

CLASSIC SCENE



November 2021



Club Officials

Chair: **Trish Brown**
Tel: 01862 832337
chairman@highlandclassic.org.uk
Secretary: **Bryan McIlwraith**
Tel: 01463 222839
secretary@highlandclassic.org.uk
Treasurer: **Ian Thompson**
Tel: 01463 790969
treasurer@highlandclassic.org.uk

Membership

Bryan McIlwraith
Renewals should be sent to Bryan at
67 Lochalsh Road, Inverness IV3 8HW
Tel: 07821 260774
bryanmcilwraith@gmail.com

Shy and retired osteopath

Webmaster

www.highlandclassic.org.uk
Webmaster@highlandclassic.org.uk

Editor

Calum Pearson
Bowersburn, Croftnacreich,
North Kessock. IV1 3ZE
Email: editor@highlandclassic.org.uk
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Thursday preceding the monthly meet-
ing. Please send articles by post or
email to addresses above.

Archivist

The club has an extensive archive of
information relating to all aspects of
classic car ownership. To access this
please contact Ranald Smith at
Hawthorn Cottage, 2 Burn Road, In-
verness IV2 4NG. 01463 236459
ranaldsmith@btinternet.com

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Cover Picture

To be honest, I was struggling for a
cover for this months newsletter, so
I mocked up this 'face off' between
our clubs Cars and Coffee and the
Highland Car Clubs Croftera Pande-
monia, both of which feature in this
newsletter. All good humoured of
course.

Welcome to the November Newsletter

Well the nights are fair drawing in. Time to get those winter garage projects going.

Personally I'm getting sick of being in the garage as that VW van has been playing up again. There was a lot of rattling and clonking coming from the back but I hadn't had a chance to investigate, mainly being stuck in the driving seat. A visit to a pal and his very bumpy access road diagnosed the problem. A loose shock absorber top mount on account of some corrosion. In fact by the time I got home it had separated completely (see picture), ah the diagnostic qualities of a rough farm



track. I couldn't source a replacement panel so I had to make one. I welded it in following the same spot welding scheme of the original. That lasted about two days as there wasn't much clean steel to weld to. Then I bolted it on and added lots and lots of weld all over the place, and this time it's holding. That's two days gone out of my life though.

Then there was some work making the new 'stand-in' Focus roadworthy. I ended up having to buy two new rear brake drums, but I have fixed the exhaust and engine management light. Just wings, an airbag sensor some shocks wings and a dent to fix and it'll be good to go.

Then Mrs Editors Focus needed some pre MOT work. I managed to get one Sunday in her diary when it wasn't needed and set to work fitting lower suspension arms and removing rust from the front subframe. Hours were spent removing nuts that hadn't been undone for 160,000 miles, but I got there. The subframe was lowered to get cleaned up and painted, but now revealed are two rusty brake pipe unions. A gentle run over with my finger made both of them seep fluid, so just in time then. It's now teatime and I'm making up new brake pipes as the car is needed tomorrow. It's a fiddly job but finally they're fitted. The subframe goes back on, suspension arms are fitted, one steering rack bolt is almost impossible to re-fit. And then drip - what's that? Bloomin' brake fluid leaking out of the new pipes. I've now done 11 hours solid and it's definitely time to call it a night. Fortunately Mrs Editor appreciates my efforts. The next evening after an 11 hour work shift, 3 hours see's the job completed. In my haste and tiredness I had forgotten to tighten up one of the brake unions. A simple fix once you've lowered the subframe again. After a quick test drive at half past midnight, the cars a runner again, and the clonking noise has gone. I still have the tracking and under tray to refit, but that's for another day.

So for a winter project? I think I'll be learning to play bass guitar.

Your editor.

P.S. I love it really.

Chairs Bitty

We met up last month at the Rollerbowl where we had time for a long natter with fellow club members. Topics under discussion at our table were variable and included things like retirement, pressure washers, astonishing feats of stupidity observed at roundabouts, amazing to find everyone at the table had been at one time or another to Norfolk, cars, our cars, other people's cars and the positives / negatives of the NC500.



Keeping in the car sphere, I was reading about the changes to the +E licence the other day, whereby new drivers are getting an +E on their licence again for free (up to a certain point). Apparently this change of heart is because we are running short of HGV drivers, after kicking out our European drivers with Brexit (and a little bit of Covid sick leave). Now I can't really complain about this myself, as I too benefited from this state of affairs after I first got my licence many years ago, before the introduced the mandatory +E test in the 90's. However, I do agree with what many highlight as a concern. Yes, I can drag along a trailer without much of a worry; and from my parents I have it drummed into me how to load and hitch up, but when it comes to reversing I am still out of my depth. Needless to say that I avoid having to reverse with a trailer and look admiringly at people who can take a caravan and go hop, hop, hop, parked!

