

CLASSIC SCENE



October 2021



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Cover Picture

A Stag-erring turn out for our trip to
the Shandwick Inn.

Lower left - some cars at the Porsche
Club Cars and Coffee.

Lower right, Dusk at the Shandwick
Inn

Welcome to the October Newsletter

Not much car activity to report at your editor's garage this month. I'm a bit scunnered after the final push to get the VW T5 van going. And going it is. I've done about 600 miles with only minor issues. It's not even as bad on fuel as I expected, especially on a long run out west and back. The previous owner complained of a decline in mpg, but I suspect that was mainly due to the shocking state of the wheel bearings.

The Beetle is still waiting for the accident repair to be done after the supermarket shunt, and hasn't been driven in weeks. Poor thing.

The tax on the Sierra is about to run out before being SORN'd for the winter months so that'll get a wee autumnal blast somewhere soon.

Our (emerging classic) Ford Focus Mk1 is needing a bit of TLC and Mrs Editor doesn't like driving the van, and I don't like her driving my Sierra. The Golf doesn't like being driven at all so I have an 8 car conundrum. How do I get the Focus in the garage to fit new subframes while keeping Mrs Editor on the road? Well it's a 9th car solution. I bought another Focus Mk1! But a cheap banger. So it needs a little welding here and there, and has a brake pedal that pulses badly, it's got an MOT until next March. If it fails that (which I expect it will as it should probably have failed this one) it will be a perfect spares car. Meanwhile, once I've made it a bit safer, Mrs Editor can drive it for a few weeks while the good Focus goes into surgery.

Meanwhile my efforts to collect an old Sierra for spares have stalled as I'm out of time.... and parking space.

In non-me news, I would like to say thank you to all those who sent in contributions for this months edition. I'm sure you'll all enjoy the newsletter more because of it.

Generally when writing this thing, I try and go for a light hearted, possibly comedic tone though the latter is rarely fully achieved. However in this issue we have an item from Bryan about a real life roadside experience, which makes very serious reading. I have obviously read it and it's still on my mind a week or so later, so you may well want to skip it, however I felt it worth publishing as a sombre reminder of how easily things can go wrong, and how well people can behave in a crisis. In my opinion and I'm sure yours too if you read it, Bryan was a bit of a hero (my words) and also makes some very good points. Many people just drive past a road side incident. Have you got it in you to stop and help?

Chairs Bitty

We've been away for a fortnight at the end of August / early September and thus were unable to join you on the run to the Shandwick. I expect that you all have a lovely time – the weather was good (well it was were we were). During our time away we spotted:

- several classic cars, some pictures may be further along in the magazine
- a Lamborghini Aventador
- a swan taking a stroll across the campsite
- a bunch of red kites which were definitely not photogenic as every time I tried to take a picture they *** off, only to return to wheel overhead the minute you turn the camera off.
- a stupid person in a campervan towing a large trailer driving at 30mph on a foggy coastal to Stranraer road and not stopping in layby's, much to the frustration of other road users
- bathers trying to have a swim but giving up after having to walk half a mile across mudflats following the receding tide and still not getting any further than ankle deep.
- lots of modern Aston Martins

and on return home finding that the village hotel has a new owner who happens to own several classics. We are trying to recruit him to the club.

Some wonderful news about our Landy. She's back where she belongs – on our driveway. Finally after many many attempts at bleeding the brakes and the Landy stubbornly refusing to behave, finally a few more bubbles came out and tadah, the brakes are perfect. As the MOT was due next month and our mannie at the garage just could not face seeing our Landie again next month, so the MOT was carried out now. Apart from a failed bulb, it was a breeze. Since she has returned the Landy has been immediately pressed into service hauling garden clippings to the amenity site. In one week she has done more miles than in the whole of the previous year (all of 150).

