NWMMOC NEWSLETTER

July 2026

Photo from the Archive:2003 'Major success for the Minor'

Bill Reed has provided a photo and report from The Gazette and Herald, 3rd July 2003.

AFTER a 2,000 mile drive across Britain, Mrs Morris, a 40-year-old Morris Minor, made it back to Malmesbury in one piece last week.

Driver Julian Marshall, 62, of Common Road, Malmesbury, with co-driver Paul Harris, 61, of Cheltenham, were taking part in a Morris rally from John O' Groats to Land's End in aid of Malmesbury Area Youth Support.

Although Mrs Morris, a 1963 Minor 1,000, had clocked up 186,000 miles before the trip, she finished the rally in under 24-hours pulling in to Lands End at around 5am Wednesday morning after leaving John O'Groats at 11am the previous day.

Mr Marshall said he was very pleased that she ran very smoothly throughout the trip and said she looked like she could go another 186,000 miles.

This was more than could be said for the drivers.

"My back and shoulder is a bit stiff and and my arms are a bit tired," he said. "We were very pleased though. Without rest breaks we averaged about 60 miles an hour, quite amazing when you consider she normally only goes to Cirencester and back."

The trip was aimed at raising money and the profile of MAYS, a charity that provides support to young people aged between 12 and 25 with concerns about bullying, family problems, drugs and alcohol abuse, who live in the Malmesbury School catchment area.

The money raised will be spent on schemes such as peer mentoring which began at the end of last month.

MAJOR SUCCESS:Julian Marshall celebrates after his marathon fundraising drive in his Morris Minor for Malmesbury's Cartmell Centre (10149/3/CWK)

Open gardens at Middlewick House: Classic cars and a chat with Nick Mason 7th June.

Words: Pam Holmes. Photos: Clive Frost, Pam Holmes.

On arrival we were directed to parking spaces backing on to a small waterway surrounding the house and gardens.

The event organiser, Jennie Shaw approached me, thanked the Branch for our attendance and said she would bring Nick Mason over to talk with us.

Photo left: Nick talks with Clive and Steve.

A few minutes later, Nick appeared with Jennie. They admired Clive and Anna's Traveller, we talked about how Morris Minors are always remembered fondly by individuals lives whenever they see our cars, "the car I went to school in", "learnt to drive in" or were significant in other ways in the lives of individuals.

All types of Classic and Supercars were on display!

Wiltshire Air Ambulance landed and showed people around

Below: North Wilts Branch sociable picnic!

Watch the press to see how much money was raised for the Air Ambulance and Bobby Van!

Chippenham Cherished Vehicle Show: Sunday, 7th June

Photos: Bill Reed.

When two shows take place on the same day! Then there are difficult decisions to be made!

Below: Morrisons car park, Chippenham at 9.15am Bill and Alex's Minors ready to go to the Cherished Vehicle Show, the other Minors gathering to go to Middlewick House! Everyone had a good day!

Below are photos from the Chippenham Cherished Vehicle Show, thanks to Bill Reed.

North Wilts Minors on Tour: Derbyshire 12-15th June

Words & photos: Bill Reed, Steve Chater, Ashley Alexander, Ash and Pam Holmes

We gathered at the Old Prison Cafe, Northleach prior to setting off on this third “Tour” to Derbyshire: Bill Reed, Steve Chater, Ashley Alexander, Ash and Pam Holmes.

The first leg of the journey from The Old Prison was to Hilltop Farm cafe along the Fosse Way, this took an hour at which time we took a break for “morning coffee” or in some cases hot chocolate!

Parking together at Hilltop Farm.

Above: Driving up the Fosse Way.

Lunch was at Bosworth Field Visitor Centre, after which we drove the final section of the route around the periphery of Derby following mostly country roads into rural Derbyshire.

At 3.30pm we arrived in Wirksworth, at the home of Susie and Julian Marshall, who had invited us for tea and cakes. Susie and Julian are Honorary Branch Members. They were very active members for several decades prior to moving to Derbyshire in 2020. It was great to catch up with them both and we were very fortunate to enjoy refreshments in their sunny garden!

Our destination for the next three nights was the Premier Inn, Matlock.

On Saturday morning we took the short drive, alongside the River Derwent to Cromford Mill where we had a fascinating guided tour. The very knowledgeable guide enabled us to understand how the Cromford Mill had developed under the ownership of Richard Arkwright and then his son.
We held cotton bolls and had demonstrations of carding and spinning. It was interesting to reflect on the challenges that Richard Arkwright had to face in introducing new industrial developments.

Alex, Ash, Pam and Steve at Cromford Mill with our guide. Bill took the photo.

Saturday afternoon was spent on the Ecclesbourne Railway with Susie and Julian. It was a 1940's weekend with steam trains and vintage buses running. Many people were dressed from the era and there were displays of memorabilia.

