



Malvern Hills Branch Newsletter

December 2020



Welcome to the Malvern Hills Branch December newsletter.

Every thing is still cancelled



Dear All,

Thank you for all the articles you have sent and for your messages throughout the year

Just to wish everyone a Happier Christmas and a much better New Year. Also with any luck the chance to meet up with more than 6 people at a time.

In the meantime there are the usual winter jobs to do on the morris. Smear grease over the chrome bumpers and wing mirrors to try and keep the rust at bay. Replace the battery after the car won't start on a cold frosty morning and get the screen wash to work. The one-way valve in the water bottle is faulty so the pump runs dry and stops working.

Here is a photo of a typical view recently



Seasons Greeting from Dave B
Treasurer's trivia,

Hello everyone,

The dark evenings are now upon us and we leave behind a summer and autumn for our branch the likes of which we have not experienced before. We are normally remembering many happy outings and meetings in our Minors but apart from just getting our Morris' out to give them a run that has been about it for most of us. Now is the time we normally look forward to our Christmas meal as the finale to our year but unfortunately not this time. The news as I start on my trivia is very slightly better and it does appear we may have reached the peak of the second wave with some flattening indicated. With the continuing good news on vaccine development there is now at least some hope of a much better 2021. It is still too early to predict when our branch will be able to meet up again but I am hoping matters will be much improved by the spring. In the meantime it is a matter of taking the greatest care not only for our own wellbeing but for those around us.

AGM- Thank you to everyone who participated in the new style AGM we held this year. All of the existing committee have been re-elected. Hopefully, this time next year we can have something approaching a normal AGM again!

FRONT WHEEL CYLINDERS- A little while ago I ordered some new front wheel cylinders for the 948. Now what I have always done is keep my spanners for carrying out work on the front cylinders in a little separate wallet. I have a ring spanner for the large bolt that holds the cylinder on, a spanner for the small bolt, and a spanner to operate the bleed nipple. When I went to fit a new wheel cylinder I found my existing bleed nipple spanner no longer fitted the new nipples supplied and was too big. I have therefore purchased a new spanner (10mm) to fit the new sized nipples. So if any of you are planning any brake work on your Minor and are fitting recently purchased cylinders with new bleed nipples this is worth keeping in mind.

CLASSIC CAR AND MEMORABILIA SALES - I have mentioned in the past how much I enjoy a mooch around an auction and have really missed going to my usual haunts this year with so much being cancelled. Although I did not actually attend I was fascinated by some of the offerings Pugh's had at a recent Classic car, memorabilia and spares sale they held. It is incredible what can still turn up. The car that really caught my eye was a 1937 Standard Flying Nine. It had been driven into a garage in 1954 and had only emerged again this year! It even had evidence of war time white paint on the running boards and the sidelights were blacked out. It looked wonderfully original and made 1,900 pounds. They were only in production a relatively short time with production ending in 1940 with the onset of war. Another very original looking car was a 1936 Austin Seven. Although a barn find it looked very complete and I'm sure a good clean up would have made a dramatic difference. This came also with its

original log book. It made 2,400 pounds. Our favourite car was also in evidence. A Morris Minor pick up made 8,700 pounds and looked a very good buy. There was also a 1967 4 door which was an unfinished project. Although you can never really tell without seeing it in the flesh this also looked a very good buy with the bodywork apparently completed and the car reported to run and drive well. It made 1,650 pounds. There was a huge range of spares available and all the usual signs and manuals. A most interesting sale.

