



# The MESSage



Newsletter of the Middlebridge Enthusiasts Scimitar Set

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December 2017

## MICK'S MESSage

### My Car No 33

No 33 has been used on a regular basis and is all the better for it. Once again she made the trip to Curborough for the weekend and joined the other 5 MBs that were present. On the Sunday Bruce built our stand in the marquee and three MBs were on display. Nearest the entrance was, Garry's Cosmos Blue car which he drove from Germany. (Pity there's no furthest travelled award) the orange car (Asbo) belongs to Pete and certainly attracts attention! The third car is Bruce's and along with a wicked paint job she also boasts a stunning interior. One thing I did note was that 3 of the 6 MB's in attendance had electric Hollandia sun roofs fitted.



With no Middlebridge in the concours, Matt and I entered the event, this meant two hours of frantic cleaning on Sunday morning, the good thing is that you are not allowed to touch the car after 11.00 hrs. I must say the standard of the cars gets better every year which is great for the whole Scimitar marque. Keith and Richard went to town on the cars and later in the marquee I was delighted to take the runner up spot to Tony Carr's beautiful blue GTC.

The next big outing for 33 was 'Event City' Manchester a Premier Northern indoor event, the MESS mob were all booked in the same hotel

so there was a few late finishes and mickey taking ;o) If that was not enough we all met up again a week later in Sywell for yet another weekender!

I had a couple of surprises, firstly and for the first time I was spotted and pictured on the M1 en route to Manchester, the second surprise was a truck driver that I passed somewhere on the M6 came to the Middlebridge stand to say how nice he thought the car was. It was a pity I was off wandering at the time.



**Above, Bruce's stand at Scimfest. Right, spotted on the M6—in the outside lane again!**

## 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.**

**The Sywell 'Pistons & Props' is a favourite with MB owners and this year was no exception. Bizarrely we had people interested in purchasing cars during the event which also occurred during the event in 2016. [Late addition one of the visitors has bought a car via the website].**

### **NEC Classic Car Show 2017**

**We were once again located in the Premier hall and directly adjacent the Silverstone auction area, our position was one of the best at the whole event and boy didn't we know it. On the Friday (the most expensive & quietest day usually) we were overwhelmed by the number of people coming to our stand to discuss the Middlebridge marque.**



**The Sywell Stand**

**again it was good to see many owners both past and present visit us over the three days and enjoy much good hearted banter. The pictures on pages 20 & 21 say it all but please note Bruce's Middlebridge tardis that swallowed up the whole Middlebridge stand, carpets and all. Surely a great advert for the marque, there's not many Classics that could pull this off.**

### **Matt's Car No 66**

**Sadly due to work pressures No 66 is currently on the back burner and we are now hoping to spend time on her over the winter.**

### **For Sale / Wanted**

**Will has finally reduced his fleet of Middlebridges down to two but I'm sure he will elaborate later in this MESSage. MB No 36 has also found a new owner and we're hoping to see the car at events next year, the new owner is already enjoying her and has put good miles on the clock.**



**The NEC Stand**

**These were serious people that wanted cars and had already done their homework prior to visiting us. At the time of writing this we now have only one car for sale on the website with several people being directed to it. Needless to say Bruce's wicked stand showed off the three cars on display at their very best. Saturday & Sunday were also very busy days for all of us. Once**

## Middlebridge Prototype Found!?

John Unwin sent me this photograph of an alleged Middlebridge prototype he found at Tatton Park. Sadly not, but as registrar I am always pleased to hear of possible sightings.

John has progressed with his work on MB65 putting it on the stand at the Bristol Restoration Classic Car Show. John says the drive there was a touch noisy as it is still a work in progress and has no carpets but he was pleased to note that the engine was exceptionally smooth and possesses some grunt.

The shake down run produced only one minor leak from a water hose so good work on the rebuild, which was no small task from the condition it was acquired, in and it is good to see it back on the road.

John has plans for a full respray and some further work to bring it into good condition and I look forward to seeing it at more shows flying the flag for the marque.



MB65 at Bristol Restoration Classic Car Show

## Prototype Horn

Dr Dan Mitchell, owner of the Pre Production Prototype, let us know of a straightforward cure for an intermittent horn.

