

The MESSage

Newsletter of the Middlebridge Enthusiasts Scimitar Set



: middlebridge@live.co.uk



February 2024



Mick's MESSage

I need help, advice or the Samaritans! I simply don't understand what's happening. Due to ill health I made the decision to stop working, step back, chill 'n' relax and hopefully slowly improve my health, maybe a bit of relaxed bike riding and the odd visit to the local fitness centre! Then, pray tell me why I'm busier than ever with no time at the moment to do the above. Personally, I find this retirement blooming hard work and I haven't even started on the massive house to-do list! How do you all do it. My first real shock was soon to hit me, overnight I lost my company vehicle, laptop and phone. I have now replaced these but the biggest shock is paying for fuel!! Matt said to me, welcome to the real world.

MB 33

At the time of writing this my Middlebridge, No 33 is still languishing in the garage with a promise that I will do a few small jobs before the

new classic season commences. I'm still not sure how I will explain car tinkering over house decoration. There are no essential repairs to be undertaken on 33 but I would like to quieten the exhaust drone at 55mph and stop the very annoying Wilwood front brake squeal at low speed if possible. Oh, I also need to sort out the intermittent wiper fault but electrics are not my forte. Another reason for the delay in working on 33 is its just way too cold as I write this update in January.

Marque Website

During 2024 I'm looking to further expand the Middlebridge website and needless to say Martin North will be at the deep end. (Sorry Martin) . My goal is for everyone visiting the site to have a much more comprehensive overview of the Middlebridge Group of companies and their activities, the intention is for us to create the appropriate areas and slowly populate them with our data and hopefully watch the areas grow in the future much like the Middlebridge Scimitar area.

NEC Classic & Restoration Show.

The NEC has been asking the MESS to support this event for some years, on this occasion we have said yes and now have a stand on 22/24th March 2024, needless to say this is another first for the MESS but please come along for a chat, banter or even advice, whichever, we look forward to seeing you there, this event will kick start the classic season for us. (See full details of discounts on Page 14.)



MIDDLEBRIDGE will be exhibiting at Spring's best classic car show, the Practical Classic Car & Restoration Show at Birmingham's NEC, 22-24 March. Come along to say Hello and see our Stand 5-370 Hall 5. Quote our club code **S24CC460** to save **£3.50** off single-day adult tickets or **£2** off other ticket types. Book at www.necrestorationshow.com before 29th Feb and you'll be helping the club earn extra benefits. Ticket discounts apply to advanced ticket prices until 21st March and on-the-door prices thereafter.

Isle of Wight

(Middlebridge 35th Anniversary Event)

For the 3rd year running we will be attending the Isle of Wight Classic Car Extravaganza, I believe there are 5 or 6 cars booked to attend but everyone is welcome to come along, hopefully everyone received the event flier that contained the full information pack. Just in case anyone did not receive it, I have added to this MESSage.

Isle of Man Event

Another first for the MESS is a trip to the Isle of Man arranged by a group of Middlebridge enthusiasts, unfortunately I will not be able to attend however they have promised pictures to tease me with. Some owners are doing both the IOM and the IOW events, greedy beggars!

Our Central Marquee

35th Anniversary Event

25/26 May 2024

As well as the two signature IOW event we are trying our best to do something more geographically central and also create a relaxed experience to hopefully enable more members to attend. We have planned the following, to meet on Saturday lunchtime at the Great British

Car Journey, for a tour of the museum that would of course include the Royal Middlebridge that's now on display. Hopefully we can get together for an evening meal and then on the Sunday take our trusty Middlebridges to Brookhill Hall that is approx' 12 miles from the museum and situated adjacent the M1 Motorway (Junction 28). Brookhill Hall is hosting a minimum of 600 classic car gathering on the Sunday and the Royal Middlebridge has been invited as a star car at the event. Incidentally, Brookhill Hall is the location where Classic & Sports Car held the photo-shoot and road test of Middlebridge No 5 (fingers crossed it should be out in the Spring edition). Another alternative is of course to just turn up on the Sunday and join us on the Middlebridge stand.

Donations

May I also take this opportunity to thank everyone for the very kind donations, as always George has the purse strings and data but is a little busy personally at the moment following yet another house move. I don't envy him there. As soon as he reconciles the accounts I'm sure he will be in contact with everyone that has very kindly donated once again. It is these donations that enables the MESS to design stands that stand out at the various classic events promoting the Middlebridge Marquee.

