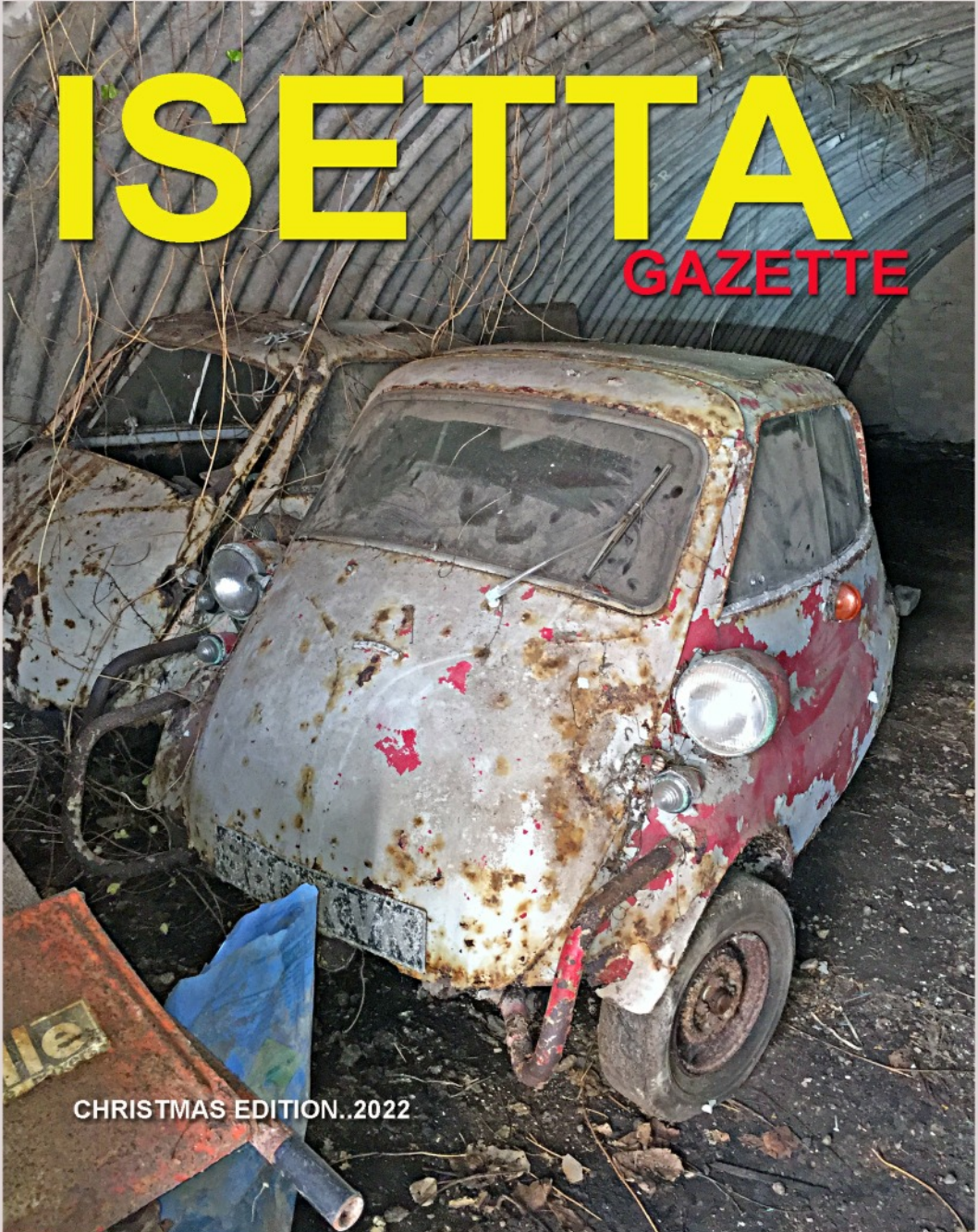


ISETTA

GAZETTE



CHRISTMAS EDITION..2022

The Isetta Owners Club of Great Britain Ltd.

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Isetta World www.facebook.com/groups/267159327250111

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

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

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

Editors Bit

I have finally got to the bottom of my clutch apparently not releasing. After removing and replacing the engine a number of times, finally without the clutch in situ, it turned out to be the spigot bush binding on the gearbox input shaft. Although the bush slid onto the shaft before it was fitted, it obviously shrinks when pushed into the end of the crankshaft. Lesson learned.

Finally I was able to drive the car only to find the front suspension shock absorbers were shot. One didn't work at all and the other was seized. Ordered 2 of these and set about replacing them, now all 4 have been replaced and drives as it should.

You will find a few more pages in this gazette but don't get complacent, I have nothing to go in the next one, so keep up the good work, send in what you can.

That's all for now, so have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Important Announcement.

Now is the time to renew your membership, don't delay, or you may find you are unable to purchase spares. See inside for full details.

Ian Parris

Chairman's Chat

An update from my previous Chairman's Chat, my son's shift pattern and lack of availability of holidays meant that he couldn't make the last committee meeting. Maybe next time and I will plan it around his shift pattern when he's not at work so he's got no excuse. And yes, we still need younger members on the committee to ensure the future of our Club for the benefit of our cars.

So, now's the time for refurbishment of your car before the rally season starts after Easter.

Thanks to the efforts of Ian looking after the website and producing the gazette, Mike researching and purchasing parts, and Lee picking, packing and posting spares, the club has almost all parts available to members.

Finally Merry Christmas and All the Best for 2023 to you all, see you next year!

Jeff Todd



NEC CLASSIC CAR SHOW 2022

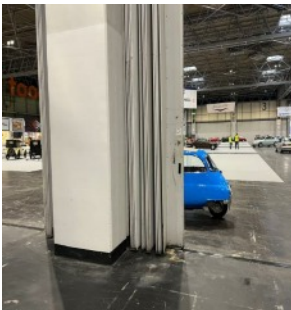
Dave Watson

Once again Passions were reignited during the weekend of 11th – 13th November at Birmingham's NEC for the annual season finale of the classic car community. The Isetta Owners club were again proud to be a small part of this huge show.

Show Director, Lee Masters said: "What an incredible weekend! The atmosphere was fantastic with passionate enthusiasts filling the halls. I was excited walking around watching the interactions between people. The community coming together made me feel emotional and proud of the movement. Also, the quality of exhibits and displays were off the chart, people went above and beyond. Huge thanks to all the clubs and our partners, exhibitors, and visitors for their continued support."

