



# Edinburgh, Lothians and Borders MG CLUB

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March 2023



Jim T wins the coveted Piston Broke trophy

Credits: Helen, Craig, Allan, Jim T

## MEMBERS' CARS

The painter has finished Craig's Midget and it does look good!  
See how it got home in his article.



## INTERESTING CAR







## Mrs Grumpy's Grumble

Many thanks to Craig for writing most of this newsletter!

Virgin Media and Midlothian District Council - what a combination! I was looking out the front window and saw several Hi-Viz wandering around our driveway. Closer inspection revealed Tranny vans and digging equipment parked on our wee bit of land that we helpfully tarmacked when we did the driveway.

Went out and asked the nearest Hi-Viz (a cheery Weegie, luckily of a robust personality) what was going on. "We're from Virgin Media and we're laying down fibre for the broadband." "Well, you're not digging up our driveway and patching it - it's private as is the bit where you've parked your Trannies and stuff." "No, it's council land and we're digging it up to lay the cable." "I'll say again, it's private - and you're digging nothing. Speak to your Boss."

Meanwhile a resident from farther up Station Road, stopped and asked "What's going on?" She then pointed out that Station Road beyond where we were standing hadn't been taken over by the council and was therefore private and she didn't want it dug up unless Virgin Media was going to resurface the whole street.

Poor Weegie chap was looking a bit pale around the gills by this time and went off to consult with his Boss and MDC. He came back with a map from MDC showing that my house and 44A were indeed private and we weren't getting the fibre anyway (which explains why we didn't get notified) but the other half of my semi was on a council road and he would get fibre - so they'd dig up the driveway at the top. "And BTW, that land where our Tranny is parked is a council pavement."

"If it's a council pavement, then why did Midlothian Planning tell the guy, who wanted to build a house in that garden there, to contact us to see if we would allow him access across our wee bit land? MDC knows it belongs to us and my neighbour has his title deeds on hand to prove it."

By the time my neighbour had dug out his title deeds, MDC had admitted that our driveway, the wee bit of non pavement and the rest of Station Road were not council property and Virgin Media could not lay their cable beyond the flats opposite us. At which point, they decided that it wasn't economically viable for just ten flats and left!! A result - especially as I wasn't getting the fibre anyway and would have had to move to Virgin Media even if I was.

But think what would have happened if I'd been out!

## INTERESTING CAR

Ronart W152, made 1981-86  
Designed to copy the 1950s  
front engined Formula 1 cars  
using the mechanicals from  
Jaguar XJ models

# SECRETARY'S AGM REPORT

A big plus during the year was that the committee was brought up to full strength by the addition of four new members which had a significant impact on the running and organising of events. Fraser and Steve can't be here tonight but I would formally like to thank them and the other members of the committee for their hard work and their support during the year. All of the committee are happy to continue in post for the coming year.

First full year of events for a while which were by and large well attended and well received. We attended some of our regular shows and added a new one at Carhailes, we had a very interesting visit to Bill Dalgety's restoration place, we did a run or three and many thanks to those who arranged them, had the usual mayhem that is known as the gymkhana, the social event of the year - the BBQ and then we had the Gathering of the Clans and we finished our year with the Christmas dinner.

The last run of the season proved quite eventful for one of our members - in fact the organiser whose normally trusty steed broke down had to have the recovery service called out. The day of disaster did not end there and in fact got worse due to issues with public transport which led to him arriving home at a very late hour and very tired. (*Ed: Full story on next page*) His story touched the committee so much that we have awarded him the Piston Broke trophy to mark his calamitous day and I would now like to formally present the trophy to Jim Tierney. [The Brian Kirkness Trophy for the best home restoration should have been presented to John Lawson but the secretary forgot the trophy - sorry John catch you next time!]

Financially we had a successful year in which we managed to increase our bank balances by just over £1,000. Our raffles did well (thanks to Martin) our calendars sold well again (thank you Helen) and our membership numbers held steady (thanks to you all)

The one big ticket item on the agenda related to the cost of hiring the room at Meggetland. For over ten years we have had the room at Meggetland free of charge but, sadly, all good things must come to an end (aka someone picked up that we were not paying!) The committee has spent a number of meetings discussing options and researching alternative venues. We have concluded that, given the facilities and geographic location of our present "home", it offers good value for money and we recommend that we stay put and pay the fees.

