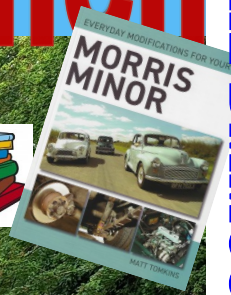


Dorset Branch

THE DMIMOC MONTHLY MAGAZINE



Inside—this month:
The UK's Oldest Van by Laurie Blewer
Book Review 'Minor Modifications' by Matt Tomkins
Wolvercroft Report and pictures



September 2023 Vol.26 issue 9

The MMOC Dorset Branch

was founded in 1980 by Graham Melly and chaired in the early days by Aubrey Batt. It is a Branch of the National Morris Minor Owners Club but has its own accounts and organisation (see Constitution for further details) **We meet on the first Wednesday of every month (7:30 for 8:00)** at the **Bournemouth Electric Club, Broadway Lane, BH8 0AA**. We have an active calendar of events throughout the year – particularly in the Summer months when we attend many rallies and other shows. The monthly Clubnight is an opportunity to meet the other enthusiasts and enjoy a presentation or other activity organised by the Committee.

Membership currently costs £15 per year—£20 for joint membership.

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FRONT COVER

Brian Tilly negotiates the ford at Tarrant Monkton on the Wolvercroft Saturday run

Photograph: Laurie Blewer

***Print Deadline* to ensure inclusion for any item within October Edition please:-
Sunday 24 September 2023**

Dorset Branch Newsletter

MORRIS MINOR OWNERS CLUB

Volume 26 Issue 9 September 2023



NEXT CLUBNIGHT

Is the 2023 Annual General Meeting 4th October 2023

In This Months Issue...

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<i>CHAIRMAN'S REPORT, P.6</i>	<i>THE UK'S OLDEST MINOR VAN P.18-19</i>
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Dorset Branch Members-It's Your Magazine - It's Your Club !

*****The Editor encourages and welcomes any written contributions - particularly loaned (or emailed) photos please of topical interest, from the branch members suitable for inclusion.***

****Please submit , if possible ,any material or advertising matter , within 10 days prior to the next monthly club night date . (*Inclusion within the next available published newsletter is subject to space, as it approaches the next respective monthly publishing deadline. The Dorset Branch MMOC will accept no liability in respect of goods or services provided by advertisers : No recommendation is implied : Any views expressed or advice given within the newsletter is offered in good faith and no liability is accepted by the Dorset branch or the MMOC for any consequences arising from following such material.***

Editorial

Hello everyone, Hopefully everyong enjoyed the recent Branch Rally at Wolvercroft a few weeks back. More details are in the Chairman and Secretary's reports. We have a bit more news to share regarding Roger's recent illness and recovery which is included in this newsletter. He has decided that it would be best to stand down from his position as newsletter editor and his other activities in relation to the Branch. Therefore the Editorial position has now become vacant and we are looking to recruit a new committee member as soon as possible.

Below is advance notification of the MMOC event to mark the 70th anniversary of the Morris Minor Traveller which should appear in the next Minor Matters. I have never been to the Great British Car Journey Museum, but have been waiting for an excuse to do such a trip. Its over 200 miles each way, however, so we probably wont be going in our 1954 Traveller. It's a shame, as we made it to the 60th celebration event which was at the Gaydon museum—a bit nearer and 10 years ago!

Don't forget to get your entries in for the visit to Phil and Craig's Antiques emporium on 8th September (not 9th as it said on earlier entry



forms and the website—oops!). More details on page 17..

Brian W.

TRAVELLER AT 70

I have been reliably informed that there will be an opportunity to mark the 70th Anniversary of the launch of the Morris Minor Traveller models.



It will take place on Sunday 1st October 2023 at the Great British Car Journey at Ambergate, Derbyshire. Discounted entry is available at £10 per adult although entry on the day will be accommodated. In order to secure the discounted entry fee code MMT70 needs to be used when booking on line at the Great British Car Journey

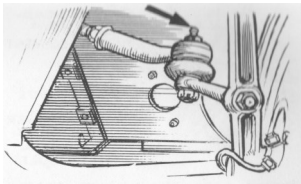
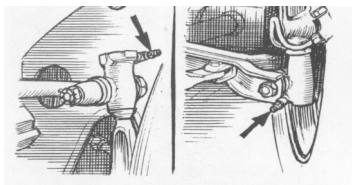
website (<https://greatbritishcarjourney.com>)

New Branch Member

Victor Reilly from Kinson, Bournemouth - 1969 4 door saloon

New Morris Minor Spares are available through the club.

