

RUN TO THE HILLS

A group of varied old-timers head to a hill-station. We tagged along

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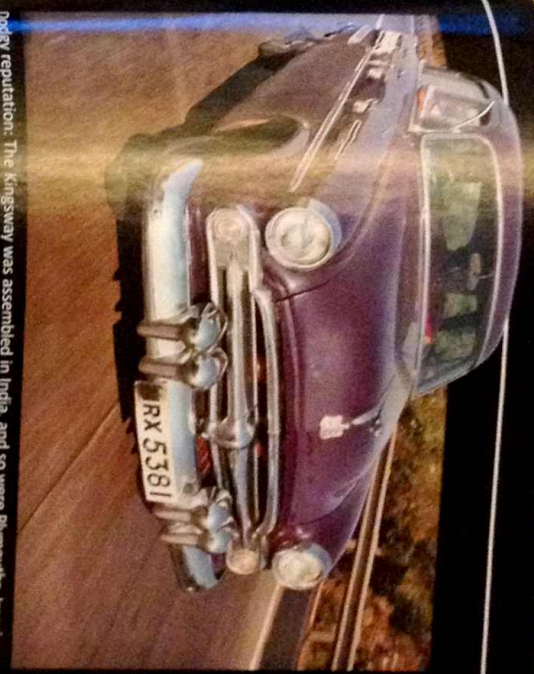


Grouplison: Well, a group shot in Mahabaleshwar is a must isn't it, for the records?

The city of Mumbai has three seasons usually. Hot, hotter and wettest. Now unlike other places in India where you get to see a plethora of vintage and classic machines when winter sets in, there is no such opportunity in Mumbai, except for maybe two days in January. But this year, something happened – Mumbai had something resembling winter as well, that too, an extended one. Many owners got their cars and bikes out. The Fiat guys had a drive and so did the Beetle owners. Now with no signs of the temperature rising, another bunch of old-timers decided to emerge from their garages and head out to Mahabaleshwar, a hill-station about 300 km from Mumbai. So a 600 km round trip it was, in a diverse bunch of cars.

Readers who have been with us for a long time would recognise some of these machines, as we have featured them in the past. This includes Amr. Ali Jeth's 1935 Rolls-Royce Phantom II Continental, Aniruddh Kasliwal's 1946 Packard Clipper, Amol Nayak's 1956 Mercedes-Benz 180 D, Divyansh Sannat's 1959 Mercedes-Benz 180, Fal Dhorwad's 1965 Mercedes-Benz 230 SL and his 1981 Fiat Spider 2000 and Magesand Dadacharji's 1948 Morris 8 – the latter went all the way to Udvada in Gujarat, the holy place for the Parsi community, for our story. The other cars in this drive included Fal Dhorwad's 1924 Rolls-Royce 20 HP, Sameer Kadam's 1942 Ford GPW (driven by his brother Ashish Kadam), Hormisji Canai's 1949 Buick Super, Man Dossa's 1954 Dodge Kingsway and Hemant Kumar Raul's 1960 Chevrolet Biscayne. As you can see, the cars straddled generations and continents!

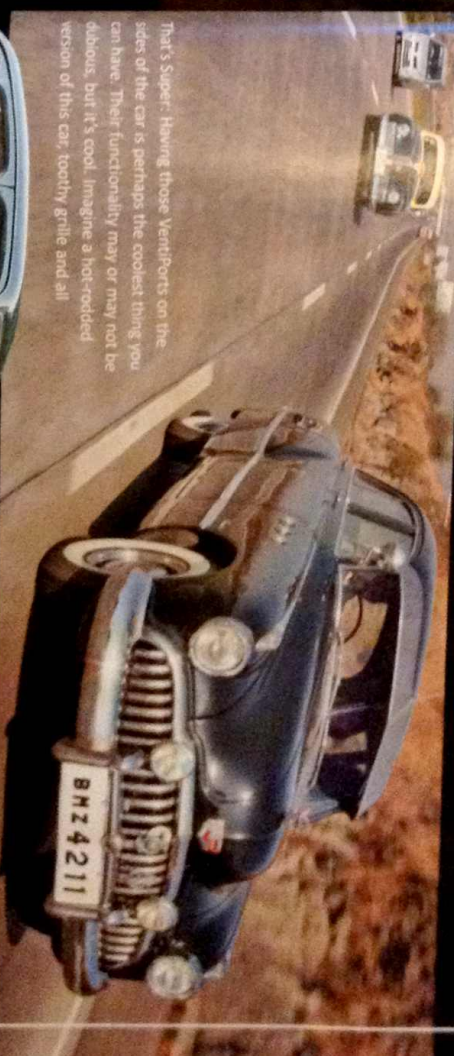
Well, even if its winter, the sun doesn't let go, does it? Despite the afternoon heat, the cars made it all the way up to Mahabaleshwar flawlessly. And they went as if time had stood still for each of them. It was the 20th century for all of them, despite the 16th century road conditions and the 21st century traffic conditions. There were sights to behold, as this diverse bunch of machines loomed in the rear-view mirrors of modern cars, overtook deceptic trucks, stood along with Maruti and Hyundais at toll plazas, cruised behind Toyotas, let off some steam on the side of the road for the benefit of the locals, climbed the ghats along with Traversas and Sumos and stood basking in the adulation provided by thousands of camera phones. It requires some essential body parts made of some really hard material to take these machines out on today's roads, that too, over long distances. What a drive, folks! Hope the winter next year will be just as good...



doggy reputation: The Kingsway was assembled in India, and so were Plymouths. Imagine if Premier Automobils still assembled Dodges in the country – we'd be a nation of Rams!



Roll with it, baby: The last Phantom II Continental ever made, this one is a rockstar of a Roller. Its Gurney Nutting body combined with that Parthenon grille makes it an equal!



That's Super: Having those VentPorts on the sides of the car is perhaps the coolest thing you can have. Their functionality may or may not be dubious, but it's cool. Imagine a hot-crowded version of this car, toothy grille and all!



Been there, driven there: This is no ordinary Morris. It is a family member that goes along wherever the family goes, Delhi or Sri Lanka, Nagpur or Udvada. And it's not as cranky!

Chevy to the levee: The twin-lane shade, the wrap-around windshield, the horizontal fins, the jet-inspired tail-lamps, and what not – all there in a car that was not considered to be too expensive. What more do you want?