

The World of Personal Number Plates Issue 55

Regtransfers



BAMFORD
AUTOMATIC
CHRONOGRAPH

GEORGE BAMFORD



Est.
1982

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PERSONAL NUMBER PLATES

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 below lists the top 40 prices (including fees and taxes) paid for plates at auction since April 2022:

PAT 3K	£100,245	35 BUG	£42,041	5 XW	£30,087	7 NSS	£28,033
53 NGH	£78,417	II MSK	£41,219	262 C	£29,882	II4 N	£27,532
5I TES	£77,287	7 OPG	£38,741	I PUM	£29,625	992 JC	£27,378
4I O	£73,422	333 O	£37,971	ASA 55IN	£29,625	IO KJB	£27,057
I YSD	£68,145	8I2 C	£37,329	ARA IN	£29,381	II5 HY	£27,057
8 TOY	£55,305	II HSS	£36,006	KIII NNG	£29,060	I YSF	£26,620
57I G	£54,303	8 TRU	£34,119	1007 AM	£29,047	I NYT	£26,197
296 GTS	£52,737	140 B	£32,193	MUD IIIY	£28,341	KVS I	£25,901
I YUM	£47,742	I NGX	£32,167	270 A	£28,328	I KWH	£25,901
SA22 RAH	£45,033	130 A	£30,909	786 MUS	£28,328	9II RAV	£25,824

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.

Why you should sell with us

Regtransfers have been trading since 1982 and draw upon this immense industry and regulations governing the transfer of registrations.



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.

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.

GEORGE BAMFORD

Cars, wristwatches and construction equipment may not often get mentioned in the same breath - or even in the same conversation - but they all feature prominently in George Bamford's life. Despite the conspicuous differences in scale, all three are the products of engineering, which happens to be George's passion.

George Bamford is the grandson of Joseph Cyril Bamford, founder of the famous heavy equipment manufacturer JCB. Joseph set an impressive example to inspire subsequent generations. Not only did he establish the company that was to become a household name beloved by small boys everywhere, but he was a progressive employer whose workers enjoyed good pay and conditions: an ancestor of whom to be justly proud.

In due course, JCB passed into the hands of Joseph's son, Anthony. George Bamford has not yet joined JCB. His focus is very much on his own projects for the time being: consequently, the Bamford name is now associated with fine personal timepieces as well as stonking great excavators, loaders and tractors. How so? Read on.

Style

George Bamford's love of watches seems to have two roots. Firstly there is the childhood impression of style and cool that he experienced while sitting with his dad, watching movies. The second influence was his early, and enduring, fascination with engineering.

"When I first fell in love with cars it was with Corgi toys and things like that. Then Le Mans was what first made me fall in love with a watch: seeing the Tag Heuer Monaco on Steve McQueen's wrist. I've got to admit that it wasn't the best movie, but sitting in my father's arms watching Le Mans, admiring the watches and cars together I was like, 'Wow, this is so cool!'. My childhood memories are of watching Steve McQueen and James Bond.

"I just fell in love with how all that movement happens because I'm an engineer at heart. I love engines and I love that movement. I learnt how to weld when I was seven and I learnt how to strip an engine when I was eight."

Despite that natural affinity with machinery and mechanical things, George has not



TIME
WAITS
FOR
NO
ONE

followed his father and grandfather into the family firm. At least, not yet.

"My father actually said to me that I wasn't allowed into the family business. He said 'Look, George, you've got to go and learn the value of a pound. You have to go and do something that makes you money and you've got to do it on your own.'

"I was a photographer at the time and I realised I couldn't make really good money at that. I'd just got out of university, studying at Parsons [the prestigious school

of design], and I was like 'Christ, I have to do something!' That's when my watch business started."

Inevitable

When he was younger, George had already made a tentative early foray into the world in which he was about to immerse himself, as he had bought and traded watches at flea markets as a kind of hobby. With that modest experience, his interests in engineering and design and

the obsession instilled by James Bond and Steve McQueen years before, what followed was surely inevitable.

"I used to trade cars and I used to trade watches. In fact, I should probably have been a car trader instead of a watch trader because I see a lot of car dealers now making a hell of a lot of money. But then watch dealers do also make a lot of money!"

Despite the occasional pondering of whether he would have made more money trading cars than he does making watches, George Bamford is clearly very satisfied with how things are working out.

"I am the master of my own destiny. My ego is fulfilled and I love working for myself and the idea of doing things on my own. I love creating watches, working inside the watch industry and doing my own thing. It's just really cool."

The tangible shape of George's fulfilled ego is embodied in his complementary businesses, Bamford Watch Department and Bamford London. Bamford Watch Department has become the go-to destination for those wishing to own unique versions of their favourite high-end timepieces. Custom colours and graphics transform a great watch into something seen once in a lifetime. Official partnerships with, and approval from, those elite watchmakers gives Bamford a unique credibility.

"Six years ago, we signed contracts with some of the top watch brands to work with them on personalisation. Being accepted has been one of the best things, and to be a part of some of those watch brands really is a cool thing to be."

Rebel

That cooperation with the classic manufacturers did not come without a lot of work. In the early days, George was widely considered a rebel. The customisation options he offered were most certainly not approved by Rolex and the other top brands whose pieces he considered worthy of his transformational talents. But as George's own reputation developed, so did acceptance by the brands who came to understand that his work enhanced their products rather than detracting from them.

Bamford London offers a more accessible price point for those who want the Bamford style but without needing a lottery win or a second mortgage to fund the indulgence. Bamford London watches bear the Bamford brand and, while they are less expensive than the customised legends sold by Bamford Watch Department, their Swiss movements deliver quality and reliability that more than justifies their cost.

"Bamford London pieces range from about £450 up to about two and a half thousand pounds," says George. "And then you've got Bamford Watch Department that sits



BAMFORD

L O N D O N

above that, starting at four and a half thousand and going all the way up. So we serve those two sides.

"And I'm very lucky, you know? I can honestly say that while our customers can get on without us, we cannot get on without them. So I'm very lucky with the customers that have supported Bamford."

Despite his brands' success, and the fact that he seems to have fulfilled the task his father set him, one can't help feeling that George gets more satisfaction and enjoyment from the process than from the payoff.

Personalisation

"Personalisation is key in my life. I personalise my cars with number plates, you know, and I personalise them with colours, with clocks in them, with just little things that make me smile. Making a unique watch for someone is that same thing. You put it on your wrist and you wear it for you and it's personalised just for you.

"Imagine if you had a certain portion of your watch you wanted to match the colour of this Porsche, with the dial, with the second hand, with everything that could be personalised. Even with a strap that matched the car's kind of chocolate or tan interior, and with a black dial with little silver accents. That, for me, would be the epitome of Bamford Watch Department. We can do whatever you want: we can put Batman into a watch; we can put a car into a watch!

"And that's what I love about Bamford London. I get fulfilment out of actually designing my own watches."

It is striking (no horological pun intended) that so many seemingly disparate parts of George Bamford's life just fit together with the precision of... well, of a Swiss watch movement. His early love of cars, watches, his early introduction to the principles of engineering, his design education all either guided him to his current success or feed into his products. However, there is another of George's predilections that provides possibly the most bizarre component to the movement of his seemingly well-oiled life: a love of cartoon characters in general and of a certain beagle in particular.

Snoopy

"Hell, yes, I love Snoopy. I love cartoon characters. There's some amazing things: look at Sesame Street, look at Snoopy, look at... I don't know, even Sonic the Hedgehog or Popeye. I mean, Popeye is so damn good!" It's another example of



enthusiasm rooted in his childhood that has survived, undiminished, to contribute to the shape of his adult life.

"Snoopy! If you say the word Snoopy, you cannot help but smile. You really can't help but smile. It just gives you that wonderful thing of, like, how you can't be angry when you hear Snoopy. Snoopy just always makes me smile.

"Oh yes. I have a lot of Snoopy crap, a lot of Snoopy crap, but I love it. I love collecting Snoopy. I love everything that they've created. If there is anything that I can collect, I will: vintage Snoopy, modern Snoopy. Because, for me, for my generation and generations before it was a symbol of hope, of peace, a symbol of happiness. That's why I love Snoopy.

I haven't got a Snoopy tattoo, but maybe one day.

"We do the Snoopy with Franck Muller, and we're just so lucky that we can design inside the brands and work alongside them on things like that."

As he's grown up, George's collecting habit has diversified and now focuses on more than just cartoon merchandise: he has an enviable collection of fine cars and plenty of private number plates to display upon them. In fact, even as we conduct this interview with George, we are sitting in his wonderful Porsche Speedster.

"I found it, rebuilt it. I thought this was going to be just a very simple rebuild: change the colour, do a few things, you



know. Instead, it was three years of work but I'm so pleased with this car. You know, it's a beautiful, little ugly car. You think about it, if you turn it upside down, it looks like a bathtub but there's something so fabulous, something that makes you smile. It's a bucket list car. Is it going to break down on the side of the road? Yes, it is. But is it going to make me smile? Yes! With cars and watches I'm also obsessed with the sound, the feel, the look."

Show pony

The driving is as important to George as the aesthetic as he shows when he gushes about his current favourite ride.

