

**IRISH**  
**VINTAGE**  
*Scene*

From  
the **Archives**

Issue 5 - 2020



*Maximum*  
*Mirafiori*





### PAGE 4-9 MAXIMUM MIRAFIORI

One of the greatest saloon cars of the seventies, the Fiat 131 filled many shoes, from faithful family hack to raucous rally weapon. This month we take a look at the history of the unforgettable 'Mirafiori'.

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN ISSUE 58 MARCH 2011

[BUY ONLINE NOW!](#)



### PAGE 10-14 SINGLE MINDED

After spending his early childhood on this unusual 1955 Lanz 13hp, Jim Kelly from Rathdowney, Co. Laois lost all contact with it until a chance meeting in 2007 led to their reunion.

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN ISSUE 53 OCTOBER 2010

[BUY ONLINE NOW!](#)



### PAGE 20-23 UP TO 90

Ninety cubic centimetres of swept engine capacity might not sound like enough to raise your interest, but when you clap eyes on Benny Doran's 1969 Honda S90 you can't help but be captivated by this machine's charms.

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN ISSUE 125 OCTOBER 2016

[BUY ONLINE NOW!](#)



### PAGE 24-27 SUPER SWEDE

Swedish manufacturing giant Volvo produced many useful and practical trucks from the 1920s onwards, but the majority of those weren't seen in this part of the world. It was to be the F88 of the mid sixties that really got the company noticed in Ireland, and today the model holds memories for many hauliers.

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN ISSUE 96 MAY 2014

[BUY ONLINE NOW!](#)



### PAGE 28-32 CLUB CHAMPION

Practically since its inception the performance and competition potential of the little Mini has been exploited to the fullest, with today's technology making them faster than ever before. Chris Greene of Waterford Mini Restoration is itching to put his newly-built Clubman rally car through its paces.



ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN ISSUE 21 APRIL - JUNE 2016

[BUY ONLINE NOW!](#)

## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



Welcome to Irish Vintage Scene's dip into the archives. In this free online magazine we go back in time to pick out some of our readers' favourite features from our fourteen-year history, as well as looking at a fondly-remembered event from the past, and a competition too. We will notify you every time each new 'From the Archives' becomes available, and will email you a convenient link to this free read, so you'll never miss an issue. Thanks for reading,

*Thomas Heavey*

Thomas Heavey, Managing Editor.

## ALSO

### PAGE 3 COMPETITION

### PAGE 16-17 MOUNTBELLEW

PUBLISHED BY IRISH VINTAGE SCENE LTD.

ADDRESS:

UNIT D, GROUND FLOOR,  
CARRAIG LAIR SHOPPING CENTER,  
ORANMORE, CO. GALWAY, H91 KV8K

EMAIL:

[THEOFFICE@IRISHVINTAGESCENE.IE](mailto:THEOFFICE@IRISHVINTAGESCENE.IE)

TEL:

091 388805

# who wants to win...



Put your car-spotting skills to the test here, by telling us what kind of car this is! The winner will be picked at random from the correct entries received, and will win **a year's subscription to Irish Vintage Scene**. Simply click [HERE](#) to enter! (Winner announced 22nd May)



**Identify the car?** [\(click here\)](#)



# Maximum *Mi*

ONE OF THE GREATEST SALOON CARS OF THE SEVENTIES, THE FIAT 131 FILLED MANY SHOES, FROM FAITHFUL FAMILY HACK TO RAUCOUS RALLY WEAPON. THIS MONTH WE TAKE A LOOK AT THE HISTORY OF THE UNFORGETTABLE 'MIRAFIORI'.

Words & Photography by Andrew Pollock [andrew@irishvintagescene.ie](mailto:andrew@irishvintagescene.ie)



From the **Archives**

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN ISSUE 58 MARCH

Introduced in 1974 to replace the equally worthy 124, the 131 bucked the styling trends of the time in typical Fiat fashion, wearing a subtle, sharp-edged suit that was a million miles away from both the curvy coke-bottle saloons of Ford and Vauxhall and the unorthodox, angular designs from Renault and Citroen. Hailing from a country where style is everything, the Mirafiori, called after the area of Turin in which it was manufactured, was as svelte and modern in appearance as an affordable four-door saloon could possibly be, but its attractions were more than skin deep. With the seventies fuel crisis in full swing as the 131 was released,

Fiat had made every effort to make the car attractive to a budget-conscious public, with a five-speed gearbox available on the more upmarket variants. Despite their extensive reputation with twin-cam power units, Fiat also elected to fit more frugal OHV engines in 1,300 and 1,600cc capacities, further improving the 131's popularity at the pumps.

To provide the kind of driving dynamics that the company were famous for, Fiat bestowed the Mirafiori with disc front brakes and rack-and-pinion steering, held together by a McPherson-strut suspension system. While the rear end didn't feature

independent suspension, the live axle was very well located courtesy of a five-link setup, resulting in excellent roadholding and an involving driving style across the range. The all-important interior also packed plenty of consumer appeal, boasting plenty of legroom and lots of glass area. Even the most basic models benefited from thoughtful design flourishes here and there, and when parked next to the competition from the likes of Ford and Vauxhall the 131 instantly made them look staid and old-fashioned in comparison. Highly competitive pricing was the icing on the cake, leaving Fiat with a highly successful model on their hands. This Series 1



# Mirafiori



2011

**BUY ONLINE NOW!**

Mirafiori found favour in a variety of market sectors, as it was available in two or four-door saloon or estate, with two different engine sizes and two levels of trim. For those with more of a need for speed, the Abarth-tuned model released a couple of years later was a technical tour-de-force bristling with Bertone-tweaked lightweight body panels, a barking two-litre, sixteen-valve, twin-OHC engine, Colotti gearbox, jewel-like Cromadora wheels and fully-independent rear suspension; unsurprisingly, the 131 Abarth did the business on the rally stages, winning three world rally championships between 1978 and 1980, becoming a legend that is still fondly remembered to this day.



*The lads from the [www.131.mirafiori.com](http://www.131.mirafiori.com) group are an enthusiastic bunch, and (most) enjoyed a trouble-free trip to Portumna Castle, the five-speed gearbox of the 131 proving a boon on the motorway.*



*Robert O'Shea's Sport with the Abarth of Andy Hennessy line up to indicate just how different these cars actually are.*



This motorsport exposure, combined with the resolution of the fuel crises of the early to mid-seventies, found the buying public becoming more receptive to a sportier and more luxurious 131, and for the 1978 facelift some chilli was added to the recipe. A revision of the model line-up revealed a new luxury flagship called the Supermirafiori, a plush motor fitted with either a 1,300cc or 1,600cc twin-cam engine in the style of Fiat sports saloons of old. Topping the range was the two-door Mirafiori Sport which, although far more of a road car than the mad, bad Abarth, was still a pretty serious proposition with a 115bhp two-litre engine, quick-shifting five-speed gearbox, wide wheels and aggressive exterior styling featuring unique paint schemes. When compared to other sporting saloons of the time such as the Escort RS2000 and Triumph Dolomite Sprint this was a pretty convincing spec, and the Sport's propensity for rear-wheel-drive antics made it a firm favourite with keen drivers all over Europe.

The Series 2 facelift didn't neglect the more mundane models, however. Although the side profile was practically unchanged, the front and rear came in for new, larger lamp units and revised badging/grilles, and the chromium trim of the Series 1 was banished for more up-to-the-minute black rubber and plastics.

Those who found the 1.3 and 1.6-litre OHV engines not frugal enough were served by the introduction of two diesel engines; a 2.0 and a 2.5, both of which instantly achieved popularity with taxi drivers from Athens to Abbeyfeale.

