

L'Aronde

The Magazine of SIMCA Club UK

Volume 34 No.1 January-February 2014

Simca

Matra

Talbot

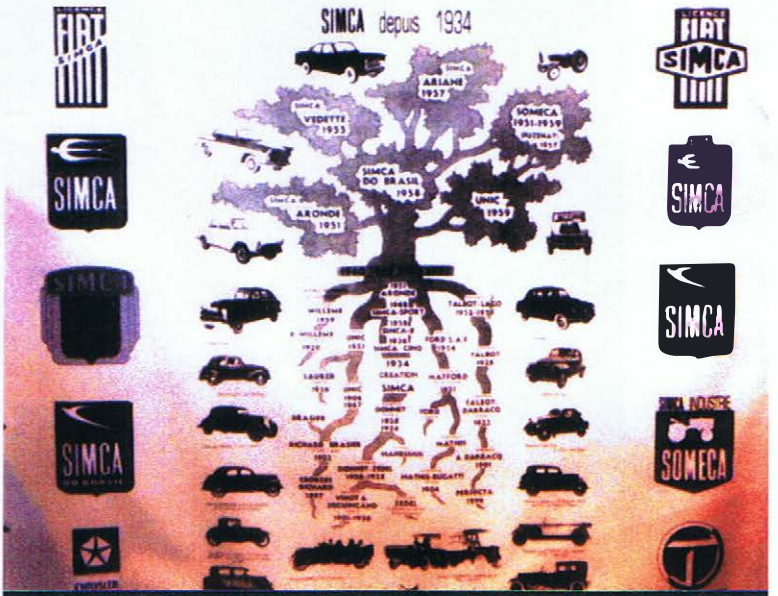


*Above: superb SIMCA CG convertible photographed by Des Collins at Retromobile.
Below: Abarth-SIMCA 2000 featured in a May '66 Autocar Silverstone track test
which appears in this issue.....*





Jean Todt/Guy Frequelin Sunbeam.



The SIMCA Family tree... must look for a full, clearer copy of this.



The Abarth-SIMCA 2 litre from the cover

Into another **SIMCA-Talbot** year with the time fast approaching when all club cars will be at least 30 years old.

Thanks to all members who have already renewed their subscription for 2014. Prompt renewal certainly helps Edward, our treasurer and enables me to predict print runs for *L'Aronde* more efficiently.

Please note this will be the last issue of *L'Aronde* I am able to send out to those members who don't renew. *Those who choose not to renew, having sold their car or for whatever reason... many thanks for your support over the years.*

I've managed to list many of the dates for events we could attend as a club during 2014. Please let me, or the committee member responsible for the event, know if you are interested in joining us at any of these events and arrangements such as club stand size, passes etc. can be planned.

THE BIG EVENT FOR 2014 is, of course **ROUTEUK** in July, our hosting of the **International SIMCA, MATRA, Talbot** meeting at Beaulieu.....

I've included some information that is also available on the website for the event www.routeuk.net and David Chapman fills in further details on what, hopefully, will be an even bigger celebration of everything SIMCA etc than the 2000 International meeting we hosted at the same venue. I've found a few photos of the 2000 event. Any others for future issues would be very welcome.

For the New Year, I decided my RHD **1200S Coupe** just has to be finished and having dragged the **1100 pickup** out of mothballs that will be back on the road for 2014 too. So far, despite the weather, I'm on course with the New Year's resolution although progress on the coupe is slower than I'd like as I keep finding some obscure parts that don't relate to the rest of the 1000 range and time goes in sourcing the necessary parts.....

I've updated my progress on the coupe.

Daniel Burrowes' workmanship was universally admired on Phil Hart's **Rallye 1** at the NEC. His latest project appears along with other rear engined material in '*Mille Time*'

Every so often, our old cars decide to let us down. Jeannette David's previously reliable **Solara Rapier** has recently been through an 'uncooperative phase'..... She describes the mystery faults and the measures taken to try to cure them. Colin Hill adds his comments on the problems and possible reasons.....

Guy Maylam has found a period John Bolster road test on the **SIMCA 1500** and A track test featuring the spectacular 1000 based **Abarth SIMCA 2000**.....

Des Collins has sent in some photos taken recently at **RETROMOBILE**.....

At the AGM I suggested a possible thread for new material in *L'Aronde* could be *Members' Other Interests*.....

You've had photos of my obsession with old excavating machinery. This time sister in law Lesley explains what keeps her busy when she is not persuading Kev to buy even more old cars..... *just joking Les honest..!!!*

Recently, in the process of introducing myself on the French SIMCA website www.simca-competition.com I dug out some old racing photos which appear here along with some background information.

Following on from Bob Friendship's reprinted letter re. the formation of what is now SIMCA Club UK in the last issue. Out of the blue, I received an email from Alan Catharine, who was magazine editor for the original Club SIMCA International. He has offered to write me an article for a future issue....

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Email scukmick@aol.com



SIMCA Club UK
www.simcatalbotclub.org





Simca Club UK..... Directory

Reformed by Bob Friendship in 1980 as the Simca Aronde Owners Register, later the Simca Owners Register. Now also incorporating the Talbot (1979-1986) Owners' Register

Website www.simcatalbotclub.org

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Advisor for Samba David Chapman (as above Re. Membership Secretary))

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Advisor for Murena/M530 Tim Martin, 100 Church Road, Netheton, Dudley, W.Midlands, DY2 OJJ Tel. 01384258097 Mobile 07771 359731 Email mister530@aol.com

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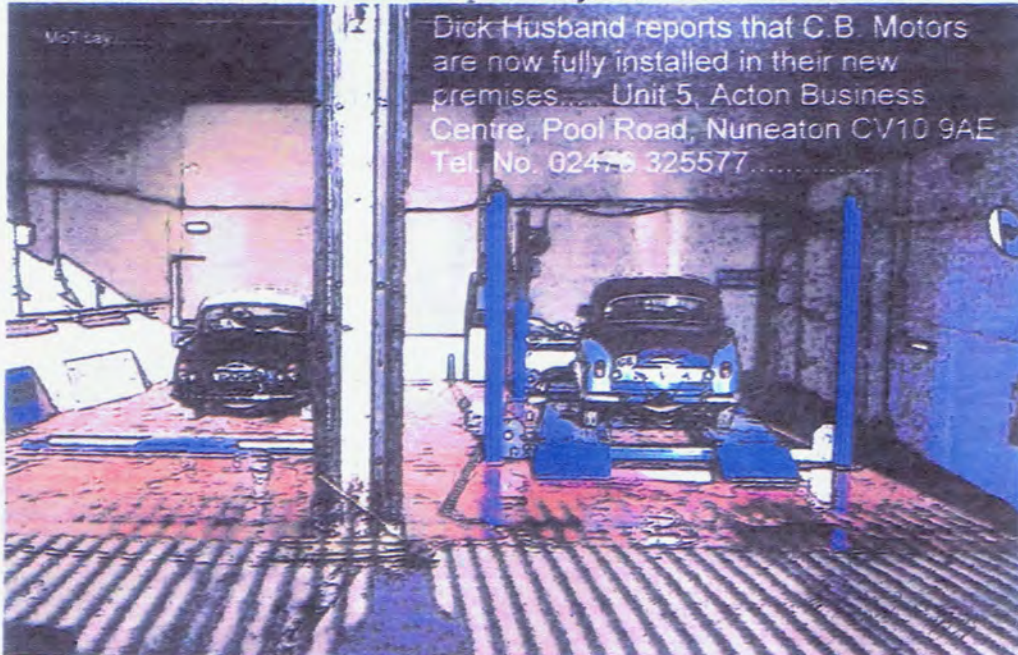
MatraClub magazine editor & contact Roy Gillard. Tel. 020 88611035 roy@matraclub.org.uk

The views expressed in articles or letters in L'Aronde are not necessarily the views of the committee of Simca Club UK.

No responsibility will be accepted for loss, damage or injury arising in the consequence of anyone acting on information contained in this publication.

SIMCA CLUB UK Services and Parts suppliers

CB MOTORS Large stocks of spares –new and secondhand for *Simcas, Talbots and other older cars* Contact **Dick Husband** on Dick.Husband@btinternet.com tel. 02476 325577 . Dick is now fully installed in new premises at **Unit 5, Acton Business Centre, Pool Road, Nuneaton CV10 9AE** and can offer all the services available previously.....



