

CLASSIC SCENE



July 2024



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Classic Scene is published on the Thursday preceding the monthly meeting. Please send articles by post or email to addresses above.

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The club has an extensive archive of information relating to all aspects of classic car ownership. To access this please contact Ranald Smith at

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Cover Picture

HCMC gets best club stand at the Tain Show.

Well done!

Welcome to the July Newsletter

I didn't spot any media coverage for HCMC this month but we do have an accolade - we won the best club stand at the Tain Show. I was unable to make it but when I heard over the wires that we'd won, my first thought was, 'Did Jim Mackay bring his tractor?' Oh yes he did, which (and no disrespect to the others) I think nailed it for us. Now the bar has been set we'll have to show even more interesting items next year. Does anyone have an old petrol pump, a stationary engine? An old motor bike?

Your editor's self generated nautical related life chaos has tailed off and I have actually had time to spend in the garage, but before that, a bit of background. Due to lack of time, the emerging classic Ford Focus was beginning to show evidence of the brown stuff in the wrong places and has terrible lacquer peel, along with a faulty replacement driveshaft. A work pal had a Ford Mondeo or Mundane-O as I call it for sale, spares or repair. Mine for £250. Once a wheel bearing was replaced it was on the road and the Focus is now off the road awaiting some TLC. I've since fixed the handbrake and I've ordered a replacement DPF which has all but rotted out and is currently held together with welded on threaded rod! Hopefully that will be enough for the upcoming MOT, and still puts it in bargain territory. It's also a really nice car to drive and I plan to take it on a road trip to Yorkshire in a few weeks. It also puts me at my ten car limit! Beyond which insanity creeps in.

Meanwhile our Skoda Fabia (aka Fabulous) is less than fabulous as it now suffers from crippling power loss which I think is related to the faulty EGR valve. The only way forward is to replace the EGR valve and check out the turbo and other bits at the same time. That's a two day job and one for another month. Although we are now at ten cars, Mrs Editor doesn't like the Mondeo, as it's huge and I'm using it as a daily anyway. So how to solve this little crisis? That's right. We now have a wee Fiat Panda 4x4 bought off a friend and club member who shall remain anonymous in case I'm writing about it in this newsletter later! If I'm still sane.

On the plus side we didn't mean to buy the Panda 4x4, we were looking at another one, but Lynn (for she has a name) had clocked the 4x4 and wanted it badly. I married a woman with impeccable car taste. So far so good. It's really good fun and drives well. She loves the height and the 'city' button for manoeuvring. I have a feeling this might be a keeper. Unlike the Mondeo which will go when the Fabulous is fixed. Reluctantly of course.

I look back on the time when we only had one car, the Mini, and wonder how we managed?

Chaotically yours,
Mr Editor

Ramblings from the Chair



For those of you who view the website regularly, you might just have noticed that there has been an addition to the drop down menus at the top to include a page of 'Rules and Advice' in the Membership section. Now don't be alarmed – there is nothing to worry about, it's all very basic stuff and nothing that, I hope, you don't know already. In these modern times, not only do we need to have rules so that we can show that we are a responsible organisation, we need to be proactive and this section will give the Committee an opportunity to review and change/add rules as necessary, from time to time. Please have a look, just to remind yourself of your responsibilities.

Now, on to one of my pet hates – that of tailgating, I just don't get it. I was going down to Beaulieu on the single track road when a young lady in a sporty Citroen caught up with me and stuck to my rear bumper with what looked like inches of clearance. Now, the road is narrow with poor visibility on some bends, so I refused to be pressurised into speeding up. When we got to the double width road (and the 20mph limit), the young lady was weaving about on the opposite side of the road but couldn't get past me due to parked cars, but still extremely close to my rear end. When we got on to the main road, and past the derestriction sign, she zoomed past me with a burst of acceleration and into the distance. However, the road was busy in both directions and in a surprisingly short distance I came up behind her, stuck behind a large and high Transit van which was obviously not proceeding at the haste that she wanted. Amazingly, she was again just inches away from the rear of it and therefore totally unable to see any overtaking opportunity without dodging out on to the opposite side of the road, causing some alarm to oncoming traffic. As I say, I just don't get it – surely with a bit of thought she would realise that by staying back she would have a better view of the road ahead, have more time to gain speed for overtaking and be able to stop in time should the van have to brake suddenly. And cause a lot less distress to fellow motorists!! As for ourselves, when out driving in our older vehicles, we need to remember that the car in front, with ABS, can probably stop much quicker than we can and therefore we should keep a very healthy clearance behind it.

