

MIDGE MAGAZINE



Autumn
2017



MOBC. the Midge Owners and Builders' Club

Jim's combined Midge

Hello All.

Everybody in the Northern Hemisphere has, by now, hopefully had a summer. Chris B has suggested members dust off the flying helmets and grab a last run in the sun and take a few photos. Drive it-Snap it, Crank and Click, or whatever. The idea being to combine a census with 'Show off your Midge' in idillic surroundings, and you sitting in it grinning. That would give everyone a bit of publicity (if they want). In terms of detail I was originally thinking of just owners initials, county and Midge status I.E. daily use, being restored, resting, disassembled or whatever. I rather scuppered the plan by not being more precise in my census encouraging email, but I'm most gratified with the number of responses. I'll see what I can do later to collect some photos with drivers even if the Midge is in the garage 'hibernating' or awaiting surgery, and of course hereby invite you to send some in.

Bryan C suggested members could explain the single innovation or idea they are most proud of that might be different from other Midges. Something they incorporated into their build, like his Jaguar quarter-lights, again I'll encourage that later.

For next time, If you haven't been out and about, or even have long since sold your Midge, how about a photo and a wee story about how you met / ran over / replaced or found your spouse, got flies in your hair, had a wheel fall off, out-paced a conventional sports-car / panda / bicycle... send it in. It can get a little lonely up here in my freezing garret with just a candle stub for warmth and light, writing it all with quill and ink and sitting

Stories and photographs to Secretary Jim Hewlett
at
jim@jimhewlett.com or The Old Manse, Tarbrax,
West Calder. West Lothian. UK EH55 8XD

on the obligatory
milk crate.
Sniff.
JH



Welcome to Wajid Syed and
welcome back Michael Taylor.

Page 1	Editor's rant. Index
Page 2,3,4	Chris B and the dynamo
Page 4	LHD Steering
Page 5,6	Ray and Ethel step out
Page 7	Bryan and Madge. More on p15
Page 8	Bits, bobs and Billy
Page 9,10	Chris H and the Mk2
Page 11	Blame it on Chris B
Page 12	Events and various
Page 13	Roy recalls
Page 14	Greg arrives in time.
Page 15	The idillic Michael Josling & BC
Page 16	Tom Sanderson recalls the wet.
Page 17	Bill Durham's bits
Page 18	Footnote.



Chris Bird writes:-

I live and learn - hopefully!

I confess that the title is optimistic - not about the living - but about the learning - as this story will show!

It started on a warm, sunny afternoon and I had driven over to see a friend about 30 miles away. I was just heading home through the Wimborne traffic when I became aware of a whine as I revved the engine - and did I imagine it, or was there also a bit of a rattle? That did not sound good so I pulled into a lay-by as soon as I could and had a look. There was certainly a whine from the front of the engine, but the rattle had stopped, so I decided to press on home.

When I got home it was worse, but I couldn't tell where it was coming from. It couldn't be the Rimmer's dynamo because that had done less than 1000 miles, the fan belt looked fine but I tried the old WD40 trick to see if that would silence it. It didn't. I heaved on the pulley and fan to try to detect any movement and then reluctantly settled on the water pump as the culprit.

I needed a culprit as it was Wednesday evening and I was due on the Dorset Classic Car Tour on Sunday. I ordered a pump from Moss which came on Friday - but by then, I had done a

more detailed diagnosis with a sounding rod and had settled on the dynamo for the whine and a loose bolt on the light bar for the rattle.

I removed the dynamo but could find nothing obvious, so I gave the rear bearing a shot of oil and put it back on. Still the same. Off it came again and I realised my "shot" had been way too much and so spent a while trying to clean the commutator through the holes in the back plate. I tried the two big screws but couldn't shift them. I put it back on - still the same.

Off it came and I applied a huge screwdriver assisted by an adjustable spanner to the screws and very soon had the back plate off. There was still a lot of oil around and there was evidence of some wear on the "Oilite" bearing, but how much could there be in under 1000 miles? I carefully cleaned the commutator with fine emery and chamfered the edges of the brushes - as surely this noise must be coming from them. I cleaned up the bearing and smeared some special bearing oil on before putting it back together and on to the car. I tried it - silence - but the ignition light stayed on - no charge. "Bother", I said. It turned out that one brush has stuck and was

not making contact. Easily fixed once I had taken the blessed thing off again. Then the test - silence - bliss - we would be going on the Tour.....

