

ISETTA **GAZETTE**

WINTER EDITION 2014



The Isetta Owners Club of Great Britain Ltd.

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I.O.C. SUBSCRIPTION RATES

United Kingdom (and members receiving an electronic gazette)	£18.00
Europe	£21.00
Rest Of World	£25.00

Credit Card Payments. IMPORTANT

Please ensure you give the Membership Secretary the full card number, the expiry date and the 3 digit security number from the back of the card above the signature strip. **By PayPal to isetta.subs@virginmedia.com**

Registered Office: 225 Old Road, Meriden, Coventry. CV7 7JP Company Reg. No. 2527362

Editors Bit

Another year is coming to an end, time to get your car sorted for the 60th Anniversary Rally at the Bubblecar Museum.

At the 50th Anniversary we managed to get 35 cars to attend, let's see if we can do better, even if your car isn't running you can still come along and help us celebrate on July 11th -12th 2015.

Please all be aware, 2015 subscriptions are due on January 1st, do your best to pay early so as not to miss the Spring Gazette.

As always I am looking for your contributions to the Gazette, a few words to many pages are acceptable along with pictures. I prefer items written in Word and pictures in the JPEG format they are easier for me to deal with.

On behalf of the committee I would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and look forward to seeing you during the 2015 Rally season.



Ian Parris

Chairmans Chat

The AGM was held at Beedles Lake Golf Club near Leicester and all the officers and committee were re-elected en masse. I hope that is a sign of confidence in the running of the club. Spares, both new and secondhand, go from strength to strength thanks to Lee and Mike respectively. Thanks must also go to Ian for continuing to produce the Gazette which according to a survey of the members when I took over as Chairman, is the most important thing you are in the club for. Ian desperately needs articles to include so come on you must have a story about your adventures in your Isetta that you could provide.

2015 is the 60th anniversary of the Isetta and the club will be marking this momentous event with a weekend rally at the National Bubblecar Museum. Wouldn't it be a superb tribute to our little cars if we could get 60 Isettas there for the event. So come on members get your cars there, and I include myself in that.

Dave Watson coordinated our attendance at the Classic Car Show at the National Exhibition Centre and Jo and I were there on the Saturday. Thanks must go to those members who provided cars.

Jeff Todd

I was asked by my good friends Martin and Tracy Oldham if I was take their son Tom to his school prom in my bubble. I replied "of course I will but it might be a bit difficult as he's six foot tall".

They wanted it to be a surprise for him so I was told not to say anything as he assumed he was going in his dad's beach buggy, only to be told the day before the prom that the beach buggy would not start and he would have to go in the family car instead.

On the night of the prom I pulled up outside their house where his parents were waiting for me to arrive. They called Tom to say it was time to leave and when he came out and saw the bubble his face lit up and he was full of excitement.



We managed to get him in the bubble and we set off to the prom. When we arrived we were greeted by laughter from people who had never see a bubble before and they all gathered

round taking photos.

It was our turn to stop near the head prefect who was greeting the guests for the prom. He just looked confused as how to get Tom out, then after a few seconds he shook his head and with that I turned to Tom and said "he hasn't a clue as to how you get out of here". He shook his head a second time as I opened the door. The crowd cheered and clapped and gathered around again to take more photos. We felt like film stars.



After more photos Tom went inside the venue and I returned home.

The following morning I received a phone call from Tom's dad to say they had a very proud son as he won best arrival and best dressed.

The following day Tom's mum Tracy phoned me and invited me round for a cup of tea where I was presented with a trophy from Tom for best arrival.



Tony Hyde



LETTERS



Hello Ian,

Here are two oddities seen in Salamanca Motor Museum.

Voisin built aircraft in WW1 and luxury cars in the Art Deco period.

The Biscuter was their attempt to join the Iso bandwagon after the war but the uptake in France was very poor so the licence was sold to a Spanish company and production, now known as Bicuter, continued well into the fifties.

We all know the economic conditions, post war, that led to the need for small, simple and economical transport that gave us the Bubble and its contemporaries.

Gabriel Voisin was an aircraft designer, starting in 1906 with his brother Charles. He went on to build luxury cars during the Art Deco period.

After the war he designed the Biscuter (two scooters together) but found little sales in France so sold the licence to Automocion SA of Barcelona who renamed it Bicuter.