For Sale / Wanted

We currently have two cars for sale on the Middlebridge website.

Pre-Production Middlebridge, 1 owner car, Manual and in excellent condition

Middlebridge No 61 A truly awesome car by any standards.

A 35th Middlebridge Anniversary Event

The 2024 Isle of Wight Classic Car Extravaganza

7th & 8th September 2024



There are a number of Middlebridge owners wishing to return to the IoW for the Classic Car Extravaganza, having enjoyed the event, the banter and the venue during the past couple of years. The event itself is returning

MESS Calendar 2024

(Please note events highlighted in blue already have MESS members attending)

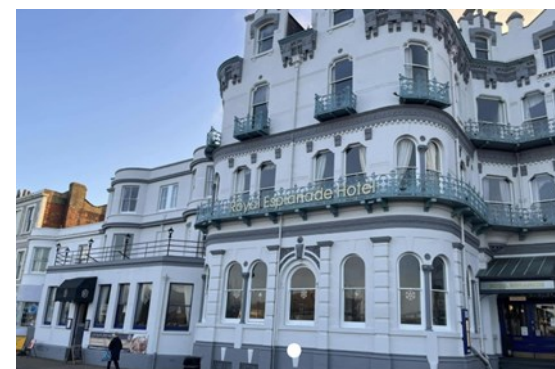
Date	Date	Event
22/03/2024	24/03/2024	NEC Classic Car & Restoration Show
21/04/2024		Drive It Day (Please email us pic's)
16/05/2024	21/05/2024	Isle of Man Trip
19/05/2024		Oakham Classic Car Show - Rutland
25/05/2024	26/05/2024	GBCJ / Brookhill Hall Classic Car Show
26/05/2024		Sandringham Pagent
06/06/2024	06-07/07/2024	Hollowell Steam Rally
23/06/2024		GBCJ Reliant Themed Day incl. Middlebridge
28/06/2024	30/06/2024	Three Counties Show Ground Classic Car Show
29/06/2024	30/06/2024	Bloxham
13/07/2024	14/07/2024	Powderham
17/08/2024	18/08/2024	Scimfest
06/09/2024	08/09/2024	Goodwood Revival
06/09/2024	09/09/2024	Isle of Wight Classic Car Extravaganza
21/09/2024	22/09/2024	Sywell Piston & Props
08/11/2024	10/11/2024	NEC Classic Car Show
T.B.C	Work in progress	Caffine & Machine
T.B.C.	Work in progress	Dagenham,Cologne, Essen Road Trip
T.B.C.	Work in progress	Middlebridge 600

to a previous format with the classic car show being at two locations, Newport on the Saturday and then Ryde on the Sunday.

We are planning to try a different hotel in Ryde, for better quality rooms and service, as well as car parking and access to the car park. The hotel has provided a quotation based on seven double/twin room B&B (Half Board is available).

Proposed hotel:

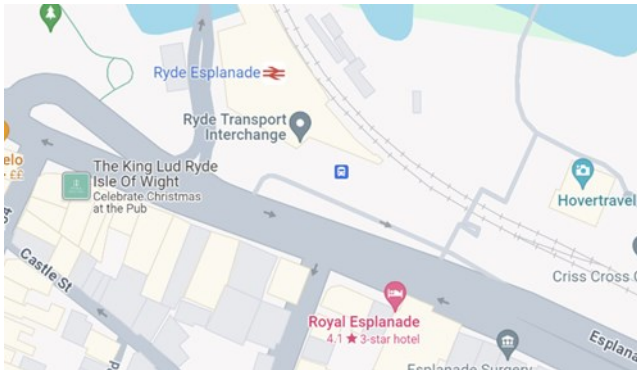
The Royal Esplanade Hotel, 16 Esplanade, Ryde, Isle of Wight, PO33 2ED 01983 562549
info@royalesplanadehotel.co.uk <https://www.royalesplanadehotel.co.uk/>



The hotel has checked its room availability and there are couple of different room types currently available for the dates we require and is offering the MESS a 10% group discount.

To secure the booking, a £50.00 deposit is required and since we will be booking more than four rooms, we will be required to pay the outstanding balance two weeks prior to arrival.

