

CLASSIC SCENE



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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

These cars were "saved" under the Governments scrappage scheme. Now rotting away on an airfield somewhere in the UK. See email from John Mackenzie.

CHAIR BITTY APRIL 2016

The visit to the Highlander Museum at Fort George was very well attended. Given that the museum is part of a live barracks, we got escorted into the fort and directed to a courtyard round the back of the museum where there was more than plenty of room to park. As it turned out a number of our members had relatives in the Seaforth or Cameron regiments, so for them it was a little bit of Who Do You Think You Are experience, especially after one of the volunteer guides offered to do a little research.



As for our cars, here we go again. The Merc obviously decided that it was finally time to give up on the gearbox sump. Alice had identified something leaking and initially blamed a fuel leak, but it turned out that the gearbox sump had cracked. Fortunately our garage has a scrapper in their backyard with a good gearbox, so the sump was swapped over and the car got a gearbox filter & oil change into the bargain. All done just in time before we needed the car to pick up some relatives from Glasgow.

Not to be outdone, the Smart announced a slipping clutch, which although it is a fairly straightforward swap of a clutch/flywheel unit, according to our man at the garage, access is a ***. But being dual mass and of-course a Brabus, the unit is eye wateringly expensive. Another trip to the building society will be in order. The mounting brackets for the secondary air pump will be tackled at the same time.

This months meet is to the Inverness Kart Raceway at Fairways. If you want to do a round of Karting, details of how to book a place are on our websites Forum. I am chickening out as I always end up with a very bruised back. See you there.

Trish.

CLASSIC CAR CONSPIRACY PLOT DISCOVERED

It has come to my notice recently that there is a **SINISTER** plot in the Classic Car World aimed at the more **DEXTEROUS** amateur mechanics among us. This plot goes right to the heart of car fans and involves a deliberate plot to make cars extremely difficult to work on for the many of us who delight in weekend tinkering. It goes back to the original design of many cars and prevents any possible way that this "tinkering" can be achieved.

What on Earth am I wittering on about? The clue lies in the opening paragraph. For those of you who did not enjoy the delights of learning Latin at school (I did it for 3 years, totally useless unless someone can find me a Roman Centurion or two) it's the two words "Sinister" and "Dexterous". If something is "sinister" we normally mean it is somehow evil or dark. "Dexterous" or "dexterity" on the other hand intimates cleverness or nimbleness of hands and fingers. But the original meaning of these two Latin words is simply "left" and "right". So apologies to those of you who are "sinister" of hand, you're not really evil. But if you are a sinister car designer, you have caused untold grief to us weekend mechanics. As you know from last months and this months Newsletter I have been working on the Lancia and I am convinced that the majority of car designers are left handed. I am sure that all of us "dexterous" home mechanics have had at some time, huge troubles simply trying to put a nut on a bolt in some hidden part of the car. No problem for those of a "sinister" persuasion, your fingers are dextrous but for the majority of us right handed people trying to put that nut on a bolt in a part of the engine that we cannot even see is nigh on impossible. On the Lancia it was fitting the carburettors back on. Standing at the front of the car, the carbs are on the left, but the engine is canted over to the right at 45°, no problem on the six nuts visible on the top of the carbs and manifold but the other half dozen are under the carbs. Go around to the right hand side of the car and you cannot even see the nuts, so you can only reach them from the front with your head upside down trying to see them and then using your left hand. Likewise the nut for the clamp

holding the distributor in place. The head is at the 45° angle and the distributor on a level engine would be horizontal but on the Lancia is now at a 45° angle to the left and is hiding behind the fuel line and various other water pipes, clutch cables and levers and to tighten the nut requires an open ended spanner held in..... Yup the left hand!

So not only are car designers all left handed they also have an evil (sinister) sense of humour. I'm sure that the first thing they design is some obscure part that probably only once in a cars life do you need to get at it to replace or repair it. They then lay that part on the floor and build the car around it muttering to themselves in a sinister way, "Try finding that in 25 years time!" The main problems I have had in the past were on, of all things a Lancia Beta Coupe. One of the Fiat designed cars not a "real" Lancia I hasten to add. First up was the heater. It was never very good so I took it into my head one day to take out the heater radiator, give it a good clean and a flush through. After about three hours and with the inside of the car looking as if a wrecking crew had done their worst I gave it up as a bad job and just put up with the weak heater. Then the water pump went. I had previously replaced the water pump on a Mk1 Ford Cortina. Drain the radiator, slacken the fan belt, remove three very accessible bolts, old pump out, new pump in, three bolts and tighten up the fan belt and refill the radiator. Took about 20 minutes. I had a Haynes Workshop Manual for the Lancia, so find the page and a quick read first.

