

WWW.ISETTA.ORG.UK

No 376

# ISETTA **GAZETTE**



AUTUMN EDITION 2019

MAGAZINE OF THE ISETTA OWNERS CLUB OF GREAT BRITAIN

# The Isetta Owners Club of Great Britain Ltd.

## OFFICERS & COMMITTEE

<b>CHAIRMAN</b> Chris Skepper	6B High Street, Little Paxton, St. Neots Cambs. PE19 6HA <b>email:chris.skepper2104@gmail.com</b>
<b>TREASURER</b> Bob Crompton	1 North View, Ryhope, Sunderland. SR2 0PE <b>email:bargeebob999@gmail.com</b>
<b>SECRETARY</b> Joanne Todd	108 Clee Road, Grimsby. DN32 8NX <b>email:joannetodd2006@gmail.com</b>
<b>MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY</b> Ian Parris	1 Winston Close, Nether Heyford, Northampton. NN7 3JX <b>email:isetta@ianparris.com</b>
<b>GAZETTE EDITOR</b> Ian Parris	1 Winston Close, Nether Heyford, Northampton. NN7 3JX <b>email:isetta@ianparris.com</b>
<b>USED SPARES MANAGER</b> Mike Ayriss	29 Oak Drive, Syston, Leicester. LE7 2PX <b>email:michael.ayriss@talktalk.net</b>
<b>TECHNICAL ADVICE</b> Lee Turnham Mike Ayriss	70 Prebendal Avenue, Aylesbury,Bucks. HP21 8LQ <b>email:lee.turnham@talktalk.net</b> 29 Oak Drive, Syston, Leicester. LE7 2PX <b>email:michael.ayriss@talktalk.net</b>
Alastair Lauchland 600's & 700's	Millstonford Farm, West Kilbride, Ayrshire. KA23 9PS <b>email:alastair.lauchland@btinternet.com</b>
<b>NEW SPARES MANAGER</b> Lee Turnham	70 Prebendal Avenue, Aylesbury,Bucks. HP21 8LQ <b>email:lee.turnham@talktalk.net</b>
<b>ARCHIVE/RE-REGISTRATION and REGISTRAR</b> Dave Watson	c/o Ridgeway Furniture Ltd, Unit 21a Chartmoor Road, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire. LU7 4WG <b>email:d_watson@btinternet.com</b>
<b>WEBMASTER</b> Ian Parris	1 Winston Close, Nether Heyford, Northampton. NN7 3JX <b>email:isetta@ianparris.com</b>
<b>EVENTS</b> Rosalind Rose	Riverview, St. Mary's Road, Ramsey St. Mary's, Huntingdon. PE26 2RF <b>email:r.rose125@btinternet.com</b>
<b>REGALIA</b> Darran Rose	Riverview, St. Mary's Road, Ramsey St. Mary's, Huntingdon. PE26 2RF <b>email:d.rose125@btinternet.com</b>
<b>COMMITTEE</b> Jeff Todd	108 Clee Road, Grimsby. DN32 8NX <b>email:jefftodd1952@gmail.com</b>

---

Website [www.isetta.org.uk](http://www.isetta.org.uk)

Isetta World [www.facebook.com/groups/267159327250111](https://www.facebook.com/groups/267159327250111)

### **I.O.C.O.G.B SUBSCRIPTION RATES**

United Kingdom (and members receiving an emailed gazette)	£18.00	<b>Annual Subscription payments should be made by PayPal to <a href="mailto:isettasubs3@gmail.com">isettasubs3@gmail.com</a> alternatively via the Online Spares System by purchasing an Annual Membership Subscription (Renewal Only) item or by Cheque to the Membership Secretary Ian Parris.</b> <b>For Standing Orders:- Sort Code 09-01-56 Account No. 00744809 to Isetta Owners Club of Great Britain Ltd.</b> <b>Ref. Your Name.</b>
Europe	£21.00	
Rest Of World	£25.00	

Registered Office: Geoff Davey ACMA, 46 High Street, Gargrave, Nr Skipton. BD23 3RB Company Reg. No. 2527362

## **Editors Bit**

---

You will probably notice the gazette this time is only 12 pages, this is because out of more than 350 members only 2 felt able to contribute anything. I even scour old gazettes for suitable articles to repeat.