As good as the 131's design was, it was getting long in the tooth by 1981 in the face of increasingly modern and well-packaged front-wheel-drive competition. To hold the fort while an all-new model was developed, Fiat gave the ageing Mirafiori a second update, with the Series 3 receiving new SOHC engines to replace the previous OHVs, as well as new taillamp and body trim treatments. To bolster the model's popularity Fiat provided very generous equipment specifications, with five-speed gearboxes, front headrests and tachometers standard across the board, and luxuries like power steering, electric windows and central locking were available on higher-spec variants. Combined with the new 1.4 and 1.6 engines and very attractive sticker prices, these succeeded in keeping the 131 competitive until the axe fell in 1984 with the introduction of the front-drive Regatta, itself heavily based on the Ritmo/Strada hatchback. With that, a long and illustrious line of rear-wheel-drive Fiat family saloons was ended, but such was the magic of the Mirafiori that it evokes fierce loyalty in its enthusiasts to this day.



**Although perhaps not as large in number as the RWD Escort and classic Opel fraternity, there is a loyal and active 131 following in this country, committed to keeping this iconic saloon car in circulation for the enjoyment of us all.**





*Abarth's Cromadora wheels are purposeful but highly attractive.*



*The Abarth's twin-carbed 2.0 16v DOHC was more highly strung then the Sport; this one even more so thanks to those open chokes.*



On a sunny Saturday in late 2010, Irish Vintage Scene travelled to Portumna Castle in Galway to meet with just some of those enthusiasts, members of the online community at [www.131mirafiori.com](http://www.131mirafiori.com), who had brought along as comprehensive line-up of models as you could hope to assemble, encompassing four-door saloons from all three Series' as well as a squadron of Racing Orange Sports, an Abarth and a Group 2 rally car. Having crossed paths with the 131 lads in the past during one of their annual Gerry Kennedy Memorial Runs, I had already seen first-hand what a positive reaction this model receives from the casual public, and this occasion was no different; even though you might think that the car's relative rarity today might have caused it to slip from the general motoring memory, in fact the opposite is the case, with many folks recognising the car from their childhood years or similar. The Mirafiori was extremely popular in its sector in Ireland throughout the seventies and eighties, and it was as common to see a shiny, specced-up Super swanning around town as it was to see a mucky, rusty L towing a trailer down to the local mart. The Sport in particular was always a highly-respected performance car in this rallying-mad isle, and even though all variants were known for their failing for corrosion in our damp climate they were equally-well known for their comfort, tough engines and DIY-friendly nature. Although perhaps not as large in number as the RWD Escort and classic Opel fraternity, there is a loyal and active 131 following in this country, committed to keeping this iconic saloon car in circulation for the enjoyment of us all. Our thanks to all of the owners and drivers who travelled to Portumna for this very special photoshoot, and we hope to see you all out and about at events this coming summer.



*The interior of Robert O'Shea's Series 1 1600 Special shows how well-specced it was in 1976, with a five-speed 'box, rev counter and radio/cassette just some of the goodies.*

**Thanks...** Irish Vintage Scene would like to thank Kevin Doyle for his assistance with this feature, plus the Office of Public Works and the staff of the beautiful Portumna Castle for accommodating us on the day of our shoot. For more on the global 131 group, log onto [www.131mirafiori.com](http://www.131mirafiori.com); for more on Portumna Castle and its attractions, log onto [www.heritageireland.ie](http://www.heritageireland.ie).

#### 1976 1600 Special, 76 TN 540

Robert O'Shea from Co. Tipperary is only the second owner of this Series 1 Special, which he tracked down in the UK about four years ago. Packing a five-speed gearbox, rev counter, vinyl roof and radio/cassette player it retailed for about £2,500 when new, and was treasured by its original family up until he bought it. As a result of its pampered life it is still in original condition, having covered only 71,000 miles from new, and it was great to have such a fantastic example of the rarely-seen Series 1 with us on the day.

#### 1979 2000 Sport, 79 TN 576

Robert also owns one of the four Sports in our photos, which was originally a Dutch car but had made its way into Germany by the time he bought it over the internet around three years ago. Another one-owner car, with 130,000km on the clock, it has survived in very original condition right down to the correct wide steel wheels, and Robert likes nothing more than to take it to a show on a sunny Sunday.

#### 1978 1600 Super, 1024 LE 32

As you might have guessed from its yellow headlamps, our Series 2 saloon representative originally hailed from the south of France. It's now owned by Chris Conlon from Castleblayney, who tells us that he has loved the 131 since childhood, as his father drove them. The sole previous owner of this car ran a vineyard, and had bought it for his wife and children, hence the trio of factory seatbelts in the rear. Having covered only 73,000km in its lifetime in France the car is still very original, requiring only a respray and an interior retrim in the last few years to preserve its condition going forward.

#### 1981 1300 Super, 81 L 145

Kevin Doyle of [www.131mirafiori.com](http://www.131mirafiori.com), who organises many of the group's events in this country, is the owner of the Series 3 saloon in our line-up. He tracked down this 1981 car on eBay in Italy, where it had been stored for many years by the widow of its first owner. Having found its way to a classic car dealer with only 26,000km on the speedo, complete with the plastic covers still on the doors, Kevin was quick to snap it up, and promptly took a Ryanair flight down there to drive it back to Ireland; a three day adventure! It was worth the trip though, as it's a real belter.

#### 1978 2000 Sport, 78 L 823

Kevin also owns this very tasty Sport, which boasts an Abarth twin exhaust and a boot spoiler as subtle, period extras. Having spent ten years looking all over Europe for 'the right car', Kevin discovered this example in Frankfurt in 2006 with a meagre 30,000km on the clock; it had lain in storage for twenty years, but hadn't deteriorated because the first owner, an engineer, had done a lot of preventative maintenance such as waxoiling the bodywork. It's a real stunner, and Kevin tells us that the doors still clunk closed like a brand new car; no mean feat for a 33-year-old Fiat.





(L-R) The progression from Series 1 to Series 3 shows many trim changes, but the overall profile of the 131 was still unmistakable.



*FAR LEFT: Interior of Kevin Doyle's Sport is in as-new condition, which is rare for this model due to the amount of relatively brittle plastics used.*

*LEFT: Chris Connolly's Sport on the left boasts some motorsport-inspired accessories, while Seamus Mannix's example looks just as it did when it was sold in Longford in 1981.*

#### 1981 2000 Sport, LIX 201

Seamus Mannix from Killarney has been the custodian of this Longford-registered Sport for over two years, but it wasn't always as pretty as it is now. Bought as a rolling shell, he describes it as being a jigsaw puzzle of parts; although the bodywork repairs had been completed previously, there was still plenty of work needed. Having rebuilt the engine and suspension, and carried out a complete rewire, the car was soon back in good health, and has been kept to original specification; this includes the four-spoke alloy wheels fitted to Irish models, as opposed to the fat, dark grey steels fitted in other markets.

#### 1978 2000 Sport, DLO 258T

Hailing from Lurgan in Co. Armagh, Chris Connolly's car was the longest-travelled 131 on the day of our shoot, but we're glad he made the trip as it is thought that his is the oldest Sport on the road in the UK and Ireland, being built in October '78, only a month after the model's introduction. The first owner held onto the car all the way up to 1995, and Chris took ownership about three years ago, following a full restoration in 2005. With its brace of Cibie Oscar spotlamps, four-spoke Revolution wheels and accessory sill covers, this car provided an attractive contrast to the otherwise standard Sports on the day.

