



The MESSage



Newsletter of the Middlebridge Enthusiasts Scimitar Set



: middlebridge@live.co.uk

December 2024

Mick's MESSage

Me pondering often does not bode well, however, we're fast heading towards the year end and I've been looking at some stats, and there's good and not so good news, I will break down numerically below. Let's hope for some input and apologies for the ramblings of a pre-Xmas Paddy. With the upcoming festive season in mind may I, on behalf of the MESS, wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a wonderful 2025, we do hope to see you during the year ahead and hope you enjoy my bumper December MESSage.

Website hits are awesome and steady at 4,700 per week, not bad for 79 cars built.

Facebook and Instagram are getting decent hits which is good news.

No automatic cars coming to the market and until recently only one car for sale. Due to a lack of cars I can confirm that people have purchased Reliant cars instead of the Middlebridge cars they actually wanted.

We need more cars at events and also different cars and new events. (Fingers crossed for 2025)

We need to look at new events in order to further increase marque awareness and increase people's interest in attending.,

Should anyone have any ideas please, please contact us, I was personally quite annoyed that there was a huge all British marques get together last year and we knew nothing about the event, I feel it would have been an ideal venue for the MESS to promote the MB marque.

Some of the events we currently attend are very expensive to both the owners and the MESS alike.

Alan's heritage certificates have proved very popular and will be a great addition to your classic's paperwork and needless to say would help should you consider selling your car. Please see a more in-depth article later in this MESSage. (They would also make a great Xmas gift for someone hard to buy for).

NOTE: The front grille badges are now in short supply and if you are considering one for your Middlebridge I would make contact with us as the chances of having another batch manufactured looks very slim indeed.

We looked into having another batch made and it would require an investment in the region of 8k.



I'm hoping that by the time this epistle becomes public we will have had a cash injection as we rely solely on donations. George's plea was in the last MESSage but please be assured that every penny is used to forward the Middlebridge marque in one way or another. May I also personally thank the people that responded to George's finances plea. Thank you.

We have not had a Middlebridge on the Classic car magazines for some time. Surely there are stories out there and I can think of three here and now.

Please email any suggested events to Middlebridge@live.co.uk and we will at the very least discuss them and their merits.

As some of you know I'm now fully retired and like many other retirees I simply have no time at all to do anything, 'how can this be'? Anyway, one of my many projects was to reduce my fleet of cars etc and this month has been quite successful if not very weird.

Firstly I sold the trailer, storing it in my garden was becoming a real issue with my other half and within days of selling it, it was on its way to Ukraine going out loaded with post / parcels and returning with Ladas; yes I did say Ladas, I have seen the pictures. The new owner has several in store in Ukraine and they are as new and even have the original plastic seat over-covers on. The average price paid is £1,500 and they fetch about 8 times that when sold in the UK.

Second and pretty reluctant sale, was my fully loaded Ranger / Raptor (an awesome bit of kit) but not really a daily as too big & wide for parking spaces also, my trailer was now gone meaning I could no longer justify keeping it as a spare vehicle. Anyway, what a weird sale, it was uploaded to a well-known auction site and within a few hours and while I was on route to the Brewers Fayre at 4pm I got a call from a guy saying he was desperate to view the vehicle ASAP, initially I said call me back tomorrow as I was now on the M6 heading North, he asked what time would I be back home, I said 8pm earliest, he said, I will see you then! I left the Brewers Fayre (MESS meet) at 7.15 (sorry guys), and punched it back to my place in the driving rain and dark as I was coming off the motorway he called again to say he was at Northampton Station and could I collect him from there, I did and we drove about a mile to where I live, there's no street-lighting as it's a very small cul-de-sac he got out his mobile phone, turned the torch on and went round the car and said he wanted it, 15 min's later and with the money in my account he was driving off in my pride n joy! Bear in mind my truck was in my opinion quite an expensive purchase. (see pics) Oh and yes I have kept the private plate,

Addendum: Yes I wilted and purchased a replacement for the Ranger / Raptor and I have to say it's a bit older but I'm really enjoying tinkering and driving it. More on my new toy in the next issue as no doubt any content will be thin on the ground over winter.