"The Ferrari 275 GTB. That for me is the car where I know where each wheel sits. I know how fast I can drive it into a corner. I know how I can get it out. I can just take it to the limit. That car is about the pure driving experience.

"I've had so many experiences in that Ferrari. We drove that to a friend's wedding then, when we arrived, my wife got her dress stuck in the boot and we just couldn't get the boot open. We were late and she was cursing me, the car and

everything but I was smiling. I was like, I've just driven hours in this car and we got here! That car's been on a flatbed many times when I've sat on the side of the road because it's overheated or something, but I don't care. I just want to drive it again!

"A car cannot be a show pony. It cannot just sit in a garage. I know a lot of people are like, 'Oh, I can't take it out in this weather', but if it's just a garage queen then what are you doing with the car? Go and experience the car. Go and love the car and make stories about it."

So, we've established that George Bamford can forgive a car the odd tantrum so long as it delivers the experience he craves. That willingness to accept a trade-off extends to a lack of comfort too, so long as it is balanced by a car's other qualities and appeal.

"That Defender is uncomfortable to drive." He indicates a Land Rover. "I mean, the seat is literally on the metal, so you kind of bounce up and down on the road and you're at the weirdest angle, but I love Landies. I have to listen to Bruce Springsteen in it as I just go wherever it takes me. If it breaks down, well, it's taken

me to that point. If I get to my destination, well, that's winner-winner-chicken-dinner! It embodies adventure: any type of adventure from driving in London to going on the Camel Trophy [a famous competitive event for 4x4s, renowned for its challenging terrains. The Camel Trophy event was discontinued in 2000]. Carpe diem, you know, just going anywhere."

Jaw-dropping

Watches, cars, cartoons... We almost find ourselves wondering if he can possibly sustain that relentless level of enthusiasm, as we move on to discuss his many personal number plates.

"I love number plates!" We breathe a silent sigh of relief. "And it's not about the value. I'm never going to sell them because they're part of me, although my kids probably will! And it's not because I want to be recognised or because I want to show off that I've got the number plate. I just think it completes the car.

"Yes, number plates are a good investment but it's more than that. Is it in my DNA? Well, I mean, if you look at the history of my family's business, my grandfather



“What I love about your brand is that you’ve built up a name that is really synonymous with giving good customer service. You always have the best plates and you’ve been in the industry so long that you’re the trusted name.”

bought little Vespas with personal number plates on just to get the number plates. He got JCB 1, JCB 2, JCB 3 and it was one of the greatest advertising things for the business. You had salesmen going out with those number plates on their car.

“I know people look at your car and go, ‘Wow, that number plate’s worth this or that’, but it’s not about that. It’s about does it work for the car? That Defender there has its original number plates, because they’re right.

“I even name my cars after their number plates, give them nicknames. My children don’t know that a car’s a brand X or brand Y. They know it by its number plate or nickname and that’s what I want to happen. I want them to fall in love with the car, not its brand or the value of it.

“I also love when you are on the motorway and you see a plate that’s a bit different. You try and figure out what it means. I even named a watch after a number plate. So there’s a watch called B 347 and if you think about it B 347 spells out ‘beat’. I saw a number plate very similar to that on the motorway. It wasn’t exactly that but it looked like B 347 and I was like, ‘Oh my

God. That’s perfect’. I decided that was what the watch should be called. But no one really knew why I called it that. No one knows even to this day.”

A Regtransfers exclusive, right there!

Sadly George doesn’t actually own B 347. “No, I don’t have that plate and I don’t even think it’s been issued.”

What he does have is his favourite number plate on his favourite car: that jaw-dropping Ferrari bears the registration GHB 5.

“Yes, GHB. I’m very lucky to have had a few of them and, you know, the first was bought by my father, years and years ago. It was very forward thinking of him to buy it with my initials. I’m very lucky to have got that number plate from him.”

Collection

George has accumulated quite a collection. In addition to his initials plates, he has quite a few of those he described earlier: plates he considers perfect for certain cars regardless of whether they immediately convey meaning to an onlooker. His current list includes BWD and BW registrations for Bamford Watch Department and Bamford Watches and

registrations relating to his wife’s name, Leonora. George’s father, JCB managing director Anthony Bamford, the only man ever to own two Ferrari 250 GTOs, also has his own number one initial registration and GTO-related plates..

When we expressed our appreciation of the Bamford family as customers, George was quick to reciprocate very kindly.

“What I love about your brand is that you’ve built up a name that is really synonymous with giving good customer service and delivering number plates to customers in the right way. You always have the best plates and you’ve been in the industry so long that you’re the trusted name. That’s the great thing about Regtransfers: it’s the trusted name in number plates.”

And we think that’s the perfect place to end. We’re very grateful to George for his time, his hospitality and his boundless enthusiasm.

www.bamfordlondon.com
www.bamfordwatchdepartment.com

*Interview: Angela Banh
Story: Rick Cadger
Location photography: Amy England, James England*



SCD

If you're a supercar owner or one of the less fortunate multitude who can only dream of, or aspire to, that privileged status, the chances are that you've heard of Supercar Driver. If you're particularly lucky, you may actually be a Supercar Driver member who has attended one or more of the club's legendary Secret Meet events. Sadly, none of the *World of Personal Number Plates* production team gets paid quite enough to own a car of the calibre required for membership, but we were able to attend the Supercar Driver Secret Meet at Donington in June.

You probably won't be surprised to hear that our photographer/videographer has attended more than her fair share of supercar events (with emphasis on "more than her fair share", but the rest of the team isn't envious or resentful, honest). Despite this familiarity with the genre, she categorically declared the SCD Secret Meet the most impressive event of all, with the best cars and many, many amazing personal number plates.

Nope, not even a little bit envious or resentful.

One of a kind

"I don't think there's anything like it," says Adam Thorby, the man behind the brand. "People keep saying 'Oh, you should open it up to the public; you'll make thousands' but it's not about that at all. It will always be private and invite-only."

Supercar Driver, or simply SCD to its members and its founder, is the epitome of an exclusive affair. It is structured as a members' club and has 1300 members across the UK. People pay an annual subscription which entitles them to attend the club's events. Approximately 60% of those are then free and the others are paid for. Events can be anything from a breakfast meet to a tour around Europe.

In addition to the previously mentioned requirement that a prospective member should own a qualifying supercar, anyone



Adam Thorby A reason to drive

wishing to join must have the patience to join a long queue.

"We run a waiting list now, so if you're not in it now it's hard to get in," says Adam. "There's only so many of us running it and so many events we can do. We could easily have 2000 members but we wouldn't be able to work it unless we increased resources, so we've put the waiting list in place. There are 500-plus people on that at the moment."

Demand for membership should come as no surprise really. Supercar Driver addresses a common issue amongst supercar owners: something that seems, paradoxically, both obvious and somehow surprising. Although many owners have dreamt of owning a Ferrari, Porsche, Maserati etc since childhood, and despite spending an eye-watering sum to realise the dream, too many of these cars simply don't get driven.

Way of life

"I've always taken great pleasure in getting people who own hypercars to actually use them," says Adam. "That started from the little events, little drives around Wales with a couple of Zondas and an F50, which then evolved through different things over the years to become the Secret Meet, with its hundred amazing cars. These are cars that you might normally expect to see in someone's garage, because they don't have anything in particular to do with them. SCD is all about bringing together like-minded people and giving them a reason to actually use their cars. It's about community and friendships too. It becomes a way of life."

For Adam Thorby, that way of life is partly an inherited inclination: Adam's father, Andrew, has always been embedded in the world of fast cars.

"I think what was key was that I grew up around motorsport. My dad designs racing cars and, back in the day, he designed some pretty iconic Le Mans cars. He was quite big in Formula 3, in Group C in the 1980s and British touring cars in the '90s. He's done it all really,

I suppose. A byproduct of that, of course, is that I'm a complete petrolhead.

"When I was a child, we never did normal, traditional family holidays; we only went to race tracks. Dad would work every weekend, seeing different tracks around the UK and Europe, like Le Mans and places like that. I don't remember sitting on a beach doing what most other kids would have been doing but, instead, we would go to race tracks. When I got a bit older I would sometimes get a bit bored as I'd seen it all before, so I used to go and look around the car parks. I do remember that.

"Oddly, my dad wasn't all that bothered about cars for himself and he didn't own anything particularly notable as I was growing up. He did have a Honda Prelude with the pop-up headlights that was cool but, in the family, that was about it for cool cars. I used to fantasise about having them, and I had a poster of a purple Diablo on my wall, but we didn't have anything amazing at home."

Early experience and modest beginnings

In the absence of a flash family car, Adam's childhood desire for something more exotic was temporarily satisfied by a neighbour's vehicle.

"When I was a kid, our next door neighbour had a TVR Chimaera 500. His garage was next to our living room and I would hear him start it up. I loved cars but I was quite shy and when I told my mum that I would love to go in that car she just said to me 'Go and have a word then. The worst that can happen is he'll say no.'

