



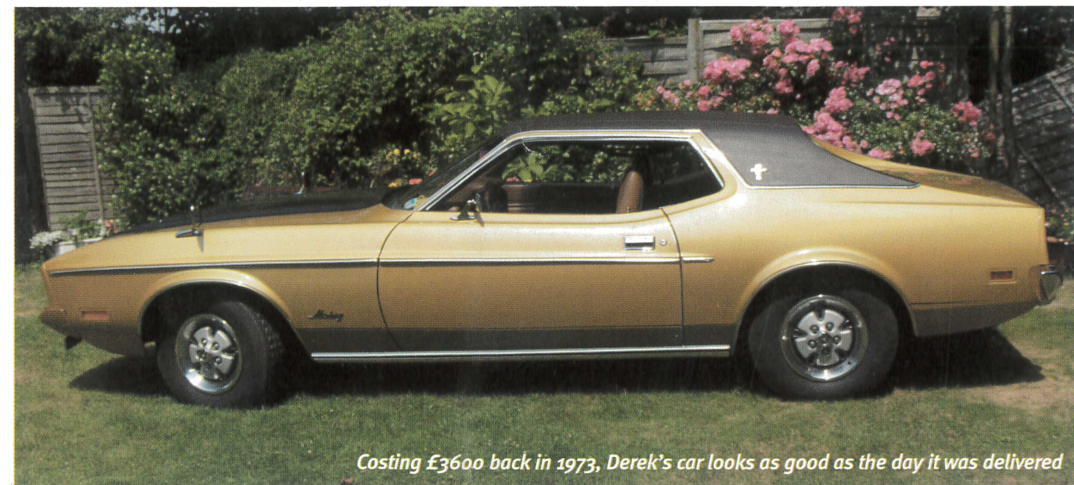
*A one-owner 33-year-old Mustang with less than 11,000 miles? Surely not, says Bruce Strachan*

**I**N 1987 I bought a 24,000 mile two-owner 1973 Mach1 with a 351 Q code engine and a C6 auto transmission. I thought my purchase was pretty unique in the UK until I attended a show and parked up near an almost identical Mach1. This car was still owned by the original owner who had bought it in America and exported it with him upon his return. The Mach1 had a 351 H code engine with an FMX auto transmission and had covered 40,000 in 15 years.

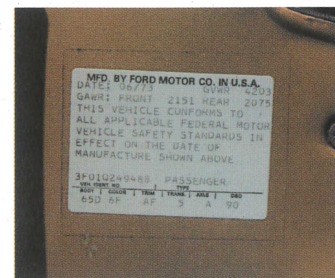
At the 2005 Mustang national show I came across Pete and Lleana Laws' one-owner convertible and the details of their car can be found in *Round Up* issue 155. I thought by now I had seen all of the one-owner Mustangs in the UK. Not so, as Dorset member Derek Holland, read the article and phoned to tell me about his '73 coupe. He bought his Mustang coupe new in 1973 from Bristol Street Motors in Southampton and still had the car sitting in the garage 33 years later, with less than 11,000 miles on the clock. To say I was amazed would be an understatement as although I have read similar stories in *Mustang Monthly*, America is a large country and has loads of Mustangs so the 'rare finds' are bound to be more common. It is also strange that all of



*This Mustang came with the 351 Q code engine, with a four-speed wide-ratio manual top-loader gearbox. The rear axle ratio is a 3.89:1 'open', the lowest ratio that could be specified in 1973.*



*Costing £3600 back in 1973, Derek's car looks as good as the day it was delivered*



*Door tag gives full build details*



*Speedo says under 11,000 miles*



*Originality is everything with this car*

## Time warp Mustang

these cars were 1973 models. Derek, a club member since 1998, started to explain to me about the Mustang but I needed to see it for myself. There are many myths and stories that are told about classic cars and I like to verify where possible, as much as I can first hand, as sometimes the facts can get distorted over the years. It then saves me the embarrassment of backtracking when I repeat the

story here. So with a completely open mind I set off with Colin, a good friend of mine and also an American car enthusiast, to Dorset to see just what this Mustang was like.

