

## CLUB HEROES



### Darren Mitcham

Gay Classic Car Group press and PR officer on the joys of driving an Austin 1800

**What attracted you to Landcrabs?**

I always wanted a Wolseley Six or an Austin 2200 because it was the first car that I drove, when I was 12, on Kirton Marshes. After years of looking, I ended up with 'Doris', my Mk1 1800, which has bags of Issigonis austerity.

**How did you get involved with the GCCG?** I joined in 1999 and have recently become press and PR officer.

**Which is your favourite event?**

I prefer weekends away, driving on quiet country lanes, to traditional 'cars in fields' events. Classics are about the whole driving experience: the sounds, the smells, the way the instruments waver under different road conditions.

**Has there ever been any negative reaction at car shows?**

In recent years we've not been to general shows but, judging by the reaction to the equivalent German gay car club's display at Essen, we're looking to have a stand at a UK national event.

**Which event are you most looking forward to?**

A week in October on a European run – the perfect antidote to modern living. No traffic jams, no mobile-phone hands-free kit: just the unadulterated pleasure of motoring.

**What's the best run that you've done?**

Taking Doris to France at Easter with 100 other club members. Part of our ethos is travelling in other classics and carrying passengers with you. Other people's comments and memories heighten the pleasure of owning your particular car.

**If you couldn't have a Landcrab?**

The whole Austin range from 1975 – Allegro, Princess, Maxi. I bought the 1800 as a fun car but was surprised by how it handles and feels.

**And your dream car?**

One day a Vintage Bentley presses all the right buttons, another a sedate '60s saloon. If I had to choose, an early Porsche 911, for the purity of the engineering and its administration of its steering power.