



Newsletter

June 2006



Arrangements are now well under way for our Lancia Centenary celebrations. We are inviting all the other Italian Car Clubs to hold an Italian Car Show and Lunch at the Italian Club on Sunday 3rd September. So make a "Big Note" in your diary and start polishing so your car is looking its smartest on that date. We are also hoping to show some restorations in progress so if you have a suitable one let me know and we will see if we can help with arrangements to get it to the show.

I am glad that we have started getting some interesting articles submitted by members. Not only have we got Pierre's Delta history but also Peter has submitted an extremely interesting article on Pat Brown our late Honorary President. Peter is trying to find some pictures of the Cisaprilia and I will publish these later. I have added a picture of his Aprilia which I took at one memorable meetings when he was telling us of his previous exploits.

Jim

LAST EVENT

Garage Meeting - Bring'n Buy Meet

After a disappointingly small amount of trading the meeting livened up when Peter apologised for the HPE being in the way because it was refusing to start. Of course this challenge could not be ignored by the assembled team of experts so out came the tools and it was soon up and running with the carb being tuned by Pierre. This was resulted in a queue of new challenges headed by Deon's Spyder for a carb tune and my Fulvia to investigate a misfire that had developed on the way to the meeting. Kyle also managed to get a slow running problem sorted out on his Thema as well as having a ride in Laurence's Monte.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Chairmans Braai – Sunday 2nd July

This will be the second of what looks like becoming an annual event. We have an indoor Braai area so the event will go ahead whatever the weather. Bring your Food & Drink and we will provide the rest. Just let us know if you are coming so that what table space etc will be required.

Directions:

From R27 Otto du Plessis turn right into Blaauwberg Road at Pick'n Pay/Bayside shopping centres. At second set of Robots turn right into Janssens Road between the Battery Centre and Plate Glass. Ours is the red brick house on the far right of the next crossroads.

From M5 Koeberg Road after Refinery turn left into Blaauwberg Road at Killarney Hotel. At third set of Robots turn left into Janssens Road between the Battery Centre and Plate Glass. Ours is the red brick house on the far right of the next crossroads.

Garage Meeting – 3.00pm Saturday 5rd August 2006

As the carb tuning was so successful at the last meeting, the theme for this meeting will be ignition timing. Laurence will be there with his new digital timing light at the ready if you want to make sure that your timing is set up correctly for the LRP fuel. It will be at our place in Table View, see above for directions.

Centenary Celebrations – Sunday 3rd September

See introduction for details.

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DELTA



The story all started back in 1975 when Fiat and Saab started a joint development effort to develop a compact luxury hatchback, known as the '600 Project'. Internally known by Lancia as the 'Y5'. Giorgetto Giugiaro was approached to develop the new compact hatchback architecture, which resulted in a pleasing and groundbreaking 2-box design. Lancia's collaboration with Saab also resulted in the development of new rust proofing.

The reason for the Fiat-Saab joint venture was due to the oil crisis, which had started to choke European producers by the mid-seventies as a result of higher production costs and stiff competition from Japanese imports.

The Delta was launched in September 1979 at the Frankfurt Motor Show, and with Ermenegildo Zegna designer cloth upholstery as standard, it soon won over the hearts of fashion conscious people

looking for an affordable car.

Marketed through Saab in Sweden as the Saab-Lancia 600 between 1980 and 1982 (yes, with Saab badges), the program went on to spawn the 'Type Four' project, which resulted in the Saab 9000, Lancia Thema, Fiat Croma and Alfa Romeo 164 (known during development as the 156!). Saab also marketed the Lancia A112 alongside.

The Delta's brilliant design soon paid off, with the hatchback scooping up the prestigious European Car of the Year Award in 1980. Fending off competition from the Opel Kadett and Peugeot 505 (369 points versus 301 and 199 respectively), the front-wheel drive Delta was a clever take on the small-medium hatchback segment.

The Audi A3 was touted by its maker in 1996 as being the first 'prestige' hatchback, but what was the Delta not exactly that? In the same way that all luxury 4x4s can trace their ancestry to the original Range Rover, the recent wave of hatches with a prestige nameplate, such as the A3, BMW 1-Series, Mercedes-Benz A-Class and even the Alfa 147, can all trace their ancestry back to the original Delta. Widely praised at launch as a very neat contender and an integral part of the continuing turnaround of the marque under Fiat ownership, the launch of the 'littlest Lancia' coincided with a Europe-wide trend for downsizing, a trend set off by the oil crises of the seventies – people wanted the comfort and refinement levels of a luxury car, but also something that was easy to park in cities and economical at the petrol pump.



