

CLASSIC SCENE



February 2023



Club Officials

Chair: Trish Brown
Tel: 01862 832337
chairman@highlandclassic.org.uk
Secretary: Bryan McIlwraith
Tel: 01463 222839
secretary@highlandclassic.org.uk
Treasurer: Ian Thompson
Tel: 01463 790969
treasurer@highlandclassic.org.uk

Membership

Bryan McIlwraith
Renewals should be sent to Bryan at
67 Lochalsh Road, Inverness IV3 8HW
Tel: 07821 260774
bryanmcilwraith@gmail.com

Webmaster

www.highlandclassic.org.uk
Webmaster@highlandclassic.org.uk

Editor

Calum Pearson
Bowersburn, Croftnacreich,
North Kessock. IV1 3ZE
Email: editor@highlandclassic.org.uk
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ing. Please send articles by post or
email to addresses above.

Archivist

The club has an extensive archive of
information relating to all aspects of
classic car ownership. To access this
please contact Ranald Smith at
Hawthorn Cottage, 2 Burn Road, In-
verness IV2 4NG. 01463 236459
ranaldsmith@btinternet.com

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Cover Picture

Dashcam footage of a snowy Kes-
sock bridge during January's snow.

Welcome to the February Newsletter

Happy New Year to everyone who didn't make the auction night.

My headline news is that I'm driving again! Who'd have thought that driving your van to the dump, I mean recycling centre, could bring so much pleasure? I was also pleased to be able to enjoy driving in the snow before it melted. Who else felt like Colin MacRae, giving a tug at the handbrake before going into their drive?

The wonderful NHS have declared I have a medically functioning brain and heart. Though my concussion symptoms are still lingering and I can get muddled and forgetful, or put it this way more muddled and forgetful than before. For example the other day I couldn't remember what Dingwall was called. My performance as auctioneer at the last club meeting was slightly hindered by occasional (I can hear smart comments already) brain lapses. One bidding session went up to £5 and then climbed back down to £3. Surely an auction first? Still it was fun and there were a few laughs. Why am I telling you all this? Just to fill a few lines of the newsletter really.

The next meeting is the AGM where six, yes six years ago it seems I volunteered to do the newsletter with my first attempt coming out for March 2017. Doesn't time fly by when you're having fun? As always the committee posts will be open to new blood so get your nominations in now and we can vote for the new newsletter editor get it down to two, have run-off speeches, pass it to the members and then I'll wake up from my dream and to a three day deadline.

I have finally got around to some car work in the garage. I believe the Sierra has had a problem with the clutch dragging, like it's not full disengaged. A common problem is the plastic self adjusting quadrant in the pedal and as there seems to be too much cable slack at the clutch arm on the side of the gearbox too, I going to replace it. A bit of Haynes Manual research made the job look easy enough. Undo clip, remove washer remove pedal, reassembly is the reverse of disassembly- except the pedal box on my car is built differently so it was a pedal box out job, which meant removing the steering column, but when I got the pedal on the bench the quadrant looked OK to me. I had a spare so I installed it anyway, and I have a better but not complete understanding of how it works. I think it needs to be under tension to work properly. I'll know if it's fixed or not once I get it all back in the car, but as Edd China says, that's a job for another day.

Hopefully we'll meet up at the AGM where you can air your views and help shape the future of the Highland Classic Motor Club.

Your Editor.

Chairs Bitty



Our January auction was good, with many bargains to be had. Not everything got sold, but at the end of the night all buyers and sellers were pleased with their proceeds. Calum is doing a really good job of managing the auction, not by trying to fill Bryan's shoes, but by putting down his own ones. After many years, we are also getting slicker at recording who sold/bought what and Calum's numbering system is playing a part in this. By the way, the club made £26.50. And yes, we came back with more than we left with.

Our Landie has gone in to our local garage to get the exhaust manifold gasket replaced. Feedback from our mannie at the garage suggests that the manifold is not entirely straight any more and 2 of the bolts are missing. We are wondering whether the two are connected and perhaps also the long run to Edinburgh and back. In any case, our mannie at the garage will attempt skimming the manifold to remove the high points.

The Merc turns out to be a bit rubbish in the cold weather. We are seriously thinking of getting a spare set of wheels with winter tyres, but are actually not sure whether this will solve our issues. The car has a tendency of keeping on driving when you are trying to slow down on slippery/icy surfaces. "take it out of gear" is the advice in the handbook, otherwise the electronic gadgetry will continue to try and put power to the wheels. Which is probably why some year ago – you may remember me mentioning it – the car refuses to stop for junctions when it is icy no matter how carefully you approach the junction. And all the electronics get really confused, like in the North Inn car park last month which was like a curling rink, when the dashboard lit up like a Christmas tree with the ABS and traction control all flashing at us. It sorted itself out as soon as we joined the main road again.

