

ISETTA

GAZETTE



AUTUMN EDITION



The Isetta Owners Club of Great Britain Ltd.

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Editors Bit

I hadn't realised until I was updating the website a couple of months ago that this edition of the gazette will be my 50th. That means I have been doing this job for over 12 years, it doesn't seem possible, where has the time gone.

It's not always easy to get enough to print that's why I resort to begging.

I occasionally get some good feedback and as far as I can remember none bad so I guess I'm not doing too bad a job of it, either that or nobody dare complain for fear of getting the job themselves.

I must admit, I do get a lot of satisfaction producing the gazette along with my other roles, so, as long as everybody is happy I will continue.

At least this year it has given me something to do during lockdown.

On another note, the NEC Classic Motor Show is on for 13-15 November. If you get your tickets early, use club code CC479 this will give you a £2 discount on entry tickets. We are on stand 3-240 this year. (Full page advert in the gazette).



Ian Parris

Chairman's Chat

Well that's summer gone and what a mix, Covid, heat, rain and wind here in U.K. Not really the best for us with rallies and meets cancelled but looking at spares sales many of you have been hard at work restoring or servicing your cars. Lee has been hard at work shipping and restocking like there is no tomorrow.

The NMCR have had to reduce their rally to a small meet but hopefully it will be well supported in its temporary format. We shall be represented there even if only by one or two members.

It is hoped that the NEC Classic Car Show will run this year albeit in a different format and Dave is already working hard to get things ready so if you can help out with a car for the stand or to be there as volunteer staff to support him please drop either Dave or myself a line.

Things will be different this year for our AGM as due to Covid it will have to be a virtual meeting using Zoom.

Details of the meeting and joining instructions are on page 6.

Chris Skepper

In response to the regular questions concerning original Isetta fitments ...

Variations in Specifications of Brighton Isettas By Terry Parkin

The Isettas produced at the Locomotive Works in Brighton, Sussex between 1957 and 1962 were based on a single, simple concept but the changing specification was by no means easy to document. To understand the why's and wherefore's it is necessary to view a much wider scene than just an old railway building near the South coast of England ; it is unfortunately necessary to recognise and understand the circumstances of Isetta production by re-visiting a desperately tragic period in the lives of all Europeans.

British Isettas were produced in the difficult economic climate of the early post WW2 years and were an excellent example of a new era of co-operation between two Nations who had only a few years previously been locked in a vicious, bloody war . The effects of that war had been severe for both sides.

In the Peace after the conflict, the difficulties faced by Britain were extensive. We are a small island and during the 6-year war of 1939 – 45 (less for some other countries) our limited natural resources had been thoroughly depleted. Our Nation's wealth had been spent and exhausted on the paraphernalia of war and defence. Our export earnings and essential supplies of imported goods had been effectively halted by the sea blockades and U-boats.

Socially, home-produced products were strictly rationed – without the necessary number of the correct coupons it was impossible to buy basic foods such as butter or meat. Fruit was a luxury few could obtain and fewer could afford. Similarly domestic fuels such as paraffin and coal were strictly rationed ... no coupons = no home heat. New clothing was virtually unobtainable as there had been no imported supplies of cotton for many years. Any viable domestic vehicle – car, van, motorcycle-and-sidecar, bike or whatever had been requisitioned and taken away from private ownership for war or defence purposes.

Commercially, production of all items not essential for the war effort had effectively ceased. Factories which pre-war had produced domestic items such as furniture, pots and pans, knives and forks, even children's toys had either been flattened by bombing or converted to the production of weapons, munitions and military supplies. Any machinery which could conceivably have been used for military purposes had been removed from the local factory at the end of the street and transferred to underground munitions factories. The machinery that remained was out-dated and worn-out through lack of spares.

Industrially, Britain had no iron or steel stocks as the war had consumed everything we had. Automotive fuels were only available to essentials services such as the military, the medical services, farming and food production, a limited provision of public transport, and essential road and rail movements of people or materials.

Immediately post WW2, Britain was economically bereft... These were severely austere years – meagre supplies of poor quality foods, a desperate absence of materials and resources, the heart of our labour force depleted by death or injury in the service of their country. Even the health of the Nation suffered from the lack of food, fuels and resources.

