

CLASSIC SCENE



November 2025

The Penultimate Cars and Coffee at Rollerbowl



Club Officials

Chair: **Richard Lashley**

Tel: 07707 518070

chairman@highlandclassic.org.uk

Secretary: **Trish Brown**

Tel: 01862 832337

secretary@highlandclassic.org.uk

Treasurer: **Ian Thomson**

Tel: 01463 790969

treasurer@highlandclassic.org.uk

Membership

Miles Vincent

Renewals should be sent to Miles at
72 Laggan Rd, Inverness IV2 4EW

Tel: 07805 389023

membership@highlandclassic.org.uk

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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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

archivist@highlandclassic.org.uk

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Cover Picture

One more meeting in November then
that's it for our fantastic Rollerbowl
venue.

Many thanks to Shahid Yusaf his
family and all the staff at Rollerbowl.

Welcome to the November Newsletter

Our newsletters often carry a subtle theme — though you might not have noticed! This month, it's all about **Cars and Coffee**, as Rollerbowl closes its doors for the final time.

The Cars and Coffee—Inverness event was the brainchild of our very own events expert, **Miles Vincent**. The idea began in the USA in the early 2000s and quickly became a worldwide phenomenon. With light-touch support from a handful of HCMC members, Miles launched the first Inverness Cars and Coffee event at the V8 Café on Henderson Road in February 2017. It was an instant success. Clearly, the demand was already there — and before long, we had outgrown our welcome in the V8 car park, and we were asked to move. I noticed it's now pay and display!

Early on, there were a few instances of tyre-skirling departures, but these were quickly stamped out. Apart from being dangerous, such behaviour risked attracting the wrong kind of attention — especially with other car meets making headlines for all the wrong reasons. Miles handled the situation with care, setting clear boundaries while maintaining a relaxed, inclusive atmosphere. (There was even one infamous ban after a driver sprayed a few expensive cars with stone chips!)

So by August 12th, 2018, after some head scratching, the event found its new home at the **Rollerbowl car park on Culduthel Road**. There, **Shahid Yusaf** generously welcomed our crowd of well-behaved car enthusiasts. We're all very grateful for his kindness. The move allowed the event to grow even further, though with that came new challenges. Groups of modified modern cars began to appear in greater numbers, shifting the vibe toward more of a "late-night retail park" feel.

To restore the original character of the meet, we introduced a nominal pre-2000 age limit for featured cars. While it caused a bit of a backlash at the time, the decision ultimately paid off — the friendly, classic atmosphere returned, and the event's identity was preserved. No offence meant to those I may have offended here!

Today, Cars and Coffee has become a social highlight for many. It's a place to catch up with friends old and new in a welcoming, judgment-free space (except perhaps for my slightly crooked parking last month!). Ford, Vauxhall, and VAG owners mingle side by side. It's great for mental health, photography, Instagram, and simply enjoying our shared passion for old cars. Our unofficial tagline could well be:

"Something new or interesting turns up every month."

After eight years, that's still true.

With over **4,400 followers online**, Cars and Coffee has also become a social media success story. As the **FBHVC article** later in this issue reminds us, our scene needs to attract younger enthusiasts — and this event is the perfect way to do just that.

Well done, Miles Vincent.

— *Your Editor*

P.S. What's next? Wait and see. It's not over — not by a long shot.

Ramblings from the Chair



Right, this month I feel that I can look down on all you common people – for I have been in the company of the gentry. Well, not really, - let me explain. On our return from a short break in Galloway, the Good Lady and I made a visit to Dumfries House in South Ayrshire, a property once owned by the, then, Prince Charles, and now by The King's Foundation. The gardens are really quite stunning and feature a lot of different structures, built by apprentices using traditional craftsmanship in an attempt, by the King, to prevent these skills from dying out. There is a Chinese Bridge over the river, a fantastic brick built octagonal summerhouse with ceramic dragons flying out of the corners and a great kitchen garden growing all sorts of fancy fruits and vegetables. Just a great place to visit if ever you are near Cumnock.