Having had this problem for some time he decided to investigate and on checking the



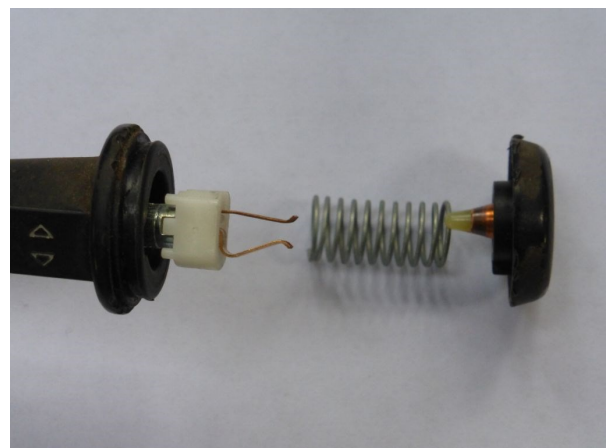
Not the Missing Prototype

wiring and the relay all were okay so he thought it must be the stalk switch.

On taking this apart he found that the gap between the two brass contacts had grown to 4 mm since the prototype was built in 1988.

He polished the tubular brass contact in the stalk end knob on the right, no improvement, so closed the gap between the brass contacts to 3mm. Go closer than 3mm and the horn will be permanently on.

When the stalk is reassembled the button must line up with the slot on the stalk end and be pushed straight on or the brass contacts can get bent.



## MB Trunnion Collapse

Peter Humphries was talked into joining a local classic car club that meets at Mansfield Town FC. When he was leaving his inaugural meeting some of the members came outside to have a look at the new car on the block.

Whilst he did a 7 point turn MB27 spat the driver's trunnion out and collapsed the suspension onto the tarmac, embarrassing!

The car was now at 45 degrees and blocking 30 other classic cars in. This then attracted an even larger audience. Peter says that he has never seen so many trolley jacks, ratchet straps and torches appear so quickly. Although he thought this was a display of keenness to help, it might have been that they wanted MB27 out of the way to let them out the carpark! As darkness fell the floodlights were switched on and it seemed like even more people arrived to have a look.



MB27 in Disgrace!

Worryingly the car had passed its MOT two weeks earlier with no indication there was a fault. The trunnion came off the vertical upright and there was no sign of thread at all in the brass trunnion. The thread was okay on the upright but it was replaced anyway. To be on the safe side Peter did a complete rebuild of both sides. Both trunnions had the same regime for

greasing. The passengers side one was full of grease and no sign of wear. The drivers side one was bone dry and all the thread had gone from inside the trunnion. There must have been a blockage internally stopping the grease getting inside it.



ASBO Under Cover and Secure!

I have not heard of this happening very often and not to a Middlebridge but Dr. Dan Mitchell tells me that MB57 suffered a sheared front upright through where the stub axle meets the upright. Crack tests were carried out on the upright remains and the consensus was that it might have hit a kerb hard at some time.

Meanwhile, having been recovered the next day to his local garage you would think repairs would have been straightforward but, no! The car has been there so often the chief mechanic suffers from migraines when he sees anything orange. He has to be put in a dark room whilst ASBO is covered with a tarpaulin on the 4 poster.

At times you would almost think that cars can become self aware. Now sulking, ASBO, with the keys left in the ignition and with the windows up, activated the alarm somehow and operated the central locking making it nice and secure!

A week to the day Peter went to another classic car meet at the same place. A breakdown truck passed the window and the immediate comment from someone was.... I see you've booked your lift home....

Being a good sport and willing to share his embarrassing moments with us perhaps we should do a new feature entitled "Embarrassing MB Moments" with contributions from other owners, just to make Peter feel better!

### George's Grumblings!

#### Well over my head (pun intended)

The headlining in my Middlebridge has been renewed again as the previous one had become ruined by mould. My brief to the trimmers was to source where the rain was entering and prevent it re-occurring. New seals were bought for the rear hatch. New window wiper spindle rubbers replaced the split originals. The rear side windows were removed and much sealant was applied to the rubbers before reinstalling. (Nigel at QRG had advised that sealing the side windows was better than trying to get the drains to work efficiently.) Sealant was also added to the roof aerial and the glass pop-up sun roof rubber.

The first time I used the car it happened to rain and water dripped onto my head and



lap! The hatch glass had not been securely clipped squarely back into its frame. Having refitted that properly, it still leaked in the corner just above the driver's head – the leak was between the glass and rubber, not the actual body/rubber seal. I think the rubber has lost some of its 'elasticity' over time and no longer created an effective seal against the glass. My cure, which seems to have worked for the moment, is to raise the profile of that rubber by fitting draught sealant within the rubber's rim. This particular sealant is 'm' sectioned and is double-sided. I divided the 'm' into an 'n' simply by pulling apart the 2 sections, this I carefully fed under the rubber's rim, sticking it to the hatch-rubber's base. (see pics). This has now raised the level of the rubber-to-glass making a better seal. Only time will tell just how well this cure lasts, but it's cheap and doesn't take long to install and could be an answer to some of your water ingress.

