



# The MESSage



Newsletter of the Middlebridge Enthusiasts Scimitar Set

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November 2016

## MICK'S MESSage

### My Car RIL 3000

Once again it's MOT time and sadly this year a fail on windscreen wipers which was a shock as only a week before I fitted a full set of TEX stainless steel arms & wipers! After re-fitting my old ones a pass was issued and I duly called Tex to complain as they were very expensive. A replacement set of wipers was duly despatched to me but sadly these were not much better than the originals. Apart from some daily use I took the car to Curborough where I was asked at the last minute to make up the concours numbers or no MB would be represented. We, Matt & I duly agreed and were told we had an hour to ready our car. We had only arrived at Curbog' 5 minutes before after driving through rain. ;o( Needless to say we did our best and got the car washed and threw / hid the contents under the fuel tank. I'm delighted to say that we managed to take runner up in the National Concours D' Elegance with Tony Carr deservedly taking the Gold with his great blue GTC.

I was really pleased that my car did well at Curbs after all of the issues earlier in the year. I can now finally put this nightmare behind me and move forward. MB 33 also proved her worth by being loaded with goodies from Curborough to help progress our SE5a.

### The Elms Monthly Meeting, FOXED!

Twas the 5<sup>th</sup> September (1<sup>st</sup> Monday) and once again time to head to the Elms at J20 of the M1. The usual suspects were there and on this occasion we were joined by Huw who has owned Reliant Scimitars for many years and currently runs a very nice BRG MGB. We do hope to see Huw at our meetings again and hopefully we have not bored him to death while talking Middlebridge! Time will tell as we are looking forward to the meeting tomorrow, Monday 7th November at 7pm. However, the Elms is undergoing refurbishment (Nothing to do with rowdy Middlebridge owners!) and **we have had to move the venue to The Fox Inn, 34 Rugby Road, Lutterworth, LE17 4BN**, see you there?

### Website & Thank You.

May I take this opportunity to thank Norman the ex owner of MB 15 for his very kind and generous MESS donation after selling his lovely MB. It will be used to help fund the Middlebridge website. Thank you very much from Mick, George, Will, Bruce and all. (We may even see you back in the fold yet. ;o) After receiving Normans donation I had a quick look at the sold area and was somewhat impressed to note that we have sold 34 MB's via the website! While talking website, Martin North has uploaded our 'previous events' page should anyone wish to take a peek.

After the last MESSage I decided to take the advice offered and update my own Gallery position. I'm glad I spent some time doing this as it certainly now reads better and is far more comprehensive than before. Maybe now that the winter nights have started to draw in you could consider adding this to your to-do list. ;o)

## Lights Out

On the trip to the Seaburn show I had a sudden and inexplicable loss of main beam. On investigating this I found corrosion on the terminals and fuses in the small fuse box in the inner wing. This was confirmed as the usual cause of light problems by Gordon Collins (MB3) who has experienced this before. It has undoubtedly been made worse as the fuse box cover went missing prior to my ownership. It looks very like the fuse box used in the economy Reliants but the connections are to the rear rather than the side of the unit. A bit more investigation suggests it is the same as used in the Landrover Series III and Lightweight - 1971/85, a Lucas item 6FJ 37531 with a link between terminals 3 & 5.

Corrosion in motion!



What it should look like

## Calling Keith Taylor!

For some time we have been having a failure message from Keith Taylor's email address and the telephone number we have for him is not correct.

He contacted George recently but gremlins have crept in again and the phone number George took does not work either.

I am trying a piece in the MESSage in the hope that someone can provide a correct contact or that Keith himself will read this once it is on the website.

MB34 is a car we have little detail on and I both Mick and me would really like to speak with Keith and get some more history on the car and some more recent photos.

Keith, if you are out there please get in touch through either :

[middlebridge@live.co.uk](mailto:middlebridge@live.co.uk) or

[middlebridge.registrar@rssoc.co.uk](mailto:middlebridge.registrar@rssoc.co.uk)



# Middlebridge 70—Not for the Faint Hearted!

## PART 2!

Needless say to work has continued but at a much more leisurely pace, more of the electrical issues have been diagnosed and repaired enable us to key start the car, this was with the help of Peter Freeman via email (Thanks Peter) we would also like to thank Brian Ford who sold us three MB wheels with good tyres, we purposely removed all of the valves and replaced with new, pumped up to 27psi and finally fitted to the car and topped off with a new set of Middlebridge wheel centres.



