

CLASSIC SCENE



40th Anniversary

August 2019



HCMC Ruby Picnic. Sunday July 7th 2019.

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The club has an extensive archive of
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Cover Picture

The Highland Classic Motor Club Ru-
by Picnic was a resounding success
with many classic and some vintage
members in attendance.

Pictures by Julie Ross.

Welcome to the August Newsletter

In the editors garage this month I have been working on our emerging classic Ford Focus Mk1 Diesel. Emphasis on diesel as this was very slowly dripping out from the rear of the car. The tank is plastic and further forward so I thought it must be the steel filler neck. It was a pig to remove for investigation. Some sources on the internet said you needed to drop the rear suspension to gain access. The first snags were two seized pipe clips, which were very hard to access. I tried several things but a Dremel worked in the end. After much pushing and twisting I got the filler tube out and wire brushed it down. I found pin holes at tank end which I fixed with a dab of weld. Ultimately the thing needs replaced but I haven't sourced one under £130 yet, which is about the market value of the car, so it went back on and the leak has gone. I do like this car otherwise I wouldn't endure this kind of work.

Next, I thought I would tackle the Renault Clio Mk2 MOT failure I got cheap off a friend at work. It needs a few things and then I can sell it on. Plus I need to trim the hedge it was stored against. First I tried to unlock it with the fob, but the car battery was dead. So I tried to unlock the passenger door, but the lock is broken. I tried the boot and driver doors, but they have no manual locks. Hmm locked out, so time for a coffee break. The internet suggested putting a brick through the window which wasn't much help. I tried jacking it up to see if I could get to the bonnet catch, but that looked too difficult, but what if...? Yes, there was the alternator with a big fat positive cable on it so I was able to charge the battery and bingo the central locking works and I'm in. The passenger door lock has since been fixed.

In general news, Danny Hopkins of Practical Classics writes that many Classic Shows are in trouble due to the perennial problem of lack of volunteers. I think we are fortunate in that HCMC has a good spread of age groups and people are likely to take on roles, though speaking for myself it is hard to volunteer for much more while still working full time (and as Newsletter Editor!) but one day soon I will retire or reduce hours.

On a more positive note the FBHVC survey has shown that national interest in historic vehicles has grown from 16% in 2016 to 19% in 2018, with in general terms, young people wanting to own a classic and modify it and over 55's wanting preserve them in original form. Interestingly, the FBHVC report that 32% of historic vehicle are presented for a voluntary MOT test. I thought it would be much higher than this.

Your Editor

Chairs Bitty

Our 40th ruby picnic was a great success. The weather got better as the day went on, with nice sunshine in the afternoon (remember I 'ordered' this last month). 21 vehicles gathered at the Shandwick Inn and just after 11 we set off in convoy led by Bryan. His Stag suffered a slight malfunction during the drive, but thanks to simple old technology we were



under way again within 5 minutes. We drove past a number of old club haunts before we arrived at the Strathpeffer shinty club for our picnic where a number of other members were already waiting. At the end of the afternoon we all gathered for a commemorative photograph. We welcomed back Hugh Skinner, our founding member, who was with granted honorary membership of the club.

As I intimated last month, I did not make it to the impromptu visit to the Culduthel Care Home, but I gather that residents greatly appreciated a "private" car show.

All is relatively quiet on the car front, except for the Skoda who decided this weekend to start wheezing. We suspect an air leak in the air induction circuit to the turbo. But as long as you drive it with restraint it keeps going quite happily. But we'll take it to our manny in the garage for a closer look.

This month has been one of picking fruit. For the first time since we planted our redcurrant several years ago has we managed to get berries of it. Usually the birds and caterpillars get to them before they are fully ripened. This year I didn't see much in the way of caterpillars, and the birds were held at bay with the aid of plastic bottles hung over the branches. For some reason birds are not interested in the black currant, but the strawberries! I've got netting over the top of them to deter the birds. The sparrows keep getting trapped in it. You would think that after several rescue missions (one requiring me to cut the net) they would learn. Ha! The blackbird relies on its own weight to allow the net to sag...And anything that hangs too close to the ground is attacked by slugs. Still, the patch produces more than we can eat, so freezer it is for now. Jam once I've got a few empty jars again.

This month we drive down to Aviemore for a visit to the Inshriach gin distillery. We gather at Simpsons Garden Centre at the slightly earlier time of 19.00pm and we'll set off sharpish as Simpson's car park closes round this time.

