



The MESSage



Newsletter of the Middlebridge Enthusiasts Scimitar Set

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MICK'S MESSage

My Car No 33

At the time of writing this winter's has arrived along with a light dusting of snow that of course saw road and rail transport once again fall apart. It is also time for me to stop using my MB on a regular basis and join the masses in my eurobox. I'm just getting over being poorly for quite some time and all I have done is buy the service items for my car, I did however take Pete Humphries advice and purchase a set of Iridium Spark plugs and rocker gaskets from Burton Power. Hopefully at some point in April I can do a good old fashioned



MB33 on a beach holiday, Bettystown. Co Meath

full service and fit my new Middlebridge rocker covers that I'm hoping will be delivered to me by the end of March, that should see her good for another years faithful service.

Please take a look at the MB website to see Pete's appraisal of the Iridium Spark Plugs recently fitted to his car, his product appraisal convinced me to bite the bullet although my car has none of the issues that Pete mentions. Watch this space .

Late addition: Along with my thorough service I have now got the added task of completely draining the cooling system, flushing out and re-filling with IAT (Blue) anti-freeze. Please see page 3 for more detail and why. I have also decided to replace the alternator as there was a very light bearing whine. I do intend to take her abroad this year so it's just "belt and braces" and peace of mind.



MESSEMBly

A monthly MESS meeting is held on the first Monday at 7pm in The Elms Pub, Lutterworth LE17 4HB.

Food available and Travelodge next door. Every enthusiast is welcome to join us, owner or not.

Banter expected and encouraged. Ditto rude jokes.

Matt's Car No 66

Sadly due to work pressures No 66 has been on the back burner and with me being ill and Matt moving house No 66 has had to move further down the to-do list. We are however doing all we can to ensure 66 remains as original as possible and to this end we are sourcing original spare parts where required. This of course takes time but we think the car will be all the better for it. The other advantage is that she has now been in a dry warm workshop for over a year, the body does have some small marks and a patch of non matching blue paint on the front bumper but a real + is that there is no sign of micro blistering and this is why were happy to keep her snuggled up in the workshop.



Gatcombe Sew on Badge

Gatters Sew on Badges

As many of you will know the 2014 Gatcombe logo was very complex and difficult to re-produce in any other guise. We have managed to find a company that has the ability to create sew on badges that will enable us to advertise

our 25th Anniversary on any of our own regalia / clothing . We have purchased 25 of these badges and they are available for £12 each UK postage included or a tenner without postage. At this price the MESS will make a very small profit. Please see the attached picture.

Note: I took the finished badges to our monthly meet at the Elms and there's now only 19 left!

If you are interested please email me with your requirements and I will reply with my bank details. Email: m_gaugh@hotmail.com



Anti Freeze Dilemma

I have been running OAT anti freeze since I re-commissioned my Middlebridge in 2002 but many times I have thought about my product / formulation choice, I have never had a gasket or hose failure to force the issue so it stayed way down my never ending to-do list. Recently however I have had two enquiries from MB owners who also had a similar dilemma. It was time to finally attempt to put this to bed. I had a look on the net but could find nothing specific to our engine so I called a friend that has worked for Ford for many years at Dagenham and Daventry and he has come back to me with the following. The Ford Scorpio used (FOMOCO) Motorcraft Antifreeze, Super Plus 4 (ESDM-97B49-A) and blue in colour, of IAT formulation. ie: ethylene glycol based. So it's blue or green in the machine!

I will in due course drain my cooling system, flush and convert to the engine manufacturer's originally recommended antifreeze. But please bear in mind that I have not had a single issue while running OAT for the last 16 years!



It would be great to hear from anyone that has any ideas on the above.



MB33's Standard Load Cover

Fully Loaded

The subject of load covers has never really bothered me. I was aware that there was a standard cover and I had seen several alternatives made by owners over the years but I have always just carried a blanket to throw over the luggage if we are travelling. However, I can see the benefits of hiding whether there is anything being carried at all. The standard load cover follows the moulding in the inner rear panels and that means that the depth of the loadspace is fairly limited.



MB26's cover made with the mechanism of a self retracting roller blind

At the Manchester Classic Car Show, I saw probably the most ingenious load cover so far on Alan Timmis' MB50. Alan had taken a parcel shelf from a scrap car and fitted it with wooden brackets to raise the cover to the height of the back seats. Great, you might say, but surely that just means folk can see in through the rear window under the shelf. Well, that would be the case but Alan got a company to make a vinyl strip for the rear window which is the same depth as the visible area of the screen. He also had the company cut out letters which were then backed with a silver vinyl material giving a nice finish. The good thing about this is that you don't really lose any rearward vision but do gain a useful extra loadspace.



