

L'Aronde

The Magazine of SIMCA Club UK

Volume 34 No.5 September-October 2014

Simca

Matra

Talbot

Impressive line up outside the Hall at Beaulieu at ROUTE UK in July

....



Below: Ariane and Aronde Grand Large at Beaulieu... Photos Guy Maylam



Guy Maylam's photos from Route UK at Beaulieu.....



Rare in RHD form, the Ariane.... The body from the V8 Vedette with 4 cylinder 1290cc engine from the Aronde.....

Talbot 1100 van, Horizon and Alpine SX pose outside Beaulieu's hall

Thanks to Guy for these photos.... Further photos from Beaulieu very welcome for future issues.....

Editorial... September-October 2014

Further photos from *Route UK* on cover and page 2 at Beaulieu were supplied by Guy Maylam.....

As events for 2014 draw to a close, thoughts turn to winter restorations. As a bit of inspiration..??? There are reports on two long term rebuilds on 1100's in the Ward family.

The first one is yet another instalment in the reconstruction of my own **Talbot 1100 VF2 pickup**. What started out as a quick bit of attention to rusty area turned into a total rebuild and something of a 'weldathon' once I started 'digging' and finding the results of past bodging...

The other is brother Kev's **SIMCA 1204 Special**. After many years of use in Kev's ownership it was in desperate need of some structural work. The restoration took several years but the end result has now hit the road.... with 16 valve power .thanks to Honda.

Kev describes the rebuild, his thinking and how well the end result performs.

Many of us are rear engined car enthusiasts. It was a surprise when Renault announced their latest **Twingo** city car would be rear engined. Coincidentally both David Chapman and **SIMCA 1000** owner Peter Dammeyer have decided to write about the new Twingo for this issue.

David Chapman reminds us of the origins of the **SIMCA** marque from its early years building FIATs under licence to the highly successful **Aronde** in the 50's.

SIMCA 1000 owner Philippe Vanderbist has been busy restoring a property in South Western France. Obviously he's had the camera handy to capture interesting French classics.

Alexis Zaregradky, our 'French Connection' spotted a good selection of cars from the range at the recent

Automedon show in Paris. I've included a couple of pages of his photos.

Some time ago I wrote an article to describe how Kev and I got into racing **SIMCA 1000s**. In the course of the article I touched on our early oval racing activities. Cars from the **Chrysler, SIMCA, Talbot** range were often the choice for us after becoming bored with 'following the herd' and racing Fords.. I've completed the story to cover our early years on the oval tracks and my return there at the end of my racing career.

I've included the minutes of our **AGM** held on Saturday 18th October and a few ideas for the articles I'm sure the membership are keen to send me for future issues of *L'Aronde*.



1100 pickup in early days of my ownership delivering Mum's new pond.

Mick Ward

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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

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SIMCA Club UK AGM Saturday 18th October 2014 at Longford House Premier Inn.....

Meeting commenced 5pm. President **Dick Husband** welcomed the members and noted that again we had a good turnout representing almost 25% of our membership.

Present were...

Debra Bennett, Tony Bennett, David Chapman, Des Cooke, Jill Ewan, Philip Ewan, Phil Hart, Peter Hawke, Ros Hawke, John Henderson, Pam Henderson, Colin Hill, Daniel Husband, Dick Husband, Bob Hussey, Grant Kearney, Edward Martley, Guy Maylam, Clive Nelson, Jennie Nicholls, Titus Taylor, Stuart Wade, Kevin Ward, Mick Ward..

Apologies were received from.....

Ben Aston, Cornel Baxendale, John Beattie, Malcolm & Jeanette Bennett, Daniel & Peter Burrowes, T.Chadwick, Robert & Emma Chinnery, Jeannette David, Brian Dowse, Clive Forder, Bob Friendship, Mike Hammond (thanks to everyone), John Harris, Trudi Heathcote & Andrew Guest, Philip Hodge, Roger Kirby, Marcus Maylam & Kim Spooner, Clive & Marie Milner, Simon Taylor, Andrew Thacker, Lesley Ward, David & Lilian Wells.

Membership Secretary David

Chapman reported.....

He was stepping down from this role after 28 years. Membership currently stands at 102. The number of SIMCA, MATRA & Talbot cars is obviously declining but ROUTE UK showed the enthusiasm for them is still strong.

David urged members to help his successor by renewing their subscription for 2015 promptly and help the treasurer by paying by electronic means where possible. Payment by cheque is still possible of course.

He produced the 'R.J.Husband shield' which he'd had for some 20 years. This was originally presented annually for significant contribution towards club activities.

After the meeting it was decided that for 2014 it should go to **Clive Nelson & Titus Taylor** for their work in organising

the hugely successful **ROUTE UK** at Beaulieu..

Magazine Editor Mick Ward.....

See report on separate page,

Treasurer Edward Martley reported.

We are currently in a really healthy financial position after the success of the International meeting at Beaulieu so it was proposed subscriptions were frozen at the current level for 2015.

The audited accounts were circulated and approved by the meeting .

A suggestion based on the MATRA club's experience led Edward to check whether membership of the RAC MSA (Motor Sports Association) could provide us with cheaper, more extensive Public Liability insurance cover.

His enquiries had shown fees to join the RACMSA and regional organisation would largely wipe out any saving. Along with the uncooperative attitude from some of their officials and changes to our own rules etc. they'd require probably there wouldn't be any advantage for this in following up membership. *Ed. My own dealings with RACMSA have seemed to involve pay, pay, pay for simply more 'red tape'*

The proposal re. MSA membership was put to the meeting. With just two in favour, it was decided not to go ahead with MSA membership.. MATRA club members there said they had had insurance from MSA for many years... but applying for new membership now seems to involve more cost/complications.

A set of club rules had been drafted to comply with MSA's 'red tape'. Edward plans to send an amended version of these out, with the specific MSA references removed with the final *L'Aronde* of 2014

Election of Committee for 2015.....

The main issue was a replacement for David Chapman as **Membership Secretary**. Mick Ward proposed Daniel Husband, noting that we needed to get younger members on the committee as we are an 'ageing population'. Jill Ewan seconded Daniel. It was also mentioned

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that perhaps we should have a secretary to deal with items other than membership. It was resolved that Daniel Husband take over as membership secretary and David Chapman, proposed by Jill Ewan and seconded by Kevin Ward, would deal with some other secretarial duties and remain as Samba Advisor.

