

The 6/80 & MO Oxford & Cowley Club

Issue No.

188



Date.

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2025 YEAR OF THE ISIS

The 6/80 & MO Oxford & Cowley Club

Committee 2024/25



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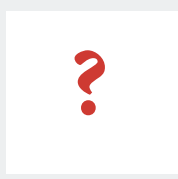
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WANTED
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Don't forget

**The deadline for the September 2025
issue (No. 189) is
Saturday 2nd August 2025**

Magazine Submissions

Articles and reports from members are welcome and can be submitted in Word (PC) or Pages (MAC), but unfortunately not in Publisher native files. If you are using Publisher please provide the file as a high resolution pdf. Likewise Word and Pages files can also be provided as a pdf if you prefer. Today there is no need to use double spacing between sentences and lines as they have to be removed anyway. If articles or photos are subject to copyright please advise when submitting them so that wherever possible reproduction permission may be obtained. While we endeavour to acknowledge individual photos in the case of article illustrations they are attributed to the author, unless stated otherwise.

Pictures/Photos

For optimum reproduction quality please do not embed images in your text, but instead provide them as individual files (tiff, jpeg, png are typical formats that are fine). Pictures printed on plain paper are usually too grainy. Old photos, newspaper or magazine articles are fine but photocopies are usually illegible when reprinted. Please send the originals and they will be returned in good condition at the earliest opportunity.

If you are sending photos by email please ensure the file size is above 300kb and please don't try to enhance the image. As a rule of thumb if you are sending photographs that have been taken using a digital zoom (particularly with a phone camera) they are generally not as sharp as those taken with an optical zoom.

Club Rules

All members are entitled to a copy of the club rules which can be obtained as a pdf download from our website www.680mo.org.co.uk. A printed version may be obtained from Pat Carroll. SAE required. His contact details are on page 2.

Disclaimer

The 6/80 & MO Oxford & Cowley Club does not necessarily support the opinions expressed in this publication.

The club for the preservation of the Wolseley 6/80, 4/50, Morris Six MS, J & JB van and derivatives, Morris Oxford MO and commercial derivatives, Oxford SII, III & IV, Morris Cowley 1200/1500 and commercial derivatives, Isis SI & II, Hindustan Landmaster 1956-58 and Hindustan Ambassador 1958-2014.



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website: www.680mo.org.uk



**Check out our
website or keep in
touch through
social media.**

Find us on 



*Morris Isis Travellers
in New Zealand.
(John Weir collection)*

Magazine Production

Steve McNicol: Editor, Design, Pre-Press, AU Print Liaison & AU Distribution.

John Weir: Scheduling, Proof Reading & UK Print Liaison.

Brian Holdsworth: UK & ROW Distribution.

Pat Carroll: Email Distribution.

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Front cover: Howard Dent's immaculate Series I Morris Isis. (John Weir)

The 70th Anniversary of the introduction of the six cylindered Morris Isis in 1955 is being celebrated this year. Isis was a name last used by Morris way back in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

EVENT CALENDAR

2025 70th Anniversary Year of the introduction of the Morris Isis

10th June	Gaydon Gatherings	2nd Tuesday of each month until October
27th-29th June	Club National Rally & MMOC Rally	Moreton-in-Marsh (UK)
13th July	BMC & Leyland Show	BMM, Gaydon
2nd August	<i>Closing day for magazine content</i>	<i>September club magazine</i>
16th-17th August	Wolseley Register National Rally	Beamish (UK)
1st September	Old Cars Day	Australia (not all states)
6th-7th September	Beaulieu International Autojumble	NMM, Beaulieu (UK)
28th Aug-2nd Sept	Aust. Branch National Rally	Lithgow (NSW)
19th October	Bay to Birdwood Run (South Australia)	NMM, Birdwood (SA)
25th October (TBC)	Club AGM	Zoom
1st November	<i>Closing day for magazine content</i>	<i>December club magazine</i>
7th-9th November	Lancaster Insurance Classic Motor Show	NEC, Birmingham
15th-16th November	Bendigo National Swapmeet	Bendigo (Victoria)
2026		
7th February	<i>Closing day for magazine content</i>	<i>March club magazine</i>
1st March	All British Day (SA)	ABD, Echunga
20th-22nd March	Practical Classics Car & Rest. Show	NEC, Birmingham
15th April	British & European Motor Show	Yarra Glen Racecourse (Victoria)
17th-20th April	Morris Registers National Rally (Australia)	Toowoomba (Queensland)
26th April	National Drive it Day	Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs
2nd May	<i>Closing day for magazine content</i>	<i>June club magazine</i>

Official club events are listed in bold print.

For more details about club events refer to our Club Officer reports and the event ads at the rear of this magazine.

Non Club and invitation events are listed in good faith for members information only. If you plan attending please check with the organisers to ensure the event has not been postponed, the venue changed or even cancelled. Please note that some events require entry forms which need to be completed in advance.

If you are involved in any club related events during the year please let us know and we can add them to the calendar.



EDITORIAL

I had intended to include the Technical Tips page in this magazine but after capping the number of pages to 44 I received three or four items for inclusion so it will have to go in another magazine. I also had to cut another two pages and unfortunately part 2 of the 'Which Model am I' has also been removed, but will 'hopefully' be included in the next magazine.

There is also one article that has been carried forward to the next magazine but after that we will be looking for articles from you. There are a few events before the next magazine and we normally have reports, which I look forward to receiving.

The feature in this magazine is the 70th Anniversary of the introduction of the Morris Isis and once again John Weir has provided a great article. Members of my family have owned a couple of Isis over the years and I came close to buying one on two occasions, but the only Isis I have ever owned was built in 1929 (see photo). There will be more Isis information and images in the next magazine.



John Weir has listed the club positions which will become vacant at the AGM and it would be great if some of our members would step forward to help keep the club running. Some of the positions are critical for our survival. Financially we are in a good place but it is just volunteers on committee we lack. If you need more information you can contact one of the committee members (see page 2). Please think about it.

Steve McNicol



CLUB NEWS



CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

Welcome to Issue 188. This edition features the 70th anniversary of the announcement of the Morris Isis Series I in 1955. We also hope to feature this model on the club stand at the Lancaster Classic Motor Show at the NEC in November (anyone with a Series I Isis Traveller who would like to display their car, please contact me).

As I write this in early May, we are enjoying a period of lovely spring weather after a gloomy winter. Hopefully members are taking the opportunity to give Cowley's finest Wolseley and Morris cars some exercise and maybe attend some local car shows. A run will do your car good, driving it will put a smile on your face, and the public will enjoy chatting with you and seeing your car.

Preparations are ongoing for our Rally over 28th-29th June at Moreton in Marsh in the Cotswolds. Our thanks to Martin Hamilton for organising this event and liaising with the MMOC as they host the event. Remember that you do need to book your place. I look forward to seeing a good turnout of our cars and having the opportunity to mingle with old and new club members.

I hope you enjoy the summer. Our thanks once again to Editor Steve McNicol for an excellent production.

WANTED

I appeal to members to volunteer to assist with the running of the club by being a committee member. Some key positions are or will need to be filled by the time of our AGM this October.

Without support the club will contract and may no longer be able to function. After nearly 50 years this would be a sad loss. Subscriptions are managed to provide spares support, our annual rally and NEC stand, the quarterly magazine, the website and overseeing other social media platforms, DVLA applications, insurance, technical advice, maintaining historical databases and FBHVC membership. This service does not happen by itself. It needs your input.

Positions that currently need filling include:

Chairman and Public Relations – from October 2025

Spares Secretary (Post-54 Morris) – from October 2025

DVLA Liaison – required now

Rally Secretary – for 2026

Please consider how you can contribute and contact me or any other appropriate committee member (see page 2). The club's future is in your hands.

John Weir



TREASURER'S REPORT

I am pleased to say for Q2 to April 2025 the club's financial position remains strong, with healthy bank balances. Committee members should have all received the bank account information prior to the recent committee meeting confirming this. Comparing the accounts with the same time in 2024 they are similar despite rising costs, which is good news.

The club has agreed to subsidise paid club members the cost of the upcoming UK national rally by £7 per entry bringing the entry cost down to £10. At the rally, members who have paid the MMOC £17 entry fee can provide their name and current phone contact so a BACS payment for £7 can be paid direct into their bank account.

On a personal level my 6/80 has returned home from winter storage and is now in the process of being painted, hopefully this will be finished by the end of summer.

Tim Rouse



MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Welcome everybody to another Membership News Report and as you may have guessed it is time for you to renew your membership subscription. **If you have NOT received a reminder it means that you have already paid for 2025-2026.**

I am pleased to report that membership fees are remaining the same and the £30 per annum still applies. Payment can be made by cheque payable to 6/80 & MO Club to my home address or by a BACS payment to the club bank account but please remember to include your name and/or membership number on the transaction.

We have had a few more new members and their details are as follows:-

MO 1939 – Meherwan R Daruvala is from Mumbai in India. He has a 1950 Morris Oxford MO which we assume would have been exported from UK. Chassis No. SMO 82354 and Engine No. 95999.

MO 1940 – Jeffers Mayo lives in Pampisford in Cambridgeshire. He has a 1953 Morris Oxford MO in grey. Chassis No. DAJ11/128771 Engine No. 158142. Reg. No. is HSE 984. The car is said to be in excellent condition.

W6 1941 – John O'Keefe is from Northampton. His Wolseley 6/80 engine is incomplete and is keen for the club to help him. A 1954 car in black. Chassis No. AAA/1323554 Engine No. 24644. Reg. No. is XPU 314.

MS 1942 – Craig Ellis lives in Bracknell in Berkshire. He has a 1950 Morris Six which was passed to him from his grandfather. The car has been standing and garaged for more than 20 years. Myself and Pat Carroll went to inspect the vehicle and its chassis and engine numbers to assist with the registration with DVLA.

Chassis No. SMS 8312 and Engine No. 7820. The original registration number which we hope it will retain is KRT 428. Good Luck Craig!

MO 1943 – Paul Yeomans lives near Truro in Cornwall. His car is a 1953 Morris Oxford MO Reg. PZ 5034. Chassis No. DAA11/151651 Engine No. 186307. The car is black with a red interior and in good condition. It used to belong to Jaguar Land Rover Ltd.

MO 1944 – Hartley Capel from Warlingham in Surrey has a Morris Oxford MO but is unsure on the year of manufacture. Chassis No. 130080/10029 and Engine No. 136664. It is a green car and was imported from Australia in 1996 and is rust free. The car is not yet registered and we would advise you to contact David Ferguson who is our DVLA Club representative.

Club records have a record of chassis number 129955 being registered in the UK on 22nd April 1953 though obviously a factory built car. The BMIHM records has Hartley's vehicle assembly in the Quarterly Build Ledger from 1st January 1953 with chassis number 124736 as the first off the line on 1st April being chassis number 131809 so Hartley's CKD would likely have been for export to Australia to eventually be constructed at some point in the first quarter or half of 1953. (*Details from our MO Historian – Nigel Anderson*)

CW 250 – Esteban Mallett lives in Suffolk and has a 1956 Morris Cowley 1500 saloon Reg. No. is 875 XUF. The VIN of EAE11/14941 confirms a Morris Cowley 4 door saloon made for the home market with Empire Green paint. The serial number suggests that it is a Cowley 1200 manufactured around November 1955 and therefore not a Cowley 1500 of 1956. It is possible (but unlikely) that the car was not registered until early 1956. The car may have had a replacement 1500cc engine to replace the 1200cc engine at some time, possibly from a Morris Oxford or a post October 1956 Morris Cowley 1500. There is a casting on the bottom of the block beneath the manifold that will confirm "1200" or "1500". In the day it was not uncommon for the DVLA and MOT testers to just assume that the Cowley had a 1500cc engine like the Morris Oxford, not realising that they in fact had a 1200cc engine. (*Information supplied by Club Chairman John Weir*)

Brian Holdsworth



WEBMASTER'S REPORT

The club website at www.680mo.org.uk continues to receive a steady stream of visitors from all around the world. The most visited pages tend to be the galleries so I suspect that many of the 'hits' are from people trying to find out about our cars and what they look like.

However, the website also has a lot of information of interest to members, much of it in the members area which is password protected. To log in enter either your membership number or your email and then your password. If you haven't got a password, or have forgotten it, click on 'Lost your password' and you should then be able to generate an automated email to reset it. Any problems, email me at webmaster@680mo.org.uk.

Amongst the goodies in the members area are copies of all club magazines going right back to the late 1970s, including those of the old Morris Cowley and Oxford Club. There are also a number of other documents relating to our cars; one I find particularly useful is the 'DIY MoT Test Checklist', which can be printed off to document a safety check on your car. Finally there are archives of the old forums, which provided discussion of our cars prior to the advent of the Facebook group.

If any of you have any other material that would be suitable for the website, including pictures of cars or technical information, do email it to me, together with any suggestions for improving the website.

