

# ISETTA **GAZETTE**

**SPRING EDITION .... 2015**



*National Meeting ~ Southwell race course 2006*

# The Isetta Owners Club of Great Britain Ltd.

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## **Editors Bit**

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Some of you out there have still not paid your 2015 subscriptions therefore this could be your last Gazette.

Just think what you might be missing if you don't receive the next instalment, not only that but you won't be able to purchase spare part from our vast inventory of stock.

I will also keep reminding you of the Isetta 60th Anniversary Rally to be held at the Bubblecar Museum over the weekend of 11th - 12th July. Do try to support the club, with a car if you can but yourself if you can't get a car there. I have again run out of articles for the next gazette but must thank those of you who have contributed to this one. Keep them coming in I can't produce a gazette without contributions.

Please note a new address for paying for subs and spares is [isettasubs3@gmail.com](mailto:isettasubs3@gmail.com).

I would like to thank Hagerty classic car insurers for supporting our 60th Anniversary Rally.

**Ian Parris**



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## **Chairmans Chat**

Isn't it amazing how things evolve? The club is in a stronger position than ever thanks to the combined efforts of the committee who each have an additional defined role as detailed inside the front cover of every Gazette. The turnover of the new spares service continues to grow and the range of parts available increases, we have Lee, Mike and Ian to thank for that. Mike also has used spares available. Ian continues with the publication of the Gazette which becomes increasingly more difficult with every issue as his material dries up. If you've done something unique with your car tell everyone about it via Ian. Our relationship with DVLA continues to flourish thanks to Dave who also administers our vast library of publicity material and organises our presence at the Classic Car Show at the NEC. Financially Bob ensures the club is on a sound footing and Roger looks after BMW 600 & 700 matters. Nevertheless the committee needs new blood, come on members, come and join and give us your input.

Don't forget the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Isetta coming off the British production line at the former locomotive works in Brighton now the site of a Sainsbury's supermarket. This event will be held over the weekend of 11 & 12 July at the National Bubblecar Museum near Boston. I'm striving to get my car and transporter ready, if I can get there so can you. We need to get 60 cars there minimum! We can do it.

**Jeff Todd**

## **Story of 1959 Isetta 300, XNC 427**

My interest in 'Bubble' cars began (as I am sure most of ours did) having seen them tootling along the roads in the 60,s as a (very young) child. My interest was then rekindled in the early eighties, as was my interest in classic cars generally. My first encounter with classics, apart from a string of Moggies, began with the random purchase of a 1938 standard ten for £500 from a roadside garden, which followed soon after with a Daimler SP 250. Back to the Isetta it was in the early eighties I was working as a trainee Estate Agent in Bristol and visited a modern house near to our office and in the garage was an Isetta 300 which was painted as a Union Jack, the owner had told me the previous owner was a 'Mod' and like the fashion for customizing Lambretta's and Vespa's he had done same to his Isetta being that it was a bit like a Scooter. Anyway the owner after telling me the story of parking up conventionally with another car quickly parking in front unable to open the door being stuck there for several hours (I think that's a much told and over exaggerated one) said if I liked the car it could be mine for only £500, I was seriously tempted but did not have on me the £500 or a garage to keep it in so had to pass. I wonder what ever happened to that car, anyone know of an Isetta from Bristol painted as a Union Jack?

Fast forward to 2012 and I am now living in Sark, Channel Islands where cars are banned but bizarrely my interest in cars, particularly Isetta's is re awakened by reading various press articles. I had seen various Isetta's for sale at various auction houses and had reckoned interest and prices were rising so it was now or never. This just happened to co inside with a classic car auction and with a visit from my brother in law who ran a small garage business in Bristol and said if I got it, he would pick it up and do any restoration work needed. I knew it was a risky strategy to buy at auction unseen but I thought what the hell, the car had a current MOT until May 2013 and this might be my best if not only chance of getting one, so risk it for a biscuit! Well the auction started and I was on the phone the bidding was slow and it seemed like I was in with a chance of getting it, I could hear the auctioneer say going once twice, sold to me, wow, then much to my amazement the chap on the phone said there was another bid, and I should bid again, which I reluctantly did this time definitely getting the car. Anyway as you can imagine I protested loudly that the hammer had gone down the auctioneer had said sold to me, but then started off the auction again, seems very dodgy indeed to me, this is not the first time I have seen this stint and with some of the very biggest Companies. Anyway the car was mine and I was relatively pleased with the price and even with any restoration costs, I thought I still had a fairly priced car.