Our next meeting is the scenic run to Nairn on our annual 'Pudding Run' – last year the weather was atrocious – cold and wet, so I hope for something better on the 4th of July (election night, oh dear!). Don't forget to bring a deckchair and some sweet treats. See you then.

Regards, Richard

June Club Night

Calum Pearson



It's club night and your Editor aka Calum Pearson could actually make it. Empty diary, working Beetle. Sorted. And it was a good one too. There's something deeply satisfying about going out for a drive with like minded classic owners and the HCMC runs are so eclectic it's never dull.



Graeme Bremner took us on a run around his youthful stomping grounds near Invergordon. We met up at Skiach services just off the A9 near Evanton, for the usual preamble chats and several took the chance to top up with petrol.

We went up the Struie road turning right at Easter Ardross / Dalnavie along old single track roads towards Scotsburn and Lamington. All new territory for me and very interesting. I started off trying to keep up with the cars in front, then realised we were getting strung out and I tried to position the Beetle in a mid position so I could be followed but after one turn there was no sight of anyone in front. Fortunately Graeme's instructions were easy to follow and I became leader of the (slow) pack. This was probably a good thing as it split up the (it's not a) convoy. I stopped to let someone coming the other way progress, and noticed those behind also pulling over in a courteous manner. Well done. Must have read the club rules.

We crossed over the A9 going through Arabella and back across the A9 to Kildary. and the coast road through, Barbaraville, and ultimately Invergordon. I was so engrossed in finding the correct turn of for the Town Centre and Tucker's Inn that I nearly missed a long row of interesting looking cars in a big layby. Cripes that's us! We popped over to the Tuckers Inn where we indulged in a wide range of alcohol free beverages and stories. The staff were lovely, though a bit bemused by our arrival. Like most pubs, it's quite meal based now and they don't expect drinkers, even feeble ones.

I had agreed with Graeme to write up his event and he would do the Tain Show but Trish Brown also sent in her review of the evening (no complaints!) so before I pass you dear readers over, it only remains for me to say, 'Thanks Graeme, a great evening, and something a little different.'



Trish Brown

We missed a few club meetings, but in June we joined our club members at Skiach services. There were a few cars there I have not seen before (Rover 216 convertible, MG TC), but as we were a bit late in arriving with the Landie, we did not have much time to look around or chat to people before we set off for our run. With the Landie we were easily the slowest vehicle and it was not easy to keep up. At some point, we decided not to bother and to drive and enjoy the run instead.

It was a lovely evening as we drove round the back roads to Lamington. Its been a long time since we've done that road. It all looked so green and fresh. Then a quick loop via Nigg Station/Arrabella before we headed via Kildary to Invergordon. As luck would have it, we all managed to park up in the lay-by on the shore, giving passers by a good view of our cars. We retired to the Tuckers Inn, where I ended up speaking to a couple of continental tourists, who were very impressed by Scotland and very complementary of Scottish people in general. 'Everyone is so friendly' they said. And seeing our cars was an unexpected bonus. See, classic cars make people happy.

Tain - Wet but Well Attended Graeme Bremner

Setting off early for Tain with mini me, we could see the weather was not going to play ball. On arriving at the field, it was clear to see that the tent was going to be a necessity.