***The current list is posted on the website under the 'New Spares' tab. We can also order other items for you—usually saving the postage cost.
Brian. 07411 116336***



Suspension Leg Trunnion Seals

These are now available as a 'car set' with 4 of each type to allow replacement of all the upper and lower trunnion seals on your car. Normal price would be £48 but the cost for the set is only **£39.50**



Indicator Stalk Repair Kit

We can supply a new indicator stalk end to replace broken ones which house the green repeater light. £6 each



Point smartphone camera at code to go to the fitting instructions



CLUB MEMBER DISCOUNT Dorset Club Spares give paid up members the benefit of a 10% discount on Morris Minor Spares (unless not already on offer, or a discount from the club's supplier is not available) Spares parts available from Club Spares Manager **BRIAN WOOD.**

Chairman's Report



Hello everyone and welcome to the September edition of the newsletter. Thank you to Graham for showing us those fascinating cine films last month – it was great to see some old and sadly missed faces on the big screen. Tonight, is the annual gardening competition so I hope that your green fingers have been busy and that we have a good show of plants tonight. Don't forget that next month is the annual AGM and your support would be very much appreciated. As you all know Roger has very sadly had to step down from his position as newsletter editor due to ill

health so this has left a vacancy on the committee. If this is something you think you might be interested in helping us with why not have a chat with Brian, who is currently undertaking the role, to see what it entails. November will see us having a talk from The Variety Club Childrens Charity and we would like to collect as many toys to present them with as we can. They must be new and unwrapped please. This is also the call for your baby photos before we put together the competition for the December meeting.

August has been a very busy month on the events front. Starting off with the Lymington Show where we had a very packed club stand. This is always a very good show and one we try not to miss if possible. We even had an overseas visitor on the stand – namely Dave from the Isle of Wight! We went away to Butlins in Bognor Regis for a week directly after and returned for The Purbeck Rally the following weekend. A brilliant show that has been much missed during the Covid years etc. A good turnout of cars, commercials, tractors and steam as well as a good selection of traders and car boot stalls. As usual, I bought far too many books! This was followed by the Dorset Branch Rally at Wolvercroft on 19th and 20th August. We were very lucky with the weather and had a really good turnout of cars and an all round good weekend. Everyone who went on the Saturday road run seemed to enjoy it and my apologies for making you all go through the ford at Tarrant Monkton – it did make for some very good photographs though (*see front cover-Ed*). Sunday saw about 60 cars turn up for the main rally day and it was good to catch up with some members that we hadn't seen for a while. The prize winners this year were, appropriately in the Minors 75th year, Andy Wallis with his Lowlight, a beautiful Austin A35 convertible, and the Chairmans Choice award went to Keith Gifford from Burley with his beautifully original 1958, 4 door saloon. Thanks to everyone who donated raffle prizes and to the young assistant who helped with both the prize giving and the raffle – namely Lewis.

Believe it or not we are already looking ahead to Moggyfest 2024! As there are no particular anniversaries to celebrate next year we have been looking for a simpler theme for next year. We have come up with "Barn Finds" as the theme, so we will be looking to set up the marquee as a barn and will obviously be on the look out for props that we can use. If you have anything you think would be suitable and that we can borrow please let me know.

I have made some progress on the 4 door this month. With the help of Brian and Ray Foster we rolled the car over onto her side and I have since been scraping lots and lots of horrible underseal off. This has revealed the expected holes but I don't think its as bad as it could be. When the underside is nice and clean I'll ask Terry to come round and take a look ready for welding to start.

If everything has gone according to plan you should have your membership renewal forms with this newsletter. As I mentioned last month we have regretfully made the decision to increase the subs slightly this year but it is still excellent value at £15 for a sole membership and £20 for a joint. We

(Continued on page 7)

Secretary's Report



August was a very busy month for me, it started with the Lymington Spectacular show on Sunday 6th August. I had reserved a club stand with space for 30 cars, I think we would have been hard pushed to cram 30 into it. After a very wet July the weather had just started to improve, the previous day was particularly wet, and I did wonder what the show ground would be like. As it turned out the ground had drained well and was very solid. We had enough space to erect the club event shelter which came in very handy mid-afternoon when there was a very heavy downpour of rain. The following Wednesday I headed off to the Welsh border for 5 days of canoeing and camping along the River Wye with the Poole Harbour Canoe Club juniors.