COLIN HILL Horizon / Alpine / Solara Spares / Servicing / Recovery
01473 737325 / 07745 422498 / colihill@hotmail.com ...
Exhaust Systems / Windscreens / Gear Change Rods / Driveshafts / Water Pumps /
Alternators / Starters / Service items plus many bits you thought you couldn't get
again, and free advice on these models.....

Kev Ward has stocks of new and used parts for **SIMCA 1000's and 1100's** , he may just have what you are looking for! Contact him on **01246 278 508** or Email kev.ward1204@btinternet.com

Guy Maylam can supply some parts for SIMCA 1100, 1301/1501's and CHRYSLER- TALBOT Horizon, Alpine, Solara, 180 and 2 Litres and other models. Contact him for the part you need on **01892 538598** Email guymaylam@aol.com

Michael Whitworth has a stock of **Samba** parts, including suspension struts, suspension arms, gaskets, water pumps, filters, brake pads, shoes and cylinders and small electrical parts. Contact him on **01905 821 231**

Mick Ward has gaskets, ball joints, pads, shoes & cylinders for most 4 cylinder models. Also small electrical bits. 01 water pumps, some factory workshop manuals/handbooks, shockers and hoses **01246 200045** Email Scukmick@aol.com

As the saying goes, I have some good news and bad news...

Owners of MATRA cars.....
Note from Roy Gillard regarding the future of French parts supplier
HB Pieces. I believe they did parts for the mainstream **SIMCA/Talbot** range too.....????

The good news is that HB Pieces have a buyer for all their Murena stock. He is not telling us who yet until probably March.

The bad news is that there is no buyer for the Bagheera and Rancho stock (he doesn't even mention 530!) but he says that there is a 60% discount on all Bagheera and Rancho stock until they close for good at the end of March and scrap or dispose of them. This discount applies to all except any items offered on eBay.

So if anyone needs any parts for their Bagheera or Rancho (or possibly the 530 - it's worth asking as he may still have some and also discount them) get your order in now before the end of March!

Roy

Wanted.....

bonnet to fit 1956 SIMCA Aronde. In good condition or at least less rusty than the one on my Grand Large. Probably a vain hope finding one in the UK but thought I'd ask before I start trying to repair the one I have which is very rusty around the nose and along the edges. **Mick Ward**
01246 200045 scukmick@aol.com

Chrysler 180 parts wanted....

Mike Newton, who was a member in the 90's with a **Chrysler 180**. He sold that car but has now bought another **180**. It's a long way from returning to the road but he's keen on collecting spares for it. He currently needs a centre propshaft bearing carrier but any other parts would be welcome. Contact Mike, who's based in Gloucester on **01452 313103**

Steve Dixon is keen to contact other members with the later 1290cc models of the **SIMCA Aronde**. He is also looking for spares sources for these cars. Contact s.b.dixon@hotmail.co.uk

SIMCA 1100 NOS parts

Phil Hart has large stock to sell to make space for his 1000's and parts....

- *Rear bumper sections with & without number plate light (both types)
- *Indicator/light control steering column switch- part no.3252300
- *Rear light lenses and bases, early and later types, car & van/estate both types.
- *Front side/indicator light lenses& bases
- *Clutch plates & covers
- *Clutch master & slave cylinders
- *Brake master cylinders
- * Front brake flexi hoses
- * Driveshaft gaiters
- *Water pumps.. also fits Alpine/Solara/Horizon/Bagheera/Rancho/some 309
- *Carburettor to fit SIMCA 1100
- *Inner track rod ends
- *Rear anti roll bar rubber bushes
- *Rear wings for car, van/estate & pickup/Hi Top van
- *Rear quarter upper/window panel
- *Various engines and engine parts

- *Various Alternators
- *Various Water Hoses

Some other parts are available, give me a ring on **07949 440721** or email philhartsr3@talk21.com

All parts are new old stock and are genuine Simca/Talbot apart from the water pumps which are QH.

NOS Brake parts and some wheel bearings & ball joints for most Talbot models.... Gasket sets for some....

Mick Ward 01246 200045 email Scukmick@aol.com also still have 2 sets standard 1200S coupe steel wheels. (4x13 perforated) with 4 hole type hubcaps which were fitted on some late 70's SIMCA models too, Matra Bagheera Alloys, 1x 1100Ti alloy wheel, 2x Metro 5 spoke 6x13, most without tyres.

Set of 4 hardly used Cosmic 5 spoke 5.5x13 alloy wheels from FIAT Uno..98mm pcd so will fit 4 bolt SIMCA/Talbot cars ... £80 email me for photo.

Rage reclining bucket seat in black cloth/ vinyl. Bit of wear but no tears... £15 only email for photo.

Various parts from Renault (MATRA) Espace 2 I'm breaking includes FREE set of 7 seats ideal van conversion. **Mick**

1983 Horizon 1.5 GLS.

Partially broken for spares.... Instruments, steering wheel, electric windows,, some wiring, fuel tank, lamps and offside rear quarter panel have all been removed and kept for my other Horizons.

Still has usable blue velour interior. Car was stored in a damp garage from 1993 until last year, resulting in major corrosion... no panels worth saving. Engine still turns but I have not had it running (approx 90,000 miles). Must go soon as I need the space but a shame to crush it if somebody can make good use of the mechanical parts or the interior....

Contact **Paul Vincent...on 01530 412582** or **07813 711769** or email on levland_cars@yahoo.com ... The car is located near Lichfield Staffs.

Trackday at Blyton Park near Gainsborough, Lincs. Friday 28th March 2013. Supported by *Practical Performance Car Magazine* on what has evolved from an old airfield to a superb purpose built tarmac track with all catering, meeting room toilet facilities etc. Entries are now closed but spectators welcome and chance to ride as a passenger. Info **Mick Ward 01246 200045** scukmick@aol.com Philippe Vanderbist (1.9 205Gti) and myself (Ed.) in my Honda twin cam SIMCA 1000, FIMCA or even my 1200S have already signed up.

Dates for 2014 events.....

La Vie en Bleu Prescott Hillclimb nr Cheltenham, Sunday 25th May, French car event. Is there enough interest for a club stand ? Info www.prescott-hillclimb.com

Bromley Pageant Sunday June 8th . www.bromleypageant.co.uk contact Guy Maylam or Stuart Wade re. our club presence there.

Santa Pod ***Retro Show***, huge event at the famous Northants dragstrip. Earlier this year on June 22nd I'll book us a club stand. Let me know if you're interested. **Mick**

East Midlands Festival of Transport, Thoresby Park, Ollerton, Notts NG22 9EP. Sun 29th June. We attended this in force as a club last year. Please let me know if you are interested in joining us this time and I'll book a club stand. **Mick**

Retro Rides Gathering 2014 moves to Shelsey Walsh Hillclimb near Worcester this year on August 31st. I'll book us a stand and there's chance to have a crack at the hill. Cars must be roadgoing, taxed, etc and driven to the event. More info on www.retrorides.org



MATRA Club Maintenance Meeting Sunday 5th October, at the *Green Man* on A43 near Silverstone.....

ROUTE UK at Beaulieu..... 11 to 13 July 2014

David Chapman Writes

Remember, it's Route UK 11-13 July 2014 at Beaulieu

If these dates are not in your diary or similar yet, please put them in now. This International Rally is **THE BIG ONE** in the **Simca, Matra** and **Talbot** world, and this year it is here in the UK, so please be sure and support it and have a great few days with us at the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu.

Organised with our friends in the **Matra Enthusiasts Club UK**, we hope to repeat the successful event held there back in 2000, when even the British weather was on our side. We are returning to Beaulieu as many of our continental friends have asked us to hold the event again at this location. Offering easy access to those coming across the Channel to Portsmouth or Poole and still relatively close to Dover and the Eurotunnel at Ashford, it was far ahead of some alternative venues we considered. If you then add all the sights at Beaulieu, from the extensive Motor Museum, Palace Grounds, to the Monorail and Beaulieu Abbey, PLUS a great selection of Simcas, Matras and Talbots, you have a must see event, and you will need most of the three days to see it all. We are also organising a Gala Dinner on the Saturday evening to include an awards ceremony.

Please book in advance

We have had a number of bookings from members of overseas Clubs, but at the time of writing, none from the UK. It does help us with both the planning and the finances to receive bookings as early as possible, so please do visit the website www.routeuk.net and complete your booking. The Gala Dinner is limited to 250 places. If you have not looked at the website yet, do so now. Please let me know if you have any questions. And don't worry if your car is not on the road, you are welcome in your everyday vehicle and can park in a designated section of the event field. Look forward to seeing you in July.



