



Edinburgh, Lothians and Borders MG CLUB

www.MG-Edinburgh.co.uk



October 2020



The Virtual Picnic Run

Credits: Helen, Tony W, David T, Allan, Karen, Andy, Emo

MEMBERS' CARS

Tony W has traded in his scruffy TF for a newer, sleeker one
- see article on his interesting journey south.



INTERESTING CAR

Spotted by Andy at Kames Motor Show



MRS GRUMPY'S GRUMBLE



Many thanks to Tony W, David T, Karen and Allan for their contributions to the newsletter.

Digital stuff - you know how it's supposed to be better but never is? DAB Radio that cuts out at Leadburn, Digital TV signal that can't cope with wind, rain, trees, mist, whatever. Digibox recorders that always go faulty. Or is it just me?

The new Humax digital HD recorder (bought in January) has fried its electronic brain. I settled down with my supper to watch Scottish Vets Down Under, which had been recorded the night before. I got told there are no recordings - really? You're telling porkies - there's hours of stuff I haven't got round to watching. Pulled its plug, switched it on again but got the same message and it wanted me to go through all the privacy stuff - and then I noticed a date at the top right corner, 1st August 1970!!!!

Anyway, eventually it wouldn't even start up - just left me with a blank screen. Switched to the old digibox and watched programs on that that I hadn't got round to - the TV having the usual dross. Packed up the new digibox and made a foray into Edinburgh to go to John Lewis. This is not for the faint hearted as I decided to drive and park in Omni rather than sit in a crowded 37 bus filled with Covidiots.

I knew Leith Street would be closed, so intended to approach from Leith Walk after going the Abbeyhill route - but the park was closed. Head down the North Bridge, which is single file each way due to renovations. An ambulance couldn't get through and we all piled out of our cars to move the cones for the driver. Thought I might park in Waterloo Place, but it was £4.30 an hour and I only had £5 in coins. No, I don't try to pay by credit card - have tried three times in the past and never succeeded! Got to Omni from London Road - Leith Walk is closed below that roundabout BTW. You have to use your bank card to get into Omni and then out again - no tickets. That worked fine and was only £2.90. However once in Omni all the places were reserved, so I drove round getting more and more despairing until I spotted a space. There was Sellotape on the wall but no reserved sign (I suspect some other desperate person had ripped it off - it wisnae me!) so I parked in that space and headed for John Lewis.

The digibox was repaired within a week and posted out to me, working fine - and it still had all my recordings!!! That was a result. It got a serious swearing at as it took two goes to get it re-tuned, speaking to t'internet and with everything saved - but now working fine. At the moment.

INTERESTING CAR
A 1950s Lea Francis as used
by the Metropolitan Police

FOR SALE FOR SALE FOR SALE

Pedal Lock from Amazon - two bought by mistake and one can't be returned. Retail £20 - yours for a tenner. Contact Richard Spencer - richard@midkinleith.net



A DAY TO FORGET

I recently had cause to go down to Lincolnshire and decided it would be a good idea to leave Edinburgh early. I set off in the TF at 6.00 am, having decided to go the A68 and so avoid the Newcastle bypass. When I was at Hexham, I made the mistake of taking the wrong road out of a roundabout and found myself heading for Newcastle - I should have known better as I have travelled that road many times!

I reached the bypass to find the traffic at a standstill and it remained so for two hours. Nobody knew what had happened, but the traffic started to move about three yards at a time. Suddenly, there was an almighty bang and I saw clouds of steam rising from the engine bay. On inspection, I discovered that the expansion tank had blown itself apart.

I was in the outside lane, but managed to get the TF onto the nearside grass verge. I was just about to phone the AA when a motor cyclist dressed in yellow gear pulled up and said 'Not to worry, I'll get you picked up by a breakdown truck'. Ten minutes later, there was the truck and the TF was loaded. Upon enquiring what was going to happen next, I was told by the driver that I would be dropped in Gateshead and then transported farther south.

It appeared I had been collected from the bypass by Newcastle Roads Department and I learnt that the hold up had been caused by a man who wished to end his life by jumping off one of the bridges. He had been there since 2.00 am as the Police had had trouble persuading him to come down.

After approximately an hour and forty five minutes, another truck appeared and I was transported some distance down the A1 - and then left at a Service Area car park. Again, I was told that someone would be along to take me the next stage down the A1. A wait of another hour and a half and the vehicle appeared to collect me.

