



REGISTERS

V8

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V8 in Northern France

You may recall that I reported in the August News Letter that my V8 had been treated to a 4.0 upgrade earlier this year. The Spa Classic provided the perfect opportunity for running in purposes but the first serious trip was still to come. So, in mid-September my wife and I set off in the V8 with a friend and his wife in his recently acquired 1984 Mercedes R107. We were heading for northern France and Belgium on a war graves trip, taking in both world war sites to help understand what our respective grandparents went through all those years ago.



Resting at the Thiepval Memorial

From the Eurotunnel we turned left and headed up to Dunkirk for our first stop at the Operation Dynamo Museum near

the coast. A worthwhile stop before pressing on to Ypres in Belgium for 2 nights. The V8 was running well and enjoying the French roads across the countryside. The péage costs a little more but it's generally a quicker route between destinations and the quality of the roads is superb. That said, some of the cross-country roads also provide some excellent driving and fabulous views. This is definitely what my late father-in-law would have called 'V8 country'! Our journey took us on to Cambrai, Arras and Rouen. Then over to Arromanches and the D-Day beaches, before heading back to Dieppe, via Honfleur, for the ferry crossing back to Newhaven. Living in NW Kent, the journey home was a mere hour away. If anyone would like more information of our journey, please email me and I will be happy to share more details.

There was plenty to visit and I think a return trip will be planned in the future, as we really only scratched the surface. If you're using the péage motorway system, I'd strongly recommend the purchase of an Emovis 'Bip&Go' tag to avoid queuing on and off the motorways. They even have 30kph lanes on some gates, which state that you can approach the barrier at this speed (around 19 mph) although this involves a certain level of bravery if the barrier fails to operate!

So how did my 53-year-old MGBGT V8 perform over the 1000-mile trip? Effortlessly and faultlessly is the short answer. 29.mpg too. The new engine didn't miss a beat and none of the small supply of spares I had stashed away in the car were needed. My only (small) discovery was that something was 'binding' on the steering on a full right lock. Close inspection showed that the Ron Hopkinson ¾" front anti-roll bar (who remembers those?) had been refitted (after engine replacement) approximately ½" off centre, towards the passenger side, resulting in the steering arm clashing with the ARB drop-link on full lock. I have rectified this and all is now well. It's worth noting that clearances are minimal on both sides with the bar in the correct position, so accurate placement is essential. If there are any grumbles on full lock, it's worth checking. Oh yes, the '84 Merc also performed well and didn't break down. German engineering with 108,000 miles on the clock – not bad for a pair of old cars.



The intrepid duo relaxing at Honfleur