

ISETTA

Gazette

WINTER 2010.....



J.F. Wareing

The Isetta Owners Club of Great Britain Ltd.

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Editors Bit



For the observant one amongst you, you will have noticed from the Officers & Committee page that we have a new Chairman and Secretary.

Bob Crompton has been carrying out the role of Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary for quite a long time. Like many of us he has other things in his life apart from the Isetta Club and needed to relinquish some of the duties and responsibilities.

Thankfully Jeff and Joanne Todd stepped forward to take on the roles of Chairman and Secretary respectively.

Bob has agreed to continue in the role of Treasurer for (I hope) as long as he is needed. On behalf of the committee and club members I would like to thank Bob for the commitment he has shown to the club in those roles over the last few years as I am sure we would not be in such a good position without him. You will find a stuffer in with the Gazette for membership renewal, a questionnaire and vehicle census. Please take a little time to fill out as many details as possible and return them with a fat cheque to our membership secretary Fred Parker ASAP. A request from Lee Turnham our Registrar on the vehicle census form, please don't put "as before" as Lee needs the latest up to date information on your vehicle(s). That's enough from me at the moment except to wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year from the Officers and Members of the Committee.

Ian Parris

Chairmans Chat

Welcome to my first chairman's chat, but first of all, on behalf of all members and committee I must thank Bob Compton for his excellent service to the club for many years as chairman, secretary and treasurer. Fortunately Bob has agreed to carry on as treasurer so there will be some continuity.

Permit me to introduce myself and my wife Jo. I responded to Bob's request for a volunteer chairman last September and I was nominated for chairman and Jo became secretary. I am an industrial chemist by trade but have always had a passion for cars and still have some of my Dinky Toys and Corgis from the 60's! I am an MOT tester but only for 4 wheelers. Jo manages a canteen at one of the car import compounds in Grimsby. We own 2x3 wheel Isettias, one has hardly any compression and the other is a basket case and will probably be used for spares. Elsewhere in this Gazette is the usual membership renewal, yes it's that time of year again. For the benefit of Lee, can you please complete your vehicle details so that our record of cars can be updated. Also, on the same piece of paper is a quick questionnaire to ask what you, the members, want from our club. Again please fill it in, thanks.

Jeff Todd.

John's Isetta trip to the High Sierras

My **initial plan** was to drive across the valley, through Stockton, NE to 49, north to Auburn, the side-roads off I-80 to Truckee. I'd camp at DL Bliss State Park about halfway down the West side of the lake. Tuesday I'd continue south to Markleeville, camp there and enjoy the hot pool.

Wednesday I'd go on to Bodie for pictures in the mid or late afternoon, photograph Mono Lake around sunset and camp nearby. Thursday I'd try to get up over Tioga Pass, maybe circle Yosemite Valley and camp there. On Friday I'd head up to 120 and then west to home. What really happened was somewhat different.

Monday morning I still had a lot of packing to do, and the Isetta was getting really full. I really shouldn't have taken food or a camp stove. By 11:00 I packed a stainless cup of coffee to the right of me, secured between a couple other things, and I started off via Tilden Park backroads and was in Concord in 30 minutes. I was on Concord Road, looking for Clayton Valley Road when I noticed a Costco gas station on my right, so I pulled in to top-up my tank. Must have been in the mid 90's already.



While inserting my cards and pushing buttons a man walked over from another lane to look at my Isetta, hadn't seen one since he was a boy. He explained where to turn to get onto Clayton Valley Road. I hung the nozzle up and waited for my receipt, but nothing came out. Hm-m-m? I continued east through Clayton in canyons of very tall steep grassy hills with a few oak trees. Beautiful area. I pulled over to stop and have some coffee, and that's when I noticed it had tipped over. The warm coffee had run under my warm butt that hot morning and I didn't even notice it. No problem, I sipped some bottled water and headed on to Stockton.