See you there,

Trish.

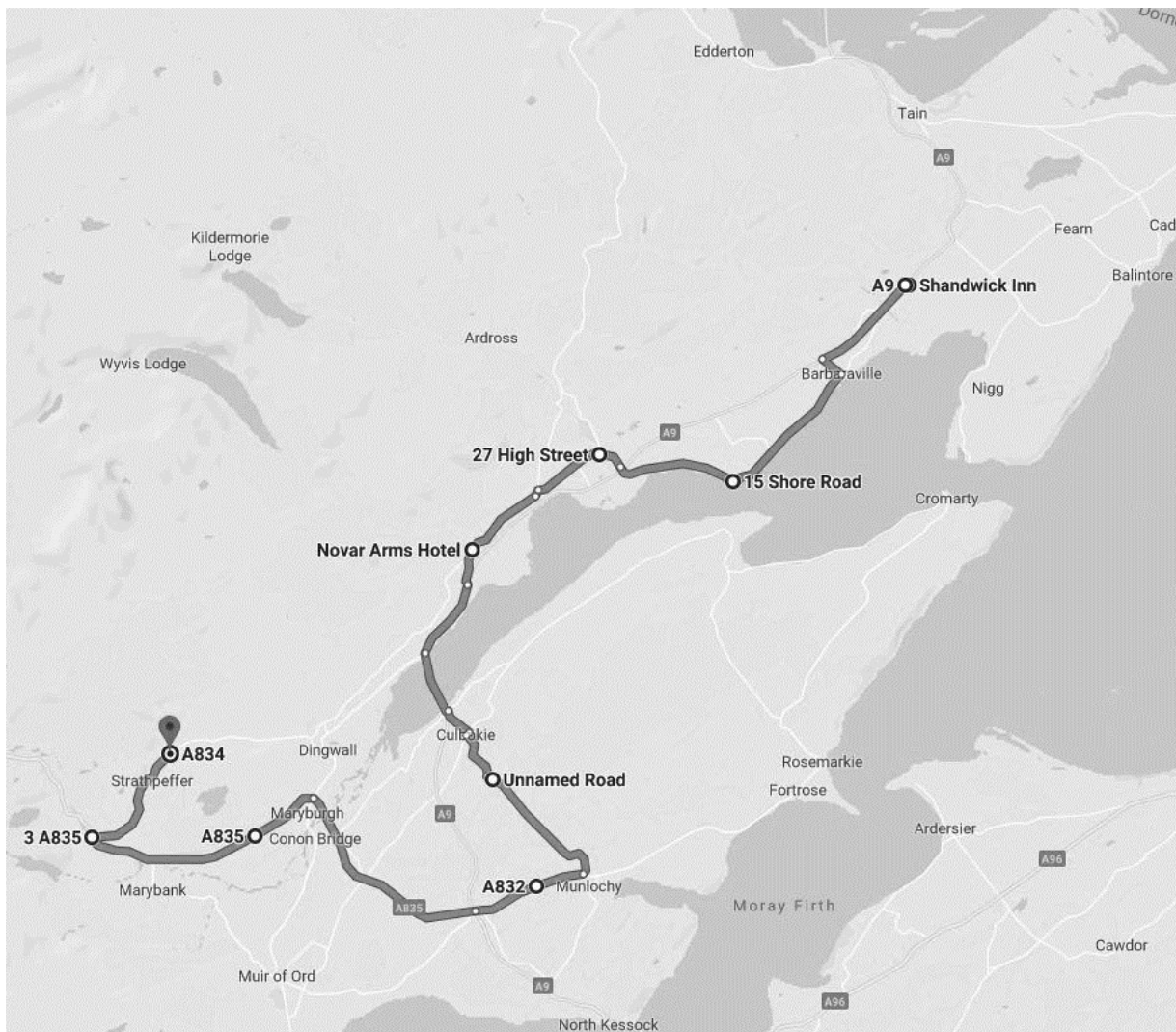
Ruby Picnic

July 7th

Without a doubt the highlight of the month was the Ruby Picnic organised by Bryan McIlwraith and his many helpers.

