

CLASSIC SCENE



January 2023



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The club has an extensive archive of
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Cover Picture

A collage of the best of 2022.

Welcome to the January Newsletter

I'm afraid it's a short newsletter this month as there isn't much news to report.

I'm still waiting for the NHS to give me the all clear to drive again so there are no driving adventures to report though I have been cycling through the snow and ice thanks to the marvel that is studded bike tyres! However there's no motor involved so it's not a topic suitable for these pages. Actually this bike did have an electric motor in the front wheel, as I had converted it, but then the batteries died and it seems to be about £300 for a new battery pack, so I've just been pedalling.

Of tangential interest maybe is the highway code revision that states "leave at least **1.5 metres** when overtaking cyclists at speeds of up to 30mph, and give them more space when overtaking at higher speeds." I have been overtaken by a significant number of taxis even BMW ones that have been doing just that, in particular Inverness Taxis. Very courteous. On the downside I have noticed lots of wee gremlins in the Inverness cycling infrastructure. The cycle lanes marked on the roads often seem to end suddenly, spitting you out into random situations, and it's often not clear from the signage if the pavement is dual use or pedestrian only. I'm not a fan of cycling on dual use pavements anyway as pedestrians have the ability to move sideways randomly and dogs are tied to owners by tripwire. The next time you curse at an errant cyclist, bear in mind they may be a bewildered victim of Highland Council planning. Some cyclist of course are just errant. I watched one cycle straight out of a junction cutting right in front of an elderly driver who just managed to avoid a potentially nasty collision. Our eyes met and communicated how stupid that cyclist was.

I do have some car news. My emerging classic Ford Focus Mk1 had its MOT in early December. After sorting out the complex logistics of getting it there, there was a distinctive and familiar aroma on arrival. Wishful thinking blamed the maltings, but the smoke from the OSR wheel confirmed a sticky brake caliper. Oh well. Might as well put it through and see what else needs doing. Later that day it had a pass. What? My friendly tester had given the caliper a dunt with a bit hammer and freed it off. The replacement caliper has arrived but festive socialising means it's still on the to do list. Luckily we have the Skoda Fabulous as a back up.

The best thing that happened to me this month (even better than Xmas sprouts!) was the collection of a Myford lathe I have inherited. It was heavy logistical problem solved by the kindness of friends. I am in the process of reassembling it and my YouTube suggestions are now full of machining tutorials. There's a lot to learn.

You've got to love the Scottish gritter names. 'Gonnae Snow Dae That' came up our track and got a chuckle. 'How snow?' 'Just gonnae snow.' Pity about all that corrosion causing salt though.

See you at the auction, if I can get a lift, preferably in something with cavernous luggage capacity.

Your Editor.

Chairs Bitty

A few of us got together for our Secret Santa meet at the Old North Inn. We made some time for a quick very silly christmas quiz, which was won by Kevin Davidson. The quiz was followed by all of us joining in to sing the "Merry ** Christmas Everybody" song, accompanied by Bryan on guitar and Calum on the drum. We were then treated to a few more songs before Bryan's voice gave out. The rest of the evening was spent in catching up and at our little table the conversation included tall stories about dogs and their antics.



December was a month of cold weather and again we were pleased as punch with the Landie's heated windscreens, especially when you need the vehicle because the other cars are unable to get out the drive. We got as far as the end of the driveway with the Merc and then it got stuck on the ice. By that time it was also snowing like no tomorrow..... Then you have a job and a half getting the car back in the driveway. Next day I took a walk to the village green to raid the local grit/salt bin and liberally spread this muck at the end of our drive and into the street. But I've kept a few spadefuls in a spare bucket for the next time.

There is a minor downside to the increased use of the Landie and its recent trip to Edinburgh. Either something has shaken loose on the manifolds or a gasket has gone. Whichever it is, the Landie is now frapping. Alice tried tightening up the manifold bolts which only made a tiny little bit difference. Oh well, another trip to the garage is on the cards.

The cold weather had an effect on the Smart too, which was already displaying a reluctance to start in recent weeks. It would go like "ngngnung" then a brief pause after which the engine would burst into life. The brief pause only got longer as the weather turned colder. We had something similar some years ago which was fixed with a new battery, so Alice went to see Goodtread to see what they could do. It took a week before Goodtread was able to supply a battery. They had one up at their warehouse, but seemingly nobody about to go and pick it up. The new battery has been installed and as expected has sorted out the starting problem.

At this time of year when the nights are drawing in, people get into the spirit of things and decorate their windows or gutters with lights. In our street, all houses have some lights around the windows or draped a strand around their gutters. However, further along in our village you have the enthusiasts, with 2 households that appear to be competing with each other. No idea what their electricity bill is going to be like, but anything you can hang a light on has been lit up. Quite a light show. When you come to our January meet you will see a similar enthusiast in Inchmore. If I don't see you before then, Happy New Year.

