

# CLASSIC DRIVER



## First Love - An owner's reunion with his Ferrari after 37 years

14 July 2015 | Joe Breeze

*Almost 50 years ago, an Englishman named Deryk Haithwaite purchased a brand-new Ferrari 275 GTB/4 at the age of just 26. Recently, he was reunited with the rare right-hand-drive beauty after 37 years - and Classic Driver was on hand to witness the emotional rendezvous...*

Most could only dream of owning a Prancing Horse at such a tender age, but ordering a brand-new four-cam [Ferrari 275 GTB](#) was not to be Deryk Haithwaite's first experience of Ferrari ownership. He had previously owned a shortnose two-cam 275 and, after finding himself in the fortunate financial position of being able to afford the more powerful variant, he placed the order through the UK Ferrari concessionaire, Colonel Ronnie Hoare.

**There's always time for a picture...**



Once the car had been built, Haithwaite travelled from his home in the Channel Islands to Maranello to collect it - ordered in right-hand drive, as the Isle of Jersey, where he lived, drives on the left. After a factory tour and final inspection, Deryk set off on the long journey home, the car wearing the same export plates it sports during today's reunion (a nice touch from [DK Engineering](#), who organised the rendezvous). "Back in those days, there were no speed limits," Deryk reminisces, "so a large part of the journey was completed at a 150mph cruise." Such rapid progress allowed him time to stop and take pictures of his new mount at rest stops.

## The *other* first love





After arriving home (and enjoying some memorable journeys along the quiet, picturesque roads of Jersey), Deryk drove to a party where he met a young lady named Diana. Shortly after they were introduced, Diana remembered a tale her brother had told her earlier that week, about a friendly young man who had given him a lift back from his marshalling post to the start line at the 5 Mile Road, where Deryk was stretching the legs of his new machine. Impressed by Deryk's kindheartedness, Diana accepted his offer of a lift home from the party, and the pair began dating. Almost 48 years on, the two are still together and have been happily married for decades – and today, Diana has accompanied Deryk to be reunited with his *other* first love.

## A big heart, but a body of steel



After becoming an item, the pair completed many road trips across Europe in the Ferrari during Deryk's 11-year ownership: "We went to an Italian ski resort in the car, much to the bemusement of the locals," the couple recalls. "It did surprisingly well in the snow." Deryk also regularly parked the car in central London overnight, where his decision to specify a steel body (rather than the now sought-after aluminium option) was soon vindicated. "I specified the steel body as it was more resistant to dings and dents than the aluminium body, and I never intended to race it," he says. Indeed, during a weekend spent in London visiting Diana at university, Deryk awoke to find a Mini had ploughed into his sleeping steed – and though the impact had collapsed the little Brit's suspension, the steel-bodied Ferrari escaped without a scratch.

## A timely offer



After enjoying the car for 11 years, the time came for Deryk to part ways with his beloved four-cam. On his son's 8th birthday, antique dealer Keith Banham offered Deryk a package deal, which included £20,000 cash, a [Breguet wristwatch](#), and a carriage clock worth £4,000. The offer was too good to turn down on a car for which he had paid around £6,000 brand-new; in those days, classic Ferraris were still considered to be depreciating assets, and making such a profit was unheard-of. Deryk used the cash to become a partner in a stockbroking firm, a move that ultimately proved lucrative and he went on to own a string of other iconic cars, including several [Porsche 911s](#), a [pre-War Alfa](#), a Renault Gordini and the Bugatti Type 37 he still owns today. Meanwhile, of course, the four-cam Ferrari has enjoyed its own good fortunes, too.

## Capturing the moment

So, there's the background of the story – now watch the moment DK Engineering's James Cottingham reunited Deryk with 'his' Ferrari. Second first-drives don't come any more poignant.

*Photos: Peter Aylward for Classic Driver © 2015*

*Video: Grid Stars for DK Engineering*

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