages were certainly not popular at first, by fans and competitors alike, but were regarded as a necessary evil. When, a year or two after their introduction, the following days running order was derived from the times set on the first day they became more accepted.

After the first days eight stages the results were:-

1st Kankkunen (Toyota) 27minutes 07 seconds

2nd Alen (Lancia) 27m 34s

3rd Waldegard (Toyota) 27m 50s

4th Ericsson (Lancia) 27m 51s

5th Salonen (Mazda) 28m 31s

6th Schwarz (Audi 200) 28m 32s

7th Mikkola (Mazda) 28m 51s

8th Arikkala (Lancia) 28m 54s

Day two and the “real” rally starts, consisting of thirteen stages (SS9 to SS21) through the snow covered forest tracks of Wales and a total of 95 stage miles spread over 13 stages. One of Alen’s favourite sayings was “maximum attack” and he certainly did. He was the fastest on nine stages, second fastest on three and third fastest on one. He left the others in no doubt of his intentions, giving himself a three and a half minute lead over Waldegard and over four minutes ahead of Salanon, Mikkola and Airikkala by the end of the day. On the second stage of the day Kankkunen had suffered a puncture losing one minute of time

and, more importantly, giving Alen the lead which he kept all day. The positions were now:-

1st Alen 2h10m 10s

2nd Waldegard +3.30

3rd Salanon +4.01

4th Mikkola +4.06

5th Airikkala +4.25

6th Kankkunen + 6.02

### Retirements

Sebastian Lindholm (Audi Quattro) – accident (SS10)

Russell Brooks (Ford Sierra RS Cosworth) – accident (SS12) Hafren

Mikael Ericsson (Lancia Delta Integrale) – accident (SS14) Dovey main

Gwyndaf Evans (Ford Sierra RS Cosworth) – accident (SS15) Dovey Gartheiniog

Colin McRae (Peugeot 205) – engine mounting (SS17) Penmachno north

### Problems

Kankkunen suffered a transmission oil leak. (SS20) Clocaenog 3

Day three. The competitors left Harrogate early for a snow covered Lake District (SS22 to SS31) followed by Kershope and Kielder, one of Alen’s least favourite parts of the world – 93miles spread over 10 stages, the first being Grizedale West and 17 miles of tricky twists and turns through the Lakeland fells. On that day’s ten stages, Alen was first on just two and third on three, ending the day in third place and 15 seconds behind the joint leaders Kankkunen and Mikkola.

1st Kankkunen & Mikkola 4h09m02s

3rd Alen 4h09m17s

4th Waldegard 4h11m06s

5th Salonen 4h14m34s

**6th Airikkala 4h15 30s**

### **Retirements**

Louise Aitken-Walker (Peugeot 205) – accident SS27 Kershope

David Llewellyn (Ford Sierra RS Cosworth) – accident SS29 Kielder Whitehill

### **Problems**

Waldegard – puncture (SS22) Grizedale west

Airikkala – puncture, changed wheel on stage (SS22) Grizedale west

Alen – lost third gear (SS28) Kielder Broomilynn (lost 1m16s to Kankkunen)

Alen – spin and puncture (SS29) Kielder Whitehill (lost 1m19s)

Alen – broken transmission & FWD only (SS30) Kielder Pundershaw

Alen – new gearbox fitted between stages (mechanics took 20 mins)

Day four, another early start, (6AM) with the competitors heading north into Scotland and 75 miles of forest tracks that were mostly covered in snow and ice. Alen only had a 15 second deficit on the leaders so he was in a good position to put on a charge. On the first stage, Twiglees, he dropped twelve seconds to Mikkola but on the next three stages managed to not only overhaul Mikkola but give himself an 18 second lead. However, disaster was about to strike. On SS36, Elibank, a deceptively long 90 degree right hand bend caught most drivers

