

Morris Minor Traveller Restore Project

Where to start? I needed a project to keep me occupied, something to do. I was looking for something that would keep me busy not for a few days but a long-time project, about 2/3 years. I have already restored a Mini car, so I fancied a slightly bigger and more detailed project. But something that I was not committed to every day unless I wanted to be.

We, my wife and myself, were just driving pass a garage in Wootton Bassett and we saw this Morris Minor Traveller up on a stand for sale. So, we stopped on the way back home to have a look. It needed some slight work on the wood section but it was road worthy and had a full MOT etc.

We went home to discuss it over, I needed to assess my options. I had the space in the garage to store and work on the car during bad weather. We had the cash to buy the car and start the restore, but there was a limited budget which could be extended over a 1 - 2year time frame if need be. There was no time frame set from the beginning as this depended on the standard I was going to restore the car to. So, after a little discussion we went back and brought the car, I drove the car home and decided to take the car straight off the road to save on getting any car insurance, so I SORNed (No TAX) it via the WEB.

Then I need to work out where to start on the restore. I have all the tools from my previous Mini project and this had given me the confidence to take on the work required. There was still number of things I needed to get before actually starting. I had not worked on a Morris Minor before so needed to do some

research and buy the relevant Books on the car and engine, and search the WEB for as much information on the Morris Minor Traveller as possible.

I then decide to join the Morris Minor Owners Club, so if I need any advice on anything I could ask via the WEB site. This then lend us to the Local Morris Minor Club which we join again to further expand the field for information on the Morris Minor.

It was nearly two/three months before I actually started on the restore of the car. I also needed to plan where I was going to store the parts from the car as I removed them. Marking or labelling each part as it was removed. I learned this from the Mini project also I start to take pictures to help later on with the build. At this stage, you can see what needs to be replaced or restored depending on the standard of restored you wish or can actually do.

I expanded my initial plan from just repairing/ restoring the wood section of the Traveller to a complete body strip down and then respray. This was after I had stripped all the wood and interior of the car and found that it needed a new base floor and rear wing, as both of these were rotten away. But this only extended the time frame of the project, which was never really an issue from the start. The extra cost was covered in the long-term plan so again was no issue.

The restore is really straight forward, if you are familiar with car maintenance and not afraid to have a go at mechanics. However, there are quite a few pit falls that you can fall into, which will cause much heart ache and frustration.

The first thing is definitely to record/label every part/item removed from the car as you remove it. This might seem

simplistic but come 18 months later when it has to be replaced/restored, you will certainly appreciate any help as how to fit/connect the item.

When I started, I did not take many pictures, Big Mistake. Also, you need to take pictures from two/three angles to ensure that you can see exactly how it needs to be refitted. Do not rely on the manual's as these miss-out stages and some of the descriptions are vague to say the least. Even the simplest tasks like removing the door handles, window glass or brake shoes (these can be fitted upside down) need to be recorded.

You need to plan your actions with some thought for both the stripping and restoring stages. An example is to remove all the interior panels before removing any of the side wood panels, as access to most of the screws are behind the interior panels. I can't count the number of times I had to remove the same part to replace/restore another unit. Whereas if I thought about it I would have only had to do the job once.



Another big mistake I made was ripping parts off the car and actually braking the item, thinking I could replace the complete item later with new parts. Do not throw away anything not even nuts/bolts, as these could Whitworth which is very hard to find or order. Unless you are going to completely replace all with Metric type nuts/bolts. There are a few which cannot be replaced.

At some stage, you will need to decide if you are going to restore the car to its original condition or to upgrade certain parts with new modern items. I fitted new Disc brakes to the front of the car, which greatly improved the driving conditions and safety of the car. You can upgrade the car suspension system with new modern parts. I also added a water temperature meter.

Remember that this is your hobby and not a full-time job, so if it is getting a little frustration and a particular section seems not to be going well, take a short break and come back with a fresh state of mind. When finally, you have the car on the road completely MOTed and road worthy ready for that first drive. The feeling is well worth all those long hours of work with great satisfaction. So now is the time to enjoy driving and showing off the car.

Written by Harry Ridley in 2017