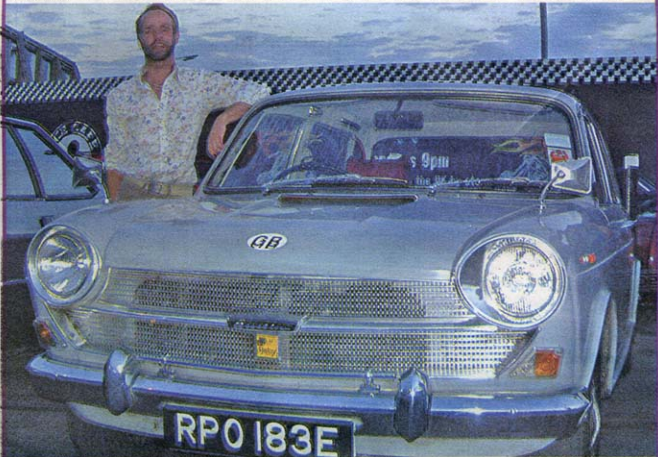


THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD



Darren Mitcham, 35, of Aylesbury, tells us why the Gay Classic Car Group gets his motor revving.

"I joined in 1999, although the group's been going since 1988. In terms of numbers, we're a few shy of 400 – and our members are men and women who come from all over the country.

"I myself own a 1967 Austin 1800 – it's grey with a bright red leather interior. You don't have to own a classic car to belong to our club – several people just come along for the events.

"We have cars dating back to the 1920s, and several people in the group do full restorations on

cars.

"This year, 80 of us went to visit Frankie Howard's house in Somerset, and we had lunch in a local village pub. A couple of weeks ago, we all had a week-long trip through the Loire Valley in France, where we met up with gay classic car clubs from Germany, Denmark, and Holland. There were even some Australians there – classic cars are very popular among gay people down under. You meet some interesting people – ordinary

people like me get to mix with millionaires who own 10 cars!

"We've just had a stall at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham, during the three-day classic car event. We were a bit apprehensive, but there was no homophobia at all. We'd met up at several rallies before, but just as friends, not as the club. This is the first time that we had a flag-flying session, and it went down really well!"

■ Contact the group via gccg.org.uk.