

The World of Personal Number Plates

Issue 52

# Regtransfers

Also inside this issue:

Nick Mason

of **PINK FLOYD**

and his 250 GTO plate



**MY  
NAME'S  
DODDIE**  
foundation

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**DODDIE WEIR**

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PERSONAL NUMBER PLATES



# Think Twice



So, what do you do when the number plates bug bites but you already have your ultimate registration, a number-one with your initials? Well, more and more people are buying *another* number-one with their initials.

Apologies if you had to read that twice. Yes, we did say that people are buying *two* number-one initials plates. It may seem impossible at first, as every registration is unique, but in many cases there are indeed two versions: one with the number first and one with the initials first. In the photo above, John Priestly, from Sleaford in Lincolnshire, provides the perfect example with his superb brace of JLP plates.

JLP 1 was issued in London in 1947 and the reversed combination, 1 JLP, was released in 1996 when it was sold at auction.

Owning both variants in this way is the sure route to real exclusivity. Imagine owning one and then passing someone driving the other way in a car displaying the reversed version! It could be even worse than finding someone else wearing the same outfit at a party.

Complementary registrations of this kind make a big impression. They work particularly well for business branding. They also make a fantastic pairing for married couples who may share the same

initials - Don and Debbie, Karen and Kirsty, John and Jane etc.

Number-ones have always been amongst the most coveted of cherished registrations and owning a matching set makes an impressive statement. As they never go out of fashion, and are constantly in demand, number-ones also have terrific investment potential.

Luckily, we have many more of these unrivalled single and paired examples to choose from.

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BSN I I BSN	HCT I I HCT	LHB I I LHB	RTA I I RTA	TSN I I TSN	WFT I I WFT
BV I I BV	HGR I I HGR	LPS I I LPS	SHG I I SHG	TV I I TV	WGK I I WGK
DDF I I DDF	HJR I I HJR	NCR I I NCR	TBT I I TBT	VBS I I VBS	WPL I I WPL
EAA I I EAA	HJV I I HJV	NRD I I NRD	TEB I I TEB	VRB I I VRB	WR I I WR
EEO I I EEO	HPJ I I HPJ	PPN I I PPN	TFP I I TFP	VS I I VS	YEB I I YEB
FJP I I FJP	JTT I I JTT	PPT I I PPT	TKA I I TKA	VYN I I VYN	YJC I I YJC



# MY NAME'S DODDIE



Standing nearly two metres tall, Scottish rugby legend Doddie Weir OBE is a big chap with a big voice. As Anna White of Scottish clothing specialists ScotlandShop, who produced much of Doddie's trademark tartan garb, wrote, "His voice is instantly recognisable as he climbs the stairs to the office". Well, if the voice isn't enough to identify Doddie at a distance, the aforementioned tartan leaves little room for doubt. If you should decide to google his name and then look at the images returned by the search... Well, just be prepared for a bit of sensory overload.

Surely, every single person who interviews Doddie must ask about that tartan. Predictably, we do too.

"I was asked to commentate on a rugby game in Aberdeen about 20 years ago," says Doddie, "so I thought I would get a pair of Aberdeen tartan trews for the event. That was about 20 years ago. And since then it has grown to include the full three-piece suit, shoes, underpants, buses and even tractors!"

The reference to tractors is a nod to Doddie's rural roots and the place the farming life has always held in his heart. As

a farmer's son, the young Doddie initially seemed destined to follow in his father's footsteps. He earned his Higher National Diploma from the Scottish Agricultural College and worked on the family farm. He also worked as a beer salesman for Carlsberg Tetley. Doddie's rugby journey began at school leading to an amateur career with Stewart's Melville FP RFC and Melrose RFC. The transition to the professional game came in the mid-1990s when he moved to England and joined Newcastle Falcons.

As well as his club appearances, Doddie was capped more than 60 times as part of the Scottish national team between 1990 and 2000. He says that his favourite memory from his rugby career is winning his first cap for Scotland on 10 November 1990. He retired from playing in 2004 and has, to an extent, returned to his roots, as he now lives with his family on their farm in Scotland. But that change of pace certainly doesn't equate to a loss of interest in sport.

"I follow my kids playing, and watch rugby on the telly, especially games with Newcastle Falcons. I still support Melrose, Newcastle Falcons, and of course

Scotland. I like to watch the Grand Prix, the World Rally, and the golf and I still enjoy a little flutter on the horses."

Spending most of his life doing farm work or playing competitive sports has left Doddie a strong believer in the benefits of an active lifestyle.

"I'm a little worried that the number of juniors and seniors coming into rugby is decreasing. More emphasis should be put on the benefits of sport and exercise, instead of playing computer games!"

Much has been made in the media about the evident correlation between strenuous sport and motor neurone disease (MND). This correlation seems particularly marked for sports that involve impacts to the head such as may be sustained during hard tackles and even when heading a soccer ball. Recently quoted figures estimate that the incidence of MND amongst top sports people may be eight times higher than for the rest of the population.

"There is a lot of talk about the issue of neurological conditions in sport," says Doddie, "and I do think more should be done to look into the effects. Thinking of



rugby in particular, I think that more needs to be done to train players in how to tackle safely.”

This newly prominent issue is why Doddie is becoming a familiar face on our TV screens. Even people who don't really follow sport now know the names of Doddie and his friends Rob Burrow and Stephen Darby. All three men achieved recognition during their sporting careers: Doddie and Rob for Rugby Union and Rugby League respectively and Stephen for football. More recently, however, they are becoming household names for a very different reason.

In June 2017, Doddie announced that he had received a diagnosis of MND; this was shortly before his 47th birthday. In September 2018, at the age of 29, Stephen revealed that he had also been diagnosed with MND. Rob's MND diagnosis was made public in December 2019; he was 37. Doddie, Rob and Stephen have, like Professor Stephen Hawking before them, become the *de facto* faces of MND awareness in the UK, largely thanks to appearances on TV shows such as BBC1's *The One Show* and their interviews with television journalist Sally Nugent on *BBC Breakfast* and with Lorraine Kelly on her eponymous show. But their recent notoriety has not been as victims of a disease: it has been as men making active contributions to the fight against that disease. Doddie decided to establish a charitable

foundation to raise money for the cause and, in October 2017, the My Name's Doddie Foundation was registered as a Scottish charity.

Doddie is a resilient character and his positivity comes across strongly in his TV interviews. His condition has obviously had an impact. Lifestyle changes are unavoidable and even that famous voice shows signs of the struggle but Doddie still exudes an air of enthusiasm and vitality and the group interviews he has done with Rob Burrow and Stephen Darby have been as humorous as they have been profound. When Regtransfers supplied Doddie with private number plates to promote the My Name's Doddie Foundation, Doddie kindly sent us a video message with his booming good wishes for Christmas and the new year. However else he may be meeting the challenge of MND, it certainly isn't quietly.

“I am doing well considering the issue I have,” he says, “but every day is a fight against MND. The unpredictability of the situation means that day to day life is lived as it comes, or “Definitely freestyle,” as Doddie puts it. But he believes that there is no one-size-fits-all approach and each person living with the disease finds their own path.

“I think that everyone has their own fight with this illness, so I believe it's up to the individual as to how they want to face the disease. I've always been involved in team sport and working as part of a team, so it's

natural to me to want to work with others. For me, the bigger the team - the stronger we can fight MND.”

That team is the My Name's Doddie Foundation. “The Foundation was set up by a group of my friends initially, to find a cure for MND, not realising how big it would become. We set it up so that we could control the direction of our investment in research. We work very closely with other charities especially MND Scotland and the MND Association. We have spent nearly £7million to find a cure and provide practical help to people with MND.

“An effective treatment could be just round the corner. The first-ever major drug trials in the UK are taking place now. There are two main trials underway just now: one is called TRICALS, the other is MND-SMART. So, at last there is light at the end of the tunnel.”

