

trident



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Editorial Jottings

by Geoff Lancaster



Apologies

By rights over the festive season just passed I should have been eating Humble not Christmas Pie! In the last issue through an editorial oversight I omitted to credit the excellent cover shot of Nick Mason chauffeuring Barry Wayne up the Goodwood Hill. The shot was of course provided by Peter Collins, a photographer whose generosity to the club we have enjoyed for many years. Sorry, Peter.

Committee Squabbles

No we haven't descended to the depths of Hello Magazine in trident, this is merely a tale of friendly dispute amongst two members over the true definition of a 'squab'. Yours truly referred to the part of a GranTurismo seat on which you place your posterior as such in our recent Wales road test. Chairman Harris claims on the other hand (or should that be cheek?) that the squab is the part against which you rest your back. Anyone out there want to join in?

New Year's Honours

The elevation of our good friend Vera Cooper to Honorary Life Member is well deserved and possibly overdue. The committee is sparing in dishing out such favours but in Vera's case it was unanimous that her service over many years warranted proper recognition. Most members will know that the annual 'Vera's Lunch' traditionally kicks off the Maseratisti's social season. Indeed this not to be missed social occasion has become, as they say, a legend in its own lunchtime! What members may not appreciate however is that Vera hosts our

bi-monthly committee meetings as well. Not only does she invite a dozen or so of us to use her home for our meetings but she feeds us all as well!

Maserati Appoints New Man

Starting on January 1, 2010, Thomas Hajek, Managing Director Maserati GB Ltd took up the responsibility for Maserati in Great Britain. He will also oversee France, Monaco, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, Austria, Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg.

Hajek (49) started his international career in the Fiat Group in 1988. In several executive positions he has led sales and marketing activities for Alfa Romeo, Lancia and Fiat in Germany and Poland. From 2008 onwards he was responsible for the European commercial vehicles operations of the Fiat Group Automobiles SpA in Turin. Thomas Hajek, a native German, is married and has three children. He speaks fluent Italian, English, Spanish, French and Polish. Trident wishes him every success in his new role and looks forward to a long and happy relationship with the club.



Above: Thomas Hajek



New Year, new look

The observant amongst you will have noticed some subtle changes to the design of this issue of Trident. Some explanation is required. The biggest change is of course that we have been able to go full colour. This has been possible at no extra cost through the wonders of the latest digital printing techniques and I hope you agree refreshes our magazine. Meanwhile in the Editorial garage there has been something of a New Year makeover going on as well. Signor Gandini in the shape of my beloved Quattroporte IV has stepped aside for the young upstart, Signor Guigiaro this time in the shape of a 4200 Spyder. Now all I need is some sunshine! It might be a long wait.

2010 and all that

2009 was always going to be a hard act to follow especially as in our International hosting year our chaps put on such a splendid show.

Nevertheless the opportunities this year to indulge one's fancy for things automotive and in particular, Maserati, are copious to say the least. The lucky few will be off to France on another Bennett extravaganza shortly and no doubt Trident will be reporting in full in the next issue. Some of our number did a recce this year to Angouleme and the word is they are assembling volunteers for another raid this year. Check out the report in this issue. It may inspire you to put your name forward with Brian Harris. The Silver Flag hill climb always attracts a goodly selection of Masers and how about the prospect of the Trofeo GranTurismo hammering around Brands Hatch in April. This could be your taster for an assault on the Le Mans 24 heures which this year will feature the MC12's! The list goes on with both Wales and Scotland featuring on the Rally agenda. A fitting close to a busy year would be a visit to Sweden for their International Meeting. Happy New Year motoring to all! 🏁

Below: The victorious MC12's



Giallo - Giallo Cars Limited

by *Brian Harris*

Occasional series on Independent Maserati specialists

As you drive down London Road into Hildenborough it can be a little difficult to spot the unique Giallo sign on the right hand side of the road. Usually you will see first the array of Maserati 4200's in the display of cars at ADG. This is a happy convenient arrangement which suits both Giallo and ADG.

Matthew Sage has been running his Giallo service centre for Maserati cars for five years now. He worked with a Ferrari independent specialist for almost seven years until they decided to forgo servicing Maserati. Seizing the opportunity Matthew set out on his own with a four bay unit in Hildenborough servicing especially 3200GT. These were beginning to fall from favour with the main dealers who preferred to concentrate on the current models and associated sales. ADG had sensed a similar market opportunity for sales and asked Giallo to move onto a shared site. Giallo also provides the preparation and service support to ADG and both have moved on embrace the 4200 range. It is a complimentary arrangement.

The service centre has three full time service specialists – Sean White, Chris Baxter and

Matthew himself. They have the backing of Maserati GB courses for the 3200GT onwards including full engine rebuild. Also Sean is the master diagnostic technician and at the time of writing an SD3 diagnostic unit was on the way. The combination of training, equipment and experience enables them to look after the QP4 Evoluzione, 3200 GT and 4200 series. Work is guaranteed for 12 months or 12000 miles. Electrical work is handled in house. No bodywork is undertaken directly although minor to major repairs can be placed under Giallo supervision. And they do have a competitive source for supply and fitting of tyres. Wheel alignment is, however, outsourced at £130 + VAT.

As the Maserati range develops and moves on there is a need for independent specialists to support the previous models. This is vital to keep the second-hand market fluid and affordable. Giallo has good relationships with main dealers and with Maserati GB who they find friendly and helpful particularly with keeping them up to date.



Above: Giallo and ADG have a symbiotic relationship

Photo: Geoff Lancaster

Below: Giallo Principal, Matthew Sage, gets a grilling from the Chairman

Photo: Geoff Lancaster



The workshop has three car lifts plus a further bay. Air conditioning is also serviced in house meeting DEFRA requirements. Many 3200 V8 engines have been rebuilt and some local solutions found for such as crankshaft end-float and throttle re-conditioning. 4200 engine rebuilds are now being undertaken. The team has recently been to Maserati GB for servicing courses on the QPV. The plan is to include it in their service offering for 2010.

Matthew looks to provide a cost effective reliable service in a market which is becoming

increasingly price sensitive as the purchase value of the earlier cars is reducing. He is keen to promote the Club and does sponsor events. Giallo will give a 10% discount to current Club members. 🏆

GIALLO

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Matthew Sage principal;

Sharon Humphries reception;

Louise Sage accounts

For obvious reasons the Club is unable to recommend or show favour to any dealer or specialist and these articles have the purpose to inform Club members.

Below: Brian Harris puts Alistair Grist of ADG through the mill.

Photo: Geoff Lancaster



Biturbo comes good at last

by Reg Palmer



Some said it could never be done with the most unlikely competition car.

In 1972 I started competing in sprints, hill climbs, auto tests, trials and then from 1974 circuit racing right up to 1996.

Along the way I got to race and in some cases prepare some wonderful and well known cars, including:-

- Jaguar XK120 Roadster (Sprint car).
- Jaguar Mk 1 and 2 (including the Albert Betts Mk 1 two tone green UXF 363 that races and wins at Goodwood and has been driven in recent times by Justin Law/ Anthony Reid/ Bobby Rahal).
- Ford Mustang.
- Ford Zephyr and Zodiac (as driven by Tony Dron and once owned by my great pal, the late Tom Luff).

Looking back I've had a fabulous time in club motorsport, many outright race wins and 3 championships on the way.

And then, having vowed not to compete again, a Maserati 420i came into my ownership around 9 years ago. It could not have had a better provenance as it was the personal property of Paul Molyneux, the acknowledged expert at Bill McGrath Limited. Paul had fitted a 2.8 litre 3 valve engine and some up rated suspension parts - a quick and sorted car indeed.

It was too good in some ways for me as I like tinkering, so I also acquired a 2.5 Biturbo Coupe from Bill McGrath, which was initially purchased as a source of spares. However, it was too good to break and was re-commissioned. Conveniently it

had an MIE handling kit and on one fateful day at a Castle Combe Classic Action Day two pals persuaded me to go on track and see with them on board how it went.

There were snags, no limited slip differential, a brake pedal that went to the carpet after 3 or 4 laps but it was quick, albeit tricky. This prompted me to apply for another MSA race licence and go off sprinting at Castle Combe, Colerne and best of all at Goodwood on the full circuit. To run in the "unmodified" road car class you only need to fit a timing blade, an oil catch tank if you don't have closed circuit breathing and have a current MOT, tax disc and road insurance.

Having said that there have often been 400/600 hp Imprezas, Mitsubishi Evos, Porsche 911s, BMW M3s and the like in the same class.

Over the next 5 seasons this old coupe got faster and faster, starting out at Goodwood with a standing lap in 117 secs and finally 105 secs. The car got bigger wheels, road legal track day tyres, the driver got back in the groove, especially at Castle Combe where I used to be an instructor and then Goodwood after a session as a passenger on a Maserati Club track day in a Ferrari 575 driven by a gentleman who was taught the circuit by his pal, none other than Peter Gethin.

So, frequently accompanied by Roger Harrison, Pat Butt (local respected engineer/coachworks man) the car got into contention with a couple of third in class results and nearly within range of the class winning 911 (not mentioning the time the car spun backwards into the Castle Combe timing gear, completely demolishing it!)

By this time the dear old coupe needed serious body repair, it was a car we had lightened removing heavy stuff like the air con, but it had been lightening itself in a form of brown powder swept up off the garage floor. Time to stop!

But then no, why not transfer all the performance bits to the 420, which after all had the far better engine?

And then I entered it for the ACOC Goodwood Sprint 2007, on a beautiful sunny day as it turned out. The car felt good on the convoy lap and then onto the start line for practice lap 1. This lasted for about a cars length. As I let the clutch in there was an awful bang from the transmission, the gear box had broken, event over. Actually the same part broke on the Giordanelli Biturbo at Brands Hatch all those years ago. The first reverse synchro hub had exploded. What made it worse was the fact that the car would have put on a good show.

Back in Somerset Pat Butt and I set about removing the box and Pat was able to repair it. Over the next few months we did lots of fine adjustments to the suspension geometry and got the 420i into the best shape it had ever been in.

So one year on and back to Goodwood on a very cold and windy (but dry) Saturday. The real opposition was a previous championship winning Morgan Plus 8 and Bill Shepherd's 430 BHP supercharged 2005 Mustang. Third in class looked likely, the Mustang destined to win by miles. I am running the Kumho tyres for the dry and the car is going brilliantly, but third after the qualifying runs; the Mustang out of sight in P1.

Around midday lashings of rain set in for the rest of the day so it was back to road tyres; an excellent set of Toyo Proxes Directionals.

The first timed run on a waterlogged track sees the Biturbo ahead of the Morgan and Bill early shifting to third, calls on all of the experience, spins up again; fourth and we're at Madgewick. It's on the edge but still on the tarmac, into fifth and the scary Fordwater looms blind entry, very fast (flat in dry at 120 mph). Approach No Name corner, way way faster than it looks on approach, fly through that and just about slow down enough for St Mary's. Opposite lock through there, straighten it up for an accurate turn-in for Lavant in third. I get a terrific drive out of here onto the Lavant Straight; it's spinning up even here in fourth and fifth gears on standing water. Woodcote is exciting with the tail hanging slightly, I tell myself this is going to be about the best lap I've done here, so keep it tidy at the Chicane and don't foul up at the final gearshift on the way to the line.

Back in the paddock Roger Harrison and I go straight to the timekeepers – yes it's P1, with the Mustang still to do its final lap.

We wait ages for this and watch from on top of the pit garages as Bill sets off. Biturbo is assured of second place already; surely the American car will win.

Roger is timing it and as the lap finishes he says he thinks we have won. I say I can't believe it. Roger is amused to see me running in a panic to the timekeepers. But there it is no question, a victory for the Biturbo and by a clear margin.



Above: The Biturbo Coupé pressing on

Photo: Dpiphotos

Below: Reg Palmer fettling the Coupé



I am overjoyed. It may only have been a one lap sprint but somehow it felt as good as the win at Silverstone in my Mustang back in 1989.

I win my wager with a pal who said it could not be done especially before I got my bus pass in 2 months time.

Oh yes, it did break down the next day, but it didn't matter.

When it really counted the Maserati came good and I believe it may be the only recorded track victory for a Biturbo.

Organisers have welcomed both the cars, one featuring as a cover photo and the other in their club calendar.

My sincere thanks to Pat Butt, David Askew, Roger Harrison, Andy Heywood and Paul Molyneux for all their help along the way. 🏁

Below: The ex-Paul Molyneux 420i



PAZZO di MASERATI

by Stephen Rogers

Discovering Maserati rather late in life, the conversion (from Porsche) came fittingly perhaps on the M25. I confess to my ignorance of the marque other than that boyhood recall of Fangio and his successes and vaguely of Stirling Moss's link with Maserati, but beyond that no further knowledge.

The Damascene conversion came in 2001, just west of Heathrow when, in the quiet mid – morning on the way to my office in Twickenham I heard a sound reminiscent of a low flying Canberra bomber on runway approach. Knowing a little about flight control in this area, I was totally puzzled until I realised that the noise was on my right ear from the middle lane. Winding the window down I saw a 3200 GT resplendent in blu nettuno cruising past with twin turbos singing in that unique Italian way.

I thought the Guigaro design was exquisite, took a 360 degree view and became afflicted. I decided then and there that one day I would buy a 3200, recant from Teutonic product and convert to Maserati. It took three years to find my 3200 GTA and success came in 2004 when I was able to find a low mileage example, which I bought within three hours.

The owner was sad to part with the car but under orders from his other half as it did not accommodate the carrycot and buggy. I agreed with her that it was not the car for a new family and took off smartly for home.