No Bright Spark!

A full service, replace all oils, renew both fan belts, alternator and PAS followed by a road test that went great with the car performing extremely well. Peter Humphries came good with a genuine rear light lens (Thanks Peter). Jon Smith very kindly offered genuine parts and we have used some trim and a front light unit. (Many thanks Jon). The picture above shows why we initially had a very slight misfire on No 3 cylinder!

The next day when the car was run up the cooling fan did not cut in and this was traced to a 'now' faulty otter switch. (I was shocked at the price of a new otter switch).

The fitting of a new galvanised spare wheel tray and an original Middlebridge spare wheel more or less completed the mechanical work.

With the car running great it was time to start work on the interior, however at this point, Matt received a call enquiring about the car, a meet was arranged and after a test drive the car now has a new owner whom we know will turn her into an A1 example of the marque.

I'm sort of sad to see MB 70 go as not only did we think she drove very well she was very quick. The new owner also remarked on how well she drove and he already has one of the best MB's in his possession!



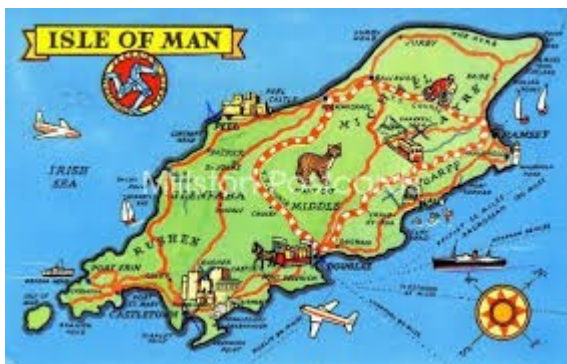
MB 70 On The Move Again

## 'Initial Expression of Interest only' Middlebridge Family Run 2017

One of the items discussed on several occasions at our MESS meetings was the possibility of organising a Middlebridge Family run, we stress family as many people really enjoyed the 'family' orientated Gatcombe event. Our idea is a two or three day event to the Isle of Man where those interested could drive the famous TT circuit. There's also lots of events and places of interest for all the family to enjoy over the weekend with us all meeting up for a meal before leaving. This idea is for 2017 and this short note is simply to gauge interest in a Middlebridge TT, 2017 event.

Should we get a reasonable number of replies to this "expression of interest" we will be happy to progress the idea further and come up with proposed date's and cost. Needless to say, should the event go ahead we would publicise it in the Classic mags.

We do look forward to hearing from anyone that may wish to express their initial interest.



### Dan Mitchell and MB Wheel Centre Disks

Dan has contacted me to confirm that he still has some stock of the original Middlebridge Plastic wheel centre disks, please just let us know if your in need and we will put you directly in contact with Dan.



### Middlebridge on the Web

While trawling through various sites I happened upon a link to a photographer's blog which included a section on the Middlebridge. It has a bit of poetic licence but has some very good photos of Alan Turville's MB31, one of only two cars that came from the factory with two tone paint.

<https://opticalcolubris.wordpress.com/> .



## ASBO Update and Fractured Fingers

When George first saw the orange re-spray his words were similar to....Blimey! That colour deserves an ASBO. The name has stuck.

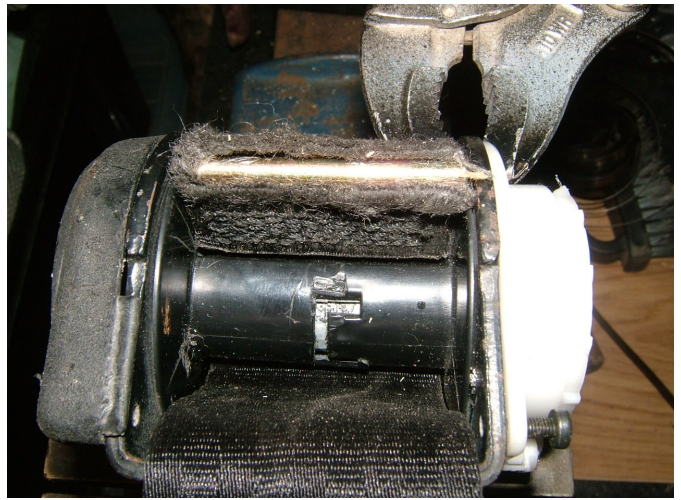
It has got attitude under the bonnet to match (210 BHP) so I decided to develop the theme.

