



# The MESSage



Newsletter of the Middlebridge Enthusiasts Scimitar Set

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November 2022

## Mick's MESSage

Wow, I have had to write this last minute so please forgive any errors. Personally, I was really looking forward to the Isle of Wight Extravaganza. For me it was a nice drive out in the MB a chance to meet friends share some banter & enjoy a great event and at the same time forward the marque awareness. Personally I was also looking forward to the break.

Unfortunately I had to pull out of the event and it's the first event I have missed. The reason for me deciding to pull out is that I still work full time and more so, I'm now a carer and could not get the time. I'm hoping and praying that I will be able to attend next year's event but don't want to count my chickens.

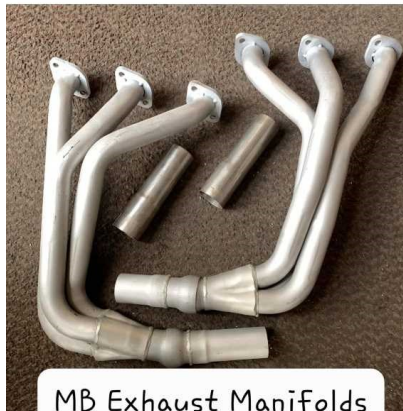
However, the Sywell show is essentially in my back garden and I managed to get there for both the Saturday and Sunday.

I booked the hotel at the NEC last year and made the necessary arrangements that allowed me to be with the MB gang for the duration of the event.

While at the Sywell event I was asked about new MB exhaust manifolds and availability, a day later the ad below popped up on Facebook from Nigel at QRG, hope it helps. Incidentally, they have been advertised on the MB site for some time.

Reliant Sabre & Scimitar Owners Club (RSSOC)  
Nigel Palmer · 1 h · 🌐

Middlebridge or 2.9efi conversion Double S exhaust manifolds with connector pipes. New old stock £400 contact me if your interested can ship world wide



MB Exhaust Manifolds

CO,  
efi

Message

Another item that will be brought to everyone's attention will be our forthcoming **AGM** and Xmas dinner on 10th December (**3pm AGM Start and 7pm for dinner**) We should point out that anyone is welcome to just attend either event if that suits them better. I do look forward to seeing many of you there and I'm sure we will have a great evening.

## MB 33

Tis time to panic. Well, on the inside, MB 33 went for her annual MOT and for quite a few years has sailed through without even an advisory note. This means I'm now trying for a pass with no advises every year as all MOT data is now recorded and available to view online, MOT day means a drive round the ring road to warm her up before heading to the garage. Nervously, I then sit there praying; Oh yes another pass with no advises yippeee.

Later the same day a colleague at work said my rear lights were faulty, at first I thought it was a wind up but no, my brake light switch had decided to give up the ghost and my rear brake lights were now on permanently.

Oh the joys! On checking my brake pedal, the switch had come loose, a quick tinker and hey presto back to full health. (Panic over)

## Sywell "Pistons and Props" 24th & 25th September 2022

This event has become an annual gathering for the MESS. Once again we had a good turnout of cars over the weekend. The event offers a myriad of different activities which include the following to name a few; Large Classic Car Show, Classic Bikes, Hot Rods, Drag Racing, 50's style dress and much, much more.



Full details and plenty of pictures have been added to the Middlebridge website.

## NEC Classic Car Show 10,11 & 12th November 2022

Well, what a show and where to start. Once again, Bruce bartered for a great stand location. This year we decided to pay for the carpet in advance, this really made life easier for us on the Thursday, we could focus our time on erecting another bespoke stand designed and built 'once again' by Bruce Beauchamp. (See pictures).



While Bruce erected his flat-packed stand with the assistance of, Alan George and Will, I was once gain on car cleaning duties. This format seems to work well as by the time I had cleaned all 4 cars the stand was ready for the cars to be put in location.



Friday, and pre-10.00 we had sold the Guards Red Middlebridge and I can confirm it was with the new owner on Monday 14th November.