Early on in its life, in 1982, a Delta also achieved a significant milestone when it became the last car to roll off the production line at Fiat's world-famous Lingotto plant (of 'The Italian Job' fame).



Lancia's fourth letter of the Greek alphabet may have been based on humble Fiat Ritmo underpinnings, but the Giugiaro-penned shape was elegant and the interior appointments luxurious for the time.

A substantial reworking of the Ritmo's floorplan also meant that Beta-derived MacPherson struts on all four corners (with twin transverse links at the rear) were substituted in favour of the Fiat's standard MacPherson front/transverse leaf spring and wishbone rear suspension – a recognisable nod to its Beta and Gamma bigger brothers, but a move which also benefited handling.

This was useful, as the eighties trend towards turbocharging didn't take long to manifest itself in various developments of Lancia's baby. In 1983, a turbocharged version of the Beta's 1.6 twin-cam appeared developing 98kw, later upgraded to 105kw with the addition of fuel injection in 1986. But these improvements were to be overshadowed by a much more significant development.

The image of the Delta had received a timely fillip towards the end of 1985, six years into its life, when the Delta S4 was let loose onto the world's rally stages on the end-of-season, and extremely demanding, Lombard RAC Rally. Like all Group B cars, the relationship between the road car and its competition counterpart was next to nonexistent – Abarth even designed an all-new twin-cam 16-valve engine, with both a

turbocharger and supercharger to reduce the effects of low-down turbo lag, mid-mounted and driving all four wheels, some way from a humble road-going Delta. But while there may have been little relation, the car was certainly effective, winning its first-ever special stage and sweeping to a one-two finish on its very first outing, Henri Toivonen leading home long-time Fiat/Lancia exponent Markku Alen.

It seemed after that performance that 1986 would be full of promise, but it was to be a scenario that would not be fulfilled. After taking a superb win on the Monte Carlo rally in January of that year and leading in Sweden prior to engine failure, Toivonen and Lancia arrived in Corsica at the beginning of May searching for a win. Leading from the off, Toivonen and co-driver Sergio Cresto built up a commanding lead, until on the second day – a year to the day when another works Lancia pilot, Attilio Bettega, was killed on the same rally in an 037 – their S4 plunged off the road and exploded, killing both crew members, in an accident that has never been fully explained. Lancia immediately withdrew from the rally, and although it continued to fight on in both championships, it was left on the back foot.



Pierre

Patrick Agnew Brown – 1919 – 2001

Early racing

Pat decided before WW2 that he was going to build a racing car and accumulated bits, starting with a Lanchester chassis, a 1934 Ford V8 engine and gearbox, and a Lancia Lambda front and rear suspension, complete with wheels.

In 1937 he persuaded his father to buy an Aprilia, one of three imported into Cape Town. This he commandeered (without his father's permission!) and raced for the first time at Pollsmoor early in 1938, under the name 'A N Other' - and came second in his first club race!

About this time he and several others formed the Amateur Automobile Racing Club.

After the War, he started competing in reliability trials in the Aprilia with Peter Burroughs as navigator, and won the Jones Trophy for the best all round performance for 1946. They continued competing until 1948 with great success, always finishing in the first three, and on one occasion, won the 'Double Twelve' with a loss of only 12 points.

The story of the Cisaprilia

He now decided to build a Lancia based racing car so he sold all his bits to Dawie le Roux, who built the first LRX out of them. He and HOFFIE le Roux bought two Avro Anson Bomber tow bars from war surplus and made two 'Cisaprilias' out of them. The Anson tow bar was an 'A' frame and was cut and shaped to accommodate the Aprilia front and rear suspension. The wheelbase was one foot shorter than the saloon, and the engine was about nine inches further back. The floor pan was 20 gauge sheet steel welded to the frame, and the sides were 16 gauge cut and welded into a channel and bolted onto the frame. The seat was a modified Hillman Minx seat bolted to the floor. The steering wheel was a Blumel wheel from a 1934 Morris 12/4, and the radiator was from a Jeep CJ2A.



This was all done at Lewis Holwil's house in Claremont in about eight weekends and some nights. For its first outing at a sprint in Green Point, still only in chassis form, Pat took the engine out of his saloon on Friday, ran in the acceleration test on Saturday, and put the engine back in the saloon next day!

The hard work now began with the building of the body. Square aluminium tubing was bent to shape and then screwed to the main channel, the tail section was made by beating the aluminium into a sandbag, and the bonnet was made by bending the metal over an acetylene bottle. A Flaring tool was made for the louvers.