ROUTE UK

Don't miss the International

SIMCA MATRA TALBOT RALLY

Come to

NATIONAL MOTOR MUSEUM ON JULY 11, 12, 13 2014

At

BEAULIEU, HAMPSHIRE, SOUTH COAST ENGLAND

By

Motorway – M25 & M3 South – M27 West, Leave at Junction 2

Local - Follow brown signs marked BEAULIEU MOTOR MUSEUM

Admission

Special entry price for the 3 day event which includes all Beaulieu attractions + ROUTE UK within Palace Grounds

ADULT £34

CHILD £17 (5-17 years inclusive)

Site includes

- Motor museum
- The Abbey
- Palace House & Gardens
- Mono Rail
- Veteran London Bus
- Childrens Play area
- Theme rides & drives
- Brabazon Restaurant

Visit www.routeuk.net for all details and to book ticket

Contact

David Chapman + 44 (0)1737 765331 dn_chapman@tiscali.co.uk



Photos.....
Cars at the
RAID 2000
Meeting at
Beaulieu...



THE TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS OF A CLASSIC CAR OWNER

The story begins on 26 April 2013 when my Talbot Solara Rapier (Registration C499 SLY) had its full annual service with Colin Hill and passed the MOT test. When I took the car to Colin to be serviced, I mentioned that ignition had become difficult at times so he fitted a new ignition coil. However, starting up the car continued to be a problem after I brought it home to London. On 9 May 2013, therefore, I took the car to Kwik Fit to have the battery checked. They said the battery was nearing the end of its useful life so a new battery was also fitted.

On 17 May 2013, I had arranged to meet friends in Streatham, South London, for a birthday lunch celebration. The traffic was heavy on the South Circular Road (A205). By the time I arrived in South London, the car had begun to overheat and the engine cut out. I managed to collect my friends and restart the car after a number of attempts at ignition but by the time I drove into the car park of the local Harvester restaurant, only a mile up the road, the engine cut out again and the car would not restart. From the relative safety of the Harvester's car park, I rang the AA (Call out No: 1). The patrolman said the spark from the engine was okay and the fan was cutting in at 70C. He primed the fuel pump manually which he diagnosed as being air locked and he advised that the radiator temperature sender unit may be playing up. The car started up but on my way home after lunch, the engine overheated and cut out again on the very busy South Circular Road. Thus on 17 May 2013, I had to ring the AA again for the second time in one day (Call out No: 2). The second patrolman said that he suspected the fuel pump was working only intermittently. He managed to start up the engine and followed me home. I could not continue driving the car which had become unreliable so I booked it into my local garage, Swan Autos. They fitted a new ECU unit, fuel pump and radiator temperature sender unit which I had asked Colin to kindly post to Swan Autos direct. In addition, I asked Swan Autos to fit new spark plugs and I collected the car on 25 May 2013.

The next month was incident free and I was able to drive up the A1 from London to the Club's National Meeting on 29 June 2013 at the Newark Air Museum in Nottinghamshire. Those who attended will recall it was a dry sunny day with a good turnout of members and their vehicles. I decided to return home via the A46 from Newark to Leicester, with a view to picking up the M1 straight down to London. I filled up with petrol at the Shell garage in Newark and then made for the A46 at a steady 60mph. However, half way along the A46 from Newark to Leicester, the engine suddenly cut out, resulting in the car's speed slowing down. The car would not accelerate due to the loss of power. There was no hard shoulder but just ahead I could see the slip road/exit off the A46 to East Midlands Airport and Melton Mowbray. I had the presence of mind to steer the car on to the slip road before it came to a stop. The engine just kept turning and would not restart so I had to ring the AA again (Call out No: 3). The patrolman took off the distributor cap and said the king lead had become disconnected at the distributor cap but I was not convinced because it was now quite clear to me that when the engine overheated, only then did it cut out. It seemed to me that the cause of the overheating was still not being addressed by the AA. At any rate, I eventually got back to London very late, exhausted, nervous and worried about driving the car. My fears were not unfounded because the problem continued, with the engine overheating and cutting out, despite the number of parts I had already changed on the somewhat "hit and miss" advice/suggestion of the AA.

On 3 August 2013, there was a further recurrence of the problem. My mother and I were driving on the Gunnersbury Avenue/Hanger Lane (part of the South Circular Road) when the engine cut out

again just before the traffic lights at the junction with Madeley Road, not far from home. The car would not restart. My mother suggested I should wait ten minutes for the car to cool down and then try to restart the engine which I did and, yes, the car restarted and we managed to get home.

The next day, on 4 August 2013, the car suffered a sudden loss of power again on Bury Street in Ruislip, Middlesex. Even though I waited this time for the car to cool down, it would not restart so I had to call out the AA once more (Call out No: 4). I told the patrolman the car had been fitted with a new ignition coil, battery, ECU unit, fuel pump, radiator temperature sender unit and spark plugs but yet the problem had not been resolved and the cause of the engine overheating and cutting out had not been diagnosed after three previous AA call outs. This fourth patrolman was of the view that it was not a fuel problem but an ignition problem. He suspected the original Bosch D Drive distributor had a fault and he suggested it should be changed. On 6 August 2013, therefore, a new Ducellier distributor and new set of 5 ignition leads was sent by Colin direct to Swan Autos where the car had been booked in again for these parts to be fitted. I also arranged for a carburettor kit and gasket to be sent from Southern Carburettors to Swan Autos for the carburettor to be overhauled as well. I collected the car a week later on 13 August 2013 after the new distributor and 5 ignition leads had been fitted and the carburettor completely overhauled but still the problem had not been resolved.

On 21 August 2013, the engine overheated and cut out yet again on the busy South Circular Road (A205) near Putney, on my way home from visiting my friend in Streatham, South London, who was unwell. The temperature gauge had risen three quarters of the way up and the car would not restart. I waited for the engine to cool down. When the needle dropped back to the middle of the gauge, I turned the ignition key and the car restarted but within five minutes the engine cut out again by the time I had driven a bit further on to Sheen, on the A205. Again I noticed the needle on the temperature gauge had risen beyond the half way mark so I rang the AA (Call out No: 5). The young patrolman who turned up knew little or nothing about the car and said he would have to ring the AA's Technical Department for advice. All they could tell him was that more investigation would be needed to simulate the problem so they simply instructed the patrolman to follow me to Swan Autos because the engine had cooled down and the car restarted again. I was utterly fed up and nervous of driving the car again. I was now on the point of giving up on the Solara and buying a new car. Colin discussed the matter with Charlie Hipgrave, the owner of Swan Autos, to try to fathom what could be wrong. It was decided to change the water pump and thermostat, as these were about the only parts that might be suspect, which had not yet been changed. The work was done and I collected the car on 2 September 2013 but the engine cut out again on my way home.

By now Colin was at a loss as to what else to suggest for the problem. As a last resort, the car could be taken to him in Suffolk for further investigation. However, it went back to Swan Autos where it remained for some four weeks during which Charlie and Colin continued to liaise. On a test drive, the engine had cut out on Charlie so he was eventually able to experience the problem himself as it happened. He decided to fit yet another new coil and ignition amplifier/ECU unit i.e. replacing these two parts for the second time, which had in fact been newly fitted just weeks/months earlier. I collected the car on 24 September 2013 and it has worked properly without any further incident ever since. I still do not know which part was actually at fault, having changed so many at great expense, but the experience has been a nightmare I would not want to have to live through again.

Jeannette David

25 January 2014

Photo.Jeannette David's Solara Rapier heads up a group of club cars at the June 2013 Newark Air Museum Meeting.

Below..... Colin Hill adds his comments to Jeannette's story of the Solara's recent 'troubles.'



It was actually my idea that Jeannette might want to write an article about the problems she had with her Solara Rapier. The car was originally owned by me ,and I sold it to Jeannette when her own Solara , which she had brought up to me to be serviced ,had to be scrapped due to irreparable corrosion in the rear suspension. The car has always been returned to me each year for servicing and MOT ,and Jeannette was very good in having work done ,before a problem became a necessity -Clutch , Tyres and Battery being obvious examples. Over the years she has had very few problems ,for a car that is used regularly ,has now covered over 100k miles and is 28 years old.

