

BODY BEAUTIFUL crunched auction find
Karmann Ghia stunner

TEENAGE CRUSH youngster swaps his
206 Pug for a Bug

VOLKS WORLD



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ICONIC CUSTOM VW FROM THE 1970S
RETURNS LOOKING BETTER THAN EVER

'70 BEETLE NOW WE'RE TORQUING!

'LEMON' BUY BUG
TRANSFORMED INTO A
PUNCHY, SHOW-QUALITY
CAL LOOKER



**VOLKS
WORLD**
SHOW
2020

21-22 March 2020
Sandown Park, Esher, Surrey

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Fix those rough running issues

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Beautiful Beutler
The Swiss firm's VWs



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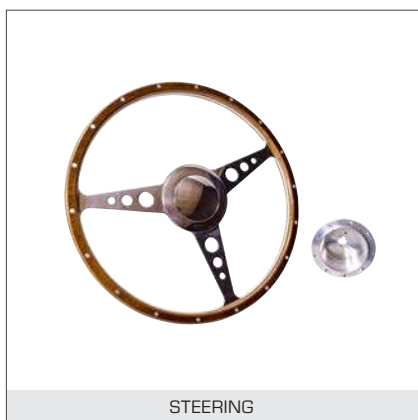
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04



ENGINES



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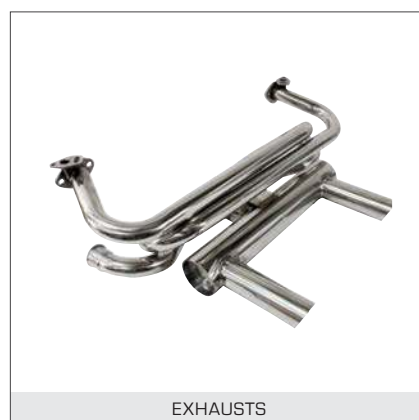
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April 2020



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VOLKS WORLD

The May 2020 issue
goes on sale
Friday 3 April
Don't miss it!



Subscribe & Save - page 88



Valuable

"OK, so what's it worth, then?"

Don't you hate that question? It's mostly asked by parents, wives, neighbours, colleagues and other people around you, who simply don't understand why you spent so much time and money on something as ordinary as an old Volkswagen. They suspect that all the effort you put into it doesn't pay off in the end. And, let's face it, they are right; it doesn't pay off - money-wise. Restoring an old Volkswagen the right way is always a losing proposition, financially.

So, do we restore them to earn money? Of course not! What none of the sceptics will ever get, is: it's all about the emotional value! Nothing compares to the first ride in your dream car after a long restoration project comes together; money can't buy the pride you feel when showing off your aircooled beauty at the next event.

But, how embarrassing and frustrating could all this end up being, when a non-original headlight, a rusty flasher cap, a lousy fitting window scraper or a stuck indicator switch compromises the joy of the car? Its emotional and financial value are shattered! In other words, being stingy when buying parts never pays off, neither financially, nor emotionally!

Here's the thing. Go for VEWIB when purchasing an essential part for your lifetime's pet project. VEWIB supply the correct headlights, high-quality indicator caps, perfect widow scrapers, smoothly-operating indicator switches, and much, much more! Each and every item is valuable in every single aspect.

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Welcome to the mag



< Ghia was viewed in the dark, in a snowy Kent railway station carpark. No wonder I didn't spot the rot!



< Late 914 looked nice but let me down on the way home

E

ver bought a 'lemon'? Reading through Paul Lang's account of how he went into buying his '70 Bug virtually blind (pages 20-26 this issue), only realising later that he'd acquired a shed, got me thinking about my own air-cooled car buying catastrophes. When the heart is allowed to rule

the head, there's seldom a happy ending.

Possibly my worst car-buying blunder was a white, Europa bumper Karmann Ghia. I went to view it in the railway station carpark at Sevenoaks one dark November evening, in four inches of snow. The interior was good, as was the 1600 engine, but the body was made of cheese and structurally, well, let me just say it had less integrity than a politician. Despite feeling momentarily chuffed that I'd negotiated the price down to £1200, my enthusiasm melted like the previous

“It wasn't a good look being towed in a Porsche”

night's snow when I realised it was an eyesore. Back then, KG repair panels didn't exist, so faced with running it as it was in its botched state until the next MoT, I did my best to enjoy the experience. Alas, the forced frivolity was relatively short-lived. The clutch went in Richmond one night, and when a friend attempted to tow it in his Mk1 Jetta, the front bumper – complete with both bumper hangers – pulled off the rotten inner wings, leaving the still attached bumper sitting in the road and the Karmann stranded. It subsequently sat in my nan's garage in Walthamstow before I accepted £700 for someone to just take it away.

Now, you would have thought my next purchase would have been savvier. But sadly not. I fell in love with the idea of buying a VW/Porsche 914 and found a late example on Fuchs for sale (in Berkshire, I think). It was more than I could afford, but I went to see it anyway and was so astounded that my low offer had been accepted I forgot to take it for a test drive. Yes, really. Needless to say,

it 'stopped' on the way home and failed to restart. The same friend, again in his trusty Jetta, came to the rescue and dragged me home. It wasn't a good look being towed in a Porsche. I subsequently spent a fortune replacing various Bosch fuel injection components before it coughed into life again. By that point, my love for it had soured and, having posed around in it for a bit, I sold it on for roughly what I paid for it in the first place. £4,500 for a tidy, freshly sorted 914 doesn't sound much these days does it?

And that's the dilemma you face when you realise you've bought a pup. Do you throw more time, emotion and money at it to get it sorted – or cut your losses? I'd like to say I'd always do the gallant thing and persevere, like Paul Lang, but I admit my track record isn't good.

For Paul, the seven years he spent restoring his 'lemon' was his road to Damascus. As he humbly explained: "I couldn't just scrap it and every step was a learning curve for me." With a bit of encouragement from fellow enthusiasts, given this kind of determination, I am coming around to thinking that anything is possible.

Now, there's a bit of news I need to share. After four fun, full-on years editing *VolksWorld*, from the July issue I'll be taking the reigns at *VW Camper & Bus* magazine instead. I'll be handing *VolksWorld* to my right-hand man and current VW editor, Paul Knight. The current *VWC&B* editor, James Peene, will no doubt be doing lots of hand-holding and also continue to make regular camper contributions so it's basically the same team, wearing slightly different hats. I perhaps ought to mention that this change has created a cloud of indecision as to whether I ought to keep my Delta green Beetle, the totally original one-owner car I purchased last summer. I am driving it to *The VolksWorld Show*, so if you are dying to become its next owner, please track me down at Sandown and maybe we can talk turkey. Forgive me though if my eyes appear watery while I am talking to you.

Ian Cushway
Editor

77870

Engine inspection hatch seal

The rubber of the VW Vanagon must be glued just like the original. With this rubber there is no difference in top or bottom, it is delivered on a roll.



24741

Rear sliding roof guide

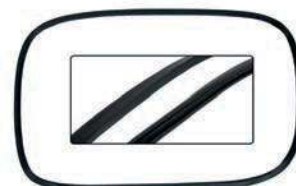
This guide is screwed to the back of the sliding roof, both on the left and right side, and ensures that the roof is guided correctly and evenly through the guides.



27544

Engine inspection hatch seal

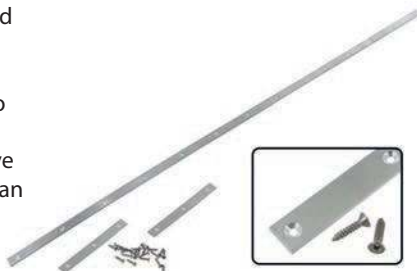
The rubber of the Bay Window Bus is pressed into the profile edge with the profiled side down.



07165

Front window frame seal inserts

If the aluminum inserts for the sides need to be replaced, which is necessary with most convertibles where the rubber is replaced, that of the windscreen will also be necessary. Now that we have also included seal inserts for the rubber above the windscreen in our assortment, you can mount all hood rubbers correctly with new aluminum inserts. Are delivered in a 3-piece set including screws.



07128

Convertible top lock hook plates

On most convertibles, these guides are worn and often not present at all, it is only when the closing hook has damaged the paint that you notice that these guides are missing.



26733 / 26735

Complete rear corner for the VW Split Bus

There are different ways to make a restoration run smoothly. Grinding bad points, welding a part and plaster finishing are still a common method but also the way we prefer not to see it. Replacing a complete corner is the ultimate way to restore. From now on, the complete rear corners are also available for the Volkswagen Split Bus, of a very high quality and with a fit that is equal to the original. If you replace them in the right way, filler is even superfluous.



www.paruzzi.com/magazine

Wheel bearing replacement

We explain in edition 20 how to replace the front wheel bearings.



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Get them in the diary

Here's a list of show dates to keep you going for the next few months...

Run a show?
**Why not
tell us
about it?**

email VolksWorld.ed@kelsey.co.uk



March

Ultimate Dubs

Date: 08 March 2020

Location: Telford International Centre

Contact: www.ultimate-dubs.co.uk

UK Cruise to Ninove

Date: 14 March 2020

Location: Folkestone to Ninove in Belgium

Contact: see Facebook

Freddy Files

Date: 15 March 2020

Location: Ninove, Belgium

Contact: see Facebook



The VolksWorld Show

Date: 21/22 March 2020

Location: Sandown Park, Esher

Contact: volksworldshows.com

April

Dubshed

Date: 4-5 April 2020

Location: Eikon Exhibition Centre, Belfast BT27 5RF

Contact: www.dubshed.com

May

Elsecar

Date: 19 April 2020

Location: Doncaster Racecourse

Contact: www.elsecarattheraces.com

Stanford Hall

Date: 03 May 2020

Location: Stanford-on-Avon, LE17 6DH

Contact: www.stanfordhallvw.com

Vanwest

Date: 8-10 May 2020

Location: Taunton Racecourse

Contact: www.vanwest.co.uk

Big Bang

Date: 15-17 May 2020

Location: Santa Pod Raceway

Contact: www.big-bang.co.uk

Stonor VW 2020

Date: 31 May 2020

Location: Stonor Park, nr Henley on Thames RG9 6HF

Contact: www.abvwc.com





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WORLD**
21-22 March 2020
Sandown Park, Esher, Surrey

Save the date



Come to the show!

21-22 March 2020 – Sandown Park, Esher

Sponsored by



WELCOME

The *VolksWorld Show's* been going for over three decades now, attracting the very best air-cooled cars to the classy Sandown Park location for what has to be one of the most talked about and eagerly anticipated events of the season. And looking down the list of cars on display, this year promises to be one of the best for a long time.

Highlights are too numerous to mention, but suffice to say the immediate post-war Type 28 built by the British Army in 1945 shouldn't be missed. There's not another one like it anywhere, and having just been restored by German collector, Christian Grundmann, it's being unveiled for the first time at Sandown.

The 20+ car Cal Look display in the Brasserie promises to be pretty special, too. Especially as it contains that iconic cover car from the February 1975 issue of *Hot VWs*.

Then there's the actual



VolksWorld display area itself, which is always a bit of a last minute affair due to the fact that some cars only get finished the night before the gates open. They're that fresh! Meanwhile, we've got all the usual attractions outside, including trade stands, cars for sale and some spectacular club displays.

If you're reading this in advance of March 21/21, book your tickets now. If you're flicking through the issue at Sandown, grab a coffee, dose it with a couple of sugars, then brace yourself for one of the most thrilling show visits you're likely to make all year.

Ian Cushway

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW...

OPENING TIMES

Saturday 21 March; 10.00-17.00
Sunday 22 March; 10.00-16.30

PRICES

Advanced Adult day ticket: £16.00*

Advanced Adult Weekend ticket: £24.00* (swap your ticket for a weekend wristband at the help desk in the main entrance)

Adult Camping Add-On: £14.00*

All Advanced Child tickets are free when selected with a paying adult (child aged 14 and under)

ON THE DAY

Adult day ticket £20.00

Adult Weekend ticket: £30.00 (swap your ticket for a weekend wristband at the help desk in the main entrance)

Free entry for up to 2 children per paying adult, additional Child tickets are £5 each.

* booking fees apply

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Don't miss out on our exclusive subscription offers – UK Direct Debit offer of 13 issues for £26 on *VolksWorld*, *VWt* and *VW Camper & Bus* saving you up to 56%.

Tickets are on sale now!

Why not take advantage of our Weekend Ticket offer. Get in quick if you want to save some cash and even add on camping! For more information on The *VolksWorld*

Show 2020 visit

www.volksworldshows.com

SLIPPERS THE SPLIT

The ultimate DJ bus will be on the Red Brick playing tunes to entertain you. Born from a pub conversation, the 1961 splitscreen was saved from the big scrap heap in the sky and after an extensive and no expenses spared restoration became the ultimate DJ booth complete with lights and smoke cannons.



POST-WAR SURVIVORS

In 1945 the corps of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME) was sent out to the VW factory in Wolfsburg, initially to demolish the works, but then on instruction of Major Hirst to rebuild the factory and restart production. Our special display in the Foyer will celebrate the 75th anniversary of this amazing feat and includes as its star attraction the only remaining Type 28 Kübelwagen post van in the world, from the famed German collector Christian Grundmann. But that's not all, we've also invited two super-rare original 1946 Beetles that epitomise that immediate post-war era, and to complete the 'Army era' display we've borrowed information and artefacts from the REME Museum, MOD Lyneham – including a very special 1:10th scale model given to Major Hirst by Volkswagen as a thank you for his post-war contribution. It's never been seen before outside of the REME Museum itself.



TRADE BOOKINGS

Please contact Hill View Media on 01366 728 488 or email info@hillviewmedia.com

PARK AND PRIDE

Once again Meguiar's will be awarding a prize to the winner of the Car Park Show & Shine. It is open to anybody that does not have a car inside the main halls, so that includes the mouth-watering selection of the finest club rides on the Red Brick, Grandstand Apron and Summer Lawn as well as the main car parks. There is no need to enter or park in a special place – our judges will find you! The prize is awarded at 4pm each day.



COOL FLO PRO-RIDER TEAM

Back by popular demand, the Cool Flo Pro-Rider Team will be on the Red Brick performing tricks on the half-pipe. Check out the timetable in your show guide on the day to make sure you do not miss out on the fun.



THEY'RE GOING TO BE CLUBBIN' IT!

Wolfsburg Bus Crew – this club has set the highest standard at shows in 2019 and will be showcasing their finest buses on the Red Brick in March.

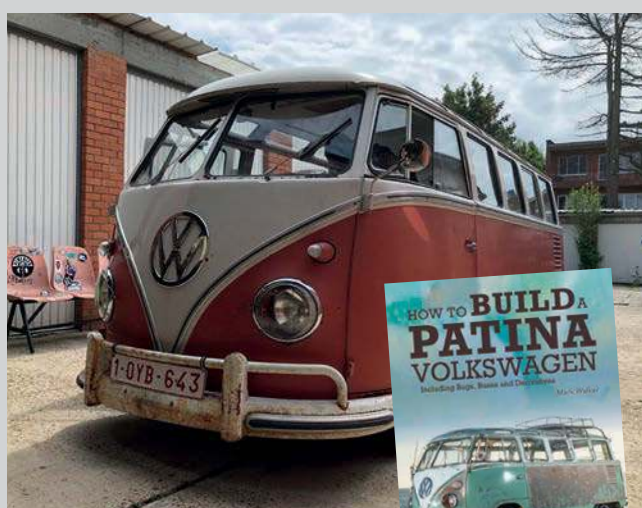
Karmann Ghia Owners Club – one of the leading UK air-cooled car clubs is bringing a special display of their top show cars for a feature in Esher Hall together with their club stand on the Grandstand Apron.

