

Model world

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THERE'S a thriving one man road vehicle business at 45 Rutland Gardens, but you would never know it simply by looking.

Some of the cars that are produced are tiny. In fact, one sits comfortably on a man's thumbnail.

Of course, they're all models and the beautiful work of Colin Flannery who has been making his living from them for about ten years.

Colin either designs the vehicles himself or works to other people's plans. He makes an original that is used by major companies as the prototype for mass production.

The smallest model he has made is a 1932 Austin 7, only 1.5 centimetres long, and with wheels that turn.

The largest scale he works is 1/24, and a couple of models (of which he was particularly proud) were a fair-ground traction engine and an MGB GT.

But Colin's production line has turned out a wide range of vehicles including buses, electric tram cars, petrol tankers, lorries, steam rollers, bicycles and even a few ships.

His interests are not confined to the miniature. One of his collections includes a display of early garage fore-court equipment, most of which dates from the 1920s.

He said: "I've also got a 1952 Ransome MG 5. They were used a great deal in the Spalding bulb fields.

"I stripped it down to its last nut and

bolt, had it sandblasted, rebuilt the whole thing and had it resprayed."

Colin and his Ransome are well known visitors to rallies and shows, particularly Gosberton Preservation Society's Show.

He also owns a 1936 Austin 10 Sherborne, discovered in Lincoln last summer, and is busily collecting spare parts to rebuild it.

He is also a member of the Austin 10 Drivers' Club.

Colin's enthusiasm for motor vehicles is summed up in a principle in which he believes very strongly: "old transport and associated relics should be seen in working condition and used wherever possible."