

CLASSIC SCENE



June 2020



Highland roads go back to the 1970's
but we can't go out and enjoy them as
Covid 19 lockdown continues.

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Cover Picture

At the beginning of lockdown the roads were incredibly quiet, but by mid May when out on my bike, I took these photographs, I had to wait for a quiet spell, so fake news everyone! KFC opening up caused a traffic queue all the way along Millburn Road!

Welcome to the June Newsletter

Funnily enough, there's not much news in the newsletter as lockdown continues but we have plenty of good reading for you. Hopefully you've all been keeping well and have been busy on those projects if you have one. As a key worker I have been driving into Inverness most days and occasionally out for a shop or daily exercise, and boy the roads are quiet. Here at HCMC we like a bit of nostalgia, and wouldn't it be great to go back to 1970's traffic density? Unfortunately we've not really been allowed to go anywhere very far away to enjoy the roads and taking your classic to Tesco's isn't that thrilling.

I have been driving the Sierra to work every now and then but have had issues with the battery discharging fairly rapidly, which I eventually traced to fuse 10 (interior lights and central locking) drawing 2 amps. Thankfully these are not essential so fuse 10 has been pulled and the battery now appears to hold charge.

Meanwhile the Beetle battery has also died - also some kind of draining issue (a bit of a theme this month) I haven't got to the bottom of yet. It's next on the list however after a good charge that was another classic drive to work.

I took advantage of lockdown time to work on the minor rust on Mrs Editor's Ford Focus (Mk1—emerging classic!) which was mainly at the bottom of the doors. It seems to be a stock fault where the seam sealer comes away and traps water at the fold in the door skin creating the perfect environment for corrosion. That's all four doors done and new seam sealer applied plus two wheel arches tidied up. Another interesting fault was the bonnet lock. Ford for some reason decided to have a key lock behind the badge on the front grille. Turn anti-clockwise to unlock, then turn clockwise to release the secondary catch. So what do you do when the lock fails and the bonnet is stuck shut? Google and YouTube have some drastic and arm shredding solutions but thankfully I got mine open around the 80th attempt. The lock barrel is gubbed, so I decide 'just' to remove it. Now I just swivel away the front badge, stick a large screw driver into the mechanism, twist left, lift, twist right and open sesame.

Saturday the 9th of May was supposed to have been the Inverness BID Classic Car show, but the weather was damp, humid then very rainy, so trying to find a positive angle, it looks like we saved ourselves a soaking. Hopefully Nicola will let us go for a drive soon, and maybe a socially distanced club drive could be arranged, but we'll have to wait and see. Better to keep safe and follow the advice for now.

Your editor.

Chairs Bitty

I was listening to the radio the other day. Not so unusual, I do this most days. On this day the topic was a bit more eco orientated. Not surprisingly the green movement is pleased with how emissions are going now that most commuters work from home. However, they are not happy about people going back to work if this means they take to their car in order to avoid getting Covid on public transport. Any CO improvements we made in the last 3 months are likely to go out the window twice as fast.

I was speaking to a help-desk agent based in far off India. He too was working from home now. He mentioned being so pleased to wake up in the morning to birdsong. Something he hadn't experienced in years and he was not looking forward to returning to the old ways of working and commuting. My employer too is thinking of reducing the number of days that people will work from an office in the future. In that respect Covid has accelerated the change in attitude towards the environment. This may not be good news for us classic car lovers as our classics are often stigmatised as "the most polluting". This is looking at cars in a purely on-the-road vision and this is where electric cars look very good. Factor in the mining of precious metals and what it takes to manufacture all components and electric does not look quite so eco friendly any more. Perhaps hydrogen is be a better way forward if we can create an engine that can both crack the water and use the resultant H and O.

Meantime, the Skoda hasn't moved since it came back from the garage last month. We disconnected the battery as the car has a tendency to drain the battery within a couple of days. We've never yet worked out what is causing this but suspect it has something to do with the alarm.

Even so, when we came to put the battery back on, it still needed a top up charge. We decided to take it shopping yesterday to make sure the nicely serviced brakes would not stick on again. Only to find that at low speeds it is rattling again (aargh, what now?). Halfway down the road to the shops the ABS light came on. Ah, we thought, could it be the next ABS ring breaking up? Some more deliberate slow driving later and careful listening to the noise, we agreed that this is probably the case. So the car is going back to the garage.

The Merc with all its modern electronics suffers from the same battery running low malady and we put it on charge at least once a week as it is our main vehicle for the weekly shopping run. On talking to our mannie in the garage, he mentioned that after a few weeks of nearly nothing happening business is slowly picking up again. Apparently modern cars are failing to start or display little electrical foibles when they have been parked up for weeks on end. Our Merc signals this by making funny chattering noises in the seatbelt tensioner.



The Merc had its MOT done. Not much more to say on that, save that a piece of brake pipe was replaced. Talking about MOT's, our mannie at the garage is predicting a rush on MOT's in September and expects that an increased number of these will fail. All because, as he puts it "those who opted to delay the MOT this year will be the same people who normally don't bother with servicing either". No doubt we will hear more on this in September.

