

NEWS

From winter car preparation to Steve McQueen's Porsche, via love stories, beautiful books, leather-bound flasks and news of the Austin Allegro Equipe's pitiful decline...

FAT LOT OF USE

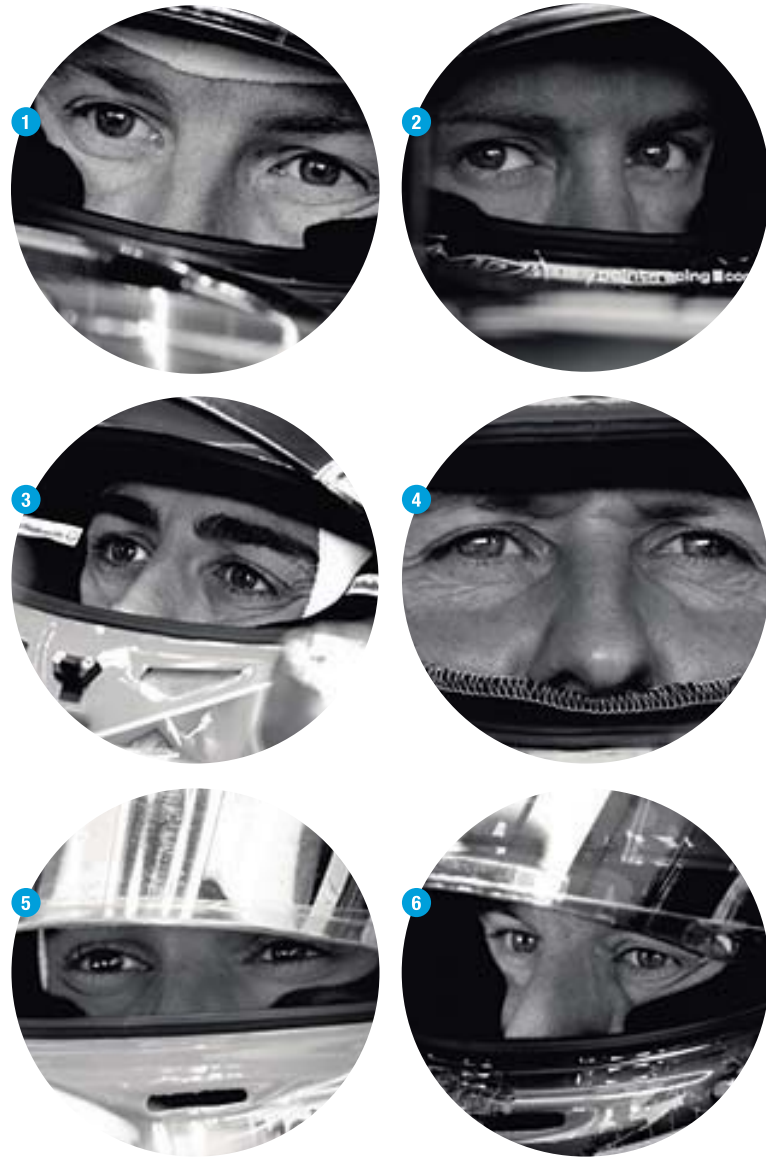
A British entrepreneur recently completed a trip around the world... and did it without using a single drop of fossil fuel

Andy Pag, 36, from Thornton Heath, south London, began his voyage in September 2009. His vehicle of choice was a 22-year-old Mercedes school bus that he restored after rescuing it from a scrapyard. It was also converted to run on vegetable oil; the 1,200-litre tank gave him an approximate range of 3,000 miles and

he frequently "refuelled" by scavenging discarded cooking oil from restaurants.

Andy's trip around the world took a romantic turn, too. American journalist Christina Ammon contacted him in order to write a feature about his adventures, and ended up sharing the second half of the journey with him after they met and fell in love.





