

ISETTA GAZETTE

AUTUMN EDITION .. 2016



J F Wareing September 2006

The Isetta Owners Club of Great Britain Ltd.

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Editors Bit

Mork calling Orson, come in Orson..... Is there anybody out there?
We are selling thousands of pounds worth of spares but nobody ever communicates with me about articles for the gazette.

Well I said nobody, there have been a couple but where are the rest of you.
This gazette has been reduced to 12 pages as I have received nothing else to put in and I have only just returned from a month away on holiday.

Remember, no input = no output.

I bet you all tell tales of your exploits to anybody that will listen, well we are all listening. The silence is deafening!

If I get nothing else for the next gazette I will tell you stories of my trip which included The Badlands of South Dakota USA with "Wild Bill" Hickok and Calamity Jane.
You have been warned.....



Ian Parris

Chairman's Chat

It's that time of year again when we hold our AGM at Beedles Lake Golf Club just north of Leicester. It's easily accessed from the A46 and about as centrally located as possible bearing in mind we are a national organisation. Full details are elsewhere in this Gazette. But we desperately need your input as committee members, please make every effort to come along.

The spares service is expanding rapidly thanks to the efforts of Lee, Mike and Ian.

My Isetta has seen no progress, the space cleared in my garage at home has been taken by my son's motor-bike. One day maybe.....

I know Ian is always short of articles for the gazette so look out for this one from me in the next gazette.



Jeff Todd

TEACHING AN OLD 'FROG' NEW TRICKS continued

A Restoration Story by Rhona Bell

We said in the last article that Ken and his partner, Phil, had managed to do some body work on Kermit before we moved. Actually, on recalling what was done, it was more than we remembered. They had cut out the floor and repaired the firewall, repaired the front wheel arches, fitted repair sections to both lower sides, fitted a new floor, fitted two new wings, fitted repair sections to the rear sides, fitted a new rear valance and made some repairs around the rear lights. Phil decided he wanted to practice his lead loading and happily did so until he decided he had given himself lead poisoning!!

Once in our new abode, Ken took a stock take of the spares that had been collected over the three or four years Kermit had languished in the workshop. This also proved a very fruitful exercise. Again, there was much more than we remembered and most of it was new.

Ken started a complete strip down and separated the body from the chassis. We took the chassis to be blasted and when it came back it was actually a bit better than we thought it might be. It had a few of the fitting tags missing



or broken so he welded new bits on. If we had still had the workshop he would have powder-coated it but no such luxuries now. So, he has painted it in two-pack black paint. Whilst the chassis was away he finished the welding that had not been completed previously as some parts had only been tacked in position. He then proceeded to take the front suspension and steering apart, cleaning, painting and replacing parts as necessary. The rear axle was dismantled and the casings sent away for vapour blasting. On their return, it was re-assembled using new parts where necessary (see picture).

Whilst all this was going on I took a look at the V5 for the car. It actually says 'date of first registration 1991'. As I deal with DVLA for another club, I anticipated this may be a problem when getting it back on the road, i.e historic vehicle classification and free road tax. We approached the Isetta Historian and, although he knew of the vehicle, he could shed no light on its history.

He suggested we went direct to the BMW Archives in Germany. We followed up on this advice and the information we received was fantastic and very, very quick.

We have now found out that it is, in fact, a 1956 vehicle and was light blue. It was manufactured on 14th December 1956 and was delivered on the same day to the BMW importer Dunsfold Tools in London. We have also been given the complete technical data for the car. Amazing!

We did have to pay a fee to get all this information in writing but, hopefully, it will be worth it. We strongly suspect now that the KML registration is probably an age-related plate and we may have to follow up on this later but we will just worry about getting the car back on the road first.



During the last month, restoration work on Kermit has been a little on the slow side. Ken has been busy fitting new windows in the front of the bungalow and plastering walls. However, he has managed to do a little more work on it

After completing the welding, he removed the rest of the paint and treated the body with a coat of rust remover and applied etch primer. He has then done a little light filling in preparation toward the final finish. Getting the body ready for the final spray is a very time consuming job and he is doing a little at a time so it doesn't get too tedious!



Once the chassis was painted it was time to re-attach the running gear. The front and rear suspension were reunited with the chassis together with the chain case. New copper brake pipes, the exhaust, the rear mudguards and various cables were also fixed in position.