We finally got around to rebuilding part of our garden wall. The double skinned wall (with planter) had about a meter knocked off it some years ago and that was not done that tidily. By the way, my in-laws have got around to it. It is a little round dish with the words "a round tu-it" written on it. We don't have one, so it has taken us 9 years before we got off our rear ends and finished the job. Out came the bolster and hammer out to straighten out both edges, and with some left over mortar from a previous jobbie, we bricked up the end. Most of the rubble generated went back into the bottom of the wall and the top half filled up with compost. It is looking so much better. All we need to do now the rendering for the finishing touches. I don't think it will take another 9 years though.

After the brick laying labour we did some more cold tarring on the drive. We had a go at this back in 2016 and decided that there were other areas on the drive that could do with a bit of attention. Especially after we cleaned off moss and liverwort that likes to grow on the drive's edges. That stuff seems to eat the tarmac and removing it with a wire brush created some sizeable holes. We had a few days of nice weather around early May and we got through 1 bag of cold tar before the weather closed in again with night frost and a few flurries of snow. Today the weather was reasonable and we managed to use up the other bag.

The courgettes and french beans have been planted out. The leeks will follow a little later once the root systems are more developed. We already had a few crops of baby spinach for lunch time salads. And a few crops of rhubarb, which together with some of last years strawberries, black currants and raspberries from the freezer, makes for a very nice fruit crumble. We are eating well during lock down and yet still manage to loose weight. Must be all the hard labour.

Well, as you know, nothing much has happened yet with relaxing the Covid lock down. Unnecessary journeys are still frowned upon, although I had to laugh that we are now allowed to go as far as 5 miles with a car for leisure activities. Wow, 5 miles, how generous. I am not sure what the government was thinking as your car won't have warmed up, the emissions will be sky high, and the exhaust will rot before your eyes. But I suppose things are very slowly going the right way, with more businesses and the likes opening up again. I am keeping up the hope that summertime may see us out in our cars again (long, economic, low emission drives of-course). Until then, stay safe.

Trish.

Acadiane restoration

Jesse Wigman



As promised a while ago, here is a wee update on my 1983 Citroen Acadiane restoration. I have owned this van since 2007. I bought it on eBay from someone on the Isle of Lewis. It needed a restoration but I drove it back from Ullapool with no problems and to be honest it wasn't the worst. My dad kindly did the restoration and it went straight into daily use including a trip around the French Alps. You may have seen it before at some of the club meetings and shows a few years ago.

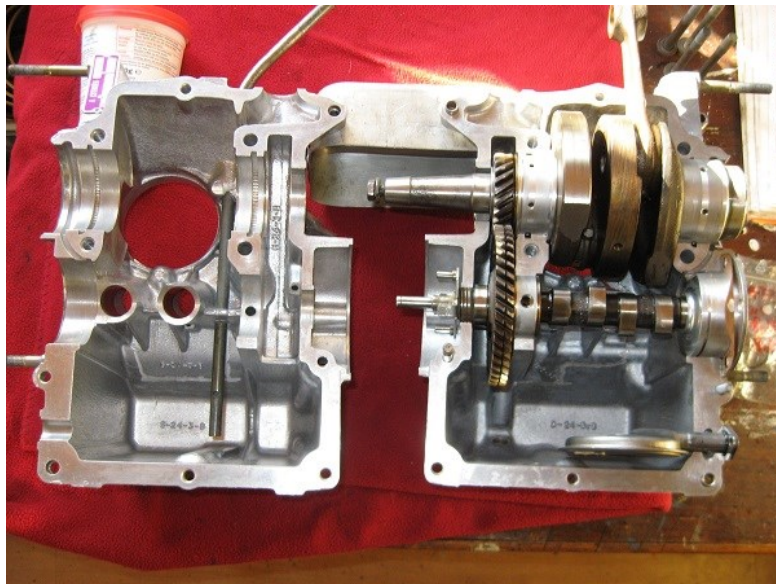
Fast forward 7 years and driving it daily has taken its toll (especially during the winter). It really needed another restoration, mainly on the panels and cross-members that didn't get replaced last time and some more work to the chassis. The engine had seen better days and needed a rebuild too. I decided to take it off the road and start a complete strip down and rebuild. I wanted to do as much of it myself as possible, the problem being during the summer months I travel all over the world as a mountain bike race mechanic. We started stripping it in November 2014 and I'm still working on it now!



Whilst I was away in the summer months my dad did pretty much most of the welding on the body - new rear wings, floors, toe-board and cross-members etc. - a LOT needed welding. It was far worse than we were expecting (it always is...)