I had told my brother in law I had been successful and as he was back home the next day he would pop up to auction premises near London and collect car, of course the auction house wanted to charge me storage/removal fees, but after reminding them of their sharp auctioning practices, they agreed to waive any charges.

My brother in law duly collected car and sent me emails with pictures and an account of the car. The first thing that threw me was that in his pictures it had two wheels at the back and I was sure all of the auction house brochures and online pictures were for a three wheeler, so I checked and all of the auctioneers pictures showed no rear pictures, and the blurb made no reference to it being a four wheeler, were the auctioneers up to yet more tricks? Anyway initially I was a bit disappointed to be getting a four wheeler, but after a bit of research I thought that English built four wheelers were probably rarer, had reverse gear and were less likely to roll, so cheered my self up thinking I had done reasonably well as it so happened. My bother in law said car started fine but was a bit difficult to get into gear had a few dings to body work, the odd bit of rust and bright work probably needed re chroming. He said he had all sorts of comments from pedestrians especially girls at traffic lights and so on.

Upon receipt of history file, which was very extensive there were all sorts of interesting history from 1<sup>st</sup> owner to date, also in car we found original hand book (slightly damp and rotted), the auction house bumf promised file contained original bill of sale, but sadly it was not present. The ownership history was a bit interesting as the first owner appears to have been Mrs. Clarrissa Violet Webb from Pinner, Middlesex who acquired car from new on 07/05/59 and owned it until 1991, it was then acquired by Mr. Nicholas Van Der Steen who appeared to be working for BMW in Wimbledon and perhaps his ownership was more to do with his BMW involvement rather than personal interest. Interestingly there are letters on file from Mr. Van Der Steen at BMW, Wimbledon in 1996 to a Mr. John McDonnell of Bubble Cottage in Bromley. Anyway Mr. Van Der Steen was a member of the Isetta Owners club during his ownership. The car then transferred to the owner ship of Tracy David Hillier on 30/06/05 then finally to me in September 2012. Interestingly there are copies of various letters from Clarissa Webb between February 1969 and April 1975 to and from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, The Ministry of Transport and the then Department of the Environment, Driver and Vehicle Licensing Centre, Swansea. It seems there was a longstanding argument going on about the level of tax that should be paid on the four-wheeled Isetta.

As you can imagine I was excited to see my Isetta where it was stored in a relative's garage in Bristol. So come the day and car started just fine but I just could not get it into the correct gear, my brother in law tried and eventually did get it into gear and we took it for a spin down the road. The next time I saw the car it was at my brother-in-law's garage awaiting a restoration. Again we took it down the road for a spin and it promptly broke down, the brakes also locked on whilst a huge articulated lorry sat right behind us with a driver who did not seem at all amused at these twits in a odd looking car holding him up. Eventually the lorry went by and we had to push the little green Isetta back to the works, which luckily was not too far.

I debated for some time as to what best to do and with the help of my brother-in-law decided a budget of around £2000 would fix up car (of course it ended up costing more) which seemed reasonable. Firstly the car was stripped down, bits were ordered, and engine, brakes and steering were sorted. Then came the topic of painting, and I agonised for some time about a colour scheme, usually I am the sort of person who likes things to be precisely as they came out of the factory, however to my mind the existing colour was a horrible green a bit like the cat had just been sick colour! So the decision was made to change colour to an Azure Blue colour (which was actually a BMW color) with the top half in Olde English white. Time went by as my brother-in-law was just doing bits in evenings at weekends and that was fine by me.