We met at the Shandwick Inn just off the A9 near Kildary. 40 years ago this pub hosted the very first HCMC meeting. We hung about for a while chatting and waiting to see which members past and present, would turn up. Having spent literally months going through old newsletters and researching the club for the Ruby Newsletter special edition (which is nearly finished) I found myself feeling more connected to the place than I'm really entitled to be. 21 cars turned up and the weather held out. There was a great atmosphere and I caught a glimpse of Bryan's chuffed face.

The carefully planned route took us via Invergordon, Alness then past the site of the old Wheel Inn to Evanton where we saw the Novar Arms, a regular venue in the past. A diversion south took us north of Munlochy who's hotel had been used many times, and then we carried on past the old Kilcoy Arms at Tore. Finally we drove up the Ullapool road, by Contin and through Strathpeffer to arrive at Castle Leod where the club last held a picnic on Sunday the 11th June, 2006.





En route, we had one break down but I think it would be unfair to name names. I mean what would be the point(s) and to be fair it only took about 5 minutes to diagnose and repair the problem which is quite impressive. The leader of our 'herd' of classics took us on the rest of the route without incident. (Is that enough hints?)

On arrival at the Castle Leod shinty grounds, we found the club marquee set up, complete with catering and it was still sunny! Picnic tables appeared from various cars and there was a relaxed afternoon of eating, chatting and general tyre kicking. As Bryan pointed out it was great to have a quiet private area to enjoy the event and the clubhouse was open to provide facilities.



Ticket



Shandwick Inn



The Wheel Inn



Left - **Novar Arms**, Evanton.

Right - **Kilcoy Arms**, Tore. Now owned by Teclan, a digital marketing company.

In the early days of the club, The Munlochy Hotel (Now the Allangrange) and the North Kessock Hotel were also commonly used meeting venues but each one became harder to use until the Old North Inn at Inchmore became our regular spot.



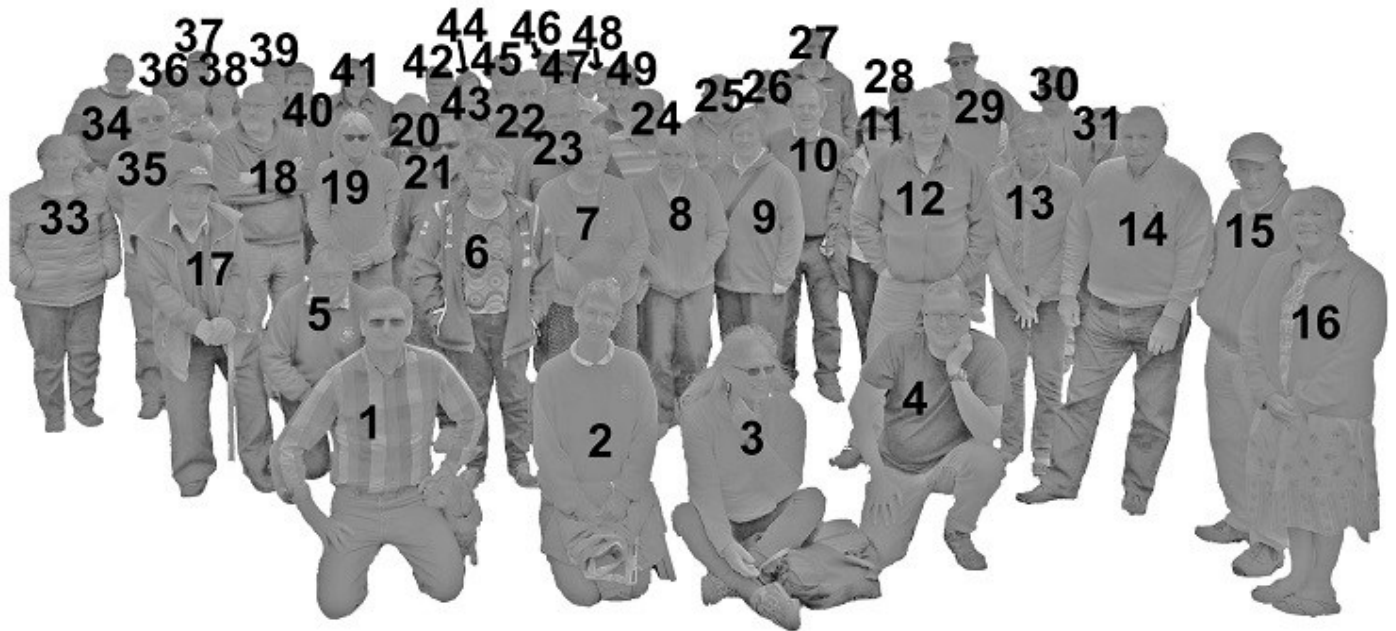
Founding member Hugh Skinner was at the picnic and I had a wee chat with him. It was Hugh and Kelvin Skinner that put out the adverts that started it all and Hugh thinks it was his idea to start the club. As a token of appreciation Hugh and Kelvin were given honorary membership.



