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APRIL
2020



Photo courtesy N. Cross

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From the Editor and Committee

The committee wishes to extend their thoughts and good wishes to all who have been impacted by the Corona Virus Pandemic. To our members and their families, we hope that you remain safe during these next few difficult months and manage to maintain some sort of contact with your friends and family.

We sincerely hope it not be too much longer before we can return to some sense of normality - if a slightly different and hopefully wiser one. Until then please take care.

We have been contacted by the Fiat 500 Club Italia and their email has been reproduced below. My husband has kindly translated the text for non-Italian speakers. (overleaf)

Fiat 500 Enthusiasts Club

FROM THE FIAT 500 CLUB ITALIA

Buongiorno,

Stiamo attraversando un momento difficile per il mondo intero.

Ora più che mai la comunità è importante per non sentirsi soli e sconfortati. Vi stiamo raggiungendo con questa email per farvi sentire la nostra vicinanza come associazione, intesa come unione di persone che utilizzano le proprie risorse, il proprio ottimismo e impegno per stare coesi e tendere una mano dove c'è bisogno.

La comunità dei cinquecentisti si è dimostrata molto presente e capace di portare sorrisi e buonumore anche adesso. Noi ci siamo, e guardiamo con speranza al futuro certi di poterci presto reincontrare in qualche lieta occasione.

Nel frattempo vi invitiamo a seguirci sui social, dove troverete di certo un bel carico di sorrisi.

Stelio e Domenico (Presidente e Fondatore del Fiat 500 Club Italia)

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Good day,

We and the whole world are facing a difficult time.

Now more than ever the community is important in order not to feel alone and disheartened. We are reaching out to you with this email to make you feel our closeness as an association, a group of people who use their resources, their optimism and commitment to unify and reach out where needed.

The 500 community has shown itself capable of bringing smiles and good humour even at these times. We look to the future hopefully, confident that we will soon be able to meet again on some happier occasion.

Stelio e Domenico (Presidente e Fondatore del Fiat 500 Club Italia)

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Membership Renewals - 2020

Further to the article in last December's magazine and the follow up in the January e-newsletter, we thought it might be helpful to just recap on membership renewals.

Anyone who joined the Club prior to March 2019, will have a renewal date of 15 February. This means that for the bulk of our membership, renewal takes place this month.

Anyone who joined the club after February 2019 will have a renewal date set for 12 months after the date of joining.

Whenever your renewal date is in 2020, we are pleased to confirm that the annual subscription has been held at £20. For this you can expect:

- 6 magazines
- e-newsletters
- discounts from some of the companies that advertise with us
- access to technical support
- access to the Members Only area of the Club website
- access to Club merchandise
- a range of organised events and the chance to meet fellow enthusiasts

Historically, the majority of members have paid subscriptions by standing order. Where you have a standing order set up, your membership will automatically renew and there is no action for you to take.

Around 10% of our members have previously paid renewal subscriptions by cheque. Those with a February renewal date who have previously paid by cheque should have received a reminder to say that renewal subscriptions are due in February. The renewal reminder explains that as an alternative to cheque, we now offer the facility to pay subscriptions on-line via PayPal.

A huge thank you to those that have already renewed and thank you in anticipation to those that are about to renew. Without you we would not have a Club so your continued support is very much appreciated.

And finally, if you have any questions about membership or renewals then please do not hesitate to contact Phil Swallow our Membership Secretary at membership@fiat500enthusiasts.co.uk

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HAPPIER TIMES!



On the Modena-Rimini motorway

As well as Rimini, Stefania's family also took the 22km route from Rimini to the medieval microstate of San Marino, sited on the Western flank of the city's highest point Monte Titano. As Stefania's picture of the map shows, the road is steep and tortuous but the little car made it.



The top of San Marino! Not an easy road and very steep... see map



Back in Rimini - situated on the Adriatic roughly 200 km south of Venice, famous for its long golden beach and warm sea , the family continue enjoying the Italian lifestyle with their little 500.



Having s great time!