This year the car decided to be different ,and in fact broke down at the MOT station ,but was quickly fixed and a new coil fitted. After that Jeannette takes up the story ,and I think it says a lot for her fortitude and affection for the Car ,that she persevered until the problem was fixed. Albeit ,that talk of getting a more modern car had entered into our emails. Yes , a nice Rover 45 on my drive almost had Jeannettes name on it.!

Most people reading the article will come to the conclusion that the Head Gasket was at fault in reference to the over heating problem. As I said earlier ,in line with the policy of changing an item that we knew was due to fail ,I had already changed it 2 years ago. It was on the verge of failing. All Simca / Talbot engines will suffer with the same problem of eventual gasket failure ,and like the K series Rover engines it does not fail between the cylinders ,but in one or two of the water ways ,where the gasket is the seal at the top of the cylinder block. I have seen cylinder heads where the gasket has failed ,and the water has eaten its way through the head exiting as steam through the spark plug hole. Rover's fail normally in an oil way ,which lets the oil in the cooling water -hence you don't get bad running ,the first symptom being over heating , loss of water ,and a horrendous mess in the cooling system.

If the truth be told ,neither I nor Swan Autos know exactly what the problem was. As Jeannette said to me ,'we've changed everything ,so what else could it be ?'. It has now solved the problem ,the over heating has disappeared ,and the car is running fine. A list of items replaced :

Head Gasket ,Coil (twice) ,Plug Leads ,Spark Plugs ,Distributor (with new cap and rotor arm) ,ECU (twice) ,Weber carb overhaul kit , Water Pump ,Radiator sender unit, Fuel Pump ,Battery .

There are no lessons to be learnt ,from this episode. It's possible that some 'New' parts that were fitted were faulty -not an uncommon problem back in the 80's. I recently sold a New Water Pump to a customer ,only to have a phone call a few weeks later to be told it was leaking ,so this might be the cause of Jeannette's problems . Who know's ,all I can hope is that she continues with her Talbot driving and enjoys it ,and the comments she gets when the car is out and about.

Colin Hill

I've decided it's got to be up and running this year. I need the garage space to start work on my **Talbot 1100 pickup** that's been festering for far too long now.

The main job before putting the **1200S** back on its front wheels was the conversion to rack & pinion steering. This was easier on the 1200S than on an early 1000 with the steering box etc. The '67 1200S was sort of a 'half way house' between the two front end set ups used on the 1000 saloons. While it still used the steering box and idler etc, the transverse leaf spring was mounted centrally in the channel section crossmember just like the later cars. I used the parts from one of the dismantled 1000 projects I've got lying around, fitting new balljoints and bushes as and where necessary. The steering rack was equipped with trackrods from the the Alpine/Solara which use a proper balljoint at the inner end in place of the crude rubber bush and forked inner end on the 1000 rack. Early in our 80's searches into racing 1000 info, some of the French contacts we made suggested this mod. It really improves the feel of the steering. SIMCA 1100 trackrods do the job as well and the original LH thread 1000 Trackrod end screws straight into the FWD rods.. The steering column needed a bit more work as the 1200S column to the steering box went straight through the top outside corner of the bulkhead whereas the UJ equipped column for the rack goes between the pedals needing a new hole in the metalwork.

Front shockers are some Spax adjustables I got years ago. The Bendix front brakes on the rear engined SIMCA Coupes are unique in the 1000 range using single piston sliding callipers. They are the same as fitted to various small FIATs so parts shouldn't be a problem. If there is any difficulty, a box of NOS parts I bought from Newark Autojumble recently may come to the rescue. In it was a pair of Samba Bendix reconditioned callipers which fit the 1200S carriers exactly and

use similar hose fittings.



Rack from late SIMCA 1000 saloon fitted with Alpine trackrods and original 1000 ends.



Spax adjustable shocks fitted. Just needs brakes completing.



Rest of collection waiting for some time in the garage.

The front flexible hoses are different from the 1000 saloons, using a banjo to connect to the calliper. I was going to use some *Aeroquip* hoses I got with the parts that came with the supercharged car but found the female ends were wrong for screwing on to the banjo. I took one of the old hoses to Newark Autojumble and after trying various hoses, a pair for a Mk1 Mini Cooper S fitted the bill exactly ...not surprising as the 1000 range strangely use imperial rather than metric threads on the braking system.

Next job is to replace all the rubber hose sections on the front to rear cooling pipes and heater, remembering having been nearly 'poached' when an original heater hose burst on my **Rallye 2**. A bit of re-positioning may be necessary towards the front end to clear the steering rack now fitted.

Once it is back on 4 wheels, I can finish the steering column installation. I could use the complete assembly from the late 1000 saloon but the coupe differs in the column stalk and switch area. Ideally I'd like to keep those original so a bit of extra adaptation may be called for here.

Then it's down to refitting the engine and box with new bits where necessary and moving on to the outer bodywork.

I've replaced the major rot point on SIMCA's Bertone coupes... the wheel arch lips on all 4 corners, using sections from Samba front fibreglass wings at the rear and steel 1000 saloon arches at the front, .but quite a bit of grinding and filling will now be necessary.

I'll probably get it ready for the road in red oxide primer which isn't far from the original colour. Kev, who has recently retired, has offered to have a go at the paintwork when he has a 'slot' in his own resto programme.

I've even thought of trying to get it ready for the Blyton trackday on Friday 28th March as a 'shakedown' session before it hits the road in earnest, but that depends on progress being maintained and I can fling the FIMCA and RCY around

without worrying about the occasional 'off'. It would be a shame to 'bend' 5 years' restoration work. For the final trimming inside, I'm lucky to have the other car to supply bits.



Area below radiator now has removable section in thick alloy as access to hoses etc. down there.



Abarth SIMCA 2000 showing off its twin cam,



My other 1200S coupe, a LHD model. There's currently enough left of it to make something out of it. Once the rust has been dealt with it will be crying out for some big arches and its own twin cam engine, albeit 'J' power, Honda D series.

At the beginning of the 80's we were into grasstrack racing (*I was racing a Lotus Twin Cam powered VW Karmann Ghia*) and just beginning to look towards tarmac oval events. I remember locally an advert for a damaged rally prepared **SIMCA Rallye 2** and a **Rallye 1** to reshell it.. We thought, but were still deeply into Fords then, quickly dismissing the SIMCAs as potentially over complicated Continental stuff.....!!!

A few years later, we had moved on to Hot Rod oval racing with 105E Anglias and a Talbot Sunbeam, which, in turn, was becoming ridiculously expensive 'wallet racing' and were looking towards the cheaper, up to 1300cc 'Stock Rod' class.

On the look out for suitable cars, I bought a Renault 5TS and Kev bought a late model **SIMCA 1000SR**. It was quite rusty but the poke from the 1294 engine was worth the £90 alone. It had a long MoT and served as a road car for many months until Kev arrived at his work one day at the chemical plant and ran through a caustic spill..... **not** recommended for an already rusty SIMCA..!!! The fast dissolving car was scrapped and the mechanicals saved. Soon after, another '77 **1000SR** turned up for £50 and served as Kev's first 'Stock Rod'. It went well enough until it ended its days on one of the huge earthmover tyres marking the infield of the track. The single Solex carb limited the power output though. We were on the lookout for a pair of Rallye 2 Solex twin choke carbs or 40DCOE webers (*although a bit 'iffy' in the rule book*). An advert in *Motorsport News* did supply a single DCOE and Manifold, cage and various other bits from a 'dead' Rallye 2. Then the local 'grapevine' threw up the remains of a rally 1000 (*yes..the one at the top of the page..!!*) The car had continued to run in local Rallies through two reshells, even eventually proving more than competitive with the Imps in the up to 1000cc class using a 944cc

engine, Piper SM2 cam and twin 40DCOE webers..

The shell was long gone but we got a *Franspeed* inlet manifold with twin 40DCOEs, close ratio box, Dunlop alloys and various other bits.

The oval racing interest made way for sprints and Hillclimbs and Kev used the parts acquired in an S reg '77 **1000GLS** which eventually progressed to running a Ron Jones built **Rallye 3** spec 1294.. with quite some success..... It eventually acquired Rallye 3 arches and a fair bit of bracing/reinforcement on the weaker areas of the bodyshell.....



The local rally car that supplied many of the parts we still use on our 1000's.....



Kev's **1000SR** stock rod on its transporter... my old faithful V4 powered Mk1 Transit... one of the better Fords I've owned.....

