

**FORMER PRESIDENT ALAN DOMVILLE CONTINUES HIS REMINISCENCES  
AS A MOTORING WRITER & LIFELONG GROUP FRIEND.....**

In the last issue I reflected on insurance arrangements for test cars and it reminded me of a couple of unusual incidents that occurred when I had borrowed test cars.

For most of my time at the *Guardian* the motoring section comprised 32 pages, half of them filled with my editorial, and so frequently I would have two or three vehicles on loan so that there was always something fresh to feature.

One particular sunny day in midsummer I had in my drive a Porsche sports car, a Fiat 500 and my own car. I had to drive to my office and arranged the cars so that the sports car was garaged while my own was parked in the drive and I was using the Fiat for transport. I set out on my journey and with little warning the clouds came over and the sky began to grow black. Hailstones bigger than golf balls started to fall and when I returned home I discovered the roof of my Ford Sierra had been completely decimated; the damage couldn't be repaired but simply hidden by a plastic roof. The Porsche, of course, was safe - and amazingly the Fiat had been completely untouched by the hail I had driven through.

On another occasion I had returned home one evening in a borrowed people carrier and because I needed my own car early the next morning I parked it safely on the road while I obtained the keys to back my own car out of the way.

As I walked through our front door I gazed in horror as the people carrier started to move off. My first thought was that it was being stolen; my second was the realisation that no one was at the wheel.

And then I heard a car approaching in its opposite direction. I raced to the middle of the road to stop the oncoming car while the people carrier behind me began to turn in the direction of my brick gateposts. I desperately tried to stop the people carrier by putting my foot on the bumper but failed and it duly toppled one of my gateposts.

Astonishingly, the only damage to the vehicle was a scratch caused by my shoe. And I was relieved that the lady driving the other car hadn't been driving so fast she could not have stopped.

But I could not understand why it had happened when I distinctly remember applying the handbrake which was one of those that are operated electronically from a switch.

Some months later a new version of the people carrier was announced which had a conventional handbrake - and I learned that there had been several cases of the vehicle moving under its own steam because the action of slamming the driver's door reacted on the handbrake switch.

I learned very early to check the condition of a test car when it is delivered so that you don't suffer a sleepless night wondering why the wheel rims have been damaged when you haven't yet driven it - and in the days when excise licenses were affixed to the windscreen there were a couple of occasions when the discs were out of date.

**CHAIRMANS CORNER: SOLUTION**

How can a dead person rewind back the tape himself?  
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