

IRISH
VINTAGE
Scene

From
the **Archives**

Issue 8 - 2020



ROVER *DRIVE*

A RARE IRISH SURVIVOR



PAGE 4-9 ROVER DRIVE

Next year will mark fifty years of the Rover P6. Although this popular model has become part of the furniture on the classic car scene in the last twenty years it was actually a revolutionary design in its day, boasting a long list of advanced features that would change the public perception of Rover forever.

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN ISSUE 72 MAY 2012

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PAGE 10-14 THE BABY FORDSON

When Fordson introduced the three cylinder Perkins-powered 957e Dexta In 1957 it was the dawn of a new era in small diesel tractors.

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN ISSUE 60 MAY 2011

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PAGE 20-24 TRIUMPHANT

Fresh from a detailed rebuild, this stunning t-100ss recently scooped the IVVMCC 'Restoration of the Year' award, one of the most prestigious prizes in the country for two-wheeled classics.

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN ISSUE 44 JANUARY 2010

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PAGE 26-29 SCANDINAVIAN HAULER

When Volvo and Scania decided to take on the British truck industry in the seventies it ended up being a rather one-sided fight, as the Scandinavian machines proved to be a league ahead in quality and development.

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN ISSUE 40 SEPTEMBER 2009

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PAGE 32-35 LITTLE STEPS

We've all got to start somewhere in this retro and classic hobby, but for many of us the results of our first car projects are best forgotten. However, even though Evan O'Connor started his Mini rebuild at the age of fifteen, he's ended up with a stunner to be proud of.



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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 CLASSIC CAR LIVE 2008

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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 Friday 11th September)



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

Tom spent many, many years on the lookout for an Irish Series 1, and having found this one twelve years ago he's hanging onto it!



NEXT YEAR WILL MARK FIFTY YEARS OF THE ROVER P6. ALTHOUGH THIS POPULAR MODEL HAS BECOME PART OF THE FURNITURE ON THE CLASSIC CAR SCENE IN THE LAST TWENTY YEARS IT WAS ACTUALLY A REVOLUTIONARY DESIGN IN ITS DAY, BOASTING A LONG LIST OF ADVANCED FEATURES THAT WOULD CHANGE THE PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF ROVER FOREVER.

Up until the launch of the P6 in 1963 Rover had become known as a maker of finely crafted, traditional saloon cars. Even though their early days had seen dalliances with air-cooling as well as the manufacture of bicycles and motorcycles, by the 1930s Rover had successfully honed their reputation for high-quality cars for the upmarket buyer. Dignified, stately motors like the P4 and P5 saloons were popular choices for executives, politicians and the middle classes, and even though they were solid performers they sold more on the promise of luxury and presence than performance and handling. However, Rover's major release of the sixties would revamp the firm's image overnight, and would put them on the map worldwide as a very forward-thinking manufacturer.

This release, of course, was the P6. Launched in 1963 as the Rover 2000, this saloon was more compact than the outgoing models, and the front end was lacking the usual upright chrome grille required by traditional Rover buyers. There was no six-cylinder engine either, simply a two-litre four, so just where exactly were Rover going with this new upstart? In a very bold move, Rover simply put the car out there to stand on its own engineering merits as opposed to perceived glamour, and luckily for them, the gamble paid off. Underneath the P6's skin everything was new and bang up-to-date, including the overhead-cam engine which, although not as smooth as a straight-six, was both willing and economical. The latter was more of an issue than ever before following the petrol shortages experienced during the crisis in Suez, and it seemed that most Rover drivers were willing to sacrifice some refinement in favour of more miles per gallon. The front suspension was a unique arrangement featuring coil-springs lying horizontally in the upper wheelarches, acted upon by a linkage connected to the front wishbones; this system saw that the tops of the struts were braced by the bulkhead, the stiffest part of a car's bodyshell, which paid dividends in both handling and insulation from road vibration. The rear end was just as accomplished, a De Dion sliding-tube with coil springs which, although a little complicated, endowed the car with excellent road-holding whether empty or loaded up.



From the Archives

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN ISSUE 72 MAY 2012

OVERDRIVE

Words & Photography by Andrew Pollock andrew@irishvintagescene.ie



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The Rover P6 is a regular sight at classic shows, but the Burnt Grey paintwork and Kildare registration of this Series I mark it out from the crowd.

Styling-wise this new Rover was a more understated creation than previous Rovers, particularly the rather brash P5 that continued in production. The styling was dignified but clean-cut, with a hand of restraint placed upon the use of chrome trim. With its rakish window pillars and four headlamps mounted in a recessed grille the 2000 was purposeful enough to appeal to younger drivers, yet was just conventional enough in profile not to alienate the existing Rover customer base; no mean achievement. The extensive glass area and slim pillars also made the slightly compact interior seem larger than it actually was, while also marking a serious departure from the rotund, small-windowed P4 model. What wasn't initially obvious from its appearance was that the car's structure was quite radical, consisting of a substantial inner framework onto which all of the exterior panels were simply bolted. This meant that accident damaged panels could be replaced in record time, as well as providing excellent access to the mechanicals when required.

Propulsion for the bold project came from an all-new two-litre overhead-cam four-cylinder engine, fed by twin SU carburettors in the 2000TC and by a single carb in the more basic 2000SC. In 1973 these two units were increased in capacity to 2.2 litres, giving rise to 2200SC and TC badging, but perhaps the most memorable power option was the 3.5-litre V8, which was made available in 1968 to create the 3500 model. Initially only an automatic, a manual version named the 3500S was subsequently made available, and for those who could afford the fuel and road tax this was to be the cream of the P6 crop, providing the car with strong power and performance to match its capable chassis. Four-wheel disc brakes on all P6 models made sure that safe stopping was available at all times, and the interior boasted many passive safety features and extensive padding to impact points.

Every which way you looked at it the P6 would have been a ground-breaking car for any manufacturer, but coming from a conservative operation like Rover made it a real bombshell. There was soon a waiting list for the new car, and throughout its long production life the various versions of the P6, from the basic 2000SC up to the storming V8 3500S, sold strongly and enjoyed a loyal following. Even though the car's replacement, the SD1, was launched in 1976 the P6 2200 and 3500S models continued in production right up until 1977, the remarkable fourteen-year production run indicating just how 'right' the car was on most, if not all, fronts.



OWNERS TIPS

"The best thing I have done to the car is to fit electronic ignition, as it has made it smoother, much more reliable and easier to start."

Expansive glass, leather trim and stylish detailing make the P6 interior a pleasant and comfortable place to be. Note the extra gauges of the TC model in the centre of the dash.