Car parking can be pre-booked at the hotel for a limited number of cars, at a cost of £5.00 per car / per day. The hotel has been informed that as a group, we are happy to double park (blocking our friends in).



Proposed Ferry Crossing:

Departing Southampton at 13:00 on Friday 6th September (or nearest available time)

Departing East Cowes at 10:30 On Monday 9th September (or nearest available time)

Red Funnel ferry from Southampton can be arranged by the hotel at discounted rate of £105.00 per car. Full payment is required at the time of booking.

The Event:

By the Echo ... Thousands of car enthusiasts will once again take great joy in the hundreds of vehicles on display when the extravaganza returns to the Isle of Wight on 7th and 8th September 2024.

Plans are afoot to revert back to the old format of hosting the show in Newport on Saturday and in Ryde on Sunday.

The decision to spice things up has come about following a change of organiser, with Paddy McHugh now taking the event forward into the new era. It follows the death of founder Vic Gallucci earlier this year.

The support of Newport & Carisbrooke Community Council is being sought to host the event at Newport Quay, with confirmation expected soon.



As before, the MESS will register the display cars in advance with organiser Paddy McHugh at classicariw@gmail.com or by calling 07794 216319 after 16:00.

Payment Schedule:

All payments to be made to the MESS account.

Account Name: Middlebridge Enthusiasts Scimitar Set

Sort Code: 30 90 89

Account: 49350668

Please contact Alan Cavendish-Tribe by email alan.cavendish.tribe@gmail.com if you are interested in joining the MESS on the Isle of Wight. Alan will be booking rooms as soon as possible as to avoid any disappointment.

Cost Summary

See over: -

		Premier double / twin room		Premier double / twin Sea View		Superior double / twin Sea View
Hotel - B&B Discounted Rate per room for 3 nights		£345.60		£375.30		£418.50
Hotel car Parking (£5 per day)		£15.00		£15.00		£15.00
Ferry - S'ton to E.Cowes Rtn per car		£105.00		£105.00		£105.00
Event Admission Ticket t.b.c.		£7.00		£7.00		£7.00
Total		£472.60		£502.30		£545.50
Payable at time of booking		£162.00		£162.00		£162.00
Balance payable by 15th August		£310.60		£340.30		£383.50

(Ed: Having encouraged him with the last issue, Chris has given in to my badgering and provided a couple of other reports but let's start with his trip to the Isle of Man (IoM) and the aftermath.....)

Number 12 at the IoM

I have been going by myself to the IOM by motorbike every year for 15 years. I always stay at the same hotel for four days, between the TT and grand prix (or classic as its now called). The present Mrs W went to Yarmouth with her parents at the same time, so no conflict ensued. She always asked if I was lonely in a hotel on my own. One full of motorcyclists and lot of beer?



Yes, terribly dear.
With their passing last year and my worn knees,

we decided to take the Middlebridge with a less powerful bike on a trailer. (Mrs W had never been to the island.) We booked a cottage; ferry tickets rented a trailer and off we set.

Now to the joy of owning a Scimitar: at the ferry terminal the chap in the car next to us in the queue, was an ex-owner and grassed me to Will, hence his request for this rambling. Now if your sexual preference is for middle aged or older beardy men, the Scimitar is the car for you! At every fuel stop or pub night you will be scraping them off the car! (Never attractive ladies for some reason....)

The drive to the ferry in changeable weather was event free. The loading was bit hairy due to the ground clearance of the fully loaded car, this fact would curse the trip. You can't own a Scimitar if you do not like the sound of stainless-steel silencers scraping on anything lumpier than a drain cover! The ferry trip was long and okay, save for the toddler who screamed for the entire trip - what ever happened to proper parenting? Driving off the ferry in Douglas was a 1 mph job over the steel ramp and on to the cottage.

Having never driven a car on the IoM before, I noted just how bad the roads are, away from

the main roads. It's not that they are badly surfaced or pot holed, just undulating beyond belief. The cottage was in Laxey several miles up the coast and is a place I know well. The sat nav took us the most direct way on a four mile section that had the trailer bouncing in an alarming way. Finally, we arrived, the cottage was nice with fine views but nailed to the side of a mountain.