The wheels had been totally refurbished previously but were now painted in our choice of colour. New tyres and inner tubes have been

fitted which grandson, Tom (4), helped to fit which made his day. A set of new hub caps were then, ceremoniously, put in position.

The engine, which has stood underneath the body for some time, was brought out into the light and years of dirt and muck were washed off. It has been stripped down and the cases will, in due course, be vapour blasted. The internal workings have been examined and the big end was found to have a little



play in it so it has been sent away for refurbishment. The piston appears to be oversized and Ken has contacted the Club who are attempting to locate some new piston rings for it. We have purchased new bearings, gaskets, etc from the Club ready for re-assembly of the engine.

In the meantime, the BIG debate has been over what colour to paint Kermit. We have more or less decided that it will be two-tone with Old English White at the top but the bottom half is still very much under discussion. We definitely don't want red as BABY is red but should it be blue as original, green as the 'frog' was, perhaps burned orange?? Watch this space

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STORIES

The Club is pleased to welcome:-

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Dennis Hunter	Driffield	Shaun Beaumont	Rotherham
Thomas Milligan	Whitehaven	Kai Hansen	Norway
Jonathan Rogan	Preston		
Steve Chambers	Lincoln		

New Members since the last Gazette

To advertise your items for sale or want adds etc. please email the editor at 'isetta@ianparris.com'

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Front Brake Shoes by Mike Ayriess

The MOT situation here in the UK now means I do not need to start panicking around the spring time when getting the Isetta ready for its annual safety test, but as I was to find out during pre season servicing perhaps that's not such a good thing?

The Isetta really does not take that long to service, a change of oils and grease a few points here and there and it's done in next to no time. Follow that up with a check to the steering followed by the brakes is when I noticed something was a little not quite right as the brake plate was moving! Wheel off now and with the brake shoes exposed it was easy to see what had been causing the "Clonking" and sometimes a little pulling to the left yes I could see the brake torque arm nut (No 74 in the exploded view pictures) was loose! To tighten the torque arm nut up is not quite as simple as finding the correct spanner because the bottom brake shoe is in the way and has to be removed. I was looking for a simple way to save time and not remove the shoes when I spotted a real problem. I could see an air gap between the bonded brake lining and the shoe. I had one of those very small electrical screwdrivers to hand and inserted it into the gap for a bit of a poke about and the lining came completely off without any pressure! It was around this time I remembered the Flanders and Swan song "The Gas Man Cometh" as lyrics were beginning to come true. Now how did it go?

'Twas on a Monday morning the Gas came to call!!! Luckily I had spare brake shoes to fit there and then, but were did I go wrong when fitting these bonded brake parts. A quick internet search says I am not the only one this has happened to from cars to motorcycles even in the programme Wheeler Dealers their Isetta rear shoes lining came off and jammed the rear brake on! I purchased these relined parts some years ago and had them in stock for another long period so maybe they were over 10-15 years old by the time I installed them and then of course they have been in service for another 5-10 years. Quality of the bonding and the bonding preparation process must come into play but the company that did the relining did put there sticker on the shoes so with that I conclude they were happy with there quality control which to me comes back to one thing "age". What can you do about it? Well much the same as I do visually check the car including the brakes at the beginning of every Rally season.



Most brake parts can now be purchased from the Isetta Club on line shop have a look for yourself at www.isetta.org.uk/opencart you may end up buying all sorts of things you didn't realise you wanted a bit like going into Aldi!!

My Restoration of Isetta UJF 589. By Paul Robinson

The story starts back in 1981, I saw an old Bubble Car in a field at the back of my works, after tracing the owner I found it was a 1963 Scootacar (it was a total wreck) after a lot of persuasion and haggling he said I could have it for nothing. After years of hard work the restoration was complete and I took it to the national at Quinton and surprisingly won 1st prize in its class and best in show. I was very pleased as that was my first experience with Bubble Cars. At the show I met a chap (Brian Perry) who said he had a Messerschmitt KR200 (also a total wreck) for sale in Frome. I decided to go and look at it. Two weeks later I hired a trailer and went to Frome to collect it from various locations around his house. Parts of it were in a field, engine on a table in the garden, chassis bits in a farm yard up the road. Four years on and the Messerschmitt was completed. It also won several prizes at different Nationals. I then decided not to restore any more Bubble Cars as it was a lot of hard work.