The TC model boasts twin SU carburetors to boost power to around 115bhp, which when combined with the slick four-speed manual gearbox makes for ample performance even today. All maintenance items fall easily to hand, and Tom has added electronic ignition for added reliability.



Thanks to its prestige image when new, married with high levels of build quality and durable mechanicals the various P6 models have become a very firm favourite with classic car enthusiasts in the last few decades. The bolt-on exterior body panels mean that tatty wheelarches and rusty sills don't represent the same crisis that they do on other, more conventional classics, and the long production run means that there are generally plenty of good cars to choose from, as well as a decent supply of secondhand parts and new spares. All of these qualities have long appealed to the owner of the Burnt Grey example on these pages. Indeed, Tom Carey from Mullinahone, Co. Tipperary fancied a P6 from the moment he set eyes on one in the sixties, when they represented a very opulent mode of transport indeed. "There was never one in the parish" he explains, "but the very first day I saw one I liked it, and that just stayed with me." Having tried to pick up a really good one as a daily driver in the late seventies to no avail, Tom put his plans for P6 ownership on the back burner for a long time, but always had his eyes peeled for the right car. However, this 'right car' would take some searching out, as Tom had a very specific target; he would settle for nothing less than an original Irish, chrome-grille (pre-1970 facelift) model! Regulars on the Irish classic scene will realise just how rare Irish P6s are, despite the model's popularity at shows; indeed, I can't remember seeing another in a very long time indeed.





After a very patient wait Tom finally came across this Kildare-registered '68 2000TC for sale in 2000, and didn't waste any time in snapping it up. An original two-owner car, the vendor outlined that the car had been initially owned by a developer who was very particular about the car, to the extent of driving it to the local railway station each day to get the train into Dublin for work so as not to get it dirty on the building site! Having stayed with that first owner for several decades, the Rover was eventually picked up by a local man who knew the car and had long admired it from afar. One thing was for sure; this 2000 had been cherished throughout its life, and Tom was the right man to continue in that vein. The previous owner had carried out some bodywork repairs and maintenance work during his stewardship, and so Tom hasn't had to do a whole lot of serious work in the last twelve years, which is just the way he likes it, as like many of us he had previously gone down the restoration route with other cars, without much success. "Like everyone I bought the wrong cars first, ones that I'd have to restore" Tom smiles wryly; "I hadn't enough time though, so I was looking for a rolling restorer. The very

minute I got this one I could drive it, and it's been very reliable."

Although he tells us that he's not very mechanically minded, leaving the major oily work to his local mechanic of choice, Terry O'Brien, it is clear to me that Tom has derived a lot of satisfaction from maintaining his Rover, cleaning up bits of bodywork here and there while solving the various small issues that can crop up when running any classic. The rear brakes have had to be rebuilt, a few nicks on the bodywork have been touched up and a rough running problem was eventually solved by the fitment of electronic ignition, but the sheen of P6 ownership for Tom remains untarnished. "The guy that designed it was a genius really" he enthuses; "you have a sporty engine and good suspension, but you still have comfort because of the long suspension travel." As a practical but stylish classic with which to cruise to a show, swing open the boot and pop out the picnic table, the 2000 is hard to beat; this Series 1, with its unusual colour and old Kildare registration, is a very fine survivor, one that we are glad is still enjoying a pampered existence.



Having been kept well throughout its life this car has yet to break the 100,000-mile barrier.



One of the few criticisms levelled at the P6 during its production run was a slight lack of luggage space, but for weekend use these cars aren't found lacking in this department. Tom has resisted the urge to mount the spare wheel on the bootlid using the optional touring kit, electing to keep it just as it was.

ROVER 2000TC – QUICK SPEC

Years Produced: 1963 to 1973 (replaced by 2200TC)
Body: 4-door saloon base frame with bolted outer panels
Engine: 1,978cc OHC 4-cylinder
Output: 114bhp @ 5,500rpm
Transmission: 4-speed manual/3-speed automatic
Front Suspension: Independent with horizontal coil-springs
Rear Suspension: Independent De Dion sliding-tube
Top Speed: 115mph
0-60mph: 11.9 seconds

CLUB MEMBERSHIP

Tom is a member of the Kilkenny Motor Club; for details on the club and their events, call the club phone on 087 2844370 or log onto www.kilkennymotorclub.com. Tom also rates highly the Rover Enthusiasts' Club of Ireland; find them at www.roverclubireland.com or call Ray on 087 6334328.

THANKS"

Tom would like to thank his mechanic, Terry O'Brien of Mullinahone, Co. Tipperary, for all of his excellent work on the car, and also his wife Helen for her patience and support for his classic car hobby over the years.



LEFT: Owner Roddy is involved in the Ballyroan Vintage Club of Co. Laois, who have given admirable donations to charity over the last few years as a result of their events.

MAIN: Blue/orange colour scheme and side-mounted headlamps mark this Dexta out as an early model, built in the first couple of years of production.

FO

WHEN FORDSON INTRODUCED THE THREE-CYLINDER PERKINS-POWERED 957E DEXTA IN 1957 IT WAS THE DAWN OF A NEW ERA IN SMALL DIESEL TRACTORS.

There can be no underestimating just how loved and respected the diminutive Fordson Dexta is, not only in Ireland, but in the agricultural world at large. The Fordson Major and Ferguson 20 had set the scene for affordable multi-cylinder diesel tractors in this part of the world, but the Dexta was the beginning of the next level thanks to its extremely economical three-cylinder Perkins engine. That missing cylinder made it far more of a fuel miser than the larger E1A Major, and while the resulting shortfall of torque meant that higher operating revs had to be used, the Dexta's almost forty-horsepower output was still a highly useful figure, and plenty enough for most small to medium farmers in this country.

The blue and white colour scheme of the later Super Dexta is a very familiar sight on today's road runs and show fields, but the blue and orange applied to the first of the breed is far less common. Even rarer again are the very first run of Dextas, which are identifiable by their headlamps being mounted on the bonnet sides instead of being integrated into the radiator grilles. Roddy McGrath's example is one of these early models, a '58 in fact, built about a year after the Dexta's 1957 introduction. It's gleaming paintwork and careful detailing might suggest that this tractor led a charmed life, but as is usually the case, nothing could be further from the truth.