Once parked up it was time to get our base camp sorted. It began as a task for Ruaridh and myself and descended into a

disagreement and falling out. Luckily I was soon joined by Alan who (apart from losing a windscreen wiper on the A9) came very prepared for the conditions as did Jim.





Between the three of us we got base camp to a point where it was suitable to stave off the worst of the weather.

Soon we were joined by a sizable number of club members and managed to fill up our pitch with a wide range of vehicle offerings from early classic cars to modern supercars, and even a tractor.

Although the weather was not in our favour and there was a noticeable number of missing spaces it was a particularly good turnout for the show given the circumstances and personally always a good place to catch up with people I have not seen in years as I grew up in Scotsburn and attended Tain Royal Academy.

The day was topped off with our club stand winning best overall club stand at the show, well received by our Chair and all the club members who attended.

Thanks again to everyone who turned up, helped erect the tent and dismantled it in my absence.



Fleeting moments

Trish Brown

Towards the end of May we set off south for the Harwich ferry in our Merc. Not wanting to do the 15hrs drive in one day, we parked up halfway just outside Penrith. Next day we got nearly 5 miles down the road before the Merc decided to throw a red "Error level, stop car!" message. Mercedes in Carlisle did not have a replacement suspension air pump in stock and predicted "at least a week" to source the part. After cancelling the ferry journey, we were recovered back to home, where we promptly gave the car to our mannie in the garage to fix (not the £2500 quoted by Merc Carlisle I can tell you). On a positive note, we got a full refund from Stena.

The staycation gave us time to have a good look at the garden, which due to the weather hasn't had much attention. Now I can see my strawberries again. And the blackcurrant bush. A path has been cleared to the compost bin. And new mulch put down beside the fence after shredding trimmed branches. We watched as the sparrow Mum & Dad were busy feeding their 4 chicks in the nest on the shed. Then one day things went quiet. Chicks flown the nest?. Sadly not, the next day we discovered 3 dead chicks in the grass. The wood pigeons are still on the nest, but I can't see whether there are any chicks there yet.

On the Smart front, we decided to go down south (Fauldhouse) a few weeks later, to have the car looked at as the gearbox is still playing up. Our mannie at the garage suspects electrical issues, but not being that au-fait with this car, was happy for us to take the car somewhere else. On a Thursday evening we set off for Edinburgh in 2 cars in case the garage was needing more time to fix the Smart. Friday morning, the Smart won't start. No gears displayed on the dashboard. And if the car cannot select neutral, the electrickery won't let you start the vehicle. Tried temporarily taking off the battery to trick it, but nope, that did not work either. Phoned the garage at Fauldhouse, but their breakdown wagon is off the road (waiting for parts – sound familiar?) Anyway, we phoned the RAC again and 2 hrs later their van turned up. The man managed to lever himself into the Smart to take a look and would you believe it, when he turned on the ignition, the dashboard said 6th gear. 6th? How is that even possible? When we parked up, we put it in reverse as it was facing downhill.

But, can you select neutral? Yes, you can. Does it start? YES. A quick drive around the campsite proved that it was changing gear fine. No further time was lost and we set out for Fauldhouse. Got to within 2 miles of Fauldhouse before the gearbox gave up again. This time with the "3 bars of death" syndrome that you cannot get rid of without a proper fault code reader. The garage loaned us a towrope and with the Merc we towed the Smart the remaining 2 miles. Just as well then we took both cars as we could get back home again. Now we are waiting for the phone call to say the Smart is ready to be picked up.

Cars And Coffee

9th June 2024

I wasn't there again so I'm afraid I can't report directly but I hear favourable words and the weather was nice. It was an excellent turn out with cars from all over the Highlands.



I was speaking to a couple of guys from Tain recently to find out they were regulars at our Cars and Coffee and they loved it. It's very well known now and has quite a reach, as shown by the cars that turn up every month.



Cars and Coffee

Jim Mackay

Jim also sent in some pictures from Cars And Coffee. It's always interesting to see what catches someone else's eye. I couldn't print them all as we run out of space, digitally speaking, so I picked the one's that caught my eye. Editors privilege.