Dinner on Saturday evening in Wirksworth where Julian and Susie's son Simon joined us for a drink.

Sunday16th June was the Morris Day at the Great British Car Journey. We had several objectives for the day, all overlapping, and all were achieved!

Firstly, to meet up with our honorary members Julian and Susie Marshall and take them to the Morris Day at the Great British Car Journey, where they could meet friends and join in a Minor event. Their own Minor is currently laid up but their son Simon has plans for getting it back on the road. They were pleased to meet Adrian from the Arkwright Repair Shop who is currently repairing one of their clocks, and whose recently restored Morris 8 was displayed at the entrance to the Museum and won a prize.

Secondly, to meet up with Andy Smith - also an honorary member - and GHR 800N, the car built in Swindon in 1974. He brought it over so that it could be appropriately parked up under the North Wilts flag. He was kept very busy with questions about the car and said that he had learnt a few things too. He also won a prize!

Thirdly of course to support the MMOC on a day which was part of the 50 year celebrations.

Photo: North Wilts Branch cars at the Great British Car Journey.

The Great British Car Journey Museum and its owner Richard Usher were very generous with vouchers for the cafe and merchandise. We spent quite some time admiring the exhibits which are all in immaculate condition and include very rare vehicles, some of them unique and with fascinating histories.

Inside the Great British Car Journey

Steve and Julian admire a newly rebuilt Morris 8 which was being displayed for the day by a friend of Julians and was a prize winner.

After the Morris event we all went down the road to Cromford Wharf for a lovely walk along the canal, tea and ice cream.

Farewell photo below!

Steve Chater summed up the weekend by saying,

“ I thoroughly enjoyed our weekend together and many thanks to Bill for all the hard work in preparation of the event, also to Ash for navigating us to destinations in a relaxing way. All the venues were interesting and enjoyable, Cromford Mills, Ecclesbourne Railway and the Forties Memories, and the Great British Car Journey Museum. The highlight for me was spending time with Julian and Susie who I hadn’t seen since they moved other Derbyshire, also meeting their son Simon. I certainly hope we can have a ‘rerun’ sometime in the future.”

All of us who participated in this event wish to thank Bill for having initiated the “North Wilts on Tour” visits to Derbyshire, and for having facilitated the 2026 Tour so successfully!

Final photos: on the way home!

Classics at White Lodge Care Home.

Photo: Richard Reade.

Some of the residents at the White lodge fete enjoyed looking at the Morris Minor belonging to North Wilts MMOC member Richard Reade and the Rover P5.

Cirencester Classic Car Show:

Photos from Steve Chater

Steve displayed his prison van, which is in pristine condition and one of few! There was diverse range of other classics along the streets of Cirencester.

Hampshire Branch Rally at Wilton House: 28th June. Didn't we have a lovely day……

Photos: Bill Reed, Ash and Pam Holmes

Peter Watts led those of us driving from Wroughton, on a scenic drive through the Wiltshire countryside. Through Avebury, Devizes, Lavington, Stonehenge and on to Wilton House where Martin and Jenny joined us.

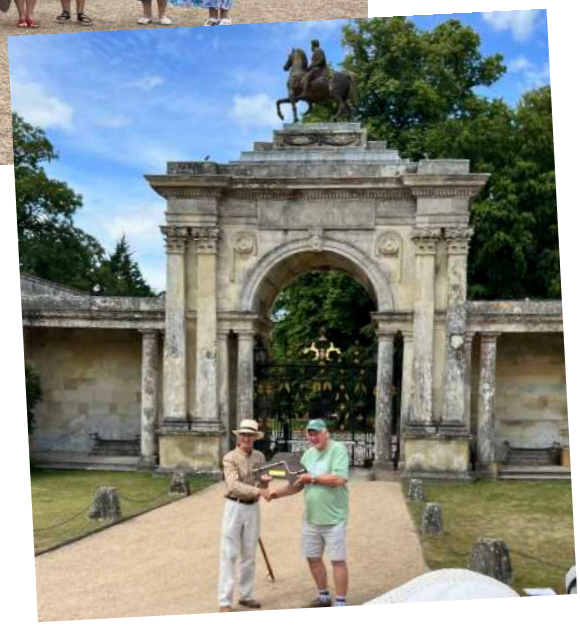
We drove in under the arch and "parking" for all the Morris Minors was in the courtyard of Wilton House.

About 50 Minors from Hampshire, Dorset, The Isle of Wight and Wiltshire were gleaming in the sun and being admired.

In the museum, cars belonging to Lord Pembroke added interest to the event.

We enjoyed a picnic on the grounds of the House with its magnificent facade.