Just on the east side of Stockton **my engine began sputtering**, so I pulled off. The engine would run real slow. I'd shut it off, wait a minute and start it again. I could drive for a short way before it would sputter again and quit. I figured I was only going as far as that one filling of the float bowl would take me, that I must have a fuel flow-issue to the carb. My first check was the rubber fuel line from tank to carb. I unhooked it, stretched it straight, sighted through it, and it was absolutely unobstructed.

I feared that the rubber gasket in my British Enots fuel tap might be turning to goo in the heat, nearing 100° that day. I began taking the rotating tap off the brass body, amazed no fuel

leaked out. Then the gasket fell out and it was still in like-new condition, but no fuel was leaking. Strange, because I had just filled up maybe 20 miles back. I thought maybe my nylon tea-bag fuel filters inside the tank were turning to goo and would not pass fuel. I found a stick under the walnut trees where I had stopped, planning to tug on one of those tea-bag filters, but dropped the stick into the filler hole, pulled it out, and the stick was bone dry. Hm-m-m, maybe the reason I didn't get a receipt at Costco was because I hadn't actually pumped any gas into my tank! Getting old and forgetful, Johnny!

No big thang! I pulled out my Triple A card, phoned for help, and spent the next half hour picking up walnuts on the ground for our squirrels at home. They're different from those I buy at Monterey Market in Berkeley. Soon I had 3 gallons of fuel in my tank and was off again, turning NE onto hwy 26, driving through gently rolling foothills, cattle country, but none to be seen. Now and then there are dark chunks of volcanic rock on top of the soil.

Traffic was heavy by 5pm, people getting off work and racing for home and dinner, maybe Monday night football. I usually try to turn out when possible if people can't get around me, but this road had plenty of passing opportunities and no turnouts. People would pass easily enough, but one pickup truck almost clipped me purposely, but I swerved and avoided him. Just the same, at 45-50 it could have been dangerous.

Soon the local rush hour was over, all home having dinner. I stopped in Jackson to look for



a campground on my map, but there really aren't many in the Gold Country. They'd probably attract too many gold-panners. The sun was setting. I figured I'd continue on toward Auburn. I figured I'd try to at least get up to Truckee and camp nearby. At Auburn I pulled off to have a chicken sandwich and coffee, then tried to make my way on surface roads just off interstate I-80, but they weren't very direct, too far off the route I wanted to follow. I stopped at Oliver's Gas Station, took some pictures, and looked at my map again.

I decided that now in the darkness after 11pm, I might be as safe on the freeway, what with my bright tail lights and 4-way emergency blinkers. Traffic is mostly big trucks at night. This soon proved to be a good idea, until I thought I was running out of gas more sputtering. I pulled off to the side, out of traffic and stopped. My engine was idling, but when I tried to back up it felt like

a 4x6 was jammed against my rear wheels. I got out, looked, nothing unusual, so tried driving again. By backing up and going forward, whatever the issue was had disappeared.

I continued on up I-80 making good time, sometimes moving at over 50 mph, but sometimes as slow as 22mph in 2nd, but I felt safe. I enjoy driving at night.

At the turn-off to Sugarbowl I left the freeway and took the old highway down to Donner Lake. I was able to camp there, setting up my tent by the light of the full moon at 2:30am. Felt so-o-o good to lie down and sleep!

In the morning I was up at 7:00 at maybe 40°F. I chatted with a concrete finisher from Louisiana, happy to be working in California. I drove south to the lake, past Sunnyside Lodge, DL Bliss (closed) and then saw a hot air balloon rising from that little island in the lake with a castle on it. I finally stopped after listening to a lot of rattling in my chain drive. I was thinking it was a bad wheel bearing, probably the axle bearing at the right rear wheel, since that one looked rather greasy from being hot.



I turned off to Fallen Leaf Lake, drove to the end of the road and hiked up into the wilderness. I wanted to find the Bernard Maybeck stone kitchen & dining room that is so similar to a Maybeck house near us in Kensington. I met more people there, hiked an hour to find the natural rock structure with corrugated roof and took lots of pictures. Then I continued on to South Tahoe.