In our garden, the courgettes have decided to call it a day now that the nights are getting a little colder and I have consigned them to the compost heap. We had a few courgettes, but not as many as I was hoping for. Similarly the onions and potatoes did not do as well as expected. I think having the beds under the elder trees was, certainly this year, not a good place to grow crops. The elder trees appear to have survived – thankfully, if somewhat denuded by the aphids occupation. Now that the weather has turned a little cooler the aphids seem to have moved on, or at least the trees are looking cleaner. Here is hoping that the elders come away again next year cause right now the growth is only at the top of the trees.

Our neighbour too is into home grown produce. They also have a plum tree with more plums than they can cope with. As you do when you are neighbours, we were chatting over the fence. As earlier in the year the plum tree was looking a bit poorly, we admired how well the tree appeared to have recovered. And before you could say "plum" we were presented with a bucket full of freshly picked plums. Made me think they were glad to get rid of some. Anyway, we have turned these into several jars of plum jam. Yum.



You will have heard me going on before about the state of our back road, some sections of which having so many potholes it resembles swiss cheese. Well, to our amazement we noticed at the end of August that the Council finally started to tackle the road. We were not expecting much to happen apart from filling in the potholes. But would you believe it, on return from our little holiday whole sections of road have been completely resurfaced, leaving the worst of the sunken edges fully restored. What a joy to drive. More sections are in progress, notably the 100m of "swiss cheese" which has been scraped back ready for a new coat of tarmac. When finished, this road is going to be almost as smooth as a billiard table. Amazing.

Back to club matters. This month we are keeping it simple. We are meeting up at Roller Bowl for a drink and a natter - and if there is any light left at 19.30, a look around our cars.

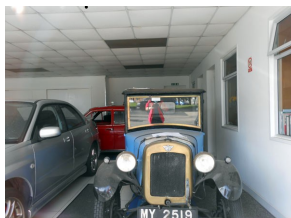
See you there.

Trish.



Mystery car. ----->

Can you identify the frontless car on the right? Send your answers in by email and the first correct answer gets a home backed apple pie from Trish.



September Club Night



For the September meeting we drove our cars up to the Shandwick Inn, Kildary, the infamous birthplace of the HCMC. We met at the north-bound car park on the A9 near North Kessock at the slightly earlier time of 19.15pm with a 19.30pm start on a route via Dingwall where we lost some cars and gained some others.

I was car-less as I had arranged to pick up that Mk1 Focus banger in Alness on the way home, so I arranged a lift with the other Callum in his Burton. My house is about 30 minutes walk for the Harry Gow's layby so I turned up on foot. Unfortunately I didn't mention this to Mr. B, who turned up at my house. Sorry!

Now being a passenger in a Burton is an interesting thing. Being a little on the tall side with slightly sticky-out ears I had to lean into the screen to hear over the wind noise but other than that it was a delight. We wafted gently along on the magic carpet of Citroen mechanicals but we were beyond Dingwall before we realised nobody was behind us.

Anyway we found our way to the Shandwick Inn to find some cars were already there and some arrived a little later. Some cars arrived that hadn't set off, and some that had didn't. Do you follow? No? Then you probably couldn't follow a 28hp kit car either.



A Shandy at the Shandwick..

As it turned out, it was a very pleasant almost warm evening, and we all sat outside with our shandies and softies. One pleasant surprise was the attendance of Craig Anderson, who was a former newsletter editor, a former colleague of mine (and I didn't recognise him because of his beard!) and a current musician and entertainer. Just don't ask him how many guitars he has. He may list them.

The staff were very friendly and the banter was flowing until it was time we flew ourselves. I had that mission in Alness to pick up the old banger.

And there she was parked up on the grass verge where I'd left her, still with four tyres but much less petrol than earlier in the day. Also suspicious was the now open filler flap. Still they left enough to get to the filling station at Morrisons so can't complain. Callum kept up the banter with 'encouraging words' about my new purchase, plus he followed me home to pick up any bits that fell off, which was rather surprisingly none. I will say, I don't know how the thing got an MOT. The brake pedal felt more like a pedal car pedal than a stop pedal.



