

51



2017
AUGUST



www.fiat500enthusiasts.co.uk

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'TECH TORQUE'

Please note that the Fiat 500 Enthusiasts Club advise caution if following any advice given on these pages as the club can accept no responsibility.

A Salutary Tale

Since completing the restoration of my fiat I have had a issue with the low oil pressure light coming on after driving the car for number of miles. The first time the light came on was the first big trip which was to Brooklands, after driving about 25 miles the light started to flicker then when we reached 30 the light stayed on. The trip home the same happened again.

Over the next couple days I replaced the low oil pressure switch and changed the oil, however I noticed the light was turning on over a shorter distance, fortunately I was only driving a short journey. Speaking to others and looking on line nothing really suggested what the problem might be as it took time for the light to come on. In the end I decided to remove the engine and strip down to see what the issue was as the light was now coming on after only a couple of miles.

When I restored the car I fully rebuilt the engine so I know it should be ok but when I started to strip the engine apart it soon become clear what the issue was, there was grit / sand inside the engine. As I started to inspect the internal part of the engine I could see server damage to the oil pressure plate and the end of the cam shaft, it looks like the grit / sand had embedded itself into the soft aluminium oil pressure plate and ground the end of the cam down by over 1mm and the same on the oil pressure plate, this in turn meant there was over 2mm less of pressure on the spring and explains why the light was coming on over a shorter period, ie, the parts were wearing out, I was totally amazed this level of damage could occur in just under 300 mile of using the car and even more amazing that it didn't damage more of the engine.

After fully stripping and cleaning the complete engine I only had to replace the cam shaft and oil pressure plate, but I also I decided to replace the front main crank bearing because it seemed to have more clearance than I wanted - even though it was new when I restored the car just under 300 miles ago.

The next thing was to try and work out was how or why the engine had grit / sand in it too, the only thing I could find was from the rocker cover , It was one of the only parts I got powder coated. Even though I thought I checked and cleaned it I couldn't have done as thorough job as thought I had.

The engine is all back together and so far the low pressure issue is fixed, time will tell if I got all the grit / sand out !!!



Photos above show how the oil pressure plate and cam shaft looked when I first rebuilt the engine and after 300 miles of use.

Colin Hitchcock

LOW OIL PRESSURE PROBLEMS? A BRIEF CHECKLIST

1. Having been involved in assisting Colin regarding his unfortunate oil pressure problem which hopefully is now solved, I thought that I should summarize the possible causes. Listed in order of ease/ cost/ likely cause, as far as possible.
2. Check oil level and specification,
3. Suspect the Oil Pressure Sender and replace.
4. Are there any unusual noises from the engine ? Identify the source and consider next move!
5. Is the engine overheating, note: All Air cooled Engines appear to run bit hot. Fan/Dynamo belt slipping?
6. Has the cooling fan become detached from its drive (behind dynamo) It would make a LOT of noise.
7. Do you have the rubber seals around the spark plugs, if not some cooling air will fail to reach the cylinders.
8. Is the thermostat working and opening the control flap when hot?
9. Open the heater valve inside the car and at least the air will flow in that direction, (engine running). Check that there is air movement felt.
10. Does the oil smell of petrol possibly with oil level increasing over time.
11. If the Carburetor Float or spring loaded Needle Valve are faulty, excess Fuel will dilute the oil very quickly. I have witnessed this, surprisingly the car ran and ticked over perfectly.

The following will probably mean dismantling of some sort.

12. Fracture / damage to oil pick up or its attachment within the engine sump.
13. Worn Main or Big end bearings. Wear/damage to oil pump/oil relief valve.

Finally there was an interesting article on this subject in the Magazine, No 43. April Page 13, by "Topo Peloso" pointing out the possible differences between 500 & 126 oil pumps. Members can view by accessing the Members Area of the website.

J.J.

FIAT 500 BITES BACK!

Having followed, and advised Colin (Hitchcock) during his unfortunate mechanical woes to his immaculately restored car. I have been reminded of some of the incidents that have occurred to me over the years of 500 ownership and offer them as advice and warning .

On the first test run after restoring my 500 I had travelled around 5 miles when there was a strong smell of petrol in the car. I immediately turned off the engine at around 30MPH declutched; then fractionally later realised that the steering would lock if I then steered into the layby which was alongside on my left. I had to keep steering straight until the engine stopped turning and I could then put the ignition back on in order to be able to steer.! I stopped, dived out of the car, opened the lid slowly, (I was still thinking clearly!) and saw that the metal insert into the carburettor that the flexible clamped onto had fallen out and was spraying petrol all over the engine. I had been SO close to seeing the newly rebuilt car going up in flames.