out. Although the road was very wide and the downhill bend was not tight, most cars had “a moment”. About fifty percent managed a complete 360 degree spin without any damage but Alen put his car off the road, on the outside of the track and down a forty five degree slope, boot first. About 25 of us, yes that includes Andy Robinson and myself, pushed, shoved and heaved until it was back on the track. Two toots on the horn was the usual thank you but it had taken the muscle of twenty five young lads and the power of the Lancia about five minutes to rescue the car. Later, Alen said ‘That’s the nice thing about Britain’s spectators’. Without them, Alen later said ‘he would have been off the road for good’. When a car leaves the track there is always a big jeer then everybody does his best to get the stricken car back in the rally. Before Elibank, SS36, Alen had held an 18 second lead over Mikkola but, after his little adventure, he was now down in fifth position, 5m13s behind Mikkola, the fastest on the stage. Even after four more stages, the gap between Alen and Kankkunen, who had taken the lead, was still 4m 25s. On the last two stages of the day Alen took 27s from Kankkunen and 1m49s from Mikkola. At the start of the last day the leaders were:-

1st Kankkunen 5h44m27s

2nd Mikkola 5h45m33s (+1.06)

3rd Alen 5h47m52s (+3.25)

4th Salonen 5h48m30s (+4.03)

Day five, a 4AM start for the 11 stages in Yorkshire that had to be tackled with a distance of 83 stage miles. The first two stages, Boltby (SS42 – 3.9 miles) and Cropton (SS43 – 8 miles) passed without

incident or major time changes but on the third stage of the day (Gale Rigg – 6.8 miles), Kankkunen, near the end of the stage, went straight on at a sharp left and into a tree, damaging his oil cooler. Although he managed to get his car out of the stage, his rally was over. The positions were now:-

1st Mikkola 6h06m17s

2nd Alen 6h08m01s (+1m44s)

3rd Salonen 6h10m09s (+3m52s).

What followed was the longest stage of the rally, Dalby 1 (18.2 miles). Fastest was Pentti Airikkala, although lying sixth overall. Alen cut Mikkola's lead by only six seconds. Was time running out for Alen or was there still enough stage miles for him to take the lead? Seven stages and 45.75 miles. Even if Alen took two seconds a mile from Mikkola's lead it wouldn't be enough.

The next stage was Wykeham 1 (SS46). It was only 2.5 miles long but Alen took another 5 seconds from Mikkola's lead. In top class rallying, if you

are going 1 second a mile faster than the other person then you are flying. On this stage Alen was 2 seconds a mile faster than Mikkola. Did the time that Alen posted on this short stage force Mikkola into a mistake? We will never know but the next stage was decisive; Langdale (SS47) and 5.25 miles long. Mikkola made a rare mistake and slid off the road, his car was stuck, his rally was over. Alen was now leading, his nearest competitor was Salonen, 3m12s behind him. With five stages still to run Alen slowed his pace and drove for a finish, thus winning the one rally he had wanted for over 15 years. The final positions were:-

1st Markku Alen – Lancia Delta Integrale (7h15m37s – Stage average 60 MPH)

2nd Timo Salonen – Mazda 323 (7h19m43s +4.06)

3rd Bjorn Waldergard – Toyota Celica GT-4 (7h22m16s +6.39)

4th Pentti Airikkala – Lancia Delta Integrale (7h25m06s +9.29)







