

Rex Garrod

Born 1943. Maker of robotic machines for TV programmes.
Available online at www.livesretold.co.uk



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1. Introduction

The following chapter was archived in 2021, with acknowledgement and thanks, from Wikipedia.

Rex Garrod (10 September 1943 – 8 April 2019) was an inventor and roboteer, notable for building the radio controlled car which starred in *Brum* and co-presenting *The Secret Life of Machines*. He also entered several successful robots into the early series of British TV series *Robot Wars*.

Early and personal life

Garrod grew up in Mickfield, Suffolk. He was a speedway driver for the Ipswich Witches (1971) and Scunthorpe Scorpions (1972–74). He and former motorcross racer Dave Bickers then moved into special effects.

Garrod married Sally in 1992, and they had two daughters. He had Alzheimer's disease for the last eight years of his life, and died on 8 April 2019, aged 75.



Rex Garrod's wife Sally created a scrapbook to help her husband after he developed Alzheimer's.

Television work

Garrod designed and built the eponymous car from *Brum*. *Brum* was a British television series which ran intermittently between 1991 and 2002. It told the story of a small car called *Brum*, which in reality was a giant remote control car. Garrod is credited with both designing and building *Brum*. He also made devices on the children's programme *Teletubbies*.

Garrod co-presented Channel 4's *The Secret Life of Machines* with Tim Hunkin, another inventor from the same county.

Robot Wars

Garrod was Team Leader of Team Cassius, a team of roboteers which entered several robots into Series 1, 2 and 3 of *Robot Wars*. In addition to the performances of his robots, he was known for his generosity in helping other teams fix their competitors.

In Series 1, Team Cassius entered "Recyclophse", which reached the Grand Final but lost to Roadblock.

In Series 2, Team Cassius entered 5th seeded "Cassius", a wedge-shaped robot armed with a front-pivoted flipper. Cassius was the first competitor in the show's history to "self right" (i.e. to turn itself over when it was upside down), and as such Garrod is often credited with inventing the so-called "srimech". Cassius also reached the Grand Final, but lost to Panic Attack.

In Series 3, Team Cassius entered 2nd seeded "Cassius 2", a similar robot to its predecessor "Cassius", which lost to Series 4 runner-up Pussycat in the 2nd round of the heats. His team then quit and never returned to the show, as their complaints about insufficient health and safety precautions were not listened to by the producers.



Rex Garrod built a microlight among other projects.

2. Tribute by Tim Hunkin

This chapter was archived in 2021, with acknowledgement and thanks, from Tim Hunkin's website at www.timhunkin.com.



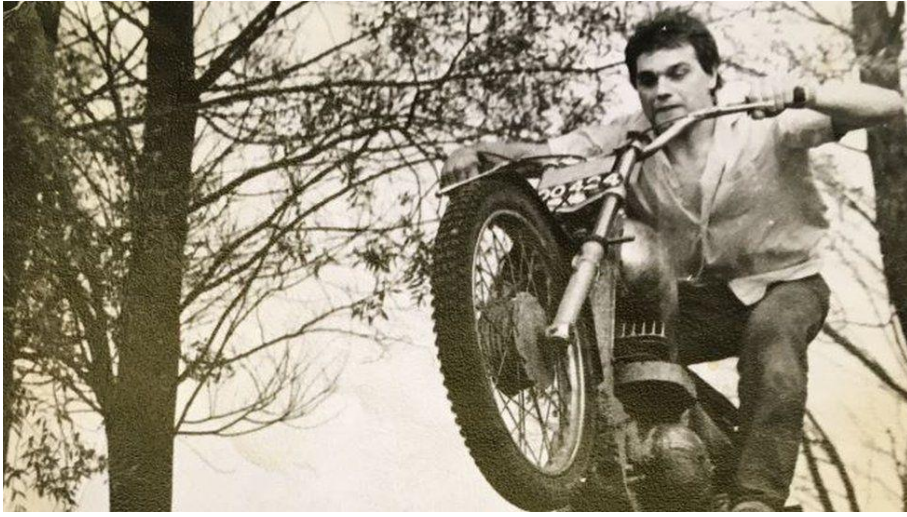
Rex with Casius, his first wedge robot for robot wars.