At the moment we can meet this additional cost from our current operations but we need to look to the future and as a result are presenting you with alternative suggestions of possible ways to future-proof the club. These are not exhaustive and if you have any suggestions, we are happy to hear them. However, I would stress that we spent a lot of time debating and discussing options before coming to our short list which we present tonight. The options we would ask you to consider are:

1. Do nothing and see how our finances pan out this year and then take a decision at next year's AGM
2. Have members who attend a meeting each pay an extra amount, say £2
3. Raise membership fees for next year to the pre discounted rate ie £20 or even higher.

After discussion, it was agreed that we should follow option 1 and review the situation at next year's AGM. By that time, we would have details of the rent charge for 2024 as well as a note of the financial performance in 2023 and we would be able to make an informed judgement on the way forward.

There being no further business the meeting was formally brought to a close. My thanks to all the members who attended.

**Allan Digance**

# THE PISTON BROKE TROPHY

I was awarded the Piston Broke trophy for 2022 and I thought that perhaps I would tell the story of why to members that do not know the story.

It was at the last run of the season and as I had organised this outing, and I had the position of last of the ELBMG procession in our silver ZS. We were approximately 30 mins into the run and progressing along Carron Valley to the reservoir when the ignition light appeared. The car seemed to be performing OK and it was obviously not the alternator drive belt so we carried on until the ABS light appeared along with the instruments starting to fail. At this point we pulled into a lay-by and investigated, and it was obviously the alternator had failed. Despite using a hammer on the alternator, it would not work (sometimes this works).

So, we phoned the rescue services at approx. 11:40am (I had phoned Helen first to inform her that we were dropping out). They told me it would be 120 mins minimum to reach us. In fact they did not appear until 15:30. They did update me in minutes every hour from somewhere south. Luckily, we had some eats and water, but it was very cold and wet outside.

The engineer that turned up reached the same conclusion that the alternator was out and performed the same test as me but also some electrical tests as well. The first thing he did however was to put Marjorie in his cab with the heater full blast. He informed me that we would need recovered and that the Dreadnought Garage, Callendar was the destination.

We proceeded to Callendar, ZS at rear and Marjorie and myself beside him. The young engineer told me he had volunteered to come from Glasgow to rescue us as no other van was available. He told me his Father had a ZS and that he now had his oldest car rescued. He was impressed with the condition of it as well.

We arrived at Dreadnought at 17:00 and after being unloaded I entered the petrol station to firstly buy Marjorie and myself a hot drink and then ask about a taxi to take us to Stirling. I was supplied with a contact number which I telephoned but no answer, so I then returned to the assistants and asked if they had another taxi telephone number. The answer was a no, only 1 taxi in Callendar and I would have to arrange another from Stirling but if I wished I could get the last bus to Stirling which was departing from outside the garage at 17:50. We quickly locked up the car wrote a note to Paul Luti and got on the bus with the girl from the service station (finished her shift) and proceed to Stirling via Doune, Deanston and arriving in Stirling at 18:40.

I then led Marjorie to the Train Station only to find that the train drivers were on strike. No trains. Marjorie then led us to a taxi rank, muttering a few things which I did not hear. The trouble was no taxis either except a private hire car. I enquired to the driver to how I would get a car to take us to Brighton. He then spoke to presumably to his controller and then handed me the phone to speak to her and after instructing her what I required she asked to speak to the driver and 2 secs later he told us to jump in. We were delivered home at 19:45 and I had to fork out £47.

The best advice I can give anyone on all this is NOT to ask what you are having for Dinner when you get home!

**Jim Tierney**

# GLASGOW CENTRAL STATION

Nine members of EBMGOC or should that be six members and three associates, embarked upon the Glasgow Central Station tour. Interestingly for a car event, everyone was turning up by public transport. Helen and Tony arriving Chez Craig to get the local line to GCS. Jim and Marjorie were getting the express train from Polmont. Emo, Mhairi, and Matthew Wilson were getting the train from Edinburgh and Fraser arriving by bus!!!

