



The MESSage

Newsletter of the Middlebridge Enthusiasts Scimitar Set



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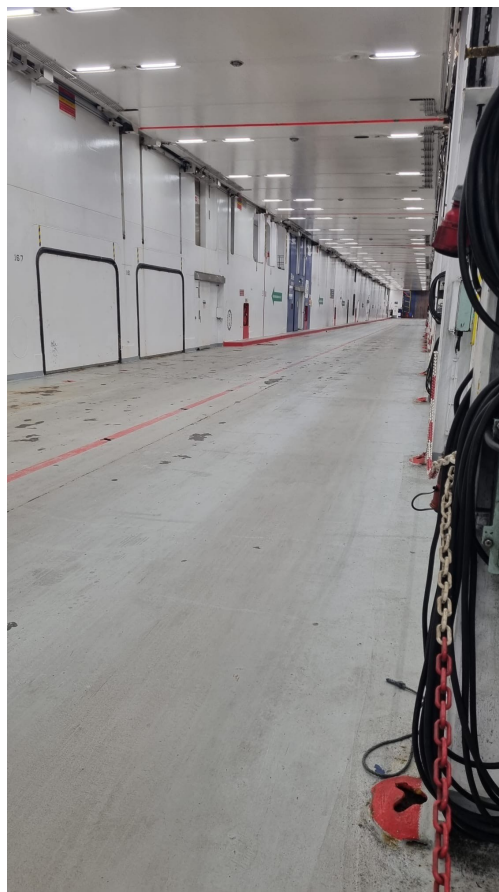


June 2026

Mick's MESSage

Goodness only knows why but I decided to do a winter tour of Ireland in my camper (talk about in at the deep end). It has been eight years since being back home and I wanted to meet with family and stay over where I grew up. (tis probably an age thing me thinks). I'm delighted to say that my van was perfect and I had a zero to do list on my return. My Khumo tyres are nearly new but gave very little traction in the settled snow and ice while I went through mid-Wales (A5) via Snowdonia in the middle of the night, I must have done well as I was one of only a few that made the ferry for the crossing to Dublin, see pics.

Due to a change of personal circumstance, this year I do intend to combine Middlebridge Events with more time away at VW camper events in both the UK & Europe.



Travel conditions were not great and a lonely ferry deck!



MB 33 & Original Fitment Alpine Stereos

Having finished the 2025 season using my car for Stoneleigh and Whilton Locks events last year I made the decision to look at the feasibility of upgrading my MB original Alpine Cassette head unit, more specifically having it converted to Bluetooth but keeping the appearance totally original. I met up with Bal, the owner of Retro Car Audio at the NEC classic car show by arrangement and handed over three Middlebridge Alpine head units, 2 of the units had faults hence being removed from the MB cars that I had owned and the third was from my car No 33.

Part one was a thorough inspection of all three units prior to any work. Bal found faults and wear on all three head units. Not surprising after 38 years! These faults are covered under his normal service which is a must prior to the upgrade as he wants no returns and is incredibly busy. Bizarrely, all three head units were slightly different models but all did come from MB cars. I was advised to have the centre head unit (pictured) serviced and upgraded for my car as it is apparently a much rarer model, the 7280LS. I have run with the advice and as I write this hopefully the upgrade is in process. I'm considering having a second head unit converted should anyone be interested in a Bluetooth Alpine head unit for their Middlebridge.



The other MB head units are 7291R and a 7283L, as you will see from the picture they are all very similar in appearance.

I was stunned to be told that there are several on-line forums specifically dedicated to our type of Alpine head units!! I have had a look and, wow, people actually collect these head units and they can form part of rare Alpine head unit collections. Needless to say there is a good market to sell them. I have seen them advertised from about £450 from abroad. I do however have serious concerns as any comeback would be difficult should there be a problem and they are sold as classic 35 year old head units. Middlebridge were not the only company to use Alpine at the time, so did Lamborghini and plenty more high end manufacturers, hence the current values.

Bal completed the overhaul of my head unit and sent me a WhatsApp preview of it working as new and with the Bluetooth added. The video can be watched by anyone and has been uploaded to MESSy Photo Gallery and on the Middlebridge Facebook Page. I now have the unit fitted to MB33 and am very happy with it.

Total cost for assessing all three head units and upgrading my chosen unit was £750.

