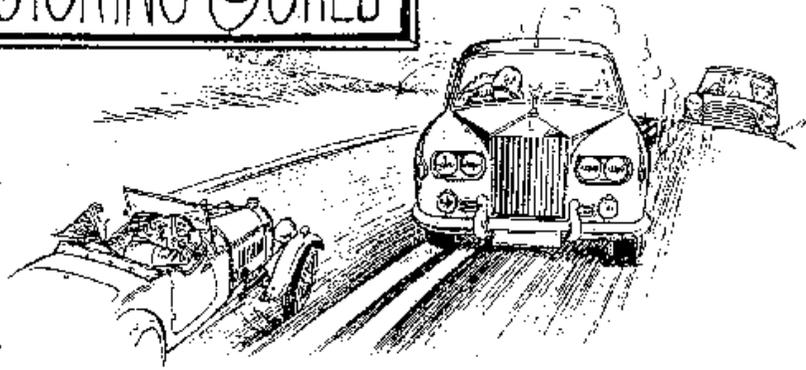
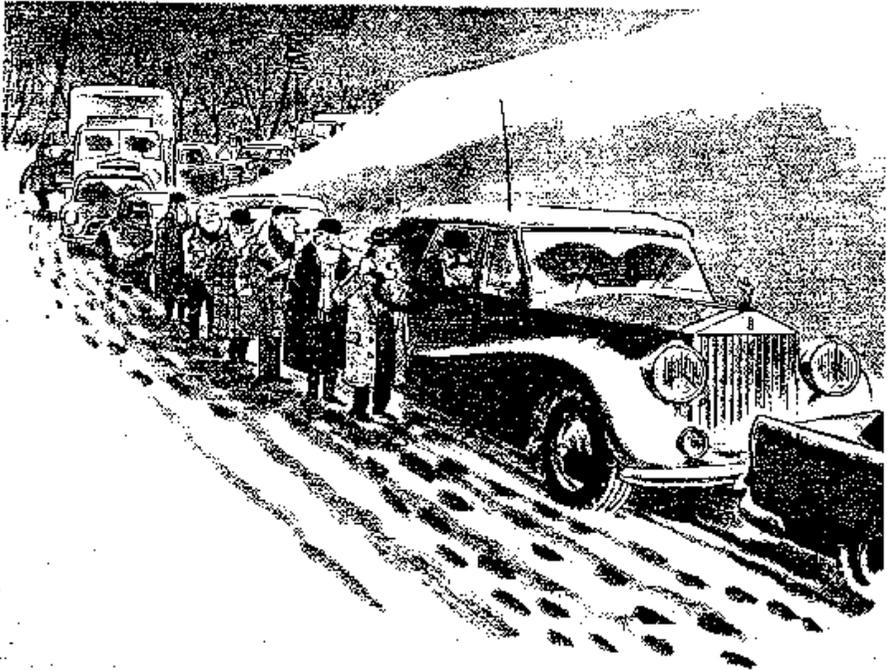


JOY TOUBERT'S MOTORING JOKES



"A typical example of the money getting into the wrong hands."



"I'm on the A30, on the wrong side of Salisbury and I look like being late for supper."

Natal Diecast Model Collectors

May 2009



BMC Mini in red by Matchbox Collectibles
No VEM-02M

Natal Diecast Model Collectors

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Details of next meeting:

Date: Monday 25th May 2009
Venue: VCC Clubhouse, Kloof
Time: 17:30 for 18:00 till we end
Cost: R20-00 for non-members
Subs due: R90-00 for the year.
R60-00 for Country Members
Theme: 50th Anniversary of the BMC Mini

Dates to look out for:

Monday 25th May Natal Diecast Model Collectors Meeting
VCC – Kloof

Saturday 30th May Hobbies Fair
Bellair Primary School

However, all is not lost if you are prepared to persevere and spend a few minutes on restoration and please don't reach for the cellotape !!!

Not only is the cellotape repair method often unsightly, but it also leaves behind a sticky residue when the cellotape fails after a few years ... and then a permanent stain is often left behind on the area previously covered.

Note: If the printing on the box is damaged only on one side, then the box may be restored, and you can display the good side/s. But if the printing is damaged over most of the outside of the box, then it is probably irreparable.

