



Edinburgh, Lothians and Borders MG CLUB

www.MG-Edinburgh.co.uk



APRIL 2026



Craig finds his dream car at Classic Restorations!

Credits: Helen, David T, Joan,

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Name: David Turner

Occupation: Retired teacher and active organist/pianist

MGs and current state of repair:

1968 MGC: it's not 'concours' in that it has various modifications and upgrades such as power steering, but it was superbly restored at some point, probably in the early 2000s, and is still in really good condition. I have had a lot of mechanical work done to bring that side up to the same standard as the body.



2010 MG TF: it's one of the last ever made, being 51st from last off the production line. It's technically therefore MG Motor (SAIC), not MG Rover, though you have to look hard to tell the difference. These very late cars had all the left-over upgrades from the parts bin thrown at them, so it has leather seats, parking sensors, and the 'twist of pepper' wheels from the 85th anniversary cars, for example. When I bought it, in 2023, it was in the best condition of any I could find, and has even now only done 23,500 miles. It's been well cared for and is in excellent condition.



What is your normal car? Lexus GS hybrid. It's my fourth Lexus in a row, and the last three have all been hybrids. All four have lived up to the Lexus reputation for reliability and have been excellent in all respects. Whilst Lexus dealers are expensive, I've found them better than those of any other brand I've owned.

How many miles did you do in your MGs over the last 12 months? I did about 1,500 in the TF, a proportion of which was on the MGF Register's autumn weekender around Arrochar. The MGC has only done about 400 miles, since it was off the road for half the year (see below).

Who are you insured with? The TF is with Cherished Vehicle Insurance, and the MGC is with Peter James under the MGCC scheme. I've changed insurer several times but I'm currently happy with these two. Incidentally, not many 'classic' insurers will give agreed value policies on cars like my TF because it's less than 20 years old, but I think both of these companies do.

Who does your repairs? The MGC spent its summer at the seaside at Murray Scott-Nelson in Scarborough, because I wanted a lot of mechanical rebuilding work done, and there are very few garages who have even seen an MGC, let alone know what to do with one. All the routine maintenance or straightforward upgrades (such as conversion to electronic ignition) I've done myself.

The TF has been maintained by David Allkins, the 'MG Rover Mobile Mechanic', from Derby. Most garages don't want anything to do with these cars, despite the fact that they're not that old. It can be a bit awkward to work on, not least because of the mid-engine layout.

Favourite run? I take both cars on the A702 to West Linton or Biggar fairly regularly on the grounds that it's a nice scenic run and one of the few roads around here with a decent surface. I try to avoid driving either in town here owing to the disgraceful state of roads in the city. Despite being fitted with 'soft-ride suspension' (as all TFs from 2005 were) the TF's ride is pretty firm. Ironically both cars can be driven in the LEZ for different reasons, but I don't!

MANY MOONS AGO - 2018

Annual Quiz

Christmas Dinner



VISIT TO CLASSIC RESTORATIONS

Eighteen members turned out for the fascinating tour of Classic Restorations in Alyth. Two brave people turned up in their older MGs - Chris looking pleased his V8 got him there and Dominic in his TF. There were also two modern Chinese ones - Graham's Plug-In hybrid and my bluey/lilac MG3.



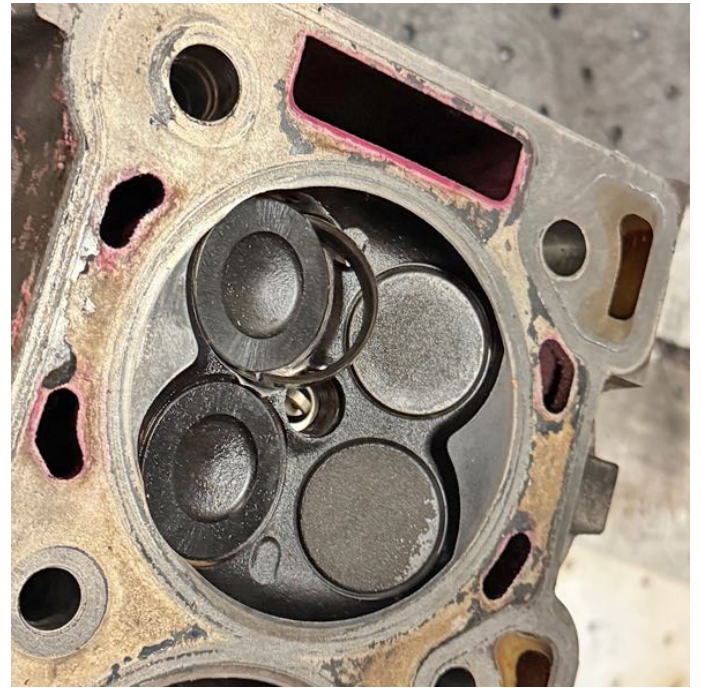
Graeme (son of Charles who showed us round in 2018) let us warm up in reception while everyone assembled and then we started the tour. We saw a huge variety of cars lots of Rollers, Bentleys, sportscars and very old, unique vehicles - but there were ordinary cars getting a ground-up resto for sentimental reasons.