Now to the real story.

The year was 2008, the phone rang and a friend said he had seen a Bubble Car in his mates back garden which was scrap and was I interested. I said I would look at it (I nearly died) it was certainly scrap, the floor was completely eaten away, old wires were all over the place, bottom of the door was missing, engine was corroded from the bottom half down, there was rain water in all the places that could hold water, the only good thing was the glass had been taken out and stored away.



After a long conversation it was found out to be a 1958 LHD Isetta. It had no paperwork, the original number plates were still on it, chassis No. and engine No. all matched.



Anyway I decided to buy it and have a go. I started to strip it down, as I did this I took photos so that I would know which parts would go where. I had no knowledge about Isettass.

After 9 months on and off the engine was completely rebuilt and running on the bench. I forgot to mention that I joined the Isetta club before I bought the car. They sent me drawings of all the parts, which were a great help. The next job was to sort

out all the running items, chassis, front wheel assemblies, rear end etc., each item was restored as original, bit by bit. Next came the body I made up a dummy chassis so that the body could be bolted on, this stopped it going out of shape when cutting out all the rusted bits and the welding of the new metal in. New floor and various panels were purchased from David at Bromley Bubble Co. This being done it started to look like a car. When all the welding was finished the body was taken off the dummy chassis and fitted to the original, all bolts holes lined up perfectly.



The door had been welded and finished to a point where it could be fitted on the body. Steering column and dash fitted also. The body was ready for filling and getting ready for the undercoat, all the new wiring and assembly of gear stick and cables and the rest of the running gear were fitted, and it was then towed to the paint shop for the undercoat. Undercoat done and back in garage All lights, badges, flashers etc. were fitted to make sure everything was OK.

All fittings were taken off again and the car and all small parts sent back to the paint shop for final gloss. My mate Sam of Passfield Panel & Paint (a master body & paint man) did this and when it came back it looked 100%. Assembly started, bit by bit very carefully, I could not afford to do any damage to the paint work. In the meantime the seat had been reupholstered and was ready for fitting, next all glass was fitted. As there was no paperwork I could not use the original Reg. No. so I would have to have an age related plate. Dave Watson of the Isetta Club sorted this out for me. Three weeks later I had a new number and registration documents. Photographs of the car were taken and sent to the insurance company. The car was now ready for the road.

The following year I had a phone call from the club to say they had Cow Catchers in stock, at the time of restoration they were not available, although they were fitted originally. I purchased a pair and fitted them. The car is now 100% original and ready for the show.



P.S Without the help of the Isetta Club, David of Bromley Bubble, and Passfield Panel & Paint my job would have been a nightmare. My sincere thanks goes to everybody that helped in this restoration.

PAUL ROBINSON (Houghton Regis)

Workshop Manuals and Hand Books

Here at the end of the Isetta Clubs' Technical Help line we are often asked about which manual to buy so perhaps we should look at the books available?

The original Blue Isetta Owners Hand book, which I assume was given to the owner when the car was purchased new, is a very good book for those every day questions like "How much petrol does the tank hold" and "What are the recommended tyre pressures" etc., however, this book goes into a greater depth than you would expect in a new car hand book today with things like "How to adjust the Contact Breakers" so it is a very useful and informative book. This book was reproduced by the Club some years ago to celebrate a milestone in the Isetta Club and given to every member so some you will still have this book filed away?

Summing up I would suggest this is a must have book for all owners.

How to buy this book?

Go to the Clubs' 'Online Spares' Shop for a copy of this and the Isetta Brighton BMW Workshop Manual book both on one CD.



The Isetta Brighton BMW Workshop Manual is in another league, when it comes to information, as it is totally lacking in basic written information for the Isetta owner and perhaps is intended as an aid memoir for the mechanic after a training course on the car, however, it does offer good pictures that may help the owner when the words are few but it does not address Girling Brakes and the 3-wheeled car.

Summing up this is not really of much practical use for the average owner, but I still suggest you buy it for the pictures.

How to buy this book?

