

Viva Lancia!

Steady Barker himself:

"Ditta Minetti were Lancia's distributors in Milan and at the time were probably the biggest Lancia dealers in Italy. They sold many Lambdas, including one to Lord Berkeley of Berkeley Castle. This great character had a number of cars - in England he ran a Rolls with an English chauffeur, but when in Italy (his wife was Italian) he ran the Lambda with an Italian chauffeur.

"Minetti often had cars built with special coachwork, and this is one of them."

Steady Barker bought the car direct from Jim Gordon, who had entered the Mille Miglia in it twice; once with Lewis (hence its description as the Gordon-Lewis car) and later with Lance Macklin who went on to fame in his own right. In England with Barker, the car was never made to run well, and we hear that Luciano Nicolis has had to undertake extensive work on the engine, including boring it out and having new heads made. Sig. Nicolis now uses the car as often as his health permits and has entered at least one Mille Miglia retro with it.

Hearing Steady Barker talk about the car is like walking back into history... There are Italians with lizard skin shoes, a driver who died on the Carrera Panamerica, tales of no money to buy petrol, skulduggery in smoky cafes and dodgy deals on moonlit nights... this car is living history, so we are delighted that it's still extant and in fine fettle.

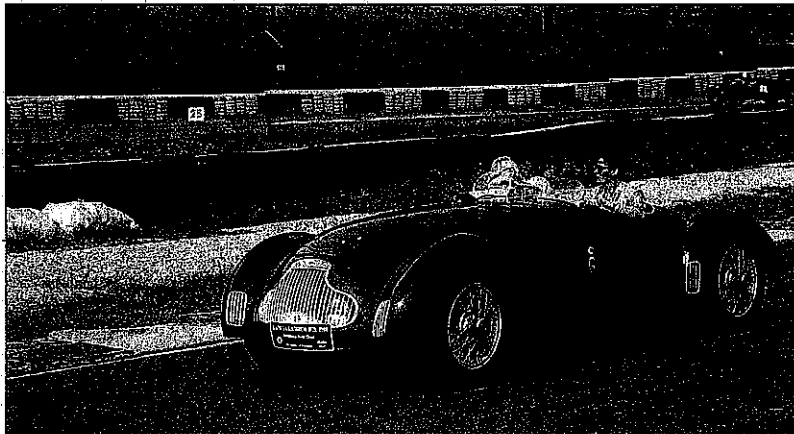
Photo (top) courtesy of Lancia Club Germany.

LAMBDA LINE UP - NEW ZEALAND

John Vessey is currently in New Zealand with his famous Lambda, partaking on the 'Pantamental Run'. Outside the Rose Bank winery the team line up (centre picture) - left to right: Anne and John Vessey (white hat, kneeling), Ron Jacob, Geoff Thorpe, Gerard and Jan Webb, and 'Liz'.

As we tentatively move into Spring, the New Zealanders are slipping into Autumn, but it's still warm enough for shorts.

1953 Sestriere Rally. An unflustered Appia takes a frosty mountain pass, with the ease and aplomb that we've all come to associate with the marque. Photo is by Rodolfo Mailander, copyright the Ludvigsen Group (who almost used it as their 1995 Christmas card), sent in courtesy of Ian Wheeler.



Snippets

THEMA WORKSHOP DATA BOOK

In an endeavour to help out Thema owners who may find the available 'factory' manuals to be not all that they need in times of problems, we have decided to gather together hints and tips from both the specialists who work on these cars and also from private owners, and, after approving, collating and editing them, to publish the results in booklet form. (I am a member of a sub-committee set up by the LMC board).

All experiences will be welcomed and if found to be of help, will be incorporated in this venture. Please get out your pens and write to me as soon as possible.

One reason for realising the need for such information, is that I have run a 16 valve Turbo for the last 12 months. When it has been behaving itself it has been a fine performance car, but I have also been plagued by a series of faults which should not have appeared in a basic Skoda model, leave alone a top of the range Lancia! It will not surprise many of you to hear that the over sophisticated electrics have been to blame on many occasions, what is also disturbing, is that most of the 'experts' ideas for correcting the faults usually haven't worked!

In a perfect world I would like a Thema fitted with manual sun roof, windows, basic heating system and far less 'idiot lights' flashing on the dash board (at the moment I am being told to check the brake fluid level constantly, it is however full, and the switch and circuitry check out as they should! The demister fan has also died and the manual doesn't even mention such a fault as possible!)

Meanwhile, the other car in the household is my landlady's Nissan, which one just gets in and uses, the only 'fault' in three years has been a minute oil leak at 27,000 miles which was put right for free by the local dealer, because quote "It shouldn't have happened!" Makes you think, doesn't it?

Your comments etc. to Peter Gerrish at Little Turzel, Petersfield Road, Ropley, Hants. SO24 ODX or Fax: 01962 772041.

Peter Gerrish

Sandwiched in between a rare BMW and (we think) a Wartburg this Aurelia – albeit a little dishevelled, still retains all its style and character. Twenty eight years on, has it survived and where is it now?

GOOD INTENTIONS

I made a good resolution to write to the Lancia Motor Club Journal when I was travelling in the 'outback' between Friborg in Switzerland, and the North of Italy in late July or early August 1968 and have finally got around to it!

Francesco Gandolfini's letter re Aurelia platform cars in the March issue has reminded me of the unusual Lancia I saw on ground next to a garage with other makes and which was not registered for the road – no registration plates. These photographs show a long chassis car from which a headlamp had been removed. It

was of generally tired appearance: it must have been 12 to 15 years old by 1968. My notes say it had a Farina body and I can discern a badge in front of the A pillar.

I have long been puzzled as to the model and date – early series wheels and hub caps, I think, but perhaps Francesco can help identify it more accurately.

Roland Grazebrook

STEADY BARKER'S ASTURA

Regarding the 'Steady Barker' Astura featured in various recent editions of Viva Lancia! we asked who were Minetti, the firm who built it? The answer comes from