As well as the practical activity in pursuit of effective treatment, Doddie feels that there has been a welcome growth in public awareness of the condition. “I think that awareness of MND is much greater now than it was 10 years ago and people are generally more aware of the effects MND has on the patient and their family.”

The news about the current UK drug trials, the raised profile of MND in the public mind, the publicity surrounding the challenges faced by Doddie, Rob and Stephen and the team efforts of the My Name's Doddie Foundation all seem



## **“On the charge like a mad giraffe.”**

Doddie's Rugby Union career



### **Amateur career**

Weir started playing rugby for Stewart's Melville FP RFC. He then played for Melrose RFC in the Borders and was part of the team that won six Scottish club championships.

### **Professional career**

He later moved to England in 1995 to join the Newcastle Falcons and was part of the Premiership winning side of 1997–98.

He also started the victorious 2001 Anglo-Welsh Cup final.

He moved back to Scotland to join the newly reformed Borders team in 2002 where he remained until his retirement from professional rugby. He finished his playing career together with Gary Armstrong at the Border Reivers in 2004.

### **International career**

Weir's first appearance for Scotland was on 10 November 1990 against Argentina at Murrayfield Stadium. A mainstay of the team throughout the 1990s, he was a fan favourite of the Murrayfield crowd. In 1997 he was the first recipient of the Famous Grouse Scotland Player of the Five Nations Award.

He was once described by commentator Bill McLaren as being “On the charge like a mad giraffe”

A lineout specialist, he was selected as part of the British and Irish Lions tour of South Africa in 1997. Whilst on the tour he suffered a serious knee injury, as a result of foul play, while playing against Mpumalanga Province.

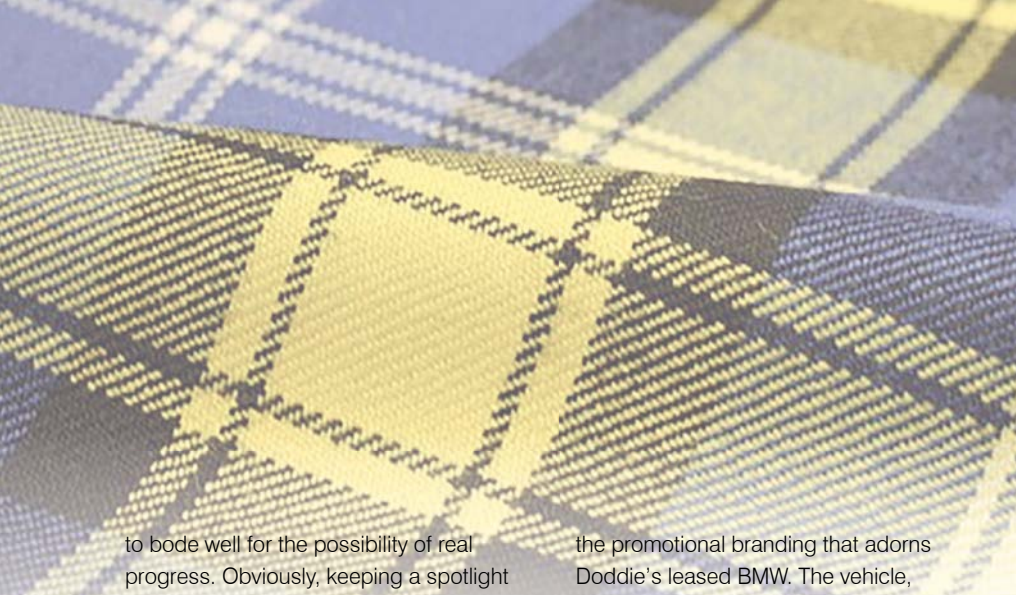
His final appearance was in the Six Nations Championship match against France at Murrayfield, on 4 March 2000. He won 61 Scottish caps, scoring 19 points from four tries.

He is the only Scot to have scored 2 tries against New Zealand.

*Condensed from Wikipedia*







Doddie's autobiography, *My Name's Doddie*, is published by Black and White Publishing 2018

to bode well for the possibility of real progress. Obviously, keeping a spotlight on the issue takes a lot of work and Doddie takes every opportunity to promote the cause.

One of the tools he uses to great effect is that ever-present tartan. The new variant, Doddie's own trademark version, was created with the help of ScotlandShop.com, whose founder we quoted in opening this article. The pattern brings together the colours of the teams that Doddie loves: Melrose, Newcastle Falcons and Scotland. Eye-catching somehow doesn't seem like a sufficiently potent adjective...

Doddie's new DOD 111E number plates are also intended as an addition to

the promotional branding that adorns Doddie's leased BMW. The vehicle, provided by Thrifty Car Rental, bears the name of the foundation on its sides.

"I have another personal plate, GWE 1R," says Doddie. "My 'Sunday' name, as Doddie is short for George. My brothers Thomas and Christopher have similar plates. It's a bit of a family tradition as my old boy got one for his 50th birthday. And my sister doesn't like to be left out so she has a couple of nice plates too.

"I enjoy the fun in finding the plate that most closely matches your name. Having the name on the front of your car is unique.

Some people, like my good lady, prefer to remain anonymous!"

We wish Kathy the best of luck with that anonymity thing. Private plates or not, it can't be easy to remain incognito in the company of a stentorian, tartan giant.

- Rick Cadger

**MY NAME'S DODDIE**  
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# Under the Hammer

The continuing spectacular prices achieved at auction demonstrate the resilience of personal number plates as solid investments in uncertain times.

The values of top quality cherished registrations are growing, worldwide. It might be hard to believe, but eight of the ten most expensive UK number plates have been purchased since the onset of the 2007/2008 financial crisis. Despite uncertain times, people are confident that wisely selected private plates will hold or increase their value.

The competitive environment of a car registrations auction seems to be especially good at delivering spectacular sale prices. Sums paid in the UK have been amazing enough, with outstanding examples achieving prices in excess of half a million pounds, but in some parts of the world, a single registration may sell for millions of pounds.

Spending a few hundred pounds on a personalised number plate is something most people are quite comfortable with; the increasing number of private registrations sold in the UK each year demonstrates the fact. That shouldn't surprise us; a good registration can do more to personalise a vehicle than any other change. A flashy spoiler or custom paint job may be eye-catching, but no one can guarantee it will be unique. With a private registration, that is exactly what is guaranteed: uniqueness, forever.

The table opposite lists the top 40 prices (including fees and taxes) paid for plates at auction since November 2020:

<b>0 IO</b>	£128,000
<b>RR 3</b>	£126,500
<b>LFC I</b>	£125,062
<b>86 A</b>	£111,813
<b>J42 MES</b>	£102,825
<b>86 0</b>	£79,059
<b>65 0</b>	£71,997
<b>38 0</b>	£55,331
<b>IG 7</b>	£48,628
<b>666 S</b>	£45,059
<b>15 YED</b>	£43,749
<b>812 GTS</b>	£42,848
<b>NSK I</b>	£40,539
<b>5 OMG</b>	£38,741
<b>XBO 55X</b>	£38,613
<b>600 M</b>	£37,457
<b>MUD 90D</b>	£36,430
<b>UPS I</b>	£32,899
<b>IG 12</b>	£32,231
<b>IIII 0</b>	£32,219
<b>IG 10</b>	£32,219
<b>4II AN</b>	£32,193
<b>2 SUV</b>	£32,193
<b>123 PC</b>	£32,193
<b>JEN 20N</b>	£31,307
<b>4 XU</b>	£30,267
<b>4 OMG</b>	£28,341
<b>50 MAD</b>	£28,341
<b>5I 00</b>	£25,901
<b>GTB 275C</b>	£25,773
<b>10 YK</b>	£25,773
<b>7 MNH</b>	£25,721
<b>7 YT</b>	£25,131
<b>222 S</b>	£24,617
<b>I VSS</b>	£24,617
<b>105 S</b>	£24,489
<b>AVE IIE</b>	£24,489
<b>992 M</b>	£24,489
<b>234 G</b>	£23,847
<b>5 YON</b>	£23,847

# The Regtransfers Auction

Not to be outdone, we have successfully hosted our own online auction for many years.