The other vacant post was Advisor for MATRA Murena/MATRA M530 as Tim Martin no longer was a member. Clive Nelson offered to cover all the MATRA models (other than the Bagheera that Kevin Ward deals with) and the meeting gratefully accepted this.

The rest of the committee were re-elected en bloc for 2015.

Edward Martley suggested that, to mark David Chapman's contribution to the club over 28 years we should bestow lifetime membership on him. This met with the meeting's agreement.

National Rally & other events for 2015

2014 saw the Beaulieu International meeting replace our National event. In 2013 we went to Newark Air Museum. Another suggestion that year was the **Battlefield Line**, a preserved railway at Market Bosworth in Leicestershire. This was considered as a good idea for 2015's National. Guy Maylam is to look into a mid to late June date for this.

It was noted that the 2015 **French 'National' meeting** will be on **14 to 17 May at Parthenay**.

Mick Ward said he would book us the usual club stand at The Santa Pod Retro Show, Retro-rides Gathering and other possible events at Mallory Park and Prescott.

Kevin Ward mentioned a weekend meeting that Lesley and he were working on. Based at the '**Fat Lamb**' near Kirby Stephen this would be a joint event with the MATRA Enthusiasts Club. The owner, who is an avid classic car enthusiast, offers god weekend rates to car clubs and will even lead tours of the area in one of his Healeys or Jaguars. It will probably be on the first week of August.

More information to follow.

Route UK International Meeting at Beaulieu review

Dick Husband congratulated all who attended/helped at and organised the event.. Universally considered a huge success, it also made a significant profit of nearly £2000 to the two clubs.. We also got the cooperation of the British weather again...!!!

Clive Nelson noted that the two events..Raid 2000 and Route UK in 2014 owed a lot of their success to Beaulieu itself with their whole organisation being welcoming and supportive at every stage.

They are now making things even easier for small clubs running events by offering to deal with all booking themselves online.

Clive noted the figures for the two events. Raid 2000 saw 303 adults and 10 children visiting. Route UK had 350 Adults and 60 children....arriving in some 180 cars.

Others commented on Clive's organisation of the Saturday tour of the New Forest area. Planned to the finest detail, his early morning recce spotted a possible road closure giving him chance to change the route.in time.

The next International meeting will be in Holland in 2016.

Spares availability for SIMCAs & Talbots.....

Dick Husband warned about vague or blatantly incorrect information re. applications on parts for sale on Ebay etc. As far as parts in general are concerned, exhausts are an area where some parts are becoming hard to find. John Henderson mentioned he'd had a 'custom' Alpine exhaust system made for £300ish some years ago.

Dick also mentioned the faster deterioration of rubber items from tyres to Exhaust hanger since asbestos is no longer used in their construction. Ethanol in fuel also increasingly attacks tanks and gaskets/O rings etc.

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John Henderson repeated his support for 'Tetra-Boost' an additive he has used for years in his Alpines. While not cheap it offers lead replacement plus protection against ethanol erosion etc.

Other members with spares...ex Grimes and elsewhere commented on parts supply. While things keep turning up, in general many parts are becoming harder to find. Parts are being remanufactured in France but some can be horrifically expensive...

Please use the pages of *L'Aronde* to advertise parts you have to sell or are looking for....One person's junk may just be another's treasure...Ed

Any Other Business.....

Edward mentioned he'd been to the AGM of the FBHVC (Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs) of which we are a member. It was held at the HQ of the Rolls Royce Owners' Club in plush surroundings. The event included a Police demonstration of car security and ease of entry on many old vehicles.

As magazine Editor I receive their regular newsletter and can Email it to interested members.Mick Also the MSA enquiries had suggested we needed a 'webmaster' for the club site etc. It was also mentioned that some clubs were moving away from forums to 'social media.' Ed. *Facebook messes my computer up..!!!*

Stuart Wade said our Forum seems to operate well, something which I can back up...Ed.

The meeting closed and many members stayed over for a meal.....



Above and left.... More photos from *Automedon 2014* by Alexis Zaregradsky

We are on course for 6 issues of *L'Aronde* for 2014. I'm delaying the October-November issue to fit in the minutes of this meeting.

Quite a number of members now take the option of receiving their magazine by email in PDF format. Bob Friendship, our club founder is happy to continue the job of putting it into PDF for us.

The PDF option sees quite a saving on postage re. our overseas members with Royal Mail's International rates having risen alarmingly. The UK saving is not so significant with many of the PDF recipients opting to receive a hard, paper copy too.... which the higher subscription rate allows them to do.

This year has seen an excellent flow of material for the magazine from members. David Chapman, Colin Hill, Guy Maylam, Julian Pearson, Jeannette David, Robert Chinnery, Tony Owen, Clive Milner, Lesley and Kevin Ward, Daniel Burrowes, Des Collins, Philippe Vanderbist to name but a few have all sent in articles and/or photos or unearthed 'archive' material. Alexis Zaregradsky keeps us informed of SIMCA/Talbot action in France and we now get occasional reports from Colin Smith in New Zealand.. Alan Catharine who was editor of the original *SIMCA Club International 'L'Aronde'* has promised to provide some 'period' material

Please keep the material coming..... Possible themes include.....

More members' other motors articles.

Restorations in progress with photos...if you're fed up with the endless pickup saga

Old SIMCA/Talbot advertising , Dealer information sheets etc.

Places visited and 'adventures' with your club cars.

Tips on what works well and what falls off and how to do the repairs..

Modifications for reliability, performance or to substitute unobtainable parts.

Reaction to legislation/over regulation etc. that threatens to blight our hobby.

A letters page.... If you feel like sounding off..????

SIMCAs, MATRAs and Talbots in Motorsport...here, abroad past & present

Events where 'our' cars have turned up...

Anything, in fact, related in some way to the cars.... Or general interest.

More 'Members' Other Interests' articles.....??????

Also I receive the magazines from SIMCA, MATRA & Talbot clubs in Belgium, the Netherlands, Australia and Germany and Peugeot UK in exchange for ours and can reprint/translate articles of interest to our members along with web info from sites such as www.simca-competition.com .

I've edited L'Aronde since 1997. I still enjoy the job. So, if the membership wish, I'll carry on the, hopefully, good work....!!!!!!

