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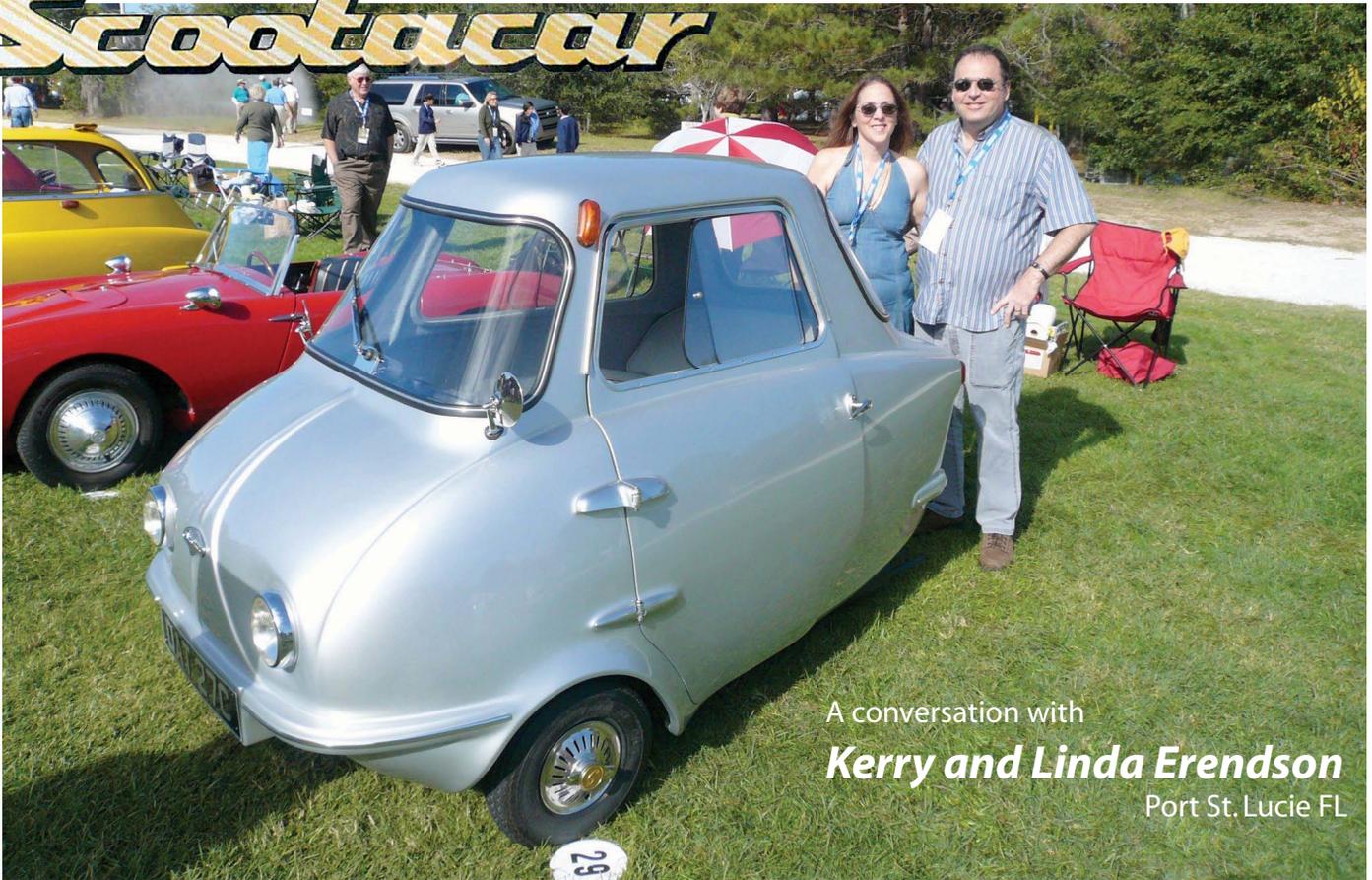
THE VINTAGE MICROCAR CLUB

MICROCAR NEWS

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Scootacar



A conversation with
Kerry and Linda Erendson
Port St. Lucie FL

K- We had just finished building the Tri-Tech Schmitt and we brought it to the 2001 Micros in Madison Event and had no idea there was this huge community of Microcar people out there. Plus there were all these Microcars there and we only knew "the usual suspects," like the Messerschmitt and the Isetta. We were just blown away!

L- I looked at the Scootacar MK1 in Bruce Weiner's collection and it looked like a big cartoon on wheels and I said "I don't know what this is, but I have to have this."

K- of ALL those cars, that was the one that struck us.

L- It was the most endearing. I absolutely just fell in love with this thing, and then we found out how insanely rare they were. So we looked around and thought maybe we would find something else. We also like the Fuldambobil S7/Nobel 200 and in my search to try and find one of those, I ran across Alan Hitchcock's website and lo and behold he had TWO Scootacars for sale (a MK1 on consignment and a MKII advertised as "if one does not require concours...")