Our back road has now been finished although the new tarmac edges have not yet been sealed. I am intending to have a word with the Council about this, as it seems a shame that all this good work is likely to become undone with the first frost, just for the want of a dribble of bitumen. But the 2.5 mile long stretch is now a pleasure to drive again. It was funny to see on one 50m stretch that the council worked on that everyone was taking their time waiting for traffic to pass this stretch, so that they could swing out and avoid that piece of dug up road. And that all without cones or lights!

October has been a relatively quiet time for me. The only real excitement has been the replacement of a Velux window. I've been trying to get this installed since mid September, with plenty of dates agreed with the installer, but the weather not playing ball. At last on the 22nd it was finally done. And not an hour after the works was finished, the heavens opened up. Talk about just in time.

October means that things are slowing down in our garden, although we have spend a few weekends rigorously clipping back most bushes. This is something that we neglected to do this year as our precious Landy was unavailable for shifting the clippings to the amenity site. The garden was starting to look a bit rough for this lack of maintenance, so big improvement there. The rigorous clipping has also improved the safety of fellow road users as our hawthorne is no longer forcing pedestrians of the pavement. Win win all-round.

Which all brings me to this months meet at the Old North Inn. Come along for a chat with a quiz (courtesy of Bryan) thrown in for excitement.

See you there.

Trish.

October Club Night

Well who'd have thought meeting up in Roller Bowl for a natter would be any

Well
at
ac-



good?
it was,
least



According to me and all those I spoke to. I turned up late due to a work shift but plonked myself down beside Richard and Bryan, to join a conversation I'm calling 'Get your nuts off.' For the lucky few oxyacetylene gas heating your seized fastenings to cherry red seemed to be the unbeatable method. A MAPP gas torch was a good alternative. Breaker bars and impact wrenches were all on topic with a good hours chat on personal experiences of stuck nuts. Riveting stuff. (Though that's a topic for next month).

The middle table seemed to delight in out doing each other with long rambling tales with Mike acting as some sort of marshal.

I've got no idea what the table nearest the coffee counter were talking about but there was a lot of smiling going on.

After a while as the lights started to dim we got the feeling it was time to go and we spilled out into the car park to finish off the last anecdotes and head off into the autumn gloom.

Perhaps it was just the joy of talking to real people in these pandemic times, or maybe we're just a great club with interesting members but I'm confident in saying a good night was had by all. Oh, and a special thanks to Miles for organising it at the last moment.

Out and About

The Kingsmills Hotel seems to be the place to go for up market car gatherings. Two groups were seen by regular spotter Jim Mackay. Some were being washed as the owners were sitting down to dinner! Maybe they were supper cars?





Back in your editors classic car hunting ground I saw this.

How far has this car come as the crow flies I wonder?

In other news my Beetle that got driven into here is now fixed and has also had it's annual wash thanks to Parks bodywork, who I have to say did a pretty decent job and were nice to deal with.



I can't remember where this picture came from, the club Facebook page maybe?. It was from a couple of months ago, and spotted if I remember correctly outside the new hotel at Inverness airport. Here are some facts from the internet....

'While the DB5 saloon might be the ultimate Gentleman's Express, there was one man who was able to find a flaw with the iconic model—David Brown himself. An avid sportsman, Brown grew frustrated with his company car after realizing that he

could not fit his polo gear in the luggage compartment. Worse still, his hunting dog was chewing the plush leather seats. As the story is told, Brown entered a board meeting at which some of his engineers were in attendance, plunked his hunting dog down on the table, and said, "Build me something for him to sit in."

The result, a shooting brake built on the DB5 chassis, was so handsome that several customers requested their own. At the time, the factory was too busy building the regular DB5, so Brown asked Harold Radford's new coachbuilding business to assist with the demand. Known today as the Radford Shooting Brakes, just twelve DB5 examples were ever built, only four of which were fitted with left-hand drive for export.'



I saw this lovely Hillman Imp in the Sainsburys car park at Nairn. It was rather lovely though I got woken from my dreams of ownership as I was buzzed by a high speed shopper car missing me by literally inches as I took my pictures.

Cars and Coffee



Minis vs Imps - which would you rather have?

I have to confess I have never driven an Imp and people do say they are they are a better drive than the Mini, but then I've owned several Minis.



VW versus Ford where do your loyalties lie? Personally I have a foot firmly planted in both camps.