Mick Ward

Costs , other than postage have remained stable this year and I feel the current local printers continue to give us good service. They have helped me recently while 'grounded' by DVLA by collecting and delivering material and magazines.

Simca – the early years by David Chapman

Since the first Simca to be officially sold in the UK was the Aronde in 1953, we do not often look at the cars built before then. Hopefully this article will provide some information about the development of the company since it started in 1934.

Henri Theodore Pigozzi founded the company to manufacture Fiats for the French market. The Societe Industrielle de Mecanique et Carrosserie Automobile was established in November 1934 with headquarters and factory at Nanterre in Paris.

The first Simcas were virtually identical to their Italian brothers. The range started with the Tipo 508 Balilla with a 995cc engine, four speed synchromesh gearbox and four door pillarless saloon bodywork. This was complimented by a 1.9 litre version called the 518 which started production in 1935.

Later that year Fiat introduced the legendary 500 Topolino and Simca manufactured this as the Simca Cinq (5). The 5 had hydraulic brakes, synchromesh gearbox, independent front suspension and a 570cc side valve four cylinder engine.

A year later Fiat introduced the 508C Millicento with a 1098cc overhead valve engine and four door body. In 1937 Simca started production of their own version of this car, called the Huit (8). Amedee Gordini developed the 8 into a racing car, which, with him at the wheel, won the Index of Performance at Le Mans in 1939.

Between 1936 and 1938 Simca's production rose steadily to a peak in 1938 and achieving Pigozzi's ambition of producing 20,000 cars in a single year. Approximately twice as many 5s were built as 8s, and by the end of 1939 over 46,000 5s had been manufactured. This was the first in a long line of popular Simcas. Production inevitably declined during the war years, but the factory escaped destruction and continued to produce a few cars right up to 1945. At this time Simca joined Baron Petiet's Groupe Francaise Automobile selling consortium together with Delahaye and Delage, although these two latter marques did not survive long in the post war era. The only external evidence of this arrangement was the initials "GFA" appearing beneath the Simca logo on the car's radiator grille, and of course, in the publicity material of the period. Incidentally, Peugeot acquired the ownership of these long defunct marques when it bought Chrysler Simca in 1978.

1946 saw production restart in earnest, and in the following year Simca introduced the 6, an overhead valve version of the 5 with a restyled front end, with a contemporary American look. In 1949 production of the 5 was phased out, with just 221 examples of a car which had been in production for 13 years. In

1950 production went over 30,000 for the first time, with 26,258 8s and 5497 6s leaving the factory.

Gordini resumed his development and racing work with Simca after the end of the war and continued to breed race winning machines until 1951 when he set up as a manufacturer of high performance cars in his own right. In 1947 Gordini developed for Simca an 1100cc single seat sports car which had several successes on circuits including first, second and third places in the Coupe des Petites Cylindrees at Rheims.

The 1949 introduction of a Sport Cabriolet version of the 8 was the first move away from simply replicating Fiats, and this model was joined in 1950 with a Coupe version. Bodies for these glamorous looking cars were produced by Facel Metallon. A Cabriolet Sport won its class in the 1949 Alpine Rally, while the following year two standard 8s took a brace of class wins in the Monte Carlo Rally. If Simca were on a roll by 1950, the most significant advance was in 1951 when a new 4 door saloon model was shown in secret to Simca management – the Simca 9. The engine was the only link with the current range, the 1221cc unit introduced into the 8 in 1949. The rest of the car was entirely new and incorporated coil and wishbone independent suspension at the front. Much discussion followed the presentation of the car to the Simca board as to a suitable name for their creation, and eventually they decided on the name L'Aronde. This was selected because the symbol of the Simca marque was a swallow and the ancient French word for swallow was L'Aronde.

June 1951 saw the Aronde launched to the public and mass production started that October after the factory at Nanterre had been extensively modernised. With production of the 6 ceasing at the end of 1950, Simca turned their attention to producing nearly 30,000 Arondes in the short time left to the end of 1951 to add to the 20,568 examples of the 8, by then the only other model in the range.

From the moment of its launch the Aronde was a startling success and by the end of 1952, when production of the 8 had declined to a mere 27 examples, Simca had built a staggering 69,028 Arondes. Simca had joined the first division of French manufacturers.



SIMCA 8 1200 at Rouen Autojumble, September 2007.....

David Chapman Writes

The first Simca Talbot

A couple of years ago I wrote an article on the history of the French Talbot company before it was purchased by Simca in 1959. I mentioned that the very last built Talbot Lago Sports were fitted with Simca Vedette engines and apparently only 10 such cars were made. The chances of any surviving must be extremely remote. So it was a nice surprise to find that a model of one of these very rare vehicles was available. What's more it was badged as a Simca Talbot Lago, presumably the first such use of the Simca and Talbot marques names together. The model is now sitting on my bookcase, and I will bring it to the AGM so you can see what a Talbot Lago looks like.

French rear engine revival

Until recently I would have thought the least likely development in French cars was one of the major manufacturers starting mass production of rear engined vehicles. But Renault have done just that with the launch of the third generation Twingo. Just 3.59 metres long, the Twingo is the first new rear engined Renault since the 10 was discontinued in 1971. Back in 2008 Renault's engineers came to the conclusion that for a city car, the adoption of a rear engined layout was advantageous. This has allowed them to move the dashboard further forward, resulting in a very lengthy cabin (for its sector). Like the Simca 1000 Rallye 2, the radiator is mounted in the front. Also like the Simca 1000, the new Twingo's front wheels are unencumbered with driveshafts, giving it an impressive turning circle of 8.9 metres, almost comparable with that of a London Taxi.

The engine is a turbo charged version of Renault's 0.9 litre three cylinder as used in the Clio. The unit has been rotated through 45 degrees, so it is 15 cm lower than in its upright position in the Clio. The rear suspension of the Twingo is an unusual de Dion torsion beam design. While this is a rear wheel drive car with a turbocharged engine, it does not apparently feel like a sports car. What it does do, according to Autocar, is feel like the best city car yet developed. The cockpit feels spacious and it is very comfortable at 70 mph on the motorway. On winding back roads, the Twingo becomes more enjoyable, although it could do with a rev counter.