As we were passing the house (which we haven't visited yet but has a great collection of Chippendale furniture apparently), we became aware of maybe thirty very fancy cars parked in the gardens at the front. Purely by chance we had stumbled upon the Maserati Club 'on tour' with their members exiting from a tour of the house and getting into their cars. They ranged from the very new to what I believe is a 3500GT Superleggera from around 1960 (the silver one pictured). All absolutely beautiful and showing sportscar development throughout the years with the cars from the 80's notable for their rather square looks (but just attractive in their own way). The burble of the V8 engines as they departed down the drive was to die for. However, despite their fabulous looks, some of the older models seemed quite a handful to drive – the 3500GT took rather a lot of steering effort to manoeuvre and the window was dropped obviously by a handle – no power steering and electric windows then! A quick search of the internet might suggest an asking price of £200k might be the starting point if you wanted to own such a car. There was a lot of tweed and silk scarves amongst the occupants – not a pair of jeans in sight! To be fair, there were also some woolly



'bunnets' donned for those in convertibles with the hood down!

I have to say that I thoroughly enjoyed last month's talk by Tim Loftus and his tales of boatbuilding. He and his business partner seem to be able to turn their hands to almost anything. I was particularly impressed with his innovative build of a wood slicing mill built on curved rails so that curved timbers could be manufactured. It would be great to visit the boatyard – maybe a special Club visit on a Saturday or Sunday might be possible next summer.

Now, just a reminder that the very last Cars and Coffee at Rollerbowl will be on Sunday, November 12th – the venue is closing soon. However, C&C will continue at a cracking new location – to be announced shortly, watch this space.

This month's Club night will be at the Avoch bowling club pavilion and will a talk about the Auxiliary Fire Service by our Committee member Mark Wilson (who I'm told owns military Green Goddess fire engine!). Hope to see you all there, Thursday 2nd, 7.30pm.

Out and About

Our key spotter Jim Mackay spotted this Steyr-Daimler-Puch Pinzgauer in Ardesier. These were originally manufactured by Steyr-Daimler-Puch (SDP) in Austria,



named after an Austrian breed of horse and were designed to be the successor to the smaller Steyr-Puch Haflinger vehicle. The internet says...

SDP of Graz in Austria were the original manufacturer of the first UK MoD Pinzgauers but it was Automotive Technik Ltd founded in 1993 in Guildford, which supplied the vehicles. In mid-2000 production of the Pinzgauer moved from Austria to England and ATL became the sole international supplier after acquiring the global rights from what was now Steyr-Puch.

By the autumn of 2002 ATL had introduced the EURO-3 compliant 5-cylinder Volkswagen 2.5-litre TDi engine in the Pinzgauer instead of the earlier 2.4-litre 6-cylinder model; UK MoD vehicles ordered with this later engine can usually be identified by the large one-piece brush guard / bonnet protector with outriggers bolted back to the engine bulkhead / A-pillars

October Club Night

Steve Hanson



What a cracking start to the club's monthly Thursday evening winter gatherings. Traditional Boat Builder Tim Loftus came over from Ullapool to the Avoch Pavilion and gave an engaging talk about his world of designing and building wooden boats, bicycles, even a ship's mast for a perfume company!

Tim and his business partner Dan are Johnson Loftus Boat Builders, based on the stunning shores of Loch Broom at Corrie, about a mile outside Ullapool.

Tim and I have been good friends for over 30 years and I've been witness to many of the tales he told on Thursday night. So as expected, Tim, a natural story teller, had the room fully engaged as he spun yarns accompanied by a side show he'd prepared.

What soon became clear was Tim's huge and diverse talents. He brought with him his wooden framed bicycle, (with it's hollow tubes!) built some 10+ years ago, used as his daily transport and still looking as good as the day it was made. A testament to his craftsmanship, build quality and selection of materials. It really is a thing of beauty!

We saw a video of another bike project he was



involved in. Commissioned by the bike brand Endura, Tim worked in collaboration with bike builder Steven Shand to make a replica of the first pedal powered bicycle. This was a celebration of Kirkpatrick Macmillan who designed and built the first one over 100 years ago. Endura-sponsored cyclists then 'tag team' rode the replica bike the 60 miles from Macmillan's birth place in Thornhill to Glasgow. I remember chatting with Tim during the build about the wheels. 'I'm no wheelwright, but I'm sure I can work it out' he laughed. Not an ounce of arrogance. Just a willingness to 'give it a go'. This 'give it a go' attitude came up all night. Unable to find a dependable company to supply bespoke cast components, Tim and Dan just made their own foundry! Now they cast all the bronze fittings they need, inhouse.