## What is the number plate auction?

The number plate auction is a premium online service that provides customers the opportunity to list their plates in an online auction for others to bid on. It also offers buyers an excellent opportunity to purchase registration marks securely in an online auction environment. Our auction differs from many other online auctions in that we specialise in selling registration marks and draw on over 35 years experience in the marketplace to ensure that the transfer process is overseen securely and legally by Regtransfers staff.

If you have any questions, or need any help, please remember that we have staff here every day, who will be happy to speak to you.

## Why you should sell with us

Regtransfers have been trading since 1982 and draw upon this immense industry experience to deliver a safe and secure service. We understand that, with the rules and regulations governing the transfer of registrations, it can be a daunting experience for customers unfamiliar with the industry. We aim to offer the most straightforward, most secure and best overall online auction facility for buying and selling registration marks in the UK.

[www.regtransfers.co.uk/auction](http://www.regtransfers.co.uk/auction)











Liyan with his younger brother, Kash

Liyan Midha is just four years old but, as his father, Bali, puts it, he is “the biggest car fanatic you will come across and will challenge Jeremy Clarkson for his position one day.” Liyan shares his passion with a Facebook page, an Instagram account and his own YouTube channel where he reviews supercars in his own uniquely entertaining way. We’d bet that you’ve never seen Lamborghinis, Porsches and Rolls-Royces demonstrated quite like this.

Liyan and Regtransfers are kindred spirits with a shared obsession with everything

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“My experience with Regtransfers can be described as simply as quick, easy and hassle-free. The fact that I am repeating business and referring family and friends to you speaks volumes.”  
*- Bali Midha*

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# Lambo Liyan

about supercars, from those roaring engines to the cool number plates that finish them off so perfectly. As you can see from the photograph, our magazine certainly seems to have captured Liyan’s interest.

Dad Bali’s own interest in motoring excellence turned to personal number plates in 2015, with his first purchase of 6 KU. “My mother’s name is G. Kaur,” he says. “I thought that plate represents her name very well.”

The pleasing aesthetics of three-character registrations lead Bali to buy 2 UO. “It was a low number, hence desirable and, of course, three characters. 3 UO then became available and was to make a great pairing.”

Bali then saw 6 OU on the Regtransfers website and directed his brother-in-law to it.


“My cousin, whose initials are SYV, purchased 5 YV,” says Bali, “which he saw as a great match for his initials and, again, inspired by the number plates on display on my vehicles.” Later on, he purchased 5 XU, primarily because of the three-character format and, also to match a plate he already owned, which also started with a ‘5’.


Over time, what started as a hobby turned into an investment. “When cash


doesn’t perform well in banks,” says Bali, “alternative avenues are the way forward, and number plates are high on the list of items providing returns alongside gold, bitcoin, real estate etc.”

Regtransfers has been very happy to be able to assist Bali and his family to find some great private plates for both aesthetic and investment purposes.

“My experience with Regtransfers can be described simply as quick, easy, hassle-free,” Bali says. “I have used you regularly for a number of years for the acquisition and disposal of a number of registrations. I regularly receive emails from you showing number plates which are personally tailored to meet my needs, based on my search requests. The fact that I am repeating business and referring family and friends to yourselves speaks volumes.”

 [lamboliyan](#)

 [lamboliyan](#)

 [@lamboliyan](#)





# Nick Mason: Fastest Drummer on Four Wheels?



Everyone knows that rock stars drive fast, expensive cars with private number plates: at least, *real* rock stars do and drummer Nick Mason is as real as it gets. With his bandmates, Roger Waters, Dave Gilmour, Richard Wright and, in the early days, Syd Barrett, Mason made musical history.

## From hi-hat to high-octane

Aside from his musical activities, Mason is well known for his lifelong obsession with cars and racing and as he has a particular enthusiasm for Ferraris, that multi-millionaire rockstar thing really comes in handy. He's not just a passive collector of automotive eye-candy: Mason is a long-time racer who has successfully taken part in the prestigious 24 Hours of Le Mans on several occasions. Of course, that doesn't mean that the eye-candy thing isn't applicable but Nick Mason's collection of stunning cars does more than just languish in a garage or warehouse.

And what a collection it is! In addition to the aforementioned Ferraris, all the legendary brands are well represented: McLaren, Maserati, Alfa Romeo, Bentley, Bugatti, Jaguar, Aston Martin, Porsche ...

## Star of the show

But whenever people talk about Nick Mason and cars in the same breath, there is one in particular that is always present in the conversation. Mason's favourite car is one that he regards as part of the family and from which he hopes never to be parted. The car in the photos on this page is a 1962 Ferrari 250 GTO that Mason

bought in 1977 for £37,000: a price that, in those days, was high enough to give one a nosebleed. Its exact value now is hard to declare exactly, but experts often estimate prices in excess of £50 million. Like most of the others in Mason's stable, the GTO is a racing workhorse that has taken part in competitions all its life. Iconic manufacturer, serious racing machine, nearly priceless... Is it possible to get any closer to a perfect car? Well, yes: Nick Mason's Ferrari 250 GTO is paired with its absolute perfect matching cherished number plate, 250 GTO, which would originally have been issued in the period from 1959. A breathtaking combination indeed.

## An expensive hobby

Of course, supercars don't come cheap and neither do perfect, top-notch cherished registrations. Fortunately for Nick Mason, his career in music was no modest matter.

There are rock bands, there are famous rock bands and then there are legendary, iconic rock bands whose music and fame transcends cultural, linguistic and generational borders. Pink Floyd are firmly established in that legendary category. As early pioneers and then, later, elder statesmen of progressive and album-oriented rock, Pink Floyd - or simply "Floyd" to their fans - produced music to universal acclaim. Their biggest selling album (and Nick Mason's favourite), *Dark Side of the Moon*, spent literally years in album charts, has sold tens of millions of

copies, has been certified multi-platinum and has been selected for preservation in the United States National Recording Registry by the Library of Congress as "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant". Oh, and it made the band very rich: rich enough to buy Ferraris.

Pink Floyd songs have been covered by diverse artists including Ed Sheeran (with whom Nick Mason performed 'Wish You Were Here' at the 2012 Olympics closing ceremony), rapper Wyclef Jean, Scissor Sisters, Foo Fighters, David Bowie, Pearl Jam, and Irish folk legend Christy Moore. They are also venerated and mangled in equal part by countless tribute and covers bands, open mic performers, karaoke and pub session singers and people in the shower.

The passing of founder Syd Barrett and, more recently, keyboard player and vocalist Richard Wright, along with the band's fractious history of personal conflict, may have assured that the spectre of reformation has been laid to rest but the legacy lives on.

## A family affair

There is a noticeable racing bias to Nick Mason's car collection. As mentioned above, Nick has raced competitively himself and passion for the sport appears to actually be encoded into the Mason DNA. Nick inherited it from his father, Bill, a documentary filmmaker who focused on motor cars and motor racing and who was also an amateur racing driver. In turn, Nick has passed the family obsession on to his



daughters Chloe and Holly. Both daughters have racing licences and Holly married professional racing driver Marino Franchitti. It should, therefore, come as no surprise that Mason's wife, Annette ("Nettie"), is no stranger to the driving seat of a racing car, nor to competitive driving at venues such as Donnington and Goodwood. We should also mention in passing that both Mr and Mrs Mason are qualified pilots although, so far as we know, they don't actually race aeroplanes. Yet.