Graeme gave us the backstory of the cars, which was the fascinating part! People who had spent thousands on the resto but hadn't actually bothered to come and see the car, people who said Classic Resto was too expensive, went somewhere cheaper and then had to pay Classic Resto to sort out the problems, people who paid £350K for a rare Merc, only to find it was an ordinary Merc with a body kit and worth £40K.

There was a now rare MG Montego with 14,000 miles on the clock and a very rusty MGB awaiting its new body shell - which now costs £18,000!! GTs will presumably be even more expensive.



Graeme also handed out advice - Mercedes 230s have a unique and troublesome fuel injection system and it's not a good idea to use your Aston Martin to reverse your boat trailer into the sea and not hose it off afterwards. If you notice a problem with your engine, then do stop driving it before you do serious damage - the pics on the next page show an engine that had one of its valve seats out of place.



You know how they used to send apprentices for Tartan paint? Well, one lad found some - as shown by the RR advertising Scott's Porage Oats!! We saw a Midget with a Nissan Micra engine - Craig disappeared under that bonnet for a close inspection.

Classic Restorations are able to do welding, body repairs, re-shells, resprays, interior trim, engine rebuilds and services - all to a high standard. They are expensive, but they are good.

So, an interesting tour, finished off with a delicious lunch at the Alyth Hotel - they managed to serve us quickly and cheerfully after we arrived a tad early - and the food was good.



Many thanks to Andrew for organising it all and if you do visit Classic Restorations, you should know their car park is Seagull Central - don't park next the building! As ever, I finish with photos of members enjoying themselves. **Mrs Grumpy**



A WELL DESERVED AWARD

Longer standing members of ELBMG club will remember Malcolm Kirby for his indefatigable enthusiasm, humour, his PA and wee traction engine that gave rides at numerous shows.



Malcolm has also been a stalwart of Red Dot Radio since 1969. The Hospital Radio is now based in the Western General although it started on Hanover Street and has moved to the old Royal Infirmary, then Victoria Hospital before a space was found at the Western. Red Dot Radio is as popular now as it was when it started and Malcolm intends to keep on doing it.

After nearly 60 years, he's been awarded an MBE - it's good to see that honours do go to honest, decent and hard working people! **Mrs Grumpy**



The GT and Me in October 2025 - a European Swan Song?

(well, maybe)

My earliest memory of foreign travel was by car, post-World War II and aged 4. Safe in my father's arms, I watched the looming underside of our big black Chevrolet being winched up from a car ferry and lowered to the dockside in Calais. Of the holiday itself, the childhood scenes are fleeting. The strongest was emptiness when I played on rubble with hoteliers' children. We drove on to the gently prosperous bustle of Juan les Pins, on the Mediterranean, and the soft taste of baguettes, croissants, and Grenadine.

I've been driving abroad since I was eighteen, mostly from Scotland and usually on my own. Car travel gives me freedom and flexibility. I reckon that I have used every Channel port (including the Chunnel) to get off this island.

I bought my 1974 Tartan Red MGB GT around 1990, after arguments with insurers when my green 'rubber-bumper' was stolen.

This older, red one handles really differently and has its original engine (round the clock twice) and gearbox but needed a new Heritage body shell, leather club seats etc. fitted mid-90s. It has been a workhorse, well cared for but not as an ornament, and it has earned its keep. It has a huge K-fan (after threatening to overheat at Monzo F1, one summer (another story!)).

A well-travelled little car, it commuted at least 50 miles daily cross-country in all Scottish weathers, with escapes abroad for many years. Then for 18 months it was 80 workday miles! For the past 14 years, the MG has gained a garage and semi-retirement with only UK travel and club outings.



Traffic and haulage have multiplied so enormously that driving a classic MG south from Scotland on queueing motorways is not a lot of fun. We had some wonderful years here when a car and lorry ferry sailed from Fife to Belgium. But, there was a double industrial whammy. It proved cheaper for Scots holiday makers to fly abroad; plus the un-negotiated cost to truckers, who were only paid when driving. The unprofitable facility closed.