In a slightly confidential way, he told me that its

first owner had been a 'celebrity' called Johnny Vaughan. As I was none the wiser, I phoned a friend who told me he is a DJ on the radio. Months later he rang in excitement to say that he seen in a magazine an article Johnny Vaughan had written about his first Maserati. It told of a mishap caused by his bulldog, Winston. Johnny was preparing to go out and was loading the car. The dog had jumped into the car which was running, knocked the gearshift on the way and then stood on the accelerator. The car then tried to exit the garage but the wrong way, causing a little front end damage. However, the insurance company declined to pay out on the basis that Winston was not a named driver. I suspect the story may have blamed Winston rather than the real culprit!

The car has been responsible for a number of things. It a true GranTurismo which gave me a resurgent interest in driving, especially long distances on the continent. So far it has been to Spain, Portugal, France, Benelux and Germany. It has been to Italy twice, including a visit to the factory in Modena to see how they are made - a must for all members.

The car has the power to excite the interest of fellow motorists, passers by and the police. We were pulled into a roadblock in Portugal and once the Politi had taken a good look at the car, we were waved on with the very hint of a smile. In Granada, a student spotted us at a traffic light and treated us to a mime of idolatry, extreme thirst, ending with a standing somersault. It is not the

sort of behaviour that owners of any other fast car would ever receive and marks out the Maserati for its design, individuality and sheer class.

I have since learned more about Maseratis, the history of the company and how each model over the years has always carried the Maserati forward in design and technology.

It is a 'boys toys' affliction which does not go away and is getting more pronounced.

I have also noticed the affliction in other owners who may not realise its hold on them. I recently had to go to the Doctors and noticed a black 4200

in the car park. I saw in the waiting room a grey and pensive man who was clearly the owner and engaged him in conversation about the car. There was an immediate and total change with a smile and lightening in him which indicates that Maserati is not only good to drive but also good for health and that 'feel good' factor.

La bella macchina is so typically Italian - beautiful, demanding and high maintenance, so it must be feminine! If there is a message, it is do not fight this peculiar form of madness, but enjoy the experience as it can only do you good. 🏠

Below: The author and Susie at this year's Vera's Lunch

Photo: Geoff Lancaster





The Car That Saved Maserati

by *Wallace Alfred Wyss*

In the late 1970s, Alejandro de Tomaso came to America to find out what kind of car Americans want. He had been building the Pantera since 1971 (continuing even after 1974 when Ford ceased importing it to the U.S.) and bought Maserati yet he wasn't sure what kind of car Americans really desired.

It was by happenstance he dropped by Dick Guldstrand's shop and Guldstrand invited me over to talk to Alejandro about what I thought he needed to build. I mentioned the BMW 2002 to the Italian car builder and told him what a great car it was in its time. He left and not long after I heard about the Maserati Biturbo.

De Tomaso had bought Maserati from Citroen in 1975. That marriage—Citroen and Maserati—had been a disaster, and de Tomaso was only too glad to pick up the pieces when the French decamped. It is said that he bought it for the price of one Maserati mag wheel, using government money since the Italian government wanted to see employees continuing to be employed.

By 1978, de Tomaso had running prototypes of his new small car. The production model of the Maserati Biturbo was introduced in 1981 as a two-door, four-seater notchback coupé featuring a two litre V-6 engine with twin turbochargers and a luxurious interior. The design was attributed to Pierangelo Andreani, an engineer from the de Tomaso team, and basically imitates the Quattroporte III, a much larger car done by Giugiaro at Ital Design.

Export versions came initially with a 2.5 litre V6, but after 1989 the engine was enlarged to 2.8 litres. In Italy, because of a huge tax on cars over two litres, a two litre high-performance version was offered. The engine was a little jewel—aluminium block, aluminium heads, a 90-degree

single cam per bank descended from the Maserati Merak two litre engine, which some say goes back to a Formula 1 engine designed by Giulio Alfieri, the legendary engine designer. The carburetted 2.5 litre V6 cranked out 185 hp and 208 lb ft of torque in North American spec and slightly more elsewhere. Fuel injection was fitted in 1987 raising power to 187 bhp. In 1989 the 2.8 engine took a big leap to 225 bhp and 246 lb ft of torque for North America and to 250 bhp for Europe.

Even in its first form the car was fast, doing 0 to 60 mph in under 7 seconds. Its top speed was limited only by its tall shape to around 125 mph.

The car was introduced to America as a 1984 model by British Motor Car Distributors.

Although they had adequate parts and service, the car had more than a few problems.

Before these became widely known they brought out a Spyder version with coachwork by Carrozzeria Zagato, which had a beautiful interior, with lots of wood veneer stretching from one end of the dash to the other and a Lassalle clock, by far the most reliable mechanical device on the car. (boo! Ed)

I remember one owner of my acquaintance, Filippo Pola, who was at first enthusiastic about his Spyder, but it seemed like every time he went out in the car it broke down. The town's tow truck driver, seeing him coming, would follow, waiting to be summoned. Finally Pola, furious at the unreliable fuel pump, called de Tomaso in person and told him to spend a couple more bucks and buy a fuel pump that worked. De Tomaso was, as per his style, resistant to outside suggestions. Other problems cited in road tests include improper carburettor float levels causing the engine to stumble during left turns, pick-up

wires in the distributors cracking from the heat, fluids leaking from faulty seals throughout the drivetrain, fuse boxes melting, and coolant temperature warning lights coming on even when the engine wasn't yet over-heating. Add clutches and timing-belt tensioners to the long list of bits that needed redesign early on. Road and Track magazine tried to mollify the critics, saying in 1990: "It's amazing a small company like Maserati with no experience in volume production fared as well as it did with the Biturbo. In fact, while the Biturbo's failings were always annoying, they were usually not serious. And nearly all the car's bugs were eventually worked out with upgraded parts. ... Most notable of all, our experts wholeheartedly agree that the basic Biturbo engine — the block, pistons, etc. — is virtually indestructible." Maybe R&T didn't want to lose the ad money. The Biturbo could be a blast to drive but it was unpredictable. Despite the use of two small turbos to combat turbo lag, it lagged anyway, and then when the turbos would finally kick in, it would be so violent that, at the same time that you were thrilled by the kick in the rear, you couldn't help wondering when a piston would exit the block.

The Biturbo problems so soured Maserati sales that the company departed from the US. after the 1991 model year, only to return in 2002 with new owners in Italy and the new Coupe and Spyder, at last reliable cars.

Roughly 40,000 Biturbos were sold worldwide. Some were even prepared for races, in venues like the British Touring Car Championship, but they were unsuccessful and received no factory help.

Always happiest creating new models, de Tomaso was a sort of Wizard of Oz behind the curtain

creating dazzling products. He was not so interested in the tedious refinement of products once they were out in the field. And America is admittedly a daunting place to sell (or warrant) cars. Consider that a single car might go from the 40-below of Minnesota in winter to the 122 in the shade of Twenty Nine Palms in the summer.

In the last few years of the Biturbo variations, de Tomaso seemed to go into hyper-gear, creating half a dozen variations, some of which looked far different than the original car, and whose specifications were mouth watering, even if you suspected not all the mechanical problems had been licked. Among the follow-up models were the four-door 420/425 and 4.24v, the Karif, the 228 and 2.24v, the Maserati Racing and the later Shamal and Ghibli II.

One can see by the name Ghibli that de Tomaso was not above reactivating a name from Maserati's past to hype a new model that didn't look anything like its famous predecessor. They eventually dropped the Biturbo name, hoping the bad reputation engendered by its mention would die with that name's withdrawal from the U.S. but the Spyder, 228 coupe and 430 saloon were not sufficiently promoted to save Maserati sales in the U.S. It was a sinking ship and the crew was seen running for the lifeboats.

The last models shipped to America were not all made to U.S. spec. and there are reports in Automotive News of dealers here and there having their stock of Maseratis confiscated for non-conformance.

The real irony of the Biturbo was that it is the car that saved Maserati, because it sold in volume whereas none of their previous cars could be considered volume sellers. The Biturbo kept

Maserati alive until a proper rescuer could be identified and secured. The result of de Tomaso's efforts was that Maserati was a much more delectable entity for an investor; being in that a running company with a sales network is more desirable than trying to revive a dead marque's name. When Fiat bought it in 1993 they were able to keep it going until they could roll out all new models bearing the Maserati trident. De Tomaso was right in choosing to make a small car; but his arrogance toward criticism of his cars and failure to act quickly to make them right almost doomed his efforts. Still, Maserati fans worldwide have to thank him for saving their favourite marque. (de Tomaso was a Maserati

enthusiast himself and owned some significant historical Maserati race cars, which were sold after his death).

What impact does this chequered history have on Biturbo values today? Well, unless you are a mechanic, make that an Italian car mechanic, and have lots of parts and experience on this marque, we would recommend against it. None, save the Spyder, are worth much in the U.S. Over in Europe with the more developed models like the Shamal, it might be different. And so it is; a great name had to go through hard times to make it to its present state of vitality... 🏁

Below: Ghibli Cup – the most desirable of the Biturbo line.

Photo: Geoff Lancaster





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1000 Millas Sport Argentina

by Shelby Myers

If you have the time and resources, there are few more tempting ways to spend five November days (springtime in Argentina) than on the South American equivalent of the Mille Miglia retrospective, the 1000 Millas Sport Argentina. Here, we join Shelby Myers and Chris Drake, who were among the 155 participants on the 2009 event. They piloted a Maserati Khamsin across 1000km of stunning Argentinean landscape. This is Shelby Myers' story...

Day One

This is my first trip to Argentina and it has been a very long flight. My English co-driver

Chris Drake drifts in and out of movies and I doze off...

...to be woken by "Ladies and Gentleman, it is now 4:00am and the cabin crew will be passing through the cabin to serve breakfast before our descent into **Buenos Aires**." After landing, we have a meal in the Palermo region and crash early.

Day Two

Chris is up at 6:30am and heads for the first of many **South American** feasts. I join him in time for the taxi with an apple in hand. A two-hour flight takes us south to Bariloche, where the climate is cooler and we head out of the airport to find a red **Ferrari 250 SWB** zooming past. From the airport it is about 45 minutes to Llao Llao Hotel, a beautiful lodge set in a pristine

location among the lakes and snow-capped mountain peaks of Patagonia, Argentina. Our room sits on the corner of the main building, overlooking the beautiful lakes east and west – perfect for watching the sun rise and set.

Our **Khamsin** is car #103, and we are given an enormous number of rally gifts including a GPS navigation system. It is now 9:00pm, although the sun has barely set. We head to the dining hall, a large room with high wooden rafters that seats 400 people or so, where large tables host the feast that is served each night – and we meet **Claudio Scalise**, whose car we are using. The meals feature freshly baked breads, cheeses, smoked salmon delicacies, pastas and – best of all – Argentinean beef, cut thinly and served singed on the outside and beautifully pink inside.



Above: Shelby Myers ready for the off

Photo: Chris Drake

Below: Khamsin set against Patagonian peaks

Photo: Shelby Myers



Day Three

I am woken by the sound of engines outside our window. The clock reads 7:15am... and our starting time is 9:19am. The way it works is this: you are given a starting time and must leave punctually or be docked points/time. You then set a stopwatch to make sure you get to the various checkpoints on time. In between, there are several sets of time trials, again timed exactly and, at the end of three days; the team with the closest time to the recommended is the winner.

After a fast bite to eat and a coffee, **Chris** and I make our way outside and warm up the car. There are 150 other mechanical wonders to admire, the Ferrari 250 SWB topping them in terms of value. However, such cars as the **Ferrari 250 Lusso, 1750 Alfa Romeo 6C, 1750 Zagato, 275 GTB/4, Mercedes 300SL** and a lovely **Alfa Romeo 'Double Bubble'** are also quite stunning. The 1973 **Maserati Khamsin** which we are driving is not as valuable, but is nonetheless iconic for its era. It has a 4.9-litre engine with around 310HP; most of it produced under 4000rpm. This particular car is the only one of its kind in Argentina and it has been there since new. The interior is original and finished in 'lovely' 70s colours of brown and orange.

I am in the driver's seat for the first day and, as we position ourselves in line behind car #102, a white 1970s **Porsche 911**, the rain starts to come down. We pass loads of eager Argentinean spectators, pretty girls and television crews and my biggest worry is that I will stall the car in front of them. As we pass through the start gate at exactly 9:19, the open road lies ahead... until **Chris**, navigating, shouts, "Oh s***, we have our first set of time trials in a couple hundred metres!" Using only the stopwatch on Chris's

watch, we try to count 30 seconds from the car in front but soon realise this lacks accuracy. Luckily, the max penalty points are 100 (and we score 100).

We continue up some steep, winding roads, but not nearly as bumpy as I imagined. I feel the **Khamsin's** torque and I rarely need to shift gears. The roads wrap around a beautiful lake and soon we are perched atop a mountain.

We continue through **Bariloche** and soon find ourselves on open road between two mountain ranges, picking up speed. Hitting various small villages, checkpoints, time trials and petrol stations along the way, we finally make our way to the **Chilean border**. Customs is very relaxed, the officials more interested in taking photos than checking to see if we are smuggling white powder.

As **Chris** and I pull in for a quick pit-stop, there seems to be a banging coming from under the engine bay. We reckon a water pump bearing has worked its way loose and we hope we can limp the car to the lunch stop in **Chile** and back. But after fiddling with the air-conditioning knob, the noise stops and we realise that the AC pump is causing the racket. We cut our lunch stop short and head back on the road, trying to get the white **Porsche** in our sights. Peering through fog, we soon find ourselves chasing car number 98. The rain is hammering down and, just as **Chris's** "Stop, stop, stop and go, go, go" techniques are starting to prove effective, the famous early **Maserati/Lamborghini** electrical gremlin strikes and the car dies quietly, leaving us stranded just yards from the final time trial of the day. The car is towed to the hotel by **Claudio's** support vehicle.