Nick Mason has written two books about cars and racing: *Into the Red* (Virgin Books 2004) and *Passion for Speed: Twenty-four Classic Cars that Shaped a Century of Motor Sport* (Carlton Books Ltd 2010). Naturally, his car collection features prominently.



Although every car is remarkable in its own right, there are a number of vehicles that stand out by merit of their histories. Mason's Bentley 4½ Litre is, in fact, the car that was owned and raced by his father and so it occupies a special place in the collection. His 1970 Ferrari 512S was featured in the Steve McQueen movie

*Le Mans*. A stunt in the film required the car to catch fire to a limited extent but things got rather out of control and the vehicle was gutted. Nick Mason acquired what was left from a French garage a few years later and set out to rebuild it and restore it to its former glory.

In closing, we make a brief detour from the sublime to the ridiculous. Somewhat surreally for a man so focused on classic, performance supercars, Nick also has an East German Trabant, a Sinclair C5 and a Model T Ford that was previously driven by Laurel and Hardy and Coco the Clown. Make of that what you will.

## A different league

Supercar fans like Nick Mason, Chris Evans and Jamiroquai's Jay Kay appreciate the way a fine cherished number plate completes the appeal of a classic car. Names, number one plates and initials can all enhance the look of a car but there is something extra special about a number plate that pays tribute to the legendary vehicle that displays it.

Nick Mason's Ferrari 250 GTO with 250 GTO plate is as close to perfection as we've seen but, that said, Ferrari dealer John Collins and his Ferrari 250 GTO displaying 25 O certainly give it a run for its money.

## Calibre

Of course, motorcars of this calibre represent a serious investment and so do the cherished registrations their owners select to adorn them. This holds true for all the top supercar marques, not just for Ferraris. Over the years we have seen a procession of supercar-themed registrations commanding spectacular prices at auction. Here are just a few:

### Ferrari-related numbers

25 O - £518,480 in 2014  
250 L - £130,328 in 2014  
250 SWB - £66,849 in 2008

### McLaren

675 MCL - £39,608 in 2015  
720 MCL - £33,128 in 2018  
MCL 720S - £26,259 in 2017

### Aston Martin

1965 DB - £34,424 in 2015

### Porsche

911 POR - £32,480 in 1989  
911 TOR - £23,590 in 2021

And for the **Range Rover** fans

5 UV - £66,176 in 2016  
1 SUV - £59,955 in 2016  
2 SUV - £32,192 in 2020

- Rick Cadger







# BOWGIE

## INN CRANTOCK NEWQUAY

The Bowgie Inn must surely enjoy one of the most attractive locations of any pub in the UK. Perched between Crantock Beach to the east and Porth Joke Cove (locally "Polly Joke") to the west, the pub and its car park look out over Crantock's sizable expanse of sand to the mouth of the tidal river Gannel. The Bowgie Inn is perfectly situated to cater for the surfers and hikers who frequent Cornwall's beautiful north coast, as it is just a few miles from Newquay. The pub's name comes from the Cornish word 'Bowgie', which means 'cowshed' and with its low-beamed ceilings and traditional features, The Bowgie Inn has charm and character to spare.

Owners Andy and Sally Pickles must surely have the best jobs in the world and they are quick to admit it. "There's not a day that goes by when we don't stop and appreciate how privileged we are to live and work in such a stunning place," says Sally.

Sally has owned The Bowgie with her business partner, Andy, for over 45 years, so it is not surprising they have formed bonds with a large number of visitors during that period. "Generations of customers have been visiting us for years," Sally says. "So many people hold a special place in their hearts for The Bowgie."

While the pub's wonderful cliff-top setting doesn't change, The Bowgie team's standards of service, quality and hospitality are constantly evolving and there has also been a substantial physical transformation over the last few years, with a comprehensive refurbishment improving facilities and comfort for visitors. Although The Bowgie has a long history, with parts of the pub dating from the 18th Century, the team ensures it caters to its patrons' 21st Century needs with an active social media presence and a popular "surf-cam"

that provides views of Crantock Beach - very handy when planning a surf session.

Of course, to survive in a challenging climate for the hospitality industry, a business like Sally's needs to keep its advertising and marketing efforts as up to date as the facilities it offers. On that front, Regtransfers has been able to lend a hand in supplying eye-catching promotional registrations for The Bowgie's small fleet of sign-written business vehicles.

**“I knew having personal plates made real commercial sense.”**

"As a well-known pub, it's really important that we're easily recognised," says Sally. "I knew having personal plates made real commercial sense."

Initially, Sally believed that there were no Bowgie-appropriate registration plates available. Nevertheless, she contacted Regtransfers in 2017 and was delighted to discover that BOW 9IE and BOW 6IE were for sale. Both numbers were duly purchased at that time and, more recently, Sally came back to Regtransfers for a







third private registration, BOW 31E, thus completing the very effective branding exercise.

"With The Bowgie now looking beautifully sleek and stylish, including all new exteriors and interiors in-keeping with a coastal colour scheme, we had to make sure our vehicles were looking the part

as well. It's amazing how many people wave to us when we're out and about in Cornwall," Sally says. "Our registrations really help us to stand out and be recognised."

Even that modest boost to awareness amongst potential customers is of huge significance at the moment. The consumer organisation CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, estimated that 29 pubs closed every week across Britain in 2015. That was before the Covid-19 pandemic put additional pressure on a sector already feeling the pinch. Luckily, the combination of a rock solid reputation, a beautiful setting and those perfect private plates means that the customers are already queueing (metaphorically speaking) to get back for meals and drinks.

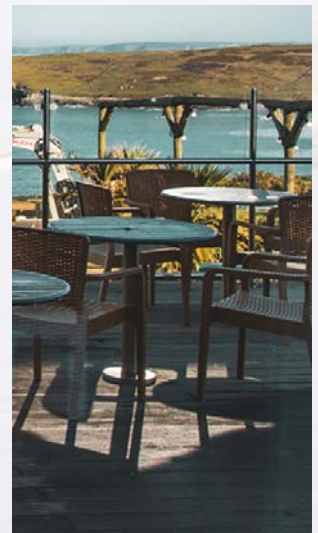
Sally and the team are eager to welcome everyone back from April, when pubs begin to reopen. Stringent hygiene measures, social distancing and a booking system supported by a custom smartphone app will ensure customers can relax, enjoy their visit and begin to feel almost normal again.

"I couldn't be happier with the service we received from Regtransfers: helpful, friendly and super efficient," says Sally. "We'd like to thank you for making this possible and for handling the process with expertise that made it 100% stress-free for us. Our new number plates really are the cherries on top of our exciting refurbishment cake, and we couldn't be happier with them!"

[www.bowgie.com](http://www.bowgie.com)



Watch the video on [youtube.com/regtransfers](https://youtube.com/regtransfers)



## Marketing on a Plate

**An increasing number of companies and entrepreneurs have seen the value of private and corporate vehicle number plates.**

**Here are some of the many benefits. For example, private plates:**

- provide excellent promotional and marketing opportunities
- look great in press releases, newspaper articles, TV, etc
- raise public awareness of your company
- help to create corporate identity
- are great fun items

- set your company apart from the rest
- are tax-deductible\*
- provide proven investment potential
- represent a one-off cost, so there are no maintenance fees
- facilitate easy fleet administration and vehicle tracking

\* VAT may be reclaimed if your plate is deemed to have been purchased for business use. Depending on the price paid, the purchase may also qualify as a capital allowance or be offset against corporation tax.

In addition to the publicity benefits, private plates can be a very good investment.

**Regtransfers** has the largest private stock of exclusive, top-quality registrations in the UK. Our website offers a range of easy to use search options, and our sales advisors are available to assist you from 9am to 9pm, 7 days a week.