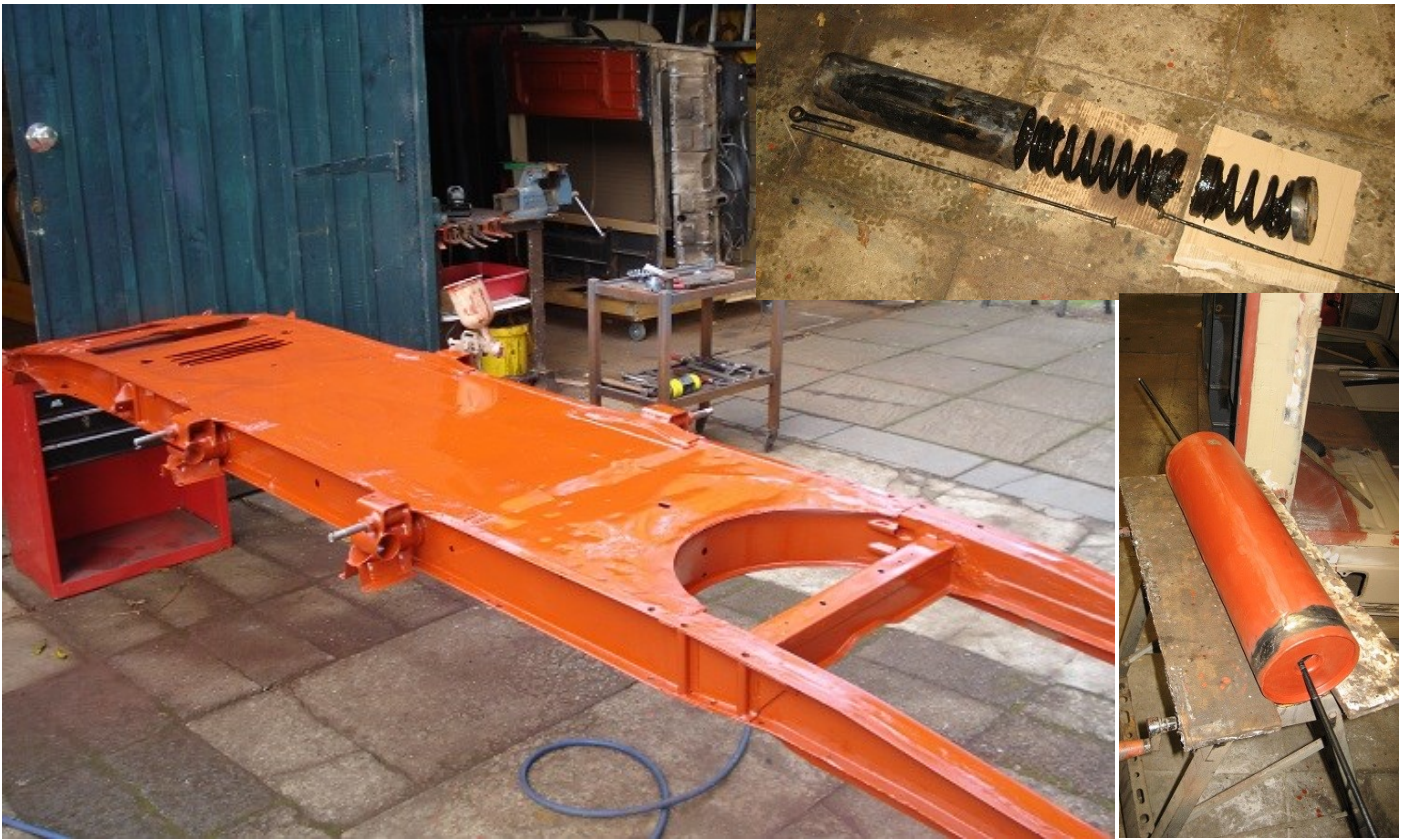


Any days off I had and throughout the winters I rebuilt all the mechanical parts - full gearbox re-build with all new bearings/seals etc.



A full engine rebuild with new pistons, barrels, NOS cylinder heads and seals etc. - steering rack, brakes, suspension and hubs all fully rebuilt. I really enjoy doing the mechanical stuff. I want there to be as many original Citroen parts on it as possible so lots of NOS parts have been sourced and fitted.





I wanted to do all the spraying myself so prepped all the panels and sprayed it 2k in its original Colorado Beige - it certainly wasn't easy without a paint booth and a steep learning curve for sure! It should look good once it is all back together. I am spending a fair bit of time on it just now due to the lockdown. Luckily the warm weather is helping the paint cure nicely. I am nearly ready to actually start putting it back together which will be nice. Less boxes full of stuff and a more complete van each day! The aim is to get it to factory specification. I hope to get it finished by the end of summer. I have attached a few pictures of the progress.

Jesse



A Motor Racing Footnote:

Chris Silver

Just as those of a certain age can remember what they were doing when President Kennedy was assassinated, others can recall clearly hearing about the death of Jim Clark, the anniversary of which has just passed in April.

Our next-door neighbour in a village near Aberdeen when I was a teenager was an avid motor racing fan. This came to light soon after they moved in when his wife told my Mother that he and a couple of friends had gone off for the weekend to "the racing at Aintree". Mother was horrified at someone going that distance for a horse race but was mollified somewhat when it was explained that it was the Grand Prix and not the Grand National he was attending.

Anyway he was a bit of a practical joker and was always teasing me so when I popped in to see them that fateful Sunday, I thought he was pulling my leg when he told me the news. The look on his face meant he wasn't joking for once. Having visited the statue in his birthplace in Kilmany in Fife, I was able to engineer a visit to Hockenheim a few years ago when on holiday in the area.

Turning up on spec one Sunday afternoon, it was disconcerting to find an event going on with a fairly steep entry charge but the guys on the gate allowed us in for nothing on the basis that we were only going to the memorial. The one in the photographs is a modern replacement. The original is, I believe, still in place but that part of the circuit where the accident took place has long since been torn up and allowed to return to forest so it's extremely difficult to find.