On Saturday afternoon, I made a quick trip to the petrol station about four miles away and when I got home, the whine was back - BIG TIME! It really was like a siren now. No Classics Car Tour for us.....So instead of touring the leafy Dorset lanes, I took the dynamo off again. This time I realised that with the screws out, the front plate and armature would pull out easily - and would expose the real source of the noise. You can see in the photo that half of the armature plates have been rubbing on the field plates - hence the siren like noise as the all the oil from my 'shot' wore off. But why? Were the field plates loose? A Torx socket found them tight - so it must be the rear bearing, after all.



Hmmm...

Chris's saga continues...

With the brushes removed I could put the endplate and bearing on to the armature and then all was clear - it was totally shot! Following the workshop manual method of using a large tap (incredibly I had one), I eventually got it out and could examine it. There is no question that it is the correct porous "Oilite" bronze, but was it pressure impregnated with oil? I suspect not - and the "few drops" I added when I put it on were clearly not enough (and before you ask - the fan belt was not too tight!).

So rather than another new dynamo, I ordered new bearings from Ebay. The pack of two came very swiftly and I was ready to sort the problem. The manual said soak in oil for at least 24hrs or boil in oil for two hours, but I had a better idea. On the internet I found that they should be pressure treated with oil so I rigged a pump up spray bottle and put it under about 1 Bar of pressure for a couple of hours. That should do it, I thought. The bearing was a loose fit on the armature so I carefully pressed the bearing in and then remembered the oil feed washer should have gone in first. I turned and drilled a new one to drop down inside, and reassembled the dynamo. It was stiff to turn - so it came apart and I skimmed down the new washer, as it must be that.....

It was still a bit stiff, but I thought it must be a high spot and would wear in quickly. Back it went on the engine and I started it up. Within seconds there were



clouds of smoke and then a screech. I stopped it to find the rear bearing very hot indeed. I took it off and dismantled it to find the bearing all but seized! The steel armature spindle was coated in bronze and the bearing was clearly knackered. At this point I ordered a new dynamo from Bull Motif Spares on ebay. It was listed for a Morris 1000, but it was

a Lucas C40 type and just £52.50 including shipping.

I just didn't want to be beaten, though, so I extracted the bearing (with great difficulty this time) and then carefully cleaned the hole in case my 'drifting' had distorted it and caused the problem. With the hole looking straight and true, I turned to the second bearing and stood it in a jar of oil in a pan of boiling water for about three hours. Then I left it overnight and repeated the exercise, before putting the bearing in the freezer to shrink it a little.

I set up the drill press with a mandrel to press the cold bearing in (and I remembered the felt pad and special washer this time!). It went in easily, but I found that I could not get the end cap on at all. The loose fitting bearing was now way too tight! It had 'shrunk'. I took it all apart and removed the pulley so that I could mount the armature in my Myford lathe. I then carefully removed a few thou until it fitted nicely, before reassembling it.

At that point, the doorbell rang - and it was the new dynamo - just 20hrs since I ordered it. I was really tempted to test my repair - but decided on the new one instead.

the tension mounts, sit quietly in the back there...

I dismantled it to check the bearing (well oiled!) and to more easily fit the pulley by gripping the armature in a vice. And, of course, I had to dismantle the old one to get the pulley off.....

Back on the car with a new 1070A fan belt (mine is the GK engine with a big pulley), I found one wire wouldn't reach, so I soldered in a piece and covered the joins with heat shrink tube. It finally worked fine and sounds good - phew!

So have I learned the lessons? Have I learned that just because I buy a new pattern part it does not mean that it is any good (see postscript)? Have I learned that the correct bearing does not just fit? And have I learned that is no quick fix and that I need to do things by the book (and then check and double check)? I hope so - but only time (and my Midge) will tell.....

CB

Postscript

2002 Recon, unleaded engine purchased from Rimmers - it took weeks to track down the rattle to the fact that the timing chain tensioner had been fitted the wrong way round.

2016 New pattern brake calipers purchased from Rimmers. After weeks of struggle I found a manufacturing fault so they were returned.

2017 The Dynamo - see above!

Thanks Chris, it obviously pays to take nothing for granted, even when it looks clean and shiny and comes in a neat card-board box.

A ha'porth of untested theory from Jim.