MB 33

A bit more tinkering required prior to the drive to the NEC and for 2025. The new aerial needs fitting post the IOW & the Sywell monsoons. (this is urgent as I don't want any further water ingress into the interior and especially the roof centre console electrics). I would also like to get the alternator charge rate checking as the current on the gauge in the car appears to have dropped a little, especially when my engine fan cuts in. My last item will be two new V belts and that's the whole to-do list apart from a good scrub up in readiness for the NEC and as usual pray that it does not rain on the Thursday morning (set-up day at the NEC). I can confirm that all of the above issues have been sorted and with no parts required apart from the new aerial.

Our Marque Website

I have decided to have another push to further increase the data in the website history area, I have already sent emails to certain people and I'm in the process of penning an email for the classic car press and hopefully for a couple of suitable newspapers in the Nottingham / Derby / Mansfield areas, If anyone can advise on suitable rags, I would be happy to do the rest. I feel we should consider doing a re-union event, possible at the original Lilacs Grove site and or the Bee Keeper Pub, allowing me / us time to gather as much information as possible over the day. I do still of course need to run this idea past the MESS for their input and ideas.

NEC Lancaster Classic Car Show 7th – 10th November 2024



Thursday 7th November and once again we all headed to & met up at 09.00 in the NEC car park, this allows us to drive in convoy into the hall quite early, quickly park the cars up in the dry, the cars are then cleaned properly especially as we had some rain on route, while the cars were being cleaned the stand was being erected and by lunch time we were completely finished with Bruce's stand erected and cars in position, we all had an early finish.

Friday, and we all arrived early and boy what a shock we were completely overwhelmed all day with two people trying to buy cars off the stand!! We have a number of people wanting cars and leaving their details with us. By the end of play we were all shattered and ready for the off. George, Bruce and Alan headed home while Will, Matt and myself headed to our lovely B&B for an Indian and a well-earned few beers.

Over the weekend we were all kept busy but took it in turns to have a wander and peruse the cars in the Iconic Auction which was once again very close to our stand. It was great to catch up with several Middlebridge owners over the weekend for





This year was the 40th NEC Classic Lancaster Motor Show and we were delighted to help celebrate by sharing their anniversary cake. (yummy, yummy).

much chin-wagging. Once again we were delighted to have Dennis Nursey and Kohji Nakauchi on the stand and we look forward to meeting with them in 2025.

It's always great to see Martin North (our webmaster) and his father for a natter and I look forward to working with Martin in the year ahead.



I guess honesty is the best policy, so here goes. At 70mph on the M42 and just before the NEC turn off I heard a horrible noise 'grinding' I slowed down as much as possible and within a minute I was within the NEC perimeter, the grinding metal noise was awful so I crept to the hall and got the car

parked for the event. On the Sunday evening I called the AA who could hear the noise at walking pace, a truck was booked to take me home and the car is booked in the garage for the 18.11.2024.

Addendum: I really do need to wear my hearing aid more! I was correct about the wheel bearing, however, it was a rear wheel bearing, not the front as I thought. I'm quite annoyed as in Feb 2023 I had a full overhaul of the rear axle including both rear wheel bearings to future proof my car. I looked at the invoice but there's no mileage but no more than 5,000 miles. ;o(I have now asked my local classic garage to look at the N/S/R wheel bearing as I don't want a repeat show. See picture.





A BIG thank you to Bruce Beauchamp, Will Anderson, Alan Cavendish Tribe, George Sampford, Alan Timmis, Kohji and Dennis, and Matt who all made this event not only possible but once again a success.



Ford Orion RS (Peaky Blinders)

No Ford ever made one, this is a one-off build of incredible quality and clearly the graphics are based on the local to Birmingham 'Peaky Blinders' theme. This was the first showing of the car and it's fair to say many, many people were drooling over it all weekend. The work was done by Stuart who is the guy that looks after Bruce's Middlebridge.