The memorial makes for very sombre reading. As was the custom at the time, many drivers raced in various different formulae. This was a relatively unimportant F2 event but intended to improve the profile and reputation of the new circuit as a possible F1 venue. Sadly, Hockenheim became a world-famous name for the most tragic of reasons

7th April 1968 - Jim Clark - a tragedy in the rain

7th April 1968 should have been a highlight in the history of the newly inaugurated Hockenheimring: none other than the two times World Champion Jim Clark participated in the Formula 2 European Championship race of the AvD. For the first time ever, the best racing driver of the world at that time, participated in Hockenheim, which was a very special tribute to the newly-opened Motodrom in 1965. The presence of the Scottish Grand Prix-Champion, who had just won the Grand Prix of South Africa, signified a great deal for the growing importance of the Hockenheimring since it was the first step to gain not only the motorcycles races, but also racing cars for holding the German Grand Prix at the Hockenheimring.



Jean-Pierre Beltoise drove as fast as lightning in his blue Matra and finally won the dreary race. Jim Clark was in the seventh position but later fell back. The English motor sports expert Doug Nye wrote then: Jim Clark was driving alone in the eighth position during the fifth lap. He drove swiftly towards the forest; his Lotus 48 almost reached full speed on the straight before the east curve. A marshal heard his car approaching after the leading group had already passed by. The red-white-golden car appeared, darting from side to side whereby the driver was fighting for control over his steering wheel. The car veered off the track at a speed of 225 km/h and crashed into the trees, killing Jim Clark instantly.

For a long time Hockenheimring was associated with Jim Clark's fatal accident. For the season in 1969, the Hockenheim-Ring GmbH invested 1.5 Million Marks to make the track safer by clearing the trees next to the racetrack in order to widen the lay-bys on both sides up to seven metres and by building crash barriers and fences all around the racetrack. One year later, after consulting the best racing drivers, two chicanes were built along the long straights in order to reduce the top speeds and to mitigate the risk of accidents during the spectacular races. From then on, the Hockenheimring was now considered to be one of the safest race tracks of the world. This has not changed up to today even after the fatal accidents of Formula 2 drivers Bert Hawthorne in 1972 and Patrick Depailler in 1980 and the motorcycle racers Yvan Palazzese in 1989 and Simon Prior in 1994.

After the replacement of the old Grand Prix track with a new one in 2002, the Jim Clark Memorial could not remain in its original position at the beginning of the former Jim Clark Curve due to reforestation process here. Since then the "old" track has been converted into a rest area with wetland and dry biotope and there are also no fortified trails leading to it any longer. The renaturalisation of the old track has ecologically enhanced the centre of the Hardt forest.

Even more poignant, perhaps, is a small stone set in the ground beside the Clark Memorial commemorating a driver of whom even many dyed-in-the-wool fans have never heard or have only the vaguest of recollections:



Herbert William Hawthorne was born in Armagh, Northern Ireland in 1943 but emigrated to New Zealand as a young teenager. Hawthorne began racing in the 1960s in a Ford Anglia before moving to the UK for work but then returned with his own Brabham BT21 and did well in the New Zealand National Formula series. A good club driver, he was another racing mechanic who came to the UK to try his luck. He raced in Formula B and won the Bogota Grand Prix in 1972 giving the Brabham BT38 its first victory. He struck up a friendship with Allan McCall of TUI cars and Bert drove his cars with some success. McCall was yet another New Zealander who came to Britain as a mechanic, working at Lotus on Clark's Cortina and at McLaren. He was later involved with Tecno's ill-fated F1 project. He was distraught at Bert's death and included the initials BH in subsequent model designations for his cars.

By the time he got to Hockenheim for a Formula 2 race in April 1972, Hawthorne was showing talent and making a name for himself. There is some discrepancy on the net about whether he was killed in practice or in the race itself but, whichever, sadly the result was the same. His accident took place quite close to Clark's and – the final irony – the race was the Jim Clark Memorial Trophy.

So – a minor footnote to motor racing history but one surely worth remembering.

Chris.

Miller, Sinclair & Sutherland,

c/o Y Beer Garden,

Pentland Hotel,

Thurso.

Weel Folkies, There wis a bit o' a rumpus en wan o' Wattie's fields when wan o' Wattie's heilan coos wis spotted wi a toilet roll en wan o' hits horns. Cars hed stopped and y locals wis chasin y coo tryin till get y toilet roll which wis unrollin as y coo ran. Now these horns are long an sharp so hits jist as weel aal y toilet roll rolled off an everyone left clutchin lengths o' y precious stuff. No one thought till question how y coo hed a toilet roll but Wattie twigged that it hed till have been en hes grain shed an sure enough there wis a scene o' some devastation wi toilet rolls scattered till y four winds. Wattie took y buck rake an gathered up y debris an made sure y field gate wis secure.

Farm crime es en y news frequently but up here es too far away an by the time y Causeymire wis negotiated y Helmsdale bobby wid hev y road block set up. Hit wis wi some surprise then that Cooster Mains wis y subject o' grand theft. Wattie spotted larry wheel marks en y shite when no larry wheel marks should hev been there. A quick coont o' y stock drew a blank, an y new John Deere complete wi new hip flask wis untouched. Hes new cattle crush an even hes new heavy duty stable brush were all there. Wattie wis at a loss as nothing seemed till hev bin taken. Hit wis only when he went till replenish hes toilet rolls that he discovered all o' them were gone. Now this wis some days efter so y thief wis clean away. Wattie wis quite desperate for a toilet roll an fortunately he found a couple en hes buck rake which cleaned up fine till tide him over. Y insurance claim wis going till be carefully worded.