Steve Langton



DVLA REPORT

With ever advancing age, I'm hopeful someone will come forward and replace me as our club's DVLA contact. However, in the meantime I'm continuing in the role and indeed have recently received a request from a new member for help in registering his recently acquired Morris 6. This is my first M6 – such a rare model with only about 12,000 having been produced. The Morris 6 was the first post war car I ever rode in as a boy. My father had a Morris 10 Series III and this seemed so antiquated compared to this smooth riding exciting and powerful Morris 6. Happy memories!



I'm indebted to Pat Carrol and Brian Holdsworth who have kindly visited Craig, our new club member, and inspected his car to check its credentials. Hopefully, as Craig has the original buff logbook, the registration process should be straightforward.

What is emerging as an insurmountable problem is registering imported cars for which the owner has no documentary evidence of its date of first registration. No amount of circumstantial evidence seems to be accepted by DVLA who are proving unyielding, only offering a Q plate registration, not a historic one. I will not therefore be continuing to offer help to members who import vehicles or purchase a previously imported vehicle if they cannot furnish me with a documented date of first registration or at least a factory record of the date of manufacture. Without this documented evidence, it just takes up too much time and effort in trying to persuade DVLA that the vehicle in question is genuine and despite all the effort, there's little guarantee of a successful outcome.

Best wishes to all – happy 2025 Morris, Wolseley and Hindustan motoring!

David Ferguson



2025 NATIONAL RALLY

As a reminder this year we will be joining the Morris Minor Owners Club (MMOC) at the National Fire Services College, Moreton-In-Marsh GL56 0RH, from 27th to 29th June 2025.

Please note that the College has a military training centre on site and ALL ATTENDEES for the event must pre-register.

***** New information*****

In the last magazine I stated that pre-registration was on line only. Having queried this with the MMOC, they have confirmed that applicants CAN pre-register using the paper form only (a copy of which should be included with this magazine).

I should also remind members that anyone considering bringing their car and paying "on the day" having not pre-registered will NOT be allowed into the rally area, but instead will be directed to the public parking area. So if you're coming or thinking of coming with your club vehicle, pre-register!

Martin Hamilton



AUSTRALASIAN BRANCH

Hi all, Hope you all are well. Since the last magazine we have had two new members join the club. I would like to welcome Cedric and Pat Van Heerden and Terry Radford.

MO 2035 - Cedric and Pat Van Heerden are from Bundaberg in Queensland and they have a beautifully restored Morris Oxford MO. Chassis No. SMO 83243/3555, Current Engine No. 112187. The car was originally black and has Reg. No. MO1952 (original Reg. No. 564 848).



W6 2036 - Terry Radford is from Devonport in Tasmania. Terry has a 6/80 which he has owned since 1993. Terry is currently in the process of restoring the car for his daughter. Chassis No. 418/9065, Engine No. X8875.

Terry writes: When I was a 6 year old living on a Council Estate in the South of England my dad bought a black 6/80. Whilst he was not mechanically minded he loved that car which suffered with a noisy big end, only to be traded in on a 100E Anglia. He loved the old Wolseley and I vowed to get him another one day. Well that day arrived in 1993 when I saw my car advertised in a village south of Hobart for \$2,500.00. A 320km trip down with the wife and after a brief test drive we set off home. The old car travelled well at

60mph with no issues. I drove the car around and to a couple of car shows and took my dad to the Horse Racing track where we had a picnic. His eyes shone. The Wolseley overheated some time in 1995 and I put it away in the shed with a cover over it.

Time went past and what with work commitments, rebuilding a Torana which I drag raced for a few years and the like, the old 6/80 remained in the shed for 29 years until I pulled it out a few months ago and decided to refresh it. Sadly Dad passed away almost two years ago but my daughter has shown a keen interest in the 6/80 so I will do it up for her. This is not going to be a complete restoration, it will be somewhat sympathetic.

How is my memory I asked myself? Not so good, I remember that the old girl overheated but never investigated as to why so, a compression test which showed a range from 20 - 120psi and off with the head. There was no sign of either water in the oil or oil in the water. There was a little sign of gasket heat between 4 & 5 cylinders but nothing else. Valves and seats were mostly poor and rusted. I have reconditioned the head using my friends specialist workshop, we actually made a new set of inlet valves. Spare parts are quite difficult to obtain and even though I have been a member of the Wolseley Car Club of Victoria for 30+ years, unless you venture over to Melbourne, which is expensive you never know what is in their Woolshed, hence joining the 6/80 MO club. Already I have been in touch with several members who have located spare parts for me, Bob Oakley in particular, so many thanks Bob.



Also, since the last magazine I have purchased one more car. It is a 1949 Morris Six SMS2112 (*see News Exchange ...Ed*). It is in need of a sympathetic restoration. There appears to be no rust at all. The paint is in need of a touch up in places, but I am hoping that some polish and a bit of elbow grease, it will come up quite nicely. The mechanicals will all need doing as well. This now makes it seven Morris Sixes I now own.

The 15th Australasian Branch National Rally is now only three months away. If you are interested in coming along, can you please fill in the form that was in the last magazine and send it back to John Inshaw at your earliest convenience. If you no longer have a copy of the form, please contact me and I will forward you a copy. Also, there are a couple of events that require booking. If you wish to attend these events, can you please contact and book yourself in for these. These events are very popular and could be booked out quite early. If you have any dramas please let either John Inshaw or myself know.

Jotham Hardy



CHARLES PLEASS LITERARY AWARD

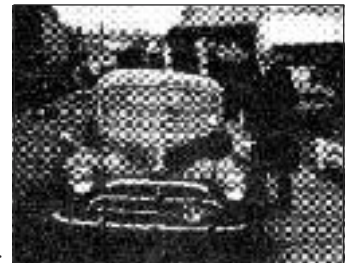
Pat Carroll



Origins of the Charles Pleass Literary Award

Hopefully you will have seen requests annually in the pre-AGM magazines for votes to be cast for the Charles Pleass Literary Award for the Best Literary Contribution to the Club Magazine during the past 12 months. Our Editor Steve highlighted at a recent Committee Meeting that most of you probably do not know who Charles Pleass was, or why there is a cup awarded in his name, and suggested that I provide a bit of background – so here it is!

Charles Pleass was a very early member of the original 6/80 & MO Club (number MO/16), joining in 1977 with his green MO registration HOP 262, and living in Ryde on the Isle of Wight. As you will see in the reproduced article below, Charles was an enthusiastic and active member of the Club back in those early days of its formation. The first mention of his name that turned up in a search of our digital magazine archive was from a very early edition in 1977, actually in the original 'MO Oxford News' by Roger Tennyson, before the publication joined with Dave Barker's 6/80 Newsletter! It comes from the New Members section and reads: "Mr Charles Pleass on the Isle of White - he has a 1953 green car, and we have already been of assistance to him by organising some gaskets for him, for which he was grateful." Unfortunately, I couldn't find any other mention of his name after that, so unless Roger can enlighten us further, the next mention that came up in my search was in his obituary in 1983, which is below. Article by Roger Tennyson in Newsletter 23, Autumn 1983:



Charles with his MO Reg. HOP 262.



The Cup, as awarded to Pat Seaward in 2023

"It was with deep regret that we have heard of the death of Charles Pleass, who passed away peacefully in his sleep on the night of Sunday 20th November 1983. Charles was the oldest Member in the Club, and was also one of our early members, having the Membership Number of MO/16. At 87 years old, he was an inspiration to us all, having recently passed his compulsory driving test (due to his age), and was driving the car up to his death. Charles was well known by the Club Committee as he made full use of the Club's facilities. He had obtained many spares from us, and also sought technical advice from us. John Goodwin visited Charles over the summer of 1982, over a 2-week period, during which time he carried out a few minor repairs to Charles' MO."

Roger concluded by reporting that Charles' son Michael, who lived in the USA, had asked for the Club's help in disposing of the MO, which was reportedly in very sound condition, to a Club Member if possible, and that it was available to view on the Isle of Wight, at an asking price of £500 to a Club Member, although a dealer had offered £700.

The idea of an award in his name was discussed at a Committee meeting and the decision announced in Newsletter 24 in winter 1983 as follows:

"This year we will be awarding a new cup, the 'Charles Pleass Memorial Cup' which will be awarded to the Membership's choice of the best Newsletter article of the year. This comes from an idea laid by Clive Clarke at an earlier Committee Meeting, and which was passed at the latest one. You can vote for any article you like in the Newsletter, be it a regular feature or simply a one-off sent in by a member on their car." The cup was first awarded to Past Treasurer and Membership Secretary John Billinger at the Summer Rally in 1984, who wrote in Newsletter 26: "May I also say thank you to the Club for awarding me the singular honour of being the first recipient of the 'Charles Pleass' Trophy for Literary Merit. I am deeply honoured, and will try over the next year to be worthy of the Trophy."

As a conclusion to the story, Charles' son Michael wrote the following letter in November 1989 to our then Editor Brian Holdsworth, which appeared in Newsletter 47 in the 'Reader's Letters' section:

"Dear Brian, I was delighted to see that the Charles Pleass literary award was given during the Coombe Abbey prizegiving (Annual UK Rally on 10th June 1989 at Coombe Abbey, Coventry, Warwickshire). Charles was a great father to be blessed with and he certainly loved his MO Oxford. As you evidently knew, after his wife passed on, the Oxford and the MO Club were a very important "reason for staying around". I'm writing because although I'm delighted to see this award given (and I hope it will go on being given for many years, because many of the articles in the Newsletter really are great), I don't want to put you to additional expense, sending copies over to me (in the USA). We will be moving West soon to an as-yet-unknown address, so it seems best to say "Thank you for everything, and now best take me off the circulation list". I'll be looking for MO's and Wolseleys wherever I go, and if I find one, I'll check it out and talk with the owner about the Club. (By the way, I owned Dad's car for many years before he took it over, and I really appreciate it) The very best wishes to you all. Michael Pleass."

So, with that tale from the early days of our Club, I hope you will be encouraged in future to submit your vote for your choice of article in the magazine. It doesn't have to be on the official voting form – just a quick email or note to the Chairman or Secretary prior to the AGM will suffice.



FAREWELL GOOD FRIEND



In Memory of *Wilfred 'Wilf' Slater*, who passed away on 25th January 2025



Our good friend Wilf Slater died on the 25th January 2025 aged 91. Wilf was a long time member of car and sporting car clubs including the Wolseley Car Club of NSW, the 6/80 & MO Club (later the 6/80 & MO Oxford & Cowley Club) and the Taree Antique Car Club (where he was an influential and popular club member). This was demonstrated at his funeral by the large number of his car club friends who attended and the parade of club cars that followed the cortege. Dave and Nancy Ribbons, Jumbo Pereira and Beverley and I were able to attend on behalf of the NSW Wolseley and the 6/80 & MO Oxford & Cowley clubs.



Wilf started his working career in his father's timber milling business. He then did his mechanical apprenticeship at Gleasons Garage in Wingham. His father then purchased Capitol Motors as the districts Leyland Rover dealer and Wilf worked there.

Wilf met Margaret, the love of his life, at a Presbyterian Fellowship Camp and the rest is history. Whilst he was courting Margaret he borrowed his father's cherished Wolseley 6/80 to pay her a visit. On the way home from this visit he smashed the car. This story was featured in the 6/80 & MO Club Newsletter 137. It is worth a read. You can imagine how pleased his father was on hearing the news about his beloved Wolseley, but Wilf promised to restore it to new condition. This he did and we are all familiar with the immaculate beautiful dark green 6/80 that Wilf drove to rallies and events after he inherited it.

Wilf's parents loved and welcomed Margaret into the family. Wilf had an amazing motoring sport career in hill climbs and rallies. His success with his Cooper S was achieved after he worked out how to effectively compete. Later in his

rallying career he drove a 6 cylinder Marina. He found this car great along straight roads but it was a beast on corners. Wilf solved this problem by changing the motor and gearbox for a Nissan unit which gave him a competitive edge to gain success.

Wilf was a true club member. He was ever willing to assist and advise members with car problems. In my case he drove all the way from Wingham to Galston (a four hour drive each way) to check out my newly reconditioned 6 cylinder OHC engine which was leaking oil by the litre. He modified the oil system and reduced the pressure in the crankcase to solve the problem. His skill was amazing. Many club members attest to his friendship and the assistance he offered them.

Our sympathy is extended to Margaret and Wilf's extended family. I am honoured to be able to call Wilf a friend.

John Inshaw

While John's tribute to Wilf summarises his life and passion for cars there are a couple of things I would like to share that for me have become cherished memories. The first was just a couple of hours spent chatting as we watched the cars go by in the 1999 Bay to Birdwood Classic Run. We covered just about every subject you could think of and during that time we solved all the problems in the world.

The other time was during the Morris Registers Caloundra National Rally in 2002. We had just visited the Ginger Factory at Yandina and Wilf asked me if I would like to drive his 6/80 back to Caloundra. I don't normally like driving other people's cars but on this occasion I graciously accepted the invitation. I thoroughly enjoyed it, with the extra power and higher cruising speed on the motorway it was a dream to drive, but not quite enough to make me want to buy one. Especially as it would be hard to have found one as good as Wilf's.