Rex Garrod, my partner making 'The Secret Life of Machines' films, died on Monday April 8th 2019. He was a huge influence on me and many other people - a true genius.

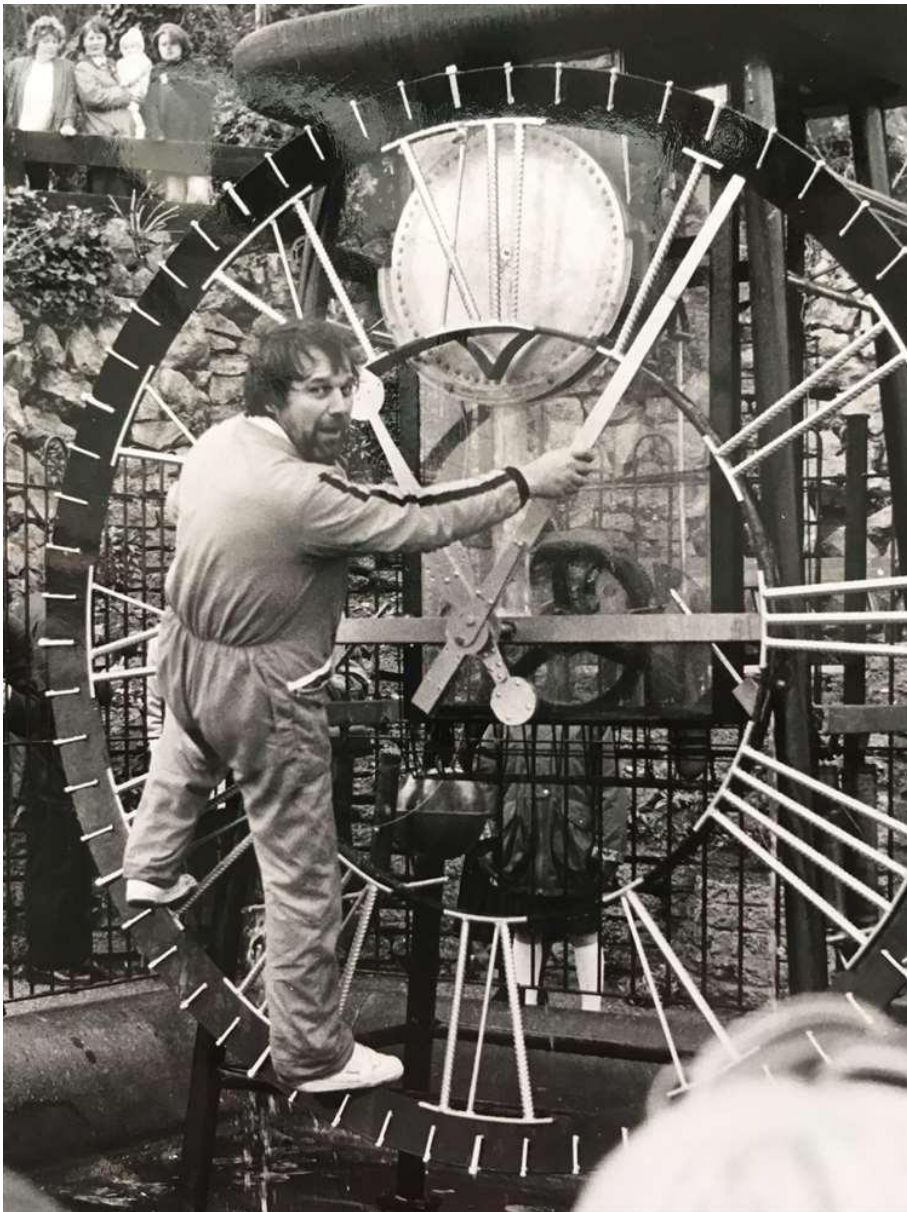
I met Rex at a party in 1983. He arrived brandishing a large Bowie knife, seized my arm and sliced the blade across it, leaving a large trail of blood. The knife didn't feel sharp and the blood didn't look real but I was thrilled by its ingenuity. The knife handle was a thick rubber tube which when squeezed, forced the 'blood' out of a row of tiny holes along the edge of the blade. He had made it as a prop for a TV drama.