Rimmers parts are not always perfect, so it is with some trepidation I raise the question of Left Hand Drive Midges. In a Facebook based conversation with Wouter the question arose as to whether there were any. I haven't heard of any yet, although there's no obvious reason why a continental Herald couldn't be a donor.

There are various options to facilitate right to left conversion including inverting the rack (doesn't sound like a good idea) or fitting a suitable rack from an alternative LHD vehicle. A Mini perhaps, I'm guessing here... So I had a look and sure enough Rimmers does a LHD rack for about £200 including postage (Accurate I think in August, but don't take it as gospel) Hopefully they won't put the price up as the pound goes into free-fall.

The track rod arms will still be angled downward unless anyone has found the right springs for the lightened front end, so you'll still have to look out for tracking problems, or fit a heavy straight 6 engine. Otherwise it's worth having fairly stiff shock absorbers to prevent the 'duck feet' effect when hitting a bump. Either way it is worth remembering to load the car appropriately when setting the tracking, or for that matter when remounting the mudguards, as I discovered when I went from 13 to 15

inch. If you have had the car jacked up you'll need to drive it back and forth a bit to get the suspension settled. Passengers, fuel tank and spare wheels will all affect it.

I'll have to wait until someone converts a Midge to LHD before we actually know where the pitfalls are, but the pedals should move easily enough and the dashboard and wiring will need reversing unless you are lucky enough to have a symmetrical one like the old Minis and Morris 1000s.

A symmetrical dashboard may save searching for a longer speedo cable.

The clutch and brake pipes will have to move, probably the battery and maybe the fan heater if you have one.

Remember to offer the old dashboard to the club if you have a nice one (one of mine is a bit rubbish) and tell your insurance people. Well that's all I can think of at the moment. Anybody tried it yet?

Rimmers website address for LHD steering rack and postage charges

<https://www.rimmerbros.co.uk/Item--i-GRID005440>

shipping

<https://www.rimmerbros.co.uk/content--name-Shipping>

JH

4

Ray Jones has been out and about with Ethel

On June 18th we visited the Lakes Classic Car Show in Grasmere, at the foot of Dunmail Raise amongst some stunning Lakeland Fells.



The Photo above shows Ethel almost melting away in the fantastic, full hot sun on the day.

She returned unscathed but her pilot – ever without sense at these times – reached home happy but severely sunburned.

A thoroughly impressive array of cars attended. The venue was Grasmere Sports Field, where I believe the famously odd ‘cumbrian wrestling’ still takes place annually.

(Far as I know this involves grown men in full thermal undies and woolly shorts, arms locked round their opponent and relentlessly hugging each other to the ground).

The 30-mile plus journey included some of the worst condition roads the Midge has yet encountered. She coped well, but I am still searching her footwells for a few of my missing fillings...July 16th was a full weekend event in Ulverston, Cumbria, dubbed ‘Retro Rendezvous - Days to Remember’.



Above, hooded, Ethel sitting contentedly alongside a 40's Chevy V8 pickup, the latter in Harley Davidson livery complete with a restored H-D in the rear bed.

The idea was to promote & celebrate anything from yesteryear, and included people in varying period costume, memorabilia stalls, two live music stages and a range of classic/vintage cars & motorcycles.

There was also an extensive

programme of short & midrange ‘Velo Retro’ cycle races, undertaken in costume on anything pedal-driven and elderly – I spotted at least one Penny Farthing.

Ethel was the only Midge present but there was a very nicely built MGB-based NG roadster, owned by MOBC member Brian White’s brother Graham.

July 22nd brought the inaugural Classic Cars & Bikes Event in Barrow town centre, organised by the Business Investment District team and marshalled by local volunteers.

Here Ethel is parked proudly in the main shopping area pedestrian precinct. The event sought to encourage footfall in the town by stationing the cars directly amongst the shops.

A huge variety turned out and lined up nose-to-tail for visitors’ inspection.



The full group included Rolls, Bentleys, Austins, Humbers, competition Fords, Lotus, Alvis, Hillman, a custom Vauxhall, VW beetles, an american Camaro and a Citroen 2CV-based trike.

The day was judged a big success, and concluded with all the vehicles leaving in convoy to execute a lap of the lower town, with a large procession of classic bikes bringing up the rear.

The threatened rain held off, sunshine broke out for the afternoon, and most of us waved ourselves silly and added to the chorus of horn-blowing during the leaving ceremony. Great fun. Latest outing was on 13th August for the Dales and Lakes Historic vehicle day at Grange-over-Sands.