Is it really a year ago already since we were last at the NEC? It's very true that time seems to go faster as one gets older! With the heat of the summer now gone and the outside shows drawing to a close my thoughts turned once again to the NEC and our stand. We had been allocated a reasonable sized space in Hall 2 backing onto the Heinkel / Trojan stand but the only down side was we had a building Colum in the centre of ours!. "Never mind" I thought "at least we are there and have a space." I set about drawing our stand to scale on some graph paper to see what we could fit on. It was surprisingly spacious and I worked out I could comfortably fit four cars including (if I can find one) a 600. Following on from last year I was pleased, as had already been

promised two super condition machines from Philip Durrow and Nick Gould, these were also new to the stand so a win win. I also managed to convince (at the time) a non-member (but long time Isetta owner) Gary Downes to bring his original condition 1956 Bubble window Isetta wreck that had been sitting in his barn for over forty years - having purchased from its first owner. The icing on the cake was to have the late Sir Stirling Moss's silver 600 - that I was planning to put at the front of the stand. All was set for what I thought would be a good mix of *new* cars to a slightly awkward space. Fast forward six weeks and the owner of the 600 decided to pull the car and put into the Silverstone auction - which narrowed my options somewhat, so I took the decision to drag PO (my blue Isetta) out. It hadn't been on the



stand for a few years and is always the “reserve” car should anything happen

Having organised the stand now for over ten years (where did that go) on my own and been involved for nearly thirty with it (now where DID that go!) the pre-planning was all fairly plain sailing. I arrived early on the Thursday set up day taking my Isetta up on the trailer and opting to drive down from the holding car park to the halls. Activity was well underway even at 9am where countless clubs we all busy finding and setting up their spaces.

“Well, it’s not the best stand we had ever built but it will do.”

The two rolls of carpet were next to arrive with all of the other stand “stuff” (including four new swanky floor mounted A4 menu holder stands I had purchased as this years’ addition to the stand) albeit a little late on one of my Company vans having earlier made a very convenient delivery to a project running in Derby!. Almost at the same time Mike Ayris arrived with the club display boards that he holds for the Club.



The next couple of hours were spent laying carpet and assembling the boards as best we could around the column. During this time the other three cars arrived and every one pitched in to help. By around 2.30pm the stand was finished. I thought, “Well, it’s not the best stand we had ever built but it will do.” The addition of the cars really helped brighten things up and mask the compromises we had to make with the display boards around that damn column!

By mid-afternoon I was able to have my first look around the rest of the show as everyone was finishing setting up. It can be the best time to grab a bargain from one of the Autojumble stands and this year was no exception – buying two hundred two inch crocodile clamps for my day job!



The show ran for its now familiar three day format Showcasing over 3,000 cars across seven halls of the NEC - including the newly restored Wings tour bus, Andy Saunders’ one of a kind ‘Deja’ custom build, and a collection of ‘Restomods’ curated by Jonny Smith’s Late Brake Show. Over 300 car clubs also showcased their various marques and models ranging from the AC Owners Club to XR4. Despite the current economic “doom and gloom” over 69200 people visited the show (I think a record attendance?) over the three days with a definite “more busy” Friday – that is odd as it’s the most expensive day!

We were treated as always too many Isetta tails from years gone by; plenty of interest and it was great to meet a few Isetta Club members who had taken the trouble to come along and say hello. It’s always nice to put a name to a face as it were. We had our normal superglued coin in the gangway for our amusement – This year being a £2 to reflect the still strange times we are living in.





One story I was particularly interested in was the Bubble window Isetta once owned by Tom Jago. Now Tom was the original inventor of many famous drinks including Baileys Irish Cream and Malibu Rum. I'm told he lived on a small Scottish island just south of Mull called Scalasaig. They only have single track roads on the island and the Isetta was ideal for "running around".

"The three days seemed to go in a flash"

I don't think there would be too many traffic jams or parking wardens there! Long story short Tom sadly died in 2018 but the new owners (also from the Island) visited the stand and were asking about spare parts! Clearly the Isetta (probably 1955) is still very much alive and being used by the new owners. I was amused chatting as the guy - was six foot six tall, had lived on Scalasaig all his life and even learnt to drive in the Isetta. It just goes to show there are still super rare cars out there AND being used!!

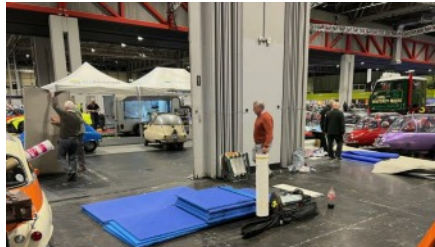
The three days seemed to go in a flash, before we knew it, five pm struck on Sunday and the now obligatory horn blowing

and "Please do NOT start your engines" instruction (always ignored by the way) were upon us and it was time to pack up for another year. The stand came down in about thirty minutes, it seemed to take ages (for me anyway) this year to get into the hall with my trailer. It's part of the "fun", Breakdown is never easy as everyone just wants to get home. One good thing was the weather - Very warm for the time of year and more importantly no rain!

I really can't do this each year without the generous help of friends and folks from the club. My sincere thanks to: Helen and Mike Ayris, Kath and Bob Crompton, Ian Parris, Neal Bircher, Neil Unsworth, Kathryn and Adrian Skelson-Reece for your help on the stand. My super thanks must also go to Philip Durrow, Nick Gould (who came all the way from Scotland by the way) and Gary Downes who supplied their cars for the stand - **THANKYOU** all.

Elsewhere in the show The judges of the coveted Meguiar's Club Showcase awarded the crystal trophy to Mark Rainer and his 1956 Triumph TR3, who won by just three points in one of the closest competitions to date. Visitors voted Ian Croft and his 1968 Lotus Elan plus 2 the winner of the Lancaster Insurance Pride of Ownership. Second place went to William Flay and his 1976 Ford





Escort RS2000 with Stephen Cheape's 1981 Ford Fiesta 950 Popular taking third place.

and it's a family we are proud to be a part of."

Silverstone Auctions hammered away £7.3million worth of car sales on Saturday with a 75% sales rate and six new world record price tags. On Sunday, 141 motorcycles were on offer with 85% sold for £750,000, while around £100,000 was secured from 72% of the Automobilia lots. The "Stirling Moss 600" sold for a hammer price of £50k.

New for 2022 and one of the highlights of the weekend was the Motorbike Trial demonstrations by 12 time World Champion Dougie Lampkin and his son Alfie. They both wowed the crowds with their expert skills as well as causing a stir when Dougie jumped his bike over Wheeler Dealers' Mike Brewer and 'Auto Alex' Kersten as well as Show Director Lee Masters.