I saw him for the last time in autumn 2017 in a care home, virtually unable to speak and tearful, his mind ravaged by dementia. I would never have imagined that it could happen to someone so amazingly energetic like him.

When we first met he had already had two glamorous careers. As a teenager he was a speedway bike champion, sponsored by Riley's Crisps. He had a scrapbook of old bike magazines, several with him on the front cover.



Rex Garrod, speedway champion.



Rex Garrod with one of his enormous clocks.

From working with his friend Dave Bickers in the early days of 'Bickers Action', he got into special effects and props for Anglia Television amongst other companies. One prop I remember vividly was a severed hand, complete with bone and arteries protruding from the wrist. This used to sit on his bandsaw table, sometimes with with fresh 'blood' when he wanted to impress visitors. This career came to an abrupt end when he was banned by a film union (special effect work was a closed shop at the time). For a while he then repaired washing machines, but was itching to do something more interesting.

The first job we did together was a wind powered clock for Liverpool garden festival in 1984. At his workshop I was amazed at the way he worked. He attacked everything with reckless speed and quite often threw half finished things away to start again, cursing and blaming God for the setback. Despite this progress was amazingly fast. The clock escapement, using an old car wiper motor and flywheel ring gear, took him only a couple of days to make.

I struggled to keep up, particularly because his workshop was always chaotic and impossible to find a clear surface to work on. Having spent a couple of hours polishing a bit of perspex I didn't know where to put it so it ended up on the concrete floor. I then promptly slipped on it - scratching it terminally. Rex enjoyed moments like this enormously.

Despite the problems, I learnt an enormous amount just watching him. He seemed to do everything in unconventional ways. When his guillotine got blunt, he didn't send the blade away to be sharpened or even remove it from the machine, he just ran his angle grinder along the edge. Watching him use the lathe was particularly memorable. He always ran the spindle too fast and cut too deep, things I would never dare do myself, but it gave me a feel for the limits of what was possible. When things were going OK he always delivered a constant stream of bad jokes.

The days were always entertaining, he was so sociable there were always visitors and lots of tea breaks. Then there were the daily trips to Sackers, the local scrapyards. Here we would sift through the latest stuff to arrive at the yard and strip any parts that looked useful.

The scrapyards were central to Rex's life, he could never resist getting 'useful stuff' for free. Long before anyone talked about global warming and recycling, Rex just thought the scrapyards were a source of bargains and that companies were fools for throwing the stuff out. Perfectly working machine tools, full sheets of aluminium and stainless steel, hi tech factory automation modules, brand new milling cutters – we never knew what to expect, but there was always something.



Sacklers scrap yard was in the news in 2019. Cutting up an old locked safe for scrap they found £20,000 inside it (above).

Rex visited Sackers almost every day for 40 years. To accommodate the treasure he constantly expanded his workshop. Eventually it comprised of his original garage, a 40ft by 30ft extension on the back of the house, a large poly tunnel and several shipping containers. Every inch of space was stuffed full.



Rex Garrod in his workshop.

Once in the care home never to return, his wife Sally decided it was time to clear everything out and invited me over to see if there was anything I wanted. His friend Phil was in charge of the clear out, helped by Terry, Colin and Stephen. I was just expecting to collect a few things and leave them to it, but I got sucked in and joined the team. We worked almost every Tuesday for over three months, rescuing everything we could. Even then there was still so much stuff I lost count of the number of skips we filled. It was a massive job but curiously addictive. We often found objects

that triggered memories and constantly swapped stories about Rex. The whole experience was like a protracted wake even though he was still just alive.