Spain was in at least as bad a state as the rest of post war Europe in addition to swinging embargoes imposed internationally against Franco. Few working people could afford a car in the 1950s except the odd 2CV or Quatrelle hence the great number of Spanish motorcycles produced in those days.

It had a 197cc engine visually resembling the Villiers 9E but with a strange, heavily finned cylinder head positioned like a hammerhead shark, presumably for extra cooling. The engine produced 9 HP and drove only one of the front wheels.

About 12,000 of the cars were produced, the two in the photos plus a commercial and a sports version.

A popular piece of Spanish slang was " as ugly as a Bicuter."

Few survive but, of course, there is a small, enthusiastic following.

They are now a great rarity.

Dorothy McKiernan.

Hello Ian.

I was wondering if you are able to help? I'm hoping to possibly contact a BMW Isetta owner in Devon or the SW that could help me out.

My father had a BMW Isetta in the late 50's early 60's but had to sell it and get a larger car - a Morris Minor - when he started a family. I know deep down that he regrets having to sell his little BMW and I was thinking that as he will be 70 in October, a good birthday present would be to get him a ride in Isetta before he it too old.

If any of your members would be able to help it would be greatly appreciated.

Regards, Ed Franklin, 18, Riga Terrace, Plymouth, Devon. PL3 6BU

edfranklin@hotmail.com

My Restoration by Ian Parris

Following on from a previous edition, I put in the new clutch and offered up the engine to the gearbox. I really should now miss a paragraph because most of it is made up of expletives so you can imagine the scene of getting the engine mounting holes in the right position to get the bolts in without the help of her indoors..... Suffice to say they are now in and not coming out.

Nothing could be worse than that I thought until I came to put the cooling tins on, I should miss 2 paragraphs for this job.

I am now convinced that the tins were made for a completely different car, they certainly weren't for an Isetta. It shouldn't be necessary to have extra large oval holes to get 6mm bolts through two bits of tin. Anyway, the tins are on and so tight I could suspend the whole car from the spark plug hole without fear of it slipping through the tins.

I have attached the exhaust pipe to the cylinder head but as most of you know the nuts are so close to the exhaust pipe you can't get a spanner on them to tighten them up. What I have done is obtain some nuts which are about an inch long which allows you to get a socket onto them as they are further away from the flange.

Since writing the above a couple of months ago I realised I had put the wrong engine in the car, the one I fitted has matching numbers with my other car so I will have to remove it and put in the correct engine, the problem now is that I have put the body back on the chassis making it more difficult than ever. (Yes I know I said the engine is in and not coming out, but needs must).



The other problem is that I looked for the cooling tins for the other engine only to conclude I didn't get them back from the painters, and when I asked where they were they didn't seem to know. I have acquired some old cooling tins in very poor condition and



have renovated them with a lot of beating and welding, but would still like to get hold of the others as they are quite rare now.

Apart from this I haven't done much at all, but I retired at the end of October and have every intention of getting the car ready for the 60th Anniversary bash in July providing her indoors stops adding to the list of jobs she's been saving for me.

More to follow when I have to fill a page or so:-

About FBHVC

The Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs exists to uphold the freedom to use old vehicles on the road. It does this by representing the interests of owners of such vehicles to politicians, government officials, and legislators both in UK and (through membership of Fédération Internationale des Véhicules Anciens) in Europe.

EDITORIAL

We often get asked by club members what exactly the Federation does. Most people know about our role monitoring UK and European legislation and representing the interests of historic vehicle owners in Westminster and Brussels. Certainly this is a vital part of our activity, but we represent the movement and its supporting industry in many other ways.

This year more than most epitomises the variety of forms this support takes. We have already seen the biggest ever Drive It Day. This is more than just a season opening opportunity to blow the cobwebs off our vehicles. It symbolises the historic vehicle movement across the country exercising their rights to use their cars, motorcycles, trucks, buses and ex – military vehicles (and others for which I apologise for excluding) on the highway. This is a right which we fight hard to protect.

The focus this year in our legislation programme will be the European Directive on Roadworthiness Testing. Put simply this is the European Union's attempt to harmonise roadworthiness testing across Europe. The Directive is now in place and the UK's Department of transport has three years to enact it in domestic legislation. The Federation is already engaged with DfT over the implementation and I urge you to read Bob Owen's report of the initial meeting in this issue.