Richard Morley from headline sponsor Lancaster Insurance Services said: "There is nothing quite like being back with everyone at the NEC for the season finale and celebrating our shared passion for classic cars. This year truly summed up what our community means to so many, being part of the family,

The next Lancaster Insurance Classic Motor Show, with discovery+, will be held at Birmingham's NEC from Friday 10 to Sunday 12 November 2023. I hope the Isetta club will once again have a stand and be part of this great show.

The Memories of Member No.447

I used to cycle to and from work each day when I was in my late teens. A distance of 16 miles (Ah, those were the days!). One day, I cycled past a garage and 2nd hand car dealer at Burley in Wharfedale, and there it sat on the forecourt, a RHD 3 wheeler Isetta, 129 CUU.

The price on the windscreen was £500, which, in 1982, was close to my limit, but I got my Dad, who had owned one in the 1960's, to give it a once over. Passing that test, I handed over the readies and 'Toby' came home with me.

Ok, she was hand brushed turd brown in colour, the bottom of the wings had been hacked off 45 degrees at some stage in her life, and she had been carpeted throughout her interior with brown wool carpet (including the wheel arches!), but at 19 years old, she was mine!

Two things came with her, free of charge. One was an application form for the Isetta Owners Club, the second was a telephone number for a local owner, one Paul Champney, who lived in the next town along.

Sending off my application to the club, post haste, I next picked up the telephone to speak to Paul, and invite him over to meet me and the car.

Invited to supper, one Friday evening, Paul and his cousin, Chris, arrived in Chris's red Trojan, and a very convivial evening was had. I'm so pleased, and grateful, that we became the best of friends. Checking over CUU, Paul was able to point out the parts that needed replacing; worn kingpins and bushes, missing engine mounts (the two bottom ones had been replaced with lumps of rubber wedged in to the space), leaking carburettor, leaking petrol tap, loose engine sump, worn steering, failed suspension dampeners, worn rear wheel spline, the list was endless.

Over the next few months, my father and I fettled CUU. We replaced the king pins and their bushes. You know the workshop manual, where it shows the kingpin being prised out with a screwdriver? Yeah, right! My father rigged up a hydraulic press and decided to push it out from the bottom. Little did we know, in those days, that the top bush was a top hat affair. He pumped and pumped until, eventually, there was a loud bang, a whizz, and ping, ping, ping, as this lump of metal ricocheted around the garage. Still, eventually, the car was put back together and it duly passed its MOT at the local 3-wheel MOT station in Shipley. To celebrate, we decided to drive down to Burford for the National Rally (like you do).

The car was well loaded, very well loaded indeed. In fact, I think if we should have rolled it, we wouldn't have moved much at all (or been killed in the avalanche, one of the two). Heading down the M1, the little car was going great guns, and then, splutter, splutter, we went on to reserve.

Now, I knew that the range on reserve was about 20 miles. We continued on, but 16 become 17, 17 become 18, and still no sign of a service station, so we decided to leave the motorway and look for a rural one. It was a mental toss up to turn left or right at the top of the slip road, and we chose left. Wrongly as it turned out.

About a mile on, the car gave a terminal splutter, and we rolled to a stop. As we were scratching our heads, and wondering what to do about it, along came a Ford Transit van, and the driver offered us a lift to the garage. In we got.

That van was a complete heap. The engine was between our feet, no rocker covers on, and bits of machinery going up and down before our very eyes, but, it took us back along the way we came, past the top of the slip road off of the motorway that we had taken,

around a corner, and there was a petrol station! If we had only turned right, we'd have made it easily.

Once refuelled, CUU made it easily to the campsite at Nether Westcote, and we pitched our tent, had something to eat, and withdrew for the night.

That night, if anyone remembers the 1982 National, there was a terrific storm; thunder, lightning, (very, very frightening), a gale of wind, and torrential rain. Paul and Chris's tent blew down. They slid it under their Trojan to stop it blowing away. Paul moved in with us as our tent was one of the few to remain standing, leading to my father uttering the immortal sentence, "If we're going in for tiered living, bags me on top!"

I can remember, in the middle of that storm, an Isetta owner called Phil decided to take the top end of his engine off. The only shelter from the elements was the little roof jutting out from the toilet block. He'd got the top off, and the barrel, looked at his piston rings, which he felt had broken, and then, in rebuilding it, dropped a push rod seal into the bottom end! There wasn't enough room to get his head in (with the engine) with his glasses on, so, in a complicated manoeuvre, he took his glasses off, passed them to his wife in the car, twisted his head sideways and inserted it into the engine compartment, his wife passed him his glasses through the hatch, and then he fished with a piece of bent wire for the offending object. He found it too, then it was the reverse process, glasses off, pass to wife, remove head from engine compartment, glasses back on, continue with rebuild, whilst the rain fell and the wind shrieked. It's just occurred to me that this happened FORTY YEARS AGO! Where has the time gone?

Chris slept in his car. The wind continued to howl and shriek. Things blew away all over the campsite, a toilet tent was in the top of a tree the next morning, and other things just disappeared. We did alright, considering.

The next morning was a blue sky and calm weather, and the weather stayed like that for the rest of a very enjoyable rally. We had a great time.

1983 saw the late Tony Marshall, the very first editor of the Isetta Gazette, announce that he was going to be standing down from the post at the AGM. No idea why I stuck my hand up, but I did, and I became the 2nd ever editor for the next two years.

In those days we used to send out 12 newsletters a year. You know how today's editor never has enough copy? Well multiply that by 3. Luckily, Paul Champney assisted me. In those days the copy was prepared on wax stencils. This could be done on an ordinary typewriter, although diagrams had to be scratched in the wax with a nail (and I ain't no artist!). Then, the stencils were put on the roller of a Roneo hand printer, and we would literally wind the night away. Often, Paul and I would start at about 7pm, and finish at around 5am, when the milkman was on his rounds.

Frequently, there would not be enough copy for a Gazette. I'd sit there, typewriter on knee, and Paul, whilst winding the printer, would dictate a technical talk, or some such thing to help fill a page or two.

In those days, membership of the club ran from January to December, and members would send in 12 stamped addressed envelopes. These ranged in size from A4 envelopes (they were great); A5 (almost as good), and then on down in various sizes to something you might have once got a telegram in. Each set of 12 had an elastic band around them to keep them together. That was great at the beginning of the year. Get towards November, and all I had was a box of curled up envelopes!