Colin and I arrived in Dorset and both Derek and his wife Marion warmly welcomed us. We immediately went to see his Mustang coupe. Marion explained that Derek had lived in the house all his life and

was even born there. Sure enough I could see the rear of a '73 Coupe and this was the car described to me over the phone. It was factory original, apart from some of the dealer installed items (including the word 'Ford' on the boot lid) that even Derek was not aware of, and it was just as it left the showroom. I was intrigued why Derek had wanted to buy a 5.7 litre left-hand drive car when fuel was



*FORD letters were attached by the dealership*

thought to be drying up (although Derek has a receipt for 15 gals of petrol for £5.25) and also when he lived in an area of narrow country lanes. His answer was simple – he liked the look of the Mustang, he could afford to buy and run it and he wanted one. What better reason was there? The Golden Glow paintwork had cleaned up very well considering it was last cleaned about eight years ago but would benefit from a detailed professional cleaning and would then look 'as new'. The Medium Ginger interior is unmarked and has no sign of wear anywhere. I thoroughly checked the car over and saw it was not on original tyres. Derek had worn his first ones out in 8,000 miles, which sounds about right as my Mach1 at 24,000 miles was on its third set.

Derek first spotted a Mustang while working near Gatwick Airport. At the time he was thinking of buying a new Range Rover but there were a few US air bases around and Derek kept seeing these Mustangs driving by. He took a trip to Bristol Street Motors in Southampton to see if they had any details on the Mustang. The salesman gave Derek a brochure (at that time Ford dealers like Gates of Woodford, Lincoln Cars London and Bristol Street Motors could order American cars just like any other Ford model). Derek scanned the brochure and set his heart on a Golden Glow coupe with a dark brown vinyl roof and a Medium Ginger interior. This all happened in March 1973 and a £200 deposit was paid to secure the car. The Mustang was built in June and

delivered at the end of July when the balance of the £3600 purchase price was paid. Bristol Street Motors wanted maximum publicity from the Mustang and placed it on a turntable in the showroom until Derek insisted they let him take the car.

The dealership didn't have the correct order form they would have had in America; instead Derek chose all of the options from the brochure almost mirroring the car that was featured in it. I am not sure if the salesman knew what options he was advising or specifying on Derek's behalf because when it was delivered the Mach1 came with the most unusual mechanical specification. It came with the very powerful 351 Q code engine, backed up by a four-speed wide-ratio manual top-loader gearbox with a Hurst shifter. The rear axle ratio is a 3.89:1 'open', the lowest ratio that could be specified in 1973. This combination makes for spectacular get-a-ways at the traffic light Grand Prix. All of the torque from the Q code engine would be transmitted through the low ratio first gear of the wide ratio top loader then through the lower ratio of the 'open' (non-limited slip) rear axle. Wheel spin would be guaranteed at the

slightest provocation. A more refined specification would have been the 2.75:1 limited slip rear axle which would have still provided brisk performance but would give a quieter, less stressed cruising speed and less drama when pulling away from a standstill. The fuel consumption would also be much improved and the original tyres would probably still be on the car today. The bulk of the first 10,000 miles was covered in the first 10 years of the Mustang's life and now it only ventures out of the garage on special occasions. Derek does keep the engine 'turned over' regularly and it usually sits on blocks in the garage to keep that considerable weight off the suspension and tyres.

It is always a privilege to have the opportunity to closely inspect an unmolested (apart from the Bristol Street Motors add-ons) first generation Mustang. Derek also has another little 'gem' tucked away in the corner of his garage – a 1942 ex-American Army Willis Jeep, which he bought from WD & HO Wills for £20.

● COLIN and I would like to thank Derek and Marion for their hospitality and an enjoyable afternoon



*The Mustang's Medium Ginger interior is 100% original and shows barely a scuff*



*The 351-4v engine is only just run in – some 33 years after it was installed*





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## Timewarp



**'73 Coupe boasts  
under 11,000 miles**



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