Having missed quite a few of the more recent club rallies I hadn't seen Wilf for a very long time but a couple of years ago, quite out of the blue, I received a phone call from him. We chatted for some time, just as if we had only seen each other a week or so ago.

Thanks Wilf, you will always be remembered.

Steve McNicol

SPARE PARTS

Our club keeps a comprehensive range of spare parts for all club vehicles to help members with restorations or on going maintenance. This is a service just for members, a benefit of being part of the club. Don't hesitate to contact one of our two spare parts secretaries if you need help or advice.



Spares Secretary

Pre-54 Parts

Bob Oakley

T: +44 (0)1743 873337

E: bob.680.mo.parts@outlook.com



Spares Secretary

Post-54 Parts

Richard Monk

T: +44 (0)1773 2570181

E: richkaty3@gmail.com

EXAMPLES OF PARTS REMANUFACTURED BY THE CLUB



NOS Light Lenses for
Series II, III, IV



Front & Rear
Windscreen Seals



Engine Mounts



Rubber Bushes
& Seals



**ALL REQUESTS FOR PARTS WILL BE ACKNOWLEDGED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
BUT PLEASE KEEP IN MIND OUR PARTS OFFICERS ARE VOLUNTEERS.**

FOR SALE

POST-54 PANELS

In the Post-54 club spares at the moment are some new old stock and good used panels.

Used bonnet, no rust or dents, fits Cowley 1500 and Series III and Oxford, Series IV Oxford £75

Saloon boot lid, very good condition, fits all saloons including Isis £75

Front panel, new old stock, very rare now, needs bead blasting, fits all Cowley and Oxford range £125

MCV van rear doors, new old stock, fits earlier pre-1954 vans as well (for the pair) £160

Nearside front wing repair panel for lower back section £40

These are all plus carriage or buyer collects. Please contact me if you are interested.

Richard Monk

PRE-54 SPARES

1951 Morris Six Series One engine, pressure tested and running. Includes starter and dynamo and accessories.

Price: £500

Also back axle and gearbox from same car.

For further information contact me on 01743 873337.

Bob Oakley



AMBASSADOR DISC BRAKE CONVERSION



Brian Holdsworth

I would like to say that the conversion to front disc brakes on my Hindustan Ambassador went without incident but unfortunately not! Necessary parts were received from India. New discs, pads, flexible hoses and used hubs and rebuilt calipers. A good friend Alec, a fellow club member and his friend Tom, had agreed to help with the conversion as he had access to workshop facilities and a useful lift for working at a more accessible height!

On inspecting the parts we first noticed that the condition of the threads on the stubs in the hubs were in very poor condition and needed re-cutting. We did a 'trial' assembly of the new discs to the hubs only to find that the diameter of disc centre was slightly too big to fit into the hub. This resulted in having to remove enough material to allow a perfect fit. Luckily Alec's son had access a workshop with a milling machine and was able to carry out the procedure.

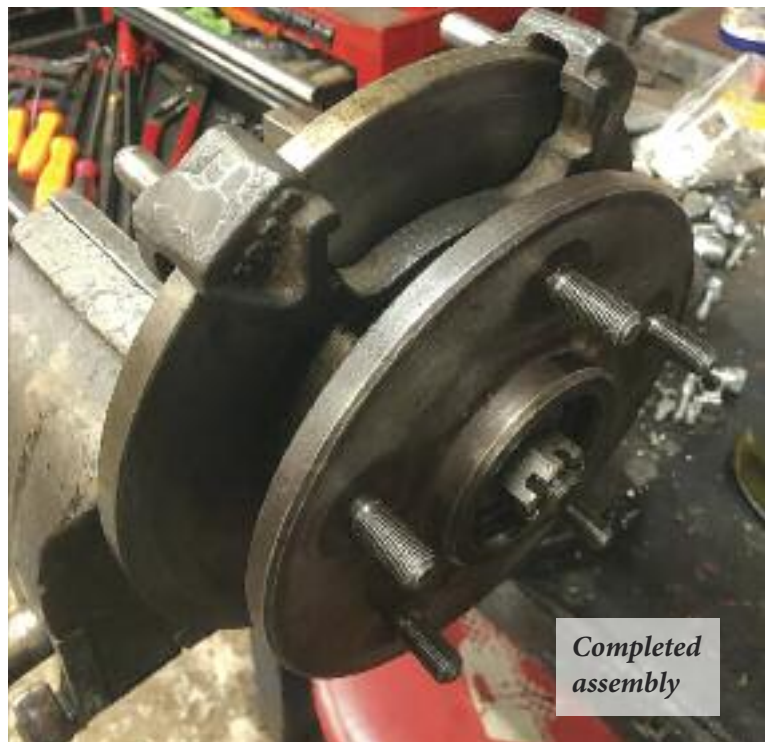
Although the nearside assembly was completed when it came to the offside we found that the disc was slightly thicker which would not allow entry between the pads in the caliper. The only solution was to remove 6mm from the face of the caliper that attached to the hub to allow the disc to enter centrally between the repositioned pads. Another trip to the workshop to remove the 6mm from the caliper.



*Removing 6mm
from the caliper.*



*Milling disc
circumference.*



*Completed
assembly*

Finally, when the flexible hoses were offered up to the calipers the threads were completely different even though this was anticipated and two different sets were sent but neither did the job. Luckily there was enough length in the existing hoses when lock to lock was applied and the thread was the same as the caliper. Bleeding the brakes then became a problem as one of the bleed nipples was broken off so had to bleed via the hose!

The final result has turned out very well and I am very pleased with the braking performance pulling up straight and strong. The attached photos will show the various problems that were encountered and a huge thank you goes to Alec and his son without whom the job would probably have been beyond me!



PART NUMBER ACH6095

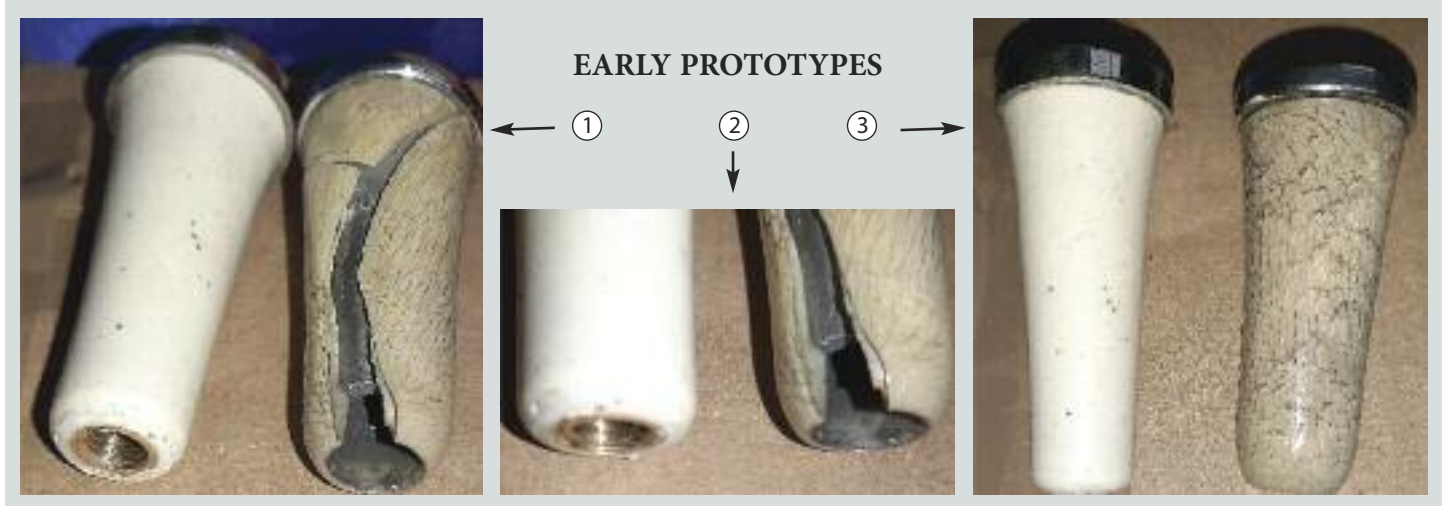
Robert Greenfield



ACH6095 is the gear lever knob for column change Nuffield/BMC cars from the mid 1950's onwards. On the 4/44, 6/90, J2 van, Cowley/Oxford/Isis ACH6095 is ivory coloured; on 4 and 6 cylinder Farina cars with a manual column change it is black. The black ones also look good on series III/IV Oxfords with their black dashboard knobs.

Most surviving gear lever knobs are now in poor condition or have disintegrated completely, leaving only the threaded Mazak centre. I am aware of one brand new, never used ACH6095 in the world; it's in the UK and likely under 24 hour surveillance with armed guards... ..or perhaps just in a drawer in Howard's workshop. Amazingly it has a marbled effect and isn't plain ivory coloured! I've never seen one like this on a car - they must fade in the sunlight!

Penguin Parts (aka Chris Chantrell) in the UK is making some reproduction knobs in both black and ivory and I think he's done an excellent job. He's made an accurate mould and uses some sort of resin, so they can have a metal centre and the outside is beautifully smooth to the touch, like they were originally. There is some very slight speckling on the ivory coloured ones.



A year ago he sent to me in NZ an early prototype knob which I've been testing on my 1954 Cowley. I like it a lot - it has the correct weight and feel and is much nicer than the poor old original one. I've kept the sun off it when parked using a fold out windscreen sunshade, but even a sock would do.

Recently he sent me four pre-production knobs including a black one. The other three had variations of original (reused) trim rings and Mazak centres, newly machined brass centres and new plated trim rings. Chris has also sent a few samples to Howard Dent, if UK club members want a closer look/opinion.

Unfortunately the original trim rings cannot be re-plated for some reason, but any that are in good condition are still potentially useful. **STOP PRESS! Chris may have overcome this problem - more news as it comes to hand...**

The Mazak centres are easy to reuse and save time/labour and material costs, so please collect any extra ones you find - Chris would love to have them, either sent directly to him in Burnley or perhaps via some people in our club. I am happy to collect them here in NZ, but that doesn't help UK members very much.



Also available in Black.

Prices are:

£23 - New brass core and new plated steel trim ring.

£18 - Mazak core and new plated steel trim ring.

£15* - Mazak core, original trim ring (*this option may not be able to be offered).

www.penguinparts.co.uk/

penguinpartsuk@gmail.com

Chris also makes other useful things and there are some interesting threads with photos on www.wolseleyforum.com of bits he has made e.g. polyurethane suspension bushes including AAA2054 (135072) for 6/80 and Cowley/Oxford/Isis (in any hardness), gaiters for the sliding joint of Landcrab driveshafts, Morris 8 radiator mounts etc.

P.S. there is also a long established sub-forum for Cowley, Oxford and Isis cars on that website too.

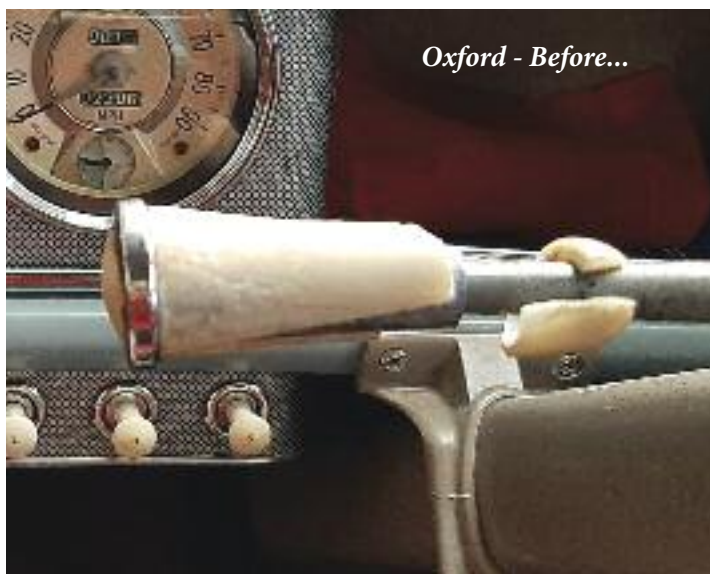
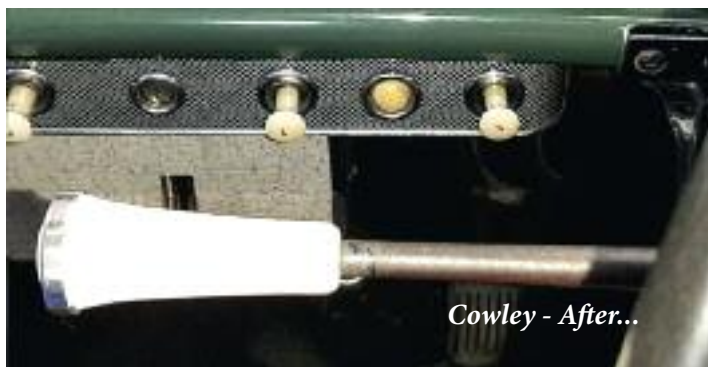


Above: The 'magic' potion.

Below: Four new and one original trim ring.



The new method. Trim rings are now being cast into the resin; earlier versions had the rings glued on, which was not 100% successful.