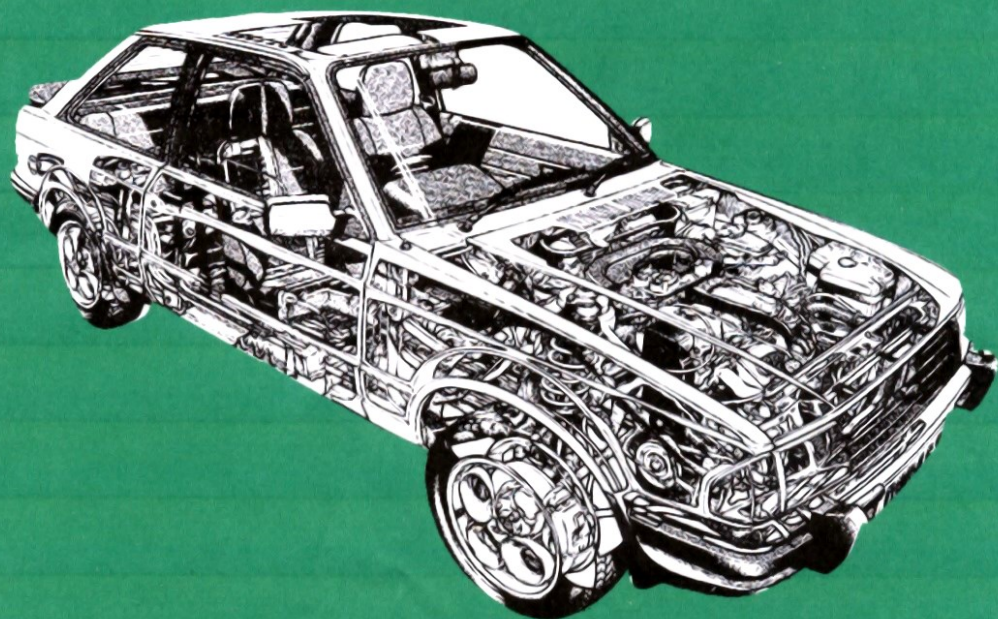


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# AFRICAR

## (nearly) a Car for Africa

Several weeks ago, Graham Knowles sent me a small article about a very rare 1980s car called the Africar – it got me thinking and sifting through that part of my remaining grey matter that seems to serve little other purpose than be a repository for car related “knowledge” and trivia.

The idea and concept for the Africar came from a (sometime) journalist and photographer called Tony Howarth. This Englishman had spent the 1970s, taking pictures, in Africa and had got to know that continent well. He couldn't understand why the major motor manufacturers sold cars to Africans that were clearly not designed and were therefore unsuitable for the rough conditions that Africa's “roads” presented. Perhaps he'd been too busy fiddling with his lens cap to notice such “African Greats” as the Toyota Land Cruiser, Peugeot 504 and Mercedes Benz W123.

Back in Blighty, Howarth came up with a concept for a car that would be specifically designed for the unmetalled roads of Africa, one that could be built from local materials (a wooden chassis and body), use local labour and as few imported parts (eg engines, gearboxes & suspension) as possible. He called the car “Africar” and, in 1985, constructed three of them, an estate car, a 6-wheel pickup and a 4-wheel pickup, to be driven to the Arctic Circle and thence on to the equator; a 4/5mth journey that was filmed as a Channel 4 documentary for transmission in May 1987.

On the back of all of this publicity, Howarth had set up shop in a factory unit in, of all places, Lancaster. He called the company Africar International Ltd (AIL) and set about, from September 1986, building the Africar's wooden chassis and bodies that would be mounted with Citroen GS engines, 2CV gearboxes and good old British Leyland's “Hydrolastic” suspension.

Unfortunately, for both Howarth and his customers, things didn't work out at all well. Delivery dates kept slipping back and, it is said, that at a 1987 Christmas party at the factory, an Africar was put on show without an engine, with wet paint, the doors locked shut and behind ropes so as to deny access – a classic case of “you can look but can't touch”. AIL eventually ceased operations during mid-1988 with, reportedly, only one Africar being delivered to a customer – allegedly turning up at the factory and driving a car away without asking! Howarth, at the time of trading cessation, was in the USA trying to drum up financial support. There he remained until late 1994 when, upon his return to the UK, he was arrested, charged and put in jail.

I don't think that anyone really knows just how many Africars were actually built but I am aware of two of them. One, an estate car, is housed at the National Motor Museum (Beaulieu) and the second, a very early 4-wheel pickup, is at the Lakeland Motor Museum nr Ulverston.

# **This & That, Bits & Bobs and a few Odds & Sods**

## **Vehicle Crime Takes Plod Some Time**

I was reading a motor related BBC headline recently, it made me smile and to wonder (just a little bit) about the effectiveness of the “thin blue line” and the Met’ Police in particular.

