

CLASSIC SCENE



February 2020



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The club has an extensive archive of
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Cover Picture

Shameless editor's Beetle and dog
promotion taken by CMH Photog-
raphy on a practise photo-shoot. She
doesn't need much practise if you
ask me.

Plus Auction night and Cars and Cof-
fee.

Welcome to the February Newsletter

Welcome to the February Newsletter. It's the time of year when we start planning our classic car activities for the year, and your committee has had a meeting to come up with some ideas. However if you have any ideas and particularly if you can help organise them we would love to hear from you. Personally I think we have a really good mix of driving events, shows, visits and club nights.

The Club AGM is on Thursday the 6th of February at the usual time of 19:30 and the usual venue of the Old North Inn. I hope to be re-elected as editor unless anyone else has a pressing desire to do it. If so you're welcome!

In the editors garage this month progress has been unusual. I was looking at a friends VW T5 van which wasn't very well. ABS issues, no battery charging and poor fuel economy. Electronic diagnostics said the nsf ABS sensor was intermittent but replacing that didn't fix it. Looks like it could be the ABS control module, which is a known weak spot. The alternator looks gubbed and is almost unbelievably difficult to get at. You can't even see it from above. It's the most modern thing I've worked on and it was quite intimidating. It was a relief to get back onto the 18 years old Golf. Only a generation older but so much easier. A new spring, new rear brakes and a wheel bearing saw it through it's MOT. I even washed and hoovered it as I know that can help with those advisories. On a recent run via Carrbridge, Aberlour, Elgin and home it averaged 70mpg on it's computer. Wow.

In other news I was asked to take Poppy the Beetle out on a photo-shoot. It was a dogs and cars project so meet Marag the Labrador. And for members further afield, meet Calum...

your Editor.



Chairs Bitty

The auction was as good as ever. Bryan was on form, the items varied, although it wasn't a very good year for selling magazines or books. The various bundles looked as if they had seen more than one auction night, with the crowd behaving as if they had already read all of them. And we probably have. That didn't stop



members from snapping up a few bargains here and there. The auction made over £15 for club funds. And as happens at our club auction night we came home with more than we left with.

A quiet time for our cars this month. The Merc and Landrover are boringly reliable – which is good news for our purse for a change. The Smart is smarting from standing out in the rain and not being tucked up cosily in a garage for the winter, but then we are waiting to replace the garage door. The Skoda's sill was rust treated and painted nicely in time for going back to work after the Christmas break.

The recent winter weather has not been kind to our roads. The back road from our village has a few sizeable potholes, the largest of which could neatly fit a 18" wheel on its side. There is also a 100meter section that is more potholes than road. It is a stretch that you can take driving down the very centre of the road, but with someone else on that stretch I tend to slow to a crawl so I can jiggle round the holes. I am pleased to report that the potholes were filled in just before the end of January.

Now for a totally different subject. I think it was Wednesday 8 January when we were returning home from an evening playing sports in the Invergordon Leisure Centre. I happened to be glancing to the north when I spotted a small light streaking eastwards through the sky. I thought it was the RAF going to do a night time bombing run at Tain and started mentioning this to Alice. I think I got as far as "Hmph, the RAF" when I realised that the supposed plane was going too fast. And was the wrong colour (yellow/red with green on the leading edge). And was getting larger. My brain was trying to convert my sentence to "wow a meteorite", but all that came out was "Oh! There! Oh!" as I flapped my hand. The meteorite made a final burst of green colour and winked out. The whole event took just a few seconds and I think we were very lucky to catch it.

Another year has gone by and this meeting is our AGM. You will be pleased to hear that there haven't been any whispers of committee vacancies so no reason for any of you to not attend. The committee has come up with a number of ideas for things to do this year, but not sure yet when we are doing what. Get your thinking caps on as your input is appreciated. See you at the Old North Inn for 19.30pm.

Trish.

News

In the news recently have been City Centre Low Emission Zones with Birmingham announcing their proposals. Edinburgh has ambitious traffic free proposals and the FBHVC has been in consultation with their council. Here is my summary for your interest.

The FBHVC does not question the need or the justification for an LEZ.

There could be significant consequences for the owners of historic vehicles in and around Edinburgh, and for any in the business of maintenance, repair and restoration.

The proposed is for traffic exclusion zones. Instead of charges for use, penalties for wrongful use would be charged.

Those keeping historic vehicles within the zone would in practice be prevented from continuing to do so, and those who currently undertake activities of maintenance, repair, conservation and restoration of historic vehicles would be required to cease operating that part of their business

Historic vehicles are by definition survivals from an earlier age and thus of comparative rarity, whether or not of great financial value.

The Federation therefore proposes that the Edinburgh LEZ should include an exemption for historic vehicles over thirty years old, reflecting the UNESCO definition of what constitutes a historic vehicle, with which the Federation, as a member of FIVA, supports.