#### 1976 131 Abarth, ZV 7812

Owned by Andy Hennessy from Dublin, this red beauty is one of the 400 genuine Abarths built back in the mid-seventies, complete with 16-valve engine, independent rear suspension, aluminium doors, fibreglass outer panels and a Colotti five-speed gearbox, among other niceties; in fact, it's radically different to the standard 131 other than in its basic outline. This one has seen racing use in the hands of a previous owner, hence the twin-44 IDF Webers, full cage, plumbed-in fire extinguishers and limited-slip differential, and Andy had the car stripped and painted after he bought it to bring up to impeccable condition, including having the original Cromadora wheels refurbished at great expense, as even these are stamped 'Abarth'.

#### 1978 131 Racing Group 2

Andy's other car might look a bit like an Abarth thanks to the flared wheelarches and Cromadora wheels, but in fact it's a Series 2 Racing (the Italian version of the Sport) that was built as a Group 2-spec rally car in Verona as a test-bed for a Group 4 car that was also under construction. With its steel body and eight-valve engine Andy tells us it's nowhere near as quick as the real-deal Abarth, but is well-equipped with an LSD, full cage, OMP competition seats and Sparco harnesses. Incidentally, the livery is a nod towards that worn by Markku Alen's 131 Abarth campaigned in the seventies, but in blue and white instead of yellow and white.



# Single Minded

Words & Photos by Andrew Pollock [andrew@irishvintagescene.ie](mailto:andrew@irishvintagescene.ie)



*Although it shares its colour scheme and styling with its bigger brothers, the 13hp Lanz is a very neat machine, falling between a Ferguson 20 and a Farmall Cub in size.*



*Jim has many memories of ploughing on this tractor in his early teens, and is delighted that it has come back home after a lengthy absence.*

**AFTER SPENDING HIS EARLY CHILDHOOD ON THIS UNUSUAL 1955 LANZ 13HP, JIM KELLY FROM RATHDOWNEY, CO. LAOIS LOST ALL CONTACT WITH IT UNTIL A CHANCE MEETING IN 2007 LED TO THEIR REUNION.**



Lanz are famous for their large, heavy, semi-diesel Bulldog tractors capable of running on almost any low grade oil. Although it takes some skill and knowledge to start one from cold, once it's up and running a big Lanz will chug away all day, all the time making its signature popping sound. However, there were other, lesser-known Lanzas that didn't follow their usual trend, as is demonstrated by the unusual little 13hp on these pages. Belonging to Jim Kelly from Rathdowney, Co. Laois, this diminutive tractor is thought to be one of only two or three example of the D1306 13hp ever sold new in Ireland, and indeed is considered to be the only survivor of these. In stark contrast to the larger Bulldog, with its mighty horizontal engine containing a piston the size of a tin of paint, this 13hp is powered by an air-cooled single of only 534cc, which stands upright at the front of the tractor. What's more, it is far more picky with its fuels than its bigger brothers, as it runs on a strict diet of diesel only. The engine is rumoured to be a dieselised version of a Triumph motorcycle engine, and in operation you can certainly hear the similarities as it has a very distinctive sound, its thudding engine note revving far higher than you would expect of a diesel tractor.

Jim's relationship with this fascinating little tractor goes all the way back to 1955, when his father bought it brand new in Wheatley's Lanz Dealership in Roscrea for the princely sum of £440 along with a single-sod Star plough. Jim is quick to point out that his family weren't exactly flush for cash, and the Lanz was financed through a five-year hire-purchase scheme. "Tractors were getting more popular, and he decided to move with the times" Jim explains. "We got a Ford Nan in 1953 to replace the horses, but my father wasn't at all mechanical and every time he wanted it, it wouldn't start. It was then he decided that, if he was ever to buy another tractor, he'd buy it new." Indeed, the new Lanz wasn't only to become the farm labourer; it was also destined to become the Kelly family's main mode of transport, its lively turn of road speed and wing-mounted seats meaning that it often carried the six children to 'mass, church and meeting.' "It did work very, very hard" Jim confirms; "At that time we would have had 85 acres of ground, and the little old tractor would have done all of the work that the horses had done. The PTO shaft was never ever used by us, as only for the single-furrow plough it was just horse implements we were using."



*A small side-mounted hydraulic pump runs lift arms at the rear, for use with a single-furrow plough or similar implement.*



Jim was nine years of age when the Lanz first arrived in the yard, and he still has fond memories of spending days ploughing on the tractor in his early teens. The Lanz was used with a wide variety of implements, ranging from harrows and a roller-ridger to a mowing machine, hay turner, tumbling rake, a tumbling cart and a rubber-tyred bogie. Although the tractor performed pretty well, its uncommon nature did give rise to problems both for Jim's father and for the dealer, as spare parts weren't in plentiful supply even then. Also, repairs that would be standard procedure nowadays such as bleeding an airlock in the diesel system or reconditioning a fuel injector were still something of a black art, and the 13hp did have to go back to the dealer for work on occasion. However, cleverly Wheatley's always provided a larger 22hp as a replacement tractor, giving Jim's family plenty of exposure to the charms

of the more powerful two-furrow machine, which effectively doubled the work rate of the little 13hp. Eventually this subtle persuasion did its job, and in 1962 Jim's father traded in the 13hp for a second-hand 22hp, which was also built in 1955; indeed this tractor is still in Jim's ownership, and bears a registration number only six digits away from the 13hp!

In the late eighties Jim began to become interested in the vintage tractor scene, and restored his father's old 22hp which had laid in a shed on the farm after it was retired in the late sixties. After completing that restoration, and after picking up another few Lanz models in the interim becoming something of a Lanz aficionado in the process, he often thought about the old 13hp and whether it had survived. All ties with the tractor had been lost after it was traded in in 1962, and even

though he searched for as much information on CI 8098 as he could, it didn't take long for the trail to go cold. However, at the National Ploughing Championships in 2007, where he had a 28hp on display, Jim got chatting to a young man by the name of Darragh Leonard, who was looking for information on a 13hp he had. "Bells started ringing straight away" Jim explains, who asked Darragh to examine the rear mudguards for holes, which Jim himself had drilled in his youth when a home-made cab was fitted to the old family 13hp. Sure enough, the phone call came back to say that the holes were present, exactly how Jim had described. Even though Darragh is a keen tractor enthusiast himself, he and his father Tommy could see how important the Lanz was to Jim due to its family history, and so a bargain was struck involving a couple of other vintage tractors that Jim had in his collection.

## DURING RESTORATION



*If you look closely at the first photo you can see the Lanz on the right of the house, shortly after it joined the family. The second photo is rather more grim, as it shows just how much the 13hp had deteriorated in the intervening years.*



*The 534cc engine is very compact, and is practically concealed by cooling shrouds and injection equipment.*



"It's been done as well as it can be" he tells us, "because there isn't the material available to have it 100%". Thankfully the rest of the mechanicals, including the six-speed ZF gearbox and the hydraulic system, were relatively straightforward to overhaul, and no seal or bearing was left untouched in the quest for reliability.