Many things showed off his skill and ingenuity. One was the rotting remains of a full size animatronic rubber shark that had swum underwater for an advert. At the time I'd been amazed that the windscreen wiper motors worked completely submerged in water. At first they weren't powerful enough to flex the shark's body but he realised the water kept the motors so cool that he could run them at 60 volts (5 times their normal 12 volts). This massively increased the motors' power and the shark then performed perfectly.

The only trace of 'The Secret Life of Machines' tv series we did together was an old reel to reel tape recorder with a pot of ferric oxide. He enjoyed showing kids how to make sound recordings using sticky tape and rust. He had destroyed the huge Van De Graff generator, the biggest prop we made in his workshop, in a fit of rage, but I remembered the fun we had getting it to work. At first it produced no sparks at all, but when he switched the lights off we could see tiny sparks on everything up to ten meters away.

Most of the electronic devices which happened to be switched on in the workshop never worked again. Around the Van De Graff globe itself a faint green corona glow showed where the charge was leaking. It didn't take long to get rid of the edges and rough patches that were causing the charge to leak and then it worked as it was supposed to, but it was never as exciting as that first attempt. There were his 'Robot Wars' robots - wedge shaped with a flipping mechanism to tip over opponents. (I think he invented the wedge, which was copied by many contestants). Also several 'Brum' radio controlled cars made for a popular kids TV series. These were so complicated, every detail was radio controlled - doors, headlights, wiper blades, starting handle etc. These didn't go in the skip, there's still a market for anything Brum related on Ebay.

Rex loved weird stuff, something we shared. He had a gallon can full of mercury that was too heavy to lift. At some point Sackers had got worried by the mercury in their yard and offered it to him. I remember what fun it was to play with – a liquid so heavy is completely counter intuitive. Because its so toxic it can cost a fortune to dispose of but Phil somehow found a company that wanted it and even paid him a few hundred pounds.

Rex also had an explosives cupboard. Most of it was gunpowder and fireworks but Phil thought there had been a lump of plastic explosive. I never found it but there were some explosive bolts – the sort that separate the stages of a rocket as it gains height. I have no idea where he could have got them. He also liked to make big bangs by mixing Oxygen and Acetylene in bin bags. He used to say it was harmless because the bags

didn't confine the gases. Then one went off while he was holding it. He didn't get badly burned so he was sort of right, but I don't think he ever tried it again. Except on a smaller scale, like the day I bought an explosive gas meter at a car boot sale (no ordinary boot sale but the Dunstable Downs radio rally sale – at the time a mecca for all things weird and scientific). Rex decided to test my meter by filling the rubber bulb with oxygen, adding tiny amounts of acetylene to get a reading. The dial stayed firmly in the green 'safe' area so we kept adding more. Eventually the rubber bulb exploded – maybe that's how it was supposed to work.

There were a lot of chemicals and stuff for spray painting. It's not easy to spray a car perfectly, but Rex was very, very good at it. In fact he was good at anything related to cars and engines. Soon after I first met him he bought a crash damaged Toyota Celica sports car to convert into a pickup truck. He made a beautiful job of it but the DVLA wouldn't licence it. He eventually wrote to his MP and astonishingly this did the trick. What I didn't know at the time was that when he eventually went into the DVLA office to collect his tax disc, he demanded to see the manager. After being stalled for hours the man eventually appeared. Rex asked him if he was a civil servant and then told him he should in future try to be more civil and a better servant.

Rex could never cope with bureaucracy and because he was so larger than life, kept confronting it. Terry and Colin used to work for BT at its Martlesham research centre so are not bothered by it. Phil, Stephen and I are more like Rex, but better at keeping under the radar. The clearout also reminded us of stories Rex used to tell us. One I particularly liked was about his drive home from Scunthorpe after a speedway event. The car broke down in the middle of the night and he traced the fault to the petrol pump, which was unrepairable. Instead of waiting until the morning he taped a plastic petrol can on the roof. Amazingly gravity was then enough to feed the petrol straight to the carburettor.