This is a terrific annual gathering in a gently sloping meadow looking southward over the bay toward Morecambe, Heysham and further afield to Blackpool.

Below is Ethel on duty late in the day, prior to the teatime exodus after the awards ceremony.



Always an enjoyable show, this event benefits from a large number of regular attendees. Brian White was there with his 'Tally Ho' Midge sporting a brand-new engine rebuild. So also was Malcolm Hopwood with his Pembleton trike.

The Historic Vehicle Day has a great atmosphere with live jazz music laid on throughout, plenty of catering facilities, a selection of auto-jumble stalls and a prize-giving conducted by the town's mayor.

Well that's it for now...until the next Lakes Motor Museum 'Drive-in' day on September 10th that is. Ethel and I will be there as usual to fly the MOBC flag, weather-willing.

Oh - and in other business, since my recent significant birthday marking the end of a sixth decade, I have been the proud possessor of a voucher for one day's unaccompanied hire of a 1938 Austin 7 Ruby saloon.

The providers are some lovely people at Motorparty in Dumfries – check out their website – and I am hoping to make the trip towards the end of September and realise a long-held ambition of mine to drive one of these beautiful little cars.

RJ

Some Midgees are waiting for a bit of work. Needing encouragement, Bryan Coventry, member 69 writes,

Madge the Midge was bought as something my late wife and I could share.

I had been taking gliding lessons at The London Gliding club on the Dunstable downs with a view to joining a syndicate with five others to purchase a secondhand / pre-loved glider.

Then came the fateful day she said. "You do know don't you? You will never get me up there with you in charge".....

So I bought Madge..... She was on the road, and had been for a number of years, running as the original owner / builder's everyday car.

However.

She needed some love and attention. She ran far too high at the rear. Bordering on tuck under. If anyone can remember the days of the Spitfire pushed far too fast and with hope / gay abandon into a corner. Only to exit on three wheels and a horizontal 'has been' wheel.

So after playing with different combinations of the rear leaf springs, we came to a good ride height. I then bought a set of converters from Cal Custom.... (Do they still exist?) I think so, google cal custom automotive

...to put her on a set of MGB wire wheels bought second hand. Cal Custom did sell

new chrome wires made in India. But they just looked....wrong. I sprayed mine the colour of the body and was very happy with the result. I removed the rear



seat and replaced it with a lockable box trimmed the same as the interior of the car thus, I had a boot. This is how we ran Madge for many many years, mainly as a weekend hobby, attending most if not all of the custom car shows around the country at the time.

J.C. walked by at one of the shows, looking at the windscreen said, "This is an early one."

This - I should have mentioned - would be about 1991.

Then I discovered Narrow boating. Madge was garaged in a barn for the next 4 years. Never coming out, just turned over every now and then. Until the day we moved house. From Bedfordshire to Staffordshire. Three months later I had to bring her home to the new house. I spent a few days freeing off brakes and getting her ready for the MOT.

Pass or not I was driving her up to Staffordshire. I'm pleased to say she passed and didn't miss a beat all the way home. I parked her in her new garage, and there she has been for the last 11 and 1/2 years. I have bought new motorcycle wings and removed the old rear ones, but I just can't find the impetus to work on her. She starts and runs well so I need to crack on and replace the wings. Am I the only one in this situation ? Has anyone any ideas to get me going ?

Best wishes to all
Bryan,

More on page 15



Billy Graham has taken his neighbour's dogs for a run. I'm not sure that's what the neighbour meant by 'run', but they look happy enough.

In France and possibly elsewhere on the continent too, the market for Midges, with good V5cs, seems to be doing very well, prices of 3 and 4 times what we expect in the UK are being asked. Worth noting, and if anybody has exported one there I'd love to get an article on how to do it.

I'm not advocating a mass exodus, but if middle men are making a disproportionate profit we should know. Of course it may be just that the French have very good taste and more money. Me, I'm staying, and keeping mine for now, but if I was leaving, (I'll not mention Brexit), I'd be taking at least one with me. Possibly with a LHD conversion steering rack, as mentioned on Page 4). It probably is time to update my suggested (and it is only a suggestion) Midge pricing list on the web site as £5k and £8k are now being asked for in some areas for good models.

