



The 6/80 & MO Club

Morris Cowley and Oxford Club (MCOC)

On Saturday 18th Feb 2017 a committee meeting was held in Amersham at the home of Patrick Carroll, the President of The 6/80 & MO Club. Also present were two representatives of the Morris Cowley & Oxford Club (MCOC), Richard Monk and Chris Burchall, who had been invited along to discuss a possible future amalgamation of the two clubs.

Neville Holmes, Chairman of The 6/80 & MO Club stated that a lot of positive things came from the discussions. There were further items to be dealt with, and once final decisions had been made, proposals would be put to The 6/80 & MO Club committee at their AGM which will be held at the MMOC HQ, Derby, in October.

The 6/80 & MO Club celebrates its 40th anniversary in November of 2017. A full merger, and change of name to incorporate the MCOC will not occur until after that date. MCOC members however, will be welcome to participate in 6/80 & MO Club activities until a full amalgamation has been agreed upon and achieved.

The 6/80 & MO Club has never been large, by virtue of the fact that it caters for only a few specific models, which are becoming ever rarer, as are the spare parts that are needed to keep them going, many of which have to be remanufactured by the club at considerable cost! It is hoped that the amalgamation of the two clubs will help to increase the membership of both, to the mutual benefit of all involved.

Historical note

The 6/80 & MO Club was founded in November 1977, by the merging of Roger Tennyson's Side-valve MO Club, and the Wolseley 6/80 Club, run by David Barker. The combined Club catered for, and continues in the same light to this day, the Wolseley 6/80 and 4/50 models, the Morris Six, Morris Oxford Series 1 (MO) and all commercial derivatives, plus the J van. These vehicles are very important in that they mark the transition period between traditional "old school" vehicle design, and modern-day techniques. The period they were introduced was from 1949 until 1954 - during which year the merger with Austin took place, the company becoming BMC, formerly Nuffield's (Lord Nuffield - William Morris).

The saloon cars were designed by engineer Alec Issigonis and his team and were of monocoque construction, all exhibited at the October 1948 Motor Show, Earls Court. Although the new Morris Minor MM was powered by the 918cc side-valve engine from the Morris Eight, its big brother, the MO had a 1476cc side-valve engine which was designed for the car. Likewise, the Wolseley 6/80 & Morris Six (Series MS) had specially designed six-cylinder 2214cc ohc engines, the cam driven by a vertical shaft from the front of the engine. They also featured lightweight valve gear adapted from a Hispano Suiza V8 Aero engine that Wolseley, under the management of Vickers, had built under license during WW1.

The valve gear eventually proved troublesome (cured today by the use of modern materials), and led to the unpopularity of the ohc models, which, together with the side-valve MO, were phased out in 1954 when the Austin company's "A, B & C" series engines became available. The Wolseley 4/50 was powered by a 1476cc four-cylinder version of the ohc engine.

Out of the ohc vehicles, the 4/50 is by far the rarest, there being only a handful of them on British roads, closely followed by the Morris Six, of which approximately 35 known examples exist worldwide. There are also very few surviving MO Travellers, of which only 500 were ever built. The most prolific survivor of all the models is the MO, also helped by the fact that it was built under license in India as the Hindustan 14, many of which still exist and are in regular use today. The Wolseley 6/80 has survived well too, several hundred examples being known to the club register.

The MCOC was formed in 1979 to further the efforts of collectors/devotees of Morris Oxfords - Cowleys - Isis of the mid-fifties (1954 -1959), Saloons -Estates and Half ton commercials. The Oxford SII also being built under license in India as the Landmaster.

Sadly, their secretary Derek Andrews, passed away in August of 2016. As Derek performed many roles within the club, and much documentation had been inadvertently lost or destroyed after his death, the club began to dwindle in membership. It is hoped that a merger with the 6/80 & MO Club will help to bring back some of their lapsed membership, and swell the ranks of both clubs.

Bob Francis.
Editor 6/80 & MO Club.