



Newsletter

April/May 2008

It is very heartening to see how well respected Peter was in the Lancia world. The English Lancia Club had a two page spread in his honour with two obituaries and an article on his rallying escapades by himself. The obituaries are copied below along with a farewell from Barry Hull. I will print Peter's article in a future issue. There is another chapter on the Lancia's in South Africa saga with some notes from Nick Pryke who was lucky enough to visit the FIAT SA head office and drive the new cars. See below to share his experience.

Jim

LAST EVENTS

Garage Meeting – Saturday 5th April



The idea was to view the new ALF premises in Gordons Bay but once everyone found the comfortable clubroom there was very little movement away from the bar. I did however spot two Intergrales and plus two Monte Carlos being worked on in the spacious and tidy workshop. We were pleased to welcome new member Johan Berning, and everyone was impressed with the condition of his Series II Fulvia.

Garage Meeting – Saturday 17th May

Despite a good turnout and some good sales, there was no noticeable reduction in the number of parts left on the shelves. If you were not able to make it and are looking for parts please contact Phil as he now has a good idea of what is available. Peter Gerrish was continuously barraged with Lancia related questions that were all answered knowledgeably and usually with a related amusing anecdote.



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Celebration of Peter's Life – 12 noon Sunday 25th May - 6 Birkett Road, Rondebosch

This will be a bring 'n braai in the normal Presidents Braai format. Please bring your own cutlery, seating etc.

Garage Meeting – Saturday 7th June

This will be an event to celebrate the life of Peter Immlen. If you have any ideas on the most suitable way of doing this, please contact a committee member.

FAREWELLS TO PETER

Peter - 'Mr Lancia'

I said farewell to a lifelong friend of some 40 years on the last day of his life and this is a farewell of who he was.

It all started many moons ago when the guys of Pinelands used to gather on a Saturday at Chris & Peter's home in Pinelands – the original start of garage meetings. In those days we all drove Fiat 1100's and while we were tinkering in the garage Chris was in the kitchen baking an enormous cream cake – which became traditional – and afterwards she would lie on the back lawn in a skimpy bikini catching a tan, ogled by all of us single guys.

Peter started rallying a Lambda for Harold Fredman with Chris as Navigator – and so the love for Lancias started.

The guys eventually moved on to Saab's, Volvo's, Darts, etc and Peter bought his first Appia – from then on everything else was a bucket of bolts.

Peter & Chris decided to immigrate to Ireland to start a plastic factory and a family, everything went with them, household goods, dog and of course the Lancia. The dog, a beautiful Labbie, was placed in quarantine for six months in Ireland. When Peter & Chris eventually went to fetch him, the dog did not immediately recognize them but when he got outside and spotted the Lancia, lo and behold he knew who they were.

The family returned to South Africa some years later and Peter acquired a Fulvia Coupé and the Saturday meetings restarted, only this time at Peter's factory in Ndabeni, where what I called 'Aladdin's Cave' began.

Peter, at this time, started his collection of Lancias and spares and Aladdin's Cave started to grow. One Saturday afternoon Peter phoned me and asked me to come to the factory as a container had arrived from Australia. When I got there the container was still locked and I said to Peter 'what the hell is in there' and his reply was 'wait and see'. We unlocked the container and there was the worst rusted wreck of a Lamda I had ever seen. We rolled it out and I said to him 'you ain't going to live long enough to restore it'. Sadly my words were to come true as we all know that the cherished Lamda is not complete.

As we all know Lancias were the only cars that ever graced the driveway of Mr Lancia's home – Thema, HPE, Fulvia, Flavia, Appia, Beta, Lambda. Peter's love for Lancias never wavered and he never drove any other make of car for all the years I knew him. When Chris decided that the HPE had run its time and bought a 'plastic' (Honda) Peter practically disowned her.

Peter was a Lancia man till his death, as I said everything else was a bucket of bolts.

Long may his memory be with us.

Barry

My good friend Peter Immelman, president of the Cape Lancia Club, South Africa, sadly died in March after a massive stroke.

I first came into contact with this ardent Lancia collector in 1982 when I was getting fellow Fulvia enthusiasts together to raise funds for saving a large quantity of spares on offer from the UK importers. Peter was one of the first people to respond to my plea in the LMC newsletter and we were soon involved in regular phone and fax exchanges of views on all things Lancia.

Having married the lovely Christine, daughter of an English army officer stationed in The Cape, Peter had every excuse to visit the UK from time to time and always came to the LMC AGM if he could, thus I got to meet him and Chris at last and we came great friends.

Pete shared my love of good food, wine and real ale as well as things Lancia and also had a wonderful sense of humour so I was able to share my love of the Goon Shows with him. Pete suffered from a hearing problem so I introduced him to the splendid interchange between Eccles and Bluebottle which went roughly: "I've got my new hearing aid Bottle!" "Oooh, does it work well?" "Half past three!" Thus the phrase "half past three" came into our conversation quite regularly and invariable reduced two grown men to laughing idiots!

In the early 1990s, Peter fell in love with the idea of obtaining a Lambda and as none of the half dozen or so examples lurking in South Africa were available, set out on the most amazing hunt, finally getting parts of two chassis in very poor condition from Australia and other parts from all round the globe.

