

CLASSIC SCENE



April 2009

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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.

Archivist

Ranald Smith
The club has an extensive archive of information
relating to all aspects of classic car ownership
including technical advice etc. To access this,
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Cover picture

*Miles' Mini stable mate—a 70's
Reliant Scimitar*

THE CHAIRMAN'S BIT

We had an interesting visit last month to Moray Firth Training. An excellent turnout (around twenty) listened to Gavin Grant explained the proper way to treat grinding discs and wheels, and cutting discs. This gave us plenty to think about whilst lying under the car smoking a cigarette, cutting away the bit of the exhaust system next to the fuel tank! A few of us adjourned to the pub afterwards to mull over the evening and to discuss mig welding with fire extinguishers – at least I think that was what Ian and Miles were talking about.

The weather is still a bit mixed to say the least but I have spotted a few MGs and some old Healeys having a run so things are picking up. It's also been a busy month for new members and I would like to welcome the following people to our happy band: Tim Boles lives in Tomatin and owns two Chevrolet Camaros (one of which he races), a 1979 AMC Jeep and a 1991 BMW Hartge; Alan Goff from The



Muir of Ord who owns a 1974 Lancia Fulvia; Bill Leslie from Inverness who owns a 1981 Triumph TR7 (in TR8 spec with the V8); and last but not least Brian Regan from Auldearn with a 1957 MGA. None of you will need to be concerned about being shown up by the Chairman's car! If I ever get it going.....

Michael

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This Months Meeting

Thursday 2nd April March at 8pm

Pub meet at Brockies Lodge, Kiltarlity

EDITORIAL

Hello,

I've had more emails from the organisers of the Inverness Classic Motor Show on Saturday the 9th May. It now appears that this event is for all classic, vintage and veteran cars regardless of age. There are plans to display classics in the Morrison Supermarket car park as well as around the town, making up a 'route' for the punters to follow. I'll print more details as they come known.



The April meeting to Wheelfix has had to be rescheduled, so we're off to Brockies Lodge, Kiltarlity for a pub night. A chance to shake some of those winter cobwebs from your cars.

Things are shaping up for this years 'Drive it Day' on 26th April. Meet on Stadium Road at 10:30 for a short run through the town before heading over the Black Isle to Dingwall and a route to the Old North Inn at Inchmore. If we have similar weather to last year, it should be a grand day out.

Entry forms for the Tain Rally are available from me if anyone needs one—see me at one of the meetings.

If you don't see me at the monthly meetings, you can write to me at the address inside the front cover, or email me direct at ClassicScene@bevs.org

Callum

For Sale

I'll be moving shortly and have to dispose of all my motoring bits and pieces.

Garage Clearance—Years of collecting to go.

Petters 2cyl Stationery Engine

A35 Parts

1972 Rolls Royce (Tax Exempt)

1972 MG Roadster (Tax Exempt) Wire Wheels Chrome Bumper etc Reg DKB 566K

Jaguar M2 S Series incomplete restoration Reg JAN 665D

Honda CB250 Motorcycle NSA 353P 1976

Sun Tandem – must be over 50 years old for restoration

Haynes car manuals and other parts manuals.

Collection of 9 brass radiators Riley, Bull Nosed Morris, Morris 10 from 1930's etc.

12 or more old paraffin roadworks lights – easily converted to electric

Many other spares. Bring your own boxes.

Contact **Peter Cook** on 01463 239209

Local Events Diary

Here are some details of 2009 local events that may be of interest to our members

April

26th FBHVC “Drive-it” Day. We’re planning a longer run than last year.
Meet on Stadium Road at 10:30am for a scenic run around the local area.
Further details next month

May

2nd Highlands Historic Commercial Vehicle Road Run. Starts in Inverness
9th Inverness Classic Motor Show 10am-5pm

June

1st Motorfun classic rally with fun run. George West, Rally Sec 01343
543716
7th Fraserburgh Vintage Car Rally 12-5pm
21st Tain Vintage Vehicle Rally, Glenmorangie Field, Tain

July

11th/12th Scottish Transport Extravaganza at Glamis Castle
19th Forres Theme Day—Veteran, Vintage and Classic Vehicle Show
19th Knockhill Classic SpeedFair

August

2nd Moray Muscle Show, Inchberry Hall, Mosstodloch
9th Historic Wheels Rally—Brodie Castle
29th Fortrose Classic Rally and Fun Day
29th/30th Auto Spirit—Culzean Castle

September

5th Dingwall Street Fair
6th Motor Mania—Grantown on Spey
19th Working Vintage Rally and Display, Daviot Fram, Nr Inverness
19th/20th Selkirk Rally

October

3rd/4th Fraserburgh East to West Commercial Run

If you notice any errors or omissions, please let the editor know.