"REPLACING THE WATER PUMP"

1. Jack up the front of the car and remove the front offside wheel.

Err, excuse me, it's the water pump. I'll just check that again. Yup, right page, right section. So off with the wheel.

2. Remove the small plate on the inner wing behind the front suspension.

Ok found it. It is a bit small. 4 bolts holding it in place.

3. Unbolt the water pump. Remove and insert new pump.

Hmm. The hole in the wing is too small to get a socket onto the bolts. But I can get an open ended spanner around the bottom of the inner wing and onto the bolts. But I can only get an 1/8th of a turn on the bolt before the spanner jams up against the suspension arm. So remove the spanner completely, turn it over and get the next 1/8th of a turn, take it out and turn it over again. But guess what? I CAN ONLY USE MY LEFT HAND ON THE BLOODY BOLT! It took over 4 hours to replace the pump. Not only that but when Fiat took over Lancia and Ferrari, they amalgamated many of the ancillary parts so that one size fits all. So many parts now came in a pretty, bright red Ferrari box, and it doesn't take much imagination to work out how much they charged for Fiat parts in a Ferrari box! This was in the early 80's and I also replaced the Lancia front brake pads one time. Another very smart Ferrari box but £80 for pads! On the good old Dagenham Dustbin a set of front pads was about £6.

But I digress. So is there a "Sinister" plot by car designers who are all left handed?

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CLASSIC CARS ROTTING AWAY

Many of the vehicles bought under the scrappage scheme are still sat on unused airfields, abandoned. In this state they are of no use to anyone. I propose that the cars are auctioned off to the public, or at least used for parts. The price of steel has recently dropped dramatically and therefore it seems pointless to waste these iconic cars for this purpose. Many of these cars are a huge part of British motoring history, cars such as Minis, Triumphs, Rovers and Jaguars amongst many others are iconic cars and shouldn't be scrapped for a pittance. If this cannot be achieved then we need to at least ensure this doesn't happen again. I believe if we acquire enough support we may be able to make a difference. Let's save those classics! Below is a link to an online petition to try and save these cars.

Go to www.change.org and look for patrick-mcloughlin-save-the-classic-cars-from-the-scrappage-scheme?

John Mackenzie

THE EDITORS MONTHLY RANT.

Actually not too much to rant about this month. For those of you who have sent items to me recently, many thanks, and I have had to hold some of them over until next month. One of the items was from Gavin Anderson about the problems associated with the replacement of headlights with after market HID bulbs. At the same time the EU (Who else?) is trying to pass a definition of an 'Historic Vehicle'. The FBHVC is somewhat against this as it could be the thin end of the wedge and introducing legislation which may restrict the use of 'Historic Vehicles' to only on certain days and times, add into this the possible problems with LEZ's. Low Emission Zones in some city centres and it all starts to get complicated and a previous issue of cars fitted with non standard parts. So I will try to wade through all of this nonsense and put into words of a few syllables.

I'm also a bit short on photos to fill up a few empty spaces, so if you find something odd that's remotely classic car orientated please pass them on.



I managed to find this Lancia Fulvia Zagato around the back of HIS in Inverness a while back. A very rare beastie and the first I've seen in many a year. According to www.howmanyleft.com there are only 14 registered with the DVLA. And for any other Lancia fans out there, there are some beauties on ebay at the moment; a fully restored S1 Fulvia with a proven rally record.....£89,999!!! An S1 Fanalone (A Rallye model with large headlights) £45,000.

At the Ed

LANCIA ENGINE REBUILD Part 3.

