

LOW VOLUME, HIGH OCTANE MOTORING

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BI-MONTHLY

LIFE IS TOO SHORT TO DRIVE BORING CARS

**SPECIAL STONELEIGH
COLLECTORS' EDITION**

F430

Thriller **in** Vanilla

MR2 kits' exotic bargain body conversion

SPECIAL STONELEIGH COLLECTORS' EDITION

THE ICE MAN COMETH



Aaron Radiators

50 years and counting

Radiators are a crucial part of your engine's well-being. Choose wrongly and you'll lose your cool. Select wisely, such as using the services of Aaron Radiators and you won't have a problem.



We like nice companies here at *tkc mag* and we really appreciate quality engineering, especially things that are made right here in GREAT Britain. After all, this nation was founded on our engineering prowess.

A company celebrating 50-years of existence in May 2012 is Aaron Radiators and although a lot has changed in the intervening years since Bill Stringer founded his operation, one thing has remained a constant, and that's the fact that Aaron Radiators still produces a superb range of bespoke radiators. Bill has always planned to become self-employed, although his hand was forced somewhat prematurely because he got sacked for going home early one day to attend a friend's wedding as best man.

However, showing true entrepreneurial spirit and endeavour he decided to start his own company relying on his wife, Jane's, salary for the first 18 months. As now, things didn't come easy but Bill had a passion to survive and grow, and he really had to get on his bike, or rather in his old MacFisheries van and drive all over London pushing his wares and the services that Aaron could offer.

There's no special meaning to the Aaron name either, as he chose a double 'A' name to ensure he'd get an early listing in Yellow Pages. Anything that got you a jump on your rivals back then was important, of course.

Aaron grew quickly once they got a foothold and their South London

Main types of kitcar radiators.

Cortina type FD2002 (typically 350mm x 442mm x 32mm)

This type is used by a lot of Lotus Seven-inspired sportscars, with Capri/Granada items more popular with the short oval hot rod boys.

Sierra type FD2035 (600mm x 395mm x 50mm)

Sierra diesel-style is used by a lot of Cobra replicas as it is well up to the job of cooling a big V8.

VW Polo type VW2038 (380mm x 300mm x 34mm)

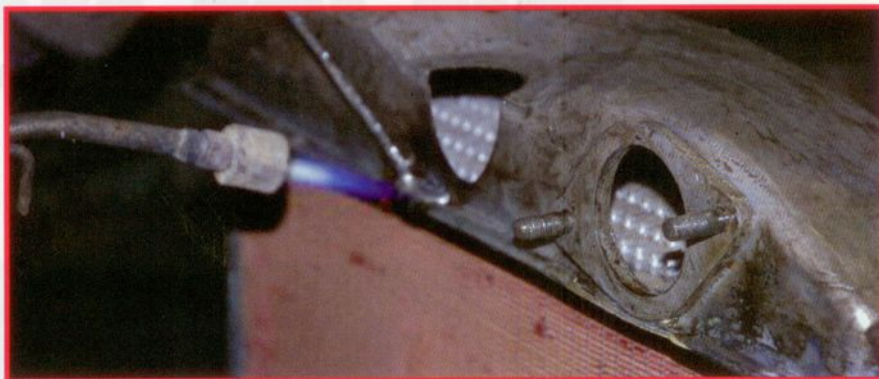
Used on Lotus Seven inspired and exo-skeletal-type cars, as they are good for installations where space is limited. A good budget option that can be upgraded later.

Honda Civic type HD2031 (350mm x 350mm x 16mm)

This style is popular for mini-based kits and student racecars.

Full Custom type

These are what Gerald Stringer really loves where a radiator needs to be designed from the ground up or a very expensive original from a classic car has to be replicated.



for them, to open the doors! Problem was, motorists didn't leave antifreeze in the system all year round.

The problem was that the early sixties had seen car manufacturers switch to 'tube and fin' type radiators, replacing the old cellular film core-type that might have been heavy but lasted forever. It took the carmakers longer than the aftermarket to get their new versions up to scratch.

Bill ran his company stoically until he sadly passed away five years ago, but his son Gerald, ably assisted by sister, Laura, is now at the helm and since taking over they've had to cope with one of the worst-ever recessions that this country has seen while also streamlining their activities. Gone are the days when Aaron supplied thousands of what they call 'box rads', which are best described as replacement items for your daily driver,

and although they still keep stocks and can supply what you want, Gerald has decided to concentrate on the company's real expertise and that is producing a range of radiators, made to order, for an array of classic, kit and custom cars that can be made to suit a specific installation, taking into account 'packaging' issues.