There were also offers for the Gold Middlebridge No 33 including an open chequebook offer!! There was another offer made at lunchtime for the Guards Red car, this offer was well above current valuation price and the car was to be exported to Dubai to join a collection. Unfortunately, the offer could not be accepted because a deposit had already been taken that morning.

Friday was as usual an incredibly full-on day for me, in part because every year my Brother



and his Wife fly in for the event and to spend time on the MB stand.



Saturday, another busy day and we were delighted to have Martin North and his father on the stand, Martin is the long-suffering Middlebridge webmaster. Hope we can keep him busy in 2023.

Sunday, Kohji and Dennis Nursey were booked to come to the event and join us. It never ceases to amaze me how many people they know, once again we were treated to times past at Middlebridge and discussed briefly Middlebridge Engineering and Middlebridge Racing but we have parked these for the moment to do one last push on the Middlebridge Scimitar history. We

look forward to meeting with Dennis and Kohji next year to bring this to fruition.

Bruce, Alan, George, Will, Matt and I were kept very busy over the three days with the occasional lull, thankfully!

The cars on display were as follows:-

Bruce's Porsche Marine Blue car with a beautiful Leather interior that really attracted many admirers, Bruce was also asked several times if the car was for sale.



Guards Red MB, newly painted by Paul Turnbull looked awesome, this car is John Cassingham's ex concours de-elegance winning car, she is in totally original specification and needless to say looked incredible on the stand.



Alan's Completely original Renault Electric Blue MB is a truly awesome survivor car, this car drew many people and shocked quite a few when they were told it was original and as she left the factory complete with 33 year old paint.





Gold car, the crazy gold colour does seem to split opinion, we do leave the bonnet raised as this clearly attracts / entices people to the stand, she also has a fully optioned factory interior. Some people were stunned at the paint condition for a car refinished in 2002, 20 years ago!! (Fingers crossed she will make 25 years).



On the whole, a great stand & display that yielded some great results, roll on 2023.

It was enjoyable to have some good banter and share cake & biscuits with our friends from the RSSOC during the event, it was easier this year as we were in the same hall.

Once again, it's the pictures that tell the story. Many thanks go to Bruce, Alan, George, Will and Matt for manning the stand over the three days. (And to Mick for all his hard work in Coordination. Cleaning and Camaraderie! - Ed.)



Addendum: there is video footage of the Middlebridge and stand on you-tube, yet another little coup.

## MB 66 at her local Classic Car Gathering in Ulvavarn Sweden

A few pictures and details from the veteran car meeting that occurs every Tuesday evening during the summer at Ulvavarn (Ulva watermill; a mill and buildings that are now an artisan glassworks and various other handicraft shops).



Each week people gather from around 17:00 in the grounds with their cars all organised by the Upplands Veteran Car club (Uppland is the 'county'). The meet is split into two sections - Yank Tanks (my name for them) and 'others'. It's pretty well attended if the weather is good. They also have a theme each week, etc. BMW, Morgan, Saab etc and those with these make a special effort to attend.



I have also attached a picture of MB 66 just prior to her epic trip to Sweden. I really look forward to seeing her in the UK once again and hopefully for our anniversary event in 2024.



Thanks for the detail and pictures Steve.

### MB 69—Quick, Slow, Quick!

As I said above, MB69 underwent a restoration and repaint at Paul Turnbull's GT Evolution and has now gone to a new home.

The picture below was taken prior to any stripping out of the car, the reason for the late stripping is to protect the interior from dust, it also reduces the time that exterior components are off the car to protect from any possible damage.

Paul delivered her straight from his place to the Middlebridge stand at the NEC. Where it was admired by many over three days before being picked up by its new owner.



### Our other money pits!

I was actually quite sad to see my Moonstone Cossie go under the hammer at the Silverstone Classic but I do need to stick to my plan of reducing my fleet. Silverstone did a great job advertising her and to be positioned next to a Countach & Lady Di's RS Escort to the rear, what can I say, I wish mine had reached the £650+ k of Lady Di's old car.

