

Dear Roger....

Procrastination is now one of my special skills; it is already Tuesday and I haven't yet posted the few photos of Francesca's visit or written the promised letter. Nor have I come up with the additional 125 words needed to fill the extra space now available for the ESCAPE ROAD page and required for all the unpublished pieces sent in during the past couple of months. An aggravation in most instances as I worked hard to get the words down to the smaller number required for the original format....it is much more difficult to write "short" than "long". But having once done so, I hate to have to now come up with a bit more. Though I must admit that the extra words, in many instances, will allow me to include information that should have been there but had to be left out originally for space reasons. I suppose the only reason I complain is that I'd rather be devoting the time and energy to new pieces.

Or figuring out what car should replace your Maserati! Brock Yates (in the enclosed article from the Post Magazine) has certainly hit the nail on the head. Or the car on the roof. Why the hell is the public rushing to drive off with automotive jelly beans or sausages. The latter being my assessment of the Audi 5000 when it appeared and I still feel that way about its looks. All the talk of highly beneficial aerodynamic efficiency is a lot of nonsense. Except for a very few Autobahn commuters who daily cruise at 100+mph for a few minutes, or even an hour, and then find themselves in town traffic, who really benefits at all from this streamlined blandness? No one at all here in the US. If fuel efficiency is so damned important surely the use of a Diesel engine makes for vastly greater overall efficiency...10% at high speeds and up to 50% in heavy city traffic. Furthermore, cars in the Audi class are by no means purchased for their fuel economy at this time.

I'd rather look at a modern version (or old) Mercedes 540K, a Horsch, Lagonda, Talbot, Delage, Jaguar, Franklin, Lincoln, Duesenberg, MG, Alfa, etc than today's models bearing the same names. The old ones had automotive STYLE and genuine individuality. What joy is there in a sausage-generated low CD factor that can compare with the view of, or over, a louvered hood with a distinctive radiator and flanked by sweeping fender lines? With spare wheels (wire, of course) on side mounts if the car is big enough to carry them gracefully. God knows I'd certainly rather have such a car; and if "efficiency" was desired or required I'd tuck a turbo-Diesel beneath that louvered hood.

So that is what I'D like. What would YOU like? If we both like the same thing what can be done about it? Such tastes aren't being catered to. Few, if any, of the expensive replicars are being done well enough to stand comparison with the originals. Except for the today's version of the most handsome MG of all, the TF, that is being made in England by a little firm called Naylor (I think). Maybe why I like the XJ6 is thst it looks more like a real car than most of the others, even though it doesn't have a radiator and fenders.

Surely it would cost less just to keep the Maserati running than to take the loss inherent in selling or trading it for something that is no better performer or more elegant inside. Or with as impressive a name and emblem...that name and trident has real CLASS! I assume the air conditioning works.

Sooo, for the moment I must opt for the status quo. Never mind the quids it may cost you to maintain it!

Love & Sympathy —

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Roger' followed by a flourish.