Tinted side and rear window. Black rear lights with LED's fitted and of course ASBO orange front and rear seat belts.



I looked at getting these replaced by a seat-belt company but a set of 4 belts was £120 plus postage and whatever bits needed replacing.

I went on Ebay and found a perfect match. £10 for 10 metres delivered. Proper 47mm wide webbing. So, having scrounged a set of



old belts from John (Rev Wilks) I thought I would do it myself.

All I had to do was understand the mechanics of getting the inertia belt out of the units.

I now know how to do it and also how not to do it. Suffice to say if you take one side off the unit, not a problem. Take the other side and a 10 foot coiled spring propels itself, and anything near it, to all four corners of the garage. I eventually worked out how the belt was fitted and you do not need to take the side covers off! Doh!



The seatbelt is simply folded over on itself and stitched leaving a loop. The belt is pushed through a slot in the spindle, a rod is pushed into the loop, and the belt pulled back into the spindle. I have re-designed the anchorage bracket as above, in stainless. The slot in it is 48mm so the belt can be fed through it and stitched without being squashed up.



### Cooling system Maintenance

After my issue with core plugs I was refilling the cooling system but what to use, blue or red anti freeze? I put 5 litres of blue in it. The header tank started frothing reminding me of an old school chemistry experiment where we produced that much hydrochloric acid fumes that the entire science block had to be evacuated. The swimming gala had to be cancelled in case we had received lung damage.

Anyway after I put my glasses and read the label it said, Wheel Cleaner. Dilute up to 10 times volume. I had to connect a hosepipe up and flush the system for several hours to get it all out. The amount of black stuff that came out was amazing. Like emptying a household radiator.

My MB system has been drained at least 4 times previously and I thought it was clean. So I may have come up with a new servicing tip. The temperature gauge is showing slightly lower than normal. When it goes up, it comes back down a lot quicker. The hot idle oil pressure is slightly up also. It is quite clearly cooling a lot more efficiently.

The wheel cleaner was like paint stripper. I had to put cream on my hands for a week, it had taken to top layer of skin off.

The fractured finger? The big vice that I used to file the core plugs down. It was loosely fitted to the bench so I decided to bolt it down better. It is fitted with a quick

release spring loaded lever. As I pulled the jaw of the vice forward to get at the rear mounting bolt, the release mechanism disconnected and whollop the lever spun round and cracked my finger. The air was the same colour as the wheel cleaner/anti freeze. So I get it all ready to bolt down and guess what.....It whacks my finger again.

I am to home mechanics as what the queen mother was to arc welding and rugby league.

### Coming and Going

Much to my surprise as I did not think he would, Norman did sell MB15 and Murray Hilborne is the new owner. Tom Lisney, the new owner of MB36, has also made contact with us.

Matt and Mick have moved MB 70 on to a new owner who already has a MB which means yet another owner with more than one Middlebridge car!

I was also sorry to hear that Geoff Bibby has had to sell MB45 due to illness. Graham Walker had MB55 up for sale but it is now showing as sold, we hope the new owners of both make contact with us.

We have also been told that MB19 has left these shores for a museum in Austria.

MB64 has been listed in the auction catalogue for the next Brightwells sale on 23rd November. The car is running but has been listed as SORN since 2009 and would need some recommissioning.

<http://www.brightwells.com/classic-motoring/auctions/classic-vintage-november-2016/catalogue/>

If the owner is reading this (he is on the mailing list) and would like to give us some background on the sale we would be grateful.

Other than this, there are currently no cars for sale and two wanted adverts on the website which can only be a good thing.



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## Showtime— Historic Wheels at Brodie Castle

One show I try to do is the Moray Historic Wheels Club's annual event at Brodie Castle, it is a particular favourite of mine, not only for the range of cars and bikes present, or that nearly all of them drive to the event but also because it raises quite a bit of money for charity (over £10,000 was distributed after the 2015 show). This was the show's 40<sup>th</sup> year and over 250 vehicles had registered plus the late entries. MB14 was there last year and I try to rotate with the SE5a year about but when Robbie Williamson (MB48), Ashley Edwards (MB22) and Mark Amos (MB47) said they would attend, I had to take a Middlebridge as if we got four cars it would be the largest gathering of Middlebridges ever in the North of Scotland, so far as I am aware, and a great advert for the marque. Sadly, it was not to be as Ashley had to cancel due to his unfortunate encounter with a speed bump while in Devon with MB22 which meant the car was still undergoing repair to the exhaust and rear bumper at the time of the show.