To hasten Britain's slow and painful rise from its knees every item it was humanly possible to produce was earmarked for export and imports were only permitted for essential supplies.

It took around a decade after the end of WW2 for England to begin to experience a relaxing of restrictions. It was 10 years after the end of WW2 that improving circumstances allowed England to start building Isettas, although the war years still had huge influence on the factory's abilities.

The first Isettas to come out of the Brighton factory were assembled completely from parts imported from BMW, Bavaria ; Britain was keen to re-develop it's industrial capacity but the resources to develop and manufacture new products and components of its own were scarce.

Slowly, as Britain's industrial heart began to revive, some British-made components were included in the Isetta's specification. For example, Lucas electrics supplemented and subsequently replaced the Bosch components; similarly, British brake parts were introduced among the imported parts, and gradually the proportion of British-manufactured components was increased .

However, because of limited resources and continuing import restraints the supply of British parts was still intermittent, so, for example, it was sometimes necessary to fit Bosch items when supplies of Lucas parts were interrupted. It was also common to fit an alternative UK part when the preferred UK item was not available. It must be remembered that during this period, manufacturers such as Lucas supplied virtually all of the British automobile industry giants such as Austin, Morris, Rover and Land-Rover, Wolseley, Riley, plus most of the motorcycle manufacturers such as Norton, Triumph, Matchless and Ariel, plus most of the commercial vehicle producers such as Albion, Bedford, Foden, PLUS all the other smaller manufacturers, of which Isetta was just one of many. Similar restraints applied to other suppliers such as Dunlop who also supplied the majority of British vehicle manufacturers. All these companies had first call on available parts, simply because they were larger customers than the comparatively small Isetta Company.

There were also instances where Isettas were fitted with parts made by other British vehicle producers, for example the pull-up handbrake was a Ford fitment, used by them on their Prefect, Anglia and Popular ranges, and probably other ranges as well. So it was not at all surprising that there would be occasional breaks in the supply from Ford because their own production obviously had priority over that of the Isetta company. At times such as these, to maintain the flow of Isetta's out of the railway shed's doors, the Isetta company would fit an alternative handbrake, maybe an original from BMW, or maybe from a different model from Ford's range, or simply whatever they could lay their hands on.

Unfortunately, time has revealed that Isetta did not maintain accurate and detailed records of the variety of components or where and when they were used in their Brighton output.

It is also apparent that apart from milestone introductions such as announcing the first sliding-window "Export" models, or the first 3-wheelers, or the first Right-Hand-Drive cars, the company's policy was of continued, on-going incorporation of parts of UK origin, whenever such parts became available or the original part became obsolete or unobtainable. In today's world every manufacturer saves it's specification changes until the introduction of a new or face-lifted model, but of course the myriad of Isetta component suppliers each introduced their new components according to their own time-scale, so it was not possible for the Isetta company to introduce a raft of "improvements" at any one specific time with the fanfare of a new-model announcement, particularly as there was only the one base vehicle body. True, they did try with the "Plus" model but intermittent supply of components dictated that not all "Plus" models had the same parts fitted, and all the "Plus" extras were available as after-market accessories anyway.

There were also variations in the specification of Brighton Isettas which were not date-sensitive or progressive introductions so both small and large headlamps were apparently randomly fitted, according to what was available from the factory's stores at the time. Bumpers could be absent, or rear only (with or without over-riders) or fitted at both ends, or front only with either tubular or blade designs. The bumpers could be painted or chromed. And so on ...

Thus, while Isettas exported from the UK to other countries may have been built to a specification more rigidly defined by subsequent importers in particular economic or climatic markets, or indeed by the restraints of import/export documentation and licences, it is an enjoyable quirk that I have found it to be virtually impossible in the UK to walk down a line of 30 Isettas and find two which are identical.

Fortunately, the enjoyment of Isettas today vastly out-weighs the tragic memories which must occasionally be re-visited to reveal the circumstances of, and leading up to, British Isetta production.

However, it is a distinction of great satisfaction and pride that in some small way, the Isetta helped to bring together so many Nations across the globe in such harmonious enthusiasm.