After about 60 miles, I was again unloaded at another Services - one I know well. By this time it was late in the day and would shortly be getting dark. I thought I had been forgotten about and tried to get through to the AA, but with no success. I phoned the hotel where I'd booked a room to say I'd be late in arriving, if at all! Since I was unable to get through to the AA, I phoned my son-in-law in Edinburgh and asked him to try. He phoned back quickly to say an AA vehicle would be with me in ten minutes.

Oh Joy, it was and 'once again' we set off down the A1, with the driver saying he was to take me to my hotel. We arrived at 10.30 pm, having had to make a lengthy detour because the A1 was closed to all traffic due to road works.

I retired to bed, hungry and not good tempered. I had for some time been thinking about changing the TF and as I often do, thought about calling into Trophy Motors. Some of you will know them as they deal with nothing but MG TFs and the odd MX5. They are possibly the biggest MG dealer in the UK. They are just up the road from my hotel and I managed to get the TF to their premises. By this time, I had made up my mind that my TF had to go and I was faced with choosing another from approximately 40 cars!

I found one which was reasonably priced and was very happy with the part exchange I was offered. The new car was checked and in the workshop I was invited to inspect the underside and was given a good guarantee. I changed the insurance, the car was packed and I was ready to go. I should point out that the Trophy people treated me with absolute courtesy and kindness - I would deal with them anytime concerning MGs.

I had an uneventful run back until I got to the A68 landslip and had to detour again. I'm very pleased with the new TF - there is more to this story, but I won't bore folk with all the details!

Tony Woods

DAVID'S LOCK-DOWN IMPROVEMENTS

While super-restoration-heroes like Craig and Emo have been doing their major restoration works in their garages, mere ordinary mortals like myself have also been busy on smaller jobs. Well, not very busy: more an occasional foray really.

I decided it was time for some improvement work on my 1967 BGT. Mechanically it is pretty good, but one of the things letting it down visually was the somewhat pitted chrome around the rear side windows. When it was restored by a previous owner, much of the chrome was replaced, but probably in attempt to retain some originality in this mark 1 car, it retained some of the original parts. Chrome-wise, these included the front grille (which fortunately is still in good condition) and the rear side windows. In return for a donation to club funds, Helen sourced better condition replacements for me from her seemingly endless supply of 'B bits. (Ed: It is great that I'm gradually emptying the Charterhall lock-ups and even better that it helps Edinburgh members and the club!)

Unfortunately, to remove these windows from the car, you first have to remove the B post trim. On Helen's car this would have meant removing a few screws, but on mine, like many, they were pop riveted to the body, so this meant drilling out the old rivets. As I'd decided to replace the pillar-trims anyway, (these not being pitted, but scratched, and again less than pristine) it was not too daunting a prospect. But of course, you can't drill out the rivets until you've removed the rubber door seals. Doing this without damaging them proved easier said than done, but ultimately only one of them suffered minor and not terminal damage!

Once all the trim was off, it was a simple matter to replace the windows. But, of course, nothing is ever that simple. When I came to replace the clasps at the back that allow you to open and close the window in normal use, the original screws would not fit through the holes in the replacement window's clasps. A bit of filing later, and they did - and then one of the screws refused to screw all the way back in to the body. Further investigation revealed that the original screws were, in fact, the wrong screws. Thank you previous owner - who seemed to have a large supply of the 'wrong' screws for many parts of the car. Others are still on the to-do list!

Windows fixed, metal trim re-riveted (and looking much nicer) it was on to another niggle: the fact that the panel lights had never worked. Since the wiring in the car is all fairly new it was a fair bet that this was caused by a faulty rheostat. Again, a swap isn't a 2 minute job because the tachometer has to be removed to get access. I thought this would be simple, but again, the unexpected problem that no one has mentioned in any manual, online article or forum inevitably then arose. On my car, at least - I haven't tried it on anything else! - you can't get the tacho straight out because the steering column shroud is in the way. Aaargh. So that then had to come off too. Not hard of course, but a delaying irritation. The only difficult bit of the whole job was putting the tacho back. Again, no one mentions the fact that trying to get the knurled wheel nuts back onto their threads in an area you can't see, where there is absolutely no manoeuvring space and you can hardly get your fingers in at all - and that only while sitting at a stupid angle, or else sitting on the ground by the car and twisting your body into contortions to get your head under the dashboard