In Autocar's words, we will have to wait for the warm and hot versions of the Twingo to see its potential as a pocket sports car realised. But once it appears in showrooms in the UK, I trust many Simca 1000 enthusiasts like the Wards, Phil Hart, Daniel Burrowes and Jill Ewan, will be popping down to their local Renault dealer to try a rear engined Twingo. New French cars have just become interesting again.



New Twingo



Renault 10.....

Shaking that A**e – re(ar)-engineered

by Peter Dammeyer

I suppose we all agree that Renault wrote many significant pages of automotive history and we Simca followers still salute Renault for their brave introduction of Espace, Alpine and Avantage. On the other hand I probably will not be the only one feeling that most Renaults of the past 20 years have been disappointingly dull and wonder if the company and its legacy will ever recover.

Despair not as Renault might just have introduced a complete Game-Changer.

The third generation Twingo arrived (together with its sibling the new Smart forfour) as the first true compact rear-engined car for decades.

Initially offered with 70 and 90bhp I am sure there will be a Cup or Sports version following soon.

Will it condense all the qualities of the Dauphine and R8 with the quirks of the R4 and R16? We will have to wait and see.

Renault claims the rear view is inspired by the famous R5 Turbo which might be wishful thinking – but to have finally a rear-engined compact 4 door car back in modern production should get all of us Simca 1000 fans into some sort of ecstasy.



Rear engined Renaults... 750 above



Dauphine above and R8 below.....



The new Twingo and its rear engine.....



In the 1990s Renault made the decision not to produce the first generation Twingo in RHD and never imported it to the UK. On the continent this car had to fill the footsteps of a legend, the R4, and did so very successfully over a period of 15 years (1992-2007) – a legend in itself bearing in mind that fast turnaround of generations nowadays.

Its cute and juvenile looks took over the streets of Paris and other cities and are deemed to become a true classic as I am writing this article.

The second generation Twingo can only be understood as a gap filler – not a bad car but unusually bland and uninspiring – at least Renault offered it to the UK.

There might just be a slight chance some of us will end up doing something we haven't done for a long time – getting pin-up picture up our walls from a new car...



1100 Pickup Resto..... Hopefully towards the 'last lap'..... Mick Ward

Have now fitted both replacement doors. I thought SIMCA 1000 doors were fiddly to fit all the links from the locks and handles etc. but the 1100 tops that. I'd unwisely painted one door already and the 'gymnastics' involved in assembling everything meant a few scratches now need touching up.

Rust repairs to the nearside were basically in the same areas as the offside although I had to make up plates for the areas included in the NOS inner wing I fitted on the other side. The lower inner sill was 'beefed up' with some decent box section steel and lighter sections were used to recreate the sloping area in front of the wheel that links up with the top rail near the shocker turret.

Once all that area was complete I had a base to rebuild the bump stop mounting. These fill with water and eventually disintegrate thanks to rust. Luckily I had the one that came with the NOS inner wing on the O/S to copy. I've tried to improve on SIMCA by repositioning the access hole for better drainage.

The NOS outer wing section in front of the rear wheel (supplied by Stuart Wade) made life easier as it had the rear section of the sill built in. This panel was welded to the top rail and inner sill flange. Once a patch or two had been done on the rear door pillar the wing was welded there too. I've filled the joint with the top rail to try to keep out the moisture.

Before fitting the bolt on rear wing section, I took the chance to fit sections of plastic inner wing liner (from something modern on the junk heap at our local garage) to protect the new metalwork and avoid SIMCA's original rust trap.

The rear wing corner section fitted, albeit with some filing of holes, thanks to the manufacturer's 'legendary' accuracy .

The pickup bed had to come in for some 'surgery' as it had rotted away just in front of the rear crossmember. I'd left the top of the chassis legs open at the rear so I could build in some reinforcement and tubes for further bolts to improve the



N/S structure partly reinstated and NOS panels



All in place. I've now painted the dark green up to the top of the pickup bed, just leaving the strengthening ribs at the top in beige.

Are there any other SIMCA/Talbot light commercials being restored, still in use or derelict out there...??? Please let us know with photos if possible..... Ed.

fixing of the towbar. I'd already fitted a central bar from the towball bolts to a crossmember further forward but was shocked to find a past owner had simply welded the main angle piece of the towbar between the bumper mountings.

Once the rear floor was reinstated, work moved on to the joint between the two sections of the pickup bed. The rear section I think is shared with the estate and hatchback models while the front will be the panel that presumably is removable in some of the van versions. On the pickup where they overlap and thanks to poor sealing, 'hit & miss' original spot welding and years of abrasion from loads meant quite a few rust holes. It was vital I sealed it properly as the joint forms the top of a main crossmember. which doesn't need further help to rust.

The tailboard I'd reskinned over its lower two thirds some time ago. After a bit of work to replace worn pegs on the hinge brackets, the panel was fitted. As noted before, it's really functional but is the part of the factory VF2 pickup that makes many people think it's a home conversion.

Moving towards the final 'cosmetics', I've now decided to paint the whole of the pickup bed in dark green just with the top strengthening rails in the original beige. A darker colour at the 'business end' is better as it will still regularly serve as a load carrier. For the cab section forward, I'm thinking of retaining the two tone treatment... the original Antelope Beige over dark green with a thin red line.

Polishing the slot mags up will be a job in the garage for the bad weather. Then I'll be able to refit them to wind up the 'nerd' who used to look at it at local events and repeat 'have you still got those awful big wheels on it'..... Of course he'd get the same answer... 'It's MY vehicle and that's just how I like it.!!!'

Must sort an engine out too. Have chance of an ex-Bagheera 1442 from Kev which should give decent 'poke.'...!!!!



Holey area on joint of floor sections and rear end of pickup bed that was rusted / worn through ...



Are there any other SIMCA/Talbot light commercials being restored, still in use or derelict out there...??? Please let us know with photos if possible..... Ed.

Following on from the article on our SIMCA 1000 racing... a bit on Ford dominated oval racing where we used other cars from 'our' range.....

The first taste of Motor racing, early 70's for Kev and I was *bomber car racing*, a local (Derbyshire & South Yorkshire) class of racing for armoured banger cars. The raw materials came from free gift MoT failures, Chesterfield auction buys £8 to £25 at the most or local 'for spares or repair' ads. Cars used included mk 1 Ford Zephyr, Classic & Corsair. 4/44 and 15/50 Wolseleys. A V8 Pilot and a Triumph 2000 never made it to the track as they were sold on/ used for parts. I went along a different route racing an armoured VW beetle for years....not fast but superb traction on the dirt tracks.

