New Look World of Top Gear at Beaulieu

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Photo by Chris Adamson.

World of Top Gear changes up a gear...

Chris Adamson reports.

Current T*op Gear* presenter Chris Harris opened the revised *World of Top Gear* at the

National Motor Museum, Beaulieu and in the process became the first on-screen star of the high profile television programme to visit the popular permanent exhibition.



Photo by Chris Adamson.

Accompanied by The Stig and Lord Montagu, he welcomed the first visitors and revealed some of the highlights of his career so far as one of the presenters of the cult BBC motoring series.



Photo by Chris Adamson.

Among the more memorable moments was the time he almost killed Matt Leblanc in Kazakhstan and driving across Cuba pre-Donald Trump, while one of his favourite episodes was the creation of the SsangYacht.

After the opening, Chris did what Top Gear does best – indulging in power slides in an expensive car (a Mercedes AMG loaned for the day) around the watered Beaulieu Arena.

Among those getting an inside Top Gear view as a passenger was this correspondent who was being re-united with Chris some 12 years after they last met when they spent two days together in Italy driving the Le Mans class-winning Oreca Chrysler Viper at Monza circuit.



Chris and Chris…
(Photo courtesy National Motor Museum).

Back at Beaulieu the re-launched exhibition now includes profiles on the three newest presenters and has a section devoted to cars from the most recent two (post Clarkson, May and Hammond era) series.

These include the sea-going Ssangyacht built from the world's ugliest people carrier, the Volvo Chris Harris drove across Kazakhstan and the Maserati he raced against locals in Cuba.

Reviewing the display Chris said: "It's very exciting, seeing all these incredible cars in one

place. It’s a privilege to have a home for all of the weird Frankenstein creations that we have on the show.’’



(Photo courtesy National Motor Museum).

The new-look display still includes homage to the past, with a heritage corridor timeline which pays tribute to the show’s 40-year history which began with Angela Rippon as the first presenter and has continued through four decades.

At the entrance to the *World of Top Gear* experience, the stretch Panda limousine used to carry a celebrity to the glittering Brit Awards has been made into the longest car seat ever for group selfies.

Head inside to see the indestructible Toyota Hilux rising from the ashes in a haze of smoke, alongside the roofless Reliant Rialtos driven by Chris Evans and Matt LeBlanc in their first of their road trip challenges and the current Reasonably Fast Car, a red Toyota GT86.

Old favourites are retained including the rocket-shaped Reliant Robin space shuttle, Snowbine snow clearer, the Caravan Airship, the Lotus Excel Motorhome, the Jaguar XJS rail car, the Porsche 944 Turbo ambulance, double-decker racing cars and the Hovervan, which was created from a Ford transit van.

Entrance to the *World of Top Gear* is included in a general ticket to Beaulieu which includes admission to the National Motor Museum and its collection of more than 250 vehicles, *On Screen Cars*; the 13th century Beaulieu Abbey, Palace House and its gardens. To book tickets in advance online or for more information see the Beaulieu website at www.beaulieu.co.uk or call 01590 612345.



Photo by Chris Adamson.