### Light hearted banter;

I thought I would once again finish off my epistle with either a look back to better times or something a little light hearted. Hope you like the pictures on the next page.





## GEORGE'S JARGON

### IOW BITS

What a smashing event this was!

Those that attended have already suggested (insisted?) that we do it again next year as it was so enjoyable, so watch out for that one in the future... Some of us arrived a day or two earlier, some stayed a little longer to enjoy visiting other parts of this lovely little island.



Those showing their cars were Bruce and Alison; (Asbo) Pete and Marie; (Syd) Alan and Sandra; Paul and Kate and finally Alan C-T who did a solo run. There was much interest in our cars and Bruce's new info panel was read avidly. The latter seems to hold folk's attention in whatever format that it's seen. See Bruce's pics of the event and perhaps this will entice others to attend next year. A stunning weekend, thoroughly enjoyed by all...

The Yelfs Hotel was also deemed a success. Thanks go to ASBO man, Peter Humphries, for sorting that one (or was it Marie once again?).



Maggie and I stayed at an elevated caravan site overlooking the sea in Cowes in our tourer about 6 miles from Ryde.

Yelfs very kindly allowed me to use their Car Park for my VW Campervan (my caravan's tractor unit) for both days during the show, which had become emptier by the Middlebridges now being displayed on the sea front. I offered to pay for that privilege (which was refused), so a donation to the Air



Ambulance was my suggestion which Yelfs thought was a good idea. Wasn't that nice of them!

You will have read in the last MESSage of Peter's Scimitar failing to fire up whilst in pole position on the ferry, much to everyone's delight! Paul Crocker's Scimitar displayed similar antics in the Hotel car park, which was traced to a dodgy earth. I'm hoping that both will supply confessions by writing of their exploits in this MESSage, especially Peter's encounter with someone who'd (possibly) blocked him in the hotel's car park, or didn't..... Not to be outdone, Maggie and I had our own courtship with disaster too.

We arrived earlier than expected at Southampton and were able to catch an earlier than booked ferry. As I was manoeuvring the VW



and caravan onto the boat I asked Maggie if she had the caravan keys. No, she didn't! Neither did I. Curses, where were they? Well, they were back home on the hall table we later discovered. Great!

All sorts crossed my mind, including driving back home to Warwickshire, sending them to me by courier, snail mail even! (Crikey, daren't risk that one). I never thought to ask a neighbour who was coming down to the IOW a day later and indeed visited 'The MESS' stand on the Saturday. Arriving



at the Caravan site, we explained our plight and that we were unable to open our locked caravan's door or lockers, thus preventing us from operating our caravan mover to negotiate easy access to our pitch.

Once unhitched, two burly staff at the site 'old-school' manhandled the caravan into place and later returned with a bunch of spare keys and one was found to do the job - though it was the wrong number. How lucky was that?



Our next-door neighbours have a key to our house to feed our cat during our absence, they texted me the key's number, so now to find a locksmith. It was a bit of a worry when the first one that I contacted said that they no longer serviced the IOW!

I left a message with a Campervan shop who tried to phone me back (apparently), with advice but it didn't connect properly, so next morning I drove to the shop to seek his help. He couldn't. He simply pointed straight across the road to someone who could though, a proper locksmith no less. I gave him the number and his computerised key cutter made me a new one in a few minutes. Pocket lightened by £9, I now had a spare key! Very impressed.



As an aside, the chap in the Campervan shop sussed my accent wasn't from leafy Warwickshire but from the karsi that is London. Would you believe it? He too was from Peckham originally, he had also bought a house a mile or so from mine in Catford, drank in the same Youngs or Shepherd Neames pubs in Dulwich, Crystal Palace, Forest Hill...small world, innit!