CARS IN THE NEWS

Michael Paulley



Hello to you all again.

Let's hope this year is going well for you. Give your classic a good service and a good run out - it will do you good and your car. If you do not have it as part of your insurance, then its a good thing to have a roadside assistance and recovery, as you never know when you might need it.

Here are some of my latest online finds.

UK

- 1 - 1954 Wolseley 6/80 is for sale at £6,900. Tel 01405 800940.
- 2 - 1954 MO Oxford is for sale at £2,400. No tel no.
- 3 - 1956 J-Type van is for sale at £19,995. Tel 01575 447649.
- 4 - 1952 J-Type van is for sale at £9,000. Tel 01751 474455.
- 5 - 1955 Morris Cowley is for sale at £650. No tel no.
- 6 - 1960 Morris Series III half-ton van is for sale at £30,000. Tel 01944 758000.

Australia

- 7 - 1954 Morris MCV ute is for sale at AU\$27,000. No tel no.
- 8 - 1951 Wolseley 6/80 is for sale at AU\$21,000. No tel no.
- 9 - 1953 MO Morris Oxford is for sale at AU\$1,500. No tel no.

When you receive this club magazine some of the finds may be sold I'm afraid. So that's your lot for now.

Until next time, as always, Keep it Classic!



NEWS EXCHANGE



MCOC MAGAZINE GIVE AWAY

I'm a club member (CW0143) and was previously a member of the Morris Cowley and Oxford Club (from 1985 until its merger with the 6/80 & MO Club in 2017). I've been having a clear out recently and came across all my old issues of the MCOC magazine Cowley News. These run from Issue 18 dated August 1985 to Issue 99 dated June 2015. I think these magazines are all now available as digital downloads, but if any club member would like my old paper copies, please get in touch and I'd be happy to pass them on free of charge.

I can be contacted on maurice.pinkmoon@gmail.com

Maurice Fletcher

SOMEONE HAS GOOD TASTE

My neighbour is adamant that everyone in my road is desperately waiting for me to move so the price of their properties will increase dramatically. However, I was waiting in the opticians when I got talking to a young couple. We ended up discussing the traffic situation in the town, how everything is gridlocked and they want to build another 8,000 houses.

I mentioned when I moved in to where I am now nearly 40 years ago my road was a lovely tree lined avenue with virtually no traffic, now it's part of the rat run and very busy and a lot of the trees have gone.

When the woman asked me where it was she said "that's where that lovely old car is, I'd love to live in that road"

Just goes to show there is a bit of couth and culture in this world despite neighbourly love!!!!

John Blackburn



FOR SALE

Towbar complete with tow ball and pre-wired socket. Best suited for Post-54 Morris Oxford/Cowley/Isis range although it will also fit MO, MS or 6/80. Simple fit to bumper bolts behind the bumper. Buyer to collect from my home address in Bucks or I can take it to the Annual Rally at Moreton in Marsh. £75.00 (to go to local charity).

For contact details see committee page.

Brian Holdsworth

Club Keyring Fobs and Bumper Bar Badge



Keyring Fobs

£3.00 each including UK P&P

Available from Membership Secretary Brian Holdsworth.

Bumper Bar Badge

£40.00 each incl UK P&P

Specially manufactured for the Club by Trophies & Medals Ltd from enamel on stainless steel.

Available to order from Membership Secretary Brian Holdsworth.



Paypal payment preferred to brianspost1@msn.com (friends & family payment method), or cheque to his home address, payable to 6/80 & MO Club.



Left to right: Tim Rouse (Treasurer), Mike Parry (ex-member), Richard Monk (Spares Post-54), John Weir (Chairman), Bob Oakley (Spares Pre-54) and Dave Barker (member).

LUNCHTIME GATHERING

Tim Rouse kindly organised a 'Christmas lunch' that was originally planned for late 2024 to meet up with our Pre-54 spares secretary Bob Oakley, but for various reasons was rescheduled for 16th April. This had the benefit of more daylight hours for driving and enjoying the spring sunshine. Other members and friends also joined us.

The venue was a remote rural pub 'The Bridge Inn' on the banks of the River Avon at Offenham, near Evesham in Worcestershire. Some spare parts were delivered and exchanged. Dave Barker thought Christmas had finally arrived as Santa had brought him some Wolseley cylinder heads. Richard Monk had a bumper stocking mainly because it was filled with an Oxford rear bumper.

It was an enjoyable and relaxed lunch. Instead of turkey with all the trimmings the main request was for traditional fish and chips or a beefburger. Many thanks to Tim for organising this get together.

John Weir

SURPRISE VISIT

We had a surprise visit from long time MCOC member Paul Chapman and wife Sally over the Easter break. Paul lives not far from us in Hawklinge, Kent.

He has owned his sound Series III Oxford on and off for many years having bought and sold it three times but I think it is with him for good now.

Richard Monk



SPRINGTIME IN FRANCE

I thought I'd let you know that the core plug repair is holding up in my Wolseley 4/50. It's stopped raining so I went out yesterday morning and again today and took a few photos of the car in the glorious sunshine.

Pat Seaward



RECYCLING!

This image is Katy demonstrating our post box made out of an old B series sump with a big slot in the top so that our postman can put the club magazine in it without folding it in half, which annoyed me! There is a trap door behind it to extract the post.

If you expect to receive lots of post, you could use an Isis sump which is a lot bigger.

Richard Monk



BODY ID TAGS

In the September 2024 magazine (issue 185 pages 43 and 44) Nigel Anderson asked owners of 1948-54 club vehicles to provide either photos or written notification of their vehicles body build tags and if agreeable a copy or scan of any Heritage Certificate so the extra information can be added and recorded on the club's vehicle record data base.

To date the response has been very low and we would like remind members that if you haven't sent anything to Nigel he would still like to hear from you. His email address is: mohistorian@680mo.org.uk.



FOR SALE

1996 Hindustan Ambassador 1.8 litre ISX
for sale at £3,750 o.n.o.

This version, with the 1817cc Isuzu engine and gearbox, is pretty nippy. It was beautifully restored by Richard Monk in 2021 and has been kept in a garage overnight ever since. It has only 23,500 miles on the clock and its current MOT expires on 20th April 2026.

I have owned it since new (bought from Fullbore Motors in London and first registered on 16th September 1996).

Originally Ivory in colour, but in 2009 I had it resprayed in British Racing Green.

I'd be very happy to email more pictures to anyone who is interested, show you the car (I'm near Alton, Hampshire) or chat about it - if you are interested. I can be reached at michael.hartz@pgsl.biz or 07771-564743.

Michael Hartz



TIMING GEAR UPDATE

An update on my aluminium timing gear. The gear has now done 500 miles and when cold at idle it is slightly more noisy than fibre or Tufnell gear, but not bad at road speed and almost no difference at idle speed when hot. It is quieter at road speed when hot.

The purists among you will be thinking why fit an aluminium gear? For two reasons, fibre gears no longer available and only option would be a dried out second hand gear that would likely fail. The other option a Tufnell gear that also could fail when the Tufnell gear separates from the steel centre. If the Tufnell gears were one piece I would have used one but not steel and Tufnell.

Tony Bullen

(Thanks Tony. Refer to issue 187, page 14 for the original information ...Ed)

MO OXFORD REVIEWS

In recent times there have been a couple of our club cars that have been reviewed by the media.

Nigel Anderson's early MO was compared to a Hillman Minx and an Austin A40 Somerset in an article written by John Presnell in February for 'Classic & Sports Car'. There are some great illustrations of all three cars.

More recently Robert Elliotts beautifully restored MO was featured in the April edition of 'The Automobile'. It can be found on page 70 and is titled "Back on the Road" They report on the car's restoration, which was also covered in part in our club magazine - issue 176.

Don't forget the deadline for the next magazine is Saturday 2nd August.



WILF SLATER

There is a tribute to Wilf Slater elsewhere in the magazine but I thought I would also share these two photographs. Wilf with his beloved Wolseley 6/80 are pictured above. The photograph was taken at Menglers Hill lookout during the 6/80 & MO Club's Tanunda National Rally in 1999. This was only the second national rally for the Australasian branch and Wilf was a regular attendee back then.

In action! During the Morris Registers Caloundra National Rally Wilf and his 6/80 were captured on film as they arrived at Lansborough (Qld) for a morning tea stop at the Lansborough Memorial Hall. As the 6/80 was painted dark green it sometimes appeared black in photographs.





ABD ECHUNGA (SA)

South Australia's All British Day was held on 2nd March this year and there were over 770 British vehicles on display, filling the two ovals. The usual traders and food vendors were there, but the only club cars were four Morris Oxford MOs, two of which are in the club.

Pictured above are Steve & Anne McNicol's 1951 MO, Ron & Anne Atkin's 1952 MO and a Morris Minor Series II.



B&EMS YARRA GLEN (VIC)

In Victoria the British & European Motoring Show was held at Yarra Glen Racecourse on Sunday 16th February. Branch Secretary Jotham Hardy has provided a couple of images. He parked with the Morris Car Club of Victoria and five of our club members attended the show: Frank Evans (Marina), Garry Davies (J-type van) Tony Bullen (MO), Ron Sinclair (modern) and Jotham (Series IV Oxford Traveller).



ANOTHER MS

It would come as no surprise that Jotham Hardy has added another car to his collection since the last magazine. This time its an early Morris Six and it will be a good companion to the other sixes in his 'fleet'.

A very original car: Serial No. SMS 2112, Engine No. 2787, black with red interior..



MOLLY'S NEW HOME

This well known Morris Six was restored some years ago by Wilf Alison and it used to make regular trips from its home in Tasmania to the Australian mainland. Fast forward to 2025 and Snow Harris has just purchased the car and it joins his growing fleet (see page 20).





TRAMWAY MUSEUM VISIT

Graeme Dorling has sent us this great photograph of his Morris Oxford Series II at the St Kilda Tramway Museum (South Australia) from back in March this year. The first two trams, while much older than the Oxford, would still have been seen around the suburbs of Adelaide when the car was new. The silver and red H-1 type tram would only have been about three years old at the time. The visit was part of the monthly club run of the Morris Car Club of South Australia.



FLEET UPDATE

After recently purchasing another Morris Six ('Molly', which was restored some years ago by the late Wilf Alison) Snow Harris has provided a photograph of the family's current roadworthy cars. From left to right we have 'Molly' SMS 2704, 'TJ' SMS 4407, 'Teresa' SMS 9821 and 'George' SMCV 18857/21641 (Amelia's ute - which made its debut at the Forbes rally in 2008). They also have SMS 4660 (parts car), SMCV 2531 (ute unrestored original) and another ute which is under restoration.

ARTICLES WANTED

We are now running short of articles for the magazine. If you can help please contact the editor.
In particular we are looking for technical articles and restoration reports.



GRANDAD'S MO

Craig Reiff



A heartfelt thank you to my grandparents, especially to my grandfather Joseph Peter Waddoup, who will be celebrating his 90th birthday this August. As a little boy he promised me a precious family heirloom that I have waited so long for.

After over 25 years of waiting and about 50 years of ownership by my grandfather, it finally happened in May 2022: my grandfather handed me the beautiful 1952 Oxford Morris Series MO. This remarkable vehicle was originally purchased by my grandfather's grandparents. After their passing, it was passed down to my grandfather's uncle, who unfortunately never really used this beautiful vehicle.

For many years, the Oxford Morris MO sat quietly in a small garage until my grandfather's uncle passed away. My grandfather was then asked by his mother if he would be interested in buying the car. Together with his old friend Mick they set out to rescue it from its dusty prison. However, accessing the vehicle turned out to be more challenging than they had anticipated; they first had to hunt for a light bulb to illuminate the dark garage.



Once they finally gained access, they discovered the brakes were stuck, the battery was dead and rust had taken its toll, but after countless painstaking attempts they managed to breathe life back into the car.

Over the years, my grandfather devoted immense time and effort to restoring this vehicle. He lovingly returned it to a beautiful, well maintained condition, which I promise to preserve for the future. In May 2022 I transported the car in a closed trailer from the picturesque southwest coast near Exeter to the quaint mountain village of Kitzbühel in Austria.

There, after a few years of retirement in the garage, we made the car roadworthy again. It still runs today without a hitch. Every time I take it for a drive I am flooded with memories of my grandparents over in the UK.

I also want to extend my gratitude to the club for their incredible support, especially in sourcing spare parts and offering assistance in every way possible. Here's to many more years with this beautiful Morris Oxford MO! A heartfelt thank you to my grandfather for his trust and for instilling in me the passion for this car.

Happy 90th birthday OP,S





TM7730 (AL4440)

Robert Greenfield



TM7730 (Formerly AL4440)

In my previous article I gave some details and background of a really nice Oxford that I had bought - AL2452. I still had the use of the rusty Toyota for everyday use (along with my bicycle) and eventually I ended up sort of acquiring it after I spent a lot of money getting the rust removed to a Warrant of Fitness standard. I don't recall actually buying it.