As a word of warnin till y clubbie members who might be tempted till buy cheap toilet rolls en y internet, you might be buyin stolen goods. I wid be very suspicious if there wis coo horn marks en y rappin an barley seeds an even buck rake marks.

Young MacKay jist hed till hev a project an so set aboot makin a respirator. Wattie hed an old forge bellows which he gave till Young MacKay en exchange for a toilet roll. A repair till y bellows wi some leather from an old sofa an a clean up o' y old one way farty valve hed y old thing huffin an puffin good style. A Lister D which hed come from Inverness some time ago wis pressed in till use till drive y bellows an, wi a length o' vacuum cleaner hose attached till an old gas mask, hit wis ready . Now dependin on y severity o' y Covid 19 there wis three options till choose from. Air an exhaust fumes, pure air or oxygen from y oxy acetylene set (remembering till turn on y correct tap). A dust mask, face shield, Dickies boilersuit, welly boots, weldin gloves an some sheep dip completed y package. He submitted hes plans till y government but I think he wis narrowly beaten by F1 an Dyson. Anyway, wi y Lister tankie fill o' fresh petrol, Young MacKay wis ready wi y trike an tandem axle trailer till go anywhere y respirator wis needed. You hev till give him credit for hes community spirit.

Since word wis oot aboot y respirator there's bin no new cases up here North o' y Ord!

Best Regards, Wundy Miller.

HCMC Quarantine Quiz

Derek Darnell

Bored of being stuck at home? Why not try your hand at answering the 40 motoring related questions below. Have fun! There is a prize.

1. Who invented the pneumatic tyre?

.....

2. In which year did the colour of the lettering on the Rolls Royce badge change from red to black?

.....

3. Who was the first driver to win an Alpine Gold Cup for finishing three successive Alpine Rallies without incurring any penalty points?

.....

4. How many Ferrari 250 GTO cars were built?

.....

5. Which car won the 1961 Oulton Park Gold Cup race?

.....

6. From the initials of which phrase did the Alda car derive its name?

.....

7. In which year did the Ministry of Transport introduce the testing of cars that were three years old or older?

.....

8. Who was the first driver to cover a distance of 100 miles in an hour?

.....

9. On which date was the Brooklands Motor Course officially opened?

.....

10. Who was the author of the book *Unsafe at any Speed*?

.....

11. In which year were the first traffic lights introduced?

.....

12. How many World Championship Grand Prix races did the Lotus 72 car win?

.....

13. Who founded the Belgian Excelsior company?

.....

14. In which year was the British Racing Drivers Club formed?

.....

15. Who is the current BRDC President?

.....

16. What was the real name of the driver who won the 1926 Italian Grand Prix at Monza driving under the pseudonym "Sabipa"?

.....

17. Which was the only World Championship Grand Prix to be won by an American Driver driving an American car?

.....

18. Which make of car carried the mascot bearing the words *Feathers in our cap*?

.....

19. According to the Highway Code, between which times must a moving vehicle not use its horn in a built up area?

.....

20. Who was the first president of the United States to travel to his inauguration in a car?

.....

21. Who designed the Lancia badge?

.....

22. In which year did petrol rationing end after the Second World War?

.....

23. Which aircraft inspired the Cadillac tailfins that first appeared on some 1948 models?

.....

24. In which country was the Sabra car built?

.....

25. Which woman driver qualified to compete in the 1977 Indianapolis race?

.....

26. Where were HRG cars built?

.....

27. How long is the Shelsley Walsh hill climb course?

.....

28. What make and model of car was Field-Marshal Montgomery's staff car "Old Faithful"?

.....

29. In which year did Morris sell its millionth Morris Minor?

.....

30. In which year was the Ford factory in Dagenham, Essex opened?

.....

31. Who were the winners of the 1970 World Cup Rally?

.....

32. In which year was the Renault 5 introduced?

.....

33. Which four men founded March Engineering Ltd, their names being contrived to make the name March?

.....

34. In which year did Lord Montagu found the Montagu Motor Museum?

.....

35. Which companies amalgamated in 1932 to form the Auto-Union?

.....

36. Which company assembled the Sunbeam Tiger between 1964 and 1967?

.....

37. Who was responsible for styling the Triumph Herald?

.....

38. Which driver crashed into the water during the 1965 Monaco Grand Prix?

.....

39. Delahaye was taken over by which company in 1954?

.....

40. Duessenberg built only two Duessenberg SSJ cars. Who bought them?

.....

Answers to Derek Darnell (derek@cairns27.plus.com) by Midnight Sunday 14th June

——There will be a prize awarded to the first wholly correct entry drawn——

Thank you...

To everyone who sent pieces in for this months newsletter. There was plenty of it and enough to hold over until next month and I even have the promise of some more. I hope you all enjoy Jesse pictures of horrible rust and the great work on the van. We have a quiz, some racing nostalgia and Millar Sinclair and Sutherland too.