NEC Restoration Show (March 2025)

We held a meeting during the Lancaster Classic Car Show and with a heavy heart decided that we would cancel our booked slot for the Restoration Show in March 2025. To put it simply we just don't have the available funds to stage the event in the manner the Middlebridge marque needs to be portrayed. We apologise for this but we do also need to ensure that we will be back at the NEC next November as it is the premier show of the year.

2025 Events Calendar:

The 2025 events diary will be briefly discussed at the NEC in November but is on the schedule for our MESS meet at the Brewers Fayre on 14th January 2025. There are many elements to each event, not least cost both to the MESS and us as individuals, locations and are they family friendly, one, two or 3 day event, indoor / outdoor not to mention a marque stand where needed.

MESS Calendar 2025

(Please note events highlighted in blue already have MESS members attending)

Start Date	End Date	Event	
27.04.2025	27.04.2025	Drive it day & combined AGM (TBC)	
TBC	TBC	Crouches, Nottingham x Lilacs Grove, Re-Union etc	
06.11.2025	09.11.2025	Lancaster NEC Classic Car Show	
TBC	TBC	Xmas Dinner 2025	

Coming and Going

We currently have one UK car for sale on the Middlebridge website, the Pre-Production Middlebridge, a owner car, manual and in excellent condition

It was good to meet David, the new owner of MB2 at the NEC and he has informed us that the car is now refurbished by Graham Walker, resident in the Isle of Man and will shortly be getting a Manx registration.

We also have a waiting list for people wanting automatic cars and one has now come up but it is left hand drive and in Europe. MB76 has an interesting history being a one owner car. The advert is here: – http://www.middlebridge-scimitar.co.uk/sale_full_details.php?id=66

Henk writes: -

On one of my trips to the UK I went to Nottingham, where on April 10 1989 I visited the new Middlebridge factory at Beeston and met with Terry Drought the sales director.



During this visit I was very impressed with the whole setup of the new factory and by the end of the day I had decided to buy a new Middlebridge, Left Hand drive with all available options they could deliver. As a special the car has a good working air-conditioning, cruise control and radio player with CD.

After waiting a year Middlebridge 76 was delivered just before the factory went into liquidation. So in 1990 I got MB 76 with a 2.9 litre Scorpio V6 engine, 4 speed automatic, pearlescent racing black with grey interior and a sun roof. The car is in a good overall condition with usual Middlebridge features of galvanised chassis, stainless exhausts and fuel tank, and electric windows and mirrors.

I have owned this car now for 33 years and during that time it has always been garaged. Pretty much everything on it works as it should. Although the body paint is original and also 33 years old it is still in a reasonable condition. The interior is in a good shape and also there has been no engine problems after 182,000 miles.

Since purchase, the car has been in the hands of Alex Kleinhuis garage in VALKENBURG Z-H in the Netherlands who specialises in Classics. The car has been kept in a dry garage and remains in good condition. The latest checkup on the car was in June and the regular APK Inspection is valid until 23/10/2025. My reason for selling is that I have reached an age of 84 where reluctantly I need to reduce my number activities and toys!!



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 two pictures.



MB63

Ralf gives us an update on the progress with MB63: -



When I got the car, I was shocked at first. It was in a much worse condition than I would have expected from the pictures. If I had seen it first hand, I wouldn't have bought it. It was clear to me that it wouldn't pass the TÜV in this condition. So I initially considered whether I should sell it straight away. But Germany is not a good market for a Scimitar, especially if it is in a bad condition and without German

registration. So after much hesitation, I decided to keep and restore the car, which of course is much more expensive than I had originally planned.

At first I only fixed the very obvious and simple defects (leaky fuel line, defective window lifter motors, heavy oil contamination on the underside, rusted handbrake lever on the left rear wheel, non-functioning brake light on the right, non-functioning tail light on the left, defective fog lights, etc.). But it was already clear to me at this point that there was still a lot more to do (leaking steering gaiters,



defective upper ball joints on both sides, leaking tie rod end on one side, rusty brake pipes, and most of all: the rusty rear axle). Nevertheless, I drove to the TÜV with these defects to hear what the inspector had to say. There I was lucky that I came across an inexperienced and benevolent inspector who had never seen a Scimitar before. Fortunately, he didn't see the defects mentioned or turned a blind eye.