The Federation would be content if this exemption did not generally apply to vehicles which were being used for wholly commercial purposes. However the Federation is aware that some historic buses and coaches, which are not registered in the "historic" taxation class to ply for hire, but in each case are in fact used for essentially cultural purposes. The Federation is aware that there is at least one operator who on rare occasions uses "heritage" buses within Edinburgh, and we would propose that this limited use by buses and coaches should be permitted.

It is good to see the FBHCV lobbying in action and hopefully helping to set a precedent for how classic vehicles are affected by LEZ's. Once upon a time long ago when you could drive up Princes Street I was in my first Mini with a really smoky engine. I zoomed out of one of the upie-doonie streets onto Princes Street leaving a trail of smoke and disapproving people. It was embarrassing then. Jail time now.

More News The Caithness And Sutherland Vintage And Classic Vehicle Club are desperately looking for volunteers to help run the 51st John O'Groats Vehicle Rally in early June possible Sat the 6th or 13th.

The Club had a dramatic end to 2019 when at an extraordinary general meeting the Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer all stood down. This was due to age, health and other commitments, and all declined re-election.



STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS!

In an exciting HCMC Newsletter stop the printers situation I have just read in the John O'Groat Journal and Caithness Courier that following a report in the same paper the Caithness and Sutherland Vintage and Classic Vehicle Club had 31 people at a recent meeting which is double their usual attendance and they have elected a chairman, secretary and treasurer. They have quite a few new members. Who said local newspapers were dead?

They are still looking for younger members with ideas on how to move the club ahead, a problem common to most clubs, though HCMC is quite lucky and we even have an unofficial youth wing—you know who you are!

So if you can do anything to help the Caithness And Sutherland Vintage And Classic Vehicle Club please contact them via Facebook.

https://www.facebook.com/pg/Caithness-And-Sutherland-Vintage-And-Classic-Vehicle-Club-1806630616299772/events/?ref=page_internal

or send me an email at editor@highlandclassic.org.uk and I'll pass on your message.



It's Scored a Half Century

In 1970, the Triumph Stag was launched to a warm welcome at the various international auto shows. One year after it's planned launch. This makes 2020 the year of The Stag. There are quite a few in our club and up north in general which is surprising as I've read that only 25,877 cars were produced between 1970 and 1977, and 6,780 of these were export models. The Stag rapidly acquired a reputation for mechanical unreliability, usually in the form of overheating which probably



limited sales, but by all accounts good servicing and a modern radiator can make them perfectly reliable. On a personal note they probably have the best exhaust burble this side of the Atlantic. Happy 50th birthday.

Miller Sinclair and Sutherland

There is no episode this month. I thought I had received the anonymous letter and put it on my editors desk, but when it came to find it I couldn't. I was searching high and low and Mrs Editor was getting justifiably irritated at me lifting cushions and looking under sofas. In the end I gave up and contacted the anonymous sender but now the mystery is even deeper. Can't say too much in case I spoil someone's fun, but there is still no episode this month.

I just hope I didn't lose it, because that might mean I am actually losing it myself if you get my drift.

Out and About

Not many pictures from out and about this month. I've seen a few candidates going round the Longman roundabout but it is no longer legal to take a snap so now they're just lost memories. The 'Mystery Machine' is stolen from Cars and Coffee (Thank you Miles) and the second is the back of a Triumph Herald I spotted in a sandbank during a work trip to the Isle of Benbecula. Anyone lost one at sea?



Intentionally Blank

I've actually run out of content for this bit and with a looming deadline it's not only the page looking blank my mind too, so I'm filling it with this rubbish.

Remember the club would love to see your contributions no matter how small, half a page in this case. An ideal spot for hearing about your dream garage or a snap of a classic seen out and about.

Blank

Club Auction Night

I have two new years resolutions. One is cycle more, and the other is to have a clear out. Hello HCMC Auction Night. I think this is about my 5th Auction with the club and you'd think I knew it all by now, but no. I learned 1.) If you have some junk to sell, get Bryan to auction it early, before the bidders get junk weary. I was last up. 2.) Expect some degree of humiliation. After an afternoon of ruthless gathering of items I could just bear to part with, there was a feeling of self doubt at comments like, 'You don't half have a lot of crap,' and other sentences containing the word 'crap.' And how do you think I felt when these once cherished items refused to sell even at an HCMC auction, and must now face a trip to the dump? Pretty bad. (Not really!)

Anyway up until that point it had been a really good with some good items up for sale going for a fraction of their worth. I look at it as club member recycling. More of an exchange of items into the hands of a club member that might have a use for something you don't. Plus the club makes a bit for it's funds and it's certainly a good laugh.

My biggest laugh of the night was when an odd item came up, no less than two water leak detectors. Quick as a flash came Tom McCallum's remark, ' Make sure and wear them down your trousers!'

Another was when a large tied bunch of spanners came up. 'What size are they?' asked Bryan. '13mm,' came the reply. 'And...?' said Bryan, examining the bunch. 'No. They're all 13mm.'



A Haynes manual for an Aston Martin DB7 came up, which was sure to catch Bryan's interest. However the cover picture didn't look quite right. Once he peeled off the title made out of Old North Inn stationary he discovered it was for a Ford Mondeo. 'Bid for it! There are a lot of shared parts.'