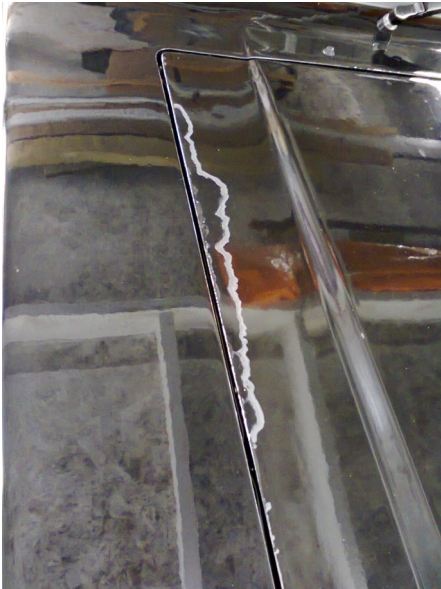
We met at the Glenfarclas Distillery in the morning of the show and drove in convoy to the showground at the castle. The three cars caused a bit of head turning in Forres as we passed through the town and getting three in one place was a pretty good effort, made more memorable by the fact they were consecutive chassis numbers as I took MB46. We also had three other Scimitars, Dick Nortcliffe's SE6a, Miles Vincent's 2.9i converted SE6a and Colin Main's SE5a. Colin really flies the Scimitar flag and he puts the rest of us to shame with the number of events he attends.

We maybe didn't get the record for the most Middlebridges in one place in the North of Scotland but this was the most Scimitars I have seen in any year at Brodie. To top it off, the sun shone and MB46 came away with a trophy for the best Club member's car on its first outing at the show.



You might notice the fact that Mark's bonnet was open in the photo on the previous page. He had been having problems with the lacquer lifting and the decision to show off his engine was really to ~~hide~~ disguise the fact that the repairs to the bonnet paint were not complete at the time of the show and it was, in effect, a matt finish.

We did suggest that it was quite period and that lots of old school cars had matt bonnets but that did not quite cut in as an argument. I was very restrained and did not take any close up photos! However, by the next show at Dunfermline at the end of the month order was restored and it was resplendent and shiny in a new coat of Jaguar Jet Black.



MB47's bonnet before with lifting lacquer and after in shiny new paint

### Bartons—Beeston Heritage Day

I didn't get to join Mark and the others at the Scottish Ford Show on the 5th September as I had planned some time off to travel south again to see non MB friends and meet up with MB friends at the Beeston Heritage day the following weekend.

As with our trip to Seaburn, the journey was not uneventful. Just north of Stirling in the outside lane of the A9 dual carriageway we suddenly lost power. Thankfully we were close to a slip road and I costed the car off and parked up. Initially thinking it was my old friend the fuel cut off switch I tried there first but that was working fine and I then started looking at the ignition side. What had happened was that the coil lead had, for reasons best known to itself, dropped onto the exhaust manifold and melted the insulation shorting it out.

Thank goodness for cable ties— the swift application of one of these saw the lead lifted out of harms way and the car fired and ran no problem. We stopped overnight at Dumfries and were about Newark the following morning when we were slowing down in a traffic jam (outside lane!) when the thing cut out again. This time it was a bit more difficult as we could not get to the hard shoulder because of traffic so it was hazards on and as tight to the central barrier as I could get. This time the lead had moved and shorted out on the rocker cover! Retighten the zip tie and away we went again!

I had emailed George and Mick to see if they could get me a replacement lead for the Saturday show and George went above and beyond the call of duty to get me a complete set.

Sadly the weather forecast proved right and Saturday dawned with a downpour. The rain was so heavy that the Middlebridges outnumbered all of the other classic car exhibitors until about 2pm when it eased off and a few other hardy souls turned up.

We got five cars in total, MBs 14, 26, 43, 50 & 63. It would have been six but the owner of MB33 didn't bring his. His excuse was that he had cleaned it in preparation for the Manchester show the next weekend and had no time to clean it again if it got dirty. You can imagine the ribbing he got for that!

It was good to meet Alan and Glyn and Jackie. It was the first time I had seen MB50 and I am pleased it is back in use with an enthusiastic owner. Glyn has made a fantastic job of MB43's interior which was literally just (almost) finished.