Finally, we have launched a Government recognised and funded apprenticeship in vehicle restoration. This apprenticeship has the potential to fill the skills gap that our research showed was looming.
Enjoy the issue!

UK LEGISLATION

Bob Owen

Following a plethora of activity over the last few months, there is less to report in this Newsletter, though there may well be rapid development in the next little while.

Roadworthiness Testing

Readers will have noticed that the question of Roadworthiness testing moved from EU to UK legislation from last month. This change reflects something very important, which may not have been fully understood.

The EU Directive is adopted. It is now binding on all Member States. This includes the UK to exactly the same extent as the others.

The UK Department for Transport (DfT) has now got a couple of years to work out how to apply it here. But they must work within the constraints and in accordance with the Directive.

DfT held a briefing session on 2 July, where the Federation and several other groups were represented. The purpose was to get initial ideas about how the historic vehicle movement would prefer the Directive to be applied. In truth we had barely enough time to get our thoughts together, especially given the process DfT had chosen to adopt for the meeting.

The good news is that DfT propose to open up a website to get input from everyone. As of now the Federation has had no sight of its intended format. We will both let you know when that site is opened and also tell you our views on it.

We established that DfT do intend to establish some level of exemption from general testing for historic vehicles. But they are clear they will need to apply the 'substantial change' rules, and one of the issues over the next few months will be to work out how that ought to be done, both in terms of the standards to be applied and the process by which these standards will be applied to individual vehicles.

DfT are of the view that they will be able to set up the regime for general testing so that it will be capable of testing all old vehicles which do not meet the stricter 'historic vehicle' definition.

Some concern was raised by those representing larger vehicles that care must be taken to avoid geographical limitations of testing. Already, it was pointed out, some vehicles in Cornwall had to travel halfway across Devon to be tested. Any new regime must not be allowed to make this worse.

Interestingly we had little consensus among the various organisations represented over whether or not exempted vehicles should be tested at all, or remain, as at present, free from testing. On the one hand, some felt nothing should be on the road without some sort of test, while others felt all available statistics suggested that setting up a special testing regime for historic vehicles would simply not have any measurable effect on accident rates. There was some agreement that a vehicle coming off SORN ought probably to undergo some sort of testing. It will be interesting to see how DfT come down on this issue.

There was also little consensus on when the cut-off date ought to be. The Federation supported the position in the Directive and the view of FIVA that a thirty year rolling date was suitable. Others, with different and perhaps more specific interests, had some difficulty in seeing 1980s vehicles as 'historic' and preferred an earlier date.

Finally, I think I should provide one little warning. DfT are clear this whole exercise must not create new cost for Government. That does mean that in some way, whether through fees to DfT/DVLA/DVSA, or higher test fees to testing stations - motorists, and in particular owners of historic vehicles, will be paying for any changes made.

Wedding and Funeral Cars

The Law Commission issued its Report on Taxis and Private Hire in May. Accompanying that Report is a draft Bill, setting out proposed legislative changes. While this is still not legislation in force, recommendations of the Law Commission often move fairly smoothly into legislation.

The Law Commission, following a great deal of response to their earlier consultation, including from the Federation, proposes that the existing exclusion from the definition of 'use as a hire vehicle' of wedding and funeral cars be retained. This is very welcome.

Members should note that the exclusion in the proposed legislation is very precise, being 'used in connection with a wedding or a funeral'. This does clearly mean that the use of vehicles for hire for events such as school proms would *not* be exempt. This is not merely an oversight, as these matters are specifically covered in the Report.

But the constraints on use of vehicles for such events as proms would not appear to apply where provision of the vehicle is made purely as a favour. Of course this depends on the assumption, set out in the Report but not explicitly defined in the draft Bill, that the word 'hire' necessarily implies a financial return. The Report discusses this in the context of discussing cessation of the use of the term 'plying for hire'. This is a matter the Federation will need to explore as new legislation appears.

REACH Regulations

Asbestos

Some time ago limitations in dealing with asbestos came under the ambit of the EU REACH Regulations. Previously the UK had its own legislation on the subject. It has taken some time for the Department of the Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and HSE (Health and Safety Executive) to get round to replacing the exclusions previously in place under domestic law. Thus they have not ensured that selling a vehicle which happens to contain asbestos components remains legal, as it was previously under the national legislation.