The day after I got back, I was off again to Plymouth for a few days kayaking and enjoying the annual British Fireworks Competition. The day after I got back (there's a theme here!) it was the Dorset Branch Rally at Wolvercroft.

When I arrived at Wolvercroft, Saturday lunchtime all the marquees and event shelters were up. I left Ethan to put our tent up and headed off with Laurie to get a head start on the cars out on the road run. We stopped off at the ford on the river Tarrant to take some photos and video of the cars going through it. There were some great pictures, if anyone wants a copy of the original photo file, please let us know. Sunday was very well attended with over 30 Morris Minors. Thanks to everyone who helped over the weekend to setup and then take down and pack away. Ethan had a great time driving my car around the field on Saturday, thanks to Dave for letting him have a go in an automatic Cortina estate with trailer attached and a Rover cabriolet on Sunday.

We've just got back from a day out at Henstridge Wings & Wheels. While there were lots of cars there weren't so many Planes due to poor weather. We were still treated to some excellent displays and a fly by from the Red Arrows. Definitely going back again next year, hopefully without the thunderstorms!

There are still plenty of events to come, we will have just got back from the Ilse of Wight rally last weekend. There is a trip to visit Phil & Craig in Sherbourne next month which is looking to be a fabulous day out.

This evening's club night is the annual gardening competition, hopefully I'll find something that has just turned ripe or flowered to bring along and enter. Many thanks to Martin & Sue for helping organise and run the evening. Ian.

(Continued from page 6)

haven't increased the subs for quite a few years now so I hope you understand that with the increase in costs it was a decision that had to be made. Please can I ask you to get your forms returned to Brian Ford as soon as you can – thanks.

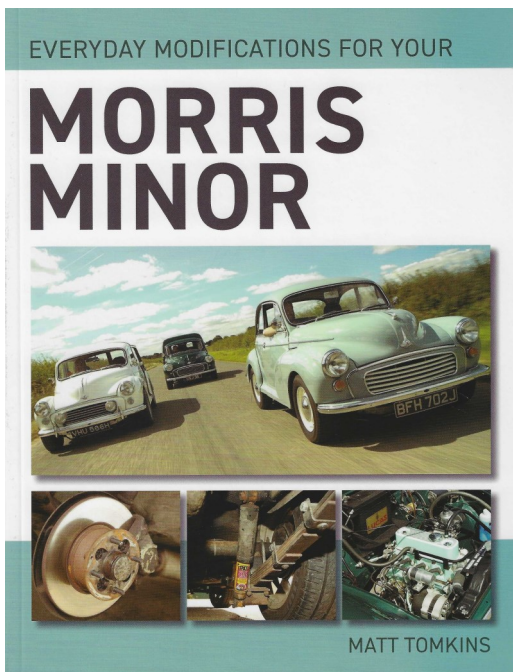
That's about all from me for this month I think so until next time,
Happy Minorng, Laurie.

***BOOK REVIEW—Everyday Modifications for
your
Morris Minor by Matt Tomkins***

There are some among us—you know who you are— who are keen to maintain the originality of your cars and will not countenance anything which is not to the original factory specification. I must confess to being a bit like that with my Series 2 Traveller, but I wanted to use it rather than just look at it, so practicality prevailed and I fitted a 948cc engine to replace the 803cc. The Morris Minor is a classic car that cries out to be used regularly—as indeed most are. Morris Minor owner and Workshop Editor of *Practical Classics* magazine, Matt Tomkins has written a book on the subject of modification and I was fortunate enough to pick up a copy of his new book called “Everyday Modifications for your Morris Minor” at the MMOC National Rally recently at Chateau Impney. I say ‘fortunate’ as I think the Club Regalia tent sold out pretty quickly. Matt is a longtime member of the MMOC as well as Workshop Editor of Practical Classics Magazine. There are a vast array of books on the topic of Morris Minors, some concerning more specific areas than others. There are loads of things that can be done to improve the Minor and most do not detract materially from the ‘classic theme’, but make

driving and owning and maintaining the car a more pleasurable experience. As time goes by, more ‘off the shelf’ improvements have become available for the Minor, some of which have now become economic to produce in small quantities—aided by improvements in production technology (eg Computer Aided Design and CNC machining, 3D printing etc). Guest Newsletter Editor (me) gets a mention on page 20 in relation to extending bonnet stays. However, there are not many books that cover the subject of improvements in any detail. It’s one

(Continued on page 9)



(Continued from page 8)

of those subjects that bears regular updates from time to time. As with most things, the availability of new parts is always changing and sometimes things which were available yesterday aren't available today. For example, popular engine upgrades included the Fiat engine in the eighties and nineties. But, due to declining 'classic' Fiat availability, these days, the 1275 'A' Series is a more popular choice with the more adventurous going for the Ford Zetec unit. Also covered are safety considerations which should preface any discussion on maintenance so that one can fully appreciate the consequences of trying to work without a visit to A & E.