At the end of the show we received a call for help as MB43 had stopped just a few miles up the road. A hasty phone call to Mick and "International Rescue" swung into action. After a quick check the fault was traced to "fuel starvation" caused by a faulty gauge!

Irritatingly the weather was fine on the way down and back up with only the day of the show being wet. I think for the first time ever MB14 was spotted by a fellow Scimitar owner on the way north and reported on Scimitarweb.



MB's 26, 14, 63, 50 & 43 at Beeston



MB43's refinished interior



Above: -International Rescue!

Left: MB14 spotted by Chris Gallacher on the M6 (note correct lane discipline!)



## Badges for SE6

All badges are printed on chrome finish self-adhesive then domed; badges can also be colour coded to vehicle.

The decal can be applied direct onto existing shield providing the surface is smooth. Badly pitted shields would require flattening and then black or silver spray paint applied to create a flat surface to apply badge.

See red grill badge applied to the front of red GTC.



# The Zoute Grand Prix

The Zoute Grand Prix. Ever heard of it? I hadn't but did read an article in a Classic Car journal whilst flying back from the states a few months ago. It read that the event was like a Belgium equivalent of our Goodwood Revival save the circuit racing. What an opportunity I thought it would be to see if we could get a Middlebridge assessed and invited to attend an International Concours d 'elegance. The list of International judges including Derek Bell representing the UK and Pebble Beach Judges all under the Bonham's leadership could only help our quest to have the Middlebridge story out there.

You can imagine my delight at receiving an acknowledgement and invitation. Sadly, I had omitted to read the bit about the cost. After all I am from Yorkshire and I thought the amount shown had put the decimal point in the wrong place. Save to say I went for it and booked the North Sea crossing to arrive on the first day of Judging, Saturday 8th October 2016. The weather could not have been better and the car was safely parked on board.

Saturday morning, we (Brother in Law, Tim) arrived at the sea side town of Knokke Heist by 10.00am. The venue was near to the centre and on a golf course. If you have never been to Knokke Heist imagine Monaco without the hills. The shops are Louis Vuitton or equivalent. The women are



dressed elegantly, many with designer dogs in push chairs or in designer bags, with men in tow with crevettes, scarfs and red trousers. Get the picture. The cobbled roads blend into the pavements in a traffic calming fashion with alternative colours and each road is lined by trees and flower beds. A very high end destination a tax haven for the Dutch. The properties are huge and the garages and drives adorned with everything beginning Porsche or Bentley. Golf carts are the preferred mode around town and there was a quiet air of decadence to everything and everyone. Enter the owner of MB28 from Yorkshire.

Access was initially denied due to the fleet of transporters emptying out their contents of Bugatti's, Ferraris and the like with owners not old enough to remember them ever on the road. Access achieved and slot 65 allocated for MB 28 twixt a Rolls Royce and a Fiat Dino Spyder. I worried about the quality of MB28 but was pleasantly surprised at how well she stacked up and superseded some of the exhibits.



Not like that, like that!

I was not at all embarrassed. In fact, on arrival and throughout the two days the Middlebridge received more attention than many of the others. However, disaster struck. As the organisers placed in front of each car the obligatory matching picture frame notice boards for each vehicle, MB28 board was headed, 'Reliant Scimitar'. Having swallowed breakfast again I went straight to the organisers. I love the Scimitar and everything about it but the idea of the expense and commitment was to float the Middlebridge story. All of a sudden my broken English/Dutch accent prevented any sway in what had been done and it could not be rectified. They didn't have a problem accepting my money. Attention to detail. I was not a

happy bunny. To crown it all off the red trousers and the dogs had eaten all the buffet and left only the champagne and red wine. As I was driving I thought better. That said I did find out that it is known locally as the 'Bubble Beach Concours d 'elegance' and I can see why now.

It would have helped if someone had informed me of the judging time(s) as although shown as 1100-1800 that didn't help with the opportunity to leave the site and look at the rest of the Zoute Grand Prix which consisted of the town centre and sea front closed off to traffic save the entry vehicles and adorned with straw bales and black and white chequered tree/lamp post guards. McLaren, Porsche, Bentley, Mercedes, Audi sport and all related manufactures had stands and vehicles on display. Old and new driving through the streets and sponsors marquees all over the place. I declined the Saturday night 'Surprise Gala Dinner' offer with my entry as the 250euro price tag + 21% Vat didn't appeal as much as the thought of a good bowl of local mussels. What I didn't realise stupidly was that between my Brother in Law and the rest of Knokke, unless you had a restaurant booked you were unlikely to eat anywhere. It was heaving. But we managed to get ripped off with a meal later that evening.

