

A typical weekend for a Twenty - 2017

For 5 years since moving up north from London to Chesterfield I had wanted to bring my first car a 1932 Morris Minor tourer from an ex-neighbour's garage in Bromley. Every attempt was thwarted. Originally I had thought I would be able to drive the car the 150 miles, but as time went on it was clear that too much work would be needed for this. I booked the Annual Rally at Burleigh House from Friday to Sunday. On the Thursday I loaded 50 years of Motor Sports into GUY27 and arranged to collect a car trailer locally. On Friday I picked up the trailer at 9am & drove to Burleigh & unloaded all the mags in about 13 supermarket vegetable boxes in the Club's Spares Tent with a request that they were to be given as one lot with a donation of say £10 to



the Spares fund. I had previously (about 2 years earlier) offered them for free to THH, but got no reply. I then headed south down the A1, M11, Dartford Bridge to Lewisham, where I was surprised to find that every road, including main roads & bus routes, was limited to 20mph with endless wretched humps. Only the S

circular A205 was clear. On arrival at the back alley (sat navs try to send you up this!) I found that the combination on the lock on the gate had been changed. It took over an hour to find someone who knew where he had the new combination of 4 numbers. Just a minor change.....

It was too difficult (even for me!) to back the trailer up the alley so I parked it so that my car could be pushed out & straight on to the trailer. I opened the friend's garage door, but I had



forgotten how overgrown it would be so did not bring cutters etc. I managed to get the up and over door high enough & propped open to get the car out. As suspected the brakes were seized on. The early hydraulic brakes I had fitted in 1960 had aluminium pistons in cast iron cylinders & these were always prone to seize up if the car was not used for months. The handbrake

had been deliberately left off to prevent seizure, but it did not work! I struggled to get

3 of the wheels & drums off & clean out the grot and free up the wheels, but the near side rear was immovable. Eventually I managed to drag the car out with an improvised tow rope with the brake locked solid. A friendly old neighbour was now helping me. He called up for re-inforcements & 4 big strong men helped get the car down the alley & on to the trailer. It was now nearly dark. I loaded up various boxes of bits, my Vespa body and nearly everything belonging to it, but it was so dark I missed some stuff so will have to go back. My spare 20hp engine & gearbox will have to wait another day - probably with a hired van & power tail lift, like I used to take them to London years before. I headed north about 10pm. There was traffic chaos just after the Blackwell Tunnel. One of the tunnels ahead was closed. All traffic was being turned off to a roundabout deliberately reduced to one lane with traffic lights. [I had exactly the same on the M1 near Barnsley a few weeks later.] A left turn, awkward U-turn & some nifty lane changing saved probably 30 minutes. I

got a room at the Stansted Services.

In the morning I drove (cruising at 50mph with the overdrive) to the rally site at Burghley & unhitched the



trailer near the spares tent.

In the early evening I tried to find a hotel in Stamford, but they were all full. I drove back south about 10 miles only to find the hotel I had seen was closed for an event. I then headed for Peterborough & could not find the hotels I had seen the previous year. So I headed back towards Stamford & had dinner at Royce's village. I knew that I could



get some sleep on the settees under cover back at the House, but when I got to the gate it was locked. I drove round to the other gates - they too were locked. A couple returning from the rally dinner in a modern Bentley were also locked out. We went back to the first gate where the Bentley man tried to persuade the chap living in the gate house to open up, but he said he did not have the key - but his car was parked inside.....The couple then parked up & walked through the pedestrian gate back to their caravan. She could not walk in her high heels so no doubt had to wash her feet having walked through the sheep droppings!

After a very uncomfortable night dosing in the 20 hp the gates were opened at 7am. The keyholder said that we should have been given his phone number & he would have opened the gate 8 hours earlier!



I drove in & parked in the 20hp line. Later I learned that the first few places were for the cars to be judged, but I did not have to move. At the end of the day I checked with Ben at the spares tent - my Motor Sports were still there - no-one wanted them even as a gift! I re-connected the trailer & some Dutch members helped me by carrying

the boxes to the car where I stacked them up in the back.

It was dark when I got home. I parked up on the wide grass verge near my house.

The next day (Monday) my son came & helped get the car off the trailer & down the slope to the garage.

472m in 3 days using 21.5 gals so 22mpg
46m solo 426 towing.

Yet another typical weekend for a Twenty



My 3 cars re-united.



I did see other cars & here are two of the best - Packmans' 20hp



and the Meades' Auld Lady