I have been found under the bonnet of a Morris Minor for some 40 years (man and boy) and most of the things I have learnt the hard way are reproduced in this book. If you have a Minor which is in everyday use, then I would thoroughly recommend buying and reading a copy of this book.

The book is published by The Crowood Press (www.crowood.com)

ISBN 978 0 7198 4197 2 (£19.99—UK, \$29.99 US)

THE 'BRIAN WOOD' REPORT and latest news from the Spares Dept.

Contrary to expectations, I did manage to take a few bits along to Wolvercote—mainly shiny stuff and cosmetic items and managed to sell a reasonable amount of stock. Some of the 'locally produced' items were also on show and were viewed by the shoppers. I have decided to change the design of the interior mirrors for the



future to try to achieve a better long-distance image in the rear view. The acrylic mirrors themselves are of decent quality—if perhaps not so durable as their glass equivalents. However the image was sometimes a little distorted and so in future the frame will be printed a little bigger so that it can't be 'snagged' and slightly twisted by the internal edge of the frame. I have also come up with a quicker way of printing the frames, so that will mean they will now be cheaper. I hope to get some ready for sale in the next month or so.

Photos from Branch Rally at



Wolvercraft World of Plants

Photo credits: Andrew Ward, Laurie Blewer, Brian Wood



Branch Member News

ROGER KELLOW

Dear Ian, I am Roger and Marilyn Kellow's daughter Louise and I am writing to you as the Club Secretary on behalf of the family to inform you and fully explain in more detail what has happened over the past few weeks regarding my dad's health and his recovery prognosis.

Towards the end of May we noticed my dad wasn't well.

I took him to the doctor thinking he had suffered some kind of stroke from the symptoms he was presenting and we were sent to Poole hospital straight away for various tests and scans then sent straight to Bournemouth Hospital where they were going to do further investigations as it was unclear what was wrong. He then had to have an MRI and further tests, they eventually diagnosed viral encephalitis and treated accordingly with an antiviral medication. This drug unfortunately caused a very rare reaction to my dad which resulted in him having 2 massive brain seizures, luckily he responded to the emergency treatment given but he was taken to the high dependency unit from then on. There they discovered that he had contracted pneumonia as a result from the seizures and also he was dangerously close to having kidney failure which was an unavoidable side effect from the antiviral medication, they had to contact the renal specialist, neurologist and the infection specialist to make sure all further treatment was done for the best possible outcome.

He was not fully conscious throughout this time and has no recollection of anything that happened during these couple of weeks.

One of us was always with him throughout this awful time.

He then slowly started to recover and was moved to a lower dependency ward and eventually came home but was extremely weak and they said it's only because he was so healthy for his age that he is recovering from these 3 life threatening illnesses.

As I'm sure you know my mum has various health issues also so now they are both needing extra support and help from the family.

We have been supported by the doctors and the encephalitis society that have explained all the diagnoses and that encephalitis can happen to anyone at any time or age, is very serious and the recovery is very individual to the person and is a slow process.

This has been a very difficult, scary and stressful time for us all as a family and feel like our world has been tipped upside down.

I hope this clarifies and explains what my dad and us as a family have endured over the past few weeks and hopefully you will appreciate and understand that he is regretfully having to stop doing a lot of his previous activities and commitments.

The neurologists have said he cannot drive for the foreseeable future which

has been quite a blow for him and he has made the hard decision now to sell the motorhome.

I would request you and the club members understand that he feels that he can regrettably no longer be able to commit himself further to the club or committee as a useful member on any level due to us not knowing when or how much he will be capable of doing.

I can arrange for the return of any items to the club that are at my parents address and would appreciate it if you could email me about that. Could you also please ensure that my mum and dad's contact information and details are taken off of any future publications and social media accounts. He requests that I send all his friends and colleagues in the club his regards and thanks them for the well wishes and apologises but this situation is out of his or my mum's control and they need to focus on recovery , various appointments and treatment now .