VW Girls Collective – one of the first clubs to book for the 2020 Show, this all girls club is looking forward to their first time displaying their cool VWs on the Grandstand Apron. If you are a girl with a VW and looking for a club to join why not head to the



To book tickets or find out more about The VolksWorld Show visit

www.volksworldshows.com



PERFECT PATINA

Our very own Mark Walker will be back again this March to promote his new book, *How to Build a Patina Volkswagen*, alongside a special display of patina gems in the Esher Hall. Now these aren't just VWs covered in rust; they're carefully preserved original examples – survivors – many of which have a fascinating tale to tell. Understandably, some are shinier underneath than they are on top and, like the 356-inspired Bus above, lots have top-drawer

RETAIL VILLAGE

Our retail village really is a haven for VW lovers. It's guaranteed to be jam-packed with everything you could possibly need for your VW, including secondhand parts, rare accessories, clothing, gifts and plenty more.

The biggest names in the VW scene will be there to showcase their latest products and services and offer some exclusive show deals, discounts and offers, as well as giving expert advice on your latest VW project.

Oh, and if you are a trader and want to promote your service or platform then get in touch with our sales team at info@hillviewmedia.com to book your place.



CARRY ON CAMPING

As the longer nights and warmer days approach this Spring, Sandown Park will prove the perfect venue to try out all that new camping equipment that you've been accumulating over winter. With hot showers and the golf clubhouse providing great food and drink from Friday through to Sunday, it promises to be a fun experience for all the family. We recommend you book early as plots are limited and sell out fast! Remember to buy your Camping Add-On when you book

INTERNATIONAL SWAPMEET

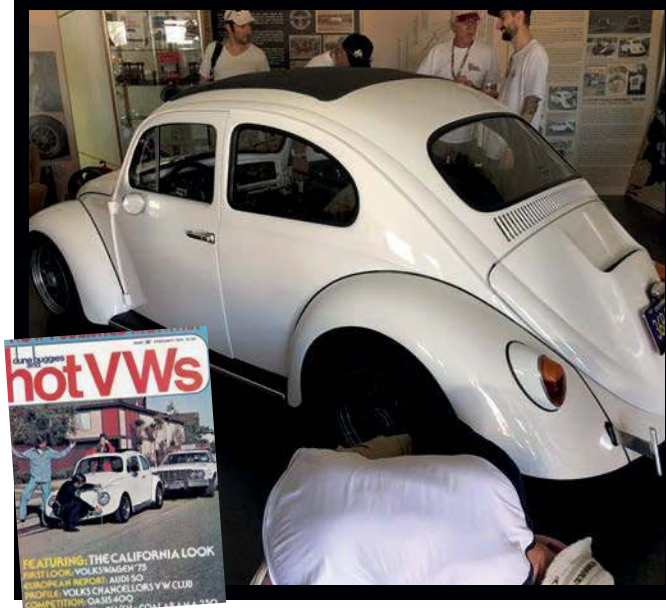
VolksWorld's famous international swapmeet is one of the show's most popular features with over 100 tables of rare accessories and parts. If you're searching for that elusive item head over and take a look to see if you can find it. To find out more or book a table space, email info@hillviewmedia.com

GRAB YOUR TICKETS – NOW!

Why leave it until the last minute because tickets are available NOW. What are you waiting for? For more information on The VolksWorld Show 2020 be sure to visit www.volksworldshows.com

CAL LOOK EXTRAVAGANZA

At VolksWorld we've always loved that nose down, stripped to the bone look that originated in California, so this year – with help from Martin Greaves of the UK Cal Look Register – we've gathered together an impressive 20+ Cal Look display in the Brasserie at the back of the Surrey Hall. Presented by stalwarts of the scene, Heritage Parts Centre, you'll be able to see some of the best examples from across Europe, including one of the cars that started it all – the white Cal-Look '63 Beetle that appeared on the February 1975 issue of *Hot VWs* magazine. It's making its British show debut at Sandown this year so it might be the only chance you get to see it on UK soil.



MARKETPLACE FOR SALE AREA

New for 2020, inside the show our Marketplace gives you the chance to showcase the car or Bus you have for sale, with thousands of potential buyers on site ready to view. If you are looking for a new project or show car for the season this will be a great place to start. For air-cooled cars, Buses and VW Transporters only, the space is limited so head to www.volksworldshows.com to register. Oh, and get this – the driver gets a weekend entry ticket with their 'For Sale' pass.



LOVE YOUR VINYL

The VW scene is used to seeing pin striping and custom paint but art made from vinyl is making its debut here at the show. Joel Clark, himself a VW fan, will be busy creating the most amazing artwork using hundreds of pieces of cut vinyl and will be on the *VolksWorld* Show stand all weekend doing a live demonstration of the technique. And get this, you'll be able to take a piece of his work home in the form of a limited edition *VolksWorld* poster which will be available for sale on the *VolksWorld* Retail stand in the Foyer.



CLUB ACTION

Clubs are at the heart of The *VolksWorld* Show and help create the event's unique atmosphere. For club bookings please contact volksworld.show@kelsey.co.uk to register your club, or if you are already registered please contact your Club Admin for the booking link and access code. The thing is, club spaces are filling up fast and we recommend getting your club booking in now! Oh, and we will be awarding a trophy for the Best Club display and this will be presented on the *VolksWorld* stand at 4pm on Sunday.



KIDS ZONE

The *VolksWorld* Kids Zone is a great place for the little ones to have some fun. Join in the fun and games with Van Man, colour-in VW pictures, test your skills in giant Jenga, and for the very little ones we have a soft play area. Alternatively, if you want to just sit and chill out you can relax and watch one of our VW-themed movies.





Still Doin' It



Putting on the show

The *Volksworld Show* at Sandown Park has become something of an institution and is regarded by many to be the premier event at which to debut a fresh new show car. This year is certainly no exception as there are more than a dozen vehicles, which have been built specifically to be debuted in 2020 not to mention a large number of vehicles that have never been seen before at a UK event. Quite exciting stuff, eh?

On a similar note, I've been talking with a renowned overseas VW enthusiast who is building a car, which will make its first appearance at Sandown Park in 2021. Best of all, this one is being kept completely under wraps – no social media hype or spy shots online... if all goes to plan, this one will be a good old-fashioned surprise with a proper unveiling et al!

My point is that there's a whole lot of planning involved in the organisation of The *Volksworld Show*, not to mention the running of the event, too. Thankfully we have the assistance of Pippa and Jason, the show team, to do the general organisation, health and safety and all the 'behind the scenes stuff', and Ben Foster takes care of the traders, which leaves the editorial team with the task of gathering together a suitable collection of vehicles and special displays.

It's always an exciting process and, despite the time that it all consumes, I know each and every one of us looks forward to the selection process and chasing up vehicles we'd like to invite. But that's just part of the deal – the hard work begins on the Thursday of the show weekend... and the Friday is little short of 'total mayhem'. When you arrive on Saturday (or Sunday) morning, everything is in place and the cars are perfectly positioned and show-polished but few people realise just how much work it takes to reach that point. Show car owners are the real stars as this event is quite unlike your typical field weekend. Not only do they have to navigate South

London / Surrey traffic on a Friday, they then have to hand over the keys and find their way to a hotel (or back home) until the cars can be collected on Sunday evening. In this world of Health and Safety rules and regulations, the fact that cars are gathered in an indoor display hall raises a few red flags, which is why owners have to ensure they have minimal fuel in the tanks when they arrive and we have to push the vehicles into position on the day. And, I can promise you that the security take the fuel level issue very seriously indeed and check each and every vehicle as it arrives (and yes, we have drained excess fuel out of more than enough cars over the years...). Then, once the car is in position, the next safety check is to ensure that the electrical system is fully disconnected. Of course, I get it – the last thing any of us want is a fire hazard – but I just wanted to illustrate just some of the 'behind the scenes' stuff that most show goers have no idea of.

Obviously, this also means that exhibitors can either top up the fuel tank once they're off site or take a chance on a low-fuel run to the nearest gas station but even this can only take place once the last visitor has left the building and we begin to empty the cars one by one (i.e. on a cold, dark Sunday evening!).

The same is true of club displays and vehicles parked in the grandstand or around the red brick area. These cars have to be in position before the show opens and cannot be moved until the last member of public has left the building.

And this is why I want to thank every club member and especially the enthusiasts that exhibit show cars inside the main halls as it really does require true dedication to make The *Volksworld Show* what it is. The logistics are a pain but, hey, the results speak for themselves. Enjoy the show!

Paul Knight

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NOW WE'RE TORQUING

With the help of some very good friends, Paul Lang has managed not only to build a show-class car in his garage, but has also honed some pretty impressive restoration skills in the process. He talks us through how it all happened...

Words Paul Lang Photos Paul Knight







◀ Mooneyes steering wheel fits well with the 'black' theme inside

▶ Paul Lang (right) stands proudly alongside his Bug with his good friend and VW mechanic/painter Grant Tatum. If you need somebody who knows their way around a VW to work some magic on your car, Grant can be contacted on 07955 072717



✓ Inspiration for the car's name came from a tattoo sported by Metallica's James Hetfield

"I had this underlying impression that old VWs were, well, just a bit rubbish"





I'm not 100% sure where my love for VWs originated. Most likely it came as a nine-year-old, enjoying Herbie films, drawing pictures of Bugs and watching trash on telly. After all, even Libby from Neighbours drove a Bug for a while! One thing's for sure, one of my oldest friends, Grant Tatum (of GT Restorations), played a big hand in fuelling my enthusiasm. Having met at school, Grant and I would talk VWs; we liked the same stuff, and spent hours drooling over magazine features.

However, despite my love of the aesthetics, I had this underlying impression that old VWs were, well, just a bit rubbish. Sure, they looked cool (and I 'got' that), but they just didn't seem to be quite as practical or reliable in daily use as the old-timers' stories might suggest. Oil leaks, steamy windows, dodgy heaters and constant care and maintenance, that's how most VW owners described their beloved Beetles to me through my teen years.

But, somehow this added to the mysterious appeal for me. How cool would it be to have an iconic little car which not only looked the part, but also delivered impressive performance without compromising day-to-day reliability. A dream? Yes, maybe, but it was a dream that stuck with me.

Buying a lemon

Fast-forward to 2002 – the year I finally decided to 'get involved'. I used to drive past this '70 1300 Bug on my way to work each day – it was dark blue with cream sides and was, quite literally, sat on the bumpstops. Slammed over factory steel wheels and fitted with pre-'67 front wings with US-spec lights, it looked as tough as nails to me. Then, one day, I spotted a 'For Sale' sign in the window. Of course, I had no idea what I should be looking at, but that didn't matter and the next day I was driving it home, grinning from ear to ear. However, my joy was short-lived as I was soon to learn that 'Kev' – the car's reg – was, ahem, a bit of a lemon.

When the carpets eventually came up, there was a good inch of sludgy brown water underneath, I began to notice cracks in panels, repair over repair and bad paint just about everywhere. In short, it was in a bit of a state so I had no option but to buy a set of hand tools, a Haynes manual,

some overalls and get stuck in.

Everything was rusty and none of the bolts wanted to come out; I'd remove something horrible, only to reveal something even worse underneath. I had the heater channels and boot floor plated over, just to get it through an MoT as I just couldn't afford to do any more at that time. I knew nothing about bodywork, didn't have the money to pay anyone else to do it, and was only just getting to grips with the spanners and screwdrivers.

Over the first couple of years of ownership, replacing the entire braking system turned into a complete mechanical overhaul, which turned into a complete interior re-trim and stereo install, which then turned into a complete engine rebuild, by myself, at home, in my parents' garage, albeit with help and advice from fellow members of my local club, Spooky VW Club (Spooks). I ended up selling the registration number, and buying a set of Riviera wheels wrapped in Yokohama tyres with the proceeds. The tyres were a bit of a poor choice, size wise, and I didn't even know what 'offset' meant back then. These factors combined led me to having lovely new wheels and tyres, that wouldn't fit under the wings at the front. It was all pretty rubbish.

Battle of wills

Further investment secured a narrowed beam, but it also revealed a massively corroded frame-head. Whilst tightening up the four beam bolts, one of them just pulled the thread straight out, and everything just seemed a bit flaky and crusty. I was starting to feel like I was fighting a losing battle.

I couldn't just scrap it, so figured it was time to learn something new. Bodywork repair. I brought it up with Jon Witney at Spooks, saying that there were areas I really wanted to sort out, but nothing too full-on. After all, I was hoping to do it in my garage at home. He assured me that anything was possible, and with enough determination, anyone could achieve it. He was right, and in the end 'nothing too full-on' turned into 'seven years of full-on', and it still all happened in my garage at home!

I started to gather the seemingly endless list of tools required to do the work. Cutting, welding,



▲ CSP's Super Comp exhaust sounds great and exits through the original apron cutouts

TECH INFO

BODY

1970 Beetle, fully restored at home and painted Nogaro blue; pinstriping by Neil Melliard

ENGINE

1776cc fed by twin 40 Dell'ortos; lightened and balanced internals; Type 4 oil cooler conversion; case tapped for full-flow; Fram oil filter; 1.5-litre sump; CSP breather tower/filler; CSP heat exchangers; CSP Super Comp exhaust; tinware powdercoated in antique silver

SUSPENSION/CHASSIS

Narrowed beam; fully refurbished suspension and brakes

INTERIOR

TMI seat covers; custom mats; Mooneyes steering wheel, glass-mounted rear-view mirror, gauges and gear knob; black cloth headliner, installed by Louis Newbury

WHEELS AND TYRES

Refurbished Cosmic wheels shod in Michelin XZX tyres, 145 SR15 front, 165 SR15s at the rear

THANKS

Huge thanks to Grant at GT Restorations, fellow 'Spooks' Jon Witney, Stu Earthy, Paul Fallanche and Paul Frost. Thanks also to Maldon Shot Blasting & Powder Coating, Karmann Konnection, GSF Chelmsford, Tony Royston, Day Mouldings, Phil West, Neil Melliard of Prosign and Bernard and Louis Newbury. Also my Ma & Pa for putting up with the late night-noise for so long, and all my friends and family who have understood and supported me throughout.



^ An assortment of Mooneyes gauges are set in Flat4 dash panels



^ Tunes come from a RetroSound head unit – iPod/USB sockets are in the glovebox



^ 1776cc engine provides just enough poke to back up the looks of this Bug. 'Antique silver' powder coated tinware suits the theme perfectly



✓ Note Optima battery, Dynatone sound proofing and hidden audio install

in the period between Christmas and New Year 2011, that's the hue I chose. I've always liked Porsche Guards Red, so set about detailing the steering damper red, and have red urethane tie-rod covers, and axle gaitors to accessorise it. And while I was at it, I went on to paint the master cylinder, brake drums, beam and tie-rods, polish my brake lines, detail my wiper motor and used all stainless allen-head bolts and screws throughout. Oh, and I also rewired the entire car.

I decided I liked the 'one year only' features of the '67. With the larger sized windows of the '70, a '67 was as old as I could 'legitimately' make it look. I liked the upright headlight/long bonnet combination of the US Spec '67s and, if I'm honest, I probably liked the challenge of having to find nice panels, rather than rely on buying off-the-shelf pattern parts, too. In the end, I found a good '67 bonnet, decklid and rear valance, re-shaped and re-handled the doors, fitted modern style clear H4 upright headlights and removed the fuel filler flap from the front quarter.

Other influences

I've always believed less is more, so with this in mind I settled for no back seat, a small '1200 style' headliner and mats instead of carpet with everything else in satin black, or chrome. No trim, one-piece windows, polished T-bars, the right stance and a sprinkle of 'hot-rod'.