I would like to include a letters page but rarely does anyone write to me (sad) but, I was quite overwhelmed when I received a letter from one of our members as this is a very rare event for me (even though I ask in every gazette for some sort of communication just to prove I am not alone) but this letter was even more welcome and I would like to thank Mike Paxton on behalf of the club. (See Letters Page).

The front cover this time is my "Bessie" in front of the Alresford Station on the Watercress Line. Whenever I visit a Heritage Railway I ask if I can park in front of the station, it not only shows off the car but adds to the atmosphere. Try it sometime the stationmaster will often welcome you.

You will see inside that the club AGM will be held on 20<sup>th</sup> October near Leicester, it would be nice to see more members attend to give your input to the what you would like the committee to do for you.

**Ian Parris**



---

## **Chairman's Chat**

---

Well here I am almost one year in post with the AGM set for 20<sup>th</sup> October at Beedles Golf Club (more detail elsewhere in the Gazette). You may recall in my last chat I had had a wiring problem with my 300, well new loom is in place and this time the suspect wires have been separated from the main loom as I couldn't identify the source of the problem. The car is driving ok and has been to a few local shows but the regulator is heating up so investigation will now focus on that. NEC Classic Show is coming up and we have a place in Hall 2 this year. Dave Watson is working his magic again and is looking for a range of cars again. He would like Bubble Window, Slider, 600 and 700 to show as a set so if any of you can help drop him a line. He has had some response already but I'm sure he would welcome more even if your pride and joy isn't concours standard or is still undergoing restoration.

I would like to express my thanks to all the Committee for their efforts in running the Club, without them you wouldn't have the Club and Isetta's would be dropping in number rather than being found, dragged out of bushes and barns. Keep up the good work one and all... get those cars back on the road.

**Chris Skepper**

## THE ROLLING EGG

Reading Bob Hensley's article, "My First Car-1918RF", (Isetta Gazette No 375), got me all nostalgic about my 1957 Isetta 3-Wheeler... (Brighton-built), until I belatedly realised that my yellow Isetta is far from being my first motor vehicle.

Although it seems I've had my 'Rolling Egg', (auf Deutsch, 'das Rollende Ei') forever, it wasn't even my first micro-car. That honour went to my Messerschmitt KR 200, way back in 1960, when I was a starving university student, keen to get in out of the rain.

After a few years of (often expensive) fun with my 'Schmitt... (I am of German background and was studying languages, to become a teacher), I grew up, at least to the extent of graduating to 'normal' cars, of which I've owned about 40 over the years.

As a frustrated micro aficionado, however, I never got over my fascination for micros, but it wasn't until my retirement in 2000, (having stupidly let myself have four heart attacks), that I started thinking of finding one again.



This is no easy task in the land of Oz, as, unlike in Europe and the USA, micros or bubble-cars were never a big deal here (no pun intended.)

Indeed, the only two that ever had official dealerships/importers were the Messerschmitt and the Goggomobil, and their reign here was relatively brief, never surviving the 1960's.

One major reason was our long distances and rough roads, coupled with our love of speed and power. Our cars needed to be powerful, rugged and large... like us...not exactly a perfect fit for tiny little motorised lawnmowers, which is how sun bronzed

Aussies tended to regard Messerschmitts, Isettas, Heinkels, Goggos and even Minis.

For many years, our Holdens and Fords reigned supreme on our roads...with only a few 'foreign' cars, such as the indestructible VW Beetle, gaining a significant foothold.

(As a nostalgic aside, it might be noted that we now have no local car industry at all, having gradually allowed our labour costs and outdated work practices to 'kill' our local production, or even assembly, of VW, Nissan, Mitsubishi, Toyota, Ford and Holden. We now depend totally on full importation, inevitably leading to a loss of local expertise and jobs.)

