

## Editor At large

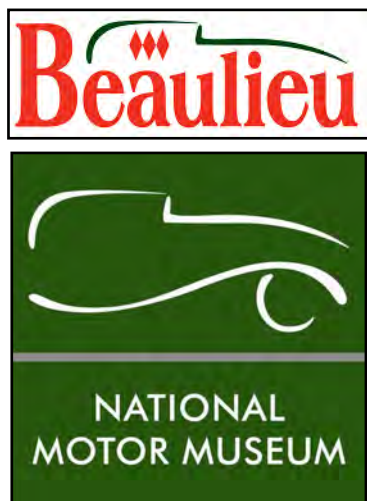
There are some really good advantages to belonging to car clubs. The obvious one is spending time with like-minded enthusiasts, sharing stories with them and picking their brains about how to fix or improve your own car.

Then there's the advantages of cheap registration via historic or classic plates. Indra and I belong to 5 car clubs (2 for the Morris, 2 for the Triumph, plus a local Southern Highlands club), but have really only obtained the full benefit from the MMCCNSW, but we're working on the others.

Something I hadn't thought of was meeting up with like-minded car people when travelling overseas - but this really hit home when Indra and I visited the UK recently. Knowing we would be spending time with family down in Cornwall and up in Lancashire, I contacted the two clubs well beforehand and suggested a possible catch-up.

Well, I didn't expect the response I received. The Cornwall club invited us to attend their annual show-and-shine, while the Lancashire invited us to attend one of their meetings. I did have some history with the Lancashire club though: last year I was able to give 'our' Byron a little help in getting his Morris Minor registered after he emigrated with it to Australia.

Unfortunately, our itinerary had been partially set in stone, with accommodation already booked, so we were unable to attend the two functions suggested. Well, that didn't stop my new UK friends, they just organised other places where we could meet.



We stayed with Indra's brother in London for a week, then when he and his wife drove to Fowey (pronounced 'Foy', as in 'Joy') in Cornwall for a holiday, Indra and I headed south for two nights in Lyndhurst (go there, and stay at the Crown Hotel if you can), for the main reason of visiting the nearby National Motor Museum at nearby Beaulieu (this just has to be a must-see for any car enthusiast).

Lyndhurst? A beautiful town, really cute like most other little towns in the UK, but it has a very unique car dealership. There's only one car dealer in town - and it's a Ferrari dealer! If you owned a Ferrari dealership, how many cars would you have on the premises or in stock? 3? 5? I decided to count them, but I couldn't see into some places - my count finished at forty! That's 4 and 0, forty Ferraris in the one small country town dealership! OMG, and not all of them were under cover. Being an ex-Fiat owner, my first thought was rust, but the Italians have probably fixed that by now.



Lyndhurst, town of Ferraris and a Reliant Robin



The scenic route: Tokyo to London via the North Pole





With Patrick Collins, Curator: Vehicles and Research, National Motor Museum



Indra and I found some cars we would like to buy, but we'd have to sell our house first :(



Let me introduce John Hough, who I had been in contact with. John is Chairman of the Morris Minor Club of Cornwall, but he is also a member of the Beaulieu Museum Trust. Given that John lives in Cornwall, he regularly drives the 9 hour return trip to Beaulieu to more than 'help out' at the National Motor Museum. John arranged for Indra and me to see a lot of the back room goings-on at Beaulieu through Patrick Collins, whose title is 'Curator: Vehicles and Research, National Motor Museum'.

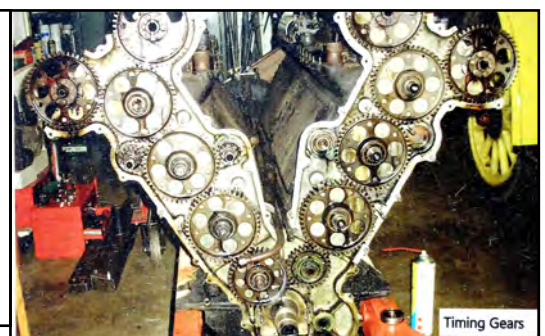
Wow! Patrick gave us the royal back-room tour, almost nothing was out of bounds with thousands millions of items all filed

away. There was even a stunning 'hands on' exhibition that was due to be shown just before COVID hit, so it is stored ready for that time in the future when we can touch things again.

Then we checked out the main part/s of the museum. Just one thing: if you ever go to England, as a car enthusiast, you MUST visit the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu, otherwise you can't be a car enthusiast, no excuses. It is simply brilliant, and so are the grounds, the gardens, the Abbey ruins, the wartime spy training centre, the Palace House... Even non-car people find it easy to spend a day here.



Sunbeam 1000hp was the first car to break 200mph, in 1927 - and is being rebuilt at Beaulieu for a return to the US in 2027. Complex timing gears (right)





And the one car dealership in the hamlet of Beaulieu? It sells classic sports cars, like MGB, Austin-Healey, TR, E-Type.

It was then onto Fowey, where I met John Hough one evening, who must love driving as he spent 45 minutes driving there, with his son Paul, just to have a chat (and a pint or two). What a delightful couple of hours! Like-minded Morrie/Moggie owners, talking about all things Morris Minor related and solved the world's problems.

John Hough and son Paul in Fowey, Cornwall



From Fowey we headed north, via Bath, Bourton-on-the-Water, Abergavenny (remember the song?), Wrexham, then to Indra's sister's house in Whalley, Lancashire (weird coincidence: Indra's sister lives just 2 km as the crow flies to where 'our' Byron Littlewood lived before he emigrated to Camden, NSW).

Now let me introduce Andrew Whittaker, Chairman, and Gareth Slater, Secretary, of the Lancashire Branch of the Morris Minor Owners' Club. I couldn't make it to one of their meetings, but they did invite me to a LCV outing in Leyland. LCV? I thought Morris Minor 'light commercial vehicle', what with 2023 being the 70th anniversary of the Morris Minor LCV. No, 'Lancashire Classic Vehicle' was the outing, with dozens of, um, LCV's on display.

I mentioned elsewhere that King Charles couldn't have been treated better; I was gobsmacked. I mean, they wouldn't even let me buy myself a coffee! As a thank-you for helping Byron, I was presented with Lancashire Branch MMOC shirts and caps for both me and Indra. Honestly, I was stunned. And after the car show they paid my entry fee into The British Commercial Vehicle Museum in Leyland. I want to go back there!



Top: Gareth Slater presenting me with a Lancashire shirt at the LCV car show



The rest of our UK trip? We drove east from Whalley to York (4 nights, so much to see), then to Whitby on the east coast via Goathland (aka Aidensfield in 'Heartbeat'), thence south over the Humber Bridge (huge!), picked up some Triumph spares at Lincoln, then to Ely and back to London via Duxford Imperial War Museum (aircraft), a fantastic site for the aircraft nuts. Duxford must have been having an upcoming air show, with Hurricanes, Spitfires, Mustangs and Catalinas etc all taking off and flying past, doing touch-and-goes - Indra and I enjoyed our mini air show.

Would I go to the UK again? Absolutely! Being in a car club opens so many doors for unforgettable experiences. And isn't that why we join a car club?

Cheers,  
Owen Sinden

PS I kept a count of classic cars that we saw on the road during the trip, with 66 in total. I am pleased to announce that the humble Morris Minor topped the list with 10 cars, closely followed by MGBs with 8. Next was MG Midgets on 4, and we even saw two 3-wheeled Reliant Robins.