*Having an espresso sul
lungomare Rimini*




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*Ciao
Stefania*

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ABARTH PLATINUM (?) ANNIVERSARY

Technically speaking, a 'Platinum' anniversary is to celebrate 70 years of marital bliss, but I couldn't come up with a better title; so this will have to do! I refer to the 70th anniversary of the original company -"Abarth & C." which was formed on the 31st of March 1949. Sadly, on the 31st of July 1971, Mr Abarth arrived at work to find that his partner (the son of the Armando Scagliarini, who originally underwrote the formation of the Company) had signed the Company over to Fiat and it had become absorbed into the giant Fiat conglomerate. On the 17th of August (2019), the anniversary of the creation of "Abarth & C." was celebrated at a dinner, organised by Tony and Sue Castle-Miller (of Middle Barton Garage fame) in the Mecure hotel at Brands Hatch, and what a successful evening it turned out to be. After a general 'get-together' and Champagne reception in the Hotel's foyer, about 90 guests sat down to an excellent meal. Among the guests were people from Italy, Germany and Holland and, as a little 'extra', Tony (and Sue) had arranged for a mouth-watering selection of Abarth cars to be displayed in the dining hall.

The 'after-dinner' speakers were Phil Jones, a long-time Middle Barton customer talking about his racing career which has included a 850TC Corsa and a 'Group 5' 1000TC (both 'sort of' Fiat 600 based) , and Lincoln Small who, as the 3rd Director of Radbourne Racing, was able to give a potted history of the Company, which include the saga of the delectable "Radbourne-Abarth 1300GT" cars. It was a real pleasure meeting up again with Lincoln, who I last saw in 2012, and his lady, as Lincoln was 'sort-of' one of my bosses when I worked at Radbourne Racing. My immediate boss was (the sadly, late) Geoff Anstead, and it was a real pleasure meeting up with his sons. The final event of the evening was the gift of a framed picture by the Continental guests to Tony and Sue, which was duly signed on the back by all the guests present.

Sunday (the 18th) was "Italian" day at Brands Hatch with just about everything from a standard Fiat 500 to 'pre-tubo era' Formula 1 cars on display -nirvana for any self-respecting petrol-head. The 'Classic Abarth' display had just under 40 cars in it, ranging from a couple of Abarth 695 replicas, through to full blown 1000TC Radials with a (VERY) rare Abarth 2300, a selection of Fiat 600 and 850 based Abarth models and Lincoln Small's 'Radbourne-Abarth 1300GT'. Tony Castle-Miller had his latest project on display - an 'Abarth-Simca 1300'; painted in powder-blue; this car is absolutely stunning (and was one of the original cars brought into the UK by Lincoln Small as part of the Radbourne Racing venture). Tony Berni trucked an 'Abarth 1300 Periscopio' all the way from Italy—it was to win the "car of the day" award, a fitting reward for what must have been a massive effort on his part. There were 3 'track sessions' for the classic Abarth cars - 2 "skid-lids on, no passengers and no pace-car so go-for-it" sessions and 1

'Cavalcade' behind a pace-car where passengers were allowed. Never even having done a 'track-day', I decided to give the 'free-for-all' sessions a miss as I was expecting them to be quite 'leery'. As it turned out, they weren't at all 'leery' and I could have coped, but that is life! For the cavalcade, I invited Anton Boutier, the Middle Barton Garage chief mechanic, to drive my car. I will concede that this was a sneaky move on my part to obtain another opinion regarding my car. Suffice to say that Anton's report made all the time and effort (and cash!) I have put into my "wee beastie" worth while!

Once again, with the exception of an hour of (hard) rain, the event was blessed with good weather. Living just outside Chester makes the trek down to Kent a tiresome drive, so whether I will go to the "Italian" day again is debateable. However, whether one is going to view all the 'Club' displays, the cars in general, the racing, the cavalcades or the F1 cars running round the circuit, it is a great day out—definitely one of the boxes to be 'ticked' on any petrol-heads 'bucket-list'

However, I cannot finish this article without extending a VERY big thank-you to Tony and Sue Castle-Miller. They put a great deal of hard work into organising what turned out to be a very enjoyable, and successful, weekend.

Topo Peloso



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LEGO FIAT 500



Some members may remember an article printed in the August 2018 magazine (pg 22) where Signore Zannotti was canvassing support for Lego to build a 500 Fiat. To do this he needed to obtain 10,000 supporters. The campaign had begun in August 2016 and since then 8,800 votes had been collected but time was running out - October 2018 was the deadline which was when Mr Zannotti contacted our club along with others, for a last push to reach the required number of votes.

It appears that this campaign was successful, and Lego have now reproduced this iconic little car in model form.



A number of members brought this fact to my attention and Nathaniel our web master managed to take the following pictures where the model was being displayed for sale in Leicester square, London for the sum of £74.99.