Above: Shelby and Chris posing

Photo: Shelby Myers

Below: Argentinean roads can be treacherous

Photo: Shelby Myers



Day Four

Having watched the rest of the field shoot off for the day, **Chris** and I meet a mechanic who has come up from Bariloche. Our translator tries to explain to the mechanic what is wrong with the car. **Maserati** placed the black box that supplies power from the coil, which controls all of the car's electrics, at the very front of the car on a cross-member just under the grille. The obvious problem is that it sucks up whatever the road can throw at it. "How do you say hair-dryer in Spanish?" we ask the translator. We use one from the hotel to blow-dry the water-soaked electrics. By the time we've refitted everything, it is 11:00am – and we're miles behind the field with no chance of catching up.

Instead, we accept an offer from the gentlemen in the **Mercedes 300SL Roadster** and the **Ferrari Lusso** and dine with them at their private hotel and cottage on a secluded lake in the **Andes**. Since the rain has subsided, the views are incredible.

Day Five

The final day of the rally is the shortest. It starts with a lie-in for most competitors then a lazy day winding to the south and back, covering only 400km or so. Recently armed with stopwatches, **Chris** and I are on a mission. We have all the right ingredients: **Chris**, an experienced UK Formula Junior driver; a freshly prepared car; great weather; and a good sleep. Our only problem is my amateur navigation skills. Reading the driving notes, time trials and overall timing takes quite a bit of focus and practice. The first time trial is a disaster and we easily score 100 penalty points. Each subsequent trial comes with disappointment and I feel sheepish.

This quickly changes as **Chris** engages in a high-speed chase through a long stretch of windy, open roads. Sandwiched between our friendly **Porsche 911** and a speedy little **Triumph TR6**, I put the navigation book down and play the role of photographer and spotter for **Chris**. The chase goes on for an hour or so and when we finally come to our stop, the cars are nicely warm and all the participants have huge grins. Finally, the last time trials section of the rally – a difficult track of nine start/stop points. We slow the approach and, stopwatches in hand, proceed through the line. The first one is seven seconds and I count down aloud. Resetting the stopwatch on the finish/start line, we have 38 seconds to the next line. Tyres squealing and rushing through the end line, I hit the wrong reset button on one of the clocks and things start to go downhill. After a series of "Go, go, go... slow, slow, slow... No! No! No!" sequences we are at the end of our run.

Chris and I head back towards the hotel, filled with grateful thoughts of **Claudio Scalise**, for letting us use his wonderful car, and of **Cristian Bertschi** for making it all happen. We're already looking forward to next year. 🏆

For further information on the Argentinean **1000 Millas Sport** event, visit www.1000millas.com.ar.

*Shelby Myers is a key member of the **RM Auctions** European team. Their next European sale will be at Monaco, on May 1 2010. Maseratis are expected to feature.*



Above: Three wise monkeys..Green, Temple and Harris

Photo: Duncan Mitchell

Below: The track, now, as it was when racing began in 1939

Photo: Duncan Mitchell



Angoulême Circuit des Remparts

by *Duncan Mitchell*

2009 was a good year to try two motoring events which had been on my to do list for a while, firstly when Andy Heywood organised a trip to the Silver Flag Hillclimb in June, and then Brian Harris fixed a trip to the 70th anniversary of the Angoulême Circuit des Remparts in September - many thanks to Andy and to Brian. We went to Angoulême with Grandstand Motor Sports, travelling with a selection of pre- and post-war cars, Astons, Bentleys, Healeys and so on. A nice touch was that they had pre-arranged lines at the Portsmouth ferry terminal for our entire group, and we were loaded onto the boat together, so we had a good opportunity to see our fellow travellers. The owners of the older open cars were already expecting a battle with the elements over the weekend, either because they could not, or more likely, would not put their hoods up. In the event quite a few only gave in under extreme provocation. The show got off to a good start with an excellent dinner on the boat.

The most popular choice was described on the menu as Gargantuan of Lamb. This was accurate – no question here of sharing the joint with your fellow diners. The crossing was smooth, but disconcerting, like the marine

equivalent of a sleeper which seems to reach its destination half way through the night and then spend the rest of the time being shunted around sidings, only there are no sidings out at sea.

After docking at St Malo, we took the suggested route south towards Rennes. Unfortunately, by the time we arrived, the locals were attempting to produce gridlock on the ring road in their enthusiasm to visit an agricultural show. So we followed the chairman on his scenic outer ring road. No trip through rural France would be complete without the occasional route barrée, and this one was no exception, but of course they did not defeat our intrepid navigator. The diversion was a great success and rather more interesting than the ring road, so we arrived at Lohéac in good time. The museum Le Manoir de l'Automobile at Lohéac is vast. There is a huge range of French cars, many racers, a good set of classic production Maseratis, and much more besides, including many non-car exhibits. This was my second visit and there is still plenty more to take in. We lunched in Lohéac and then drove on to our overnight stop in La Baule. Friday's drive took us over a couple of impressive bridges, across the Loire at St Nazaire and, with a bit of poetic license, across

the Atlantic both ways to and from our lunch on the Île de Ré at La Rochelle, and then on to our hotel. Not for us the standard hotel in Angoulême, but a charming old country hostelry about 10Km outside the city – they even managed to serve us afternoon tea. On Friday evening we drove into Angoulême. Of the displays spread around the city centre, the most striking were the clutches of Voisins – extraordinary looking cars – they could only be French. We participated in a concours held for the road cars attending the weekend and decided that Cliff's 3500 and Andrew's Mistral were the clear winners. We waited to hear that the judges preferred English metal and drove back to our hotel. We returned to Angoulême later for another excellent dinner. The first night out in the rather damp sticks the mosquitoes nearly got the upper hand. Then we discovered that the hotel had thoughtfully provided us with a spray with which to poison ourselves and the mosquitoes. We tried it: it seemed to work on the mosquitoes; we're still here.

One of the traditions of this event is the Rallye International de Angoulême on the Saturday. We were all instructed to cram our cars into the car park of the Géant supermarket, producing near gridlock (compulsory this time). We

skipped the free breakfast in the cafe and manoeuvred our way millimetre by millimetre out of the car park again – a seemingly impossible task – to join the queue to the starting ramp. To quote the travel notes for this trip 'you then marvel at the ACOCRA President's comments about your car to the assembled multitude of confused locals'. We could not hear this, so have no idea how marvellous or confusing this was, but we were then free to go. The rally route took us about 150Km through numerous villages in the delightful countryside of the Charente to the east of Angoulême. There were plenty of marshals to help show us the route along the way, except of course where there was some ambiguity in our instructions. Countless groups of spectators had congregated all along the route to wave enthusiastically at every passing car. Some were just at the end of their garden, but many more had taken a trip out to a remote spot. Given the discouraging weather, this local following for the event was remarkable. We had a mid-morning coffee stop at Chateau Villebois-Lavalette, lunch in the barn at Chateau de la Tranchard, and a mid-afternoon stop at Chateau de La Rochefoucauld. Here we had the opportunity to see over the public parts of the chateau, for the princely sum of €2. We omitted the final quarter of the

official rally route back into Angoulême, and made our own way back to our hotel, criss- crossing the official route at numerous points.

On Saturday evening we all attended a buffet held in the covered city market hall. Andrew warned us this would be a bun fight – an apt description, but no buns. Buns would have been useful for managing the food, in the absence of plates or forks. The most successful edibles were the almost limitless supplies of mussels and oysters – no need for buns with them. The organisers had jetted in Jackie Stewart from the Goodwood Revival to join Jean-Pierre Beltoise, Henri Pescarolo and other dignitaries and to say a few words about his association with Matra.

On race day, Sunday, practice was in the morning and racing in the afternoon. The course, which is unchanged since the first event in 1939, has two sharp right-handers, three consecutive uphill hairpins and plenty of opportunities for mishaps. In 1950 Fangio won in a 4CLT, beating Gonzalez – perhaps he was in a Ferrari. We did not dally in the paddock in the interests of bagging a good spot from which to see the races before the rest of the world did the same. We found excellent places in the two grandstands closest to the final hairpin. Race

day was blessed with showers, mostly heavy. This gave the safety car plenty of exercise; it featured in almost every race, sometimes twice. The commonest cause was that a car would dive into the tyre barrier on the top hairpin, invariably becoming trapped with terminal damage. The town had thoughtfully laid a pedestrian crossing all the way across this hairpin, which must have done wonders for grip here.

There were races for tricycle cars; for Bugattis, to celebrate 100 years since Bugatti's independence; for Alpine A110s - best laps about 1m 6s; and for Formule de France cars. These are based on 1300 Renault 8 Gordini bits - best laps about 1min; they were all 70s cars, except one 1990 car which was unable to get around the very tight second hairpin, so every lap it stopped, waited for the cars immediately behind it to pass, completed its three point turn, and continued on its way. In the race for Sandfords and Darmonts, the French versions of the Morgan three-wheeler, even the fastest cars only lapped in about 1m 25s. This was not really a spectator sport and a far cry from seeing Morgans going really well snapping at the heels of Bentleys several times their size at Donington (remember that).

Clearly we should have watched this race on a

downhill stretch. The other races were for rather more varied selections of cars, with a good proportion of English cars and entrants. They produced much more interesting racing, sometimes between the leaders, but there were also some good private battles going on way down the field. The Jean-Pierre Wimille race for pre-war sports/racing cars was won by a Frazer Nash lapping in about 1m 10s. In the race for Historic Sports Cars, the 1000cc Ford Diva lapped in about 1m all on its own well ahead of the rest of the field, but there was an excellent tussle for 2nd and 3rd between a Mini Marcos and a 3.5l Warwick GT350. In the Maurice Trintignant race for pre-war sport/racing cars, there was a terrific battle between the Bugatti 35 B which had already won the Bugatti race and Piglet, a typical, i.e. unique, 'VSCC' special, as seen on the track at the Goodwood International two weeks later, won by the Bugatti lapping in about 1m 5s. Apparently the Bugatti has a limited slip diff (shame), but then Piglet has not got a diff at all, which does not seem to do it any harm. One of the MG TCs was third. The leaders would overtake back markers, one on each side, in the short stretch up to the last hairpin, and still make it around the bend – great stuff. There was even a 12 litre aero-engined Vauxhall trundling around in this race until it ran out of

road somewhere. This is about as unsuitable a car as you could imagine for this circuit. I suppose that the race for Historic Racing Cars of the 60s and 70s – anything from a Ginetta G4 to a Mustang – was held, but the heavens opened just as it was due to start and we had to battle our way back to our coach.

On the Monday we said our goodbyes and set off for Caen, avoiding the autoroutes and relying on a map, some of the signposts and a sense of direction. Of course our chosen direction did not always coincide with toutes directions, which can mean every direction but the one you want, but is often the only sign to be seen in the towns. The French are building country roads like there's no tomorrow (so that is what the expression means). Maybe C. de Gaulle said non to global warming as well. So some of the roads were missing from our 2004 map - even a 2009 map would not have been able to keep up. Apparently their rate of construction is ten times that of Italy; how does the UK compare? We managed to go through Vouvray-sur-Loire and within 40 Km narrowly miss Vouvray-sur-Loir – I think someone is trying to have a 'laff' there – and it was not a reflection on our navigation. As a final treat, we thought that it would be ideal to

visit the Le Mans museum, only to find that it is closed on Mon and Tues. So we consoled ourselves with driving around the accessible part of the 24 hours circuit instead. It was intriguing to see how the everyday road system has been constructed around the circuit. This was previously not obvious to me when the roads were in circuit mode.

Angoulême is a charming city and this weekend, complete with the side shows, has a character all its own - well worth another visit.

Participants:

Cliff Clifton and Peter Holmes	3500 GT
Andrew Green	Mistral
Duncan Mitchell and Colin Trotter	Ghibli Cup
Geoff Temple and Brian Harris	Spyder

Below: Le weekend, French in every way.

Photos: Duncan Mitchell



Classic Motor Show breaks box office records

by Geoff Lancaster

This year's Classic Motor Show broke box office records over the weekend when it welcomed around 48,000 visitors into its classic motoring extravaganza, an increase of around 8,000 visitors on last year's event.

Held over three days, organisers and exhibitors alike were besieged from the outset with classic fanatics flooding into every entrance to get a look at the 1,400 vehicles on show. The show also welcomed visitors from neighbouring shows MPH and Top Gear Live, creating a joint visitor total of over 91,000 motoring enthusiasts over the course of the show.

Dealers had to replace sold cars with new stock at the end of each day with over £500,000 worth of cars sold at the show with more in the pipeline for after the event. Brown and Gammons, who came back to the show after a long absence, commented that it was the best show they had done for ten years. Classic Car Tours took an unprecedented number of bookings at the show whilst other traders frantically replenished their stocks.

Fundraising motor club the Sporting Bears also created a new record, raising around £38,000 with its Dream Rides – a ten-mile ride as a passenger in one of the many amazing cars on display which ranged from a 1936 Lagonda to the latest model of the Audi R8. Three charities will benefit from the funds. This year's chosen charities include the Midlands based Thomas's

Fund, Derian House Children's Hospice in Lancashire, and Julia's House, Dorset.

The centrepiece of Hall 1 was the Meguiar's Club Showcase, bringing together the crème de la crème of vehicles from 16 major marque specific events that the company supports throughout the year. A flawless 1967 Ferrari 275 GTB/4 owned by David Moores was selected as the 'Best in Show' by a panel of independent judges.

Members and Maserati enthusiasts who attended this year's show couldn't have helped but be impressed with this year's display. Peter Holmes and Jim Hunt stepped in at the last minute and agreed to organise the display, to ensure the Club's participation this year. As Peter explained; "We owed it to the Club and Simon Lees-Milne's legacy of fine work over the years".