Julie Ross was there with her camera and was press-ganged by me into taking a group photograph. The result is pretty good. Some members have asked if they could get copies of this so if you let me know at editor@highlandclassic.org.uk I'll get some printed and pass them on at cost. I intend to use this picture in the Ruby Anniversary newsletter so you will all have a paper copy at least.



For posterity and for the Ruby newsletter I would like everyone to identify themselves by number, and also to say if you'd rather not have your name listed. I'm particularly struggling to name partners and one child. Please can you drop names against numbers with permission to publish to, editor@highlandclassic.org.uk



Out and About

Jim Mackay sent in this picture of an Austin 1100 from BMC's ADO16 range. This car is in the Inverness area somewhere. Time is a funny thing but it looks much more appealing to my eye now than they did when they were a current model.



Culduthel Care Home

July 4th

On Thursday July the 4th we had an extra wee club night. Nothing was planned as the Ruby Picnic was going to replace the usual club night but we were invited and so a good number of members went along. Some popped along to the Dores Inn for a refreshment afterwards.



Lex Wheels on Tour 2019

Jim Mackay



These cars were photographed by Jim Mackay at the Kingsmills Hotel on the 3rd and 4th of June. I was going to publish this last month but there was no room in the Newsletter. Sorry Jim!

Lex Wheels on Tour are a group from the Netherlands who make regular trips to our classic car parish. They bring some lovely cars to our equally lovely roads. Jim's photos are just a selection from those in the car park.

c/o y Lounge Bar,

Pentland Hotel,

Thurso.

Dear Folkies, We hid till fit a couple o field troughs at Wattie's ferm, Cooster Mains an Young MacKay spotted a burnt out combine, lyin in wan o y fields. Wattie hid bin combinin an y straw an chaff hid caught fire an he hidn't noticed hit till hit wis too late. Y whole combine hid gone up, straw, chaff, diesel, rubber hoses, wiring, belts, hydraulic oil, comfy seat, piece bag an hip flask all contributed till fuel y flames. Poor Wattie wis distraught as he hid jist filled y hip flask wi Rock Rose from Dunnet Distillery. Y combine wis insured for fire but he got no compensation for y hip flask, life's a bugger some times. Y scrappie mannie wisna interested so hit lay where hit burnt an y bill used hit for shelter when he wis hidin from y coos!

Now, y diesel engine, a six cylinder Ford wis complete wi jist y wiring an y water hoses burnt oot an bein on a combine hit wouldna hiv done many hoors. A deal wis done wi Wattie an hes Loadall made short work o liftin hit off y top o y combine, paletting an pushin hit intill y vannie. This, thought Young MacKay wis an easier option than y multi-engines he hed planned for his Power Major. He could always hev hes multi-engines if this one wisna powerful enough.

Two problems hed to be sorted oot as y six cylinder wis longer than y four cylinder and there wis no clutch as y combine es belt driven. Cormacks came up trumps wi a suitable clutch from an old Thames Trader larry lyin in y yard an y side rails were constructed wi two lengths o new tram line (don't ask). Y rail came in handy for y roll-over bar, reinforcing mesh for y clutch safety cover courtesy o an abandoned Tesco trolley an a pair o big wheels from an old dump truck. This kept him busy in hes lean-to all winter an come spring hit wis ready for some paint. He hed some yellow paint from Dounreay which wis near enough the engine colour but he hed to keep hit all blue till qualify for membership o oor local clubbie, Y Blue Tractor, Green Stationary Engine an Multi-coloured Car Club or BTGSEMCC fir short tho hits no very short. Hit es a fine runnin machine an wi twice y horsepower o y original engine Young MacKay wis confident o pullin anything north o y Ord. Y challenge wis oot in y Groatie.

Regards, *Wundy Miller.*

Apologies to our new favourite anonymous contributor. This letter should have been in last months newsletter but there was a problem in the sorting office and I didn't get it until the day after the last edition was published.