One of my new old-car-nut friends suggested that I could search for another Oxford that I could use as an everyday car and that owning two cars like this wasn't such an unusual thing to do, or at least he thought so. On the face of it this seemed like a reasonable suggestion, but with hindsight perhaps it wasn't the wisest. I wasn't exactly flush with cash. I was just starting my second year of tertiary study - Music and Chemistry at the University of Canterbury. I wasn't eligible for any grants because my parents earned too much and I was under 25 years old. On the plus side, I had just started playing in a band to earn money and my accommodation costs were well under market rates... with a double garage on site! Playing in a band for money means you can defray expenses against tax and gives a much better hourly pay rate than stacking shelves so long as you can be brutally efficient with rehearsals, setting up, packing down, soundchecks and trouble shooting. We weren't too bad but I do have memories of soundmen and band members occasionally utilising techniques such as fate, luck, chance, magic and whinging to trouble shoot where I could see it may be preferable to go through the leads and cables to isolate the malfunctioning one.

The band "Scarecrow" turned out to be quite successful, playing Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights most weeks and occasional private functions for four years, although the hours were a bit brutal: 11pm-3am and then the pack down. To enable a Morris to be used for carrying equipment without damaging the upholstery I cut a piece of MDF 'timber' to fit exactly the rear seat squab and rounded off the sharp edges; this way I could carry a TL606 15" speaker cabinet in the boot, another on the back seat alongside a heavy amplifier, a bass guitar behind the front seat and a couple of bags of miscellaneous leads and cables etc and still have room for a passenger if required. However, at this stage only the rusty Toyota was used for getting to and from gigs.

My search for another Oxford began. I left my contact details under the windscreen wipers or in letterboxes of the few that I saw around Christchurch with little luck. The owners who bothered phoning me



back weren't interested in selling. After quite some time someone did contact me - the owner of TM7730 - a green 1954 Morris Cowley. He was a younger man - maybe 5-10 years older than me. He had re-registered it (to TM7730) because the old rego had lapsed after being off the road for more than two years, so he'd done all the hard work needed so it could pass the fairly strict safety test. After a little bit of bargaining we agreed on a sale price of \$1,200. The car came with a folder of useful info, receipts and the original registration papers from 1954.

Left & above: The earliest photos that can be found of the author and his Cowley, pictured in Totara Street, Christchurch, 24th August 1997. (Frank Rowlands)

The left hand rear door with evidence of a quick accident repair. The paint on the door skin was a different shade too.

It turned out to be rust free and very original, with the considerable downsides of poor brakes, intermittent electrics and a sick engine. Only the flexible brake hoses had been replaced to get it on the road; the master cylinder sprung a leak and I nearly had brown trousers on one trip in rush hour traffic!

The intermittent electrics meant that everything would just go dead every so often and I'd have to coast to the side of the road. After a few minutes it would mysteriously come to life again. The original 1200cc engine only worked on 3 cylinders, so was painfully slow.

The original paint had several areas of touch ups, representing several accident repairs. This was confirmed when I removed the door trim panels to do some rust proofing - the inside frame of a door and inside of a B pillar had been cut out to whack the dented skins and that inner section of the B pillar had never been replaced!



The Cowley was used as an everyday car into the 1990s, and over the years several repairs were made from parts that were available/cheap. The original SU pump was changed for a NZ made AutoPump many years ago, and the SU bracket bent by 90 degrees (-ish). I had a spare SU pump reconditioned and new braided hoses made up and I put the installation back to original.



An aftermarket NATRA brand heater had been fitted (luxury!), but the air duct to the windscreen vents had never been connected. This Cowley also had the luxury of bumper overrides (being an export model), but nothing else. More recently, I fitted an engine temperature gauge and sender from parts I had in my garage, but I don't believe that it is working 100% correctly.

The master cylinder was removed by Graham, my mechanic, the bores sleeved in stainless steel and new seals fitted. The wheel cylinders were all replaced with new production aftermarket ones.

The electrical problems were largely fixed by cleaning all earthing points and checking/cleaning/replacing bullet connectors. The wire for the interior light had its insulation damaged when the seatbelt bolt holes were drilled in the B pillars. I got it going for a little while by using a piece of plastic pipe as a sleeve, then it has never worked again! A new wiring loom is being ordered soon...

The little engine that couldn't. This was a problem. I asked Graham to remove the engine and tell me what needed doing. One day I got a phone call - "Everything" he said; "It's stuffed". The rings had broken up and big ends and mains were very worn, despite fairly good oil pressure.

I looked for a replacement 1489 or 1622 but there wasn't anything around that seemed worth checking out; they

were just as likely to be stuffed too, so Graham gave me a shopping list of items to look for. Amazingly, I could find most bits needed at a fairly reasonable cost. The unique bit - +.020" 1200 pistons came from an engine builder in the North Island - he was using them in Ford Anglia engines!

With the necessary bits found I took a deep breath and gave the go ahead for the engine to be rebuilt. Mace Engineering machined and assembled the short block. It cost \$571.92 back in 1997, which was a lot of money for me at the time. I am glad now that I rebuilt the original engine but at the time I had no idea that originality was a thing.

I don't remember much being done to the cylinder head but I'm sure that at least the valves had a grind and Graham offered to grind out the metal promintory between the valves 'to make it go better'. I didn't know any better so I agreed. Later on I found that the carburetter wasn't able to be tuned, so Graham made up an adequate one using parts from several that I had acquired when I bought another Oxford - OXCART (...another article perhaps...), and he did similar making a frankenstein distributor from several different Lucas distributors, DM2 and others.



The Cowley across the road from Graham's workshop, probably in 1999. The engine had been rebuilt and the car was waiting for a respray. It was waiting a long time...

in the back. Unfortunately the original style of hoodlining material and colour were unavailable so a lighter colour was chosen. Likewise for the floor covering - nothing remotely like the vinyl 'carpets' were available so I settled on black carpets. I've got the remains of the original mats stored in my garage, in case I ever get the chance to get a closer replacement.

From what I can work out, the Cowley was back up and running on the road again by late January 2008. With me living in New Plymouth I was able to store the Cowley in my parent's garage on the outskirts of Christchurch between 2008 and 2016, although typically I was only able to drive and work on it once a year for 3 weeks or so. I wasn't able to do much in those short once per year timeframes, although I did swap out the 5.185:1 diff for the 4.875:1 that came from my Oxford and change the left hand axle oil seal. More recently I tried out a 4.55:1 diff, but this was a bit too much for the little 1200cc engine and it liked going up hills even less than before!

I also recall having to work on the brakes several times - no doubt a consequence of the very small amount of use it was getting. I fitted flashing indicators to LHD specs and retained working trafficators using relays, replaced the original control box from my OXCART stash of spares when it stopped working, and replaced the starter motor and generator with NOS spares I bought online from a retiring auto sparky in Wellington.

In 2016 Lisa and I flew down to Christchurch and drove the Cowley back to Egmont Village. We did this just days before the Kaikoura earthquakes. We stayed overnight in Hanmer Springs and took the inland road north to Kaikoura. This quiet, winding road became the temporary main road north after the earthquake. Over Cook Straight on the ferry and continuing to Egmont Village the engine was pinking badly going up hills, which was particularly a problem going so slowly up the steep Ngauranga gorge to get out of Wellington. Filling with 98 octane petrol lessened the problem. The rest of the trip was trouble free at 45-50mph; we even overtook something! (...OK, it was a tractor...)

A tea break somewhere along the very quiet inland Canterbury road from Hanmer to Kaikoura. This is the Cowley's longest road trip so far - getting it from Christchurch to Egmont Village.





The Cowley and I beside the Awatere road/rail bridge, State Highway 1, close to Blenheim. These days road traffic has a separate two lane bridge; before this trains ran overhead and a single lane for all road traffic ran underneath. The cardboard muffs either side of the radiator are an attempt to force more air through the radiator because the temp gauge reads hot and there was pinking.

Late in the evening (well after dark) we arrived home in Egmont Village, parked the Cowley on the grass and put on the proper waterproof, breathable car cover we'd bought for this event. At last, after many years the Cowley, Oxford and Isis were reunited! The Cowley celebrated by developing leaking wheel cylinders all round and the cat celebrated by putting rips in the Cowley's specially purchased car cover. Although annoying, the car cover was a temporary measure while a new garage was being built. At least with the Cowley now close to hand I could start ticking off the jobs on the list... and adding new ones.

I wanted a quick fix for the pinking and replaced the distributor with one from SimonBBC which included a 'leccy ignition module, although almost anything should have worked; the advance curve must've been dreadful to have such pinking in a low compression engine (lowered even further by having the Westlake promontories ground out).

One strange development apparent with more regular driving was that the engine developed an odd noise once it warmed up - it had a 'clack' that made it sound like a diesel engine. My mechanic Steve could also see an accompanying small puff of smoke from the exhaust when revving the engine and it seemed reasonable to conclude that something had gone wrong with gudgeon pins/bores. I located a new set of +020" pistons with rings for the same price as just a set of rings, a new set of big end bearings and a 1200 head gasket set. One day Steve rang and said that the good news was that the gudgeon pins were fine, bores were good and that everything looked OK... which was also the bad news - he hadn't found what was making the noise.



The original cylinder head with the Westlake Promontories completely ground away.

The block was reassembled with the new parts and I had another 1489 cylinder head rebuilt with new valves, guides and hardened seats - and the Westlake Promontory intact, aside from the sharp edges rounded off. It was skimmed to raise the compression ratio which may now be c.8.3:1. It runs with no problem on 91RON petrol. The engine must have been under a slight curse. When Steve was driving it back to my house there was a terrible knocking from the engine and he switched off the engine immediately. With the cylinder head off he could see one of the valve guides had nipped up. Back to the engine shop. New 1200 head gasket (probably the last one in NZ), and finally back to my garage. Once there, I started investigating what might be the source of the 'diesel' noise.

I found much excellent information from www.mgaguru.com (an amazing website!) that a worn camshaft thrust plate could cause a noise like this, so out came the radiator and off came the timing cover. I also checked the play between the distributor and the crankshaft by removing the distributor cap and using the crank handle/rocking the car back and forth in 1st gear. I found that there was a lot of crank movement before the distributor would turn.

The culprit turned out to be the camshaft timing gear - it had somehow worn around the woodruff key and could rotate slightly on the shaft. I fitted the new thrust plate after drilling the missing hole required for the oil feed on early B series engines and fitted a new chain and new sprockets. I also fitted an A series timing cover that had an oil seal rather than a felt seal which required finding the correct oil thrower from an MGB. Try as I might I could not see any way to fit the rubber ring timing chain 'tensioner', so I left it off. I am curious to know how they are fitted to these early B series engines.

Of course I didn't quite line up the dots on the sprockets correctly, so off came the timing cover again, and I've still yet to get around to stopping the oil leak that the new cover was meant to eliminate... However, the engine now makes only the correct tappety B-series sound like it should!

One long anticipated job was improving the column shift mechanism. It was pretty ratty and often refused to go into 1st or 2nd when at a standstill - usually when the traffic lights went green!

I knew that the early cars' gear change isn't great and that the workshop manual shows the factory modifications over the years and adjustments to check. One of the ball joints was so worn that it was being held together with a spring to stop it falling apart!

I replaced all ball joints with Rose joints (aka rod ends) and had my local retired engineer braze up the hooks/eyes to make them round. He also devised some collars to help. Some of the worst play was in one of the levers on a gearbox shaft. The lever could wiggle up and down, side to side, in and out and the securing pin could be made no tighter. I made some experimental shims using old razor blades which worked well until they fell out. The gear change was improved so much that it was just as good as AL4252 which has all the factory improvements. The gear lever now wears a prototype replacement knob cast by Chris Chantrell aka Penguin Parts in the UK and I believe that he has just made them available for sale (see article on page 12).

Unfortunately the replacement head with hardened valve seats has developed a crack.



The inlet and exhaust manifolds have had ceramic coatings to lessen heat transfer in the engine bay. And they look nice. Those with sharp eyes may notice the non-standard water hoses going through holes butchered into the firewall, odd heater tap and the wiring going to the fuses that has never been secured behind the fusebox.





I found the original distributor! I had it rebuilt to later Cowley 1200 spec and I had a new correct spec vacuum advance unit made in the USA. Since these photos I have fitted an electronic module to eliminate the points.



A year or so ago I found the original distributor in the garage. I was delighted because I thought that I had lost it years ago. I found the specs online for the later distributor settings to suit 7.2:1 pistons and had a new vacuum advance made in the USA. Doing this meant I had a baseline to work out what needs doing (if anything) to the timing. According to the engine temperature gauge the engine still gets a bit hot with sustained 'high speed' running, especially up long hills, although there are no other ill effects I can detect.

Very recently I have started replacing the front suspension rubber bushes - they are finally giving out after 70 years! I replaced the rear suspension bushes a few years ago when I had the rear springs retempered. This Cowley is a very early one. The chassis number is EAE21/676 and engine number is BP12M681 which I think means it is the 175th one made and first registered in NZ on 11 October 1954. I'd be interested to know if there are any earlier Cowleys in the club.