They mill their timber on site. Planks are cut from huge tree trunks using a saw best described as a band saw, on it's side, pushed along a small railway track. For curved logs they built a curved track. A little unorthodox, but it works.

Tim explained the process of building a boat from start to finish. He'll sometimes make a small scale model, then work at full scale, marking shapes and profiles on the workshop floor. He'll make a keel section running bow to stern, then add ribs and planks and deck. Then make and fit masts, rigging, sails, fit an engine if required. We saw photos of small boats, big boats, new builds, renovations. His skills seem endless and to be honest quite astonishing.

His boat yard is low tech. A trusty old tractor doing much of the donkey work. There's an 'Iron Fairy' crane from the 1970's. Even a 1948 bulldozer. Up for sale if anyone's interested! Dan owns a series 1 Land Rover. Tim has a series 3 in need



of restoration. They both sail boats that they built themselves. Boats that have taken them and their families all over the world.

Looking to the future Tim and Dan have plans to re-build, from scratch, the historic herring lugger SV Muirneag. Plans are underway to raise the considerable funds necessary for what will be a 3 year build. Once a common site on the Moray Firth, the 80ft vessel will be the only seaworthy Class One Zulu remaining in the world. It will be based in Ullapool and Stornoway, to be used by the community.

Anyone with the vaguest interest should visit their new website

www.muirneag.org

It really was an enthralling evening. 17 club members attended. For those that couldn't make it, we talked about having a club drive across to Ullapool next year, to see the boatyard first hand. Keep an eye out for next year's calendar.

Steve

Out And About Part 2



Another Jim Mackay spot, this time at Hill of Fearn.

"You just have to have the Pochet van once described as looking like a toaster, noisy as a chainsaw and handling like a shopping trolley in a gravel park! The Berkley? has no engine but the Bond and Gazelle look complete. Cheers, Jim. "

Ed: That Gazelle is known from the local show scene and Drive It Day. The bodywork has been patina'd by sharing a barn with some sheep.

Fleeting Moments

Trish Brown

The Merc is having yet another suspension wobble. The rear level bracket broke, resulting in the car sitting on its haunches at the back. Not a big problem to fix you would think, buy and fit a replacement bracket and Bob's your uncle. Except Bob isn't. The suspension now thinks it needs to raise itself, making it look like some pimp mobile.

Resetting the suspension level values works fine when you are in the garage connected to the computer,. But take the car for a spin, and after a few hundred yards, yikes, you going into the clouds with rock solid suspension. Any speed over 5mps rattles out your filling. Our mannie at the garage is scratching his head on this one, especially since there are no fault codes.

But all these gremlins in the air suspension are going to come to an end. We decided to buy a standard spring/strut conversion. No doubt the very cushioned drive will be compromised, but at least we will get our car back. Currently we are waiting for the replacement parts to turn arrive.

On a different subject, we were in Holland a few weeks ago, spotting some nice looking cars.

This nice Sierra GT stayed at the same holiday park.

A few streets away from the site we came across this Series 2 Landrover, ex military according to Alice.



Then on the way back to the site, this Saab 900S Cabrio.



On our way home we stopped of in IJmuiden for lunch and a stroll, were we passed by a few interesting cars like this Mercedes W123.

More holiday spotting on the next page.



A hideous American sledge—Google says it's 1978 Cadillac Sedan DeVille powered by a 425 cubic-inch (7.0L) V8 engine



A TR4a out for a drive, and a nice Celica next to an Opel 40kph invalid car.



These 40kph buggies were nearly in every street! We had to laugh at this ridiculously pimped version.



Cars and Coffee

October 2025

This month's Cars and Coffee—Inverness was probably one of the busiest yet, and for good reasons.

It was possibly going to be the last event held at Roller Bowl ever so there was added impetus to attend—something you could tell your grandchildren about or boast about in Inverness nostalgia groups in twenty years time. "Ah yes, I was there."



It was a special Macmillan Cancer Support fundraising coffee morning with cake provided by the family of Richard Gibson and some who had travelled a long way to be there. We raised £1134.15 in about 2 hours, which by any measure is quite impressive. Cancer has touched many of us directly or indirectly so it was an important cause for us and obviously people agreed.