Along comes Chris Evans Children in Need Car Fest event (2013) where members of the public are encouraged to apply to bring along their classic cars to display at the event. I applied and after much nagging by me they eventually agreed with only a month to go, that I could bring along my Isetta to Car Fest South to be in the unusual seven group. So the pressure was on. I rang up my brother-in-law and said could the car be ready for the event in only a months time, he said he would do his best. As always there was a mad panic for ordered bits to turn up, bits to come back from chrome platers. The inside of the car had

been covered virtually all over in a horrible green/beige carpet, I had ordered replacement panels to be pretty much near to original, had seat re upholstered etc. My brother-in-law (bless him) was up into the small hours trying to finish off car ready to be at Laverstoke Park in Hampshire early the next day. The final part needed was a new black sun roof which we were promised was dispatched by courier several days previously, but it just did not turn up, so my brother in law very cleverly fashioned and fitted from perspex a sheet to cover the opening, that actually worked very well (perhaps we could start a new trend?).



So Car Fest day came and my son James, father Patrick, brother-in-law Rob and me turned up at the event and were ushered into the members only covered classic car display area. We felt a bit inadequate being along side Chris Evans multi million pound Ferrari's and even being only several rows away from Nick Mason's (Pink Floyd drummer) £30,000,000 Ferrari 250 GTO, registration number 250 GTO. However we did our various runs through the day and seemed to get just as big a cheer from the crowds as the Italian exotica. Certainly when the public was allowed into the car enclosure, we had just as many people

around our little Isetta as the Ferrari's did. We even had one guy on the sporting bears stall bid £50 for the chance to ride up the strip, it transpired the guy was from Bristol and had by chance seen the car in the garage in its pre restoration state.

The Isetta went back to Bristol to the garage awaiting various fine-tuning bits pieces that included attention to brakes, sunroof etc.

The winter came and went and car was finished and I was very excited to take it out for its first major road run of a 30-mile or so round trip. I pick up car and it ran like a dream starting first time. I was a little nervous to be on busy traffic filled main roads driving a very unfamiliar car. Anyway off I went, got overtaken by a lycra lout on a bicycle and the first time I had cause to jam on brakes the car suddenly shoot across to other side of the road, more adjustment needed I was thinking. Anyway over several days got to know car quite well and did a good few miles around local villages, even parking up outside a local Olde Worlde pub where I got more attention than if I had trucked up in a Ferrari. Although the Turkish fellow at the kebab house didn't know what to make of it as a pulled up outside to get my dinner on the way home!

The next day it was time to take car back for some more TLC and it was a distance if some fifteen miles or so and I opted to go on B roads to avoid fast A road traffic. Off I set with my mother following as support car and within 5 minutes the car broke down (probably fuel starvation I was guessing) but started again and off I set again. This pattern repeated itself countless times. I just prayed that when the big long steep hill (Redhill before Bristol Airport) on the fast section of the A38 came the car would not break down yet again, luckily it didn't and eventually I made it to my destination with countless other breakdowns.

The final chapter of my story comes in the early part of this summer when I took delivery of the Isetta for the finally time, with hopefully all the glitches resolved by my ever patient brother-in-law. The Isetta now looked absolutely fabulous whilst probably not concours but pretty shinny nonetheless and driving brilliantly, starting first time, ever time. I was now

using the Isetta as a commuting car to travel to a rented lock up about five miles away where I have several classics, and every time you pull up at red light or zebra crossing people always give you a cheery wave and smile.

Anyway disaster strikes as within days of getting my lovely Isetta back I was parking it into the garage which is a bit tight involving a few back and forward moves to get correctly lined up, but on the final leg I am lined up ready to reverse into garage, but only several feet from the low boundary granite wall, so I select reverse gear and let out clutch which can bite a bit suddenly compared to a moderns, anyway you all know what is coming next, bang I am in the wall with the front door stove in, number plate buckled etc. Of course I had selected forward rather than reverse gear in error. Annoyingly despite having the crash bars on the front of my car, the angle of the car to the low-slung wall just hit slap in the middle of the door. As you can imagine I was heartbroken after what was nearly a two-year project to get car just sweet. Then I thought what the hell S\*\*t happens. I got onto insurance Company which in fairness were very good, car went off to local body shop (rumoured to have been sold to Tesco's, what a shame!) who did a great job apart from fact window rubbers had to be redone as first attempt left creasing.



So I am back to square one again and looking forward to some more Isetta adventures in 2015 and hope to meet up with any other Isetta owners especially in the South Bristol, North Somerset area before too long.

Hope you enjoyed my pictures and story.

