

MARTIN AUSTIN
1945 –2020



The Fellowship is very sad to announce the passing of Past President Martin Austin. Martin was a wonderful friend to many people in the industry and will be hugely missed by everyone who had the privilege of knowing him.

He began his career at Longbridge as an Austin Technical Sales Apprentice in 1964, following which he had a brief period as PA to Filmer M Paradise the American Sales Director at the time. He then went on the road as a “District Supervisor” for Newcastle and the north east of England working out of the Glasgow regional office. After that he went with BL to Australia as Sales Manager where he worked closely with another Fellowship Past President Tony Ball who was Chairman of BL Australia. It was whilst he was in Australia that he met his charming wife Sonya.

He then returned to the U.K. to run the southern regional office. Then in the late seventies it was back to Australia to run a large Toyota outlet in Sydney returning to the U.K. in the early eighties. Around this time he took on the role as MD of the new UK Lada concession where he helped make many new Lada dealers a lot of new money.

Following the merger of the Lada and Proton importers he left and established Corby Motor Group which he ran until he retired. Whilst running Corby he also set up a great Chinese/Malay/Vietnamese restaurant in Northampton with Alan Lamb, the England and Northampton cricketer.

Martin devoted a great deal of his time to motor industry organisations and his influence was an enormous help to many people. He was Chairman of the Institute of Motor Industry council (IMI) between 1996 - 2010 and spent time establishing a successful IMI organisation in Malaysia with his local contacts.

Between 1997 – 2000 he was on the board of the Retail Motor Industry Federation and also served as President of the Fellowship of the Motor Industry between 2014 – 2015. Many Fellows will remember his wonderful sense of humour as a speaker at Fellowship events, and in particular his masterful impersonation of the Cornish comedian Jethro.

As if his life was not busy enough he obtained a helicopter pilots licence and purchased a helicopter for his own use travelling around the country. Martin led a full and successful business life, he was always great company, a true friend to many people in the industry and will be sadly missed.

Martin is survived by his wife Sonya and 2 children Daniel and Emily