

CLASSIC SCENE



January 2017



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CLASSIC SCENE

The next 'Classic Scene'
GOES TO THE PRINTER
on the Monday of the week preceding the next meeting
Please send articles by e-mail or typed.

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COVER PICTURE

Karting Evening and the Most Improved Driver of the Night.
LIZ!!!

CHAIR BITTY JANUARY 2017

Before we set off on our Santa's night out, I made sure I had wrapped the presents and put them at the door. When we got to raceways to unpack our bags with the nibbles, etc. ... Where are the pressies?? You guessed it, still at home. Duhh. The club had the place to ourselves, which was just as well when our Arrive and Drive session turned into a full evenings entertainment. Thanks to the 3 gentlemen at Inverness Raceways for the professional care of us on the night. I think it was around 10pm before we eventually wandered out of the place. Overall feedback from attendees is that this is something that we may well re-visit in the future. I think Mr Silver was keen on a future opportunity to reclaim his title. Based on my experiences 11 years ago at the Invergordon kart circuit I had taken a cushion with me to protect my back from bruising. That worked perfectly, but the cushion did have one side effect: "does my bum look big in this?" Oh yes!

Some statistics from the night:

- Fastest driver of the night – Miles Vincent
- Best improved driver of the night – Liz Bligh
- Best kart (i.e. the one consistently posting the drivers best time) – No.11
- Worst kart (i.e. the one consistently posting the drivers worst time)– No 9
- Most crashes – round 3

For December the weather is still very mild. Certainly no white Christmas in sight as I am writing this. But I am sure that is not going to stop us from enjoying this festive season. We've got an 8 foot Christmas tree in the village which is a little bit sparse at the top, not that you see this at night when it is lit up, but during the day it looks a bit forlorn without any further decoration. We took pity on the tree and bought some garland and tinsel the other day for a little bit of festive look. Just hope there won't be much rain between now and the 31st (when the village will welcome in the new year) as wet tinsel... well....it can look a bit bedraggled.

Next months meet is our annual auction night. It will be the 5th January at 7.30 in the Old North Inn. Our auction night is always excellent entertainment. And some amazing bargains can be had. Do come along with your surplus garage stock, unloved Christmas stocking fillers and other goodies you may have saved up especially for this night.

Until then, Happy New Year.

Trish.

A CLASSIC CAR AS A DAILY DRIVER? WHY NOT?

Hello all. I thought the monthly magazine was lacking some reader articles so as I have just bought another (nearly classic) car I thought this would be the perfect way to introduce it!

I had been thinking for a while to take my 1981 Citroen Dyane off the road during the winter months as the salt and climate just kills our lovely classics in no time. This is my daily driver and I normally use it all year round regardless of the weather. I'm a strong fan of using classic cars all year round. Cars need to be driven but also looked after. Since the Dyane's restoration it has seen 2 winters and it's already showing some rust spots here and there. It's been well treated underneath and I always wash it regularly during the winter months. To keep it from deteriorating and another restoration in the next few years I felt I had no choice but to take it off the road and buy a winter car to travel to work with. There were a few criteria to meet to make this happen. Ideally a small 1 litre engine, under £500 and if possible one that would go on my classic insurance as I haven't built up any no claims. One stumbling block was my dad Bert as I already have 3 Citroens that live at his address... I'm not sure adding another car to my collection would be a good idea. I convinced my dad so I set about searching. I quite fancied a little Fiat Panda, Peugeot 205\106 or Mk2 VW Polo\Golf. I wasn't actually too fussed as long as it would be cheap and reliable. Most cars I found up here in the Highlands were either too rusty or just had too much work to do to them. I just wanted a little run-around that was in good condition, had a long mot and that didn't need any work doing. I widened my search to cities in England in the hope that I could get a bus or train down to go and have a look. I guess this is a bit of a risk but if the car looks good then it would be worth going all that way. I found a nice Citroen AX at a dealer just outside of Manchester for £300. It did have over 110,000 miles though, but looked OK. It seemed ideal and met my requirements. Then the next day on Gumtree I spotted another AX for sale in Preston. This 1996 1.0i Debut model looked very tidy, had only 42,000 miles on it and had a full year's MoT. I phoned the chap Keith and he assured me it was a solid little car with pretty much nothing wrong with it. Another search showed I could take the Megabus straight from Inverness to