Oxygen bottle

I have an empty BOC oxygen cylinder, size x, free to a good home. It replaces the older smaller one for a Porta Pak and, sadly, I have no more contacts with a BOC rental agreement to have it re-filled. I paid good money for it but BOC insist that it belongs to them. What happens when one of these cylinders goes awol? Obviously, the renter has to pay for it so this cylinder has been paid for at some time in the dim and murky past. I've paid for a replacement at MacGregors and I'll need to do the same for acetylene some time soon.

Cheers,

Jim MacKay.

07968144905.

Out and About

The 20-Ghost Club had a two night stop-over at the King-smills Hotel and fortunately I was alerted. I'm not a Rolls Royce enthusiast but I would have liked to have owned one. I drove a 1937 example once, round the ring at Glamis and that was special. I considered a later 70's Silver Shadow which could have been had for £5K but, really, it just wouldn't fit on the drive. The star of the group had to be AX201, THE Silver Ghost, the most photographed and one of the most expensive cars in the world, priceless really. It had it's own trailer with accommodation and someone dedicated to look after it . He polished everything frequently and removed my paw marks and drools without complaint. He even agreed to let me drive when there was no-one around! The owner, I presume, had a young and attractive female driver, daughter, I presume. I videoed the starting procedure and the owner kindly asked if I was finished before he carefully closed the bonnet, how considerate. Poor man couldn't close his zip but he was out and his car was being used, just like my A40 (not really). Cheers, Jim MacKay.



Other lesser marques were out and about too...



Cars and Coffee

I can't say too much about this month's Cars and Coffee as I didn't attend, but I did hear it was really busy. Here's a selection of pictures borrowed from several places.



The 'Back to the Future' replica was a hit as were these Porsches.



However even one of the Porsche owners made an Imp his car of the day.



But as you'll know by now, there's something to satisfy all tastes.



He came to Drumnadrochit in 1986 and was a delightful man and a keen supporter of our club. He will be very sadly missed and The Club sends sincerest sympathies to Sheila, Ian's wife, and Bruce.

Austin Healey - Part 4

Jim MacKay

I reckoned that I was better with a basket case car original car than a tarted up runner and cheaper too. How original this one was is questionable. Being a sports car means that it was driven hard and would have picked up a few knocks on the way so I was under no illusion as to its originality. The rust certainly looked original so there was lots of originality! The splined wheels were rusted on and



various methods were use to free them off. Fortunately the spines were not worn, a small comfort in the overall scheme of things.

The body in two parts (front and rear bulkheads) is welded to the chassis about a door width apart and it was still attached here and there. Eventually, I had barrow-

age floor. Questions were being asked about its integrity and its trueness and whether or not a new chassis was required. Is it meant to rock or has it sagged in the middle? No-one could tell me. And one of the front suspension mounts is bent



and the chassis split. I took some diagonal measurements and they seemed fine so I decided to repair and if it ended up running sideways then I could at least say that everything was original!

Cheers,

Jim MacKay.

WARNING - THIS ARTICLE CONTAINS DETAILS OF A HORRIFIC ROAD INCIDENT.

