

CLASSIC SCENE



40th Anniversary

May 2019



Spring is in the air



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The club has an extensive archive of
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Cover Picture

Now the sunnier weather is here,
more Classics are making at appear-
ance at Cars and Coffee, adding to
the melting pot of people and their
vehicles.

Welcome to the May Newsletter

I was driving along Longman Road mid-April and saw a lovely blue Volvo P1800ES and we crossed Shore Street roundabout together. What a beautiful car. I found a picture on the internet to show you as I couldn't take a picture and negotiate that roundabout at the same time. Plus it's illegal. Look at that rear hatch—it's huge!



I also saw a red early Alfa Sud driving down Tomnahurich Street in Inverness. It looked lovely and very Italian.

In other news I have bought another car. I don't want to spoil the surprise but it's 31 years old and black.

I was driving up the A9 towards the Longman roundabout late one weekend, following a Ford Mustang. It was cruising and I was slowly overtaking, and then we both slowed down for the 50mph limit. Just as the gap between us was closing, a blue Audi travelling at least 100mph bore down on us and did a quick undertake. With a speed difference of about 50mph and a gap in the 10's of meters it was a bit scary! Never mind that it was twice the speed limit. Then a white Astra (race loser) appeared but there was no gap so s/he tail-gated us flashing their headlights then gave up.

Later in the week I was talking to a taxi driver in the waiting room of a well known local osteopath and we discussed the weekend street racers. He has seen some crazy things, but the most poignant was the number of times he's come across crashed cars off back roads and has had to stop and check if there are any bodies in them. So far he's been lucky, they've all been abandoned.

Coincidentally the residents of Raigmore Estate/Millburn road have been in touch to see if we know any of these late night racers, as the noise of loud exhausts and specifically the bangs and pops (anti-turbo lag systems like rally cars?) are causing people serious distress and sleep loss. As a club with an age demographic beyond our twenties and as modified Fiesta ST's are not yet considered classics we are blameless but we are part of local car culture and it's significant to note the affects of anti social driving. The Raigmore residents say the police don't seem to do much, and my new taxi driver friend said the racers seemed to know where the police are and how to avoid them. Allegedly.

Your

Editor

Chairs Bitty

A good night out at Bitz engine cleaning. Looks like they are heavily into performance car tuning. Privately, they also do a bit of rallying. Bryan was the lucky man who got the wheel alignment checked on his car as part of Bitz demonstrating their computerised alignment system. For those of you with older cars, if you know what the alignment is for your car, Bitz can do custom alignments. Miles' Escort van was the lucky vehicle getting a Terraclean tune up. If you have read the forum / etc., you will know that Miles was pretty impressed with the results.



Alice serviced the Landrover in readiness for Drive-it day. We took the Landy out last weekend to Ullapool and it fairly flew down the road, returning just over 19mpg. We were very impressed. There is something about pottering about in a Landy that is very relaxing even if the driving position is a bit uncomfortable on longer runs. The run did highlight that the tappets needed a little adjustment and we did these this weekend, 3 of which were a little bit out by 0.001".

Some advanced notice of the Ruby Picnic – Sunday 7th July. There will be a road run down memory lane before arriving in Strathpeffer for the picnic. Details should be elsewhere in the magazine. Tickets will be on sale as of Drive-It day.

On the gardening side of things, with the lovely weather I finally got round to pruning the hawthorne which had got rather out of shape. Leaning the ladders in the bush and standing near the top doesn't feel quite so secure, especially on the road side, which is a good deal lower than the garden. But with Alice holding onto the ladders the job got done. The hawthorne did fight back as the scratches on my arm will testify.

I also took the opportunity to seed courgettes, beans and spinach. Well, what I actually did is finish off the seeds from last year. No idea how much of it will come up, but if all of them do, I will be struggling for space later in the garden when I come to plant them out. I'll worry about that later.

This month's meeting is a pub run. Details of where we meet up is elsewhere in the magazine and on the website.

See you there,

Trish



Bitz Garage - Nairn.

April Cub Visit

Bryan McIlwraith arranged our April Club Night out, a visit to family run, motor-sport orientated garage 'Bitz' in Nairn, just the other side of the A96 from Sainsburys.

Bitz was originally established in Cawdor 1994 by former armed services technician Dave Tennant, his wife Annabelle, and eldest son Kris, and then moved to Nairn in 2007.

