

Your cars

THIS ISSUE: A ragtop German Moggy, a Scottish Pearl, a black Panther from Cyprus, and a not-so-grim collection of hearses

1969 Morris Minor convertible replica

Hubert Fingerle, Klingenstein, Germany

Hello Hubert, tell us how you came to own your Moggy?

'Well, it's your fault. Whenever I visit my friends in England I make sure I don't go home without a copy of **Practical Classics**. Over the years it has kept me inspired and in touch with the vintage car scene in Britain. Last April, I realised a lifelong dream to buy a British classic.'

Why buy a Morris Minor convertible?

'It started back in 1973. I had a British penfriend. When I came to England for the first time to visit him, his older brother picked me up from the railway station in a Trafalgar blue Morris Minor Traveller. It was my first ride in a British car, and I never forgot it. I was seven at the time and rode in the luggage compartment in the back. I've wanted one ever since.'

Why didn't you buy a Morris Traveller?

'A couple of years ago my wife and I spent our summer holiday in Cornwall. On our way to visit friends in the West Midlands, we decided to pop into Charles Ware's Morris Minor Centre to find out about Travellers. They were working on a maroon convertible and my wife said: "Why does it have to be a blue Traveller – why can't it be a maroon convertible?" A question to which I didn't have an answer.'

So was that the one you bought?

'Nope. It had been specially built for a customer, so I commissioned another. It was all arranged via email and, in December 2009, I bought a two-door saloon for them to convert. They started work straight away and it was ready by mid-April 2010. So I booked a single flight and a space on the ferry for the return journey.'

How did it cope on the trip back to Germany?

'Naturally it didn't go to plan. On the



day of my flight the volcano in Iceland erupted and my flight was cancelled. Twice. In the end I bought a train ticket a week later. VUK 128H had been beautifully restored, but didn't want to leave the UK. After several hours of trouble-free driving, it refused to start at Dover and I missed my ferry. It took the AA two hours to arrive and three minutes to discover a wire had come loose from the starter motor. I felt quite foolish...'

How are you enjoying life with your dream car?

'It's brilliant. After my starter motor mishap, all has been well. The journey through France, Belgium and Luxembourg to its new home in



Minor took centre stage on the ferry – when it eventually got going, of course.

south-west Germany was a joy, and it was easy to get it registered. It flew through the German MoT, and I've done more than 3000 miles since. My wife was happy that she was able to change my mind

to the maroon convertible, and I am too. It has starred at several car shows, and given us lots of pleasure. We're looking forward to many more miles together. Thank you PC.'