F1 CHARITY BOOST

SIGHT FOR SORE EYES

Can you identify these F1 drivers? Drawing attention to the importance of sight for drivers and the fact that 90 per cent of blindness occurs in the developing world, these candid images were taken by photographer Andrew Hone on behalf of Sightsavers, a charity that works to prevent avoidable sight loss. Sightsavers is offering the seven signed photographs as prizes in a series of charity draws

before this year's remaining F1 races. Chief executive Caroline Harper said: "For every £1 entry ticket, Sightsavers could buy a pair of spectacles to help someone see clearly again, while three tickets could help us protect a family against river blindness disease for 10 years." To see more, go to sightsavers.org/eyesonf1.

For answers see page 11

BRITISH INSTITUTION UNDER THREAT

LOLLIPOP LADIES FROZEN OUT?

The UK has 20,000 school crossing patrols but a recent TES survey found one in four local authorities planning to reduce or abolish them to save money. A "lollipop army" has mobilised in protest, with an e-petition at <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/3221>



BACK TO THE FUTURE

Three classic British motoring icons created new headlines at the 2011 Frankfurt Motor Show

BMW showed off the latest addition to its MINI range, the stubby Cooper Coupé that hit British showrooms on October 1. Its closest ancestor is probably the mid '60s Broadspeed GT Coupé, pictured right.

Land Rover's DC100 concept (above) provided a foretaste of the Defender replacement, expected in 2015, and Jaguar's C-X16 (far right) was described as a modern interpretation of the classic E-type, which celebrated its 50th anniversary this year. The world has been waiting for a new E-type ever since the original was discontinued in 1975, but there is still no word on when – or indeed if – it might actually happen.



2.3
MILLION

The number of vehicles on Britain's roads when the Highway Code was first published in 1931

34.1
MILLION

The number of vehicles on Britain's roads today, of which 31 million are cars

1.01
BILLION

The number of cars worldwide in 2010, 240 million of them in the USA

SEASONAL CAR CARE

DON'T GET CAUGHT OUT THIS WINTER

The AA is ready for the coming winter, with extra Patrols on call to deal with an increase in breakdowns. But how prepared are you?

BATTERY / ELECTRICS

Battery problems are the main cause of winter breakdowns. Short trips in cold, dark conditions put a great strain on batteries, which rarely last longer than five years anyway; if yours is near the end of its life, replacement might save a lot of inconvenience. If the car stands idle at the weekend, a regular overnight trickle charge is a good idea.

When starting, turn off non-essentials such as lights and wipers. Use the starter in five-second bursts if the engine doesn't fire quickly, with 30 seconds between attempts to allow the battery to recover. Avoid running car electrics such as heated windows for any longer than necessary.

TYRES

Check you have a working jack and wheel brace, and that you know how to change a wheel. Consider buying a set of winter tyres, which give more grip in wet and cold weather. You can fit them to a spare set of wheels for winter use – but demand will be high so don't leave it too late to order.

If you stick with standard tyres, ensure they are in good condition, preferably with at least 3mm of tread. Don't reduce tyre pressures to increase grip: it doesn't work and reduces stability. If heavy snow is likely, buy snow-socks or chains and practise fitting them in advance.

ANTIFREEZE

Antifreeze costs a few pounds, but repairing a cracked engine will cost

hundreds. A 50-50 mix of antifreeze and water gives maximum protection down to -34C. Traditional glycol-based antifreeze should be changed at least every two years, but most modern cars use long-life antifreeze. Make sure you use the right type. Antifreeze/coolant is needed all year round as it also prevents corrosion within the engine.

If the fan belt squeals continually as soon as the engine is started, it is a sign the water pump is frozen; the cylinder block could be frozen too. Stop the engine immediately and allow it to thaw. This might take several days unless you can get the car into a heated garage. More common is a



frozen radiator; the engine will soon overheat as the coolant is unable to circulate. Stop immediately and allow the radiator to thaw.