We were hosted by Dave and Kris who explained that they have a background in Motor Sport especially rallying. Dave's wife used to compete in national level rallies and has a cupboard full of trophies including outright wins.





Bitz were the first garage in the north of Scotland to install a Hunter Hawk Eye computerised 4 wheel alignment system, that can show all the key suspension alignment information, dynamically. It is a very powerful machine especially in the hands of a skilled operator like Kris.

They were looking for a car to demonstrate with and coincidentally Bryan's Volvo had a previously unresolved tracking issue.

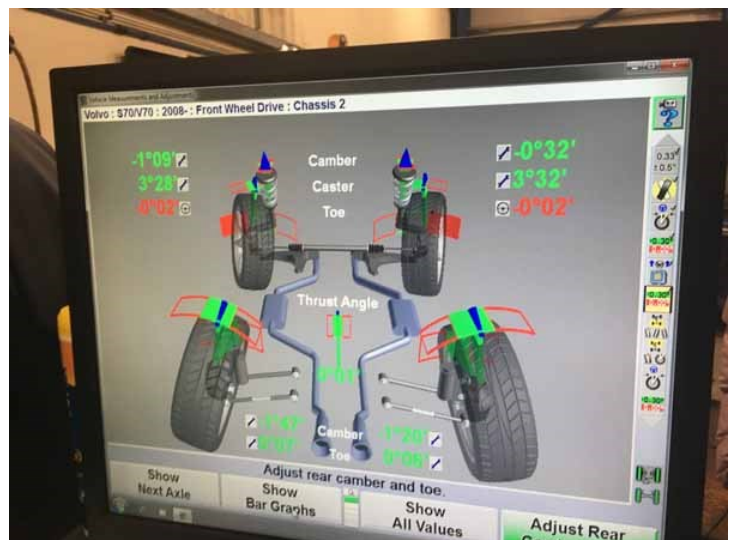


The laser scanners picked up alignment information from targets clamped to all four wheels (Mini wheels are too small—boo) and gave a comprehensive display of camber, castor, set too, tracking, and thrust angles.

It was a very interesting machine as shown by the number of people who crossed the laser beams to get a closer look.



We were shown how the data could be manipulated if you were a less than scrupulous tyre fitting company. (Name with-held for legal reasons.)



Kris very generously brought Bryan's wheels into perfect alignment and he went home happy in the knowledge that he had a perfect pair of axles.

Terraclean is an engine cleaning system. (Redex on steroids.) It cleans the fuel system via the injectors – through the combustion chambers (think decoke) and cleans post combustion too i.e. EGR and DPF. We were looking for something old and sooted up to experiment on. Enter Mile's Gulf Van. Here's his review.



'Wow, what a difference it has made to its performance! I drove there as a rolling roadblock, hardly able to keep up 55mph but on the way home it pulled all the way through 60 in fifth gear. Phenomenal improvement. It starts easier, runs smoother and actually accelerates.'

Dave did say that the results achieved were variable, I guess you have to have something to clean first. High mileage cars or cars that do a lot of stop-start driving are ideal candidates. Campervans respond very well. EGR valves and Diesel Particulate Filters are notorious for getting clogged up then failing and Terraclean will address these. It's hard to clean out a DPF completely, but it is usually possible to clear out enough soot to allow the regeneration process to kick in and do the rest. One of Bitz's areas of expertise is engine management systems; repairs chipping and diagnostics. They have a good track record in repairing ECU issues that have been preventing DPF's from regenerating and with new DPFs costing circa £1000 this is good to know. My poor brother had to write off a fairly new Mazda due to DPF failure and he's not alone.

And so after tea and biscuits and the usual thank you from Trish that was the end of our visit which was warmly received, and generously presented by the team at Bitz Garage.

<http://www.bitzmotorsport.com/>

01667 456700



GARAGE NIGHTMARES or TRYING TO FIX A STAG.

Part 1. by Bryan McIlwraith

Some people do things the hard way. Climbing Everest, without oxygen for instance, or trekking over Antarctica single handed, or climbing El Capitan without ropes. Pah! A walk in the park! Try fixing a Triumph Stag. That'll sort out the men from the boys.