Mid to late 80's was the real heyday for buying cheap SIMCA 1000s. Among the cars we bought was a **1000GLS**, reg. no. **RCY938M**. Bought from a scrapyards (where it had been sent when the front

leaf spring snapped) who put us in touch with the owner who had a heap of spares for it. We realised he'd used past 1000 ownership experience to rustproof this one around the rear door pillars and various other suspect areas. The sills had rusted though but once replaced RCY was pressed into service as a Rallye 1 replica with a single 40DCOE Weber and SM2 cam on a 1294 engine (from one of the original 1000SR's). In this form it was quite successful at various sprints. We even drove the two 1000's to events, enjoying the drive there almost as much as the sprint. **RCY** was chosen as the basis for a lightweight 'modified' sprint car after I'd set it on fire when welding it. It gradually evolved into the car I still own. Now, of course, it is Honda twin cam powered..

Kev's biggest success with RCY was the 1990 *Cars & Car Conversions Converted Car of the Year* contest where it came second in class. It did give some engine trouble though and Kev took a break from racing. I acquired his original racing 1000 to have a go at a bit of circuit racing. I entered the *TOYO Tyres Road Saloon Series* and from the off I was expected to be a lot faster than I ever managed. The reason for this was that previously Neville Knight had had a lot of success in *Road Saloons* with a genuine **Rallye 3**, the one now owned by Phil Hart.... They assumed, wrongly, that I'd be as quick..!!



A few seasons of road Saloon racing was brought to a halt when scrutineers at a race meeting at Donnington took serious

exception to my strengthening of the well worn bodyshell. Umpteen times stronger than when it left Poissy but deemed to be 'no longer a production car.' Stripped of all the best bits, the rolling shell was sold to grasstracker Grant Victory and I believe various drivers got several more seasons out of it.



A replacement shell was needed and it came up in the shape of N reg **1000GLS** from Leeds. One elderly owner for most of its life and not too rusty. This car was quickly built up for race use with the R3 spec 1294 engine. This time I kept it on standard arches rather than the R3 bodykit.. It did a further season of Road Saloons until the new season's rules came out. Cars running excessive negative camber were banned.



They obviously didn't want my 1000...!!... so I switched to the *ICS Historic Saloons* where older cars were more welcome. The class I ran in allowed engines up to 1500cc 'from the same family' and it ended up with a

1498ish cc unit on twin 45DCOE's built by John Lockwood who was then running a SIMCA Abarth 1150 Corsa replica with a similar motor. We managed a few meetings with both 1000's racing at a number of race meetings over the following two seasons. The ICS series eventually ran as a support to British Touring Car meetings but costs became over the top so, along with some other competitors I joined the Classic Saloon Car racing club's pre '74 Post Historic Championship. This meant returning the car to group 1 Rallye 2 spec and 1294cc on twin 40 DCOE's. It raced in this form until 1998 when I retired from racing and, by then seriously 'tired' it was broken up for spares to keep RCY going.

In the meantime, I'd acquired Kev's other racer... RCY 938M. After a few years of dereliction it was pressed into service for the CSCC's new class 'Classic Thunder' which allowed group 4, 5 and assorted much modified cars. Some of the early races were a bit of a farce... while I fought out the smaller engined class with two or three Minis, fighting it out for overall honours were Dolomite, Capri, Rover and BMW 'Batmobile' ex endurance racers many of which had been dragged out of museum collections for the series. The 'endurance' of some of those cars didn't even run to 10 laps at times...!!!



Member Daniel Burrowes currently races in the pre'74 and Classic Thunder series using a superbly self built 1000 Rallye 2 and an ex German Youngtimer

which brought him real success in 2013.....

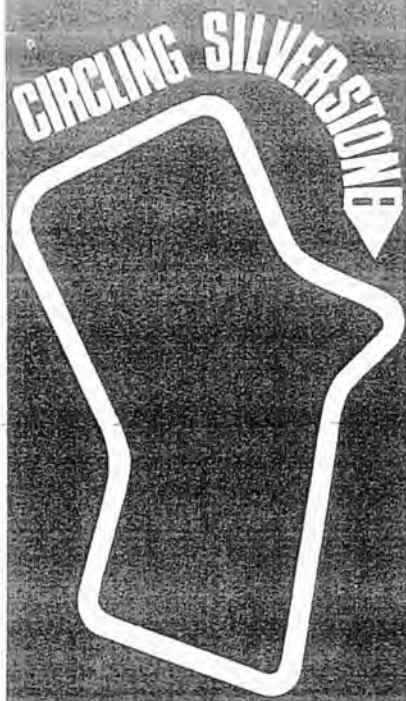


Daniel Burrowes' pre'74 racer and below his ex German Youngtimer racer that now appears in Classic Thunder races....



RCY was back on the road after I gave up racing. It went to various shows like this. Yes, I know in this over regulated age this would be a No No now but it was powerful enough, the structure is semi spaceframed so was strong enough and brakes, suspension etc were more than up to the job.....

I sold it to RetroCars writer Phil White in 2003 but after various events hampered his plans for it... it came back home 2008 and currently serves as a test bed.....



ABARTH SIMCA 2000

SMALL knots of people gathered round a mere handful of cars, out of the wind behind one of the big corrugated iron hangars on Silverstone's desolate perimeter track. For general practice days in the week the big paddock is not used, and an odd patch of weedy concrete apron just after the apex of Abbey Curve does instead. This Thursday, in the middle of last summer, was grey and cold with an anger in the sky that threatened rain.

The object of my visit had just been wheeled off its trailer, and now stood on its own, diminutive and sleek, little more than waist high, and sparkling in that vivid shade of national Italian racing red. The Abarth-Simca 2000 is a strange sort of "special" with such doubtful parentage that it has no right to be the classic it is. It starts with a Simca 1000 platform chassis complete with transverse-leaf front suspension and semi-trailing arms with coil springs at the back. The engine, a masterpiece of aluminium castings by Carlo Abarth, uses a Simca 1500 block bored out 5mm, with a special crank giving a capacity of 1,946 c.c. There are two overhead camshafts, each driving a distributor for the dual ignition and two of the biggest double-



This was the Abarth as it first appeared in 1964 at Goodwood. Later cooling ducts were added

choke Weber carburettors ever made—58 DCO 3s. For this year the power output is just over 200 b.h.p. net at 7,200 r.p.m.

Built up as an integral part of the steel hull, the body is a double-skinned aluminium structure with a roll-over bar behind the seats and Perspex windows except for the laminated glass windscreen. The all-up weight is a rather substantial 13.5cwt.

Since the basic Simca chassis is used, the engine is behind the rear wheel centre line, and drives through a Simca 1000 gearbox and final drive. To reduce the oversteer from this tail-heavy weight bias, 6.00-13in. rear tyres are used (5.00-13in. front) with 5deg of negative camber. This extreme angle means that only on corners are the treads lying flat on the road and the outside edge of the tyres had 0.5mm more tread depth than the inside edge after wearing less than a third away all over.

This particular car was imported for the Earls Court Show of 1963 and bought by Ray Everest, a Harrow businessman, for the list price of just under £4,000. The plan was that under the name of Everest Racing his son Paul would enter the car for Bob Burnard, winner of the Veedel

Trophy the previous year—1962.

The story of the car has been unlucky. As delivered it had standard Simca 1000 gears, which have a wide gap between 2nd and 3rd, and only last season were the close-ratio alternatives fitted. Then there have been the crashes. In avoiding two other spinning cars on Paddock Bend at Brands Hatch the Abarth was shunted up the front by a fourth car. Then on the way to Goodwood later that year, the Thames van towing the trailer left the road down a ravine and the car was damaged at both ends. And to cap it all the crankshaft broke, so between 1964 and 1965 a complete rebuild was undertaken to bring the specification into line with the latest the factory could offer.

