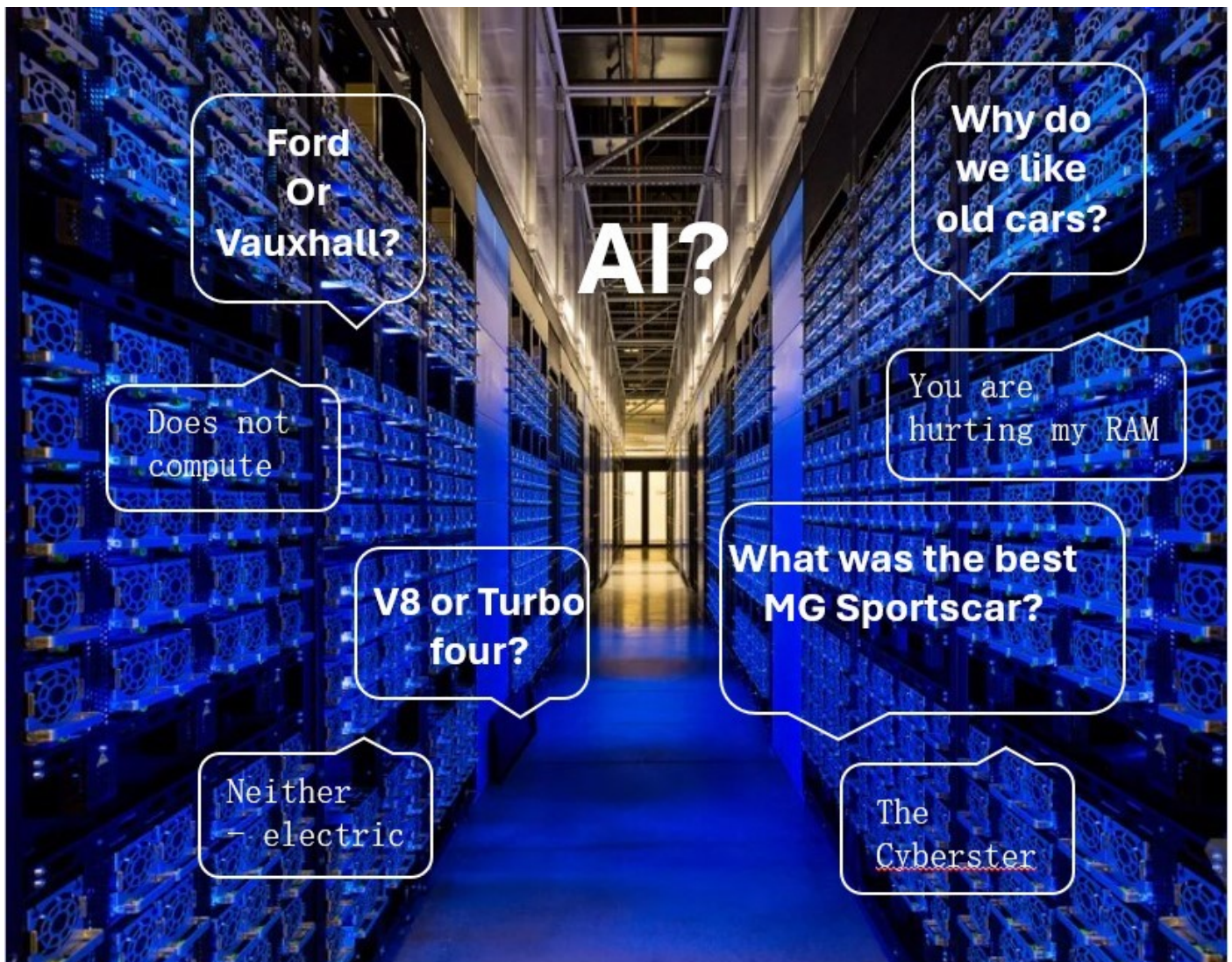


CLASSIC SCENE



September 2025



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Cover Picture

AI vs Classic Car Owners.

Welcome to the September Newsletter

This month has been rather light on car-related adventures, as work and other pastimes have taken up most of my time. I did manage to coax the Sierra out for a run to Cromarty—though not without its share of drama. First it refused to start, then relented. I suspect another electrical gremlin. Partway through, I either struck a stray road spring or shed a piece of my own suspension—still to be determined. To add to the excitement, my local garage was out of petrol, leaving me to complete the trip with a touch of range anxiety.