MB50's Parcel Shelf

Unfortunately he can't remember the make of car the parcel shelf came from but just went armed with a tape measure and got one that fitted so he reckons they must be relatively easy to find.



MB50's Parcel Shelf Supports

Cover Up

Looking at keeping things under cover Pete Humphries has been making further modifications to MB27, this time under the bonnet. He had four separate covers made from plastic, aluminium and plywood to cover the airbox, battery, washer pumps and a splash guard to keep the water from the bonnet dripping onto the distributor when opened. Peter used the same process as Alan with vinyl material to wrap the covers and although he was expecting some problems with the under bonnet temperatures, and wondering if he would have to remake them in fibreglass if the wrap lifted, everything seems to have stayed intact for now.



MB27's Tidy Underbonnet

Coming and Going

As expected, MB44 has sold and we welcome Peter Durham back to Scimitar ownership after a break of 20 plus years. Unfortunately, due to a change in circumstances two other cars have come back to the market; MB60 is being sold by Graham Curtis and Philip Godding is parting with MB54, both very good examples of the marque, details have been posted on the Middlebridge Scimitar website.



MB60



MB54

Oh No! Not Again!!!

Yes, I am afraid so. I am back to 3 Middlebridges. To cut a long story short MB67 came up for sale at short notice and had to be sold quickly. It was nearing the

end of a restoration and still had a few minor jobs to do to finish it off but essentially it was complete, running, MOT'ed and in Scotland, so I broke the habit of getting Scimitars from south of England and arranged a deal with the owner.



MB67



I am still of the opinion that having three is too greedy so if anyone is interested in making me a sensible offer for the car I could be encouraged to part with it— although the longer I have it the more I grow to like it.....

Will

Galvanised Into Action!

We all know, of course, that a galvanised chassis doesn't last **literally** for ever, but I for one had certainly succumbed to that warm cosy feeling that having a galvanised chassis meant that was one area of the car I really didn't need to worry about... **WRONG!!**

I discovered today that my 'lifetime warranty' wasn't, and my MB chassis is not only showing extensive 'white rust':



but worst of all is the area behind the front wheel that catches all the dross from the road, where the zinc has disappeared completely:



Now this will be old hat to many of you, I know, but for those who knew it once but have forgotten, or maybe never realised it all, it seems a galvanised chassis can have a lifetime as short as 20 years: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iQJKvFH-2ts>

This means that for most Middlebridges, now at 25-30 years old and (as far as I can recall) most/all? never having had a body-off resto, it is probably time to check that your chassis really is as good as you thought it was. Not being familiar with their details I can't say but I imagine this may also be the case for some SS1s or

Sabres, and maybe for any SE5s that were rebuilt back in the 80s or 90s on a galvanised chassis. Over-painting a galvo chassis extends its life of course, but even so it seems the best you're likely to get is about 40 years, so as we move to celebrate our 50th even these chassis may be due an inspection.

The good news, as far as I can see, is that over this same past time period advances in easy-to-apply corrosion treatments means that pretty effective solutions are available at modest cost - certainly far cheaper than another body-off operation, and far more convenient too. I am not on commission for Corroless, but I have seen it on a Reliant chassis and I plan to use it to give my car a little tlc. Entertaining (?) video about the options here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x4p8wfDgZ_M

My plan at the moment is to hand-brush the one-coat gloop for the exposed areas I can wire brush, the same again in aerosol for the crevices and nooks and crannies on the outside, and either that again or the wax CCI 400A for any box sections and to run into, as far as I can, the gaps where the body is sitting on the top face of the chassis - depending on what I find regarding the rubber mounting strips - there are signs that they too are degrading more than somewhat

CORROLESS.

Now I've been knocking around cars and rust treatments for well over 45 years and I've never heard of this stuff - so naturally when I got home I searched for it on Scimitarweb, and it seems no one there

has heard of it either, or at least mentioned it, so I thought I would. Information is here: <https://www.arc-rite.co.uk/corroless-gl-ize-2167-p>

It seems quite splendid stuff. Someone I know reckoned he's done an entire chassis with just a 1 litre tin, cost about £20, and still had a little left for touching up etc. I saw the chassis, and very good it looked too, in excellent shape and nicely clean with the satin-gloss finish of the Corroless. Apparently it dries with some elasticity, rather than being brittle like Hammerite which can chip. The product blurb says it is self-healing, and it seems to be a bit of good old fashioned bitumen with glass fibre (how appropriate for a Reliant!) and some rust-curing component (phosphates?) with a little bit of waxyness for penetration and sprayability, all applied in a single coat. Seems to me at £20 to treat a chassis this must make galvanising a somewhat wasted exercise (says he with a galvanised chassis). It claims a 30-year lifetime, which would certainly see me out!