The first thing I did when setting out to rebuild the engine was to remove the Solex carburettors and clean and service them. So slightly out of sequence, but getting them off and then, inevitably, cleaning them was easy and a good place to start on the rebuild. Lots of carb cleaner was used and fortunately Tool Station does a good line in cleaner at about a third of the price that Hxxxxxds charge. Make sure that you have a well ventilated area when using carb cleaner as it's a bit "aromatic", either that or spend a lot of time giggling at the slightest thing! Lots of fiddly little jets and even fiddlier small seals all over the place, but a good clean had them looking a lot better. Putting it all back together again was a long job, would you believe there are 11 gaskets. The manifold is in three pieces, first there's a pipe that takes hot water from the radiator that fits on top of the heated section of the inlet manifold. Two gaskets on this pipe with four nuts and another gasket betwixt cylinder head and the inlet manifold and another eight nuts holding manifold onto the head. Next is another section of inlet manifold between the first bit and the carbs. This has a rubber section in it which is there to absorb any vibration that might affect the carbs. Don't want frothy petrol do we? Another two gaskets between the two sections and another eight nuts, now up to five gaskets and another two on the carbs. Keep up this is important, now seven gaskets. Time now to fit the assembled carbs and inlet manifold onto the head. More than a bit fiddly because there are 8 nuts to hold each section together and four on each carb. Making 24 all told. Come on keep up, I warned you that Lancia's are over-engineered! Oh forgot to mention, while putting all this lot together you have also to fit a drip tray under the carbs and manifold. This is absolutely vital, because if your carbs leak, the petrol will drip straight onto the starter motor. That's if the drips miss the alternator in the first place. Next is the air filter box. This fits onto the carbs with another two gaskets, one for each carb but only 4 nuts. On each carb. Gaskets:-9. Inside the air box are four individual inlets that line up with the carburettor throats. Two nuts on each, eight in total and another two gaskets. 11 gaskets and 36 nuts. And before I forget, there's another 8 nuts to hold the exhaust manifold in place..... and a gasket.

Things were now looking good. Head and cams all back on, timing chain reconnected carbs cleaned, serviced and refitted. Before I started to dismantle the engine I had lined up every timing mark I could find and if something needed to be timed in any way and didn't have a timing mark then I marked it! There was dabs of paint, pencil marks and notches carefully cut into everything I could think might need marking. But just to make sure I turned the engine over by hand without any spark plugs fitted. Nice and slow, just in case something wasn't quite right, and pistons and valves decided to meet in the middle. The valve clearances were reset and even without the plugs in every time the pistons came up to TDC there were lots of reassuring gurgling and hissing noises. Remember that 155psi compression test? Things were now looking good. Radiator refilled, engine filled with oil and a new oil filter fitted. Plugs in, treble check that all the plug leads are in the correct order and the timing checked and fully lined up with the static timing marks. Nothing left to do but fire it up. The battery had been on charge for some time so, all systems go! It fired first time.....for all of two seconds. Do you think that bugger would start? No chance. After rechecking everything umpteen times all I did was flatten the battery every time. 5 days I tried to get it to start and it would not fire for more than a second or so. Now when I renewed the timing chain several years ago I was convinced that the timing marks on the cam sprockets were ever so slightly inboard of the timing marks on the cam clamps. When everything else was exactly on the marks I noticed that the exhaust cam appeared to be slightly early but when you compared the timing marks with how much the cam would rotate just moving the cam one tooth on the sprockets it seemed to be too much. So after lots of tea and deep thought looking at these timing marks and checking everything else, it couldn't be anything else but mistimed. It took two goes to split the timing chain and move the sprocket just one tooth but on the third go it all seemed to line up perfectly. Not being brave enough to try and start it straight away I again turned the engine over by hand without the plugs in just to be sure there was no danger of any valves and pistons touching. The battery was almost flat but it fired up first time without any problems. Lots of oil pressure and within a minute or so settled down to an even tickover and everything began to warm up nicely. The Lancia has only one thing that could be better designed or placed, the oil filler pipe.

It's on the back of the rocker box/cam cover and the pipe is very narrow so it quite often gets an air lock and the oil overflows out of the filler pipe and all over the exhaust manifold. So when the engine began to warm up there was lots of smoke around, but a quick visual check everywhere showed that nothing was leaking and it eventually cleared. I have only driven the car for about 25 miles or so and I have run the engine at low revs until it has warmed up fully then at varying revs to bed the new rings in. All seems well and Callum will be pleased that the engine no longer smokes on tick over or on the overrun so he will have to get his fix of oil fumes from someone else. This was the first time I had been brave enough to tackle a car engine rebuild and to start with a double overhead cam V4 was certainly jumping in the deep end. But with hindsight it really wasn't that difficult and it really has paid off. The engine sounds and feels a lot smoother and quieter and, hopefully, I have cured its smoking habit. Sadly the engine will probably not throw out any oil at all now and I will have to find some other way of rust prevention. Would I do it again? I hope I don't have to!

Al the Ed.