HSE are now working to rectify the position by implementing derogations permitted under the REACH Regulation though there cannot be a straight replacement for what was there before, as that would not be REACH compliant.

They decided to use sales and loans by museums as the best starting example. Accompanied by our vice-president David Hurley, I attended a workshop on the subject. We were very concerned at the level of detail and qualifications required to enable a transfer to occur. These principles would themselves be quite demanding on management of museums, especially of the smaller ones, and the representatives of even large national museums expressed concern.

We made clear we did not see how the same rules could practicably be transferred to an individual owner who wished to sell a historic vehicle containing asbestos, nor to any private individual wishing to buy such a vehicle.

In a very useful meeting, the HSE representatives clearly understood our concerns, and agreed to take them back for consideration. We will keep you posted as to developments.

Chrome plating

Chromium trioxide, used in chrome plating, has become what is known as a 'candidate substance' for inclusion in REACH. There are major industrial concerns regarding particularly the use of chrome plating for hardening purposes on bearing surfaces which are being dealt with through such bodies as the European Vehicle Manufacturers Association (ACEA) in Brussels, supported by FIVA.

The ACEA activity concentrates on the need to maintain the capacity to supply spares to existing vehicles. However the Federation is also concerned about the continuation of the business of chrome plating existing parts, on which so many of us rely, primarily of course for cosmetic purposes on vehicles which have many external chrome trim parts, but also in some cases for refurbishment of bearings. We have not been sure that the major organisations lobbying in Brussels have properly taken account of the need to get protection for these businesses. We are having a little difficulty accessing DEFRA in the UK to make sure these points are considered. We have sought and been promised the support of the All Party Parliamentary Historic Vehicles Group to get us some access. We will carry on.

Discontinuance of the Tax Disc

I advised in the last edition of our concerns with the arrangements proposed to enable the UK dispense with tax discs. We have now heard from DVLA, who are not convinced of the validity of these concerns. The DVLA website contains a section dealing with what they propose to do in October.

This issue goes well beyond historic vehicles. To remind everyone, our particular worry is that when a vehicle is sold the licence will have to be surrendered by the seller and a new licence obtained by the purchaser. This is to apply even where the vehicle is VED exempt. A major flaw is that the point of time of the change is to be when DVLA receives the V5C, something which neither seller nor buyer will know precisely. No one has explained how buyers and sellers are supposed to deal with vehicle insurance in this case, nor how buyers will know when or how they can apply for tax when the records will show another keeper.

We have not pointed out, but it is the case, that someone selling a vehicle privately can hardly give up the licence before sale, because to do so without the vehicle being regarded as ready for scrapping, he or she would have to do a SORN declaration. This would prevent the buyer from having a trial run or taking the vehicle away.

As DVLA had not responded to us at the time of our last meeting with the All Party Parliamentary Historic Vehicles Group, and so we raised this with the Group. They were conscious of the fact that the effect of what we had raised extends well outside our historic vehicle interests and they promised to ask that the matter be looked into.

DVLA latest response says they are setting up an on-line method of advising of the sale, which would clearly help with the issue of uncertainty. It is not yet clear to us how the proposal would deal with the three-way match involved in signing off Section 8 of the V5C. We will continue to look into this and take it up directly with DVLA.

VED Exemptions

Hopefully, the issues on what constitutes proper evidence of date of manufacture are now largely behind us and most applicants for Historic Class now have their nil rate tax in place. We did have a small issue with DVLA accepting the provenance of BMIHT Certificates as the best available evidence of the vehicles for which they hold the manufacturers' records, but that was easily sorted out.

Next April, when the extension to the end of 1974 is planned to come into force, the rerun of the process will presumably be less trouble both for our members and for DVLA and we expect it to run smoothly. We will be sure to remind members affected of what they have to do to get into the Historic class and, if their vehicle was manufactured in 1974 but not registered until 1975, demonstrate that fact to DVLA.

BUY AND SELL & WANTED

FOR SALE

1 Red Tartan Seat Cover unused very good quality, made in Germany. £60 + postage.
1 Stainless Exhaust Pipe from Engine to Silencer Box unused. £15 + postage.
2 Lucas Rear Light Units unused. £10 pair + postage.
Roger Hall 01472 826009 Grimsby.