Double rear damper and coil-spring units were fitted to a reinforced sub-frame, cooling ducts were added to front brakes and rear dampers, and a cold-air box built for the carburettors which were re-jetted after enlarging the choke tube diameter to 50 from 47mm. New, longer inlet stubs and a completely new exhaust manifold with unsilenced megaphone tail-pipe further improved breathing, and the real reason for the car being at Silverstone on this day was to experiment with

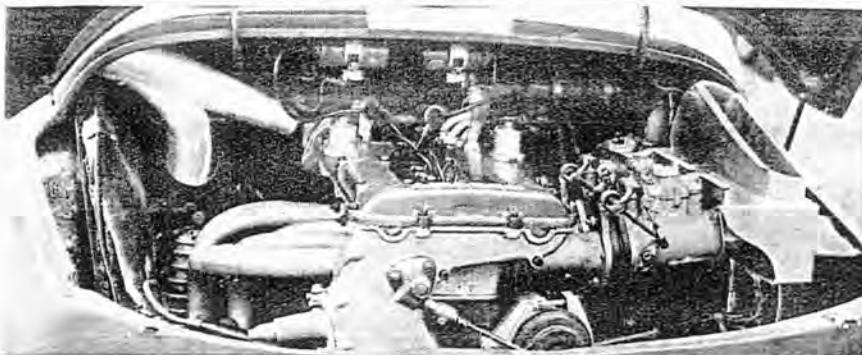


for front and rear brakes



1965 RESULTS

Date	Club	Circuit	Status	Result
22 May	B.A.R.C.	GOODWOOD	Closed	1st. Outright
6 June	B.R.S.C.C.	BRANDS HATCH	Closed	2nd In Class
7 June	N.S.C.C.	SILVERSTONE	National	1st Outright
13 June	L.M.C.	SNETTERTON	Restricted	1st Outright
19 June	B.A.R.C.	SILVERSTONE	Restricted	3rd In Class
20 June	L.M.C.	BRANDS HATCH	Closed	4th In Class
27 June	B.R.S.C.C.	SNETTERTON	Restricted	3rd In Class
3 July	B.A.R.C.	GOODWOOD	Closed	1st In Class
22 August	W.E.C.C.	SNETTERTON	Restricted	1st In Class
30 August	B.R.S.C.C.	BRANDS HATCH G.P.	INTERNATIONAL	1st In Class
11 September	B.H.M.C.	BRIGHTON	National	1st Outright
12 September	B.A.R.C.	BRANDS HATCH	Closed	1st In Class
2 October	B.R.D.C.	SILVERSTONE G.P.	Restricted	1st Outright
9 October	B.A.R.C.	SILVERSTONE	Closed	1st In Class
10 October	R.E.C.C.	SNETTERTON	Restricted	2nd Overall
Total:—15 Races. Results:—10 FIRSTS. 2 SECONDS. 3 THIRDS. 1 FOURTH.				
1966—11 April	B.A.R.C.	GOODWOOD	INTERNATIONAL	1st In Class



Power house, full to bursting. It is hard to believe that the engine started life as a Simca 1500

main-jet and emulsion-tube sizes to eliminate some misfiring when picking up from about 4,000 r.p.m. in a corner.

We would have liked to have driven the Abarth on the road and taken it to the M.I.R.A. proving grounds with a fifth wheel to record the performance, but the noisy exhaust, no road registration and the transportation difficulties confined our testing to a few laps of the Grand Prix circuit.

"Right," said Bob just before lunch, "why don't you have a brief go now in case it rains, while the engine's warm?" So I climbed in, wrestled with the tangled safety harness and rattled my head inside his over-size crash-hat, worn more as a token talisman than effective protection.

"Don't touch the accelerator until the engine fires, and then catch it," advised Colin Smith, the mechanic, as I turned the starter. Suddenly it came to life and a crisp crackle echoed back off the hangar walls. I blipped the throttle a few times to get the feel, engaged first and tried a U-turn on the apron. The catalogued turning circle of 30ft must have been measured at speed with the aid of the handbrake, for I

needed two bites to get the car round.

"Max. revs 7,500," Bob added, "but you'll only need 3rd and top once you get going."

Then I was away with deafening reverberations inside the car and so much punch, it practically left me breathless. I found the hesitant pick up from below 4,000 r.p.m., but wasn't embarrassed by it like Bob because I was using 2nd gear and going more slowly through the bends. I never got within minutes (it seemed) of his times during the five of six laps I completed, but I was new to the car and it wasn't mine to break or bend. The handling had all the precision of a car set up for the track, with oversteer at the beck and call of one's throttle foot or simply by tweaking the wheel at the right moment. With my kind of cornering speeds I only managed to see 6,300 r.p.m. (117 m.p.h.) on the longest straight, but at max. revs the car will pull nearly 140 m.p.h.

Soon I had settled to the rhythm, up and down through the gearbox, on and off the brakes (much too early before the corners as usual) with that urgent pounding of the open exhaust, crisp and rorty. Much too soon, I felt it was time for a breather, for fumes of some kind were making my

eyes water. Reluctantly I came in, slightly flushed from the thrill and tingling from the sensation—or was it the vibration?

A promise of another run later in the afternoon came to nothing when on the back leg of the circuit we saw the little red coupé coast to a halt. We tumbled into my Mini and raced round to find that second gear had stripped and filled the transmission with stray pieces of metal. I was very relieved that it hadn't happened while I was driving.

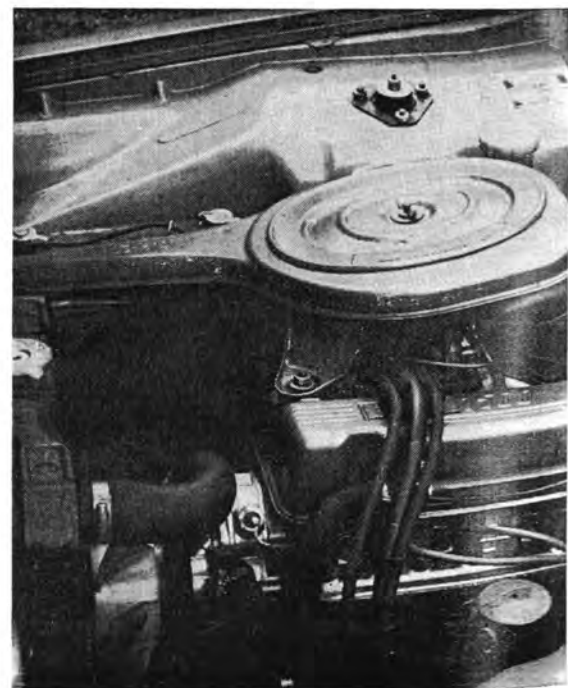
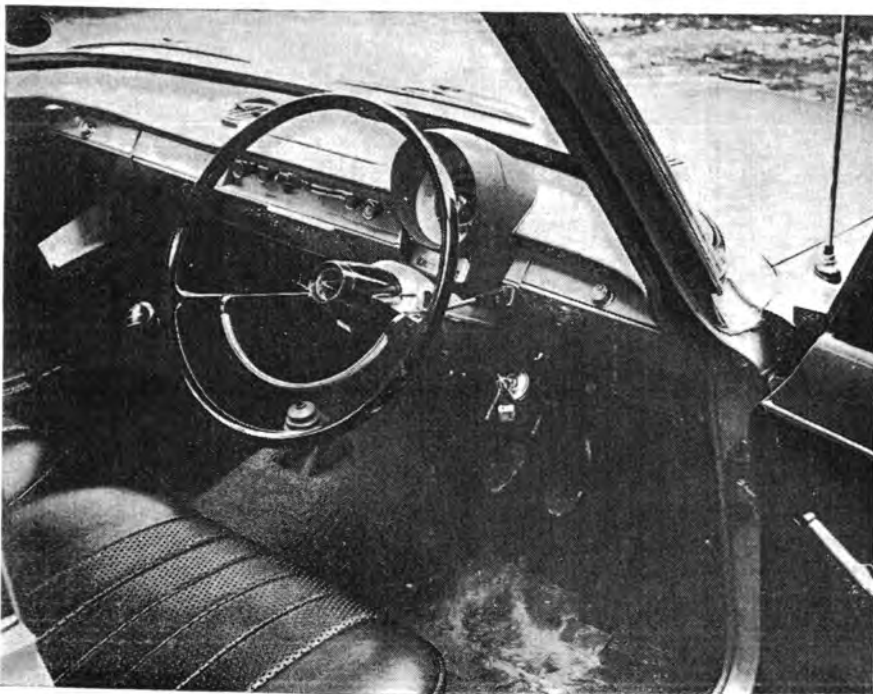
Since then the car has had a winter strip and rebuild and a major cause of engine troubles has been eliminated. All through the 1965 season there had been failures of the twin Marelli distributors with drive shaft fractures almost an everyday occurrence. A lot of races were run with only single sparking plugs per cylinder functioning and that's not the way to get full power from a dual-ignition head. So Lucas units replaced the Italian ones, and the car has been going fast ever since. While still running-in the engine at Goodwood on Easter Monday, Bob Burnard finished 5th overall in the G.T. race and won the up-to-2½-litre class.