Seventeen pages so far and well packed, so there's just room here to squeeze in a thank-you to all the contributors. If I get any late arrivals I'll put them in the next one.... Having a few articles ready makes it much less stressful, and means I can get started earlier. So as Winter approaches, warm up that keyboard and send me a few lines for the Christmas / New Year issue. It doesn't matter how small, and a photo, or several, always helps.

Jim



Useful links

http://www.carandclassic.co.uk/car_events.php

<http://www.classicshowsuk.co.uk/>

and

<http://www.kentkitcarclub.com/2014events.php>

Don't forget I can update the magazine, so if you have a correction, suggestion, addition or whatever, I can put it in. It does mean a bit of work, so I'll not be adjusting individual apostrophes, but if it's important.....

UK 2017 Events

The Car and Classic site does event prediction so much better than I can, there seems little point in copying their web page, especially as they can update as the months go by.

If you go to

http://www.carandclassic.co.uk/car_events.php

you can get the information direct, that's where I get it.

Chris Herd answers the call.

I'm not good at writing stories - never have been - but my story started with Ebay - good old Ebay !!



I saw John Cowperthwaite's advert for plans for a kit car, based on an old Suzuki Jeep. 'Old' was the key word. No computers !! That's my kind of thinking.

I bought the plans and as I'm not far from John's location he was good enough to bring them personally - in his Midge. Thank you John, great to meet you. Hope the cup of



tea was up to the mark. His wife Rosemary took me for a test drive, that was the start of it.

I purchased a donor Suzuki locally. Thanks again to Ebay. Might not be the best of base vehicles but I'm stuck with it now. You wouldn't believe the number of loose nuts & bolts. Spring shackles, Drive shafts, Engine mounts (nut missing!!), Brake pipe flattened because the rear cylinder pistons were hanging out! etc etc.



I managed to recoup some of the cost by selling bits I didn't need.

There it all begins. Late 2016. Many hours in the garage but it's getting cold & I'm not keen on cold.



Progressing slowly and over the summer I make decent progress - at MY speed!!

Below. 30/10/2016 (approx.)



Doesn't look too much different but the devil's in the detail !!

Chassis stripped & painted & lots of other bits ongoing.

Many bits & pieces acquired via Ebay. (Commission from Mr. Ebay welcome) Anyone knowing other sources of spares can call me please.

Plenty more to do, but I'm still enjoying it and will continue. (Page 10)

Chris Herd's Saga continues.

21/01/2017

Bit cold in that garage so not too much progress over winter. I'm too nesh!!



Fuel tank and first bit of bodywork.



Ebay "bargain" ??? Front & back wings & screen off a 'Spartan' kit car. £130.00 lot. Will they fit ??? Perhaps I should say "They WILL fit."

24/02/2017 below, Trial fitting body parts. I feel like a prosthetist. Does this feel like progress !!!!! We'll see in a few months time !



25/06/2017
Slow progress!!! First time outside.

And the chance to clean the garage. Still not as clean as my neighbour's!



02/09/2017

Seats, Steering & dashboard.
Not connected - but dashboard all the same!!



Approval from the 'boss'?? But she can't even get in it !! **C.H.**

Impressive stuff Chris, keep at it. JH

Alan Bowden wrote:-

Hi Jim.... happy to inform you that me and my midge are very much active!



The little car is noticed and admired wherever it goes, tends to be within a 30-40 mile radius of home, no long journeys but I'm very confident that the Midge would take me much further without a problem.

Recently had to replace the Dunlop SP tyres as they had developed some serious cracks, mot's are always a delight, the garage loves doing them as there is very little that can go wrong or to test.

At one point it was fitted with a surfboard rack, with this being very much a surfing area it attracted a lot of attention, I could've sold it many times over.

A new stainless silencer has now replaced the noisy old original so now I'm contemplating fitting an old radio. The little car does give some motorists a bit of a shock as they presume (from its appearance) that it must be a bit sluggish...far from it, it goes like a rocket and corners perfectly! **AB**

Alan enclosed a couple of pictures and mentioned that since taking them a chrome rear rack complete with a wicker hamper has been fitted. Is that your garage in the background Alan?



It was Chris Bird who had the idea of doing a census of members, just so you know who to blame, and it sort of took off from there. I'm pleased to say lots have answered the call and several of the photos could be described as idillic. My original plan was for facebook and web-page postings, with the minimum of details but there's been such a good response I'll have to recalculate how quickly I can do that. I found this below to give you ideas, If anyone gets close to a reproduction they'll get a special mention and maybe an MOBC coaster. Sadly current regulations would preclude actual consumption of the bottle of fizz. It may be a bit late for this summer, perhaps we could risk frostbitten ears in autumn, otherwise maybe next Year?