JS



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TOUR OF EUROPE 2000 (3rd instalment)

Sunday 10th September, the 27th day of our journey, we again headed south to a Fiat 500 Club raduno in Ceva. Plenty of cars to admire and again old friends to meet. Silvia amazed us by giving us a magnificent trophy in recognition of our trip.



Silvia presenting James with a trophy

After a convoy run and a stop for a drink, we left the group and headed for Savona, where we had arranged to meet up with a friend at another raduno held by a local classic car club. Guess what! At the award giving ceremony we were given another trophy. We were delighted, but couldn't help but wonder where we were going to squeeze two large trophies into an already overcrowded little car.

We felt it was now time for a bit of a holiday, so leaving the trailer with our friend in Albenga, we drove to Padova to stay with James's relatives... We parked *Bugsy* up, by this time she had driven 5500km and we thought perhaps was tired. We then set about playing at being tourists, visiting Venice, Padova and the surrounding area, travelling by train or bus.

Our visit coincided with Jimmy's 68th birthday, a chance to let our hair down before leaving on the next leg of our journey.

Already mid-September and a slight autumn feel, with the nights getting

shorter it made us think perhaps we needed to complete the trip before the winter came, Fiat 500 heaters can be rather temperamental at times !, and we still had 3 more countries to go to.

Arriving back in Albenga, we thought we should check-in with the Fiat 500 Club at Garlenda.



Bugs'y beside the Fiat 500 memorial in the park opposite the club house

We were greeted with "Where have you been?"

It seemed that Silvia had told them all about our trip and they were surprised that we hadn't visited them sooner. Dominico Romano and Dario Braggio (Garlenda's mayor) treated us to a superb meal and then presented us with a beautiful hand

printed plate, we felt extremely honoured.



Bugs'y, James and our friend Silvio proudly displaying the trophies we had been given

Again the word had got round and arriving back at our hotel, we were told that a reporter for "La Stampa" had rung wanting to interview us, so the next day we were busy being photographed and talking to the press.

Time was passing fast, we had now been away from home for 39 days. Our next stop was over the border in France.

FRANCE

On the outskirts of Nice, a charming gentleman called Pierre Colombi had a garage specialising in Fiat 500's so a stop there was a must.



Outside Pierre's workshop

Luckily he spoke Italian as our French was somewhat limited, but we enjoyed looking around his workshop and at all the different models of 500's that he owned.

Stopping that night near Cannes we found a lovely hotel with swimming pool, just right for a lazy afternoon. Another stop was in Beziere before heading into Spain.

Jan diCarlo

Final episode 'The Last Leg of our Journey' in June magazine



CLUB REGALIA

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'TECH TORQUE' (&TIPS)

technicalteam@fiat500enthusiasts.co.uk (or contact the editor)

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.

Et tu Brute

It was with great interest that I read, in edition 66 of this illustrious little magazine, of the 'running' problem that Carl suffered whilst taking part in the "Crooked Spire Parkside Run" with his 500 (re. article:- Fiat 500 ownership). The cause of my interest? I had suffered exactly the same running problem, again with an AccuSpark ignition system.

I had driven my 500 (with a tuned 126 '650' engine) fairly (OK, very) enthusiastically from just outside Chester to Maghull, which is just north of Liverpool, and about a 40 mile drive- no problem at all. On the way back however, it was a totally different situation. I had only travelled about 3 miles towards home before the engine started back-firing violently - very loud bangs and engine holding back. Initially, I thought that the problem lay with the ignition leads (which were marked where they went through the 'holders') cross-tracking. Having spent a few moments putting on extra insulation tape, the engine started perfectly and ran for 3 or 4 miles before the whole scenario repeated itself. This scenario continued all the way home, to such a degree that I changed my route home to stay on slower roads. My main fear was the Mersey Tunnel that I HAD to go through - no option! The engine started mis-behaving just before I got to the slip-road leading to the tunnel, so I stopped and tried re-routing the ignition leads (still in the belief that they were the problem). This gave the engine enough time to cool down and get me through the tunnel with no problem... just. As I went up the slip-road leading away from the tunnel and got level with the sign that advised me that I was "leaving the area of tunnel regulations", the misfiring/back-firing started again - Phew!! (to those that don't know the area, being towed out of the tunnel will empty your pocket to the tune of £75.00p PER HOUR). Eventually, the misfire/back-firing and holding-back got so bad that the car became un-driveable, to the point that I had to use my AA

membership and get the car transported home. Of course, just to make me look a complete wally, the engine started perfectly when the AA Technician un-loaded the car off the jockey-wheels and I drove it onto my drive.