Terry Parkin

26 October 2009

IOCOGB AGM 2019 to be held at 14:00hrs
GMT/UTC on
Sunday 11th October via ZOOM

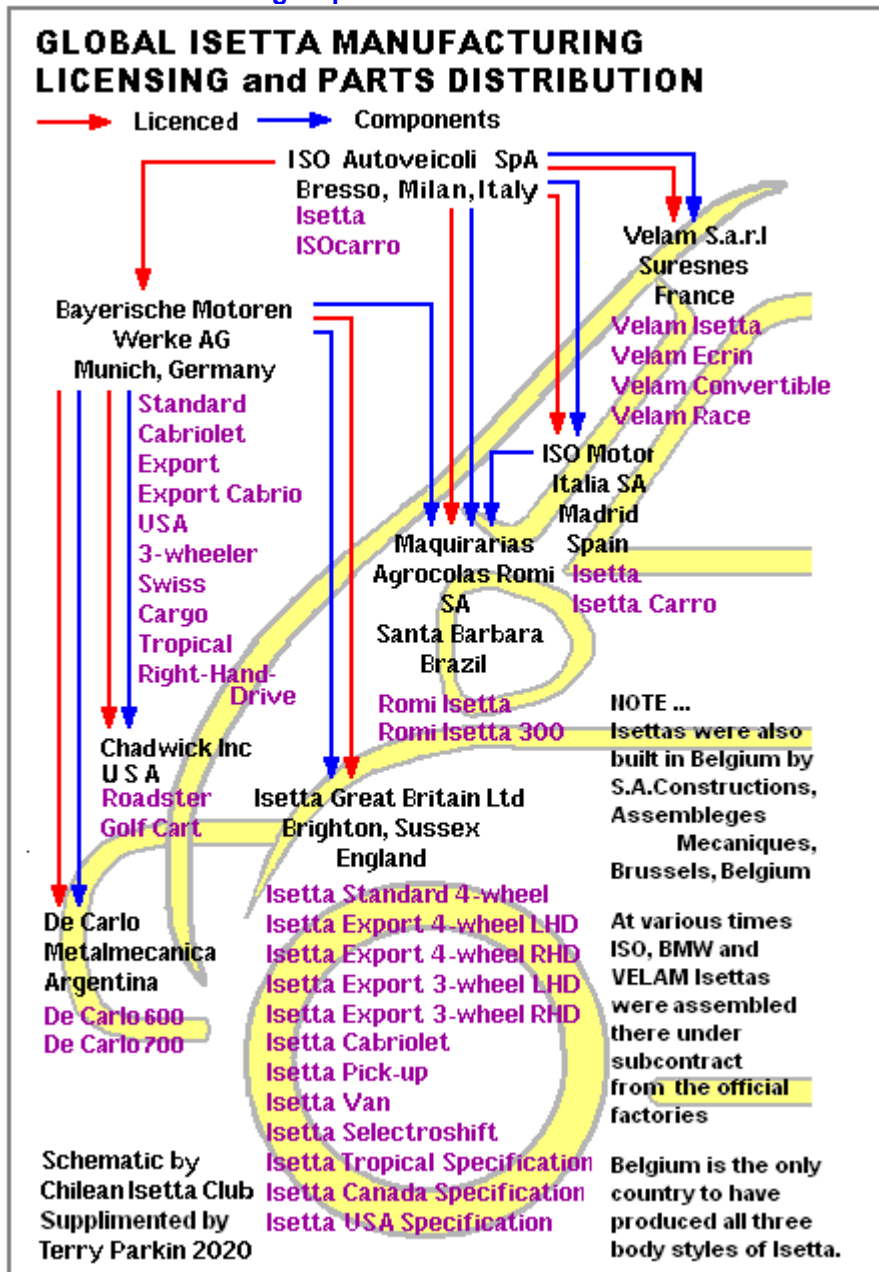
Anyone wishing to join the meeting must advise the Chairman by email of their wishes together with the following information by 1st October to allow reports and link to be sent prior to the meeting.
Members name, email address and country of residence.
Email chris.skepper2104@gmail.com

NOTE THAT THE MEETING WILL BE CONDUCTED IN ENGLISH
If you wish to speak, please get the attention of the chairman
by raising your hand who will endeavour to include you.