The only technical defects that I still had to fix for him were the jerky steering and insufficient handbrake effectiveness. And I had to replace all the shock absorbers because the mounted threaded shock absorbers are only allowed in Germany with an appropriate certificate, which of course didn't exist. Fortunately George attached the two original front shocks in the accessories collection. So I had to organize only the rear shocks (which were not easy to get).

But he had a completely different challenge for me that I hadn't expected at all: In Germany, an emissions report is required when a car is first registered. One exists for Scimitars first registered before August 1989. My Scimitar was first registered in November 1989 and the old report is no longer valid for it. After many phone calls and discussions with various authorities, I was given an exemption. This cost me several weeks and 200 Euros. Finally, I was ready to register the car at the end of August 2023.



Finally, I was ready to register the car at the end of August 2023.

But I didn't want to drive the car in this condition. I was particularly worried about the rear axle / shock absorber mounting on the left side (see pictures). So in September I started to dismantle the car to restore it. Almost all of the screws were so rusty that I could only remove them with force (angle grinder, bolt cutter, drill, etc.). And many screws are in places which you can hardly reach with the tools mentioned. It was an extremely laborious job that cost me a lot of time and bloody fingers. I have never seen a British oldtimer car that is as difficult to repair as a Scimitar. Anyway, I solved it and was able to lift the body from the frame.

But during the winter I couldn't work on it much because unfortunately I don't have a heated garage. So I was only able to start working on the car again a few weeks ago.



The current status is:

The car has now been completely dismantled, the frame has been sandblasted and repainted with brushable liquid zinc paint. Actually my intention was to get the frame newly dip galvanized because the zinc was worn at some places. But at the coating company they told me, that an already galvanized frame cannot be galvanized again. It must first be de-galvanized

before it is possible to galvanize it again. And just the de-galvanizing procedure costs double the price of the galvanizing. So I decided for the brushable liquid zinc paint.

The rear axle has also been sandblasted, repainted and completely overhauled. The gearbox is cleaned, has new oil and seals and is repainted. I am currently working on the front axle. I hope that by autumn I will be ready to put the body back on the frame. Then I will continue with the work on the interior next year. The headlining and the complete electric wiring need to be replaced. I also want to have the car painted. That will take a lot of time and money. I don't think I will be finished before 2026.



The registration number of the car, which you can see on some photos (AZ-RL-823H), was only a preliminary number. Meanwhile I have another registration number (AZ-RL-24H). Unfortunately I don't have a photo from this number in mounted condition. But even this number may not be the final one. It may change again, once I have finished the restoration.



Old Adverts and a bit of a Mystery

I have been looking into a bit of archive material and found a couple of adverts in old Autocar magazines. The car advertised in the December 1997 advert is said to be No. 13. If Lawrence is reading this he could perhaps confirm if that's correct and he considered selling it then as, to my knowledge, he has owned it since 1989! The 1994 advert does not specify a chassis number



Peter Smith Sports Cars

LOTUS CARS FOR SALE

81 W Esprit Turbo Essex Ltd. Ed., 15,000 miles, total spec includes air con and full leather.....£13,995

88 (F) Excel SE, Calypso red, half tan hide, 33,000 miles, fsh.....£10,750

88 (F) Excel SE, Monaco white, half grey hide, 38,000 miles, fsh.....£10,750

90 (H) Scimitar GTE, By Middlebridge, auto, Met blue, full magnolia hide, 21,500 miles.....£15,750

93 (L) Scimitar Sabre 1.8 Turbo, Red, black hide, only 200 miles.....£13,750

STATION RD, HATTON, DERBYSHIRE
0283 813593 (178648)

but given the location and specification, I wondered if it was Bruce's car but on

speaking to him at the NEC he said he looked at the car at the time but it was not MB26 which he finally bought. He did give me a copy of the advert for the car with a picture that shows the car had the registration H939 SWA. That's a bit of a mystery as I cannot trace the car on the register. Yes, it might have changed registration but I am also having difficulty in tracing an electric blue car with a magnolia interior. Any help anyone can give to solve this would be well received by your registrar!