There was a piper! I think we should have that every month now. That was down to Richard Gibson's family. Nice touch.





It was dry and sunny! This was excellent for people wandering about but it was difficult to take decent photographs because of the high contrast and long shadows.

The car park was rammed, including all the way around the back of the building. Some people had walked in from the school car park across the road which was the car park of shame for the day if you came in a modern car.



At one point cars were being turned away from the carpark. We do need to leave a bit of space for those early bowlers. I was up on the grassy knoll and there were about a dozen cars parked on the grass outside the premises.

There was a over-riding topic of conversation too. Do you know what's happening? Where is Cars and Coffee going? So far, that is a fairly well kept secret.

And did I mention there was cake? Very good cake too.

FBHVC National Historic Vehicle Survey

The Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs (FBHVC) has released its **2025 National Historic Vehicle Survey (NHVS)** – the most comprehensive study ever conducted into the UK's world-leading historic vehicle movement.

The findings reveal a thriving and valuable sector that continues to grow, contributing **£7.3bn to the UK economy each year**, supporting tens of thousands of skilled jobs, and attracting record numbers of enthusiasts.

Yet while interest in Britain's motoring heritage is booming, the survey also warns of an **ageing owner base** and a critical need to fund the **training of the next generation of engineers and restorers** to preserve the nation's transport heritage.

Key Headlines

- **Record Growth in Historic Vehicles:** The number of historic vehicles registered with the DVLA has risen again to **1,934,178**, just shy of the 2 million once forecast for 2025.
- **Economic powerhouse:** The historic vehicle sector now contributes **£7.3 billion** annually to the UK economy, with owners spending on average **£4,567 per year** maintaining and enjoying their vehicles.
- **Jobs and businesses:** The movement supports **2,700 specialist businesses**, collectively employing **34,500 people** across restoration, maintenance, parts supply, museums and events. Nearly half (45%) of those businesses now offer, or plan to offer, **apprenticeship programmes** to pass on vital heritage skills.
- **Growing enthusiasm nationwide:** The UK is home to an estimated **690,777 historic vehicle owners**, and more than **22.7 million adults** regard historic vehicles as a vital part of Britain's heritage. Over **9.7 million people** say they would like to own one, and **4.3 million** attended a historic vehicle event in the last year – a 100% increase since 2020.
- **Minimal road impact:** Despite their visibility, historic vehicles account for only **0.2% of all miles driven** in the UK, with the average vehicle covering just **837 miles annually**.
- **Demographics and Future Generations:** The **average age of an owner has risen to 66**, highlighting the importance of engaging younger enthusiasts. Encouragingly, the under-35s now show the most significant **interest** in historic vehicles, while the introduction of the **'Youngtimer' category** (vehicles aged 20–30 years) offers an accessible entry point for new enthusiasts.
- **Skills and apprenticeships:** With over **11.9 million adults** agreeing that apprenticeships focused on historic vehicle skills should be available to young people, the FBHVC calls for continued support to sustain these specialist trades for future generations. Businesses echo the call, with **45% already offering or planning training schemes** to ensure vital historic skills are passed on.

HCMC Events

6th Nov 2025 HCMC Meeting & Presentation Avoch Pavilion, off Rose Street, near the Co-op. What three words - total.random.outbound The HCMC November meeting will be an informative talk by Mark Wilson on the Auxiliary Fire Brigade. 7 for 7.30pm at the Avoch Pavilion. Extra parking is available down by the Burnside Garage.

9th Nov 2025 Cars And Coffee - Inverness Rollerbowl, Culduthel Rd. Inverness. This is the last one at Rollerbowl. They are kindly opening up, one last time, just for us and we will be collecting **new unwrapped gifts** for Cash For Kids NS so please buy one extra present for a Child who might otherwise wake up on Christmas morning with nothing under their tree and bring it with you.

4th Dec 2025 HCMC December Meeting T.B.C. 7 for 7.30pm Venue T.B.C.

14th Dec 2025 Cars And Coffee - Inverness NEW VENUE, Inverness 2nd Sunday of every Month from 10am-12noon. A Quiet Social Gathering of 20th Century Classics plus interesting Modern Sportscars & Bikes. Park up, buy yourself a hot drink & snack from our NEW VENUE & check out what's in the Car Park. Find us on FACEBOOK.