#### Close(r) encounter...

Since my car was re-trimmed years ago my doors have never fitted properly. Partly this is due to the leather's thickness, plus the door seals are a slightly different profile and thicker than the originals, which are obviously obsolete. To solve the problem Peter Humphries has trimmed off the 'bulb'



part of his trim where necessary, Mickey G has removed the glass fibre upstanding from the car enabling the seal to readily flex, Steve Robinson has successfully fitted 'Mini' seals, I have sliced through the bottom of my 'bulb', so it looks complete when the door is opened yet squashes up when shut – but it still doesn't close nicely. I have recently taken delivery of 3 different seals from 'Seals Direct' for a trial run, however whilst at the NEC show I bought 8 metres of the 'slimmest' seal that I've seen. It usually retails at £4.50 a metre, but it shouldn't be confused with cheaper and less well made products. If this seal proves successful and can be recommended and sufficient orders are placed, the cost will retail at £4 a metre. I will report back on the outcome with the vendor's details - if it's any good. In the meantime if you have solved this problem do please let us know how you achieved it...

### Money Matters

The recent Manchester show took funds from the MESS account for carpet leaving it with just £ . Bruce has given me a refund from the Organisers amounting to £ which is now in the MESS Account. It does mean that we do have quite a bit of carpet now which can be used at other shows, such as the NEC, providing the organisers don't keep changing the shape of the Stand too much, of course. The usual appeal for swelling the MESS funds remains. Cheques sent to me, made out to 'The MESS' is the best way. Just keep 'em coming folks...please.

I am very pleased to report that another owner has topped up the Funds by posting me another £ (to be added to the above figure), his generosity has been acknowledged and thanks sent. Another

owner thrust £ cash into my hands during the NEC weekend. Thanks to you too, you know who you are!

### A touch of the staggers

I am truly staggered by the expenses surrounding the NEC event. Friday's entry was £32. Saturday's £23.50. The food prices were similarly hiked. I think Mick and Matt's hotel was about £ a night, Peter H reckons the weekend cost him over an eye-watering £ . (*How much of that was the stuff he bought!? Ed.*) These



George at the NEC!

are the figures that some MESSgeteers are scraping from their pockets for all our benefits. It is fortunate that I live reasonably close, consequently I drive to Hampton-in-Arden, park outside the Train Station for free, the £2.20 return journey takes 3 to 6 minutes to Birmingham International, then a 10 minutes stroll to our Stand. Not only do I save money, I don't have to endure the Parking hassle at the NEC. For next year, with those excessive costs in mind, I shall seek out Hotels and B&B's that are close to Train stations that are easily commutable to the NEC. Any information will be sent to anyone intending to visit the Show, especially anyone helping on the Stand.

Once again the NEC was a huge success for The MESS in many ways. Due to a recent bout of bronchitis my already poor hearing had deteriorated further still, so I was unable to comprehend all conversations. I fear that some of the banter and verbal abuse probably passed me by... *(Just as well! Ed.)* Amongst the many that visited us was Jonathon Smith and his chum Andy. It was Jon's Middlebridge that was sold at last year's show. This year he brought his Daimler Dart, which was one of 24 issued to the Metropolitan Police, complete with bell. We had heard rumours that his Dart was going to be on the contiguous Daimler stand to ours, but he was told that they didn't want him (understandably!) – he was on the Pride of Ownership stand instead. Another visitor was Chris Wilkinson who owns no. 12. Though he is not a RSSOC member, Chris' car has been shown at the NEC on the RSSOC stand before we negotiated our own stand for the MESS. We discussed the problem that many owners are experiencing, that of micro blistering. I have had caravans made in grp. I see boats in grp. I see other cars in grp that don't seem to suffer the problem.



Bin There, Done That!

I think part of the problem is today's paints which are water-based. Chris says that Lotus don't have the problem as

those cars are in a vacuum seal whilst they are curing. What he says makes sense, once in a vacuum all atmosphere is expelled, especially damp. Our cars certainly weren't produced that way and I do wonder if damp within the 28 years-old shell is still trying to escape. I have been advised that the answer is to strip the shell back to the gel coat (at least) and leave it in an oven for a year! How on earth can we do that? There has to be a more practical answer, surely – any geenuesses out there with likely suggestions?