By about 2am we would have printed the Gazette, 12 double sided sheets of A4, and assembled it. Then, it was pack into the variously sized envelopes and stick a stamp on. Mistakes number 1 and 2 – don't use your tongue to wet the envelopes and stamps – it ends up a dry gummy mess in your mouth. We took to using sponges and water, and even they ended up a sticky mess, but at least they weren't in our mouths! By 5am, having

worked through the night, Paul would set off for home, and I would deliver a mail sack of 500 envelopes to the post office.

After about 6 months of winding, Jean Hammond (of RUM cars and ex Secretary of the Isetta Owners Club) produced a revelation. An electric Gestetner printer. No more did we have to wind. You set the counter to whatever number you desired (in our case, 500), pressed 'print' and, theoretically, you could go and have a cup of tea whilst it "ker-chunk ker-chunk'ed" away and it printed your pages. I say "theoretically" as you didn't dare take your eyes off of it. The moment you did a sheet of paper would stick to the roller, and it would chuck out 500 pages of blank paper!

The other development I remember from that time was being able to take the mocked-up pages to a printer around the corner from where I worked, and they would produce a laser cut stencil. Pictures and even photographs could now be produced in the Gazette.

It was in early 1984 too that 129 CUU and I parted ways. She had to go as I had the chance of a much better car, YER 306, and I went for it. YER had a complete original floor, and no rust anywhere. She had originally been white, but I had her repainted black. She was a lovely reliable little car, and in her I drove to, and around, the Netherlands with my brother.

1984 also saw me stand down as Editor after two years. Lyn Pavey replaced me and did, in my opinion, an excellent job.

In 1985 I met my future wife, Brenda, and YER was sold to a chap who had originally placed a note under my windscreen wiper, asking if I ever wanted to sell, to give him a call. She still wears the ring on her finger that I bought with the money from that sale. It was a bargain, and remains so even 35 years later.

I didn't own an Isetta for the next 11 years, and, I have to tell you, it was like an itch I couldn't scratch. We talked about buying another one, of course, but it wasn't a major priority. Then, when Brenda was away in China, 177 ABD just turned up, and I had to have it.

I agreed the price, and the collection time, and waited for Brenda's return.

Well, of course, when she got back, she was full of the things she had seen and done. Terracotta army, Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square, Great wall, she had seen loads. Eventually, she asked me what I had been doing whilst she had been away. One of the things I had done was to drive down to Wales to see my parents in Brecon. On the way, I had hit a piece of reinforcing steel rod laid in the road, and it had flipped up and rammed the fan of my Maestro through the radiator. I eventually got the AA to relay me to Brecon where my brother fixed it. Total cost was £150, but it was an unexpected cost. "Never mind", says Brenda, understandingly, "these things happen. At least you haven't bought an Isetta."

"Ahh", I replied, "I think there's something I might have forgotten to tell you."

177 ABD was completely dismantled when I got her, but was in mint condition body wise. I got ABD, now renamed "Bertie", completed in time for us to attend the 1998 Story May rally.

But, before then we needed to test the car, and our packing of it. So, that Easter we loaded up the car with all of our camping possessions, and drove up to the Lake District for a weekend camp. The car went really well, and we arrived at the camp site in good time, tent pitched, and something prepared to eat.

That night, it was so bitterly cold that we went to bed fully dressed. We were still cold, and, feeling decidedly miserable the next morning, we decided to drop the tent and go home. I can still remember the ring of snow on the ground around the tent when we dropped it. May, of course, was warmer. We set off driving down the A1 to Harwich, where we caught the ferry to the Hook of Holland. Arriving in Holland around 1pm, we headed east,

reaching Bocholt on the Dutch/German border as it became dark. Luckily, we found a campsite, and following a mini in through the barrier, we pitched our tent and had a meal before settling down for the night. Funnily enough, I couldn't find anyone to pay for our pitch, or even tell that we were there. I eventually paid the next morning.

We were woken about 5am by the loudest, and most prolonged, birdsong I've ever heard. It was like every bird in the world had chosen to sit in the trees above our heads, and sing their hearts out.

Continuing east, we travelled through Hamlyn (of Pied Piper fame), and arrived at Story early afternoon.

Story, of course, was everything we had been told, and more. The double decker bus/café, the camping in the orchard, the drive out into the Hartz mountains, the cakes in nearby towns, and the truck stop at Bockenem. It was a shame to have to go home, and, of course, as we had made our own way there, alone, we had to make our way back again – alone. It was an uneventful trip back, luckily.

Two years later, of course, it was Story again. This time we travelled down to Harwich, but then we teamed up with the Ayriss's, Hurns, and some others to ferry across to Hamburg and thence down to Story. A shorter road trip, although longer on the ferry, and arriving at Story we saw that things had changed. A lot more camper vans than tents, we were now in the long field next to the drive, the museum had grown into another adjacent building and a Hanomag museum had opened across the way. The drive outs were just as good though, and one day we all went out in our cars to do the rally treasure hunt and navigation. There were probably 20 of us driving down a narrow road, all following each other because none of us were really certain where we were going, and there, in the distance, a blue Isetta coming towards us. Terry Parkin! Obviously going the wrong way, ho ho ho! (How we laughed!)

We all stopped and Terry turned around and tagged on to the end of the convoy, which drove approximately 150 further yards before stopping again, and then we all turned round. Turns out Terry had been going in the right direction. It was only sheer numbers which convinced him that he was wrong. Eventually we all got back to the museum.

There were happy days out driving, more cake in towns, exploring bizarre things such as the three barns full of sticks at Bad Salzdettfurth (still don't understand that one), and the defoliation of the forest near the old East German border, with the watch towers and barbed wire still in place, up in the Hartz mountains.

The next big holiday was a trip to the Outer Hebrides in 2000 (Harris and Lewis to be precise) and this holiday has been published in the Gazette under the title "In the footsteps of Soapy". It's still on the IOC website, so I won't bore you with that one again, but it was fun.

2008 I took Bertie off of the road as she was getting a bit crusty in places and I had the body sand blasted and resprayed.

Since then, her annual mileage, as befits a car of 60 yrs, has reduced a bit, although the old girl has still got it in her.

We've driven down to the IOC AGM at Leicester a couple of times, been to the coast in the winter, and even been on TV. You can see her in action on "Bangers & Cash" on Yesterday TV. Series 4, episode 2. That resulted in being invited to a car rally in Glossop, over Holme Moss, like you do. A mere 90-mile trip.

Who knows where we will turn up next? I've no idea, but, actually, I'm quite looking forward to it.