Fed up with the crash & bash and some of the aggro that ensued we then went non contact-ish ,Into grasstrack racing, I raced a Beetle, Kev an R8S Renault followed by 1500GT powered 105E Anglia and a very successful home brewed Lotus Cortina MK 1. Kev then took to the tarmac Ovals having bought an Anglia 'Hot Rod'. Twin cam engines weren't allowed in that formula so my last fling on the grasstracks was in a VW Karmann Ghia with Kev's old Lotus TC engine transplanted.... Really spectacular but took some controlling out there on the rough. amazing in the wet..!

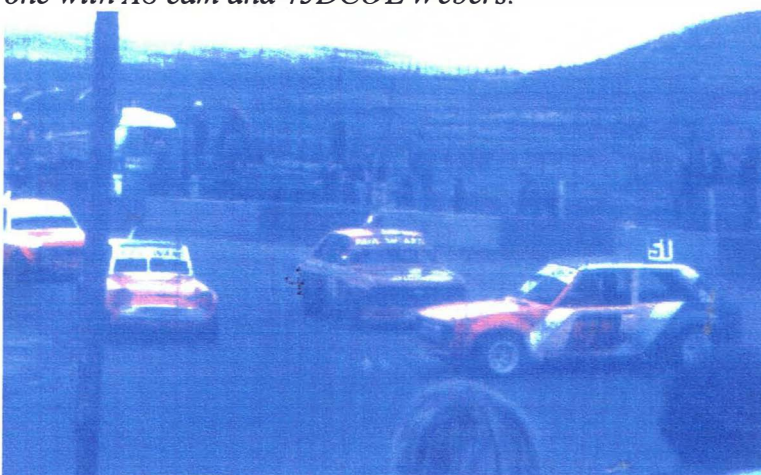
Kev gradually developed the 105E Anglia with the regulation 1700cc dry sumped crossflow engine. Nearly everybody else was gradually moving to Escorts, Mk 1 & 2.. Oval *Hot Rod* racing was more or less an all Ford formula except for the odd Mini and Imp (they eventually banned rear engined cars too) so to be different Kev decided to build an **Avenger** as he was impressed by how his road Avenger GT handled against his mates' Escorts. A road car with a duff engine was found and built into a Hot Rod racer. It was powered by the 1700 Ford crossflow from The Anglia though as that was the engine to use. The old Avenger



Kev's racing Avenger, powered by dry sumped 1700 Ford crossflow engine with Cosworth A6 cam and 40DCOE Webers.



The Sunbeam that replaced the Avenger, Initially with the same engine but later one with A8 cam and 45DCOE Webers.



*Same Sunbeam having changed hands & piant job. Mick spinning out while Kev nips round inside in Mick's old Anglia. gave good service but we always struggled as the formula was fast becoming 'wallet racing' with multi £1000 engines. By early 80's, the Talbot **Sunbeam** was the thing to have in other forms of Motorsport. Kev passed a local*

Info, photos etc of SIMCA, MATRA, Talbot sporting activities past & present always welcome for the pages of L'Aronde.....ED

bodyshop on his way to work. The proprietor rallied Sunbeams, sponsored by the local dealers. Regularly there were bent Talbot Sunbeam bodysHELLS on the heap behind his unit. Kev struck a deal and a few shells bent in different ways came our way. The Sunbeam is basically a cut & shut Avenger so all the gear from Kev's now tired & battered **Avenger** was bolted into the shell that we'd created from the bent parts.

Kev used the **Sunbeam** for many seasons surviving a number of shunts and engine blow ups. Considering our budget it was quite successful. I'd taken up Hot Rod oval racing too by then, building a 105E Anglia (blast from the past by then). When Kev decided to give up racing, I bought the Sunbeam,,,,, I had to as I'd bent it badly at what was supposed to be a 'trial' race meeting with it for me.

We raced both cars at a few meetings, Kev in my old Anglia and me in the Sunbeam. The following season, I'd rebuilt the Sunbeam and, with a few 'mods' I'd tried was ready for action. One of the early races that season saw me heading for a sure fire second place when one of the top drivers, sore at being beaten by one of the Ward brothers, took us both into Hednesford Raceway's unforgiving barrier.in a desperate attempt to launch his Toyota 1000 past me.

That was the end of our first Sunbeam. A visit to a local scrapyard soon after turned up a lightly rolled moss green Sunbeam shell which, with panels from the previous source and many new suspension parts (the rear axle was bent from the crash) was built into my Mk 2 **Sunbeam** racer. It was used for another season or so but the race spec crossflow by then badly needed a rebuild. The cost of a competitive Ford engine was now way beyond my pocket so I sold the car. It was bought by an insurance broker from Southend who, I'm told had it expensively rebuilt and signwritten in his firm's colours but then never actually raced it.

By that time, the 'wallet' racing had gone



Sunbeam rebuilt into a 'new' bodysHELL.



Kev's 1000SR 'stock Rod' lining up for the first time at Buxton Raceway.



1000 about to leave the farm for another race meeting behind Kev's trusty Scimitar towcar.....

mad. **Toyota Starlets** fitted with the ultimate megabuck Ford engines etc. were now the 'thing to have' and the age of the spaceframed Kevlar bodied cars was beginning in the formula,. We looked for something cheaper and found it in the

Info, photos etc of SIMCA, MATRA, Talbot sporting activities past & present always welcome for the pages of L'Aronde.....ED

Stock Rod class... in theory non contact for cars up to 1300cc with original carbs and limited engine & suspension mods.

As mentioned in a previous article, Kev bought a late model **1000SR** which he raced for a short time. In looking for carbs, cams etc for the Rallye 2 & 3 and being told the twin Solexes and webers weren't allowed in *stock rods* (not on models sold on UK market), Kev decided to go sprinting and hillclimbing and built an R3 spec **SIMCA 1000** for the job, saying goodbye to oval racing.

