



Minor Message series 3 no. 11 Me and Minors by Chris Howard

I learnt to drive and passed my test in an Austin A30 van UYO 475. I took the test in Newton Abbot. It had snowed overnight and the emergency stop was interesting. We slid for ages and when we hit a clear patch the examiner shot off the passenger seat into the dash (no seat belts in those days).

Father had an inheritance and smoke grey Traveller 469 LOD was bought. Father filled it with petrol on Friday - allowed me to use it over the weekend and had to fill it again on Monday!

There was a crowd of about a hundred of us, several with their parents' cars, and Rod Ives who owned a Morris 8 pickup. It was not noted for its performance and so used to head the convoy. We used to see how many other vehicles we could gather for a convoy - great fun in the summer months with the grockles. Boggit hunting was a pastime often pursued. When asked what a boggit looked like the reply was that we did not know because we had never caught one - we thought it funny.

They built a multi storey car park in Torquay (well three floors), we used to play car hide and seek in there in the winter when it was empty. On the occasions we went to Exeter, always tried to get the needle over the petrol gauge going down Telegraph Hill. School finished and I had to get a job which meant moving to Bristol, and no car until I got a Mini 204 AYO. BXF 868G replaced 469 LOD, it was 1098cc but the earlier 948cc always went better in my opinion. Father eventually gave it to me when he bought an Astra. I was by then married with four children, joined the MMOC and applied to go on the MOT to Ribeuuillé. Mary Hall queried our entry - surely four adults and two children not two adults and four children. Borrowed everything except our sleeping bags. Filled a trailer. Wife in the passenger seat, three kids in the back and the youngest behind on a mini seat I fixed in transversely. Later got a six man tent followed by a trailer tent, fridge and Thetford. Killed an MG Midget and BXF got a 1275c engine with Niki carb, free flow exhaust and discs with a servo. Went to St Rémy and broke the gearbox on Mont Ventoux, but that was another story.



For Chris's Mont Ventoux story, click [HERE](#)