Although reminiscing and trying to do the best with his hoard were our main topics of conversation, our amazement at the sheer amount of expensive high tech stuff that he'd rescued from the scrapyards kept growing and growing. I'd never been quite so aware of the wastefulness of the modern world. I suspect that David Dodds, who owns Sackers, was pleased that Rex was rescuing the cream of the stuff deposited in his yard.

Towards the end of our mammoth clearance I realised we were dissecting the demise of British industry. In about 1980, when Rex started collecting, Britain was still a major manufacturer with highly respected products, even if our prices had become less competitive. The treasures ending up in the Sackers were the result of successive local companies going bust. So evident from Rex's collection was that the companies had invested in the

latest equipment to try and keep up, but it had obviously been near impossible for them to survive. The decline is still not completely over because there are still some small marginally profitable companies, trading until their owner retires.

I tried to find good homes for the motors and pneumatic equipment I couldn't bear to put in the skip, but it wasn't easy. Not only is there less industry but also fewer people who have the knowledge or workshops to use stuff like this. I absorbed quite a lot into my own stores. At the time it felt crazy expanding my stores as I am already 67, so it triggered a mass sort out of my own stuff. Since doing this, I find I use something of his almost every day. Quite often I curse him – he rarely tested his finds and many things don't work. But mostly its nice to have these regular reminders.

I often tell people I learnt more from Rex than from my entire formal education. Of course its actually more complicated. I got a good grounding in maths and physics at school, then went to Cambridge and left confident to pursue whatever interested me (I've felt embarrassed by this sense of privilege ever since). But more of the knowledge I use in my workshop comes from Rex than from Cambridge. His own background was very different. His father was a local thatcher and Rex was apprenticed to a local electrician called Bill Bunn. Bill recognised his talents and taught him things like electric motor theory, which I still don't fully understand.

Rex used to enjoy poking fun at me for making mistakes with my posh education. Although well hidden, I think he lacked confidence and compensated by showing off. So it was just perfect that at the height of his career, the University of East Anglia awarded him an honorary doctorate. He loved dressing up in the robes and going to all the events. If ever anybody deserved one it was Rex. I hope I will forget his final distressing years and remember him as the true genius that he was - Dr Garrod.

3. Brum



Rex Garrod with Brum.

This description of Brum, the children's TV series whose central character is a radio controlled car designed and built by Rex Garrod, was archived in 2021, with acknowledgement and thanks, from Wikipedia.

Brum, also known as The Adventures of Brum, is a British children's television series about the adventures of a small, sentient vintage car. The series was originally narrated by Toyah Willcox, who also provided the voice for Brum and all the characters. The show aired for five series between 1991 and 2002 with two revived CGI series airing in 2016.

Set in Birmingham, England and produced by Ragdoll Productions, Brum was first broadcast in 1991 and the last live action series was broadcast in 2002. It was initially directed, written and produced by Anne Wood and initially narrated by Toyah Willcox who also provided the voice for Brum and all the characters in story form. From series 3, all the characters including Brum were silent except for the car noises. The narrator provided commentary rather than the previous story form.

The show was first aired on BBC One on the children's block, Children's BBC (CBBC), as well as airing on satellite and pay television where it was screened on TCC and Living, and also aired in the United States on Discovery Family, in Australia on ABC, Max, Nickelodeon, ABC Kids and ABC2, in Brunei on RTB, in India on Pogo, in Indonesia on antv, in Singapore on Kids Central, in South Africa on SABC2 (with both an

English dub and an Afrikaans dub) and CBeebies, in Kenya on KBC, in New Zealand on TV2 and TV3, in Namibia on NBC, in Zimbabwe on ZTV, in Ireland on RTÉ, in Germany on BFBS and SSVC Television, in the Netherlands on Nederland 3, in Bangladesh on BTV, in Malaysia on TV3 and in the Emirates on Dubai 33. It also aired on the now-defunct children's channel, KPC "Kids Pick Cartoons". A new CGI-animated series, aimed at young pre-school children, was produced in 2016.