Geoffrey Howard ■



THE SIMCA 1500

Road tested by JOHN BOLSTER





Nowadays there are no really bad cars, but many of them—indeed the majority—have stupid faults and fall short of one's expectations. The experienced tester returns them with a mental reservation not to buy one of those himself!

It is therefore a great pleasure to test a thoroughly good car and to be able to praise it unreservedly. Such is the Simca 1500, a machine which I returned to Simca Motors with the feeling of having lost a friend. In addition to the usual AUTOSPORT road test routine, it served Raymond Baxter and me as rapid transport to and from Le Mans. Time was short and schedules tight, but the Simca covered good and bad roads, wet and dry, with a wonderful lack of effort—and one can be very, very weary



after broadcasting *Les Vingt-Quatre Heures*.

The Simca is a steel four-door saloon with an exceptionally deep screen and windows, and the bonnet is low with a considerable slope. The front suspension is by parallel wishbones, the helical springs being above the upper ones, and there is a torsional anti-roll bar. Behind, great pains have been taken to locate the axle positively. At both sides, hefty top-hat-section trailing arms are pivoted beneath the axle and locate the helical springs, while two shorter trailing arms are above the beam. A Panhard rod provides lateral location and the propeller shaft is divided, having a central steady bearing to avoid vibration.

The brakes are discs in front with drums behind, assisted by a vacuum servo. To give the maximum useful space, the spare wheel is recessed into the fuel tank beneath the floor of the large luggage boot.

Remarkably compact, the engine nevertheless supports its hardened crankshaft on five main bearings. There persists an idea that Fiat and Simca models have design similarities. This is no longer true, the Fiat 1500 having only three main bearings and a completely different cylinder head. Both engines do have Weber twin-choke carburettors and Vandervell centrifugal oil filters, however. The gearbox has synchromesh on all four speeds and is controlled by a central lever.

When I saw the Simca in its coat of blue, its appearance at once appealed to me. On taking the wheel, I was impressed by the splendid all-round view and I was able to adjust the seat to give an ideal driving position. Both Raymond and I used the car as a bed on occasion, the reclining seats being admirable for this purpose. An unusual form of plastic upholstery, pierced for ventilation, has the merit of being easy to clean.

On moving off, one is pleased to find a particularly smooth clutch. The gearbox is quiet and the Porsche-type synchromesh unbeatable, only first gear sometimes resisting engagement at low speeds. Here I must give the car its only black mark, for the gear positions are on opposite sides to the normal arrangement, which takes practice to learn. I disliked this at first, but an owner would become used to it, no doubt.

The engine is quite remarkably smooth for a four-cylinder, running up to 6,500 r.p.m. or so without a tremor. It is also very quiet. Initially, one gets the impression that the acceleration is not very rapid, but this is largely because the power unit is so unobtrusive. In fact, the car is lively for a 1½-litre saloon weighing just on a ton, reaching 70 m.p.h. commendably quickly and then taking a little longer to climb into the nineties. I was always agreeably surprised at the notable fuel economy.

It is the suspension and roadholding which are so remarkable. The ride, even on very bad roads, is particularly good, there being a complete absence of pitching. In the dry, the machine understeers, and it is stable on highly cambered roads or in gusty side winds. On wet roads, the response is neutral, and during very hard driving one can help the tail round with the accelerator. Delicious! The well-located rear axle never hops or tramps, the roadholding being quite exceptional for a car with such a comfortable ride.

Another benefit of the rear suspension geometry is found during panic braking, the Simca stopping all square without locking the rear wheels. The brakes are well up to the performance of the car, being light to apply and progressive in action. The hand brake, though of the usual umbrella-handle pattern, is powerful too. This is a welcome change from the usual feeble parking brakes. The pleasantly sensitive steering is light at parking speeds.

As is usual in French cars, there is a switch in the form of a stalk under the steering wheel that does just about everything. The wipers cover the area of the enormous screen very well and the lighting is effective. When the heater is turned off, the ventilation is adequate for hot weather.

In the past, Simcas have tended to have a rather jazzy interior décor, reminiscent of a Caravelle aircraft. "My" 1500 was exceptionally well finished and the interior, though pleasing, was sober. There is very full equipment, with plenty of arm rests, map pockets and two lockable glove compartments. The heating and demisting system is standard.

The Simca 1500 is a thoroughly sound four-door saloon. Good-looking and very well finished, it endears itself to the driver because it handles well and to the passengers because it is smooth and quiet. Many people will be surprised when they first try this car.

SPECIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE DATA

Car Tested: Simca 1500. Four-door saloon, price £919 15s. 0d. or £949 17s. 3d. with de luxe upholstery, including P.T.

Engine: Four-cylinders 75.21 mm. x 83 mm. (1,475 c.c.) Pushrod-operated overhead valves. Compression ratio 9.5 to 1. 81 b.h.p. at 5,000 r.p.m. Twin-choke downdraught Weber carburettor. Coil and distributor ignition.

Transmission: Single dry-plate clutch. Four-speed all-synchromesh gearbox with central lever; ratios 4.44, 6.24, 9.15 and 16.21 to 1. Two-piece open propeller shaft. Hypoid rear axle.

Chassis: Combined body and chassis. Independent front suspension by wishbones and helical springs with anti-roll torsion bar. Cam and double roller steering gear. Rear axle on helical springs with two pairs of radius arms and Panhard rod. Telescopic dampers all round. Girling disc and drum brakes with servo. Bolt-on disc wheels fitted 5.90-13 ins. tyres.

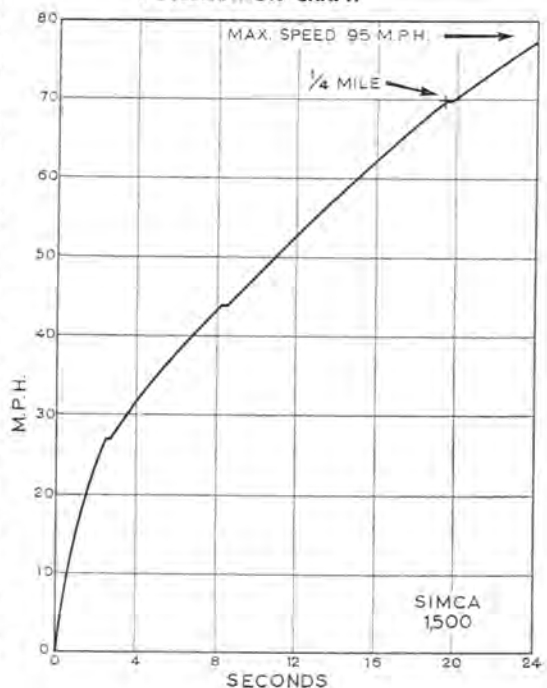
Equipment: Twelve-volt lighting and starting. Speedometer, Fuel and temperature gauges. Heating, demisting and ventilation system. Variable speed windscreen wipers and washers. Flashing direction indicators. Radio (extra).

Dimensions: Wheelbase, 8 ft. 3½ ins.; track (front), 4 ft. 4 ins.; (rear), 4 ft. 3 ins.; overall length 13 ft. 11½ ins.; width, 5 ft. 2½ ins.; weight, 19 cwt, 3 qrs.

Performance: Maximum speed, 95 m.p.h. Speeds in gears: third, 70 m.p.h.; second, 44 m.p.h.; first, 27 m.p.h. Standing quarter-mile, 19.6 secs. Acceleration: 0-30 m.p.h., 3.6 secs.; 0-50 m.p.h., 11 secs.; 0-60 m.p.h., 15.2 secs.; 0-70 m.p.h., 19.6 secs.

Fuel Consumption: 26 to 32 m.p.g.

ACCELERATION GRAPH



Mille Time..... Rear engined SIMCA round up....

Recently I've put some info on my SIMCAs on French website

www.simca-competition.com



simca-competition.com

Gerard Magro suggested I look on there and I've been amazed at the response to the photos I posted. Even my Honda transplants have caused interest. One Frenchman even recognised my old tow car as a Magenta Tarragon.... I didn't think knowledge on that marque went far outside North Yorkshire...!!!

Below are photos of two of Gerard Magro's highly successful racers, one with interesting aerodynamic mods....