So back to the judging. 2.30pm and the three straw boaters with blue jackets, matching ties and light trousers/skirt arrive at MB28. What a bonus, Derek Bell is one of them. Straight away he kindly offered to be the interpreter between broad Yorkshire, Dutch and Italian and started off after the pleasantries with, "So tell us about this Middlebridge connection".

I swallowed breakfast again and went into it. Genuinely fascinated and also by admission slightly embarrassed that he did not know the story having raced with Brabham and now saw the connection. I knew I'd earned the brownie points and capitalised on it. I didn't go to win a trophy, honestly. I merely wanted Middlebridge exposed. That said I was now filled with some confidence and knowing that MB28 out shone many of its rivals, hoped I'd be in the running for perhaps 'best mud flaps' or any minor award. An egg cup would do. Some 40 minutes later and we have finally closed all opening and available apertures on MB28. Bounced in the seat, queried the colouration of the rocker covers (its done 265,000 miles you Italian sausage!) and generally had a good old chin wag, the judges moved on. And so did my Brother in law and I. We went around the displays and events on the sea front.

Secure underground storage was afforded overnight and at 6.00pm we tucked MB28 away.

Sunday morning and the instructions told us to be at the Royal Zoute Gold Club by 9.30. No problem, only a short drive from the storage but again through tree lined streets with detached housing set well back from the road behind trees, fencing and electric gates. The Golf Club was something else and a beautiful setting for the day's static show. Punters were charged on the Saturday and Sunday respectively at 25 euro each to gain a look at the cars. Is it me?

Lo and behold I parked up again and again they revealed the sign by pegging it in the ground in front of the car. How I prevented myself from doing a hand brake turn on the 18<sup>th</sup> beats me. The only saving grace was that breakfast was served which blended in nicely to canapés and then lunch and loads of free bubbly and wine. Great if you're

driving. Further judging took place of those cars left unattended on the Saturday and those freshly delivered by transporter that day. It was glorious weather and I was thrilled to be a part of it although very much perhaps 'out of my league'. Is it because of Brexit are all other European nations just rude people? Was it me or them or them because of me? Strange environment.



Jon "selling" MB28 to the Judges

However, 3.00pm the food stops and the lights dim. The music starts and the Judges take to the stage. The huge cups, the silver salvers and the glass encased wrist watch are all highlighted and the giant TV screen at the back of the stage starts to light up with names, class awards and pictures as each class winner and trophy is announced. I am pleased to say that MB28 came up on that huge screen for all to see, not once, twice but three times in total and each time you could just make it out in the background.





**'Ow You Say—Meedlebreedge en Francais?**

**Not a sausage, not a mention, not an egg cup... not impressed. That genuinely didn't upset me even though I truthfully had half a wish that I might get something. What did shock me was that for every winner there was an introduction from the dais which identified a relationship between either a judge, car or recent event which gave association. In other words, it seemed like a 'club' and I together with a few others were not a part of that club, obviously.**

**One winner couldn't even start his car. Others had lights that did and didn't work....something tested in judging. In fact, the car that won the group the MB was in was a deserved winner but not on a par with the MB. I have an Alvis in the garage that would easily have given the Lancia a run for its money if 'used' to that extent is what they want. Surely filler that is not flat is not what you would want in a concours car. I'm sounding bitchy now so will stop but hopefully you will get the idea that the end flattened the experience somewhat. Not because I didn't win anything but because of this apparent 'closed shop' which came across. Naturally every car**

**there was a winner in its own right and to get a Middlebridge into an International Concours d 'elegance like Mick has done in the past can do nothing but good for the marque.**

**The event closed with a Police escort procession through the closed streets with genuinely thousands and thousands of people present..... not for us I'm afraid as we would have missed the return ferry had we stayed for that one. We left in peace fully satisfied that we had done well, met Derek, eaten some weird and wonderful stuff, met and witnessed some weird and wonderful people and returned on a nice calm crossing back home on the Monday morning.**

**I have of course written to the organisers since return and to comment on my experience.**

**Now where are those red trousers of mine?**

**Finally may I say a BIG thank you to Jon Smith (Owner MB 28) for sharing this great article with us and for further increasing the awareness of the Middlebridge marque in Europe. (Mick)**





## Footman James Manchester Classic Car Show

This event is a first for the MESS and our stand was contiguous with the High Peak Reliant stand and I must say they put on a great and varied display of the various Reliant models. Our stand was smaller which suited us better as we only wanted to show three or four cars. We knew Bruce was working on improving our stand but even I was very surprised when I arrived to see our new stand, it's clean & modern lines attracted people from other clubs to enquire where we had purchased it!