So in these unusual times the newsletter is in the unusual position of having more than enough contributions, but don't let that stop you sending things in. It could be a while before we have any actual events to report on.

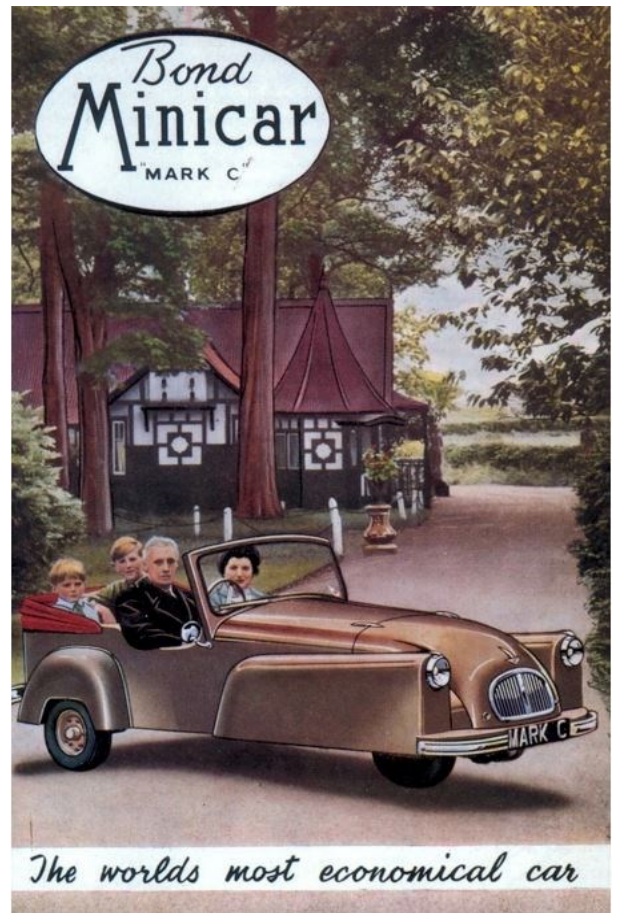
I've been out on my bike looking for pictures of parked up classics around the Black Isle my it didn't come to be. A Renault 16 I sometimes see wasn't there and a strange (to my eyes) scrapyard at Raddery (below) looked like it had been tidied up. Must try harder.



Bonds Live Forever!

Article supplied from the Bond Owners Manual by John Eastwood.

The story begins on the 2nd of August 1907, the year of the first Beijing-Paris rally when, on a beautiful summer day in the city of Preston, England, Lawrence Bond utters his first cry. After an uneventful adolescence, it was at the age of 23 that Bond was hired by the Henry Meadows Company, an engine manufacturer that produced, among other things, the 1,500cc four-cylinder Frazer Nash or the big 6 cylinder Invicta and Lagonda engines. A little later, he gained status and acquired a solid experience in the field of lightweight construction by working as a draftsman at the aeronautical



subcontractor Blackburn Aircraft. In 1944, Lawrence Bond decided to go it alone and create the Bond Aircraft Company, an engineering company specializing in the manufacture of aircraft parts and military equipment. But with the Second World War coming to a close, the engineer chose to turn his attention to civilian vehicles.

From Modest Beginnings

In 1947, he moves into an apartment which also serves as a workshop. Always in the small town of Preston, he designs and builds racing cars. In the post-war years, motor racing is restarting slowly, but the time is not right for highly-powered vehicles. A new formula is born, limiting the cubic capacity to 500cc. More economical, the cars are equipped with engine, brakes and suspensions borrowed from production cars. The ingenuity of their creators is what makes all the difference.

And few are more ingenious than Lawrence's car. His very small front-wheel-drive car, whose design is largely inspired by aeronautical techniques, is certainly notable. The press of the time dub it "Doodlebug" (because of its resemblance to the V1 bombs dropped on England during the Second World War that were given that nickname). Equipped with cable steering and without suspension, the car has very low ground clearance and is barely larger than a kart. In races, the structure is so light that it must be weighed down with several sandbags. For his first race, on June 21, 1947 on the Shelsley Hill circuit, the power of his 499cc engine makes his driving a bit risky. In order to prevent the tyres from spinning on the wheels during

strong acceleration, Lawrie Bond is forced to glue them on their tiny rims. His perseverance is rewarded, as on July 24, on the timed route on the Isle of Jersey, Lawrence wins his first hill climb, but breaks his jaw two months later by losing control of his vehicle. After breaking his teeth, he does not get discouraged. In 1948, the regulation of the 500 category evolves and allows the realisation of a bigger racing car. Even with a much larger body, the car must still be weighted on the start line with several sandbags, which does not prevent the Type C from being even more efficient, because its block, force-fed on alcohol, reaches the speed of 160 km/h still with cable steering ... but it does not shine in competition. And of the three cars assembled, only one finds a buyer. For the talented manufacturer recognised by all, it is time to move on ...

So, why not turn to three-wheelers? By developing a first prototype of a small car, Lawrie would forge a solid reputation as an inventor.