Isetta World

The International Internet Forum of The Isetta Owners Club

www.Facebook.com/groups/267159327250111



Bertie by Richard Jones

I've been asked to describe, in more detail, my super duper heater that I mentioned in the last issue. So here it is. It's an Eberspacher B1LC petrol heater, running from a separate feed pipe from the petrol tank. It has a thermostat mounted on the side of the car, and it has a clock, which can be set, enabling the heater to be fired up for up to an hour after the time set. That's mounted on the door.

It chucks out an enormous amount of heat. You know when you have your heater on, and it clears about 2 cm squared area of windscreen? This one will clear the entire windscreen in about a minute, it will defrost the entire car in roughly 3, and I can drive to Bridlington in shorts and a T shirt in December! It's that good.

Do you remember the really cold winters' days we used to get? Snow, frost, ice. My Isetta was no different, and would be a lump of ice when I came to drive it. Times that were so cold that I had to scrape ice off the inside of the windscreen! Now, if she's out on a cold night, I set the clock, the heater fires at the designated time, and I walk out to a toasty, defrosted, warm car.

Sounds perfect, doesn't it? Of course, for every "quid" there is a "quo". When the heater fires, it draws a considerable amount from the battery. It runs until it gets up to temperature, and then it shuts down. When the temperature drops inside the car

(It's an Isetta, it drops quickly!) it fires up again, but it doesn't take long to flatten the battery if the engine isn't running. It has happened that I've walked out to a warm, defrosted, ice free car with a flat battery which won't start, so I do have to be careful about it.

The heater unit is sited in the bottom of the spare wheel well, so I've no spare wheel, but I'm running on radials anyway, so I still wouldn't have one (You try cramming a Radial tyre in there, it won't fit. It's too big). I've got the emergency tyre inflator foam for that.

I've got an original fishtail nozzle blowing onto the windscreen, and a heater pipe blowing down at floor level at the same time, so it does warm up quick.



When we were going to the Story rally for the first time, (I suppose it was about 1998) we wanted to check out everything worked first. So, Easter weekend, we loaded the car up with camping equipment and set off for the Lake District (Like you do!) just to check that we could carry enough equipment, food, clothes and spare parts for a long journey. We arrived at the campsite and pitched the tent. We were frozen! It was sooooo cold that we got in to our sleeping bags fully clothed! Dur-



ing the night it snowed! It was truly bitterly cold. Why we didn't get in the car and put the heater on, I don't know. I suppose we were young, and tough, the wife and I. So we suffered. However, we felt that we had passed the test for Story, so the following day, we loaded up the car, dropped the tent (I can still, to this day, visualise the ring of snow when we dropped the tent), and drove home. It was bliss. Warm feet, warm car.



The Story rally was in May. Obviously didn't need the heater by then. The car was loaded up the night before we set off, fuel filled up, oil checked, and off we went. Down the A1, peeled off at the A14 (I think) and headed for Harwich. This was 1998, not that long ago, and yet we can still remember seeing a Messerschmitt KR200 coming the other way up the A1 (Like, when does that ever happen now?) and us flashing headlights madly at each other.

We b&b'd in Harwich that night, and then we drove down to the ferry the next morning. We caught the catamaran to the Hook of Holland, and

drove east until it got late and the light started to fade. We camped at a place called Bocholt, just on the German/Dutch border. There was a barrier on the entrance, but as we arrived a Mini in front of us raised the barrier, and we drove in right behind him. Pitched the tent, climbed in to bed. Found someone to pay for our stay the next morning on our way out.

The next day we continued east, driving through Hamlyn (of Pied Piper fame), and eventually arrived at Bockenem, and thence on to Story.

The Story rally was, as usual, excellent. Everyone who has been knows what it was like (the double decker bus café, the microcar museum, the drives out, the lorry stop at Bockenem.) and I have described it in previous articles. We had a good time. The car behaved impeccably. Too soon, it was time to say goodbye to our friends and return along our same route home.

We stayed at the same B&B in Harwich. We decided to treat ourselves to an Indian curry, a suitable restaurant which we had seen just as we left the ferry terminal. I remember the locals were all quaffing lager with their vindaloo's. I called the young Asian waiter over to us, and said, "Is there any chance the Chef could rustle us up a jug of mango lassi?" He gave us a strange double take and said, "How do you know about Lassi?" My wife replied, "We're from Bradford, lad!" So we got our lassi with our meal, and all the locals spotted it and asked what it was, and that's how a ceremonial glass of lassi got passed around the restaurant for all to try (Remember, it was 1998!).