Miles' Meanderings

My word, doesn't the winter fly by when you have such a long car "To Do" list and I am sure it isn't any easier even when your list only has one item on it such as "Rewire TVR" eh Mike?!

Well, with the exception of the Lambing Snow that everyone insisted on telling me about when I commented on the pleasant Sunshine we were experiencing in mid-March, winter is over! How's your list looking now? Thought so!

I'm not here to say I told you so or listen to your woes of other "To Do" lists and hard to find parts etc. I am just going to say "MOTs." Yes that is a plural. Read it and weep; "Two MOTs", one plus another one, double delight, one in each hand, two!

Mini and Scimitar both roadworthy and legal. I just had to tell somebody and when thinking who would appreciate that most I thought of you lot, so here I am telling you.

Great, now I can get on and write any drivel now because nobody is likely to even be talking to me after that, let alone want to read what I've got to say, but if you are still with me I do hope as many people as possible have or will soon be in possession of that most coveted piece of paper because it will mean that you have no excuse at all to miss coming out with us on "Drive It

Day" the 26th April.

Yes, dust off those driving gloves, check those tyre pressures and tell the other half you won't be able to go to her Mother's for Sunday lunch that week because you are going driving!

Last Year we had an encouraging turn out of about 20 Classics, the sun shone and an enjoyable, if not slightly short drive around Inverness and part of the Black Isle was had by all. A longer run is planned this year.

Many of the participants were not even Club Members (in fact not many of them were) and although it is more of a Federation thing than a Club Run it would be great to see as many of you as possible out there supporting the day, even if you just push your Classic out of the garage onto the driveway and then pop down to Stadium road in your modern. The idea, after all is to get those Classics seen and raise awareness of their following.

In all seriousness, we have been putting out flyers and press releases to the papers and radio stations to try and invite and encourage as many Classic owners to come along for the run as possible but we have to hope that they see or hear us, you guys have no excuse for not knowing and I can be more direct, so please come, it's your hobby!

And what a hobby it is! I just love the camaraderie that an old car or two can invoke, there may be the odd playful rivalry between Marques but generally Classic Car ownership or even just an interest in Classics opens up avenues of social and sensory delights.

It doesn't matter where your allegiances lie you will always be afforded a flash of a Triumph headlight, a driving-gloved tip of a Ford baseball cap or a full-on Morris Minor wave if you just acknowledge that Classic leading the convoy of frustrated looking modern car drivers in the other direction!

Ownership of these different Marques and Models too can be so similar, bringing us all even closer together under the umbrella of the Classic. Take for instance the trouble that both Bryan and I had when trying to winter his DB7 and my Mini in our respective garages.

As we read recently in his January piece for Classic Scene, "A Different World" he, like myself before, had struggled to mount the insurmountable incline up to his garage without removing rather important pieces from the underside of his pride and joy and had to resort to stacking slabs in front of it to gain access.

Well if this doesn't unequivocally link us both through our love of Classics, whether Aston Martin or Mini, across

the tarmac and gravel of the highways and byways I don't know what would!

However, when I mentioned this at the recent Committee Meeting it was pointed out to me by the "Wireless" one that where as I had undoubtedly used "old slabs" (as can be seen in the accompanying picture) Bryan's Aston Martin assisters were more likely to be regarded as "Engineering Blocks"!

Oh Dear, maybe I've been inhaling too many high mixture exhaust fumes and am looking at all this through rather rose tinted driving goggles. Never mind, I know my placewith my old Mini, old slabs and two new MOTs!

See you all on the 26th. You'll have to come along now, if only to see which car I'll be driving!

Miles.



Every Car Has Its Day



Out of the blue, one summer, I had the chance to immortalise my 50 year old Austin Ten Conway Cabriolet on the 'Silver Screen'. She was given a chance to appear in "War and remembrance" an American production.

She was auditioned at Duxford opposite the old aeroplane museum. The film team had transformed the area with palm tree and hordes of Indians, with banks of red-faces Khaki clad soldiers and clusters of demure starched nurses. They were filming supposedly in Delhi! Huge elbow cranes topped with cameras and arc lights towered above jean and t-shirted technicians.

When I reached the area I parked behind a line of ancient open jeeps containing an imaginative assortment of would-be soldiers who seemed to come to life at my arrival. They soon located the Head of Transport - a charming battle torn Austrian known to everyone as "Nerch" and his London counterpart - John Sargeant. Together, they looked the car over and declared that she "would do". John invited me to stay to lunch with the assurance that he'd contact me in a couple of weeks time.

About ten days later, John phoned me at work asking if I could be on location on the A1 at 8am the following day to start two days filming. I had visions of setting off well before dawn and tried to summon an enthusiastic

"yes, but where about on the A1?". The answer came back "Near Bigglewade, but if you want to break your journey, you could stay with us at the Gonville Hotel in Cambridge and set off with the convoy the following morning". John did make it sound attractive, particularly when he added that if I could reach the hotel by 9pm, I could join him party for dinner that evening.