I had a go at *Stock Rods*. Living really dangerously behind the wheel of a Renault 5TS. Despite predictions I kept it on 4 wheels despite the alarming lean on corners. A **SIMCA 1100** was built to replace that, 1294cc with a single DCNF. They wouldn't let me use the twin DCNF's (*The Ti was not a model sold in the UK*) as their rules totally ignored the existence of the 1204 Special. That car did two meetings but its parts were robbed for a Bagheera we were rebuilding I built up a seriously rotten but very fast (in between cracked heads) FIAT 128 3P coupe for a while. At one Hednesford meeting the promoter told me at the gate 'I'm glad you brought the FIAT, your SIMCA may not have been allowed to race', as they were still questioning the eligibility of the twin DCNF's. I believe also Des Cooke's father Brian had put in some amazing performances on the ovals around that time in his **SIMCA 1100** and maybe they were getting worried about a 'french revolution' challenging the Fords.

I'd also thought of using a 1442 engine but thought 'that would be cheating' until I realised everybody else was already cheating in some way or other.!!!

Soon after we left the ovals for years of sprinting, hillclimbing and eventually classic saloon racing with the variety of **SIMCA 1000's** previously featured.

Towards the end of the last century, a few health problems meant I had to give



Mick's 1000 built for the Buxton 1600 FWD 'Hot Rod' class.. Note Rear arch extensions made from Bagheera wings..



1100 in action on Buxton track....



At least it stayed on 4 wheels, unlike the Mini in the background....!!!!

up racing on the big circuits. Our local short oval, Buxton Raceway, had much laxer requirements and had a non-contactish 'hot rod' formula for front wheel drive cars up to 1600cc. Engine swaps between

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models from the same manufacturer were allowed as long as they were below 1600cc, 8 valve and on carbs. I built a **SIMCA 1100**. with huge arches made from Bagheera wings to cover the wide slicks. 1294 and 1442 engines with Hart 2 (Rallye 3-ish) cam plus went quite well. A 1592 I tried just couldn't stand the pace, melting its pistons and cracking the block. The trouble was the 1100 was far too heavy against the Fiestas, Novas and the odd Mini & Metro. The 1100 was progressively lightened, eventually having no floor in the rear, the rear suspension having its torsion bars removed and using coilovers. Eventually I decided to build a **Samba** (as the lightest car in the Peugeot/Talbot range) using the same engine as the 1100. Yes I know it doesn't fit but it does when the front structure from a Peugeot 309 is welded into the front end of a Samba...which is exactly what I did.. The idea came from French Groupe F Sambas built in the same way featured in motorsport magazine *Echappement*.

The spec of the Samba was as follows... 1442 engine from a late Horizon with Hart 2 race camshaft, double valve springs running on twin 40DCNF carbs on a Bagheera manifold (later I fitted twin 45 DCOE carbs when I found a suitable manifold), home made 4 branch exhaust exiting through glovebox area and out of hole in passenger door..!!!, 5 speed gearbox from the 309,..... 309 steering, crossmember, & suspension arms with 'compression struts' using 1000 rack end bushes., adjustable front suspension struts originally from Rallycross Golf GTi adapted to fit 309 hubs. Samba trailing arms at rear with 1100 stub axles welded in to fit 1000 front discs (same wheel bearings..!!) adjustable Spax coilovers. 7 or 8x13 alloy wheels with choice of Avon racing tyres or wets.

The end result went well, but by the time it was ready to race, **the rules had changed.....** The class limit had been increased to 2 Litres. This was a result of the organisers giving up trying to police



SAMBA/309 'hybrid' replaced the 1100



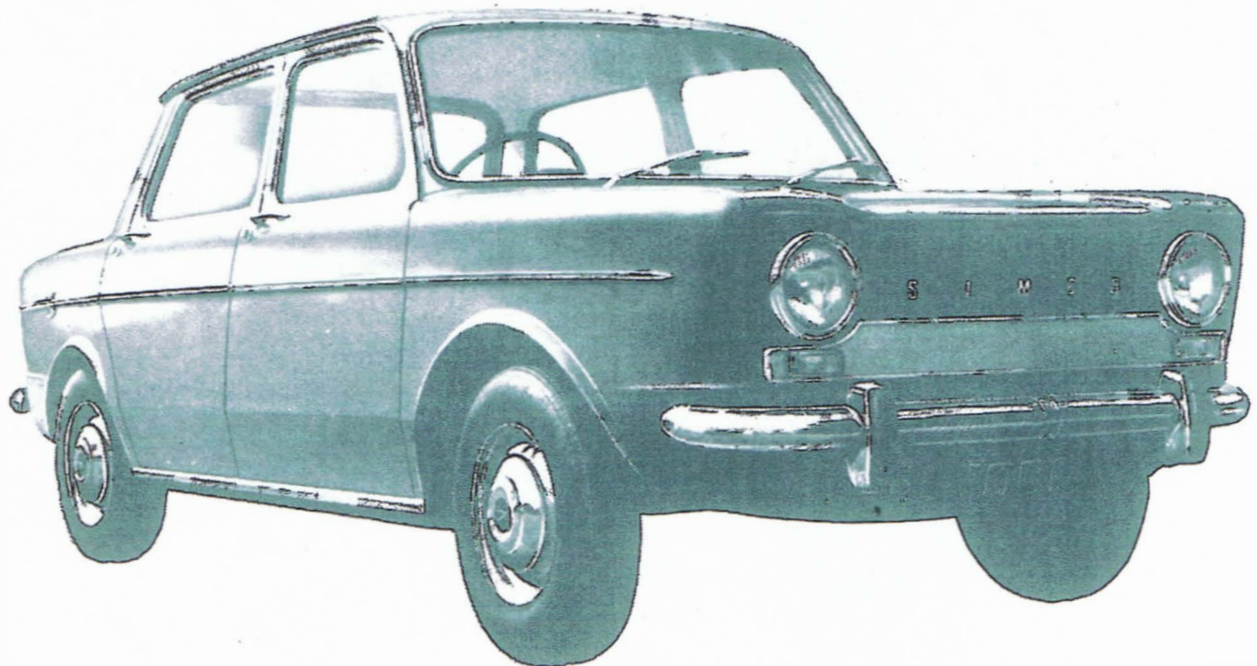
the engines in the Fords and Vauxhalls mainly. Most had obviously been running ones blatantly over 1600cc. My 1442cc Samba was then at a real disadvantage. It went OK and handled superbly, particularly in the wet. but, that season, I was plagued with sheared distributor drives and the driveshafts coming out of the centre bearing of the BE1 gearbox I was using by then.