I really enjoyed our long drive holidays in the Isetta. It seems so long ago now. These days a trip to the local meet in Leeds, or a quick dash to Tesco's seems to be the most I do, with, of course, the trip to Leicester in November for the club AGM.

In 2018 there were two Isettas' there. Mine, and another owner who had come from about 20 miles away. Last year, just me in mine. I was hoping to encourage a few more owners to join me in 2020, but, who knows with the current clampdown whether there will be an AGM, or trips out even. Times sure are a-changin'.

Keep safe, keep well, and see you on the other side.

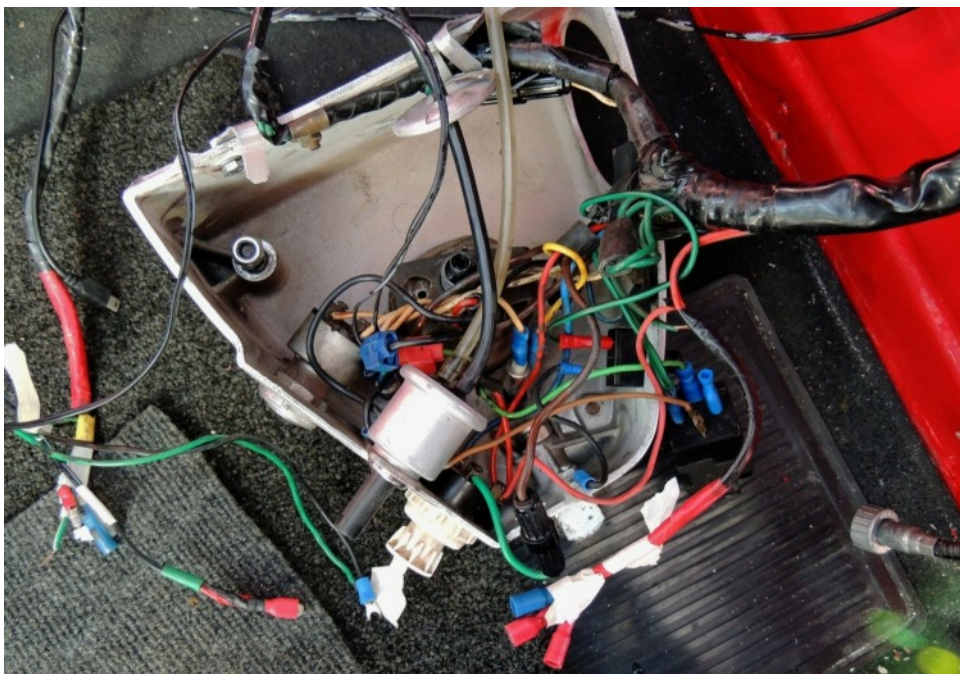
Richard Jones

Witches Hair by David Marsh

Like a lot of Isetta Owners, I have always regarded wiring as the “Witches Hair”. Dangerous to touch and wild to look at.

My Isetta wiring has therefore suffered a lot of ignoring over the years and I have only touched it under protest. This year however I decided to tackle it – well no really it decided it for me. So, I retrieved the excellent wiring diagram that had been done some time ago by Terry Parkin (Thank you Terry) and my trusty multi meter and in I went.

The indicators had stopped working. So, I started looking for the fault. First the wiring to and from the switch. It seemed intact but it didn't work, so I looked under the dash board, (a place I never go without a safety harness). The flasher unit fell out of it (I assume from its hiding place). After checking the flasher unit was wired up etc. it still didn't work. So I decided to look further, so took the whole dashboard unit off.



I can hear Ray Glendenning choke and laugh from here! This mess was made worse by the windscreen washer unit and also my addition of couple of extras – a power lead to the radio, interior light and a socket for my camera.

I have done a number of body-off restorations on my Isetta and the wiring to and from the dashboard has always been problematic. So, I thought “Why don't I put in a quicker way to remove the front door by having the wires to the Dashboard “unpluggable” from the main wiring loom”.