If you would like to discover how this exciting and entertaining medium could work for you, please visit:

[www.regtransfers.co.uk](http://www.regtransfers.co.uk)

**01582 967777**



# Complementary



Stephen Godber is understandably proud of his great-grandfather, the late William Samuel Godber, and his achievements. William was born in 1867 and, as a young man, he founded a sewing thread mill in Nottingham. The business became very well known in the area but was rarely referred to by its full name of W S Godber Ltd: to the people of Nottingham it was simply "WSG's".

This abbreviation of the name, derived, as it was, from William's initials, is currently represented by the registration WSG 5, which is assigned to Stephen's Porsche.

"The business passed to my grandfather Charles Lesley," says Stephen, "and then to my father John Derek. I had no interest in it and wanted to fly, so I joined the RAF instead and WSG's was sold to a larger sewing thread manufacturer in the 1980s.

"The WSG 5 registration was bought in 1984 to honour the memory of the past

100 years. It has adorned a dozen cars and is now on my Boxster."

Stephen's first personal registration, GDZ 526, bore a rather more cryptic message than WSG 5. "It was on a 1980 Jaguar XJ-S that I'd promised myself before I was 30," says Stephen. "I couldn't really afford a plate but I bought GDZ 526 based on it meaning 'Godber's 5 litre with 2 banks of 6 cylinders'!"

His next private registration was considerably less demanding to decode. "I had a new Audi TT in 2001 so, before delivery, I bought AU51 TTT."

After leaving the RAF, Stephen embarked upon a new career, running his own business building swimming pools "for the rich and infamous". Despite parting ways from the air force, Stephen's love of aviation persists and he lists his hobbies as flying, skiing, sailing and motorsports.

"I've had a wide range of cars from Caterhams and MGs to Subarus and Jaguars and there's nearly always a Volvo estate in the mix too.

"I contacted Regtransfers a month ago and bought SG59 WSG for my Porsche Cayman 981 GTS, my initials and year of birth. It complements the WSG plate and has a nice symmetry of its own.

"My experiences with Regtransfers have always been professional and easy," he tells us. "Your sales advisor, Giles, ensured that my latest acquisition, of SG59 WSG, was no different. I'm always happy to recommend you."



“My experiences with Regtransfers have always been professional and easy. Always happy to recommend you.”





# Happy to Oblige



Marcus Keane-Munday, from Farnham in Surrey, graduated from university in August 2020 and currently works in IT. Outside work, Marcus is a big fan of cars and private number plates. He attributes his interest to the influence of his father.

"My dad used to own a 1980 Porsche Carrera CS which had the number B124 WNG," Marcus says. "It had a huge 80s ducktail, so I always read the plate as 'Big Wing'. This was when I got hooked. My dad then purchased a Ferrari 599, for

which I found the plate S99 YEA to make it really stand out."

Marcus began buying his own plates when he was 17 years old. His first was T77 MKM which combined his initials and his lucky number, 77. The number remains in the family and is now on his brother's car.

"I also owned and sold a few cheeky plates, like Y10 SEE (Why Lose?) and CO57 LYY (Costly)," he says. "I joined a

few enthusiast groups on Facebook and started reading this magazine!"

In 2017, Marcus purchased his second car, a 1992 Mercedes 190e, and treated it to the number E19 MKM.

"I had fun with that car," he says, "but it became too rickety to use every day for work, so I purchased my BMW 3 Series. At the exact same time, M422 CUS became available. Obviously, I couldn't ignore this plate as it is perfect for my name, so I snapped it up and put it on my new car."

For the future, Marcus has his eye on MA22 CUS, which is due to be released next year. "This would give me a near-perfect matching set," he says. "I am currently on the lookout for other Marcus numbers and hope to build my cherished collection over the coming years.

"I am constantly checking Regtransfers' brilliant site for my next number," he tells us, "and I would love to be featured in your magazine."

We are very happy to oblige.







## Attention

Phillip Killpatrick's daughter, Jessica is 22 years old and the family live in Rochester, Kent. "I brought this number plate from Regtransfers for her 17th birthday before she even had a licence," Phillip tells us.

"She absolutely loves the plate and it shows off her car perfectly. It gets a lot of attention and compliments."



## Success

Peter Bailey, from Brockworth in Gloucester, kindly sent us this great photo of his daughter, Nia Francesca Bailey with her splendid N1 AFB registration.

Nia, 31, holds a master's degree in English and is currently teaching drama and English in Beijing, China. When she was born she was given the name Nia because of the family's Welsh heritage.

She loves her little Fiat 500 convertible and wanted a plate that would suit her outgoing personality. N1 AFB came along and dad bought it for her ten years ago upon completion of her university success.



# The Cherry on the Cake

Abdul Aziz has been obsessed with the Porsche Carrera 911 ever since he was a wee boy living in 1970s Glasgow. "The t-shirt, posters, you name it, I had it all," he recalls. "Ferraris, Lambos? I'm not even interested. Porsche has a unique appeal that no other badge has in the car industry and you either get it or you don't. I vowed

that this young boy who lived in the top flat of the tenement building in the south side would one day own one."

The dream never faded and over the years Abdul continued to visualise himself behind the wheel of a Porsche. Eventually, when he turned 50, he decided it was time to realise his motoring ambition. "I bought

myself a Carrera 997 Black Edition," he says. "It is one of a limited edition of just 1911. When I came down from cloud 9, I took the next step. The 997 Black Edition deserves a befitting plate: 997 BE is the cherry on the cake."







There was a time when four-wheel drive vehicles were pretty much the exclusive domain of farmers and the military: when ownership of a 4x4 indicated that its driver expected to tackle challenging, off-road terrain. The majority of today's 4x4s are rarely asked to deal with anything more hazardous than the local supermarket car park, which seems a bit of a waste as many of them are every bit as rugged and capable as their less refined ancestors. Along with that change of role has come a change in terminology: what we once called 4x4s are now just as widely known by their American name, SUV.

The explosion in the popularity of SUVs means that they are now big business

and, where sales are concerned, business doesn't get any bigger than Essex-based Saxton 4x4, Europe's largest specialist dealership. Saxton's Chelmsford showroom is an impressive affair, its 100,000 square feet housing over 1000 prestige vehicles and premium brand 4x4s. Saxton is also an official Overfinch, Kahn, Urban and Onyx centre, offering a diverse range of expertly modified 4x4s and specialist cars.

Of course, no great car is complete without a great number plate and Saxton 4x4 certainly appreciate top quality cherished plates. The company has been a valued customer of Regtransfers for a decade and, like many other top companies,

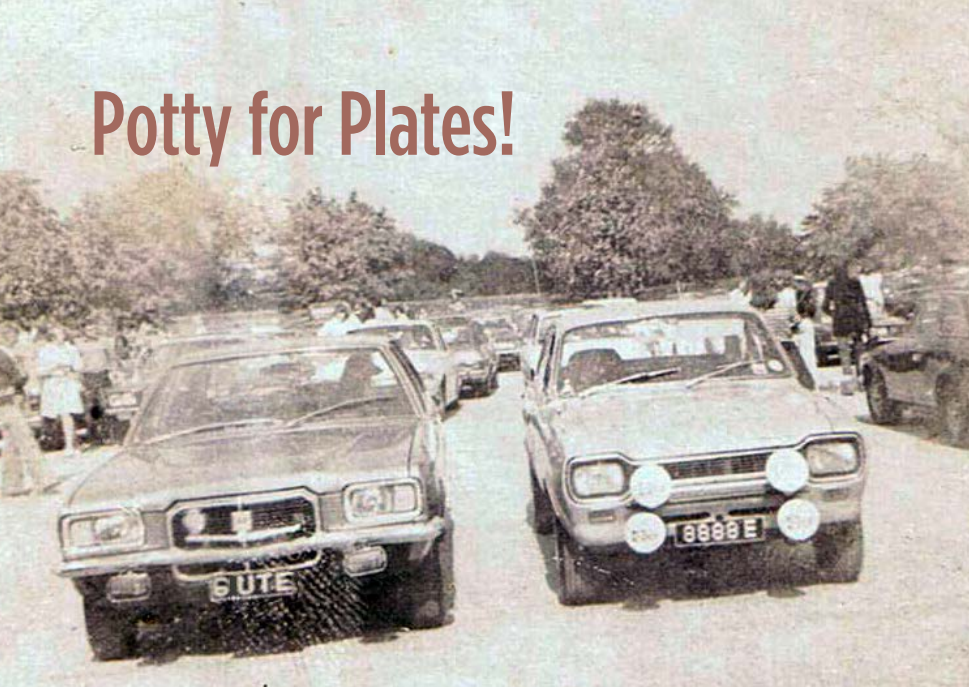
Saxton recognise that private registrations offer great marketing and publicity opportunities. In 2016, Saxton secured their perfect, business-themed registration in 1 SUV and, in late 2020, the acquisition of 2 SUV made a fantastic matching pair. Just weeks after that, 3 SUV was added to the collection, thus completing a hat-trick of highly relevant, top-quality cherished registrations. But that may not be the end of the story, as the company told us, "Our team are always on the look out for new plates."