The start of my show season, Sywell Aerodrome 07.04.2026

This event was my first outing and was a test run prior to the long trip to and from the Great British Car Journey (GBCJ) some five days later. I thoroughly enjoyed the event and the weather was stunning with brilliant sunshine all day. Also and a bonus for me, you can come and go as you please and there is a vast variety of different cars on view. My car drove great and inspired confidence for my next run which would be a long haul.

Great British Car Journey 12.04.2026



5.15am and the awful sound of my alarm, 'yawn' prior to the first long drive of the year in my MB, I was looking forward to getting her settled on the motorway and making use of the newly restored and upgraded Alpine stereo. The trip north was quiet (stereo apart) and I made great time to our meeting point at Mac's for a coffee prior to doing the last short leg in convoy to the GBCJ. It was a cold morning and after setting up we soon found ourselves in the museum looking over the various cars on display including MB No 5 the Ex-HRH Princess Anne car and then back to the café again. Peter H won a prize for his car which was great. I actually found the Famous Land Rover 90 from the TV series Vera and was shocked to discover it was automatic! (*Only because the actress, Brenda Blethyn, didn't have a licence for a manual! - Ed.*)



We decided to head home about 2.30 as the rain had set in, suddenly I had a major issue, I had just joined the M1 and my wipers packed up. I checked the usual connections but they were fine and power was getting to the wiper motor. It panned out that if I could stay at 60mph ish I could see but if the traffic slowed down visibility became very difficult. After the two hour drive



MB27 with its new plate and a justifiably happy owner with his prize certificate

home I must admit I was shattered and was glad to get in and chill. I asked on the MB 'WhatsApp' group and Peter H confirmed that he had exactly the same issue and it was the motor at fault. A new one was ordered as I don't want a repeat of that experience.

Appropriate Numbering

You can see Pete's car in the photo wearing its new plate—when he acquired the car it had the plate G9 GTE and while he preferred that he was looking for a more appropriate plate and bought G27 GTE which is the chassis number of his car. He asked us if we could suggest who might be interested in the G9 plate as he wanted it to go to a Middlebridge owner, if possible. We asked the owner of MB9 who was quite happy with his existing plate and the owner of body number 9 could not use it as his car is on a "F" plate so too old to use a "G" plate. However, the fact that a G can be a 6 (if you squint) made us think of David Scarle and MB69.

We put Pete in touch with David, and they did a deal which gave Pete the original cost of his registration from DVLA and a donation of £500 to the MESS. David comments "whenever I mention to people that my car is number 69, I get the wry smile back. For my MB, being No.69, this plate makes sense on several levels, currently being on an odd L reg 1993 plate reflecting when it was first registered rather than a proper G plate for year of manufacture, obviously the 69 reference to being MB69, as well as the GTE aspect of the plate."



MB69 Looking stunning in the sunshine



MB Facebook and Insta' presence

As some of you may have noted Shannon (my granddaughter) has spent some time focusing on our insta' (Instagram) and Facebook (FB) presence. At the time of me writing this I can confirm that in the first month we have tripled our hits and vastly increased our followers. We desperately need picture or small short vids to continue to increase our following and thus marque awareness so any information from owners gratefully received.



Middlebridge Scimitar >

Weekly growth plan 52%

Analytics >

28 days

7 days

Today

Views

8,630

↑ 12x

Approximate earnings

\$0.00

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Engagement

608

↑ 599%

Net followers

22

↑ 100%

Forthcoming Scimfest

The MESS have advertised the RSSOC Scimfest weekend and several owners have expressed interest in attending, mainly on the Sunday 16.08.26. The more the merrier and we look forward to seeing you all there for a good chin-wag but after 11.00 for me as that's the cut off time for the concours!

Content >

Latest post



Views

118

Earnings

\$0.00

Engagement



MB33 with refurbished and upgraded Alpine stereo, ready for the Scimfest Concours

MESS Calendar 2026

(Please note events highlighted in blue already have MESS members attending and those in orange are past)