I had to have tunes though, so I obtained a pair of 7X10 DLS speakers from a friend at work, and decided to install one in the kick panel behind the passenger seat. I've hidden it behind a Mooneyes speaker grille, detailed in satin black. It's hooked up to a RetroSound headunit, with iPod connection and USB charger socket in the glovebox, via a punchy little amp secured behind the speaker. Combined with the Dynatone sound deadening, which lies behind every piece of trim, it makes plenty of noise for just one speaker.

Incidentally, the Mooneyes influence came from Metallica front man James Hetfield. He's a fan of their work, and I've always been a massive fan of his. I've always liked the hot-rod styles, and this was an easy homage to make. I opted for a set of Moon gauges set in Flat4 dash panels, and to add a 'touch of class', trimmed the panels in black leather.

I've always loved pinstriping too and another fellow 'Spook', Stu Earthy, had some lettering and striping on his car, courtesy of Neil Melliard. I'd wanted to give it a go myself, and attended one of Neil's workshops with Jon Witney to try and kickstart things. It worked for Jon, but I still had lots of restoration to do before I got too stuck into something else. None the less, I saw one of Mr Hetfield's tattoos, 'Leadfoot', with a 'stripe around it, and as the word meant so much to me personally, on so many levels, I decided to adopt it for the car.

Meanwhile, the floorpan, spring-plates, backing plates and steering column were blasted and plastic-coated in black by Maldon Shot Blasting & Powder

leading, air-compressing, sanding, shaping... quite a list.

Jon knew exactly what had to be done, so I took his advice and got stuck in. I'd do a bit, Jon would come round, tackle something crucial, and leave me with a list of what to do next. This went on and on until we'd bare-metalled the whole car, replaced both 'pan halves, heater-channels, lower bulkhead, boot-floor, lower rear-quarters, complete front quarters, spare wheel well, framehead, rear bumper hangers, both doors, bonnet and wings. Repairs were extensive, and at every step of the way a learning curve for me.

I bumped into my old mate, Grant, and managed to convince him to come round and see what I'd been up to. This sparked the next chapter of the build for me and rekindled a friendship that had laid dormant (but never forgotten!) for a good 10 years. Living just two miles apart, the short commute and possibility of being fed, led to 'garage night' becoming a pretty regular occurrence. Sometimes we'd just get something to eat, chat about stuff and put the world to rights, and sometimes we'd smash it out 'till 2am. Eventually Grant would show me, and talk me through everything I would need to know to get to grips with all aspects of bodywork and restoration. Coupled with a change of career into car bodywork repair five years ago, I feel like I've learnt an awful lot about all aspects of repair. Both old and new. Thanks to Jon, Grant, and the confidence they've given me to try things.

Blue hue

I'd seen a RS2 Avant in Nogaro Blue with satin black details and fell in love with the colour. So when the 'shell' was finally transported in the back of a Luton van to be painted



“Repairs were extensive, and at every step of the way a learning curve for me”

Coating. They did an excellent job, and applied a product that may not have the shine of a paint, but is incredibly durable. An excellent mix of form and function.

Inside job

I'd previously re-trimmed the seats in black TMI stock style vinyl covers and they were good to just go back in. I'd also made a set of fitted mats that would show off as much bodywork as possible and, with Grant's help, ensured that every bit of paint on the inside of the car looked as good as the outside. Nowhere was spared a flat and polish. A Mooneyes steering wheel, glass-mounted rear-view mirror, gauges and gear knob provide the eye candy inside, wrapped up perfectly with a black cloth headliner, installed by Louis Newbury.

I remember Jon telling me about Cosmic wheels, and how hard they were to find. I liked the sound of some rims that weren't so 'commonplace', and when I saw them, instantly knew they would suit the car and after some searching, eventually found a set for sale on the VZi forum. They were tatty, but do-able, and I transformed them from dull, corroded and curbed, to satin-black, polished and lovely. Sure, I spent about 12 hours on each wheel, but the results made it all worthwhile. Wrapped in Michelin XZX tyres, and with T-bars to complement them, I think they tick the 'Cal-look' box for me, whilst working with the more modern colour perfectly.

Power haus

Finally I had the looks – now I just needed an engine to back it up. I opted for a 1776cc, fed by twin 40 Dell'ortos, all lightened and balanced. I wanted it to have lots of torque, and be capable of sitting up there with modern cars, but without being too thirsty. The tinware is all genuine VW stuff, powdercoated in 'antique silver'. I opted for a Type 4 oil cooler conversion, as I didn't want to go down the external cooler route.

The case was tapped for full-flow, which feeds a Fram oil filter, and there's 1.5-litre deep sump and a CSP breather tower/filler. The first time I saw CSP's 'Super Comp.' exhaust, I knew I had to have one. The fact that it exits through the original cutouts via beefier tail pipes sold it to me. It gives incredible ground clearance, fits perfectly, and sounds lovely too. Hooked up to CSP heat exchangers, even the heating works well now!

All in all, I've ended up with a Bug that ticks every box for me. It's come a long way whilst I've owned it, and it's nice to think that I couldn't have done it any better. I can think that because of the people who helped me create it...

I entered a crowd, and made friends who would prove to be extremely enthusiastic and knowledgeable folk. Now I'm just going to make the most of it and enjoy the fruits of all that labour. ■

✓ Paul spent 12 hours restoring each of the scruffy secondhand Cosmic rims he'd found



^ Every detail of this car is perfect. Paul and Grant pride themselves on the presentation

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HELLO DOLLY!

Having suffered a driveway catastrophe which resulted in major body damage, Matt Donnelly applied his extensive coachbuilding skills to make this '72 Ghia one of the nicest we've seen...

Words Cathal O'Toole Photos Andrew Pollock







> After extensive detailing at Spikes, repro Fuchs look spot on

Newry-based Matt Donnelly is no stranger to classic cars and admits he's always fancied a Ghia. Traditionally, the most common route to Karmann ownership is from first owning a Beetle and then working your way up. But Matt didn't feel the need for the softly, softly approach and instead threw himself straight in. "It's the car's exotic shape that's always attracted me," he explains. "It's as simple as that and from the first time I saw an example in the metal I was hooked. However, I never had the opportunity to make a purchase, so when I saw this one I knew I had to have it."

And that was in the summer of 2013. Matt was doing something we all find difficult to resist, looking at cars on online auctions sites, and despite his good side telling him 'no' as he hovered his mouse over the 'bid now' button, he could see the potential in this '72 Karmann Ghia.

Motoring mishap

Of course it looked nothing like it does now. In fact, the previous owner had suffered the worst kind of motoring mishap on his driveway which had resulted in extensive bodywork damage. Apparently, the handbrake cable had snapped on his Splitscreen Van causing it to roll back down the drive, crashing into the front of the Ghia. And if that wasn't enough, the impact was so severe that it pushed the Ghia back into a parked car. All in all, this had resulted in a fair amount of front and rear end damage – not something you want on a handbuilt car with no bolt-on panels other than the bonnet, doors and engine lid. So gutted by the incident, the previous owner felt it was time to list it on eBay and move it on to the next owner. At the same time Matt had just logged on for what we all call 'a quick look', and while this rarely ends well, on this occasion, albeit after a colossal amount of money, late nights and scratched knuckles, Matt managed to buck the trend.

Nose job

Placing the winning auction bid was the easy bit, though. Matt then had to work out the logistics of how he was going to recover the non-rolling, engine-less Ghia from the South of England to Northern Ireland. Oh, and did we mention it didn't even have any wheels? Yes, our Matt does love a challenge or two. As recompense, at least he was able to negotiate the purchase of the engine from the owner's ill-fated Splittie. Admittedly, it needed to be rebuilt anyway so the owner was happy to part with it.

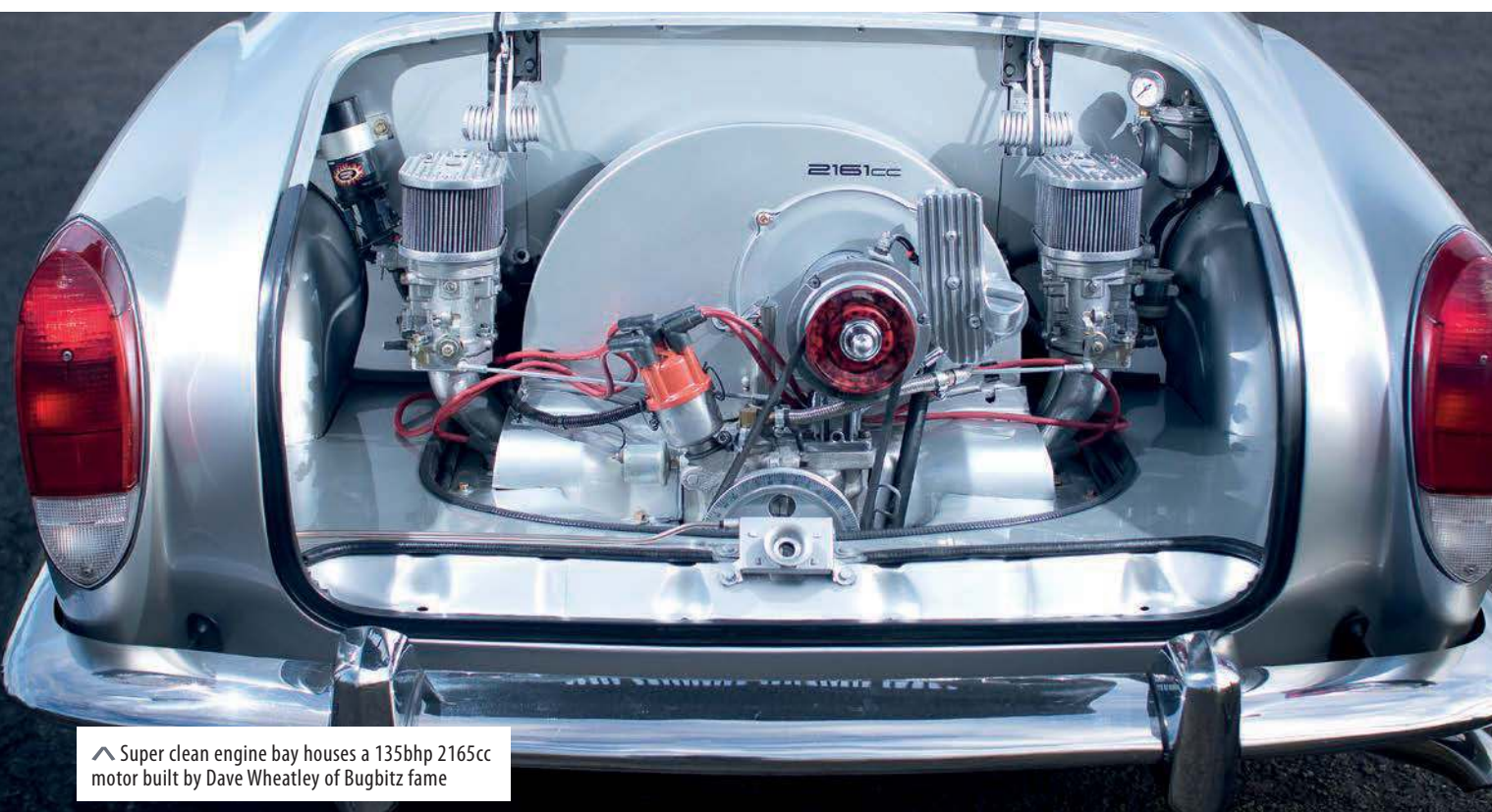
"It's the shape that's always attracted me, it's as simple as that"



> Wood-rimmed wheel and red leather adds contrast and class to this Ghia



“the previous owner had suffered the worst kind of motoring mishap on his driveway”



▲ Super clean engine bay houses a 135bhp 2165cc motor built by Dave Wheatley of Bugbitz fame



✓ Matt successfully transformed a battered eBay buy into his dream Ghia



TECH INFO

BODY

1972 body; fuel filler welded; blade style bumpers and overrides fitted

ENGINE

2165 stroker; raised case; Scat 82mm crank; chromoly pushrods; Mahle 90.5 pistons; lightened flywheel; Mahle oil filter; Gene Berg oil pump; FK8 Cam; Gene Berg GB860 heads (ported and polished); twin 40 Dellorto carbs

GEARBOX

Stock 4-speed manual

SUSPENSION

3in narrowed beam; lowered 1 spline in the rear

INTERIOR

Ford RS 2000 seats retrimmed in red leather; red leather dash top, rear seats and door cards; Gene Berg shifter; black carpets; Grant wood-rimmed steering wheel

WHEELS AND TYRES

Fuch replicas (VW Heritage); rear 5.5in, front 4.5in, wrapped in 205/60/15 and 145/65/15 rubber respectively



△ Twin 40 Dellortos are topped off with CB Performance air filters

After eventually getting the Ghia home Matt began assessing what needed doing. While the rear was indeed dented, it was the front that would require the most attention. Initially, he considered the possibility of carrying out a nose graft but rust- and accident-free Ghia noses aren't exactly falling off the shelves these days. No, it would all need painstaking repair – and I suppose one thing we can all be happy about is that thanks to the accident, the less delicate 1970s safety bumpers were damaged which gave Matt the opportunity to feck them straight into the bin and replace them with the earlier blade type affairs.

Body beautiful

When it came to repairing the accident damage, Matt, who owns a bodyshop, certainly wasn't afraid to tackle this coachbuilt beauty. The extent of the frontal damage included the nose and the front panel up to the front of the bonnet, as well as a kink in the nearside wing. While at the back there was a ding in the rear panel, the engine lid and again, a kink to the nearside rear wing. Not much if you say it quickly but this is a handbuilt classic, so hats off to anyone with the skills to make it all good again and indeed many hours were spent dollying and massaging the deformed metal back into shape. When the modern cars were finished each day he would commandeer the lift and lay the engine lid and bonnet on it and spend (too many) hours working them into shape. Said Matt: "It felt like forever but it's not like I could pick up spares in the shop on the corner. I had to do it and I'm delighted with the results."

As the car originally came from California it was a rust free specimen. There was only slight bubbling on one of the arches and once dealt with it was time to move on to some custom touches like welding up the petrol flap and replacing the fuel tank with a '60s tank for under bonnet filling. Next up was to hand-form the engine bay sidewall panels which would be colour coded to give a much smoother look.

And then it was time to hit it with paint. The Ghia was originally dark green and the previous owner had painted it dark grey but Matt always wanted a silver Ghia with a red interior so he spent quite some time mixing the paint until he had the right shade of silver; not too bright and modern but slightly darker and more vintage. We think he nailed it!



“Many hours were spent dollying and massaging the deformed metal back into shape”

Attitude adjustment

The car had been lowered by one spline at the rear while the front had a 3in narrowed beam fitted before he bought it, so that saved Matt a job, although he's subsequently fitted Koni adjustable shocks front and back to keep the ride firm and planted on those corners. Oh, and the discs and drums have been redrilled to a Porsche pattern to allow the fitment of the Fuch replicas. Andy Finch of Spikes Restoration then did a great job of detailing them to look as close to the originals as possible. If you've got a rim and rubber fetish you'd probably get a kick out of reading these figures: Matt's rims are 5.5in at the back and 4.5in up front and are wrapped in 205/60/15 and 145/65/15 rubber respectively. To finish things off he fitted new copper brake lines throughout and for launches there is lineloc but he hasn't connected it fully yet.

Race to the top

I had the pleasure of following Matt on the Derg Coastal Cruise to the *Bug Movie* Premiere, and all I can say is I'm glad I was driving my GT Beetle with an 1835cc motor because he is liable to leave anyone for dust at the drop of a hat. It's a freshly built 2165cc stroker motor built by Dave Wheatley of Bugbitz fame. It features a raised case, 82mm Scat crank, chromoly pushrods, Mahle pistons, a lightened flywheel and twin 40s to name but a few go-faster goodies. It pushes out about 135bhp at around 6250rpm. Not bad for a car that weighs no more than a toaster.