When I bought my yellow Isetta, at auction, I was so enamoured of the thought of owning one, that the actual condition and roadworthiness of the one I'd rashly bought never occurred to me. It looked OK...well, sort of OK, so I blithely went into the auctioneer's rooms in the city...about 25k's from where I live, and announced that I intended to drive it home.

Now, I don't know that much about the car trade in the UK...although I still have vivid memories of Arthur Daly in 'Minder'...but I really didn't expect the reaction I received from the (well-regarded) firm of auctioneers.

"DRIVE it? You actually mean DRIVE it"? said, Chris, the chief auctioneer, in disbelieving tones. "Where do you live? Next door, I hope."

"No." I replied, suddenly sounding a tad unsure of things." In the north of Sydney, about 25k's away."

"OMG", stammered Chris. "You can't do that, none of us could even get the thing to start, run properly or change gear."

I somehow sensed that he was suddenly sensitive about what they'd sold me...and I was even more sensitive about what I'd bought.



With what I hoped they thought was rugged Aussie self-confidence, I announced, "Well, I've bought it. Somehow, I have to drive it home."

I guess I must have looked far more worried than rugged, as Chris found himself saying, "Graham, I just can't let you try to drive it all that way. Let me see what I can do." And he went away...possibly, I thought, to find a large hammer, or to enjoy a private laugh at my expense.

Instead, he was soon back, saying, "Look, Graham, we don't normally do this, but what you've bought is not...normal, so I'll arrange for it to be transported to your place in the next week, and there'll be no charge. Just please don't try to drive it home...or anywhere, until you get it fixed."

So, I returned home, Isettaless, and spent the next week wondering what the hell I'd done, how they were going to transport my strange little beastie, and precisely what 'get it fixed' was going to mean.

A few days later, I got a phone call from Chris, telling me 'it's on its way. Look for it in your street.'

With a mixture of excitement and trepidation, I went out into our quiet, semi-rural street...and waited. Soon I heard what sounded like a heavy vehicle coming down the road, and suddenly, the largest, longest, low-loader semi-trailer I've ever seen droned down the street...and perching in splendid isolation upon it, looking ridiculously tiny and out of place, was...one minuscule, yellow Isetta.

Even I could not help laughing out loud, only to discover that the driver, (who was bigger than my Isetta), was not amused.



"It's all very well for you to laugh, mate." Said the peed-off driver." I've been honked at, laughed at and yelled at ever since I left St Leonards. I'm a CAR carrier...not a bloody TOY carrier. What IS this thing, anyway?

Hoping to recover some dignity for myself and my new acquisition, I haughtily said, 'It's a 1957 BMW Isetta, very rare in Australia.'

This is too family-oriented a magazine...and too 'Isetta'-loyal, for me to be too specific about his response, other than to comment that his suggestion as to what my Isetta could do, was gymnastically and gynecologically impossible.

logically impossible.

He proceeded to untie the ropes and cables with which my poor little beast had been imprisoned, lowered the rear ramp, (fortunately solid and not just two tracks...not really good for 3 wheelers) ...and said, 'Right, it's yours...back it off the truck.'

Suddenly, I didn't feel quite so confident. I'd never driven an Isetta before, and all its commonalities with my long-ago Messerschmitt seemed to have nothing in common at all.

I also remembered the auctioneer's words about their not being able to start it, get it to run, or change gear...and here was me, a complete Isetta novice, expected to start it and back it off the huge truck. 'Was zu tun?'

And then, the small god of Isettas and Sims's came to my rescue...or so I hoped, when I looked at the ignition switch and announced 'There's no key. They must have forgotten to give it to you. We'll have to roll it off the truck and up my driveway.'

For a brief moment, I thought the irate driver was going to kick my new toy off his truck, just to be rid of it...then, two of my neighbours, who must have been watching the whole fiasco, came over and offered to help roll the 'Egg' off the truck and up my (fairly steep) driveway. Somewhat anticlimactically, we managed to do so, three of us giggling all the while...and you can guess who wasn't giggling.