Start Date	End Date	Event
12 th April	12 th April	Great British Car Journey (Best of British) Ambergate DE56 2HE
4 th May	4 th May	Retroix Car Show, Shuttleworth, SG18 9EP. £20 show car & £15 per Passenger
24 th May	24 th May	Brookhill Hall Classic Car Show, Pinxton, NG16 6J. £5.000 incl all passengers
27 th June	28 th June	Clipstone Classic Car show, Powerhouse & Headstocks, NG21 9EH
28 th June	28 th June	Baston Classic Car Show, Bourne Linc's, PE10 0LY. £10 advance booking. £15 on the day
4 th July	5 th July	Lichfield Rotary Cars in the Park, Lichfield, WS13 6RA
4 th July	5 th July	Hollowell Stam Rally, (Download exhibitor form) on 25 May. Neil Byrd tel: 07773 845148
15 th Aug	16 th Aug	Scimfest Curborough Fradley Staffs
22 nd Aug TBC	23 rd Aug TBC	Classics & Leicester Airport, email to register. Ht121@hotmail.com Salon Prive
12 th Sept	13 th Sept	Isle of Wight Classic car Extravaganza, £5 per day/ £8 Weekend. E: classiccariw@gmail.com.
26 th Sept	27 th Sept	Pistons & Props Sywell, Northants, NN6 0BN £10 with 1 passenger, £15 on the day
25 th Oct	25 th Oct	Stoneleigh Resto Show, CV8 2LH
13 th Nov	15 th Nov	NEC Classic Car Show Birmingham
TBC	TBC	Crouches 2026 work in progress
TBC	TBC	Brewers Fayre Xmas dinner 2026

Paint Your Wagon — MB12's Respray

It's been a few years since my last ramblings on Middlebridge 12. She has had little use due to work commitments also her mini caravan tow car use has ended.

Repeated ground clearance damage at festival sites warranted the purchase of a VW T2 camper van with big engine and tow bar. We now tow VERY slowly instead of very fast.

During this time, she has had the second full respray in my ownership, this one cost more than I paid for the whole car back in 2001. The last paint job was in 2012 and lasted well, as it coincided with the car being relieved of its company car duties, to make way for the 911 I always wanted.

During Covid we had to move to a much smaller industrial unit, resulting in the car being stored on my drive for the first time since the respray. (Mrs. W also found out how many motorcycles I had.....) To cut a long story short, one winter out and it micro-blistered worse than a teenager's face.

The paint its self was brilliant from 10 feet away, then 15, then to the point something had to be done. I even considered selling the car at one stage as the paint depressed me so much. Mrs. W's usual words of wisdom being "you hardly use it anymore and we could use the money for a new kitchen." That being said, I will keep it until my legs drop off!

Next problem was finding someone to do the job, that knew GRP. QRG has had some bad experiences with Middlebridges, with paint reactions due to alleged chemical imbalance. Nigel would not touch the job.

My car, I am convinced, has a Reliant 6b body. I was told many years ago by the ex factory sales manager that it was allocated to him to lend out. I assume that in a rush to build something to show the press, a non factory body was built into my car.

Apparently in the days before computer rendering the only way to view a cars paint scheme was to paint it. No 12 was painted many times (one coat of top of another) for whatever the reason. Check out the picture. As the last painter said; "Look at all these colours and none of them are attached to the car!" I voiced my thoughts some years ago to Mick G only to get a cheeky grin in response.

Anyway, the chap who painted it before, (taking six months to do the job) now rarely takes on full resprays. In common with most, body shops today, they do the low hanging fruit of lease hire returns. If you can make a grand out of a few bumpers, why would you have a whole car cluttering the place up for months.

I asked around and, luckily, my younger brother has a large network of motorsport people he knows through his motorbike racing and recommended a company near Milton Keynes, owned by one of his racing cronies. To say the owner was a top bloke would be an understatement. We hit it off straight away.



MB12's Colour History!

The problem was he did very high-end work. The car he was finishing was a one of a kind ex racing (1960s) Ferrari that the fund manager owner paid 32,000,000 Euros for. No, that is millions. It was beautiful but how can anything be worth that!



MB12 in Primer

On seeing my car, he commented on what a good job the last chap had done. (He knew him by reputation.) It was just a shame the paint was no longer attached to the body in places. A ball park price was agreed for him to do it as his winter "charity project" when things were always quieter. I knew there would be mission creep in the costings (always more) but once the paint was off it was worse than I had hoped. The gel coat was bugged in lots of places requiring more work and time.

However, the job was done and the car was kindly stored on their large site for a couple of months until I had space to store it in our new unit. During this period a disturbing event happened. On moving the car around

his storage unit, the OSF lower cast/forged wishbone snapped whilst reversing. The break was clean with no evidence of impact damage or corrosion. More worrying not across a bolt hole or obvious stressed area. He kindly replaced the part and trunnion bush kit whilst in his storage. I only found out about this, on collecting the car.