In my workshop I checked everything - tappets, timing, carb and anything else that I could think of. Eventually I changed the AccuSpark ignition pack with a spare one that I had (from a different manufacturer) - problem cured. I eventually got a replacement ignition pack from AccuSpark, it seems that that will supply a new 'pack' for the princely sum of £20, upon the supply of the purchase invoice and the old unit, even when the faulty unit is well out of warranty (as mine was). I now have a "Powerspark" ignition pack in the distributor, keeping the replacement AccuSpark ignition pack as a spare.

This brings us to the technical question, is this a common fault with the AccuSpark ignition pack? or, is it in fact a possible fault on ALL the 'hall effect' ignition packs that, due to the position of the distributor which is in the path of the hot 'cooling air' from the engine, they get too hot and will eventually fail? It would be interesting to hear from other users of this type of electronic ignition and hear if they too have suffered a similar breakdown.



I have tried to get round the problem of hot air blasting over the distributor by fitting as per the photos, an 'air-dam' on the 'bent section' of the thermostat housing to prevent the hot air going past the distributor, as well as turning the distributor as far round (anti-

clockwise) as I can, and still get at the distributor-cap clips so that the ignition pack is not in direct line of the hot-air flow. As can (hopefully) be seen in the pictures, even with





the thermostat-flap fully open, there is only about 1/16th of an inch of gap for the air to get through to the distributor. I have now run with my thermostat-flap modification for the better part of a year, and to date, all has been well, but whether this is because my mod has been successful or the ignition pack hasn't reached its 'buggered' stage, I

honestly don't know, only time will tell. I will however, give serious thought as to what I add to my "always carry in the car" kit in case this problem re-occurs - a distributor with a set of points in it or just a spare ignition pack? Such are the joys (!?) of playing with a modified classic car!

Topo Peloso

TOM'S TRAILER

Following on from Tom's article on his new trailer in the Feb magazine, I thought members might like to see how the 500 sits on the new trailer. Bear in mind that as he mentions in his text, his trailer is very slightly longer to accommodate another car.

JS



MY OTHER CAR

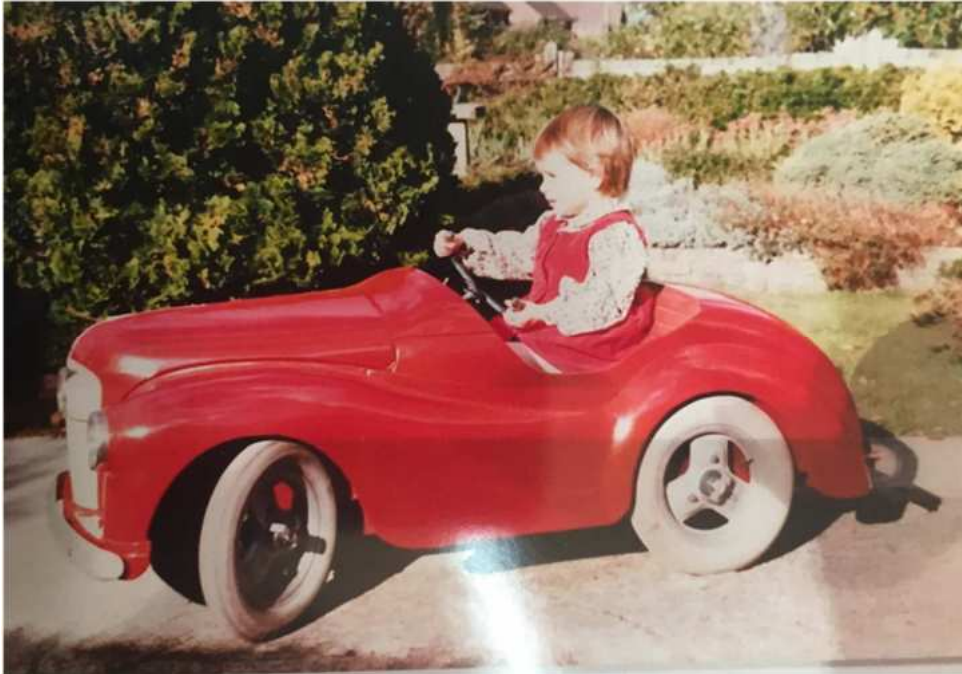


My grandson in my Austin J40 pedal car. The J40 Peddle car was based on the 1948 Austin Devon and was built using off cuts from the Austin works. It cost new £27 (approximately 3 weeks wages at that time). To buy one now you're looking at £2500 upwards.

