



# The Grange Courier

## Happy New Year!

If I have not spoken to you please accept my very best wishes for this New Year. 2003, where did it go? We had a busy time in all areas of the business and as usual at John Mitchell saw many changes, some major, some minor and I am glad to say mostly positive. We are looking forward to a good year in 2004 with the opening of a new 30,000 sq. ft. high bay warehouse, major depot refurbishment and of course the usual fleet replacement programme.



I hope the improvements we make are seen by your company and are beneficial, if they are not then please tell us. To close please accept my thanks for your time in reading The Grange Courier and I hope you find it interesting and informative.

Back in 1996 we took a deep breath and ordered our first 14 MAN tractor units. At that time it was one of the biggest buying decisions we'd ever taken and was viewed as a very bold step by some industry observers. This multiple order was no rash decision, but part of a carefully prepared plan which allowed us to commence our fleet and business expansion programme in earnest.

Since that landmark event almost eight years ago, many more MAN Trucks have arrived at Grangemouth and have long since become the mainstay of our fleet. Last November saw a significant milestone in our relationship with the German manufacturer, when we took delivery of our 100th. MAN vehicle. Our picture shows MAN Scotland Dealer Principles, Sandy Millar and David Bennie presenting (respectively) flowers to Catherine and champagne to Iain.



# Depot Developments

Last November saw another landmark in our company's progress when we sold our 26 acre depot at Thornbridge. Bought in 1990 this huge site has served us well over the years and has played a vital role in allowing the many various aspects of our business to grow. Our acquisition of several extra acres adjacent to our Earls Road Headquarters in 1998 however, changed our long term outlook and some time ago we decided to slowly transfer all functions and focus all activities on our central HQ. Our premises and facilities development plan continues on schedule with the construction of a new warehouse (pictured left), due for completion in the early spring.

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# Golfers to The Fore

The annual John Mitchell Golf Trophy was held at Gleneagles' Kings Course on Tuesday 16th. September 2003. Thankfully, the event was blessed with fine weather, as the 32 competitors set out on the hallowed fairways of one of Scotland's most spectacular and challenging golf tests. The closely fought competition was eventually won by Alex Reid of Scottish Courage, with Alex Totten of Falkirk Football Club, Second and Andy Fulton of GRC third. Champion Alex is pictured being presented with the trophy by staff members Lynne Sharpe, Tracey White and Sarah Gibb. This truly enjoyable day was rounded off with dinner in the Dormy House and entertainment from renowned after dinner speaker, Willie Allan.

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# Grangemouth Port Progress



Our home town's reputation as 'the hub of Scotland' was recently further enhanced by a five million pound development programme, recently announced by Edinburgh based owners Forth Ports. This is welcome news for the local economy, customers, shipping lines and importers / exporters alike. Grangemouth's container terminal (which is the oldest in the UK) is set to benefit, with new methods of container handling and improved IT tracking of the 'boxes', allowing a doubling of existing capacity. In recent years container volumes at the port have risen by 10 % per annum.

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## Painting The Past

As a family run company we're always aware of our local roots, with Catherine and Iain being the fourth generation of Mitchells to work and reside in Grangemouth. With this in mind, last year we commissioned a nostalgic painting by the foremost road transport artist, Alan Spillett. The result is "Gateway to the Highlands", a superb study of our first 32 ton Seddon truck delivered in the late 1960's, set against the snowy backdrop of Stirling Castle, The Wallace Monument and the old A9 leaving Bridge of Allan.

The authenticity of the scene is completed by the Sea Land container trailer, one of many we hauled north to Speyside during that particular era. We have on offer a very limited amount of fine art prints of this evocative painting, please see our merchandise section at the end of this newsletter.



# New Additions to Fleet



2003 proved to be a most successful year for our ongoing fleet renewal programme, with 20 new MAN and Mercedes Benz vehicles and over 30 new Dennison trailers joining our operation. These new additions allowed us to reach another target, which was to have all our road haulage equipment less than five years old. The latest John Mitchell curtain side trailers carry a revised livery with stunning use of our stylised Osprey logo (pictured below).

Continuing with the wildlife theme and to celebrate the 50th. Anniversary since the aforementioned Osprey was reintroduced at Loch Garten, this years new trucks will be named after Birds of Prey.



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## Two Minute Interview

Our interviewee this time round is one of our Driver team, Jim Hunter, who by coincidence joined the company on the same day as our Managing Director, Iain. So it could be said that Jim is long suffering as well as long serving! (Only joking, boss).

Let's see what steers his interests!



**Briefly describe your job:** LGV Driver

**What's the most enjoyable part of your work?** Driving

**Where is your favourite place / holiday destination?** West Coast of Scotland

**What are your hobbies and interests?** Hill walking / Landscape photography

**What tape / CD are you listening to at the moment?** Bruce Springstein

**What was the last film you saw at the cinema?** Don't go to the cinema

**What's the best book you've read in the last 12 months?** Hutchinson's Directory of Science

**What's your favourite TV programme?** Horizon

**If you won £10 million on the lottery, what would you spend it on?** Buy a Rolls Royce, have a 6 month holiday in the USA and build a house on the Isle of Skye