How did such an early example end up in NZ? Only Oxfords were assembled in NZ from CKD kits, so this Cowley was assembled in the UK and exported to NZ privately. The first owner was a woman in Southbrook, Canterbury, her address only stated as "Station Road" where the NZR railway station was sited. At that time I imagine Southbrook was pretty rural, although quite close to Rangiora (now it is a suburb of Rangiora). If you had overseas funds (e.g. if you were a farmer) in the 1950s you could jump the waiting list and buy a new car easily from your local car dealer; this appears to be the case for this car and it still has its "Stan Lugg, Rangiora" dealer rosette in the middle of the dashboard. Still, this is not a typical car for rural use in NZ, most farmers preferring a 'better' car, like a Holden.

The ownership papers show that the original owner got married, moved to Christchurch and kept the car until 1986. Owner number two kept it until the early 1990's by which time the rego had lapsed. Owner three had it re-registered in 1995 and I'm the 4th owner, since 1996. Unlike Moggy (AL4252), the Cowley has not been used as an everyday car for a sustained period, nor has it been on many longer trips. It is a car Lisa and I like to take into town or along quiet roads and 50mph suits it really nicely. The engine and gearbox are the quieter than the Oxford and it idles better too. The respray in the original colour wasn't done very well, but I love the dark colour and maybe one day I can get it redone.



I am amused to find a Pertronix 'Flamethrower' coil in my Cowley. Must give me an extra 0.5 mph top speed...



The NATRA heater installation showing one of the holes 'elegantly placed' in the firewall. Despite an air duct going up via a hole in the passenger's glovebox it doesn't attach to the windscreen, so no demisting is possible.



Compared to an Oxford the Cowley has bits missing to save money. Most you can live without, but in our opinion the meanest item missing that an Oxford has is the passenger's sunvisor.

On the 'to do soon' list... the cylinder head and/or gasket aren't quite right, the indicated getting hot going up long 'fast' hills, replace wiring loom, finish replacing the remaining front rubber bushes and shock absorbers (they're starting to leak), eliminate the free play in the gearbox lever and replace the seals, check the propshaft for balance.



- 1 - Outside my house, with our replica NZ Railways 'single mens hut' in the background, which has been in use as a sleepout for various children. One day I may finally get to use it for repairing musical instruments.
- 2 - Outside a cottage in Egmont Village where we stayed while the asbestos cladding was removed from our house.
- 3 - These are my youngest daughters with me on a Morris Owners' Club (South Island) event in 2014.
- 4 - My eldest daughter Abby driving the Cowley in 2023. The worn column change wasn't much fun for her and I fitted rod ends etc soon after this photo.
- 5 - TM7730 making a visit to the workshops.
- 6 - At the Inglewood car show, parked next to vehicles of similar style and performance (heh heh!).
- 7 - In good company!
- 8 - Where Lisa and I stayed at Hanmer Springs on our journey back to Egmont Village. The owners had a Borgward.





Above: We didn't expect to see a double decker bus in rural Banks Peninsula in Canterbury.

Top right: Remains of specification sheet pasted on top of firewall, to the left of the Morris Motors details plate.

Lower right: Dealers rosette in the middle of the dashboard.



ART DECO MO

Robert Elliott



And finally, my pick of the 'non Minors'

Izzy was filming the Travelling Auctioneers at TW Gaze Auction at Diss in Norfolk (one of Rob's regular haunts). Having never seen a Series MO, she wanted to see the car, which she admired, and commented particular on the dashboard and the Art Deco style Morris logo.

As regular readers may recall, Rob Elliott's Series MO proved very popular with Steph Holloway (of *idriveaclassic* fame) at the Club Rally in 2023 and also at the Morris Register rally the same year. The list of celebrity admirers continues with Antiques expert Izzy Balmer. She will be well known to viewers of *Antiques Roadtrip*, *Bargain Hunt* and the *Travelling Auctioneers*.

Rob was introduced to Izzy a couple of years ago by another TV Antiques expert, Tim Medhurst, who he has known for many years. She is as lovely in person as she is on camera.





LOOKING BACK AT THE MCV

Graeme Dorling



Shortly after Morris Motors launched the Morris Oxford Series MO in 1948, development work proceeded with two different commercial variants of the car that would be a 1/2 ton van and utility to be known as the Morris Cowley Series MCV. The Morris Cowley name had been used from the very early days of Morris vehicles until well in to the 1930s.

The chassis for the new models were designed by the Projectile Engineering Company (PECO) and Nuffield Metal Products in conjunction with Morris Commercial Vehicle design team. They were manufactured by the Pressed Steel Company.

At the direction of Lord Nuffield the two commercial vehicles were to take on the appearance of the Morris Oxford Series MO sedan that the public were already familiar with.

To achieve this, both the utility and van were able to utilise most of the MO body panels forward of the centre pillar that included the engine bay floor, inner and outer wings, doors and forward half of the floor, sills and roof panel. Unlike the mono construction of the Morris Oxford, the commercial variants required a separate chassis with the cab and van body bolted to it.

Due to likely flexing of the rear of the ute, extra strengthening of the number plate panel in the chassis was added. Once assembled, the cab was bolted to the chassis and the mechanical components including engine gearbox installed.

The van body had a generous 3.4 cubic metre capacity.

The front suspension lower arms were attached to the chassis while the top suspension arms and shock absorbers were directly bolted to the body. As with the Morris Oxford, the commercial variants used the same independent front suspension system incorporating torsion bar springing and hydraulic double acting shock absorbers. In addition they were also fitted with telescopic shock absorbers. The trim of the vehicle could be adjusted via way of a vernier attachment at the torsion bar anchorage.

The same 1476 cc side valve engine was utilised however the axle ratio was lowered to take into account the potential loading of the vehicle while achieving an acceptable acceleration. A column shift gear change was used along with Lockheed hydraulic brakes with 9 inch drums.



Above: This beautifully restored 1953 Morris Cowley van in post office red livery is owned by Alf Padgett from New South Wales and was restored over an eight year period beginning in 2008. It was photographed at Mildura during the club's national get together last year.

Left: The rear view of a 1954 Morris Cowley van in very original condition owned by Frank Evans from the Morris Car Club of Victoria.

Both Alf and Frank are current members of the 6/80 & MO Oxford & Cowley Club.

A well preserved example of a 1953 Morris Cowley utility is seen at the departure of the Bay to Birdwood Rally in September 2010. The owner, Craig Smith had only recently purchased the ute from interstate (without even seeing it first) and then he drove it all the way back to Adelaide. While restored it lacked the centre casting on the bumper bar and the windscreen centre pillar was not refitted.



In Australia the majority of both the Series MCV van and utility were assembled as CKD (Completely Knocked Down) units at the Nuffield Australia car assembly plant at Zetland in Sydney. They were released in Australia in October 1950

about three years ahead of the Morris Minor commercial variants. Cab chassis were also offered for sale.

The utility proved to be more popular than the van in Australia and the numbers of surviving vehicles of each type tends to confirm this. For many decades the utility had been an icon in Australia and most car manufacturers offered a model in their line up. The Ford V8 utility launched in 1934 was the first genuine utility offered in Australia. It was built on a standard passenger car chassis as distinct from a light truck with driver's compartment and tray section being built separately.

The origin of the utility is thought to have come from when a farmer was refused a bank loan to purchase a car to take his wife to church in. However the bank would provide a loan for a farm work vehicle and after contact was made with Ford, the company designed a vehicle to carry a commercial load on a sedan chassis with formal passenger car comfort and fittings.

While the utility and van had excellent carrying capacity and very useful and good performing short haul vehicles they were less desirable for longer distances due to their lower gearing and limited maximum speed. The sales of the more powerful Holden utility and van particularly for regional use soon outstripped that of Morris from the mid 1950s. After 1954, the Morris Cowley vans and utilities were replaced by vehicles based on the Morris Oxford Series II and Austin derivatives.

Due to hard commercial use following many decades of service both the Morris Series MCV vans and utilities are now quite rare in Australia and the few that still exist are in the hands of motoring enthusiasts. In spite of their age they are still practical vehicles quiet capable of performing the job they were designed to do.





NEC - HIGHLIGHTS 2025

John Weir



Two vehicles caught my attention when I visited the Practical Classics Classic Car & Restoration Show in March.

On the Morris Minor LCV stand was this beautifully restored 1954 Morris MCV (Cowley) half-ton chassis cab. It belonged to Mike Parry (non-member), and it was a credit to his restoration skills. The vehicle was exported to Portugal from Cowley and used by a sheep farmer who constructed a timber open pen on the rear chassis. It retired as a working vehicle in 1980 and was left in a field. In the late 1990s it was rescued and sent to Germany. In 2004 it was purchased and returned to the UK where it was stored until 2014. The restoration was completed in 2023.

It has a bespoke rear body, fully restored interior and the original 1476cc side valve engine albeit with a period Derrington Tuning twin SU carburettor conversion. The owner said that he had completed a 5,000mile 5-week tour of Sweden and Norway post restoration and he thoroughly enjoyed driving his very special MCV.



On display on the Footman James Insurance sponsored "Barn Find" stand was this 1958 Morris Oxford Series III. It looked quite a late model and was in duotone Black on Birch Grey. It looked in relatively good and original condition, but I could



not inspect it too much as this would have disturbed much of the "patina" (dust and cobwebs!). It looked very complete, had seat covers and it gave the appearance of being well looked after in its younger days.

There was limited information on the car other than it had been abandoned on a driveway some 35 years ago. After expressing an interest, the current owner acquired the car some 32 years ago for the equivalent of its scrap value, and it has been in dry storage ever since. The SFO 260 registration was not known to me or our club historian Martin Hamilton. There is the possibility that the original registration had been sold and at some time it was re-registered. I was unable to access the VIN plate. If any members know anything about this car, please let Martin know and we may be able to compile its back history.





MORRIS ISIS 70TH ANNIVERSARY

John Weir



70th Anniversary of the Morris Isis Series I

“Isis” is an ancient word. It was the name given by locals to the river which flows through Oxford. The Isis later joins the River Thame to become the River Thames. It is also the name of the Oxford University reserve crew in the annual boat race with Cambridge University (there is also a River Isis in Queensland and NSW in Australia). As William Morris expanded his business empire from Oxford and then Cowley, he assigned local Oxfordshire names to some of his cars during the inter war years – hence the Morris Oxford, Cowley and Isis.

History

Morris endeavoured to get a share of the larger car market, with bigger engines and more luxury finishings at a competitive price, but never really achieved success.



The ancestry of the 1955 car goes back to a large top of the range model of 1929 called the Isis. Throughout the 1930s it had a 6-cylinder 2468cc engine. This complemented the smaller and less powerful mid-range Oxford and Cowley saloon models. The Morris Isis name was dropped from June 1935 after limited sales success and the factory opting to drop the traditional car names in favour of Numbers (h.p. rating) or Series names.

In 1948 the 6-cylinder 2215cc Morris Six (Series MS) was derived from the smaller and less powerful 4-cylinder Oxford Series MO. Production of the Morris Six ended in 1953, after limited sales of 12,464 cars, having been overshadowed by the more luxurious Wolseley 6/80 also produced by the Nuffield Motors. For two years there was no large, big-engined Morris on the market until the return of the Morris Isis in 1955.



Description

The Isis name dates from 1929 – 1935 when Morris used it for top of the range cars. After a lapse of 20 years, it was reintroduced with the Morris Isis Series I in July 1955. It effectively replaced the Morris Six (1948 – 1953). It was the last pre-BMC design to achieve production having been designed at the Morris design office in Cowley. It was part of the Nuffield Motors rationalisation policy as the Isis was based upon the Oxford and Cowley models introduced in 1954, but the wheelbase and front of the car were longer to accommodate additional bracing and the heavier, longer and more powerful BMC C-Series 2639cc six-cylinder engine with a 4-speed column change gearbox. Compared to the Oxford, the Isis had larger brakes, tyres and clutch. The less precise Bishop cam and peg steering was in front of the suspension, the column was higher but without the offset angle. It was the largest, fastest and most powerful Morris produced at that time with 86 bhp and a top speed of 90 mph. Initial selling price was a competitive £801 10s 10d (Standard) and £844 0s 10d (De Luxe).

The Isis was available with optional (£63 15s 0d) Borg Warner overdrive from January 1956. The deluxe version came with a heater, additional instrumentation in the form of a clock, twin horns, leather seat covering both with central armrests, opening quarter-lights in the front doors as well as over-riders. Late Series I models had a mesh grille (from June 1956) and coloured piping on the seats. Series I models were phased out in October 1956 with styling upgrades to the whole Isis/Oxford/Cowley range and the Series II Isis was introduced. Series II production ceased after a 16 month production run in March 1958. The Isis name was never used again. Some cars saw service with the police, some were exported to countries where the distances travelled required the 2.6 litre engine.

The only other variant was a Traveller estate car. It was based upon the Morris Oxford Traveller with an identical rear timber section, but longer front section. Initial selling price was a range topping £957 7s 6d.