Preston. A quick phone call to my insurance company and they told me it qualifies for classic insurance. Perfect! I can add it straight onto my existing classic policy. Keith agreed to keep the car aside for me until I could come for it a couple of days later. One 7^{1/2} hour bus journey later I arrived in Preston. Keith picked me up and took me to his house where the AX was parked. It looked to be a great little car. A few small dents but no rust underneath whatsoever! I drove it around and all appeared to be sound. A couple of little things needed sorting but nothing that worried me. A bargain deal of £250 was done and away I drove back up the road! I had a long 7 hour journey ahead providing everything would go OK! Everything went well apart from the car shuddering and holding back a few times; probably because it hasn't had a long run on the motorway for a while. Hopefully a good service and some injector cleaner will sort that out. Having only ever owned and driven air cooled 2 cylinder Citroens it's a bit strange having injectors and a radiator! I'm not used to that haha! Since I've had it back home, dad and I have given it a full service with new oils, filters and plugs etc. We also sorted out a few wee niggling things like aligning the boot properly and sorting out a little play in the steering column. To prepare it for winter I'll be fitting some winter tyres, mud-flaps and some extra spot lights. It's not perfect by any means but it's ideal for what I need and a bonus it's another Citroen. It's still a fun wee car and will help to preserve my Dyane for a lot longer! Regards, Jesse Wigman, Strathpeffer (PS I'll be writing another article on my Citroen Acadiane restoration soon)



EU LEGISLATION or BREXIT BITES YOUR BUM

The roadworthiness testing of all cars has been an established part of the UK motoring scene now for many years, and the annual test is still called an MoT even though that Department changed its name years ago. With Classic Car ownership steadily on the increase, and as reported recently worth £5.5 billion to the UK economy, there has been an increase in interest (Meddling!) from the EU. For once the British Government is trying to be sensible about classic cars but it would appear that they have been taking too many training seminars in Brussels and are getting themselves into a real muddle.

It all revolves around the need to test the roadworthiness of older cars and in a nutshell the Test Centres are finding that their modern equipment and subsequent computer systems are struggling to test your car and the testers themselves are also experiencing problems because of a lack of knowledge and experience of older cars. So the Government is looking at various options of exempting older cars from a roadworthiness test. Unfortunately the EU have come up with the definition of "Classic Cars". They have chosen to call them "Vehicles of Historic Interest", VHI's, and the Government has decided to use this term in their discussions even though we are leaving the EU and there is no such definition within UK legislation. I'll return to this definition and its problems later.

The government has come up with a list of options for the roadworthiness issue and the option they seem to favour is option 3 as this will fall into line with the zero rated Vehicle Excise Duty class of 'Historic Vehicle'. So everything over 40 years old will be exempted from Duty and testing. This to me smacks of the Government washing their hands of the whole problem and completely ducking the issue.

The options are:-

1. Remove the current exemption for pre-1960 vehicles and in doing so make all vehicles that are currently exempt subject to full annual testing.

1. Introduce a basic 'VHI' roadworthiness 'safety' test- either annual or biennial for 40 year old vehicles.
2. Exempt 40 year old 'VHI's' from annual testing and introduce a 'VHI' certification process to ensure a vehicle has not been substantially changed. (Could be based on self-certification or independent inspection or a combination.) **This is the Government preferred option.**
3. Introduce a biennial 'VHI' road worthiness test for 40 year old vehicles.
4. Exempt 30 year old VHI's from annual testing and introduce a VHI certification process to ensure a vehicle has not been substantially altered. Again could be based on self-certification or independent inspection.

In my opinion 1 is a total non-starter, it simply puts pre-1960 cars back into full testing. 2, 4 and 5 are introducing a new testing system not much different to an existing MoT, which will also require further funding. So 3 looks a likely candidate. Now comes the problem. The FBHVC's reply to the Government runs to 14 pages and much centres on the definition of a VHI and at present there is no definition of a VHI in current UK legislation. The only term in use for Vehicle Excise Duty purposes is Historic Vehicle, a vehicle over 40 years old. The actual wording of a VHI is "a vehicle manufactured or registered for the first time at least 30 years ago, which is no longer in production and has not been substantially changed." Many EU countries have varying legislation for dealing with old cars from very liberal to those with very limited mileage and only allowed to run on certain days. Add into this the definition of a VHI and all sorts of problems arise. Here in the UK there has always been a healthy interest in a "Special". Cars made up with varying levels of skill from a whole variety of sources. Even high volume cars from well-respected makers could be included in this. Light lenses, switches, even engines are assembled into some undeniably classic cars. Lotus for one, the early 7's could easily be described as an assembly of parts, even a kit car. But historically there has never been any restraint on such specials or a standard car modified by the

Owner and there has never been the need to define or control such vehicles. The Construction and Use Regulations underpin the balance between freedom to alter and modify, and safety and roadworthiness standards. These Regulations, along with the MoT test, ensure that all cars meet a minimum safety and roadworthiness standard. This has worked over the years as the number of 40+ years old cars involved in accidents where the age of the car was contributory is so miniscule that no meaningful conclusions can be made. And that is from the Governments own statistics.