Grant Prentice, who has the amazing good fortune to live near your humble editor, is continuing his restoration project seen above. He writes... Hi Jim I don't know if I have sent you this photo (above) or not, you can use it as found for the next mag issue. Work is ongoing, I've had to make seats myself (trial and error) model No 5 being the one to go for. The base of the seats are the rear (fold down) seats from a Renault Megane 7 seater with home made sheet metal backs which are lined with 10 mm camping foam cut and shaped to suit. I have been quoted £200 to have the seats covered, don't know anything about the costing of such things, perhaps some other members have some experience of this? The front wings have been removed, blasted and primed. I'm working on a new front lower panel, thinking of making it out of thin sheet steel. **GP**

Roy Tingay recalls.

My membership number is 060 I think, so I've been around for a long time and have written articles in the distant past, but nowadays Midge only gets used for local shows and attending the local TSSC club meetings so only boring stuff to relate. I also have a TR3A and TVR Taimar (currently SORN'd) both of which I restored in my younger years.

I guess that you (Jim) must have my Midge details on record but in case not:- First put on the road in Sept 91 registered as a Triumph Vitesse, but subsequently changed to JC Midge several years later when DVLA stated that it was the owners' responsibility that the vehicle is described correctly. This change didn't come easily taking several months of letters and pictures and then finally an inspection at the local commercial vehicle test centre at Thatcham. I have kept the original Reg of the Vitesse so it is road tax free. The chassis was bought from "JC"

Like most Midge builders I used some of the plans without modification but adjusting lots of other things as I went along. In those days we used to meet up regularly as a club at the many kit car shows so it was good to have many heads available to sort out solutions to tricky problems which we all had! The basic chassis uses a solid rear axle on trailing arms and coil springs (never did like the Herald rear suspension from a very young age!). This configuration has changed many times over the years as I didn't like the geometry plus I wanted to lower the car



At Highclere Castle 1991,

when 16" wire wheels were fitted, quite a lot of welding!! The plans were for a two seater in order to accommodate the extra two cylinders of the Vitesse engine, I am not of large build but the doors had to be enlarged otherwise there seemed to be very little point in having them, just keep the sides solid (much more rigid!). I wanted to use as many parts off the donor car as possible, seats included which meant a lot of cutting and welding back together of the seat frame to fit the Midge's limited space plus a lot of sewing to make the

new covers. Forgot to mention that the tank is off a Spitfire the rear axle is Triumph Toledo.

Other mods over the years include a new radiator core several inches longer with more tubes using the Maxi end bits modified to have the lower pipe moved to the correct side for the engine, not cheap, but worth it because the engine used to boil over cruising at 60. A later Vitesse multi bladed plastic fan also helps when compared to the original Brunel like steel/aluminium one. An overdrive gearbox was also fitted which helped all these things.



New 16" wheels and side-screens,

I may have reached that age of being too old to do any major jobs on anything but I have this idea of making the cockpit wider by bending the sides with several layers thinner ply bonded together, a bit like a pear-drop shape

like the original MGs. Building that would be fun but it is all the other bits afterwards that get tedious. After 26 years it is due for a change. **RT**

Greg Hackett had a stressful day, and a lesson for us all about carrying spares. But don't fret, it has a happy ending.

My youngest child was leaving primary school this year, and, thanks to the Americanisation of our culture, the school had a prom for those leaving (I know, ridiculous for a primary school leaver).

Anyhow, many of the children were arriving in stretch limo's & horse drawn carriages and the like. My son asked me however to take him in Ivy which I was only too happy to oblige.

First though I had to get her MOT'd, so a week before the prom I did just that. Thankfully she passed. I had a busy week of work but on the day before the prom I was able to give the car the polish of its life in preparation for the day. I did everything, wheels up on ramps to reach those hard to reach places, exhaust pipe polished, the lot. It looked great.

My joy at a job well done was short lived though. That afternoon I thought I'd go for a quick run out, I got a mile up the road & broke down. Disaster!

I called out the RAC who eventually arrived to be informed that my electronic ignition had packed in. He couldn't fix it & towed me home.



I tried in vain that evening to get the car going but to no avail.