[www.saxton4x4.co.uk](http://www.saxton4x4.co.uk)





# Potty for Plates!



When Mike Elwell received our *Regwise* newsletter, it prompted him to get in touch and tell us about his impressive collection of personal number plates.

The introduction to Mike's story is a bit different to most we hear: his initial inspiration wasn't a posh Rolls-Royce or a

celebrity's cherished number plate... "I first became interested in car numbers when I was very young," he says. "A local flowerpot manufacturer had POT plates on their cars."

Mike acquired his first private registration, MJE 242, for the princely sum of £20 from an advertisement in *Exchange and Mart*

soon after he got his first car. Mike's middle name is John, so the number incorporated all of his initials. Unfortunately, the number was lost when the car was scrapped.

Mike wasn't the only family member to part with a nice number "At that time, my wife, Ursula, had 53 MDH which she sold with her car," he says.

In the early 1970s, Mike and Ursula started buying and selling numbers issued in their local area, including registrations such as 4 PEA, 2 SEA and 4 MEA.

"We acquired two numbers that we still own today," says Mike. "The first, 8888 E, was on a car which the owner was about to scrap for £10. I said I would give him £5 if he would let me transfer the number first and he agreed. The second was 6 UTE, which Ursula used. That one was bought on an Austin A40 for £40."

That Austin subsequently underwent several changes of identity. When the couple transferred 6 UTE from it, the car was issued with 6019 DH. That number



Mike and Ursula's daughters with CAR 800K







too was sold, at which point the car acquired 3 XDH and then 19 XDH, which were both sold, as was the car for the price they paid for it. "Back then," Mike says, "the numbers were transferred by the local Motor Tax Office and replaced with unissued numbers from the area. I always used Walsall for a number of years and they would issue unissued reversed DH numbers. One time when I went to transfer a number all the DH series had been issued and I was told it was my lucky day as they had to start issuing a new sequence and gave me 1 XDH. I rushed home to get two details of cars awaiting transfer to try and secure 2 XDH and 3 XDH, but missed out and ended up with 3 XDH and 5 XDH."

Later on, the Elwells bought and used numbers such as CAR 800K, THE IR, and H1 MJE. "We purchased CAZ 1976 for our daughter Carol's 17th birthday in 1993," Mike recalls, "HES 50N, for the wife's dad (surname Hesson), ECL 41R for our other daughter Claire, M16 XEY for myself and URS 111A for my wife."

Mike always wanted a Mercedes-Benz C55 AMG, so for his 70th birthday this year,

he finally purchased one along with the perfect number for it C55 AMG.

"We have had some interesting times due to our involvement with car numbers, visiting number plate rallies, including the first get together at Woburn Abbey and auctions. The only regret I have is that, when we first started to have numbers, the late Noel Woodall [the respected autonumerologist] had U 2, U 4 and U 6 for sale - 'U' being my wife's initial. But in those days there were no retention certificates so numbers had to be placed on cars. Having only one car at the time, I made a close offer to the price wanted for all three just for U 2 but the owner did not want to split them."

Mike relates a number of amusing incidents, including the police calling to recover a car that had been put up as a gambling debt in respect of a car he had transferred a number onto a few years earlier. "One of the numbers ended upon a car that is displayed in a museum."



The couple's eldest daughter, Claire, is pictured here with 1 XGH, which Mike placed on his wife's uncle's moped until he sold it.

The recovery of a car years after they transferred the number under the stolen vehicle came, ironically, from a pool belonging to the very same flower pot manufacturer who first promoted Mike's lifelong love of number plates.





# A Great Set

Narinder Devgun, from Sutton Coldfield in the West Midlands, was a postmaster in Birmingham for over 30 years. In 2011, Narinder purchased 8 NSD from Regtransfers for himself and his wife, Satpal. The registration combines both Narinder's and Satpal's, first initials and their last initial. A few years later, Satpal, saw 9 NSD advertised by Regtransfers and so she purchased it for Narinder as a Christmas present.

"The set looks great on my Audi and Ferrari motor cars," says Narinder, who is currently selling an earlier acquisition, NSD 264, through Regtransfers.





# The Badger

Francis Charles-Jones is a lucky man. Not only does he own a very nice Bentley Mulliner, he has also acquired his perfect initials plate, 1 FCJ, to make the car look its absolute best. This is one of the nicest car and registration combinations we've seen recently.

Francis is the director of Sparta Security, a company that was launched in the North-

East of England but has grown to provide a wide range of personal and property security services to clients across the UK. Francis and Sparta were featured in a 2015 BBC TV documentary entitled *Rent a Cop*, making Sparta one of the region's best-known security companies. In addition to the excellent plate on his Bentley, Francis also owns SP18 RTA representing his company's name.

Outside his career in security, Francis is a self-confessed golf addict. In fact, so focused is he on the game that it has become a matter of personal pride that this competitive man will not turn down a golfing challenge from anyone. His almost predatory determination to take on any and all comers has earned him the golfing nickname "The Badger"!





# A Piece of History

Robert Carde spotted the registration BO 2 in our listings and thought we might be interested to learn that his grandfather, George William Blackaller once owned a 3.5hp Quadrant motorcycle with the very same plate, way back in 1905.

The fantastic photo reproduced here shows Mr Blackaller posing with the bike and registration, which was issued in 1904 by Cardiff County Borough Council.

“He was among a group of motorcyclists from Cardiff that did a Land’s End to John O’ Groats trial in June 1906,” Robert tells us.

## BO 2

BO 2 was issued in 1904 by Cardiff County Borough Council and is currently available exclusively through [www.regtransfers.co.uk](http://www.regtransfers.co.uk)



## The Plate for Me

“I’d happily use Regtransfers again and would recommend them to anyone.”

“The plate was made for me,” says Desmond Joseph Hurn from Northampton. “I had my eye on it for a while. I love it, and you guys made it so easy for me. In less than a week, everything was done apart from the insurance, but that was a five-minute call. I’d happily use Regtransfers again and would recommend them to anyone.”





## Part of the Family

Jonathan, from Norwich, thought his copy of *The World of Personal Number Plates* magazine was such a great read that he felt motivated to share his own story.

"As a young child in the 1970s, I was fortunate to have a grandad who was into his cars," Jonathan says. "He was particularly fond of Mercedes Coupes and enjoyed driving over to the mountains in Europe."

Jonathan remembers one episode quite vividly. "Around 1976, my grandad changed his car from a blue 280 SL to a gold 45 SLC which was a fast car. As we were travelling down to Devon we were stopped by the police. They told us that they were struggling to catch up with us in their Ford Granada. They certainly would not have 15 minutes earlier as we had been up to 125mph!