The event ended with a presentation to the owner of the Morris that the Hampshire Chairperson most wanted to take home. A group photo was taken of those who had dressed from the era of their car.



We then had a scenic drive home through Devizes.

Many thanks to Peter Watts for leading the group and planning the route.

Forthcoming Events:

Wiltshire Open Studios: Sunday, 26th July.

Words: Pam Holmes

‘Open studios’ is an opportunity for the public to visit the hidden world of local artists in their studios or workshops. It is free of charge.

The artists' work ranges from curios, jewellery, glass or ceramics to large sculptures, bronzes and epic landscapes. You can meet the artist and discover their inspiration. It can be an exhilarating to step into someone's garden or house to look into the world of an artist.

Peter Williams has arranged this Drive, starting at Chiseldon, visiting studios in the Baydon, Ramsbury area, including ceramics, painting and sculpture, then ending in Aldbourne for lunch.

At the moment there are 8 Morris Minors signed-up for this event! You could still join us: - please email me to book your place!

Shalbourne Show: Sunday, 30th August.

The success of this Show in 2025, when over 450 classic cars attended, has led to it being a requirement this year for each driver/ car to book in advance. The link for booking is on the North Wilts MMOC Branch website. Any problems in obtaining and returning the booking form then please contact Pam Holmes 01285 810524 pamlynnholmes@icloud.com

Once you have booked for the Shalbourne Car Show, please advise Bill Reed who is co-ordinating this event and arranging for us to drive “in convoy” to the Show to enable us to be parked as a group. bill@euclidvillas.co.uk

A personal invitation to enter your vehicle at the Oakridge Show: Saturday, 5th September.

This traditional Village Show is held at the Pleasure Field, next to the Oakridge Village Hall (GL6 7NZ), between Cirencester and Stroud. This year is the 80th anniversary of the original Oakridge Flower Show and will include stalls, sideshows, hot food, bar and beverages, music and dancing entertainment. Inside the hall there will be a display of craftwork, fruit, vegetables and flowers entered in the friendly competition by local residents. Toilets in hall foyer.

As in previous years, there should be a growing and attractive display of pre-war and classic cars, motorcycles and possibly some tractors and commercial vehicles.

Entry is free. Arrival by noon at the latest, with the expectation that vehicles are displayed until 4pm.

Entry forms are on the North Wilts Branch website or available from Pam Holmes. 01285 810524.

Brinkworth Show: Sunday, 6th September.

Please let me know if you plan to attend this show, then we can reserve a space sufficiently large for the North Wilts cars to be parked in a group.

It would be good to support this local village show.
pamlynnholmes@icloud.com

AGM as part of a social event: Sunday, 18th October at Castle Eaton Village Hall.

A requirement of being a Branch of the MMOC is that we hold an Annual General Meeting each year, that we appoint a chairperson, treasurer, secretary and at least two additional committee members.

North Wilts Branch are fortunate in consistently having had sufficient volunteers to form an active committee enabling and promoting each year, an extensive programme of events. If you would be interested in joining the Branch Committee then please talk to me, Pam, or any of the other committee members.

The AGM will take about 30 minutes; the remainder of the afternoon will be a programme of social events. Watch this space!

Your ideas and contributions are vital to sustain the Branch, so please put this date in your diary. Times will be around 12-4pm.

Also please can you pass to me or any other committee members, ideas for events over the winter months.
New ideas are particularly welcome but please let us know which of these “old events” you would like to see, or not have, on the programme again:

- Quiz
- Games evening or afternoon.
- Speaker - what sort of topics.
- Presentations about “my Morris and the work done on it”
- Visits to places of interest: ideas for venues!
- Breakfast meet
- Pub lunch

North Wilts MMOC Branch Committee

Words: Pam Holmes

Your committee meets every 6 weeks to consider and discuss all those matters that affect the Branch and its members!
We share information about events relevant to Branch members Morris Minor and classic car related interests, approve necessary expenditure, monitor the accounts, ensure the equipment owned by the Branch is kept in good order and liaise with the Morris Minor Owners Club.

The most time consuming responsibility of the Branch committee is to plan and deliver a regular programme of events; which are promoted through this Branch Newsletter and the Branch website.

A significant amount of time recently has been given to planning the Branch Rally on Saturday, 1st August at South Cerney Show.
Soon we shall be focusing on planning the AGM and we are already thinking about the “December Branch Event” for which your suggestions would be appreciated: please give us your thoughts!

Finally, I would like to pass on thanks to those Branch members who are not committee members but who have taken the lead, or made a significant contribution to organising events for the Branch: Bill Reed, Ashley Alexander and Peter Williams.

Final note of thanks for your contributions to this newsletter to:

Ashley Alexander
Steve Chater
Clive Frost
Ash Holmes
Richard Reade
Bill Reed