And the final job really was easy. New dashboard overdrive switch fitted in a further attempt to cure the intermittent non-functioning of said overdrive. The solenoid had already been replaced and meant that it now *usually* worked, but I'm hoping this second stage of replacement might turn *usually* into *always*! So far, so good, but then it was an intermittent fault [David Turner](#)



TROUBLE WITH THE MODERN

Well, the MG3 has run faultlessly for 6 years and 30,000 miles - just a fondness for the airbag warning light to come on, the last one being due to a water bottle rolling about under the seat. I had groped about blindly and removed one water bottle (they fall out of the too shallow cup holder) and thought that was it, but no, there was a second one that I'd missed - ooops!

Anyway, I've given the MG3 very little TLC - it's just had its regular services, MOTs, the occasional wash and I've only opened the bonnet to fill the screen wash - yes I know, bad me. On a recent food shop, I thought the clutch pedal felt a bit odd - but every time I tested it, it was fine. Then on a visit to Charterhall lock-ups, in a queue of traffic, when I put it into first and tried to move off, the clutch pedal stayed stuck to the floor. Toe'd it up and suffered the somewhat jerky start - note to self; it is advisable to put it into neutral first. Drove it, sticking a fair bit, to McLellan's Garage and they squeezed it in for the following week.

Being me, I phoned Central Garage to ask if this sticky clutch pedal is a common fault - and it is. I was advised to get the clutch bled as that usually cured it. If it didn't, the gearbox had to be removed to sort it. I should say, at this point I didn't know if the MG3 clutch was hydraulic or cable - but being told it was hydraulic, I assumed that it would have a concentric slave cylinder as apparently most modern cars do - including the Mazda 5 speed conversion for the MGB, by the way.

When I dropped the car at the garage, I passed the bleeding info on Stewart McLellan and when he heard about the gearbox removal, he made some remarks about concentric slave cylinders - ones I agree with, which is why my V8 didn't get the Mazda 5 speed box!! He then asked if the MG3 had a concentric slave cylinder and I said yes, as it's a modern.

I arrived back and Stewart said he hadn't bled it - which vexed me slightly as my logical mind says eliminate the easy stuff first. Stewart went on to say that he thought the problem was the lever in the gearbox sticking. That jogged my memory - good mechanic Jim had said that was why the gearbox might have to be removed and Central Garage had got it down to a fine art as they'd done quite a few.

Belatedly, I asked the relevant question - why has it got a lever on the gearbox if it's got a concentric slave cylinder? Because it doesn't - it has a slave cylinder bolted to the outside and a system of levers. Stewart helpfully showed me all the bits (I've learnt more about the MG3 this last week than the previous 6 years!) and didn't charge me, which was nice. I then asked Stuart at Central Garage the next relevant question - if it's got an outside slave cylinder, why does the gearbox need to be removed? 'Lever system in the bell housing with nylon bushes with no lubrication and it seizes up' - a modern design fault then? I've had both my MGBs for over 35 years, done 300,000 miles between them and the levers in their bell housings have never seized up - but then there's usually a smidgeon of shouldn't-be-there-oil and the bushes aren't nylon.

Both Stewart and Stuart told me the MG3 clutch was heavy, - well, it didn't feel particularly heavy to me, but then my benchmark for a heavy clutch is the V8!! According to Jim, it was fine at its service, so I can only assume it had stiffened up slowly over the intervening 5 weeks and I hadn't noticed.

Since I'd had a wee windfall, I decided to get the clutch changed when the gearbox was off. I don't like spending money on the modern, so to spend some of the bonus made it relatively painless. The clutch pedal is now much lighter and the bill wasn't too scary. My only criticism is - why does a tiddly MG3 clutch cost £200, while a muckle one for the MGB is only £120 and the seriously hefty V8 one comes in at £250? Anyway, the car's going well, it's smiles all round and I can't fault either McLellans or Central Garage. I also got given some rather nice MG goodies by Central Garage - even more smiles all round!

My favourite is a nifty multi-task job - tyre pressure gauge, ruler, spirit level, stylus and a choice of two screwdrivers - Brian would have loved it!

Mrs Not So Grumpy



VIRTUAL PICNIC RUN 1

Tony W and myself kept within the Covid rules and managed to do Neil & Margaret's most enjoyable Picnic Run on a gloriously sunny day. We even went on a road to Hawick that I'd never been on before!