Nowadays, the simplest option from Edinburgh is to take the overnight North Sea ferry from Newcastle to Amsterdam.

Winter 2024: My son, Doug Bridgens, suggested taking the MG on its final European road trip, sharing the driving. Doug, a long-distance walker, cyclist, and photographer is the only person I trust to drive the 'B. I made a list of places I wanted to go - Castellane, the Alps, the Pyrenees, and dine on Cassoulet in France; Canfranc, Sol del Rey Catolico, Téba, and some Napoleonic battle sites in Spain. Places and roads that needed a tough little MG, as they are almost inaccessible by train or plane.

A workshop check-up before the ambitious trip decreed a new exhaust and a few little tweaks. After recent years of foreign travel with an easy Corsa VXR, I knew taking MG hairpin bends without power steering was going to be a test for me. Between us, the MG and I rack up well over 100 years.

There was the usual preparation of sorting out documentation, insurances, daily distances, and charge-free credit cards. We went in October 2025, before snow restrictions were likely in the mountains, and when it should be a little cooler in the south of Spain.

Over the years I have found that my MG is often positioned on ferries for load balance, but this was one of the strangest! We crossed the North Sea on the weekend of Storm Amy 2025, so I hoped the big container was well strapped down. The storm delayed disembarkation in Amsterdam by over two hours.



From the ferry, we began our satnav mystery tour to get to our interim destinations! Old-fashioned folding maps give me essential geographical context when using satnav to avoid Low Emission Zones. We established that 200 miles daily over 3 weeks was feasible. I had not realised how far we would circle LEZs, how many there would be *en route*, and how wonderfully interesting it would become. We pared luggage to a carrying minimum to avoid temptation of overnight raiding, and I packed the tools round the spare wheel.

We chose to arrive in Holland on a Sunday morning when trucking traffic would be lighter. This was sound planning but my unaccustomed navigation by satnav (as club members will understand!) to avoid Low Emission Zones, led to the only misdirection of the tour. At the first Dutch roundabout, my indication to take the exit was not fast enough, so Doug took the next one. Satnav did get us back on track but via Schiphol Airport. Then we circled endless suburban roundabouts and massive (in MGB terms) speed bumps, followed by Belgium forests. Excellent for speed control but frustrating for us. My 'B sits happily at 70 mph; Doug calculated we averaged that first day at 43mph!

Always conscious of safe parking for a classic, I had booked rooms in a castle near Namur as a first night treat. Travelling off-season has many benefits but, unfortunately, only two hotels in our road trip had restaurants open for dinner. The castle was not one. We arrived late but found good food available a few miles away. Doug calculated we had averaged 200+ miles at 43mph.

Next morning, we walked to the car park and found a pancaked tyre, the nail clearly visible. Doug inflated the tyre with the electric pump, but we needed to get it fixed. It was my turn to drive.

Once again, we had lost a fair bit of time at the start of day and drove through several small towns that had petrol pumps and car showrooms but no workshops. Then, we came across an enormous, tyre depot, isolated in deep countryside,. The staff dropped everything, our wheel was removed and tyre repaired. They were intrigued by the 'B; where we had come from and where we were going? Drive a classic abroad and you make friends!



Getting to our hotel in Vitry-le-François was straightforward. A small, ancient, walled town attractively spaced around a large square garden with afternoon cafés and a good choice of restaurants and attractive overhead lights that go on and off as you pass.

The next day we were entertained at a terraced paved restaurant. It was set on a neat, floral roundabout that reminded me of an old Inspector Clouseau film. A queue of commuter traffic and huge travel coaches eased their way to their exit

ving with oncoming uphill cars, lorries, some determined tourists on a pedestrian crossing, and a horse and cart! Another small town that had its plaque, recording Bonaparte's visit.

Doug persuaded me it would be easier to book hotels online as we went, mostly Ibis Budget with gated parking secured at night from 9pm - always easy to get two rooms. They provide clean, cheap 'n cheerful, no frills, but *en suite* accommodation. Breakfasts cost extra but good value.

Every French town seemed to be a Low Emission Zone that would penalise an elderly car. Satnav directed us around the countryside, somewhat haphazardly, but steadily took us south east. As a result, our trip drove through intriguing areas that we would have otherwise have missed. Lots of lovely sweet-smelling hilly forest runs; and through villages with good roads for coffee breaks so it turned into a good day.