IT'S YOUR CHOICE WHETHER YOU READ IT OR NOT. Bryan McIlwraith

So, there was me and Jane tootling along through the gently rolling Welsh hills, on our way to a coffee shop that we had spied the day before. We saw a column of smoke ahead and thought a farmer must be burning bales. Rounding the next bend we firstly saw a van stopped in the road, and then noticed beyond it, a burning car. I wasn't sure about whether to stop or not (the guy ahead of me didn't), but then I noticed that behind the blazing car was a person sitting on the road. I pulled over and approached the scene. The guys asked if I had a fire extinguisher (I didn't) but the blaze was well beyond that. What I saw was a lady whose every stitch of clothing had been burned off her body. She was sitting only a foot behind the inferno shaking, twitching, spasming. I shouted to her to come away from the car but she appeared not to understand or unable to move. I shouted to her again, pleaded with her to move or she would die. She moved, but only a foot. I reached out to her hand but the heat was so intense I was still a foot way from her hand. One of the guys from the van reached out, and probably because he was wearing work gloves he managed to reach her hand. I grabbed his shoulder and we heaved her away to the grass verge. Only a few yards but a bit safer. I shouted out to the on-lookers that we needed water. It is important to cool the skin of burns victims. By the only luck of the day the van was Welsh Water and the guys had an eight pack of 3 litre bottles. I grabbed them and started to pour the water over her and told them to do the same. I then shouted for a blanket or towel which somebody produced and, putting it over the victim, I wet the towel all over, and also a blanket that had appeared. I told the guys to keep doing this and water appeared from other cars and vans. I sought assurance from others that 999 had been called (it had been) and then turned back to the casualty. I enquired her name, but she was barely able to speak and I couldn't understand. I did find out she was sixty (relevant later). I also asked if she had hit something but she hadn't. All the while re-assuring her that the ambulance was on its way (but minutes seemed like hours) I pieced together the story. She had had a container of petrol in the car, and had gone to use a lighter. There must have been petrol fumes in the car, and with the lighter, well, she would have been engulfed in a fireball, but at least she escaped from the vehicle.

First to arrive was the fire brigade who immediately set about extinguishing what was left of the car. Their medical officer arrived with his kit, and having had a look, said "well I'm not going to change anything you're doing". I gave myself a little gold star at that moment. I have done umpteen first aid courses, but managing a burns victim was a first for me. Theory is one thing. Improvising in the field in a real situation is another. The paramedics were next, and they immediately set to with a saline infusion and oxygen. I gave them what little information I had, and the leading fireman asked me what I knew of the incident. Having told him I decided that best thing I could do was get out of the professionals' way.

With burns victims the casualty is assessed thus. Their age (60) is added to the percentage of burns, 100% in this case. If the total (160) is over 100 then the casualty is unlikely to survive so I don't hold out much hope for this poor lady. This also shows how casual, nay cavalier, we all are about the handling in general of petrol which is a highly volatile liquid. I suspect if petrol was only discovered in this day and age Health and Safety wouldn't allow Joe Public any where near it. This incident also demonstrates an important principle; if you know what you're doing, speak clearly in an authoritative voice, and those around will accept your leadership. Lastly; I can well understand where PTSD has its origins. Some of the images from today will be hard to erase.

Bryan.

The Line in the Sand.

Bryan McIlwraith

Driving the Stag this summer has been a joy after several years of strife. To recap those years briefly; V8 engine deemed unfixable so removed, 2500 straight six and gearbox sourced and dropped in. But then discovered flywheel fault, so drop gearbox to fix. Months of sorting niggles; on the road. Discover overdrive faulty so drop gearbox (again) and fit another. So finally this year, engine and gearbox running nicely; and it was a great summer for open top motoring to boot.

But, (yes there's always a but), the Stag will be fifty years old next year, and some of the suspension rubbers may well be the original ones. All is well in a straight line, but roundabouts evoke a feeling of steering a jelly. Not only that, but there is a definite clonk from the rear end at times which made me deeply suspicious that the diff mounting rubbers were not in good health. In addition to this the diff has got a serious oil leak which needs dealing with, and the rubbers on the radius arms at the front are known to go squishy, so it seemed appropriate that this winter's job would be a suspension overhaul, front and rear.

I decided to tackle the rear first, and with the car jacked up and well supported I started loosening everything in sight with the intention of dropping the whole set up as a unit. Surprisingly most of the bolts came fairly easily with just a touch of heat here and there, so I got a bit of a shock when the whole unit did drop down to the floor before I was quite ready with the trolley jack!