I thanked all of them, not least of all the poor, embarrassed carrier, who wished me luck...although he didn't specify what kind of luck. He then had the devil of a job finding a way of turning his long trailer around in our narrow street, (a dead end), so he could go back to what he fervently hoped would be a normal job. I never saw him again.

That memorable day was 17 years ago, and 'The Rolling Egg' and I have lots of adventures... (and even more misadventures) since then, some of which, if you wouldn't mind, I might share with you in future Gazettes.

By the way, my Isetta cost me \$A11,000 in 2003. It's now worth at least \$35-40,000...but we won't say how much I've spent on it, will we?

GRAHAM SIMS  
Thornleigh, NSW  
Australia

## LETTERS

Dear Ian,

I have today sold my car registration number 651KUO to one of our members from Norfolk.

I am grateful Ian to you for all the assistance you have given me with this sale and advertising it for me and I enclose a cheque for £100 as a donation to the club.

Many thanks again and all the best for the future with the club.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Paxton

## The 45<sup>th</sup> National Micro Car Rally - September 2019.

We picked our camping spot, at the back of the field, opened up our Trailer and rolled out the Isetta ready for four days of "Bubble Car" escapades, in beautiful Somerset.

We were soon joined by other Isetta Club Members either side, and to the front of us, so we could easily catch up on all things Isetta.

**Thursday** was a drive of around 50 miles, in quite a hilly terrain, so all 13 bhp was needed to push us up those Quantock hills before topping out at a Car Park, which gave our tired Engines time to cool down and the 1 hp Quantock Pony's time to investigate our strange 4-wheeled Isetta and the BMW 700 of Chris and Andrea Beal. Going down, of course, challenged our Brakes and I was very conscious to "Engage Low Gear", as the road sign said, but it had the Engine spinning far faster than the Speedometer Gear Indicator marks recommended, but, we made it to the suggested preserved West Somerset Railway Station, at Bishops Lydeard, which offered us a welcome Tea break in a "Brief Encounter" atmosphere before the final few miles back to the Rally Site at Steps Farm. The evening was, of course, spent telling tales of when and how we got lost and how we found our way back to the 3-course Hot Buffet Meal put on by the Rally Organisers Malcolm McKay and his wife Helena.



**Friday** arrived bright and dry and at around 10am we set off in small groups on the 70 mile route towards Glastonbury but, with no loud music to be heard and the lure of the Shoe Museum not appealing to many "Souls", Coffee and Cakes it was in a peaceful and "Tranquil Hippy" sort of way.



Wells was our next stop and parking right on the Cathedral Green gave a stunning back drop to our photos and the usual questions, how fast does it go, what mpg and, of course, they don't have Reverse Gear do they!! Lunch in the Cathedral Café was cut a little short when the Toast Machine set off the Fire Alarm and we all had to leave for a short time but, no matter, entertainment was on hand by a super

Guitarist playing in the Paupers Archway, I felt quite at home!

Wookey Hole was one of those places I thought I must have been to before but it all looked different so we carried on through the Cheddar Gorge and, yes, it tested our Brakes, once again, on the way down. We made a wrong turn after the Gorge that gave us the opportunity to climb another long hill before realising that instead of heading towards the seaside, at Brea, we were heading in the opposite direction!! However, after a quick Left and Right we got back on track arriving at the really wind-swept Beach Car Park and yes, it was the beach,



and we parked on the Beach. So at this point we had a couple of Isetta's a BMW 700 several Bonds and a few Berkeley's with other cars coming and going but, a few of us had a plan to visit Bond/Nobel owner's Terry Day and his wife June, who lived just two minutes up the road for a well earned cup of tea with old friends.

**Saturday** was a slightly shorter day at 60 miles, to the Haynes Motor Museum, owned by the famous Haynes publishing group, who's Workshop Manuals we have all used at some time or other but, first we had a short stop at Langport, with its Riverside Walk or, in our case the Red Cross Shop that offered Coffee, Cake, and a chance to buy something we didn't realise we needed but, we did come away with several Denby Pottery Bowls that I will keep in stock for the next time I break one, whilst washing up at my daughter-in-laws!!