Just 24hrs before the car was needed it was dead. In the 9 years I've been the custodian of the car I've had almost no issues whatsoever, but just when I needed it the most, it'd let me down.

A full day of work on the day of the prom meant I wasn't able to do anything then either to get her back on the road. My aunt & uncle who built the car in 1992 came to the rescue though & arranged to have it transported to my mechanic on the Friday morning. I found in a box of tricks I was given with the car, the old points which the mechanic fitted for me until I could get the electric ignition fixed.

Phew! Crisis averted.

I finished work in time to fetch the car to take my son to his prom. Unfortunately it poured with rain, but with a stiff upper lip we soldiered on. Once we were close to the school I pulled over to put the roof down.

So after a very stressful couple of days, Ivy held her own &

garnered a lot of attention & my boy got to the prom in style.



GH

Michael Josling Member No 1319 in Norfolk is doing quite well in the idillic photo of the year competition.



And he even has the picnic basket, attractive companion and the car is painted black. All he needs is the flying jacket

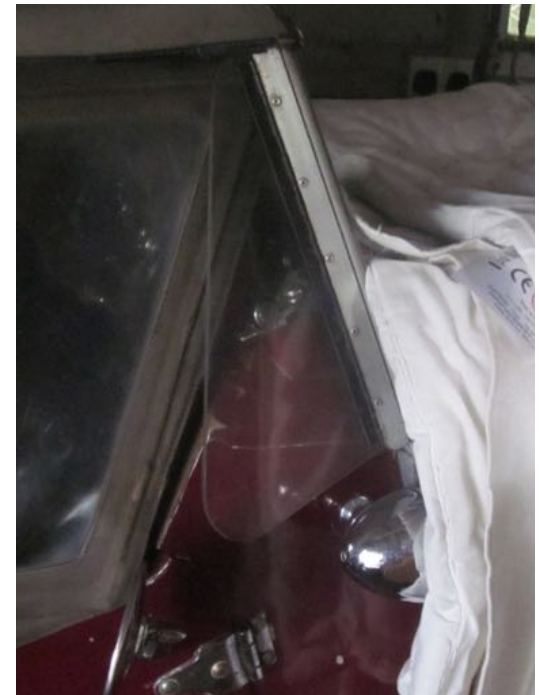


Continued from page 7

Bryan sent me a few photos of the Jaguar rear quarter-lights that he used as front quarter-lights. I think John B may have used something similar.

The parts may be difficult to find now, perhaps there are other later cars that used the same sort of thing.

Bryan also mentioned that as well as Tonneau covers and soft roofs, he also makes gear-stick shrouds, as seen below.



From Tom Sanderson

This year and for the past 2 years I have re-joined the East Yorkshire Thoroughbred car club and we have taken part in the East coast run from the start at Hull's East Park to Sewerby, Bridlington.

A round trip of some 90 miles usually on the Sunday of the 2nd weekend in June, a nice run, people congregate in lay-bys and villages, to wave at the passing vehicles which is much appreciated.

The first time we did the run was in 2006 it was great fun and the weather was good too.

In 2007 Steve Brockelsby came with us in his Midge he was staggered as to the turn-out of cars, lorries and buses that take the run and the people lining the route. If you are not member the cost to do this is £7, forms are on-line of the clubs web site.

We go for a run in 'Flo' weather permitting to Withernsea (22ml) or Hornsea (32ml) or for a coffee at Winestead (18miles).

Most memorable was Thursday 30 August. We went out to Hornsea Freeport and realised part-way there that the indicators were not working, later I found brake lights had also failed.

We had to use hand signals, which was fun, we had a walk round and a coffee. Walked back to the car it was raining, then the thunder and lightning started, with no hood or anything put up an umbrella we both sat in the car hoping it would blow over, even me parking under a tree didn't help matters. After a time the weather



abated, we decided to risk it, but further on it started again, this time rain was on both sides of the windscreen (wind blows the rain over the screen from one side to the other). We went through a cloud burst puddle of water that flooded over the car but the engine still ran the next one was 50 yards long and halfway across the road so I went on the wrong side of the road to avoid it and stop us from getting wetter, fortunately there were not many cars on the road at that time.



When we got home we were soaked to the skin my wife was not amused, but these things happen.

It seemed 'Flo' had an electrical problem, a burnt out flasher, later we found some sort of

short had caused the ribbon wire (retrieved from a scrapped Toyota during the build) and melted the 2 sets of wires.