The place where Matt spends most of his time is quite a plush place to be and certainly catches your eye as you approach the Ghia. The first thing you'll spot, apart from the

very smiley happy face of the owner, is the red dash top; it's been covered in red leather which complements the silver painted dash front perfectly. Something else you can't help but see is the honking big tachometer which hints at something fun under the engine lid, just in case the hum from the exhaust, the stance or the Gene Berg shifter weren't clues enough. Other features of the classy cabin include a Grant wood-rimmed steering wheel and Ford RS 2000 seats which have had the headrest removed before they too were trimmed in sumptuous red leather. The rear seats and door cards also had a trip to the same trimmer. A new set of carpets finish off the interior quite nicely.

So, after a moment of madness at the keyboard, Matt's overcome every hurdle to create the dream Ghia he'd always hankered after. And wow, don't you just love it? ■



^ Monster tachometer hints at the fact there's a hopped up motor out back



Inauspicious start



Previous owner had suffered a bloody nose courtesy of a driveway incident involving a Split Bus and a broken handbrake cable



The KG's rump took the first impact from the Bus, but it was then pushed into another vehicle



Extensive metal repairs were needed, but thankfully Matt owns a bodyshop so it was no biggie



Matt managed to pull out much of the damage at the rear but further work was needed to get it absolutely spot on





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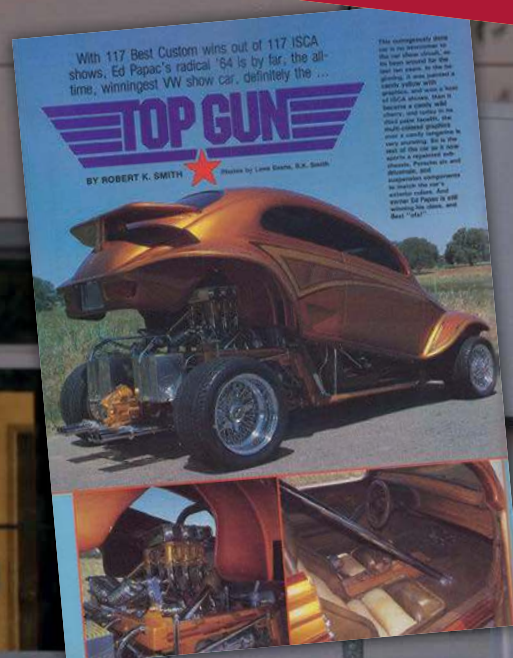
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BACK FROM THE DEAD

California, early '70s: Ed Papac began building a '64 Beetle that went on to become one of the world's most iconic custom VWs, winning countless car show awards throughout the '80s. And then it disappeared without a trace. Fast forward to 2019 and the chopped saloon – known as Top Gun – resurfaced at a major local event, looking in surprisingly great shape. *VolksWorld* tells its remarkable story...

Words and Photos Stephan Szantai



While John has to tweak part of the installation, the entire 'shell is meant to tilt forward as seen in this article (1986 *HotVWs*)

'64 CUSTOM BEETLE

✓ Graphics played a key role in the '80s VW scene and this custom build features some of the best



I

ndoor shows have played a crucial role in helping shape the custom car scene worldwide. As *The VolksWorld* Show has demonstrated since 1992, they allow the crowd to admire the very best, cherrypicked vehicles because everything's undercover. UK

custom car spectaculars started a little earlier, one of the most popular being Manchester's immensely popular Rod & Custom Show. Held at Belle Vue between 1976 and '83, it drew over 70,000 visitors at its height. Its success allowed promoters to invite some major American players in the scene, all expenses paid, including Ed Papac and his '64 Beetle (then painted yellow) in 1981. It went down a storm and even landed on the cover of UK's *Street Machine* magazine in August that same year. And yes, you've got it, the trend-setting VW is still around – and here we're able to tell its incredible story.

1973 Debut

The Volkswagen scene truly exploded in the UK starting in 1987, thanks in great part to the launch of both *VolksWorld* and Santa Pod's Bug Jam. However, the United States, and in particular California, home of the famous Bug-Ins, was the source of our inspiration. Few VW enthusiasts here, however, were aware of the burgeoning custom VW scene in 1973, when Ed Papac debuted his '64 Bug at West Coast car shows; in fact, the first version of his ride featuring cut-out wings/fenders had more than a hint of a very different popular trend of the time: Baja Bugs.

But many other details helped it stand out from the other custom VWs built then, too, including a wild paint job and an air-cooled flat-6



> The rear valance with custom tail lights partly conceals the VW Porsche 914 5-speed 'box



“The tilt body allowed show goers to admire the VW Porsche 914 5-speed gearbox and flat-6 motor”



'64 CUSTOM BEETLE

✓ Porsche only produced 50 racing 906s in 1966 – and apparently this Beetle runs one of their engines



◀ The heavily altered '64 Beetle even graced the cover of *Street Machine* (UK) in 1981

➤ When was the last time you saw 235/35VR13 tyres? They would be difficult to replace today!



'64 CUSTOM BEETLE

> This Beetle is a throwback to the '80s, when heavily altered custom VWs had a huge following



> Under the nicely built, one-off airbox, check out the dual Weber 46IDA carburetors

engine installed midship, set on a one-off tube frame. Ed claimed it came from one of the 50 almighty Porsche 906s produced in 1966, a racing icon that participated in Le Mans' 24-hour competition that same year – four of them finished behind the three Ford GT40s that dominated the race, as narrated in the excellent movie *Ford v Ferrari*. The custom crowd loved it and the renowned US-based *Street Rodder* magazine even put it on its cover in 1973, a most commendable accomplishment.

As impressive as it already was, Ed chose to entirely rebuild the vehicle in 1975, and it reappeared three years later in an even more outlandish guise and repainted Candy Yellow. The 'shell, solely finished in metal and now hinged at the front, had been sectioned 4in, while the 4in chopped roof had lost its drip rails and B-pillars. More alterations ensued: front air dam, side scoops behind the doors (lacking hinges), recessed headlights, custom taillights and rear wing, etc.

Lola & 906

The tilt body allowed show goers to admire the VW Porsche 914 5-speed gearbox and flat-6 motor (equipped with a handful of hi-po parts) up close, along with a ton of polished and chromed components. Other equally exotic goodies include inboard rear disc brakes and rear inboard suspension and axles taken from... a Can-Am Lola T70 race car. Ed had a bunch of parts custom made as well, from the hi-rise intake manifolds and exhaust, to the gas tank and oil pan. They complemented various

VW items, such as the fully-chromed front beam fitted with Opel GT disc brakes. Both the style and size of the wheels aren't what you might expect on a Beetle, being 13 and 15in respectively with Zenith wires; they run Pirelli P7 tyres from the same era, measuring 235/35VR13 and 295/35VR15.

Some details of the vehicle certainly remind us that Papac began wrenching on his project during the 1970s. Look at the interior in particular. When was the last time you saw a hand-carved teakwood dash with Stewart Warner gauges, in addition to a rattan headliner and door inserts? They have held up quite well, as have the leather-covered bespoke seats and Raid steering wheel.

Not unlike many custom cars built at the time, the '64 kept on evolving to please both the crowd and the show judges, thus explaining a repaint in dark red in 1982, followed by a Candy Tangerine applied in '85 – that's when the car adopted its 'Top Gun' moniker. The same paint dresses the vehicle today and still looks excellent 35 years on. American magazines of the era celebrated Ed's creation, too, hence it landed on the cover of *VW Trends* in 1980 and *HotVWs* in 1986. He had racked up over 100 First Place awards by then – car show goers couldn't get enough of it.

Disappearing act

During that same time period, Papac decided to raffle off the vehicle, but something unexpected happened shortly before announcing the raffle winner: it vanished, being seemingly stolen.





✓ Rear wings were moulded to the body, while two scoops carry fresh air to the engine compartment



➤ Among the unusual details is this flip-top gas cap which has been recessed into the body

TECH INFO

BODY

1964 Beetle; Candy Tangerine custom paint; tilt body; 4in sectioned body; 4in chopped top; drip rails, B-pillars, door hinges removed; bonnet, engine lid, wings/fenders moulded in; many custom details (front air dam with integrated turn signals, recessed headlights, taillights, rear wing, side scoops etc.)

ENGINE

1966 Porsche 906; 1991cc; stock 66mm crank; 80mm Jahns forged pistons; Grant rings; 10.5-to-1 compression ratio; ported/relieved heads; Iskenderian camshaft; dual Weber 461DA carbs, custom hi-rise intake manifolds, custom airbox; custom chromed exhaust system with six tips; custom oil pan; detailing (polished case, chrome, paint etc.)

GEARBOX

5-speed VW Porsche 914; 7.31 ring and pinion; stock gear ratios; Lola T70 axles

CHASSIS/SUSPENSION

Rectangular tube frame; chromed 1964 front VW beam; Opel GT spindles; coilover front shocks; rear Can-Am Lola T70 inboard suspension, rear custom coilover shocks

BRAKES

Opel GT front disc brakes; Can-Am Lola T70 rear disc brakes

INTERIOR

Custom seats and leather upholstery; hand-carved teakwood dash and side panels; Stewart Warner gauges; rattan door inserts & headliner; Raid steering wheel; custom fuel tank

WHEELS & TYRES

Zenith wire rims 8.5Jx13 (front), 12Jx15 (rear); 235/35, 295/35 Pirelli P7



Conjectures ensued, with hypothesis claiming it had been built into a house, sent to a wealthy collector in a faraway country, or dumped at the bottom of a lake. Insurance fraud was high on the list as well. While theory abounded, the disappearance remained a mystery... until the car resurfaced a few years later when sold by the federal government who had apparently found and seized it.

A couple living in Oklahoma became the new owners and kept it for a while, untouched. It changed hands again in 2002 through a Las Vegas-based auction, joining the fleet of American Classic Cars. The company, based in California, kept the vehicle for 14 years, parking it in a hangar where it gathered dust, until the next chapter involving Volkswagen enthusiast John Nash unfolded. This So-Cal resident found out about the custom Bug by word of mouth and showed interest, as he remembered the car and the magazine articles related to it in particular.

"I was taken over to the airport where Top Gun was stored," he continues. "After years in storage, the door of the hangar was opened and the somewhat neglected car was revealed. It proved in relatively good shape, very close to the condition it was in while enjoying its 100-plus car show wins – I marvelled at its workmanship and details." Needless to say, John had to have it.

Parked with a '47

The tangerine-painted saloon thereby joined his small fleet of VWs, which includes a few desirable pieces such as a '47 Beetle which is currently undergoing restoration. Top Gun needed some love so John spent days dusting off, cleaning and detailing every square-inch until it returned to its 1980s beauty, or at least close to it. In 2019, the promoters of the El Prado Show & Shine

(America's largest Volkswagen meet – see Autumn 2019 *VolksWorld*) approached John to invite him to join a special display called 'The '80s are Back'. Of course he jumped at the opportunity and accepted, knowing that the vehicle would share the limelight with other notorious VWs that had survived since the 1980s.

Better still, the judges loved it... once again. Thirty-three years after last appearing at a car event, Top Gun went to win another top award – 'Best '80s Car'. It proves just how well it was built in the first place, and serves as testament to the loyal commitment of its new caretaker. What a car! ■

➤ The chrome on the front torsion bar and other suspension components has lasted remarkably well

➤ As the engine is close to the occupants, Ed Papac fitted a pair of seats with a slim structure

✓ Chopped, and lacking both B-posts and drip rails, the roof received a lot of attention

“Other equally exotic goodies include inboard rear disc brakes and rear inboard suspension and axles taken from... a Can-Am Lola T70 race car”



▲ Carved wooden dash, rattan door inserts... it's almost like a '70s concept car inside





▲ Welded to the 'shell, the engine cover merges with the sloping contour of the custom rear wings



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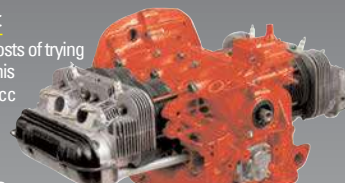
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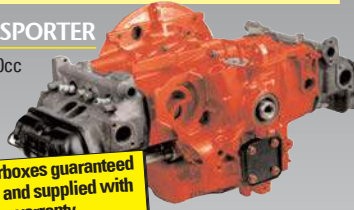


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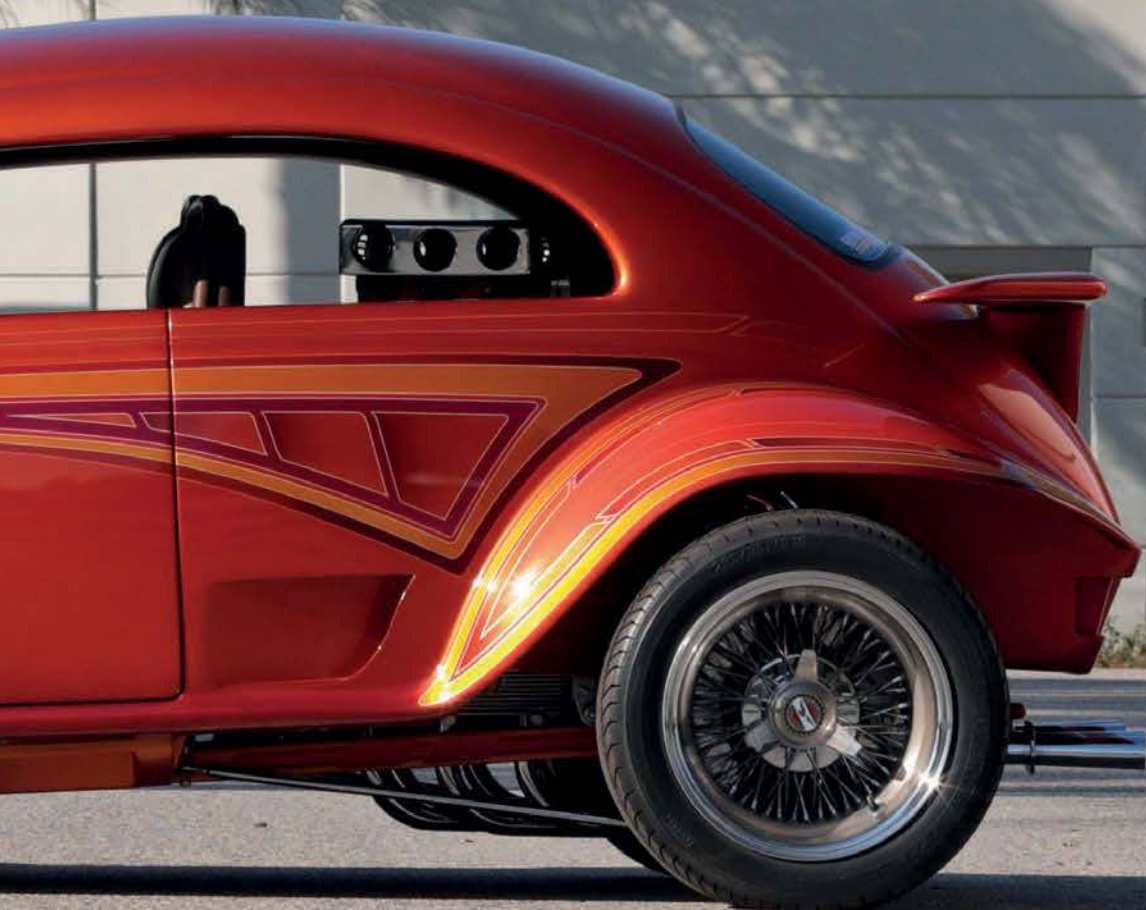
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STOP ME AND BUY ONE!

