



# The Grange Courier

## The Show Must Go On!



The annual Commercial Vehicle Show was held over three days in March at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham. This event is one of the biggest in Europe and attracts many thousands of visitors from the transport industry and all its related suppliers and customers. This year we were honoured to receive a request from our trailer suppliers, Dennison to display one of our newly acquired sliding skeletal (that's a trailer which adjusts to take different sizes of containers) on their stand. Dennison are a family run company who have an excellent reputation for customer service and production of a top quality, continuously refined product. Their highly innovative skeletal trailer is currently UK market leader, no mean feat in today's highly competitive environment.

Government Transport Secretary, Alister Darling was one of the high profile visitors to the show and impressed a number of industry supremos with his in depth knowledge of Telematics. He had done his homework a couple of weeks earlier in Edinburgh, when we supplied one of our new trucks, driven by John Stevenson, for a comprehensive demonstration of this latest vehicle information technology system. Over the years John Mitchell vehicles and trailers have appeared at a number of prestigious shows and displays, a small photographic record of these is pictured left.

# Spring Into Summer

Here we are starting another financial year, what a challenge the last one was! A shortage of drivers combined with rising fuel costs and escalating insurance premiums. Bad news? Never!

The team at John Mitchell have worked hard to keep the business in the black. Last years profit levels were acceptable but not spectacular, but we met our targets and kept our fleet replacement and depot improvement programmes on schedule. With the support of our valued customers we hope to progress and develop the company similarly, this year.

I hope you all have a good summer, perhaps jetting off to some warm far off land, or enjoying some well-deserved time off, closer to home. I will hopefully talk to you before the next newsletter, but if not enjoy your break!

Iain Mitchell.





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## New Arrivals Boost Fleet

This year's fleet replacement and addition programme lifted off at the beginning of April with new trucks from MAN (below left) and Mercedes Benz (above right). 'Grange Concorde', is the name given to the latest MAN, which is the 28th TGA model to join our ranks and comes complete with the Telematics satellite data information system.



Mercedes trucks are also well represented in the fleet, but 'Grange Comet', is the first of a number of Axor models due to arrive this season. The Axor is no nonsense, short / medium distance haulage vehicle, which has a good reputation for reliability and features a well proven, simplified mechanical layout. We have high expectations for these lorries and the ever-watchful eye of Stuart Allison our Fleet Engineer will closely monitor their performance.

A long-standing tradition of our fleet is the naming of the general haulage trucks with the 'Grange' prefix, which was started 35 years ago by the late John Mitchell, the company founder. This year to celebrate the 100th anniversary of man powered flight, we intend to name all the vehicles after well-known aircraft.

# Rear View Mirror



This time round we feature 1965, the year when the well known phrase "Thunderbirds are go", was first uttered, The Beatles, The Rolling Stones and The Who, dominated the charts and those very yellow, indestructible, 'Tonka Toys for real tough boys', appeared in the shops. Back home in Grangemouth, John Mitchell was in his ninth year of business and after much hard work, had built his fleet up to a total of six lorries, which included this AEC Mercury, pictured left. Long distance haulage was the core business, even 38 years ago with London,

Bristol and the South Coast being regular, weekly destinations.

Life on the road was much tougher then, with very little in the way of motorways and bypasses to speed up a journey. Drivers had to also have an excellent knowledge of the location of digs and lodgings then, as sleeper cabs were unheard of!

Being a local family company who generally employs a lot of local people, it goes without saying that we've known some of our staff for a very long time indeed. Such is the case with Stuart McDougall, one of our drivers, who is pictured (right) in 1965. From a very young age, Stuart seems to have learned the subtle art of schmoozing with the fairer sex! For the benefit of our female readers, we have also included a more recent picture of this well-known smooth operator!





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## Press Cuttings

Just two media articles to report this month, both of which from publications that, to our knowledge, we've never before been featured in! Aberdeen city centre ground to a halt on February 12th when a major gas leak closed roads and brought the 8am rush hour to a complete standstill. As with most mornings, a number of our vehicles were in the area and were unavoidably caught up in the ensuing chaos. The reporters from the local Evening Express newspaper were soon on the scene interviewing frustrated motorists, but it was our driver, Brian Simpson (pictured right) who ultimately caught their eye and the focus of their camera. Brian was a credit to our company, managing to his keep his cool and keep smiling through what was a particularly difficult morning.