To begin restoring you will need a few cotton buds, a few clothes pegs and some wood glue. (I use "Ponal" or "Bostik" or similar – but it should be clear when it dries)

And don't worry although wood glue is more traditionally used to hold two pieces of wood together, this glue is actually also very strong and flexible when dry (for the end flaps on the box) and importantly, it will not damage the box.

The first step is to carefully wipe down the box with a slightly moist cloth (if the box is very dirty) Then you can begin with the restoration of the box and the end flaps. Apply the glue carefully as required to both surfaces using the cotton buds, wipe off any excess glue, and bring the parts together. Use the pegs to hold the parts in position, and after a while, the box should start to look more presentable.

Similarly, apply glue onto the end flaps if required, align these carefully in their correct position, and hold with the pegs. Finally apply glue to the seam which holds the box together, and assemble the box, which by now should be regaining its former shape.

Depending on the extent of damage, several steps may be required to follow the above directions, pausing in between to allow the glue to dry, before proceeding to the next step.

A polystyrene insert which has been cut to the correct size will then give the box some strength and shape, make it look more presentable for display, and easily hold a model on top.

Another alternative to the restoration of model boxes, and which many of us already know is to contact Robb Barlow in the UK. Robb makes really excellent Dinky / Corgi and several other makes of reproduction boxes, but sadly with the SA / UK exchange rate, these have become quite expensive.

Displaying and Restoring (older) Model Boxes

- Philip Ellis

Whether or not to display a model box is often a dilemma ... you have the box, sometimes acquired with as much difficulty as the model itself ... and now you have to decide whether or not to display the model and the box together.

Space is often problematic the model box takes up room which could be occupied by a model ... and so often a compromise is reached and the box is removed, and then stored elsewhere, where it cannot be seen.

Personally, I think this is a shame, as many of the older boxes are both attractive and colourful showing the model in detail, and the model number too.

It also seems a pity when the ultimate prize for a model collector is obtaining a "mint and boxed" model - and then the box is not displayed, and is put away elsewhere. (Window boxes can obviously also be displayed with the model inside)

To save space, some collectors have tried storing the model on top of the box but unless the box has some internal support (it may be already weak to start with) collapse is inevitable ...

Recently, I tried using polystyrene cut to size and fitted snugly into the model box. This can be cut at Polystyrene Centre in Pinetown, and I've found that polystyrene works very well, and is not expensive.

So now I can see the model box, the model itself can also be clearly seen standing raised on top of the box, and most importantly, I've saved some space !!!

Some model boxes are also obtained by collectors when the box is already badly damaged and that much the worse for wear. I've had some boxes where the cardboard is torn, the end flaps are torn, or completely torn off, the glue holding the box together has failed, and the box is opened, flattened or even the corners squashed. So, from a general look, the box is in a very sad state of affairs, not at all fit for display, and possibly more than likely could end up discarded on the scrap heap.

(Continued on Page 7)

6.

Hi Folks !

Our March meeting had the theme "75th Anniversary of Dinky Toys" and members obliged and brought along some of the most treasured parts of their collection. There was a good turnout, and we had a large range of Dinky Toys displayed.

The range made by Meccano / Dinky was huge, and I saw some models I've never seen before, nor even realized carried the Dinky label.

There was a tin plate telephone box, rolled up scenery for an outdoor scene, and even a set for making up pavement sections. All of these were made during different periods of the production span of Meccano / Dinky. And in addition, there were also displayed many of the traditional cars, vans, trucks, transporters, and aeroplanes. (See insert for some pics)

Geoff Sear had a large and colourful banner made up which read "Celebrating 75 Years of Dinky Toys" and this was displayed in front of the tables at the meeting. Many thanks to Geoff for arranging, and to Coke for kindly donating this banner to the club and members.

Tony Day took some pics (thanks again Tony) and these and an article on our display for "75th Anniversary of Dinky Toys" were featured in a recent edition of "AutoDealer".

All in all, I thoroughly enjoyed the evening's display, and I hope that members who were able to attend, enjoyed themselves too.

Our theme for the May meeting is the 50th anniversary of the BMC Mini (or BLMC Mini) Interestingly, the man responsible for the Mini, Sir Alexander Issigonis, was also a model-steam-locomotive enthusiast. -See Pages 4 and 5.