"I did eventually give the neighbour a knock and he said 'Sure, jump in with me,' and from then on, every Sunday, we would go out in it. His missus didn't like it so it gave him a chance to share the car with someone who did. It benefited me then, but it also gave me confidence and taught a lesson that still works for what I do now: if you don't ask, you don't get."

Adam's first taste of owning his own car was a rather more mundane affair.

"Oh, God! It was a Ford Fiesta in red. It was awful but in those days it was just





whatever was cheap and had wheels. All those cars have disappeared with the scrappage scheme now."

Onwards and upwards

When Adam left university he began working in property. As a career, it wasn't a natural fit for a fast car fanatic.

"I wasn't very happy in my line of work. I had started organising some events in 2009, a couple of years after I'd left uni. I met a chap from Cheshire called Rich who was also doing events and we ended up collaborating. We were doing different things under different names but then we combined and started organising events together.

"I just had a kind of burning desire to do it for a job so, in 2013, I moved to doing it full time. It evolved from things like meeting up with a few people in a car park, standing around and then going for a drive and maybe having a coffee. Eventually, we saw potential in it."

As it turned out, the potential was enormous. Demand has been such that the sheer number of events held by SCD has risen to a staggering 160 for 2022.

"It is insane really," says Adam. "and far more than the 100 that we would usually organise. As we don't really do anything in January and December due to the weather, that means we're doing something like three events a week at the moment."

A business but not as we know it

"We all love it," says Adam. "It's not a traditional business and I don't really view it as a business. People ask me 'What's your five-year plan, what's your three-year plan,' but it's not like that. It's run by people who love cars and are passionate about cars. That's the main thing that I'm focused on. I don't sit there counting the pounds and

the pence and doing the budgets and all that. People probably think I'm mad but I know when things are working.

"I am involved with quite a few businesses now, it's not just SCD. We're involved with Jodie Kidd's YouTube channel, we run that. We also have various tour businesses so, day to day, I work with a group of companies and build new ones. I'm not quite so hands-on within SCD now so I don't have to do as much as I used to but I still attend 30 or 40 events a year."

And of those events, does he have a clear favourite?

"Secret Meet!" he answers without hesitation. "It's the one I've always organised. A bit of context for that: I did the first one in 2010. We started at Donington and we convoyed to Graypaul [*Ferrari and Maserati dealership*] in Nottingham. There were about 100 cars involved and some of them were really cool things. I always had an ambition since then that I would hire Donington and do a big event there. I remember talking to my colleagues about it at the time. Everyone around me said 'Just wait. Learn your craft and wait.' So, I waited until 2019 when the time was finally right to move the Secret Meet to Donington."

Whatever combination of venue, people and cars provides the magic of the

SCD Secret Meet, there is no denying that the event is one of the highlights of the supercar calendar. Regtransfers photographer and videographer attends a lot of events but the SCD Secret Meet impressed her in a way that Goodwood, earlier in the year, just couldn't quite match.

Number plates: the finishing touch

As one would expect, private number plates are an integral part of SCD and its membership's obsession with cars. The business's vehicles display a range of SCD plates. Even the more run-of-the-mill cars get their private numbers: M333 SCD is on a BMW and one particularly cute example is a Renault Clio Sport bearing CL10 SCD.

"As I mentioned, I didn't grow up with us owning nice cars or things like that but as soon as I buy a car now I always buy a private plate. I think they really make the car. I mean, you can spend a lot of money customising or ordering a new car, you can do anything really, but you can make it completely unique with the number plate. Every BMW M3 CSL is really the same but put a private number plate on one and it's unique.

"I like to see what plates other people have got too. At our events I see people turning up with really good plates and a lot of my friends who are SCD members have got some great plates. It's a big thing!"

www.supercar-driver.com

Interview: Angela Banh

Story: Rick Cadger

Photography: Amy England





TOMMY MALLETT

Entrepreneur and former *TOWIE* cast member Tommy Mallet has had quite the journey to success. As a child growing up in Islington, London, Tommy struggled with the academic side of school life but, as time has gone by, he has demonstrated that hunger, ambition and determination can overcome the disadvantages imposed by a limited education.

Another early challenge came when Tommy's family relocated from Islington to Essex when he was 14 years old. Tommy initially found it hard to fit in coming, as he did, from a different area. Although part of the reason for moving house had been to remove Tommy and his older brother from

situations that threatened to lead them into trouble, their new neighbourhood was still far from privileged and young Tommy often got into fights. When he left school, Tommy found himself without qualifications except for a grade C pass in history, the only subject in which he had taken a real interest.

In search of direction

Despite his issues at school, Tommy did go on to college but dropped out after a few months. A period of unemployment followed, before he bumped into an old friend and was offered work labouring on construction sites. The man who gave Tommy that first employment opportunity

became something of a role model. As well as the job, Tommy's employer and his family were supportive and gave Tommy the chance to get back to college and do a carpentry apprenticeship. Working on construction sites at the homes of the wealthy exposed him to the glitz and glamour that accompanied success. Although he had no idea how it would happen, Tommy became convinced that this kind of success was his destiny.

That yearning for bigger, better things grew and grew to such an extent that Tommy found his employment a distraction. Working for someone else was an obstruction that kept him from seeing his

own road to fortune, so he quit his job in order to “find himself”, thus sacrificing the income and security of regular work. Survival meant selling his carpentry tools, along with most of his other possessions, but Tommy was still no nearer finding a path to his goal.

Connections with friends have been vital elements at every stage in Tommy Mallet's story. One such connection had led to the construction job that first exposed him to the lifestyles of the wealthy and fired his ambition and then, in 2014, his friendship with another cast member led to an offer from ITV's *The Only Way is Essex*. Tommy was initially dismissive and inclined to refuse the offer but, once again, input from a friend was about to change everything.

The wake-up call

To Tommy's shock, one of his closest friends received a substantial prison sentence: a 14-year sentence meant that his friend could expect to serve seven. Still reeling from the shock, Tommy visited his friend in prison and mentioned the invitation from *TOWIE*. Tommy's friend, knowing his situation, was not impressed by Tommy's dismissal of the opportunity and issued an ultimatum: either Tommy should join the show or he should not visit his friend again. His reasoning was simple and the words “Do you want to end up in here with me?” provided the motivation Tommy needed.

Tommy joined *The Only Way is Essex* in 2014 and soon met Georgia Kousoulou, who would become his partner in a lasting relationship that has proved very popular with viewers. The couple left the show in May 2021 to concentrate on becoming parents but their fan following remains as strong as ever.

His time on *TOWIE* proved a mixed blessing for Tommy. While the show was an undeniable opportunity, it did not elevate him as it had earlier stars such as Joey Essex. The early public obsession with the show had peaked by this time and peripheral income streams such as public appearances didn't materialise for Tommy. While his lot had improved, Tommy didn't see his future success being that of a TV star.

Tommy's first taste of actual business success was with a nightclub he bought into with friends. For a while, the Circuit club in Romford was a great experience. Tommy was earning good money and having fun. Unfortunately, there was some trouble outside the club, which attracted unhelpful attention from the media and the police. Within months, attendance and

revenue had both dropped off. Another false start, it seemed.

The product

A conversation with an agent got Tommy thinking in terms of launching a product of his own. He had already decided that footwear was a particular passion of his and he began trying to design a box in which to store his beloved shoes. This soon morphed into the desire to design actual shoes, not just a container for them. But every product needs a unique selling point and there were already countless designer shoe brands in the shops. Another of Tommy's trademark random encounters soon provided the answer.

Tommy admired a pair of shoes he had been given to wear at a photo-shoot and asked the photographer how much they cost. When he was told the price, Tommy was shocked to realise that he couldn't afford a pair of the shoes he was modelling. This was a real lightbulb moment and Tommy decided that he wanted to create something that provided the quality of a £500 pair of shoes at a price that would be affordable for hardworking people who wanted to look good for a night out at the end of a long week. He now had a concept and started sketching out designs.

The next piece of the puzzle to fall into place was Tommy's fortuitous meeting with Evren Ozkarakasli on a night out. When

he learned that Evren worked in clothing production, Tommy asked him to get shoe samples made up based on Tommy's design and specifications. Evren delivered the samples and Tommy was elated to see that the result was even better than he'd imagined. The two friends decided to try an initial retail run on a partnership basis and a brand was born.

Bumpy ride

The road wasn't a smooth one at first, but at least Tommy could now see a road! The early days saw Tommy and Evren running around a leaky storage unit trying to prevent rainwater from damaging their stock. Much of the rest of the time was spent wondering why orders were so slow to materialise. Tommy realised that having some celebrity status from a reality TV show could actually work against him as well as in his favour. While his *TOWIE* fame had provided him with a social media audience he could market his product to, he found some people were resistant to wearing a reality star's name as the branding on their trainers. Early attempts to get the product carried by shops also met with dismissal and, within two years, the company had amassed substantial debts.

Yet another chance meeting, this time with a fellow gym member, resulted in Tommy reluctantly borrowing a book that was all but forced upon him. After struggling



with the written format, Tommy got an audiobook version and listened to *The Secret* by Australian writer Rhonda Byrne. The book is something of a phenomenon: it has sold many millions of copies and has as many critics and detractors as it does devotees, nevertheless, countless readers swear by its message and Tommy found it a great source of renewed focus and determination. Regardless of whether others share Tommy's opinion of the book, it is a fact that the following months saw the ailing young Mallet brand rise like a phoenix.