Recently, I've been experimenting with AI, in particular ChatGPT. You can ask it questions and it fires up a few kilowatts of cloud computing power (somewhere near Slough, I'm told), melting a few more kilos of polar ice in the process, before producing a surprisingly good answer. According to its diagnosis, my Sierra's graunching gears point to a clutch issue—likely a faulty release bearing, though time will tell. I even asked it to generate an image of a Sierra on a remote Scottish road and, for fun, an Austin 10 on a farm. Oddly enough, the background hills were identical!

Mrs Editor, being a creative writer, insists AI is the spawn of the devil. As a less creative writer with somewhat limited enthusiasm, I find it may actually offer some intriguing new possibilities.

Another AI tool I've dabbled with is Google Lens, handy for identifying old cars. I recently misidentified a Standard Flying 14 with it—though it was actually a Flying 9. Still, it did highlight the signature waterfall grille, and in truth, it did a better job than I could. The unexpected reward was the opportunity to explore the history of a marque from the 1930s and 40s, an area outside my usual expertise.

AI clearly still has its limitations, but it also shows promise. I even read that medical researchers have used it to develop a new family of antibiotics resistant to superbugs.

It's hard to believe how quickly the year has passed. The nights are drawing in, but there are still a few shows to attend and one more Club Night drive left on the calendar.

Hope to see you out there , maybe at the Fortrose show?

—Your Editor

P.S. I got ChatGPT to re-write this entire editorial—apart from this line.

P.P.S Watch out, the robots are coming!



Ramblings from the Chair



During the good spell of weather last month, Mrs Chair and myself found ourselves in Caithness, an area I had visited for work reasons but had never really explored – and we found it to be very pleasantly rural. The part on the extreme north east corner is described as the Lowlands beyond the Highlands and it certainly appeared to be very productive with arable fields and plenty livestock. There was a surprising amount of trees and woodlands, something we had not expected. But I digress – we took the opportunity to visit the Halkirk Heritage & Vintage Motor Society Museum, right in the centre of Halkirk and what a lovely place it is. The exhibition is relatively new and is based primarily around the classic car collection of the late Edward Sutherland, former owner of J&G Sutherland garage (once an Austin Rover main dealership), although the cars on show are changed frequently and are loaned from nearby owners. I had thought that I might have seen Bluebell, the light blue Standard 10 which was saved from the scrapman. Readers may remember that the car, which was fully roadworthy, was traded in under the scrappage scheme from about 15 years ago (for £2000) for a new Ford Transit van. Fortunately the lads at the scrappies at Thurso refused to crush it (which was an essential part of the scheme)



and hid it from view somewhere in Caithness. After much campaigning, including assistance from Practical Classics, Ford relented and the car passed into the hands of the Caithness and Sutherland Vintage and Classic Vehicle Club and was shown at the British Motor Museum at Gaydon and the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu. She made her way to both locations under her own steam. Unfortunately she is not on show at Halkirk at

present, but is still local to the area, awaiting some restoration work. Anyway, at the time of my visit, there were about a dozen cars on show including (the youngest) a Rover 214 convertible, a Frogeye Sprite, two Morris Minors, two Wolseleys, an Austin A40 convertible and a Buggati. In addition, there were pedal and motor cycles, a cut away Hillman Imp engine, scores of old magazines and books, in piles, cabinets full of vintage tools and all sorts of old classic car paraphernalia. In another room there were less general car related exhibits but all of interest to me. There was a quiet reading room where one could become engrossed in the old

magazines or perhaps a Haynes manual if you are needing some assistance for your classic. In yet another room there was a mock up of a typically 1950's garage with an Austin A40 in bits – obviously in need of restoration. Like my own garage, there were car parts strewn around the workbenches, ranging from sparkplugs (remember the old fashioned pink colour) to Hardy Spicer yokes and bearings. Finally, at a room in the back was an exhibition of transparent PVC personal protective clothing which was found in the attic of the building. It seems that the premises (an old school) used to be a factory producing



these garments, with Dounreay being a main customer. There were newspaper articles and newsreels giving information on the factory. Altogether, I found the museum to be fascinating and I could have spent a lot more time there – unfortunately it closed at 4.00pm. Its opening hours are fairly limited – if you fancy a visit, I suggest you check the times before you set off.

My thanks go to various members who attended last month's run near the River Findhorn (which was excellent and on roads I had never been on before) who informed me that the Senator was permanently showing one brake light – diagnosed as a disintegrated brake light switch and a failed bulb (hence the one light, - through overuse maybe?). A quick search on-line revealed that the switch is common to many Opel and Vauxhall models (maybe even current models!) and one has been purchased, awaiting fitting. I think I will be lying upside down with the driver's seat pushed rearwards and the back lowered as far as it will go!