After the show I wrote to Vic Gallucci thanking him and his team for a super event, he was very pleased to receive such praise. We have spoken since and I think we have a better relationship which should bode well for us, especially as 'The MESS' IOW stand earned 'Best Club' display and this being our first visit too! Sarah Crabtree of 'Bangers & Cash' fame judged it and gave the prize to the Lincolnshire Lecher aka Alan Timmis, aka Syd. I reckon she gave it to Syd just to get him off her back, after all the silly old b did propose to her. She may be into old bangers and wrecks, but there is a limit.



(Well, I thought it only right to give Alan the right of reply..... Ed.)

Oh dear, oh dear! Jealousy is a terrible thing to behold.

It is well known by those known to be in the know, and who know well that those also in the know do

indeed know well that the loving and Lovable Lincolnshire Lad is loaded with loot, charm, good looks and an elegant maturity. It is no surprise then that the equally lovely Sarah chose to "pull" the lad using Duckhams finest as bait.

The Lad certainly has age but owns most of his teeth and a provenance many appreciate. It's a pity but no surprise, for it is well known (by those who ..... etc, etc, etc.) that the Rugby Ruffian (AKA George, AKA The Warwickshire Wasack) is a jealous type and clearly upset that Sarah choose me over him. His petty comments to demean me will be dismissed by those who know him well (etc, etc, etc.) and are of no consequence to anyone. *Alan*

## 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.



## SYWELL WINGS & WHEELS

As usual this is a lovely laid-back event and was thoroughly enjoyable. In my opinion though it is at risk of shooting itself in the foot, by increasing entry fees and parking charges for Joe Public, plus the exorbitant prices demanded by caterers. I have written to the organisers, Live Promotions, voicing these concerns. Cheesy chips were £7, fish n chips £12, £8 for a burger, £3 coffee. Micky G had a plain, ordinary, burger with chips costing him £11.

Though it was a sunny weekend (mainly), it was a very cold wind blowing across the airfield, so cold that Micky G decided to wear proper trousers on Sunday as his little, wind-lashed Ernies were protesting on Saturday - seen bravely dangling from beneath his shorts. I can't remember the last time I saw him so nattily attired...

There wasn't as many paying public this year, especially on the Saturday and those exhibiting were also depleted. More arrived on Sunday but numbers were still well down on previous years. It was also noticeable that there were less traders especially of car-type stuff. You could buy

a funny knitted hat, a tin sign, sweets and chocolates, but not a chamois leather for instance.



Amongst the entertainment provided there was a WW1 mock air battle between 2 British bi-planes and 2 German tri-planes. I'm not sure if it's because I'd seen it a few years ago but somehow it didn't have the same exciting impact and the choreography was out of sync. Saturday had 2 Spitfires(?) doing a flypast which lasted several minutes, Sunday it was just one that didn't stay long. Saturday also showed paragliders with a trail of red powder following them as they twirled around creating patterns in the sky. Very pretty.

With less money in folk's pockets and expected to pay higher entry fees to visit such places and

seeing even less exhibitors, I can see many such events disappearing sadly, unless organisers reduce prices to attract the punters...

Sunday showed 7 Middlebridges on our Stand. Bruce and Alison, Alan and Sandra T, Alan C-T, Pete and Marie, Paul and Kate, Mick, me and Maggie. The usual fun and banter were the order of both days interrupted by interested visits from Joe Public.



It could have been 8 as Roy Thurman, owner of no. 36 arrived in that very lovely car, but he parked it in the Public Car Park costing £25. I'm not sure if that included Entry to the show or not.



He could have saved himself £20 by entering his car on 'The MESS' stand as it was £5 per car for two people for the weekend. Roy thought he had to be there for the whole weekend, but no dear reader, either or both days were possible. The only stipulation is actually being on-site before 10am. He would have also been inside the showground and not having to endure a long walk from the Public Car Park.



George and his "Refreshment Tank". You may think it is water but I couldn't possibly comment.....

