

**We're
forever
blowing
bubbles**



These three rare cars will travel to Oxfordshire this weekend. From left, owner Chris Hopkins and his Isetta, Paul Champney and the Messerschmitt, and Richard Jones with the Heinkel Trojan.

ALTHOUGH the bubble burst 20 years ago, for many people the "bubble car" is still an obsession, and three young men will be setting off this weekend to meet hundreds of other enthusiasts.

Richard Jones, 19, a dental technician of Queens Road, Ilkley, Paul Champney, 25, a diesel engine fitter of Silver Mill Hill, Otley and Chris Hopkins, 25, a panel beater of Manor Street, Otley, are all driving their own models down to the Micro-Car Rally at Burford in Oxfordshire this weekend.

The journey, simple enough for modern cars, is more of an adventure for the threesome as the car can only cruise at an average of 40 mph, so they are setting off at 5 a.m. to get there in time.

Forlorn

Richard will be driving his BMW Isetta, which he calls "Toby."

He said: "I have not had the car very long and it needed a lot of work doing to it to make it roadworthy for the rally. That has been my prime aim since I saw it looking all forlorn in a garage. I have spent about £600 all together, but it will need even more to get it back to its original condition."

Paul, who will be taking his Messerschmitt, which he found slowly rotting away, has also spent more than £600 to get the car back to almost mint condition.

School

He said: "It was an absolute wreck, with all kinds of bits missing, including the floor. It has been a big job to get it back to 1959 condition, but it was worth it."

He and Chris have both been interested in small cars that can do between 60 and 70 miles to the gallon since they were at school and do a lot of the work together.

Chris's Trojan has also taken many hours of hard work to restore to its gleaming self.

"But it is worth it. These cars become an obsession, a way of life. There is nothing like driving one of these cars. They are so individual."

Bradford Telegraph
& Argus
17 September 1981