The Touch of Genius

"Mini price, but it does the maximum!" This is how the famous 80s advertising slogan, touting the benefits of a liquid detergent, could have applied to three-wheeled vehicles as well, had it been released nearly 30 years earlier, To understand the rise of these curious machines, you have to make a big "Bond" back in time and cross the Channel. At that time, buying a motor-tricycle made it possible to escape the heavy taxes imposed on cars, and also to get out of having a car licence. The machine had to weigh less than 350 kg and not have reverse gear. Very small cars meeting these specifications were then considered motorcycles



by the British government, and it was enough to have a bike licence to drive them. That's why, at the end of 1948, Lawrence Bond unveiled his minicar prototype. Entirely made of aluminium, its body looks a bit like an inverted bathtub. With its tapered rear part with protruding space to store provisions, its horizontal bar grille surrounded by two small headlights that seem to blink, the machine seems straight out of a cartoon. To get on board, there is no door, just a small notch that allows the driver to slip behind the wheel. Under the long hood hides a small motorcycle engine of 122 cm³. Villiers brand, it rests on the single front wheel placed in central position. Equipped with three speeds, the box has no re-

verse. If needed, the driver can always... lift the car. Originally designed for the personal use of the Bond family, the strange three-wheeler is a sensation on every drive out. Dubbed "The 1/8th litre, Bond Shopping Car", it also arouses great interest from the automotive press. Given the economic difficulties of the moment and his own enthusiasm, the inventor declares that his minicar can claim a bright commercial future. But to produce it in series, Lawrie Bond needs space. He then approaches Sharp's Commercials, a company specialising in the maintenance and refurbishment of military vehicles for the English army, but whose business is gradually declining due to the emergence of peace. Sharp's managers jump at the chance, but prefer to take over the construction of the cars. They propose to the inventor a collaboration to improve and evolve the model. In 1949, the first Minicar; came off the line at the rate of fifteen copies a week. For every Minicar sold, Lawrence Bond earns royalties.

According to the wishes of Sharp's management, Lawrie later replaces the cable steering with a rack-and-pinion model and, on the Mark B, swaps the synthetic windshield with a triplex glass that is less sensitive to scratches,

The gearbox has no reverse. If needed, the driver can always ... lift the car

But as his Bond goes on, Lawrie no longer feels like the only master on board...

So this "fanatical genius", as some people call him, begins to dream. Besides, Sharp's offer to buy his property rights, but ask

him to remain a consultant, Bond agrees and the money raised will allow him to finance his Minibyke, another project that is close to his heart. With the design inspired again by aerodynamics, this little scooter with a 98 cc Villiers does not lack pace. Its riveted aluminium beam frame, and wraparound mudguards like the legendary Indian Chief motorcycle make it look like



none of its more traditional competitors. Performance (65 km/h), economy (less than 2 litres per 100km) and comfort (big balloon tires), these are the three advantages that Mister Bond pushes in catalogues. But on two or four wheels, Lawrie is always thirsty for invention. He gives up his rights to the manufacturing. Ellis, which now manages the production while continuing to make improvements to the range. Thus, the Bond Minibyke is even planned to go to the assault of America and Japan. Launched in January 1950, the scooter is sold at a price 55 pounds and will subsequently benefit from a telescopic fork. After an increase in displacement

to 125 cc, sales continue until 1953, the date of the stoppage of manufacture, with a total of 520 units sold. Meanwhile, at Sharp's Commercials Limited, Bond Minicar production continues to climb. After 2,000 copies are sold, the first model bows out in 1951 to make way for the Mk B, with a slightly more generous bodywork, the novelty of rear suspension and its engine capacity now 197 cc. An improvement expected by a large number of owners who no longer hesitate to travel across Europe driving their mini-cars. It's a great reward for their designer who originally developed them for local use only. While his Minicar is still evolving, the engineer is moving back to the scooters. Commercialised under the name of "BAC" (an abbreviation for Bond Aircraft and Engineering Company), the models Lilliput and Gazelle designed in 1952, then the Oscar and the Sherpa are added to the assets of the insatiable inventor. And even if only two copies of the Oscar were made, these are still present on the English roads in 2018!

With the P1, P2, P3 and P4 whose elegant lines have nothing to envy to the Italian production, two-wheelers succeed one another, but sales volumes remain limited. But Bond's imagination is really overflowing and, at the end of 1952, the new Minicar Type C is released. With a front that now has built-in headlights, it later has small seats to accommodate two young children, A B C D E F! The last two letters are also attributed to unprecedented variants of Minicar that display a more modern body. However, next to a US supercar, one could almost consider them as miniature cars, The long Tex Avery bonnet is impressive and allows you to stretch your legs in the cockpit, like in a big car, The Saloon version, which appears in the catalogue, confirms the fact that with its 250cc engine, there is a real family car capable of transporting four people.

The End for Microcars

Alas, over time and with the increase in the standard of living, the Minicar is less and less popular. In December 1966, the ultimate evolution, the Type G, which is equipped with hydraulic brakes and sometimes a twin-cylinder 250 cc engine, bows out. With a total production of 24,482 copies, all models combined, the page of the Bond Minicar turns decisively, while another opens immediately.