Brum is the story of a small replica car who ventures out into Big Town when his owner isn't looking, and gets up to all manner of adventures. Each episode begins and ends in the same way, with Brum leaving the other cars in the motor museum when the owner's back is turned and heading out to explore Big Town, before eventually returning to his place. Each series has had its own background music. From series 1–2, the introduction music was the same, but in series 2, they used different instruments. From Series 3–5, the music became jazzy and a new title sequence was directed by Nigel P. Harris.

The car can express himself in various mechanical ways including opening and closing his doors and bonnet, bobbing his suspension, and flashing and swivelling. The actors in Brum do not speak – mime and off-screen narration help propel the story. It was therefore easy to prepare episodes for airing in other countries, and the series has been broadcast in many parts of the world and in many languages..



Brum in the Cotswold Motoring Museum.

The stories are set in the city of Birmingham, since in addition to its onomatopoeic nature of a car engine revving, Brum (as a contraction of "Brummagem") is a common colloquial name for Birmingham. Although later series make no direct mention of Birmingham, calling it simply Big Town, many of the city's streets and landmarks can be seen in each episode.

The show was written by a range of writers. Anne Wood primarily wrote all the first series, while the second was written by Tom Poole, Dirk Campbell, Andrew Davenport and Morgan Hall. The last two series were written by Nigel P. Harris (5 Episodes) and the existing Ragdoll team.

The car itself – a half-scale replica of a late-1920s Austin 7 Chummy convertible – was designed and built by Rex Garrod. It is now housed at the Cotswold Motoring Museum in Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire, which is also where the opening and closing sequences of the programme were filmed

4. Robot Wars

The following chapter was archived in 2021, with acknowledgement and thanks, from the Robot Wars Fandom website at www.robotwars.fandom.com.



Rex Garrod with Cassius.

Team Cassius was a team from Stowmarket in Suffolk which entered the first three series of the BBC TV series *Robot Wars*, reaching the Grand Final on two occasions with their flipper robots Recyclops and Cassius.

Team Members

"I was handed a pack of information by Tim Hunkin, who had received it from the Science Museum. I thought it would be a good education exercise for kids (including old kids like me)."

— Rex Garrod on entering *Robot Wars*

Team Cassius was founded by Rex Garrod. Together with Simon West, George Francis and Mick Cutter, they first entered the original series of *Robot Wars*, building two robots; Recyclops and Robot the Bruce. George Francis and Mick Cutter did the electronics for the robots, whilst Simon and Rex did the mechanics.

George Francis and Mick Cutter entered Robot the Bruce as a separate entry, and George Francis would go on to form his own team, Team Chaos, but he would continue to use Rex Garrod's workshop. The two continued to work closely together, with George helping Rex with the electronics on Cassius, and Rex helping with the mechanics of Chaos. Chaos 2's first ever battle being an informal roadside skirmish with Cassius, which Chaos 2 won 4-1.

"Chaos 2 is the first robot of mine that I did the majority of the mechanical construction on. I've always done all of the electronics on my robots, this year I've done most of the mechanics and pneumatics as well. Rex made the high pressure rams, some valve adaptors, and the wheel hubs. Obviously he also supplied most of the materials, lots of advice, fixed some gear wheels, and supplied loads of coffee!"

— George Francis on the Chaos 2 website

Rex Garrod was a former children's television presenter and engineer, who worked on special effects. He drove Recyclops and the original Cassius, and operated the weapons.



The fearsome House Robots, which were larger than the contestants and would periodically attack them.

He was well known for his cheery and sporting demeanour and always helped other roboteers to modify and repair their robots when problems arose. He was also reluctant to attack other robots once they had been immobilised, preferring to attack the House Robots.