As timing was a bit tight from ours, we decided to get the earlier 13:00 train which would give us time for a cuppa and a bite to eat once there. Although the journey itself was uneventful, Tony seemed to be having issues with his tickets. Not least trying to find his wallet to pay for them and then forgetting where he had put them (back in his wallet!!!!).

Having arrived at GCS, we adjourned to Costa for a cuppa and sandwich and do a spot of our favourite hobby - people watching. Amongst some of the people we spotted were Jim and Marjorie who had had the same idea and were popping into Costa as well. Having met up, they told us they had seen the Wilsons on the same train but had lost sight at the train station. So, all was looking good, we just needed Fraser and everyone would be present. As the tour was due to last a couple hours this necessitated the obligatory comfort break. On the way to the loos in the station I bumped into Emo, Matthew and Fraser. Mrs. Wilson having taken the opportunity to go for some retail therapy would meet up with us after the tour.



With everyone now present, we made our way to the meeting point and awaited our tour guide. At just before 3 our guide arrived dressed in Gillie brogues, kilt and jacket. Paul was his name and he had started with the railways 31 years ago. He began his career at GCS in customer services before working his way up to become station master at Euston, Kings Cross and finally Glasgow. He had always been interested in railway history and as part of Glasgow's open doors events, suggested they let the public in to see some of the old facilities. Unsure of the demand for this type of event, they released 100 tickets and were flabbergasted to receive approx 83,500 applications!!! And so the idea was born.



It was then time to get suited and booted, namely green hi vis vest and orange safety cap - cue photo opportunity with Helen staying firmly behind the lens. Once this had been done, we were led round the concourse and through a door and down some steps. This led down to the first level where it was pointed out that when the station was built there had been no thought of any fire safety and as such, there had been two fires a year apart in 1888 and 1889. Now they have installed partition walls and fire doors so hopefully there will not be a repeat. Moving on, we were then taken into an area where they would have unloaded the coal and grain from the trains.



Even though this was a work area the construction was magnificent with vaulted brick work arches that had been made using giant wooden formers during the construction. The cargo would be dropped through large metal doors into this storage area ready to be distributed throughout the city. Evidence of this was further enhanced by the brass rings still attached to the walls which were used to tether the horses. This would have been a very dirty environment with coal and grain dust, not to mention the constant threat from rats attracted by the grain. Further on we made our way to a small room at the end of a corridor. This was the ledger room where all the staff files were kept. This was

the least favourite place the staff had to visit as once again rats were quite prevalent and indeed there is a photo of the room taken when the files were still there, and on the shelves were no less than 6 rats!



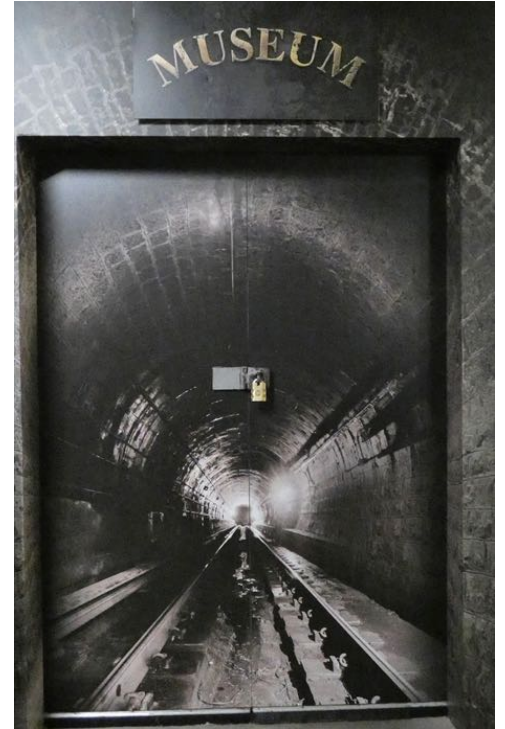


Once we had finished here, we made our way down to the next level. This was a temporary mortuary during the war. Approx 17,800 bodies passed through this area and there is a video display of all their names, with addresses, shown on the wall. Some of the facts are quite harrowing - the female relatives had to identify their loved one's body, a process made more difficult as instead of metal I.D tags like the Americans, our soldiers had cloth ones (which contained asbestos) and were less likely to be legible. Once done, they were instructed to remove the body as soon as possible and sometimes even received an invoice from the Government for the shroud they were wrapped in.