K- We dropped everything we were doing and made arrangements to have these cars shipped over. Unfortunately he gave us what seemed to be a great deal on two cars, but actually we would have been better off just buying the MK1. The MKII was in just horrible shape. When we saw it on the dock, Linda said "We should just leave it here!"

L- The first reaction was to just bolt and run but then you think how sad it is that someone let it get to that condition and then its like an animal that is sick and injured you want to save it. We really feel like

we saved it from a certain death. Somebody else would have looked at it and said "there is just no way I am going to shell out this kind of money to make this work, its a disaster."

When we went to go pick the car up at the Jacksonville dock, we said, "What is that STENCH?" and Kerry said that was the Port, they always stink.

It wasn't, it was the car.

You could smell it all the way across the parking lot.

It was just a muddy filthy little mess.

K- after we cleaned it up, we had enough foreign soil to pay taxes to England.

L- yeah we washed half of England down the driveway.

K- I made the ridiculous decision to restore the MKII first figuring we would make mistakes on it and then move to the MK1 as the MK1 was fully functional, you could drive it. But it ended up costing us an enormous amount of time and money. It took us 3-1/2 years to restore.

L- when we first got the car it was Navy Blue, but it was really hard to tell what the color it was originally. It had been painted many many times.

K- We both do all aspects of the restoration and work on the car together. She did most of the interior, but I still helped cut and staple, but when we did the electrical system, I was in charge of that but she was there helping me make it.



L- I did all the sandblasting and priming of smaller parts. Kerry couldn't stand being under the sandblast hood.

K- We really didn't do anything on the body, we took that to someone who knew what they were doing.

L- yeah, we wanted that to look good, things that can't be seen, we did.

K- The floor was completely rotted away so we had the floor completely fabricated and the rear seat surrounds had to be fabricated. The door was cracked in half and hanging by one hinge. Our body guy (*Ken Caskey / Kidd Darrin's in Melbourne FL*) reconstructed the body and the door to match each other.

L- and all the metal that was actually embedded in the fiberglass body of the car was rusted so every bit of it had to be stripped away, replaced and then that area re-glassed over.

K- The car was originally made by bonding the metal right inside the fiberglass, so it rusted right inside the fiberglass. When we were deciding how to put it all back together again, even though it was more expensive, I made the decision to have the new metal pieces bolted to the frame so unlike an unrestored Scootacar, the whole body can be easily unbolted now and removed if necessary. It's a departure from the original which just sits there and rusts in one piece. I wanted to be able to take everything apart again if there was any trouble.

L- right, now they can rust in separate pieces.

K- the interior paint looks exactly like "trunk paint" so that is what we used on the advice of our body guy. I was told we could put a clear coat over it to protect it, but it would have a sheen and we didn't want that.

L- plus he couldn't guarantee it would not eventually turn yellow. I don't think we knew at the time that the trunk paint was still slightly water soluble after it dried, we were more concerned with making sure it looked correct.

So now I have a reason to stand there with the umbrella and protect the car when it rains!

(the car is not entirely watertight)

K- The biggest drawback of owning a Scootacar today is that there are just no parts. What few things we had to get we relied on Grant Kearney in the UK to scrounge for at Autojumbles.

We got a desperately needed door hinge from Stephen Boyd, they were both very helpful with information.

Owning an Isetta is apparently like owning a Toyota in terms of parts compared to a Scootacar. There are no parts sources, there is very little information and really nothing to go by. And here we wanted to make this as original as possible, we felt an obligation to make it as good as possible.

L- We felt a moral and kind of an ethical obligation to keep it original, you don't want to take liberties with something like that. You kind of want to preserve its integrity and you want everything to be "correct".

With the MK1, it's basically intact so it's a matter of taking it apart, restoring and putting it back together where-as with the MKII



everything was so decayed you really couldn't tell what it was supposed to look like. So we had to do so much investigative work just to get it back to its original form.

K- I'm sure a lot of other microcars have this problem of no parts or information. Obviously if one does not have a microcar, one should start with an Isetta. Obviously there are parts and information available for it. You should be really deep into microcars before you go trying to do something like what we did with the MKII. The more complete the car, the more information you've got when you buy it.

Also- while we do have a MK1 Scootacar and a few things on the two cars are the same, most pieces are quite different so getting a sample of something to fabricate a missing piece is not easy.

L- Any show we go to other than a Microcar Show, everybody thinks it is a "new" car.

K- Especially recently when the fuel prices went up. Everyone thought it was some new fuel-efficient modern thing they could go out and buy.

K- We made the cover for the car because we have to have an open trailer (we can't tow an enclosed one with our normal car) and it had to be fully protected.

L- yeah no rain, no dirt, no stone chips

K- The inner layer is crucial because it keeps the outer layer from rubbing against the body and scuffing the paint. That outer tough layer of Sunbrella material is great for an outer layer but it definitely can't contact the car.