Austin Healey - Part 5

Jim MacKay

A visit to "John's Emporium" in Muir of Ord furnished me with enough wheelbarrow wheels to make up four useable ones, perished, but useable. He had some dismantled security fencing in a pile and I managed to prise some away from him. I had a couple of box lengths which I had rescued from a skip somewhere and some pipe from a neighbours garden swing, which I hasten to add, was being disposed of and some pipe from a neighbours bunk bedand so on. I made a trolley from my gathered bits, high enough to clear the wheelbarrow wheels, wide enough to sit under the chassis rails and long enough to fit the skipped



box lengths

without cutting them! Some of it was bolted together for dismantling at a later date, at a very later date as it turns out. The image doesn't show the handle on the turntable end, perhaps this was the mark 1 version. The trolley is the best thing I have made in a long time, not the handiwork, the usefulness. It is so easy to move the Healey around and I'm not sure what I will do when the heavy stuff is fitted; fit stronger wheels? You'll notice a washing machine in the background and it would be unusual if there wasn't one. You see, it's like this. Our first one was an automatic, a Hoover Keymatic, way ahead of its time and way ahead of the engineers who came to fix it when it broke down! I stayed with Hoover and had many over the years, some I paid for, others I picked up for nothing. There was always a couple spare because the washing must go on. If the car breaks down it's out with the bike or walk but it's different with the washing machine. Hand wash? You must be joking. I had two under the bench in the garage with the backs facing out for ease of access when Tom visited. Quick as a flash, he asked if my neighbour was running a launderette without my knowledge!

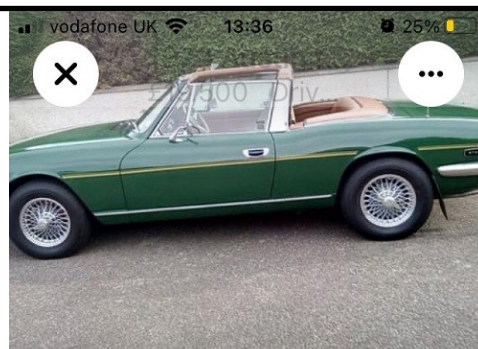
Ah, yes, the chassis. You can see from the images that there was a lot of cutting out but nothing that affected any dimensions or location of supports. Surprisingly, the cross brace was affected and after over forty years in dry storage it was still full

of rusty water; so much for the liberal coating of leaked engine oil. Anyway, it had done its job in keeping the chassis straight when the front off-side took a big hit. The older ladder chassis which Samantha is fitted with would have been written off. Onwards and upwards. Cheers, *Jim MacKay*.



A BBC report on the panic buying of petrol.

An electrical joke.



In stock **1973 Austin triumph stag**

A Cars and Coffee regular, up for sale on Facebook.

I don't make the rules. I just wonder who does?

Someone recently asked if we'd had a good holiday. Well apart from a certain road traffic incident, I also had an acute flare-up of gout in my left ankle. If you've never experienced acute gout then I can only tell you that the pain is horrendous. I wouldn't wish it on anyone (well I might make an exception for Patrick Harvie). Fortunately I managed to get my GP practice to fax a prescription for prednisolone to a pharmacy in Denbigh. Relief, although not immediate followed over the next few days.

The icing on the cake however was getting a speeding ticket. I was driving through the village of Pershore (near Gt Malvern, home of Morgan you see) and I spotted the speed camera van. I knew I was probably over the thirty limit but I was fairly sure it wasn't by much. Waiting for me in the pile of mail when I got home was the ticket. One hundred pounds for thirty-five miles an hour in a thirty zone! Hardly boy-racer stuff, and it's the second time I've been done for 35. And of course three points to boot. Yes I was breaking the law but I did feel a bit miffed especially as my licence has been clean for a long time.

The ticket gave me the chance of doing a Speed Awareness course and avoiding the three points. It's billed as a *National* Speed Awareness so I thought I might be able to do one locally. I sent off the form and it duly came back. Apparently National only means England and Wales. I really didn't want to have three points on my licence and one of the courses was in Cumbria. Jane rolled her eyes when I told her of my plan. I'm retired so I have the time. Drive down to Cumbria one day; Premier Inn; do the course next day; Premier Inn again and home day after. I kept on debating it, and at times was minded just to pay the fine; on the other hand maybe a bit extreme, but, as I say I have the time.

I decided I was damned well going to do it. Nowadays you book the course on-line so I duly logged in and guess what came up on the screen? "Due to Covid no face-to-face courses are being held until further notice. You can book an online course instead"!! Not only that, the on-line course cost £88, which is less than the fine! So, I don't have to leave the house, I don't get three points, *and* it's cheaper. Who in their right minds would pay the £100 and take the points given this? I don't make the rules, but you have to ask who does?

Actually, despite all this we had a really nice break!

Bryan.

La Crofterra Pandemonia 2021

The Highland Car Club's sporty two day drive took place in September and member John Mackenzie took pictures at the start which give you a good taste of the event.



This is definitely an event I would like to try one day.

HCMC November Club Night

4th Nov 2021 7:30pm Quiz night at The Old North Inn, Inchmore, IV5 7PX

Note the change in venue from last month.