**Simon Couldridge.**

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

Kristoffer Petersen	Denmark	Sean Mooney	Kettering
Tony & Beryl Driver	Balcombe	Leigh Jones	Bridgend
Bryan Dobson	Wettenhall	Stephen Platt	Wheelock
David Taylor	Cape Town	Paul Merrett	Chantry
Peter Ashcroft	Conwy	Roger Allen	Evesham
Steve Rummer	Bridgewater	Leigh Roberts	Caernarfon
Austin Landrie	Canada	Nigel Owen	West Yorkshire
Roy Davey	Ware	Dean Porter	Margate
Christopher Walkington	North Lincs		

**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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## My micro life by Paul Champney 0040

You can well imagine that with a low membership number like 40 I have been involved with microcars since the early days of the club. Well, let me tell you, my interest in bubbles predates the IOC by some considerable margin, and I have been persuaded to tell you about it.

It is on record that the first Isetta in my life was UYY 844. A right hand drive, 1958 4 wheeler. It was at the back of a service garage, and my cousin Chris and I, were both 11 and half years old, so this was in 1966. We got the car working, sort of, and used to belt round the garage yard, in reverse, with a truck battery on the floor and by filling the float chamber every couple of minutes with petrol because the tap was assembled wrongly and didn't allow fuel out of the tank. We summoned up the courage to ask the garage owner if we could have it, only to have the car snatched away by its owner at the last moment.



Glum? We were gutted. However, there were plenty of Isetta's to be had in those days, and it didn't take very long for another one to turn up. Chris and I had both had our 13<sup>th</sup> birthdays in 1968 when we heard of an Isetta just up the road from where we lived. It was in a garden, we were told. Actually it was in a hedge, but you don't let these little things worry you. It had no exhaust, and the brakes didn't work. The owner wanted £5 for it. Do you know how much £5 was worth in those days? We're 13 and had nowhere near that amount of money. So, we went to see Chris' dad. We made him his tea, we cleaned up around him, we were very nice to him, and he gave us the £5! We got the car!

The brakes and the exhaust were only slight problems with GCW 925. It had not one engine mounting in it, but, we found an old stair rod that was just the right size, and wedging that under the engine we were able to belt around the field behind where Chris's family lived.

The year after, 1969, and we were 14. GCW 925 was off the road needing repair and we heard of another Isetta in the town where we live. It was an old left hand drive three wheeler, originally painted imperial red. It was rough, but it ran. It had the large plastic rear lights, but the dash board was painted the same colour as the car, so we always reckoned on it being a 1962 car. Anyway, we acquired OCX 650, and went round and round the field in it until one day it rolled over. By now we had acquired a little bit of nous over the mechanics of the cars we were using, so we broke the car up and put the spares in storage for use later.

Chris next bought his first car. TKW 715, which was a rare RHD Heinkel 175 with the starter button. It was totally original but very rotten, so he soon sold it on after it had been round and round that field.

We'd heard that an acquaintance in Guiseley was clearing out his collection of microcars. By now the year was 1970, and we could both ride Honda 50's. So off we went to see Charlie Grey in a cloud of two stroke smoke. I remember knocking on his door and asking Charlie's father, who opened it, "Is Charlie Brown in?" When his father replied, "It's Grey", I said, "Ooops, wrong colour!"



From Charlie came three stripped Isetta's. All were three wheelers but one of them was a left hand drive, had the small Hella headlamps, was painted imperial red, seemed to be German spec but with three wheels. We paid £5 for all three of them, and broke them all up for more spares.



In 1971 we acquired the RHD VKW 733. The body was wrecked but mechanically it was sound and had a log book, so we used GCW's body to restore VKW 733 to road-worthiness, and I drove that car for quite a while.

There used to be a scrapyards in Pudsey called "Bangers & Smash", long since gone. They had, at one time, three Isetta's in their yard, one of which was at the very top of a huge pile of vehicles. I climbed up this swaying pile just to gain a wiper linkage out of it.

From Bob Thomas in Keighley we acquired a battered RHD which had not run for years. 4589 KH was shoved, forgotten, down the side of his lock up. We dragged it out, put some fuel in it, connected a battery to it, at

which point Bob commented, "You've got no chance!" and turned the key. The silencer exploded and hundreds of spiders did a runner out of it, but the car ran. This too went into storage, but we didn't break her up.