**And finally, who would you most like to be stuck in a lift with?** Halle Berry

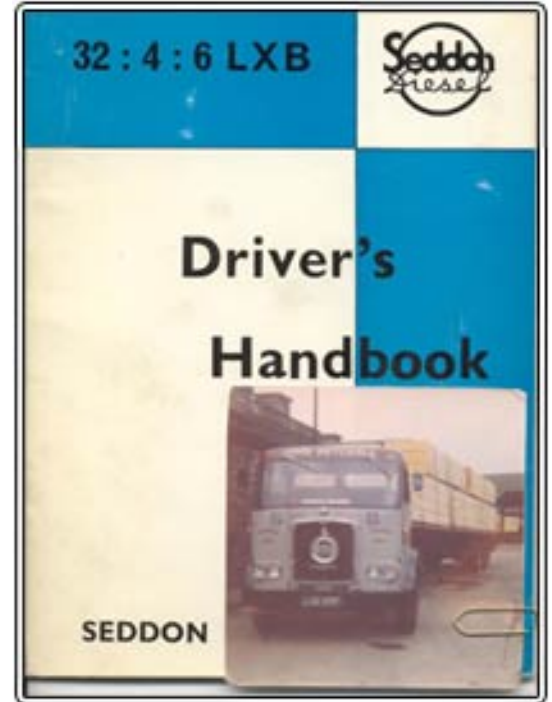
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## Rear View Mirror

For this edition we turn the clock back 37 years and have a closer look at the vehicle which features in our aforementioned painting. 'Grange Monarch' was a Seddon 32:4:6 model, which was purchased brand new and immediately put to work on the 1st of November 1967, driven by Albert Mair who became John Mitchell's right hand man. Lorries manufactured back then were sturdily built, required lots of very regular maintenance, had little in the way of comfort (as we know it today), but got the job done nevertheless. The original Drivers Handbook (pictured right, with photo), proudly states that, "The Seddon Company has gone to very considerable trouble and expense, to ensure that this new model lacks nothing which a driver desires for his comfort and well being". For the record, this truck served us well for many years.

Elsewhere in 1967, The Monkees and The Beatles provided entertainment for millions of fans (not at Zoo's but at concerts!), the car of the moment was Monte Carlo Rally Winner, the Mini Cooper and Celtic Football Club celebrated winning the European Cup in Lisbon.

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## A Movie Star in Our Midst's!



At almost sixty years old our old classic, preserved ERF truck is used to attending summer shows and events, but recently a surprise request has seen 'the auld yin' back out to work and earning it's keep! Thankfully this work was not general haulage but a guest appearance in the film "Young Adam", starring alongside another 'weel kent' face, Ewan McGregor. Used with other classic vehicles to form a period background our truck performed faultlessly, in locations in Glasgow city and Grangemouth. The two movie stars are pictured left, enjoying a break from the action!

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# The Competition

In this edition we're offering our readers the chance to win a fully framed print of our superb new painting, "Gateway to the Highlands" if you have read your Grange Courier carefully, you will probably know the answer!

The Question: Which scenic area of Scotland did we haul the Sea Land containers to?

Please e-mail your answer to [newsdesk@johnmitchell.co.uk](mailto:newsdesk@johnmitchell.co.uk) before April 30th, 2004. The winner will be drawn at random from the correct entries and the result will be announced in the next newsletter.

Congratulations to Mr. Allan Black of Port Seton, East Lothian, whose winning entry was pulled from the mail sack for the MAN winter jacket competition in newsletter no. 4. The correct answer was that MAN trucks are manufactured in Germany.



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## John Mitchell Merchandise

We are pleased to offer the following official company products for sale; all prices include postage and packing. If you require any further information on these goods, please contact Lyn Sharpe at our office (tel. 01324 496307).

## Painting



We have a small number of prints of Alan Spillett's classic painting available for sale. These Giclee fine art prints are produced to a very high standard and the image size is 10" x 14" with surrounding border. The cost per print is £40. Please allow six weeks for delivery and note that cheques sent will not be cashed until 1 week prior to despatch.

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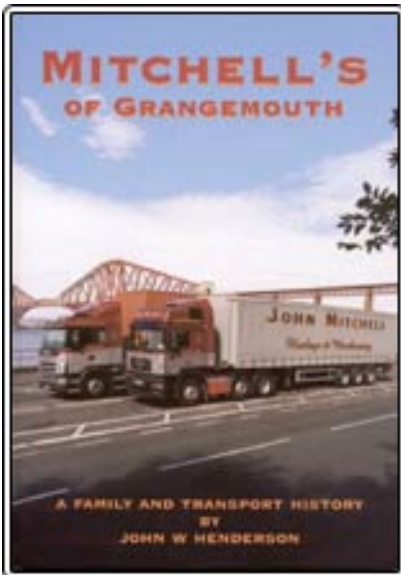
# Model

To commemorate our success back in 2002 as 'Motor Transport UK Haulier of the Year', we commissioned top model makers Search Impex Ltd. To produce a detailed 1:43 rd. scale model of one of our MAN trucks. This model is a limited edition and the cost is £95.



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# Book



A book on our family firm was first published in November 2000. "Mitchells of Grangemouth ", a family and transport history, is a 48-page well illustrated history of the Mitchell family's carting, haulage and local involvement in the area's heritage from 1892 right up to present day. The cost of this publication is £12.

Send your orders to: John Mitchell Haulage and Warehousing, Earls Road Industrial Estate, Grangemouth. FK3 8XA. Please allow 28 days delivery for the Book and Model.

Thank you for reading the Grange Courier, if you have a story or picture that you think would be suitable for our magazine, please mail us at [newsdesk@johnmitchell.co.uk](mailto:newsdesk@johnmitchell.co.uk)

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