One of my 'to-do' jobs is to refurbish it to its original glory, then it will be an ornament not a play toy!

The following picture is of the same toy car with the little boy's grandmother playing in it around 50 years earlier.

Almost 32,000 J40s were produced from 1950 to 1971. As don points out they were built using off-cuts of metal from the Austin works. known as 'Joycars' by the Austin factory they were fitted with a dummy engine, battery operated headlamps, and horn.



This is my Austin A40 Devon 1950 / 1200 CC Engine (as you can see it's in primer waiting for a top coat).

These were built between 1947 - 1952.

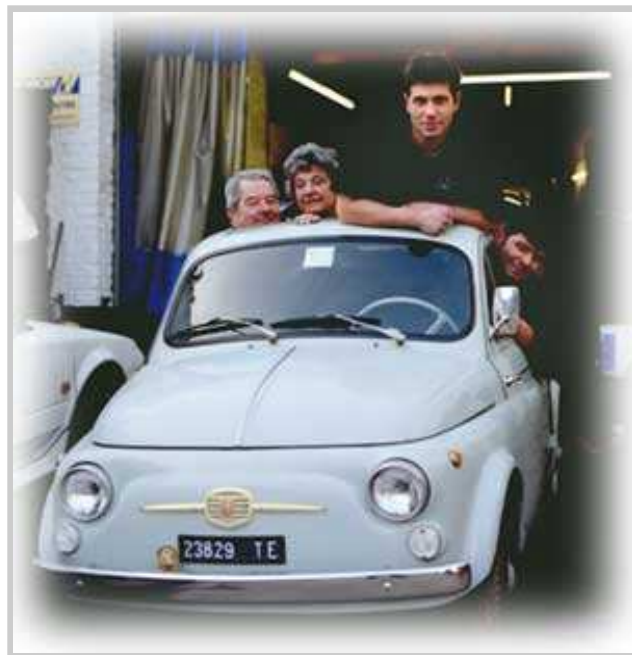
In November 2011 I went to view this car with a friend of mine who was interested in buying it, but he didn't want it so I bought it. It sat in the garage until about 18 months ago when I started working on it. Unlike the Fiat 500, parts for this vehicle are not so easy to find, I'm still looking for a N/S/F inner wing.

Don Paesano

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S T R E T C H 5 0 0



A stretch 500 seen at the AutoMetroRetro show in January by Tim Lovett. The show was held in the Lingotto factory in Turin. Unfortunately Tim says it was positioned in a way that made it impossible to get a complete shot. Even so, it is impressive - even if it's not to everyone's taste.



MEMBERS WANTED AND FOR SALE

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FOR SALE 1969 Fiat 500L

27



White LHD Red interior mileage 34000. "Molly" came into our family in 1998 fully restored by 1 previous UK owner, had a few early social outings then dry garaged for 20 years. Full overhaul & MOT pass September 2017 (mainly lights, horn, shock absorbers & steering bushes). Due to difficult circumstances was unable to have her home & she was poorly stored. Paintwork now starting to 'bubble' & nearside door sill starting to corrode. Have lost my garage so need to move Molly on to a new home asap. Located Lincs/ Notts border. £4000 ovno

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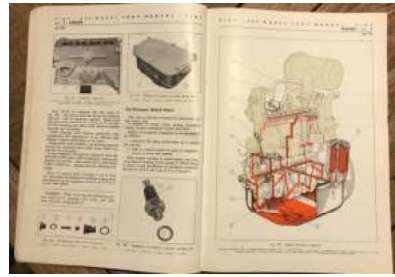
I have an original Fiat 600 Sedan & Multipla 'Shop Manual' for sale. This is the trade bible by Fiat for servicing 600s including Multiplas

It's not dated but suspect that it's probably pre-1960 as it doesn't cover the 600D. A4 sized perfect-bound soft-back, 345 pages. Copiously illustrated with diagrams, B&W photos, charts etc.

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Later versions available on eBay from £70 upwards - if you can find them. Reproductions from £40. Open to offers, or swap for 500 equivalent or good Weber 26 OC 10 Carburetor.

Contact: Brian Lloyd blloyd61@gmail.com or WhatsApp me on 07879412472.



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NEW MEMBERS

The Fiat 500 Enthusiasts Club extends a warm welcome to the following members who have recently joined our club

Sandra Bosanquet	S Wales
Sharon Drewell	Hampshire
Ben Smith	Oxfordshire
Richard Barretto	Devon
Jacqui Kowalewsky	West Midlands

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