Lessons learned..

- If necessary fix/glue the carb insert in securely,
- Buy a Fire Extinguisher.

Some months later, (another test run) Smoke suddenly poured from the rear of the car, again an Emergency stop! This time one of the studs that thread into the engine casing and support the exhaust system had vibrated loose and fallen out, Now expectations were that this stud would be blind, ie not threaded completely through into the engine internally, but not so, and oil had blown out under the slight pressure and covered the exhaust system. By walking back around 100 metres I found the stud and refitted it to get me home.

I later learned that when preparing these engines for racing etc a bolt was inserted from the INSIDE and threadlocked to prevent this happening!!

Third incident, a good while later I had obviously not refitted the oil filler cap correctly and it fell off making a loud Clang as it hit the road behind me .

The only other car for miles then came along and squashed it " I believe that this is called 'SODS Law' Who ever he was!

J.J.

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AN ALTERNATIVE RECOLLECTION OF '57

Hi, what an interesting edition of the magazine! [June edition] I liked the article on the Giardiniera by Gary Edwards. I've always thought that to be the most practical small Fiat. Loads of room a hidden engine and smart lines.

However, you've missed something from the 'what happened in '57'. My father was stationed in Egypt three years before and we all got together in Cyprus in '55. When it came to leaving in June '57, dad decided on returning via Greece and Italy then up through Europe.

An exciting trip on the cargo ship Phillipa Grammani with a storm, frantic Greek ladies who expected to die at any moment and our Royal Enfield with its side car stowed in the hold ended serenely in Naples with no deaths. We looked round Naples for a few days then headed north. There were loads of small Fiat's around some of whom managed to pass our 650cc bike. I think they must have been 600s at that time and they certainly motored! Dad's bike was admired and when it was still they were impressed by the size of it's motor.

Reaching Rome dad drove round and headed for the Autostrada again before mum yelled at him and we went and found an hotel. More sight seeing! Also my first spaghetti dish which was simply spaghetti with a dollop of dry cheese. It took several years to get me to try it again. Now I'm cured!

I was stuck on the pillion seat and kept in place by side hampers. Great views either side of dad! It was very hot in June so we wore the minimum, crash hat, shorts and tee shirt.

All fine until Switzerland when we got cold after two and a half years in Cyprus. Covered up we enjoyed the mountains and drove into France. France looked a tip after Swiss cleanliness but improved. The bike burbled away through Paris where we again stopped, then to the coast at Boulogne where I managed to get washed away while swimming! I had learned to swim in the Med with no tide to worry about. A nice pharmacist sorted my scrapes and we headed home.

Grandma was amazed at the colour we had all collected on this wonderful trip...far better than a boring flight home in a Hastings transport!

My 600 d is being treated again and I have spent a couple of days getting the new wheel arch to blend in. Also retrieved some more filler and grey primer from the Bromley show so I'll have to get on with it when it cools down.

We booked a holiday later in the year in Sicily so more Fiat spotting and hopefully an automatic 500 to hire!

Martin Bates

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COTSWOLD DRIVEOUT 3RD JUNE



As the early morning mists evaporated, our intrepid crews started to arrive at the start venue in the heart of the Cotswolds around 9:30am, where a Full

English was waiting for anyone man (or woman) enough to take it on. Given the distance many had travelled, I would have expected nothing less.



Crews were briefed and route books handed out before the “No need to rush off” Le Mans start took place from the car park. However, in true FFEC style, in less than 3 miles there were Fiat 500’s going in all directions and the traditional chaos reigned.



Having said that, after about 50 miles of picturesque countryside, all crews arrived safely at the finish at our place for a good old oil drum and charcoal BBQ. Whilst the coals were getting up to temperature, the route book marking took place (lubricated by a few beers)



and despite no bribes to the organiser and significant opposition to some of my decisions, a clear winning car and last place car were established.



A magnificent Fiat 500 trophy car went to the winners (new member Sarah Williams & family) whilst an equally elegant (in its own way) wooden spoon trophy went to the last placed car (Stefan Graichen). Unfortunately, Stefan took



his eye of his prize and it got chewed beyond all recognition by one of the dogs. Roll on the next event!