You have reached your destination ...

Mallet London is now an international brand. Tommy's shoes are carried by some of the world's top stores in many countries including the UK, USA, Dubai and South Africa. As for celebrity endorsement, well, having one's product worn by people like Drake, will.i.am, Olly Murs and Craig David really can't do a brand any harm.

Tommy's status as a serious entrepreneur is firmly established and was reflected in his inclusion in the 2021 Forbes 30 Under 30 list of successful and influential young business people. More importantly, Tommy himself is rightfully proud of what he has achieved.

"After launching in 10 countries over the past year, I found the majority of them have never heard of *TOWIE*. They buy the brand for the style and quality. The show gave me a platform to promote myself in the UK but I don't think it made any impact for me in places like South Africa or Saudi Arabia where the brand is hugely popular."

After that long and very winding road, Tommy Mallet now finds himself in a good place: the place he longed to be when he was a daydreaming labourer on a building site. Tommy, Georgia and young son Brody live in a beautiful house in Essex and, although Tommy still has ambitions to grow his business even further, he is very appreciative of his life and his home.

"As it stands we are happy where we are," Tommy says. "I focus on my life and business daily. Gone are the days when I would try to plan five years ahead: I'm just enjoying the moment." It sounds as if Tommy and Georgia picked the perfect time to start their family.

"Being a parent is amazing," Tommy says. "It's hard work but the most rewarding job on the planet." There are no immediate thoughts of a second baby though. "As it stands, we are just enjoying our first child and putting all our time and energy into that."

Fans followed Georgia's pregnancy eagerly and the couple shared their

progress in their own series, *Georgia and Tommy: Baby Steps*, for ITVBe. The show was a far more intimate production than *TOWIE* and Georgia especially was keen that it should be raw and honest. Instagram fans were delighted in early 2022 when Tommy confirmed the show's return for a second series.

The couple also shared the news that Tommy had proposed to Georgia while they were on holiday and that she had accepted. As he posted holiday snaps on Instagram, Tommy told fans "Now stop asking me when I'm gonna do it".

Tommy's story may be an extraordinary one but he doesn't think it has to be unparalleled. Tommy sees no reason why other people shouldn't enjoy similar success, even if they have faced their own struggles with education. He knows he is living proof that where there's a will there's a way.

"My advice to anyone with a learning disability is to never treat it as a disadvantage, as nowadays there are so many different apps to assist you with reading and writing. It's not how you read it: it's how much you want it!

"I've proven to myself, after all these years, that with hard work and dedication, the sky really is the limit"

www.mallet.com

Rick Cadger

Tommy's plates

For a top entrepreneur and TV personality, Tommy shows remarkable restraint in the cars he owns. He has been more focused on building a secure future for his family than on flashing the trappings of the wealth he has earned. So, no multiple garages full of Italian supercars to be found here.

That's not to say he isn't a fan of nice cars: Tommy says his dream wheels would be a Mercedes-AMG One. For now, however, the cars parked in the Mallet driveway are a Mercedes SLS AMG and a Mercedes-AMG G 63.

Of course, a nice car looks its best when it's finished off with a good private registration and Regtransfers was delighted to supply Tommy's M41 LET plates.

"People like being different," says Tommy, "and private registrations are a great investment at the same time. There aren't many things you can buy and enjoy looking at without losing money on. They also keep cars looking fresh as they become older.

“The team at Regtransfers was amazing from start to finish.



Seeing double? Those with a good sense of perspective will be pleased to know that the car in the foreground is, in fact, a toy version for Tommy's one-year-old son, Brody!

Look Here!

Some people look for very specific features or qualities in a private registration: a name, a word, a set of initials, the absence of a year code etc. Others seem to see appeal in a range of formats and can be attracted simply by the overall look of a number. Imran Khan, from Bradford, selected his most recent acquisition simply because he liked its look.

"Although 16 D has no specific meaning to me, I couldn't turn down the opportunity to add another three-character plate to my personal collection," Imran says. "The characters have a great aesthetic and occupy very little space on a standard size number plate."

Imran also owns 7 KN, which he describes as "the shortest abbreviation I could find for Khan." Like 16 D, 7 KN was purchased from Regtransfers.

A friend of Imran's, also a private plates enthusiast, has owned the registration 111 MK for many years. He also owns Audio Images, a Bradford-based company providing vehicle tracking and security and in-car audio-visual. Audio Images is Yorkshire's leading specialist in the installation of vehicle tracking systems for the recovery of stolen cars, vans and motorbikes, as well as fleet tracking systems for business. Imran finds his friend's business a great place to spot nice cars and nice number plates among the vehicles brought in by customers.

Imran's own 16 D and 7 KN are both currently on cars. "But I have recently taken delivery of a 2022 BMW S1000 RR motorbike, so I may eventually put one of the numbers on that.

"Number plates have become a hobby for me, and have shown fantastic returns on my money," he says. "I have been dealing with Regtransfers for several years now and they have always delivered a fantastic service."



“I have been dealing with Regtransfers for several years now, and they have always delivered a fantastic service.”



Benvenuta Italia!

Giuseppe Ragona, known to friends and family as Pino, was born in Catania, Sicily to an aristocratic family. Pino's line descends from the Royal House of Aragon of Sicily and Pino himself holds the title of Count Palatine.

The title, he tells us, has been passed from father to son since 1436, when Sigismund, Holy Roman Emperor, first appointed

Count Girolamo Ragona to the rank of Palatine.

Pino lives in London with his English wife Claire and their two children, Virgilio Giuseppe Ragona, who will, in turn, inherit his father's title, and their daughter, Countess Azzurra Maria Ragona.

Pino is owner of Giovanni's Restaurant in the heart of Covent Garden; he is also chef.

Giovanni's is a widely acclaimed establishment and that high regard is underlined by the favour it has found amongst a host of international celebrities. However, Pino lavishes as much personal attention upon his other customers as he does to the rich and famous.

"I want them all to feel at home and be treated in the way my family and I would





“A smile does not need a translation.”

want when we visit a restaurant”, he says. “A smile does not need a translation.”

Amongst the legendary figures to have graced Giovanni’s with their custom was another famous son of an Italian expat family.

“Certain dishes remind me of events and people,” says Pino. “Some more than others. For example, Pasta e Fagioli reminds me of the great Frank Sinatra and memories of wonderful evenings in

Giovanni’s, or ‘the hideout’ as Sinatra called it.”

The singer became a regular at Giovanni’s and he used to take his wife, Ava Gardner, to the restaurant.

“After the divorce,” Pino says, “she chose London as her new home and, maybe because it reminded her of Frank, she still often came to us. Giovanni’s became like a second home to her: the usual table, the usual wine.”

Given Pino’s connection to his origins and rich Italian culture, Regtransfers were delighted to supply him with a fine number plate that perfectly celebrates his heritage, 17 ALY.

www.giovannilondon.co.uk
www.benvenutaitalia.com



Photo: Ben van Meerendonk • Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0





Nick Sahota

Nick Sahota has been obsessed with car number plates for as long as he can remember. In fact, so early did the bug bite that Nick purchased his first registration, N1 GGK, when he was just 15 years old: long before he had a car, or even a driving

licence. His purchase was funded with six month's earnings from a Saturday job.

That early ethic of working for what he wanted was instilled in young Nick by the examples set by his father and grandfather. It seemed quite natural to Nick that he should be his own boss and so he embarked on his early business

career. His first ventures were car cleaning and car parking businesses but an interest in property development soon prompted a change of direction.

Nick developed an eye for the potential in a variety of residential properties and rapidly acquired his own portfolio of houses and apartments for the rental market.





The experience he gained in the business fuelled a further broadening of his interests, and Nick decided to move more into the development side.

His projects to date have included a number of developments of ever-increasing size. From projects of 30 units he has moved on to 50, 70 and even 100-apartment developments.

So, these days, Nick finds himself better able to afford to indulge his personal

number plate fetish than in the Saturday-job days of his youth. He has also been able to purchase the odd vehicle or two to go with his registrations.

"I have a fairly large car collection - more than 50 - to display some of my favourite plates on. But I do have over 120 plates now, so I still don't get a chance to run them all.

"I have started to think of it as an addiction. Although they are great

investments, I just find it difficult to part with my plates in order to actually realise the gain!"

Nick isn't hoarding all his private registrations for himself, despite his admitted addiction. He has begun to spread the number plate love around the family too.

"My dad's name is Glen, so I bought 61 EN, 613 NS, 613 NN and, 66 LEN for him."

Instagram: @nicksingsahota





A Cracker!

Derek Mair, from Edinburgh, tells us that his keen interest in autonumerology goes right back to the early 1980s. "I have owned a few crackers over the years," he says. "I currently own A 1111, and 1 CC which is on my Lamborghini Huracan. I also have others on retention."

We are very happy that Derek is pleased with his E 4 registration and that he had a good experience dealing with Regtransfers.

“The lady I dealt with was a delight and made the process very straightforward.”