VISION

Fit new wiper blades if yours are worn. In cold weather, make sure wipers are switched off in the park position when leaving the car; if they freeze to the screen, you could damage the blades or the motor when you turn on the ignition. Windscreen washer fluid should be topped up and treated with an additive to reduce the chance of freezing. Don't use antifreeze as it will damage paintwork.

Don't reduce tyre pressures to increase grip: it doesn't work and reduces stability

Use air-conditioning for faster demisting and to reduce condensation. If it snows, clear the roof as well as the windows before you set off; snow on the roof can fall onto the screen, obscuring your view.

LIGHTS

Check that all lights are working and clean, and that headlights are aimed correctly. You must use headlights when visibility is seriously reduced. For advice on driving in fog, see Paul Ripley's column on page 62.

Don't forget to keep your number plates clean; you can be fined if they are dirty and illegible.

For more seasonal advice, go to theAA.com/motoring.advice. For a range of winter driving accessories, from emergency kits to folding snow shovels, visit shop.theAA.com.



'Sight for sore eyes' (p8) answers: 1. Jenson Button, 2. Sebastian Vettel, 3. Fernando Alonso, 4. Michael Schumacher, 5. Lewis Hamilton, 6. Mark Webber

CARS THAT TIME MIGHT FORGET

SCARCE STORIES

Website enables drivers to assess their car's rarity

Do you have a 1970s Mazda RX-2 lurking in your garage? If so, it is one of only two still registered for UK road use.

We can be specific about such details thanks to the website howmanyleft.co.uk, which allows the automotively curious to research survival statistics for individual makes and models, from the Aixam A751 Super Luxe (338 examples) to the Zastava ZLX E (none recorded since 2004).

In between, we learn that there are still 67 Mini Mokes, seven Renault 8 Gordinis, 26

Morris Marina 1.8 TCs (the most desirable Marina?) and 18 Hillman Avenger Tigers.

Austin Allegro aficionados might be pleased to hear that 517 examples survive (although only 204 are reportedly roadworthy).

The most sporting Allegro – as great a contradiction in terms as the motoring world has known, in spite of claims that it rivalled the original VW Golf GTI – was the 1750 Equipe, pictured here. Some say it should never have been built, but even they may be sad to learn that only one is still registered as a runner.



HIDE AND SEEK

Caracalla-Bath is renowned for its leather goods, many of which reflect motorsporting themes. Pictured below are two that pay homage to Sir Stirling Moss, who announced earlier this year that he was retiring from racing at the age of 81. Seven was his favourite competition number and the colours of this flask (£25) and wallet (£80) reflect those of the Ferrari 250GT SWB he drove successfully in 1961. For more products, go to caracallabath.co.uk.



BY DAVID BURGESS-WISE

A GOOD IDEA AT THE TIME... Model T Ford Snowmobile

"A Ford on Snowshoes" was the slogan coined by Ford dealer Virgil D White of Ossipee, New Hampshire, to promote the Snowmobile attachment that he patented in 1917 to enable the ubiquitous Model T to cope with the severe winters of the northern United States. White built his first snowmobile conversion in 1913, but didn't put it on the market until 1921. He replaced the front wheels with a pair of steerable skis, added an extra slave rear axle and connected the two pairs of rear wheels with

steel caterpillar tracks. The conversion sold for between \$250-\$400 and proved popular with doctors and rural mail carriers, thanks to its ability to plough through deep snow at up to 18mph. There was also a "Sandmobile" version, which retained the front wheels for use in deep mud or heavy sand and found customers as far afield as Algeria and South Africa, as well as the Florida Everglades. White also offered narrow-track Snowmobiles for areas that favoured horse-drawn bobsleighs in winter.



