



Minor Message series 2 no. 16

Buying a Minor during Covid-19 - by Jeff Hide



Choosing to buy a classic car may itself provide the identity of the marque sought. It could be pure nostalgia once again to own a particular marque. It could be the need for a challenge in the knowledge that both body and brain needs the activity that most elderly cars provide (and their owners need). It could be the knowledge that specific marques offer a comradeship of like minded enthusiasts ready and keen to meet and greet new cars and their owners. However, it is much harder to identify which car to buy when you have owned and regularly driven over forty cars in your life, all now being deemed of classic status.

What about another Daimler SP250 Dart if funds allow? If not what about a Series 1 Land Rover or a Sunbeam Rapier Mark III. All well-established classics now.



According to the booklet entitled *The Morris Minor* written by Ray Newell, the Secretary of the national MMOC published in 1992, the concept and development of what became the Morris Minor was unsure immediately post WWII but once put into production in 1948 became a world beater and a cult car of the 1980s and 1990s. My first experience in a 1955 MM was memorable albeit the saloon being owned by a garage owner who sold them and he taught me something of driving and car mechanics. My second regular 1000 was a country copper's police van and my third a panda car. So, why not forget the idea of Daimler or Jaguar and find myself a Morris Minor 1000? At least it should fit into my accommodation for it.

I did, despite the limitations imposed by the Covid 19 plague. They are for sale all over the UK but you could not travel and certainly could not stay overnight miles from

home when I wanted one. What was there within a half day there and a half day back? Still risky even with bottles of sanitiser and masks but the urgency being the emotional well-being justifying it. Good models seemed to go quickly. How trustworthy was Ebay? Do you trust a second hand car dealer especially miles from home with no real come back? All these matters had to be balanced and were. Thus, it took some months.



One day I saw a Morris Minor Convertible for sale in a country classic car dealer's agricultural showroom. I followed the code, booked up and drove to inspect it. No - it was not for me but the next day a saloon was expected in. The next day I attended again and this time took a risk. The car had the history, the servo assisted disc brakes and the electronic ignition as well as a reasonable mileage supported by the condition. By chance, having got it home, I silver surfed the web under Morris Minor 1000, 1964 model - images. Lo and behold at a show/rally there was my car in immaculate condition on the screen in front of me. Chuffed or what!

However, as original as it is, my wife preferred it to have proper seatbelts and so off it went to my local classic car specialist garage for a thorough check over and seat belt fitting. I now await its return for what is left of this year's rallies if any. But next year we will be optimistic.

As Baggins is in the Cadley Garage still, I attach the only photo I have at the moment. Also, from my auto biography, I attach the following: Rover 3ltr, RNJ 555 in which I was taught to drive, 1960 Daimler SP250 Dart I bought as a barn find with only 16,000 genuine miles on the clock and my JBA Falcon, sold later to buy a boat.

Sorry - forgot to mention the Jaguar XK 120 I bought aged 18 years stuck in first gear and previously owned by Tony Hancock.

Jeff Hide, August 2020