"Another super turn-out on Sun with better weather. The Citroen XM Wagon had a cardboard and duct tape rear "window". No need for a wiper then.



Cheers, Jim. "



Out and About



The Loch Ness Classic and Vintage Car Tour



This Tour was organised on behalf of the Rotary Club of Inverness Loch Ness to raise funds, for CHAS-Children's Hospices Across Scotland and Highlands and Islands Blood Bikes and other charities.

Starting and finishing in Inverness, route covered Loch Ness side, Strathnairn, and Speyside with the return leg travelling into Glenlivet, along Speyside and into Nairnshire before returning to the Inverness finish.

Our roving reporter Jim Mackay went for a look.



There were 10 cars lined up at the Inverness Ice Rink on a cold, wet and windy morning at the start of a 150 mile wander. The Bristol 412 was sitting with the drivers window half open and the rain soaking the seat. I had a quick look but it was electrically operated so no quick fix. I notified one of the marshals who said it was jammed and the owner knew about it but the owner didn't know it was raining into his car. If the briefing lasted a while, there was a risk that the owner would get his feet wet when he opened the door! I think those with a proper roof, working windows and a heater would be the vehicles of choice on this occasion. I reckon a waft in the Jag or Westminster, which are fitted with three piece suites, would be my choice today. Cheers, Jim.



Show Gairloch Your Wheels!

Hello all, and once again – a request to consider bringing along your old / classic / interesting vehicle to the Gairloch Gathering on **Saturday June 29th**.

The format will be the same as previous years.....turn up at the Pier by 11.30am (or earlier), then a wee drive out to the field – park – enjoy the day's events and attractions – depart when you are ready to go home.

The one thing I will say though, is that this year I'm going to appeal for all owners to make an **extra** effort to come along – last year, the weather was pretty grim at times, and we had a pretty limited number of vehicles that appeared on the field. And I'm embarrassed to say that there were probably more there from the East Coast than from around Gairloch - - and you guys had driven all the way to Gairloch despite being rained on most of the way! The previous year was a similar story.



Some images from the 2013 show....

Locally, I know for a fact that inside and underneath the west coast garages and sheets – there ARE many interesting looking machines that I hope are the owners pride and joy.....so we're making a special effort this year to try and get them out and visible – instead of hidden away because there's a drop of rain hovering over the top end of Skye!

The fact is that I'm well aware that if we have great weather across here (or the reverse – if it's pouring down) then it's easier to make a decision..... It's the "in-between" kind of weather that can pose a problem, and all I can do from here is to give you a weather forecast the day before!

DG

HCMC Events

28th Jun 2024 Gairloch Gathering Gairloch Sands Campsite Saturday 28th June. Meet at Gairloch Pier 11:30am Contact Douglas Gibson 01445712085 douglasg@burach.org.uk

4th Jul 2024 HCMC "Bring Your Own Pudding" Run to Nairn Links This year's Pudding Run will start at the Culloden Visitor Centre at 7.30 for a short run through back roads ending up at the Nairn links. You'll have had your Dinner! So bring your own Pudding (and maybe a Flask!)

13th Jul 2024 Scottish Transport Extravaganza Weekend Glamis Castle Saturday 13th & Sunday 14th July. Entry Forms at www.svvc.co.uk or call 01307 840311
Deadline 20/05/24

14th Jul 2024 Cars And Coffee - Inverness Rollerbowl, Culduthel Rd. Inverness. A Quiet Social Gathering of 20th Century Classics plus interesting Modern sportscars & Bikes. Park up, buy yourself a hot drink & snack from Rollerbowl & check out what's in the Car Park. Find us on FACEBOOK.

1st Aug 2024 HCMC Drive around Loch Ness Tesco Holm, Inverness The HCMC August Meeting is a scenic drive, anti-clockwise around Loch Ness starting at 7.30pm from Tesco Holm, Inverness and finishing at the Whitebridge Hotel.