Go to the Clubs' 'Online Spares' Shop for a copy of this and the Blue Isetta Owners Hand book both on one CD.



BMW did not produce a 3-Wheeler version of the Work Shop Manual or did it? Well, yes it did but this book was still for German produced cars that sold into markets that required three-wheeled cars like Holland and Switzerland for instance, however, the book is written in German, French, English and Spanish!

One of the most useful pictures in this book is a cross section of the Rear Wheel /Axle but, of course, it still does not address the Lucas and Girling information we require, and neither does any BMW/ Isetta UK manual I have read.

Summing up it is a frustrating book as the three languages are listed separately, to the pictures, so much going back and forth is required.

How to buy this book?

Out of print, so specialist Book Shops or eBay. The Isetta Restoration Manual by John Jensen is written in simple language that the restorer can understand and a book I often go to when confronted with an Isetta Club member Technical Enquiry. An example of this is Valve Timing on page 59 Paragraph 10.

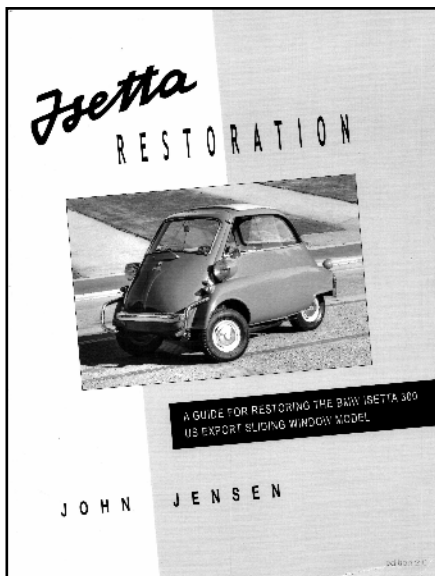
"Now you are ready for one of the trickiest parts, setting the Camshaft Timing and installing the Timing Chain. At the beginning when you dismantled your Engine, you checked for any Timing Marks on the Cam Sprocket and drew a little sketch that you can refer to, right! Just in case you didn't, there are ways to figure it out".

John has been there, of course, and understands what information the restorer needs to get over such problems, indeed, this book was a complete labour of love for our little cars and I am sure many hours of questions and answers took place in the writing of the book, all in the days of pre email, of course, and yes I remember some of those questions at the Club Committee Meetings back in the late 1980's.

Summing up this is a must have book for the home mechanic/restorer and even the professionals these days as they often have no knowledge of the Isetta.

How to buy this book? Go to

<http://www.lulu.com/gb/en/shop/john-jensen/isetta-restoration/paperback/product-10660689.html> or go to the Clubs' 'Online Spares' Shop for a link to the publisher Lulu.



Girling Front Wheel Cylinder Location

By Mike Ayriss

The Clubs Technical Helpline has been asked to confirm the position of the wheel cylinders on the Isetta front brakes so with that in mind I decided to take off the front brake drums and record the info. I hope this helps you restorers with the mystery of which is left or right brake plate. Girling hydraulic brake cylinders are available from the Isetta Clubs online shop www.isetta.org.uk/opencart

Picture captions



Offside

Off side (furthest from the kerb in the UK) cylinders are Girling No 303110 both at top and bottom

Near side (nearest the kerb in the UK) the cylinders are Girling No 303100 both at top and bottom.



Nearside

MY CAR by RICHARD THURLOW

I have owned the car for 22 years which I restored by 90% and had taken to some shows and used now and then , I took the car off the road for the last 10 years as I didn't have the extra money to finish.



I spent approx £1500 last year to get the car complete, new rear bumper, front bumpers re chromed, new side window rubbers and inserts, carburettor overhaul, new front screen rubber and insert , battery, brakes overhaul, and a few odds and sods.

I have taken the car to 3 or 4 car shows

this year and it gets lots of view and comments, the car I would say is in very good condition, I went to the 60th isetta meeting in Lincolnshire last year (didn't take the isetta) and met some of the club committee members , I have been a member of the isetta club for the last 20 years and live in Norwich .



The AGM of The Isetta Owners Club of Great Britain

Will be held on Sunday 16th October
at 2PM at Beedles Lake Golf Club,
170 Broome Lane, East Goscote,
Leicester. LE7 3WQ
All members are welcome to attend.