

Harold Robbins

This was not Harold Robbins' car, which I think was chassis /9638. I handed the car over to him at the factory and he drove it straight down to his house in the south of France.

John Page made an epic visit to cure an electric window fault and service his other cars. "I own three of your cars, gentlemen, I think that warrants a personal visit from one of your engineers". Dead right it did!

Harold R owned another house immediately behind the one he normally lived in. When he wanted to escape attention and settle down to writing he told everyone he was going away, but not that it was just around the block! Select staff knew but it was successful and he kept the secret for several years.

In actual fact this was not an Earls Court show car. Tony Good of Good Relations always had the use of a car, which doubled as a London based Press Car for photo shoots etc and this is one of them. This was the other car fitted with Air Call 2 way radio, callsign Gold 1.

2 way radios in cars were comparatively rare in those days and there is a story about how it did Tony Good an unusual favour. Illegally parked on a double yellow one time, two traffic wardens homed in on it like a pair of ME109s (actually female 109s it is said) but on closing in for the kill they heard the radio burst into life. 'Shucks' (or something) said the first warden, 'It's a bloody police car!', and they turned away, hugely disappointed. The story was relayed to Tony G by a friend passing by.

Petula Clark, Dusty Springfield

Is there proof that Petula Clark owned a Jensen? I remember there was a rumour at one Geneva Show that she might be interested, but nothing came of it, in Switzerland at least.

Regarding Dusty Springfield, I should have looked back at earlier posts but she actually owned two cars. Regrettably the first proved to be a real problem and Kjell replaced it. She was one of the most delightful people I met while at West Brom, shame that she was mixed up with a real dragon and lost her way for a while.

There is one person who, if he is still with us so to speak, could be a real help here. He is Nigel Bligh, who was Sales Manager at Folletts up to about 1973/4. I have a feeling he lived in Kent, but so far I have not been able to find him. Not only did he deal with most of the celeb owners, but he will have a fund of stories to tell if anybody can trace him.

Ginger Baker

Dick Graves received a postcard one morning with the message 'Just off across the Sahara' and signed 'Peter'. No further clues as to the identity of the sender until some time later we received a call from Ginger (Peter) Baker's manager to charter an aircraft and go and bring his FF back. 'He has gone over a cliff but was saved by a tree from almost certain death'. Too right!

... Ginger paid a visit to the factory while his car was being built, in order to see its progress down the build line. Just for fun we put a dinky model in a gap in the line created for it, 'That's your car there, Mr Baker!'. Afterwards I had the Dinky painted to match his paint and trim spec.

In actual fact there were no Dinky kits then, it was simply a matter of unscrewing the base of the model which released the body from 'glass' and trim. making it easy to paint the bodies and trim panels. On my desk I had a row of Dinky FF's painted in all the available exterior colours.

... There is a lot more to tell about Peter (Ginger) Baker and his FFs when I can collect my thought, and it is just possible that he technically owned all three cars at the same time, certainly the first two.

Verkauf von Interceptor an GKN Direktor

While we sometimes had customers collecting cars from the factory, we did not sell directly other than to execs of principle suppliers, for example GKN.

One such director came to the factory one summer afternoon and picked up his new car and drove away full of smiles etc. The following morning David Millard (Service Manager) received a telephone call from him asking for the car to be collected from his home as he had a problem. Apparently, when he got home the previous evening he drove the car into his garage and sat for a few minutes enjoying the music from the 8 track, the burble of the engine and the smell of fresh Connolly leather. Satisfied with everything, he gave a hearty blip on the accelerator pedal prior to switching off the engine. As you have probably guessed by now, he was still in gear; the car shot forward straight through the garage wall, resulting in one modified Interceptor and one extended garage! And one very embarrassed GKN director!