Now the attractions of the Island for petrolheads are as follows: -

Several excellent motor and motor cycle museums, local car and bike shows in season and, and it's a "big" and, the national speed limit on several sections of the island's roads, most notably the TT course over the mountain, is marked by the same signs as the mainland but

on the IoM this means you can go as fast as you can safely go! On a good motorcycle with massive suspension travel this means very, very fast indeed - in a low-slung Scimitar with, let's be honest, not the best travel suspension, is not fast but scary! In fact, on driving with Mrs W on the mountain section, I got the "now steady on my love look" at, wait for it, 65mph. We were so slow in fact the local plumbers Vito van overtook us on the straight.

Mindful, that the car had to get us home the rest of the four days were at a slow cruise. The bike I took on the trailer is a 50 years old Moto Guzzi 500cc with 27hp to play with. Between both bike and car, not one B road could be travelled on.

So, to the good bits: -

Good museums, stunning scenery, prices as the mainland (they still take round pound coins but do not take Manx paper currency back to the mainland as no one will take it.)

Zero night life, very old fashioned holiday, thankfully not a hen and stag destination, lots of doily tea rooms. No touring caravans allowed.

Restored railways and trams the world's biggest water wheel no less, friendly locals who are glad you came but gladder when you leave.

Bad bits.

Zero nightlife other than the pub, weather changes in minutes if not clear skies. Not a limited mobility destination. If you're old and/or damaged this is not the place to go. Everything is nailed to the side of a hill.

Bad roads unless you have a supercharged old style Range rover. Expensive and only ferry crossing. A week's worth of interesting things to do but not two weeks, but bear in mind I have been coming back for 15 years so it can't be that bad.

Radiate, Don't Fade Away

Whilst crawling on my knees fitting the Willwood front brake kit (last issue). I noticed the back of the radiator was looking a bit green. On removing the engine bay cover plate, I was greeted by the sight in the picture.



I had had it re-cored not long ago, why was the core rotten now? Not long ago turned out to be 10 years; Tempus Fugit. On phoning the chap I have used for 30 years to do the re-core, it turned out he had not lived through Covid, a sad loss.

Nigel at QRG only had a very expensive (£325.) Aluminium rad in stock and this was his last one. This duly arrived and was fitted. I reused the fan switch as this came out the old rad freely and was working fine.



The top convoluted hose was a bit rotten, so this too was changed. Taking care to clean the corrosion off of the thermostat housing. All refilled with fresh antifreeze and a dose of K seal

sealer, this for me has been a wonder product. I started up and ran with the header tank cap off. Topping up when the level dropped. The coolant system is self-bleeding of trapped air so the cap can be refitted before the thermostat opens. I ran the engine until the second stage fan cycle operated and switched off and then checked the level when cold. The whole process was straight forward and well within the scope of a home mechanic.

As I had the cover off, I span the cooling fan by hand only to find grumbling bearings so changed those and the motor brushes and fan wiring. I only last did this job 17 years ago; Tempus Fugit.

On went the cover plate and all was well, or so I thought. The fan switch failed three weeks later! As the great Seasick Steve said in a song "if it was not for bad luck, I would not have any luck at all"! I found a new one on eBay and that was the end of this saga. For now!

Important notes on the job: -

Wear eye protection (the fan can spin muck in to your eyes)

The four 8mm mounting bolts that secure the rad to top cover bracket and the bottom skid plate are a certain length. Any longer and they can puncture the radiator tubes. So, if your bolts have a flat (or two) and a spring washer fitted make sure they go

back on. Ditto if fitting new bolts.

Always put copper slip on all bolts to prevent seizing at a later date. Change your rad hose clips for quality stainless ones. Always fit the convoluted hose with a support spring on the inside (this prevents kinking of the hose).

I found another company to re-core the old rad. So, if anyone is stuck for a manual rad you can contact me through Will (if QRG is out of stock).

Time passes quickly for tyres.

This has been a full year of me and Mrs W attending gigs (see them before they die!) with some festivals thrown in. As per last year, we compromised on the choices. Her musical taste starts with The Bay City Rollers and stops dead at the end of the 1980s. I will listen to pretty much anything with a preference for acoustic. Thus we do one folk blues gig to two 70-80s pop.

This year, my choice, was the Cambridge folk festival (wash out went to Palma instead). Hers and the last one of the year, was the Henly on Thames rewind festival. An 80's extravaganza. (because all the acts are nearly 80!) The scim as usual pulled our tin box to the camp site with no problems.