Grenoble has grown from the pretty university town in the foothills of the French Alps, to a heaving conurbation on either side of the Isère river. Heavy traffic, roadworks, and complex traffic signals guided our way slowly round the outskirts. This was our start of the N85 Route Napoléon is 200 miles from its southern finish in the Mediterranean. He landed at Golfe Juan, in 1815, after escaping from the island of Elba, marching into Grenoble, having gathered a thousand men from his former, defeated Grande Armée, a week later. Almost as famous as Hannibal, but without the battle elephants, Bonaparte marched fast on meandering alpine paths north towards Paris in 1815, on his way to ultimate defeat at Waterloo. We stayed at Ibis Voreppe (for Grenoble).

My son declares that I am besotted with Napoléon - not true, I cry! I admire the general's resourcefulness but, like all dictators, he came adrift as he believed his own PR and built a family dynasty that was not up to the job. Wellington, also clever, but was controlled by having to manipulate parliament and crown. Doug and I went to the bicentenary of Waterloo, so perhaps he has a point. (My third historical novel will be about Torres Vedras.)

From Voreppe it was on to La Mure for coffee. The descending hairpins started, so much more challenging than the uphill bends with the greater volume of traffic. That section of N85 is a steep, non-stop zigzag on excellent paving with breath-taking loops spread out and visible below us. Doug really enjoyed driving that section. This stage of N85 is what makes the whole Route Napoléon a right-of-passage for young French drivers and tourists alike.

It took us to Sisteron, a lively small town with narrow streets, medieval centre, in the mountains. That hotel's rather faded grandeur, was very different from our previous hostelries. It has underground parking but I had to be at my most persuasive to gain access, until the receptionist saw the car. Restaurants were just around the corner so we were free to have a glass or two with dinner. Not to be missed is the rock climbers' paradise, the gigantic Rocher de la Baume, visible across the river from an informative viewpoint. Having walked through the old town, we watched a mass sweep by a posse of police targeting unpaid parking. Not a car escaped them - their grins abounded!

I have had a grey plastic donkey, with a nodding head and yellow paniers, with me since 1947. It has 'Castellane' inscribed on its rump.

I have long wanted to visit its origine but it was never on my route. So, the next day we diverted after two-thirds down the N85, and found an elderly hotel at my bucket-listed Castellane. Boney had stopped for lunch with the local town council, of course! Castellane is another tiny, lovely mountain village with an ancient heart. I searched in the single, open gift shop for another donkey but all that I could find were toy sheep! I chatted to an elderly resident, also relaxing in our pavement café, telling her of my father's long-ago gift. She recognised exactly what I described. The lady remembered those toys. She mourned the loss of the traditional donkeys that used to be employed by local shepherds with their dogs. They carried supplies when the sheep were moved annually up to summer alpine pastures. The village would have been en fête that day but now, she said, it was done with boring tractors, trucks and 4x4s.

We had visited a large Citroen museum on our way into Castellane - an amazing collection in pristine condition so I took some photos for a friend who still has his from new! Later, a rather lonely looking wine seller was sitting outside his village shop so, of course, we stopped to chat and bought two pricey bottles of full-bodied red to be tucked away for Christmas.

We had lunch in the pizzeria and it was so good that, after we explored a bit farther, we went back for an excellent dinner. Next early morning we had pastries and coffee from the local boulangerie's stall while the weekly Saturday market was setting up for business, complete with a fully equipped hairdresser's caravan. Few shops and no supermarkets or petrol stations here. Fill up before arrival!



We took a steep narrow road out of Castellane that climbed high into hills that became treeless cliffs. The D102 turned into a 'Balcony Road,' designated as dangerous. These old roads appear to be fairly common between mountain villages, still used as shortcuts by locals. The name describes a single-track road with some edge barriers, literally carved out of the rocks above a river gorge. There are few planned passing places and low cloud thickened as we climbed above the river.



We wound down the windows to hear oncoming cars beeping on the narrow road as they approached us on the cliff's blind curves. The D102 is only 7 miles long - but, oh, it beats the N85 for scenery and exhilaration.

It became obvious, as the mountains disappeared from the rear-view mirror, that the N85 was becoming PC. Slowly descending towards the sea; the excitement over.

Time for us to agree that avoiding the Côte d'Azur was best and to head straight for the Pyrénées. Of course, 'straight' with the MG was a misnomer.

We made our way west, parallel to the sea but inland from the motorway. The iconic poplars lining French main roads are disappearing but, despite a lack of replanting, there are enough acting as roadside sentinels to remind you that you are in France.