Like this? You may be interested to know that we currently have the superb E 2 for sale at www.regtransfers.co.uk or call 01582 967777



Readers' Gallery

Here is a selection of great photos that have been submitted by our readers. Do you have a one?

Please send it to:
editorial@regtransfers.co.uk



Anonymous



from Henry W Doyle



from Hamish Pryse



from Jimmy Donohoe



from Mark Evans



from E Rana



from Omar Naeem




from Greg McNair



from Stewart Steele



 **BUTLERS**

from Butlers Tree Services • www.lopit.co.uk



from Roy Gregg



from Sami @supratt6_aero



from Graham Meredith



from Mark Pearce



It's a Family Affair



CA22 ERA (Carrera), as well as JES 8Y for his friend Jessy.

That first registration purchased by Amar's father was the foundation of a truly epic collection of fine plates and a close-knit community of happy owners.

"Without family," says Amar, "none of the plates would mean anything."

The Sheregill family, from Gillingham in Kent, has accumulated an excellent and varied collection of personal registrations. Amardeep Sheregill, entrepreneur and managing director of Sheregill Real Estates, credits his father, Gurdeep, for initiating his love for cherished number plates.

"My father purchased 7 GSG (pictured opposite with Amardeep's children, Mya and Nihaal), for Gurdeep Sheregill and we carried on from there, buying plates for our children and other family members," Amar says.

The Sheregills are a close family and the gifts and other number plate acquisitions soon became a sizable collection featuring some excellent registrations. Amardeep kindly listed just a few of the numbers enjoyed by his family and friends.

As we have seen, Amar's father started the ball rolling with 7 GSG. Other terrific plates containing the letters SG for the family name followed and Gurdeep bought 1 ASG for Amardeep. Amar's uncle Minder has both 1 MSG and 2 MSG while another uncle, Bhupinder Sahota, has BSS 1. Brother Tirth maintains the theme with 1 TSG and Amar's nephew, Narinder, has 1 NSG while another, Arjun (pictured opposite, top), has ARJ 1N.

Amar owns a building company and two of his vans display numbers that were bought to represent his son, Nihaal. The vans bear 4 NSG and 5 NSG, while Nihaal also has his own NE11 AAL plate.

In addition, friends and family have a variety of other numbers. 6 DSA was



bought for nephew Dylan Atkar and 2 GSO for family friend and renowned immigration solicitor Gurpal Oppal. Brother-in-law Jindy received the excellent J1 NDY.

Amar says "I am always on the look-out for plates for my nephews and nieces. I purchased KH15 HAN for my nephew, Kishan, and AM12 YTS for my niece, Amryt.

"You could say it's an addiction," he admits. "I own approximately 40 or 50 plates and I am always adding more." As if to underline the fact, Amar recently purchased DAL 131R (Dalbir) and





I Want That Number!

Jim Smith was an engineer with Vickers Armstrong and has also worked for Caterpillar Tractors, Rolls Royce, Churchill Gears and many more when, he recalls, "you could leave one job and walk straight into another." In 1969, when Jim was 25 years old, he became self-employed, with the support of his wife, and started as an engineers' agent. Over the next 53 years, he moved into factory and commercial building maintenance and facilities management. "My current small customer base are very nice people to deal with," he says, "and working keeps me active and helps the bank balance."

In 1969, Jim and a few friends, also making their way in business, thought they were, in Jim's words, the bee's knees and wanted to be recognised by their contacts and others. To this end, Jim acquired TOT 111 on a car he bought and used for work.

"My real name became a distant memory," he says, "and I was known as 'Tot'. People knew my plate and who I was when I was there to see them."

Through a car dealer friend, Jim then purchased FEF 2 for £200. "Somewhere, and I can't remember how, KCU 2 also came into my life."

Some months later in the *Exchange and Mart*, Jim spotted UTY 1 for only £150. "Well, I just had to have it," he says. "FEF 2 was sold to my dentist for £200 and UTY 1 became the 'king of the castle'. My car dealer friend, Peter, was soon back on my case with PTY 1. We did a deal on a Rover 2000 and separately on PTY 1 for £200 plus KCU 2."

Several years went by and, in 1983, when out with his daughter on a driving lesson, Jim spotted XTY 1 on a black Morris Minor.

"The order of the day was to 'follow that car!' Eventually, it stopped, we stopped, and a deal was done for £1,000."

Again, on his travels to work contracting to a national bakery firm, Jim regularly passed a big American car with the registration 1 WTN. "It was shouting out at me, 'I Want That Number!' and it never seemed to move - just waiting there patiently for me. One day someone was working on the car. I stopped and eventually a deal was done for £1,000."

During all of these comings and goings, Jim had bought a Jaguar XJS, from a local car showroom, which came with the number 67 BAT as part of the sale. "This went onto my father's car until he passed," says Jim, "and it was sold privately about 12 years ago for £1,500."

In 2014, Jim spotted N5 JYM for sale in his local paper. "It was priced at what I was willing and able to pay and I was able to get the plate for £500 and it is now on my Dacia Sandero."

Y14 BET and Y14 GYM were bought from a trade dealer 2010 in memory of the family's retired greyhounds, Betty and Gymbob, who had passed away. "Those numbers cost about £500 each and have been on cars over the recent years but are now currently resting in retention."

Jim 'looked' no further than Regtransfers when he bought L20 KED in 2011 and says, "the numbers bought privately were fraught with difficulties, some doubt and hard work, but purchasing from a number plate specialist was so simple and effortless; certainly the best way to do it."



A Fourth to be Reckoned With

Ian Guest, from County Durham, is the proud owner of IG 1, the fourth most expensive number plate ever sold in the 30-year history of the government's regular DVLA auctions. IG 1 fetched an impressive £287,792 at the event at The Vale Resort near Cardiff in 2019.

Ian desperately wanted the ultimate initials plate for his Bentley Continental GT Speed and was prepared to pay for it. Its format made it special to him in another way too. "It was the last available licence plate with just two letters and a single number," he tells us.

Ian also owns 11 G, which is on a Mercedes and IG 11, which he has kept on a retention document.

At £518,450, 25 O holds the current record as the most expensive number sold at a DVLA auction and the most expensive sold anywhere in the UK. The second most expensive DVLA auction sale was of 1 D at £352,411 in 2009 and, most recently, third place was taken by DEV 1L at £308,253 in 2021.

Prices quoted here are 'all-in' and include fees and taxes.



Malcolm and Julie Mcmillan have owned in-car audio shops for 30 years and first became interested in personal number plates in 1995. "It started off with MUF 1, which I bought from Regtransfers", Malcolm recalls.

The couple have owned more than 20 private plates since that first purchase and still have a great collection of

number one registrations, including VBZ 1, 1 GCU, 1 OUX and 1 UPU.

"I just like the number one plates," says Malcom, "as they hold the most value."

The letters on the Mcmillans' number plates hold no particular significance for him except for 1 OUX. That one is very special as it represents their only granddaughter, Louise.

"Buying plates is an investment," says Malcolm, "and they make a car look good."



John Adamson, from Mansfield in Nottinghamshire, is in the enviable position of owning two fantastic, matching initials number plates: one for his car and one for his motorcycle. In fact, John's brace of fine

cherished numbers are, without a doubt, the most desirable of JFA registrations.

John purchased JFA 1 way back in 1976 and the registration was displayed on many vehicles before finding its current home on John's red Audi. Much

more recently, John bought JFA 2 from Regtransfers for his Triumph motorcycle.

Mysteriously, John didn't share his middle name with us, so you may speculate along with us about that enigmatic middle initial.

MAKE A NAME FOR YOURSELF

Names are amongst the most popular of private number plates. As more and more name registrations are bought and sold, many find owners who really cherish them and intend to keep them. This means fewer of those names remain available and so prices begin to rise. It's a great result for those who have invested in name plates, but it means that buyers need to move quickly to get the best deals. There are still some great name plates available, even at lower prices, but the performance of name plates in recent auctions suggests that their increasing popularity is already pushing those values up.

Investment potential

That trend in the prices of name numbers has always been upwards: that's what makes name registrations such a sound investment. The table opposite shows a selection of recent auction sales. While the effectiveness of the representations varies, these numbers all achieved high prices. Even those for which better combinations exist see their values pushed up by the ever-growing demand for name registrations.

It's not surprising that so many people aspire to own their names on private number plates. We live in a time when people like to be seen and noticed; social media is proof of that. Even for the more

Plate	Name	Price	Date
PAT 3K	Patek	£100,245	May 2022
53 NGH	Singh	£78,417	Apr 2022
FA71 MAH	Fatimah	£46,445	Sep 2021
15 YED	Syed	£43,749	Feb 2021
RU22 ELL	Russell	£35,531	Dec 2021
15 UKY	Suky	£33,477	May 2021
JEN 20N	Jenson	£31,307	Mar 2021
UPP 41B	Uppal B	£30,267	Jan 2022
2 USK	Rusk	£29,625	Oct 2021
42 AMS	Azam	£26,928	Dec 2021
AYA 6N	Ayaan	£26,030	May 2021
AAN 4M	Anam	£25,773	Jun 2021
PR71 NCE	Prince	£25,773	Sep 2021
MUU 5A	Musa	£25,773	Jan 2022
60 GNA	Gogna	£25,760	Dec 2021
AVE IIE	Avelle	£24,489	Jan 2021
AAD 7L	Aadil	£23,333	May 2021
J57 NGH	J Singh	£23,205	Jul 2021
MAJ IOR	Major	£22,627	Mar 2021
MRT IIN	Martin	£22,589	Mar 2021
SOP 5IE	Sophie	£21,947	Jan 2021
LOU I2E	Louise	£21,908	Dec 2021
H911 AND	Holland	£21,908	Jan 2022
WEBB 3Y	Webb	£21,061	Jul 2021
11 DDY	Addy	£20,637	Oct 2021

reserved amongst us, our name on our car's number plate is simply the ultimate in personalisation. Driving a unique vehicle is a great feeling.