OK, so by now you've guessed that I've had a "little spot of bother" with the Stag; actually two and a half years of grief to tell the truth. We were returning from a nice run around the Black Isle, in August of 2016. Passing Munloch I noticed a slight change in the engine note, a definite miss. Hmmm, maybe a fouled plug I thought being optimistic, but in my heart of hearts I knew it to be more serious. A quick test confirmed that compression was down on two adjacent cylinders on the driver's bank so the head gasket was definitely gone, so I started removing that head. For reasons best known to Triumph, the Stag has a row of bolts on one side of each head, and a row of studs on the other, and they're not even parallel! The bolts came out fairly easily, but only one stud yielded. The obvious answer is to try and soak the stud with easing fluid, but the stud is almost horizontal. To overcome this I built a C shaped dam of silicone below each stud which would hold a small amount of easing fluid. Ah, but which fluid I hear you ask? All of them, including Coca Cola! After literally months of soaking I eventually extracted a further three studs, leaving one absolutely unmoveable one. This was now January and so extreme measures were called for. I bought an infra-red heat probe pistol shaped thingy (yes LIDL!) and spent over an hour playing the MAP-gas torch over the head, working back and fore, back and fore, checking the heat with the probe. I took the head up to over 100 degrees centigrade, and....nothing, still no movement. However, I repeated the exercise and this time I got the tiniest smidgeon of movement. Even with heavy gloves on the spanners were biting into my hands. The stud fought me every millimetre of the way. In fact it didn't come out of the head, it screwed out of the block lifting the head as it came. Bear in mind that these studs had only been in for about ten years since the last engine rebuild and you can see what a bastard thing electrolytic corrosion is.

So now the head was off. And the bad news? It turned out that the head had already been planed down to the valve seats, so a further skim was not possible. I spoke to several older mechanics who assured me that in the old days they would just change the gasket and it would be OK. I used a straight edge and checked head and block all over and could see no obvious defect so I thought it worth a try. Now to back-track a little. Before removing the head, the cam shaft has to be released from the timing chain. There is a bracket sticking up from the engine front chest to temporarily bolt the cogwheel to with the chain attached which I dutifully did. But!!! What the official Triumph manual doesn't tell you is this. When you move the cog wheel across you have to keep maximum tension on it, or the timing chain tensioner will move out a click and the cog wheel will not re-locate on the

cam shaft. This is exactly what happened. I later discovered that the trick is to insert wedges down the side of the timing chain before disconnecting it from the cam shaft. (Yes; experience was once described as something you wish was happening to somebody else!). And yes, you've guessed, to get at the timing chain tensioner you have to remove the engine chest, which cannot be doneuntil you remove the other head!!!

See what I mean? Everest without oxygen? Pah! Kids' stuff!!

Miller, Sinclair & Sutherland,
c/o Y Lounge Bar (We like wir comforts),
Pentland Hotel,
Thurso.

Dear Folkies, We wis sub-contracted till remove y plumbin at y Dounreay plantie an Young MacKay wis delighted. He hes bin looking for a suitable engine for hes Fordson Power Major till make it competitive at y tractor pullin an he reckoned there wis a good chance o a Rolls Royce engine lyin about there, lookin for a good home so till speak. We hed till stick to all y rules an regulations like wearin white disposable overalls an masks an gloves, hevin a compulsory shower at y end of y shift and hevin wir vannie searched. They're very particular aboot keepin oot o'y dust but I've yet till see any. Maist o y time y security mannie scratches hes head at y mess that es the back o wir vannie, perhaps there's jist too much dust.

One day Young MacKay came across a sealed barrel in a place he shouldna hev bin. Hit hed "radio active" on y side but, try es he might he couldna tune y digital read-out till Johnnie Polson at Radio Bettyhill just along y roadie. Now, he figured that y radio wis broken but y battery might be good an certainly big as hid wis hot enough till fry an egg on. Hit wis loaded intill y back o wur vannie an covered wi last weeks Groatie , boiler-suits an hi-vis vests(based on y somewhat dubious observation that, if y want till hide something, make hit stand oot). Weel hit wis so hot in y cabbie that we hit till take wir clothes off an there we were at security wi all y windows open an sweatin. Y showers were very hot an y heater es stuck on fill we telt y security mannie. He waved us on an we hed till take turns o drivin while y other two walked till cool off. Now, doubts flooded in on Young MacKay an he decided till hide y barrel under hes livin room floor an he haesna hed y central heatin on since, under floor heatin he calls hit. Hes floor es wearin well an good as y day hit wis laid an so it should be as hits best Canadian Maple from y buildin o y Scottish Parliament all these years ago. Back till y business folkies an y search for an engine. No V12s or V8s or even V6s were to be found an Young MacKay wis despondent. He did, however, find a gas turbine wi y RR badge on hit an hes fertile mind es workin overtime tryin to work oot how he can get hit oot an how he could fit hit intill y Major. I fear this will end up in tears an there's no way he could hide hit under y living room floor!

