

## Coolamon Fire Engine Muster

Last October I was fortunate enough to visit Coolamon for their annual Fire Truck Muster. This small but attractive town has a very wide main street with a central park of trees and grass. Angle parked either side of the street was a big range of vintage fire engines and other emergency vehicles, accompanied by various makes and models of vintage cars. Most notable among these was a Valiant Charger police car and a restored FJ Holden ambulance.

At the top of the street is the old fire station that now is a museum, well stocked with all manner of equipment, clothing and models relating to the history of fire fighting in this country.

Anyway, the display of fire engines was impressive but to my surprise, hidden behind a huge Dennis fire truck was a tiny little Morris Minor fire engine! So amazing.



The fire engine fulfilled the requirement specified by the factory in 1932 that a fire fighting appliance be able to travel between assembly tracks in case of emergency. The previous fire engine had been retired after 20 years of service and this Morris Minor unit took over the job until 1983 when it was transferred to the reserve fleet; in 1990 it was fully retired.

It is currently on display in the heritage museum adjacent to the Jaguar/Rover factory in Gaydon south of Coventry in England.

Using photos taken on my visit to the museum, I built this fairly close replica with a chassis and engine of the correct vintage.

David Pfeifer



Turns out it was actually a reproduction of the vehicle that BMC had built and its size meant it could drive down the narrow factory assembly lines..... The note on the windscreen told the tale:

The photo above is of the fire engine built in 1953 by the Engineering Division of Morris Motors using the prototype chassis for the new quarter-ton commercial van. It was originally fitted with the side valve engine but was later converted to the OHV A Series engine.



So there you have it, what a great effort and the replica attracted a lot of admirers on the day.

Coolamon Fire Museum is open 7 days a week 10am to 4 pm.

The Fire Engine Muster and car show happens once a year in October but ring the fire museum to confirm dates. Could be a good destination for a Morris Car Club run?

Coolamon is also worth the visit for the old Cheese Factory that is still operating plus many heritage buildings to see. It is 30 minutes' drive northwest of Wagga Wagga.

Alan Bourne  
Member 986



## MORRIS MINOR FIRE ENGINE



The photo above is of the fire engine built in 1953 by the Engineering Division of Morris Motors, using the prototype chassis for the new quarter-ton Morris Minor van. It was originally fitted with the side valve engine, but was later converted to the more powerful overhead valve "A" series engine.

The fire engine fulfilled the requirement specified by the factory in 1932 that a fire fighting appliance should be able to travel between assembly tracks in the event of an emergency. The previous fire engine had been retired after twenty year's service and this vehicle took over until 1983 when it was transferred to the reserve fleet. In 1990 it was fully retired under the care of the trust.

It is currently on display in the Heritage Museum, adjacent to the Jaguar/Rover factory in Gaydon, south of Coventry in England.

Using photos taken on my visit to the museum, I built this replica in my workshop. It is a fairly close replica of the original vehicle, with a chassis and engine of the correct vintage.

DAVID PFEIFER