The VHI definition opens up a new can of worms, especially on the wording "not substantially changed." There is a points system proposed for the Option 3 self-certification test that could prove difficult. If your car is a bit like George Washington's axe; 3 new handles and two new heads but it's the original axe he used to cut down the cherry tree, then it might not gather enough points to qualify as a VHI. Minor updates and renewable bits and pieces will be ok.

Fortunately there was a case not too long ago regarding the provenance of a famous 30's Bentley that went to the Appeal Court and that court ruled that the car was original even though over the years it had received several different bodies. It was all part of the cars continuous history. This has gone down as a "Stated Case" and ensures that cars that have been so altered over the years, are still "original". But if you have built the car from a huge pile of spares and bits and bobs collected over the years, its probably not going to be considered as "original". The whole issue revolves around the word "substantially", so my 1974 Lancia with such minor modifications such as a stainless steel exhaust and electronic ignition will be fine but the group within the Classic Car scene who could have major problems are the custom car and hot rodders. A "new" 1940's chassis, a fibreglass Ford A-series body, a big Chevy V8 and a Jaguar back axle and taxed as an "Historic Vehicle". Now I like to see these cars, they are part of our scene and always generate interest. Maybe not for long sadly.

But look on the bright side, following the Brexit vote the EU can go take a running jump with their crazy legislation and the Government will be far too busy to worry about a few old cars and they will take the easy(cheapest) way out.

NO-ONE LIKES A SMART ARSE BUT SOMETIMES.....

A truckie was driving along on a country road. A sign came up that read "Low Bridge Ahead."

Before he realised it, the bridge was directly ahead and he got stuck under it.

Cars were backed up for miles. Finally, a police car arrived.

The policeman got out of his car and walked to the lorry's cab and said to the driver, "Got stuck, eh?"

The lorry driver said, "No, I was delivering this bridge and ran out of diesel!"

A lady was picking through the frozen Chickens at a store but she couldn't find one big enough for her family.

She asked a passing assistant, "Do these Chickens get any bigger?"

The assistant replied, "I'm afraid not, they're dead."

The policeman got out of his car and the Teenager he stopped for speeding rolled down his window

"I've been waiting for you all day," the Cop said.

The kid replied, "Well I got here as fast as I could."

When the policeman finally stopped laughing, he sent the kid on his way without a ticket.

It was mealtime during a flight on a British Airways plane:

"Would you like dinner?" the flight attendant asked the man seated in the front row.

"What are my choices?" the man asked.

"Yes or no," she replied.

KARTING NIGHT





Mark Campbell	23.80
Wayne Horne	23.89
TOP TIMES THIS MONTH	
Miles Vincent	25.30
Trish Brown	25.83
Bryan McIlwraith	25.91
Chris Silver	26.19
Roy Macgregor	26.23
Alan Giff	26.27
Thomas Paterson	26.43
Callum	26.52
Ian Thomson	26.54
Chris Lawrence	27.06
John Eastwood	27.81
Rosie	28.58
Ian Pearson	29.57
Liz Blush	35.15
Alister Cooke	44.47



CLUB EVENTS

Date

Venue

5th Jan 2017 January Auction Night
(SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE) Old North Inn.

The "FAMOUS" Annual Club Auction Night 7.30pm. Clear out your garage of surplus car parts and related junk etc. and turn them into cash (with 10% to Club Funds)
NEW RULES; If it does not Sell it will be Returned to You! -
COME ALONG AND BID!!!

2nd Feb 2017 Club AGM Old North Inn. 7.30pm.
Next Year's Diary to be filled with help from the Membership on the night! So Your Attendance and Input is Requested.

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FOR SALE

1976 MGB GT Overdrive

Same owner for the last 17 years. In running, drivable order with lots of extras fitted over the years. No MOT or TAX. Car is kept in a warm garage. Needs some TLC to body work but not rotten. Good easy restoration project and has lots of history with it.

£1500 ovno.

For more information contact mobile: 07788 997136