

HOW TO BUY A BOND CAR



BRITAIN'S BEST-SELLING CLASSIC CAR MAGAZINE

# practical CLASSICS

JANUARY 2007 £3.90



• BUY • RESTORE • MAINTAIN • FIX • PRETEND TO BE BOND

## 007 SPECIAL



K-JETRONIC UPKEEP



POST-WAR BRIT HEROES

**WIN A CAR!**  
EVERY ISSUE IN 2007

'AHHH... MR BOND,  
WE'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU'



INSIDE: M16 IN AN ASTON + ONE-HOUR ODDJOB GUIDE + Q'S MULTITOOLS ON TEST

[www.practicalclassics.co.uk](http://www.practicalclassics.co.uk)



# 'My other car's an Aston'

James Bond didn't always swan about in DBs you know. In fact, he's come to the nation's rescue in some truly attainable classics...

**B**EFORE THERE was a whiff of Aston Martin leather in the air, 007 drove a Sunbeam Alpine. Fact. You see, Bond enjoyed punishing classics that you and I can now buy for less than the price of a DB5 knock-off wire wheel. Don't expect to spend £6000 on a 1977 Lotus Esprit that takes to water like a fish, but you know what I mean.

So what about the original Bond cars? The machines that were built by Pinewood Studios for the movies and had Rog Moore's rump parked on the seat? Unsurprisingly, the truth about how a Sunbeam Alpine, Citroën 2CV and Lotus Esprit S1 found their way onto the set of Ian Fleming's finest is often much stranger than the fiction...

## DR. NO

1962

**Theme** *James Bond*

Theme composed by Monty Norman, played by the John Barry Orchestra

**Bond** Sean Connery

**Car** Sunbeam Alpine Series II convertible



### Plot outline

James Bond is sent to Jamaica to investigate the disappearance of a colleague; the trail leads him to the ill-reputed island of Dr. No, a criminal genius who may have been involved in the disappearance.

WORDS: JONNY SMITH  
PICTURES: JAMES LIPMAN,  
JOHN COLLEY & TOM WOOD

MOVIE STILLS: THE JAMES BOND  
ULTIMATE DVD COLLECTION FROM  
TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX HOME  
ENTERTAINMENT



The Sunbeam Alpine means you can be like Bond for a fraction of what you may think.

On October 7, 1962, big screens across the British Isles showcased the first celluloid adaptation of Ian Fleming's James Bond books. Sean Connery starred, John Barry orchestrated and the gun barrel opening sequence quickly became synonymous with action, girls, megalomaniacs and slick spy antics. But *Dr. No* predated Bond's partnership with an Aston Martin as Connery switched from rental car to rental car in his pursuit of arch villains, and justice for all.

So there Bond is, minding his own business driving a rented Sunbeam Alpine Series II up to the mountain home of Miss Taro (played by Zena Marshall), when he gets rudely interrupted by three 'blind' assassins in a pre-war LaSalle hearse. I say 'blind' because they weren't. Known as the Three Blind Mice, the trio cunningly used blindness as a cover to disguise the fact they were professional henchmen for Dr. Julius No.

The car chase was shot on location passing the cement factory in Kingston, Jamaica, and then in the foothills of the Blue Mountains – both in the baking Caribbean sun. Interestingly, although the chase up to Miss Taro's house takes place on a dusty gravel road, you can hear tyres screech when the Sunbeam dives around the meandering roads. Bond out-manoeuvres the antique hearse (hardly a massive task) and eventually sends the assassins plummeting to their doom down a cliff face. Dying in a hearse – beautifully ironic. Those who marvel at continuity errors may also notice the same corner and camera position is used in three separate takes. The small bush on the right side of the hill next to the road gives the game away.

The Alpine – registration number Z 8301 – signalled the first appearance of a two-seater car in a 007 film. The lucky Bond example was finished in Lake Blue, wearing a set of wire wheels wrapped in broad whitewall tyres – both of which were popular factory options for exported models. Wires added £38 and five shillings to the £985 price tag in 1961. 'There are a few giveaways that mark Bond's car out as a Series II,' says Andy Goldsmith, archivist of the Sunbeam Alpine Owners' Club ([www.saoc.demon.co.uk](http://www.saoc.demon.co.uk)). 'It's got no

quarterlights, yet it has big rear fins and the Lake Blue was a Series II-only colour.'

Negotiating those Jamaican mountain passes must have been a right hoot. You can hear Bond's stunt stand in double-declutching through the synchromesh four-speed 'box and revving the twin-carb fed 1592cc hard during the action sequence. At six foot two Connery probably found the Sunbeam's cabin a touch cramped, and the fact early Alpines had no reclining seat mechanism probably didn't help much. His head protruded an inch over the windscreen top! Good job he didn't roll it.

Doug Redenius, Vice President of the Ian Fleming Foundation in Illinois, USA seems to know more than anyone as to why an Alpine ended up on the big screen. 'Because of budget constraints the film company couldn't afford to buy a sports car in Jamaica, or ship one over from the UK. Instead, they found a local woman who privately owned the blue Alpine and hired it by the day for Connery to drive. It looked fairly new, and there were no special gadgets on it. After the filming had finished the car was simply given back to its owner.'

So the question is, does it still exist? 'The Sunbeam's whereabouts remain a mystery,' confirms Doug (the car pictured here, and on the front cover, is a 1962 Sunbeam Alpine Series II in Capri Blue owned by Simon Pettigrew from Lambourne, near Hungerford). 'No-one seems to know where it is. Tracking it down has been on my to-do list for years. But we do have contacts in Jamaica who are putting out feelers. Perhaps the original owner's family still has it somewhere, or maybe it's languishing in undergrowth. Who knows?'

In terms of value, good Series II Alpines can be had for between £5000 and £8000, though expect a concours car to be over £7000. According to Andy Goldsmith Series IIs are actually the least popular Alpines because of the limited boot space. 'You can't even get a suitcase in it! The floorpan was taken from a Hillman Husky. Series V have bigger engines, while the Series IIIs are the club purist favourite, as they have fins and a bigger, more useful, boot.'

## Dr. No/Alpine trivia!

■ The car Felix Leiter hops in at Kingston International Airport is a 1961 Chevrolet Impala pillared sedan, but the car used in the chase scene on the highway (in which 007 is in a 1957 Chevrolet Bel Air convertible), is a four-door pillarless sedan.

■ In the chase seen we see the '57 Chevy's speedo, which is in fact that of a 1957 Ford.

Three Blind Mice



■ The LaSalle hearse used by the Three Blind Mice in the Strangways secretary shooting scene is obviously a different hearse from the one seen careering off the edge of a cliff.

■ A later model Alpine can be seen in the Eighties Arnold Schwarzenegger film *Commando*, where Arnie tears out the driver's seat and later crashes into a tree.

'Because of budget constraints the film company couldn't afford to buy a sports car in Jamaica, or ship one over from the UK. Instead they found a local woman who privately owned an Alpine and hired it by the day for Connery to drive.'

## 1962 Sunbeam Alpine Series II



Sadly there's not a red ejector seat button to be seen.



## TECH SPECS

- ENGINE 1592cc/4-cyl/50HC – three main bearing with alloy head and Zenith twin WIP2 carbs
- POWER 80bhp@5000rpm
- TOP SPEED 101.1mph
- 0-60MPH 13.6secs
- MPG 26
- GEARBOX 4-spd manual
- LENGTH 12ft 11.5in
- WIDTH 5ft 0.5in
- WEIGHT 2082lb



No, the Alpine badge doesn't flip out and become a tyre shredder.



Four-pot engine was brisk enough for Bond.