Colin Smith



Photo: Courtesy James Abbott

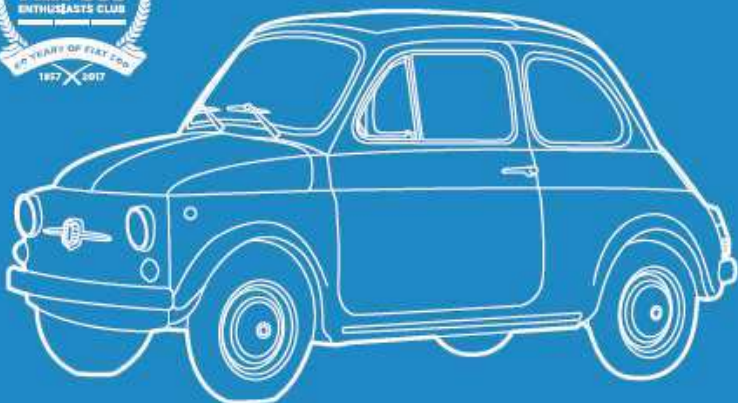
The event finished with a splendid barbeque at Colin's house where we were entertained by his dogs leaping in the air trying to snatch Stefan's Drone. Luckily the drone lived to tell the tale and provided us with some great pictures.

Many thanks to Colin for organising a lovely day out.

JS



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ADRIAN FLUX**Seventy year old Topolino - the grand papà - up for auction**

The grande papà of Fiat 500s will come up for auction at the Imperial War Museum, Duxford, later this summer.

Despite rolling off the production line an incredible 70 years ago, this classic Topolino is in pretty much pristine condition boasting sparkling silver paintwork with black trim and the original engine and gearbox in tact.

The “little mouse” will come with a pretty big price tag. The pre-auction estimate is £11,000 to £13,000 but buyer beware - all hammer prices are subject to a premium of 15% inclusive plus VAT at 20%.

Full auction guide notes on this Topolino, registered 587 XUK, with chassis number 013080 and engine number 013229, are not yet available but the vehicle was first registered by Manchester County Council on April 13, 1937.

Initial observations confirm the car has been treated to much restoration work, that it retains its original engine, and that it has been part of a private collection since 2008.

It is also understood to be potentially eligible for the Mille Miglia - the 1,000 mile race held every year in Italy to commemorate the original road touring event which ran between 1953 and 1957 and was resurrected in 1977.

Only cars manufactured pre 57, which had registered for the original race, can take part in the event which follows a route from Brescia to Rome and back again.

Though highly desirable, the car coming up for auction will fall a long way short of the most expensive Fiat 500 ever to be sold. That record was set nine years ago when the hammer came down on one of four specially commissioned examples of the supermini painted by the artist Tracey Emin.

It was sold during an auction in June 2008 to raise money for the charity ARK (Absolute Return for Kids). Incredibly, the auction raised £25 million

And the sale price for the Fiat 500, the smallest of cars? An eye-watering but incredibly cool £200,000.

If you are considering splashing out on a vintage Topolino, a classic 500, or a modern 500 Abarth Esseesse, it would be good to remember that specialist motor insurance company **Adrian Flux** has created a range of bespoke schemes **exclusive to Fiat 500 owners** .

If you own a Fiat 500, of whatever vintage, it is good sense to give one of the motor insurance experts at **Adrian Flux** a call on **0800 916 1288** , to see if you could make a big saving on your insurance premium.

For details of the Duxford auction visit **H&H Classics Auctions** or to register an interest in the 1957 Fiat 500 Topolino call **H&H** on 01925 210035.



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FIAT 500 60th BIRTHDAY PARTY - GARLEND A

At 4pm on the 4th July 1957 the first Fiat 500 rolled off the production line and emerged out the doors of the Lingotto factory in Turin.

Fast forward and 60 years on, fans of this little car gathered together from all over the world to celebrate this mile-stone birthday.



The main celebration was held in Garlenda Italy, the home village of the Fiat 500 Club Italia.

Although the club house is only yards from our home, Jimmy insisted in getting out our 500 and deciding to fly the flag for the UK he put on our

British number plates... strictly not legal as the car is on SORN in the UK, but Roberto (our local policeman) knows us well and we hoped would turn a blind eye.

The invitation to the event told us that the birthday cake would be arriving on the roof of a Giardiniera, so we look forward to seeing it driving down the road, and I always enjoy a bit of birthday cake!

Somewhere, something had got lost in translation! The cake was made of wood! In the shape of a Fiat 500 with metal candles round the outside. And although a drink and little nibbles were on offer, somehow it wasn't the same.