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FORTHCOMING CLUB EVENTS

Date

Venue

7th Apr 2016

INVERNESS KART RACEWAY,
FAIRWAYS, INVERNESS

Visit to the New Inverness Kart Raceway for a Talk on the Venue and Charity that owns it, followed by a Drive for Members interested in Booking a Kart - SEE FORUM FOR DETAILS NOW! Meet 7.30pm at the Raceway and afterwards to Fairways for drinks.

5th May 2016

Tarbetness Lighthouse Visit, Portmahomack.

Numbers are limited to 20 to go up the lighthouse. People mustn't have a health condition or fear of heights!

2nd Jun 2016

Drive each others Cars, Brockies Lodge

7th Jul 2016

Black Isle Treasure Hunt.

NOTE THIS MAY CHANGE.

The Land Rover

Over the past few years, my dear trusty old Landy has been patched up, odd pieces of steel poked into rusty holes, This mainly affected the bulkhead, which is well known as weak point, why because it is steel. There is a misnomer that Land Rovers are made of aluminium, this is only partly true, only the bodywork apart from the bulkhead, chassis and the front panel, you know the major items.

My Landy has had a new chassis fitted in the past, I think 15 to 20 years ago, so I had no worries about that part, but the bulkhead was another matter. This was supposed to be fitted as standard to all Land Rovers from 1949, but the accountants got in the way. The top rail, where the windscreen meets the bulkhead, had reached the crumbly stage, where the slightest bump in the road, left a little pile of rust. This wasn't the most worrying part of the dreaded tin worm, it was where the pedals mounted, well they were slowly sinking into the cabin.

It was time to bite the bullet, and buy a new bulkhead and get it fitted. Now a new bulkhead, if you can get one, hens and teeth come to mind will cost about £2500, This was plain steel, so galvanising was on top of this, this was a bit beyond my means. Or a brand new hand built one, if you were prepared to wait 5 years. So the road to a repaired one was the only available option, via the ever interesting eBay. This search started about 3 years ago, but it wasn't until February this year that I found one , the price was good, ready to fit, but it was located in Newcastle, So, off we toddled and picked it up.

I had previously had a natter with a repairer locally who had agreed to take in the project, as my welding skills are, how best to put this, non-existent. Took the Landy and the bulkhead over, then the true horror dawned, this bulkhead was a complete bodge job, compete garbage. A lot of work was need to bring it up to the standard that could be sent for galvanising. This included a new top rail, new corners of the bulkhead on both sides, footwell on the drivers side. The bulkhead appeared to have been a Series 2a/Defender cut and shut job hidden carefully with filler and underseal. Now where have I heard that bodge before

But we persisted and got it to the stage of being galvanised, painted and on the Landy before the full extent of the bodge became apparent. One side of the bulkhead was lower than the other, which made fitting the windscreen a bit interesting, This was not all the shut line on the passenger side door was well a chasm, I could put my hand through the gap!. The roof sat at an angle higher than the windscreen it was supposed to fit on to. I was left speechless and just a tad annoyed, understandable in the circumstances, but what now?

Decision time, well this was a no brainer, as the Landy was in an unusable state, therefore the only solution was get the old sorted out and refitted, just as the so called new one should have been, yet more time, and yes the meter was running. Time was passing and eventually the Landy saw the light of day again, not before it took it's revenge on me, by the bonnet falling on my head!

The final bill was eye watering, as we had to do the job twice. Now it wasn't until I got her home that I notice she had none of her original bolts and screws. They had all been replaced with shiny new metric ones, what! I went back and asked what had happened to then all, its her history. It turned out they couldn't find them, someone had taken them off and the person who put it back together but couldn't find them. Have you tried to find 2BA pie headed screws!

This wasn't the only slight issue, the air vents leak water, not handy, they had fitted the new seals had supplied, but they had used sealant to hold them in place, then the vents would shut properly when it was all screwed back together, I've got to take them out and replace them properly. Then the horn didn't work, as it hadn't been connected up. I had been told that the wiring on my Landy left something to be desired. Not surprised it is a hotch potch of the original 1959 wiring and odd more modern additions, I could feel the steam coming out of the ears of the person who put it all back together. I refitted the washers and fettled one or two other bits, and the Landy sailed through her MOT, with the advisory, and oil leak, what's new, but from where?

There are a number of outstanding jobs to be done: fit the fuse box, rewire the radio, speakers, block up the numerous holes in the bulkhead. Then some insulation to deaden the noise and stop the incessant condensation, new windscreen, new vent seals. The list goes on and on.

I'll let you know the progress in time. Alice

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