



Custom & Modified Register Newsletter

Morris Minor Owners Club
Custom & Modified Register

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An introduction to the new registrars, their cars & a guide to the new register

The newly reformed Morris Minor Custom and Modified Register combines the old separate Custom and Modified registers in to one unified group. This new register will be kept in duplicate by the two new registrars, Lee Wells and Julian Huxham. Lee has taken over a part of the MMOC website to keep the web enabled members access to the latest news and updates in the world of the Custom and Modified Minors. There is also a membership form on the website just in case you haven't added your custom or modified Minor to the register. Julian is taking over the paperwork side of the register, dealing with all the postal applications and newsletters. Newsletters will also be sent out by email to anyone who requests them and an archive of all the newsletters will also be kept on the website.

Lee Wells - I was introduced to Morris Minor's about 3 years ago and haven't looked back since! I brought my first Minor, 'Doris' a 1969 2 door, in September 2004, since then I've added a few more to my collection. 'Phoebe' is a 1963 4 door, which is my everyday car and pretty standard. I also have 'Mirium', a 1954 Traveler, she is signed up to the Heritage Class as she has full 1098 running gear from a later Minor and then there is 'Henry'. He is a 1966 2 door currently awaiting a complete drivers side floor pan replacement, once this is completed he will be having a running gear upgrade, this is likely to be a Ford cross-flow engine, with a type 9 Sierra gearbox. I also have plans to build a 4 wheel drive pick-up but I'll be keeping that under my hat for the moment!



Julian Huxham - My first moggy was a 1962, 2dr Saloon which I inherited when I was 15. It took me a year to painstakingly restore it to its former glory. Even then I was destined to bring the moggy into the modern age. It first started with the paint, taken from an Alfa Romeo. I soon migrated to the MG Midget suspension, engine, gearbox, brakes (disc's, servo) and further !! I have now had the car for seventeen years and gone through several more conversions. The engine is now



the Fiat 2000cc twin cam and relevant transmission / brakes and still looks great. I have now got 3 other moggies (two 2dr's and a Convertible) waiting to be restored and looking to go down the 3.5L, V8 route to further my knowledge and hopefully help others to do the same.

The new register has been broken down into 3 classes.

1. **Heritage Modified Class** - These are cars that look outwardly like standard but have been mechanically improved/up rated with the use of suitable parts available to BMC & BL during the Morris Minor production



run dates. They are vehicles that could represent the owners' idea of what the Minor should have become during its production or simply been changed to make the car more useable to the owner in normal use. The interior may also have been embellished/improved with more modern front seats and extra dials & controls.

2. **Sports Modified Class** - These are cars that look outwardly like standard but have been mechanically improved/up rated using non-period BMC/BL/Rover parts or other components of choice. These vehicles have simply been changed to make the cars more useable by there owners as fast cars for normal use.



The structure of the car should be as standard and only structural changes deemed necessary to mount replacement mechanical parts or systems will be accepted. The interior may also have been embellished/improved with more modern front seats and extra dials & controls.

3. **Custom Class** - These are cars that may have changed in both appearance and mechanical specification using the owners' imagination



and desired mechanical parts. They may incorporate extensive structural changes to maintain the integrity of the body shell, incorporate new running

gear to achieve the desired appearance. The finished car should not have changed so much that it wouldn't be legally viable as either a Historic Vehicle or a Morris Minor. So basically anything goes!

There are several ways of contacting and joining the register.

1. You can visit the registers website <http://custommod.mmoc.org.uk>.

2. You can write to the register -

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But please include a S.A.E. to ensure a reply. This is because the register is free to join and it helps to keep the registers drain on the club's funds to a minimum.

You can also call the register helpline on 07077-089-599 (Calls charged at 50p from a landline, mobile charges may vary)

Featured car pictures:

1. Lee Wells - 1954 Heritage Class Traveler. Full 1098cc running gear.

2. Julian Huxham - 1962 Sports Class 2 door. Fiat 2000 twin cam

3. Onne Van Der Spoel - 1955 Heritage Class split screen 2 door. Full 1098cc running gear.

4. Cameron Shaw - 1969 Sports Class 4 door. 1380cc A+ with Type 9 5 speed.

5. Pete Sinclair - 1955 Custom Class Low-light 2 door. V8 Rover powered. (See the featured car article on this newsletter for a full spec.)

Would you like your car featured in the Newsletter? Drop us a line and we'll try to include your car in a future newsletter.