Find your private name plate

Your own personal name number plates needn't be merely a daydream: it's just a matter of getting in while there are still versions of the name available, and before demand pushes those prices up too far. It could be money extremely well spent and there is an excellent chance of a profit should you ever resell.

Regtransfers has a vast stock of excellent name number plates for you to choose from and there are always great deals to be had. With convenient finance options available, there's never been a better opportunity to buy your own name number. And, of course, as time goes by those prices are going to keep rising.

Search now to see what we have for you. Your name on a plate could be waiting for the more reserved amongst us, our name on our car's number plate is simply the ultimate in personalisation. Driving a unique vehicle is a great feeling.

If you need a little inspiration, pictured below are just a few of the thousands who have made a name for themselves with Regtransfers.



David Wattam



John Varney



Aimée Baverstock



Anne and Alan Kennan



Grainne McPherson



Cherie Wheeler

The Celebrities' Choice

For those whose profession relies on maintaining a high profile, a name registration can be a valuable promotional tool. Regtransfers has provided personal

plates to a host of celebrities from the worlds of entertainment, sport and business. Many of our famous friends use their plates to ensure they get seen, while the more astute also keep an eye on the potential resale values.

Here are just a few of the famous names we have represented on number plates. You can read all about these and other famous number plate fans in the back issues of this magazine online and on our website's celebrity number plates page.



Carl Hartley



Jay Kay



Daniel Dubois



Gok Wan



Denise van Outen



Chris Eubank Jr



Amy Childs



Andros Townsend



Russell Kane



Theo Paphitis



David Gold



Vanessa-Mae

The Best Move



Sean Burton's love of cars began around 1968 with a Jensen Interceptor. Sean, from Stevenage in Hertfordshire, was caddying at Knebworth Golf Club with a friend when he saw the car parked at the club.

"From then on, I wished to own a decent car. I bought my first at the age of 18: a gunmetal silver, 1964, 3.8 Jaguar with wire wheels and a Webasto sun roof. Unfortunately, at around 10 years old, it'd had a few not-so-careful owners, so I bought it for 100 quid."

Sean got a job at Vauxhall Motors in Luton when he was 21. "I worked in the final-finish block and had the privilege of driving the new cars onto the final-finish line. My favourite was the then-new 2.3 Chevette."

When he was 22, Sean gave up his job at Vauxhall for an altogether more exciting prospect when he travelled to Israel to try life on a Kibbutz.

"It was the best move I have ever made," he says. "I travelled all over Israel, went through the Sinai to Sharm El Sheikh. In 1978 it was just sand dunes and Bedouins. I went to the furthest point south to Ras Mohammed - a favourite destination for Jacques Cousteau - to snorkel dive amongst untouched coral reefs in amazingly clear waters. I stayed in Israel for around 10 months then returned home, but I returned to Israel on two more occasions for short stays."

"The most memorable point during my stay in Israel was working with a survivor of the Holocaust: a truly amazing man he still had his number tattooed on his forearm."

When he returned to Britain, Sean found employment with British Gas, installing new gas mains. "That's where I gained all my groundwork experience," he says. "While earning steady weekly wages, I bought my first decent car, a white 1976 260Z

Datsun sports for which I paid £2,000. It was absolutely stunning. I recently did an MOT check on the plate and it's still up and running, which is great."

When he left British Gas in 1991, Sean started his own business, using the expertise he had gained, providing fencing and small domestic groundworks.

"I got the opportunity to carry out maintenance on some retail shopping outlets," he says, "and slowly increased the size of my business, working on larger retail outlets such as McDonald's, Sainsbury, Amazon and Tesco."

Sean bought his first Bentley, a GTC 1, in 2013. "I owned it for 11 years," he says, "but I recently parted with that one and bought a V8 S, a top-drawer car."

"My company is named Hertfordshire Fencing and Maintenance Ltd, so my 1 HFM registration really complements the car."

Call 999!

Ash Patel is an avid reader of our magazine and decided it was finally time to share his own number plate story. During the week, Ash is busy with his full-time job but at the weekend you may find him chauffeuring classic cars for various events.

Our relationship with Ash started in 2017 when he purchased his first number plate from us for his Mitsubishi Evo 5. He described the process as easy: "typing in EVO and scrolling down until I found the one I wanted." He decided upon the number plate EVO 903V. Although the number 903 didn't have a particular meaning for him, the 'V' following it did. As V translates to 5 in Latin, Ash considered the number plate a dream fit for the car. If Ash ever decides to get his hands on a Mitsubishi Evo 9, this vehicle registration would suit that car nicely too.

That was only the beginning for Ash. He purchased his dream number plate with Regtransfers after a wait of nearly 16 years. After negotiating the final price with a member of our team over the phone, he was able to buy the private registration ADA 15Y. The registration number stands for 'Ash Daisy,' and in his words is quite frankly "just perfect."

You may be wondering, why Daisy? It is a nod to the good old days when Ash would meet up with friends from the Ford RS Owners Club to attend events. Even though they used to set off together in an entourage of Ford Cosworths, he would always be the last to arrive. This earned him the nickname Daisy: a reference to the character Daisy Duke from *The Dukes Of Hazzard* movies and series.



As may be obvious by now, Ash has a real passion for classic cars. "I would rather have a Vauxhall Frontera 4x4 than a top-spec SVR Range Rover. It just doesn't do it for me I'm afraid. I want to drive the car, not the car drive me if you know what I mean."

It appeared that the venue owner for his nephew's wedding agreed with this sentiment. He was full of praise saying, "now this is what I call a classic wedding car," when Ash brought his 1972 MK1 Ford Escort and 1949 Cadillac Sedanette to the venue. The cars attracted the attention of the other guests and added something special to the wedding.

This reaction prompted Ash to transform his passion into a fully-fledged business. He started by purchasing a traditional wedding car, a Beauford Tourer, to hire

with the 999 WED registration he had purchased from Regtransfers. Despite this, he was still overwhelmed with requests to hire out the Cadillac Sedanette. Ash proceeded to double down on his idea by purchasing the 999 WDN plate for his Cadillac and made that available to hire as well. Of course, we were happy to help by providing that matching number plate too.

Just like that, 999 Wedding Cars was born, forming the perfect marriage between Ash's love for classic cars and business.

We have a feeling that this won't be the last time we'll be hearing from Ash. He will be on the lookout for the perfect registration for his MK1 Ford Escort, hopefully, adding to his already impressive personal number plate collection.

www.999weddingcars.co.uk



MARKETING

on a Plate



Shwan Jawhar

Marketing and advertising are evolving arts. The advent of the internet provided a new and unfamiliar environment but the sharp-eyed were not slow to recognise opportunities. Before long, banner adverts and sponsored links became major sources of leads and business, and companies realised the importance of domain names to their brands.

Despite the explosive growth of the internet, there is still room for offline innovation in marketing and brand promotion. In recent years, Regtransfers has noticed, and encouraged, the increasing use of private vehicle registrations in this context.

Whether it is the raising of personal profile, as achieved by Lord Sugar's famous AMS 1 registration, or the novel promotion of a brand like Theo Paphitis's stationery chain, Ryman, with the number RYM 4N, personal – or corporate – registrations are big business.

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

Some have invested in single, outstanding examples that are guaranteed to make an impact.

Others, such as Pimlico Plumbers, have bought a whole series of imaginatively themed registrations. Many of those featured are regularly returning customers of Regtransfers.

Regtransfers is the UK's largest private dealer in personal vehicle registrations. The company was established in 1982 and is widely recognised as the leading source of authoritative information on the subject.

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

or call us on:

01582 967777



SolarFrame



The Bowgie Inn



Muck and Mulch Compost



Overfinch



Souster & Hicks Bespoke Tailors



Yellow Investments



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.



Frying Tonight

If there's one thing we love to see, it is a business discovering the power of private number plates for marketing and PR. In this age of in-your-face branding and omnipresent advertising, people can become desensitised to the messages business seek to share.

Traditional marketing media, such as fliers, posters etc are, as often as not, binned or ignored without a thought.

Consequently, businesses are on an eternal quest for new ways to grab the attention of customers.

Kurt and Emma McLaughlin are the proprietors of two fish and chip restaurants: Kingfisher in Wakefield and its sister establishment, Barracuda, in nearby Ousett. The couple's perfectly themed number plates, FRY 1T and

FRY 1N, have proved the perfect way to advertise their thriving businesses.