Philippa Forrester: "If there were other people around, who were much younger than you, that had put a lot of time into a robot, and you were up against them, what would be your options?"

Rex Garrod: "Well I couldn't possibly destroy them, for all the rice in China, I couldn't do that! That's against the principles of 3p. I wanna encourage kids to build 'em, I won't destroy them, so if I could immobilise them without doing them any harm, yes, but I certainly go out to destroy them, no way. Now a House Robot, that's different!"

— Rex Garrod explains his views in Heat H of Series 2

A keen innovator, Rex Garrod is credited for the creation of the flipper weapon on *Robot Wars*, and for the invention of the self-righting mechanism. Garrod was often critical of his own driving skill, having driven Cassius into the pit on two different occasions, but was nevertheless successful in his first two *Robot Wars* campaigns, reaching the Grand Final twice.

A friend of Rex Garrod, Simon West was an engineer, who was part of the team in all three of the team's appearances. He had helped build the team's robots, including Robot the Bruce. He left the speaking in all the team's introductions and interviews to Rex, and in Series 3, Mick Cutter as well, apart from a brief comment to Phillipa Forrester after Cassius 2's shock exit in Round 2 of Series 3.

Having competed with George Francis for Series 1 and 2, Mick Cutter rejoined Team Cassius for Series 3.

"Mike Cutter, my team member for the last two years has been poached by Rex to drive Cassius 2 for him. (I didn't realize just how good a driver Mike was until he won the East Anglian Regional R/C Model Car Championship.) That's my loss, Rex's gain..."

— George Francis on website

Taking over the role of driver, Mick Cutter shared Rex's feelings about preferring to attack House Robots rather than causing unnecessary damage to beaten opponents. Unfortunately, he drove into the pit in Round 2 in his only appearance, and never competed again as the team retired.

Notable achievements



Cassius.

- Recyclops initially set the record for the shortest battle in the UK series of *Robot Wars*, flipping Scrapper over in 15 seconds in their Arena Semi-Final. However, this was beaten later on in Series 1 by featherweight and fellow Grand Finalist Cunning Plan, and the most recent record was set by Rapid in Series 10, at 5.6 seconds.
- Cassius was nominated for both Best Design and Best Engineered Awards in Series 2, but lost both.
- Cassius was also the first UK robot to successfully self-right, doing so in its Series 2 Pinball run and its Grand Final Eliminator against Roadblock later that same series. This meant that Rex Garrod is often credited with having invented the self-righting mechanism, despite Chaos having first attempted to right itself earlier on in Series 2, and various US robots - including BioHazard and Vlad the Impaler - having successfully done so in the original US *Robot Wars* events.
- Team Cassius is one of only four teams to reach multiple Grand Finals with multiple robots, having reached the Series 1 Final with Recyclops, and the Series 2 Final with Cassius. The other three teams to have done this are Team Chaos, Cold Fusion Team and Team Shock.



Cassius with flipper raised.

Garrod's Protest

"The number one thing, to remember all the time - safety! ... It isn't a toy, this is really dangerous! And it's a job sometimes to get people to realise this!"

— Rex Garrod on the dangers of building robots, interviewed in *The Constructor's Guide, Robot Wars: The First Great War*.

Rex Garrod harboured an intense resentment for several of the rules in earlier series of *Robot Wars*, as he felt many were unnecessary whilst other aspects of the show's safety procedures were grossly unattended.

"...most of them stupid, and written by some twerp who sits behind a desk, has never got his / her hands dirty, and never made anything, let alone a sophisticated machine like a robot. And furthermore, so intoxicated with self importance and will not seek help from professionals or listen to experts, who could help them."

— Rex Garrod on the *Robot Wars* rules, interviewed by Tectonic *Robot Wars*



The safety cage at the set for the BBC TV Robot Wars series.

During Series 2, Garrod was told off by one of the health and safety inspectors for a very minor incident. In his anger, Garrod told the inspector that much worse things could occur because of their negligence in the areas of fail-safe devices. His protests fell on deaf ears.