In 1973 we turned 18, and we restored GCW back onto the road, putting her body back where it belonged.

Chris's second microcar was a yellow Isetta, 947 DUM. He bought it from a lady in Guiseley, and it cost £25. It had been kerbed at some time in its life and the front wheels shook mercilessly as it had no dampener. Chris discovered though that if he ran it with 5.20 x 10's on the right and rear wheels, but a 4:80 x 10 on the left it drove perfectly. Eventually DUM was added to the growing pile of spares. When we broke it up we discovered that at some stage in its early life the barrel had blown off of its studs, bent the con rod, and put a hump in the parcel shelf. It had been put back together with the bent con rod still in it, and it was a lovely quiet engine.

By now my GCW 925's body was deteriorating, so we took the decision to break up the car, breaking the body into its constituent panels for spares, and adding her parts to the collective.

In 1974 we were told that the company dealing with Isetta spares, Glanfield Laurence, was no longer going to provide them, but, they told us, we could try to contact a chap called Martin McKeever, who lived in Brentwood, Essex, and who was trying to set up an owners club for them. This club, actually. We drove down to see him, but when we knocked on the door he wasn't in. "Come in", said his mum, "Martin won't be long." A few minutes later, and in walked this schoolboy! Martin was 16. At that time he had two cars, an Isetta 4 wheeler and a Messerschmitt KR200, in which he was learning to drive! Still, history tells



us that Martin was successful in helping set up the owners club, and I joined early in the clubs life.

In 1980 I had the chance to purchase a Messerschmitt KR200 cabriolet myself, from a chap called Brian Senior who lived near Wakefield. That cost £150, so you can see how the prices were climbing, even then. Chris purchased a Trojan at nearly the same time, so 6562 KH and 82 NPO were quite often parked next to each other.

By now it was 1980 and we used to meet monthly for a microcar meeting at the Grove pub in Wakefield, under the stewardship of Betty Varley. Betty had a green BMW 600 which was parked outside her home. It never ran as far as I remember. In front of it, in a dense thicket of trees, lay a poor dead 300. She offered us the 600, but I was short of storage space, and, more importantly, had no 600 spares so I declined it.

I did buy 177 ABD from Keith Stephenson in Leeds. It came out of a row of council lock ups and Keith wanted to give it to me. A yellow RHD 4 wheeler, it was in very good, but stripped, condition. It was such a nice car that I insisted on giving him £25, and I later sold it on to Richard Jones, a fellow owner member.

1981 saw us regain UYY 844, this time for £250. The original owner had died and the farm where it was stored was going to be developed for housing, so the car was very vulnerable. I don't know what made me think of her when I did, and a random drive amazingly took us straight to her. UYY is stripped and awaits restoration, but she is finally where she rightfully belongs, I think. This story has also been printed, in full in the Gazette, previously.



1982 saw us drive to York to purchase 4022 KW. A right hand drive 3 wheeler. Again, this account is on the IOC website as it is the car we had the collision with a coach near Arnhem whilst driving to Story in 1983. The car was a write off.

What was I going to drive now? Remember 4589 KH and the exploding exhaust? We restored that car and put it onto the road.

Another Isetta about this time was 555 ARU, which we acquired, with the intention of running it. It came from Roger Davis in Menston, and we paid £50. It was on the road, and was a yellow RHD three wheeler. We drove it

back to our lock up garage and had a good look at it in the daylight. Strange, the back wheel was leaning at an angle. So I got underneath and had a shuftie. I found that it had been originally a 4 wheeler. The 4 wheeler suspension arm had been hacked off and a three wheeler U frame welded on, slightly out of alignment. It scared me so much, thinking about it, that I sold it straight on. I still wonder if it is on the same chassis when I see it crop up from time to time.

In 1989 Chris found a LHD Irish Heinkel, 434 UA. That got sold on to a friend of Alan Town's. Latterly, I was asked by the owner of a dental laboratory to restore his Isetta, OBV 791. The body was poor, the chassis was bent, and fractured at the rear (I've only ever seen one other car with a fractured chassis, that was a three wheeler too). With the aid of the late Jim Hacking, who took on the body side along with those panels from GCW that we had saved for all of those years, and our copious mechanical spares collection we turned this into a very nice little car. The owner hated it though, he was a Cadillac man himself, so he sold it on. I believe it's still in the club.