"The registrations are noticed everywhere we go," says Kurt. "We have been in the trade for over 30 years but we've never been asked so much about what we do as we have since we purchased the plates. They've got a lot of attention on social media too."



Anthony Keogh from Crawley in West Sussex is the managing director of UK Swimming Pools. The company designs, constructs and refurbishes concrete swimming pools and places particular emphasis on customer service.

"I have been in the pool business for over 45 years," says Anthony, "and we

have a showcase of projects throughout Sussex, Surrey and Kent."

The company's vans sport a couple of business-relevant registrations: POO 1S (Pools) and the clever H2O UKS (H₂O UKS).

"I think the number plates that I have purchased from you have been a great

success in promoting my business. The registration plates are the first thing people notice when the vans are on the road," says Anthony. "I'm very pleased."

UK SWIMMING POOLS
BESPOKE HANDMADE POOLS

www.ukswimmingpools.co.uk



Tailor-made



London's Regent Street Motor Show seems to be something of a hidden gem in the motoring enthusiast's calendar. The annual, RAC-sponsored event showcases examples from 125 years of motoring, including veteran, vintage, classic, and the very latest cars. There is something for everyone, with lots of things to see and do, including interactive displays and entertainment throughout the day. It is a very popular event due to its family-friendliness and the fact that its location and free entry makes it easy for visitors to

combine attendance with a spot of early Christmas shopping.

David Wilkinson kindly sent us this photo of his splendid 1962 left-hand drive Jaguar E-Type sporting the LGW initials registration relating to his family's business.

L G Wilkinson is one of the few master tailors which offers a more genteel and traditional world, harking back to the days of the 'Golden Mile' around Savile Row. The firm's shop is situated in St. George Street which lies between Regent Street and Bond Street. It was founded in 1919 by Leslie Garnham Wilkinson (David's grandfather) and has been based in the same building since 1924. Since 1954, it has sold suits throughout Germany, The Netherlands, Switzerland and Austria with the E-Type being a capable chariot to transport suits there with style.

In 1950, David's father, Dennis Wilkinson (who is pictured in the glass panel photo above) assigned LGW 500 to an Austin

Sheerline owned by David's grandfather.

Since then, the number has remained in the family and has been displayed on a procession of fine vehicles, including an Austin A40 Sports, Jaguar 2.4, Jaguar E-Type Series 1 3.8, Jaguar XJ6 Series 1 2.8, Jaguar XJ40 and Jaguar X-Type. Since 2015, it has, once again, adorned a Jaguar E-Type.

David bought LGW 845 from Regtransfers for his second E-Type, thus making a fine pair with LGW 500. He also acquired 4268 XJ to grace his 2.8 XJ6. Other family plates include K500 LGW, N500 LGW, X50 LGW, C5 LGW, XLL 888S and OEG 622R.

We were delighted to see that the L G Wilkinson website at www.lgw500.co.uk cleverly incorporates the LGW 500 registration!

Full details of the Regent Street Motor Show can be found at www.regentstreetmotorshow.com





John Handby is a long-time fan of Jaguar cars and has owned 14 of them over the years. The majority of John's Jaguars have been XJs. "The earlier cars were in my time in corporate life," he says. "Subsequently, I carried on with Jaguars in my consulting career. Now I am retired but the passion for Jaguars has stayed with me."

John's middle name is 'Gray' so the plates perfectly represent his initials. "No particular significance in the numbers," he admits, "but I was pleased to secure the second plate with a similar look/sequence to the first."

The first plate, 334 JGH, was purchased around 2003 and has been on six

different cars. The second was bought last September for John's F-type.

"Service from you guys has been great on both occasions," he tells us, "and makes the whole process of putting private plates on vehicles very straightforward."



Pictured here, left to right, are: Clive Godderidge, his son, Phillip, and grandson, Matthew.

Phillip, from Spalding in Lincolnshire, tells us that the plate is being kept on retention and will be given to Matthew as

a surprise gift on his 17th birthday, so the photo was cleverly staged without him actually seeing it.



That Rings a Bell!

Gerald Trevor's interest in car registration numbers goes back to when he was a child when two of the letters allocated to the county of Leicestershire, where he lived, were AY and UT. This meant that lots of car registrations had memorable words such as DAY, WAY, CUT and NUT etc. "As a family," Gerad recalls, "we had a number of interesting ones, such as 88 DAY and 354 FAY."

When he started looking for a registration for himself, Gerald soon realised that his initials GT attracted a considerable premium due to the sporting connotations. "So, about 20 years ago," he says "I settled for a simple dateless registration, XUJ 492, bought through Regtransfers. I kept my last car, an Audi A3, for 13 years, and because of the registration it never looked its age."

Just before he retired, Gerad saw 4321 GT advertised on the Regtransfers website. "As an estimator, my working career revolved around numbers, and one of my hobbies is bell ringing, which also revolves around number sequences, so the number seemed ideal for me, and was affordable. My daughter convinced me that I couldn't take my money with me and that it was too good an opportunity to miss, so it now sets off my new Audi Q2 and certainly attracts a few comments."

Ben Shaw, from Stoke-on-Trent, has an identical twin brother, Tom. Not only do they both drive Range Rover Sport SVRs, but each car bears its owner's first initial and surname in the form of the spectacular 85 HAW (B Shaw) and T8 HAW (T Shaw) plates. Both plates were purchased through Regtransfers a few years back.

Ben set up a waste collection, house clearance and skip hire company some nine years ago. Prior to this, he worked for his grandad's construction company, specialising in building care homes,

distribution centres and retirement villages. "I've always had a keen interest in personalised plates," says Ben, "and currently own nine, with only four vehicles to put them on! As a family, the Shaws also have an impressive vintage car collection, which includes a rare vintage limousine, which is one of only seven in the world.

"As teenagers!" Ben recalls, "we had our first plates purchased as Christmas gifts from our parents." Not to be outdone, the senior Shaws are also keen plate devotees with B18 HAW and T18 HAW.

"I have been looking constantly for a new plate resembling my initials," Ben tells us, "and I received a postcard from Regtransfers which had suggested plates. This is where 85 HAW caught my eye.

I immediately picked up the phone and spoke to a very helpful member of the team who stated that the plate had never been issued and I'd need to apply for it to be released to auction, which I did. As the auction approached, the excitement to get my dream plate was immense. Then the plate became mine!"



Chris Woolner is a First Officer Systems Engineer with the Royal Fleet Auxiliary Service (RFA).

"I've always loved the Jaguar marque," says Chris, "probably from watching *The Sweeney* in the 1970s, with all of those Jaguar S-Types being driven by Regan and Carter."

It would be a while before Chris's Jaguar dream could become reality and at the time of his initiation into the world of cherished plates, his car was a little less glamorous.

"I bought my first personal plate, A18 COP, from a friend in the late 1990s," he says. "and it adorned my Vauxhall Cavalier SRI 130. After the demise of that SRI, I decided it was finally time to scratch that itch and buy myself a Jag so I purchased a Jaguar 4.0 Sovereign."



It was a good start but Chris was already setting his sights on a big V12 and although that car was beyond his means at the time, he did purchase his second personal plate, the optimistic XJ1 2442 (resembling XJ12 442). After a year Chris and the Sovereign went their separate ways as he finally succumbed to the lure of the V12. He bought a Jaguar 6.0 V12 and assigned XJ1 2442 to it. Ultimately, the V12 was too big and expensive to maintain but,

as Chris told us, at least it got the desire to own that model out of his system

The years went by and Chris continued buying private plates. He particularly wanted a registration that could represent his surname. That quest led him to WD07 NER, which he found while searching on the Internet. Rather later, his father acquired the very similar WO07 NER, thus completing a very nice pair of name registrations.



Continuing the TV cop theme we introduced earlier with mention of *The Sweeney*, Chris is also a big fan of Colin Dexter's fictional detective, Chief Inspector Endeavour Morse. Chris's admiration of Morse, and Morse's famous association with the Jaguar marque, influenced his subsequent car choices.

"I especially loved Inspector Morse's Jaguar Mk2," he says, "but that wouldn't be a practical daily driver for me and they are hugely expensive. Therefore, I found

INSPECTOR CHRIS

a more modern Jaguar S-Type. I love the retro lines of the S-Type: it takes much of its styling from the Mk2 but at a tenth of the cost. I also wanted my Jaguar to be a similar colour to Morse's."

A visit to Oxford, and to the Morse Bar at the Randolph Hotel (an establishment that appeared in several episodes of *Inspector Morse* and its sequel, *Lewis*), resulted in two developments. Firstly, and most importantly, Chris proposed to the woman who became his wife. Secondly, it occurred to Chris that he should find an appropriate plate for his Morse-influenced Jaguar.

"Obviously, I couldn't obtain 248 RPA, the registration on Morse's car, but maybe I could obtain something similar. I was lucky enough to see the original Inspector Morse Mk2 Jaguar at a car show a couple of years ago with the plate 248 RPA."

Chris contacted Regtransfers for assistance and we were delighted to supply M248 RPA: the same as the Detective Inspector's number but with the additional 'M' standing for Morse.