Another noticeable worry was seeing dogs, the 4-legged kind, within the showground. Somewhere it says that dogs are not allowed and for obvious reasons, but I saw a chap with 2 Red Setters on a siamesed lead, a pitbull type up near the race track, a little poodley type, there were others and on both days too... Where were the security folk who should have policed all this?

Can you imagine the mayhem, or possibly the death of a rider or driver should an animal get onto the race track?

Despite the above concerns it was still a smashing weekend, being with some really nice people with different and varied interests yet united by a special one.

## FINANCES

Paul Wade has sold his car and has sent 'The MESS' a very kind donation. I have spoken with him and have sent him an email thanking him. He will still receive The MESSage just to keep in touch.

The PLI renewal this year has been paid for by Mark and Sue Cropper. As Mark has said – it is their way of contributing to the MESS funds - which I think is exceedingly generous of them. They've also covered our membership to the FBHVC. Thanks once again you two, it is very much appreciated, especially in these very challenging financial times.

It must be mentioned again that we are still trying to raise sufficient funds for a bespoke, quality gazebo that's also sturdier than the

previous model. These both come with their own problems – where to store such bulky items?

Having emptied a barn that I rented in Hook Norton, I'm now emptying my rented 40' container, so all my spare space is swiftly disappearing. Ideally it would be good to find someone in the Midlands region who can store such things for free. Perhaps The MESS could buy a shed to place in your garden? The carpet, for instance, is 4 metres long! If not, perhaps we should consider renting a garage (say) to store MESSy assets, trailer, gazebo, display stuff, etc. Enquiries near to me reveal a weekly rent of £12.50, (£650.00 per annum), which we can't really afford when relying solely on donations. As ever, any ideas or offers are gratefully received and considered.

## ALAN CAVENDISH-TRIBE

It is always encouraging to receive offers of support and so it has been with Alan. He has set up a spread sheet of some form enabling the Middlebridge to establish an authenticated register where car's details are



stored. It is in its early stages and will be refined accordingly.

Alan inherited his father's Middlebridge but he also races a Reliant, so he has a foot in both Scimitar camps. He has also become a regular attendee of the MESSsemblies and has supported 'The MESS' at shows and events.

Another asset is his age. I believe that younger Scimitar owners will bring in fresher ideas to push the marque even further forward. History shows that we have done exceptionally well in such a relatively short time, nevertheless we cannot rest on our well-deserved laurels... Welcome aboard Alan.

## TENTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION(S)

Next February will see 10 years since Dr Dan, Micky G and I established 'The MESS' as a separate 'Club' from the RSSOC. For now, I see no point in resurrecting those reasons, nor why we felt compelled to take that particular route, no more than we need to justify that decision either.

I have spoken recently with the 'The Countryman' pub, in Staverton, Northants,

where we three made that decision, to see if we could have a celebratory meal there.

There are several possibilities. Just a Sunday dinner (70 covers), or anything up to a Weekend event, or simply a beer or 2 at the pub. The choice is entirely up to the membership.

Staverton is the west side of Daventry, the Mercure Hotel in Daventry is currently showing £50 a night. Under different names the Mercure was the Hotel used by the RSSOC for the Christmas D&D's for many years.

Before I make any more inquiries I need to know if this event is of any interest to you, if so, what is your preference? A beer, or a meal, Saturday or Sunday, or a whole weekend event? For now I just need you to show 'interest' and preference, just to give me some idea...

February is a notoriously horrible month weatherwise, consequently any planned event could be cancelled at short notice. 'The Countryman' is obviously aware of that possibility, providing some reasonable notice is given we wouldn't be financially penalised.

## EVENTS

We have a list of potential places of interest in the pipeline for next year, this may be enhanced by shows being considered by Victor Gallucci who organised the IOW Extravaganza. As mentioned we have established a good rapport with him and intend to support any relevant events. His biggest problem is the London Mayor Sadiq Khan who is notoriously anti-vehicles especially Classics, which may make some London-based events nigh on impossible and costly. I did suggest to Victor that a Classic Car meeting at Greenwich or Blackheath (the latter cojoins Greenwich Park), could be of popular interest. We shall see...