Now I say sorting office but I don't mean the Royal Mail. You may or may not remember, nor even care, that your editor had man flu for the four days when the last newsletter was due to be completed. Mrs editor had kindly stacked all my mail and it was only when I found the energy to go through it that I found the above using some vocabulary that Tom McCallum would be ashamed of. (OK perhaps not.)

RAVINGS FROM THE CHAIR

Once again I can report that the Stag is progressing all the time but it is always that little bit slower than you hope it will be. The end is in sight but whether it will make it in time for the rally is another question. If it does it will be a close call. As it stands at the moment the passenger side has had all the welding completed. All the panels have been sprayed with etch primer after removing the brown primer that they come in. It's always difficult to know what to do with new panels. Sometimes the primer is sound and removing it is tedious, but other times, as with the Rimmer floor panel, the primer needs just a touch of the wire brush to remove it. I always opt for stripping the panels but it does take time. After that seam sealer was applied to every joint and sound deadening panels were glued to the floor before painting with white cellulose.

Unfortunately getting the *right* white cellulose is proving to be a problem. Arctic white? Polar white? Diamond white? All I know is that it says 19 on the can but it seems that there were several Leyland whites around at the time. Twice now I've been told that the colour I've been given is right but once it's on the car it's very clear that it just is not.

There have been other hitches which although brief have been memorable. Like when I was trying to prise the plastic seal out of a new tin of thinners. All of a sudden the seal popped out and the screwdriver plunged into the can splashing thinners onto my face and into my eyes. There was a moment of literal blind panic and dreadful pain. I stumbled into the house and washed my face, remembering to use cold water to close the pores of the skin. Surprisingly the irritation was very short lived, and half an hour later there were no after effects. Then there was the metal fragment stuck to the surface of the eyeball..... Hmmm, I think I'll take up gardening.

This old chairman's contribution was sent in by Jim Mackay as an example of Bryan's excellent writing style. In the old Newsletters there are lots of stories of Stag travesties but that is partly due to the abundance of articles that Bryan contributed, and er, perhaps the material Stag ownership provided!

Cars and Coffee

July 14th

Another and I quote 'stonking' Cars and Coffee. First pictures by Jim Mackay.



And here are some of my favourites from an excellent morning.



Tain Part 2

As promised, here are some more photos from one of HCMC's busiest Tain shows in a while. Who'd have thought a 'Professionals' Car would be in Highland shows? Well apart from the owner, and their pals.

23rd June 2019



LOCAL EVENTS

1st Aug 2019	Club run to Gin distillery at Inshriach House	Inshriach House, Feshiebridge	Meet at Simpsons Garden Centre for 7pm. More details from Bryan McIlwraith
3rd Aug 2019	Elgin BID classic Vehicle Show	Elgin	Entry is FREE. Email CairanNHE@mail.com to collect a booking form
11th Aug 2019	Historic Wheels Rally	Brodie Castle, Forres IV36 0TE	Note: NO LATE ENTRIES at Brodie Castle. Pre-book or Arrive at Start Point.
11th Aug 2019	Cars And Coffee - Inverness	Rollerbowl, Culduthel Rd. Inverness	10am to 12 noon Every 2nd Sunday of the Month.
17th Aug 2019	Balintore, Sat 17th Aug	Balintore, Sat 17th Aug	Pebble beach Concours. Part of the Balintore carnival. Contact Hugh skinner on 07810076549 for more details
18th Aug 2019	Dunrobin Castle Vintage Car Run & Rally	Helmsdale to Dunrobin Castle	Download entry form from www.gogolspie.co.uk Helmsdale 10am. Brora 11am. Embo 12noon. Dornoch 1pm. Dunrobin Castle 2pm. Late Entry OK.
23rd Aug 2019	DubNess - The Gathering of the Vans	Clune Farm, Does, Inverness	23rd-25th August at Clune Farm, Does, Inverness. Camping for your van or visit for a day. https://www.facebook.com/DubNessGatheringofthevans/
31st Aug 2019	Fortrose & Rosemarkie Classic Vehicle Rally	Dingwall to Fortrose	info@fortroserally.co.uk or https://www.facebook.com/fortroseclassics
1st Sep 2019	Motor Mania at Grantown on Spey	Grantown on Spey	www.grantown-motormaniamania.co.uk