The site access was down a rutted farm track around half a mile long. This track, last year, had bashed in one silencer and following moans from me and hundreds of other punters (the slammed to the deck VW crowd) resulted in this year, the ruts being filled in with mill waste and rough chunks of rock. (cricket ball size)

After a good but expensive week end, we packed up and left the site. The return trip on the track was uphill. This had chunks of rock being flicked out of the ruts as we and everybody else, struggled for traction. One VW windscreen took a direct hit, not from us, and we cleared the track with only minor bangs and scrapes underneath.

So, to the 80-mile journey home.

The weather was hot and with the windows open we could both slightly smell burning rubber. A stop before we hit the motorway showed nothing and off we plodded. At the junction of the M1 and M69 two miles from home, the offside front tyre let go, luckily at 40 mph in nose to tail traffic.

The whole car and caravan ensemble came to rest in a controlled way on the hard shoulder. The tyre was a write off (see pic.) with more than 5mm of tread left. The inside wall had blown a big chunk out, almost certainly damaged by the

rocks in the ruts.



The motorway warning signs came on, so the camera people do watch sometimes, dropping the limit to 50mph but as no-one could do more than 40 in that traffic it was a bit of a waste of time.

One of the good things about the scim is the spare wheel and tools are stored in the engine bay. So no unloading Mrs W's baggage from the back.

The spare change took less than 12 minutes and we rejoined the traffic, just as the Wombles came up to rescue us.

Back home I had a closer look at the blown tyre. It had no side wall cracks and 5mm of thread but was 8 years old.

On taking the car to our local family run (trusted) tyre centre, it turned out that all the tyres were 8-9 years old, all perfectly legal with 5-6mm of thread but timed out.

In common with most owners, I alternate the front and back wheels as soon as they show signs of uneven wear. (Scimitars are heavy on tyres due to the parallel steering geometry) but must admit I had lost track of their age. I have always used Goodyear tyres so it worked out quite expensive. Spread a little by changing both fronts straight away and the still good rears the following month.

When I first bought the car 22 years ago it had the original tyres fitted with lots of tread. On putting a little too much power down on a big traffic island we did an unintentional 360 spin (my teenage son as passenger thought it was the coolest thing) and carried on without a pause. The tyres in this case were hard as nails and had lost any grip they had.

So, the moral of the story is check your tyre age as well as tread.

The age is shown usually in a small oval with a 4-digit number (week/year) but check the web for details of your tyre if you are not sure.

Also, if cost is an issue, on a car you only use



for your hobby, most branded manufacturers have a budget range under a different name. So cheaper does not necessarily mean nasty but ask your independent local tyre firm for advice.

Finally, on tyre pressures, modern tyres are a massive step up from what was fitted when our cars were new and are super grippy. This, on a car with its heavy to use power steering, can result in a lot of hard work at parking speeds. Putting 5 psi extra will lighten the load with no wear issues. Stay safe.

Alternate(or) Thoughts

To quote the great Homer, Dohh! (not the Greek chap but Simpson)

So, No. 12s alternator has been getting slower and slower to kick in on startup. Finally requiring a good rev too 3000rpm to start charging.

Also, I have spent some time checking for volt drops in the electrical system. The charging system was (once awake) was putting out a

steady 13.2 volts at the battery off load (nothing switched on) but the dash volt meter was reading lower. With this dipping to 12v and the fuel gauge rising when the headlamps were put on. This would be normal but for the battery voltage only dropping to 12.7. This suggested a bad negative (ground) for the centre instruments.

Despite all earths and feeds and connections being checked, no fault could be found. I did find a melted inline blade fuse holder behind the glove box and replaced it. This made no difference to the volt drop.

As a quick note, the quality of these blade fuses and holders has dropped significantly in recent years. This type is no longer used in modern cars, they used the micro blade types. The result being, the branded manufacturers are not making these any more in volume if at all. Enter the Chinese copies made to varying standards. I had one holder and fuse melt to the consistency of a Spangle (remember them) at only 2/3 the rated load. Best buy new old stock branded from eBay (Bosch or Durite etc)

Back to the ramble. The volt meter reading (discharge) had become a source of driver anxiety at night with the lights on in traffic and the fan kicking in. Anyway, the alternator was now needing to be revved so hard to start charging, a

replacement was ordered.