The final price was nearly twice what he had indicated! With some haggling we met at a price we could both live with (ish) a figure Mrs. W, MUST NEVER, NEVER find out! We parted as friends, with me giving him first refusal on one particular motorbike I own, should I sell.

This wishbone breakage worried me somewhat, so I checked with QRG and it's not unheard of. When I did the Willwood upgrade I did wonder if the new brakes would overload the suspension in any other way. If anyone else has had this problem I would be glad to hear from them, through Will.

Once the car was back in our dry storage, I decided to take a good look at the suspension and wheel bearings etc. The latter had only done about 2000 miles since I replaced them when I did the brakes. That's another story and this will form the basis of a future ramble.

Chris Wilkinson MB12

Chris's comments about paint not being attached to the body struck a chord with me. When MB14 was being resprayed back in 2013 the sprayer told me he had sanded back the old paint and was going over the car with an airline to remove dust when large chunks of the paint flew off! I have also heard that a number of cars were resprayed several times to check paint colours and some of the pearlescent ones are almost impossible to replicate for touch up or repair. Ed



MB12 Top Coat in Shiny Silver

Coming and Going

At time of writing, I know Simon Hall has just sold MB23 and we welcome new owner Chris Dyer. I was also contacted by Jörn Hacklaender the owner of MB15 which was exported to Germany in 2020. Jörn is slimming down his fleet and is considering selling MB15. This is a low mileage car with an interesting back story (see the Middlebridge website). It should be possible to return this car to the UK (MB23 previously resided in France) so if anyone is interested in doing that, or indeed taking it somewhere else in Europe, let me know and I will put you in touch with Jörn. we still have two cars on the website for sale, the Pre Production Prototype and one of the left hand drive cars in Netherlands.



MB23 with
its Stunning
Interior



Don't Blow a Fuse - A Timely Warning

I am not an electrician so anything that follows is simply the view of an uneducated man. (I *can't comment on Alan's education but he is meticulous in his research. Ed.*)

I believe:-

A primary duty of fuses in car electrical systems is to protect wiring from overload which may otherwise overheat cable insulation and cause a fire. A vital safety feature which if not correctly rated may have serious, even fatal, consequences.

Car fuse types are rated in one of two ways.

Continuous rate. Amperage is marked on the fuse and shows the current it will carry indefinitely without blowing. Typically the fuse will blow at twice that rating.

Blow rate. Amperage that is marked on the fuse is the current at which it will actually blow.

Fuses nowadays (glass or blade types) seem not to say if they are continuous rated or blow rated. They simply give an amperage value and there is no visual way to distinguish which rating they may be.

Older cars, with glass fuses of the Lucas type, were typically rated at the blow rate. Later cars, nowadays, usually have blade fuses of the Bussmann type and are typically rated continuous.

Take care, just because a fuse is of the glass type does not necessarily mean it is blow rated. Recently manufactured glass fuses may well follow the modern fashion and be continuous rated.

For example, by experimentation I found current Halfords glass fuses to be of the modern continuous rated type!

In passing, I also noted their fuse end caps are of slightly small diameter to those of the old Lucas type. This resulted in insufficient grip of fuses in the clips of my fuse box and thus unreliable connections. I squeezed the clips together using long nosed pliers for a tighter fit.

It would be dangerous to replace an old 35A blow rated fuse with a modern 35A continuous rated fuse because the continuous rated fuse would not blow until it reached 70A and by then the car may be on fire.

My experience suggests that many fuse retailers are ignorant of the two types and cannot be relied upon to know which type they are selling. Be wary of their advice!

I suggest, that if anyone is doubtful about their car fuses they ought throw them all out and start again with fuses suitably matched to circuit loads and all of the same type.



GEORGE'S JARGON

Having amicably resolved the discord between the MESS and Rugby's Brewers Fayre, It was sad to learn that this particular venue is amongst those being given the chop by Whitbread. Ah well...

We now have to find ourselves a new MESSEMBLY point, probably around the same area. Our old haunt, 'The Elms', at Lutterworth may be the answer. It's near J20 M1 and next door to a Travelodge.

Alan Earl has suggested 'The Waterside' a canal-side pub at Hillmorton (Hungry Horse). This is just over 2 miles from J18 M1, or about 9 miles from J20 where our regular attendee, Bruce, comes off after about 40 miles from his home in Kegworth. That's a long enough journey anyway without adding another 9 miles to it, surely! It doesn't have accommodation nearby either.