Next month's Club Night run will be the last of the season due to diminishing daylight and will be starting from the North Kessock car park (on the front, opposite the Kessock Hotel), taking some back roads to Muir of Ord and the Ord Arms Hotel. The owner, Stuart Wilson, has several classic cars which I hope we will be able to view, and we might follow this with a small refreshment. I hope to see you all there – 4th September, 7.30pm as usual.

HCMC Run to Auldearn

We enjoyed a very pleasant evening on the HCMC Run to and from the Covenanters Inn at Auldearn. Many thanks to Graeme Bremner for planning such an excellent route. I joined Richard as navigator, and afterwards we all gathered in the bar for a drink and a blether—even the three dogs joined in!



This report is brought to by Miles Vincent but put through an AI writing machine.



Have you seen my torque wrench?

Bob's got it.

Bob, have you got my torque wrench?

No not me, I saw Bob with it.

No not that Bob, Bob at the back.

Bob? What? What? What? What? What?

Replied everyone.



The Maltese Connection.

by Roving Photographer Callum Beveridge



Mr. Beveridge is a man of few words in this article, but his pictures tell us that he was in Malta and he took pictures of old and interesting cars for our entertainment.

Who can identify either derelict vehicle in that bit of waste ground?

Fleeting Moments

Trish Brown

As we were preparing the Smart for its annual MOT, we discovered the driver's sidelight was out. No worries we thought, we've got spare bulbs. Out comes the front luggage compartment and then you have to get almost upside down under the bonnet to root around under the headlights. What I thought was the sidelight turned out to be the indicator – once I pulled it out of course. So where is the indicator? We took a look at the passenger side and after a bit of rummaging spotted a small grey knurled knob, next to the indicator. Back to the driver's side. No side light visible. Let's have a look online then. Ah, on the driver's side it is slightly forward of the washer bottle. The reason you can't see it is because of the mounting bracket for the washer bottle. The only way to get to the side light is:

Remove the headlights

Remove the side panel

Remove the wheelarch lining

Remove the front panel

That is a major amount of work for a silly 5W bulb. The alternative – and this is what we eventually plumped for – is to do surgery on the front panel by cutting out a bit from the top, large enough so you can (just) get your hand in.

Once the Smart came back from its MOT, we decided to take a shopping trip to Inverness. As we neared Inverness, the ABS light came on. ****, we thought, is there another ABS ring gone? But no, as we went round the Longman roundabout, the handbrake warning light also briefly lit up, usually a sign of low brake fluid. Thus, instead of shopping we went straight to that shop on the corner of Harbour Road roundabout to buy a bottle of brake fluid. Filled up the reservoir, which worryingly it took quite a bit. This made us decide to go straight back home, whilst keeping a very healthy distance to the car in front, as you never know. It was an uneventful drive home. Once back in the drive, we took a closer look under the car and spotted drips midway under the car. And the brakes were getting spongier too. Thus, with a suspected brake line failure, we straightaway booked the car back in with our mannie at the garage.

According to our mannie, once the undertrays were removed, it was clearly not one brake pipe gone, but the second one was well on its way out too. Both front-to-rear pipes, right at the point where 2 undertrays meet. There is something to be said against garages not having to remove these undertrays when doing an MOT. This potentially lethal fault went thus undetected.

The Landie's starting issue has been addressed. We got to a point where we were not sure whether the problem was battery (nope, connecting a fully charged battery made no difference), the wiring (could be, it is getting old) or the starter motor itself (also 60yrs old). We took a gamble and bought a replacement starter motor, which made no difference either. Meantime we took the old starter motor & solenoid to bits, cleaned up any connection we could find and put it back together again. And then stuck it back on the Landie. Fingers crossed, and yes the Landie started, if reluctantly. At that point our attention focused on the old wiring. We replaced the ignition-solenoid wire with a slightly beefed up one. And we added additional wiring between the alternator and starter, as recommended by Lucas when you change from Dynamo to Alternator. Clearly somebody hadn't read that bit of advice back in the late 60's when the original diesel engine was replaced with a petrol engine. With the new wiring the starting has improved. Instead of whir whirr whir..... and eventually catching, it goes whir, vroom. And the charging of the battery has improved too. Hopefully this has sorted the starting problems. And we have a spare starter motor.

Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs News

DVLA backs classic car industry and driving enthusiasts with updated registration policies

Following an extended period of lobbying and consultation by the FBHVC culminating in the Call for Evidence to which Members responded in record numbers, the Federation can now share this Registration Policy Update from DVLA.

The Federation is very encouraged by these outcomes, not only with the revised policies but also with a clear change to a more sympathetic and pragmatic approach to the registration difficulties sometimes faced with older vehicles.

We also acknowledge the considerable time and effort Agency staff have obviously devoted to this matter and are grateful that they so carefully listened to our submissions.

OFFICIAL DVLA ANNOUNCEMENT - 20 August 2025

- DVLA has announced updated policies to modernise the process for notifying DVLA when a vehicle has been repaired, restored and modified.
- Like-for-like repairs and restorations will no longer need to be reported to DVLA, and more modified vehicles - including electric vehicle (EV) conversions - will be able to retain their original identities.
- Changes will take effect from Tuesday 26 August 2025.
DVLA has today (20 August) unveiled a major update to some of its vehicle registration policies, making it significantly easier for enthusiasts to register repaired, restored and modified vehicles.

The new guidance reflects modern restoration methods and simplifies the registration process, helping classic car owners keep their vehicles on the road while ensuring safety and accurate records.

These changes follow an extensive call for evidence, which received more than 1,350 responses from classic car owners, motoring clubs and the historic vehicle sector. In response, DVLA is replacing its existing policies on rebuilt and radically altered vehicles with two new sets of guidance that will apply to all vehicles, regardless of age.

Key changes include:

- like-for-like repairs and restorations will no longer require notification to DVLA, providing the vehicle's appearance is the same as when it was originally manufactured and there are no changes to the log book (V5C)
 - vehicles that have been subject to significant structural modifications will be able to keep their original Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) and registration number, but the registered keeper must notify DVLA of the changes.
 - vehicles that have been converted to electric will also be able to retain their original identity, but the registered keeper must notify DVLA of the changes.
- Minister for the Future of Roads, Lilian Greenwood said: "We know how much love, time and effort goes into keeping classic cars – and we're right behind the community."

"These changes are about cutting red tape and making life easier for enthusiasts, whether you're restoring a vintage gem or converting it to electric. It's all about celebrating the UK's amazing motoring heritage and helping the industry thrive well into the future."

DVLA Chief Executive, Tim Moss, said: "We recognise the time, passion and care that keepers of classic vehicles invest in keeping their cars on the road. That's why we've worked closely with the community to shape these changes."

"These updated policies support historic vehicle keepers, and the wider industry, with clearer registration processes that reflect modern restoration and modification practices, helping safeguard the UK's rich and wonderful automotive history. These changes will allow enthusiasts to focus on what they love most: preserving and enjoying these remarkable vehicles."

The new policies will come into effect on Tuesday 26 August 2025 with the full guidance to be published on GOV.UK on the same day, at:

www.gov.uk/vehicle-registration

On Tuesday 26 August 2025, DVLA will replace its existing policies on rebuilt and radically altered vehicles with two new sets of guidance:

Repaired and restored vehicles

There will be no requirement to notify DVLA where a vehicle has been repaired or restored back to its original working standard, providing:

worn-out components or body panels are replaced on a like for like basis
the appearance of the vehicle is the same as when it was originally manufactured

Vehicle log book (V5C) details are not affected.

Modified vehicles

Vehicles that have had significant structural modifications will be able to keep their original Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) and registration number, but the registered keeper must notify DVLA of the changes.

This could include:

cutting into the chassis monocoque or frame
changing the vehicle's appearance or dimensions from the original manufacturer's specification
conversions from an internal combustion engine to electric propulsion

These changes are based on engagement with industry and stakeholders along with feedback from a call for evidence which launched on 9 May 2024. DVLA published the summary of the responses to this on 9 December 2024 and the revised guidance will be published on Tuesday 26 August.

Vehicle

What AI Says About It



The vehicle in the image is a Jago Geep kit car, also known as a Jago Jeep, later renamed Sandero due to trademark issues with the Jeep brand.

Here's some information about the Jago Geep:

Origin: It's a British-made kit car produced by Jago, a company founded by Geoff Jago in 1965.

Design: The Geep's bodywork is made of glass fibre and is molded off an original World War II

Willys Jeep.

Donor Vehicles: Early versions often utilised mechanical components from donor vehicles like the Ford Anglia, Morris Minor, or Ford Escort.

Production Era: The Jago Geep was introduced in 1971, and production of its kit car line continued until around 1997.