Isetta Taxi spotted in Crete by Malcolm Richings



A gathering of members at Prestwood Steam Rally. Lee Turham's Isetta on the left, Neale Turnham's (Lee's dad) in the centre and Ian Parris' Berkeley T60 on the right.

The Club is pleased to welcome:-

Roger Davies
LO Chi Wah
Frank Kurzweg
Örjan Lans
Robert Lyle

Tatham
Hong Kong
New York
Sweden
London

Nick Haddon
Paul Squires
Garret Busby
Bruce Savage
Jimmy Dougan

Halesowen
Biggin Hill
Dungannon
Lymington
Killyleagh

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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NEC Report 2014 By Dave Watson

Is it really a year ago already? Time has marched this year and before I could get the sun cream out we are at the NMCR again (not that I could make it this year unfortunately) but that traditionally marks the starting point for me to start the planning of the NEC stand. We were once again lucky enough to be awarded a stand at the show in hall 12 in between the NMCR and Heinkel / Trojans.

Building on the success of last year's stand I wanted to do something similar but different. We had a long thin stand that was ideal for a potential line of cars. After a bit of thought I decided to try and create a line of cars starting at one end with a wreck (the rougher the better) then through various stages of restoration finishing up at the other end with a fully restored shiny car. This concept had never been done before and would also be an ideal platform to advertise the now successful new spares service along the line up of cars.

I worked out that I could easily fit five cars on the stand, still with plenty of room for visitors to come on and have a closer look etc.

I asked around, emailed some people I knew, even put out pleas on the Yahoo board but virtually no reply's came back. It would



appear that no one wanted to put their car on the stand. I was disappointed and a little deflated to say the least!! So, not wishing to give up (it's VERY difficult to get on the "list" to have a stand at the NEC, and I wasn't prepared to loose "our" place either) I rallied the committee and they once again came good. With their help I managed to more or less get the line-up of cars I wanted starting with a wreck to a shiny car.

Knowing the drill almost inside out now the autumn days turned to darkness and before I knew it, it was show week!. Thursday is the traditional set up day. A more relaxed day where you have an allotted time to set your stand up that everyone ignores and turns up when they want! Once you are past the NEC security guards and in the halls its fine. This year I decided to take *my* Shiny car up as there were no other volunteers and it had not been to the show for a few years anyway. I loaded her up onto my trailer with some of the other stand props and set off. We were lucky – it was not raining!! The trip to the NEC was fine and upon arrival at the trailer park (after several laps of the complex, another NEC tradition of me getting lost) found Helen and Mike Ayriss already there unloading their Green four wheeler. Nice to see friendly faces I thought. We unloaded our cars and drove them into hall 12 (much easier than faff-ing with the trailers in the halls). I quickly found our space that was clearly marked out and actually slightly deeper than stated in our paper work so another small bonus.

I was then on the phone to Lee, and the two Ian's who were not far behind with the rest of the cars and stand props. I decided this year to buy a roll of stand carpet for ease. I had it delivered to my works and it was being brought up to the NEC in one of my Company vans as we were working close by, ideal!!!. An hour later it turned up. I can't grumble really as it was all free and it meant that I didn't have to lug the three tons of carpet tiles around again like last year.

They say many hands make light work and we all pitched in and set up the stand. I blagged a ladder from another stand to put our bunting on the very convenient rear wall to our stand that is part of Hall 12 but works so well for displaying pictures and such like. Within an hour or so I have to say considering what we started with the stand looked great, really great.



We started off at the far end with Ian Parris's wreck (but it was a good one so we ruffed it up a bit), then Lee Turnham brought a rusty chassis and we put around that a selection of old parts to make it look like a couple of abandoned cars that were being worked on. Lee and Ian decided to complete the set with some hay on the floor and cobwebs with spiders. We even had a very tame rat that would happily pose for photos then mysteriously move when you weren't looking.