A nice set of Snow Chains came up. 'What size are they?' Bryan looks at the packaging, '9mm.' No, what wheel size?' Bryan looks at the packaging frowns and says with great confidence, 'Various.' Well I thought, they're bound to fit one of my 9 cars so I bid and won them. It turns out that was another mistake (3.) Though it turns out you can modify them according to Americans on YouTube anyway. That could turn out to be another mistake (4.)



Thanks to Bryan for being auctioneer and to Trish for being the scribe, which is the hardest job of the night, though she did manage a few sneaky bids. Bryan's PA performed very well but his hat was too small for me so I can't ever take his place. Who could?

Cars and Coffee — January 2020

Cars and Coffee couldn't have had a better start to 2020! The weather had a window amongst the wind and cold with temperatures up to chilly level. The car park at Rollerbowl, Inverness filled up nicely and there must have been 40 or 50 cars and bikes by the end of the two hours. We are lucky to have a such an enthusiastic group of, er, enthusiasts. Outside of Inverness there isn't much opportunity for classic car fans to meet up and although the numbers of classics were limited due to the time of year, the owners weren't.



A Black Rat is a term for London Traffic Police. Ask Allan Goff about it....



The TVR on the previous page has me a little bit confused. I think its is an S3 with a 2.9 V6 engine but it appears to say Taimar on the side which is the earlier M series if Google serves me right. I wish I had been there to ask. I've long fancied an S series TVR, and a Mk1 Focus RS. As regular readers might recall I have an emerging classic Mk1 Focus in TDCi guise. OK it's not an RS but it is still very much a drivers car , and mine has been subtly modified to enhance that.



Regarding my earlier editorial in the news section about younger members we need to be sure to recognise 1990's early 2000's classics, now around 20 years old.



And what was this causing a lot of fuss? Barry's electric bike that's what. It seems a lot of people had a shot and enjoyed it. Your editor is a long term cyclist and has recently finished building his own out of old parts from an early electric bike. Could it be a classic? Time and climate change will tell.

2020 Show Season

The dates for the 2020 show season and other events are being announced. The following information is to the best of my knowledge so please check with the club website or event organisers just in case anything changes. More to be announced I'm sure.

Sunday 3rd May	Forres Theme Day
Saturday 23rd May	East Sutherland Rotary Classic Car Tour
Sunday 24th May	Highland Folk Museum Vintage Day
Sunday 14th June	51st John O'Groats Rally
Sunday 21st June	Tain Gala
Sunday 2nd Aug	Orkney Classic Motor Show
Sunday 9th Aug	HWC Brodie Show
Saturday 29th Aug	Fortrose and Rosemarkie Rally
Sunday 30th August	Buckie Classic Car Show
Sunday 6th Sept	Grantown Motormanía
5th and 6th Sept	HCC La Crofterra Pandemonia
Sunday 6th Sept	Grantown Motormanía

March Club Night 'Rosemarkie Man' lecture

Old North Inn, Inchmore 19:30

Local archaeologist and fiddle player Simon Gunn will lecture on the discovery and excavation of the Rosemarkie Man, a Pictish man who was killed and then buried in a cave in the Highlands 1,400 years ago and who had links to Orkney, according to genetic analysis. Archaeologists found the man's skeleton buried in a recess of a cave at Rosemarkie in the Black Isle in 2016.

He was discovered with stones weighing down his limbs while his head had been battered multiple times.

Analysis carried out on behalf of the Rosemarkie Caves Project now suggests he was a prominent member of the community, such as royalty or a chieftain.

It is possible that quips about our Rosemarkie based members may be made during the evening. Come and find out.

Pat Smith Rally Driver talk at Historic Wheels Club

The HWC have been exceptionally lucky to organise ex rally driver Pat Smith as their guest speaker on the 13th February next year.

Please contact HWC to arrange a place.

February 13th 2020 at the Moray Motor Museum, Elgin. Arrive at 7 for 7.30pm.



Tickets now available for Historic Wheels Club John Cleland event at the price of £15/head (free of charge to members). Message their Facebook page, or contact Darren McWhirter on 07834422815. Numbers are limited for the 14th March at the Laichmoray hotel and are selling well so don't delay.

LOCAL EVENTS

6th Feb 2020	AGM	Old North Inn, Inchmore	7:30pm Help us decide the club's future.
9th Feb 2020	Cars And Coffee - Inverness	Rollerbowl, Culduthel Rd. Inverness	10am to 12 noon every 2nd Sunday of the Month.
5th Mar 2020	'Rosemarkie Man' lecture	Old North Inn, Inchmore. 19:30	Local archeologist and fiddle player Simon Gunn will lecture on the discovery and excavation of the Rosemarkie Man. Not to be missed.
26th April 2020	Drive It Day	TBA	The plan has still to be made but put this one in your diary.
7th May 2020	Club run to Ullapool for chips	Meet at Strathpeffer Square at 19:30	Mmmmmm Chips. And midge repellent.
2nd July	Drive each others Cars Night	Brokies Lodge IV4 7HW 19:30	