So after identifying a suitable Bosch type joiner for the main loom, I also identified a similar loom joint for the wires from the Dash Board to the front door's wiper motor, indicator switch,

the voltmeter I have and the two power boxes which are located in the door interior panel for my camera and phone charger etc.



Note the inline fuse I added which is accessible from the front!

Then D Day approached – time to do it. I am not the best at tidy crimping and soldering – (wires that is) so I called in my local mobile Auto Electrician, Dan, to come and help with that.

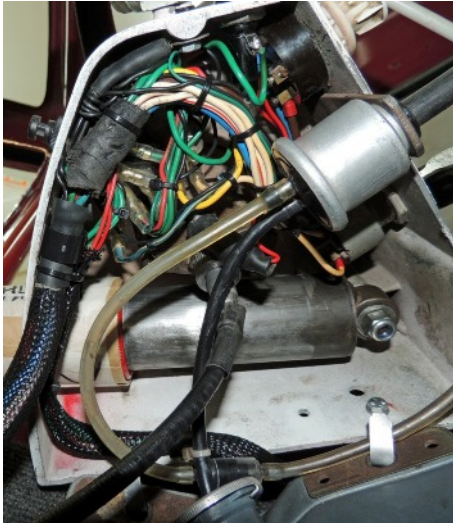
I also decided to tidy up the wiring under the seat as it too was in an interesting state!

When Dan stopped laughing, we set to work. So, 6 hours later the change was remarkable.

The rear wiring now looks like this – the small fused block deals with all the ancillary circuits and the starter/solenoid wire.



Similarly, the transformation under the dashboard is spectacular. It now looks like this.



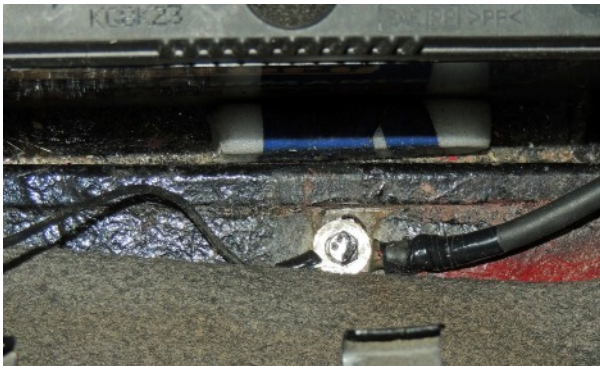
The main fuse we relocated to the front of the dash board

Then came a really interesting bit!! For many years my Isetta has never turned over well. It had a cough starting action rather than the whir that I hear other Isetta's have. I have always put it down to the fact that I had rebuilt the engine to a high standard. In mentioning this to Dan he thought I might have some sort of problem in the connections to the Dynastart etc, so whilst he was here he tested the circuit by first testing the operation of the Dynastart



by "short circuiting" through from a direct contact with the positive side of the battery to the starter post.

It still just coughed. So he remade the wire connection to the post and soldered up the wire so it was a good contact. He then turned his attention to the earth straps – first the one on the engine to the chassis and then the one from the Battery to the car.



The strap from the engine to the chassis had had good contact. The one from the battery to the floor was a different Kettle of Fish. (If yours is like mine the earth strap goes to the floor of the Isetta and connects to the chassis through a 10mm captive nut. In my Isetta it's hidden under the carpet!)

This we took out, remade the earth terminal connection to the floor on the lead and gave the whole area a really good clean

up as it was a bit mucky (well it would be as I have never touched it.)

RESULT! The car spun over as if it was new.

So now just a few things to reinstate and we are "back on the road again".

The Witches Hair has been tamed (for a while anyway).

Happy Bubbling

David Marsh

My Search for a 600 by Alastair Lauchland

As the owner of several BMW 700's and an Isetta, I've long had a desire to own a BMW 600 to fill the obvious gap in my "collection". Coming into contact with other 600 owners through my new role as a BMW 600 & 700 Technical Advisor for the Isetta Owners Club, only served to turn that desire into an itch that had to be scratched. Having contracted Covid-19 at the end of March 2020, just as the country was going into lockdown, my initial concerns obviously centred round first survival and then recovery but as I began to improve, my fevered brain decided that my recovery time would best be spent more actively looking for a 600 and the serious searching began in July 2020.