A film was shown in the museum and 'Happy Birthday' was sung. Jimmy and I missed this bit as we had bumped into some friends who had just arrived from the UK. They didn't have their 500 with them as they were in a campervan on a touring holiday, but felt they couldn't miss the celebrations, so we had lots of gossip to exchange.

Ten years ago, for the launch of the new 500 and the 50th celebration of our little cars, the Italian Post Office produced a commemoration stamp, this year they



produced another one – I have sent a postcard with the stamp to Jenny (our editor) hopefully it will arrive in time for her to print it in this magazine. I also brought a few extra so perhaps they can be auctioned off at an event in aid of club funds.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY 500. Jan Di Carlo



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ARABELLA AND



My first introduction to the 500 was in 1970 when I bought my wife a 1964 Giardiniera which was the ideal small estate car that would accept a carrycot, with my son, in the back whilst my daughter would be on the back seat. At that



time I was working for a motor accessory retailer/wholesaler in Kent so parts were relatively easy to source.

During the early days of its ownership, I became used to my wife phoning me at work to tell me the car had broken down - again! It was always on the same stretch of road, about 2 miles from home, and every time I got to her, the car would start straight away. The joys of a Fiat 500! After all what I thought were the usual checks, I fitted a new coil and condenser and the gremlin was laid to rest. Another gremlin was its tendency to shoot a spark plug out of the head when at full revs climbing the 1 in 7 hill near to our home on the North Downs. I recall the Fiat dealer in Maidstone telling me this was a weakness but they could overcome it by fitting Helicoils. Another joy of the Fiat 500 !

Being in the motor accessory business, I purchased a pair of clip-on snow chains and I amazed friends and neighbours that I never got stuck in the snow - we used to have proper winters in the early 70's ! We kept the car until 1973 when, with holes in the floor pan caused by the constant seat adjustment, it was taken by my wife, accompanied by a neighbour and our four children, to Ashford Car Market. In spite of the children's laughter when it was driven into the auction hall, it sold. Hooray!

From that time onwards, I smile inwardly when I see a Giardiniera - not for our experience but because I have always considered it a pretty and practical car.



Then, whilst idly looking online at the catalogue of a Catawiki Classic Auction in February 2016, I espied a '77 Giardiniera which, from the description and accompanying photographs, revived my long time desire to have a classic vehicle. Questions asked between the Italian vendor in Bari who spoke no English and myself who spoke no Italian (thank goodness for Google's translation facility!) convinced me that this might be within my grasp. It went right to the wire - starting at £3.8k and finishing at £5.4k (complete with auction fees and VAT). Then to get it back to the UK. A big let-down by a shipper led me to hire a self drive transporter and take seven days out at the end of March to drive to the south east of Italy, collect the car and return straight to Auto Rossa for it to be checked over, MOT'd and subsequently registered. That's where the Giardiniera (known by me as "Arabella") still resides BUT is very close to being completed - new floor, door sills, brakes, steering, etc etc - all of which will have doubled the cost. *My friends say that I am mad* but she is a pretty car !!

...ISABELLA

Then, one year on, another Catawiki Classic Auction in February and a 1967 Autobianchi Bianchina Berlina took my attention. This time at Mesagne (Brindisi), even further down Italy and again a non English speaking vendor (who had restored the car) and my still non Italian speaking - other than Ciao. I



1965 Autobianchi Bianchina Berlina 110FB

kept a low profile on the auction bidding until the final two minutes when my maximum bid of £5k was in place when the hammer went down and, with auctioneer fees and MOT, I had "invested" just short of £4.5k - Wow, what a bargain! *"My friends now say that I am doubly mad!"*



Well she (this one is "Isabella") was collected and transported back to the UK and is now waiting to be swopped over at Auto Rossa for her to be given "the once over". The language problem was easier this time round as the vendor had an American friend who translated

for us both when we spoke on the 'phone whilst the daughter of the vendor of the Giardiniera (with whom I have become a Facebook friend) has very kindly translated all correspondence for me.

Two blind purchases, both of which have been enjoyed, so far, and hopefully will give fun motoring whilst I am on the UK mainland rather than at my Channel Island home. I daren't take either "Arabella" or "Isabella" to Alderney - too much salt air on this "little rock in the ocean" !!! "Arabella" will be at The Goodwood Revival - God willing !