Jonathan's grandfather displayed the registration BGM 8 on the Mercedes cars mentioned above and Jonathan is pleased

to report that the registration remains in the family today, almost 50 years later. "Number plates became part of the family," he says. "Not only did I inherit my love of sports cars from my grandad but he also introduced me to great number plates. Therefore for sentimental reasons, I would like to think that BGM 8 will be handed down to my son and never sold.

"My grandad took me to the London Motor Show in 1983," Jonathan says, "and, as a 16 year old sitting in a Porsche 911, there was only ever going to be one car for me to aspire to." Jonathan met that aspiration at the age of 35 when he purchased a concours condition 1984 911 3.2 Carrera. The only thing missing was a cherished number plate, which he duly purchased from Regtransfers.

"HJM 704 was a combination of my, and my wife Helen's initials, together with our

lucky numbers." Like BGM 8, it has also become part of the family.

Sadly, after five years, Jonathan had to sell the 911 due to a house renovation project, but the car achieved a degree of fame when it was acquired by James May of Top Gear. However, while the car may have moved on, Jonathan retained the HJM 704 number plate, which today resides on Jonathan's Porsche Cayman R.

Before the blue Mercedes 280 SL mentioned above, Jonathan's grandad owned a BMW and, consequently, enthusiasm for that brand also rubbed off on young Jonathan. However, the M3 model that he really coveted was just beyond his means and in recent years Jonathan and his wife moved away from BMW for a change. "But we have now happily returned and have the M3 model that we always promised ourselves," Jonathan says.

Jonathan decided it was time to find a cherished JRM number plate for the BMW M3. "There was only one company to return to as a loyal customer," he says, "and I was delighted to obtain 27 JRM from Regtransfers. The transaction was rapid and we could not be more delighted to add that to our number plates. The customer experience was exceptional and I would like to congratulate the Regtransfers team for their valued assistance."

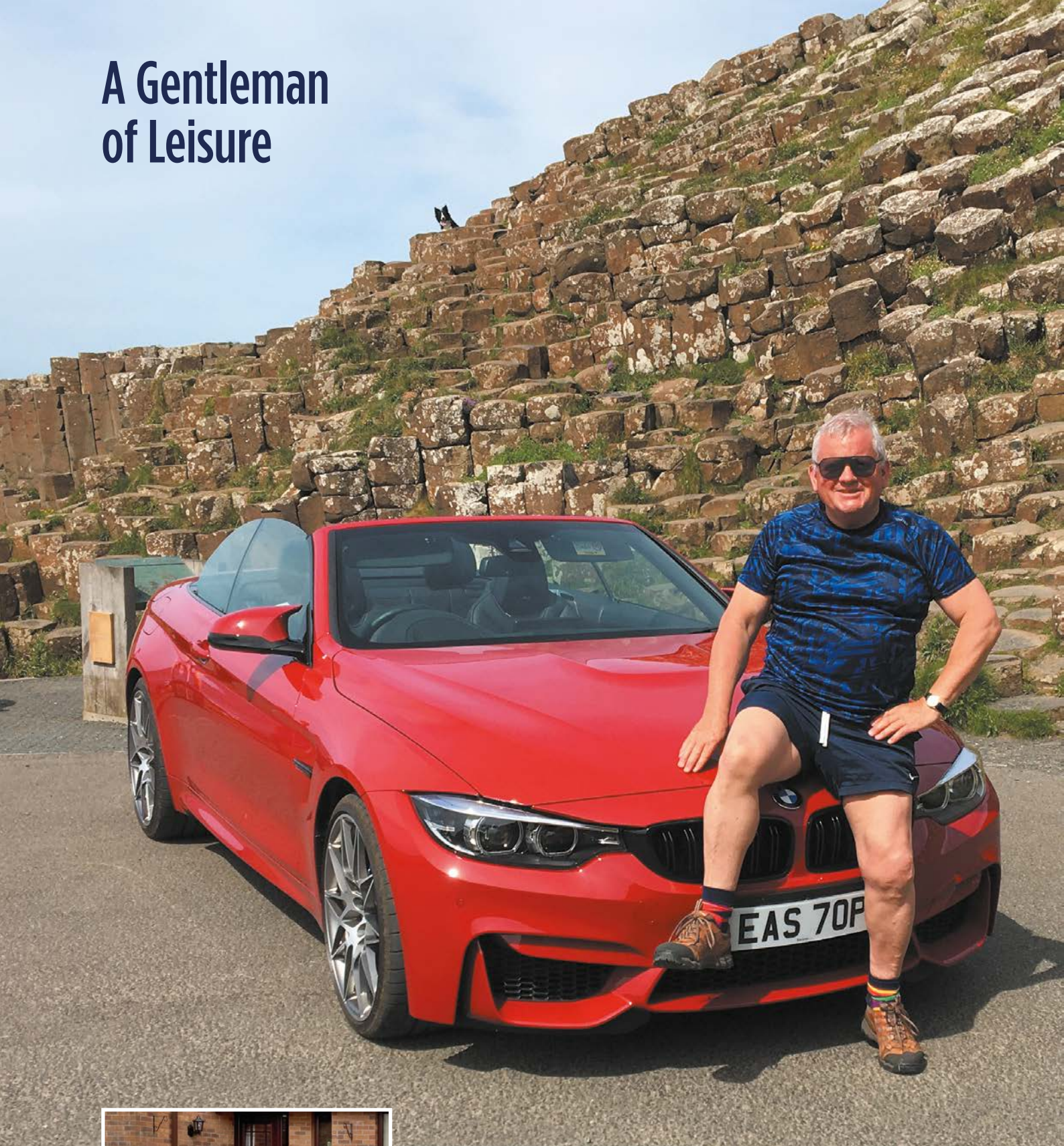


“There was only one company to return to.”





# A Gentleman of Leisure



We are delighted to say that Simon Eastop is a very happy customer.

"This is my sixth and best number from Regtransfers," says Simon, from Ballyclare, County Antrim. "I love the way that you selected the number plate that suits me and sent it to me on a promotional postcard. I thought it was fantastic."

The spectacular photo was taken at the World Heritage site known as The Giant's Causeway. "The reason for the strange pose in the picture," explains Simon,

"is that the number plate had fallen off and I was using my heel and calf to hold it on!"

Simon is a retired decorating contractor. His firm, SDE Decorators, featured the registrations SDE 508 and 45 SDE on its works vans. The company was taken over in 2017 and Simon is now a gentleman of leisure.

Apart from his own personal number plate, Simon's wife, Anne Mary, has AME 16T while the Eastop children, Andrew and Sarah Anne Louise, enjoy H14 NDY [Hi, Andy] and X15 ALE, respectively.



# Top Notch



Like many business owners, Scott Seldon of Steel Fix Construction SW Ltd finds a role for private number plates in both his personal and professional lives.

"I first got interested in registration numbers in 2016, when I opened my construction company," Scott tells us.

"I was looking for suitable registrations to suit my company name and my trade. Since then I've accumulated a small collection of registrations." Scott's collection may not be the most extensive but the quality is top notch.

"What really makes the difference to me when I purchase a registration is that they

are completely unique, so if you get an opportunity you'd better take it as you may never get another."

As a proud Exeter native, Scott is particularly pleased with his EXE 73R number plates. "It was of obvious interest to me as I was born and bred in this wonderful city. I'll be proud to display EXE 73R on my motorhome whenever I travel."

Scott's company, Steel Fix, works mostly with rebar, the steel reinforcing bars used in concrete construction projects and the company's area of specialist expertise is displayed perfectly by Scott's REB 4R plate. The other fine registrations he owns are TH17 RTY, which was a 30th birthday present, and BAI7 BOX (bait box), a great

fishing-themed number that currently resides on his brother's vehicle.