Delighted with his discovery, Jim wasted no time in bringing the 13hp home, 45 years after he had last seen it. However, it certainly wasn't in the same kind of condition that he remembered. "It was in absolutely awful condition" he remembers; "the bonnet came with it but it had been driven over, and the front under the grilles had completely rotted out." The same unpopularity that afflicted the tractor when new also came back to haunt Jim in the present day, as the spares situation for this model is poor, to say the least. Despite the bonnet's mangled condition Jim had no choice to repair it, as replacement panels don't exist, although at least there was original German metal went into the repair as the corners of a Lanz seat were used to reconstruct the lower grille! Engine-wise the same problems blighted the restoration, as the unusual engine is very difficult to get parts for. "I sat looking at that engine for a year, looking for bits and pieces for it" Jim explains; "it's very, very hard to get anything for it." Two of the main components of the engine, the piston and the injector, were in poor order, the former being badly cracked and the latter being totally worn out, leaving Jim short on options. At the Great Dorset Steam Fair he managed to find a man to weld the piston there in front of him, using an aluminium-welding product he was demonstrating, which must surely have done his sales no end of good that day!



After much research on the injector front, Jim discovered that the screw-in injector from a modern Volkswagen Polo diesel would fit the Lanz head, but no matter what he did he couldn't get the engine to run properly using that setup. Eventually, a lucky break came his way via the Dutch purveyor of all things Lanz, Coon Kuypers, who managed to source what was probably the last new injector in existence for this tractor. "Only for Coon Kuypers doing that for me, it wouldn't be running, because there isn't an injector to be found anywhere" Jim states. As the original piston also had to be used, Jim was unable to rebore the cylinder so it was simply honed out to be used with new rings, and the crank received new shells. As an indication of its motorcycle pedigree, the big-end bearing is a roller item and so the crankshaft has to be pressed apart to replace it, but following these measures Jim was eventually left with a usable engine, good enough to use for shows and events. "It's been done as well as it can be" he tells us, "because there isn't the material available to have it 100%". Thankfully the rest of the mechanicals, including the six-speed ZF gearbox and the hydraulic system, were relatively straightforward to overhaul, and no seal or bearing was left untouched in the quest for reliability.



## LANZ BULLDOG

After sandblasting and priming the tractor himself, Jim was all ready to hand it over to a spray-painting friend of his. Unfortunately, when Jim got in touch with him he found that his services were currently not available as he was getting to grips with the changes in legislation and paint-types that were coming down the line at that time. Undaunted, Jim decided to pick up the spraygun himself in his own garage at home, and even though he is quick to point out that he knows there are flaws, and that he will be getting it “properly” sprayed in the near future, he certainly did a great job for a first attempt. Now, the little Lanz 13 looks and drives just as it did in Jim’s childhood memories, when it wasn’t only the farm tractor, but the everyday transport and loyal friend of his family. As rare a vintage tractor as you could possibly find with a fantastic family history, we at Irish Vintage Scene are looking forward to having this great machine on our stand at this year’s National Ploughing Championships in Athy from Tuesday the 21st to Thursday the 23rd of September.



**Thanks...** Jim would like to thank a number of people who helped him out during this restoration. Firstly, he would like to thank Darragh and Tommy Leonard for selling him the tractor, and also fellow Lanz enthusiast Jackie Egan for always being there to help, Seamus Carroll for fabricating detailed parts for the oil pump, and Tom Duff for help with the injection system.



# NEVER MISS AN ISSUE!



12 ISSUES DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR FOR €75

**SUBSCRIBE!**







One of the many steam engines at the event was Tom Tynan's 1926 Fowler 12-tonne roller.

# Mountbellew 2010

SINCE ITS FOUNDING ELEVEN YEARS AGO THE MOUNTBELLEW VINTAGE RALLY HAS GROWN IN STATURE AND INFLUENCE IN THE WEST OF IRELAND. Words & Photos by Norbert Sheerin

Each year there is an added dimension of interest in their rally, and for 2010 there was a heavy emphasis on steam and harvesting, with a number of working fields being sown with barley and potatoes earlier in the year just to coincide with the annual vintage show. This harvesting event was an ideal opportunity for both young and old to experience the harvesting fever that gripped Ireland in days gone by, when the fruit of one's labour was manifested in the gathering of the yield to provide for the winter ahead.

As a vintage show, Mountbellew raises its standards year after year, attracting the best of vintage and classic cars, tractors and commercial vehicles. There is also an ever-increasing interest in stationary engines at the show, with over 150 on display at this last event. After just eleven years, Mountbellew has become one of the most important vintage events in Connacht, thanks to a highly dedicated committee. The numbers alone are staggering; at the show there were between 600 and 700 vintage vehicles on display, as well as 174 stationary engines,

contributing to the noise and smells of a vintage show. Over the years the club has donated generously to many worthy causes, the charity benefiting on this occasion being the North East Galway Friends of Belarus.

Currently the Mountbellew club are tackling a challenge of immense proportions; the restoration of an iconic piece of steam equipment that was in use by Galway Co. Co. from 1924 to 1954. The club is fully committed to the full restoration of this Aveling & Porter steam roller, and this project has to be one of the most ambitious and challenging projects of its kind ever taken on by a club in Ireland. A major fundraising programme is well under way, and this club will certainly meet that challenge, if their impressive organisational skills over the last eleven years are anything to go by. When completed, the restoration will be a beacon of achievement, highlighting the tenacity and determination of a vintage club in the west that has vision and a commitment to the tradition of steam.



**FAR LEFT:** This 1929 Ford Model A Standard Coupe was first registered in Tallahassee in Florida, and was used in the Sheriff's Department there. It was brought to Ireland in 1994, and was fully restored in 1996. It was driven to the show by Eugene Markey, all the way from Co. Cavan.

**LEFT:** The potato-digging proved to be extremely popular; with queues of people lining up to pick their own. Visitors could be seen going around the show carrying bags bursting at the seams with freshly-dug spuds.





Without doubt the exhibit of the show had to be Tom Doolan's Claas combine harvester, which was being powered by a Galway-registered Nuffield tractor. Well done to Tom and his hard-working team, who amazed the crowds throughout the afternoon.



This year the club made an effort to get as many stationary engines as possible together, and with 174 engines on display and all running at the one time it sure was the number one show in 2010 for stationary engine fans. The club are going for a national record at the 2011 show, which takes place on the 24th of July this year.



Gerry and Ann Wade with their 1968 Triumph Herald and their 1966 MG Midget. The Triumph was purchased in Boyle, Co. Roscommon from a man Gerry met whilst on holiday in Spain, and the MG was purchased from a man in Bristol who had a hip replacement, and was unable to use the car as a result.



This Co. Offaly-registered 1932 Austin 10 previously laid in a shed in the village of Cullybackey in Co. Antrim, where it completely disintegrated. It is currently owned by Tommy McLean, who used to pass that shed on his way to school as a young boy, totally unaware that one day he would acquire the car that rested and rusted there, thus restoring a piece of the motoring history of his own county. He acquired the car three years ago, literally in pieces, and set about having it restored.