Finally, with a further purchase of a new single axle tilt trailer to transport "my madnesses" behind my motorhome - all I need now is a secure place to park "the fleet" within a stone's throw of Southampton Airport - all offers considered!!

Peter Bennion



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XXXIV INTERNATIONAL MEETING FIAT 500 GARLENDIA 7-8-9 JULY 2017

Garlenda is a small village, 8km away from the busy coast in Liguria. Tucked in the valley alongside the Lerrone river the village amenities consists of a town hall, post office, a chemist, two tiny supermarkets, a hair dresser, one bar and three pizzeria's /restaurant's, nothing much happens here.

A population of about 1000 inhabitants, of which only half live here full time, there are more dogs, cats and chickens than people. With mountains on three sides it is normally so quiet that an alarm clock is unnecessary, the local cock crowing in the morning wakes everyone.

Except for three days a year!

The first weekend on July sees an invasion of approximately 1000 cars and 2000 people. Can we cope.... of course not, it is a nightmare for the locals. Normal life stops, as it is near impossible to even drive down the one road that runs through the village.

The only sensible thing to do is either leave or batten down the hatches stay inside and ignore the whole thing. Every year Jimmy and I talk about escaping, and have in the past gone to stay with friends as far away as possible.

This year however we decided to put up with the noise, confusion and cars racing up and down the road at well past midnight, revving the guts out of their engines and making as much a din as possible. Well of course this year is the 60th anniversary so we had to take part.



Cars lined up for the Signing-on on Friday - Photo courtesy Fiat 500 Club Italia

What we didn't take into account was that the event was not just for three days (almost bearable) but would last a week. The actual anniversary was on Tues.4th, and Fiat 500's with their owners started to arrive on Monday, not to leave until a week later.



At the signing-on we were all given a pin to mark on the map where we had come from. Leo is putting his near Richmond. I put ours as near to Fleet as I could. At the end of the event there were only 5 pins in the UK part of the whole map.

After a few days of planned excursions, On Sunday all the cars gathered at the local Hippodrome for a parade, we were parked up in groups according to nationality or regions of Italy



A long way from home - Did this van travel the furthest?

Our group consisted of only 3 cars, but we were not the smallest, only one car came from Monte Carlo – just 80km away and I suppose you can excuse club members from South Africa and Australia not bring their cars but borrowing ones locally.



As usual Bug'sy (our car) is flying the flag for the UK. Jimmy with other brave souls who had driven from Yorkshire and Devon. - Photo courtesy on Fiat 500 Club Italia.

A few facts about the event:

- 1204 cars registered at the event, the largest number since 2007.
- One car got so excited it burst into flames before getting to the event.
- A Fiat 500 N was stolen from its Danish owners when it was parked up in Imperia whilst taking part in one of the excursions



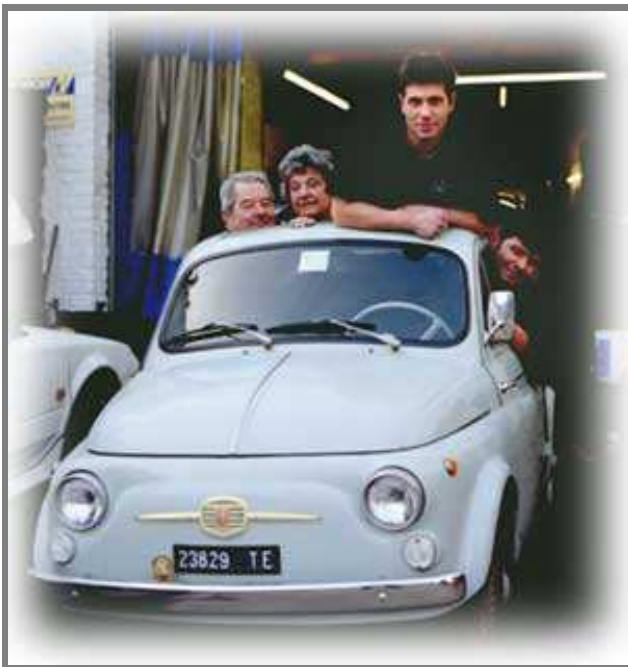
Dining out in a Giardiniera!

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CHRIS WALKER'S 500N



Above: The 500D as purchased in 2012 (see July 2012 ed. of the mag)

It's been a long 5 years, starting with the car coming over from Sweden. I knew I'd have to take any opportunity to get hold of an N. Once I had it, I stripped it to the shell over two weeks and set about repairing the body after it was chemically dipped. Choosing the body colour was easy I simply painted it the colour of my previous 500L (sold to fund the rebuild) 209 Avorio Delhi. I also took the top off and changed the car to a Transformabile.