When we arrived at the Museum our allocated Car Park was rammed with all sorts of Microcars, giving Museum Visitors a great opportunity to see our cars. The Museum itself is very large and very modern and it would seem no expense has been spared filling this modern building with all kinds of cars, and if you like Museums you will not be disappointed, I am sure. Feeling a little tired we opted for the quick return route and hit the A38, as quickly as we could, in the company of Club Members from Belgium Andrew and Carine Meynckens and their Red German- built 4-wheeled Isetta.



Arriving back in time for a short rest period, before the evening meal at 8pm, when we once again tucked into another 3-course Hot Buffet Meal with local Cider from North Newton the very village of the Rally this year, and nice it was to.

**Sunday** is the line up Show Day, so I duly drove our Isetta the 100 metres into that field and lined it up with 9 other Isetta's already parked neatly in place. The Rally this year attracted around 160 cars but, disappointingly, just 10 Isetta's, a long way short of past Rallies when up to 50 Isetta's attended and I have to wonder why this is?

The Rally always has a small Auto Jumble for us to walk around, and wonder what those rusty parts fit, but, with a keen eye I soon spotted Isetta Parts and I was particularly pleased to buy a pair of, wait for it, Air filter O Ring Seals in perfect original condition. What more could I ask for apart from Ice Cream down the bottom of the field, again locally made and, if you're a interested, I chose Clotted Cream flavour!

Time passed by very quickly, talking to Club Members and Villagers alike, who came to investigate what was happening on their Door Step and before you knew it 2.30pm had arrived and Prize Giving. The Isetta Club sponsor 4 trophies. 1st Prize went to Dave Watson, with a Blue Isetta, 2<sup>nd</sup> Steve Rummer with his wonderful Isetta Van, 3<sup>rd</sup> was Andrew Meynckens with a Red 4-wheeler and the Spirit Award went to Dave Leach and his newly



acquired Red RHD 3-wheeler in a ready for restoration condition which I am sure a new Floor and a Battery will put it right!!



Time for thanks to the Organisers who, not only plotted our Routes, negotiated Museum Discounts and Parking places but, also provided the Rally location, fed and watered us on two evenings and provided Cake after the Prize-giving so we offer many thanks to Malcolm and Helena McKay but, not forgetting the Berkeley Club Members who also worked tirelessly to serve us, in the evenings, and also plied us with free Tea and Hillarys Cakes on at least two afternoons, all home made of course.

The Rally is in its 46th year and we hope we will see another Rally next year so get your Diaries cleared for early September, 2020, and keep a watch on the Websites, Club Magazines and, of course, Facebook, for the actual date.

**Mike and Helen Ayriss 2019**

## **BUY AND SELL & WANTED**

**WANTED** Isetta, any condition considered, pref RHD.  
Please phone RON on 07941 828613

RHD BRIGHTON BUILT CAR. FULL BODY OFF RESTORATION, NEW CHROME, TYRES, INTERIOR, ENGINE REBUILD. IN VERY GOOD CONDITION THROUGHOUT. COMES WITH INVOICES FOR WORK DONE, OLD MOT'S, STORMFORCE CUSTOM MADE CAR COVER & TRICKLE BATTERY CHARGER.

PRICE £15900 ONO  
PLEASE TELEPHONE 01785 714683

STAFFORDSHIRE



June is the month in which the Essex 5 have been driving the 30 miles over so to the Aldham Old time rally for probably 25 years. It used to be a show almost exclusively devoted to classic cars but like a lot of shows its opened up the doors to many more modern cars. Over the 25 years or so we have taken Bond minicars, Messerschmitts and Isetta's to show the good old punters what's around. Someone - one of the Essex 5 but not me - decided that 3 of the same marque would make a bit of a show, and they did. We started off way out of the main arena where the grass was really rough mown and after persuading the rally marshal that the 2 members of our happy band who are blue badge holders wouldn't make it to the main arena, he very sensibly moved us right into the thick of things. Rhona suggested that it wasn't a clever place to be as the kids enjoying the flying teacup ride behind us might think we were part of the kid's funfair and commandeered our cars. She needn't have worried, the 3 Isetta's were forced to endure a lot of attention as usual. A New Zealander came up to me to tell me that a pal of his bought a brand new Isetta here in the UK in the 1960's and drove it overland all the way to New Zealand. Hats off to that man I say. In the picture is Derek Cole's immaculate red and white 3 wheeler, Ken and Rhone Bell's immaculate 4 wheel bubble window German spec Isetta, and in the middle, my yellow workhorse aka the yellow peril. It's clean and tidy but not posh. The inside is mostly restored, it's reliable, and starts and goes well. What more could one want?