Although I tend not to go to many other branch rallies each year besides our own I have really missed going to the few I have supported in the past. I have to admit that attending a rally when you do not have the worry of actually running it is a major plus! The first rally I ever went to in the MM was at Ragley Hall. I'm not sure of the year now but I would guess it was around 1987 and it was organized by, if I have the name correct, the 3 Shires branch. Remarkably, the very first Morris Minor I parked next to at that rally, a black 1960 2 door, still comes to our own branch rally every year. Back then it was owned by its original owners from new, Jack and Myrtle Whittern, who were very staunch members of our branch for many years. Jack took great care of the car and it is a great pleasure to see it still looked after so well by David Parsons in Malvern. Shropshire have held some good rallies over the years and one that was really interesting was one Clive and myself went to a couple of years ago at RAF Cosford. I met up with Clive at his home and we went together in his Series 2. We lost our bearings a bit going but it was certainly well worth the visit besides the cars. We were parked next to a particularly good Series MM high light. If you have not been it is definitely worth going to. As I have mentioned before owning a Minor means you do end up at times visiting places you either always planned to but never quite managed to or somewhere you never knew existed.

Let us hope we can look back on a very different summer this time next year.

A reminder of just how pleasant a summer afternoon out with our Minors can be. Here is my 948 alongside some convertibles at the Birmingham rally at Avoncroft a few years ago.



Historical note- This December marks some milestone anniversaries for the Minor during production. It was 70 years ago this December that the final lowlight Minors were being built. From January 1951 all home models became highlight giving the car the look we are most familiar with today. Along with numerous mechanical modifications at the same time the Series MM changed quite a bit. The big benefit I think would have been the fitting of a water pump so that you could have a heater; definitely a step up! I've always particularly liked the 4 door Series MM. You do not see them very often; we used to have a lovely one come to our rallies from Gloucester each year but I have not seen it for a long time now. 60 years ago in December 1960, the 22nd to be precise, the millionth Minor was built which was a major achievement in British car history. It was, of course, basically a standard 948 Minor with a few refinements to distinguish it from a normal model. I think the talking point about these has always been the lilac colour which has certainly divided opinion over the years.

Well that is it from me for 2020. It is most definitely a year none of us will forget. Thankfully, to the best of my knowledge as I write this, all of our members have come through unscathed from this terrible virus. By the time of our next newsletter at the beginning of February we should hopefully have a much better idea of the future.

I hope you are all able to have as happy a Christmas as possible taking account of the restrictions we live under and let us all hope for a very much better New Year.

Dave



Morris Minor Owners' Club

Malvern Hills Branch



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

HELD VIRTUALLY

ON TUESDAY 3rd NOVEMBER 2020

Present All Members were sent the Agenda and were considered to be present at the virtual AGM.

Apologies There were no Apologies.

Action

Welcome

1. The Chairman welcomed all members in his Chairman's Report.

Minutes of last Meeting

2. The Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting, having been previously circulated, were accepted as a true record of proceedings and were duly signed.

Matters Arising

3. There were no matters arising.

Chairman's Report

4. Hello everyone. Welcome to what I think is the strangest AGM I have ever been involved in. I am sure that everyone is wondering how things are with the branch; well, it would seem that we are doing as well as most branches and clubs and maybe a little better than some. Hopefully next year, we can all get back to normal and enjoy our old cars as they should be enjoyed. For me, things haven't changed that much as Mavis is still my everyday car but the shows and meetings have been very much missed. We still have our stock from this year's cancelled rally which will give us a head start for next season as and when the lockdown is rescinded and we return to normal.

The committee members have done a super job keeping things ticking over through this crisis and Dave with his Newsletter has kept us all in the loop. Although my contribution is very small compared with the rest of

the guys and girls, I have no objection to carrying on as Chairman unless someone else would like to have a go.

So, for now, I will say cheerio and please all stay safe in these sad times. I, for one, look forward to happier times to come next summer and to getting out and about in our lovely little Morris Minors.

Treasurer's Report

5. As the attached accounts show, our branch ends the year in a sound financial position ready to bounce back when we come out of the unprecedented times we are currently living through.

It was immensely disappointing that we had to cancel our rally this year owing to the virus. Not only is it a highlight in the branch calendar each year but, from a financial angle, it enables us through any surplus we make to support worthwhile causes. At the time of lockdown in March, the branch had incurred much of the cost of holding the rally with only a relatively modest amount of income towards covering this which is reflected in the accounts. As we still hope to hold our rally next May, I have treated the rally as ongoing and will carry forward the rally accounts to the new financial year.