MONEY MONEY MONEY

AUCTION ACTION

In our Summer edition we featured a Porsche 911S once owned by Hollywood legend Steve McQueen and driven by him at the start of his 1971 movie *Le Mans*. It was the star lot at RM Auctions' annual sale in Monterey, California, and we can report that it sold for a cool \$1.375million, or £832,800 – a new record for a 911 at auction.

Slightly more affordable, and dare we say rather more distinctive, is this unique hybrid creation known as the Foxbat. It was built in the mid-1970s by the late Geoffrey Stevens, a former

industrial chemist who decided that his 3.4-litre Jaguar XK150 was too small for his two labradors. Rather than buy a bigger Jaguar, he grafted the back half of a Morris Traveller on to the XK150. He eventually sold the car in the 1980s, and it spent two decades in France before returning to Blighty in 2008. It was expected to fetch £30,000 at Bonhams' Goodwood Revival sale in September, but failed to meet its reserve.



Strange fruit: Geoffrey Stevens even hand-cut a 'Foxbat' badge for the tail of his hybrid creation. But can you suggest a better name for it? Email or post your ideas to us (addresses on p17) and we'll publish the best ones in the next edition. >



CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE
THREE TIMES A WINNER

Dr Corrado Lopresto is not just your average wealthy, suave and fashionable Italian businessman, writes Angie Voluti

A lover of unique classic cars, the architect turned collector recently won his third Coppa d'Oro (Golden Cup) at Villa d'Este, Europe's most exclusive concours d'elegance.

The first was secured in 2001 with an appropriately named Alfa Romeo 6C 2500 Cabrio Touring 'Villa d'Este'; the second, in 2006, was with an Isotta Fraschini Torpedo, coachbuilt by Castagna. "When new, a Castagna-bodied Isotta would have cost as much as seven Rolls-Royces, 59 Fiats or a palace in the middle of Milan," says Corrado.

This summer, he struck gold again with another Alfa Romeo, a 6C 2500

Above, Corrado Lopresto with his wife and daughter and his winning Alfa Romeo at Villa d'Este

SS Bertone prototype, pictured above. This third Coppa d'Oro represents a unique achievement; Villa d'Este does not award them for any old automotive masterpiece.

Corrado's passion began in his youth with a Lancia Aurelia B10, his first real project as he played 'restorer' with the old cars stored in the family's large garage. They were soon joined by machines rescued from derelict barns in southern Italy, although his parents lost interest in his hobby when on a demonstration drive in the late 1970s they noticed smoke pouring from beneath their seats. "My father leapt out and never wanted to hear about old cars again," Corrado recalls.

A three-speed Fiat Balilla, bought as a rolling chassis, was quickly joined by

'My father leapt out and never wanted to hear about old cars again'

a Fiat 1100 rescued from the bottom of a local river. After discovering that the latter was a special *strapuntinata* version with a long wheelbase and two extra seats, Corrado became increasingly fascinated by rare machines. A collector was born.

His rules are simple: the cars must be Italian (because they best represent national style and design) and they must be one-off prototypes or otherwise unique, which obviously enhances their appeal. However, unlike many wealthy enthusiasts, Corrado wants the world to discover and appreciate these rare machines and he goes to great lengths to display them in public.

He has his own personal favourites, of course, in particular the Coppa d'Oro-winning Alfa Romeos.

"These are cars which have been restored and maintained to the highest standards," he says. "I try to protect them for our future generations, as a memento of mankind's highest achievements."



CHERISHED CARS
VAUXHALL POPS

First cars are memories for most, but Ian and Jayne Stringer have been reunited with the Vauxhall Chevette in which they courted 30 years ago.

Ian bought the car in 1981, for £2,000. After a series of successful dates with Jayne, it was used at their wedding in 1982 and three years later rushed Jayne to hospital for the birth of their son, Richard. Needing a bigger car, they sold the Vauxhall in 1986 and never imagined they would see it again. However, a new owner traced them via the log book. He sent them Christmas cards until his death in 2005, when his daughter offered them the car for just £200.

