

# Help at Hand

by Don Baldry

**N**ot unsurprisingly, most people would believe that "The Lighthouse Club" is an association devoted to the appreciation of maritime beacons. That isn't the case. The Lighthouse Club, whose aim is "the furtherance of good fellowship", is a club for construction people of all disciplines. Now established for over 50 years, there are branches throughout the UK, in Asia Pacific, the Gulf and the Netherlands. It is a well established organisation and there are many, events wherever branches are established. In the UK the club helps to support our Benevolent Fund - the construction industry charity, which gives financial aid to construction workers hit by accident or illness. Our support, over half a million last year, comes from a variety of good fun events. One such is The Lighthouse Run from John O' Groats to Land's End.

Last October, with high fuel prices etc. it was not the best of motoring times, nonetheless nine cars joined in, one of which was a 1962 E-type owned by Mike McGrath. Mike's co-driver was Alex Trigg (Trigger) and both work for the tool and equipment hire company Speedy Hire, an active supporter of the club. Like all our other teams in the week prior to the event, Alex and Mike were concerned about the weather. Wind speeds in the far north of the UK were reaching 80 mph. Fortunately, by the morning of the off things had quietened down, gusts were only reaching 50, a mere breeze by J O'G standards. However, with that breeze came variety with flurries of snow, sleet and torrential horizontal rain. It was that last that brought what might have been a terminal problem to our heroes. As they drove westward across the top of Scotland the rain got into the electrics and by 2pm

they had only one light functioning on dipped beam - far from ideal or safe. By this time, Mrs. Trigger was scouring the internet to see if they could pick up a replacement part en-route. Glasgow was a remote possibility, but they would not reach the relevant garage (even if it had the replacement part) before it closed. They would therefore have been forced to retire. What they didn't know was that they were about to be part of a small miracle! The other side of the time warp and a second miracle. Talking about their problem whilst refueling in a small village 30 miles north of Fort William, one of the locals gave them directions to a small local motor engineer who "might be able to help". It didn't sound hopeful, nevertheless anything was worth a try. Five minutes

later they turned off the road, through a time warp, and into the workshop. Mike got out and approached the older of the two fitters, who turned out to be owner and son. "Have you got a bulb for a '62 E-type?" was his optimistic question. And the astonishing reply was. "Och aye, reckon we've something out back."

In fact the owner and his son dropped everything to put the E-type to rights. Whilst the son disappeared "out back", his dad set about removing light bezels, checking for power etc. There was a commentary "Don't worry we'll sort this", followed by the all time E-type classic line "I used to pull lots of birds in one of these when I was younger!"

Meanwhile, son returned from out back with a new sealed beam unit still in its 40



*The intrepid travelers on the London to Brighton in aid of The Lighthouse Club.*



*The E-type survived the weather well.*



*The saviours at West End Garage in Scotland who carried out the world for charity.*

plus year old, somewhat grubby, carton. As the new unit went in and some basic but very necessary waterproofing was applied, our heroes explained what they were doing so far from home, and the purpose of the run and the charity it served.

In less than half an hour, and with lights shining brightly, all was done. Time to go. Mike reached for his wallet. "It's for charity y'say? Then there's no charge. Take it as our donation to your Lighthouse Club"

Nice one, and good to know that not only can you still get some bits for an E-type "abroad" but that there are still some very kind people around.