The Train and Toy Collectors Fair held at the Lion Park Hotel in early April was not as well attended by sellers as previous Fairs - is this perhaps a sign of the times ? However, there was still some brisk trading which took place, and several models changed hands. Adding to the occasion, stalwarts Ian Sutherland and Philip Pitman both had their Hornby and Lionel trains running on their respective track layouts.

See you at the next meeting,

Keep collecting

Philip

3.

50th Anniversary of BMC Mini: History

From “The Illustrated Directory of Classic Cars” by Graham Robson

In the aftermath of the first Suez war of 1956, the BMC Mini was Alec Issigonis's brilliant concept of what a new generation of tiny economy cars should be like. Transverse engines with front drive were not entirely new, but the Issigonis layout with a conventional four-cylinder water-cooled engine was unique. His principle has since been copied by carmakers all round the world.

As remarkable as the power plant installation was the car's very small size, its space utilisation and the suspension system chosen. Developed in collaboration with Alex Moulton, it brought rubber compression units back into the limelight. Geometry, apart from the reversed rubber cone actuation at the rear (to save space), was conventional. Between 1964 and 1969 BMC's later Hydrolastic system where road shocks and suspension displacements were signalled from front to rear wheels through interconnecting high-pressure water/alcohol pipes, was more expensive but did not achieve a great advance in ride.

Front drive, splendid balance, and sensitive steering combined to give startling handling and roadholding. Apart from being everybody's idea of a cheap and practical runabout the Mini soon became an important competition car. Minis began winning races at once and Cooper versions were followed by the very formidable Cooper S competition cars. Apart from winning the Monte Carlo rally on three occasions (and being spectacularly disqualified from a fourth), the Cooper S won British and European touring car race championships, international rallies, ice races – in fact any kind of motoring event.

The first million minis were built by spring 1965 and the four millionth arrived in the winter of 1976/7. Since 1969, rationalisation has eliminated many specialised versions like the long-tail Riley/Wolseley Minis and – alas – all the Coopers after nearly 150,000 had been delivered. One ultra-special variant – the stark and almost non-bodied Mini Moke – was withdrawn after hoped-for military contracts did not materialise.

Certainly Mini features, like the ingenious installation of the Automotive Products automatic transmission, have never been matched by the competition. Neither (except by the Fiat 126) has its small size. Apart from being a true 'Classic Car', the Mini is also Britain's best selling car of all time, for production continued slowly until October 2000, by which nearly 5.4 million of all types had been made.

British Leylands Industrial Revolutionary

From “The World of Automobiles” – vol 9

Sir Alexander Arnold Constantine Issigonis, KBE, (November 18, 1906 to October 21, 1988) will be marked in the history books as the man who added a new word to the English language: Mini. The Mini proved to be an institution, a cult car, an ideal town car and a winner in most forms of competition that it entered; no mean feat for one simple design of motor car.

The Mini's career has not been all roses however. When it first appeared in 1959, even though the younger generation flocked to it like bees to honey, most of the older dyed-in-the-wool generations of 50's drivers, cried out that the Mini was so small as to be dangerous, going so far as to christening them 'death traps'. They did not realise that the Mini was inherently safe, and could out-corner and handle better than most of the contemporary racing cars. However, as time went on, the Mini proved beyond shadow of a doubt, that it was definitely a force to be reckoned with.

In 1974, the Mini range, now separate from the guises of Austin and Morris, comprised the 850 and 1000 saloons, the Clubman 1000cc saloon and estate (a slightly revised Mini with a restyled interior and nose) and the Mini 1275GT.

The Mini's power unit is the well proven A-series engine that powered Issigonis's first BMC success, the Morris Minor. The suspension is now of the dry type using unequal-length arms, with the upper unit operating against a rubber cone spring, and telescopic dampers for the front, while the rear is by a trailing arm, operating a rubber cone spring via a lever and strut and telescopic dampers. Between 1964 and 1969 the ingenious Hydrolastic 'wet' suspension, borrowed from the 1100 was used.

An interesting option for the 1275GT is the Dunlop Denovo tyre, which is fitted to the car's 12" wheels; other Mini's still use the 10" variety. With the addition of this 'run-flat' option, the Mini has further enhanced its position as one of the most inherently safe cars available.

Interestingly too, Sir Alexander who was a readily smiling, impish man has had many engineering achievements in a lifetime as a designer, but none has made such an impact on the world as the small car which started life as a scribble on the back of an envelope and was translated into a running vehicle in only nine months.