There is another canal-side pub that's 1 mile from 'The Brewers' going towards Rugby...'The Bell and Barge' (Harvester). A recent visit showed that it's ideal in many respects – such as alcoves with round tables seating 6 at least. Its biggest problem is that when we visited it, ages ago, Bruce's car was bashed in the car park, which makes him (understandably) very reluctant to use it again. It may be worth another look though to see if there are safer places to park, but only if Bruce agrees, of course. It's also next door to a Premier Inn.

With that in mind, we're already looking at Christmas Dinner restaurants too, possibly with accommodation. Mick and I will troll around Lutterworth to view its restaurants as it is felt that the food offered at both our MESSEMBLY venues at Christmas has not been that good. We can always stay at a 'Travelodge' (whatever), but dine elsewhere...

We should be able to still use 'The Brewers' for a couple more months as it's not expected to close until September. Probably now though is a good time for us to begin our searches and consider if the 5pm start is still acceptable to all, is a Tuesday still the best day?

STOP PRESS

I have just read that Toby Carvery are taking over a 'Brewers' in Kent, it's possible something similar could happen in Rugby too and the Central Park outlet could be taken over by A N Other...

FINANCES

The last appeal for funds have seen a wonderful response. Will has contacted those who kindly donated to thank them all for their generosity. Thanks everyone, once again. This year twenty-seven MESSy folk have donated so far (some twice!), consequently the Lloyds account now has a balance of £2287.42p, which should (with care) see us continue to raise the Middlebridge profile for quite a while. Such as...

We are considering another 'advertorial' in the Practical Classics magazine as they have offered us a deal matching the original insert. This publicity has lead to an increase in on-line 'hits' added to by being seen regularly on Instagram, too.

AWARDS

Mick's Runner Up award at last year's prestigious Salon Privé has been added to by Peter H's Asbo winning at the GBCJ, and Bruce's car being voted Best in Show at Oakham. Amazing when you consider just how few cars were made... these achievements should be exploited as much as possible, especially at this year's Salon Privé which has attracted more Middlebridge Scimitars, despite the hefty ticket price. I suggest the awards should be placed in the owner's windscreens whilst on show at Blenheim Palace!

EVENTS

It's unlikely that I shall be taking 1420H to Salon Privé this year, the logistics involved last year were quite daunting, quite exhausting... however, should the Organisers offer some kind of worthy financial support to the MESS though, I might reconsider for the MESS's benefit.

I intend to attend the Boat Show at Henley in July, to see if that is another prestigious event that we should consider for next year. On paper it looks good, my personal experience is good too, but I wasn't looking at from an exhibitor's perspective all those years ago. Despite requesting support from localish owners to attend the rally this year - there was absolutely no response, so it may not be worth us pursuing that one as it's quite a distance for the usual supporters to get to, nevermind the accommodation costs in that part of the world..

CONCERNS

Bruce and I have reasonably contiguous backgrounds in the field of promoting products. Mine in advertising, creating typesetting, artwork, graphics, etc. Bruce's in designing exhibition stands, etc. Chaps like him would contact chaps like me to provide the elements for said stands and shows. With that amount of knowledge and experience it's possible that we have some idea of what works well and which can become overkill. (Beware – 'experts' on the loose!).

We are a tad concerned regarding the direction that the MESS is drifting, are we seeing too much exposure? Is it the right kind of exposure come to that? Too much of it can entice boredom, can be tedious, tiresome and irritating even. So...

Who are the audiences that we are aiming at? Is it the dirty fingernail enthusiast and/or the red trousers and hush puppy chappie? if we continue to raise the Middlebridge profile, what kind of publication should we be seen in?

My own view is to be seen at all manner of events that are really *worth* attending. Mick, and others, show their cars supporting small local shows and also at the nationwide prestigious events too, which is absolutely stellar, however I have seen some stuff on Instagram (for instance) which makes me feel a tad uncomfortable, especially with AI being used more, is it real? Is it accurate, or someone's imagination at play here? Your thoughts on the above would be very much appreciated, folks.

BLISTERING...

A recent and wonderful holiday in Can Picafort, Majorca had me drawn towards a few marinas, chock-a-block with varied craft, mainly of fibre glass construction. Not one that I studied intensely showed any sign of blistering! I understand many have the colour actually within the gel coat rather than sprayed on. All the same, some had a mix of colours, so I assume they were painted after the initial colour – still no evidence of blistering, despite being in salty water 24/7. Is the British climate so bad that our cars blister worse than something immersed in the briny?