So now my story is nearly complete. I've only one remaining Isetta to restore, UYY 844, and when that is done, I think I shall do no more. I shall retire gracefully and drive it occasionally.

## G'day to you Micro-Car Possums,

During my recent family visit to the Surfers Paradise of NSW (New South Wales) known as Manly, which as the marketing campaign titled it "Just seven miles from Sydney, but a thousand miles from care", I met up once again with that Australian Micro-car Icon, known as Fred Diwell.

His 1970 Hunter Safari with at least 500,000 Kms passed under its body, is featured here with his treasured licensed plate. This history laden chariot, did safely carry him 120 Kms from the edge of the glorious Blue Mountains range, to the Yagoona based Greyhound Club, where the Australian Micro-car & Scooter club hold their monthly meetings. I was directed to this Social Centre by my helpful Manly neighbour, who exclaimed "Oh, you mean the home of the Dish Licker's Derby?"



Prior to the Micro-Car gathering, I met Fred at Dooleys Catholic Club in Lincombe, NSW. This most impressive organisation is the third rated club in NSW. After I was let inside as a day visitor, I wandered around looking for Fred, and was amazed by its plush interior, spacious layout and first class amenities, even down to providing a live piano player in the lounge bar restaurant area. All this is financed by the rows of poker machines being energetically played by stony-eyed addicts. In excess of \$AU 1,000,000 is annually donated to local charities too.

Fred, an honorary Life Member of the MOC, has been the fulcrum, around which their Aussie nation-wide club has evolved, over many years, and it continues to flourish under its current president John Renshaw. Membership of this Multi-make club of both home built, as well as imported micro-cars & scooters has a nationwide membership of around 90.

By good fortune, one of their club's regular meetings was being held just 80 minutes away from my baby Grand-Daughter's home. Our guru, kindly invited me to join their Session, and in exchange asked me to give a speech.

We agreed that I would alight upon the UK's single, plus multi-make micro-car & scooter clubs.



Under the sections of "Past, Present & Future", plus some help from our UK Clubs, I advised our Australian colleagues that the UK club memberships presently are circa - MOC 400, HTOEC 300, IOC 310 and MICRO-MANIACS 190.

Afterwards during our "open discussion", our Country's respective Clubs forward planning did certainly dominate matters followed by insurance for present & future cover for any Club selling "critical parts" to owners around the Globe

Consideration as to how best to further publicise our hobby was discussed, and it

was agreed our treasured vehicles being driven, in front of an ever curious public was the certainly the best approach!

Promotion activity via local and state/national press, Radio & TV should always be encouraged. Naturally, our gatherings at rallies, engineering expos and sharing expertise at club meets, public exhibitions etc. should not be overlooked and constantly be encouraged whenever possible.

Worrying trends were exposed, referring to the exportation of Australian Historical Vintage, racing and micro-cars to the now Internet available "highest bidder" who can be sometimes of extraordinary financial resource.

A point I learnt during our chatting, was the simple fact, that most new road vehicles sold in the "Lucky Country" are Automatic, not manual. The consequence of such means that that our beloved micro-treasures will not be able to be legally driven by the up-coming youth who hold automatic ONLY designated driving licences, therefore. Micros will not be used on the highway by most of our descendants!

The web site contact for the Australian Club is  
<http://www.microcarandscooterclub.org/index.html>

Thank you Australians for your most generous welcome, way beyond that which I deserved.

Fred says "Not really, u didn't get reimbursed for air fare"

Till next time, Alan Town. [alan@alantown.co.uk](mailto:alan@alantown.co.uk).