As you do, we got talking at my place of work on the weather and road conditions. We all agreed that we (in the UK) are pretty rubbish when it comes to winter weather. We reckoned that the Nordic countries are probably laughing their heads when they listen to our news – inch of snow, ha ha ha – or something like that. In our opinion older cars appeared better at dealing with snow and ice than modern cars. One of my colleagues reminiscing about his Citroen AX and how he would trundle up the hill to Abriachan in the snow, where plenty of 4x4's were struggling. Skinny tyres, ko.

A year goes by very quickly and our February meeting is our AGM at the Old North Inn. Hopefully last year's quiz winners have had time to think up a wee quiz for us to puzzle over after the official club business has been completed. If not, I am sure we can fill the evening with gossip. Winter month timings, so make sure you are there at 7pm.

See you there,

Trish.

January Auction Night - Old North Inn

What can I say about the auction night? I can hardly review it as I was not an observer but being observed. This was my second year as the auctioneer and I really hope Bryan returns soon. His are hard shoes to fill as he makes it very funny and has a much better hat. I did manage to raise a few laughs but my favourite joke was the slate mounted clock, "A clean slate for the new year." Not a murmur, even the tumbleweed could be bothered. I quite enjoyed looking at the 20 plus disinterested faces, so if you think the puns will stop, they will not, they will just get more punishing.

This years most unusual item was (I believe) an MGB four speed gearbox. A heavy old item to lift onto the auction table and sadly it didn't sell, not a glimmer of interest, like my jokes. It's a pity as it was a good item. Maybe next year we can produce a catalogue of high end items beforehand?

There were quite a few new faces which was great. I'll never forget my first auction. It was a big surprise and more of a bargain recycling of stuff, than a genuine auction and with an big emphasis on laughs. I hope those new faces come back next year now they know how the low the bar is set. There were some absolute bargains to be had but as usual boxes of magazines didn't really go well. Yes there was some "unbelievable crap" too, but one persons crap might be another's treasure. Some of us still think we will get rid of things only to find that shed even fuller the next day.

From an auctioneer perspective, it was more about drumming up enough interest for someone to part with a single pound for someone else's shed clear-out item, but occasionally we did get a run, which caught me by surprise.

We had to start at the earlier time of 7:00pm, which is my excuse for the table being setup with back lighting make the items look even more shady than normal, apologies for that, we will learn and move on. You all looked well lit from where I was standing though. I have a spot light I could bring next year.

My Skoda Fabulous recently had a faulty water pump. Now if only a bargain one could be found at the auction night. Club lore has it that one once circulated (geddit?) round the auction for so many years that it was eventually thrown off the (I believe) Cromarty bridge. I can't wait for the next auction to come around again.

Calum Pearson

Erratum - also known as spotters corner

I made some wee errors in last months news letter. Of course the Fortrose & Rosemarkie Classic Vehicle Rally was in August, not September and the yellow MG was spotted in Lidl's not Aldis. Though German Christmas fare and tools are available in both.



Highland Classic Motor Club.

Annual General Meeting 3rd Feb 2022 Minutes.

Minutes of the last AGM were passed. Proposed Alice, 2nd Roy

President's Report. The pandemic had impacted on the club like everything else, but Zoom meetings had been held which were enjoyed by those "attending", and a couple of runs had gone ahead in the summer. Hopefully the end of restrictions was in sight and it seems that a lot of events were resuming this coming year.

Treasurer's Report. There was currently £1600 in the bank. Very little had been spent in the last year.

Secretary's Report. There were currently 53 paid up members with another 10 or so late to collect.

Committee Members. The committee remains unchanged from last year as does the Newsletter editor and the Webmaster.

Calendar. The club calendar for 2022 was discussed as follows;

March Old North Inn for a blether.

April meeting at Jack Meredith's collection Drumnadrochit.

Drive it Day 24th April

May. Possibly Craig Chapman's workshop at Cannich.

Inverness car show 21st may

Strathspey railway visit and jaunt as a weekend run.

June ????? Run?

July Run to Nairn "Bring a Pudding"

Other topics to be explored.

PL Smiddy; Miles

8 ball Tuning; Graeme.

Ice Racing; Trish.

AOCB. Bryan proposed a charitable donation to the Renal Unit at Raigmore where he had recently been a patient. The members were in agreement and Bryan was asked to investigate further.