I bought a rotten, crashed 1.9 205 GTi and the bits to run it on carbs for parts to upgrade the **Samba** but decided I was 'past it' by then....and sold the rolling shell to a racer from Dorset who planned to race it in a similar formula in the South West, obviously with freer rules as he intended to fit a 405 Mi16 engine to the **Samba**..I never found out its fate..!!! **Since then I've 'retired' to the odd trackday or autotest using my Honda CRX twin cam powered 1000 or the 'Fimca' or Philippe's 1.9 205 Gti**

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Philippe Vanderbist has been working over in France in recent months.....

He writes... I've recently been in France in the Mid Pyrenees area and of course my target was to find some nice classic car photos to share with the club.

I was especially looking for a SIMCA 1000. I found one, not on the road. But on top of a building, the car is used as an advert for a shop...really good idea.

I came across a few Talbot Sambas, a SIMCA 1501, a SIMCA 1100 and a really rare Porsche 904 Carrera. I need to get some photos of that for the future. I know the owner.

There are also some pictures from a car event in a town called Lascabannes. I was really surprised to find a FIAT 500 'Speedster' which I've never seen before... only around 50 left (*weren't they called 'Gamine'..Ed*) Also the DS convertible and Citroen Mehari? The SIMCA 1100Ti and 1200S were at a meeting at St. Lolie.



1100 High top van still in use by local butcher....



1000 serving as advertising on shop roof...



Photo Round up.....



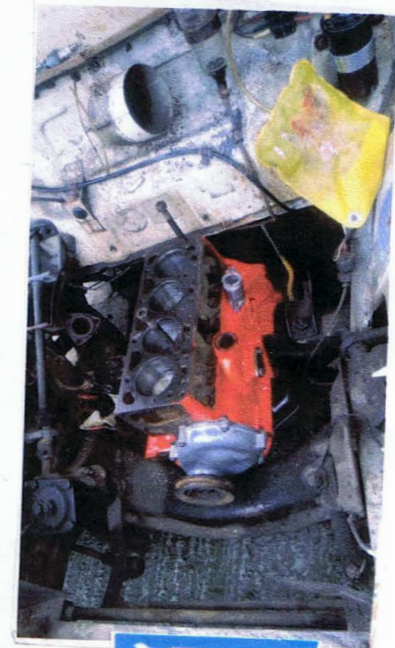
● In the same line-up, the red car is a rare Facel Metallon-bodied early Simca Aronde, with a later standard Simca Aronde alongside, but the bulbous American-looking saloon with integral roof rack is a real rarity. It's a Vedette hatchback – the Vedette was originally a French Ford, but the firm was taken over by Simca.



● Next to the Maigret-type Citroën Traction Avant there's another Simca – a Vedette 'Beaulieu', I believe, of the type introduced for 1958, still with the old 'flathead' Ford V8! Beside the Simca is an ageing Donnet saloon. Donnet was once allied with Zedel, and Simca took over the factory when they went broke in 1934. I'd say that this particular car is from around 1930 – but is it the four-cylinder 7CV model or one of the firm's bigger 'light sixes'?

More pictures from Philippe Vanderbist.....

Below: **Daniel Husband** is restoring an Aronde P60 more on this rebuild in future issues of *L'Aronde*.....



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As every year since 2009, I went to the **Automedon** show in the North of Paris. It is the last big show of the year in Paris. I saw several SIMCA, Talbot, MATRA and Chrysler cars there. I had a very good day with my friend Michel who had gone there in his Samba Cabriolet. We proudly displayed our 'Route UK 2014' sticker on our Talbots. Contrary to previous years I didn't buy anything. I go to Automedon principally for the scale models but this Sunday the choice was very poor and I wasn't happy. Now I must sort out the calendar for 2015.



More *Automedon* photos on next page.....



Some of the cars from the range Alexis photographed at Automedon 2014.

Simca 1204 Restoration + Honda power by Kev Ward

Four years ago the 1204 was taken off the road. At the time I thought it was just to do some welding around the rear chassis, but of course like all these cars, when I started looking into it – it was clear it needed extensive restoration.



This was particularly so around the front chassis legs and engine mountings. To do this the whole front end would have to be cut out and re-fabricated. The intention at this stage was to rebuild and re-fit the 1442 engine and twin carbs as before. But as I had already done this conversion before to my other Simca 1100 this time I had decided to build a more highly tuned engine and fit this.

At the time Mick (my brother) was experimenting with fitting Honda engines into his racing 1000 projects. Sitting in the corner of my garage was a 16 valve Honda engine complete with gear box which just happened to be surplus to Mick's requirements.

I started thinking if it would be possible to fit the complete engine and gearbox into the old 1204. I started doing a few measurements and it looked like it would be feasible. I talked to Mick in the pub (where all great ideas start) and I decided to give it a go. Many months were spent welding up the shell. The front chassis legs were re-built with steel

box section inside them, in readiness for fabrication of the Honda engine and gearbox mounts. The engine would now be positioned on the opposite side of the engine bay.



Trial fitting of Honda engine

I used Honda engine mountings on the right hand side and a combination of Honda plus Simca on the left gearbox mounting. The Honda has also two very substantial mounts on each end at the bottom of the engine and gearbox. This was my first major problem as the mountings were way outside the Simca chassis legs.

I solved this by making a box section frame behind the Simca front panel which I had previously removed. This would make pick up points for the extra Honda engine and gear box mounts. Also would serve as a mounting point for the radiator etc.

This worked out really well because when the Simca front panel was offered up to the car these new mountings were completely hidden as they were just underneath the headlamps.



Checking everything fits inside the front, prior to new panel being fitted

Simca 1204 Restoration + Honda power by Kev Ward

The next big problem was the main suspension cross-member.

The Simca gear change and exhaust passes over the top of this and is very difficult to work on as I am sure many of you will know. The Honda exhaust is on the front of the engine and passes underneath in the centre of the engine and gear box. This needs to pass straight through the centre of the cross-member. Also the gear change rods pass through the same place.

After much head scratching I decided to take the bull by the horns. To act as a brace, I welded some small box section pieces between the top and bottom cross-member. These could be removed later. I then cut about six inches out of the entire centre of the suspension cross-member. Once I was sure the Honda engine and gear change passed through I then lined the top of the cross-member with rectangular steel box section from one side of the chassis to the other. These were welded and bolted. I also capped the cut ends of the cross-member with plate.