During one bus trip into Porto Alcudia I noticed a yellow Reliant 3-wheeler on the roof of a car hire company, unfortunately I didn't get a pic! Questions are, how on earth did it get to that island? Was it driven there, or imported just for the fun of it? Does anyone know?

Proposed 40th Anniversary Event

I have to be honest and say that looking back to our 35th anniversary year, it was a little disappointing and wanted to ensure that we looked to organise something rather special for our 40th and to mark our pending road tax free status.

My idea is that we ask Silverstone if we can do something special at the BRDC Classic in 2029, I would envisage that it be a two day event with all of the Middlebridge cars in attendance doing a lap of the circuit on the Sunday.



Obviously, its too early to start any preparation but it would be good to get feedback either by email, via the website contact page or via our WhatsApp group.

Another reason for me looking at this so early include potentially people that would need to arrange travel and accommodation from the UK, Europe and to give all of the people still currently restoring and/or working on their cars an achievable goal and something to aim for. My goal, 40 cars for the 40th !!



At this stage, does anyone have any other ideas or a proposed different venue that will attract Middlebridge Enthusiasts to celebrate our 40th anniversary.

Another reason for me suggesting Silverstone is that it has historically been incredibly well attended and it be awesome to do a lap of the circuit with potentially 30 cars, 40 cars for our 40th would be magical and what a piece for the classic press.

MB12 Wheel and Hubs Ramble

As per my last article above, I decided to check out the wheel bearings and change the nearside trunnion bolt kit, the offside having been done at the paint shop when the suspension arm broke.

On stripping down the nearside I was dismayed to see the little used Willwood discs had corroded considerably on the inside to the extent that half the usable area was affected. On checking the offside that was found to be the same. Considering the brakes have done less than 2000 miles and had not been used in the wet, not good!



New Stub and Wheel Bearing

Off came both hubs to skim the discs on our lathe. On removing the hubs both inner wheel bearings showed lots of wear. These too had been replaced 2000 miles ago with genuine Timken units.

The inner races on both stub axles had spun showing witness marks.

It is obvious the whole front set up can't cope well with uprated brakes and grippy tyres. A few years ago, I had an inner wheel bearing outer race (part that presses into the hub) spin. This required a replacement hub from QRG as there is not enough material in the hub to sleeve it back to size.

I note now QRG require your old hub in exchange, presumably to do some sort of repair but I expect these are probably getting thin on the ground now. The only way forward was to replace the weedy OEM set up completely.

The original set up has an inner bearing internal diameter of 27mm (imperial really) and 19mm internal diameter outer. (3/4"). I decided to make new stub axles out of EN8 steel (a better grade than the original) with both new bearings having an internal diameter of 30mm.

Both new bearings inner and outer are identical being much wider and having a large outer diameter. With the new stub axles fitted, I made two new front hubs to take the larger bearings. With the OFFSIDE being solid EN8 steel as opposed to what looks like cast steel of the originals.

This one hub took a lot of machining from a solid billet. With this in mind the NEARSIDE was manufactured in three parts as a comparison.



New Hub from Solid Billet



New Bearing and Split Nut

The bearing housing being hydraulic tubing and the two flanges, brake disc and wheel mount, being laser cut 12mm blanks. The whole lot was pressed together and welded in place. The chap who does our structural welding used to stick oil rigs together so his assurance of "that's going nowhere!" is good enough for me.

The bearings were fitted and the whole lot turned true on the lathe. The fabricated hub was made to try to reduce the machining times but a solid billet has now been purchased to make a second EN8 hub if the fabricated one does not perform.

In common with all Middlebridges No12 has off the shelf Australian Performance Wheels. No provision was made for the hub to fit inside of the wheel, thus the four wheel studs and nuts have to hold the wheel on and centralize it to the hub. The shoulder on the OEM hub being much smaller, if the nuts come even slightly loose the wheel can run out of centre. This happened to me many years ago (brown underpants time!) a lot of rattling and damage to the hub.

With the new steel hubs, a substantial shoulder now is a slide fit into the wheel. The shoulder centralizes the wheel and the stud and nuts now hold it on. Thrust adjustment of the bearings is now by a VW T2 pattern split nut. This allows the thrust to be correctly set and not relying on the variance of trying to get it between two sections of the old castle nut and split pin type.