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We're now on the Web!
CustomMod.MMOC.org.uk

This Editions Featured Car:- Pete Sinclair's 1955 Custom V8 Lowlight

I bought this minor about 3 years ago through an advert in the NSRA magazine. It was down in Leeds, so I managed to get someone to have a quick look at it to let me know it was basically ok.

When I got the word back that it seemed fine, I agreed over the phone to buy it. The only problem was - it had an unserviceable auto box, but as I had a spare one, it wasn't really a concern. I duly borrowed a trailer and tow car (thanks Ian) and went to collect it. On first sight it seemed a bit rough, but on closer inspection appeared really sound.



When I got it home, I started off by cleaning it out - several black bags later, the interior was pretty tidy, and then cleaned off the outside to make it a bit more shiny (it was matt).

The auto box was totally U/S despite a £600 bill for reconditioning not that many miles ago, but it was a GM 180 box, and my spare was a BW 65 - hopefully not a problem.

I duly set to and started removing the engine and box - a full day spent getting the headers off, but eventually it was out and sitting in my garage. I separated the engine and box, and realised quickly that there were numerous differences between the boxes - flywheel, crank spacer, torque converter, mountings, gear linkage - but I had all the bits, so it was quite straightforward to change. I then completely cleaned everything then sprayed engine and box in Fiat Rosso red.

I then spent a considerable time re-welding the headers as they were leaking at about every join (they were custom made to fit car). I then tidied up the entire engine bay, relocating wires/pipes etc to make it look better, made a new exhaust system, fitted new springs to the front and rear shocks, bled the brakes, rewired the instruments, secured trim in the interior etc etc.

The car came with Weller steel wheels with pudding basins for hub caps, so I fitted the old cobra slots from the rear of my other Minor (BTS 81) to the front. Although they are

8 x 13's, they fitted without much protrusion from the wheel arch (Chevette front clip fitted). I then set about finding a set of slots for the rear, and quite soon got a set of 8 1/2 x 15 American Racing items. The only snag was that the previous owner's of the car had re-drilled the jag IRS to fit Ford 4 stud, so I had to get new hubs. This done, they fitted a treat under the 4 inch over sized rear arches. I used the



car once MOT'd for the rest of that year, then took off the front wings and replaced them and the front panel with the ones from my MM series Minor (BTS 81). The wings needed a bit of work due to wheel/arch contact over the years, but were soon fettled, sprayed and mounted - I had another full set for BTS anyway.

The only other thing I've done to the car over the intervening years is to drive it - and fit a stainless steel bulkhead cover to it. I was full of good intentions to give it a full re-spray, but although I have bought the paint, and have a pair of refurbished doors to go on, I have not done so yet. I also considered re doing the interior as it is very 70's, but it has grown on



me, and is a bit of a time warp. It was well done at the time, so I may just redo the dash and leave the rest. The car is still a full 4 seater which may surprise some, and it is certainly quite a useful feature.

I also reconditioned a set of Vitesse heads to go on it (bigger valves) and fitted them just before Christmas



In general, the car is very useable, and is very sound structurally. It was originally modified by a company called Autofantasia down in Derby around 1990, and their work has certainly stood the test of time. They built the car using an integral chassis rather than a separate one. This was probably a more difficult option, but it bestows the car with more rigidity than standard, and retains the basic Minor floor pan.

It is not the fastest car in the world, but has beaten my friends V8 manual Minor on the drag strip, and quite a few modern cars. It's best time was a 15.1 at 91 mph, which equates to a 0 to 60 of around 6.5 seconds. Top end is around 130 mph, so it's not bad - midrange is particularly good. Handling is actually pretty good (in the dry), and having a Chevette front end, the steering



is very light, with an amazingly tight steering lock.

I plan to continue using it, and will get round to the bodywork etc when I can be bothered - I've got another 2 minors to sort as well - my other V8, and my son's twin cam one, plus I have 2 motorbikes to play on.

Full Spec

Car	1955 Minor Series 2 MUJ 927
Engine	P6B series 2 Rover V8 with Edelbrock Carb, fast road cam and headers
Gearbox	BW 65
Front End	Chevette
Rear End	Jaguar S type
Brakes	Servo assisted Jag and Chevette
Wheels F	8 x13 Cobra Slots
Wheels R	81/2 x 15 American Racing
Bodywork	Lowlight front panel and wings, rear wings 4 inch wider
Interior	Very 70's velour - still a 4 seater
Colour	Rover Kingfisher Blue
Owner	Pete Sinclair, Broughty Ferry