XJS 3.6 LYNX EVENTER Shooting Brake, 1986, 5 speed manual, RHD, Navy blue/grey hide, 58,000 miles, UK registered, £13,800, Tel: (0032) 26882737

Triumph Stag 1973 black V8 Rover auto, £1000 worth of new chrome, new MoT, very good condition, exceptional price, first to see will buy £5500 Tel: (01442) 381528 (H) or (01234) 741726 (W)

MGA Sports convertible, red with black hide, chrome wire wheels and luggage rack, lovely example, £13,750. Call Peter Smith Sports Cars on (01283) 813593.

Reliant Scimitar, 1989, F, middlebridge, superb example, scorio 2.9i, manual, ultimate scimitar motoring, no. 13 (77 produced), £11,000, Tel: (01442) 863894

Austin Allegro Mkl 1.3 1974, auto, 4 door, square steering wheel, only 2 owners, 30,000 miles, history, MoT, immaculate interior, good bodywork £600 Tel: (01746) 780917 Bridgnorth, Shropshire

Opel GT 1972, no rust, Rover V8, very fast, 0-60 5.2, causes interest everywhere, easy cheap maintenance, no road tax, classic car insurance, £6,500 Tel: Manchester (0161) 4276969 E or 0161 4277653 E



Peter Smith Sports Cars Ltd, Station Road, Hatton, Derby DE6 5EL. Tel 0283 813593. Fax 0283 816491.



Make	RELIANT	Model	SCIMITAR GTE
Colour	METALLIC BLUE	Trim	MAGNOLIA LEATHER
Registration	1990 "H"	Mileometer	21,350
Specification	AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION, POWER STEERING, CENTRAL LOCKING, ELECTRIC FRONT WINDOWS, ELECTRIC DOOR MIRRORS, REAR HEAD RESTS, RADIO CASSETTE, ALLOY WHEELS, FRONT FOG LAMPS.		

£ 16,995

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.

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.

Middlebridge Authentication Register

As explained in The Essential Buyer's Guide series published by Veloce Books, classic, collector and prestige cars usually come with a portfolio of records that document the history of the car. For many makes of collectable car this could include a certificate proving the age and authenticity of a particular vehicle, sometimes called a 'Heritage Certificate', and a valuation certificate or letter signed by a recognised expert

Mick Gaughran made numerous enquiries, establishing that the Middlebridge marque would likely benefit from Heritage Certificates due to the limited number of cars manufactured. The British Motor Industry Heritage Trust provided a sample certificate together with advice on how to certify a car when the manufacturer is no longer in business. Classic car insurance specialist, Adrian Flux confirmed that Heritage Certificates are considered in 'Agreed Value Insurance' applications.

The MESS has developed the Middlebridge Authentication Register that will provide a robust and auditable process for issuing Heritage Certificates whilst maintaining a record of supporting evidence. Since the launch of of this project one owner has significantly increased the 'agreed value' of his Middlebridge and another had little problem with having the V5C corrected. It is also anticipated that these certificates will support applications to the DVLA for 'Historic vehicle tax exemption'.

The cost of a Heritage Certificate is £35. The money raised is being used by the MESS to promote the marque at various motor shows, pageants and exhibitions. The MESS continues to develop display screens to tell the story of the Middlebridge, as a result of the high quality displays the MESS is regularly offered notably good stand locations. This not only draws the attention of classic car enthusiast, but also representatives of the insurance industry and the classic autotrade.

The data required to support a Heritage Certificate is the majority of the list below. In some cases the MESS has access to other pertinent information which will be used in the verification.

Middlebridge Enthusiasts Scimitar Set (MESS)

'MESS' Heritage **DRAFT** Certificate

The details below are from the Middlebridge Enthusiasts Scimitar Set archive data files and are backed up with photographic evidence. Many of the original Middlebridge files were destroyed when the company went into receivership in 1990.