The March edition of Truckstop News, which is the free national newspaper for lorry drivers, carried a small article on our recently produced model truck. The manufacturers of the Mitchell model MAN, Search Impex, came in for praise for producing a 'striking debut 1:43 scale vehicle'.



## The Two Minute Interview

In this new section, we interview and introduce a member of our team and find out just what makes them tick! First to go under the spotlight is Susan Jenkins, from our Customer Service team.

**Briefly describe your job-** Taking transport bookings from customers.

**What's the most enjoyable part of your work?** - When a job is successfully completed and the

customer is happy with the service.

**Where is your favourite place / holiday destination?** - France.

**Any hobbies or interests?** - Walking the dogs and going to the cinema.

**What CD are you listening to at the moment?** - Robbie Williams.

**What was the last film you saw at the cinema** - Johnny English

**Name the Best book you've read in the last 12 months.** - None.

**Which TV program do you never miss?** - Coronation Street.

**Your lottery numbers come up with a £10 million win, what would you spend it on?** - I would travel the world.

**Finally, who would you most like to be stuck in a lift with?** Billy Connolly.

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# The Grange Courier

## Competition

### Win A Magnificent Mitchell Model MAN!

In this issue we offer readers the chance to win one of our limited edition, Search Impex model trucks, worth a cool £95. If you have read The Grange Courier carefully the answer should be easy!



The question: What are our new trucks named after this year?

E-mail your answer to [newsdesk@johnmitchell.co.uk](mailto:newsdesk@johnmitchell.co.uk) before 30th June 2003. The winner will be drawn at random from the correct entries and the result will be announced in the next newsletter.

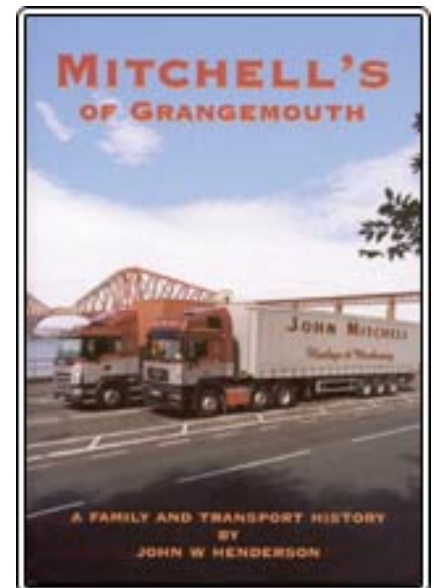
Congratulations to Mr. Ron Smith of Banff whose winning entry was picked from the correct answers mail sack for newsletter no. 2 competition. The answer of course was Stirling Castle.

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## Order Shop

A book on our Family firm was published in November 2000. "Mitchell's of Grangemouth ", a family and transport history, by John W. Henderson is a 48-page lavishly illustrated history of the Mitchell family's carting, haulage and local involvement in the area's heritage from 1892 right up to present day.

To order a copy of this book please send a cheque or postal for £12 (includes postage and packing) To John Mitchell Haulage and Warehousing, Earls Road Industrial Estate, Grangemouth. FK3 8XA. Please allow 28 days for delivery.





To commemorate our success as 'Motor Transport UK Haulier of the Year 2002', we have commissioned top model makers Search Impex Ltd. to produce a detailed 1:43 rd. scale model of one of our MAN tractor units with a curtain side trailer. This model is an exclusive limited edition with only 100 units being produced; so early ordering will be essential to avoid disappointment. The cost of each model will be £95 with a charge of £5 for postage and packing if required. Please contact Lyn Sharpe at our office (01324 496307) to reserve your truck. Remember-

first come first serve!

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Thank you for reading The Grange Courier, if you have a story or picture that you think would be suitable for our magazine, please send a short e-mail to [newsdesk@johnmitchell.co.uk](mailto:newsdesk@johnmitchell.co.uk)