*"...I got a rollicking from a so called health and safety man (for drilling a hole in a piece of plastic, half a mm thick with half mm drill bit ,without goggles and leather gloves), I told him that serious accidents would occur because of their lack of proper real safety precautions like checking the all important failsafe devices that **MUST be fitted on ALL robotic machines AND PROPERLY TESTED BY AN EXPERT WHO UNDERSTANDS THE DEVICES AND THEIR FAILINGS.** He merely walked away. That advice fell on deaf ears, only for a serious accident (hospital case) to occur almost immediately. The next year I arrived at the studio, only to find another robot had run amok, and injured another stagehand (machine fell off a trolley and the switch shorted out and an ineffective failsafe didn't stop the machine)."*

— Rex Garrod on behind-the-scenes incidents that caused him to retire from the show

Not long afterwards, a robot went "berserk" and a person was hospitalised as a result. Garrod expected Mentorn to have learned their lesson, and turned up for Series 3 expectantly. However, in The Pits, an unidentified spike-wielding robot was dropped and activated while being carried into the studio; the same robot later stabbed a crew member in the leg while being prepared for a battle. Immediately, Garrod retired from *Robot Wars* in protest.

"For one accident to occur is bad, but for two of the exact same fault to occur in my book is nothing short of criminal. I have no intention of returning to Robot Wars until I'm satisfied that safety is up to the standards I am used to in my profession (Special effects for T.V Films & Advertising). After these almighty cock-ups things have taken a giant step forward, but from information received by many of the last wars contestants, it still has a long way to go. And self important people still rule, both in safety and common courtesy"

— Rex Garrod

5. Funeral

The following account of Rex Garrod's funeral was archived in 2021, with acknowledgement and thanks, from the Suffolk Regional News section of the BBC website at www.bbc.co.uk. The article was published in May 2019.

Rex Garrod: Funeral held for Brum and Robot Wars star



Rex Garrod built the remote-control car Brum for children's TV.

The children's television car Brum and Robot Wars creation Cassius attended the funeral of their inventor, who died aged 75.

More than 300 people attended the send-off of Suffolk "bodgineer" Rex Garrod at St Mary and St Lambert church in Stonham Aspal, near Stowmarket. Mr Garrod, who also competed in speedway, made objects for television shows including Teletubbies. His daughter Kay paid tribute to the "ingenious, unique, mad inventor".

Mr Garrod's friend and fellow inventor Tim Hunkin, who designed the coffin for him, said: "Rex lived life to the full and his life needed to be properly celebrated. "I'm not surprised by the numbers coming to his funeral. There were always visitors to his workshop and he was always sociable and making things for people," he said.

The vicar at the Stonham Aspal church the Reverend Philip Payne said: "So many people came to say goodbye. Everyone has a happy story about him."

Mr Garrod's wife Sally described him as a "big kid at heart". Mrs Garrod, 69, who married him in 1992, said: "He was eccentric. They called him the professor of 'bodgineering' - he liked that."

Mr Garrod died in April after living with Alzheimer's for eight years.



Garrod's friend and fellow inventor Tim Hunkin, who is also a cartoonist, designed the coffin.



The Reverend Philip Payne conducted the funeral service.

Growing up in Mickfield, Suffolk, Mr Garrod rode for Ipswich Witches, as well as Scunthorpe, in speedway before venturing into special effects alongside former motocross rider Dave Bickers.

He presented Channel 4's *The Secret Life of Machines* with Mr Hunkin. As well as his own TV work Mr Garrod entered three robots into BBC's *Robot Wars*, which saw teams build and fight machines.

At the time of his death, *Teletubbies* creator Anne Wood, creative director of Ragdoll Productions Ltd, said: "We loved working with Rex both on *Brum* and in creating interactive Teletubby devices."



Sally and Rex Garrod married in 1992.



Tim Hunkin paid tribute to his friend.



Mr Garrod entered three robots into BBC's Robot Wars, including Cassius, which attended his funeral.