### A Cool Yule...

October's monthly MESSsembly failed to discuss the Christmas Dinner. Last year's offering at 'The Elms' was disappointing for some. At November's MESSsembly we had a chat with The Elms management and have been assured that all will be well this time. See elsewhere for the date, etc. We had considered another venue in Lutterworth, however The Elms is bang next door to a Travelodge for those who wish to imbibe and still remain within the law by staying over.

### ...and a Frantic First

There is a 'Classic' meeting that I have attended since its inception – and it's grown like Topsy... It's in Stoney Stratford on the 1st of January. It's free, however you can expect to hear the rattle of a bucket to finance some support for the charities. It's a smashing atmosphere and the whole town is given over to olde cars and motorbikes which are usually driven/ridden there. I'm usually the only Scimitar on show, however when I was once a RSSOC 'Noggin Secretary' there were a few local Scimitars who also attended. If you're localish and with nothing to do, do come along, I'll let you buy me a pint.

Without you realising it, you probably know of Stoney Stratford...it's where the term "a cock and bull story" came from. Rival horse-drawn coach drivers used to brag about the swift time that it had taken them to get from London. Some staged at The Cock Inn, some at The Bull Inn next door. Where else would you find such edukashun in a car mag?

Don't forget - grease your trunnions! Check those fuel lines regularly.

George



MB22 Underbonnet

## MIDDLEBRIDGE 22 COOLING

Since purchasing Middlebridge 22 I have never been happy with the cooling system. Although it has never overheated the fan would run constantly when in town and would take the car to run at 30 to 40 mph to cool it enough to cause it to cut off again. I would prefer it to cut in and out and so take the pressure off the fan itself. When I looked at the fan fitting onto the rad there was now some play due to running nearly all the time unless on a fast road. I don't know if the otter switch was correct or not but decided that over the Winter I would change the radiator, fan and switch with the latter being adjustable. The previous owner that had carried out the modifications to the cooling had put a manual override switch under the dash.

This was a simple toggle type switch and where it was positioned had the problem that it was easy for my knee to turn it on without realising and then if the otter switch also tried to turn it on it would blow the indicator fuse through which he had wired the fan the over ride switch!!

I decided to keep the manual switch in the same place on the dash ( saved drilling another hole in the dash) but changed it for the Revotec type which has a rotary knob and so cannot be accidentally knocked on. It has 3 positions, on, off and auto.

Keeping to the theme I also sourced a Revotec fan and fan controller. The latter sits in the radiator in the same 22mm aperture the original otter switch was placed and gave control between 70 - 120 degrees. All the Revotec parts were bought from Demon Tweaks who proved to be very efficient. The original set up was not wired through a relay which I prefer, so with the Revotec set up this was achieved and gave me piece of mind.

I decided to go for an aluminium radiator and this was provided by Radtec in Cannock who did a very nice job. Although there is no difference in the cooling capabilities between this and the conventional type, Radtec had the patterns to produce it with an uprated core and their reviews for all sorts of classic cars were excellent. It took about 4 weeks to make and was duly delivered just before Christmas.



One thing I overlooked was the fact that Middlebridge ran their cooler for the automatic transmission through the radiator and so there were a couple of extra ports in the old radiator compared to my new one. Although Radtec said they could sort it I decided to fit an external cooler which having read several forums for all types of cars seemed to be looked on favourably as there is a doubt how much cooling that can be achieved in very hot radiator water compared to a cooler that is placed in the cooler air flow. As heat can be the killer for Auto transmissions I decided that an external cooler was the way to go.....only time will tell and will keep you informed.

Removal is straightforward with the radiator itself only held by 4 bolts and good access is achieved with the removal of the spare wheel tray ( 4 bolts) Having taken the old radiator out it was a good idea to clean and paint the front subframe. This had been rebuilt by my mate in Bridgwater after its front end smash 12 years ago or so and still was looking good and no signs of any rust. I cleaned it all down and repainted it along with the front anti roll bar. However on rebuilding it the dimensions had changed slightly so some fettling was needed to get the aluminium radiator to fit. This didn't take long and soon was re-plumbed with new hoses. I refilled the system with a good quality anti freeze mixed with distilled water.