We ALL owe Bruce a big thank you for all of the time, effort and money he has put into the new stand which was considered by many to be the 'best stand' at the show. If you want to see the new stand in the flesh then come and visit us at the NEC in November. ;o)

Needless to say the show was about the cars and over the weekend we had much interest in the marque with one gentleman

“chairman of a very elite club” now looking to buy a good MB and start to reduce his own fleet & ties and get back to just enjoying cars with no politics. Two other people showed serious interest in cars and one even knew that we currently had no cars for sale. Many people read our marque information boards which is a very good and improves awareness of our marque.

We spoke on Sunday evening and we feel that the show was a real success for the MESS and for the RSSOC.





## Sywell "Pistons & Props"

This is our final outdoor show of the season and boy what a show, we had five cars on our stand (See pictures) and I think it's fair to say that we were all surprised at the continued & increased interest in the marque, we had noticed this at the Manchester show a week before. We even had a very serious offer made for one of the cars on display but after much deliberation & nagging the owner 'George' decided that he wanted to keep the MB. (This must be worth some serious ribbing me thinks). Once again many thanks to Bruce for bringing down the display stand.

Yet again, mentioned to us by visitors was Middlebridge values as they are not listed in the magazines or are years out of date. This is something that we are hoping to address in the next three months and will be discussing at our monthly gathering at the Elms on Monday 03.10.16



## Middlebridge Models

Rory Cullen is considering making another batch of Middlebridge models, but needs a minimum order of 15 to make it viable & to keep costs to a reasonable level. You can see the superb high level of detail from the website photos located in the FAQ area – the first two batches were sold out a long time ago, but he is offering to make them to owner's specification for £140 each model plus postage. If you're interested please contact him directly on (01442) 769699 – he will need photographs of your car & number plate details.



## Middlebridge 71

I mentioned in the last issue that I had been in touch with the owners of MB71. They have kindly provided the following information on the car and it looks like it will shortly be coming out of hibernation and we may possibly see it at some shows in the future.

I asked about its history on Scimitarweb and I was pointed in the direction of a previous known owner by Jim King. I discussed this with John Unwin but the owners RSSOC membership lapsed in 2004. Despite that we tried a letter to his last known address and much to my surprise I was contacted by the owner's son, Vincent, who let me know the family still had the car and that it had been regularly run on private land during the intervening years but it was due to be recommissioned later this year. He also very kindly gave me the history of the car.

The car was unfinished at the time of the Middlebridge auction and, as lot No 759, the chassis and body sold for £850 + tax in 1990. The build finish and installation of a Cosworth 24 valve engine was undertaken by Graham Walker Ltd, who also fitted the car with Recaro front seats.

Graham Walker apparently used MB71 as his own car but was repeatedly asked if the car was for sale. One day he relented, told the chap to come in with the purchase price the next day and he would sell - and he did!

A friend of the current owner, who knew he was interested in Scimitars, let him know this car was coming up at British Car Auctions. It apparently was a finance repossession and had sat in a compound for 12-18 months. It had suffered a bit of vandalism in storage and was looking sorry for itself. There were comments overheard at the auction along the lines of the car being broken to supply parts, with suggestions the interior seats might be used for an Escort and the engine for a Sierra but the current owner was adamant it was coming home with him as he always wanted a Middlebridge.

The family refurbished the car and its first major outing after this was to the RSSOC International at Harewood in 2000. They could not believe the interest that the car stirred up at the show. The car was used regularly until 2007 when it was put in storage.

Vincent and his father are Scimitar fans having owned several before MB71. Vincent's enthusiasm for the car and Scimitars in general really showed in our conversation. It is good to know that the car is still in the family ownership, they have no plans to part with MB71 as it is well cherished and clearly in safe hands.