The AC Delco alternator marketed by Lucas (owed by Greeks I believe) and made in China arrived and was fitted. Result! Or sort of. The unwillingness to start charging was still there, but the new unit was audibly working harder and had cured the gauge problem.

Hmm? Then I remembered back 35 years to my training at the now gone G.B Blacks garage. Now I always look at the volt meter to confirm the car is charging not at the panel lamp cluster. Sure enough the warning lamp was not coming on when the ignition was turned on. Doh! The ground (negative) of this lamp trickles through the alternator regulator to excite the charging process. So out came the dash lamp cluster to change the bulb. I did not have a replacement but nicked the one for the hand brake warning for now.

Now the alternator started to charge correctly on startup. Curious to see, I refitted the old unit (12 years old) and this too worked correctly but did not cure the volt meter problem. So the new unit was fitted again and all was well with the world . So the Doh was not justified (spending £150) as two faults had been fixed. The old unit must have been running at a lower current? Or the new

unit, marketed at the same output, was higher. So, all I needed was a new lilliput bulb for the dash cluster. Genuine bulbs it turns out are Hens Teeth to find. (who knew) Two packs of "Direct replacements" from different suppliers proved wrong. Both being from China and 0.10mm larger in diameter and would not fit. I ended up buying low mileage used ones to cure the problem.

The wiring on No 12 has always been a bit Pre-production so we will see what melts next!?

Chris Wilkinson MB12

Middlebridge Steering Lock Stop

Last winter I replaced the brake discs, pads, springs and dampers on the front suspension of MB35. Much to my disappointment, I discovered that the inboard surfaces of the new discs had begun to show abnormal wear. Further investigation revealed that the trunnion bolts were touching the discs when the vehicle was cornering with steering at full-lock.

The Reliant Workshop Manual SE6 & SE6A, Section B2, shows a 'lock stop' affixed to the trunnion, but trunnions on MB35 did not have the tapped holes to take the 'lock stop' bolt. The Middlebridge Manual also shows the 'lock stop' in the Section B1 diagram but does not list the

parts.



So whilst at the Isle of Wight Classic Car Extravaganza and Sywell Piston & Props Car Show, I took the opportunity to conduct a survey of 'lock stops' on the Middlebridges, to find that two cars had 'lock stops' with trunnion bolts installed from the front of the trunnion, one car had a 'lock stop on one side but not the other. Two cars did not have 'stop locks' but the trunnion bolts were installed from the rear.

The conclusion was that the Middlebridge did not appear to require 'lock stops', provided the trunnion bolts were installed through the trunnion from the rear as there is a little more clearance in front of the trunnion to accommodate the large castellated nut.

The solution for MB35 was to remove both the trunnion bolts, previously installed from the front,

and install from the rear as shown in the photo. In hindsight, the damage to the old brake discs, resulting in an MOT advisory, can be attributed to the incorrect orientation of the trunnion bolts.

Alan Cavendish-Tribe MB35

NEC 2023

What an event! Once again, Bruce knocked it out of the park with another truly awesome marque stand. We were delighted to have HRH, The Princess Royal's Middlebridge on loan from the Great British Car Journey Museum. I can honestly say, that car alone kept us busy over the three days! Thankfully the car will be on the GBCJ stand next year!

Bruce also produced a super banner specifically for the car, which many people read, along with a Princess Royal cut out that ensured many photo opportunities during the event.





On display were Bruce's lovely 'concours' Porsche Marine Blue car with stunning interior. Somehow Bruce manages to get the whole Middlebridge stand into his car and trailer and then has the trailer hidden behind the banners during the show! Next to Bruce is Alan's highly original Renault Electric blue car (ex Dennis Nursey MB CEO's car) that looks awesome and on original paint, next in line is my gold car and finally HRH The Princess Royal's Sapphire Green Pearl car post 35 years of ownership and once again a very highly original car.



Our stand was incredibly busy over the weekend with a few very short but welcomed lulls. Needless to say, the Royal car was a major attraction for visitors, YouTube influencers and many professional photographers.