Last year organiser Roger Harrison presented us with a fine display of those often maligned, but highly prized by many, Maseratis from the "Biturbo Era". This year's visitors saw one of the finest displays of Concours winning Grand Tourers from the 1960's and 1970's. Just one of the stars on the stand was one of 22 Allemano bodied 5000GTs from a total production run of only 34 cars. Manufactured in 1964, this car was at one time owned by Joe Walsh of the Eagles. This was the car that inspired his lyric "My Maserati does 185, I lost my licence, now I don't drive"



Above: Some visitors mistook the stand for a manufacturer's!

Photo: Peter Holmes

Below: Classic grand tourers were loved by all

Photo: Peter Holmes



Classic Motor Show NEC 2009



4

1 5000GT

This car is Chassis No 026 completed in January 1964. It is one of 22 Allemano bodied 5000GTs from a total production run of just 34 cars. The engine in this second series car was Maserati's first production V8, a full 5 litres and with Lucas fuel injection. A similar car was clocked on the Modena Autostrada at 170mph in the hands of the legendary Maserati factory test driver, Bertocchi. This particular example spent most of its life in the USA and was owned at one time by rock star Joe Walsh of the Eagles. This was the car that inspired his lyric "My Maserati does 185, I lost my licence, now I don't drive" It took overall Concours honours at last year's Maserati International at Goodwood.

2 3500GT

This multiple concours winning example was manufactured in May 1960. Lightweight "Superleggera" construction designed by CorrozzzeriaTouring of Milan. A total ground up restoration took place over a period of 10 years from 1989, and in 1999 this rare right-hand drive model ran for the first time in 20 years. It is now driven regularly on events in the UK and Europe having covered 14,000 miles since its restoration.



8

3 MISTRAL

Another concours winner, this is a rare 4 litre example built in 1966. The car was sold to a gentleman in Holland in 1991 who commissioned a complete restoration. By 1994 the car was back on the road but the restoration was not 100% complete and it lay unused for 14 years until the present owner purchased the car in 2008 and completed the restoration earlier this year.

4 SEBRING

Manufactured in 1966, this Maserati Sebring Series 2 was first registered in the South of France and remained there until it was purchased by a well-known collector and restorer in 1989. The car was then taken to Modena for a total rebuild and bare metal strip down which was completed in 1996. It remained unused for 5 years until acquired by its present owner in 2001, since when it has won numerous Concours awards. The car was featured in the November issue of Classic and Sportscar magazine.



5



4

2



Photos

1. *Dave Smith*
2. - 7. *Maureen Lancaster*

5 GHIBLI SS

This is a Concours winning 1970 Ghibli SS. Rebuilt in 1983 retaining its original colour and totally original interior. One of very few right hand drive models produced. Factory fitted air-conditioning and power assisted steering. Borrani wire wheels.

6 INDY

Manufactured in 1971, this Concours winning Indy has the 4.2 litre engine and is number 420 from the total Indy production of 1104. Owned by just the one family until purchased by the present owner in 2004, the car is in totally unrestored condition with a genuine 29,700 miles from new!

7 MEXICO

Manufactured in 1968, this Mexico was the original London Motor Show model. Total restoration was undertaken by Bill McGrath Maserati between 2005 and 2009 with bodywork by Prestige. Genuine current mileage of just 32,000 miles.

8 KHAMSIN

Manufactured in 1977, this Khamsin was originally supplied to an agent in Hong Kong. It was later imported to the UK in 1995 and underwent a thorough programme of restoration carried out by Bill McGrath Maserati and Prestige Engineering between 1995 until 2003.

The Committee and Organising Group gratefully acknowledge the support of Graypaul without whom our participation in this show would not have been possible.



In addition, there was a 1960 3500GT with the lightweight “Supperleggera” construction by Carrozzeria Touring of Milan; a 1966 Series 2 Sebring; a rare 4 litre Mistral built in 1966; a 1970 Ghibli SS; a totally un-restored 1971 Indy with just 29,700 miles from new; a 1968 Mexico – the original London Motor Show model, and a 1977 Khamsin. Trident was so impressed by this historic line-up that we have devoted space to feature each of the cars and their histories in more detail.

To complete this award winning line up and bringing the display right up to date, there was the very latest Maserati GranTurismo S courtesy of Graypaul Birmingham, who generously sponsored our stand.

Owners of these fine classics and members of the Maserati Club were on hand to answer any questions and the Club regalia stand offered everything Maserati from items of clothing, to books and DVD's.

Peter and Jim paid tribute to the owners who loaned their precious Maseratis, to Graypaul Birmingham for loaning the GranTurismo S and

for their sponsorship, all of the 30 Club members who variously gave up their time to help man our stand over the 3 days at the Classic Motor Show; to the magnificent “A” Team for helping to build up and dismantle the stand before and after the show, and to Roger Harrison, Enrico Pederzoli, Edwin Faulkner and Dick & Mary Pole for their sterling contributions.

A special vote of thanks goes to new members David and Angie Daw of Event Exhibition & Design Ltd who very generously supplied much of the display material and assisted with its transportation and storage. Their professional input took our display to the next level and the prospects for future shows look very exciting.

Over 240 car and motorcycle clubs exhibited at the show with vehicles ranging from ‘barn find’ vehicles in need of restoration to extremely rare Ferraris and even a chrome Bugatti Veyron.

Next year's Classic Motor Show will take place from 12th to 14th November 2010. For more information, the latest show updates and to book tickets, visit www.necclassicmotorshow.com. 

Obituary: Elio Zagato

by *Geoff Lancaster*

Elio Zagato, son of the founder of the Italian coachbuilder Zagato, died on Sept. 14. He was 88.

Known to many by the nickname “Dr. Elio” — though Enzo Ferrari referred to him by the fond diminutive “Zagatino” — Mr. Zagato not only oversaw the creation of classic car bodies for Alfa Romeo, Fiat, Lancia and other makes, but also raced them. After World War II, he was part of the dolce vita culture of the gran turismo racer, where amateurs rubbed shoulders and traded paint with professionals. He raced in the same cars and on the same tracks as Juan Manuel Fangio and Tazio Nuvolari.

In 1919, Elio’s father, Ugo Zagato, left his job in an aircraft company to establish a firm near Milan to adapt aeronautical construction to car bodies. The Zagato carrozzeria was known for racing car body innovations. During its aerodynamic period in the 1930s, Zagato led the way in covering wheels with sleek covers, tilting grilles and windshields.

Zagato bodies were famously light, thanks to material innovations like Plexiglas and structural innovations like the famed “double bubble” roof, arched for strength, and later imitated in cars like the Dodge Viper. The company pioneered aerodynamics with trademark forms like the split or stub tail (or coda tronca).

During the Panoramica period of the late 1940s, the company’s trademark large greenhouse style was applied to models from many makers, including MG. Over the years, carmakers like Ford, Jaguar, Rover, Volvo, Bristol, Aston-Martin, Bentley and Rolls-Royce went to Zagato at least once, like a society belle commissioning an evening gown. Ugo Zagato and his company prided itself on simplicity.

In 1947, Elio Zagato received a re-bodied Fiat from his father as a graduation gift. He joined

the family firm, along with his brother Gianni, who was born in 1929 and survives him, and soon went racing. Elio competed in 150 races, the company said, winning 85 of them, including the Targa Florio, several Coppa Intereuropas and a 1955 competition at the Avus circuit in Berlin.

In recent years, Zagato has produced mostly high-style one-off designs — haute couture for collectors in which a classic marque and model name are followed by the simple suffix “Zagato.” One example was the Maserati GS Zagato, shown in 2007 at the Concours d’Élégance Villa d’Este in Cernobbio, Italy. (Trident No. 100). Based on the GranSport Spyder it paid homage to another Zagato, the Maserati A6G Zagato from 1954. The company’s press release for that car outlined its ambitious view of ‘mission’ and was in the spirit of Elio Zagato: “In homage to the tradition of the gentlemen drivers who asked Zagato to transform the bodywork of their cars, modern collectors choose mechanics at the top level of technical evolution and ‘dress’ them in tailor-made garments that increase in value as time passes.

This is the mission of a modern automobile atelier: to create timeless objects that celebrate prestigious models and brands and which, unlike mass produced vehicles, are destined to last forever.” 🏠



Maserati GS Zagato at Villa d’Este.



Driving Ambition

Or ...Don't you just want to own a supercar of the sixties or seventies?

by Keith Davies

It was my dad who was the family petrol-head, mainly motorbikes – two suspected fractured skulls, numerous collar-bone fractures and a broken thigh etc. This was before compulsory crash hats and it left me with a lasting impression of a policeman's helmet showing through the front door of the family home where the first question was “which hospital is he in now?” However both my elder sister and I never rode a motor bike, not surprisingly, but we did enjoy cars. The enjoyment of driving cars stemmed from my dad's conversion to cars enabling us to experience choice language, G-forces, complaining tyre noises and other long lasting memories of vehicle maintenance procedures. Fitting the front suspension wish-bones etc. into my mothers oven for a low-bake of a stove enamel caused a bit of a rift – the roast lamb didn't taste quite right for a few weeks after that. However the suspension was protected for life against rust and was fitted with new kingpins.

Later my sister berated the technical section of VAG demanding to know why their 1800cc engine produced such a miserable bhp rating and was there an error in the brochure that the idiot in her local agency did not understand!

All this led to a passion for better and better cars to the point where I bought a Maserati albeit in later life. Having owned one of the Biturbo cars for more than 12 years now there was always the question – “Don't you just want to own a supercar of the sixties or seventies?”

Surely everyone's dream is to own a supercar with pedigree and a famous carrozzeria name on the side. However saving up enough cash is another question and waiting until you do probably means you're too old, can't see too well, can't get out of a low car or can't drive anymore for numerous other reasons.

Trying to find such a car that does not cost a fortune is difficult. However the much underrated Indy falls into this category as being

“out of step” with other Maserati model prices. The big question being can you find one?

Norman Geddes managed to find one a couple of years ago. A prime (original paintwork), low mileage one shown at the Classic Car Show back in November. I must admit at that show I was sorely tempted to steal the rear reflectors that are missing from my car. Not the sort of thing Halfords sell for a rare breed car.

Other reasons for buying an Indy are that it is such a practical car with four seats and plenty of luggage space, not that you would go to the supermarket in it but very useful for holidays and club events. Practical with that sporting performance and classic lines, what a winner! The chief engineer at Maserati at the time was Giulio Alfieri who designed a “long-distance runner” and the Indy has the last body styling that Carrozzeria Vignale made for Maserati, completed in 1969.

The Indy was one of the higher production volume cars with factory figures at 1104 examples, only exceeded in the supercar range by the 3500 GT (with nearly 2000) and the Ghibli by a whisker in the 1200 area. The later Merak also topped 1800 cars. The Indy was produced from 1969 to 1975 and of course there were variants as always with Maserati. Three engine sizes were fitted but each engine size had a different dashboard and other minor changes – still a bespoke car when it came to specification.

The engines, all V8, quad-cam with 4 twin-choke Weber carburettors, were 4200cc, 4700cc, and 4900cc. The 4200 version had the “double binnacle” dash where the clock was on the passenger binnacle. Production of the 4200 reached 440 cars. The 4700 had a more conventional dash with a large grab handle on the passenger side (seat belts were one of the options!). A total of 364 of this model were produced. Finally the 4900 had further revisions inside and larger wheel rims at 15-inches (more of this later). It also had a third grille in the bonnet rather than



Above: The Davies Indy

Photo: Keith Davies

Below: Keeping it in the 'family'

Photo: Keith Davies



the two of the earlier models. The final run of these was 300 cars.

On the subject of bonnet grilles, one of them is placed directly over the ignition coil – brilliant! I guess that Vignale was a metal basher and not knowledgeable about what makes a car go – or stop. There is mention in the handbook about avoiding enthusiastically hosing through these grilles when washing the car so it seems to be a well known “feature”.

So where do you find one of these chunky V8's. There were a couple on e-bay and more on other web sites mainly in America. I looked at one that had been on e-bay in the UK but was not impressed. It had not been driven or looked after much for a number of years and it showed. Still an impressive looking vehicle but thoughts of putting it right made me shudder. You have to make a judgement on what you are prepared to pay and what work you intend to do to bring it up to your own acceptable standard. It all gets personal here because I would not like a concours car. I want to drive it, so it will get stone chips and it will get minor scratches and it will clock up the miles. In my view stone chips and squashed flies are all part of the patina of a classic. However it will also be very much enjoyed, which is the reason for the purchase in the first place.

You don't really want to buy one of these off a forecourt of some dubious mixed-vehicle garage and as history is essential the best route is direct through the current owner with a strong preference from someone inside our own club. The chances are you will have seen it over the years at various events and had an opportunity to talk to the owner and sometimes the previous owner. Quite often cars are not advertised as the owner is just thinking of selling but has not consciously made a decision to do so. This eventually turned out to be the case for my Indy.

The catalyst for this happening was our International event in early October 2009. I had volunteered to be a marshal on this event that

eventually resulted in me becoming the Chief Marshal with responsibilities to ensure smooth running of all the individual car sections planned by the main members of the organising committee. The people with the blue vests at this event were our club volunteer marshals to whom I give grateful thanks.

Part of the Track Day was open to club members that were not on the main event, allowing them to drive their Maserati around the Goodwood track at sessions in the afternoon for a small payment. This required me to contact a number of club members who had shown an interest and to send them more detailed information on the final arrangements – noise testing, driver briefing, crash helmets and sign-on (waivers) etc. This was normally done by e-mail with the exception of a few people where telephones were used. With e-mails it is simple to keep to the point and with my typing (keyboarding perhaps), it is also fairly brief, however with the telephone you tend to wander off the point and cover all things Maserati as well as putting the world to rights.

The main contact for the International event was Derek Mills and he included, in one of his regular e-mails, (not to mention numerous organising meetings), the telephone number of Henny Cate who had expressed an interest in the afternoon sessions with his 4700cc Indy.