I took the car for a long run for a couple of days through the Scottish Borders using many types of roads and speeds and was well pleased with the results. Having stopped at Duns on the way back to see how the plans for the new Jim Clark

museum were coming on ( well worth a visit), the car had a long fast run back to Edinburgh, eventually on the A1 and the fan only cut back in when in heavy traffic about a mile from home. It proceeded to work as it should cutting in and out either automatically or by using the manual switch.



MB22 at the Kittoch Rotary Rally 2016

## MIDDLEBRIDGE 22.....my story so far (Tales of Woe!)

A little background first, I have owned Scimitars since 1981 (red 5a) and have had every model from the first straight 6 coupe to the last Sabre mk2 to leave the factory with the exception of the Middlebridge and GTC. On retirement 3 years ago and moving from the Devon countryside to a flat in Edinburgh the idea was to use just public transport and rent a car when needed. All our cars were sold off ( Scimitars, Imprezas.....) and the move was made keeping just one modern car with the intention of getting rid of this in time.....and then I saw how dry and warm the underground garage was at the flats with the added bonus of security doors!

I decided that I would look for either a restored GTC or Middlebridge as although the garage was great I would not be able to work on anything more than fairly routine servicing so a full restoration was out. Eventually I spotted MB22 for sale on eBay which read as exactly what I was looking for.....restored, professional paint job ( I was looking for this as since the storage would be dry I could have a good paint job which something in the past had deterred me a little as in damp / wet conditions we all know what can happen!) concourse winner at the Gatcombe event, new radiator etc etc. The one sad part it was back in Devon about 30 miles from where I used to live! Undeterred, arrangements were made to view the car whilst I stayed with family still in the area.

Like many adverts, especially on eBay, the car was not quite so good in the flesh as I had imagined. The main points I picked out were:

The paintwork was very good but on opening the doors I noticed that the door shuts had not been done. Knowing Kevins work at Avon Classics where the " expensive " re-spray had been done I knew this was not something he would do. ( and why did the previous owner from Glasgow commission a Bristol firm to do it?) The front bumper also had a scratch and there were one or two other minor issues. The final paintwork issue related to point 2.

Both doors didn't hang properly, especially the passenger door which on opening, rubbed the paint exposing primer.

On going for a test drive I noticed the fan cut in fairly quickly and didn't seem to cool enough in order to cut back out again. Although the seller said this was normal for the car, having owned Scimitars for so long I was not very satisfied as I could see what would happen on a hot day when stuck in a traffic jam. The previous owner had fitted a toggle switch as a manual override but I did notice it was placed close to my knee.....more of this later.

There was a cigarette burn in the passenger seat which had been mentioned in the ad plus the seller had sourced a replacement, genuine squab.

So, all in all, a nice car but some money needed to be spent in order to get it where I thought the car needed to be. After a few e mails backward and forward to the seller a fee was agreed and I became the owner of MB22. A couple of weeks later I was back in Devon picking up the car. Apart from the fan the car performed as I would expect and the cooling was helped by doing my usual of driving throughout the night from Devon to Edinburgh, so less traffic and cooler.

On returning to home I started to look through the three files of bills, info etc. that had come with the car. This proved the answer to my queries on the re-spray. On turning over a page over I saw a name on a previous owners document I recognised as being a friend of mine from Bridgwater. Tony, had bought many Scimitars around 2000 to 2008 breaking some and restoring others where possible. I got to know him through the Scimitar Drivers Club and became a good friend as well as a source of

parts. I suddenly realised that I had known the car and indeed when doing Le Jog in 2005 and in need of a part, Tony had met us in Bridgwater to bring it to us in MB22 as we passed through on the first day of the event.....a small world indeed.

I gave him a ring about the car and he was able to fill in more history. He had bought the car after the previous owners of 10 plus years had had a front end smash damaging the front bumper and the sub-frame behind. Tony had gone about restoring and repairing the car and being a bodywork specialist and paint sprayer by profession knew what he was doing. He still had some old photos of the work (see below) which he kindly passed on to me. He refurbished the wheels and sourced new centre caps from Australia. Having prepared the car for a partial re-spray (he remembered not taking all the trim off and not doing inside the door shuts ) he found pressure of work prevented him from doing the top coats himself. Therefore he asked Kevin at Avon Classics to quickly do this and paid him accordingly. He did tell me the amount which I won't divulge here but it certainly wasn't the major expense that had been quoted before. He had then kept the car for a couple of years before selling it North of the Border to a guy from Glasgow. The



repairs etc took place in around 2004 so is testimony to the job done that the car still looks good 13 years later.