Back in April 1995 (29 years ago mind) Gerhard Berger, the ex-F1 GP driver who was then driving for Ferrari, had not one but two Ferraris stolen from his London address whilst he was away at the San Marino Grand Prix. One of these cars was a rare Ferrari F512M in, of course, red. One can only assume that, upon his return from the GP at Imola and finding his garage surprisingly sans two Ferraris, Mr Berger would have, as a matter of urgency, made contact with the Met’s finest to report the crime and to get the Police on the trail of both the cars and the crooks. One can almost picture the scene, PCs Stonkers & Crutch rocking up in a basic Vauxhall Astra Patrol Car (with a vague but lingering smell of kebabs and doughnuts) to follow up on the reported crime – ‘so it’s two Ferraris that you’ve lost then is it mate?’, ‘they’ll have been nicked to order they will; they’ll be half way to one of the Arab States by now’, ‘bit of bad luck that, were they company cars?’, ‘I’ll give you a crime number for your insurance and we’ll give you a bell with any info as and when’ ..... ‘Oh, by the way, can I have your auto-

graph?’ ‘Berger, unusual name that. I like mine with fries.’

Anyway and after nearly 29years, a Ferrari Service Dept. was handed a Ferrari and was asked to do some checks on it following its purchase by a buyer in the USA. Suspicions were raised and the force was alerted to it. It turned out to be the missing/stolen F512M that now has an estimated value of £350,000 or more. Further investigation by the force’s organised vehicle crime unit and the National Crime Agency, established that the car, following its theft, had been shipped to Japan before being brought back to the UK in late 2023. However, there is still no trace of Mr Berger’s second, stolen Ferrari so that one remains “missing”.

Officers said that they had worked with Ferrari and with international car dealerships in a “painstaking” investigation. “The stolen Ferrari – close to the value of £350,000 – was missing for more than 28years before we managed to track it down in just four days.” Erm, hold on a minute. You, the Police, only “tracked” the car down after an observant Ferrari mechanic dragged you to it, the second car is still “missing” (you haven’t got a Scooby as to where it might be), you haven’t made any arrests and all of this has taken nearly 29years. So much for a “painstaking” investigation and accurate crime statistics.

## **Highway Code – Rule 264**

I was just about to throw some old magazines into the blue bin when I noticed a “Reader’s Letter” piece in the Spring 2023 edition of RoadSmart (the Institute of Advanced Motorists magazine). It had



been written by a retired police officer with 30+ years service, 28 as an advanced police driver and motorcyclist. It was, I think, very interesting so I'll just quote what was stated: -

"The standard of motorway driving has deteriorated massively over the years, however, one of the biggest issues is lane discipline. Many drivers ignore Rule 264, thinking 'If I stay in lane two, three or four, I won't have to keep weaving in and out.' If you are travelling at 70mph and passing slower vehicles with continuing momentum, with no vehicles directly behind you, then there is an argument to stay in lane two or three, but when there is clear distance between slower vehicles drivers must return to lane one."

"Vehicles often travel in lanes two, three or four with no one on their nearside. This is an offence: if there are other vehi-

cles behind you, and even if the motorway is empty, you should travel in lane one for safety reasons."

"One last word – The Highway Code is not law but it is used to prove an offence, along with other evidence."

**..... and now for something completely different .....**

It is reported that a Japanese project to build an electric (EV) "micro city car" out of paper has failed. Following a lack of foresighted investment, other financial difficulties and very heavy rain, the Origami Company of Japan has simply folded. Liquidators are hoping to sell off the main assets as kits for the creation of paper swans, frogs and the like.

Well, it creased me up anyway!!!

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Sir,

Over the course of the last 12-18 months and whilst avidly reading your otherwise excellent magazine, I keep coming across the use of the rather vague comment(s) that our club is in need of some "new blood" or perhaps "young blood". Am I alone, amongst your readers, in feeling ill-informed about what the terms "new" and "young blood" actually mean and, even more so, about how exactly our club initiates a process whereby we can actually receive this shot of fresh lifeblood?