Richard Jones

MERRY CHRISTMAS

To All Gazette Readers



The story of 9036 MF (so far)

It was the early 80's and along with Mike and Helen Ayriss & family, we had attended a couple of Story Rallies with some great memories and some great driving stories.

My then wife, Jenny and I had decided that, as the kids were growing, we wanted to do the next Story in two Isettas, so the search went out to find a 2nd car as stablemate to my original red RHD car 637 THT.

Through Mike, we found a very nice RHD car 9036 MF in babby cack yellow near Earl Shilton, Leicestershire. A deal was done and the car was bought back home to Studley near Redditch in good driving order. After fitting a tow bar to both cars, off we went to Story towing one small trailer, but soon found out that 9036 MF had noticeably less power than 637 THT, so the trailer ended up behind the latter.

A great holiday ensued and we returned from Story with tummies full of German sausage, great potato salad and Einbecker beer, as I recall. Probably slowed the cars down by a couple of mph!!!

A few years later in the early 90's I think, I decided that 9036 MF needed a complete rebuild and so I started by stripping out the interior, separating the body from the chassis and, as I recall, refurbishing the offside front hub with new bearings, new kingpins, new brakes etc. While I was doing this Mike Hurn kindly made a start on the front wings and opened up the rear vertical seams to allow them to be de-rusted.

About this time, my daughter Lisa expressed an interest in the car, when it was restored and I very foolishly promised it to her for her 21st in 1998. Suffice it to say that she is now 45 and the promise is still yet to be fulfilled.

From 1998 to 2021 the car unfortunately resided in a lock up in Studley in a disassembled state and to a large extent was out of sight and out of mind.

In October 2021, knowing that Lisa was coming over to see us from Australia in July 2022, my mind turned to having it ready for her when she arrived. This in turn proved unrealistic, but in early 2022 some progress was made and shown to Lisa when she came over. Amazingly she is still keen to have the car, although the current transport costs to Oz may impede that dream.

So, this is the first of a series of articles for the Gazette, showing my progress (that will keep Ian happy) over the next year or so.

Bearing in mind that eventually the car will reside in Oz, where there is no Club and very few Isetta-familiar mechanics (my son-in-law is not very mechanically minded) my intent is to make a good standard driving car rather than a Concours car.

Therefore, a full nut and bolt restoration is required, which has started with the chassis. All serviceable parts will be re-used but any items subject to wear e.g. seals, bearing, brake shoes, clutch etc. will be fitted with new.

In addition, the engine will be fully stripped and again new bearings, big end, seals, timing chain etc will be fitted.

Here are a couple of photos of the car as it arrived in Sunderland with the body chained up to the rafters and the chassis sitting on its wheels.



Progress to date has been to remove the chaincase, all of the rear suspension, the engine, silencer, front hubs, braking system, cables. The following photos show some of that progress.

The current state of play is that the chassis is fully stripped ready for Waxoyling, front hubs have been disassembled, and some aluminium parts e.g. front hubs, chaincase, cylinder head have been vapour blasted.



Next steps are refit the back suspension, rebuild and refit the chaincase and rebuild and refit the front hubs. Then brakes and finally rebuild the engine complete and refit.

The body will be done last as I am short of space and it is not my skill set, so I suspect it will have to be blasted with walnut shells to expose the considerable amount of filler and then it is either over to my mate John, or if he cannot do it, I will have to find a decent body shop.

Anyway, enough for now, watch this space

Bob Crompton
1st October 2022



My Story by Roy Pinches

Born in 1939, now the young age of 82, perhaps I may not be able to stake claim as the oldest member of this exclusive Isetta Owners Club, but profess I may claim to rank with the clubs' other senior enthusiasts.

Brought up in Eccles near Manchester Lancs, on the fringe of industrial Trafford Park, Salford Docks, the Manchester and Bridgewater Ship Canal, is it was an era of steam, smoke, boilers and smog, in a period when King Coal reigned supreme.

A youthful vision and recollection of all things vintage, steam railway locomotives, steamships and barges, steam fairgrounds, factories driven by steam, steam rollers and road steam wagons, all of which finally contributed to a 40-year lifetime interest in preservation.

Following with interest of the Bolton steeplejack I submitted to being a member of the Fred Dibnah appreciation fraternity, and subsequent attendance at national steam rallies, which to my pleasure often featured superb classic vintage car displays.

Originating from a working-class background, owners of family cars were in the strict minority. After six full years as an apprentice joiner in shopfitting, travelling on buses and pedal cycles, at the glorious age of 24 I graduated to my very first mode of transport.

I purchased in July 1963 a blue 125cc a blue Vespa Douglas scooter. This 1959 machine registered number TUX 747 purchased from F. Taylor and Sons of Salford Ltd. cost me the grand sum of £55.

For two years I owned the Vespa, taking me to work during 1963 and 1964 in which time I successfully passed my motorcycle driving test. This apparently permitted me to drive a motorcycle up to an including 1000cc.

I never did buy a Harley Davidson motorcycle, however after two years, and having secured my licence, I graduated and traded in my scooter for a flying machine, permitting me to be the owner and pilot of a Heinkel 3-wheel bubble car.

A Heinkel Cabin Cruiser, bright red in colour, bought on the 9th of September 1965 for the extravagant sum of £97 purchased from 55 Hyde Road, Ardwick.

My new prize car was a 1958 model, registration number WND 986 (no longer showing on the DVLA records). I used the car for work from 1965 to 1966, from memory it had a single pot 175cc engine and was the traditional bright red bubble car colour.

As a young chap, a wood butcher by trade, I had little or no knowledge of mechanical matters, few tools or spanners and ignorance of engines.



I had the car for only 12 months. It was an adventure I can never forget, however a sad decision and a fatally bad mistake when I swapped it for a car with four wheels, an Austin A40 Farina.

Travelling to work each day, I traversed the steep bridge incline of the high-level bridge on the now M60 over the Manchester Ship Canal, near the Trafford Centre.

Every day was the same, the feeling of anticipation on the uphill gradient, will I make it, will I make it, will I make it, followed by a huge sigh of relief mounting the summit and freewheeling down the other side.

Inexperience did not instil confidence, what I know now is needed TLC and an engine decoke.

By this time, married with a young daughter, who always travelled sat on the rear seat of the bubble, I was always in trouble when after alighting from regular car journeys, I received the wrath of my good wife when my daughter's clean white new stockings were frequently full of holes, even then it was sometime before I realised the cause was acid burns off the 12V battery I had placed in the rear foot well, behind the driving seat.

The correct Heinkel small 12V batteries were then harder to acquire and more expensive, hence my purchase and application of a larger car battery continued to prove my misgiving.