Make and Model: Middlebridge Scimitar GTE, (Grand Touring Estate)
Body Style: Sporting Estate
Date of Manufacture: May 1989
Chassis Number: SM9 0102 99 KE4500?? (Car No. of 1989 manufactured)
Body Number: SNM??
Engine Number: SM 2222??
Gearbox: A4LD (Automatic) Type 9 (Manual)
Exterior Paint Colour: Original: Congress Red 22??
Current: [unclear]
Interior trim Colour: Black 22??
Interior Specification: (extras) Velour with Walnut Facias.
Dim-Dip kit fitted, Sunroof.
Original Dealer: Queensbury Road Garage, Kettering, Northants.
First Registered for use: August 1989
First Owner: Mr??
Registration Mark: First: G??22?? Current: MBS??
General Remarks: The historic evidence for the car also include the original Workshop Build Record. The interior was overhauled replacing the velour trim with full leather in 12.03.2014.

Signed on behalf of The MESS

DRAFT 2024

While every care has been taken to ensure the correctness of the information supplied, The 'MESS' Middlebridge Enthusiasts Scimitar Set cannot be held liable for any errors or omissions or the consequences thereof. The 'MESS' accepts no liability if incorrect details or numbers have been quoted by the enquirer. It is not a realistic option to manually inspect each car as we have cars Worldwide. We will be solely reliant on photographic evidence from the owners requesting the 'MESS' Heritage Certificate's. These photos will be stored for future reference. (Unfortunately, no original Middlebridge Scimitar Ltd factory records are in our possession 21.03.2024)

WWW.MIDDLEBRIDGE-SCIMITAR.CO.UK



- Scimitar Model Identification (photo of car front showing grill and number plate)
- Date of Manufacture (photo of Chassis Plate)
- Chassis Number (photo of Chassis Plate)
- Body Number (photo of Body Plate)
- Engine Number (photo of engine number)
- Gearbox: A4LD (Automatic OEM) or Type 9 (5 Speed Manual OEM) (owner statement)
- V5C – Vehicle Data (photo of V5C page 2 listing vehicle details including date of first registration and serial numbers)
- Exterior Paint Colour (original) (owner statement)
- Exterior Paint Colour (current) (owner statement)
- Exterior Specification: (extras) (owner statement) Dim-Dip Lighting Kit; Cruise Control; Sunroof; Tow Bar & Electrics
- Interior trim Colour (owner statement)
- Interior Specification: (extras) (owner statement)
- Full Leather; Leather Seat Facings; Velour Cloth
- Quality Vanier Facias; Standard Black Facias; White Facias
- Wool Carpets; Velour Carpets
- Original Dealer (photo of Black Book)
- First Registered for use (photo of Black Book)

- First Owner (photo of Black Book)
- First Registration Mark (photo of Black Book)
- Current Registration Mark (photo of car front showing grill and number plate)
- Current Mileage (photo of odometer)
- Date of Vehicle Data (submission date of the above, time of authentication)

Once the vehicle has been verified and included on Middlebridge Authentication Register, a Heritage Certificate will be prepared in draft for the owner to check and then two signed original certificates will be issued. Two signed certificates are provided to ensure the Middlebridge owner is able to retain an original with the car records, whilst the second may be used to support applications such as 'agreed value' insurance.

For further information, please contact alan.cavendish.tribe@gmail.com

Grille Badges

Mick mentioned grille badges in his epistle and the costs of replacing these if a new batch was to be produced.

As it stands the following cars do not have badges, unless you know different: -

MB04, MB17, MB18, MB19, MB20, MB25, MB31, MB32, MB38, MB41, MB49, MB52, MB57, MB64, MB68, MB71, MB75.

So, 62 cars now have a badge and only 17 do not. We know that MB52 will not require one as that has been missing since 1992 and MB75 is probably the second unbuilt RHD MB74. George reckons he has 30 badges remaining, although some of them may be seconds. It looks like we have enough to supply the remaining cars plus a few to cover any replacements of issued badges due to damage or deterioration. George reckons only three badges have been replaced since they became available and one of those was due to defects shortly after fitting so they appear to be robust and long lived. Of the other cars if anyone is interested in purchasing a badge they are £70 plus P&P and all proceeds go to the running of the MESS.