As I have explained my garage has limited facility to do much work so I began trying to find a local garage to work on MB22. Having searched the internet I decided to try Edinburgh Sportscars and MB22 was booked in to have some paintwork sorted, the doors adjusted and the seat squab fitted. The guy running the garage was very nice and obviously knew his stuff but the premises themselves were shabby with cars squashed in, tools all over the place (looked like my old garage back in Devon!) and some cars parked in an unsecure public car park at the rear. However, despite this the jobs they did were good so when the MOT was due I got them to arrange and do it.

The car sailed through the MOT and getting the car back home I washed it down as it had been a mucky day. The first thing I noticed was a deep scratch on the offside of the rear bumper where the car had obviously been reversed into something! Immediately I called the garage back who agreed to re-spray the bumper and blamed the MOT station for this. I eventually got the car back just before I was due to drive back down to Devon for the Powderham Classic Car Show which my wife and I had organised between 2003 and 2005 and we wanted to see old friends. Only a minor hiccup so far but this began the next tale of woe.....

I got the car back just before we were due to travel down to Devon for the Powderham classic car show. Ann was the Chairman of this show from 2003 to 2005 and although the trade has now shrunk it has meant that car clubs can have as much space as they want and the show is still good. We were also going to meet friends from Norfolk who were bringing their Rover and staying with us in a holiday cottage.

As usual we were to travel down overnight and left Edinburgh at midnight. After 15 miles at West Linton I noticed the indicators had packed in and the fan was not operating as it usually did and so at the services at Evanton by the M74 I was able to stop and have a closer look. It was then I noticed that the simple toggle switch ( see radiator / cooling system change above) had been accidentally turned on with my knee and the other switch had also activated at lights in town we had stopped at. I then realised the power for the toggle / manual switch had been taken via the indicators and this in turn had blown

the fuse. Having replaced the fuse and deactivating the toggle switch we were back on our way. The rest of the journey was uneventful and we turned off the M5 at junction 27 at 8.00am. As we had a full week of running round I decided to fill the car up there which as it turned out may have been an error!!

We had rented one of the cottages for 3 months just as we retired whilst finishing off work contracts after our Devon home had been sold.....so we knew them and the entrance. As we turned in we slowed right down as there is a speed hump, unfortunately though we still managed to catch the offside exhaust clamp and as we drove on there was a bang, the car started to sound like a motorboat and in the rear view mirror I could see the rear half of the exhaust system on the drive!



On examination the exhaust had dragged out through the rear bumper ( through the repair that had just been done), had bent the pipe and also pulled the front part off the manifold breaking the clamp. Greenflag were called and they said they would look at it in the next few days so MB 22 was not going to make Powderham! ( although we still did) Thursday the following week we called the Taunton garage where the car

had been taken and it was obvious they had not looked at it and so had to arrange for it to be trailered back up to Edinburgh whilst we hired a car to get back up North.

The following week I went over to Edinburgh Sportscars to see the car and find out the damage both physically and financially. It was decided to put the repairs through the insurance and by the time this was sorted and I had sourced some parts for them a further 5 weeks had passed! On returning to pick up the car the first thing I saw was that the offside exhaust stuck out a further 6 inches compared to the nearside. I therefore left the car with them to sort and returned couple of days later. I was then greeted by the owner telling me that when they washed it they had found that the paint had been rubbed on the front nearside bumper probably caused by the straps on the recovery vehicle on the return from Devon.



Again I left the car with them and since they were painting I asked the inside of the door shuts to be also done. I had purchased some new SS sill plates so asked them to leave the old ones off after painting and I would then fit the new ones. A week later I returned to finally pick up MB22 and found they had put the old

plates back onto the new paint! I drove the car away and needless to say I haven't taken it back to them since! ( they also managed to lose my wheel valve covers and broke the MB keyring that came with the car!)

I got the car back the day before doing a car run from East Kilbride near Glasgow which with travel there and back totalled around 160 miles. By the end of it the manifold was starting to blow again!

What of the future?

The main job this Winter is to fit tubular manifolds and finally try to sort this exhaust problem out once and for all. I am going to try those made for QRG and will inform you how I get on with them.

I have to decide whether to get the car repainted to its original red and get the interior retrimmed, all to concourse level. The condition is good as it is, so may just leave it and enjoy it. If I do go down the respray route I will keep it as close to original as possible as being slightly old school I prefer cars kept as the factory originally made them perhaps changing running gear to help ease of driving and safety.