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## **FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

**5th -12th April 2015** Scottish Micro Car Club Spring Rally based at Gairloch Camping and Caravan Park from 5th to 8th April and at Port a Bhaigh campsite, Altlanhu near Ullapool from 8th to 12th April. For further details contact John Ducker on 0185 5821354 or email : [johnducker@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:johnducker@tiscali.co.uk)

**22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> May 2015** Heinkel Trojan Club AGM/Rally based at the Bubble Car Museum, Main Road Langrick Lincolnshire. Road run to place of interest on Saturday and evening BBQ/get together in the evening. Sunday 10am AGM meeting. Contact Peter Jones [pjtrojan@hotmail.com](mailto:pjtrojan@hotmail.com) or Julian Haycraft [julianhaycraft@gmail.com](mailto:julianhaycraft@gmail.com)

**13th-20th June 2015** EAMCC 25th Anniversary Rally. The East Anglian Micro Car Club would like to invite all microcar enthusiasts to a week long rally based near Great Yarmouth at the Rose Farm Campsite at Belton (home of the 2012 National Micro Car Rally). There will be runs out most days with a couple of rest days for you to do your own thing.

Those interested will to book through Rose Farm direct on 01493 780896 and the website is [www.rosefarmtouringpark.co.uk](http://www.rosefarmtouringpark.co.uk) We would like to get a minimum of 20 units for the week, but how long you want to stay from a few days or maybe combine it with a holiday is entirely up to you. If interested call or text Tony Pettingill on 07881 247659 or Martin Galea on 07777 636829.

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## Me & Mr Bromley

**(This story was sent in with a members subscription but unfortunately got separated from it and I therefore am unsure of the author. Would the author contact me and I will give him/her the credit for it in the next gazette).**

It all started about 32 years ago, Sue and I saw a Bubblecar for sale at a car show. We looked at it and said shall we buy it? but after sitting in it and laughing we decided not to buy it.

Last year on eBay I saw some bubbles for sale all too much money, but then I found one going cheaper so I bid on it, I didn't get it but then Terry the chap selling it called me and said I could have it at the last amount I bid so I agreed.

I duly informed my wife, but as she was watching Coronation Street it didn't seem to sink in.

I told my friend Dave what I had bought and that it was somewhere in London, he asked precisely where it was and when I told him he laughed, it turned out it was just down the road from his aunt's house so he knew exactly where to go.

I hired a van and Sue, Dave and I set off to London. Four and a half hours later we arrived at Terry's house. When he opened the garage door Sue said "it's all in bits, couldn't you have bought something that looks like a car not a pile of bits".

I told her that Terry had said it wasn't for the faint hearted and he was right.

We loaded all the bits up and set off for Devon but the van oil light kept coming on so we phoned the van owner and he told us to just keep driving as it needed a new oil pressure switch which he hadn't got round to fitting yet.

We finally arrived home and Dave couldn't stop laughing at the state of the body, the floor was rusted away, there were holes in the door and wings where you could put your hand through.



All the parts were in bags and buckets with me thinking I had probably paid too much for it but after spending loads of time and money over the next 11 months Mr Bromley lives again. I call it Mr Bromley as most of the parts came from Bromley Bubble to restore it.

Thanks to Coronation Street and Emmerdale Sue was oblivious to most of it (including the cost).

I would like to thank Ray, Dave Basil & William for their help and Sue Hayley & Sophie for keeping us supplied with Tea.

## Golden Journey

Friday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2014 was a rather special day for our little Green car as it was going to be giving two special people a rather nice surprise.

It all started with a request for a Red Isetta and could the club help? Well, getting a Red car on the right day proved to be a little difficult so, as a compromise, I suggested that HEG 175 with its newly upholstered 'Lincoln Plaid' seat might fit the bill, even if it wasn't Red?

So with the date set myself and Helen set off, in plenty of time, for the Royal Arms at Sutton Cheney, in Leicestershire, not that far from the famous Bosworth Battle Field of Richard III fame.



Arriving with  $\frac{3}{4}$  hour to spare the 22 mile journey proved easy for this well travelled car, even if the original 28000 mile clutch does slip a little now and then, so we parked up in just the right place to execute this Golden Wedding Anniversary surprise.

Fifty years ago the newly married Bob and Carol Horton set off on what turned out to be a memorable journey for their honeymoon, at the seaside town of Torquay, in YOV 361 a Red LHD Brighton built Isetta and, from the photo, probably a Plus model.

In those days friends trimmed up your car with Ribbons, Balloons and numerous Tin Cans, tied on with string, so you get the picture of how the car looked as it set off from Birmingham to join the newly opened M5 heading South.