On a more upbeat note, the girders that support the station above are subject to various tests each year to ensure they are fit for purpose, and it has been discovered that there has been no movement or deterioration since they were first installed. Certainly, a credit to those who built the station in the first place. Through a locked door is the museum which contains various artefacts, both found and donated. As well as a display relating the story of the lost town of Grahamston, there are two Swiss clocks, one of which which halts the second hand for 3 seconds when it reaches the top - can't remember why! One item of note is a map detailing some of the lines and prices. This was found under the carpet of the driver's tearoom in the station.



Our final location was the original Victorian platform. For this we made our way back up and entered one of those insignificant grey doors within a station corridor. Once through we made our way down a set of metal stairs (for which Glasgow council charged Network Rail £3,945 for a building warrant). This area had previously been used as a dumping ground within the station. When this platform was in use the steam trains used to stop but of course the engine would still be running and consequently there would be buildup of smoke, and this allowed the less salubrious members of society to rob ladies, by cutting the handles of their handbags with a knife,





and so was not a very safe place to be. Such was the frequency of these occurrences that the ladies petitioned for a separate waiting room to be added to prevent these robberies, which the railway agreed to.

Now that this site has been cleared, future development of this area includes Victorian shop fronts, a 3D holograph depicting people in period dress and the installation of a full-size steam engine with 1 or 2 carriages. This should hopefully be completed by May. We also got a glimpse of a train entering the low level station - apparently you can see this tunnel from the train if you know where to look!



With the tour finished we made our way back to the meeting point where we returned our safety hats and hi vis vests. It has to be said that our guide Paul was very enthusiastic and possesses a wealth of information about the development of the station.

After the tour we had a leisurely walk up to the Red Onion that Jim had kindly booked on our behalf. Here we met Mrs. Wilson and enjoyed a meal that rounded off the day nicely. It was then back to the train station, although Emo and Mhairi were staying in Glasgow for some more drinks.

All in all, a great day and thanks to all who came, to Jim for booking the meal and June & Helen for the photos. We may opt to go back next year once they have the train installed - watch this space. **Craig Fotheringham**

PS There was a lovely old model of Flying Scotsman, which Helen would have snaffled if she could've fitted it into her handbag!!



## BACK HOME

The February MG meeting was indeed a thing to behold, not because of the AGM and the lively discussion re events, but earlier that night at 18:20 I got a call from Chris at CBC to say my car had been painted - yee haa! and I couldn't wait to share the good news.

I was due to see Chris the following day re the completion date. So, as I had already offered to take Mrs. J to work (at the R.I.E) this meant I was already halfway to East Fortune and therefore only 20 mins further east to CBC's premises.

When I got there Chris was busy with a customer but was happy to let me in to see the car and as you will now hopefully have seen the photos on F/B - it looks superb, resplendent in its new Aqua colour. Although it is just the bare shell (panels and hardtop to follow later), this will now allow me to bring the shell back to chez Craig and start the build up. Cue a plan.

A quick call to Emo confirmed he had Wed 15<sup>th</sup> off, and along with young Matthew Wilson, we would bring the car back then. I would hire the obligatory Luton Van and arrange to meet them out at Chris's.

It would be no problem to load the van at CBC as there were plenty of bodies, but once we had got it back to my house it would be a different matter. If you remember when Eddie, June and I loaded the fully panelled shell it involved quite a bit of effort and an engine crane. This time we would have to be slightly more careful. Although there were no panels attached, there is still a fair weight involved and along with fresh paint makes for an exciting unload!!!!

Our plan is to jack the front of the shell up and then place my new red Sealey 900kg 4-wheel dolly under the floor pan. Once we have this done, we will then reverse the van up the slope at my house, drop the tail lift and wheel the shell out. Hopefully this will negate any lifting/damage and keep the disruption to the neighbours to a minimum. When I loaded the shell previously, I ended up blocking the road for a while, much to the inconvenience of the traffic.