Ashley Edwards



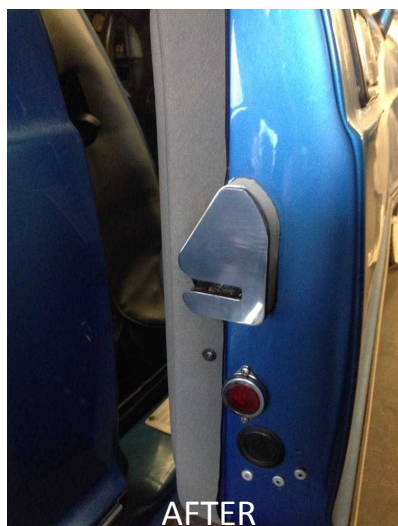
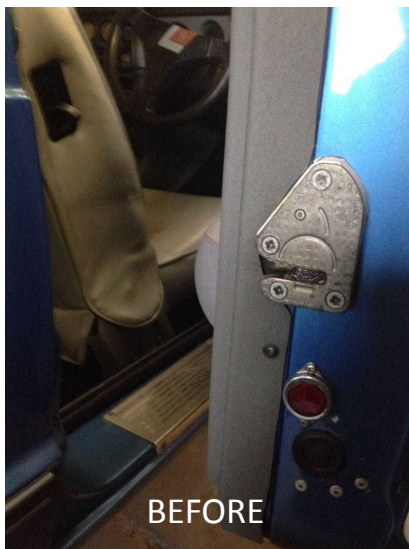
MB22 at Brodie Castle Show—August 2017

## Stainless Door Lock Covers

For those who like a bit of Bling for their car, Mick has had 25 sets of these covers made in stainless steel.

Fitting over the door locks to hide the screw heads, the price is £12 per pair + postage. Mick says they take two minutes to fit but he did use a better quality double sided tape than supplied. If anyone is interested please get in touch with Mick.

Giving MB owners first refusal, after six weeks or so he will advertise them on EBay as they will also fit other models with the same lock. Should there be any profit it will go towards MESS funds.



## Middlebridge 14 ,42 & 46 Update

MB14 was at the Historic Wheels show at Brodie Castle in August and was joined by three other Middlebridges, another local car, Robbie Williamson MB48, but also Ashley and Ann Edwards from Edinburgh MB22 and Mark and Kim Amos from Kinross MB47. Gathering four Middlebridges in one place is good but to get that in the North of Scotland is nothing short of amazing so a big thank you to all involved for their support in flying the flag. Despite the cars being in two different age classes (1980's and 1990's) the organisers managed to get them together and they made a good display, attracting a lot of interest.



MB's 14, 47, 22 & 48 at the Historic Wheels Rally, Brodie

Following my confession last time that I had acquired another Middlebridge, and having had a chance to look the car over and work out a list of things to do, I decided not to trust it to the local garage who are okay but don't really have an appreciation of the intricacies of older cars.

Hearing about the good work done by and just chatting all things Scimitar then Mark Wilson on MB33 I contacted him and we set off back home round Bradford and agreed to take the car all the way back back onto the A1M, cross the A66 and back down to Keighley, not far from where it up home getting back at 23.50hrs. If you was purchased! Anyway, I thought about believe the car's computer it was 830 miles driving the car down and getting the train round trip and 16 hours 21 minutes driving. back but it involved three changes and I I might take a more relaxed approach to would still have had to get back home an picking it up when Mark has finished with hour and twenty minutes from Aviemore at it! near 11pm at night. Flights were not easy either with none from Leeds Bradford to the North Scotland airports.



MB42 Being Offloaded at Keighley

So, I hit upon this idea of hiring a trailer and using my main car to deliver it. Fine enough you might say but then I have to go and make it more difficult for myself by deciding to do the round trip in a day. Setting off just after 04.30hrs on a Saturday we drove down the M6 to Keighley, getting there about 13.00hrs. Sat Nav's are great but note to self, always check the route it is taking you is suitable for wide trailers. Some of the roads were a bit of a squeeze to keep the trailer between the verge and the white line! Once at Mark's we spent a bit of time going over the work on the car

With the purchase of MB42 I decided to sell MB46. I had been in touch with Mark and Sue Cropper as I knew they had been looking for a Middlebridge for some time. MB46 was about out of MOT so I agreed to renew this and after a bit of a delay with the garage, who let me down despite knowing the car was to be sold the next week, Mark and Sue drove up to Grantown on Spey where we handed over the car leaving them to journey back down to Birmingham the next day. I had a great degree of sympathy with that approach having been known to make the odd long journey to pick up a car! Mark let me know that the journey home was very relaxed, despite heavy traffic with long delays on the M6, the Middlebridge kept its temperature and plenty of interest from other car owners taking pictures!