The year after is the 35th year of the Middlebridge Scimitar, so something Special is likely for that. Ideas have included a trip to the IOM, but would that deter owners from overseas joining us? Apart from entering the UK via a ferry, another ferry is then needed to the IOM from Liverpool. Mmmm. Your thoughts please?

It has to be said once again, this is your 'Club' and we invite your ideas and



suggestions for any event that could be of interest, plus if you want to get involved in helping to run or organise any event, that would also be very welcome.

## AGM & CHRISTMAS DINNER

Peter has already booked a slot for 'The MESS' Christmas Meal at The Brewers Fayre, Rugby. A 'Meal Deal' is part of the package on offer. It's Saturday, 10th December at 7pm. We will have the AGM earlier at 3pm. Everyone is invited to either or both of these MESSsemblies. The more the merrier folks, please do come and join us for another night of fun, banter and laughter.

## STOP PRESS!!

We need someone to design the on-line 'Shop' for the Regalia.

Bruce has more than enough on his overloaded plate and just hasn't had time to create anything. We have a new company to provide the Regalia and will do all the tasks involved in taking orders, despatch, etc, so you need do no more than to come up with an attractive design for the 'Shop' for them to use.

If you are interested, please contact me, 07816 448494, I'll give you the contact details so you can discuss with the Regalia supplier exactly what he requires.

## Wiper Woes

Peter Humphries has been having issues with his front wipers. He went to the marque specialists and found that Graham Walker does 2 motors. One at £260 plus VAT (none left) and one at £160 plus VAT with only one left. However, neither come fitted with the large 130 degree cog, which was the source of his problem.

He initially assumed it was the nylon cog. That cog is universal and it is the metal disc that is different. The drive pin is simply welded in a different position depending what degree the particular car it is fitted to requires. He later found out the motor is the same as some Jaguars and available – but minus the cog!

So, he drilled the 4 rivets out of a spare 160 degree cog and put his 130 back on it. Very pleased with himself the wipers worked – for a while until they packed in again, as usual, at 70mph (Your Honour, Ed.) on the motorway.



### 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.

However, on further inspection it was the metal shaft than was worn at one end (closest to the cog) allowing for play and thus jamming.

He went to see his mechanic who suggested turning the shaft on the cog down on the lathe and fitting a new purpose made bearing in the wiper motor case.

So, they started to pull the bearing out to find two bearings with a gap between them. Pete assumes the gap would have originally been filled with grease to keep it all lubricated but over the years it dried up and was metal on metal causing the wear.

Having popped one out, from the non worn end of the shaft, they simply swapped them round and, hey presto, it works brilliantly with no play in it at all.

Thanks Peter

## Coming and Going

Sadly, due to a change in circumstances, Andrew Taylor has moved MB21 on – to Dave Speed! Dave's tenure was short and he has sold the car to another owner and we welcome Martin to

Middlebridge ownership and hope to see him at some events next year.

I think Dave is looking for a change of role as, if he keeps this up, he will have owned more Middlebridge cars than me and will be angling for the MB registrar's job as well!

Tim Drury is selling MB6 and at time of writing has taken a deposit on the car. MB6 used to belong to Nigel Palmer's father and Tim has had MB6 for 14 years and it is regularly used and well maintained.

It was at both the Gatcombe and Silverstone events and is another Middlebridge that will, by the time you read this, probably have reached 300,000 miles.



I have also been asked by Dan Mitchell to let people know he is looking to pass on the custodianship of the Middlebridge Prototype.

Full details on both and other current cars for sale (Including MB60 & 63) can be found on the Middlebridge Scimitar website.

There was considerable interest from visitors to the NEC stand and we have made people aware of those cars (and others we know of) and hope to help with the sale to owners as enthusiastic as those who have current custodianship.