Our second child was born, Nigel, in the local cottage hospital. I took a few days off to mind my daughter, whilst needing to make an evening visit to my wife and new born.

That day I removed the cylinder head and decoked the piston, hurriedly completing the assembly, dashing out to buy a bunch of flowers, and clean up for a hospital visit.

Late for departure, I turned out into the main road in the Heinkel, stopping at the traffic lights at Patricroft Bridge, I turned right running down parallel to the Bridgewater Canal alongside the road. It was then it all happened, it was an early summers evening, the Sun shining brightly, all of a sudden it started to go dark, I thought and 'eclipse of the Sun' the chickens will all go to roost. Then I realised! the Heinkel bubble was full of smoke, we were on fire, I stopped along the canal, opened the door wide, jumped out and reached back in to save the Bouquet of flowers. An old chap sitting on the wall woke up, grabbed the bucket, ran across the road, dipped the bucket in the canal, and proceeded to throw bucket after bucket of water into the poor Heinkel. It was all I could do to stop him.

Again, my lack of experience revealed my problem, it was again the battery, but it had not helped by the stupid application of two long un-insulated battery leads which extended into the old battery compartment, and to make it worse I crossed them over, touching positive to negative, glowing brightly as a touched each other.

Trying to move the battery leads with bare hands created loud words and burns.

Turning up late in hospital with burnt hand, clothing smelling of smoke and dropping flowers was never the best entrance I made.

Later in the year, all forgotten, the Saturday evening excursion to Blackpool illuminations in the Heinkel, now a family of four, was also not the best idea.

Returning through Preston late, at the throwing out time, we had a puncture, few tools, less experience, the angel of the Saviour appeared out of a club, at chap in a Rolls-Royce, full evening Tuxedo, providing knowledge, help and experience to send us on our weary way home. Sad to this day - the Heinkel had to go.

I attended many steam rallies, including visit to the G.D.S.F. in Dorset for 30 years. A popular event was Pickering Rally in Yorkshire, always viewing bubbles.

Many years ago, I witnessed the arrival at Pickering of some Isetta's, they came driven on the road, on trailers, but one was a unique, it arrived in the chap's caravan!

The modified rear of the caravan lifted up like a garage door and out came an Isetta, I believe this was the remarkable creation of Mr Terry Parkin of Hull an amazing method of transportation.

Fast forward into the year 1997 passing a local car show room at Hindley, Wigan, it was extremely surprising to spot a maroon bubble car taking central stage. It had to be bought, my second bubble was Isetta 7103 NA three-wheeler.

Used for a period of time, we attended local car and steam rallies. as far as Oulton Park Cheshire.

Mechanically sound when stored in my garage. I've now had this bubble for the last 24 years in need of some TLC. It still retains fair condition.

P.S.

I have now given this to my grandson for him and his father to restore.

Roy Pinches

The Club is pleased to welcome:-

Stephen McCrory	Ontario	Geoffrey Fane	Caterham
Tom Parker	Bray	Francisco Martin Siro	Birmingham
Jack Farland	Colorado	Roger Hill	Essex
Kevin Lidgerton	Boston	Paul Marshall	Beccles
Ian Logan	Oxon	John Davis	Cambridge
David Badman	Clevedon	James Harvey	Hertfordshire
Chris Banks	Beaulieu	John Bentley	Nottingham
Mike Mackley	Kettering	Dhiab Banimalek	Abu Dhabi
Rasmus Bach	Denmark	Charles Fauel	London

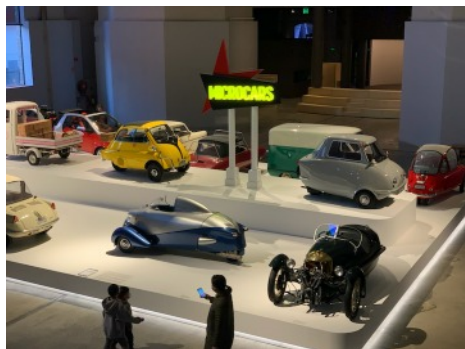
New Members since the last Gazette

To advertise your items for sale or want adds etc. please email the editor at isetta@ianparris.com

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Hello from the Antipodes, Ian, where, as the land of 'droughts and flooding rains', we've gone from one extreme to the other. We are far from a 'sun burnt country' at present, with floods all along our east coast and even inland. Not good weather for Isetta's!



My (Brighton) Isetta and my Heinkel Kabine, along with about 20 other micros, have formed a major exhibition of microcars, on display for about 10 months in the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney. This unique exhibition attracted significant public attention, with the organisers stating it was the most popular they'd ever held. It brought back memories to a lot of folk of a certain vintage.

This long-term display, plus the dreaded Covid, plus our unusual rainfall and floods, has meant that many of our usual outings have been cancelled/postponed. And today, (24 Oct) the German Car Show about to be held next Sunday has itself been cancelled because of the wet weather and bogged grounds.



In the absence of much 'action', I've attached some pics you might find space for in the Gazette ...and I'd be happy for this 'letter' to be included if you see fit.

The yellow Isetta is mine ...as are the red Heinkel & Green Fiat Topolino. The Isetta 'truck' pic ad was just sent to me, I assume a very rare vehicle, and the Isetta pics are obviously from an ad in years gone by.

Best wishes
Graham Sims



Subscriptions are due on January 1st 2023.

Membership renewal can be done via the 'Online Spares System' by purchasing an 'Annual Membership Subscription' or by PayPal to isettasubs3@gmail.com these are the preferred methods of payment,

Alternatively bank transfer or standing order to:-

Santander Bank, **Sort Code 09-01-56 Account No. 00744809**

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Or by cheque to 'The Membership Secretary',

Please make cheques payable to IOCGB Ltd and return the enclosed form to:-

Membership Secretary,
IOCGB Ltd,
1 Winston Close
Nether Heyford
Northampton
NN7 3JX
England.

Check on the website isetta.org.uk or inside the front cover of a gazette for payment amounts dependent on where you live and if you take your gazette by email.

Please note

The Isetta Online Spares will be closed from 24th December until 1st January for stocktaking. Orders received close to the closing date may not be processed until January so get any urgent orders in early.

All fired up and roaring to go

We finally took possession of our newly rebuilt engine from the Bromley Bubble Car Company, and how satisfying it was to hear the heart beating again. Sadly, our engine had been swapped for one that had been severely water damaged when being worked on at a garage in Tunbridge Wells many years ago. The garage in question has long since gone, but the legacy of a badly corroded crank meant that this was not going to be a simple refurbishment, but a total rebuild. With the work now completed and the engine now installed, we are now working out what cables and linkage we need, making it yet another learning day.