## FUEL GAUGE STABILITY

Peter has just fitted the new Spiyda Gauge Wizard MK4. This is a sender/petrol gauge matcher and supposed to stop erratic gauges.



How have we got here. It has been a long journey. I bought an earlier version of the product from Chis at Spiyda. My goal was to stop the blasted warning light coming on all the time. The product had an anti slosh setting that can be adjusted. It did not work well enough. He then reset the chip to double the amount. Still not good enough. It would appear the MB VDO gauges are a bit strange. (No surprise there then) It was a pain to set up as well. You had to connect a small 22 turn variable resistor and then enter the Ohms readings for 5 different points on the gauge from empty through to full. By now you will all be going off the idea. He told me that he could preset a new version of the wizard that he was working on if I sent him the measurements. I had ago taking them from

my old sender unit. It went up in smoke. Fortunately Bruce Beauchamp managed to take some readings and sent them to me. Chis has put these into the MK4 wizard so that a Middlebridge option can be selected. If you ring him he will set it up before he posts it. So the really hard work has been done.

The written instructions were a pain to follow. This time he has done videos on Youtube. <https://Spiyda.com/Link/WIZARD.html> covering every aspect of the set up. I am no auto electrician as Pete Freeman (our MB electrical genius) will testify. It took me three days to put my car back together after it was sprayed and then two days to get the sidelights working. So if I can fit this gizmo and get it to work, anyone can.

Chris has confirmed the price of £40 give or take a penny. He says he will provide a code to use on EBay but that it will not work till he swaps websites at the end of the month. So if anyone is desperate then ring him direct on 07859106329 and be clear you are a MB owner and would like the unit pre loading and the reduced price.

I have just been out for a test drive and driving round islands like I need an ASBO. I cannot get the petrol warning light to come on at all and the needle is rock solid. We just need someone else to buy and fit one for a second opinion.

Pete Humphries



## Coming and Going

In the last article MB10 had just sold and the new owner has been in touch with the register so we welcome John Watson to Middlebridge ownership. John visited the stand at the NEC in November and let us know his plans to refurbish the car. MB36 has also sold to Roy Thurman who has been looking for a Middlebridge for some time. The only car still available for sale is MB44 and with the interest shown by visitors to the NEC I would not be surprised if that too sells soon.

## MESSy Shows

Just to finish off this newsletter a few pictures of the MESS stands at Sywell, Manchester and the NEC.

Joining them for the end of season at the NEC I can confirm we had a fantastic few days with about eight owners visiting the Middlebridge stand and another seven owners manning the stand at various times throughout the weekend.

The show seemed busier than normal and the interest from the visitors was very pleasing with us all answering many questions. A number thought that Middlebridge was either still manufacturing cars or were remanufacturing Reliant Scimitars to a modern specification.

Time and again I had the same enquiry – why are Scimitars so undervalued? We were opposite the Silverstone Classic Auction and looking at the prices of some very ordinary mass production cars I had to admit they had a point. Quite a few people admitted they had never heard of the Middlebridge Scimitar so the effort everyone put in here and throughout the season was well worthwhile to raise the profile of the marque.

## CAPTION COMPETITION



This is George's neighbour helping him out of a tight spot. As you might expect, George has already given several suggestions for the caption, some are even printable. Can you do better?

## SYWELL PISTONS AND PROPS



Dr Dan Mitchell's Middlebridge Prototype has been completely resprayed in its original Pearlescent colour this summer by Spa garage. After 28 years of ownership it was good to restore it to as new condition . It had just age related patina (no blisters ! ) and made its first appearance at Sywell 2017



# MANCHESTER CLASSIC CAR SHOW



# NEC CLASSIC CAR SHOW



## NEC CLASSIC CAR SHOW



The Magnificent 7?

Image Copyright and Courtesy of Andy Fitzpatrick, Finishlinesports.net



A graphic example of Bruce's excellent engineering of the Stand—Everything, except the cars, folds up into his car and trailer.

Thanks too to Alison Beuchamp who puts up with Bruce going missing every time a show comes round!!

A big thank you to exhibitors and visitors and to Stewart and Mary Frost who missed out on the photo above, but helped on the stand.