The frustration of the long build was the real lowlight for me, but my enthusiasm has been ignited once more as the car is coming together. I made numerous modifications to the car, in every area but it is still at heart a 500N. A highlight I found by accident was that the car has Marchal headlights which were fitted to Ferrari's in the 60's. So these have been refurbished and put back on the car.

I'll be showing it at the Revival along with my friend Roger Webb (also a member) who has a 1960D and lives just a 15min drive from me.

We hope to do a joint article as soon as his new engine is fitted.

Chris Walker



Chris' 500N having just passed its MOT July 2017



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WANTED AND FOR SALE

Does anyone know of door repair corners / cheap front hinged doors or skins
For a 600 not at silly prices?

I have some spare items. I had a delightful Lancia Y10 for years and have the rear side windows with fitted motors, 1 of the panels which went above the window below the roof and 2 headlamps. 1 new 1 good used. Also the cars front grille with badge.

I tried to sell these on eBay but came unstuck with the cost of postage so these must be pick ups. . I live near Tunbridge Wells but could meet on the M25 services.

Call Martin to discuss. 07749060850

FOR SALE

I have a number of Fiat 500 items for sale including cylinder head, clutch, covers, cases, springs, pedals. Can be collected from Dorset or postage can be arranged

Contact Colin 07771977933

STOLEN! - CAN YOU HELP?



**Stolen from central London (SE24)
sometime on the morning of Tuesday 27th
June 2017.**

**Fiat 500L (reg JPK 69K)
Renovated very recently from
the road up. Original interior
(except for a radio!)**

**Distinctive spots on the front and
luggage rack on boot lid.
If you have any information please contact
Dominic on 07795 363820**

EVENTS 2017

Fri/Sat/Sun 8-10 September

Goodwood Revival *(See page 33)*

Sat 23 September

Surrey Hills Autumn Driveout

After the success of last year's event we've decided to change things a bit. So it's now neither really autumnal and, quite likely, not going to be in the Surrey Hills. But it will still be fun. Contact: Nathaniel Cross, web@fiat500enthusiasts.co.uk 07802 10896

Fri /Sat/Sun 10th 11th & 12th November

NEC Classic Car and Motorcycle Show

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December

Date TBC

We'll be making an announcement about this event closer to the time mid Dec.

Contact: John Jenkins, chairman@fiat500enthusiasts.co.uk 07773 132645



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*Club ticket (adult 16 years+) offer only applies to Saturday and Sunday and only when booked in advance. Club single ticket offer is limited to four tickets per member and the club family ticket offer is limited to one family ticket per member. A family ticket admits 2 adults and up to 3 children (5-15 years). Hand in your ticket stub or print-at-home voucher to your club's stand and they will benefit from a commission. Calls cost 13ppm plus standard network charges. All bookings are subject to a single transaction fee of £1.60. Tickets include a show guide to the value of £7.50. Entry to the auction requires purchase of a catalogue. See website for all information. All information correct at time of publishing.

GOODWOOD REVIVAL MEETING

SEPTEMBER 8TH, 9TH AND 10TH



As part of our celebration of 60 years since the launch of the Fiat 500 we have received a generous invitation to form a convoy of 500s at the Goodwood Revival Meeting, without doubt the best classic event in the country by far.

Details of the plans can be provided to those who contact the Goodwood Team, and details of the terms which are excellent, will also be provided.

We advise all members to give full support to what will undoubtedly be the highlight of the year. A real once in a lifetime.

Please send through information of your cars, with a photo attached to James at the following email address: competitors@goodwood.com

NEW MEMBERS

The Fiat 500 Enthusiasts Club extends a warm welcome to the

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| Carmelo Benedetto | Cambridge | 1948 Fiat Topolino |
| Pip Pegler | W Sussex | 1971 Fiat 500 Giardiniera |
| Merrian Fisher | Surrey | 1972 Fiat 500L |
| Roderick Bryant | Devon | 1970 500R 1973 500L 1972 500L |
| Andrew Oropallo | E Sussex | 1971 Fiat 500L |
| Julian Brannigan | Newcastle | |
| Richard Dredge | Worcs | |

**COPY FOR OCTOBERMAGAZINE SHOULD BE WITH THE EDITOR NO
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