



Clockwise from above: Odometer testifies to a hard working life; John has maintained his Mercedes diligently; interior still looks good after half a million miles; W124 often held as a pinnacle of Mercedes quality.

**"MY BROTHER-IN-LAW SUGGESTED I LOOK AT MERCEDES BUT I THOUGHT THEY'D BE TOO EXPENSIVE"**



## HALF A MILLION AND COUNTING

**Two generations of E-Class estate have come and gone since John Powell bought his 1990 300TD. Several hundred thousand miles down the road, he's in no rush to replace it with a newer model.**

High mileage W124s are not that unusual but John Powell's 300TD recently passed a milestone remarkable for any car, even a Mercedes. On a recent business trip John's trusty Merc saw the magic '500,000' roll up on its odometer – a moment so significant his son reached across and caught it on film for posterity!

A self-confessed "Ford man", John first bought into the three-pointed star some 17 years ago. "I'd always had Granadas," he recalls, "but it was getting too expensive to run them

because they were too thirsty. My brother-in-law suggested I look at Mercedes but I thought they'd be too expensive – I was surprised to find that they weren't as costly as I'd thought."

John's business of selling, installing and maintaining cash register systems entails big mileages and requires a car able to carry large, bulky loads. As such, a diesel-powered estate car was the ideal machine for his needs. John's first thought was to look at Volvo but at the time they offered only petrol engines. Hence to his local Mercedes dealership and the purchase of his first

W124 estate, a 250TD model.

"It was the worst car I ever owned," laughs John, "and how I bought another Mercedes after that I'll never know. It was nothing but bloody trouble. I had this, that and the other go wrong with it but despite all that, I actually quite liked it."

A tip-off that Mercedes was bringing out a six-cylinder diesel soon had him back at his dealer. "I said 'I'll place an order right now'," recalls John. "I bought it blind. I didn't know what colour I was getting or anything and he said 'OK, have a maroon one with

leather seats' so I agreed and I bought it. And it's the best car I've ever owned. What a difference between that and the 250!"

Loaded with desirable extras like leather upholstery, cruise control and a sunroof, John admits his new Merc cost him "a fortune" but is happy to boast that his investment has been repaid many times over.

### HARD WORKING MERC

Thirteen years and 514,000 miles after he bought it, John's Merc is still uncomplainingly racking up the miles, remarkably enough still on its original engine and gearbox. "I had a new rear axle fitted at 502,000 miles because the old one was getting very noisy," says John. "Apart from that it's all original, it's all there. I had to have a new