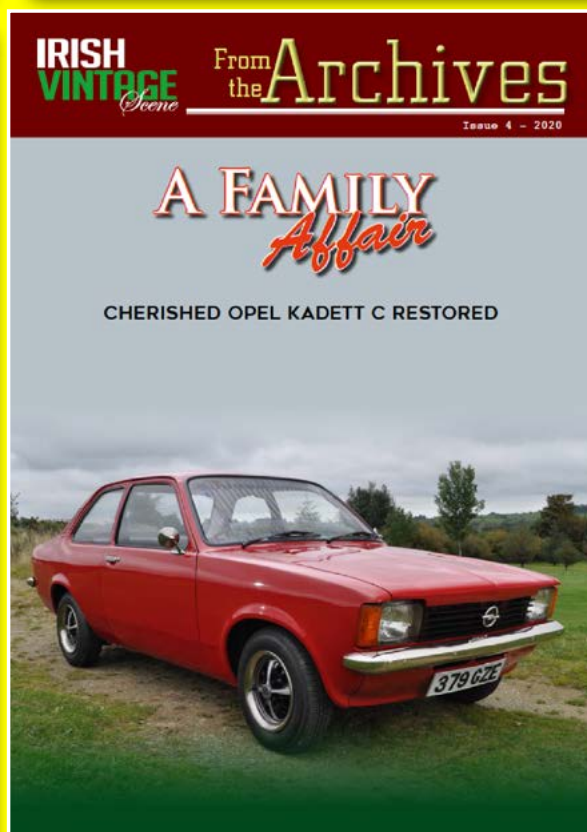
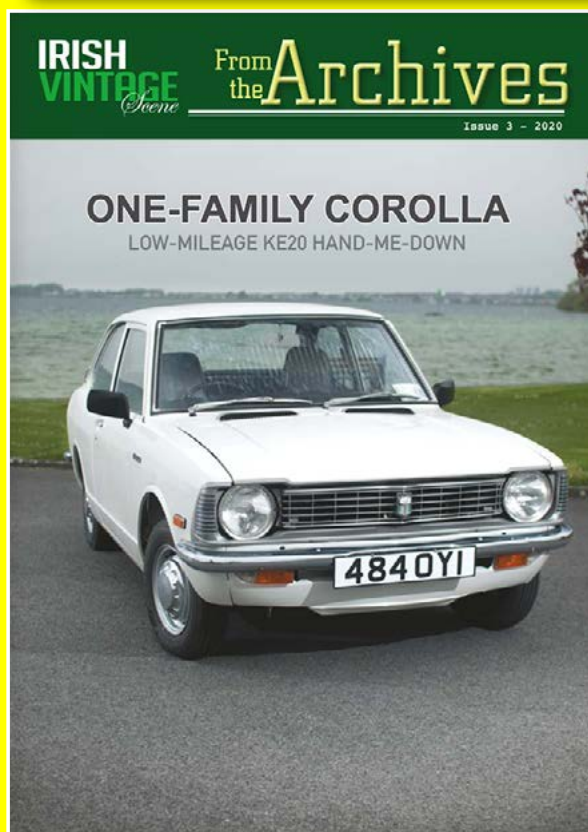
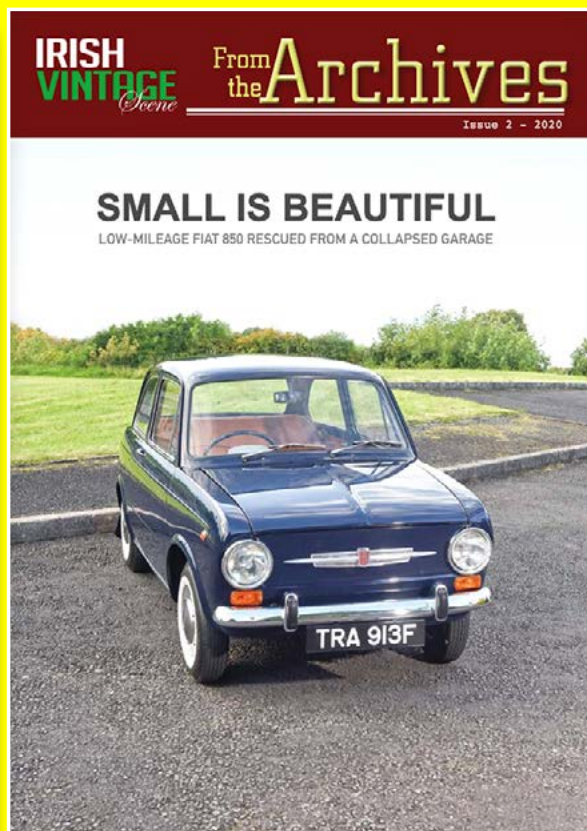
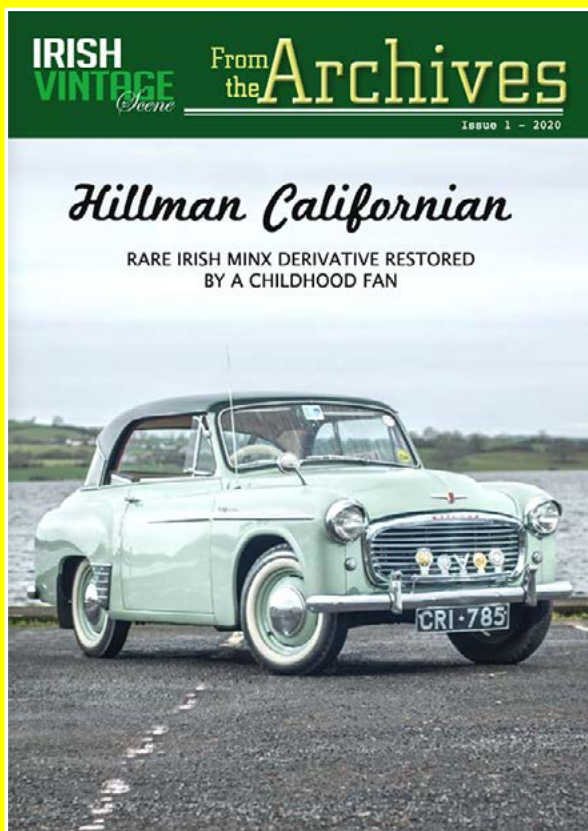


The working field was a huge success at the 2010 event, and with more space being sought for this year, the club are planning to build on their past success.



## PAST ISSUES

(Click to view)





# IRISH VINTAGE *Scene*

STAND OUT FROM THE CROWD WITH...  
QUALITY **IRISH VINTAGE SCENE** MERCHANDISE



IRISH VINTAGE *Scene* **REGATTA  
JACKET**



Sizes: **S, M, L, XL, 2XL, 3XL**

**BASEBALL HAT**



€7

**BEANIE HAT**



€7

**IRISH VINTAGE  
SCENE BINDER**



€12

**POLO SHIRT**



€20

Click here to purchase any of the above!



# Up To 90

Words & Photos by Andrew Pollock



From  
the Archives

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN ISSUE 125 OCTOBER 2016

BUY ONLINE NOW!



*Ninety cubic centimetres of swept engine capacity might not sound like enough to raise your interest, but when you clap eyes on Benny Doran's 1969 Honda S90 you can't help but be captivated by this machine's charms.*



*Benny's owned and restored all kinds of bikes over the years, but as his first-ever road bike was an S90 in 1965, this project has been a bit special for him.*



*Sourced in Oughterard, this bike wears an authentic Galway (ZM) number, but nothing is known about its early history. If you can fill Benny in, let us know!*

IRISH VINTAGE SPORTS



For many a year, Honda have seemingly had the knack of extracting the most out of small and lightweight machines, whether it's a Civic hatchback or an outboard boat motor. The entire engine capacity of this Honda Sport 90 might be half of just one of a modern superbike's cylinders, but that doesn't mean that it's any less fun in the real world. Launched in 1964, the Super 90, or S90 in some markets, was aimed squarely at younger riders who were starting off in their motorcycling career, but wanted something less pedestrian and more dashing than a scooter. If that engine looks familiar, then that's because it is based on that of the Honda Cub, meaning a four-stroke single - an overhead-camshaft by this stage - producing a reliable and unstressed 8hp. The rest of the bike was very light, with a distinctive T-shaped frame in pressed steel instead of tube, and this combined with the surprisingly high-revving engine to provide quite a sporting, if not sporty, ride. A top end of 60 to 65mph was plenty if you were a headstrong youngster heading onto the roads for the first time, and the simple but high-quality running gear was able to withstand the lackadaisical servicing that might come with the territory, so it was the perfect cocktail for some teenage kicks.