Coachbuilt VWs are usually all about exotic, open-top sports cars. However, this super rare commercial delivers just as many smiles...

Words Paul Knight Photos Dokke Sahertian





◀ Rear facing front seat is a novel feature of this fun commercial

✔ Note the rope that the driver would pull to let children (and adults!) know that it was ice cream time!

Raoul Verbeeman is a well-respected Belgian vintage VW guru who has restored (and owns) some of the rarest VWs in Europe. In fact, his obsession has almost become a way of life as he shares his home with his collection. Yes, it may look like a cool museum – and in many ways, that’s exactly what it is – however, with a bedroom and a small kitchenette attached, this is also a cool home!

Sure, there’s a great fire truck, a rare VW Bug pick-up and a ’50s Karmann cabriolet plus a Tempo Matador (both of which Raoul is currently working on), but there’s also an impressive collection of rare parts (not to mention the occasional scooter and motorcycle). But, it’s this cute, coachbuilt ice cream truck which caught our attention this time round, hence Dokke Sahertian was sent to snap some pics.

Raoul explained, “I first saw this ice cream truck more than 20 years ago at the legendary Mol VW fair.” He continued, “Immediately I fell for the truck and tried to buy it, but the owner explained that it had belonged to his late father, hence he was too emotionally attached to part with it, which I respected.” However, six years later, Raoul decided he’d ask once again, if only to show that he was still serious about purchasing the rare beast, and yet again, he was told it was not for sale, so he decided to try to forget about this one, as it seemed it was never meant to be.

Then, in 2012 (once again at the VW swapmeet),



>> This amazing collection is actually at Raoul’s home!

“he made a plan to undertake a thorough yet sympathetic overhaul in order to preserve the magic and nostalgia of this oddity”

> Yes, that’s a genuine Beutler-built Beetle pick up truck





“This particular body style is one of only four units ever produced”

^ Gotta love the original chiller lids that dominate the interior



^ Even the original Valkenaers name tag has been restored and refitted



^ Type 2 headlights adorn the front of the Van

✓ Check out the beauty rings and pin-striped wheel centres





Raoul was just about to leave when he bumped into some old friends. Chatting about the various cars and deals they'd spotted, his friend, Richard, suddenly said, "Did you see that the ice cream truck has a for sale sign in the window?" With that revelation, Raoul said his goodbyes and headed straight back to the vehicles for sale area to check it out. At first he was thinking "It must be some other, later-model ice cream truck..." but he soon realised that the vehicle he had tried to buy several times before was indeed now advertised for sale! Raoul was amazed to learn that it had actually been for sale for around a year, but the owner hadn't contacted him as he assumed he would have lost interest or bought something else. Wow – it was Raoul's lucky day!

Nice cream

Of course, the project didn't look as sweet as it does today, but it wasn't a total basket case, either. Raoul was told that, after it was retired from ice cream sales service, the truck was driven for several years before it was taken off of the road due to a collision, which had caused some damage to the front of the chassis. From then on, it was trailered to the occasional VW event and displayed as a vintage rarity, but was in need of some structural work to make it roadworthy once more. Raoul decided that, rather than treat it to a super-detailed resto, this project deserved to retain at least some of the original character and patina, hence he made a plan to undertake a thorough yet sympathetic overhaul in order to preserve the magic and nostalgia of this oddity.

It's actually based on a '52 Beetle, which was delivered (new) to a Belgian coachworks named Carrosserie Valkenaers. Founded in 1945 by the Valkenaers family, the coachworks specialised in caravan construction, but later went on to produce one-off and short-run commercial bodies, too. In fact, it's still in business today.

This particular body style is one of only four units ever produced, and was ordered by Frans Caers from Mol

(Belgium) to be used as an 'Ice Cream parlour'.

Raoul commented, "As my health prevents me from working on heavy restoration work these days, I turned to my good friends Geert and Robert José Mommen, who tackled the metalwork on my behalf." This involved the repair of the front end of the Beetle chassis and also the fitment of a fresh pair of floorpan halves. And, for a short while, the vehicle was rolling – it was even displayed at Bad Camberg in 2015 (and also as a promotional vehicle for Geert and José's business at Lubbeek in 2016).

Sign of the times

However, it was soon time to move to the bodywork, as there were some structural issues and repairs required to return it to its former glory.

The front panel (and the spare wheel area behind) required some repair, as did a few



sections around the lower part of the body. Four new chassis beams (outriggers) were fabricated to replace the rusted-out originals and the body was braced around the B-pillars to add rigidity. Raoul also had the guys replace the four inner mudguards and repair the metalwork around the sides of the engine before refitting the body to the chassis. Incidentally, the paintwork was tackled in-house, and they managed to preserve much of the custom-painted signage etc. Sure, it may not be the original artwork, but it's certainly has plenty of age, and suits the vehicle. It's also how Raoul first remembers seeing it, hence that's how he wanted it to remain.

The 16in wheels (from a Barndoor Type 2) were blasted, repainted and fitted with new hubcaps and beauty rings, and they look great alongside the re-polished brightwork and those funky bells.

Inside, the refrigeration unit was overhauled and rewired, while Michael Wynn tackled the seat covers and other bits of trim. And wow, we just love the original chiller lids that dominate the interior of this truck.

The finishing touch was the addition of the IJSCO personalised license plate (Ijs meaning Ice, of course), which topped this sweet ride off perfectly.

And there we have it – one of the rarest commercial coachbuilt VWs left in the World! Yes, it's way rarer than a Hebmüller, a Rometsch, a Dannenhauer & Stauss... the list goes on. And, in our eyes, it's every bit as good looking as any of those coachbuilt open-top sportsters! ■



^ The motor is a 25hp unit from a Split window Beetle and has been overhauled to run like the proverbial wristwatch

“Inside, the refrigeration unit was overhauled and rewired”



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"SELL THE 206..."

Teenager Callum Goddard stopped tinkering with his 206 when he clapped eyes on this Beetle. But it looked a lot different back then, of course

Words and Photos Jon Cass





'74 BEETLE



◀ Horn push clock came from VW Heritage

✓ Tarmac-hugging stance was achieved when Callum ransacked the Limebug catalogue





W

hen you're still in your teens, a classic Beetle as a daily driver isn't usually the first choice that springs to mind. For Callum Goddard, it was those unmistakable cool looks along with an enticingly low insurance quote that lured him towards classic Bug ownership.

"I'd already started modifying my first car which was a Peugeot 206 Quicksilver," Callum remembers, "I'd fitted a tuned exhaust and forked out on different wheels but I stopped wasting money on the Pug as soon as I saw the Beetle I wanted."

It would be this 1974 1300 Beetle that caught Callum's eye, advertised for £3500 and located many miles away on the South coast. "I liked what the previous owner had done to the car," Callum explains, "the 1300 engine had been swapped for a 1600 twin port and it had been recently resprayed in white." What's more, the wings, bonnet and bootlid along with the headlights and tail lights had been swapped over from an earlier car giving the impression of a pre-'67 Bug. "It had been lowered slightly too and was owned by a young lad, so I had my suspicions straight away it hadn't been well looked after," Callum adds. Putting those negative thoughts aside, he took the plunge only for his worst fears to come true when the Bug broke down on his drive home from collecting it. "It kept stalling due to rust in the carb and I spotted a leak from the petrol tank, too. It wasn't a great start to Beetle ownership," he laughs, adding "it wasn't a good look sat on the side of the road waiting for recovery truck, either!"

Daily duffer

For the first year, Callum stuck to his original plan and assigned the Beetle to daily duties, but frequent breakdowns began to create problems. "I started to lose faith in the car, not knowing if I was going to reach my destination, or what time I'd get there. Because of that I

decided to buy a Polo 6N for everyday use and the Beetle became my weekend project car."

This gave Callum an opportunity to consider what mods he wanted to make, and top of his list was air ride so he began ordering parts from Limebug. Other than replacing the rusty heater channels, the rest of the metalwork was solid and required no major welding, so he cracked on with the work at every opportunity. Now up front there's a 4in Jawbreaker Limebug air beam, Limebug air shocks, through rods and dropped spindles. Meanwhile the rear features a Limebug bolt-on bag kit with 2in dropped spring plates, the work being carried out by Carters of Chapeltown, Sheffield.

Green credentials

The bodywork wasn't in the best condition when Callum bought the car and those daily driver duties had done it no favours. It was impossible to obtain a shine from the white paintwork, a few more holes were appearing in the floorpan and rust bubbles were making the whole thing look decidedly scruffy. In short, something had to be done to put right all the wrongs. "When we began stripping the 'shell, we had to go through six different layers of paint, so it was little wonder



"I stopped wasting money on the Pug as soon as I saw the Beetle"



^ Air tank and compressor sits neatly under the bonnet



^ RetroSound head unit and earlier dash knobs help turn the clock back inside



^ Fitted grey carpets, grey cloth seats, door cards and matching grey-painted Bay wheel – it's subtle all right

TECH INFO

BODY

1974 bodysell with pre-'67 wings, bonnet, bootlid, sloping headlights, rear snowflake lights, bumpers and chrome trim; single piece running boards with chrome edges and coated black on top; tapered rain channels; Crème green paint

ENGINE

Fully rebuilt twin-port 1600; J tubes; pancake air filter

GEARBOX

Standard 4-speed transmission

SUSPENSION

Limebug air shocks and Jawbreaker 4in narrowed beam at front; Limebug manual air bags at rear with 2in dropped spring plates

BRAKES

Standard drums 4x130 fitment

INTERIOR

Bay Window steering wheel resprayed to match the wheels with VW Heritage clock horn push; seats, door cards, parcel shelf and speaker box retrimmed in Italian grey cloth; custom grey cloth headlining; chrome 3-point Wolfsburg buckle seatbelts; RetroSounds head unit with Bluetooth, connected to 2x 6x9 JBL speakers and a 10in JBL subwoofer; pre-'67 style knobs and switches

WHEELS & TYRES

Tyres 155/60/15 rears are stretched to 6j wheels; chrome domed hubcaps

THANKS TO...

Limebug for their help over the phone with the suspension; the kit itself is well-made and works wonderfully. Also, Custom & Commercial for supplying parts and Machine7 for getting me the right windscreen and some bits to finish the Bug. Also, thanks to Jack Betts, Chris at Carters, Sheffield, James Drennon and Clique53





"I started to lose faith in the car, not knowing if I was going to reach my destination, or what time I'd get there"



▲ Wolfsburg crest lapbelts finish the retro look off perfectly

the topcoat never had a shine," Callum laughs. The task of restoring and perfecting the bodywork was left in the hands of Carters once again, who also applied the green paint. "I changed my mind around 20 times about which colour to go for but feel I made the right choice in the end," Callum smiles. "Most people mistake the colour for Beryl green, but the difference is the white pearl in the crème green which produces a lighter shade in the sun and goes

darker in the shade." A subtle custom detail is the tapered rain channels, a suggestion by Callum's Dad; simple but highly effective. The snowflake rear lights, early type wings and bonnet were all carried over, though the running boards are a single piece part with a chrome edge and tops coated black to resemble the early thick trim running boards.

Ask an expert

As this was Callum's first project, some of the trickier tasks were left to Chris at Carters, "I didn't want to screw anything up so Chris fitted things like the pop out windows and chrome trim," Callum points out. To complete that stunning exterior look, fresh number plates were attached, and new 155/60/15 tyres bought, the rear pair stretched on to wider 6J wheels. "Looking back, I didn't know much about chassis mods at the time and I wish I'd known about flat 'pans, but you learn as you go," Callum tells us.

The question of reliability or lack of it was still playing on Callum's mind and it seemed only sensible to have the 1600 twin-port engine fully rebuilt by Carters, too. Other than the addition of J tubes for added ground clearance, and a vernier pulley, the engine itself remains standard though it certainly looks the part sat in its freshly painted bay. Callum's friend, Jack Betts, came to the rescue rewiring the car when no one else could do it, a task Callum remains eternally grateful for!

Cabin fever

When it came to the interior, Callum elected to strip the seats down himself and these were then recovered in Italian grey cloth by Spirit Interiors



“If I hadn’t bought this Beetle I’d still be driving around in a 206 which would have been a bit depressing”

in Birmingham. The door cards were trimmed to match in the same material while the carpets were hand trimmed and fitted into place. “The headlining was custom made in grey cloth and James Drennon of clique53 fabricated a parcel shelf and speaker box that was trimmed to match the rest of the interior,” Callum points out. Sounds come from a RetroSound head unit which is wired to an amp powering a 10in subwoofer and two 6x9 speakers.

Callum’s added a Bus steering wheel painted to match the wheels fitted with a VW Heritage clock horn press along with early type knobs and switches.

Since completion, unsurprisingly, the Beetle’s attracted a fair amount of attention. “The best reaction I have had was from an old bloke outside a pub in Wentworth,” recalls Callum, “when I dropped the air ride and got out of the car, he asked ‘am I drunk or did your car just sink?’ I will never forget that as long as I live!”

While the car’s undoubtedly come a long way, Callum would still like new rear indicators, wide five drums and new wheels – he’s thinking SSP Fuch replicas, though he admits to still having a fondness for the traditional steel rims, “I also want to get some art work done on my air tank incorporating an old VW badge,” he adds.

That’s not all...

Already, Callum and his dad have purchased a follow-up project in the shape of a ‘54 Oval. “Having farmed out lots of the work on this car, we’ve gained confidence and will be doing more of the work on this one ourselves which will be a lot more satisfying.” But it doesn’t end there. Callum’s also on the lookout for a T25 or Bay to tow his Bug to shows this coming season. The enthusiasm of youth, eh!

“I feel I’ve definitely become addicted to old VWs, they’re much more fun than working on or driving a boring modern car, and the social aspect is great too,” says Callum. “If I hadn’t bought this Beetle I’d still be driving around in a Peugeot 206 which would have been a bit depressing.” ■



◀ Spirit Interiors in Birmingham did a cracking job of the interior

✓ Original 1300's been replaced by a rebuilt twin-port 1600



▲ 6J steelies suit the car, but replica Fuchs are on the cards at some point



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OWNER INFO

NAME:

Ian Cushway

JOB: Editor

CARS OWNED:

VW Passat, Polo

WORK THIS

MONTH:

Polishing the faded paintwork

Polishing the itch

I love the patina look but finally decided it wasn't quite right for this Beetle

You've probably figured by now that I like to keep my vehicles pretty stock. It's not out of choice, necessarily, it's just that I haven't got the imagination, the cash or the technical nous to pull off radical modifications. That's why I'd decided not to do too much to the '67 1300 Beetle I was lucky enough to buy last summer. After all, it had been with the same first owner (Ken) for 52 years and it just didn't seem right to interfere with or diminish in any way all those years of history. Hence why I had resisted the urge to polish any of its faded Delta green paintwork.

Until now, that is. You see, the shiny finish on both rear wings didn't match the rest of the paintwork. Ken explained when I bought the car that he had unfortunately scraped them on the narrow gateposts while reversing off the steep drive of his Bournemouth bungalow. They weren't replaced, just carefully repaired – and I've found the

receipt for £175, dated 2005. The colour match is perfect, as is the finish. But, as I said, they just don't look right against the rest of the factory faded bodywork.

Raindrops...

There were a few other reasons for deciding to finally polish the Beetle. Some rain drops had got in through the garage roof during a torrential downpour, and when they dried on the paint, being so porous, they made a mark. I subsequently layed in bed one night, wondering what horrible pollutants might possibly be eating into the cellulose, and that's despite living in rural Brittany where the air is pretty clean. And then there was the niggling thought that Ken, fastidious as he was with the car, would probably want me to get it looking like new again, and leaving it so 'unloved looking' would probably go against his wishes.

All things considered, then, it was time

to finally grab the polishing cloths and get busy making it look shiny again.