Of course there were the usual drivers who don't understand the etiquette of single track roads - i.e. you wait at a passing place, especially if two cars are coming towards you and you give way to the car coming up the hill - fortunately we didn't meet anyone on the climb up from Talla.

Otherwise a great run, with a coffee/toilet stop at the Gordon Arms and many thanks to Neil & Margaret for putting it together. Hopefully some other members will have managed to do it and we'll get some more photos. [Mrs Grumpy](#)



VIRTUAL PICNIC RUN 2

Really enjoyed the run!! The weather was kind too - top down all day.

Many thanks to Margaret & Neil for some lovely roads (the instructions were “interesting“). *Ed: For the very last bit to Wilton Park, I satnagged it - trying to read Google Maps interesting instructions while driving is a no no!*

The back roads to Hawick were of special mention: views to die for. **Karen Niven**



FLOWER POWER FUN QUIZ

Many thanks to Allan

The answers to these clues are all flowers or plants. Some are cryptic, some are straightforward. Watch out for anagrams!

1. A sly one's gauntlet. 1.
2. Mrs Bucket or is it Bouquet? 2.
3. He tip-toed through them. 3.
4. Cilla. 4.
5. Lurpak's drinking vessel. 5.
6. Goes before cock, seller, and appeal. 6.
7. Sugary Bill. 7.
8. Give me your answer, do. 8.
9. German wine follows the prickly bush. 9.
10. Don horned rod. 10.
11. Housewife's hand protection. 11.
12. Her Majesty is occupied. 12.
13. No grasp, Dan? 13.
14. A sad ringer. 14.
15. Tuna pie. 15.
16. Welsh emblem. 16.
17. Evaporated milk. 17.
18. Small amount of liquid after white flakes. 18.
19. Don't burn your fingers on this implement. 19.
20. A lion mag. 20.
21. Doing word, Mrs Sharples 21.
22. A stiffly neat flower. 22.
23. A worry. 23.
24. Sounds like a trendy king of the jungle. 24.
25. Angry head. 25.
26. Palestinian town's astronomical object 26.

- | | |
|---|----------|
| 27. September's birth flower | 27. |
| 28. Remember myself | 28. |
| 29. Sounds like "wee on vowel"!! | 29. |
| 30. Solar bloomer | 30. |
| 31. A single vowel follows the German fox | 31. |
| 32. A show cave in Castleton | 32. |
| 33. A torch I'd need to find this one | 33. |
| 34. Miss Savage? | 34. |
| 35. A bovine mistake | 35. |
| 36. Part of your eye | 36. |
| 37. Calm site | 37. |
| 38. A household cleaning implement | 38. |
| 39. Songbird's feline sound | 39. |
| 40. Ian, Dad's Army's Pike. | 40. |

ANSWERS

- | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| 29. PEONY | 15. PETUNIA | 1. FOXGLOVE |
| 30. SUNFLOWER | 16. DAFFODIL | 2. HYACINTH |
| 31. FUCHSIA | 17. CARNATION | 3. TULIPS |
| 32. SPEEDWELL | 18. SNOWDROP | 4. LILAC |
| 33. ORCHID | 19. RED HOT POKER | 5. BUTTERCUP |
| 34. LILY | 20. MAGNOLIA | 6. POPPY |
| 35. COWSLIP | 21. VERBENA | 7. SWEET WILLIAM |
| 36. IRIS | 22. PRIMROSE | 8. DAISY |
| 37. CLEMATIS | 23. YARROW | 9. HOLLYHOCK |
| 38. BROOM | 24. DANDELION | 10. RHODODENDRON |
| 39. LARKSPUR | 25. HYDRANGEA. | 11. MARIGOLD |
| 40. LAVENDER | 26. STAR OF BETHLEHEM | 12. BUSY LIZZIE |
| | 27. ASTER | 13. SNAPDRAGON |
| | 28. FORGET-ME-NOT | 14. BLUEBELL |

EDINBURGH MG CLUB

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Please feel free to contact the committee if you have any queries.

Monthly meetings on the second Thursday of the month, 8pm at Boroughmuir Rugby Club, Colinton Road, Edinburgh

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

October 18

Last run of the season may be cancelled, will keep you informed

November 12

Meeting cancelled

December 11

Christmas Dinner - hopefully. Will keep you informed

INTERESTING SNIPPET

A rather environmentally green Mini - spotted by Emo