Carry along the line up and you come to Ian Jenkins' nearly complete car. This was missing the interior and a few finishing touches. Then along again to Helen and Mike Ayriss's Green four wheeler. A very well-known car but the only four wheeler I think we have had on the stand? – Again a lot of interest from the public. Then finally across to the other end of the stand and my Blue 59'. Needs no introduction as I'm sure most of you are familiar with it. This year I set it up with a traditional 1950's pic-nic display in front. It was a chance to show off some of my collection of 50's memorabilia. I included a very nice battery powered record player that played 45rpm singles. We had the 'Playmates' Beep Beep playing for some of the time. I stress some of the time as after four plays drove us mad, the public seemed to like it though.

The show opened on the Friday (14th Nov) as normal and ran for three days finishing at 5.30 pm on the Sunday. Over 70,000 visitors came to the show spread over the three days. I think most of them stopped by at some point or another!! (Or at least it seemed like it at times) As always we were asked those familiar gems like "does it av a reverse mate?" "ain't they made



from fiberglass?" "What happens if you drive up to a wall-he he?" YES we have it every year and we have to expect it.

This year I decided to have a little fun. I purchased a small Russian (of all places) Magnetic Taxi sign and stuck it on the top of Helen and Mikes green 4 wheeler. It was amazing to hear how many people saying "ere, look at that, I dint know they made a taxi version", We even had one person going that it was a special super rare version only made for the far eastern export market, this was a rare survivor of only four ever made! My pic-nic display was also getting a lot of attention in particular my record player. At the other end of the stand the wreck display (complete with tame rat remember) was drawing large crowds with many photos being taken. Although the shiny cars are great to look at, the rusty wrecks draw just as much attention and our stand was no exception to this, indeed I noticed whilst having a wander in the show (not something you can do in five mins now due to the vast size of it these days) that quite a few of the other club stands had rusty wrecks on as well to draw in the visitors.



On the Saturday (by far the busiest day) I arrived early and super glued a

£1 coin to the floor in the gangway. Innocent fun that makes the day go by with a smile. To our amusement we even managed to catch out a certain Mr R. Dilks who eventually saw the funny side (I think anyway).

Once again I brought the Isetta data base along on my (sloooow) laptop. It proved popular as ever and we managed to find some "lost" cars that were once owned by visitors to the stand. I work hard to keep it updated throughout the year with information received from members and keeping my eyes open for Ebay listings etc etc and its really starting to pay off now. I have over 1800 Isettas listed both alive and sadly dead. Please keep your information and pictures coming as it all goes on and helps grow this important archive document for the future – the only one I know of so complete in the world.

Isetta`s were also well represented at the show on other stands. There was a nice example in the Silverstone auction. It was great as I used the data base to tell the auction house some additional history on the car they did not know. I think they were impressed?, I was impressed with the final sale price of just over £15k!!. There was another Isetta as part of a nice line up of white cars on the Gay classic car owner`s stand. Again a very eager owner was keen to know more history of his car.

Before we knew it - it was Sunday eve and once again the tradition of all the car horns blowing at once to mark the end of the show. Then the worst bit – breakdown. An hour of every man for himself as owners wanted to get away as soon as possible. Despite a very angry PA announcer most owners started their engines up and filled the hall with smoke!! Same every year. We were all packed up in about

forty five minutes and then said our goodbyes and in my case thank-yous. I chose to load my car back out in the car park as I find it easier and less hassle

We learnt some lessons from last year: Like bring some seats!!! A welcome sit down was most welcome but only for a short time as more and more visitors wanted to chat.

The lesson to learn from this year: Don't buy cheap sticky pads!!! We were for ever having to re fix the display posters on the rear wall.

2015 marks the 60th Anniversary of the Isetta. It's an important year and the club want to mark the anniversary with a rally at 'The Bubblecar Museum' on July 11th – 12th and we want to do something special at the NEC next year. Please get involved!! Dig out your Isetta and come along. I will badgering people earlier next year in the hope that we can get some of the rarer cars out. We know they exist and they deserve to be shown off!! Please give it some thought, without you and your cars there is no club or shows.

Finally I have to say a **huge** thank you to: Lee and Neale Turnham, Mike and Helen Ayriss, Neal Bircher, Jeff and Jo Todd, Ian Parris and Ian Jenkins for supplying their cars, time and enthusiasm for free to help make the stand the success it was.

Thanks Guys.



Our Chairman Jeff Todd presented Dave Watson with a cup for the work he put into the very successful NEC Show, and Mike Ayriss with a Shield for his efforts in obtaining and remanufacturing hard to get spares at the AGM in October.



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.