Maybe it was the high speed running but it wasn't long before the Engine started to seize up with lack of Oil due with what turned out to be a loose Drain Plug! Had one of their so-called friends done it as a prank? Well, we will never know, but the Engine was empty and with some good fortune the car stopped very close to a garage? Tea was the order of the day, as the Engine cooled down, followed by time spent getting the Engine successfully freed off after filling it up with fresh Oil. The Engine ran, but smoked rather badly, so Bob put the gallon can he had just bought under the seat and set off again to Torquay making it later that same day.

The car ran ok for the rest of the honeymoon with the help of the Oil from under Carol's seat but it still had to complete the return journey to Birmingham. Would it make it under its own steam?

Being a member of the AA breakdown service proved useful on the trip back because, as you have guessed, the engine stopped again but not from lack of oil this time it was due to a blown Head Gasket, unfortunately, the Patrolman did not have a Head Gasket in his vehicle but could get one, however, it would take around 3 hours to collect and this gave Bob plenty of time to remove the Engine. The Police stopped by and agreed to send a message to Carol's Mum who was expecting them home and, of course would be worried, and yes they did deliver the message saying they would be late arriving home due to mechanical problems!

After fitting the new Head Gasket and the Engine back in the car they eventually arrived home but what an experience this couple had and not surprisingly their little Isetta is still fondly remembered today!

This memorable story was relayed to me by the family, on our Isetta ride outs in and around Sutton Cheney village, in Leicestershire. I understand the Engine was later rebuilt at home,

by Bob, but he tells me the Piston Rings, whilst still complete in the grooves were broken into lots of 5mm long pieces and the Cylinder Barrel did not need re-boring.

Another funny story worth mentioning was this car had a reverse gear and, as you may know if you had a Motorcycle Licence, in those days, you could only drive a three-wheeled car, if the reverse was blocked off, but this car had reverse so when a Policeman spotted Bob reversing out of a driveway he came over to "have a word"! Luckily Bob had just passed his Car Test 3 or 4 days earlier so he showed him the Pink pass slip allowing him to reverse his Isetta.



I have to say this Anniversary surprise was very well thought out, by sons Mark and Philip, with all sorts of small but significant reminders of their little Isetta which played such an important role in the early years of marriage and one such item was the Wine Glass decorations showing the happy couple alongside their Isetta, so we should raise our glasses and wish Bob and Carol a Happy Anniversary in this their Golden Year.

**Mike and Helen Ayriess**

## **FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

**June 25th - 28th** - Early Summer rally at Wold view touring park, Caistor, Lincolnshire - a return to this beautiful award winning campsite £15.00 per night plus £1 per unit insurance charge (members) for the weekend. Contact Eric Bruce for more details on 07885 742566

**July 11th - 12th Isetta Club 60th Anniversary Rally** to be held at The Bubblecar Museum Langrick near Boston. All microcar enthusiasts are welcome to come along and celebrate with us. There will be no entry fee to the rally but you will receive a 'Welcome Pack'. A run out will be arranged for Saturday with a free BBQ and quiz in the evening. Sunday run out to a cafe in Boston for Breakfast if you wish to participate. More details from Ian Parris 07909 514916 [isetta@ianparris.com](mailto:isetta@ianparris.com). Campsite bookings to be made direct with the Museum on 01205 280037 <http://www.bubblecarmuseum.co.uk>

**13th - 16th August** - Scottish Microcar rally at The Wheatsheaf Inn, Vale of Lorton, Cumbria, again hosted by Alan prince - contact him on 07979 690160

**3rd-6th September 2015 41st National Micro Car Rally** based at Hatton Country World, Dark Lane, Hatton Warwickshire CV35 8XA. Hosted by the Frisky Register. Road runs on Friday & Saturday to a place of interest. Static display, auto jumble etc. on Sunday. Further details to follow. For further updates see [www.national-microcar-rally.co.uk](http://www.national-microcar-rally.co.uk)



# 60th

## ANNIVERSARY RALLY

To be held at 'The Bubblecar Museum'  
Lincolnshire on 11th & 12th July 2015

Come along and join us in our  
Celebrations. All microcar enthusiast  
are welcome.

Usual rally format with a run-out on  
Saturday and a BBQ and entertainment  
on Saturday evening.