Purpose: Designed as an affordable and rugged off-road style vehicle, it gained popularity as a project car and leisure vehicle.



The car in the image is an MG Maestro, likely a 2.0 EFi model from the mid to late 1980s.

Here are some key details about the MG Maestro:

Manufacturer & Production: Originally produced by British Leyland (later Rover Group) from 1983 to 1991, as a performance variant of the Austin Maestro.

Engine & Performance: The 2.0 EFi models, introduced in October 1984, featured a 2.0-litre O-series engine with electronic fuel injection, offering 115 bhp, a top speed of 115 mph, and a 0-60 mph time of 8.5 seconds, making it competitive with rivals like the Golf GTI and Escort XR3i.

Notable Features: Pioneering features for its class included a bonded laminated windscreen, body-coloured plastic bumpers, an electronic engine management system, and adjustable front seat belt anchorages. MG and Vanden Plas versions also featured a digital dashboard with a voice synthesis warning system, a distinctive and somewhat controversial feature at the time.

Legacy: While initially facing some reliability issues, particularly with the earlier 1.6-litre R-series engine, later 2.0 EFi models offered improved performance and handling, and are now considered classic British cars, particularly the rare Turbo variant.

Cars and Coffee

Jim Mackay

Another great turn-out despite Historic Wheels having their Brodie Castle Rally. I was drawn to the MG Maestro as I had an MG Montego and lots of fond memories.



I had a chat with Jock, he of the other A40. He's had the engine out three times to fix an oil pump leak, change the gearbox which was reduced to 3rd gear only and replace a clutch release fork cross shaft bush. All appears to be well and he ought to be sorted as he's had his allotted three!

Ed: I'm also drawn to the MG Maestro. My Mum had the 1600 one when I was a teenager and us kids got to drive it. Crash score-one all between me and my brother. It had a speaking computer and instantaneous mpg read out. Now there's a challenge—how low can you get it? Well zero point something if memory serves. My parents thought it was terrible. Me and my brother loved it!





In Memory of Richard Gibson



We are sad to share that Richard Gibson, a much-loved regular at Cars and Coffee, passed away on 8th August. His daughter let us know that, in keeping with his wishes, there will be no formal funeral—but she felt, quite rightly, that many of us would want to know and mark his passing in our own way.

We knew he had been unwell, yet Richard never lost his love of socialising at Cars and Coffee. He was a familiar and popular face, known not only for his warm conversation but also for his unforgettable cars. Many will remember him arriving in his gold Jensen Interceptor, always proudly wearing Jensen-branded attire. Fittingly, he served as the Scottish Rep for the Jensen Owners' Club.

Richard's taste in cars spoke volumes about his character. After the Interceptor, he owned a TVR Taimar 3000M followed by a stunning (1934?) Lagonda Rapier—one that anyone with an eye for cars would envy. More recently, he became synonymous with his ever-present white Gilbern Invader estate. In our world, we often judge people by the cars they cherish—and by that measure, Richard passed with flying colours.



More than the cars, though, it was Richard's company that made him special. Always ready for a chat, he will be remembered as a true enthusiast and a good friend to many. He will be sorely missed.

To honour him, we will dedicate September 14th's Cars and Coffee gathering to Richard's memory, with donations going to Macmillan Cancer Support in his name.

HCMC Events

30th Aug 2025 Fortrose & Rosemarkie Classic Vehicle Rally Dingwall Mart -> Fortrose George V Sports Field on the Saturday between 1pm and 4pm. Entrants should have their information pack by now.

31st Aug 2025 Buckie Classic Car Show Linzee Gordon Park, Buckie, UK 11am -4pm Classic, Modern Classic, Future Classics. Register Online at www.buckieclassiccarshow.co.uk

4th Sep 2025 HCMC Scenic Drive & Pub Meeting Gather for a 7.30pm Start at the North Kessock car park (opposite the Kessock Hotel on the front) to the Ord Arms to look at Stuart Wilson's classic cars and maybe have a refreshment.

6th Sep 2025 Dingwall Rotary Vehicle Show 2025 Cromartie Park Vehicles should be in the Cromartie Car Park by 11.00am and remain there until the parade at 3.30pm. please reply to gordonmacrae72@gmail.com by email with your details

14th Sep 2025 Cars And Coffee - Inverness Rollerbowl, Culduthel Rd. Inverness 2nd Sunday of every Month from 10am-12noon.

20th Sep 2025 Wheels of Nairn 250 Classic & Modern Cars on Show from 10am - 3pm. More details at www.nairnconnects.com or Facebook