These are made in house (Adil is responsible for aluminium while Mike takes care of copper/brass with Gavin overseeing both) using British-made cores and metal that's also made in the UK.

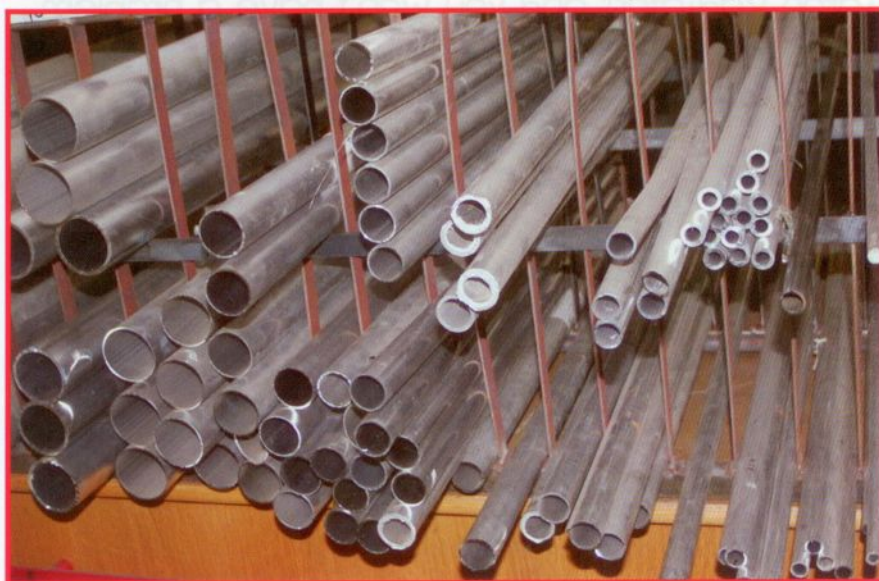
We should, at this stage, point out that Aaron's business (note that I resisted the temptation to use the word 'core'! — ed) is underpinned by their industrial range for generators, compressors, truck and plant equipment, which is work they've always done and successfully so.

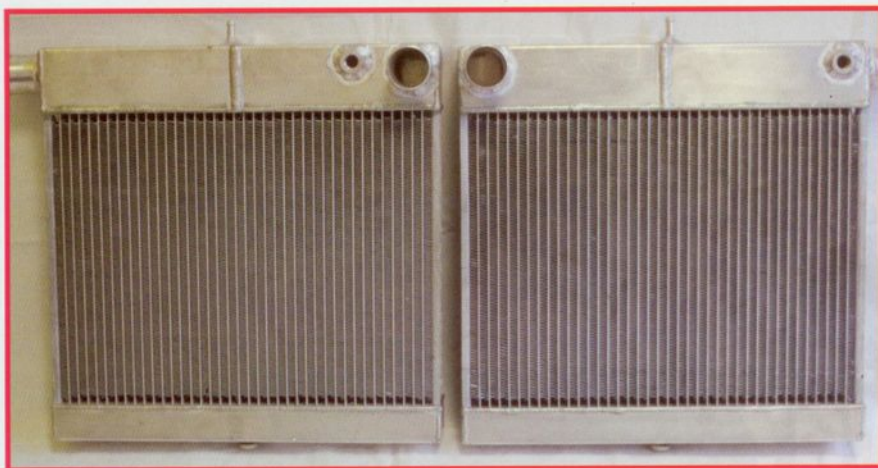
The company is very well-versed in most popular kitcars, so if you have a Lotus Seven-inspired sportscar or Cobra replica they'll more than likely have a 'pattern' for the radiator you require, although if it's something unusual, just send Gerald some (accurate) drawings and dimensions (he'll advise on exactly what he needs from you) and he'll create one from scratch for you. Bike engine kitcars often have a specific requirement for small radiators and Aaron is well-versed in such installations. It's not just individual kit builders that use Aaron's services, as they also supply several kit



(bordering Thornton Heath and South Norwood) workshop, which was formerly The Sportsman pub a Crystal Palace FC supporters club lounge and is located just a few hundred yards from Crystal Palace Football Club. Bill did pretty well and soon opened a north London branch in Holloway Road, later moving to Hornsey, which closed in 2009.