I rushed home and packed hairdryer, dungarees and jeans and donned smart gear for an evening out. Before leaving home, I left a message at the hotel reception explaining that I had been held up and for the name of the restaurant to be left with the reception. This was just in case the car collapsed on the journey with nervous excitement - I was sure it was catching!

However, there must have been a following wind because I made the 45-mile journey in just under an hour. I was there fore in a reasonable time to book in, meet up with the four members of the transport team, locate my bedroom which was in the front of the hotel and was the size of a small ballroom with an en-suite bathroom, easy chairs, coffee table, electric kettle, tea, coffee etc. Needless to say, the cheery company of John, Yvonne, Alan and "Budgie", and the meal (no expenses spared) were highly enjoyable.

Thanks to an alarm call at 6am, I was able to join the convoy at 6:30am and set off for a location at Toft Manner via my old cars first ever run down a motorway! On arrival, the car was immediately blacked up, wartime style, with black masking tape, leaving only slits on the headlamps. She was then well dusted and groomed before driving off to the filming area by a young 1940's type Chauffeur. I was tucking into breakfast when I was called to tend the car as she was refusing to start. Racing to the filming area I had visions of the starter motor packed up...or worse! I was clear

that the ignition was functioning and so I took the carburettor to pieces as she does suffer from silt in the fuel. Right enough—it needed cleaning with some petrol stowed in the boot. I got her going quickly but the engine had to be switched off and restarted during filming.

Suffice to say that with a new driver unused to the quirks of the car, we soon had a red faced impatient producer, a flat battery on our hands and me feeling a trifle sick. Fortunately, John Sargeant and his team came swiftly to the rescue in the shape of an enormous battery which they placed directly behind the drivers seat with jump leads connecting it to the flat battery under the drivers seat. The shared relief in that filming could once more proceed was like a comforting wave of warm sunshine which showed in the faces of the crew. I kept my fingers firmly crossed as the filming continued and the male lead Hart Bruckner jumped into the back of my car. I was just hoping that he didn't place his large feet casually across the battery terminals.

At about 11:30, we left for the next equally remote filming location at Lolworth Grange—another old and very large privately owned manor house kept in its original condition. While the massive film unit was packing up and moving off and relocating. The gallant Transport crew were giving my car a full investigative overhaul although to my relief this time the car was to be filmed stationary.

Filming proceeded in the grounds at the back of the manor house where a dozen little pre-school boys, dressed in flannel knee-length shorts and lace-up boots were clustered on a

tartan rug. Apparently, it is well known that the most unpredictable, difficult film ingredients (apart from old cars) are children and animals. There were very many retakes of the little boys eventually leading to one child breaking down when he was caught short as he was completely baffled and dismayed by the discovery of fly buttons!

Eventually, filming over, the child star came and sat beside me on the grass where I was clumsily tucking into an enormous cream meringue. It was the Director, Don Curtis' birthday and not only were there fresh cream cakes and birthday cake, but champagne was also readily available. Some of the cream dolloped down my front and the child star gazed at me incredulously and asked my name. He revealed his name, with a heavy American accent, as Hunter J Schlesinger, aged 3 years old!

As we packed up for the day John told me that because of the starting problems with the car, he wouldn't be able to use her on day two. He said that I was very

welcome to stay and watch the action, and so I did.

The second days filming base began at a place called South Hill not far from Ireland near Biggleswade where I had the chance to relax and meet some of the other classic car owners. Andrew from Newmarket, was the owner of an enormous "Roller" with glass partition. Tony was a Thatcher from Taunton who had brought two six-seater Packards. He had more at home. Two middle-aged identical twins drove their less identical Austin cabs which were a gleaming joy to behold. They were dark red



and black with a metal rail round the roof for luggage, a recess next to the driver and glass partition. They had room for four passengers facing each other.



During the morning, Robert Mitchum arrived looking tanned, old and very slim and never without a cigarette. He quickly disappeared into the wardrobe caravan and emerged about an hour later as a highly decorated Naval Chief. He was driven off to the filming location at South Hill Railway Station with Victoria Tennant, a chocolate box blonde in a close fitting khaki suit beautifully blending with her hair and skin colour. Yvonne, the transport crews 'girl Friday' suggested that I join her for a trip to the filming area. There was plenty of activity with bursts of steam from an old steam engine and several retakes of Victoria Tennant driving an open Morris 8 Tourer at high speed towards the Railway Station. The retakes seemed to be because the Producer wanted the Austin cabs (laden with 1940's passengers and luggage) to cross with the Morris at a particular point.