Graham has since spent £3,000 restoring the little red Chevette to its former glory. "No one else would have wanted it but for me there was sentiment attached," he says. "It was absolutely amazing to get it back again, as it was like a member of the family. The straps for my son's baby seat were still in it. It was like a time warp back to the 1980s."



Another cherished Vauxhall is the Victor below, bought in 1980 for just £60 by Andy Frost of Wolverhampton. He has since turned it into one of world's fastest street-legal cars, with a top speed of 250mph. "I've spent £4,000 a year and I'm always trying to improve it," he says. Wisely, his modifications include a parachute...



JUST 46 MINUTES
The average time taken by the AA to attend a breakdown, recently recorded by *Which?* magazine as it declared the AA to be the UK's best breakdown provider. The AA was also judged most likely to fix a car at the roadside and received an 80 per cent customer rating, the best in the industry

DRIVER BEHAVIOUR
WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Don't tell Vicki Butler-Henderson (see p18) but according to a survey by *confused.com*, a quarter of British motorists give their cars pet names. Celebrities do it too: Lady Gaga has a Rolls-Royce called Bloody Mary, Paris Hilton calls her Bentley Lady Penelope, *Top Gear's* Richard Hammond has two Land Rovers named Gertie and Buster and even F1 World Champion Sebastian Vettel names the Red Bull Racing cars he drives; he particularly favours Kinky Kylie and Luscious Liz.

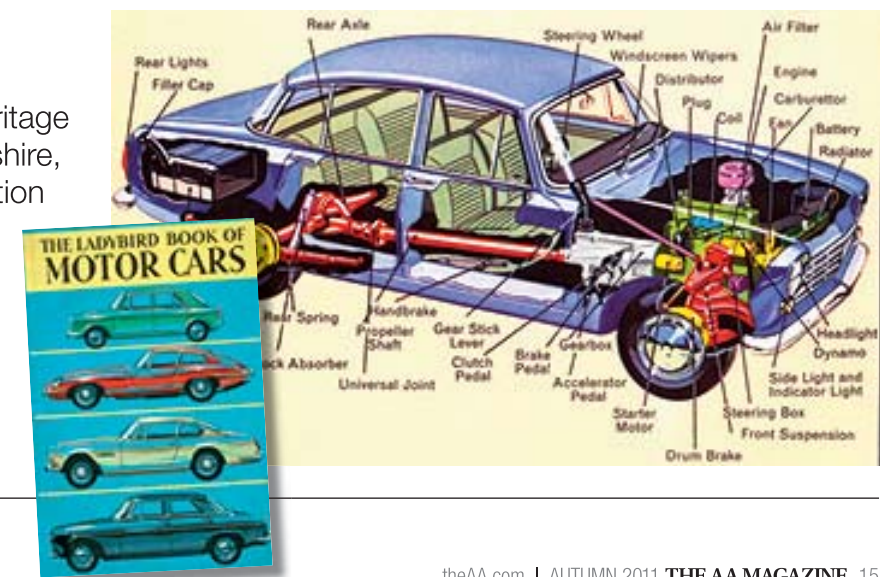
Here are the most popular male and female names given to cars in Britain:

TOP 10 CAR NAMES

1. Charlie / Ruby
2. Jack / Lily
3. Harry / Pippa
4. Noah / Jessica
5. Oliver / Grace
6. Thomas / Olivia
7. William / Kate
8. Joshua / Emily
9. Daniel / Harper
10. Billy / Betty

EXHIBITION
MEMORY LANE

From now until January 15, the Heritage Motor Centre at Gaydon, Warwickshire, is hosting a deeply nostalgic exhibition entitled the *Ladybird Big Book of Motor Cars*, featuring dozens of original illustrations from the much-loved children's books as well as many of the cars that appeared in them. For more information, visit heritage-motor-centre.co.uk.



CATERERS NEWS AGENCY, GEOFFREY ROBINSON