Under the era of the Glorious Thirty, boating begins to enthrall the crowds, Lawrie will go on to ride the wave. He therefore designs the Sea Ranger, a glass-fibre boat whose first examples have a wooden bridge. But in an ultra-competitive market, the production is quite laborious and does not exceed the few copies. The same goes for the Power-Ski that Bond invented in 1962. Designed mainly for hoteliers on the seashore, these motorized floats, which look a little like modern jet skis, will not be manufactured to more than 110 units, With 616 models sold, his

Scooter Ski will be a little more successful. Powered by a 185 cc Rotax engine, it is the ancestor of our jet skis. But the leisure society of today was not yet popular in the sixties, Lawrie Bond puts the feet on the ground to taste the joys of the open air.

In 1963, not everything that bears the Bond brand is always synonymous with mechanical equipment. As proof, this trailer "camping tent" that allows you a little piece of paradise after only 90 seconds of handling. May 1963 also sees the return of Lawrence on four wheels, thanks to the Bond Equipe GT 2+2. With rather elegant lines, this fastback coupe borrows the chassis of the Triumph Herald, while the mechanics and disc brakes are from the Spitfire Mk1. Everything else is stamped Bond! From the GT2, through the GT4S of 104 hp, many models follow each other until 1970, but are not alike, Of course!

Passionate about the race, Lawrie Bond also designs his Bond Formula Junior.

Astonishing this Lawrie, when one learns that in 1966, he also collaborated in the development of the improbable

875, a curious "three wheeler" whose front part in Mk2 versions has false notes of 1970s Ford Escort, in which the manufacturer has forgotten a wheel, On the 875, Lawrence Bond designs suspension and some body parts. With its rear engine and a reduced front trunk because it's occupied by steering and suspension, there was little room for luggage. Never



This is a Bond 875 on the production line, circa 1966, with an Equipe in the background...

mind! It is still Lawrence Bond himself who is at the origin of one of the first roof boxes, Bond, Bond and more Bond! Because even if the brand is bought in 1969 by the manufacturer Reliant, the last three-wheeled model dubbed "Bond Bug" and marketed from May 1970 still bears the name of the brilliant manufacturer. By discovering its angular lines and its unique colour "Tangerine with Black interior", the members could have easily confused it with one of the first TGV before its time. This vehicle, bodywork in glass fibre, chassis and mechanics of 700 cc, both branded Reliant, has a tilting front to accommodate two adults in a typical seventies atmosphere. Avant-garde, the Bond Bug? Certainly yes, because almost 50 years after the release of the first copy, we can always call it the car of the future! But Lawrence Bond also finds time to join the manufacturer of plastic caravan Berkeley:

the latter, wishing to diversify, entrusts to him the design of a small sports car, the Berkeley B60, Lawrie is also at the origin of the surprising "T-60", a kind of mini-Jaguar Type E with plastic bodywork and single rear wheel in central position.

Competition too.

Also for Berkeley, Lawrie Bond was even named race team manager. Chequered flags, Bond will have never



Jon raced the first Bond a couple of times in 1961 before the company folded and the cars were sold.
Image 2 of 13

CLOSE X

been very far, especially from his own account. Always passionate about racing, he will also design his Bond Formula Junior. Though the small fibreglass car, equipped with a twin-carburettor Ford Anglia engine, never had a commercial career, it was driven in the 60s by Jon Goddard-Watts on many circuits. Only two copies were built, so there was no possible evolution to align one day with F1. Without a future? Not so sure, because 50 years later, their former driver, having become a little more well-off, found the two cars. And after patiently restoring them, Jon Goddard-Watts again saw them piloted at grand historical awards. And with some success, since one won a brilliant sixth place on the legendary circuit of Monaco.

From the race to the design studio, there is only one step, so Lawrie Bond adds to the list of his inventions the design of a flat-twin two-stroke engine, the study of a rotary valve system and an air cooled V8 (license sold but never built). Throughout his life this "Gyro Gearloose" designed almost everything and built it. To reflect, one wonders well then what is missing for this little genius, who dies in September 1974, to be totally fulfilled. Perhaps he would have just loved to see the radiant smiles displayed today by the owners of his Minicars when they fall back into childhood aboard their funny cars.

P.S. Apologies to Zack. He gave me this ages ago but in printed form so I had to Scan it, use a computer to covert the image into text (OCR for you computer geeks) and then correct the English as best I could because it seems it was originally written with a very French twist. Finally it's published. I knew the day would come!



LOCAL EVENTS

Well there aren't rally many local events. What were remote chances have been slowly getting cancelled as I have been writing this newsletter.

I have asked about HWC's Brodie Rally but not had a reply so it could be on. Maybe.

Also the Fortrose & Rosemarkie Classic Vehicle Rally is also planned to take place in some form or other. Keep an eye on the club website for details.

Cars and Coffee Inverness is taking it month at a time so the best place to look is the Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/carsandcoffeeinverness/>

Cancelled events include...

Dunrobin Castle

Dubness– the gathering of the Vans

Grantown Motormania

Elgin BID car show.

Currently the not (yet) cancelled events come down to these two....

9th Aug 2020	Historic Wheels Rally	Brodie Castle, Forres IV36 0TE	www.moraymotormuseum.org for details and entry form. Note: NO LATE ENTRIES at Brodie Castle. Pre-book or Arrive at Start Point. (2nd Sunday in August)
29th Aug 2020	Fortrose & Rosemarkie Classic Vehicle Rally	Dingwall -> Fortrose	More info from info@fortroserally.co.uk or facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/fortroseclassics