I met several more people as I tried to figure out what to do at that point. I didn't want to leave my car at Tahoe to go home and bring back a trailer, and I didn't want to have anyone else work in my Isetta. I had some Chinese food for lunch and decided I should try driving back home, that I just might make it. Getting photos of the Maybeck structure was very satisfying, and if I were to return over the Carson Pass at 8,500 ft, that would only be 1000 ft shy of Tioga Pass. I filled up with gas and headed south to hwy 88 and the Carson Pass. It was slow going with lots of stops for road construction crews, but I made it over the pass by around 5pm. The Isetta had no trouble at all.

The Isetta was running fine, spitting some oil-mist out the breather, but running amazingly well. Hot, though! I had water to drink, trail mix to eat, the brim of my red cap to block the setting sun, so I made good time on the descent to Jackson 88 is a lovely route! Hwy 49 connects all the gold towns on a north-south route. Mark Twain wrote all about it in *Roughing It, 1872*. Read it on you "kindle".

Got more gas in Jackson and the sun soon set as I droned on toward Stockton. Once through Stockton the roads are a bit hard to follow, but I met a nice Dad who told me where to turn to get into Concord. Soon I was cruising through familiar Lafayette, then through Tilden Park and home by 10:30. Rosalyn was sound asleep. Soon I was sleeping, too.

Wednesday morning I jacked up the rear axle and removed my rear brake drum to find a loose screw was the problem. It would jamb between a leading edge of a brake shoe and the drum, sometimes locking up the rotation, but not effectively. I soon had everything apart, bought one new screw and used new lock-washers to secure the brake plate to the axle housing. The former spring-metal washers did not hold. My repair cost was a \$1.20 screw.

It is often best to do the work oneself.

Took me a while to clean up the coffee stains from my bench-seat, remove and scrub the floor carpet and a few other items. I can still smell the coffee, but not as bad as before. I took the Isetta to a DIY car wash to hose it off underneath, especially around the greasy engine. Looks almost new again. My restoration is 22 years old and still respectable.

Now that the trip is over, I feel fairly good about it. I doubt I'll take any long trips again unless it is up the coast through Marin. Not much traffic there. I doubt I would do the High Sierra trip again in my Isetta. Stuff happens! I drove 600 miles in 1.5 days and had a satisfying Isetta adventure. My future drives will probably be simple Sunday Morning excursions into the countryside.

This would be a good time to enjoy some Sierra scenes farther south near Mt. Whitney. Watch "High Sierra" with Humphrey Bogart and Ida Lupino, film noire with several scenes in the Sierras, and maybe the old downhill stretch to Donner Lake. It was films like this that brought people west on Route 66 and then up 295 to the Sierras. Imagine you're driving your Isetta, over Donner Pass with a suitcase full of stolen hedge-fund money. Hm-m-m-m, I might have a contemporary script here for a remake with some handsome bad guy. They don't make them like they used to.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

BMW 700 Gathering!

Due to the lack of people and cars contacting me to arrange a gathering of BMW 700's, to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of their UK launch, the event has been postponed, until we have some cars to celebrate!! Roger Barker (07968-048762).

Prestwood Steam Rally

This takes place over a 2-day period, and will take place on the 2nd & 3rd JULY 2011. It will cost nothing to get in. If you are interested please contact Lee Turnham via the web address on the inside of the front cover.

ISETTA RESTORATION by JOHN JENSEN

It has been brought to my attention that John Jensen's book '**Isetta Restoration**' is available on the internet.

As you all know, John is one of the main contributors of articles to the gazette and is an acknowledged authority on Isetta restoration. Commonly known as '**The Bible**' this book is not just for the restorer but for anyone interested in Isettas. Copy the link to your web browser and get your order in now.

<http://www.lulu.com/product/paperback/isetta-restoration/10660689>

NEC CLASSIC CAR SHOW REPORT by Lee Turnham

Spring came and went, so did summer and then OH! The NEC is here again.

Organising the NEC can be somewhat stressful, who wants to show a car, who will help (laugh). This year surprised me a little, a few people wanted to actually do something. Eight spaces were applied for these were to be for 5 Isettas, 1 Berkley, 1 Messerschmitt and a 700.