I called Henny to discuss the track afternoon and this led on to other topics amongst which was the fact that he did not use the car much now and perhaps he ought to sell it to someone who would give it more exercise. This made me think even more about buying such a car but the work-in-hand with the International event was coming up to fever pitch (this in addition to still actually working for a living). Further telephone calls and correspondence about the International always prodded the memory banks about Henny's Indy and the thought of ownership of this much travelled car with 14 Internationals under its belt.

I had not seen the car since the Silverstone Classic in July of 2008 and then only for a brief time as Henny did not stay long. However it duly came to Goodwood where I could take more of a close-up but again could not spend much time looking at it with the pressures of duties as a marshal. I really needed to see it again to look in a more detailed way but could not see how to get up to Cheshire from Buckinghamshire before the NEC Classic Car Show in November where I was once again a volunteer. As luck would have it a day became “spare” and the weather was good, Henny agreed and I drove up to Cheshire in mid-to-late October to see the car. Henny had previously mailed me the December 1988 edition of “Super-car Classics”, now closed, where there were two articles on his Indy. The main feature was called “Heavy Mettle” by Steve Crompton – a six pager and the second was in their Restoration section where the Indy was shown in all states of undress at Bob Barlow’s workshop (PMB Motor Co.) where what eventually turned out to be a full body restoration took place. All mechanical bits were sent back to the original manufacturers (gearbox, steering box, rear axle etc.) and the engine went to Bill McGrath. The job took from late 1985 to Easter 1987 to complete and it took a couple of shake-down runs before being completely fettled. So when I visited Henny I was really looking at a 22 year old, 37 year old car!

The day went well and the sun shone on our enjoyable “blast” around the countryside. We made an agreement to purchase subject to a full inspection as even 22 year old cars have their problems.

There followed a three page point-by-point, blow-by-blow list of things to do or at least think about, even the reflectors were mentioned. You have to have these inspections otherwise you

can be seriously caught out with repairs that can soon escalate to make the whole exercise painful. Thankfully in my case I felt some expense would be justified and this work is currently being carried out. Steering joints etc. are an important part of safety and need to be done on all cars with time or mileage. Can’t wait to burn some rubber now, but wait! - the Indy has unusual tyre sizes that are not made anymore. With 14-inch rims, the 4200 and 4700 have to be fitted with 215 / 70 / 14’s as the original 205 / 14’s (a larger diameter) is no longer available in the speed rating for this car. I thought it would be good to go for a complete set of five (yes we have proper spare wheels with real tyres in these older cars) but the prices were staggering. I will carry now an older spare but will have four new tyres and the credit card still looks a bit misshapen.

The planned debut was to be at Vera’s Lunch but as a gritter had passed by my home on Saturday night and it was snowing on Sunday morning, only the jumper made it as you can see from the picture ! The Indy was tucked up in it’s garage - Henny will understand.” 🏠



Birth of an icon: 1970 Citroen SM

by Martin Buckley

Citroen's SM was an ambitious, innovative product, only restricted in sales by the fuel crisis and lack of right hand drive.

It's hard to believe the Citroen SM is almost 40 years old. Low, wide and sleek, it still looks like a vision of the future, the consummate GT glamour car for that fantasy journey across Europe with your favourite mistress.

When the SM was launched at the Geneva motor show in 1970, Citroen hoped it could succeed where Jean Daninos, creator of the doomed Facel Vega, had failed, by building a commercially viable top-line French gran turismo car. To this end the SM showcased Citroen's clever oleopneumatic technology and combined it with Italian brawn: a Maserati V6 engine. With a top speed of 137mph, it became the world's fastest front-wheel-drive production car, a title it held until the introduction of the Lancia Thema 8.32 in 1988.

In some ways the SM was nothing more than a kind of super-DS. By utilising established DS components as much as possible, principally the same oleopneumatically suspended pressed-steel chassis base unit but with deeper sills, Citroen was able to get the SM into production in just three years.

There had been rumours of such a project long before Citroen acquired Maserati in 1967, but what was needed was an engine with the power and refinement to lift the car above the standards set by the DS, which, for all its sophistication, still relied on a four-cylinder engine of utilitarian character and limited power. Within days of the French takeover, Maserati's legendary chief engineer Giulio Alfieri, working to Citroen's brief, had created the basics of a new

90-degree, quad-camshaft V6, fashioned from a 4.2-litre Indy V8 but with a shorter crank throw and slightly reduced bore to get the capacity to an over-square 2670cc, nicely below the 2.8-litre limit beyond which French tax legislation imposed heavy penalties.

A V8 would have been physically too big when combined with Citroen's traditional front-drive layout with the gearbox ahead of the engine in the nose of the car. (That's what you think... read on: Ed) As it was, even with the V6 behind the wheel-line the SM had a vast front end. Six headlamps – two of which turned with the steering – behind a glass cover helped form a distinctive face, on European versions at least. Safety legislation in the US meant that Americans got four fixed lights and no glass cover.

Alfieri had offered three power curves, from the minimum 150bhp Citroen had specified through to 200bhp, but it was felt 170bhp at 5500rpm was sufficient, with three double-barrel down-draught Weber carburettors. Mated to a five-speed transaxle of Citroen design and manufacture (that Lotus would use in the Esprit right up until 1987) this power pack was tested in special two-door DS coupe test mules.

Designer Robert Opron's fastback styling for the SM was not a packaging triumph perhaps – the boot was small, the rear seating useable but cramped – yet it was graceful and ethereal, suggesting the sophistication within. The swoopy and sumptuously modernist cabin furniture set equally high standards.



Above: Citroen SM at Stanford Hall Concours

Photo: Dave Smith

Below: Andrew Brodie's classic rally SM

Photo: Dave Smith





Refined and slippery (the claimed drag coefficient was Cd 0.25); the SM was also a car of great ability. Modern drivers wouldn't find it quick – its acceleration was healthy rather than alarming even in 1970 – but the sound was exciting and the gearchange wonderfully positive. Keen drivers would also come to appreciate the sharp all-disc brakes (operated by a pressure-sensitive floor-mounted 'button'), the ultra-high-geared powered steering and the restful high-speed stability. As a driving experience there was nothing quite like it.

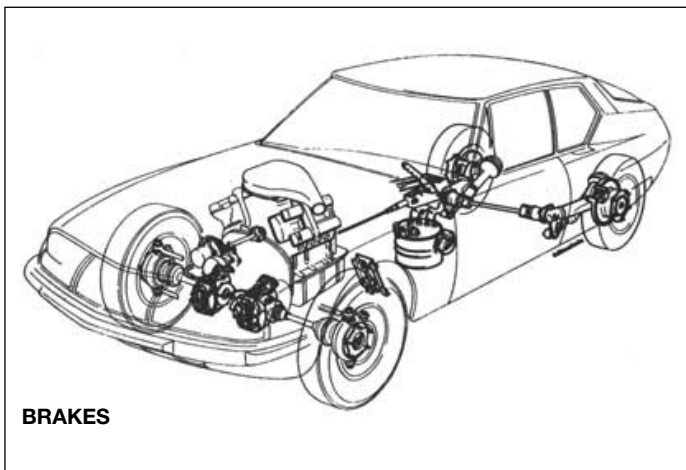
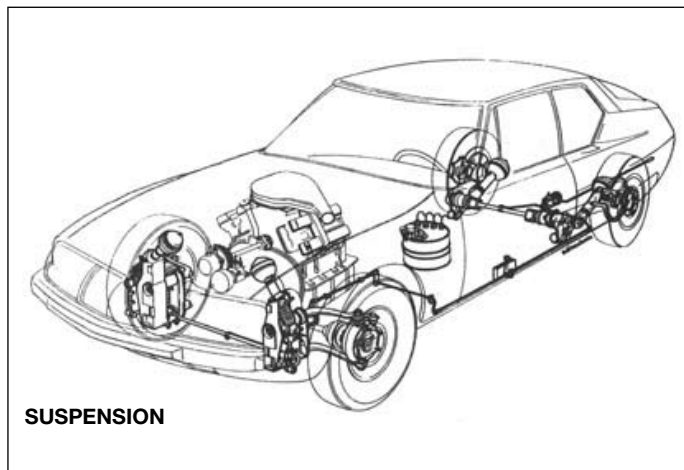
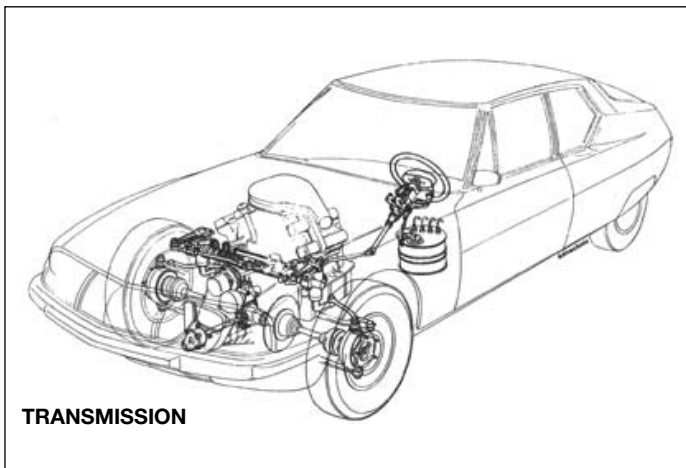
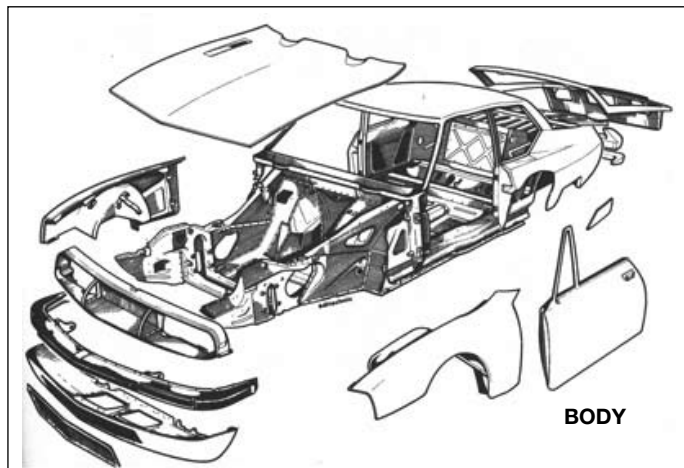
The V6, which was built in a specially designated part of the Maserati factory, would go on to appear in the Maserati Merak and the mid-engined Ligier JS2 sports car. In fact, it

would be Ligier who would build the last 270 SMs from late 1974 to May 1975, but by then accountants at Peugeot, Citroen's new owner, had discovered that the SM was losing money and the need to divest itself of the car was so urgent that the last few hundred SM bodyshells were crushed.

Just shy of 13,000 SMs were built in all – a figure that might have been higher were it not for the early-'70s fuel crisis making thirsty and hedonistic 2+2 coupes socially unacceptable. A lack of right-hand drive restricted the market in Britain to just 327 owners. Sadly, Citroen has not made anything quite so glamorous and ambitious since, and nor has any other manufacturer. When it comes to combining beauty with innovation, the SM remains unsurpassed. 🏆

Technical Specification 1971

Number of cylinders	V 6
Cubic capacity	2 670 cm ³
Bore and stroke	87 x 75 mm
Fiscal power rating	15 CV
Fuel system	Three Weber carburettors
Maximum power output in brake horse power	180 SAE @ 6 250 rpm 170 DIN @ 5 500 rpm
Valve gear	4 overhead camshafts, 2 overhead valves per cylinder
Transmission	Front wheel drive via 5 speed manual gearbox
Brakes	Fully powered discs, front brakes mounted inboard, parking brake operates on front brakes
Suspension	Self levelling, fully independent, variable ride height, hydropneumatic with anti dive, anti squat geometry
Steering	Rack and pinion, DIRAVI/Varipower
Dimensions	Length 4,890 m Width 1,840 m Height 1,320 m Wheelbase 2,950 m Front track 1,530 m Rear track 1,330 m Weight 1 450 kg
Maximum speed	220 kph



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Obituary: Bill McGrath

by Andy Heywood

For Bill it was always about the engineering. The internal combustion engine fascinated him from an early age. Slipping out of school as soon as possible, he started work on the spanners at O'Regan's garage in Southern Ireland at the age of fifteen. His brother described Bill as obsessed with cars and motorbikes - He sat at the breakfast table reading *The Autocar*. He came home for lunch in or on whatever was in for service that day and sat at the table reading *The Autocar*.

This was the late 1940s and a general garage of that time had to be all things to all machines. Post-war austerity guaranteed thrift and 'repair not replace' was not a desirable option but a necessity. It was the total opposite of today but a training that would never leave Bill and indeed, stood him in good stead.

Like many men of his generation and upbringing, Bill soon realised that the best place to get work was in England and by the late 1950s he had moved to Hertfordshire and was working for a small company building Austin Seven specials called Danté Engineering. This new discipline only added to Bill's range of skills and enthusiasm.

When Danté folded (its principals moved on to greater things including Robin Read who went to Lotus and Jem Marsh who founded Marcos), Bill worked for a tuning concern in North London and his tuning parts for Renault Gordinis were exhibited at the Racing Car Show.

A new wife and family led Bill to taking a more managerial job at a busy garage near St Albans in the early 1960s. He was to stay there for over a decade, confounding the senior management with his insistence on being in the workshop all the time.