Best wishes and regards from

Louise Clare ,

Roger , Marilyn, Elizabeth and Ashley

Hi Louise

Thank you for the update (forwarded to us from Ian)

We fully understand the situation now and are sorry to learn of the severity of Roger's condition. We do of course hope for his full recovery in due course.

He did immerse himself in the club's activities to the greatest extent for which I can only say on behalf of the members his input was much appreciated. Going forward we expect no more from him than his return to good health and perhaps some participation in club events if he still wants to. There is absolutely no expectation of anything more with regards to committee input etc. I will ensure that the club information is amended as you have requested.

Please pass on our sincere regards to him and we hope to hear better news in the future.

We recently received the following update on Roger:

My Dads health is improving and he is getting stronger every day he has good and bad days, we are seeing the neurologist in a few weeks but he still cannot drive for the foreseeable future which is really frustrating him. He has just sold his motorhome but is keeping the Morris Minor in the hope he will get the go ahead to drive again so he can visit some rallies etc. He is sorry he is unable to continue with the magazine but he cannot stay on a screen for more than 20 minutes or converse for too long due to it triggering migraines . Best wishers to all his friends at the club. Louise and family.

DORSET BRANCH SPARES DEPT. MINOR HOME WORKSHOP FEATURE



By Dorset Branch Spares Manager - BRIAN

Two Branch members have recently sought advice about the same problem with their cars. I was able to provide my answer as I have come across this issue several times in the past. It concerns clutch replacements and seems to be relate to both 803/948 and 1098 clutches. The most straightforward way to achieve a clutch replacement in a half-day or so, is to remove the engine. The only other main component that needs to come out is the radiator, to give room to ease the engine forward so as to clear the gearbox bell housing and first motion shaft. When the replacement of the clutch assembly has been completed and the engine is lowered back into the engine bay, the 'trick' is to get the longitudinal angle of the engine just right as the block is swung back and down at the same time. Accuracy is required such that the first motion shaft enters the hole in the centre of the clutch smoothly without snagging against the release ring in the centre of the clutch cover.

The problem that seems to commonly manifest itself after completion of the job—is a rapid 'click-click' when a little pressure is applied to the clutch pedal. The clutch appears to work satisfactorily and the car is driveable. The noise stops when the clutch is fully open or fully closed.

There are three small coil springs which secure the release ring to the 3 spring levers on the clutch cover and the noise is caused by one of these springs having been dislodged and 'clicking' against the release bearing. Sadly, the only cure is to do the job again, and it should be just a case of re-attaching the spring as shown in the photographs. The release bearing should be carefully examined to make sure it is not damaged. (It shouldn't be).

The replacement of the engine is best done with a trusted assistant, but it is possible on your own. I normally (at great risk to my fingers) try to *manually* guide the first motion shaft into the engine. There will be just enough room to get at least one hand in there until the end of the shaft is safely inserted into the centre hole in the cover. The engine can then be gently pushed fully home so that the bell housing contacts the engine back plate. This part of the process usually involves a little 'jiggling' to line up the splines of the gearbox shaft with those in the clutch driven plate. The engine then moves the final inch with a satisfying 'clunk' and then the screws and bolts can be replaced and the kettle put on.



This shows the inner release ring assembly with the three retaining springs fitted but with the top one dislodged on both sides (viewed from inside the clutch)

These are close-up views of the springs off (left) and on (right)



The last two photos show the fitting of the springs on the outer face of the clutch cover (off—left and on—right)

VEHICLES, SPARES & PARTS - FOR SALE & WANTED



FOR SALE 1936 Morris 8 tourer re built some years ago 5000 miles since engine re build Lots of paperwork and can email photos.

Also wanted Morris Minor convertible (preferably original) must have good body work I'm too old to start a major project. Phone 07579795504

FOR SALE 1962 Morris Minor (Post production) Convertible 948cc **£6,000.00**. More details from branch member Arthur Edmonds 01202 855466 or 07570540920