Having taken our usual break for coffee and snack, I had an amusing chat with a guy about the complicated Rules Board in the car park. Eventually, he told me that he was also on holiday and could not work out the regulations either. We jointly assumed they did not apply today, to us, on Sundays.



He asked me where we had come from and, when I said 'Écosse.' He replied with a grin, 'La Jupe!' (the skirt) and started hopping about and mimicking the pipes. I told him that Doug did have a kilt, but not on this trip.

Finding ourselves in an unusually modern suburb of bungalows, somewhere to the northeast of the sprawling LEZ of Montpellier, we stopped to have a tasty plat du jour in a busy local eaterie before wending our flattish way south of Montpellier to our hotel at Lunel for the night. We would recommend the Kyriad Montpellier Est - slightly more expensive but lots of nice rooms, lifts, and a fully manned evening restaurant. We opted to have our dinner on the elevated veranda amongst the tree tops - beautifully peaceful.

I had begun, to collect rural traffic signs not seen on principal roads, eg:

Boue = mud; *Absence d'Accôttement* = deep side-ditch, etc (list upon application!)

To be continued next month. **Joan Sumner**

FISHERROW HARBOUR DAY - May 16

We've been asked again to put on a display of MGs at the Fisherrow Harbour Day. This starts at 12 and we have to stay until 4pm. Meet up at Fort Kinnaird car park (near Primark) at 10am as the organisers want us to get in early to get the cars arranged. See Martin if you'd like to go.



DRIVE IT DAY - April 26

We've had a change of plan with Drive It Day as the BVAC run, while a lovely route, takes us too far south - it would be a round trip of about 200 miles. So, we're doing a shorter local run, finishing up with a late lunch at the Horseshoe Inn.

The plan is meet up at the National Mining Museum for a 10am start (cafe & toilets if required) for a 30 mile run to Whitmuir Farm shop for coffee, then another 30 miles to the Horseshoe Inn for a late lunch at 2pm. There will be a £5 deposit required, payable to Helen or the club.



CLASSICS IN THE PARK - May 24

The Kinross and District Rotary are doing a fund raising event for CHAS on May 24th. It is "Classics in the Park" at Balado Airfield near Kinross. An invitation only event and not open to the public - they are hoping to have 50 to 100 cars.

The intention is to invite super cars and classic cars to the event and there will be -

A tractor run of approx 20 miles (£20)

A classic car run approx 25 miles (£20)

Donation for seat in classic or super car (£15)

Donation for seat in modern tractor (£15)

Carkhana (£10)

Mini Digger challenge (£10)

Light aircraft ride (£90)

There will also be an entry fee (£20) as the intention is to raise as much money for CHAS' Rachel House refurbishment as possible.

The program will be -

9.45 to 10.45 Arrive (bacon rolls and coffee supplied)

10.30 - Judging of pre and post 1960 cars, super cars, tractors

11.30 tractor & car runs depart, carkhana and light aircraft trips

13.30 return of tractors/cars

15.45 finish

The ELBMG club has been asked to organise the Carkhana and we will need marshals to run the event - at least 6-8 but the more the better. I'm also assuming if you are helping, you won't need to pay the £20 entry fee - but you can enter the event as an individual if you wish, Steve has the entry forms.

We are planning to run four of our "driving skills" tests

Wheel Revolutions

Parallel Park

Legally Passing a Bicycle

Roundabout



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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

April 9 *Monthly Meeting & Raffle*

April 26 *Drive It Day - see previous pages & Helen*

May 10 *Stirling Classic Car Show - meet up at Dobbies, Stirling at 8.30am, to leave for show at 8.45am. We have to stay at the show until 4pm*

May 14 *Monthly Meeting*

May 16 *Fisherrow Harbour Day - see previous pages & Martin*

May 24 *Classics in the Park - see previous pages*

June 11 *Monthly Meeting & Raffle*

June 14 *Tayside Classic Car Show, Errol Airfield, please contact Steve*

June 21 *Joint Run to Bo'ness car museum with Glasgow MGOC*

July 9 *Monthly Meeting*

July 11 *Dunbar RNLI - contact Martin*

July 12 *SVVC Glamis Castle Show with Tayside MGOC*

August 13 *Monthly Meeting & Raffle*

August 21-23 *Weekend away to Cumbria Classic show at Dalemmain House, near Penrith*

September 10 *Monthly Meeting*

September 13 *Carhailes at Newhailes House*