Daniel Burrowes' superb restoration job on Phil Hart's **Rallye 1** certainly was a hit at the NEC show. Daniel is now well ahead with transforming a LHD 1000 into early **Rallye 2** spec. It will eventually appear in red with a 1442 engine on Jenvey throttle bodies and Rallye 3 close ratio gearbox.. Photo below shows the Dunlop alloys he's just had refurbished better than new for the project. They are, in fact the very same wheels seen on the 80's Rally 1000 in my 1000 racing article earlier...Ed.



After welding up any rusted areas, removing dents and adapting the front end to take the Rallye 2's radiator set up, Daniel had the shell dipped at Prostrip in Nottingham and primed ready to go to the painter's.



1000 and 1200S owners.... Let us know about your cars..with photos...Please...

SIMCA/Talbot odds & ends.....



From a mid 80's Samba brochure... highlighting the luggage capacity which is probably **not** the model's strongest feature

Very non standard SIMCA Ariane spotted by David Mott in Hampstead.....

One of Europe's most economical cars. Big on performance, frugal on fuel, great on comfort. The elegantly compact Samba has plenty of room for four people and their luggage yet can slip easily through the traffic and park in tight spaces. A lot of cars promise what Samba so rewardingly delivers. Check the specification and compare.

From the thrifty LE to the open-top exuberance of the Pininfarina styled Cabriolet, the three Samba models offer endless driving pleasure and total value for money.

Front wheel drive with a transverse mounted engine makes for tenacious roadholding, safer cornering and all round independent suspension smoothes the ride. Three insulated mountings



support the engine in a steel cradle for quiet motoring even at high speeds.

There are three engine sizes. The LE model has a punchy 954cc engine that develops 45 BHP (PS-DIN) and returns around 54.3 mpg at a constant 56 mph.

Top of the Samba economy stakes is the 1124cc 50 BHP (PS-DIN) engine in the LS. Specially designed for fuel efficient motoring, the high torque of 63 lb ft DIN at 2,800 rpm means there is less need to change gear. The result is fuel economy up to 61.4 mpg at a constant 56 mph!

The sporty Cabriolet has a 1360 cc 80 BHP (PS-DIN) engine linked to a 5-speed gearbox and can achieve an impressive 49.6 mpg at a constant 56 mph. It has a top speed around 100 mph.

My Crafting Hobby by Lesley Ward
or
**What I spend my time doing when I should be cooking, cleaning,
gardening, ironing etc, etc**

Mick has been asking me to do this article for ages, but as you can see by the sub title above I'd rather be crafting so it's taken me months to get around to doing it.

I have always had a yen for all things crafty. As a child I loved having new pens and pencils – and still do. I was happy drawing and colouring in. Those of you of a certain age may remember the colouring books you could get where all you had to do was brush the picture with water and hey presto suddenly there was colour – pure magic in my child's eye.

Again with paper, we drew outlines and made them into dancing girls. For this (as I'm sure you know) you concertina folded paper, drew your dancing girl outline and cut out. If you didn't get the folds right you could end up with individual dancers rather than the "Tiller Girls" We made Chinese lanterns and couldn't understand why our parents wouldn't let us put a candle inside for the light

Then there was cut out dolls from the magazine my Mum had – 'Woman and Home.' Each month was a section dedicated to children which included dolls you could cut out. You cut round the outline of each doll and stuck onto cardboard to make it stronger. Our 'glue' was a mix of flour and water. Included with the doll were a set of clothes that you dressed onto your doll. Each layer of clothes had tabs that you folded over to keep them on the doll.



I can't remember if the magazine gave the dolls their identity but ours were called Nora and Tilly. I always wanted my doll to be Tilly but as my sister is older than me she got to pick (in my opinion) the best name and I was stuck with Nora. Now why we didn't have different names I'll never know. Anyway this led us on to drawing our own dolls and making their clothes. We used anything from old cereal packets, magazine papers to plain

paper and colouring the clothes exactly how we wanted them.

From paper dolls clothes we went on to make my own dolls clothes. I always envied my friend Elaine from down the road as her Mum always bought her dolls clothes. At the time I didn't realise I was developing skills I would use all my life and the fact I had far more dolls clothes than her didn't register at the time.

From making dolls clothes I started to make my own. I don't so much now, but years ago I rarely bought clothes and made my own. I've made everything from dresses, skirts, scarves, blouses to trousers. I made a full length winter coat when Maxi Coats were fashionable.

I've made complete bridal party outfits too. This included the bride's dress, bridesmaid dresses, ties and cravats for the men and bow tie and waistcoat for the page boy. One of the bridesmaid dresses was cut out here, made up, sent to Sidney Australia for a fitting – perfect fit, and then sent back for finishing off. The bridesmaid arrived the day before the wedding!



When Kevin and I got married I made all our bridesmaid dresses and as Kev wanted to be different from the rest I made him a waistcoat and bow tie too.



I didn't just do dressmaking. I did home furnishing making curtains, cushions and bedding. I even made oven gloves. I learned how to use my Dad's drill. I think my first house had more holes in the walls than was safe. I learned how to hang wallpaper and felt a great sense of achievement when matching up the pattern on the wall. I had a go at tiling, but never really got to grips with cutting a tile cleanly.

I've made and decorated birthday, Christmas and wedding cakes



I taught myself how to make sugar flowers. I could really get into this if I tried!!



I made a card to match the wedding cake decoration



During all these years I still retained my love of paper and card and had begun to make Christmas cards. When I was in school I learned how to do manuscript writing during Art lessons. My sister Pam had seen an article in a magazine which showed how to make your own Christmas cards by recycling the picture off an old card. She wanted to have a go and asked me to write the greeting on the card for her. I did, got hooked and since the middle 1970s have been making cards ever since.

I started with about 12 Christmas cards. Doing as the article suggested, cutting out images from old cards. I would write the greeting, stick the image

on (I had graduated to real glue by then) and then decorate the cards in some way to finish them off. At the time I was very proud of what I'd done and they were well received by friends and family (or so they said).

As time has elapsed card making is now my main hobby. That is unless you count reading as a hobby as I've either got card and a craft knife in my hand or a book. Either way it's paper based. Especially as I refuse to go high tech and use a Kindle for my reading.

My card making supplies (or more commonly referred to as stash) has grown. I started out keeping all my stash in two small drawers in the desk in the hall. I've now taken over one of our bedrooms. I have a full size desk complete with filing cabinets, drawers, and boxes and boxes of stuff. The funny thing is I never seem to have enough and *have* to go to Craft shows and shops to get more. Kev gets his own back on me as he seems to spend a lot of time in a shop called EBay. Heard of it?

I now make cards for any occasion. I've recently made the complete Wedding stationery for someone. From the invitations themselves to RSVP cards, place cards, menus & menu choice and order of service.



I've made cards for babies, sympathy cards, Civil Partnerships, New home, Thank you, someone who prefers two wheels to four and of course quite a few that are Simca/Matra related. The list goes on.



When asked to make a card I like to match the card to the recipient. I had to make a card with diving as a theme last year. This is the result



As you can imagine I am never short of ideas for Kev or Mick, especially as there always seems to be a new Simca on the drive at either house on a regular basis.



Of course the majority of my cards are for us girls. I don't know about the other ladies but receiving a card gives me as much pleasure as getting a present (more so in some cases!). Here are a few I have made.



I have had the pleasure of winning a couple of competitions with my cards and others published in various magazines.



The joy of seeing my cards published in a magazine is fantastic. Craft Creations & Making Cards Magazines are my versions of Practical Classics and Classic Car etc.

This year I've added another side to my card making and introduced 3D cards. I have made pairs of shoes plus the shoe box, much to the delight of the shoe mad recipients.

The shoes are approximately 17cm long and 3cm high. They can be made as everyday shoes or turned into wedding shoes.



I've since adapted the pattern into a pair of trainers for someone who does fell running in the Lake District. I've also made a tiny pair to celebrate the birth of a baby boy.



I've also started making more home furnishings. At present I use MDF shapes to make hanging ornaments and fridge magnets.



The latest card request was to be given to the Vicar who was leaving her present parish to go to another. The request came from the choir mistress and wanted the choir and the church to be "in the picture." She wanted googly eyes and wild hair....



All in all it's a very absorbing and time consuming hobby. It's great therapy when you are feeling out of sorts. It stretches my imagination and creativity. It can be as cost effective as it can be expensive. It earns me a little spare cash – to spend on replenishing stock. It's made me new friends, strengthened old ones. Why do it? I love it! After all what's the alternative? Cooking, cleaning, dusting and ironing? I don't think so.