There being no further business the meeting was closed.

Austin 10 Rear Axle

Jim Mackay

I restored Samantha between 1974 and 1978 but it was many years after that I tackled the roof and interior. I had a room in a disused cottage where the window had been knocked out and a big door fitted. There was no power or water, no light unless the door was open, it was over a mile away from my house and I was glad to have it!

The back axle was stripped and as the 8 rivets holding the crown wheel to the differential body were slack I removed four and replaced them with bolts and locking nuts. I had no heat to tighten the rivets so this was my solution. I don't remember how I removed the rivets but it must have been hammer and chisel. The hub bearing inner races had started turning on the axle ends and had worn large grooves. The solution was to have the ends welded up, machined and new bearings with wider inner races fitted. The hub seals were leather but the Austin Ten Drivers Club supplied a modern garter spring alternative. The axle ends had to be machined to accommodate the new seals and I had the work done at British Aluminium. I had contacts there and a very large lathe was required.

Fast forward to 2022 and the back axle was making some alarming noises at times. On taking it apart, all became clear. There were two rivet heads sheared off and a locking nut loose among the innards. Fortunately, there was no damage to the crown and bevel so all the rivets were removed, eight bolts fitted with nuts welded on and new differential carrier bearings fitted (metric size!). Most of the black paint had disappeared over the years but the Red Lead primer was intact!

The prop-shaft universal joints were replaced but two of the cups had been rotating. Weld? Epoxy? Solder? Braze? I decided to use a centre punch to raise the metal. It works.....for now!



Out and About

A 2007 MG spotted in Crown area of Inverness with what looks like anti speed camera plates. Possibly. And a Peugeot 306 in B&Qs car park. Moderns but 15 years old and hopefully future classics.



And Jim Mackay has been out and about in some fancy looking locations, especially that Land Rover by the bins. The red Skyline was at Cars and Coffee in May and the White Datsun 280Z in November I think. Does anyone else think old Japanese cars look really good?



Cars And Coffee

8th January

Last month I said it was probably one of the coldest Cars and Coffee since it began, but January by unpopular consent was colder. No ice, but a wind that cut to the bone.



I really liked this base spec French registered BMW 315.



This Jaguar F-Type V6 Roadster that has been extensively breathed on by the Lister Motor Company. They are a Jaguar legend.



I still like Barry's Lotus Elise and suffer mild jealousy whenever I see it.



Although there weren't so many cars there that interested me, and some people came down in their normal cars there was still the opportunity to catch up with people and talk about what they were up too. This is probably the biggest success of Cars and Coffee, the like minded people it brings together.

My Dad used to have a Lister too. He kept it in the shed at the back of his office in Elgin in case of a power cut. It made a great noise on the few occasions it ran. (Joke stolen btw.)



Austin Healey 18

Jim Mackay

The new aluminium doors just didn't fit the new front and rear wings. The swage line is the big problem and it wasn't in the right place and the contour was different. The door I acquired on eBay was a lot better than the full price one. Do I send it back? Will another door be any better? It was well made but wrong. The bottom was angled the wrong way so it fouled the cill, the front and rear ends were not straight and it wasn't high enough, almost a Wild West saloon door. Meanwhile, on the hunt for the later cranked hinges I had ordered up new ones made in aluminium but they proved to be too bulky. I found a pair of second hand doors on eBay and arranged to pick them up near St Andrews. One had the proper cast iron hinges, both were presentably loaded with filler and the contours were a nearer match for the wings. Another supplier furnished me with a pair of new cast iron hinges so I was sorted. The image shows the two types of hinges and you may notice that the hole positions are different. I didn't and it was going to cause me more grief further down the line.



Cheers, *Jim MacKay.*



In the March issue of Practical Classics Danny Hopkins pays tribute to car and industrial designer Tom Karen who passed away recently. He was responsible for many classic designs and said who could always sense when something was created with love and talent because they make you smile. When was the last time a modern car design made you smile?

It seems that one of his favourite design details was the rising rear lines on the Scimitar which is often copied. He also designed the Raleigh Chopper two which makes the above combination even more special.



Of course he's not the only engineering designer with a car bike cross over. Alex Moulton designed the Moulton rubber suspended folding bike and the rubber doughnuts used in Mini suspension and then hydrolastic and hydragas suspension systems which were very effective.

HCMC Events

2nd Feb 2023 HCMC AGM Old North Inn **7.00pm** start. Time to air your views and shape the direction of the club.

12th Feb 2023 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.