

## **FORMER PRESIDENT ALAN DOMVILLE CONTINUES HIS REMINISCENCES AS A MOTORING WRITER & LIFELONG GROUP FRIEND.....**

There are many times when an editor can spot a mistake on a page long after he has passed it for the printing press and the finished product lands on his desk. It can be a cruel, horrible moment for someone trained for such a responsibility (or an obsessive perfectionist like me) and I have to confess it has happened to me several times over the years giving me near-sleepless nights.

Nowadays the chances of something like this happening are much more likely given that newspapers and magazines are put together and printed hundreds of miles from the office - some even on continental Europe.

(No, it doesn't make sense to me either!)

Most recently I had sent away the copy and pictures for reports on new Vauxhall and Renault cars for a page and - yes, you have guessed it - the pictures were transposed. Not only that; the Vauxhall pictured was not even the model specified. Frantic apologies were emailed to both companies' PR's who, both being former journalists, fully understood and were most forgiving.

Some years ago in less high-tech days, and probably in a hurry, I selected a picture of a Peugeot from my files, sent it away to be processed for a page, and only after publication did I realise I had chosen a similar looking - but wrong - picture for my story. Out of 1,000 pictures if one is incorrect it leads to no end of calls from readers pointing out the error.

Much worse has happened over the years - I was once called over the coals for describing an election candidate as a "newcomer" - meaning regarding standing for office for the first time - but who protested that his family had lived in the town for 500 years and if he lost at the polls it would be my fault. He got in - just!

But the most embarrassing moment came when I spelled the word dyslexia wrongly. Now when I was a child I wrote with my left hand and one of my teachers decided this was anathema and began a conversion job - not too successfully. To this day I have difficulty in distinguishing instantly between left and right hands.

In fact I have to confess that during my advanced test I made a right turn after being instructed by the examiner to go left. I realised my mistake amid the manoeuvre and decided I'd failed instantly and conceded defeat. "Don't worry," was the reply, "you did it beautifully." And I passed.

But my spelling mistake earned me the wrath of a representative of the dyslexia society who was probably unconvinced by my explanation that I was a fellow sufferer, however mild.

Something I could never be, of course, would be a motor rally navigator.