Despite, regrettably, some members deciding not to renew their branch membership this year, we have been delighted to welcome some new members resulting in paid-up membership of 31 at the end of September. Overall, membership is slightly down in comparison with past years. Thank you to those members who have set up standing orders which has greatly assisted me in dealing with subscriptions.

As you will know, I have used the mobile banking service at Tewkesbury to manage the branch account since the closure of the bank's branch in Great Malvern. This service ceased, however, at the time of lockdown and, at the time of writing, has not resumed. As we are dormant at present, this causes little problem as I can pay in cheques I need to via the Post Office but, if it became permanent, this would be a different matter. At this stage, it is a case of wait and see. In recent months, both Bob and myself have received correspondence from NatWest encouraging us to look at competitor banks for our account. This apparently stems from the bank bailout in the 2008 financial crisis. Having weighed up the pros and cons of our current situation, I feel we are best staying as we are for the present. In the environment we live in now the matter of where we bank is a matter, as your Treasurer, I have always kept under review and would continue to do so if re-elected. I continue to record the branch accounts by hand using Ledger and Analysis books. I have no plans to change this if re-elected and they can be inspected at any time by any member.

As you all know, I have written a Treasurer's Trivia for the Newsletter each month over the past year. Normally, this consists of a mixture of reflecting on past events and updating members on what is coming up. Since March, of course, it has mainly been a case of reflecting on past years and I have tried to make it as interesting as possible in the

circumstances. By this time next year, I very much hope that we are living in more normal times again.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow committee members for all their support over the past year. As always, it is a real team effort keeping the branch running especially at a time like now. I would also like to thank those members who have written, e-mailed and phoned me, particularly since March. It has been a real pleasure to hear from everyone. I also want those members who are having to face up to serious health issues at present to know that you have been and continue to be much in my thoughts even if we cannot meet at present.

Secretary's Report

6. Not surprisingly, little has crossed the Secretary's desk since the 2019 AGM when notes were taken and Minutes were issued. The committee has met once or twice since then – at The Huntsman and by e-mail – but taking decisions has not been necessary.

As you may know, we are obliged to hold a branch AGM within 3 months of the normal October date but, being confined to barracks, we couldn't do so; the committee has decided, therefore, to hold a "virtual" AGM. To that effect, this envelope contains the Agenda, the Chairman's Report, the Treasurer's Report and the Secretary's Report. Also included is a questionnaire which you are asked to complete and return to the Secretary electronically or by post by close of play on **Tuesday 10th November 2020**.

You will note from the Agenda and the questionnaire that members are invited to propose themselves for any committee post: if you wish to do so, please say so. In case nobody volunteers, you are asked to vote for the present committee en bloc. Also, you are invited to make any comments you wish about the branch or its operation: do not hesitate to air your views – it's your branch.

A couple of years ago, I promised to produce a few road runs for members to follow around the Cotswolds on sunny summer Sundays. Whilst I now have half a dozen routes, I have not been able to top and tail them but, once we are allowed out of barracks again on "unnecessary" journeys, I will complete them and incorporate them into our calendar. These runs are not competitive but are designed to test your co-pilot's navigation skills, the driver's ability to do what s/he is told and to get you and your cars out and about and admire the views. I believe, also, that a prime aim is to expose our classics to the general public so that they realise that Morris Minors still exist; perhaps we will gain some members...

The committee can do most things but we are unable to control this dreaded germ warfare. One day, we will return to our normal branch way of life but, in the meantime, keep to the rules and exercise yourselves and your cars as much as you feel able to do in safety.

Election of Committee

Committee
Chris

<p>7. The Chairman reported that the Committee had stood down as required and he asked in the questionnaire for volunteers to fill the various positions. There were no volunteers although Chris Perfect expressed interest in returning to the committee. Precise interest is awaited for discussion.</p>	
<p>Any Other Business</p>	
<p>8. No other business was raised although some members expressed satisfaction with the work of the present committee.</p>	All
<p>9. <u>Branch Shield</u>. It was felt by the committee that it was not appropriate to vote for the member who had worked hardest during the year for the benefit of the Branch.</p>	
<p>Date of next Meeting</p>	
<p>10. It is hoped that the next Annual General Meeting will be held at The Huntsman Inn at 8 pm on Thursday 14th October 2021.</p>	

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Chairman

October 2021

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Secretary

Also enclosed was a copy of the balance sheets which have been emailed out with the other AGM info. Copies still available on request.