I then fabricated a structure out of thick steel plate on the underside of the cross-member. This would give it strength and also act as a guard for the exhaust and gear change. The end result was a very strong cross-member with a tunnel through the middle of it.

After a few trial fittings the engine was installed. It actually fitted better than the original Simca engine.

I now started to look at the drive shafts which would need to be Simca outer CV joints and Honda inner. The Honda drive shafts are solid steel and the 1204 ones are tubular steel. I found by a stroke of luck that when cut off, one fitted inside the other like a telescope. So all I needed to do was find the right length for each shaft, then weld one inside the other. My only slight concern was the driver's side shaft was very short. This meant I had very little metal to play with, but it seemed to work out ok.

The gear change is just a single rod on the Honda with no extra linkages as everything takes place inside the gear box. So this was just a matter of shortening the rod to suit the 1204 and then mounting the gear lever

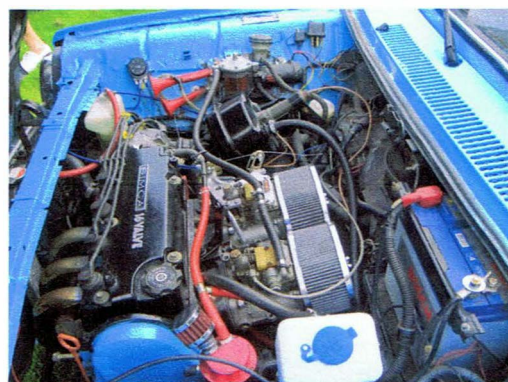
mechanism in the floor. This gave me a very smooth gear change.

Next on my list was the exhaust system.

For this I obtained a "lovely" stainless steel 4 into 1 exhaust manifold from one of the many Honda tuning firms. The rest of the exhaust was fabricated in stainless steel as a straight through system. So hopefully I will never have to worry about the exhaust system again. I now turned my attention to the fuel and electrical system.

My original idea was to fit the fuel injection system plus ECU from the Honda, but this proved a) not to fit and b) far too complicated. So I decided to run the car on good old fashioned carburetors.

A pair of 40 side draft Dellorto carbs were obtained from a 1.6 Alfa Romeo. All I needed to do was to make my own manifold! Honda didn't seem to stock one. This was eventually made up using a Ford CVH manifold which I thought cheap on EBay with about ½ inch removed from the centre. The inlet ports lined up with those on the Honda cylinder head. A thick alloy plate was then made up which bolted to the Honda cylinder head. Holes were drilled and tapped to provide mountings for the Ford manifold. Making it a family project Lesley did her bit in making the gaskets. This all worked out very well and the carbs nicely clear the Simca upper cross-member.



Carburettor installation

For the fuel system I fitted the larger capacity Honda CRX fuel tank but with the fuel injection pump removed. I then fitted an electric pump and filter regulator to supply the carbs.

Simca 1204 Restoration + Honda power by Kev Ward

The ignition system on the Honda was now not suitable as it needed to work through the ECU. But I knew from racing experience that the old twin-carb Honda engine from the early 90s had a simple two wire electronic distributor. One for ignition the other for the rev counter. This housed the coil and amplifier all in one unit. I managed to get one which turned out to be a straight fit into the engine I was using.



Engine showing new distributor

The rest of the electrics I grafted a Honda instrument panel into the 1204 dashboard. This made the wiring and instrumentation simple.



Honda instrument panel

The cooling system was pretty easy as I just used everything from the Honda. The Honda radiator is surprisingly tiny but the car cools really well – clever people these Japanese!

The braking system uses the 1204 disk brakes and drums but with a new Triumph TR6 remote brake servo. Also new grooved disks and adjustable brake bias valve.

The suspension is lowered with new shock absorbers all round, the rear ones having coil assister springs. This is finished with 6 by 13 Compomotive alloy wheels and 185/60/13

tyres. To fit these in, I fitted wheel arch extensions, the fronts being fibreglass; the rears are made up using steel wheel arch repair panels for a Horizon welded into the Simca 1100 rear wing.



Wheel arch extensions

The time had come to start up the engine...

Much to my delight the car started up without problems, but was initially a bit rough running. This was resolved over the next few days by the re-jetting of carbs plus slight modifications to the distributor to provide more advance for the timing.

To try it out, all I could do was to run it up and down our drive a few times. Fortunately it's a quite long drive. Everything seemed ok so I decided to book it in for its MOT. It passed first time with no advisories. I was overjoyed.



Car ready for MOT

Once it was taxed and insured I took to the open road for real testing. I had a few small teething problems but nothing drastic.



Spraying begins

Simca 1204 Restoration + Honda power by Kev Ward



First outing to local car show

As I intended taking this car to Route UK at Beaulieu, I decided to try it out on the motorway as a final test. So Mick and I went to the Retro Show at Santa Pod in Northampton.



Santa Pod



The car performed really well and also proved to be economical on fuel. This is probably helped by the 5 speed gear box. Also the gear change is a pleasure to use. I was very pleased with the car and everything was going well on the return journey until about 2 miles from home on a busy roundabout I lost transmission. I found the short drive shaft – the one I was concerned about being short of metal – broke on the weld, probably due to fatigue. As a result I came home on the back of a brake down truck.

I have now solved the problem. I stripped down the Honda CV and found that I could cut the Simca drive shaft a bit longer and pass this inside the Honda CV joint. This was then welded and also drilled using a locksmith drill and a metal pin fitted. This was then finished off by fitting a universal rubber boot.

I have now done this modification to both drive shafts.

This is just an overview of what it's taken me to achieve my goal. All the months of planning and testing theories is all part of restoring an old car. Multiply that by the decision to fit mechanicals from another completely different car all adds up to an awful lot of work. However the enjoyment and satisfaction it has given me is extremely rewarding.

Many friends, family and other car enthusiasts have asked, "why fit a Honda engine?" my usually reply is, "I love Simcas and I love Hondas" (much like the Aldi adverts), "why not combine the two" or even, "because I can"

Was it worth it? Yes. In my mind it's made a fun, practical, everyday car with character. Would I do it again? What about a Honda powered Matra Bagheera? I've got all the bits.....