So now the suspension is out, the question is, how far to go? It would be senseless not to renew the shockers, but what about the road springs? They're not too dear, but what about the half-shafts? You can get modern ones with CV joints in them, but you're looking at over a grand. Overhauled diffs are available, if you want to spend another £400. And should I renew brake pipes, flexibles, brake shoes and wheel cylinders. And what about the bushes? Standard or poly-bush? You could easily throw over two grand at the job. Where do you draw the Line in the Sand? The first thing is to sit down and have a cup of tea; that always helps. Looking at it with my parsimonious (mean) hat on there is no need to go mad. The road springs don't appear to have settled; I can't feel any play in the UJs in the half shafts and the hubs don't appear to have play. Besides, all these jobs can be done quite easily as running repairs. What can't be done is the diff (well some people on Youtube have managed it but it's a bit of a bugger). The diff has a nose extension which has to be removed to get at the nose seal, and there is a bearing in the extension to be replaced. Also the extension piece casing is known to crack so it's wise to fabricate some strengthening webs and weld them in. Sure there's some backlash in the diff but it wasn't noisy so after a good clean up and fresh oil I'm hoping it will work just fine. As for bushes, there are many reports of the ride being harsher with poly-bushes, so as I'm not going for track days I think I'll stick to standard. What I *am* planning buying is a press, more to help with removal. It's a tool I've thought of quite a lot and this project should justify it. However, for refitting of rubbers I am going to try a trick told to me by a retired mechanic whose word I trust. He says never, ever use grease; it attacks the rubber. The trick is to soak them in *petrol* of all things. This guy worked with Pedigreed Motors in Forres so he knows a thing or

two about old cars. I'll let you know how I get on.

One other job that is a definite now with the suspension out of the way is cleaning off the underside of the body above the suspension and diff and giving it several layers of paint. Oh what joy! Lying on your back wire brushing with dirt falling on your face. Can't wait!

Porsche Club Cars and Coffee Morning

Graeme Bremner

As well as a committee member for HCMC I am also a member of the Porsche Club of Great Britain R2 region which is the club's biggest region by area covering everywhere from south of Aberdeen shire to the highlands and islands. This region is run by a young couple who I have known for a few years now, George and Caitlin, who own the red Cayman that can be seen in the photos below. George previously had a lovely red Porsche 944 until he went to the dark side of a more modern vehicle.



They contacted me a month before asking if I could possibly get some cars together to meet them on a Sunday morning as they were going to be in the area completing a weekend drive with other club members. Obviously, I was happy to oblige and enlisted the assistance from 'Mr Events' himself Miles.



A few WhatsApp messages and Facebook posts later it sounded like we had a good few folks looking to turn up and turn up they did. We had everything from our Classics from the club to modern Supercars which all attracted quite the attention in the retail park carpark.



Luckily the weather held and it was great for opposite ends of the car community to admire each other's vehicles and good to meet new people in the area who had come along to see what turned up. One of the classics travelled all the way from Gairloch to attend, the lovely Blue Triumph can be seen below. Costa Coffee was available for refreshments and Burger King was on hand for those wanting something more substantial, I missed this in planning, but I had endure 2 hours of my 6 year old hounding me for a kids meal!



Once plenty of photos were taken and everyone had been watered it was time for the Porsches to leave down the A96, but they will be back, the R2 region will be looking to hold more get togethers in the future through myself and other members and we will be again inviting everyone to come along and enjoy.



Once again I would like to thank everyone who took the time to pop along and show support and also to Miles for assisting with the invitations. Here is to the next get together and I for one am looking forward to some more runs as September is usually a good month weather wise and hoping to get good use of the car before winter hits!

HCMC October Club Night

7th October 7:30pm Rollerbowl, Inverness. Pub Meet and Blether

If there is any light left you can go and kick each others tyres. (Gently please)

Upcoming Club Nights.

4th Nov 2021	November Club Night	Allangrane Arms - Munlochy	Pub Quiz
2nd Dec 2021	Xmas 10 Pin Bowling Night	Rollerbowl, Inverness.	Bring a Secret Santa Present! And £6