The standard compression was 5.8:1 with a maximum of 4200 rpm. Pat made a pattern from a standard piston by molding plasticine on top, shaping it with cutaways for the valves to increase the compression to 10:1. This was carefully packed and sent to Brooklands Engineering in the UK, who made two sets of Martlett racing pistons. There were no camshaft grinders in the country, so he had Nardi in Italy make up a cam with about 3mm extra lift and 40 degree more overlap, and Lancia managed to supply a higher first gear, but without matching reverse. He ported the head and Andy Young at Robb Motors modified a set of Studebaker

bi-metal valves, which were used with 350cc BSA valve springs. He made up an inlet manifold to take two SU carburettors. The petrol tank was pressurised by a hand pump in the dash, and because the petrol of the day was only 72 octane, he ran on a mixture of 1:1:1 petrol, benzol, and methanol.

The front suspension was far too stiff and Woodhead Kempo in Jhbg made up a set of springs, but they were still not right, so he made a mandrel and Schmitts Motor Engineering ground them down in their crankshaft grinder. After several experiments, and about 2.5mm off the original diameter, it was right. The rear suspension was used without the transverse spring but with the torsion bars and Telecontrol shocks. He now had a car that probably handled better than any of the cars on the local circuits. The car was very successful and among other races, won the St. John Crusader race and broke the Camps Bay Hill Climb record.

He later built a second Cisaprilia, which was a rather more conventional tubular frame, but used many of the bits from the first car. (I do not have details of his racing career)

Later

Pat later did an excellent restoration over several years of an Aprilia, which had belonged at various times to Neville Chambers and Peter McCoy. He was known to drive this car quite vigorously, to the surprise of much more modern machinery.

He was President of the Cape Lancia Club, and he seldom missed their garage meetings, where he would offer encouragement and advice based on his extensive knowledge, and when persuaded would occasionally regale members with stories of his racing days. He never ceased to amaze us by quoting part numbers for brake bits for various models, a legacy of his years at CBS.

He also regularly attended the Crankhandle Club's Seniors Meetings.



Peter

ON THE WEB



www.lancia.com

This is the official Lancia website and has many interesting facts. Mainly about current models but there is a little bit of history as well. There are also details of the centenary celebrations in Italy.

Shown is the Ypsilon Momo which is a special edition styled by the Momo design house and was released at the Frankfurt Motor Show. The website has a very fancy presentation on the car with good graphics. Unfortunately it takes a long time to download unless you have a very fast connection and computer.

Jim

Need For Speed

Anybody who knows me will say that I am not normally interested by computer games. I do not think it is possible to have enough free hours to play these games and run a Montecarlo?

Anyway, I was intrigued when I discovered you could race a Lancia Montecarlo in the computer game **Need For Speed**. The Montecarlo is not shipped as part of the game, but you can [download it](#) from the Internet and add that afterwards.

The modeling of the Montecarlo is quite good; I just need to learn how to drive it!



Before the off



Got caught speeding again...



After I've crashed it a few times!

Laurence

The Baldwin Garage

The Unhappy Side

I had bad luck with the cylinder head I am building up to put in my Lancia Beta this month. After porting the head, finding slightly bigger inlet valves and new exhaust valve, I sent the head off to a machine shop to get skimmed, new guides fitted and the valves cut. The machine shop, who were recommended by someone who races a Fiat twincam, assured me that they could find new guides and do the work with no problems. I should have got suspicious when the work took over a week to complete. Thinking its better not to rush them and get a good job I did not push the point. When I collected the head everything looked ok, the seats where not opened up as large as I would have liked and the guides where cast iron and not bronze but it was good enough.

On trying to assemble the head I realized the guides did not have the same profile as the originals so I could not put on the valve stem seals. So I phoned the machine shop, and the guy get very defensive about the whole thing and told me I should have brought in a sample for them to work with. It turns out the guides they used come off a diesel engine and wont take valve stem seals. The manager, who also races said I should run without valve stem seals.

So I have lost faith in yet another machine shop, I will be more careful in the future and let everyone know when I have found a decent one. In the mean time George from Italsud (021 424 4773) has cheered me up by finding the 14mm correct guides.

My Montecarlo has been super reliable this month, the Traffic Department was pretty expensive though. She is now 100% roadworthy, licensed, in my name and with CA plates.



left: standard valve

right: modified valve





Next month news about a new car in the garage and it is blue and supercharged.

Laurence

The Fulvia side

Not much happiness this side of the garage either as the Series 1 developed a misfire on the way to the Garage meeting, initially intermittently at all speeds, but then only at low speeds. Compressions were all good and amazingly consistent. Plugs, plug leads, distributor cap, and carbs were all swapped from the Series 2 without any affect. Eventually things came right after I refitted all the old parts except for new plugs and cleaning out the carbs and ensuring that all the joints were airtight.

Jim

CAPE LANCIA CLUB

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