"Regtransfers have provided a first class service," says Scott. "I really couldn't fault it, which is rare, and that makes all the difference. I look forward to making my collection bigger and, hopefully, doing business with Regtransfers again."



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“Regtransfers have provided a first class service. I really couldn't fault it.”

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# Readers Gallery

Here is a selection of some great photos that have been submitted by our readers. Do you have a great plate photo? Please send it to [editorial@regtransfers.co.uk](mailto:editorial@regtransfers.co.uk).



from John McGlynn



from Armen Mesgjan



from Gary Mortimer



from George Robinson



from Gary Millard



from Terry Pegg





from Richard Bately



from Duncan Moir



from Logic MH Ltd



from Christopher Baker



from Robert Paul Johnston



from Adam Darby



from John Bissett



from Stephen Beagrie



# A Life on the Ocean Waves



Commodore Ian Gibb, from Marlborough in Wiltshire, represents the fifth generation of a seafaring family; his progenitors have been sea captains since the mid-19th Century. Ian's own career has been long and successful and one can imagine the spirits of those maritime ancestors nodding their approval.

Ian attended the School of Navigation at Southampton University in 1953 and was apprenticed to the P&O Steam Navigation Company from 1954-1957. He became an officer on the company's passenger liners from that point until he achieved command in 1975. Ian continued to captain many passenger liners including Canberra, Sea Princess, Royal Princess, Pacific Princess and Island Princess and was appointed Commodore of the Fleet in 1996.

Although Ian retired from commanding vessels at the age of 60, his association and involvement with nautical matters continued and he was appointed as an Elder Brother of the Corporation of Trinity House, based at Tower Hill, London.

"Our role is to administer the lighthouses, buoys, beacons and lightvessels for the

safety of mariners around the coasts of Britain and we are assisted by the Northern Lighthouse Board in Edinburgh and Commissioners for Irish Light in Dublin.

"Trinity House was founded by Henry VIII in 1514," Ian tells us, "and has given over 500 years of service. There are, by royal charter, only allowed to be 32 Elder Brothers, of whom there are 4 royals: The Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Charles, Prince Andrew and Princess Anne. The current Master of Trinity House is Princess Anne who took over from her father."

Appointment to the fraternity is for life and its ranks have many former prime ministers, including Winston Churchill, Harold Wilson, Ted Heath and, currently, John Major. Ian himself continues to work for Trinity House but, now in his 80s, he no longer visits the lighthouses by helicopter. Ian lectures around the country for the RNLI, for whom he has raised more than £26,000 since his retirement.

Our photograph shows Ian and his wife, Ann, with their matching his and hers Gibb

number plates. The emblem on the radiator grille of Ian's Volvo is the crest of the P&O Company.

Ann enjoyed a productive career of her own. After training as a nurse at Guy's Hospital, London in the 1950s, Ann was appointed Sister Tutor in the Paediatric Department of Great Ormond Street and later in the Evelina Children's Hospital at Guy's. Ann was thus occupied for more than 20 years until when she became Sister in charge of paediatric training at South Bank University in 1997.

Ann married Ian in 1998 and produced, "with his help," two daughters: Fiona, now a qualified veterinary surgeon in Wales and Alison, now Associate Curator at the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester. Fiona and Alison also have two children each.

Ian sums up his life these days as, "still busy and lucky to be so."





# Micromania!

# Mopetta

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“I got the call and the registration number was mine. Absolutely chuffed to bits.”

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Hands up if you know what a microcar is. Three out of six members of the Regtransfers marketing team didn't know (if one chooses to believe the members who claimed they did) but microcars are, most definitely, a 'thing'. Deferring to the debatable authority of Wikipedia, we learned that "Microcar is a term often used for the smallest size of cars, with three or four wheels and often an engine smaller than 700cc (43 cu in). Specific types of microcars include bubble cars, cycle cars, invacar, quadricycles and voiturettes". The bubble car was, in fact, a fairly fashionable vehicle in 1960s Britain so while the term "microcar" may be unfamiliar to most

people, some members of the category have enjoyed a degree of fame.

Ian Leonard, from Bolton in Lancashire, has been a microcar enthusiast for 20 years and has amassed an impressive collection of some real classic examples. "I have a Peel P50," says Ian, "its big brother, the Peel Trident, two stunning Messerschmitt KR 201 Roadsters and this little beauty, the Brütsch Mopetta." He is clearly very proud of the Mopetta, which he restored himself.

Egon Brütsch was a German ex-racing driver turned plastic material specialist. In 1950, Brütsch founded the Egon Brütsch Fahrzeugbau company in Stuttgart to produce vehicles of his own design. Over the next decade, the company

manufactured 11 different models but in extremely small numbers: consequently, surviving examples are very rare indeed. Some of the models, and variants thereof, were, however, manufactured by other companies under licence.

The Brütsch Mopetta was produced for the IFMA car and motorcycle exhibition in Frankfurt in October 1956. Reputedly, the car that was eventually exhibited was not actually finished, lacking a complete set of mechanical components. It was, however, cunningly displayed in a raised position so its unfinished nature would not be evident.

The tiny Mopetta was a simple beast. The doorless, single-seater body was mounted on a chassis with one wheel at the front and two at the rear. The left rear wheel was







The yellow 1960 Messerschmitt KR 201 Roadster



The 1964 Top Gear Peel 50

chain-driven by a 49cc, 2.3HP, 2-stroke ILO/JLO moped engine.

For a while it seemed as if the Mopetta might be produced in large numbers when a third party showed a keen interest. Accounts online vary: some sources claim that the interest in expanded production was from the Opel car company that was founded by Adam Opel, while others identify the potential manufacturer as an individual, Georg von Opel, a car dealer who supposedly intended to rename the car the Opelit and sell it through his dealership. Whichever set of details is correct, the matter is of academic interest only as the interest dissipated and the additional cars were never built. As Brüttsch only made 14 Mopettas, they have always been rare and now it is believed that only five remain in existence.

“The car is very basic, with no reverse,” Ian says “just a handle on the front to pick the car up and turn it around! To start the car there is a pull cord. Once started, you have three forward gears and, depending on your size and what you have had to eat, a modest 25 mph is achievable.”

When restoration was complete, Ian decided that such a rare machine deserved a special cherished number plate. He contacted Regtransfers as we had previously provided him with a few registrations, including W199 LER for his van.



Ian spoke to our team member, Kim, who immediately recognised that the MOP 377A character combination

Ian had chosen spelt out ‘Mopetta’. She then asked Ian what it meant and was treated to an introductory lesson on the subject of microcars.

“After boring Kim with all the microcar history, I decided to get the registration number,” Ian says. “With Lockdown having impacted so many businesses, we were unsure of a release date so I had to wait patiently. When I got the call saying

the registration number was mine I was absolutely chuffed to bits.”

Another particularly notable vehicle in Ian’s garage is his Peel P50, which sports the 1963 registration SVV 997. The Peel P50 is acknowledged by the *Guinness Book of Records* as the world’s smallest production car and one was famously seen being driven through the offices of BBC TV’s *Top Gear* a few years ago. The footage is still available on YouTube.

In a motoring world where all the glory seems to go to customised SUVs and supercars that can reach speeds up to 300 mph it makes a thoroughly charming (and very literal) change of pace to consider the humble microcar. Size and speed aren’t everything. Rarity is another quality highly valued by collectors and these things are almost vanishingly rare.

We are grateful to Ian for sharing this glimpse into a small, but fascinating world.

Oh, and Kim can’t wait for Ian’s next private number plate purchase; she’s looking forward to a more advanced microcar lesson...



The 1964 Peel Trident



Ian’s latest acquisition, a 1960 Messerschmitt KR200 cabriolet



Ian with his blue 1959 Messerschmitt KR 201 Roadster, sporting VYU 606



The World of Personal Number Plates

# Regtransfers

Issue 52

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