Best Regards, *Wundy Miller.*

We've had "Jessica" for 17 years, bought as a "demonstrator" when she was just months old. It's the nearest we have been to buying a new car and quite possibly we're destined never to own one. We took the decision some time back to keep her as we couldn't agree on a replacement. The nearside outer sill needed welding when I thought I had it protected and so it was decision time. You may think that I couldn't expect anything else from a British car but I had already welded our campervan a VWLT35 which is the same age and had the advantage of living in England-shire for four years. Just don't start me on the myth of "German Engineering".



At some point the brake dust shields rusted and fell off to add to the accumulation of vehicle remains at the side of our roads. They were not required for an MoT which is just as well because I couldn't get replacements. Macrae & Dick ordered them for me and I'm still waiting! And so it was for many years that all the crap found its way into the wheel bearings which are neither easy nor cheap to fix. "Do not disturb the front wheel bearings as they will last the service life of the car". Not in Scotland mate, not without dust shields. Fast forward to last week and I found that Rimmer Bros had dust shields on their shelves. See, I told you my MG was old. "That's not an MG mate, that's a Rover". Well you may as well say "Morris" because that's what Cecil Kimber used!

Buying the new dust shields was the easy part, fitting them was challenging. I love my Porta-pac (mini oxy-acetylene/propane set) and my grinder and my chisel and my big hammer and my vice-grips. Fortunately, with patience, which I have time for

nowadays, all but one screwed out and it was easily drilled out and tapped. Jessica is now sporting three new dust shields. Ah, but what about the fourth? Before I knew better, I had bought a hub on eBay which came complete with original dust shield and no doubt the original bearing, all for £20 delivered! Who would bother fighting upside down in the gutters? Yes, there was a time. Comparing the two hubs is a salutary reminder of how much salt and chemicals are thrown on to our roads in the name of safety. It's not as if we are getting any winters. Apart from the "Blast from the East" last year which didn't affect Inverness, when's the last time you made a snowman? I didn't even bother putting on the snow tyres this year.



I've been bending the ears of my parts-man for years so much so he looks like Spock now! When, oh when are manufacturers going to coat brake discs? Disc brakes are effective but changing them every two years is just a nonsense. The front ventilated ones are the worst as rust swells out the two sides creating high spots. I don't have any problems with brake drums which go on forever. Unfortunately, there are discs all round on the ZR and ABS which was desirable new but just a pain now. Not that ABS has given any problems on this car but it's another very expensive story with the LT. All good things come to those who wait and lo and behold the latest set of discs are coated silver coloured. What with I know not but I'm liking them already. Gone is the tedious task of cleaning off the greasy protective coating. Who ever thought that one up? Yeah, we'll grease them up to protect them. Damn it, they are brakes. Don't put grease anywhere near them.

What now then? Well, I'll keep Jessica going. This car produces 118 bhp instantly (more than enough to get me into trouble and more than enough to get me out of trouble), handles well and brakes well (for the time being). She is a buzz box and fun to drive. She is not relaxing but, if that's what I want, I'll take the bus or the train or stay at home. She is very nippy in town but struggles to get 40 mpg. If I want better efficiency, I'll get a three cylinder turbo or I'll take the bus or the train.

Cheers, *Jim MacKay.*

Car and Coffee 14th April 2019



For personal reason I missed this months Cars and Coffee but it looked like a cracker, with the sun shinning, many enthusiasts took their classics out.



Personally I prefer it when the classics come out, though we get plenty of interesting moderns in the winter. Yesterdays modern is the futures classic as this Sierra Cosworth demonstrates. Nothing says Fast Eighties Ford quite like it.