Forthcoming Club Events

Aug-28	South Coast Classics (at Karting Centre (CCOTP are the organisers)
1-3 Sep	IOW Branch Rally at the Havenstreet Railway Centre. Book ferry through Wightlink using 15% discount code.
2-3 Sep	BEAULIEU INTERNATIONAL AUTOJUMBLE
06-Sep	BRANCH CLUBNIGHT - Annual Gardening Competition - see article in this newsletter
22-25 Sep	Sidmouth Holiday Run
24-Sep	SIMPLY BRITISH CLASSICS - Beaulieu. Booking through Beaulieu but let Laurie know so that we can park together.
04-Oct	BRANCH CLUBNIGHT - Annual General Meeting
08-Oct	Sherborne Antiques Centre Run
01-Nov	BRANCH CLUBNIGHT - Toy Donation Talk from the Variety Club (details TBA)
06-Dec	BRANCH CLUBNIGHT - Noggin and Natter and Baby photo competition
13-Jan	2024 ANNUAL DINNER & DANCE

UPCOMING

DORSET BRANCH MMOC ANNUAL DINNER DANCE 2024 at The DUDSBURY GOLF CLUB RESTAURANT

7pm Saturday January 13th

(KEEP THE DATE FREE—pricing & menu will be published soon)



We have arranged a club run to Sherborne on Sunday October 8th to visit the Sherborne Antiques Centre run by Phil and Craig. We plan to arrive at Sherborne at 11:00 and will arrange a meeting place for those who want to go in 'convoy' - to be confirmed nearer to the time. Refreshments will be laid on (sausage and bacon baps) and tea and coffee will be available. There is no charge, but we would like to know how many are coming. Please fill in the entry form which is currently on the website Events page and return to Jacky by 4th October club-night.



***The Oldest Van*—by Laurie Blewer**

The UK's Oldest Morris Minor Van



Whilst at this year's National Rally we were privileged to come across the oldest known Morris Minor van in the United Kingdom. It's current owner is Jonathan Evans from Shrewsbury and the following is taken from the history sheet displayed in its windscreen and researched by Russ Harvey from the LCV register.



The van carries the chassis number 685 making it the 184th van to be built! It was assembled at the Cowley works between 22nd and 23rd June 1953 and delivered to the dealer on 1st July 1953 only a week after manufacture. The original dealership was Eastern Garages in Chelmsford and it still carries its original Essex registration number of WTW 620. As you can see in the pictures the interior of the van is very spartan. It would originally have had a rubber floor covering across the cab floor and it has a wooden dashboard as opposed to the beautiful bronze coloured dash of the early cars. One extremely rare original part of the van is the fixed quarterlight windows rather than the later opening variety. The opening quarterlights were introduced in September 1953 with only 2184 being built without them. Originally supplied by Morris in the popular Sandy Beige colour, the van was never even fitted with trafficators from new! The chassis number of the van is OEF13/685 which breaks down as follows:



O = Quarter-ton, E = Van, F = Beige, 1 = RHD home market, 3 = Cellulose and 685 is

(Continued on page 19)



(Continued from page 18)

the chassis number (the 1st one would have been 501).

Very little of the early history of the van is known but it is thought to have been taken off the road in 1967 and placed in a barn in Suffolk with 6 other vehicles. In the 1990's most of the vehicles were cut up or scrapped but this one was stuck

behind some machinery and a lathe which probably led to its survival. In June 2014 the van finally saw the light of day for the first time in probably 47 years. Parked up outside the barn it was spotted by a Vespa dealer who purchased the van and immediately put it up for auction on Ebay. A deal was struck and the van was bought by Mike Sargeant from Shropshire. The current keeper of the van is Jonathan Evans from Shrewsbury. When found the van was missing its engine and gearbox but it has been fitted with an 803cc engine and box as it would have had when new. Apart from the restoration of the running gear, brakes, new cross ply tyres etc. Jonathan has made the decision to leave the van in its original unrestored state. When I first set eyes on this amazing van I thought to myself "that really needs to be restored back to its former



glory" but on looking at it in much more detail I came to the conclusion that Jonathan is right to leave it as it is. All of its history would be lost along with the unique repairs which have been done throughout the years. I particularly love the repairs to the front wings and rear wheel-arches which have been repaired using Castrol Oil enamel signs and rivets. In order to preserve the vehicle as it is Jonathan tries to only take it out if dry weather is guaranteed!

Laurie Blewer



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www.precisionclutch.co.uk



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BRANCH REBATE SCHEME

You may be aware that the branch receives a financial rebate according to the numbers of national MMOC members who attend the monthly clubnights. We therefore need to update our records so that we can take advantage of this scheme. Please would you advise the Membership Secretary of your **MMOC membership number** and renewal date and make sure that you sign the attendance sheet at the clubnights. Thanks.