THE BABY FORDSON

Words & Photography by Andrew Pollock andrew@irishvintagescene.ie



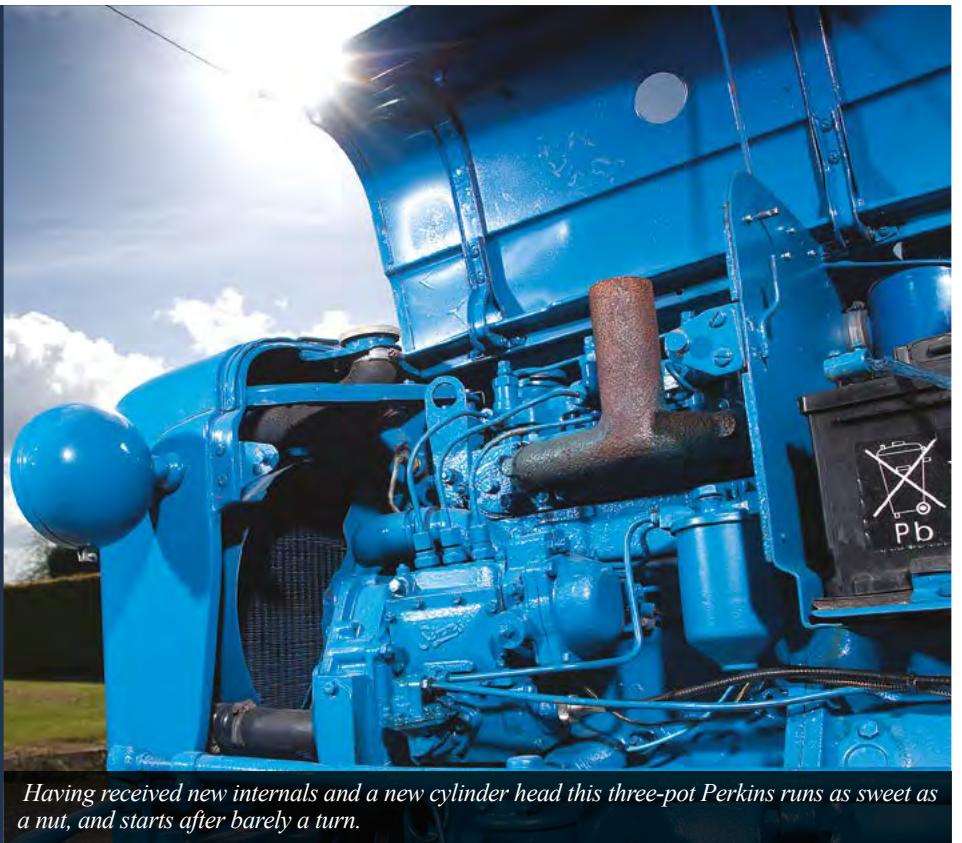
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First bought by a farmer in Durrow, Co. Laois in 1958, this Dexta was bought up as part of that owner's farm a number of years later, after which it was traded into Pratt's of nearby Abbeylisk. Having been bought by another man at that garage, the tractor was pressed into active service once again, but this time in the gruelling terrain of the bog, where it was modified to load and carry turf. Anyone who has worked a tractor on a bog will know that it is a tough life for any tractor, especially a small Dexta, and every ounce of horsepower is summoned from the vehicle in the course of its duties. Eventually the Fordson came to the end of its life, and ended up pushed under a tree as a worn-out wreck, where it rested for four or five years. This period of respite didn't do the machine any good at all, as when Roddy, a keen vintage enthusiast from Ballyroan, came upon it the whole thing was seized solid. This was hardly a great starting point for a project, but Roddy knew the Dexta was an early model and could see the potential it held, and so a deal was done and the tractor was dragged from its leafy store to Roddy's garage in order for work to commence.



Having received new internals and a new cylinder head this three-pot Perkins runs as sweet as a nut, and starts after barely a turn.

DURING RESTORATION



This tractor looks just as good from the driver's seat; no components have been left untouched.

IT'S GLEAMING PAINTWORK AND CAREFUL DETAILING MIGHT SUGGEST THAT THIS TRACTOR LED A CHARMED LIFE, BUT AS IS USUALLY THE CASE, NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH.

As he knew the mechanicals were in very poor order, Roddy realised just how deep he would have to go into the workings and so the entire tractor was stripped to pieces. As the engine was seized it was removed from the frame, and the block and head were separated for inspection. Roddy managed to get the pistons out of their previous positions, but noted that they were only good for the scrap bin, as were the liners. The cylinder head was also a lost cause, and we're sure that many other tractor restoration projects would have been abandoned at this point. Roddy held his resolve however, and just began to compile a long list of replacement parts. In the end a complete, brand new cylinder head was sourced, along with new pistons and bearings, while the existing crankshaft was checked and reground. The injector pump and injectors were reconditioned, and the cooling system was also thoroughly checked and any unserviceable components were replaced.

Moving slightly rearward, the seized steering box was freed out and rebuilt, with the oil seals and rod ends also being replaced. While the gears in the transmission were ok, the bearings were not and so these were swapped out for new items, and the severely worn selector was built up and made good once again. The hydraulic pump in the rear end was also shot, and a brand new item was fitted in its place, as well as new upper valves and all of the required seals and gaskets needed to ensure leak-free running. The brakes were also attended to, as being an active member of the Ballyroan Vintage Club Roddy had every intention of getting some use out of his classic machine once it was completed. While he tells us that practically every part is available new for the Dexta, the handbrake lever isn't one of those, and so the one fitted to this tractor is made up of parts from three donor tractors!



These shots taken during the rebuild show that no mechanical aspect was left to chance. The paintwork should also last for many years to come as plenty of layers were applied.

FORDSON DEXTA

Rody declined to fit an alternator; as the original electrics are dynamo-driven.



On the cosmetic side of things the old Fordson was shot up pretty bad too, and early in the project Rody took the sensible decision to get the entire thing sandblasted. Once the corrosion and old paint was removed and the mechanical aspects were tended to, the skid unit was sprayed with protective layers of red primer to help preserve it for the future. The only original body panel that had survived in usable condition was the bonnet, even though it had been twisted badly out of shape by a larger-than-standard battery, and this was straightened out and repaired. All other panels had to be bought new, including the nosecone, and these too were sprayed in primer before the final topcoats of Ford blue were applied by Rody's brother in law. Adamant that the tractor's integrity was to be preserved, all cosmetic and accessory components were returned to original

specification, although Rody rues the incorrect seat cushion that was sent from the UK in place of the proper blue and orange item.