The photos show 'Flo' in my garage undergoing repairs and a happier time in East park waiting to drive in convoy to Sewerby in 2016, my wife is reading the pack given to us on arrival.

Tom Sanderson

From Member no 12, Bill Durham (who made the louvre press)

Hi Jim, your last newsletter got me thinking that you may like a few photo's of some of the gear I had to make for my (former) Midge. The petrol tank made in 16swg steel sheet !!! MIG welded. The

spare wheel carrier and number plate and brackets to support the mudguards.

Mary is still laughing at the louvre cock-up.

I first attended a 3 month welding course at the local tech (so enjoyable). By the time that finished lower priced MIG welders came onto the market, one of which is still under my workbench.

Foolishly I sold my Midge (a painful moment,) as bending and kneeling were (are) causing problems.

My 2 boys and Mary Anne were quite upset, as I had not informed them of my now much regretted decision.

I have been so taken up with my other hobby I've tended to let more important things slide a bit. I have bitterly regretted selling my Midge but I still keep in touch with the new owner, (not sure if he is a club member). I have first refusal if he decides to sell, but my sons want it as I may be giving up

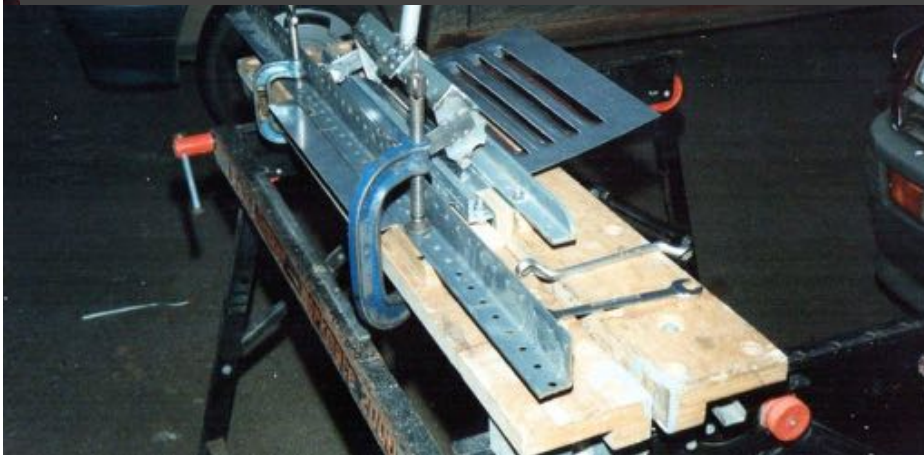


driving, as I'm in my late (very) 80s and can't say I enjoy it like I used to. BILL

Thanks for that Bill, and the club's thanks for your louvre making invention. I know the 'mis-angled louvre feeling' as I did exactly the same thing on one panel. More haste less speed as they say, JH



Below is the 'lash-up' I made to make the louvres for the side engine panels.



Thanks everybody for the impressive response to the appeal for more articles. So good in fact, that I was able to save one from Mike Bambridge for the winter issue. I had a chat with him apologising for the delay and he quite spontaneously promised to write an article about his camper-van building and driving experiences. Well, that's how I remember the conversation anyway. Many in the club will have an interesting side-line and I will be happy to consider articles about them. Being natural tinkerers, up through mechanics and even Engineers, many Midge builders get involved in all sorts of DIY and adventurous activities. Some have experience of Holidays and epic journeys, flying experience, or railway skills. Others can offer hints and tips on all sorts of projects and life generally. These would all make good 'copy'.

I'll be keeping largely to the Midge theme though, don't worry that I'm going to drift off into other interests. Traditional Midgeing will always be at the front... or occasionally parked in a lay-by undergoing the reattachment of an exhaust. The question of fossil fuels, ethanol, hydrogen and even electric conversion may be of interest though, and it's great that we are hearing more about Mark 2s. Motoring legislation is often looming. Will MOTs be consigned to the bin?... Just think of the loss of all that interest and stress that go with them. The look of surprise on a 17 year old 'fitter' as the Triumph chassis dangles its wheels in mid air. Who doesn't regret the loss of all that fun, going down to the Post Office and buying horribly expensive tax discs? Even getting free ones by internet lacks that sensation of adventure as the Post Office clerk peers at the log-book and asks "So what is it then?" and mis-understanding the answer, writes Midget, Kit-car, or even 'Other'.

Ah well, as they say.... Keep calm and carry on.