Bruce and Alan's cars also received much attention over the weekend but a real event highlight for me personally was when Alan was speaking with a gentleman (Ian Burgess) who said he used to look after a Middlebridge car and do daily oil, water and fuel checks and service the car at very regular intervals in the Cadburys garage. Alan realised instantly that it was my car he was talking about! Alan urgently beckoned me over and they both updated me, well, what a surprise, I explained about the colour change and he was as shocked and surprised as me, we even opened the bonnet and it all came flooding back to him, he said he loved that car but they were out of reach at that time, he has since purchased a Ford Scorpio which

shares the same power and transmission, he is cosseting that with it already garaged for the winter. The gentleman was quite taken back by the sudden re-union and spent much time looking over the car, I too was delighted and asked him to add his signature to the others on my tonneau cover. This really is the magic of the NEC Classic Car Show!

Many thanks to Kohji Nakauchi, (Owner), Middlebridge Group of companies and Dennis Nursey CEO for joining us on the Saturday.

Also joining us on the Saturday were Martin North and his father, it was good to have a chat during the mayhem. We all owe Martin a huge thank you for looking after and updating the Middlebridge website and already have a few surprises in store for early 2024.



Special Thanks to Richard Usher CEO of the Great British Car Journey for the loan of the car, A huge thank you to Alan Cavendish-Tribe for transporting the Royal car from the GBCJ

to the NEC and back again.

Once again, another huge thank you to Bruce for designing, creating and erecting another magnificent marque stand and of course for all of the work he does behind the scenes to make it all possible. Next is Will who annually drives the 500 miles each way and is 1st on the stand and one of the last to leave, Will's input and ideas are truly invaluable and we hope he may travel the 500 miles south in his own Middlebridge next year. How can we forget the MESS Co-Founder George. Once again George worked his socks off on the stand and delighted us with his own unique brand of banter over the three days 'nuff said me thinks'



You all deserve a huge thank you for once again making the 2023 NEC Classic Car Show such a success for the marque once again.

Mick Gaughran MB33

(Ed: And while we are on the mutual back slapping, let's not forget all the hard work that Mick puts in to support and promote the Middlebridge marque. Without his drive we wouldn't have half the exposure we get.)

MB6

Some not so good news as we were advised by Andy Goss, the owner of MB6 that his car failed the MOT on corrosion of the chassis around the rear axle.

We are aware of bracketry and "B" pillar rollover hoops needing repairs but this is a surprise to all of us as it is the first car we know of to have a failure on the galvanised part of the chassis. Admittedly MB6 is a very high mileage car but all the chassis are of a similar age and it is probably a reminder for us all not to overlook the chassis inspection and be complacent about the fact it is galvanised.

Andy is planning a full restoration and will keep us informed of progress.

George's Jargon

'BEGGING LETTER' result.

Apologies are due to everyone who sent generous donations in response to the 'Begging Letter'

appeal. Once again the membership kindly responded, and 'The MESS' Account was gifted £916.87p by 13 members. Thank you all, it is very much appreciated.

It is in my nature to thank everyone as soon as possible, however there were several delays which let down that intention. If you have sent a donation and have not received a reply, do please contact me... peckhampoppy@hotmail.co.uk

I no longer have everyone's email addresses (data protection and all that), so I asked Will if he would prefer to contact all the donators, on my behalf, or would he send me the one's that I'm missing. Somehow our emails to each other went astray, so that communication didn't occur. Adding to all that, is that Will is incredibly busy workwise and I'm up my ears in house renovations, yet again! MESSy stuff simply got lost...

In case you are wondering about the odd amount, this is the result of the exchange rate from Euros into Sterling as one donation came from overseas.

It is also a slight problem knowing who has donated when it's done electronically. Some ID's are spot on, others I have just a name on the Lloyds Bank Statement and can usually

suss whose it is, it can be more difficult when you have 3 similar surnames though!

11th ANNIVERSARY

6th February was the 11th birthday of 'The MESS', this is usually the time that MESS members choose to replenish their donations to our Funds. Despite the amount raised by the previous appeal (which enabled us to honour outstanding financial commitments), there's still the requirement to cover both known and unknown costs.

We have access to the Royal Middlebridge for the shows of our choosing, however this does present us with quite a problem. Who else has experience of this unusual situation, enhanced by the car's provenance, which has also increased its value accordingly? Whilst the car is in transit (on a trailer) it could be accidentally damaged by any number of means, flying stones, etc... so how is that to be covered?