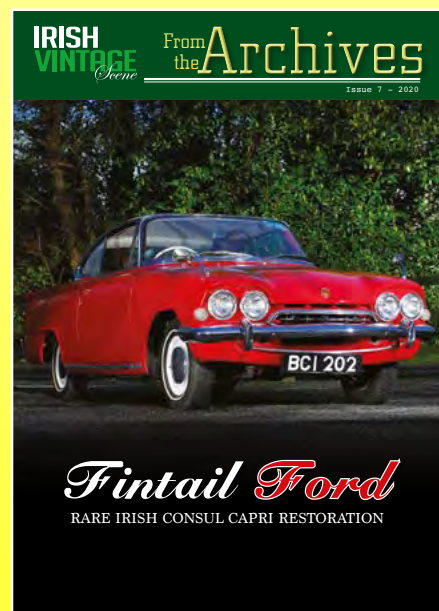
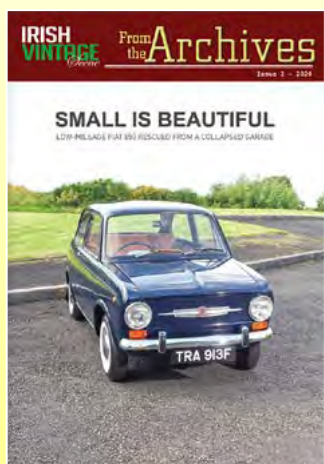
That one deviation certainly doesn't take from the tractor's overall air of quality, as it's easy to see that it has been properly rebuilt, with care taken on every mechanical component. On the day of our shoot the three-cylinder Perkins started immediately every time we needed to move it, as well it should given that it is a brand new unit to all intents and purposes. There's no play in the steering, smoke from the breather or other giveaways that something is amiss; everything simply works as it should, and as this fine early Dexta goes about its business in the future we are sure that it will remain in such tip-top condition.



The nose badge has been detailed for more visual impact, which breaks up the blue and orange expanses nicely.

PAST ISSUES

(Click to view)



A real highlight of the event was the pre-1955 exhibition races, which saw all sorts of delectable machines put through their paces to the delight of the crowd.



CLASSIC CAR LIVE

MONDELLO PARK RACING CIRCUIT, 22ND JUNE 2008

For many years I, like many others, have listened enviously to stories from the big classic motorsport festivals abroad like the Goodwood Festival of Speed in the UK, the Le Mans Classic in France, the Monterey Historic in Laguna Seca, U.S.A. and the Hockenheim Classic in Germany, to name only a few.

Words by **Andrew Pollock**, andrew@irishvintagescene.ie
Photos by **Con Brady**, **Carl Czanik**,
Mark O'Leary & **Andrew Pollock**

Considering the quality and quantity of vintage and classic cars in Ireland today it was only a matter of time before we Irish enthusiasts got our own festival of classic motorsport, and that day finally dawned on the 22nd of June this year with the inaugural 'Classic Car Live', held at the epicentre of Irish motorsports, Mondello Park Racing Circuit in Naas, Co. Kildare. Recognising the importance and potential of this fledgling event, we at *Irish Vintage Scene* were quick to join forces with Mondello at the planning stage, and sure enough as we began to bring details to our readers earlier this year we encountered a huge amount of positive feedback. While static events and road runs form the foundation of our hobby, and will hopefully continue to do so, we certainly discovered a desire in many people for a new kind of event, one where they could watch exotic old motors in full flight and even get the chance to take their own classic out onto the circuit, either for an unrestricted high-speed run or in the safety of a low-speed, strictly-marshalled set of parade laps.



IN ASSOCIATION WITH

IRISH VINTAGE
Scene



Pat and Francis Walsh, members of the Carlow Vintage & Classic Motor Club, enjoyed their day at Mondello with their 1958 Anglia 100E.



The powerful Rover 3500S V8 of John Richardson from Co. Cavan would be a great car to take around the racetrack. John is a member of the Rover Enthusiasts' Club of Ireland.



Despite the stormy weather early-on the paddock was full of all sorts of vintage and classic motors.



Mitsubishi Lancer 2000 Turbo gets some tweaking during the track session.



Lotus, MG and Porsche were well-represented on the day.



We didn't catch the owner of this very authentic AC Cobra replica, but he or she is a very lucky person!



The club excursions onto the track were hugely popular, and saw a fantastic diversity of cars from Prefects to Ferraris take part.



The pit lane was in timewarp mode; if it wasn't for the race suits and helmets it would be pretty hard to date this photo!



Denis Walsh in the Millpoole Special under pressure from an Aston DB6 as he exits Dunlop corner.



Gorgeous little Morgan F 3-wheeler leads Kieran White's fearsome TRS and a Bugatti touring coupe through a fast left-hander.



It's easy to see where the BMW 3.0CSL earned its nickname the 'Batmobile'... This yellow example was a standout, both on track and in the paddock.



Motoring presenter Tony Colley was looking period-perfect in his well-known Frazer Nash, and was really gunning it around the circuit.



The HRCA races were a real spectacle, with these oldies reaching serious speeds.



Shay O'Brien was out on track with his stunning Moto Guzzi Airone 250 Sport, one of many ex-Irish Vintage Scene feature machines taking part.

As a result, anticipation for this event was almost at fever pitch by the time the day rolled around, and not even the almost biblical weather could keep a huge number of classic enthusiasts from attending Classic Car Live 1. Those who braved the wet, blustery weather early in the day were rewarded with sunnier conditions as the day progressed, which gave everyone a chance to get out and see what was offer. The paddock was full of a huge variety of machinery, from classic motorcycles to vintage tourers, and many clubs had gone to great lengths to set up a good display of their members' cars. The parade laps were very well received by all, both young and old, and the safety and protection of everyone taking part was utmost; course-cars mingled with the parade to keep the speeds down and to keep everyone going in the right direction. Those who chose to take part in the high-speed laps looked to have an excellent time of it, with a couple of low-speed spins taking place on the tighter corners as confidence levels peaked! With plenty of racing action also on the bill, including the Historic Racing Car Association races and action from the pre-'55 class, it was an unforgettable day; this will be an event to watch in the future, and *Irish Vintage Scene* will be the first to bring you updates on the 2009 event as they are released.

TRIUMPH

FRESH FROM A DETAILED REBUILD, THIS STUNNING T-100SS RECENTLY SCOOPED THE IVMCC 'RESTORATION OF THE YEAR' AWARD, ONE OF THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS PRIZES IN THE COUNTRY FOR TWO-WHEELED CLASSICS.

Words & Photos by Andrew Pollock andrew@irishvintagescene.ie



From
the Archives

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PHANT



Gary's daughter Nicole is chief helper in the garage; another motorcyclist in the making...?