With a stand space of 9Mx5.5M, this was going to be tight, too tight in fact. At the last minute I had to drop 2 of the Isettas. The day approached and eventually managed to sneak up too fast, Thursday (set up day) was here, and so was the rain.

My fathers Isetta already loaded and on the trailer in MY garage, mine was in his hut and still to be loaded. With the tow cars loaded to the roof with the stand items I hooked up my father's trailer, and headed towards his house. Changed over trailers, loaded my car, I even got mud in the tyre tread, and off we went towards the M40 services at Warwick, we were to meet Ian Jenkins with the Messerschmitt and then all 3 of us travel together. Got to the services and no Ian, last year his tow car had a crisis, phone call made and he was around 10 minutes behind us. When he arrived it transpired that J9 M40 was at a standstill due to road works and no Traffic lights.

On we 3 plodded and into a heavy downpour, arriving at the NEC at around 11:30am, now to get through the men in highviz jackets and their comical traffic system but, STOP PRESS!!, they had managed to have a few cells of the grey matter collide and speak to one another allowing straight passage into the Hall area.

Got to door 3.6 and it was closed, already having the plans sent to me I decided the best thing to do is try and blag my way in through door 3.8 WOW it worked and in we all went, driving over everyone's stand and new carpet, well they had done it to us in the past.

Everything is going well the carpet (recycled) from Harrogate has now been laid and the club banner is taped down of the front of the stand. My vehicle is taken off the trailer and put into its position, followed closely by dads and then the Messerschmitt. WOW the stand looks small. The Berkeley arrives and all hands on deck to get it off the trailer, leathered off and into the hall and then into position. Dave turns up with the final Isetta and places it on the stand. Only 1 left the 700. Let the fun start. It arrives in the back of a nice covered trailer, only one problem, during the journey the locks on both doors had locked, and to add fun Neil didn't bring the key. Lets bring in the car thief, couldn't find one so it was down to me to acquire some good old packing tape and screw the door lock. Done it. The car was placed on the stand and the posts were placed out along with the bunting. Sod the polishing it will wait until morning.

The cars were covered where necessary and into the tow cars and head home. This was a first as both my father and I were at home before 7pm.

Early start on Friday and arrived at around 8am, cleaned and polished the cars and off for breakfast. Doors opened at 0930 and it was non-stop, very busy all day. Saturday was even worse the stand was engulfed with people. All went crazy when some idiot decided that he would come onto the stand by breaking the bunting, no sorry, then every man and his poodle would also do the same. The vehicles had disappeared and only 2 of us on the stand to find them in among the people. The only way was to repair the bunting and let them slowly drift away. Sunday was another good day but down on public attendance from Saturday. At 5:30pm the show closed, all the car horns were sounded to show the close.

The stand was torn down in great haste (against the rules) one guy would not leave the stand, and you are not allowed to break down the stand until all the public have left, he then got a few words of gentle persuasion from myself; "get you're rear end out of here so that we can go home". This was someone who was determined to wind me up. Second time I wasn't so polite. He went on his merry way and annoyed someone else. With our fairly early arrival we managed to get into a car park that aided us in the breakdown process. Out to the tow cars and get in and drive straight into the hall, load vehicles and stands and then home. An hour and a half later I was sat indoors with car in garage, all by 9:15pm.

WHAT A GREAT SHOW.

Next year I have been asked to supply a group of Microcars at the Prestwood Steam and Country show. This takes place over a 2-day period, and will take place on the first weekend of JULY. It will cost nothing to get in. if you are remotely interested please contact me via the web address on the inside of the cover. Prestwood is located within the Chilterns and has fantastic views.

Check out the show photos on the back cover:-

For the Want of a Grommet By: Pete Wright

Back in July I'd planned to join the Micro Maniacs at Holme-upon-Spalding-Moor for their Saturday road-run, friend Mick and his wife would stay over for the weekend, so we could catch up on the latest gossip and generally share a relaxed week-end.