Thanks to Bob, for sending this to The Malvern Gazette and Worcester News

THE LAST MORRIS MINOR SALOON - FMT 265J

The Last Saloon should have had its anniversary celebration at the Lancaster Classic Motor Show at the NEC but, when this was cancelled, the plan changed and the plan was to take the car to the Mini Plant in Oxford on 12th November (the actual date of its coming off the production line). Unfortunately, it wasn't possible to stage either of these events because of the virus but MMOC was keen to get this iconic car seen by as many people as possible. The sheer hard work of everyone involved this year in very difficult times is evident when you see the result; many of you may have seen the car in its original state at the Practical Classics Car and Restoration Show on the MMOC stand 'The Last Chance Saloon' in 2017 when it wasn't much more than a 'lace curtain'.

Luckily, MMOC did manage to get the car back to Cowley on 2nd November. Unfortunately, there was no audience to see it but, for the very few people concerned on the day, it was a major scramble to get it done before lockdown 2 started...

A full article will be published in the January/February 2021 issue of Minor Matters describing with many photographs the restoration of FMT 265J.

And the Full press release from Susan Akrill

Hi All,

I do hope that you are keeping safe in the second lockdown. Here is something to hopefully lift your spirits and those of your branch members.

The Last Morris Minor Built returns to Cowley after 50 years

A historically significant Morris Minor has returned to the place where it rolled off the production line on the 12th November 1970.

50 years after it was built, the last Morris Minor saloon to be produced has been relocated into the building where it was made at MINI Plant Oxford in Cowley, Oxfordshire and now forms part of the factory's collection of historic vehicles.

The gleaming car is a credit to the professionals, specialists and volunteers from the Morris Minor Owners club who have worked tirelessly over the past four years to restore the car to its former glory. Today, the fully restored vehicle looks just as good as it did when it was first built.

The transformation seemed impossible when the car was discovered in 2016 after languishing in the open for many years. The provenance of the vehicle was well established having previously been offered for sale in 1994.

Sadly, the new owner at that time was unable to enjoy the pleasure of ownership due to ill health. After his demise, the car was abandoned and it deteriorated badly in the intervening years. The car was acquired by the Morris Minor Owners Club in 2016. Initially a phased restoration was planned.

Substantial structural repairs were needed, and the services of a specialist welder and fabricator were enlisted. In 2018, thanks to a generous bequest from a former member, things gathered pace and with the help of members with specialist skills, original components

including the engine and gearbox were rebuilt. The bulk of the refurbishment and the reassembly of the car was undertaken by volunteer club members in Derby where the MMOC has its headquarters.

Club Secretary, Ray Newell who accompanied the car on its return to 'T Building' (which houses MINI Plant Oxford's car collection) at a specially arranged socially distanced handover prior to the current lockdown said: "The car is a credit to those who have supported the club in getting it back on the road in time for this significant anniversary.

We are grateful to staff at MINI Plant Oxford for their assistance in getting the car to into the factory's museum and for housing and looking after it for the foreseeable future. We hope that post lock down that people will be able to come to view the vehicle and appreciate what is a wonderful example of this iconic, British car.'

Steve Wrelton, spokesman for MINI Plant Oxford, said: 'The backstory and subsequent restoration of this car to its former glory is nothing short of staggering. Like the Mini that came after it, the Morris Minor was one of the most popular and recognisable cars in Britain. To have the last one built returning to its spiritual home and joining our car collection here at Plant Oxford is just fantastic.'



Useful contacts

Chairman **Lester Stenson**

Treasurer **Dave Smith**

Secretary **Bob Prophet**

Branch Contact **Dave Bennett**

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