However, before any of this could take place the garage needed some slight rearrangement. With the 'B still away having some work done, this gave me the opportunity and space to move all the bits for the Midget off the dolly and organize them to give me room for the Seat, the Midget and June's bike.

Having sorted the garage out on Valentine's day!!! The next day found me up bright and early to pick up the van. I had previously popped in at the weekend to pre book to make sure all was well. However, when I went to view the vehicle I was confronted with an LWB transit, not a Luton with a tail lift. Now both Emo and I know you can get an unpainted Midget shell in a LWB transit albeit at a jaunty angle but that was NOT an option for my newly painted shell! Back into the office and fortunately they had a Luton ready to go. So 10 mins later after the obligatory inspection I was ready to depart.

A couple of calls before I made my way onto the Motorway, one to Chris and one to Emo to let them both know I was on my way. Part of this plan was, Emo was going to join up in convoy with me on the bypass somewhere but eventually we met upon the A1.

Once we reached CBC the van was parked up the ramp and the tail lift lowered. Matthew had brought some packing blankets, that we put on the floor and along with CBC staff we carefully manhandled the shell into the back with surprising ease. Ratchet straps were duly fastened and with the shell secure we made our way back to West Lothian. It is here I must confess to taking the wrong turn at Haddington and ending up parallel to the A1, but eventually meeting with Emo at the next junction. Back on the A1, we finally reached the bypass before heading westwards.





Once back at the house we formed the plan. Initially we thought about trying to put the dolly under the car in the truck and then using the tail lift and the slope on the road to wheel the shell out. Having loaded the car at CBC, with a small skate under the front chassis legs, a slight change to the plan ensued. We put the skate back under the front and then me and Emo lifted the rear of the shell out the back. Young Matthew guided the front of the shell, making sure it didn't hit the inside. Once we had it so far out, we were able to rest the shell back down. Now came the tricky bit, with me and Emo supporting the rear of the shell, we pulled the shell all the way out, so the skate was resting on the tail lift. Matthew then lowered the tail lift down and with a bit of adjustment we got the shell down onto the dolly. Success!!!



It was then a simple matter of moving the Luton and wheeling the shell into the cleared garage. Obviously during this process, the obligatory photos were taken for posterity and with everything packed away we retired upstairs for a cuppa, comfort break and congratulations all round.

It must be said that I had some reservations about moving the shell with just the three of us, but a little thought and forward planning made it a lot easier than any of us anticipated. Many thanks to Emo and Matthew for their help and you should look forward to some articles in the mag and some pics on F/Book. [Craig Fotheringham](#)



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

*Monthly meetings have resumed at the rugby cub, second Thursday 7.30 for 8pm*

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

All provisional

**March 9**      **Open Meeting & Raffle**

**March 25**      **Tech Day 11am chez Helen at Roslin. SU Carburettors and fit new radiator to a GT. Contact Helen if interested.**

**£7 to visit the garden and you can picnic or eat at the cafe. Please let Bill & Karen know if you want to come so they can book the group in.**  
**[karen.niven@me.com](mailto:karen.niven@me.com)**

**April 13**      **Meeting & Spares Evening**

**April 23**      **Drive It Day with BVAC to Berwick on Tweed. Start 10am at Milestones Garden Centre, Newtown St Boswells. Contact Helen if interested.**

**June 8**      **Monthly Meeting**

**June 18**      **Thirlestane Castle Show. Contact Martin or Steve**

**May 11**      **Open Meeting & Raffle**

**May 20**      **Trip to Traquair Brewing. Contact Andrew**

**July 2**      **BBQ at Digance Towers Hallhead Road - Contact Allan**

**July 9**      **Glamis Show, contact Kay Dennis  
[ekdennis@btinternet.com](mailto:ekdennis@btinternet.com)**

**June 7**      **Picnic Run to Japanese Garden, Dollar. The run starts 10am at the old Forth Bridges hotel car park.**

**July 13**      **Monthly meeting & raffle**  
**July 15**      **Dunbar RNLI Day, Contact Martin**