L- Our life is better in general for having these microcars because it has just opened up a world that we would not have known before, meeting all the people we have met is just an incredible experience. We've met so many wonderful, nice people in this hobby, we have two exotic cars too and while we enjoy those, the people with the microcars just seem to have more fun with them. We really like to have fun with our cars.

K- The connections between the microcar owners is absolutely like family.

L- I fell in love with the car instantly and even after all the work and all the money spent, there is nothing like walking out into the garage and seeing it sitting there. It still pulls at me every time I see it. Knowing that we took it from being ready for the junk heap to the pristine little diamond that it is now is really gratifying. If someone says they simply have to have a Scootacar or some other rare microcar and they have that really strong feeling, who am I to discourage it?

K- If you have to have to one and you have the where-with-all to do it, just do it, but know that it is difficult.

L- and always carry a big umbrella!

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Scootacar bits

Curiously, a locomotive builder, the Hunslet Engine Works, decided to produce a small car. Apparently the wife of one of the directors wanted a car that was easier to park than her Jaguar. Henry Brown – designer of the tiny Rodley car – designed the unorthodox shape by sitting atop a Villiers engine while an assistant drew a chalk outline around him.

The Mark I was essentially a low, stable, platform frame with the driver and passenger straddling a bench scooter-style. The strange, angelfish-like shape was made of fiberglass, but the two halves were joined vertically down the center. With a large door on the left side, and one of the largest parcel shelves in the industry, this Scootacar was quite roomy. Despite the five-foot height (it was named “the telephone booth” as many were finished in red), the little car handled extremely well.

In 1959, it was decided there was a need for a more refined model. Rather than opting for a few minor changes, Scootacar came up with the Mark II, totally redesigned from stem to stern, with a larger body shell incorporating a sort of tail. The motor now lived under a large, plush, angled rear bench, while the driver sat on a proper chair, which tipped forward. While a very sound car, it appeared to late for substantial sales.

In 1961, a 250 cc twin has fitted to about 50 cars, but few customers were willing to brave the 62 mph white-knuckle ride.

Scootacar Mark II mechanical specs:

Engine: 197cc Villiers 9E/4SFR -single cylinder reversible. 8.4hp

Gearbox: 4 forward gears + 4 rev.

Starter: DynaStarter

Brakes: Hydraulic Front, Cable Rear

Suspension: Coil Spring Front, Swing arm Rear

Steering: Rack and Pinion

Electric: 12V

Body: Steel Platform/Fiberglass

Length: 84 inches

Width: 52 inches

Weight: 588 lbs

Wheels: 8 inch

Top Speed: 39 mph

There are approximately 11 Scootacars in North America with perhaps ~40-50 cars surviving world-wide out of ~1500 built. The Scootacar was never officially exported to the USA when new.

ALL NEW!

LOOKS
COLOUR
FEATURES

Now—the Scootacar De Luxe, with its trim new silhouette, its longer, lower line and new features comes in a super new colour . . . and it's so fast, so economical! The new Scootacar cruises effortlessly at up to 45 m.p.h., while fuel consumption is in the region of 80 m.p.g. at a steady 30 m.p.h.

LOW RUNNING COSTS!
Less than a 1/4 d. a mile—only £5 a year tax

NEW LOW LINE
... giving a smart nippy little runabout you'll be proud to possess! Now 7' 11" long the new Scootacar is the most spacious vehicle of its type on the market.

ROOMY SEATING
... now with tip-up driver's seat, seat for child and adult, with arm rests and more leg room than most big cars!

HEADROOM
There's comfortable room for heads and for hats, for husband and wife—and junior too!

INTERIOR STYLING
... with spacious accommodation and new luxurious upholstery. Deep door pocket for smaller items, a parcel tray below the instrument panel and space behind the back seat for shopping items. The large capacity battery is housed in its own compartment and is extremely handy for topping up.



NEW UP-TO-DATE BODY-STYLING
Longer, lower, sleeker, with full size car door—and high quality finish throughout. The Scootacar De Luxe gives you perfect all-round visibility and exceptional accessibility—it's an easy step into a Scootacar.

PARKING
The extremely good steering lock and unimpeded visibility make the Scootacar De Luxe a joy to park and an ideal car for shopping.

SUPERB SUSPENSION
All three wheels have independent suspension; the front wheels by means of varying rate coil springs, the rear wheel on a swinging arm controlled by an Armstrong suspension unit. Lubrication is within arm's reach of the driver to simplify greasing.

ENGINE AND BRAKES
Power comes from the very robust reversible 197 c.c. air-cooled Villiers engine unit which cannot freeze up, gives extra rapid take-off and lively acceleration. Shocked by Villiers world-wide spaces service. Brakes are Lockheed hydraulic ensuring maximum safety.

ONLY THE Scootacar **DE LUXE**

GIVES SUCH HIGH QUALITY MOTORING FOR SO LITTLE