In the absence of an explanation, I presume that it is felt, in certain quarters perhaps, that the Hare & Hounds CVC should be looking to recruit more youthful members to its ranks and thereby inject some new thinking and fresh ideas about what the Club does and how it goes about it. That is all very well and good but do we have any sufficiently youthful thinking members, or Committee members, that have the slightest idea as to what activities etc our Club might need to adopt to attract this, so called, new/young blood to our fold? As a self-confessed wrinkly and balding old giffer, I do get a certain comfort and pleasure from the camaraderie of a "natter and noggin" night or sitting with my similarly aged peers for seven hours, in an open field, surrounded by 1950s, 60s and 70s vehicles and being sustained by stewed tea and corned beef sandwiches. At my age, there are still wonderful golden memories of these machines during my youth and what I and my friends used to do with them and, indeed, in them during our salad days. However and whilst I wouldn't even consider myself remotely "down amongst the youth", I do appreciate that younger adults, if that is what we mean by new/young blood, almost certainly haven't got the slightest interest in any of that. A "natter and noggin" is probably considered to be more an old folks home activity than a good night out. I would expect that most young adults (let us say the 30 or 40 some-things) just can't afford to run or maintain an "old" car and probably have little real interest in them anyway. The more affluent ("young professionals") of this age group also seem disinclined to take much interest in cars and have even, it would appear, turned their collective backs on such Darby & Joan pastimes as playing golf (although, admittedly, that makes perfect sense to me) and would rather spend their valuable spare time fully dressed in Lycra, a "go-faster" helmet and obligatory "shades" whilst pounding away, in all weathers, on the peddles of a £3000 bicycle so that they can get in the way of car drivers and boastfully outdo their similarly minded colleagues about the mileages they've covered between those arduous Zoom meetings. I believe that they are known as "MAMILs".

So, where does the H&HCVC (and classic car clubs in general) go to if we are to attract some much needed younger members that, given the circle of life, we will need for the Club's longevity? Well, almost cer-

tainly not from the age demographic of, say, late teens to late twenties. These people may well be our grandchildren but, it seems to me at least, that they are "influenced" by shallow, two-dimensional nobodies that want to be somebodies and that call themselves "influencers". Life is lived on and dictated by "social media" and with, seemingly, nothing being posted on said social media without causing offence, outrage, anger or demands for abject apologies from half-baked keyboard warriors for whom time spent away from their mother's back bedroom, in the real world, wouldn't do any harm. Personally, I can't even begin to comprehend any of this nonsense as, apart from anything else, I find the use of, what is now, "old school" emails a very trying experience. After a recent internet search on "Russian Dolls" (the wooden type that fit inside each other not comely young ladies from Russia) I received what must have been a "spam" e-mail (I'm not actually sure what the difference is between "spam" and "junk" emails) asking me if I wanted to "get it on" with "a hot Eastern European chick". However, given my advancing years, blood pressure problems, high cholesterol and bad back I decided that, this time, discretion would have to be the better part of valour and declined the otherwise tempting offer.

After considering this particular conundrum, I feel that the best way forward for our club is to target new recruits from the forty/fifty something age group. People that perhaps have some disposable money and favour vehicles from the late 1980's, the 90's and the "noughties"; the age of vehicles that they grew up with and perhaps, couldn't afford at the time. I might add that I don't know of a sure-fire way of tempting or recruiting such people but perhaps others in our club can come up with something. One thing is for sure though, if we do manage to net some "new" and/or "young blood" then us old wrinkles and crumblies need to be welcoming and to take a genuine interest in what are now being termed "modern classics". There are some fabulous "moderns", at bottom-book prices, that are just begging to be cared for - I give you the Ford Mondeo ST220, BMW 3-Series Coupes, Jaguar X-Types or the MG/Rover Z Range of cars as examples. Basically, all classic car clubs (not just the H&HCVC) need to stop examining the fluff in their own collective navels and become much more inclusive towards the "classics" of the future and their owners - adapt or die. It really isn't naughty to own a "noughties" - I only wish that I was of an age that I could be naughty in a "noughties"!

I remain etc, etc .....

**Bernard Rassbottom Esq** (address supplied)

**The views and thoughts expressed in this letter are solely those of the correspondent – Ed**



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