Obviously the production life of the 600 and the numbers produced were low and with the passage of over 60 years the number of surviving cars has have diminished significantly further. I very soon found out that most on the market were well beyond my limited budget.

I knew of no cars for sale in the UK, and thinking ahead and to the possibility that come the end of this year, when our separation from the EU is complete, buyers here may well find themselves having to pay import duty on any car imported into the UK from the EU, only adding another level of expense to the already high prices asked. I decided therefore that with this added incentive along with its relative proximity made Europe the starting point of my search for a car to restore.

I particularly wanted a restoration case, both from a financial standpoint and also because I'm one of those strange individuals that derive the greatest satisfaction of old car/motorcycle ownership from the actual restoration process, the search for parts and of course the many interesting contacts you make along the way. If I restore a car myself, I also know exactly what's been done to it, I develop a bond with it and a confidence in it. It's horses for courses of course but I tend to think that when buying a restored car, not only are you paying for the time and effort that someone else has put into it but you're also having to take a lot more on trust, such as what really lies below the glossy paintwork and was the engine actually stripped and rebuilt as claimed?

Searching for a car during a pandemic however, has its drawbacks, because whether the car that catches your attention is here in the UK or abroad – you can't exactly just jump in the car and go to view it and this adds a level of complexity to the search as you then really need to assess the seller as well as the car – both from a distance.

I searched the internet using several different search engines because I found that different results were turned up by each, so it was worth trying. I created a shortlist of cars that were of interest to me and I started contacting the owners. This brought up the first issue. Some of the cars had been sold a long time ago, but the site they'd been listed on hadn't taken down the listing.

The first car that I found that was still for sale, was suddenly sold without warning while the owner was still answering my questions. That was unfortunate, but there's not a lot you can do about it if you aren't told that another offer has been made. Perhaps the owner didn't realise my enquiry was genuine or perhaps someone more local just turned up on the doorstep with cash in his pocket.

The next car I pursued was one in Greece advertised at "£8000 or offers". It turned out that it was actually two "cars" to be sold as one lot. One was a relatively intact car – well let me change that to it being recognisable as a BMW 600, because the body had more holes in it than a colander. The floor was gone, the sill was hanging down, both doors were holed and ragged as were the leading edges of both front wings and one rear corner looked from the photos to have at some time sustained a knock and had been filled and painted over. More significantly, the original 600 engine/gearbox had been removed and replaced with a Fiat 500 engine – leaving no room for a fuel tank, which might go some way towards explaining why that particular project had failed! The other part of the offering was a complete BMW 600 rolling chassis with the correct BMW engine/gearbox fitted. The seller had apparently bought this second chassis so that the engine and gearbox fitted could be transferred over to the "car" to allow it to be restored.

The seller was including in the sale, a new floor, rear bumper, front badge holder and a few other sundry parts. The project certainly wasn't one to be taken on lightly as the bodywork was in terrible condition, requiring many hours of work and expense but, if bought at the right price, I thought it was within my capabilities.

The seller seemed pleasant enough at first and communicated via his company email address, where he described himself as a "Global Sales Director" – for a company with no connections to anything automotive.

He was at pains to assure me that he wasn't a dealer, simply an enthusiast with this car and "many Isettas" to sell, if I wanted to buy a "package". I was given information on the 600 "lot" and he told me that he had bought it in Germany, attracted by how original it was. A questionable statement bearing in mind how little of it there was allied to the fitting of a Fiat engine and gearbox – can't get much more original than that!!! He provided me with a list of replacement parts that he claimed he'd bought since buying the car to allow him to restore the car himself. He didn't offer any explanation as to why his plans had changed.

When I asked if either the car or the chassis had any registration document, he replied saying that he had a German registration document for the "car" and offered, for an additional 500-600 euro to first register the car in Greece "to make it easy for me to register it in the UK". I couldn't quite work out what advantage getting it registered in Greece offered and why the sum being asked for this "service" should be so high, so alarm bells started ringing. I asked for photographs of both chassis numbers and for sight of the German registration document. It was only then that it came to light that there was no chassis plate on the car and he apparently didn't seem to know where to look for the chassis number on either chassis, oh and the German registration document related to neither of them.

I asked him how, if that was the case, did he propose to get it registered with the Greek authorities if there was nothing to tie the registration document to the car. There was then a hasty back peddling and he said that he'd only made the offer "to help me" and that if I was happy to import them it into the UK without Greek documents, then that was fine with him.