What I found on the bench at The Bromley Bubble Car Company when picking up our newly rebuilt engine. Although not our piston for our engine, it does show what can go wrong when an engine fails.

(see photo attached)

OK it looks like a pretty good sculptor that could have been produced by Damian Hurst, but sadly instead of this being worth thousands, and finding itself in an

exhibition in the West End, it ended up costing the owner a lot of money to put right. Fingers crossed that we don't suffer anything like this in the future.

Our next stage is to marry up the body with the chassis and start the long haul of connecting everything up. It looks like we have been



lucky to have either purchase or find all the parts needed to finish the job, and in fact I have just found a set of door badges that will be the crowning moment of this fascinating project. Keep an eye out in the next edition for the latest update.

Nev Pooley
On behalf of Chris Mannion

Isetta World

The IoC's Forum on Facebook
[Facebook.com/groups/267159327250111](https://www.facebook.com/groups/267159327250111)



A few issues ago I mentioned Isettas being assembled in Belgium – but... there was also an Israel connection.

In September 1957 the Kaiser-Frazer Israel (Kafris) management presented the Israeli Commerce and Industry Minister, Pinhas Sapir, with plan “X1” for the production of a small vehicle. Kafris envisaged a near-complete own production of a “Popular Car” within ten months, at a scale of no less than 5,000 units annually in the southern city of Sderot. Exports would create a foreign exchange surplus. Furthermore, the Kafris stamping plant, a large-scale investment, was craving for work. For the cash-striven Israeli economy, this probably sounded wonderful.

Meanwhile, in Paris, the Isetta Velam company was led by Ing. Roger Budin who had presented his Velam Isetta at the 1954 Paris show. Its production, at the former Simca site in Suresnes on the outskirts of Paris, started shortly afterwards. But while BMW had gradually widened its Isetta portfolio and production volume, Velam was a short-lived venture. Some 1,200 Velams were produced in 1955, with this figure quadrupling the year after. In 1957, and in spite of the introduction of a more luxurious Ecrin version, this figure shrunk to 1,005 units and factory closure loomed.

Around this time, Kafris executive Goldfarb approached Budin and introduced him to Sapir, saying that Budin had made a thorough survey into Kafris’ plants and the Israeli industry at large, and had concluded that local assembly of a small car bearing an Israeli name could be achieved within 8-12 months.

Together they envisaged a “special and exclusive” line-up, to include 3 models - A two-seat 2-stroke 236cc, A two-seat light commercial, 431cc with 500kgs payload ... and maybe a four-

seater. All should be built using a minimal amount of imported goods and parts. According to the plan, the body stamping equipment was to be leased from Budin, in return for a royalty fee, to be paid for every car built. However, these plans all quickly evaporated into thin air.

Concurrently, close by the Israeli city port of Haifa, Ephraim Illin's assembly company was struggling. It had a capacity of 6,000 units annually but in 1957 assembly totalled less than 2,500 units of the Willys-Overland and the latest Renault Dauphine. Illin had

purchased 890 Renault CKD kits in 1957, but low demand meant only 656 were actually assembled. The energetic and quick-thinking Illin, who had heard of Kafris failure, stepped in and contacted Budin.

סמני היכר : צרפתיה טפוסיית קטנה
מזררה, נוחה ויפה להפליא



כל הידוע פרטים מדויקים
אודותיה, נא להודיע לי
חברת קיוריספרוור לי
ישראל בע"מ - ת.ד.
35 חיפה. בין מוסרי הפרס
יום הנכונים יוגרלו פרטים!

By late 1957, Velam's production line had closed for good. It now looks as if Budin saw Illin as his last resort before going out of business, and was willing to sell the Velam tools. A deal was done.

Following the Suez crisis of late 1956, in September 1957 Illin prepared an exposé for the Trade and Industry Minister, headed "Production of a small popular car in Israel, within the framework of the industry

development in the Southern city of Sderot". That was a grandiose plan for a midget vehicle, the French version of the Isetta. According to this plan no less than 1,200 units a month (!) would have been produced in Sderot by 1959.

Illin's forecast figures were impressive: direct and indirect employment for 650 workers, and exports of some 2,500-3,000 units a year, not including the light commercial. As local content was

Illin's Isetta - Production schedule	
10.1957	Project approval, twin-seater development to start
1.1958	Moulds arriving from France
3.1958	Start of assembly at a rate of 25/month
4.1958	All body parts to be made locally
5.1958	Commercial version development finalized
7.1958	Start of exports; 700k\$ worth exports by year-end
9.1958	450 units/month, imported content at 160\$/unit
10.1958	Start of production, commercial version
4.1959	450 commercials/month, prod start for 4-seater
8.1959	450 4-seaters/month
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Velam decapotable at Illins plant

estimated at 70-75%, and given the extent of the planned exports, the Israeli treasury would have earned a surplus in foreign exchange of over \$500,000 per year. However, this optimistic export forecast was based on several dubious claims.

The first one was that BMW had sold over 8,000 Isettas in the U.S the previous year, and was about to increase exports to 20,000 units the following year. The second claim related to the marketing channels, according to which the usage of the Renault networks in the U.S would be explored. That very claim was refuted by a petulant Kafris whose plan had also included another marketing channel, this being Kafris' own distribution network in the French Colonies, Finland, Latin America, Western Africa and Portugal. As BMW were exporting the Isetta to the U.S, it can be safely assumed they would not have authorized this competitive source.

Illin and his team knew well that to reach his forecasted production of 2,000 units a year, would require some revolutionary steps in taxation. "The small passenger car will be a blessing for the transportation in Israel", his plan declared. Goldfarb added "If it



would not be burdened by heavy taxation, it could serve as a people's car", calling for a reduction in purchase tax from 35% to 20% on the wholesale price. Another request was for the abolishment of the purchase restrictions for new cars, first and foremost

Velam decapotable at Illins plant

the need for a specific purchase permit. The Ministry was unable to reply positively: "You know well that we cannot accept these requests", answered the Division Manager.

A few months later, in March 1958, the Sderot “Popular Car” plan was dead and buried. Illin had presented the Industry division with yet another paper, detailing production and required financing, among others – but this time the plan had no mention of exports, and the Israeli Export Minister advised the Government to reject it.



Illin had to mothball his popular car dream, at least for a while. Then in 1959 Renault refused to ship further CKD sets to Illin, so with the Renault affair being over he would have had no choice but to think anew.