But of course, it's never quite as easy as that. It's ages since I've polished a car, so I needed to get some fresh products to work with – and some clean rags.

Easy does it

What I was keen on avoiding was taking off too much of the original paint, so didn't want to go at it with a cheap buffer and a harsh abrasive and risk going through to the undercoat. To that end, I got on the phone to Meguiar's and placed an order for their Ultimate Compound with the aim of doing it all by hand. Yes, it would take a lot longer – but at least I would have total control of what I was doing.

Also, Ultimate Compound is a good product to use because the boffins at Meguiar's have concocted a formula that employs micro-abrasive technology so it doesn't scratch, but at the same time is



✓ It helps if you can remove trim beforehand, but be careful not to scratch the paint or buckle anything getting it off



^ This stuff cuts through oxidation without scratching the paint surface



^v Wow, look at the difference! I did this bit in the garage in between cooking duties



“ that’s the best way to get a car looking shiny; do a little bit at a time, savour the experience and not expect a gleaming, mirror-like finish after five-minutes ”



✓ Working on a small area at a time, I started to reveal the original orange peel factory finish

^ The job's made a lot easier if you start with a fresh cloth





✓ The best products don't leave a residue, so it doesn't matter if you get it on the rubbers

✓ I applied a pre-waxing glaze to polish up the surface before applying Meguiar's Ultimate Liquid wax.



super effective when it comes to ridding paintwork of oxidation and blemishes.

I also got a couple of the Meguiar's foam applicators to make life a little easier when it came to putting the stuff on.

Polishing a car by hand is relatively straightforward as long as you stick to a few important guidelines; don't rush it, don't tackle too big an area at once and never do it in direct sunlight so the product dries before you have time to buff it off properly.

Buff it up

With all this in mind, I started on the bonnet and worked my way around the car over a period of about a week. Having the Beetle easily accessible via a door from the kitchen into the garage meant I could do a panel at a time while waiting for the kettle to boil, or pasta to cook. And that's the best way to get a car looking shiny; do a little

bit at a time, savour the experience and not expect a gleaming, mirror-like finish after five-minutes.

Polished act

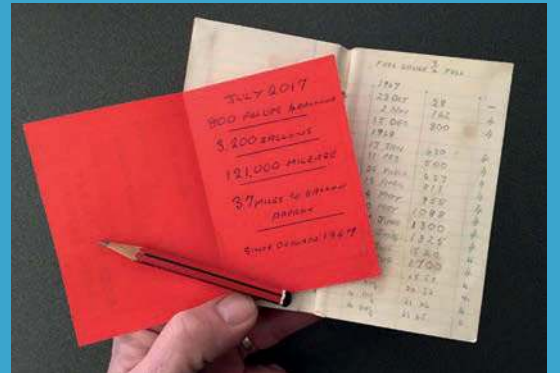
Once I'd done as much as I could with the Compound, I switched to Meguiar's Ultimate Polish. Again, it's a top-drawer product that's designed to rid the paint surface of fine swirl marks. It also acts as a pre-waxing glaze to prepare the surface for a layer of wax, adding depth and creating a super gloss finish.

Again, with this it was a case of working on a small area at a time and buffing off with a clean microfibre cloth.

Then, once that was done, I gave the shiny surface a workout with Ultimate Liquid Wax, which is Meguiar's advanced hydrophobic wax which contains pure synthetic polymer wax for prolonged protection and a deep, mirror-like shine. What I liked about this was the fact that it was so easy to apply and buff off without

BOOK OF SECRETS

I've unearthed yet another nugget concerning the Beetle's past. It's a little red book kept by Ken, its first owner, noting every fuel stop he's made since he took delivery in October 1967. The first entry on October 23 records that the tank was three-quarters full and the odometer reading was 28 miles. That must have been the distance it was test-driven prior to being sold. More fascinating still, Ken's sat down, added everything up and created a potted summary. Between October '67 and July 2017 – 50 years – he's performed 800 fill ups, used 3,200 gallons and covered 121,000 miles, which equates to approximately 37mpg. Not bad, eh? And guess what, when he handed me the book, he gave me the original Staedtler HB pencil that had been used to make the entries. Though somewhat stubbier, that's lasted as well as the car, too!



leaving any residue, even when it got on the window rubbers.

It's tricky capturing the true shine on camera, but I have to say, I was chuffed with the end result. I'll need to go back over a few areas again, and when the sun came out the other day I could see a few patches (most likely where I hadn't been vigilant enough when applying the Compound), but it's quite a transformation. And what's reassuring is the fact that the original paint on the car has been given the ultimate protection. So now, whether it gets rain drops on it or not, at least I'll be able to sleep at night without worrying...

✓ This is looking a lot better, isn't it?

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Sweet as a nut?

Sort those rough running issues before the season gets fully underway

Words and photos Mark Walker and Ian Cushway

Our air-cooled VWs have always enjoyed a healthy reputation for bulletproof reliability and will often keep going, despite mechanical problems that would see most cars on a one-way street to their local garage. That's why it's easy to

simply ignore rough running issues or put off opening the engine lid on a car that's a pig to drive. Disgraceful as it sounds, that's just what happens sometimes.

Of course, even the best maintained and serviced cars can have their issues, with cutting out, flat spots, loss of power and backfiring all

traits most of us are all too aware of. But why put up with this when there's simple steps you can take to get your pride and joy running sweetly again before the show season kicks off? Here's a guide to point you in the right direction when it comes to sussing out what's wrong, and how to put things right again.

JOB INFO

TOOLS NEEDED

Screwdriver; flat 10mm, 13mm spanners

SKILL LEVEL

2

TIME TAKEN

4-6 hours

COST DIY

From £0 for parts and materials

COST PRO

approx. £150 parts and labour





01 Valve clearances

One thing that tends to get overlooked until the engine is hot and stranded at the side of the road, running like the timing is out or backfiring, is valve clearances. Strictly speaking, these should be checked every 3000 miles and the cork gaskets replaced. Clearances should always be checked and adjusted when the engine is cold. To check, pry off the spring clip and remove the rocker cover. Expect to catch some oil with a rag. Now, remove the distributor cap and turn the engine until it is at top dead centre (TDC) on number one cylinder. You will see the notch in the rotor arm line up with the notch in the distributor body. You will also see the notch in the lower pulley line up with the join in the engine case. With this done, slide under the car on the right side (RHD driver's side, LHD passenger side) and get in position at the cylinder furthest forward. This is number one cylinder. Slot in the feeler gauges with a thickness of 0.15mm or 0.06in between the rocker and valve stem. If they are loose or tight, then you will need to adjust, by loosening the 13mm nut and using a flat screwdriver to wind the valve adjuster in or out. Moving to No.2 cylinder, turn the engine backwards 180 degrees (you will need to make a mark at the bottom centre of the lower pulley, so you can locate this easily). Continue in this way for the other two cylinders.

03 Dodgy dizzy

Most air cooled VWs came with a vacuum advance distributor. The vacuum advances the timing slightly just off idle, so makes for a smoother pull away. However, many owners fit a Bosch 009 or similar, with a mechanical advance. These run okay on stock engines, but are really meant for use with dual carb setups. The problem is they are slower to respond to load changes, which produces a flat spot upon acceleration. If you have a stock carb and engine, then a vacuum advance distributor is best. The vacuum can on a vacuum distributor takes the vacuum from the inlet manifold via a steel tube, with a rubber hose on each end. Ensure the hose is not perished, or brittle, as this will cause a leak. To check the vacuum can is working, remove the distributor cap, rotor arm and dust shield, if fitted. Now remove the vacuum hose from the carb end and suck on it; you should see the plate that the points attach to in the distributor move, then return once you stop sucking. If this doesn't happen, it is likely that the diaphragm is ruptured. You can replace the vacuum can, without replacing the whole distributor.



02 Check coil

A weak spark can cause all kinds of poor running issues, so it's best to check the coil first. If you leave your ignition on for long periods, then the coil can burn out. When checking the coil, make sure it is cold, have a fire extinguisher handy and ensure there is no fuel around in the engine bay before proceeding. Also be aware of the extreme high voltage produced by the coil and be sure to use insulated grips and rubber gloves. Ensure 12V is going to the coil; the terminal marked 15 is the positive side of the coil and the terminal marked 1 is the negative side. Turn your ignition on (do not start engine) and put a test light on the coil – one side to positive, the other to negative. The light should illuminate. If you have an ohmmeter/multimeter, you can do further checks. Firstly, remove all the wires from the coil, then attach the red and black terminals of the meter to the positive/negative on the coil. The reading should be 3-4.5 Ohms. If the coil is bad, it will show a higher reading. Next, put one of the multimeter terminals into the centre of the coil and one onto either one of the terminals. You should get a reading of 9,500-10,000 Ohms, maybe lower. A reading of 11,000 Ohms or more, or a reading of zero, indicates a bad coil.



04 Absolutely pointless

If the points and condenser haven't been replaced for a while, it's probably a good idea to change them. There are several different types of model and year specific points and condensers, so check first before purchasing parts. Check the shape and location of the condenser bung that inserts into the distributor body if unsure. Many people replace the points and condenser setup with an electronic ignition module, thinking it will be maintenance-free and solve all ignition woes. I used to be one of these people, until I had a couple of units fail. By all means use an electronic ignition module, but carry old school points and condenser too to get you out of a fix, should it fail. While you are inside the distributor, check the ground wire to the base plate is intact and in good condition.



05 Perfect timing

A poorly timed engine can cause a lot of problems, which can lead to the early demise of an engine. The trouble is, most consider ignition timing a dark art and some VW mechanics don't even take the time to identify the correct timing setup for the distributor in front of them; there is a vast array of different distributors, each with their own unique timing setting. John Muir's book *How to keep your Volkswagen Alive* comes up trumps here, giving a rundown of all models and their timing settings. A timing light is an essential tool for setting things up; sure, you can set up static timing to TDC, but why wouldn't you invest in a timing light and setup the timing correctly, when it's so crucial to your engine's health?

07 Fuelled up

There are a few different types of fuel pumps and different brands, but the main difference is that a fuel pump for a dynamo takes a 108mm pushrod and an offset pump, for an alternator there's a 100mm pushrod. If you have the wrong pushrod the engine won't run, so make sure you buy the correct pump and pushrod configuration. Some aftermarket pumps have a pin that holds in the foot of the pump; this can work out, causing the pump to malfunction. Worse still, some pumps have a plastic foot, which wears quickly. To test the operation of the pump, remove the fuel hose to the carb and have someone crank the engine over for only a second or so; you should see fuel pumping out. Caution: do not do this near a hot engine and have an extinguisher handy. Some pumps can put out too much fuel pressure, leading to over fuelling of the carburettor, causing running problems. To check this you'll need a fuel pressure gauge. For a standard engine pressure should be around 3-3.5psi. If it is higher, you will need to regulate it by adding more base gaskets to reduce the relative throw of the pushrod.



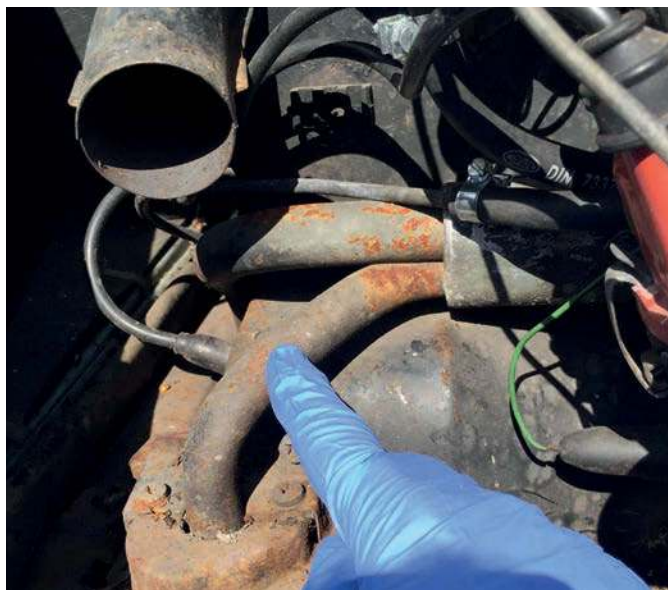
06 We have ignition

If you haven't serviced your car recently, then the ignition system is a good place to start. Try to specify quality German items, as some aftermarket parts literally aren't fit for purpose and may do more harm than good. Start with the rotor arm, and look to see it is all in one piece and the contacts are clean. Also, check the spring inside (if it has one) is intact. Now look inside the distributor cap; the carbon contact is on a spring and this should be functioning correctly, otherwise it won't make contact with the rotor arm. HT leads can degrade inside and break down; this often happens with one lead, so the problem can be diagnosed by swapping leads around. Spark plug colour can tell you a lot about your engine; a light brown indicates a plug that is in a good running engine. Heavily fouled pugs indicate a problem in the fuel/ignition system.

08 Feeling choked

VWs from 1961-on came with an automatic choke. This is actuated by pressing the accelerator pedal once with ignition on, before starting the engine. The choke uses a bi-metallic spring to reduce the air intake into the carburettor, enriching the mixture. If the choke is poorly adjusted it can make the car hard to start and cause poor running. To adjust, the engine must be cold; you will need to remove the air filter. Remove the three screws that hold the choke onto the body of the carburettor. Be careful not to drop any of the small spacers as you remove the choke assembly. Now, you can re-install the choke back onto the carb, ensuring the hook on the bi-metallic spring hooks around the choke shaft lever. Once this is done, install the screws and retainer and snug the screws up to finger tight. Now, turn the ceramic element until the mark on the element lines up with the middle mark on the housing. With this done, turn on the ignition and press the accelerator pedal once. Now start the engine with the air filter still off and go and look at the top of the carburettor; the butterfly should now be closed; the stepped cam on the throttle lever side of the carb should be down fully, meaning the throttle is being held open by the choke. Now wait a couple of minutes for the engine to warm up; you should see the choke gradually start to come off, until it clicks off altogether. If this doesn't happen correctly, you can loosen the screws and adjust the choke slightly, then wait for the engine to cool down and try again.





09 Unblock heat risers

The inlet manifold can suffer with a couple of problems. The heat riser tubes that carry heat up from the exhaust system, to prevent the inlet manifold from icing, can become blocked up with carbon, meaning the car starts to suffer with carb icing or incorrectly vaporised fuel. The only solution to this is to remove it from the car and attempt to unblock it; I've tried everything from heating and blowing with compressed air, to using an old piece of cable on a power drill over the years, with varying degrees of success. Sometimes, a manifold has to be set aside and a new one sourced, as, despite best efforts, the carbon refuses to budge.

Occasionally, if you have an aftermarket exhaust, the pre heat holes in the exhaust will not have been drilled out, so you will need to remove the manifold and drill the holes in the flanges, in order to get pre heat.



10 Coming up for air

If the inlet manifold is improperly sealed, or the ports on the manifold or carb ports aren't blocked off correctly, then you may have an air leak. Air leaks will cause the engine to run lean; this will likely present itself as poor idling, flat spots and stalling, especially when releasing the throttle, or slowing down after a fast run. One very common place for an air leak is the throttle shaft on the carburettor. The carburettor body wears out of round here on high mileage/old carburettors and this causes an air leak. If this is the case, rather than changing the carb, you can purchase kits to install bushes here, curing the leak and poor running problems.

The other places for air leaks is where the carb bolts onto the manifold, where the manifold bolts to the cylinder head and, on dual port engines, where the rubber boots connect the centre section of the manifold to the end pieces. Even if the gaskets have been installed correctly, the mounting flanges can be warped, due to excess heat. Sometimes you can rectify minor warping by filing the mating flanges with a large flat file.