On Saturday morning we all sat down to a full English breakfast but by the time it was over, it was too late to drive over to H.U.S.M. in time to pick up the road run, so to avoid disappointment we agreed to drive to Little Weighton to visit a small steam engine rally giving us a round trip of about 50 miles.



The ladies had decided to visit Beverley to do the shops, so Mick and I set off with the understanding that if we got into difficulties, the ladies would come to our rescue. It was a beautiful hot sunny morning and all went well for the first 20 miles, then while circumnavigating Walkington to avoid the dreaded speed bumps the trouble started.

First I missed a turn which put us on a straight bumpy single track road, but not a problem we've got all day then as we bounced along enjoying

the open countryside "Bang" the engine surged and we were thrown forwards as I went from what should have been 3rd to first gear, the surge must have sucked every drop of petrol out of the carburettor as the engine stalled and wouldn't re-start. Mick suggested that we should let the ladies (recovery team) know about our predicament but neither of our phones were showing a service.

I removed and cleaned the heavily oiled spark plug and eventually managed to get the engine running again, but try as I may I

just couldn't select 3rd or 4th gear. We agreed to carry on and find somewhere where we could pull off the road to take a closer look and as luck would have it there was a picnic site about 300 yards down the road.

I pulled up on the grass next to a picnic table and while Mick got out the gas stove and kettle, I scrambled under the car and quickly found the problem. The rubber grommet in the gearbox lever arm had melted into a tar like substance leaving the clevis pin rattling around in the lever hole so the lateral movement of the rod couldn't push the lever over far enough to select 3 & 4.





Mick checked his phone and found he now had a weak signal and managed to get through to the rescue team in Beverley.

“Is that the rescue service”? Let’s say the response was less than helpful and it was suggested that we would have to wait 2-3 hours until every shop had been explored.

I had a rummage in the tool kit where I found 2 washers which happened to slide onto the clevis pin and were small

enough to fit into the gearbox lever arm. With the temporary fix, I could now select all gears so we drank up and decided to continue our journey.

Once back on the road I could now use all 4 gears, but we now had excessive clutch judder when pulling away and I found it very difficult to change gear due to what I assumed was clutch drag, however by taking our time and keeping gear changes to a minimum we eventually arrived at the Steam Fair.

After spending a couple of very pleasant hours viewing the various exhibits, the time came to face the homeward journey. I adjusted the clutch lever as far as I dare before setting off, but it was soon clear that things weren’t looking good with heavy clutch drag between gear changes. We pressed on and eventually got to a clear stretch of road where I could achieve a reasonable cruising speed without gear changes only to find that the engine started to badly misfire, it was a very hot day so I put this down to fuel evaporation and continued with some caution until we came to a lay-by where we stopped to allow things to cool down. By now we only had about 3 miles to go, so after 20 minutes rest we set off and steadily made our way back home.

The next week-end I jacked the car up onto axle stands, removed the engine and started to investigate the damage. The clutch lining came out in pieces which wasn’t unexpected but I also noticed that one of the drive couplings had split and needed replacing. The clutch plate was soaked in oil so new seals would also be required; I couldn’t tell if the oil had seeped in from the push-rod tube seals so I decided to go the whole hog and replace the main seal behind the flywheel as well.

After making a puller and applying gentle heat, the flywheel eventually came away and the new seal was fitted. The next job



was replacing the pushrod tube seals which meant the head and barrel had to come off and this is when I found that a piston ring had broken up taking a lump out of the top of the piston and slightly scoring the bore. I don't think the over-revving from the gear change problem had caused this, but it did explain the heavy oiling on the spark plug and misfire problem.

The bore diameter measurements were within tolerance (+30) so in the interests of economy I decided to try a light hone to get rid of the scoring, and then fit a new piston. All went well with the re-assembly until I noticed that one of the pushrod tube seals had gone missing and as one would expect it had fallen in the crankcase, just visible with a pen torch, I guess a dab of grease would have helped keeping it in place but hindsight is such a wonderful thing. I eventually recovered the thing with a flexible grab tool and



in due course got all the pieces back in place ready for returning back in the car.