The Traveller was a multi-purpose vehicle for both business and family motoring. It was a large and heavy vehicle with a 12cwt payload. The rear had 35ft³ of space or 65ft³ if the rear seat was lowered. It was finished to deluxe standards internally with overdrive as an option. It had only two front doors (although a 4-door example was made), a timbered rear body with wide back doors and a low floor for easy loading. The spare wheel, usually in the rear well beneath the floor, was moved to the inside and the space created was used for passenger's feet as it had a third row of “occasional” seats in the back, so could seat 8 adults. The ash rear frame, like the Oxford, was non-structural and clad the steel box sections. Body and interior trim colours were limited. Floor covering was rubber matting. Export models had the option of wipers instead of trafficators.

The Series I Isis Traveller was phased out in October 1956 with styling upgrades to the whole range and the Series II Isis Traveller was introduced. Isis Travellers saw service with the Police as highway incident vehicles.

Key Features

COLOURS: Black (not Traveller), Clarendon Grey, Sandy Beige or Empire Green with maroon or green interiors.

ENGINE: Six-cylinder, OHV, bore 79.375mm, stroke 88.9mm, 2639cc (161cu in), maximum bhp 86 at 4250 rpm, SU H4 carburettor (1.5in).

GEARBOX: Four speed, steering column gear change, synchromesh on top three gears, ratios: top 4.1, 3rd 5.88, 2nd 8.45, 1st 13.59, reverse 18.42. With optional overdrive: top 2.87, 3rd 4.12, 2nd 5.91, 1st 13.59.

REAR AXLE: Hypoid bevel, three quarter floating, ratio 4.1:1 with or without overdrive.

BRAKES: Lockheed, front and rear, initially 10 then 11inch drums.

STEERING: Bishop cam and peg. 3.5 turns lock to lock.

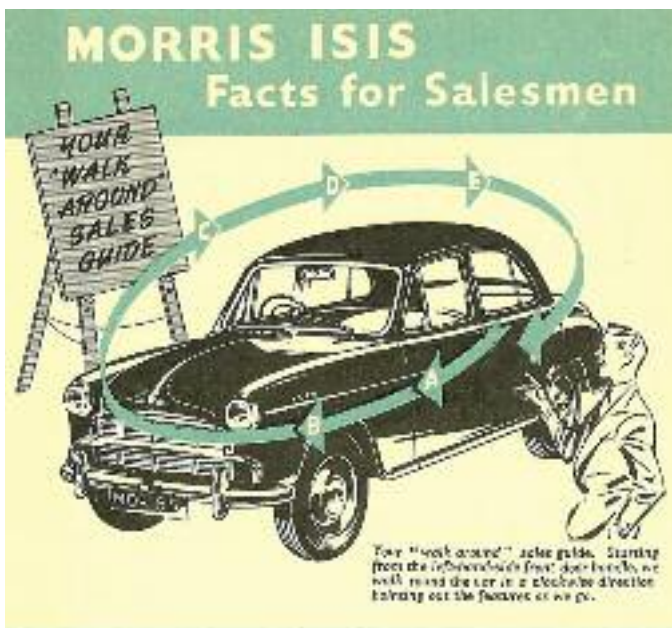
TYRES: Standard saloon 6.40 x 15, De Luxe saloon and Traveller 6.00 x 15. Five stud wheels.

SUSPENSION: Front independent with torsion bars and telescopic shock absorbers, rear semi-elliptic leaf springs and telescopic shock absorbers.

DIMENSIONS: Length saloon 14ft 10in (4.52m), width 5ft 5in (1.65m), height saloon 5ft 3.75in (1.62m), wheelbase 8ft 11.5in (2.73m), track front 4ft 5.5in (1.36m) rear 4ft 5in (1.346m) ground clearance 7in (18cm) turning circle L 36ft 9in (11.15m) R 37ft 6.5in (11.43m), weight saloon 1ton 5.75cwt (1308kg). Traveller as saloon except for length 14ft 8.69in (4.49m) height 5ft 3.94in (1.62m) weight 1ton 7.75cwt (1410kg).

CAPACITIES: Fuel saloon 12 gallons (54litres) Traveller 10gallons (45litres). Boot saloon 16ft³ (0.45m³) Traveller with seats folded 65ft³ (1.84m³), with seats upright 35ft³ (0.99m³).

The range was not a sales success with only some 6,692 (Nos. 701-7192) Series I saloons and Travellers. Very few Morris Isis Series I saloons or Travellers have survived, although they were the flagship of the Morris range.



MAIN SELLING POINTS

1. Performance the highest in Morris history; coupled with operational economy.
2. A six-cylinder 2.6 litre engine, the supreme research achievement of advanced B.M.C. design. Develops 86 b.h.p., top speed in the region of 90 m.p.h., fast cruising speed, soft-second
3. Front and rear springing equal to the best in the world, proved by years of road testing.
4. Seating six with ease with inner-ride comfort. A spacious interior equipped generously with stylish appointments. For these advantages the Isis is



Notable Achievements

The Isis was not a sporting model by any means, but its robust build and powerful engine made it a suitable candidate for an endurance event that also gave BMC good publicity especially in the overseas markets. In September 1956 an Isis (KFK



At exactly one second past midnight on 1st September the car left the premises of the Overseas Motor Transport Co. (East Africa) Ltd., the Nairobi Distributors in Nairobi.

158) in standard form, other than long range fuel tanks and a front spot lamp, was driven 7,056 miles from the Nuffield Distributors premises in Nairobi to Cape Town and back at an average speed of 60.7mph. It was driven by Kenyans John Manussis and Peter Davies over 116hrs 9 minutes including a 7.5hr stop in Cape Town. This beat by some 31hrs the previous 1954 record held by a Morris Minor.

Davies had experience in the East African Safari (Coronation) Rally and he was convinced that the Isis was strong and powerful enough to attempt the record. A new car was selected with overdrive to reduce fuel demand. It was shipped to Mombasa and driven 350 miles to Nairobi by Davies to run it in. Completing the outward leg in Cape Town the car

was serviced overnight at the Nuffield Distributor's garage and only needed a new set of tyres and an oil seal. The unmade gravel roads gave the car a real pounding. On the return journey they had a front tyre blow out at high speed, another was shredded by the gravel and a rear shock absorber was ripped off requiring servicing in Bloemfontein and Salisbury by local BMC agents. They made a map reading error in Southern Rhodesia with a detour of 110miles which lost them time. Without this they would have averaged over 63mph. Local newspapers and radio stations gave regular reports on the team's progress. The mud splattered Isis returned to Nairobi to the acclaim of friends and the BMC/Nuffield representatives. It was a great effort by all concerned.

Overseas Markets

Export revenue was vital to the UK in the 1950s. In places like Australia, South Africa and Canada, Morris saw the potential for a powerful, robust vehicle to cope with the road conditions and the vast distances travelled. The Morris Six initially was not

MOTORING EDITORS ACCLAIM THE NEW 6 CYLINDER MORRIS 'ISIS'



"Annoyed me by climbing Highland Road Artillery Hill in top gear from a 26 mph start... a spacious interior, a large fuel tank, door 12 miles to the gallon and in top gear outperforms several allegedly 'sport' cars!"
 PETER ARTHUR, "MOTORING TRAVELLER", 1934, MURRAY.

"Mid-smooth and cheerfully fast steamer... is a safe-for-anyway proposition the hit should take some beating!"
 GAVIN McFARLANE, "MOTORING TRAVELLER", 1934, MURRAY.

"This good-looking car handles itself perfectly delightfully and is strongly built to suit country use. Driven... delightful riding speed of over 70 m.p.h!"
 H. B. WILLIAMS, "MOTORING TRAVELLER", 1934, MURRAY.

"A very satisfactory general-purpose car... is excellently suited to family use... without chrome trappings and its reserve tonnage, 30 applications, and the fact that the engine is never heard to fail!"
 ARTHUR BENTLEY, "MOTORING TRAVELLER", 1934, MURRAY.

HERE ARE SOME OF THE GREAT 'ISIS' FEATURES:

Efficient 6-cylinder 26 b.h.p. engine developing approximately 26 b.h.p. • 40 m.p.h. touring, air-cooling and automatic start • exceptionally strong transmission and suspension • powerful 4-speed clutch operation • 12 m.p.g. economy • large load capacity.

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up to the task as deficiencies in design appeared. After modifications and body strengthening sales picked up. The lessons were learnt for the Morris Isis which was extensively tested prior to release, but the public were cautious and by 1955 there were alternatives competing for sales. Overseas sales were dominated by the Isis saloon as the wood finishing on the Traveller was not ideal for some overseas climatic conditions.

Police

Mr C.W. Baker of the Fleet Sales Division at Morris Motors considered that the Isis, because of its spacious body, performance, stability and durability would be a natural for police work. Cars were equipped with a 2-way radio, heavy duty electrical equipment, and specific police extras such as twin driving mirrors, map light, message pad, fire extinguisher and even truncheons in clips below the front seats. The large boot enabled the stowage of a radio transformer, first aid kit, spare battery and accident warning signs. Some forces opted for the Traveller because of its cavernous rear storage area. Also, an estate car variant was not currently available with the more favoured Wolseley and early Austin Westminster models.



Glamorgan Police (Isis SI and SII).

Baker drove some 9,000 miles in 10 weeks to demonstrate the car to 100 police forces. To accompany the sales effort brochure H5515 "Calling All Police Forces" was produced by The Nuffield Press. The sales pitch was that the Isis was "Built to measure for exacting police duties - right performance, roominess, ease of access, robustness plus the right dignity of appearance (in black)."

Of the forces visited, 54 purchased the Isis. Within BMC there was internal competition to supply police vehicles as some forces opted for the Austin Westminster or smaller Morris Oxford SII, whilst the ageing Wolseley 6/80 remained the most favoured. In addition, there was external competition from Ford with its Zodiac model.

Publicity



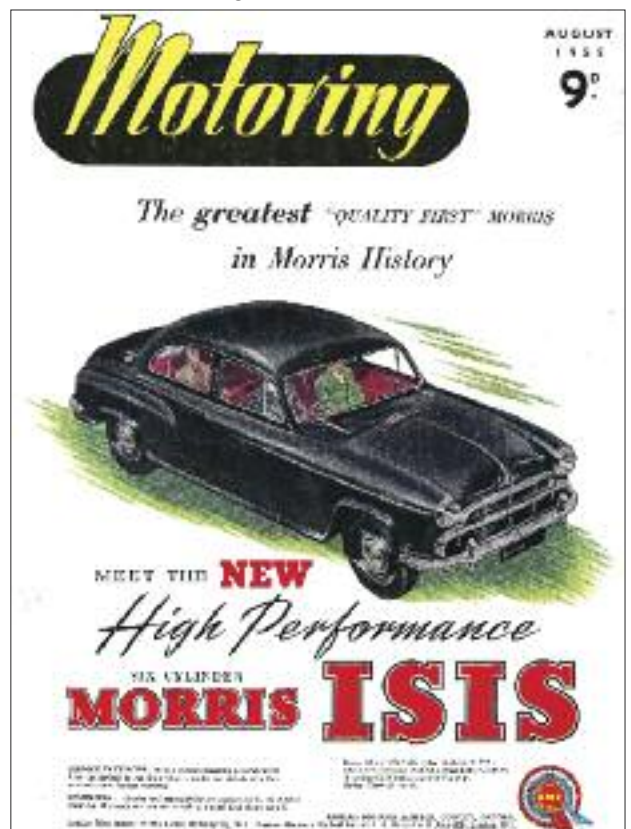
*Colmore Depot Ltd's
(Worcester) launch on 11th July 1955.*

Publicity by BMC and The Nuffield Press was prepared for the launch of the Isis. This was relatively low key and considerably less than for the Morris Oxford. The announcement was not made until the cars were available. It was well coordinated with brochures, cars placed under covers in Morris/BMC dealer show rooms both in the UK and overseas, ready for the big reveal on 11th July 1955. New models in May (Oxford) and July (Isis and Cowley) were a break with tradition as a launch usually coincided with the October London Motor Show. Reacting to feedback from their dealers, suppliers and previous sales trends, and impacts on factory production, it was decided that a July announcement had advantages as it avoided the stagnation in car sales in the run up to October, it smoothed out demand for suppliers and avoided lay-offs at the factory. It also catered to a global market and in the UK, it anticipated the better motoring weather in the summer months.

The factory promoted the new car as the top of the range stable mate to the Oxford, so keeping the new model range in public awareness. Factory publicity photographs were aimed at the more affluent customer promoting the bigger and more powerful car. Publicity locations were generally rural Oxfordshire.

There were nationwide showroom displays by BMC dealers and distributors of the Isis, supported by national advertising, albeit not as extensive as for the Morris Oxford. Space was bought in papers, adverts placed in magazines and the motoring press, with announcements in trade and technical journals. Accompanying this was local advertising in regional papers by local distributors and dealers. Sales templates and posters as well as brochures were made available by the factory. Dealer's sales representatives were trained up, and crib cards were issued. Post cards were issued to dealers to send out to potential customers or to tempt existing owners to trade in their Morris Six (MS) for the new model or, even better, to attract owners of comparable non-Morris cars to transfer allegiance.