I don't think that at this stage, Chris was quite as enthusiastic about the pile of rusty scrap iron that Pete had acquired but when Mick Cave lent them his super Lambda as transport for the 1997 LMC AGM, she was sold and before the end of the event had asked me to go out to Cape Town for a "month or so" to help with building the engine and gearbox.

Thus in February 1998, I went on the first of several working holidays to South Africa where Pete, Chris and their sons, David and Richard, treated me as one of the family, so not only did the engine, gearbox, front suspension, etc, get built, we had a whale of a time seeing a certain amount of this beautiful country.

Pete was a through and through South African and loved his country, he was also very proud of his family and their achievements. He was a keen dinghy sailor and rally driver with Chris usually acting as navigator in one of their fleet of Lancias, the favourite, I got the impression, being his 3rd series Aurelia.

Members of the Cape Club were regular guests to legendary brais (barbecues to us) in his back garden, where huge chunks of prime meat and plenty of wine and beer made for super events.

I have had some of the best times of my life with Pete and family and my thoughts are with them now at their sad loss. I still can't believe that this loveable great bear of a man is gone, he will however, never be forgotten.

Peter Gerrish

Peter Immelman was president, past chairman and general organiser of the Cape Lancia Club in South Africa. You would have to go a long way to find a more enthusiastic devotee to the Lancia marque. Over the years Peter and Chris had rallied both his Appia Series 3 Saloon and B20 with some success and had accumulated a wide range of Lancia cars including to my knowledge Lambda, Aprilia, Aurelia, Appia, Flavia, Fulvia, Beta and Thema and not always just one of each! Peter was a 'hands on' man and he enjoyed the restoration process as much as the driving. His conversion of a Fulvia Coupe to a two-seat open car a la F&M Special was a work of art and I can personally testify to the stiffness of the bodyshell. Peter was a generous man and any person with the remotest interest in Lancias was always welcomed as were any members of LMC who happened to visit Cape Town. I first met Peter about 20 years ago when I first went to Cape Town on business and this was the start of our friendship and on subsequent visits whether on business or pleasure there was always a car for me to drive not only for sight seeing but also for commuting to work.

Many members of LMC will have had the pleasure of meeting Peter and Chris as they were regular in their attendance at our AGMs and other LMC events, it has only been declining health that has kept them away in the last year or so.

I shall miss his emails with the un-PC jokes and comments and it is such a shame that he did not live long enough to complete the full restoration of his Lambda although he was able to drive the uncompleted project.

Another "good un" gone.

Don Cross

ON THE WEB

The latest rumor is that Lancia are going to get back into F1 racing by buying out Scuderia Toro Rosso. For more details go to www.grandprix.com/ns/ns20358.html

ON THE ROAD

Having just read your March Newsletter, I thought you might be interested in the following.

At the beginning of March a few of us in the Club, due to the help of Fiat *guru* Ian Huntly, got a very last minute invitation to go to the Fiat Head Office in Midrand to see the new Delta.

The Delta had only just been launched at the Geneva show a few days earlier and this maroon example had just arrived in the country for tests, mainly in Namibia.



We were even more fortunate in that we actually got to drive it, as well as the yet to be announced Fiat 500 Abarth. What a treat!

The Delta was very striking, despite all the black tape you will see in the picture, and proved to be roomy, quiet and comfortable if not particularly exciting (we will have to wait for an Integrale version for that!). Fiat want to position Lancia as a stylish and sophisticated brand, and the car certainly fits the bill.

Great news that it will be produced in right hand drive shortly, although my guess is that it won't be offered in SA for a while as Fiat have plenty of other, perhaps more important, cars and service matters to attend to first, without having to worry about the launch of a "new" brand. But we will see.

The Fiat 500 Abarth on the other hand should follow hot on the heels of the basic 500's which are being released here mid year, and is an exciting and fairly manic small car which will quickly build up a fanatical following, I think. The one we drove was in black, which to my eyes did nothing to flatter the wonderful retro styling of the new *Cinquecento*, but give me a pale blue, or white one with red and green "go-faster" stripes and I definitely won't say no!

Nick

THE BALDWIN GARAGE

The floor has been repainted and I am now busy finding places to keep everything I need and chucking out things that are not needed. Hopefully next month I will be able to start working on the car again.

Jim

THE HAYWARD GARAGE

Pierre has just rebuilt the head on his Thema as some teeth came off the timing belt resulting in bent valves. Check out his page on his web page.

FOR SALE

Check out website for the latest bargains.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

Murray Walker : " And now the boot is on the other Schumacher "

Chris

TAILPIECE



Goodbye Peter

CAPE LANCIA CLUB

Club Website: www.lancia.za.org now regularly updated.

2008 Calendar (Provisional)

May 25th – Social Meeting
June 7th – Garage Meeting
July 7th – Deadline for Newsletter articles
July 13th – Social Meeting
July 29th – Deadline for Newsletter articles
August 2nd – Garage Meeting
September 15th – Deadline for Newsletter articles
September 21st – Social Meeting
September 29th – Deadline for Newsletter articles
October 4th – Garage Meeting
November 3rd – Deadline for Newsletter articles
November 9th – Social Meeting
December 1st – Deadline for Newsletter articles
December 6th – Garage Meeting

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