Over the years, many column inches have been dedicated to the Triumph Speed Twin engine, and the bikes to which it has been fitted. A 498cc parallel-twin, the motor was designed by the famous Edward Turner, who was also responsible for such other legends as the Ariel Square Four and Daimler V8 engines. The first frame this engine graced was the 1937 motorbike of the same name, and this Triumph Speed Twin was able to crack 90mph while also being very reasonably priced. It was a potent cocktail, giving the new engine a lot of positive publicity and making it something of an overnight success. With 27bhp on tap the new-fangled twin was smooth and powerful to ride, while also not being a technological nightmare to produce for the company, and was soon to prove its mettle when it powered fleets of military motorcycles during the Second World War. It certainly acquitted itself well in such duty, and after the war its derivatives would go on to power the great Triumph models of the fifties and sixties such as the T100, Thunderbird, Bonneville and the rest.



In modern times these classic Triumph motorcycles enjoy a fanatical following, promoted by iconic Hollywood appearances over the years, many competition successes and that characterful engine, which, given the right exhausts, makes one of the most glorious engine notes of all. Although Gary Lawlor from Finglas in Dublin, owner of the gorgeous T100 SS on these pages, is predominantly a Japanese bike fan, like most of us the charms of the Triumph twin certainly weren't lost on him. "I've always had a bike, mainly Japanese models" he explains, "but I've always liked the Triumphs and the sound they make." Gary's

first foray into the motorbike world came earlier than most of us, when his mother bought him a Yamaha 90 at the age of eleven; however, before you start thinking that he was spoilt rotten, we should tell you that it came stripped as two sacks of parts! Even at his tender age Gary got the bike back together, sprayed it and even managed to sell it to a man who used it to travel to work, thus setting the seeds for a lifetime of two-wheeling. When he was old enough to take to the road Gary bought a Kawasaki K-100 on hire purchase, and has had a bike in his life ever since, albeit invariably Japanese.





Gary was relieved to find that the engine had been rebuilt to a high standard by a previous owner.

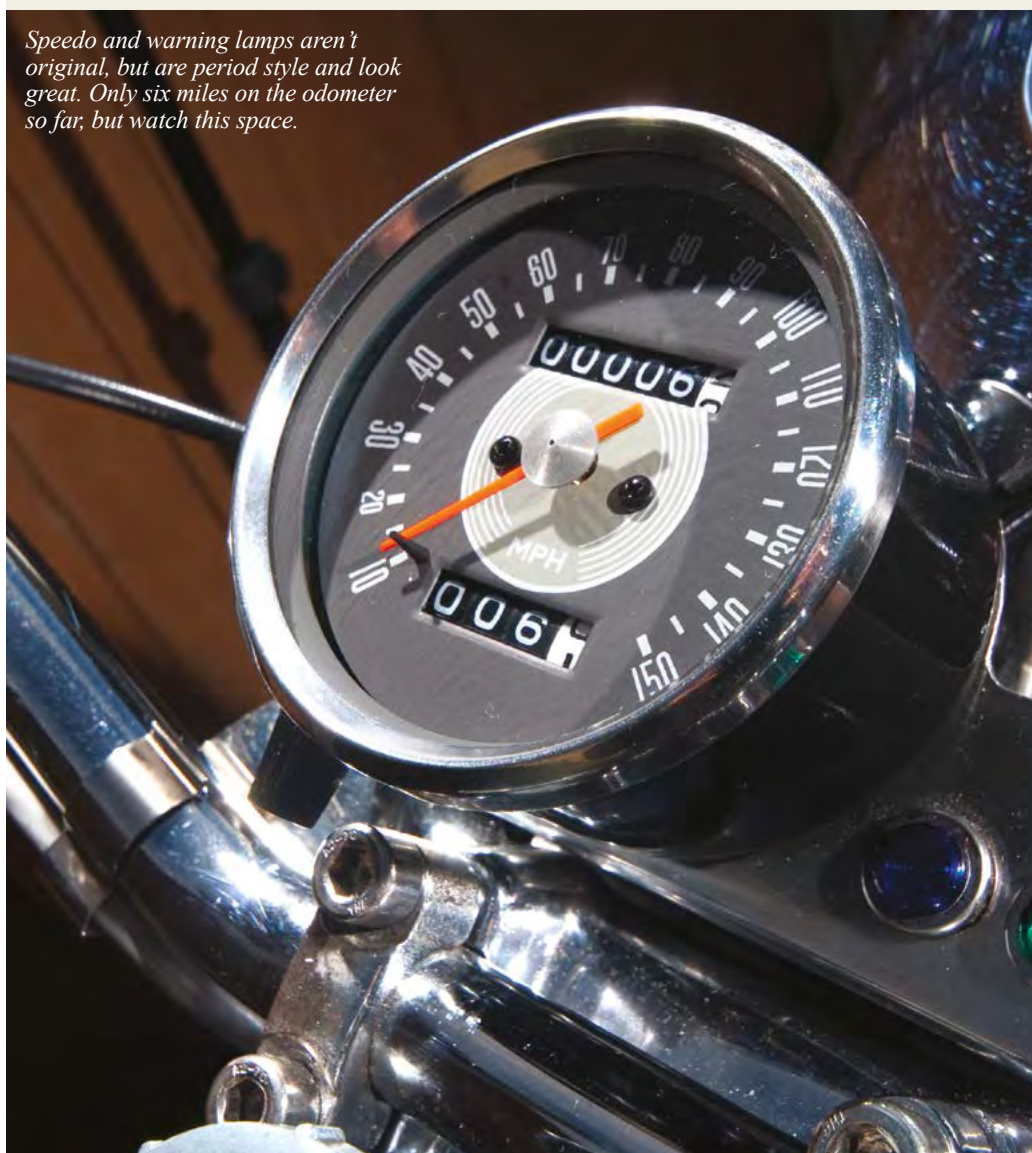
"WHEN I WON, EVERYONE WANTED TO TALK TO ME; THEY ASSUMED THAT I HAD BEEN WORKING ON THESE FOR YEARS, BUT THIS IS THE FIRST TRIUMPH I'VE EVER DONE. THERE WERE LONG-TIME TRIUMPH GUYS SAYING TO ME THAT THIS IS THE NICEST T100SS THEY'D EVER SEEN."

That was, at least, until April 2009, when the attraction of a classic Triumph twin proved too much to resist, and he picked up the bike you see here as part of a two-bike job lot which also included a 350cc Triumph. However, it was this larger 500cc machine that came in for instant attention, as a '62 T100SS is a pretty rare machine, especially so this one as it has retained its matching engine and frame numbers. Although a good share of work had already been carried out to this bike, there was a lot more ahead as a previous owner had started to rebuild the bike with good intentions but not very much experience. "We had to check every nut and bolt," Gary explains, "the steering races were all the wrong size so the front end was loose, there was play at the wheels where the wrong spacers were used, and the front shocks were sticking because the dampers were all wrong. We ended up dismantling and reassembling everything again."