If you want to identify where the air is leaking, get a can of easy start, then, with the engine running, periodically spray it around the common leak points. If there is an air leak, the engine should pick up/run faster for a few seconds.

11 High carb diet

Finally, the carburettor on an air-cooled VW is relatively simple compared to modern cars, but there's still a lot that can go wrong, either causing poor running or, worse still, stopping the car running at all. As there are so many different types of carburettor, there isn't enough space here to cover everything. Generally, the first thing to check is that the main jet is free. The main jet can be accessed by removing a brass threaded plug on the side of the carb, then using a flat screwdriver to remove it. Blow the jet through with compressed air, or just blow through it if you don't have compressed air. You should be able to see if it is obstructed. Next, if your carb is 1967 or newer, you should have an idle cut off solenoid mounted on the side of the carb. This is to cut off fuel to the carb when the ignition is switched off. If this is sticking, it can cause running issues. To test, turn the ignition on (do not start engine) and remove the wire from the end of the solenoid, then touch it on the end again. You should hear a click. If not, replace the solenoid. Inside the top of the carb (you will need to remove the top of the carb), there is a float needle valve. It directs fuel into the bowl of the carburettor and regulates the level of fuel in the bowl. If the float needle valve is sticking, it can cause erratic fuel delivery. New float needle valves come with all good carb rebuild kits. Lastly, you can check that the accelerator pump is squirting fuel into the throat of the carb correctly through the small injector tube. This can be done with the carb removed from the car and the bowl of the carb full of fuel; pull down the throttle arm and you should see fuel squirting out of the injector tube. If not, remove the tube with pliers and blow out with compressed air, or flush out with solvent. Okay, so that's covered the most common issues and by following these steps, your engine's bound to be running a little smoother!



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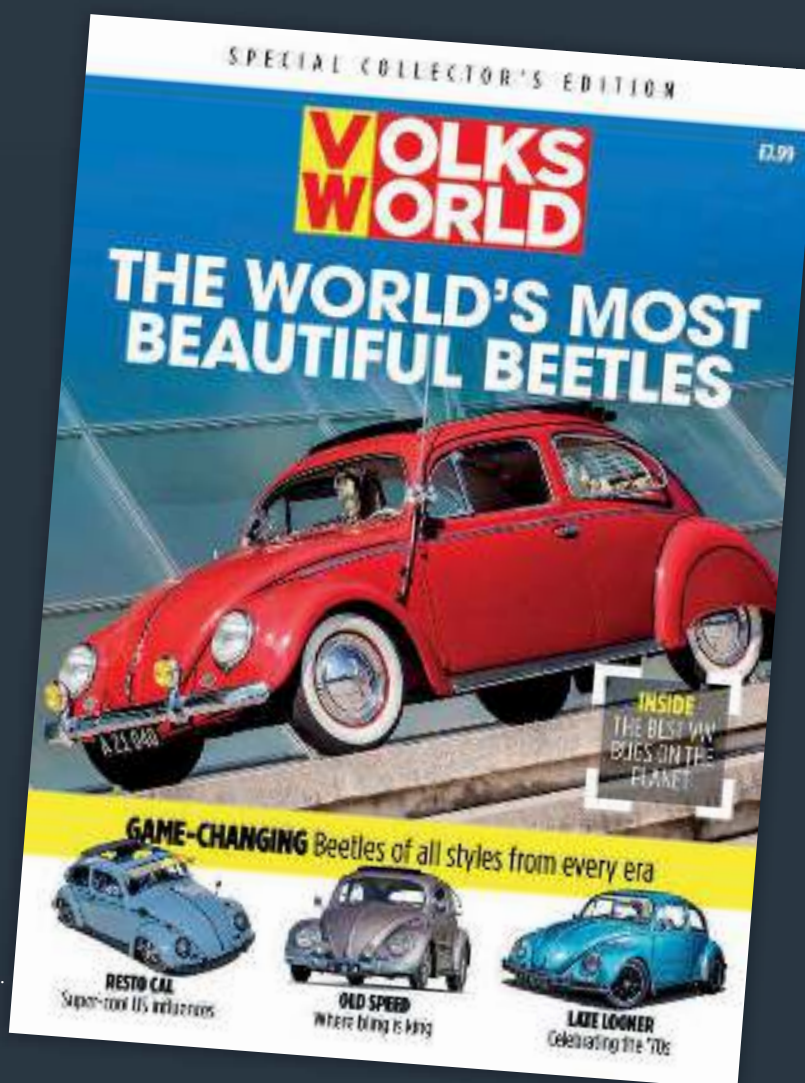
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Next month...

Here's what's coming up in the May issue of
VolksWorld, on sale Friday 3 April, 2020



And here's the best part...

This Buggy conversion allowed a couple of otherwise dead cars to live on - one of which, believe it or not, was a Pre-A Porsche 356! We unravel all the fascinating, easily-overlooked facts behind this fun and furious retro creation...

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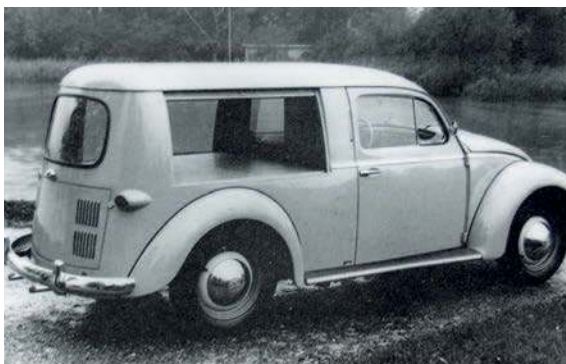
Don't miss it!

What the Beutler saw

Beutler was a Swiss coachbuilding firm that showed remarkable versatility with its Volkswagen conversions, building vans, pick-ups and estates as well as very attractive sports models with Porsche engine and supercharger options

Words
Richard Gunn

> One of the Beutler vans with its side doors open. As can be seen, there wasn't too much space inside compared to front-engined vans of comparable size



✓ If nothing else, a Beutler pick-up could manage a small moped!



B

eutler was one of the more intriguing coachbuilders with a nifty sideline in air-cooled Volkswagens. Well, we say VWs, but air-cooled German cars might be a more accurate statement, since this Swiss company also produced some lovely Porsche-based machines as well. The deft touch it exhibited in transforming Porsches also manifested itself in the firm's VWs, resulting in some stunning-looking creations. But such was Beutler's flexibility that it also produced some very utilitarian designs as well, including Beetle-based estates, vans and pick-up trucks. However, even these demonstrated a certain flair that marked them out from similar efforts by other coachbuilders.

Safe haven

The company was founded by two brothers, Ernst and Fritz Beutler, who had learnt their trade at the wonderfully-named Worblaufen, Tüscher and Graber in Switzerland before WW2. Unusually, they decided to strike out on their own and found their own company in Thun, Switzerland, during the war. While the rest of the world might have been fighting tooth-and-nail, Switzerland remained neutral; a mountainous oasis in the midst of the chaos that was 1940s Europe. Ideal, it seems, for sheltering the von

Trapp family and setting up new coachbuilding concerns.

Gebrüder Beutler & CIE, Thun, to give the business its full title, focused on sporty and prestige machines, such as Jaguars, Lancias, Mercedes, Alfas and even one Bugatti (a 1931 T49 that was rebodied from a drophead coupé to a cabriolet). But, however rosy things might have been in Switzerland, they were far from happy and prosperous beyond its borders, and the company wasn't exactly flourishing. That's why, when Volkswagen started getting back on its feet, it would prove a Godsend to the Swiss coachbuilder. At first, it was in an indirect way; in 1949, it collaborated with the newly-founded Porsche to build a prototype 356 for display at the Geneva Motor Show. The model had only just been launched and, at that time, still included a lot of stock VW parts supplied directly by Wolfsburg. It would gradually move away from its closely-related air-cooled cousin, of course, but certainly during these early days, Porsche owed much of its existence to VW. It was the tie-up with Porsche that really got Beutler noticed at first; thus it had much to thank Wolfsburg for as well.

Unfortunately, when Porsche moved from Gmünd to Stuttgart, it decided to review its special-bodied cars, and Beutler, based in a completely different country, was politely told its services were no longer required. That forced it to have a look at alternative sources of revenue, and naturally, its eyes fell on Volkswagen.

“The cars were designed by Ernst Beutler and there was something of the Karmann Ghia in their shape”

Beetle-based

The first Beetles had been brought into Switzerland by VW importer AMAG (Automobil and Motoren Aktien-Gesellschaft) in May 1948, and they were proving very successful. For Beutler, shifting from one rear-engined, air-cooled German model to another just seemed the obvious step.

So, later on in 1949, the first Beutler Beetle appeared. The Swiss firm kept

it relatively simple at first, leaving most of the body untouched, but installing a Plexiglass roof panel that could be tilted or removed completely. Granted, such things are commonplace today, and have been for many years, but at the tail end of the 1940s, it was a pretty novel and innovative idea. A total of 12 were built.

The firm got rather more creative with its Beetle-based vans and estates. These retained the front of the Type 1 up to the B-posts; aft of that, a box-type cargo section was fitted. The rear ended in a graceful curve with a one-piece screen and the original bumper was kept which, rather happily, matched the rounded profile of the rump. It all came together to give these load-luggers a distinctive appearance, especially from the back. The vans had side roll-down doors for loading, but no rear access. The estates, however, did have tailgates fitted. This necessitated the engine cooling louvres being moved up to the side panels whereas, on the vans, they were stamped into the engine cover. One rather notable feature was that, although the standard rear wings were retained, the tail lamps were fitted mid-way up the rear panel. These were stock Beetle lights, but turned 90 degrees so they snugly fitted the shape of the bendy back. It was a neat trick that no doubt saved money and time, yet still looked nicely stylish and different.

However, there were flies in the ointment. Because of the need to clear the engine (even with a remote Karmann Ghia air filter fitted on the later vehicles), the load floor in the vans was quite high, about the same

level as the shoulders of the driver. That seriously limited capacity compared to other car-based vans. Space to work on the engine, if required, was also very limited. The estate had a further issue. In ordinary use it was a four-seater, but to convert to a full estate required quite a bit of DIY work. The rear seats had to be folded down, then a frame screwed into place and the floor attached with fasteners. It was quite the palava. Despite their shortcomings, the Beutler cargo carriers remained in production until the end of the 1950s, by which time Volkswagen's own Transporter had effectively stolen most of the sales of the commercial version.

There was also a pick-up variant as well, although some of these seemed to be used as a general purpose hacks around Beutler's own factory. The conversion was a quite crude job, with just the rear bodywork of a standard Beetle chopped off and a wooden tray added in its place. Remarkably, three survive today.

✓ The pick-up variants were rather simplistic affairs – it seems that all Beutler really did was chop the rear off a Beetle saloon and fit a wooden flatbed tray. We can't imagine it was that easy to work on the engine like this. Photo: Andrew Bone via Wikimedia Commons

Good sport

Beutler, however, reserved its best work for its very sleek and smart Volkswagen-based sports cars. These were so well-executed that it was difficult to believe there were VWs underneath, especially as dummy front radiator grilles



✓ The top picture of this brochure page shows an estate with the load floor in place. It was very high – not much chance of your dogs jumping up there. The bottom picture shows one of the vans, which suffered from the same issue, plus it didn't have an opening rear door

✓ One of the later US coupés shows off its wider front grille and small fins sprouting from the rear. America was very big on fins at the time, but European cars didn't get this feature



were fitted. Together with the long, low noses, these features made the racy models look like they were packing something quite potent under their bonnets, rather than just a spare wheel and a fuel tank. The grille was somewhat reminiscent of that found on Mercedes-Benzes, which injected even more class into something that was just a humble VW in a party frock.

The cars were designed by Ernst Beutler and there was something of the Karmann Ghia in their shape. They were launched at the 1954 Geneva Motor Show and available in both fixed head coupé and cabriolet forms. The bodies were all aluminium, with robust stressed bulkheads, and attached directly onto Beetle floorpans. Anybody ordering one had a three-month wait for their car to be built, as the bodies had to be hand-formed, a very time-consuming and specialist task. Inside, the seats were made by Beutler and trimmed in leather or cloth. The dashboard bore little similarity to that found in Beetles, although occupants might have recognised the speedometer. The oil temperature and fuel gauges would have been less familiar, as would the cigarette lighter and wood-rimmed spoked steering wheel – all features added by Beutler to differentiate the cars even more from their basic origins. Additional dials and equipment could be added if required, although that probably increased the build time even more.

Ask for an upgrade

While the default engine option was Volkswagen's 1192cc 30bhp unit, a Porsche 356 motor could be specified, complete with appropriately upgraded braking system. These cars, produced between 1954 and 1956, were dubbed Beutler-Porsches and were a fascinating blend of VW and Porsche. However, Porsche power wasn't that necessary to get markedly better performance out of the Beutlers. The handling was already improved by the lower profile, but twin carburettors could also be fitted, as could Okrasa and Denzel tuning upgrades and even MAG or Judson superchargers. With twin carbs, a Beutler could manage 87mph; more was achievable with the other mods.

However, all of this did come at considerable cost. At 21,900 Swiss francs, even the basic cars were almost as expensive as a Porsche 356. Piling on the options just caused the price to climb even further. The prosperous US market was thus very important to Beutler, and so, in 1957,

the coupés heading for there were visually tweaked. They sprouted small but fashionable fins, as well as an even larger grille. Cars staying in Europe retained a smaller one. But all the models received somewhat stretched lines and different exterior trim, just to keep them looking fresh.

From 1958, Beutler decided to switch to using Porsche chassis instead of Volkswagen ones. The cars still looked more or less the same though, despite the different underpinnings. The models stayed in production until 1962, after which Beutler decided to focus its attentions elsewhere. The company continued in business until 1987.