We think Chris's Jaguar looks fantastic with its Morse plate: a fine tribute to a very popular fictional hero.





A Winning Plate

Well, the trophy isn't actually a plate: it's not even a cup. No, the Euro 2022 trophy is a wonderful squiggly thing with a blob at the top. It is very nice and it is, finally, ours!

The England women's team, AKA the Lionesses, have achieved amazing things over the summer. Those weeks were filled with genuine effort, excitement, enthusiasm, entertainment, excellence and many other things - some not even beginning with 'e'. It almost seemed as if the only things lacking in their story, their performance and the coverage have been the negatives. Even notoriously miserable football-sceptics like

your humble blogger found themselves succumbing to the Lioness Effect, and thus completely unable to muster their usual resentment of the sport.

Credit where it is overdue

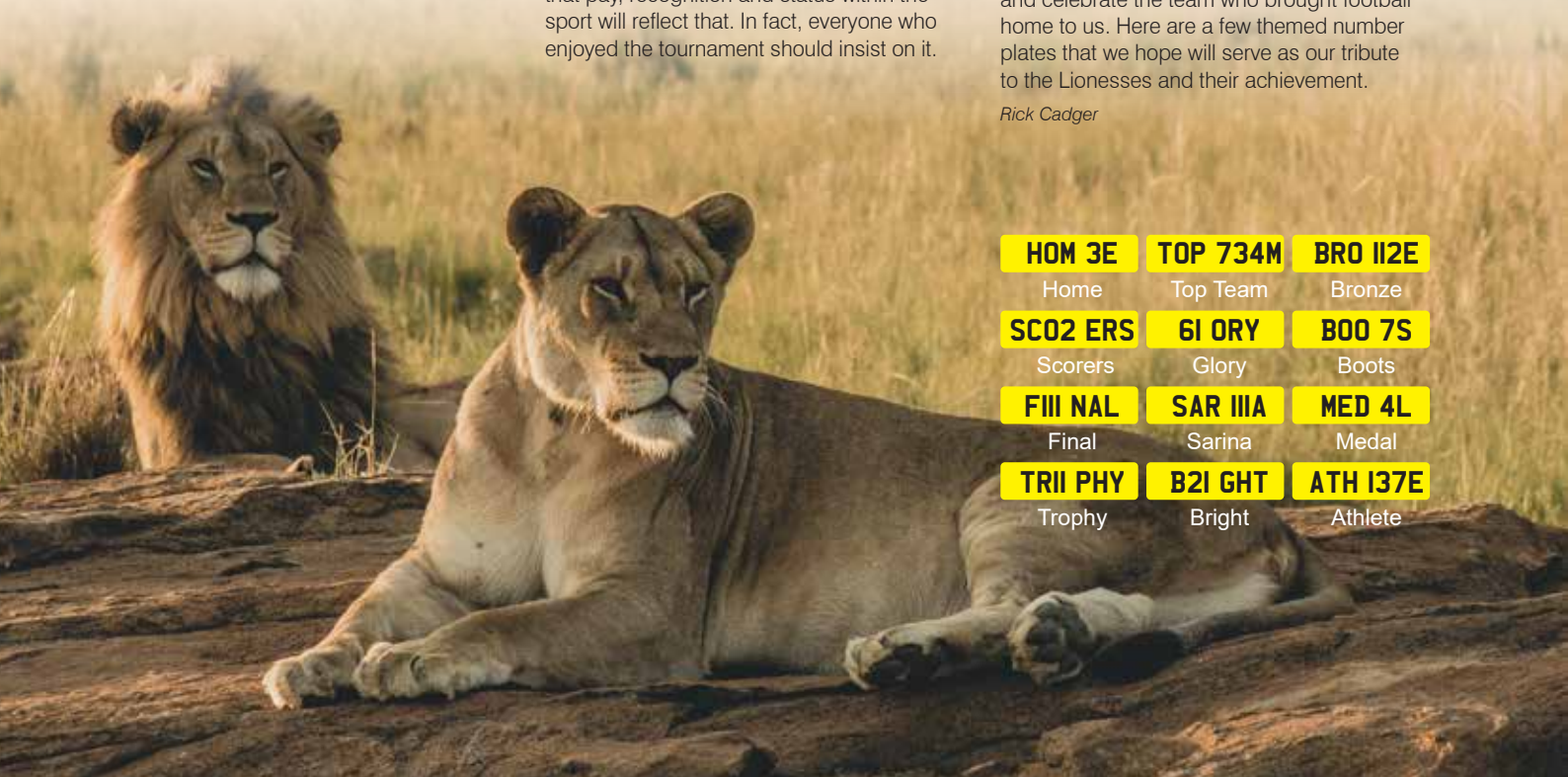
At this point, I'm afraid I am going to mention the England men's team but only to emphasise that the women's team has delivered what the guys couldn't. There now seems to be no defensible or sensible reason that the women's game should not be considered the equal of the men's in every way and one would naturally expect that pay, recognition and status within the sport will reflect that. In fact, everyone who enjoyed the tournament should insist on it.

As I've confessed, I am not a lover of football: far from it. Very far from it indeed. In fact, about as far from it as you could get. You get the idea. That said, even I appreciated the elegance of Kiera Walsh's pass and Ella Toones' chip as they secured England's first goal, and Chloe Kelly's thoroughness in sending home a ball that a less determined player may have given up on, thus effectively assuring the win.

Celebration

The word 'inspirational' has been used a lot and we feel a little inspired ourselves. You really wouldn't want to see the Regtransfers marketing department playing football - even those colleagues who are young enough to safely do so - so we won't form a team of our own. Instead, we will stick to what we know and celebrate the team who brought football home to us. Here are a few themed number plates that we hope will serve as our tribute to the Lionesses and their achievement.

Rick Cadger



HOM 3E Home	TOP 734M Top Team	BRO 112E Bronze
SCO2 ERS Scorers	6I ORY Glory	BOO 7S Boots
FIII NAL Final	SAR 111A Sarina	MED 4L Medal
TRII PHY Trophy	B2I GHT Bright	ATH 137E Athlete



John Sawle's Liege trials car is one of just 60 of this marque, which he built as a kit car in 2003.

John, from St Agnes in Cornwall, came to Regtransfers for his perfect matching plate L1 EGE.

The photo was taken on the Bluehills section of the Motor Cycling Club's Lands End Trial.



Here's this edition's obligatory doggie photo from Chris Walker of Leeds. His superb Porsche 911 sports his initials and birth date of 26th. The car and plate are pictured here with Chris's wife Denise and their cockerpool, Frank.



Sarah Paul from Dorset works for the NHS based in Sherborne. Her role is an Occupational Therapy Support Worker, working with elderly mental health patients.

Sarah is called 'Sez' by her friends and colleagues. While browsing the Regtransfers website, her husband, Bernie, spotted SEZ 17. They decided that it would look the part on their BMW and would also be an investment. "We found Regtransfers very helpful," says Sarah.

"We are lucky to live in a beautiful part of the country, only a few miles from Stourhead Gardens," Sarah tells us. "We thought it would make a nice setting for the photograph."

Stourhead is a 2,650-acre estate at the source of the River Stour in the southwest of the English county of Wiltshire, extending into Somerset. The estate includes a Grade 1 listed 18th-century Neo-Palladian mansion, the village of Stourton, and one of the most famous examples of the English landscape garden style. Stourhead has been part-owned by the National Trust since 1946. - *Wikipedia*



Regtransfers were delighted to be able to provide not only the splendid N 59 and T 40 plates illustrated here, but also the equally impressive 10 R.

Their owner wishes to remain anonymous, but you can see more great photos here: www.instagram.com/porschescotlandtrips



The Registration Numbers Club is the only traditional UK-based club catering for enthusiasts of personalised vehicle registration numbers. Joining us costs very little and the benefits could be substantial.

We were originally founded in 1977 and currently produce a quarterly newsletter, RNC News, which is the original independent club publication and is available free to subscribing members.

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A word from the RNC

by Rod Lomax

The RNC Rally 2022

After almost three years without an annual rally due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Registration Numbers Club once again held an event on 10 July ably organised by Membership Secretary, Dominic Chandler. The class awards returned this year too and were welcomed by members, although the criteria were slightly changed.

The venue was in the grounds of the Lakeland Motor Museum situated in the scenic Leven Valley just to the south of Lake Windermere at Backbarrow near Newby Bridge. The museum isn't only about cars though as its collection also covers a vast array of automobilia,



Pat Woodall once again generously donated the Noel Woodall award in his memory which was presented to long-time member Kevin Jones, from North Wales.

motorbikes and cycles which awaken motoring memories from the past.

The weather was kind to us with a beautiful sunny day to help us show off around 30 nicely presented vehicles all bearing great cherished number plates. Despite the current economic situation in the country, members had travelled from far afield, none more so than club member Andrew Hill who travelled up all the way from Plymouth in a lovely motorhome registered with BED 200M! Long-standing members mingled with newly joined ones, all enjoying the get-together in the warm summer sunshine.

The day ended all too soon with awards being presented late in the afternoon and everyone saying their goodbyes before the journey home.



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Issue 55



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