Paris plate dates from around spring 1957

In September 1960 Auto-Stock, the then

BMW importer, started sales of the 700 model in Israel. The elegant car won immediate success, and 376 units were retailed in 1961, an impressive figure.

אנו הסוכנים הבלעדיים בארץ של מכוניות B. M. W
 אין אחריהן חלה על המכוניות שנרכשו אבל מפיצים שונים אחרים

B. M. W. 700

המכונית שנבחרה
 לאחת הטובות
 בעולם
 המודרנית
 לתנאי הארץ

תחזוקה נוחה
 תחזוקה נוחה

המוקד שלנו להדגם זה צוות מומחים וכל חלקי החלף אורזים מוכרים מכל הארץ
 החנייה על המסלול: תל אביב, ארץ מודרני, אביביות 9 סלון 5386
 ארץ מודרני, חום מרובות 41, סלון פנמה ועדי קילום ארדן
 תל אביב: בית המכונות ולפי יסמך רחוב יפו 21 סלון 47625
 המכונות המעדיים:

אוטו-סטוק - AUTO-STOCK

תל אביב רחוב לבנות 8 סלון 45555
 המספר: 1111 ארבעה אזה הנקשרה חודש קיימאית מל 11111111
 תל אביב 1111

Subsequently, in August 1961 Illin presented the Inter-Ministerial Vehicle Committee with a proposal for the assembly of BMW 700s. Over the next few months this proposal encountered a considerable amount of the problems that marred the Israel Motor Industry throughout its lifetime. These were strong government involvement, a paralyzing dependence on subsidies, the proposer’s over-

enthusiasm over an apparently easy-to-get market and the bottom line – too little local content.

No Israeli market rookie, Illin signed a contract with BMW in January 1962, without receiving any tax benefits. The Israeli plant was to assemble at least 840 of their version of BMW700s a year (a realistic figure, it should be mentioned), while local content would be subject to pre-approval of the Bavarian producer. Earlier, in late 1961, a few sets were imported “for training purposes”. The four CKD kits imported in 1961 were stored till March 1963.

STUDEBAKER					1	15	26	170
1 F 13 - 10 C 1 (1960) Ill.		12	12					
1 F 13 - 10 C 2 (1960)					5	3	8	5613-7002 (1960)
1 F 13 - 10 C 3 (1960)	3	6	9		1	17	20	5613-7002 (1960)
1 F 13 - 10 C 4 (1960)								5613-7002 (1960)
1 F 13 - 10 C 5 (1960)	2	24	26		1	3	4	5613-7002 (1960)
1 F 13 - 10 C 6 (1960)				4	4	10	10	
1 F 13 - 10 C 7 (1960)		24	24					
Total	5	66	71		8	33	39	
WILLYS				4	4	29	36	175
1 F 13 - 10 C 8 (1960)								
1 F 13 - 10 C 9 (1960)	14	33	47					
1 F 13 - 10 C 10 (1960)		3	3			16	20	43
Total	3	3	3					
Total	17	96	103		14	32	68	

1. This month
 2. From January till to end of previous month
 3. Total from January till to date

Illin's April 1963 report showing 3 BMW 700s

But in February 1962 it all came to a halt. Sapir announced a New Plan for the Economy, and devalued the Israeli pound by two-thirds. As the local content of the 700 would have been very low, this devaluation had a strong effect on the sales forecast. Illin had to redo their homework, and asked BMW for a prolongation of another six months. But then it turned out that it wasn't just the devaluation which was standing in Illin's way to making BMWs. In order to be granted any tax benefits, the local content had to reach 25%. This, in turn, meant the rear axle and the propshaft were to be locally made. With a new machinery plant, Illin was well equipped for the job, but it can only be assumed that BMW was less enthusiastic and that was the end of the short-lived BMW-Illin affair. Except, in April 1963, amongst Studebaker Larks, Jeeps and Willys, a small car rolled off the assembly line of E. Illin Industries in Haifa, bearing the Blue-White logo of the State of Bavaria at its front: a BMW 700 Luxus. Over the next month another three cars were assembled there, and that was it for a locally-made BMW. Illin had decided to assemble them, and sell them locally. None survived.

In May 1963 Illin finally got hold of a contract for a small car, that of the Japanese Hino. The Hino Contessa posed a real threat to all involved in the local market. But - Yitshak Shubinsky, co-owner and director of a company called "Autocars", located in Tirat Carmel, and by then already an established assembler then surprisingly revealed that a Month previously he had made contact with BMW's Export Manager, Horst Herbstreit, who had advised him that BMW "is willing to have a close co- operation with immediate effect". Attached to the Autocars letter was a request for import license for complete cars and CKD kits .



German-made BMW 700 in Israel, next to Illin's Hiro Contessa

In July 1965 Shubinsky advised the press of a contract with BMW, according to which the German brand will provide Autocars with the powertrain for its 700, while other components would be made in Israel, along with a glassfibre body. In parallel, an interesting item was shipped to Tirat Carmel – a BMW 700 Cabrio. Ze'ev Weishaus, the then production manager at Autocars, announced that the company was about to produce this 700 as a Sabra Sport replacement. BMW, which was about to close 700 production, was willing to transfer to Autocars the rights for the body production as well as its export markets. But in December, British Leyland signed a memorandum with Autocars and their BMW project was mothballed.

And so, despite the efforts of 3 different Israeli companies, actual assembly of Velam Isettas in Israel never materialised.

Terry Parkin, Isetta World,
www.facebook.com/groups/267159327250111/
With acknowledgement to
www.israelmotorindustry.org/isetta-from-haifa/

CLASSIC CAR INSURANCE?



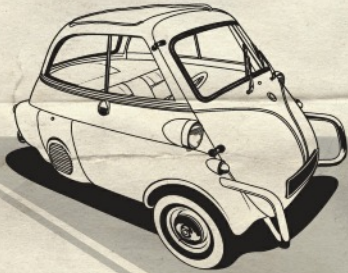
THE HARD WAY

- Ring an insurance broker that's not Hagerty. Spend half an hour explaining why your classic isn't just "an old banger".
- Politely decline home, pet and travel insurance. Patiently explain that you only need agreed value classic car insurance. To get off the phone, promise to get a quote for your home "in the near future".
- Go out to the garage, pull off your car's cover, snap several photographs. Email photos but hear back that "the photos are too dark" or "we need six and you only sent five".
- Cough up a £15-50 "certification" fee, on top of your policy premium.
- Wait on hold half an hour while their staff reviews the information. Lose the connection. Ring back, get transferred to three wrong departments. Get put on hold again.
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