I note the blurb has a Land Rover accreditation so those of you in the Landy world too probably know all this already, but for those who didn't, hope this might be of some value. There's a little bit more background here: <https://www.arc-rite.co.uk/blog/Corrolessgood/>

It's been around for over 50 years and I've only just found it ... hmm, seems about normal.

Chris Bartlett MB61

EVENT NOTIFICATIONS & DETAILS

23rd May, (Wednesday)

Ace Café. Some of are aiming to be there about 2pm as this will allow us time to do the infamous picture line up across the front of the Ace Café on the North Circular, London. Everyone is welcome and needless to say if we can take more pictures later in the day 5 or 6 ish we will. Apparently the café gets busy between 6pm - 11pm. Please let us know if you would like to attend.

3rd June

Autokarna, Nottingham. (We are just awaiting final details)

18th June, (Monday)

Lancaster Museum and Photoshoot (Lincolnshire) Again everyone is welcome but there will be a cost as we have to pay an entry fee and a good donation to the Lancaster Renovation Fund.

More details to follow on these and other shows but if you would like to attend any of the above put these dates in your diary and let Bruce know.

bruce.beauchamp@virginmedia.com



MB65 on the RSSOC stand at the Practical Classics Classic Car & Restoration Show

Although it is early in the season one owner has had a car at a show already, this time the Practical Classics—Classic Car & Restoration Show in March. John & Jill Unwin's MB65 (see photo) was displayed on the RSSOC stand just prior, I believe, to going in for a complete respray.

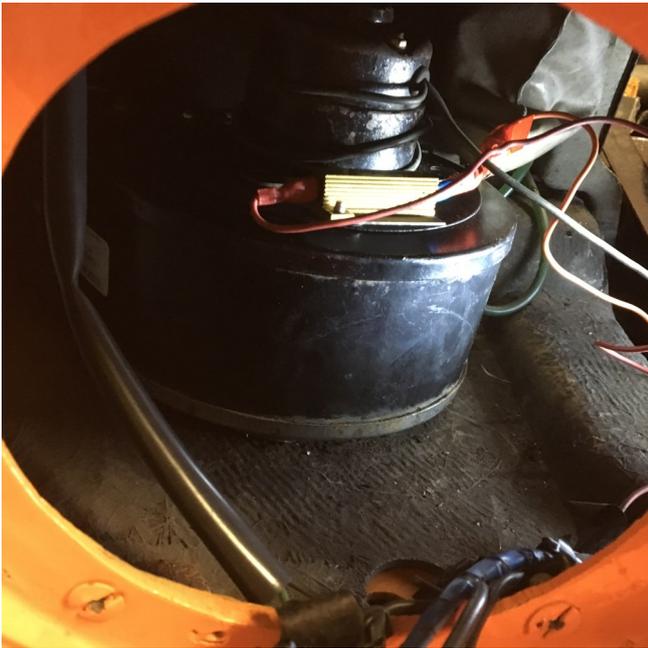




This is a simple pressure fit by compressing the material when fitting the heater housing. It takes literally seconds to fit, is very secure and, due to how it is isolated from the bodywork, totally silent in operation.

My heater blower is marked up as Gally 8024. Their phone number is 01933 224801 and they cost £90.

Driving along I thought I had wired the drivers side one up wrong. There was a steady stream of air coming out of the side vent that I had not noticed before, almost as if the slow speed fan was switched on. Nope. Air flow must have increased because of the airtight fit between the blower box and bodywork.



Pete Humphries MB27

Blow Me!

A few years ago I replaced both of my heater blowers. One of them had started squealing so I decided to replace it again. Whilst taking it out the rubberised bolts sheared so I thought there must be an easier way of fitting the blowers back in.

I have used self adhesive under bonnet sounding proofing material. I cut two doughnuts out and stuck them on top of each other on the underside of the blower housing unit and then fitted an overlapped collar of the same material round the outside of the circular metal part that fits into the large hole into the top of the bumper.



Just to confirm there is at least one MB that has had (is having!) a body off restoration

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION!



A teaser for fun, no prizes, just a warm glow of satisfaction if you get the answer:

MB33 on holiday but where?

MB14 on a Speyside road run, Peter Freeman doesn't need to guess as he already gets a warm glow from the product of this distillery!!



Drive it Day

Sunday 22nd April 2018

Get out in your Middlebridge!



Supporting the use of all Historic Vehicles