He was still running this garage when in

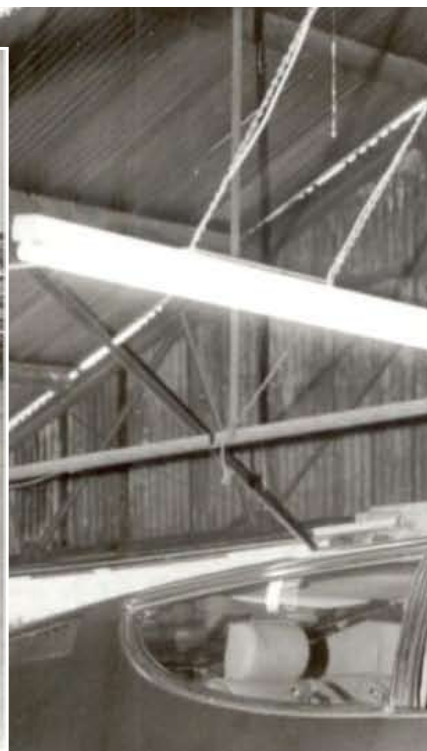
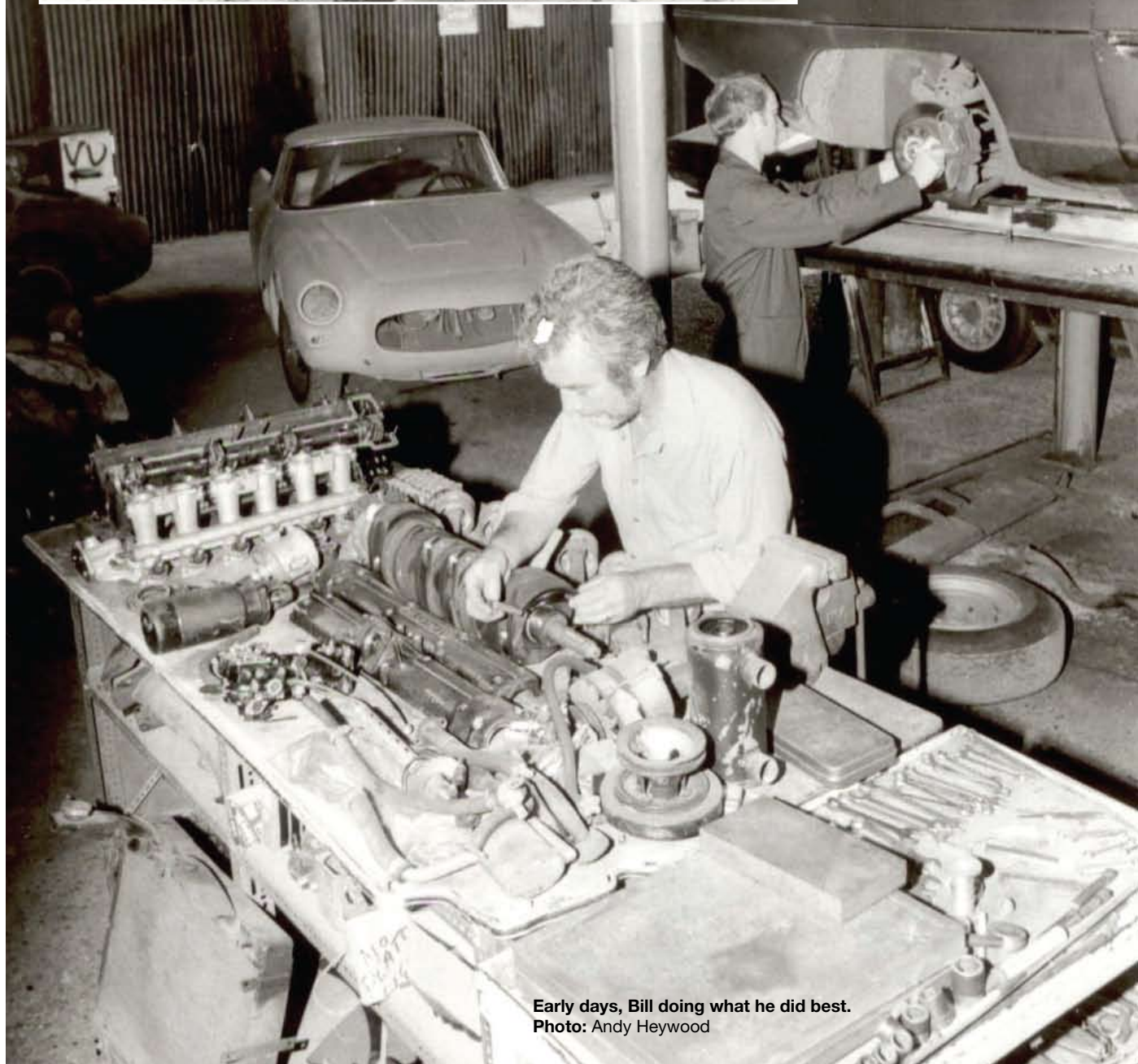
1973, his wife Pat told him of an old Maserati that she had seen languishing at the back of a local builder's yard. With his interest awoken, Bill went to look at the car. It was a 1964 3500GTI, one of the last built and RHD. Down at heel, the engine needed a rebuild and the car was generally tired. The sum of £500 changed hands and Bill had found himself an evening project.

Having very soon discovered that there was almost a complete lack of information available on these cars, Bill realised that he would have to just take it to pieces and work it out. This he did, and soon had the engine and troublesome Lucas fuel injection working as it should. With a gentle re-spray and some fettling of the rest of the car, the Maserati was soon pressed into everyday service, mostly for Pat to take their daughters to school, or move hay bales around for the horses at her riding school.

The classic car world we know today was still some time in the future and owners of such cars then were considered merely eccentric. Luckily a band of such eccentrics had recently gathered as The Maserati Club had been formed. Searching for parts for his own car had put Bill in touch with Richard Crump. Based in nearby Waltham Cross, Richard was a leading light during the formation of the Maserati Club and in addition to his architect's practice, had a sideline importing parts and selling Maserati cars. Crump encouraged Bill to attend one of the first Club meetings, at another founder member's house. The Club Concours at Cameron Millar's The Dower House in Potters Bar was written up in *Trident* number 7. A picture shows Bill's 3500 and others lined up on the lawn. The concours judge that day was none other than Whitney Straight.



Bill at Kimpton with Bora
Photo: Andy Heywood



Early days, Bill doing what he did best.
Photo: Andy Heywood

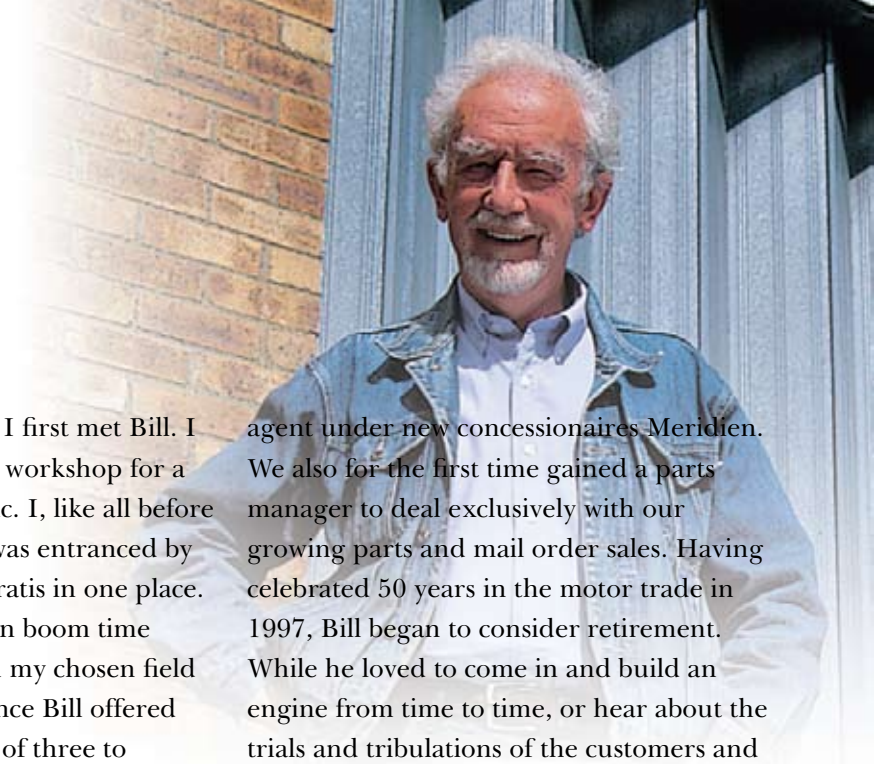
Bill's ability to repair his own Maserati successfully was not lost on some of the other members and especially not on Richard Crump. A casual business relationship developed between the two as Richard would supply customers with cars to repair and parts with which to do so, and Bill would make them work again. Throughout this time, Bill was still doing his day job running The Mount Garage in Park Street but by 1977 it became clear that there was enough work for him to finally start his own business. Thus, Bill McGrath Maserati was formed; working from a barn in Redbourn, next to his wife's riding school.

Between 1977 and 1985 when he moved to Kimpton, the company was very small and the work mostly mechanical rebuilds. However, after meeting and getting to know John Duggleby, Bill was entrusted with his first major restoration – John's A6G Frua Spyder (#2183). This was possibly the first proper Maserati restoration to take place anywhere in the world as the worth of old cars was just beginning to be appreciated. The completed car was featured in *Thoroughbred and Classic Cars* – with Bill, head under the bonnet, on the front cover. John's determination to keep the car as authentic as possible and make it work as well as possible extended Bill's skills and also his attitude towards old cars - It was no longer enough to just keep these cars on the road in the most basic and cheap sense. From now on, owners would want to restore and improve their cars as well.

After the A6G Frua, Bill's next milestone project was the restoration of the Mistral Spyder prototype (#003) for Sebastian Whitestone. This car, while only subtly different on the outside, featured the Watts linkage rear suspension that Maserati intended to fit on all Mistrals but which never made it to final production. While old cars seemed to be what was

putting Bill on the map, he never stopped looking forward. The then current range of Maseratis was the Khamsin and the Merak and he serviced and repaired these cars alongside the restorations. By 1985, the company had outgrown the Redbourn site and so when the opportunity to move into a newly refurbished industrial unit in Kimpton presented itself, Bill took the plunge once again.

A year later, after a couple of false starts, Maserati finally started to export the new Biturbo range of cars to the UK. An importer, based in Leeds, was appointed and the team of directors soon after made an appointment to come and find out what Bill McGrath Maserati was all about. Bill was always interested in new cars and new engineering invention (he continued to read *The Autocar* every week until he died) and he already had some Biturbo experience as private imports had been coming in for some time and owners naturally sought him out. When the directors arrived at the workshops, they marvelled at the range of old cars on display and realised that not only should they offer Bill a dealer franchise, but also that here was a special case. Bill was incredibly proud to have been offered a dealership and without the normal insistence on a showroom. The workshop itself they had decided was a good enough shop window. Sales of the new cars were slow and fraught with difficulty due to quality control problems. However, Bill was just as excited at trying to solve the original Biturbo's many issues as he would have been selling dozens of new cars. During this period, he carried out some modifications on a new Biturbo Coupe for Drummond Bone, which included intercoolers, more boost and uprated suspension, making the car work really well.



It was about this time that I first met Bill. I turned up at the Kimpton workshop for a job interview as a mechanic. I, like all before me (and probably since), was entranced by the sight of so many Maseratis in one place. The classic car world was in boom time (1988) and getting a job in my chosen field had seemed easy in that once Bill offered me a job, I had the choice of three to consider. It could all have been so different, but my love of Italian exotica was already well developed and at the end of the day there was really no contest.

When I joined the company, there were five of us - three mechanics, Bill and Stuart Cawley. Stuart had found Bill because he owned a 3500 Vignale Spyder and a Merak SS. Having recently retired, he had taken to 'hanging out' at the workshops and when Bill, up to his elbows in grease as usual, asked Stuart to answer the ringing telephone one day, Stuart found that he had unwittingly walked into a new job.

At that time, the Kimpton workshop was much smaller than it is now and there were too many cars crammed into the available space. Early on, I naively asked the foreman how he knew which car to work on and he answered; 'the one nearest the door'. Eighteen months later, Bill and I came to an agreement. I took over the day to day running of the workshop and he continued to work on the engines, which had always been his first love.

Throughout the next decade we worked together, though as I became more experienced so Bill relaxed and spent less time with the business. During this period the company continued to produce some high profile restorations on classic road cars for clients such as the Sultan of Brunei and the King of Morocco but also grew to take on more work on the modern cars and indeed continued to be an official service

agent under new concessionaires Meridien. We also for the first time gained a parts manager to deal exclusively with our growing parts and mail order sales. Having celebrated 50 years in the motor trade in 1997, Bill began to consider retirement. While he loved to come in and build an engine from time to time, or hear about the trials and tribulations of the customers and their cars, the lure of a quieter life in Norfolk, where for some years he had owned a cottage, was becoming stronger.

He had always had other interests in life. In his younger years he was an accomplished ballroom dancing instructor. He once told me that his main motivation had been that it was a good way to meet the girls, but I suspect that he took it more seriously than that. Latterly he developed a great interest in nature and birds (of the feathered variety this time) and when the opportunity arose to purchase a piece of land adjacent to his cottage, he was able to fulfil a long held ambition to create his own private wild life sanctuary.

As the millennium dawned, we started talking more seriously about the future and in 2003 came to an agreement for me to buy the business and for Bill to officially, finally, retire the following March. Included in the deal was the completion of the restoration of Bill's 3500GTI. As is so often the way, running a business repairing other people's cars had for years got in the way of restoring Bill's own car. It had been taken off the road again in the mid-1980s and while the body had been properly restored by Jim Henshaw, it had then sat patiently at the back of the workshop for some time. Now, with a deadline approaching, everyone commenced work and Bill himself once again rebuilt the first Maserati engine he had ever worked on, some 30 years on.

Bill retired happily to Norfolk in 2004, the Maserati tucked safely in the garage and used for local rallies and shows. On occasional visits to London, he would still drop in to see his old gang. By now we were a team of ten people, with two in the parts department and six mechanics plus double the workshop space of the original unit. Bill was thrilled to see that his business continued and the name Bill McGrath Maserati was going from strength to strength.