With no extra pairs of hands available the next consideration was how to get the engine back under and up inside the car, so I devised a cunning plan and bolted a wooden cradle which fitted snugly around the sump onto a trolley jack then to gain extra height and manoeuvrability placed the jack on a board sitting on swivel castors.

I thought I may have problems with balance but the set-up was surprisingly stable and I was able to push the whole contraption under the car then gradually jack the engine up to align with the gearbox splines and casing.

From that point once I'd fitted the new drive coupling the rest of the assembly was pretty straightforward, I cranked the engine for a while with spark plug removed to circulate the oil, then replaced the spark plug and she fired up first time which was very re-assuring. The clutch wouldn't clear when I tried to engage gear but further adjustment of the clutch lever soon sorted the problem out and I was ready for the first test run. I must say that the difference the re-build has made to the clutch pick-up and gear change is amazing and made me realise how far things had deteriorated prior to the breakdown. As I write I'm still taking the car out for short local runs ready for a full oil change at 200 miles, but so far performance is good and I expect this will improve as the new piston beds in.

Unfortunately I didn't complete the repair in time to attend this year's National with the car, although Mick and I did visit on show day. On the way down to the 3 Counties Show Ground we stopped off at the Coventry Transport Museum, which I would highly recommend if you are passing by that way and it's free.

www.transport-museum.com

We must have spent a good 2 hours in there wandering around the exhibits which included both Thrust Rocket cars and we even had a ride at the speed of sound in the Rocket car simulator.

Monte Carlo ... or Bust !
By Terry Parkin
Part One - In Commemoration of...



On **27 May 2009** it was my Child Bride, Carol's, F**ty**F***th Birthday.

On **29 May 2009** it was our 33rd Wedding Anniversary.

On **2nd June 2009** it was my own 65th Birthday.

And on **26th May 2009** it was the **50th Anniversary** of our Isetta's first Registration, **26th May 1959**.

In view of such synchronous dates I reckoned we really ought to commemorate these auspicious occasions with something maybe a bit adventurous...not exactly pinching a bone from a Rotweiler, or running with the bulls at Pamplona, but maybe another Continental trip to far-off romantic destinations? "C'est bon a Monte Carlo, Monsieur" ... "Quoi? Merde, Non! Vous must be joking, Francois!"

But Francois was ne joking pas and in mid-May we made a snap decision and booked a last-minute sailing for our Isetta from Hull to Zeebrugges return via P and O Ferries.

In the week before departure, by a stroke of luck, my Isetta brakes failed. I call it luck – far better to happen right here than 1000 miles from home. It wasn't actually a failure in the strict sense of the word but I noticed a little weep from a wheel cylinder so I fixed it in the comfort of my own garage. It's strange but true that my Isetta rarely lets me down in awkward places – if it needs attention it is invariably somewhere convenient! (Touch wood! I'm tempting fate!)

Originally I had intended to drive our Isetta to Dover to take advantage of much cheaper ferry fares, but this would have added about 600 miles to our round trip so eventually I took pity on our Isetta and booked the more expensive Ferry from Hull to Zeebrugge.

However, because in the past P and O Ferries have tried to rate my Isetta as the same as a normal car and its tiny trailer at the same rates as a caravan, I simply booked on as a motorcycle and sidecar. It worked! At the ferry check-in point the lady in the kiosk took



one look at the Isetta towing its little camping trailer and declared "No way am I going to try and fathom that", and she processed our tickets without further ado.

The following morning we drove off the Ferry in Zeebrugges, Belgium, fought our way through road works chaos around Lilles, and about 3 hours and 100 miles later we arrived at our first fuel stop. I had

calculated on our Isetta fuel tank holding say 2 gallons, which at say 50 mpg would take us say about 100 miles, which at an autoroute average of say 40 mph would take say 2.1/2 hours; a fill-up and a snack and a legstretch would mean I expected to cover about 100 miles every three hours. And we had, but using much less petrol.