When we returned to base, Alan, an enormous 'A'-team type character, suggested I join him to where more filming was being shot down a supposedly very quiet country lane. Victoria Tennant was being filmed "driving" Robert Mitchum in the Morris 8. The car was sitting

on a low-loader which also held the Assistant Producer, the camera, sound and lighting crews. The whole thing was briskly towed by a battered Land Rover.

Word had it that filming was running late and at about 2:30pm, the whole enterprise minus Robert Mitchum and Victoria Tennant, left for the final location of the day, Wimpole Hall, a National Trust Property, about 10 miles from Cambridge. This was to stage a massive funeral scene. A large cemetery was filled with hundreds of extras complete with umbrellas. Apparently, a funeral scene is not effective without rain, and the rain had to be heavy. The huge elbow cranes held large gauge hoses and the rain that fell equalled the torrent in Gene Kelly's 'Singing in the Rain'. The old cars, still blacked up, including mine, were lined up in front of Wimpole Hall and had supposedly transported many of the mourners. You can imagine the feelings of many of the extras when the strength of the 'rain' water forced one of the hose couplings apart!

Eventually, as light began to fail, we broke up for a welcome meal and the chance to chat about our shared experiences during those memorable days.

If anyone would like to register their "old" car to feature in Film and T.V. productions, they should contact one of the agencies and I hope you had as much fun as I did

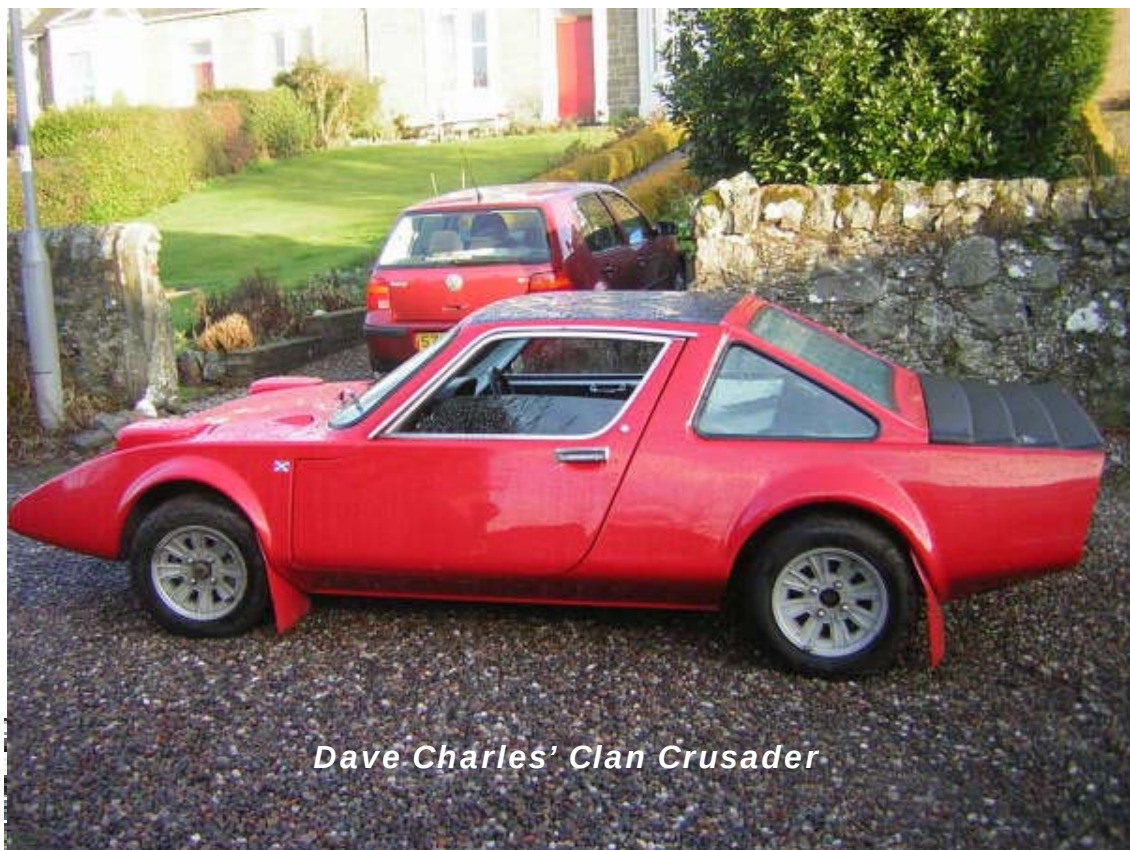
Elizabeth Bligh

Highland Heaps

Restoration projects spotted in and around the



If you're brave enough to want to rescue one these 'heaps', contact the editor for more info



Dave Charles' Clan Crusader



John Mackays 1925 Bean