New Pegged Thrust Washer

So, to summarise: -

Upsides

The stub axles are up from 27mm-19mm diameter to 30mm.

The steel used is far better quality than the hard cheese of the originals.

The wheel bearings are a massive increase.

A proper oil seal replaces the old felt pad.

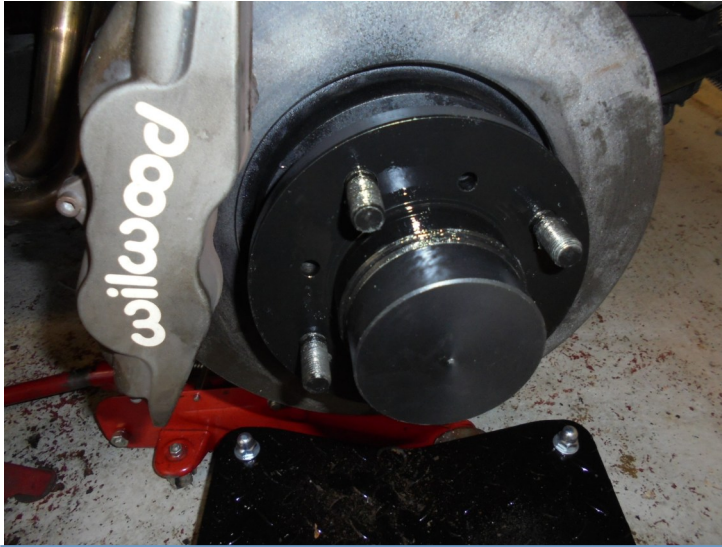
10 mm ht cap head bolts now hold the discs to the new hubs. (not wobbly in the threads imperials)

A shoulder for the wheel bore to fit to is provided.

The diameter of both the retaining bolt that holds the stub to the upright and the thrust adjusting thread have been increased.

No rock at the wheel circumference with the correct thrust set thus zero pad knock off.

The original set can be re-installed if required.



All Together Again

Down sides

This is a bit of an upgrade and will need trailering to and testing on a track day before I take to the open road.

Without the stubs and wheel bearing flexing any more, more load may be transferred to the remaining original set up causing failure.

The weak link is now more than ever, the front upright and trunnion set up.

If I could find a suitable replacement, better suspension this may be the next step. Finding a double wishbone ball joint set up with a coil over acting on the lower wishbone could be

hard as the world has gone Macpherson strut /track control arm crazy.

When I was looking to buy a Scimitar 20+ years ago and bought No12, I went to see two cars at Graham Walkers. Even then it was apparent that his business had shifted from Scimitars to other makes. One of the cars for sale had a completely trunnion free ball joint based suspension. This was their experimental car and the conversion looked very TVR but Graham Walkers would not say. However, we know it has been done. The problem now is, is it legal? The days of "Manly men doing manly things" is long gone. (sorry girls and "Others") So modified cars can be a total nightmare insurance/legal wise but so long as you inform your insurer.....

Chris Wilkinson MB12

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.

MESSEMBly

In person. The monthly MESS meeting has resumed and be held on the First Tuesday of each month at 5pm 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.

Classic Wheels Oakham 17th May 2026

Bruce & Mick attended this awesome event with 1,000+ cars, I'm delighted to say that the weather was great and Bruce won 'Best in show' a truly well deserved win for a truly awesome Middlebridge, Please see pics Below from Bruce.



THE VIMP

As microcars became more popular in the 1950's, a young man in Surrey built a tiny three wheeler. Along with his friend Andrew Waddicor, he created the "Vimp" which he described as an amalgam of vamp and imp.