All of this represented a steep learning curve for Gary as, although he had been on and around bikes all of his life, this was the first classic British bike he had taken on. Nevertheless, with the help and advice of his friends John Archie and Ken Harold, he was

able to rebuild the bike correctly and come to grips with the foibles that come with such a machine. The engine was reputed to have been rebuilt, and despite all the problems with the rest of the bike this part of the restoration proved unproblematic; the engine was serviced and inspected, and the three lads found it to be a great runner. Having searched high and low for parts for previous Japanese bikes he has worked on, Gary enthuses about the parts availability for bikes like this Triumph, all of which can be found easily and relatively cheaply from a myriad of specialists, and before long the SS was up, running, and painted. Having originally been red in colour, Gary elected to have the bike sprayed in a black and white two-tone scheme which looks fantastic while also being evocative of the period. Also, this bike would originally have worn the so-called 'bikini' rear mudguard, a scaled-down version of the infamous bathtub design, but these were controversial even in their day, and Gary has elected to simply fit conventional chrome mudguards in their place. Being an SS, a pair of quite low, aftermarket handlebars have also been fitted, further accentuating this sportier model's racy looks.

Speedo and warning lamps aren't original, but are period style and look great. Only six miles on the odometer so far, but watch this space.





Having been working on the Triumph most evenings since its purchase, it was nearing completion coming up to the Irish Veteran and Vintage Motorcycle Club's 2009 show at Leopardstown Racecourse, Dublin last November, a new venue for the event which had previously been held in Taney in Dundrum. Being an IVVMCC member for the last number of years, Gary decided to enter the show for his first time ever. The omens didn't seem entirely on his side when the finishing parts of trim for the Triumph only arrived the morning of the show, and having never been outside the garage before, it (and Gary) got thoroughly soaked while getting it into the show venue. It all proved worthwhile though, when he was gobsmacked to find a rosette on the motorcycle at the end of the day proclaiming it to be 'IVVMCC Restoration of the Year 2009.' 'I couldn't believe it,' Gary beams. 'When I won, everyone wanted to talk to me; they assumed that I had been working on these for years, but this is the first Triumph I've ever done. There were long-time Triumph guys saying to me that this is the nicest T100SS they'd ever seen. I'd only roughly sprayed on the rear

reg. number that morning, as I wasn't sure they'd let me in without it!'

With such a prestigious win on his first time out, Gary is understandably chuffed with the result of the project. Although the fervent purist could take issue with inaccuracies on this bike, Gary is quick to point out that he built it the way he wanted it, and the judges fully appreciated his position in that regard. This machine might not be to 100% factory specification, but it is certainly everything that one would expect of a classic Triumph twin; it's very evocative of its era, and is perhaps the way the model should have been built. When Gary kicked the engine into action at the end of our shoot, the thunderous blat that erupted from the sports exhausts only cemented this T100's appeal. A stunning-looking bike with a stunning soundtrack, bikers all over the country will understand Gary's frustration at not yet getting a decent opportunity to take it for a spin. 'There's only six miles on the clock since it was finished,' Gary explains in closing; 'I'm dying for a good, dry day to get out on it for a proper long run.' Aren't we all Gary, aren't we all.



The under-saddle area is as well-detailed as the rest of the machine, and features many hand-fabricated items. Gary has fitted a new wiring loom with a modern regulator, but has also kept the originals in situ so they can be easily reinstated if desired.



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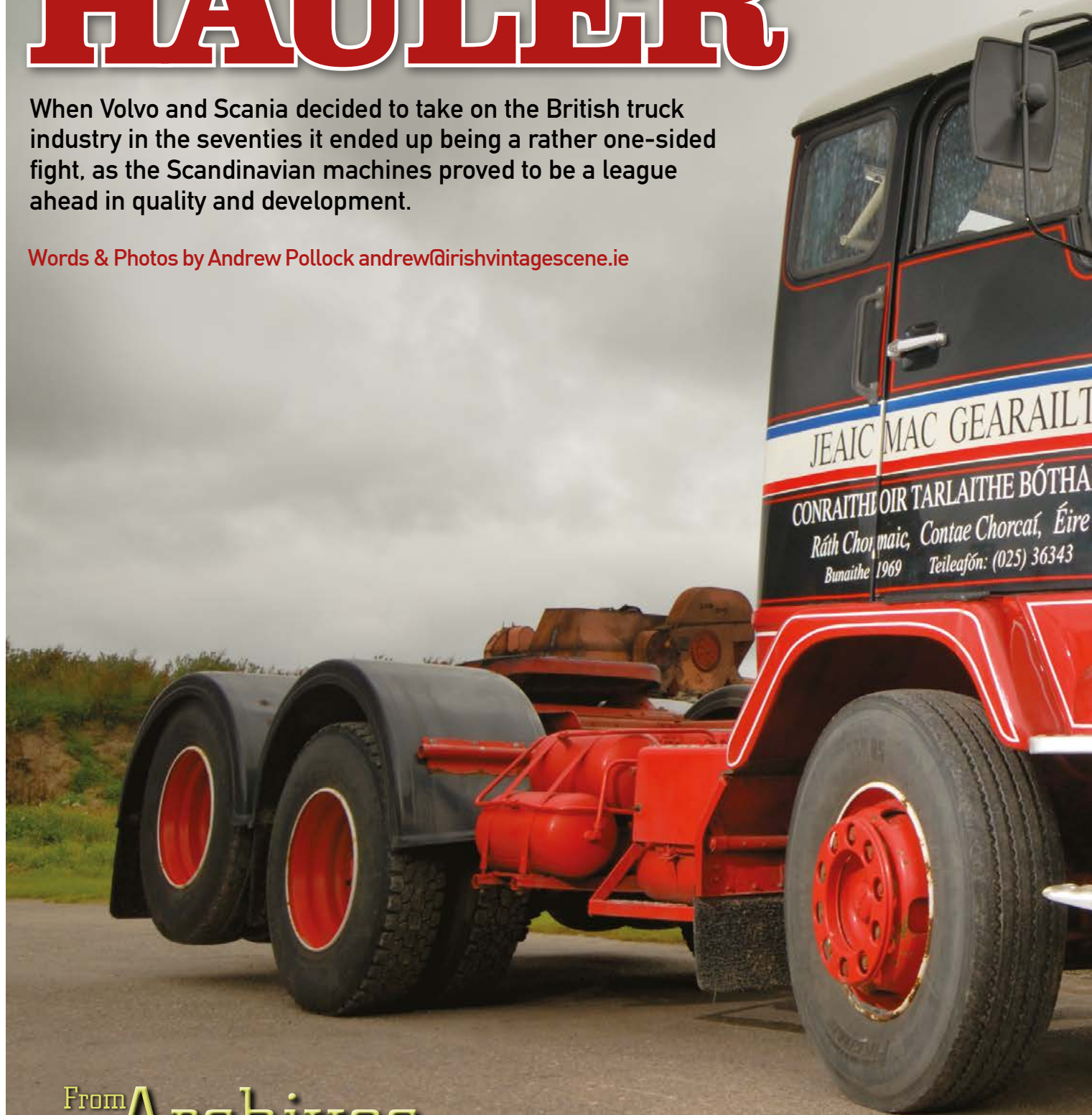
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SCANDINAVIAN HAULER