The S90 is very much a symbol of the sixties, as production only lasted until 1969, and many of today's motorcycle enthusiasts remember them fondly as an object of lust in their youth. Benny Doran from Co. Wicklow is a classic case in point. If Benny's name sounds familiar, then it's because he runs EcoBlast Ltd in Kilcoole with his son Ben - as well as media blasting, painting and powder-coating, the Doran duo also handle motorcycle restoration work and are committed riders themselves. Benny's biking career started in 1965, when he bought a Honda S90 in Bray - complete with full race fairing we may add - and even though he's had countless

bikes since then, that first little HNI-reg Honda left its mark.

Over the years Benny has not only restored classic bikes and cars, but even built trials cars and mud-pluggers, but recently he's tackled a project close to his heart. He found this 1969 S90 for sale online, and the fact that it was located in Oughterard in Galway didn't deter him from heading up there to check it out. The S90 is a pretty rare sight in Ireland these days, and so he didn't mess around, and a deal was done. "I had to lift the bike into the van, as the wheels were in a very bad state, and the bike itself was a rusty piece of metal" Benny laughs, but soon the Honda was standing in EcoBlast's workshop in Kilcoole, ready for work.

The bike had last seen the road in 1989, and the intervening quarter of a century hadn't been kind to the machine, so Ben Junior stripped it down to the bare frame to give it the works. One of the most time-consuming parts of the project was the blasting and cleaning away of all the rust, and the pressed-steel frame itself also needed welding repairs, carried out by Ben and his sidekick Stephen. The base of that lovely fuel tank had also rotted out, and so it received brazed repairs before being resealed internally. The extensive chromework that's so much a part of this machine's character was also in poor order, and so Ben carefully packed up all of the pieces and sent them over to the UK to Castle Chrome, where they were prepped and plated back to their original mirror-like finish. The many nuts, bolts, brackets and clips that dot the motorcycle were all looking rusty and tatty, and so these were also sent packing, this time to Eagle Electroplating in Newtownabbey in Northern Ireland, where they were cleaned and zinc-plated - this step alone makes a huge difference to the overall quality of a classic bike restoration, as nothing lets the side down like shabby nuts and bolts.



*How many readers started out in their riding career on one of these, or indeed admired them from afar?*



*There's a lot of chromework on these small Hondas, so replating is a major portion of the restoration budget if it's required.*



*Enclosed chain and large mudguards don't take from the S90's sporty looks. Note the T-shape of the pressed steel frame.*



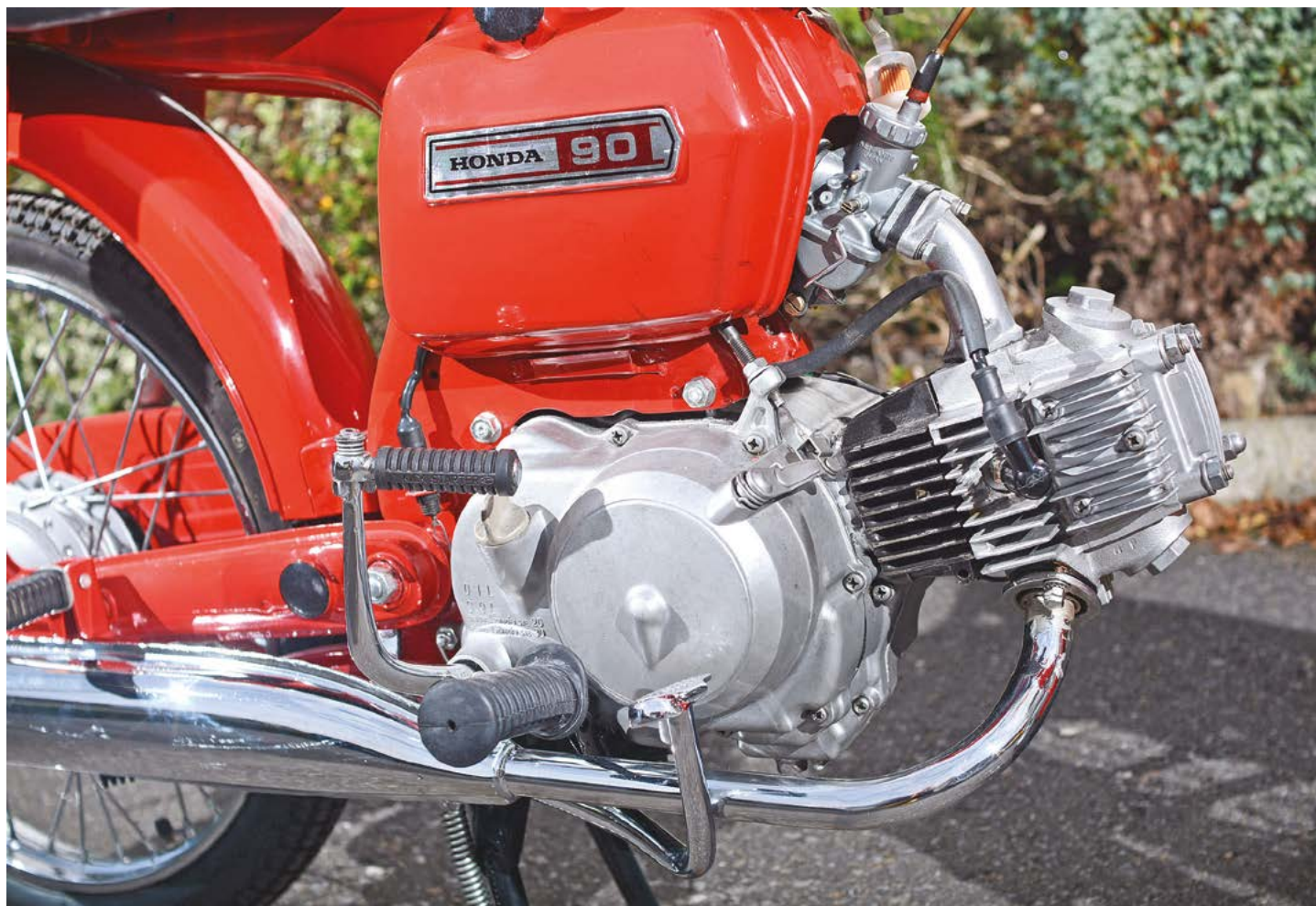
*To be fair, the S90's speedo is more honest than most, with 65mph being attainable.*



Meanwhile, on the mechanical side of things it was decided that as the overall bike was in such poor condition, the status of the engine couldn't be trusted. Instead of a cosmetic makeover, Benny took the plunge and the engine was completely stripped and rebuilt, with the help and input of renowned restorer Eddie Laycock in Dublin. A new exhaust was fitted as the original had rotted away, and the wheels were rebuilt using new rims and spokes mated to the restored hubs. And, of course, a new 2.25-17 tyre was fitted up at each end.

With the main elements of the bike coming together, it was time for the paint to be laid on in the original bright red shade, which was handled by sprayer Stephen at EcoBlast. Then, the engine could be installed and the finishing details could be added.

It's easy to assume that, being so much smaller, a motorcycle is much simpler to put back together than a car – it's true to an extent, but there are far more components in even a simple motorcycle than you'd think. The list of new parts runs to the headlamp, taillight and indicators, footpeg and handlebar rubber grips, kickstart lever, and plenty more besides. The all-important saddle was rebuilt and reupholstered by Ivan at A&T Autostyle in Kilkenny to cap off the restoration. Since its completion the stunning little S90 has done the rounds at various classic shows, where it not only showcases perfectly EcoBlast's services, but also brings many bikers on a trip down memory lane, just as it does with Benny. His next project, a very early Cork-built Mk1 Escort, is already making progress as we write, and we're sure it will emerge just as good as this Honda.