Presumably to get all the bad news out of the way in one go, he then chose to tell me that although the pictures he'd posted of the car showed it with a windscreen, it had in fact been broken recently.

Obviously by this time my suspicions were growing and having never met him, knowing nothing about him, or having seen what was being offered in the flesh, I decided it was time to ask a few probing questions. Strangely, he didn't take kindly to this and got rather spiky with me and provided me with two mobile numbers of people he'd dealt with in the UK in the past who, were now "good friends" of his. I didn't follow them up – they could have been anyone, anywhere.

I told him that I'd need to make enquiries about transport costs and he immediately came back to me with a figure of 1000 – 1500 Euro "based on previous experience" (not a dealer remember) – not even knowing where in the UK I was located. His suggestion was that the chassis could be transported on its side so that it would take up less space on the lorry, so it should cost about half of the price of transporting the car. I personally doubted that any reputable transport company would transport a chassis in this manner never mind the effort involved in manhandling a chassis fitted with an engine and gearbox onto its side and then somehow or other secure it like that for transit, so I decided to make my own enquiries by requesting quotes for transportation from Greece to Scotland, using the "Shiplly" website. I only received one quote and it was for £3741 for the transport of both car and chassis! A rather different figure to his guesstimate of 1000 – 1500 Euro.

I suggested to him that the cost of transporting a complete rolling chassis didn't strike me as economical when I actually only needed the engine and gearbox. This, quite humorously, was met by an offer to "have his mechanic" (remember it's only his hobby) strip out the engine and gearbox and send them to me inside the car. This "additional labour cost" however seemed to result in me saving less than 25% of the cost to transport the chassis and him retaining the chassis, brakes, steering and suspension components to sell a second time. The deal just seemed to be getting better and better.

By now we were about 10 days into negotiations and perhaps in a final attempt to both increase the price and clinch a sale, he suddenly offered to add some auction lots of 600 parts that he'd bought a few weeks earlier at the RRR Museum auction in Austria for an additional 1550 euro plus of course additional carriage costs, because they were still with the auctioneer because he hadn't yet paid for delivery.

The parts included a replacement side door, engine hatch, two glass fibre dash and spare wheel covers and an additional rear screen (but no windscreen). I was of course supposed to pay him the 1550 euro that he had paid for them and cover the transport costs from Austria to him.

The final clincher was that the original £8000 asking price was suddenly no longer negotiable "because the price of these cars is rising daily" (seemingly literally) By this time, no matter how keen I was to buy a 600, it wasn't going to be this one because my patience and trust had completely evaporated at the constantly changing figures involved, what was actually included in the sale, an accurate figure for transportation and all

his other evasions and suggested illegality. We seemed to have gone from an “or nearest offer” price, upwards with the offers of various additions and then told that the starting price was in fact fixed. It quite obviously wasn’t the only thing that was fixed, so communications ended and the search continued. Incidentally a few weeks later, I saw him listing the same basic package of car and chassis (only) on German eBay for £9500. BMW 600 prices were indeed increasing daily!

Next, my internet searches turned up a rather nice-looking restored car on a Spanish car website – a Spanish equivalent of Autotrader here in the UK. I wasn’t looking for a restored car and there were a few details about the car that I’d have changed if I owned it.....but the price nevertheless looked inviting especially when compared to the final (?) figures my Greek friend had been asking (for a complete shed of a car) and given the number of ex-pats in Spain, I reckoned that transport costs may well be a good bit lower given the number of lorries that commute back and forward regularly with ex-pat’s belongings and probably happy for a return load. I noticed that the listing had several good photos of the car, apparently taken outside a car dealership, yet the listing said “private seller”. It was enough to make me suspicious – perhaps because of the previous car - nevertheless, over the course of a week, I completed several contact forms through the website but received no reply to any of them and started to lose interest.

I kept searching.....and what did I find - a listing featuring exactly the same car, using exactly the same photos, only this time with several additional shots of the car taken inside a dealership in Germany. The German dealer’s price was more than double being asked by the “seller” in Spain. You’ve guessed it, a Spanish scammer!

Hey-ho, the search continues.

Alastair Lauchland

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