

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## Keith Richards and 'Blue Lena': "Let's jump in the Bentley and go to Morocco"

### Lead

All this talk of the 2013 Range Rover and its state-of-the-art Terrain Response system is a world away from February 1967, and Rolling Stones' guitarist Keith Richards' impulsive decision to get away from England before his impending court case for drug possession.

Meeting fellow band member Brian Jones, along with Jones' then girlfriend Anita Pallenberg and American model Deborah Dixon at the George V in Paris, Richards arranged for his own S3 Bentley Continental Flying Spur to be driven out from the UK for the journey by 'fixer-in-chief', ex-paratrooper Tom Keylock.

(The dark blue car was affectionately referred to by Richards as 'Blue Lena'. 'Blue', well, any cat would know why that was, and 'Lena', after the jazz singer Lena Horne.)

With Jones, Pallenberg and Dixon in the back, Keith sat next to Keylock in the passenger seat, acting DJ, feeding 45s into the Philips car record player as they made their way south to North Africa. "Somewhere we could get legal drugs," as Richards recounts in his 2010 autobiography 'Life'.

Brian Jones soon dropped out - with suspected pneumonia - at Albi, later transferred to hospital in Toulouse. By the time he joined the others in Marrakech, his turbulent relationship with Pallenberg was plumbing new depths of violence and misery.

Meanwhile, ever Sir Galahad, in Morocco Richards planned a 'moonlight flit' with Pallenberg, the woman with whom he had started a physical relationship in the back seat of the blue Bentley on the road south, 'somewhere between Barcelona and Valencia'.

Leaving late at night, Keylock at the wheel, 'Blue Lena' made the return journey from Morocco to Richards' small flat in St. John's Wood, London.

By anyone's standards, an eventful trip. And one that also included the car - and occupants, no doubt, in a different sense - being stoned in a semi-riot in Barcelona.

If cars could talk.

Photos: Gered Mankowitz, [www.mankowitz.com](http://www.mankowitz.com)

### Gallery

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