When Volvo and Scania decided to take on the British truck industry in the seventies it ended up being a rather one-sided fight, as the Scandinavian machines proved to be a league ahead in quality and development.

Words & Photos by Andrew Pollock andrew@irishvintagescene.ie



From
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IAN



Even though Volvo only released their very first car in 1926, the Swedish company has been building trucks since 1928 and has earned a reputation for tough, practical and long-lasting vehicles since those early days. That first truck, known as the Series 1, put the company on the commercial map, and today, over eighty years later, Volvo have risen to become the second-largest truck manufacturer in the world with several other well-known marques under its ownership including Mack, White, Nissan Diesel and Renault Trucks. Volvo's success in the commercial vehicle market is perhaps no surprise when you consider that they have two very suitable assets; firstly their cars have a reputation for very tough bodyshells, which translates well into truck manufacture, and secondly the company has a huge range of diesel engines at its disposal thanks to its involvement in marine and industrial power over the years through their Volvo Penta wing.

A formidable player in the modern marketplace, the Volvo onslaught in the international haulage industry really kicked off in 1964 with the release of the F88. This thoroughly modern and highly efficient truck spelt trouble for the existing manufacturers, particularly the British ones, right from the start thanks to its high build-quality and specification. The spec sheet featured a variety of straight-six diesel engines of over 240 hp, power steering, splitter plus high/low gearboxes, a roomy interior with optional sleeping quarters and a tough, solid steel cab. It wasn't cheap, but neither were the competition, and the F88 soon garnered a reputation for being a powerful and comfortable workhorse, capable of covering transcontinental distances in great comfort. Much like the Japanese invasion of the car and motorcycle industry, the writing was on the wall for the established truck manufacturers, who had to either sit up, take note and adapt, or simply fall by the wayside, which a lot of them subsequently did. The F10 that followed in 1977 followed up the F88's success with another knockout blow, and Volvo Trucks

Rear lift-axle is electro-hydraulic;
no airbags in those days!



Far left: The cab was extremely sound when Tom bought the truck, and it only needed minimal fettling before the paint was applied.

Left: The F88 outside McCarthy's Volvo dealership in Kilkenny; note the seventies tipping trailer that Tom restored last year, complete with double rams, twin wheels, Rubbolite lamps and all the other features that have disappeared from such trailers today.

Tom Fitzgerald from Rathcormac, Co. Cork knows all about the strengths of the Swedish marque, and he and his father before him have used Volvo trucks for a long time. "We're in haulage forty years this year; it's maybe forty years too long I suppose!" he laughs. "It was mostly Volvo's we've had. My father, Jack, used to draw beet to Youghal railway station with rigid Ford D-Series' until 1981 when the station closed. After that we got into artics, because it all had to go by road to Mallow. He had an F88, and the later F10s as well. We're still working an F10, which was the last one ever sold new in this country in 1994."

Thanks to his fond memories of the F88, Tom fancied picking one up as a collectable vehicle in later years, and about three years ago he managed to find the gem on these pages. A 1976 290hp model with sixteen-speed transmission, this particular example



Fitzgerald livery is very attractive, and it's great to see the cúpla focail in use!



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had survived in fantastic order and was quite a find indeed, as Tom told us.

"The man I bought it off had owned it for eleven years" he explains. "He used to drive F88s out to the Middle East, and had a pining for one himself, and so he bought this one. He lived in a council house with a shed, and every morning he would go out to the truck to do his daily checks, start it and drive it out of the shed. Then he would just polish the dash or read the paper, before reversing it back in again." The truck has been doubly lucky (or triply so if you count Tom too), as the owner before that was also very particular with the Volvo, so much so that for its last MOT he fitted a brand new front bumper and passenger seat. This cosseted existence has certainly stood to the truck, as Tom tells us that it has never been restored. When Tom brought the F88 back from the UK the main job ahead of him was to redecorate it in the old family livery. Only a couple of other minor jobs were needed, and once the attractive navy, white and red paintwork was applied the truck took on a whole new lease of life. For those who might be curious, the rearmost axle is a lifting item, and believe it or not is original equipment for this truck. This electro-hydraulic system was only introduced in '75/'76, and so this F88 was just in time to enjoy its benefits. As well as regularly hauling vintage tractors to vintage shows (Tom is an active member of the Rathcormac Vintage Club), the Volvo still proves its worth if Tom is stuck for a tractor unit through his work. It has attended vintage shows from Cooley to Mogeely to Mountbellew, and looks like it will be hauling effectively for a long time to come.

Also in the photos can be seen an attractive Ford D-Series beavertail. This has been in Tom's ownership for about six years, but only recently had been tackled and was only fresh from the workshop on the day of our shoot. A six-cylinder 1977 DO 710 model, it needed more bodywork and repair than was originally envisaged, but all work was carried out in Tom's workshop with the much appreciated help of family and friends, and the little D-Series now makes a useful little carrier for all sorts of duties around the yard and beyond. It's in a different league to the big Volvo, but each



Little D-Series is fresh from restoration.



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Little St

We've all got to start somewhere in this retro and classic hobby, but for many of us the results of our first car projects are best forgotten. However, even though Evan O'Connor started his Mini rebuild at the age of fifteen, he's ended up with a stunner to be proud of.

By all accounts, the Mini is a great choice for a first project. They are reasonably cheap to buy, fantastic fun to drive, mechanically simple and the range of spares and tuning parts out there is mind-boggling. The Mini scene is open and varied, leaving owners to build their car in any way they like, from concours originals to turbocharged rat-lookers. Such was the popularity of Alec Issigonis' protégé when new that you're bound to stimulate nostalgic conversation from passers-by everywhere you go, while a loyal fanbase means that you'll never be short of a Mini-mad friend or two. The Mini was always hailed as a 'classless' car, and by saying that we don't mean it lacks class; rather, it appealed to, and was driven by, people from all social groups and walks of life, and that universal appeal is perhaps even stronger today than it was when the little car was sitting in the new car showrooms.