*It sounds small on paper, but the alloy 90cc overhead-cam four-stroke single is a very willing little unit, and great fun in such a light bike. This one's been completely rebuilt.*

### THANKS...

Benny would like to thank Ben and Steve at EcoBlast in Kilcoole for the restoration work, Ivan at A&T Autostyle in Kilkenny for the upholstery, Eddie Laycock in Dublin for engine work, Eagle Electroplating in Northern Ireland for the re-zincing of parts, and Castle Chrome in England for the chrome plating.



We specialise in the restoration of motorcycle and old car parts, wheels, frames, engines and so on. We can powdercoat your parts in any colour, or restore aluminium back to new with our vapour-blast process. So whether it's a classic car or bike, we have the job covered.

#### Our services include

- POWDERCOATING
- SHOTBLASTING
- VAPOURBLASTING
- SODABLASTING
- ALLOY WHEEL REFURBISHMENT



Unit 3C, Kilcoole Ind. Estate,  
Kilcoole, Co. Wicklow  
Call 01-2811711 or 086 3727446  
or visit our website [www.ecoblast.ie](http://www.ecoblast.ie)





# Super Swede

Words & Photos by Andrew Pollock



From the Archives

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN ISSUE 96 MAY 2014

BUY ONLINE NOW!





TRANSPORT



88-290 HP

VOLVO

1011 ZT



Gerard's son, Christopher, is just as much of an F88 fan as Gerard himself was at his age, when he drove around in the passenger seat alongside his uncle, Christy.

With its squared-off cab and old livery, this Volvo F88 looks like it has driven straight out of the Trunwits' old photo album.



One of the aforementioned hauliers are Trunwit Transport, who operate out of Bandon in Co. Cork. The operation was founded by Christy Trunwit in 1970 after his previous employers wound up and he was able to continue to serve their existing customers. Sugar beet was a primary cargo then, but a couple of years later Christy took on work from Carbery Milk Products in Ballineen, followed by Murphy's Brewery in Cork, and his haulage business soon flourished to the point that he had five or six trucks on the go. As often happens in these cases it became something of a family business, and it remains so to this day; after Christy passed away he left the company in the control of his nephews, and they are still hauling proudly to this day from the same town.

Gerard Trunwit can clearly recall how his Uncle Christy's work impressed him as a youngster, and how it drew him into the trucking trade. "When I was five years of age we left here one Sunday evening" he remembers; "we drove to Dublin in an F88 with a two-axle flat trailer with ropes and covers, and stayed in Naas overnight. We went into Dublin the next morning to offload and reload, and then it was back down the road, five and a half hours, through every town." These were obviously the days before the motorway network, when the trip from Cork to Dublin and back was full of twists, turns, towns and villages. It was a much more involved drive than today, with few straight bits on which to get into top gear to gather your thoughts. What's more, the trucks of the day were a far cry from the automatically-shifted air-suspended powerhouses that roar along the motorways today, but that said, the new Scandinavian kids on the block were impressing most drivers with their comfort and power.

Having started off with a lone Commer, Christy Trunwit had employed favourites of the time like Guys, D-Series Fords and even bull-nosed Mercs through the seventies, but around 1975 he moved to the next level when he started buying Volvo F88s. These Swedish machines had been making waves for a good few years at that point, impressive drivers and operators alike with their reliability, comfort and build quality, and by the seventies they were making considerable inroads into the Irish market, which up to then had largely been dominated by English brands like Leyland, Bedford and Commer. The F88s obviously made an impression on Christy, as in 1977 he bought another two brand-new 290s (1011 ZT and 1022 ZT) at Volvo Trucks in Watergrasshill to bring his tally up to four, and in the early eighties they were traded in for the next F10s and F12 models. The Volvo revolution clearly had begun, and it's still the favoured brand on the Trunwit fleet today.

Even though Gerard started his truck-driving career in the last of the F10 models in 1989, he has lots of fond memories of travelling around with his uncle in the F88s, and back in 2006 he decided to take on a nostalgic project; to resurrect one of the company's old examples as a weekend classic. Even though all of the Trunwits' F88s had been traded in for F10s and F12s back in the early eighties Gerard had leads on where most of them had ended up, and he was able to trace 1011 ZT to Urlingford in Co. Kilkenny, where it had been bought by another haulier up there, repainted in his colours and used to haul between Ireland and the UK. Speaking of colours, our photos show that the Trunwit colours have changed over the years from plain red to red and white, with green and white being used in more recent times to tie in with the livery of their main brewery customers. This makes the old F88 even more of a standout in their yard, its red and white colours (the Cork war-paint as well, like) harking back to an age that still lives on in the family's memory.

With the time constraints of running a modern haulage company being what they are, Gerard wisely outsourced the restoration work required on this classic Volvo to the professionals; as he admits himself, it would have taken years if he'd been trying to work on it himself and fit it in around work. It proved to be a good decision, because the truck was back on the road in 2007 looking just like Gerard remembers from the old days, complete with its blue sunvisor over the windscreen and a quartet of Cibie spotlamps in the front bumper. Since then it's done the rounds on the vintage circuit, and has been to rallies and runs around the country. What's more, it seems to be having a familiar effect on Gerard's son, Christopher, who at the age of eight has a huge interest in all of the vehicles and machinery around the truck-yard. Mechanically the truck has required scarcely no work at all, which only goes to cement the stories we've heard over the years about the granite-hewn build quality of these old Swedish haulers. Thirty-seven years on it still starts on the first turn of the key, and after a few minutes of warming up it likes nothing more than heading out the road for a relaxing day at a classic or fundraising event. It might not be doing the Cork to Dublin route five times a week anymore, but we reckon it's earned its retirement...



*1011 ZT when it arrived in the Trunwit Transport yard in 1977.*



*This great photo shows 1011 ZT and 1022 ZT when they were bought brand new from Volvo in Watergrasshill.*



*This line-up of the Trunwit fleet from the mid-seventies shows a Guy, a couple of Ford D-Series and two Volvos: an earlier 240hp F88 on the far left and a ZB-registered 290hp in the centre.*



*Proper period Cibie driving lamps are a nice touch.*





As Bob Dylan sang, "the times they are-a changing"; the F88 would have been considered a large truck in its day, but it's dwarfed by its modern FH successors.



We're sure that Christy Trunwit would get a kick out of seeing this truck looking so well today.



The F88's 290hp straight-six wasn't turbocharged like the later F10, but was still considered a powerful performer at the time.



The original Volvo tail-lamps are still in place.



Roof hatch, interior lighting and extendable sunvisors were all part of the F88's equipment package.





# CLUB Champion

Words & Photos by Andrew Pollock

Practically since its inception the performance and competition potential of the little Mini has been exploited to the fullest, with today's technology making them faster than ever before. Chris Greene of Waterford Mini Restoration is itching to put his newly-built Clubman rally car through its paces.



**RETRO  
CLASSICS**

Magazine

RESTORE • MODIFY • DRIVEN

Archives

61  
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN ISSUE 21 APRIL - JUNE 2016

BUY ONLINE NOW!





Chris has had a passion for both Minis and motorsport since competing in Ministocks at Tipp Raceway in his early teens.



