

## Jim Bowen and his cars

*Get your motor runnin'  
Head out on the highway  
Lookin' for adventure  
And whatever comes our way*

The classic driving song from 1968, 'Born To Be Wild', by Steppenwolf, typifies one club member and his cars more than anyone else - Jim Bowen. There's a wild side to Jim and a wilder side to his cars.

Talk to Jim some time. Ask him about his cars. Ask him about the modifications he's made... I doubt you will find anyone more passionate about Morris Minors - or more passionate about our club, too!

We've all seen Jim's cars: they are probably the hottest Morris Minors on the road (especially the green one) and they always draw crowds of admirers at car shows.

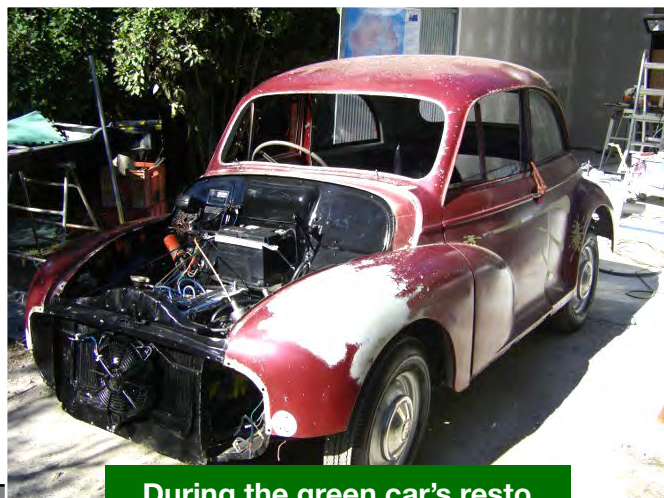
One club member readily admits that, when looking for an old English car to buy several years ago, he went to All British Day and checked out the Morris Minor Car Club's display: "I want one just like that" he declared, pointing at Jim's green Morrie.

Jim's love of Morris Minors started way back when he was just 18 years old.

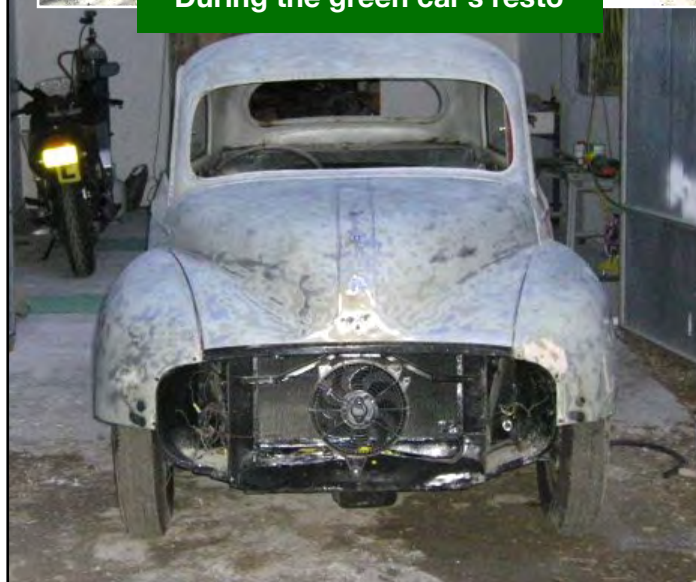


Leader of the pack - Australia Day

He put a hotted-up 'grey' motor from an FJ Holden into an MM low light. Actually, 'put' really doesn't do it justice - a straight six donk in a Morrie? Some serious engineering work was needed. "The gear stick was next to my left hip" said Jim. "And it was very, very quick."



During the green car's resto





The gold car - before restoration (top) and with its two biggest fans (below), Elanor and Jye

And what of the performance of this six-cylinder beast? Do you remember the original XR Falcon GT? The one in 'GT Gold' paint, originally developed for the Victorian Police? Yep, that's the one. In Jim's words, his car would "blow the XR GT into the weeds."



Imagine this scenario (a true story): you're young; you're in a hotted-up car; there's a line of slow-moving cars; its safe to overtake - so you fly past them. Unfortunately, one of the slow-moving cars is an unmarked police car...

This car was Jim's "first true love" and, like many of us, he regrets selling his first car to this day. As Jim owned this car for ten years, you can understand his desire to get it back. Jim has even advertised to try and retrieve it - but if you owned it, would you sell it back to Jim? No, neither would I.

Police: "Why were you going so fast?"  
Jim: "I was trying to get to Queensland as quickly as I could."  
Police: "Why don't you fly there?"  
Jim: "I thought I was flying!"

Yes, there was a rather large fine involved - but you get the idea of Jim's passion for the not-so-ordinary, especially





**The trio at All British Day**

Jye helps Jim build another Morrie race car at Ray's place, so Jim is more than happy for Jye to drive the gold car. Jye used it to drive his girlfriend, Elanor, to her Year 12 formal. These are occasions when students often hire cars like Mustangs, Corvettes and Thunderbirds for their transport - but it was Jim's gold low light that was the star, attracting crowds from all the other cars.

Jim loves playing with things mechanical; he is now building a motorised pushbike in his spare time.

with Morris Minors.

All three of Jim's current cars are MM low lights - a 1949 model (the gold one) and two from 1950, the green and black cars.

He bought the green car first in 2010, from Brisbane, then spent two years getting it on the road. It has a 1200 engine with twin 1+1/4 inch SU's, was tuned by one of Stirling Moss' mechanics and, according to Jim, this car really does fly!

Then came the black car, purchased in 2011 from Ray Selby. The gold car was Jim's most recent acquisition - and Jye Sommers, Jim's neighbour, really enjoys driving it.



**Early morning run across Alfords Point Bridge**

**Jim loves this car!**



Honestly, Jim has a hundred and one stories about his Morris Minors. Talk to him some time; you'll understand his passion for Morries! "I just love the club" admits Jim. That's if you can find him - Jim is more than likely getting his motor running and heading out on the highway...