Having seen or heard the announcements, the public could visit their local dealer to see the new car. Demonstrator cars were loaned to regional newspapers and magazines, as well as the motoring press. The emphasis was clearly on the return of the Isis, the powerful new 6-cylinder engine and the value for money that the Isis offered, compared to some of its rivals.



The Nuffield Organisation demonstrated a return to their heritage and pre-war model range. The Isis was the last Morris to follow this trend. Following the initial launch publicity there was little follow up, perhaps reflecting the low sales figures, mixed reviews and alternatives from within BMC with the similar Austin and Wolseley models.



Stamps

The Morris Isis did appear on some stamps of "British Icons" with a face value of £1 and £2. They were not British but were stamped with "Local Post". Possibly Australian (or may be not an official postal release by any country?). If members know any more, please let me know.



Brochures and Adverts

H&E 5479 - Honours go to the immaculate new six-cylinder Morris Isis (Also German and French versions; updated as H&E 5564 plus E5564 for the Canadian market)

H5515 - Calling All Police Forces

H5525 - Honours go to the greatest Morris in Morris History! (With update E5526)

H&E 5541 and 5569 - The New Morris Isis Traveller. Fast and lively – Roomy and Comfortable (also printed in German)

H&E 5543 - "Here comes the New Morris Isis – with the accent on performance"

H&E 5586 - Lengthen your stride with overdrive which highlighted the Borg Warner overdrive available to the Morris Isis, Riley Pathfinder and Wolseley 6/90. [Key: H = Home market; E = Export market]

Technical Press Announcements

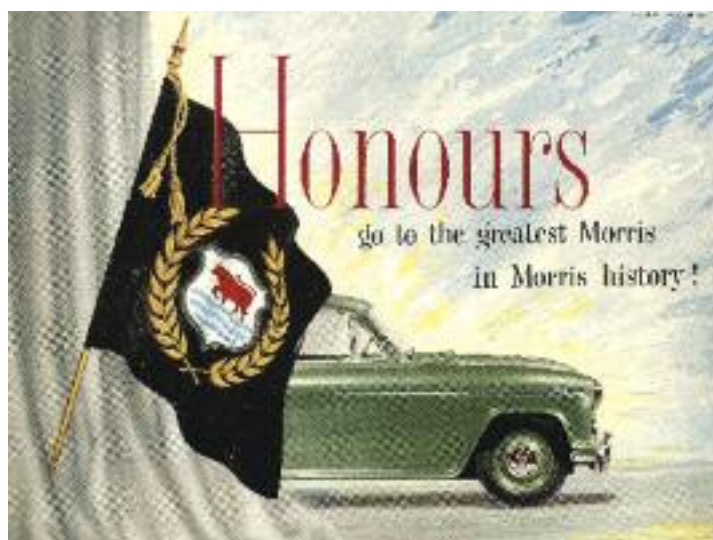
Information and photographs were made available to the motoring press immediately prior to the public announcement. The high-quality photographs of the new car stated on the rear "CONFIDENTIAL. Not for release before Monday 11th July 1955". Detailed articles were prepared, based on the information supplied by the factory, which were printed in trade publications to coincide with the unveiling. Examples of this in the summer of 1955 included:

- 13th July 1955 – The Motor: "The Morris Isis – A roomy, refined and fast new six-cylinder car at a popular price"
- 15th July 1955 – The Autocar: "Morris Isis has six cylinders – new BMC model available as saloon or Traveller"
- 1st August 1955 – Motoring: "Another Famous Name reappears"
- 1st August 1955 – Unidentified: "The Morris Isis Six"
- 1st September 1955 – Top Gear: "The Morris Isis – 1955 cars tested in Scotland"

From July 1955 to July 1956 the saloon car YWL16 was road tested and reported upon by the motoring press:

- 27th April 1956 – The Autocar: "Morris Isis – Road Test no.1593"
- 24th May 1956 – The Field: "Isis, on and off duty" (Traveller Reg: XWL 58)
- 11th July 1956 – The Motor: "The Morris Isis Deluxe saloon (with overdrive) – Road Test no. 17/56"
- July 1956 – Sport and Field: "Cars on Test - The Morris Isis Traveller" (Traveller Reg: XWL 58)"

These reports were generally favourable but there were comments about the body roll, cornering ability and roadholding in the wet. As a long distance, effortless cruiser with comfort and robustness, it was praised.



The Series I Isis only appeared at one London Motor Show in October 1955 where it joined the Cowley and Oxford Series II and Minors on the Morris stand (No.157). Two Isis were presented – a Sandy Beige one tilted on a turntable to present the chassis and a Black one with a Perspex see-through bonnet and for closer inspection of the engine bay.

Models Related to the Isis

The Isis was based on the Oxford Series II that preceded it by 14 months. The 2639cc Morris Isis Series I completed the range joining the 1489cc Oxford and 1200cc Cowley. The cars were very similar in appearance, but the Isis had a longer wheelbase as the front of the car was extended by some 10.5ins (26.6cms) to accommodate the 6-cylinder C-Series engine. This mid 1950s range marked the return of three established pre-war Morris model names.

Scale Models

Unlike the Cowley and Oxford variants, I am not aware of any commercially produced models of the Isis Series I, but I would like to be proved wrong. (There were 1:43 models produced by Pathfinder and Crossway of the Isis Series II).

Supporting Clubs

In 1979 the “Morris Oxford and Cowley Club” was established to cater for the 1954 – 1960 Oxford, Cowley and Isis models. It was set up by David Garrett supported by a small group of owners and enthusiasts and soon attracted some 200 members. In 2017 it amalgamated with “The 6/80 & MO Oxford Club” to form the “6/80 & MO Oxford & Cowley Club” which caters for the 1955 – 1958 Morris Isis models as well as other Morris cars (1948 to 1960).

Summary

The Isis Series I was only offered as a saloon and Traveller. It only had a short production run of some 6,692 vehicles over some 16 months until October 1956 when the Isis Series II was announced for the 1956 London Motor Show. The Isis Series I marked the transition between the old pre-war Morris traditions and the new BMC era. They were a well-built, roomy, and comfortable car notable for their power and torque, and rugged reliable engines. However, the longer and heavier car lacked the roadholding and precise steering of the Cowley and Oxford. Their sales overseas were limited but assisted the UK raising much needed export revenue. A year after their introduction the Suez crisis led to petrol rationing and the demand for smaller, cheaper and more economical cars. They were also competing in a congested sales market with similar BMC models on offer from Austin (Westminster), Wolseley (6/90) and Riley (Pathfinder) as well as Ford (Zodiac), Rootes (Humber) and Vauxhall (Cresta).

Perversely, the UK's motorways and dual carriageways that came on stream in the UK from the 1960s were better suited to the Isis, but most had passed into history by then. Survivors are now rare but represent practical classics that are still appreciated by their owners.



MORRIS ISIS SALOON



MORRIS ISIS - SERIES I - TRAVELLER



FEDERATION NEWS

Edited Highlights from Historic Issue 5/2025

These notes are presented as simplified highlights of key topics. Further detail can be found in Historic itself, all copies of which are available at Newsletter Archive | Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs (fbhvc.co.uk). In case of doubt the definitive version is that published in the magazine.

General Product Safety Regulations

This recent revision to the existing EU Regulation extends its scope to include a very wide range of products, used as well as new, 'sold on to the market' in the EU, although as the UK is no longer a part of the EU this does not affect products supplied in the UK. This means, however, that it potentially applies to vehicle parts and other items which clubs may sell in Europe. Any item covered by the regulation requires a 'responsible economic operator' in each Member State where it is offered for sale. Information provided by the Business Support Section of the Department for Business and Trade explains how items offered exclusively to club members are exempt from these requirements and provides details of suitable labelling to ease their free passage.

Seatbelts

It is reported that the more widespread coverage in the specialist press over the otherwise quiet Christmas period of the newly introduced technology to detect non-wearing of seat belts has produced some worried enquiries from owners of older vehicles where seatbelts are not required. So far the Federation is not aware of any Notices of Intended Prosecution being issued in such cases and it is noted that we have the option to revert to our contact on the National Police Chiefs Council if this does become a problem.

MoT

The same lack of any real news over Christmas also produced widespread mis-reporting across all shades of the national press to the effect that the existing MoT exemption for most vehicles 40 or more years old was about to be revoked. These reports have no factual basis and stemmed from misunderstanding the summary, issued in early December, of the responses to the DVLA Call for Evidence. FBHVC is not aware of any planned revision to the MoT regime as it applies to historic vehicles.

Insurance at Shows and Events

An explanation is provided of the sometime complex situations that can arise at shows and other 'non-road' events and the insurance cover that may be needed or advisable. Whilst this information is useful background exhibitors and other participants should consult their own insurers.

DVLA

- It is noted that the report of the Cabinet Office review of DVLA was published in November 2024 and that the protracted difficulties that the historic vehicle movement has had with DVLA were acknowledged. DVLA are required to address these issues in the future.
- A report of a very positive and constructive Historic Vehicle User Group meeting held in December sets out

the basics of proposals from DVLA for their future assessment of repaired/restored vehicles, modified vehicles and vehicles originally supplied in CKD (completely knocked down) form. Whilst these proposals are still considered to be work in progress they potentially seem very helpful.

- Following a plea from a member club it is stressed that a certain minimum of information is required by DVLA to permit a vehicle to be registered. Regardless of any assurances given by the seller, if that information is not available it may not be possible for the relevant club to assist.

Fuels

Details are provided of consultations currently taking place concerning the move towards net zero carbon emissions together with comments on electricity generating capacity and the availability of alternative fuels.

Events

The launch of a new edition of the FIVA Events Code is noted together with a list of useful website addresses.

Federation Activities

- Details are provided of the newly launched FBHVC insurance scheme which offers smaller clubs all the insurance benefits previously only available to larger clubs.
- Announcement of a new Federation Commercial Partner – ifndautoparts which is a sales platform connecting buyers and sellers of automotive parts.
- Reminder of Drive It Day and Ride It Day – the dates for the next six years!
- The 2025 National Historic Vehicle Survey is announced with an explanation of its key objectives and the introduction of a new partner, Turquoise Thinking Ltd.
- News of an updated version of the Essential Guide to Parts & Services which should be available shortly, with many more companies listed.
- After two years work a new online archiving system is now available to clubs, called FOCAS (Federation Online Club Archive System).
- Report on a very well attended Club Expo 2025.

Features

- The car collection of Nicola Bulgari.
- 50 years of the Honda 400/4.
- Restoration of a Honda C70.
- DRK cars of Ellesmere Port.
- Toyota MR2 Mk1 in the UK.
- Some thoughts on Cherished VRNs and inheritance tax.

Tributes

- Mary Walker - Cambridge Austin 7 & Vintage Car Club former president.
- Jim Whyman – founding secretary of the Federation.

Remember the complete Historic magazine can be found at: <https://www.fbhvc.co.uk/magazine>



LITHGOW 2025

John Inshaw



Preparations are well under way for the rally - it is not too late to apply to attend.

I would like members to let me know if they intend to participate. Ideally it will be helpful if those intending to attend would send me the completed entry form which was included in the last newsletter. **No entry fee is required.** Members who find they no longer have the entry form can get one by emailing me at: johninshaw81@gmail.com

Rally Headquarters will be located at:

Lithgow Tourist and Van Park

58 Coorwull Road,

Lithgow NSW 2790.

Phone: 02 63514350.

Email: info@lithgowcaravanpark.com.au.

Accommodation at the tourist park is filling fast.

Alternative motel accommodation (rated 3.5 star) is available nearby at:

Lithgow Valley Motel

45-49 Coorwal Road,

Lithgow 2790.

Phone: 02 6351 2334. Email: info@lithgowvalleymotel.com.au.

The proposed program was included in the Club's March 2025 magazine issue 187, but it has been repeated opposite.

I propose choices within the program. People who choose not to participate in an activity such as the Zig Zag Railway ride will be able to participate in an alternative activity.

So far 11 entries have been received - there is still plenty of room for more.

I am really looking forward to meeting with you at this event. Regards John.



Brief Rally Program

Thursday 28th August 2025.

Settle in to accommodation. BYO BBQ Dinner at Camp Kitchen at Lithgow Tourist and Van Park.

Friday 29th August 2025.

Blackheath Govetts Leap. Katoomba Three Sisters and Scenic World. Medlow Bath High Tea.

BYO BBQ Dinner at Camp Kitchen at Lithgow Tourist and Van Park.

Saturday 30th August 2025.

Zig Zag Railway. Glow Worm Tunnel or Eskbank House. BYO BBQ Dinner at Camp Kitchen at Lithgow Tourist and Van Park.

Sunday 31st August 2025.

Oberon Mayfield Garden, Skoda/ Tatra Car Museum and Oberon Dam.

BYO BBQ Dinner at Camp Kitchen at Lithgow Tourist and Van Park.

Monday 1st September 2025.

Lithgow Heritage Run; State Mine Heritage Park, Blast Furnace Park, Hassans Walls, Portland.

BYO BBQ Dinner at Camp Kitchen at Lithgow Tourist and Van Park. Annual Club Meeting.

Tuesday 2nd September 2025.

Farewell and depart for home.



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