In the sixties, car radiators were frankly rubbish and often failed after just two years, so Aaron introduced their range of rads that were high quality and well-engineered and as a result Bill sold lots of them. His wife, Jane, who still works at the company, incidentally, told me that when the autumn gave way to winter and the cold, frosty mornings arrived, they'd regularly arrive for work and find a queue of customers with frozen cooling systems in urgent need of a new radiator, waiting





manufacturers, including DJ Sportscars and AK Sportscars.

Aaron will also happily refurbish your existing radiator, or even copy the old one fitted to your Lanchester and the benefits of using their products are several, not to mention the care and skill that goes into their work and the high quality materials they use, although they don't want to be known for cheapness, the value for money on offer will pleasantly surprise you.

Once upon a time the bulk of car radiators were made from copper and brass with aluminium being more expensive, often prohibitively so, however, the way raw material prices have increased in recent years has seen copper and brass rads rapidly catching up aluminium, which used to be three times more expensive. Alloy is softer and not as good a conductor of heat as copper but it does look great. Just don't stick them in a



vulnerable position where they might get pebble-dashed by stones as they aren't as robust as copper and brass (brass tank and tubes with copper fins). Aluminium radiator cores are brazed together and are more efficient than copper and brass cores held together with lead solder (which makes them less efficient).

I had a lovely morning at Aaron Radiators and I was enthralled watching their craftsmen at work, clearly enjoying their work and producing something that will make a real difference to your car.

Radiators are something we all really take for granted but the sight of your temperature gauge rising towards the red-zone instils fear and dread into us as keeping your expensive engine cool is vital. Give it the attention it needs. Aaron Radiators are only too willing to help. What's more they'll give 12-months warranty on all their work.

The really cool (sorry, couldn't resist that one – ed) thing is that radiator technology hasn't really changed in 50-years and one of Bill's workers from 1962 could be teleported forward to today and would pick right up where he left off...

They don't just make radiators either, they can also supply all manner of other items such as heater matrix, condensers, oil coolers, intercoolers, swirl pots and generally any cooling solution, oh, and they are one of the few companies with the capability to repair leaking fuel tanks. Properly and safely. Gerald is waiting for your call...

Antifreeze

Although this is a feature on Aaron Radiators we felt that it was an ideal excuse to include some basic information about antifreeze.

The product has come a very long way since the days of being a particularly vile and horrid liquid that could make you blind if ingested. Standards and specs have increased immeasurably and despite the name it's actually the anti-corrosion ability that is the main objective of modern antifreeze.

Where it's at is how well it mixes with water and prevents rusting of engine components and various metals from eating each other.

Silicone and phosphate are the main anti-corrosion additives in antifreeze, and like a boat has a sacrificial hull, a silicate is eaten by metals to stop them eating themselves, but once a silicate is exhausted it cannot prevent corrosion anymore. The lifespan of decent antifreeze is 30,000 miles or about two years, whichever comes first. Antifreeze's natural colour is clear but a dye is added during production, with blue being the colour we are most familiar with in the UK denoting a two-year product, although the Americans like their equivalent coloured green.

Mind you, regardless of the colour it's the spec that counts.

As mentioned, recent years has seen huge strides made in antifreeze, that nasty glycol-based stuff being joined by more advanced products.

GM's DEX-Cool started this advance, and contained organic acids that were more environmentally and human friendly, but came at a price because a downside was the way it killed gaskets and water pumps. If DEX-COOL did anything it inspired ORGANIC ACID TYPE (OAT) antifreezes, which are more efficient, recommended for modern engines and can last up to five years, as the OAT products work with modern types of alloy commonly used in today's engines.

However, be aware OATs are *NOT* suitable for use on copper/brass radiators, and they don't like old hoses either. If there's a weakness in the system an OAT will seek it out.

Universal long life antifreeze mixes are available in two types – one that is compatible with engines designed for OAT products and contains user-friendly acids that meet and surpass manufacturers standards. A second type is less specific and is a true universal installation, Read labels carefully and as a general rule of thumb NEVER mix two and five year antifreezes.

People get a bit confused with the difference between coolants and antifreeze and they are different products. Simply put, coolant is diluted antifreeze... Nuff said.

There's lot of antifreeze products on the market available at your local Halfords or preferred retailer with prices for 5-litres typically ranging from £12.95 to £24.99.

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