As I said, we are at the Old North Inn for our January auction. Remember this is at the earlier time of 7pm. We are ready for it and have put together a box of assorted items. No doubt we'll come home with as much as we left with. Just need to make sure I've got spare change on me.

See you there,

Trish.

December Club Night at the Old North Inn

We went back to our old haunt though as they close earlier these days we had to meet at the earlier time of 7:00pm. I don't think that was much of a hardship for most of us but if you have a different opinion, let us know.

The Old North Inn didn't want to clear out our usual side room which I think they use for breakfasts, but it was a quiet night and we had the main bar to ourselves.

After a bit of chatting we had our Secret Santa followed by a musical turn from Bryan and yours truly on the snare drum. My drum was louder than Bryan and it took me while to hear he wasn't playing the timeless classic 'Merry Christmas Everybody' with quite the same amount of shuffle as I believe the original had so I had to listen hard to sync up. Perhaps we should have practised first but where's the fun in that? I hope I wasn't too terrible. Bryan of course was excellent and we were lucky the bar was empty with his revised HCMC lyrics.

It felt like we could chat all night but it was soon closing time and we were out and off home. It seems to me that the pubs are changing and it's going to get harder to find good club night venues. Personally I like the Old North Inn but if our meetings are all going to be cut short, maybe it's time to look elsewhere, but if you have a different opinion, let us know.

Highlights of 2022

Do you remember lockdown? It seems a lifetime ago now. When you look back on 2022 we've had a pretty decent year and I have listed a few of my highlights. Like most people I couldn't get to everything.

- April - Drive it Day to Logie Steading
- April - Visit to Jack Meredith's Garage
- May - Inverness Classic Vehicle Show
- May - Strathspey Steam Railway Visit
- July - Bring your pudding to Nairn Links run.
- September - Craig Chapman's panel beating visit
- September - Fortrose & Rosemarkie Classic Vehicle Rally
- Several club runs
- Many Cars and Coffee gatherings.

If you add your own memories I'm sure you'll find HCMC had a good year even faced with the difficulties of a post pandemic world. Sadly some former members are no longer with us and we should pause a moment to think of them, then get on with planning an even better 2023.

Out and About



Jim Mackay has been out and about again. I Particularly like the colour on that Mini. It might be Dove Grey, though I'm already waiting on corrections. My old grey Mini tucked away in the back of the garage is Dove grey, in coach enamel! I painted it outside our flat when we lived in London for a while. Now that wasn't yesterday.

John Mackenzie was also out and about and spotted this MG Midget at that fine purveyor of German Christmas fare and DIY tools, Aldi.

Personally I find the plastic bumper models quite agreeable these days. The bumpers are also handy for resting your flask on at car shows.



Cars And Coffee

11th December

It was probably one of the coldest Cars and Coffee since it began, with this northerly cold spell. However about 50 brave souls did venture out onto the salty roads. I tried to get a lift but after a number declined I decided to do something else instead. And then of course I did get offered a lift but I was busy by then.



I would have liked to have seen George's Reliant Robin in Royal Mail Red.

Or this very unusual Nissan GTR Pickup. Is that even a thing?

The Cash for Kids haul was very generous. Someone loaded the van with a binbag full of toys. We'd love to know who.



Austin Healey 17

With four new wings and a new drivers door I just needed one more new door. The boat was pushed out again. How often can I push this boat out before it sinks? The new aluminium door duly arrived and from the "off" there were things not quite right about it but nothing I couldn't fix with a TIG welder. I didn't own one but there was a possibility when it came to repairing the aluminium shrouds. Is there no end to this spend I thought? That boat is just a speck in the distance now!



This is an early Healey 100 and the door hinges were flat, cast in aluminium. The original doors had integral hinge fixings made out of thin metal to hold the captive plates and these new doors had nothing. I made up alloy ones which would be held in place like large spacers by long bolts through the hinge. But first I needed one new hinge to replace a broken original. Really! It proved to be a pig of a thing to assemble, it was nigh on impossible to adjust and there wasn't enough clearance for the wing so I abandoned it. Later Healeys had cranked hinges, obviously an improvement as they did away with the flimsy fitting on the doors. This was the way forward, right?



Cheers,

Jim MacKay.

HCMC Events

5th Jan 2023 HCMC ANNUAL AUCTION Old North Inn

Time to clear out your garages, attics and sheds and make some money at the infamous HCMC Annual Auction. (I usually lose money and fill my shed—Ed.)

7.00pm start. Bring cash and change and grab yourself a bargain.

8th Jan 2023 Cars And Coffee - Inverness

Rollerbowl, Culduthel Rd. Inverness 10am to 12 noon Every 2nd Sunday of the Month. A quiet Social Event for all Car Enthusiasts. Park up, buy yourself a hot drink and snack from Rollerbowl and check out what's in the Car Park. Chat to old friends and make new! Find us on FACEBOOK.