Alas his retirement would not be as long as anyone hoped. In 2006 he was diagnosed with cancer and though he fought bravely as many people have to every year, he lost that battle on December 9th last year. Henry Royce famously liked to refer to himself modestly as “mechanic”. Bill McGrath was the same. He was first and foremost a talented, intuitive mechanic and was rightly proud of his ‘sympatico’ with engines.

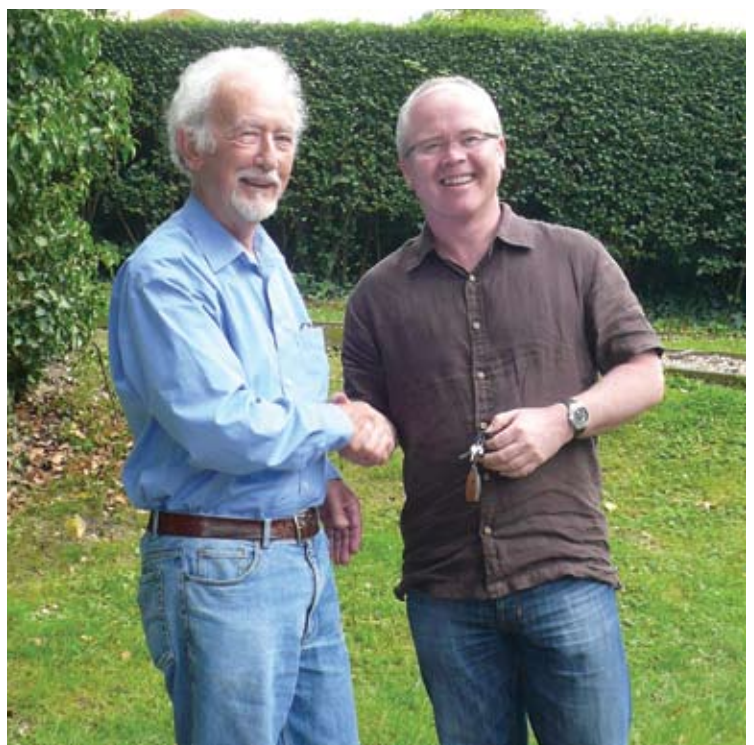
But his contribution to the world of Maserati was more than that of just mechanic. On hearing of his death, Adolfo Orsi, whose family ran Maserati from 1937 to 1968, spoke of the debt his family and Maserati owed to Bill McGrath for his support of the marque. It may have been a chance meeting with that forlorn 3500GTI that started it, but Bill developed a deep commitment to the marque at a time when few others were interested. Using his ability to repair not replace, he managed to keep cars on the road when they would otherwise have been scrapped and by instilling in all of us a no-compromise attitude towards quality, those cars continued to run and bring pleasure. Many people running classic Maserati cars today, especially in the UK, have Bill McGrath to thank for keeping them alive. 🇮🇪

William J ‘Bill’ McGrath. Born Ireland 16-4-1932. Died Norfolk 09-12-2009.

Where it all began, Bill with 3500 GT. **Photo:** Michael Ward



Bill and Andy last year in Norfolk **Photo:** Andy Heywood



Martin's 1000 miles in his Mistral over 2 weekends.

by *Martin Hasker*

We've all got personal motoring benchmarks: for those of you with race experience it can become almost part of one's DNA (or should that be DMH: Distinct Motoring History?).

Sometimes it's a quiet satisfaction as it can be lonely out there on the track in one's self-prepared single-seater racing car leaving some competitors behind and with surgical precision catching the others ahead whilst setting a lap record in the process. I now prefer shared pleasure on the road in my Mistral and living the adage about 'it's not so much what you've got but what you do with it that counts'.

Lord March is quoted as saying that the A272 is his favourite road and last September it was sublime as I drove to Goodwood for a weekend of Revival spectacle. For us, the A272 on the Saturday had no other car on it upon leaving Winchester at 07:00 until we reached Petersfield: very rare and it's on roads like these that the Mistral shows its advanced engineering and impeccable manners. I think it was Roy Salvadori I heard say that road cars should be driven as close as possible to their maximum for pleasure as that is what they were designed for (and please note that I make an especial point of going slowly through the villages).

The following Friday saw the Mistral endure the M25 as with eager anticipation the roads of Europe beckoned and close to Spa the motoring pleasure was cranked up to 'high' in the Ardennes: those of you on the Spring Break should have some fun as this is a very satisfying part of Europe. It's a rare blend of smooth tarmac, relatively quiet roads with friendly curves and satisfying undulations. Out of the car the steaks are probably the best in Europe, proper coffee is served (not the Anglo/American coffee-flavoured milk!) and I will certainly return to Spa: it's a lovely high-quality town. The journey home was marked by some initial mist for which the Ardennes is famous and I vividly recall a Belgian two-lane motorway which expanded to



Martin and Mistral

Photo: 'The Blonde'

4 lanes due to the incline – the Maser flew up that hill overtaking all and leaving many modern cars in its wake: That fuel injection system is fabulous.

Returning to home I noticed that the car without missing a beat had clocked up exactly 1000 miles over the two weekends. That got me thinking about how lovely it is that the world's premier road driving event of the same length (the Italian Mille Miglia) uses the imperial measurement - not for us aficionados that ersatz kilometre! – with a mile that goes back to Roman times.

When I started writing this I was contemplating a title along the lines of 'Memorable Drives of the Decades' and the above qualifies since the single-seater and the Mistral are in different decades. In between, I had some awful low points with two Aston Martin cars (including trudging around the Le Mans circuit) erased from my memory due to following the Mille Miglia in a front-engined V12 Ferrari and being waved through red traffic lights by an Italian policeman – bravissimo!

We have just started a new decade so I wonder what's around the corner. I know when I'm well-off: I'll stick with more Mistral motoring! 🏁



Above: The author tuning QP III

Below: QP featuring 'sustainable' bonnet prop



One thing leads to another

by Neil Crook

I last wrote to Geoff around August last year requesting some more practical articles relating to Maserati ownership. This appeared to have tempted fate as that week both of mine, an '81 Quattroporte S3, and a '71 Indy America, refused to start after 4 years of quiet reliability. The Indy isn't so much of an issue as I rarely use it as it is a bit too low for the uneven roads here in Poland.

The QP however is parked in front of the barn door so if it doesn't move then nothing moves so she's top of the list of things to do. The problem appeared to be difficult starting and un-even running, indicating to me that the carburetors were out of tune. The last time I had tried to address this I used a Polish mechanic who'd been recommended by an E-type driving friend. Two days later the car was returned to me with the prognosis that the engine was "f****d" when in fact all the guy had done was turned the mixture up thereby fouling the plugs a week later. So armed with a Haynes manual on Webers, an airflow meter and a few screw drivers I set about the task myself.

You'll see in the pictures the non standard sustainable bonnet support (wooden prop). This is because the bonnet is a very heavy panel which I don't fancy crashing down on my kidneys while I'm fettling. I know the bonnet goes to a vertical position but that is a two man job and it also puts strain on the bonnet hinges if prolonged. So the prop stays, you'll also notice the numerous axle stands for the brake service, but more of that later.

Now looking at a quad cam V8 crowned with four twin choked Webers could intimidate the faint hearted, but in fact given that they are bereft of complicated fuel injection and computerised

ignition systems they are quite easy to set up.

Indeed after an hour of tweaking and some fresh petrol off she went running a lot better. So flushed with success I reassembled the air filter housing and fired her up again. Nothing, she wasn't having it.

On relatively simple engines it is assumed that as long as you have a spark and petrol it must run. So I checked the plugs, and re-cleaned them. I could see petrol being squirted in so that wasn't the problem. I called the guys at McGraths and though they tried to suggest things at the end of the day they are not looking at the car. So after a fresh battery my only conclusion was the starter motor as I've had similar problems on my Ford E350 panel van.

By co-incidence, the day I resolved that if she didn't start, the starter motor was coming off, it too packed up. So of it came and after a full rebuild (125gbp) it's back on and the bloody car starts second turn of the key. A final tweak of the carbs and the distributor and she's purring like a kitten, all be it a big one.

Lesson learned. If in doubt think laterally.

So with the old girl up in the air, on heavy duty axle stands, I figured it was as good a time as any to give her the once over. Now I had a QPIII in the UK a few years ago, one of the rare RHD versions, blue with a white interior if one of your readers has it, and given the statute of limitations I can now confess that I had 130mph out of it down the M5. Getting it there was easy; slowing down for the slip road raised an eyebrow though. So brakes are top of the list of things to do, but where do you buy pads for a 25 year old Maser?



Above: Quattroporte III outside its Polish barn



The problem over here is getting parts for the more eccentric choice of motor car. Fortunately since Poland's accession to the EU, getting stuff over the internet and posted over is a lot simpler. Another lesson I've learned over the years is that parts bought in prestige branded boxes are often twice the price of those from the original supplier (OEM). For example an ECU for a Porsche 911 is £1,800 if it is in a Porsche box. If you get it from the OEM, Bosch its £350. So I figured that as Maserati only made just over 2,000 QP11's and that at the time they were owned by de Tomaso, who liked using Yankee running gear, I figured that armed with a part number I'd be able to cross reference to some GM / Chrysler kit.

So armed with an EBC part number, off I go to the local motor factor who tells me it's 250 quid (front and rear only excluding the handbrake) and I have to wait two weeks. The translation was OK but I suspect the concept didn't quite make it. So after 30 minutes I'm behind the counter pointing at the screen and up come the alternatives. Aston Martin DBS V8, Lamborghini, Ferrari, Iso Grifo. No Honda's. Three days later they're in the post from the UK at 180 quid. So much for shop local. The rest of the kit came from McGraths, only one mistake but their brakes are cheaper, so after a week's delay I can get stuck in.

You'll see from the photos that the original pads weren't that bad, but I've started so I'll finish. Up front was easy - big chunky calipers and big bolts. The rears are more involved as they are inboard discs and access is tight. They are the automotive equivalent of Victorian chimneys, the solution to which was to send little boys into the crevice while you stood outside poking around with a big stick. I'm a big lad with big hands so I sent in my odd job

man, Grzesio . What the bolt cutters are doing in the picture I didn't ask but I left it with him for the afternoon and returned to help bleed the brakes.

Next up were the belts and 30 minutes later it's all done. Again the old ones weren't that bad but it's one less thing to worry about.

One thing I thought I might have to worry about however, was the prop-shaft support bush. This is a fairly big rubber bush/bearing which acts as a slide between the prop-shaft and the rear differential. I've always had a big clunking sound when selecting gear and I suspected something was amiss around here. The gearbox had been given a clean bill of health by a specialist last year. So off it came. The rubber itself had no signs of perishing and the bearing within it was smooth. The only sign of wear was the deformation, but no tearing, of the little webs within the bush that give it its suspension. McGraths weren't sure what it was (my parts manual from the club hadn't arrived yet), and weren't keen to supply as they thought it cost £165 plus VAT and postage. Oddly enough it isn't actually listed in the parts manual which enabled a certain UK based Italian spares specialist to suggest I order a new prop shaft! You can do the maths on how much that box would cost. So given that there is no indication that the bearing will come loose within the bush it's gone back on the car re-greased and properly tightened up.

While we were under the car, (the prop-shaft took two of us), we looked at the diff oil. It was clean so was merely topped up. The clean oil in both the gearbox and diff suggest that the previous owner had some work done on the drive train so the clonking noise was probably the two loose prop shaft bolts we found.

Finally, top-side again for oil and water. Fortunately the motor doesn't burn oil but with oil changes at every 5000miles it doesn't have time to! Next time you baulk at the cost of oil on your service bill bear in mind there's ten litres of it and when you're working at minus 5 degrees the viscosity means it takes nearly an hour to pour it in.

Lastly water and now you've experienced a hard winter in the UK you'll appreciate the need for antifreeze. My motivation was the furring on the thermostat housing which was causing the top hose seal to fail. This can be more than cosmetic as I've got a not too old Honda motor bike where aluminum oxidization has caused one of the radiators to collapse. So it came off, got properly cleaned inside and out, and re-assembled with new thermostat and sea. Easy access, 30 minutes and job done.

So what can I say about QPHI's as a DIY service proposition? Firstly it is nowhere near as difficult as I thought it would be which means I've now no excuse for not servicing her annually. They are also very well built. Nothing seized or snapped off and this is a 30 year old car.

The cost of parts needs some perspective. This time it cost me just over £600, but that includes £80 in postage for me. Also bear in mind it includes all the brake pads and rubber belts. If I'd done the air filter, plugs and leads (done two years ago) there would have been no change out of £800. Expensive

you think? When you consider I've not touched her in 5 years, albeit that I've only done 5,000km then no. In context BMW just tried to charge me £120 for a small piece of door trim that came un-glued on my wife's 318, that's expensive. What about my labour? I reckon I spent 25-30 hours on it so an experienced motor engineer would probably spend half that say 15 hours at £50 per hour plus VAT, nearly £900. The total then, let's say £1,700. Again putting that in perspective I spend £500 a year on my modern Peugeot.

No, the only caution comes from the sheer size of the thing. This isn't a task I'd want to do with some hobby tools from Halfords, nor in a single car lock up somewhere certainly when you it involves venturing underneath the car!

With this done I'm inspired to take on my Indy which is scheduled for March. So if Geoff doesn't mind I'll write to you in the summer.
(We'll look forward to it, Neil. Ed)

A quick word of thanks is due to Claire and her boys at McGraths for putting up with my e-mails and I've now got the parts manuals for both my Maser's so next time it'll be easier.