We are fortunate in having one owner who works within the Insurance Industry and he is making intensive investigations into what is a unique situation. It is possible to hire a specialist transport company, of course, but the costs are eye-wateringly expensive. Ideally we need cover as mentioned, plus whilst the car is actually on

show. What is needed is for any (named?) member to be able to trailer it. I appreciate that I'm possibly a tad paranoid about this, however I'm not looking for potential problems, just solutions to a possible incident that The MESS can't afford.

As you all know, the GBCJ museum in Ambergate, have the car on permanent display, which is covered by their insurance whilst on site. We shall ask them if they could transport it and at what cost. That's probably ok for local(ish) shows, NEC etc, anything further than that could incur additional costs, such as the driver's overnight accommodation. I shall make some enquiries with the NMM who sometimes allow 'friends of the museum' to ride vintage bikes in various events, such as the 'Banbury Run'.

This year then we need to swell those funds, bearing in mind that we are extremely conscious of getting value for money (as always), for all events and purchases. The MESS is an Enthusiasts' society, funded entirely by voluntary contributions as you know, so please donate what you can – I'll try to respond quickly, next time, especially if I can identify you!

INSURANCE MATTERS

I have yet to book any caravan holidays this year as I have committed the dreadful sin of having

reached 80 years of age (last May), which will see an increase in my insurance premiums. Some poor souls have seen a doubling and more, one chap was quoted 5 times his previous year's premium! I also bumped a car in a supermarket car park, last November, adding to that risk of an unaffordable Insurance.

Today I received my renewal quote, which is less than double last year's premium – all things considered, I have accepted the quote, consequently I can now book the IOW Extravaganza and have my VW van adorned with the 'Middlebridge Task Force' panel to support the MESSers showing their Middlebridge Scimitars.

MIDDLEBRIDGE ACCOUNT

Lloyds Bank, Lewisham (309089)
120 Lewisham High Street, Lewisham
London SE13 6JG .

Sort Code: 30-90-89.

Account No: 49350668.

BIC: LOYDGB21256.

IBAN: GB79 LOYD 3090 8949 3506 68.

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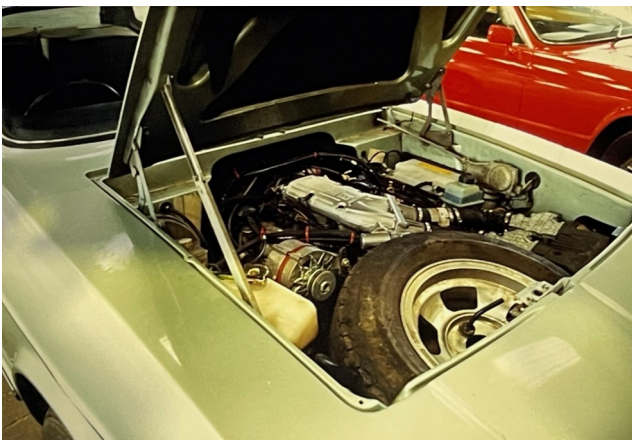
MIDDLEBRIDGE will be exhibiting at Spring's best classic car show, the Practical Classic Car & Restoration Show at Birmingham's NEC, 22-24 March. Come along to say Hello and see our Stand 5-370 Hall 5. Quote our club code **S24CC460** to save **£3.50** off single-day adult tickets or £2 off other ticket types. Book at www.necrestorationshow.com before 29th Feb and you'll be helping the club earn extra benefits. Ticket discounts apply to advanced ticket prices until 21st March and on-the-door prices thereafter.



Archive Photos

While at the NEC we were able to look through some photos that Kohji and Dennis had given to Mick for the archive.

Amongst them are three images of what we think is the missing second Middlebridge Prototype, the one that was reputedly written off.



Other photos show MB1 with what looks like the Reliant GTC 310 and a rather smart Ford pickup wearing the Scimitar shield on the rear quarter and a line of bodies waiting to go into build. More will be added to the website in due course as soon as Mick and Martin can find time.

Tail Pipe

Here's a simple way to explain what torque is:



MESSEMBLY

In person. The monthly MESS meeting has resumed and be held on the Second Tuesday of each month at 7pm in The Brewers Fayre, Central Park, CV23 0WE. Every enthusiast is welcome to join us, owner or not. Banter expected and encouraged.

Virtual MESSEMBlies will continue with the invitations sent to members by email.