It's unclear how many VW-based Beutlers were built. There's the nine Plexiglass-roofed Beetles, of course, but a figure of 28 has been mentioned for the sports models, with considerably more coupés constructed than convertibles. Only a handful remain (seven being the expert guess) and in the rare instances when they do come up for sale, they can easily match or exceed contemporary Porsche prices. So if you do see one at a show – and it will probably be in mainland Europe or the USA rather than here in the UK – take pictures. It might be quite a while before you come across another. ■

✓ One of the early convertibles. Note the rather Karmann Ghia-like shape to the rear wings... before the Karmann had even been launched



✓ Although they looked like conventional Beetles from the front, the vans were very different at the rear, with a very rounded rump

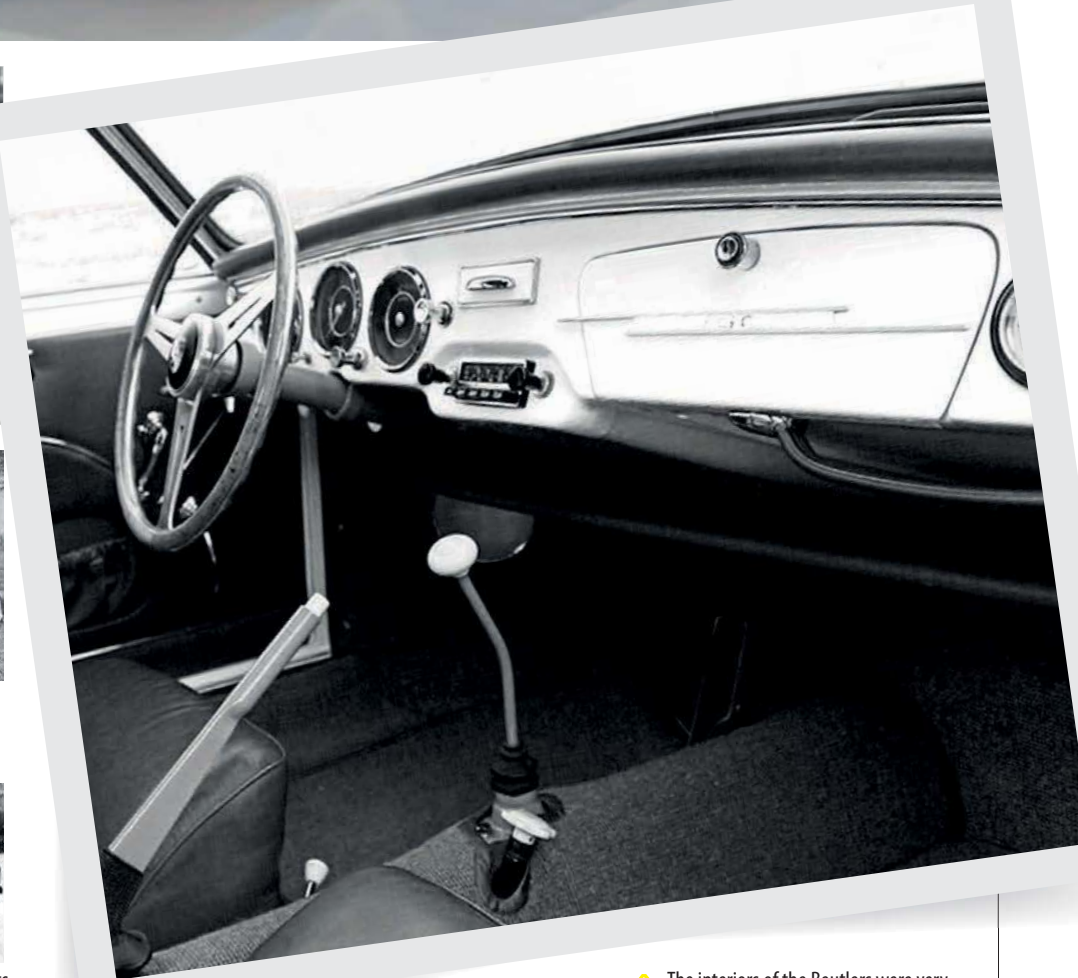
✓ One of the 1957 coupés can now be seen in Volkswagen's own museum in Wolfsburg



^ The estates were an interesting design, but rather limited in practicality, due to how long it took to install the load area floor



^ The dummy front grilles on the Beutler sports cars were very reminiscent of those found on Mercedes-Benz 300SLs



^ The interiors of the Beutlers were very stylish compared to the Volkswagen Beetles they used as their basis

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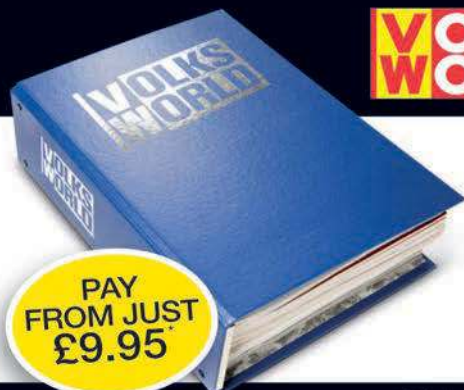



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1979, 72,000 miles, £14,995. Lots of service history. It is powered by a twin carburettor rear mounted 1984cc petrol engine with four speed manual gearbox. The driver and passenger seats have been replaced by more comfortable Volvo seats with belts where there is a walk through between them. Please call 07850 499149, Leicestershire. 10462

T2



1972, 130,000 miles, £4,000. 1600 cc. Sheldon high-top roof - Tax and MOT exempt. Project. Failed most recent MOT with major welding required to body and chassis. Otherwise good engine in full running and driving order, daily use prior to end Oct. 2019. with lots of history and a good base for restoration. In the family for 15 years and time to let go. Please call 07443 225618 100051

T2



1963, 23,000 miles, £50. Split screen, left hand drive, new engine, 1600 twin carbs, as new, owned 10 years, new interior and agreed in value. Please call 01579321472 100120

T2 BAY



1972, 63,000 miles, £10,500. Rock n roll bed, bunk in pop top roof, generally good condition, runs well, weber carburettor, small amount of bodywork attention required but otherwise sound. Full history. Please call 01263 731913, Norfolk. 12169

T2 BAY WINDOW



1976, £29,000. 1.8 refurb engine, weber 40's, electronic ignition, 240V, twin batteries, propex, bike rack, BRM alloys and runs beautifully. Please call 07958 675688, Essex. 12466

T2 DAY VAN



1972, 55,000 miles, £14,995 ONO. Tax and MoT exempt, tintop, walk through, full restoration to bare metal with full respray including stoneguard in 2017 with photo history, rebuilt engine this year, new brake and lines throughout, carpeted interior with full width rock n roll bed. All new rubber seals throughout. Please call 07738 077144, Northamptonshire. 11854

T25



1987, 55,000 miles, £4,500. 2.1 Petrol Ex German Armed Services Transporter. Water-cooled Catalysator. Left Hand Drive. Great condition for age. MoT'd till May 2020. Original Army Service Book and Toolkit + original seats still available if wanted. 2 Hob stove, good size bed. Skylight. Power hook up. Great base for renovation or full conversion. Please email buygreenmachine@icloud.com 11087

T25



1989, 62,727 miles, £6,750 ONO. New upholstery, no rust and automatic with 2 owners from new. Please call 0115 9332410, Nottingham. 10696

T25 PICK UP



1989, 154,500 miles, £7,500. An original pick-up that bears its scars from a hard working life with pride. 1200 miles on a rebuilt 1.9 DG WBX. Mot to 15/07/20. Reupholstered seats. Original load bed. Please call 01452 780712, Glos. 12478

WESTFALIA CONTINENTAL



1977, £20,000 ONO. Original near complete interior, new flooring, cab mats, door cards, jacking points and sills replaced. Recent engine out service, 4 new tyres and all recent bills and paperwork plus awning and cover. Please call 07909 998147, Kent. 11532

WESTFALIA CAMPER



£26,995. Very extensive history. Fantastic condition inside and out. Complete mechanical overhaul and underbody waxoil by Type 2 Decatives. Please call 07738 168207, Nottinghamshire. 12605



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TRANSPORTERS

T5.1



2013, £21,500. Camper converted June 19, to include rock n roll bed, Smev sink/hob, domestic fridge, led lighting. Conversion new and unused. Van has 82k FSH, new cambelt and water pump. Please call 07904 519974.
12920

T5 130



2005, 200,000 miles, £5,000. One owner, FSH, all bills, no commercial use, 9 seater, dark windows, alloy wheels, pine green, 2 sliding doors, tow bar, bike rack, oof bars and original tidy condition. Please call 01460 234223, Somerset.
12231

T5 130 2.5TDI LWB



2007, 204,000 miles, £8,950. Rat look camper van, engine rebuilt at 200k, recently converted, new batteries, kitchen pod, R&R bed, roof platform, rear ladder, lowered, soundproofed and insulated and much more. Please call 07515 466274, Stoke on Trent.
10934

T6



2015, POA. Full service history, 12 month MoT, full camper, pull tested bed, austops roof, LED lights, roof rail, alloy wheels, electric windows, cruise control and much more. Please email ken.e.young@btinternet.com.
12094

T6 2.0



£36,995 +VAT. Full black leather interior, 20" alloy wheels, sportline side bars, lowering springs, sportline roof bars, tailgate spoiler, carbon fibre bumper protector, abt front splitter, abt front grille, fully insulated and suede lined rear with led interior lighting. Please call 01142 838484, Rotherham. (T)

T6 SWB



£48,595 +VAT. Full black leather interior, 20" alloy wheels, sportline side bars, lowering springs, sportline roof bars, tailgate spoiler, carbon fibre bumper protector, fully insulated and suede lined rear with led interior lighting. Please call 01142 838484, Rotherham. (T)

T6 SWB



£55,495 +VAT. Remote central locking, cruise control, electric windows, electric heated door mirrors, automatic head lamps, multi function display. Heated windscreen. Please call 01142 838484, Rotherham. (T)

T6 SWB



£50,995 +VAT. Full Black alcantara/ leather interior, 20" Leighton lv1 alloy wheels with uniroyal rainsport 3 tyres, 40mm lowering springs, carbon fibre bumper protector, fully insulated and suede lined rear with led interior lighting. Please call 01142 838484, Rotherham. (T)

TRANSPORTER



2000, 92,536 miles, £12,000. Manual, TDI, SWD, 2461cc, white skyliner, high top, bilbo nektar II conversion, SWB twin single beds, 2 burner hob, grille, sink, fridge, one owner and 2 sets of wheels etc. Please call 01453 860690, Gloucestershire.
11213

VANS

CADDY C20



15,319 miles, £16,995 +VAT. Discovery media sat nav, radio/ cd, electric door mirrors, electric windows, lights & vision pack inc auto lights, auto dimming rear view mirror and rain sensing wipers, front fog lamps, heated windscreen, thatcham cat 1 alarm, remote central locking, air conditioning. Please call 01142 838484, Rotherham. (T)

CADDY MAXI C20



40,915 miles. DAB Radio/cd, electric folding door mirrors, electric windows, front fog lamps, heated windscreen, thatcham cat 1 alarm, remote central locking, air conditioning, cruise control, height adjustable front seats, 7 seats, multi function steering wheel, twin sliding side doors. Please call 01142 838484, Rotherham. (T)

CADDY PICK-UP



2000, £1,450. Maroon with grey trim, 1900 diesel, good MPG, recent oil change, good tyres, tow bar, good runner, needs MoT and garaged. Please call 01302 855370, South Yorkshire.
12647

VAN

£59,000. Bespoke interior, rock n roll bed, camper heater, solar power to spare battery, funder bed sliding ridge, suspension lift, interior LED lights including reading lights in the rear, 12v power and also USB power sockets front and back, premium Kenwood DVD Bluetooth sound and navigation plus much more. Please email david@rescueglobal.org.
11704

WANTED

VW T4 OR T5

Wanted. Must be sound mechanically and body for keen amateur to play with and kit out. Prefer petrol. Please call 07930 333009, Devon.
11861

PARTS FOR SALE

4" WHEELS



£150. With good tyres. Please call 01938 552817, Wales.
12614

HALF TINTED MK2 REAR LIGHTS

£20. A pillar gauge housing for MK2, suits 52mm gauges. Please call 01592 562889, Scotland.
12124

TRANSPORTER T5 UNDERSLUG WATER TANK

£70 Ono. 60 litre, complete with pump and fittings. Please call 07896 588380, Notts.
12528

PARTS WANTED

REPLACEMENT ENGINE

Wanted. For 1996 VW T4 TDI. Prefer later type turbo diesel. Advice on choice and fitting welcome. Also need sliding door. Please call 07706 163334, Lincoln.
12507

The wonders of Wolfsburg, 1966

Former *VW/Safer Motoring* editor Robin Wager wonders at the prospect of a 80p Wolfsburg lunch

I

always find on looking through past editions that the many and varied stories published can always surprise and fascinate on renewed acquaintance, and are often invaluable for giving a unique picture of the way things were at the time.

One such feature, titled 'Busman's Holiday' in the July 1966 issue of *Safer Motoring*, concerned a visit made, unannounced, to Volkswagenwerk in Wolfsburg by a Beetle owner who also happened to be a journalist.

Like so many enthusiasts, Ray Miller had been keen for some time to see the cars being made and witness the 'German miracle' – remember, this was just 20 years after that country's crushing defeat had left the VW factory largely in ruins. (And only four years after *Safer Motoring* was first published!)

When Ray announced to his wife that he was going to Wolfsburg, she looked at the map and saw the black dotted line close by, indicating a border. "That's the Iron Curtain," she said, "so watch it!"

Arriving after a trouble-free drive in his Beetle at the unmissable mile-long factory site, Ray first went to the wrong gate; it was a goods entrance, and he expected a hostile reception. On the contrary – an English-speaking guard supplied a small map, inking in the route to 'Wache 17', the correct gate, and the car park. There Ray was issued with a lapel badge colour-coded for 'English' and guided to Tours Reception.

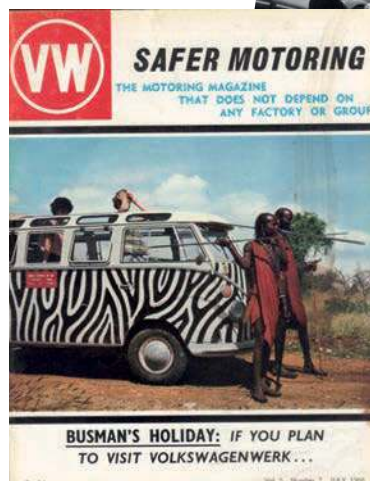
Finding himself about 10 minutes late for the morning tour, he joined a group in the cinema watching a colour film of the complete car-building process. From there everyone proceeded to a large, airy lecture room where they shook hands with a plump, jovial little man who reminded Ray of someone he couldn't bring to mind...

They learned how Ferdinand Porsche's blueprints for a cheap peoples' car were taken up in 1933 by Hitler, leading on to the laying of the foundation stone of the Volkswagenwerk in the asparagus fields of the area in 1938. The guide pointed out that none of this was political – Hitler, he said, did "some things bad, some good." Then came the statistics which, Ray thought, "clubbed you with their immensity." (This was 1966, remember...)

VW already produced 7,000 vehicles a day in six German plants and four abroad. It employed some 125,000 people, more than 49,000 of them at Wolfsburg alone. After the wartime destruction it re-emerged to produce the millionth vehicle by August 1955, and the ten millionth just 10 years later, comprising 7,600,000 Beetles, 800,000 Type 3s and 1,600,000 commercials.

What Ray describes as "the sweet smell of success" was everywhere. They had just one question: where were all the 49,000 people who were said to work there? You certainly wondered – the plant was spread over 384 acres and two shifts were worked, but only a handful of workers seemed necessary to tend the huge robotic machines.

A show-stopper for visitors, he said, was a merry-go-round robot assembling the rear end of a bodyshell. On their way around, the components stopped at 10 stations and 326 welds were performed. In this way 246 complete sections an hour were turned out, all supervised by just



▲ The factory employed 49,000 people in 1966 so you can imagine the Beetle traffic jam getting out of the carpark

◀ Article in July 1996 appeared just four years after the first *Safer Motoring* was published

“everywhere was spotless – you could eat your dinner off the floor”

five men! A similar machine assembled the front body section, then both were stitched together with 42 spot welds, a completed bodyshell rolling off the line every 18 seconds. Automation in a nutshell!

Ray was amazed how it was possible to stroll through the factory in white shirt and flannels, and still be unmarked and fresh at the end. The guests remarked that “everywhere was spotless – you could eat your dinner off the floor.”

Impressive as it all was, says our man, it was strangely satisfying to see human testers taking over a car at the end of the assembly lines. After checking the electrical equipment, they drove off to do further inspections and track tests, and you thought “no robot could do that!”

Lunch was served in the visitors' restaurant from a menu printed in four languages. Ray partook of chicken soup; pork chop, French fries and salad; pineapple and cream, and coffee, plus a carafe of red wine – all-in cost 16 shillings (80p). Afterwards, wanting some literature, he met a press officer who, with an interpreter, provided all the facts.

He was then whisked up to the 13th floor, through Prof Nordhoff's palatial suite, and on to the roof where, with not a trace of pollution, they gazed down on the hundreds of cars just off the production line, and the town of Wolfsburg, surrounded by green fields. With the Iron Curtain just five miles away, he suddenly realised who the guide had reminded him of. It was Nikita Khrushchev... ■



▲ Fleet Street journalist, Ray Miller, with the Beetle he drove – unannounced – to the Wolfsburg factory

What do you think?

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We've got a selection of stock style smoothies in widths from skinny to fat as well as our JK Exclusive 5 bolt Fumagallis.



VW Beetle



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T2 Bay



T25



T4



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