



What do you do when someone from Romania responds to a car for sale advert?

Just imagine it's been nearly five months since you advertised a classic MG for sale with little or no interest from a buyer and then you get an email from Romania asking for details of the car as they want to buy it. Well that happened to Nigel Ricardo and with all the reports of overseas scam operators contacting advertisers of classic cars for sale online with seductive offers to buy them, he was naturally very cautious. So what happened? Nigel told this fascinating story over lunch at the Shoulder of Mutton on Hazeley Heath.

In November 2007 I decided I was going to get an RV8 when we moved house in early 2008, so I placed an advertisement offering my MGBGT V8 for sale on the V8 Register website. I did not hear anything until April 2008 when I received an email from Romania asking for details of the car and was it still available. As I saw the email address was Romanian I chose to ignore it thinking it had scam written all over it.

Nothing happened for maybe three weeks when I received another email from the same person in Romania also asking if the car was still available, to which I replied yes it is but b****r off and stop wasting my time. Then ten minutes later the phone rang and in perfect English the person said he had just received my email and it was not a scam (at this point I thought, oh yes it is) so I was very cautious. He asked all the right questions and asked if I would be open to an offer to which I replied no. He continued saying he would buy it unseen and could he have details of my bank account so he could

transfer the money - now bells were ringing in every direction as I thought this is definitely a scam! But I duly gave him the number of an account I had which I knew had just £1 in it to keep it open. I thought if he needed to scam a pound he could. Then he emailed back to say he would transfer the money during the week, I was thinking "Oh yeah".

We were due to go to Spain the following day as our little town house in Malaga had flooded due to the bad winter - it was the year that Almeria had snow on the beach. We have no phone or internet at the town house but fortunately our local McDonalds there has free WIFI, so after being in Spain for a week we went to McDonalds and I did my internet banking. To my horror the full

amount of the money was in the account, so I swiftly transferred it into my other bank account and sent the buyer an email saying I had indeed received the funds and would contact him when I was back in England as I was in Spain for another week. The buyer in Romania replied back within minutes to say there was no rush as he could not get over to collect for another three weeks, but could I store the car for him and he was willing to pay the storage.

We returned home to Dorset and I sent him an email saying he could collect the car when it suited him and about a week later I got a call from him saying a friend of his living in Swindon would collect the car and would drive it to Romania for him.

The buyer's friend duly arrived and collected the car and drove off saying he was heading for Romania! Although the cash was in the bank and the car had been collected, there was still a slight sense of concern but I received an email from the buyer a week later to say his friend did the journey nonstop to the car's new home in 24 hours only stopping for fuel, coffee and essential breaks. Upon reflexion what a story - from scam scare to a good home!

Nigel's V8 (Harvest Gold 1512) was built in March 1974 but not registered until February 1975 which was not unusual at the time. It had a full professional restoration in 2004 with a respray in BRG and an engine rebuild, new carpets, seat coverings and interior trim, Spax conversion on the front and rear, Petronix electronic ignition, twin Facet fans, BL front spoiler, louvered bonnet, JVC radio with electric aerial and a Webasto roof. The recorded mileage was then 120,000.