Three hours later, as I pulled into the next fuel halt, I heard a metallic “clonk” from the rear of the Isetta as we ran over a bump on the gas station forecourt and when we stopped at the pumps I discovered that Lady Luck had smiled on us again. The trailer behind our Isetta had not become detached despite the towball bolts working loose (oops, mea culpa. Note to self – do NOT finger-tighten nuts and then stop for a tea-break!), and my suitcase had not fallen off the back, despite me forgetting to do up the strap at the previous fuel halt. So I put matters right and we hit the road again and had no further incidents on our way to our overnight halt at a Formule 1 Hotel in Troyes, about 100 miles South-East of Paris. So far, so good. C'est si Bon.

The next morning we set off soon after breakfast. This was going to be a lo-o-o-ng stretch as I intended to drive all day and through the night if necessary to cover the remaining 600-ish miles to Cannes.

The first 100 miles or so were easy, pleasant, uneventful... Then, when slowing for a Peage (Autoroute Toll collection booth) I became aware of something wrong with the Isetta's gears. The gear change had become jerky, and very stiff; traits I had not previously experienced. Was it the gearbox? Or the clutch? Or the cable? However, it was still manageable with difficulty and I didn't fancy getting out and getting under to find out so we carried on, heading onwards and upwards onto and across the French Massif Centrale.

We soon discovered that the Massif Centrale was not only central, but also massive! It is a huge range of mountains, stretching right across into Switzerland. I had reasoned it was worth the Peage charges to take the most direct route, but I did not expect to encounter such long uphill drags, and frankly our Isetta found some of them tough going – it could cope with the trailer and the luggage; it could cope with going uphill; it could cope with a headwind; but combine the three and in places it was a bit of a struggle. Then the storm hit us. Rain, thunder and lightning and sheets of water across the autoroute. “Rain” is hardly a word which does justice to the torrential downpour which beat and battered down, and bullied its way over and into our plucky Isetta. But we had no choice but to battle on, cheered only by the thought that we simply must leave this weather feature before the next 100 miles were up.

It took maybe fifty miles, over an hour, before we left the worst of the tempest behind but the rain persisted persisting down and the Massif Centrale was still beneath our wheels. It seemed we had more long stiff uphill climbs and seemingly disproportionately few downhill for the rest of the day and into the night. But – we pressed on and by daybreak we were within 100 miles of Cannes and our intend-



ed campsite. After a short nap at a fuel halt we resumed our journey, hoping for easier terrain, but having crossed the Massif Centrale we now found ourselves traversing the Alpes Maritimes, which we discovered were snow-topped Alps which stretched right down to the Mediterranean Sea.

Consequently our Isetta had no real respite until we arrived at our destination... Cannes.

On the French Riviera.

By the Mediterranean Sea. So hot it was way cool.

Having arrived at Cannes we fired up our Sat-Nav, which frankly didn't help much as for some inexplicable reason it kept sending us down Avenues where our camp-site destination definitely was NOT! But despite our tiredness and confusion we eventually found "Parc Bellevue Camping Cannes, 67 Avenue Maurice Chevalier, where we signed in and were led to our pitch. Our campsite neighbours watched in amazement as the Isetta and trailer disgorged their contents. We parked the trailer inside the tent as it made a useful table and off-ground storage box for food and other stuff.

We set up camp and slept until tea-time. Our Isetta had covered about 850 tough miles since leaving Zeebrugges and had delivered us and our trailer safely to our destination. Incredabubble!



After take-away tea, that night, as I excitedly waited for sleep to overcome me again, I thought deeply and worriedly about the gear problem which had started shortly after leaving Troyes and which had persisted all the way to Cannes. Having reached a conclusion about the probable cause of the condition I slept soundly until morning.

Terry Parkin

(to be continued...)

<http://autos.groups.yahoo.com/group/IsettaWorld>

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Front Cover

The Isetta was on display at Woodvale Airport car show near Formby on Saturday and Sunday 7th/8th August 2010, it is owned by Dave and Mel who live local to Woodvale.

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Yellow cars pull the birds



Dave Watson's 14 8.72



BMW 700



Neale Turnham's

NEC 2010



Ian Parris' Berkeley T60



Lee & Neale Turnham's



Dave Watson's co-driver