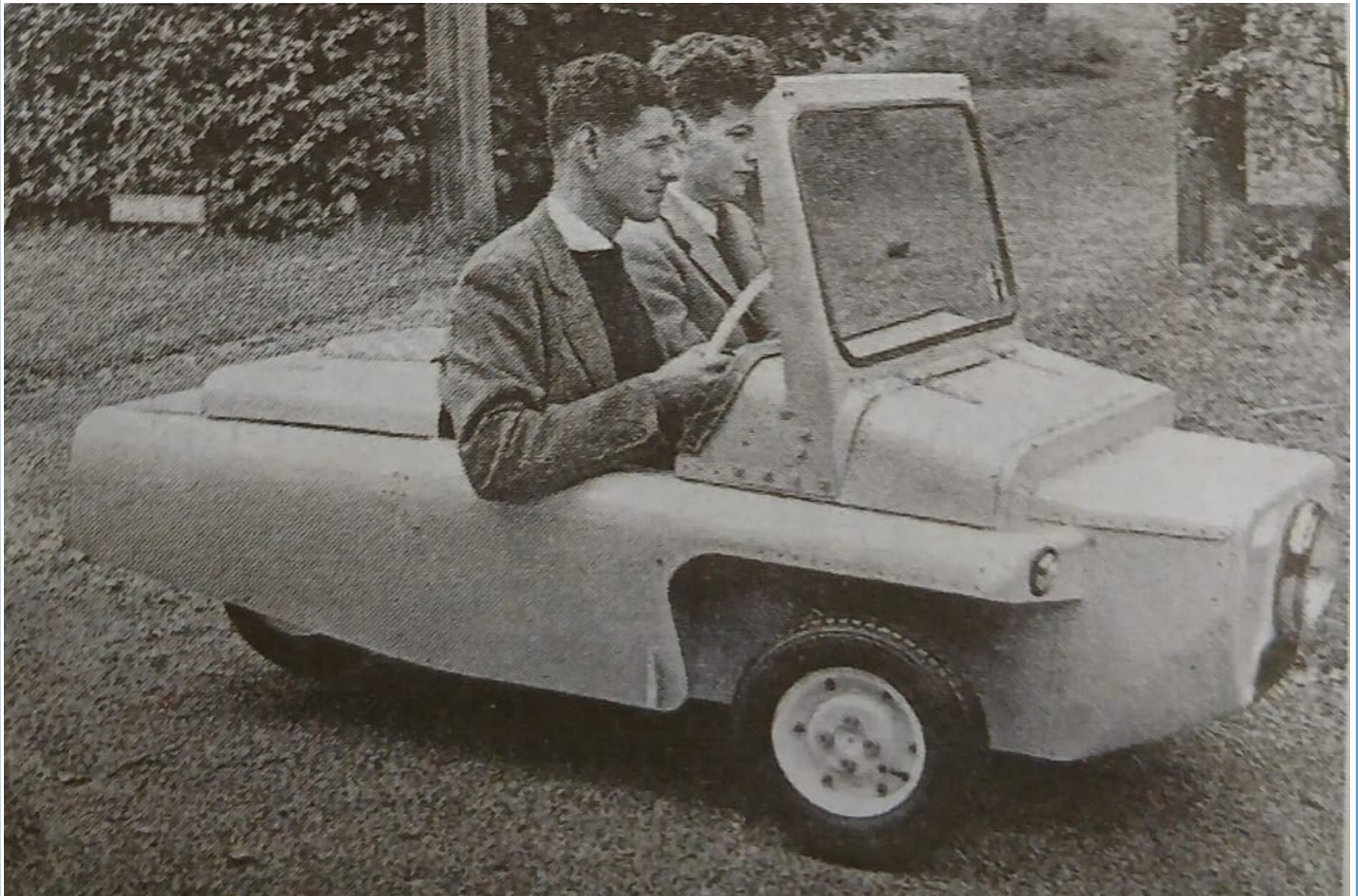
The aluminium bodied Vimp was powered by a 197cc Villers enging and weighed 250lbs. It was capable of 90 miles to the gallon and had a cruising speed of 30-40mph (which must have been quite terrifying). It was not without its limitations; the windscreen, steering wheel and dashboard had to be folded forwards to allow the driver and passenger to get in.

The Vimp was left unfinished when its builder—who was then working in the aircraft industry—went off to the Central School to briefly study industrial design before taking a job in Ford's styling studio.

The builder of the Vimp was none other than Tom Karen, one of the best British industrial designers of the latter half of the 20th century.

His next three-wheeler design would be far more famous for he was the man behind the Bond Bug. But that was just one of an impressive list of achievements; he was involved in designing the Reliant Scimitar, while he created the Raleigh Chopper, the Marble Run game, the Landspeeder in Star Wars and a Popemobile, among many other designs. Tom Karen dies on New Year's Eve 2022.

(With thanks to Blue Miller, Editor of Old Bike Mart for permission to reproduce this story here and to George for finding this and getting the permission.)



Tom Karen in the driver's seat of the Vimp with Andrew Waddicor