That Ford Anglia is right up my street and it's for sale. It's in immaculate condition with a price to match, and probably worth every penny.





While we're looking at White sporty eighties cars, what about this Mk2 Golf GTi?



There were two other Mk2 Golfs at the meeting and they had their own get together afterwards. That's the magic of Cars and Coffee.

Oh and here's a 1980's style White Capri to complete the set. And a Mini just to keep my reputation for bias intact.

There were many more elderly classics there too (see front cover) and hopefully next months will be even better.

Peterhead Prison Museum Car Show



"Good afternoon,

We are holding a Classic Vehicle event on Sunday 23rd June at Peterhead Prison Museum. I was wondering if any of your members would be interested in taking part in this event. I have attached an entry form for any members that want a copy and fill it in and send it back to me, along with the entry fee of £5.00. Once I receive the entry form I will email to say I have received it. I will then be emailing all details and times etc of the event day. If you would like any more information about the event, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards
Shona"

As you can see we have received an invitation to attend a car show at Peterhead Prison Museum. By all accounts the museum is an excellent visit and there are some lovely roads around there. If you fancy a long haul show, application forms are available from myself/Calum/editor, or Brian McIlwraith or Derek Darnell.

Grampian Transport Museum is planning an event to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Mini's launch on Sunday 25 August 2019.

Planning is at an early stage but one thing they have agreed is that they would like to see at least 60 Minis there on the day –hoping for 60 different variants including Mini based kits/specials/ Riley, Wolseley/Clubmen Rover and BMW era models . Entry to the event will be free to Mini based vehicles and their owners and entrants bringing a Mini or derivative thereof will also get complimentary entry to the Museum on the day.

More details will appear on their website, or we can pass on your details to them in advance of that. Just get in touch.

Highland Classic Motor Club "Ruby Picnic"

July 7th 2019

To celebrate the Club's 40th anniversary we are hosting a Ruby "Classic" Picnic on Sunday July 7th.

Come with us and enjoy a classic drive to a country location where we will host a fine buffet lunch with light refreshments.

The event is not open to the public. No Prizes. No Judging. Just good company and classic cars. Admission is £10 per head and by ticket only, available from Bryan, Miles, Callum, Graeme, Chris.

The route visits meeting places over last 40 years

Starts 11.00AM Shandwick Inn, then on to Invergordon Shore Rd, Alness High Street, Evanton High St, then south over Cromarty Bridge to Tore, then Dingwall and on to Castle Leod at Strathpeffer for a fine buffet lunch

Admission by ticket only (bring picnic chairs & table if you have them)

Further details on the club website highlandclassic.org.uk



LOCAL EVENTS

28th Apr 2019	'Drive It Day' 2019	Rollerbowl, Inverness	Open from 9am for bacon rolls and tea/coffee. Leave at 10:30 for the run to Alness via Strathpeffer
2nd May 2019	HCMC Pub Run	Meet at Inverness Asda. 19:30	Drive down Essich Road, take corkscrew road down to shore road to Foyers then Whitebridge. Return Via Dores stopping at Dores Inn for a refreshment.
5th May 2019	Forres Theme Day	Grant Park, Forres	Arrive 09.00 - 12.30 Judging 10.00 - 14.00 Winners Parade 16.30 Contact; forresvintagevehicleassociation@yahoo.co.uk OR patersonsharon@aol.com
11th May 2019	Inverness Classic Vehicle Show	Inverness City Centre	It's fully booked.
12th May 2019	Cars and Coffee	Rollerbowl, Inverness	10:00-12:00 It's good.
12th May 2019	How Many Left	Grampian Transport Museum, Alford	12:30PM - 4:00PM http://www.gtm.org.uk/events/how-many-left/
18th May 2019	Rotary Club of East Sutherland Classic Car Tour	Dornoch to Ullapool via Muir of Ord	Contact: Patrick "Paddy" Murray Mob: 07785 261 110
26th May 2019	Highland Folk Museum Vintage Day	Newtonmore	Arrive by 10am. Finishes 4pm https://www.highlifehighland.com/highlandfolkmuseum/vintage-day/
8th Jun 2019	Rotary Club of Inverness Loch Ness Classic Car Tour	Inverness Ice Centre	https://lochnessclassiccartour.weebly.com/