It's one of the biggest clichés in the motor industry, but it's true – the Mini has epitomised the 'David vs Goliath' storyline countless times since its introduction in 1959. Although its creator Alec Issigonis had built it as a compact family car, its low centre of gravity, light weight, and "wheel at each corner" layout combined with its front-wheel-drive transmission and livelier than expected A-Series engine to produce a surprisingly potent drivers' car too. In fact, early in the prototype testing stage the original 948cc engine was reduced in size to 848cc as the car was proving to be too fast! It didn't take long for the likes of John Cooper to bump up the engine specs, add fatter tyres and disc brakes to make a real performance machine, with rallying and circuit success coming thick and fast ever since.

Today, the Mini's winning ways very much continue in the realm of classic motorsport, particularly historic rallying. However, the Clubman you see here is certainly not a historic-class machine, which are very restricted in their modifications to reflect a certain era in the past. No, this one is bristling with power and modern hardware, and will run in Class 9 when owner and builder Chris Greene returns to the rally stages in the near future. Chris will be familiar to many readers as proprietor of Waterford Mini Restoration which, as the name suggests, is a Mini restoration business in Waterford! In fact, his love for Minis stems from motorsport, and his days spent racing Ministocks in Tipperary Raceway in his early teens, and with a brother who rallied Escorts and Mantas over the years a passion for cars and tinkering was a given.

In the early 2000s a customer of Chris' father's coal yard had a real nice teal blue Min Clubman, which had been bought new in Cork City in 1980. "It was in great condition, and ran perfectly" Chris explains. "The owner used to use it as a daily

drive, and it just needed to be tidied up a bit. We always asked when we called if he would ever sell it, and finally he decided he would sell it to us." That was in 2004, and Chris put the car away at that point with plans to restore it at a later stage. To satisfy his speed cravings he had another competition Mini on the go at the time, but after suffering a big roll in that car Chris decided to hang up his helmet for a while, and concentrated on road cars and restoring customer cars.

The speed bug is a persistent one, and around three years ago Chris felt that the time was right to get back into motorsport, and he decided to pull out the old Clubman to build it into a rally car, but one finished to a high standard to showcase his business too. During 2012 the Clubman was stripped down to a bare 'shell, ready for not only some restoration work, but also some race preparation. After receiving the relevant repairs the 'shell' was seam welded and strengthened in various places, before a weld-in multi-point roll cage was installed – something that Chris wasn't going to skimp on following his previous experiences. The inner wings were re-engineered to accommodate thirteen-inch wheels, and the rear end was turreted to accept a pair of long-travel coilover struts. There's no missing the massive wheelarch flares to cover the much larger tyres now fitted (155/530R13 Dunlop SP Sports on genuine Compomotive ML 6x13-inch wheels), which are pushed further outwards thanks to a wide-track suspension kit up front - also on coilovers and with a KAD anti-roll bar - and an alloy Mini Spares rear beam with alloy KAD swing arms anti-roll bar. The bodyshell has been lightened with a fibreglass bonnet and boot-lid and polycarbonate windows, which ease the workload on the potent four-wheel disc brakes, the fronts being whopping (for a Mini on thirteens) 260mm discs grabbed by KAD six-pot calipers.



External gear selector and hydraulic handbrake are neatly to hand. The carbon-fibre dash holds the bare necessities and nothing else.



Polycarbonate windows, full cage, harnesses and buckets – no concession to luxury here.





Heart of the beast is this Weber 48-fed 1,340cc A-Series, built by Lloyd Hutchinson and benefiting from all his years of experience.



The interior is very nicely finished, even though Chris tells us this car is built for tough use, not for show.



There's not much point in putting together a rolling package like that if you're going to put the standard lump back under the bonnet – having completed all of the other work on the project, Chris turned to an undisputed master, Lloyd Hutchinson, to take care of the engine and gearbox build. The 1,340cc has all the good stuff, like a single twin-48 Weber carburettor on a carbon-fibre intake, uprated internals and electronic ignition, and it's backed up by a very strong straight-cut Quaife gearbox with oversized drive-shafts and an LSD. Fuel is fed by not one, but two Facet pumps from an alloy fuel cell where the rear seat once sat, and the unit is kept cool by an alloy competition radiator. The Clubman's square front end is of great benefit for a rally car, Chris tells us, as it's much easier and faster to carry out repairs in its larger engine bay when you're under time pressure.

#### THANKS...

"My wife, Claire, for putting up with my obsession of Minis and all the long nights in the garage, Lloyd Hutchinson for the amazing work on the engine and gearbox, Norman Bagge for the great job on the graphics, and my friends Alan, David, Evan, Josh and Mick for their help."





*The very capable suspension setup runs to a wide-track front end and an alloy rear beam and trailing arms. Both feature AVO coilovers and KAD anti-roll bars, as well as KAD discs. On sticky racing tyres, just thinking about how this Mini will corner makes my neck tired.*

Inside the cabin, this Mini is all business. Finished in the same Porsche white as the exterior, it's nice and bright for a rally car, and neat touches abound. The carbon fibre dashboard takes centre stage, with the driver faced by only the most important instruments for stage use: the tachometer, shift light, water temperature and oil pressure. The Sparco steering wheel acts upon a Quaife quick rack, with electric power steering fitted to make it easier to muscle that wide-track front end around tight corners, and the gearchange mechanism has been moved into the cabin from its usual spot under the floor for ease of access. Securon harnesses hold Chris and his navigator into their Cobra Monaco Pro seats, and as for the big vertical hydraulic handbrake, well we don't really need to spell out what that's for!

Even though it's been lying finished since last summer, Chris hasn't yet had the chance to use this weapons-grade Mini as was intended. On the morning of our shoot it popped and banged as Chris coaxed it from its slumber from stone cold, erupting into life with a window-rattling blare as the big Weber got some fuel through its veins. It takes a bit of work to get off the line cleanly, with a long first gear, and the overall impression is a car that will demand the respect and 100% commitment of its driver. On the move it's a symphony of transmission noise, and Chris tells us that it's pretty bloody loud in there when you're up to speed, not to mention the hard suspension, rapid acceleration and the massive brakes that practically lift the back of the car off the ground on full stomp. We can tell that he's itching to give it a proper blast, with hopes being high of running it in some hillclimbs and local rallies this summer. We look forward to seeing it on full throttle very soon.

#### Club Membership...

Chris is a member of both the Irish Mini Owners Club and the Carrick-On-Suir Motor Club; for further information, log onto [www.irishminis.ie](http://www.irishminis.ie) and [www.carrickonsuirmotorclub.com](http://www.carrickonsuirmotorclub.com).

#### Contact...

Chris is proprietor of Waterford Mini Restoration, and restores all types of classic car, but with a specialisation in Minis. For further details, give him a call on 087 6807112 or see their Facebook page under 'Waterford-Mini-Restoration'.



*As well as the spare wheel, the boot hosts the fuel filter, two Facet pumps and plenty of braided/anodised fittings.*



*Thanks to some eye-catching graphics this Mini will make a great rolling advertisement for Chris' business, as well as meeting his need for speed.*



# Magazine

[illegible]

## FEATURES



## EVENT REPORTS



## BUYER'S GUIDES



## CLUB NEWS

**WWW.RETROCLASSICS.IE**





# IRISH VINTAGE *Scene*

Irish Vintage Scene is Ireland's leading old vehicle magazine, packed each month with features, event reports, club news, car histories and lots, lots more. To get your hands on the current issue of Irish Vintage Scene, check out your local newsagent or click BELOW to buy online!

See what's in the current issue [HERE](#)



[www.irishvintagescene.ie](http://www.irishvintagescene.ie)