MB6 Trials and Tribulations

In the first of an ongoing series, Andy recounts the tale of the restoration of his Middlebridge.

I purchased MB6 back in September 2022 with a cunning plan of a rolling restoration. Whilst driving it home from Plymouth discovered some gremlins (throttle sticking, dim head lights) which I thought not too much about. Once home proceeded to sort the poorly routed throttle cable and order up some new reflectors for all four head lights. Attacking said lights, I found someone had been in there, big time, which then involved a complete rewire of the head light area and to my dismay overhaul the two heater fans buried in the wings. (Oh did I mention having to rewire the fuse box in the near side wing as well!!)

On to replacing the wire mesh in the front bumper (it was falling apart), I discovered most of the fins between the cores on the radiator had corroded away. Back to Nigel at QRG who suggested I drop off my knackered rad. which he would use as a pattern and sell me a nice new aluminium one, (ouch).

With the new rad. In with two seven inch fans attached that was an improvement but the throttle was still not best; so off with the plenum chamber on top of the engine and much cleaning later all was well, a working smooth throttle.

Getting near my first MOT time, a major fuse kept blowing which I eventually diagnosed to be a cigar lighter body falling apart. This took a lot dismantling of dashboard and a lot of time to find, as well as putting back some rigidity around the radio area. A while afterwards I happened to mention this to Nigel (QRG) who immediately stated the fault, oh well you live and learn, thanks Nigel.

All is working on MB6 now (even the two new rad fans on the dual thermostat) as well as the new horns, so it's off to my MOT man who knows about old cars and guess what, a big NO pass. Yep, severe corrosion on the chassis around the back axle area, BU**ER! The MOT the car came with, had no mention of anything, no advisories, nothing! (Mind you, I would have still brought the car, I just love its looks!)

Right lets get the body off and sort the chassis and while I'm at it, I'll overhaul all the running gear. A



start was made and the suddenly on Facebook Market place a new old stock chassis appeared, located near Hull, complete with Graham Walker invoice to prove provenance. A deal was quickly done and van hired to collect it. Many coats of primer, paint and Rust proofer in the box section and Ta-Da!

I'm still not sure whether to use the new chassis or repair the old but will make that decision when I see how bad the original is once the body is off. Progress then ground to a halt while two new knees were installed, on me that is!

So on to the next stage, of undoing all the bolts that hold the chassis to the body and what a lovely collection of rusted bolts occurred (small selection shown here and as progress has continued the plastic pot has filled). Mostly drilled out but some others cut with hack saws and lots of Anglo Saxon.



Body to chassis bolts and fixings list:-

4 in engine bay above front wheels. 4 in front foot wells very close to bulkhead, 2 holding seat belts to transmission tunnel, 2 bolts close to end of doors on floor, 8 bolts holding the front seats, front seat belt floor mounts, 4 rear seat belt mounts, 8 bolts holding rear seat backs, 4 holding rollover bar to chassis, 4 just behind rear seat backs on boot floor, 4 on the boot floor close to tail gate. Oh and did I mention all those rusted bolts holding front and rear bumpers on!! All of this involved removal of interior plastic finishing panels, the car looked like a tip inside. How come the contents of a car take up so much storage space?



The Body was almost ready to lift off but a few small tasks remained; heater hoses, hand brake cable, gear knob and stick, fuel pipes, steering separation, various earthing points. The car was now starting to look like a complete demolition!



I had a support frame built for the body and that is almost ready, It still needs castors and top supports finishing. Those of you who are observant, yep, it's the wrong way up at the mo. my neighbours keep asking me what the large table is for!

To be continued.....

Andy Goss, MB6

Ed's note: We are picking up more from members about the need for restoration but to put that in context the cars are now 35 years old and, like MB6, covered up to 300,000 miles. I think that's no shame to them and shows the strength of the design and manufacture.

I have checked some of the "modern" cars I have owned and there are very few still around that are older than 15 years.