Therefore it's true that Evan O'Connor from Waterford chose wisely when, in 2005 and at the tender age of fifteen, he decided to tackle a classic car restoration of his own. "I wanted to do up a car as a project or to tinker around with for a hobby, and a Mini was picked as the car to get as they were cheap and basic" he confirms. That said, his choice was certainly influenced by the availability of a potential car just down the road which, at his young age, was a definite bonus. "I saw two in a barn just five minutes from my house" he laughs, "so I went down to the owner and had a look. I checked over each to pick the better one, only to find out that if I wanted one I had to buy the two of them. After a few days of thought, we bought the two cars for €150."

A ton-fifty might sound like a bargain for two classic Minis, but these weren't exactly minters. One was a scrapper for parts only, while the "better" of the two was no show-pony either... "It was lying idle for eight or ten years before I found it, and was rotten in the usual places" Evan recalls. "My foot went through the footwell as it had been repaired with fibreglass at some stage, and it was badly resprayed a shade of blue with tractor paint. I found paint on seats, seatbelts, carpet, sun visors, the steering wheel, the dash and anything else that wasn't masked." Not the most promising of starts, but at least it was an original Waterford car, and Evan was looking for a restoration project, after all.

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Words & Photography by Andrew Pollock
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Evan has owned his Mini since 2005 when he was only fifteen years old, and has remained faithful to it since; it's his only classic project so far.



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And a project he most certainly had, as when he started to strip the Mini down Evan found it needed floors, a boot-lid, two doors and pretty much the entire front end sheet-metal. After cleaning down the afflicted areas as best he could, he wisely entrusted the welding to a professional; Liam O'Connor of Mini Bits in Cahir was selected, and the car was trailered up to him for surgery. Liam replaced the front wings, front panel and bonnet, but before any paint was to hit the car Evan had another bit of work for him. Keen to personalise the Mini to his own tastes, a Zeemax bodykit was ordered up and was fitted by Liam. This kit not only includes the usual bumpers and sideskirts, but also wide wheelarches, so there was a bit of fettling needed to get it set up correctly. This was done to a high standard, with Mini Bits also respraying the car in its new shade of Opel Star Silver.

With the newly-refurbished shell back at home, Evan got stuck into turning it back into a fully-functioning car once again. All of the exterior trim and lamps were replaced, and a set of 7x13-inch Superlite wheels were picked up to really fill out those wide arches. The old 850cc base-model engine was binned in favour of a lightly warmed-up 1275cc motor, which was painted and detailed and mounted on a rebuilt front subframe. The rear subframe was also reconditioned, and new fuel and brake lines were fitted throughout. To reign in the extra performance of the larger engine the front brakes were upgraded to MG Metro Turbo spec with four-pot calipers, and the complete underside and all cavities were wax-oiled to ensure that the car wouldn't need such extensive remedial work again. The interior also came in for significant alteration, with the single-central-clock dash replaced by a custom item based loosely on the later dash with the three instruments in front of the driver. A new headlining and a blue/black leather re-trim completely transformed the cabin, while a chunky woodrim steering wheel looked great while also adding to the driving experience. And of course, a Pioneer head unit mated to some 6x9s and a boot-mounted sub was a necessity for a young man in his first custom classic.

Two years after he first got his hands on it, Evan took the Mini for its maiden NCT in 2007. "It failed on minor issues, which were fixed" he explains, "and I finally got it on the road about two

months later, and drove it as my daily." After putting so much graft into this, his first project, Evan was delighted to have this racy-looking Mini on the road, but disaster struck less than a year later when he met the back of a Saab at some traffic lights, resulting in extensive front-end damage. "It needed a new wing, new front panel, new bonnet and new grille" he shrugs, "and although it was repaired I decided then to use it as a weekend car as the daily use was taking its toll on it." A more modern runaround was picked up to take on the daily grind, and as can often happen in these circumstances the Mini was relegated to weekend use, then show use, then the occasional run around the block, before ending up sitting unused in need of a few repairs.

The 'long finger' can sometimes be terminal for an old car, but in July of 2011 Evan decided to show the Mini some love once again, setting the deadline of a local vintage show to keep himself on track. Having become unhappy with a few aspects of the car, both mechanical and cosmetic, he went through it again to get it where he really wanted it. The braking system was rebuilt first, and the rubber cone suspension was replaced by high-lows; that's Mini speak for adjustable struts. The ubiquitous Superlites were swapped for the more unusual Alleycats you see in the photos, with the rears being spaced out by an extra 1.5 inches to sit flush with the Zeemax arches. The coloured leather of the interior had become unfashionable at that stage too; "Mazda MX-5 seats retrimmed in black cloth look a lot more respectable than the bouncy-castle interior that used to be in it" he laughs. The engine also received a major service with new ignition leads, points and plugs to get it running smoothly once again. "I finished the car at 4am on the day of the show, and I've been using it as much as I can ever since" he beams.

Even though it's been eight years now since he took on the project, and six since he first got it on the road, we can tell that Evan is still extremely fond of his classic pocket rocket. Unlike the many others that get bored after six months and move their projects on, he looks set to stay the course and develop the car further over the coming years. This might have been his first project, but there's every chance it could also be his second, his third, his fourth...



The old 850 engine is long gone, with a warmed-up 1275 in its place. It features a K&N filter, Lucas competition coil and leads and plenty of detailing.



No room for the golf clubs here, but that's ok; Evan doesn't play golf.





Narrow Mazda MX-5 seats fit nicely and look great.



Evan's recent change from Superlites to Alleycats was an inspired move in our opinion, their black detailing providing some much-needed contrast with the silver paint.



The spaced rear wheels and adjustable suspension give this Mini a very purposeful stance.



The interior is very clean and neatly-done, with plenty of alloy detailing to break up the black trim.



There's only one thing better than a rev-counter; two rev-counters...

Thanks...

Evan would like to thank Jim and Tom Butler, Seamus Howley and Chris Greene for their help with the project, plus his father for all his assistance with the car when he was younger.

Retro Classics would like to thank Mick Harte at the Store-All Self-Storage Centre on the Cork Road, Waterford for kindly providing the location for our photos. For more information on Store-All's range of storage and security solutions, call 051 319319 or log onto www.store-all.ie.

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