P.S. I'm thinking of a '90's Ghibli at the end of the summer. Any comments on these as a DIY proposition? I've heard the FIAT era cars aren't as well made as the de Tomaso cars. 🚗

One man and his cars – Neil Crook

by Geoff Lancaster

An occasional series in which Trident explores member's passion for cars and Maseratis in particular

As you will gather from the photographs, Neil Crook has a very varied collection of cars in his barn in Poland. He was formerly the Chief Financial Officer of a US listed company and was in the happy position to be able to declare independence and wave goodbye to corporate life on the back of share options a few years ago. He therefore “retired” to help his wife look after their, then, three daughters. The Crooks (that doesn't sound quite right does it? Ed) since had a son so the more help the better. Neil's hobby was to trade a few cars in order to fund the core of his collection which at the time was made up of an '89 Porsche 911 3.2, an '85 Jaguar XJ12 and a Peugeot 504 cabriolet.

The Maserati bug first bit when Neil was still in the UK. He owned a rare RHD Quattroporte S3 and liked it. Some time later he was reading about a LHD example in a piece by Martin Buckley. On impulse he called the Italian owner and bought it for less than £3,000. Neil flew over to Italy jumped in his new purchase and drove it straight back to Poland.

The coachwork needed attention but metal bashing is cheap in Poland so £1,250 got Neil a body restoration with new metal in the bonnet and a full respray. Until the recent starting episode recorded above in trident, the QP has never let him down.

Also in the collection is an Indy. Neil was offered this car as a barn find, complete with bird droppings. A friend told him he was mad to buy a non-runner but a change of plugs later and she fired first time. He drove this one back to Poland as well; 2,000km in a single day.

Recently he tells me he had the opportunity to drive a '92 Ghibli. He describes the car as 'seriously quick and not dear money' so I predict some fleet adjustments coming soon.

For the record here is the complete list of cars making up the eclectic 'Crook's Collection' complete with the owners pithy comments on each. 🇬🇧

Below: US spec TR6 and QP III.

Photo: Geoff Lancaster





Gets bloody cold in Poland!

Alfa Spider S3 – ‘Always starts but the electrics are slow.’

Alfa GTV 2000 (105) – ‘Over rated and gives credence to the reputation that Alfa’s have. Drove it here and it hasn’t run since.’

BMW E30 M3 – ‘Better value than a 911 but they bite. Expensive now so will trade for a Biturbo Ghibli if I find a nice one.’

Citroen GSpecial estate – ‘Totally original and a great challenge to drive at speed.’

Jaguar XJ12 – ‘Great when they’re running. Great design poorly executed.’

Jaguar XJ40 – ‘Wife made me keep this so I’ve put some tuning bits on it but it too has BLitis.’

Maserati QP S3 – ‘Seriously under rated and value for money certainly compared to XJ’s. Fuel consumption would scare a Shiek.’

Maserati Indy 4.9 – ‘A bit of an impulse and to be honest too low for the roads here in Poland.’

MGB GT – ‘Classic spec. White with wire wheels.’

Mercedes 280SL – ‘The pagoda model. A proper Merc.’

Mercedes 500SEL (W126) – ‘Last of the proper Mercs but being broken as running gear going into a Mk1 Granada Coupe.’

Peugeot 504 Cabriolet – ‘Proper 4 seater convertible with a big boot. Perfect for families and it has never let me down. The one car I won’t sell.’

Porsche 911 – ‘Over priced and over rated but achingly pretty and you can’t have a decent collection without one.’

Triumph TR2 – ‘Tally ho.’

Triumph TR6 – ‘Expensive compared to MG’s given comparable performance (mine’s a U.S. version) but easy to fettle.’

VW T3 notchback – Lowered rat motor. Wicked.



TR6 again, this time with Alfa Spider



M3, 928 and 911.

The Citroen SM V8

By Geoff Lancaster & Andrew Brodie

In the Spring of 1974, the then owners of Maserati, Citroen, instructed the Maserati factory to design and build a new prototype V8 engine for the forthcoming Quattroporte II. The plan was that Maserati would engineer and build, in-house, a single development engine to be road and track tested in a 'mule'.

During the Summer ,after the development engine had been built and bench tested, it was fitted to an otherwise bog standard Citroen SM. The Citroen, finished in Rio red then completed 12,000 kms of testing including a trip to Rome and high speed running at both the Modena and Monza race tracks. Ing Giulio Alfieri also used the car personally for local commuting.

The car was eventually dismantled and scrapped in 1975, but the experimental V8 was carefully removed and stored along with other prototype engines at the Maserati factory. When the Panini family acquired the Maserati collection in early 1998, the experimental V8 was among the treasures and went into storage at the family farm near Modena.

Later that year the engine was sold to German collector, Hermann Postert who put it on display at his home but otherwise left the motor untouched. Again the engine changed hands in the Summer of 2009, going to a private collector, Philip Kantor. The car to which the engine had originally been fitted was of course long since scrapped but through the offices of SM specialist Frederic Daunat a donor SM was acquired in the correct Rio red and for the first

time in 35 years this unique V8 was restored to its original position.

The Citroen SM along with its development V8 will feature this year in a forthcoming book, 'Maserati, The Citroen Years', by Marc Sonnery and published in England by Parker House Publishing later this year.

I am indebted for the above details to the car's owner and to Andrew Brodie, our own SM specialist (No! Nothing to do with Max Mosley!)who took the accompanying photographs and also writes here his own impressions of the remarkable recreation of a unique prototype. He writes.....

This is a bit of fun from Retromobile.

In detail, the car has been modified only very slightly indeed to give a little more room for the engine at the sides of the rear of the engine. The main firewall appears untouched and inside the cabin nothing is visible on the RH side, and only an expert would know a little room has gone from above the accelerator pedal on the LH (drivers side).

The engine appears almost certainly to have been made by cutting up and welding together two standard blocks and four standard heads. One shot is the non standard oil feeds to the RH head. Naturally crank, intershaft and cams are special. The standard rear timing cover appears to be in place, and a modified water turbine cover ,that feeds the water in out on the LH side, is fitted.



The actual car is fitted up so nicely, it appears almost to be to production standard. Further, there are very few non standard parts....though a QPII sized oil cooler is fitted.

At the time of viewing, it had not yet been driven, but was running and was reputed to make some very exciting 'whhup' ' whhup' noises!

The interesting point of course is that they decided to actually go with the SS version of the standard engine, despite quite a lot of this engine being non-interchangeable with production engines. 🚫

PHOTOS: The experimental V8 installed in 'period' SM





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Portrait of a Racer

By Bob Montgomery

Jean Behra. Or 'Jeannot' as he was known throughout his career, was France's top driver during the 1950s. Born in Nice in 1921, like so many other drivers of that era, he served his apprenticeship on two wheels, first as a cycling champion and then as a French motorcycling champion for three successive years. However, by then he yearned to race cars and made his debut in a 4-litre Talbot in the 1949 Coupe de Salon at Montlhéry where he finished a very creditable sixth.

He then showed his versatility by finishing third overall and winning his class in the 1950 Monte Carlo Rally driving a Simca 1,100cc. This led to a contract to drive a Simca at Le Mans, shared with another motorcyclist, Roger Loyer, but sadly, they retired in the race. A month later, driving a borrowed 1.5 litre Maserati, he won his class at the Mont Ventoux hillclimb. This in turn led to an offer to join the French team of Amédée Gordini. Third in his first Formula 2 race, it became clear that Gordini had signed an exceptional talent and Behra continued with the team until 1954. The highlight of his time with the underfinanced Gordini team was the day in 1952 when he beat the works Ferraris of Farina, Ascari and Villoresi fair and square to win the French Grand Prix at Reims.

Drives like that and his obvious bravery endeared him to the French people. However, his bravery was to be tested in 1953 at Pau when he made contact with a Ferrari and crashed heavily, suffering spinal and arm injuries, but despite this he was soon back in the fray upholding French honour against the Italian teams then dominating Grand Prix racing.

In 1955 Jean Behra joined the Maserati team and the greater reliability of the Italian cars was soon reflected in a string of successes gained driving sportscars as well as Grand Prix cars. A nasty accident in Ireland at the Dundrod TT race cost him an ear which was replaced with a plastic substitute and although he continued to have success with Maserati he also found time to give BRM its first Grand Prix success by winning at Caen. Thus when Maserati withdrew from

Jean Behra – the most successful French driver of the 1950s.



racing at the start of 1958, Jean signed to drive a GP BRM and for Porsche in sportscar racing. The BRM turned out to be disastrously unreliable and it was no surprise when Jean switched to Ferrari for 1959, opening his season with victory in the 'Aintree 200'.

However, Jean became frustrated with some of the antics of the Ferrari management and matters came to a head when he quarrelled with team manager Tavoni and ended up punching him at the French Grand Prix. Unsurprisingly, Jean found himself 'released' from his Ferrari contract.

Two weeks later, he drove a privately-entered Porsche RSK to second place in the Auvergne Two Hour race and a week later was entered in the same car at Avus in the 1959 Berlin Sports Car Grand Prix. Avus was an extraordinary venue for a race – consisting of two long flat straights linked at either end by two lengthy U-turns which were banked. Of these the South curve was relatively flat but the North Curve was much more daunting being brick-paved and steeply banked and lined with a parapet which had served as an anti-aircraft gun emplacement in World War II.

While chasing Von Trips for the lead, Behra clipped the parapet and spun over the top of the banking, being flung out of the car and dying instantly. With 'Jeannot's' death, the French nation lost its best-loved sportsman. It would not be until the arrival of Alain Prost many years later that a French driver would be as successful once more in grand Prix racing. 🏆

(This article first appeared in The Irish Times and is reproduced by the kind permission of that publication and the author. Bob Montgomery is a member of the Guild of Motoring Writers).



Photo: Graham Wood



Photo: Graham Wood



Photo: Graham Wood

Vera's Lunch 2010

The Maserati Club social calendar got off to a flying start with the annual Vera's Lunch.



Photo: Dave Smith



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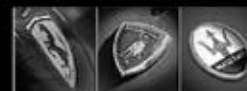
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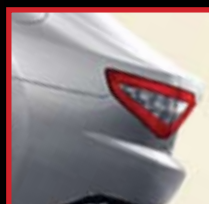


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THE NEW MASERATI GRANCABRIO

The stunning new Maserati GranCabrio is latest model to join the Maserati range, this is Maserati's first genuine four-seater car offering generous accommodation for four adults, the GranCabrio is powered by a 4.7 litre, 440hp V8 engine matched to a six speed, automatic transmission allowing for slow speed cruising or high performance touring as the mood takes you.

The Maserati GranCabrio is priced at £95,630.00 on the road, including 3 year/unlimited mileage warranty.

Maserati Official Pre-Owned Selection

GRANTURISMO COUPE - V8 S 2dr MC Shift 2010/10, Bianco Eldorado with Nero Poltrona Frau Leather. 1k	£94,850	GRANTURISMO COUPE - V8 2dr Auto 2008/08, Grigio Granito with Cuoio Sella Tan Leather. 13k	£63,500
QUATTROPORTE SALOON - V8 S 4dr Auto 2010/10, Nero Carbonio Metallic with Nero Leather. 0k	£88,250	GRANTURISMO COUPE - V8 2dr Auto 2008/08, Argento Luna with Avorio Poltrona Frau Leather. 16k	£62,850
QUATTROPORTE SALOON - V8 Sport GT S 4dr Auto 2009/59, Nero Carbonio Metallic with Nero Leather. 3k	£85,850	GRANTURISMO COUPE - V8 2dr Auto 2008/08, Nero Carbonio with Avorio Leather. 17k	£62,850
QUATTROPORTE SALOON - V8 S 4dr Auto 2010/10, Nero Carbonio Metallic with Nero Leather. 1k	£84,850	GRANTURISMO COUPE - V8 2dr Auto 2007/57, Grigio Alfieri Metallic with Cuoio Beige Leather. 11k	£62,500
GRANTURISMO COUPE - V8 S 2dr Automatic 2010/10, Blu Oceano with Avorio Leather. 0k	£83,850	GRANTURISMO COUPE - V8 2dr Auto 2007/57, Grigio Alfieri Metallic with Cuoio Beige Leather. 11k	£62,500
QUATTROPORTE SALOON - V8 4dr Auto 2010/59, Blu Oceano with Avorio. 1k	£79,850	GRANTURISMO COUPE - V8 2dr Auto 2008/57, Nero Carbonio Metallic with Rosso Corallo Poltrona Frau Leather. 11k	£61,850
GRANTURISMO COUPE - V8 2dr Auto 2010/59, Nero Carbonio with Nuovo Sabbia Leather. 1k	£78,850	GRANTURISMO COUPE - V8 2dr Auto 2008/57, Grigio Touring (Light Silver) Metallic with Rosso Corallo Poltrona Frau Leather. 4k	£59,850
GRANTURISMO COUPE - V8 S 2dr Automatic 2009/59, Grigio Touring with Nero Poltrona Frau Leather. 1k	£77,850	GRANTURISMO COUPE - V8 2dr Auto 2008/08, Nero Carbonio Metallic with Avorio Cream Leather. 27k	£59,850

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MASERATI

EXCELLENCE THROUGH PASSION

MASERATI QUATTROPORTE SPORT GT S POWER AND ELEGANCE MADE TO MEASURE



www.maserati.co.uk

440 HORSEPOWER IN A PININFARINA SUIT

As you would expect, the Maserati Quattroporte Sport GT S combines the elegance of Pininfarina design with the performance of a thoroughbred 440 hp V8 engine to deliver an exceptional driving experience.

However, you may be surprised to discover 95 years of craftsmanship fused with the finest quality materials that offer over 4 million interior trim combinations, right down to the colour of the stitching. This means that your Quattroporte can be as bespoke as a tailor-made suit.

The Maserati Quattroporte range is priced from £77,330 on the road, including 3 year/unlimited mileage warranty.

Car shown: Maserati Quattroporte Sport GT S priced at £89,860 on the road with metallic paint at £540. Official fuel consumption for the Maserati Quattroporte Sport GT S in mpg (litres/100km): urban 11.8 (24.0), extra urban 25.9 (10.9), combined 18.0 (15.7). CO₂ emissions on combined cycle 365g/km.

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