**Yvonne Jaques**

**ISETTA OWNERS CLUB OF GREAT  
BRITAIN AGM  
TO BE HELD ON OCTOBER 20TH  
2019 AT 2pm AT  
BEEDLES LAKE GOLF CLUB,  
170 BROOME LANE, EAST GOSCOTE,  
LEICESTER. LE7 3WQ  
All members are welcome to attend.**

# **FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

**26<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> September- Micromaniacs Christmas in September**, at Drax Sports & Social Club, Selby. Christmas Dinner booking is essential. Bob Bareham 01724 710747 micromaniacsclub.co.uk

**31<sup>st</sup> October - 3<sup>rd</sup> November - Micromaniacs Oktoberfahrt** - cheap and cheerful end to the rally season. Brighton Ferry pub neary Selby. Camping, toilets showers and electric hook-up available. Jim Jamieson - 07980 958 830 (office hours), 07517 673 374 (all other times) micromaniacsclub.co.uk

**8<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> November NEC Classic Car Show** Birmingham.

## **The Club is pleased to welcome:-**

Ray Prior	Thatcham	Lindsay Taylor	Shrewsbury
John Loadman	Oxford	John Broadbent	Mancetter
Maki Nakayama	Japan	Lewis Garlick	Norway
Robert Maynard	Canada	Brennon Knight	Doncaster
Stephen Pincott	Cardiff	Iris Davies	Canada
Ian McKain	Edinburgh	John Tucker	Ipswich
John Robinson	Lancashire	Ross Jenkins	Scotland
John Meredith	Ayrshire	Terje Foss	Norway

## **New Members since the last Gazette**

Colin Green a club member would like help with a restoration of his Isetta. He would like to hear from anyone within a 50 mile radius of Bridport. His address is Swan Cottage, Brook Street, Shipton Gorge, Bridport, Dorset. DT6 4NA Tel. 01308 898334  
Email [colingreen33@gmail.com](mailto:colingreen33@gmail.com)

To advertise your items for sale or want adds etc. please email the editor at [isetta@ianparris.com](mailto:isetta@ianparris.com)

The Isetta Owners' Club of Great Britain Ltd. will not accept liability for any loss or damage resulting from articles, features, adverts or any other material published in The Isetta Gazette.  
Copyright The Isetta Owners' Club GB Ltd.

PRINTED BY THISTLE PRINT LTD TEL: 0113 2040600 EMAIL: [sales@thistleprint.co.uk](mailto:sales@thistleprint.co.uk)

# THE UK'S BIGGEST & BEST CLASSIC MOTOR SHOW

3,000 CLASSIC CARS | 300 VEHICLE CLUBS | 3 DAYS

The definitive destination for classic car appreciation



NEC Birmingham | 8 -10 November 2019

Join us for a great day out exploring 3,000 cars, 300 fellow vehicle clubs, a host of celebrities, the UK's largest indoor autojumble, hundreds of specialist exhibitors, demonstrations, auction, competitions and more!

Exclusive discount on adult or family tickets on Saturday and Sunday with your club code\*: **CC5078**

## BOOK YOUR TICKETS TODAY

[necclassicmotorshow.com/club-tickets](http://necclassicmotorshow.com/club-tickets)

Headline Sponsor



Official Partners



\*Exclusive discount code is for club members use only, available in advance until midnight on Thursday 7 November 2019. To book by phone call 0871 230 1088, calls cost 13ppm plus network extras.