



MORRIS MATTERS

WESTERN CAPE MAGAZINE

Volume 39 N^o5 September – October 2025

MORRIS MINOR OWNERS CLUB WESTERN CAPE

Clubhouse: The Cape Multi-Motor Club, Jan Burger Sports Ground, De Grendel Road Parow North.

Web: www.morrisminor-wc.co.za

Facebook page: MMOC Western Cape

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

FRIKKIE MULLER



Since the last edition of our magazine, I am happy to report that Roger Buckley is doing much better and is relatively pain-free. Helen Goldenbogen had a back operation and is also doing better already. If I neglected to mention members who are unwell or had an operation, I apologize. We would be grateful for advance notice of any health problems; knowing the state of our members' health is always advantageous.

Mila Bouwer is currently visiting her children in Guernsey, and I am happy to say that our children from the Netherlands will be visiting us from the 4th September – 4th October. So many members have children who live overseas, and we all know how special it is to see them again.

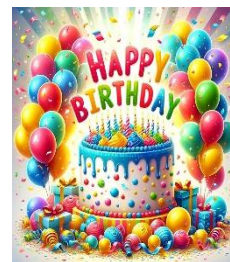
Our Christmas in July lunch on the 20th of July was a huge success and the turnout was very good. The ladies outdid themselves with the food and a big thank you to Sandy for organizing this event.

I want to remind you once again of the National Rally next year. Even though the Bloemfontein Club is organizing this event, the venue is located at Gariepdam, which is relatively close. I strongly encourage your participation in the rally, as attending a national rally is an exceptional experience with lasting impact. The deadline for the deposit is the end of August. If you have already paid and for some reason you cannot make it, you will be refunded.

As in the past, we will have an open bonnet day to inspect all the cars going, to make sure that nobody is left stranded along the route.

Until next time, we hope for a good turnout at our Soup & Bingo lunch on the 17th October and other future events.

BIRTHDAY LIST



SEPTEMBER		OCTOBER	
1	Barry Fletcher	3	Rupert Hill
2	Maria McIntosh	4	Colin Dempsey
2	Neil van der Walt	7	Bryan Moodaley
4	Elmarie Erasmus	22	John Birkett
5	Ron Clark	28	Martin Matthysen
14	Dick de Kroon	31	Mika Calitz
15	George Marx		
15	Sarah Morris		
18	Charl Cilliers		
16	Kathleen Dorkin		
28	Gerda Muller		
30	Willie Bouwer		

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

1. Sunday 21 September 2025 – Braai at the clubhouse
2. Saturday 4 October 2025 – Sandbaai Whales and Wheels car show
3. Sunday 19 October 2025 – Sunday lunch at Dixie's Restaurant in Glencairn
4. Sunday 2 November 2025 – Killarney Motor Show
5. Sunday 16 November 2025 – Braai at the Clubhouse
6. Sunday 7 December 2025 – End of year function at Westlake Golf Club

Further details of each event will be provided on the MMOC Social group on Whatsapp.

TECHNICAL

Tony Harrison



AXLE OIL LEAKAGE – AN ARTICLE FROM THE DORSET

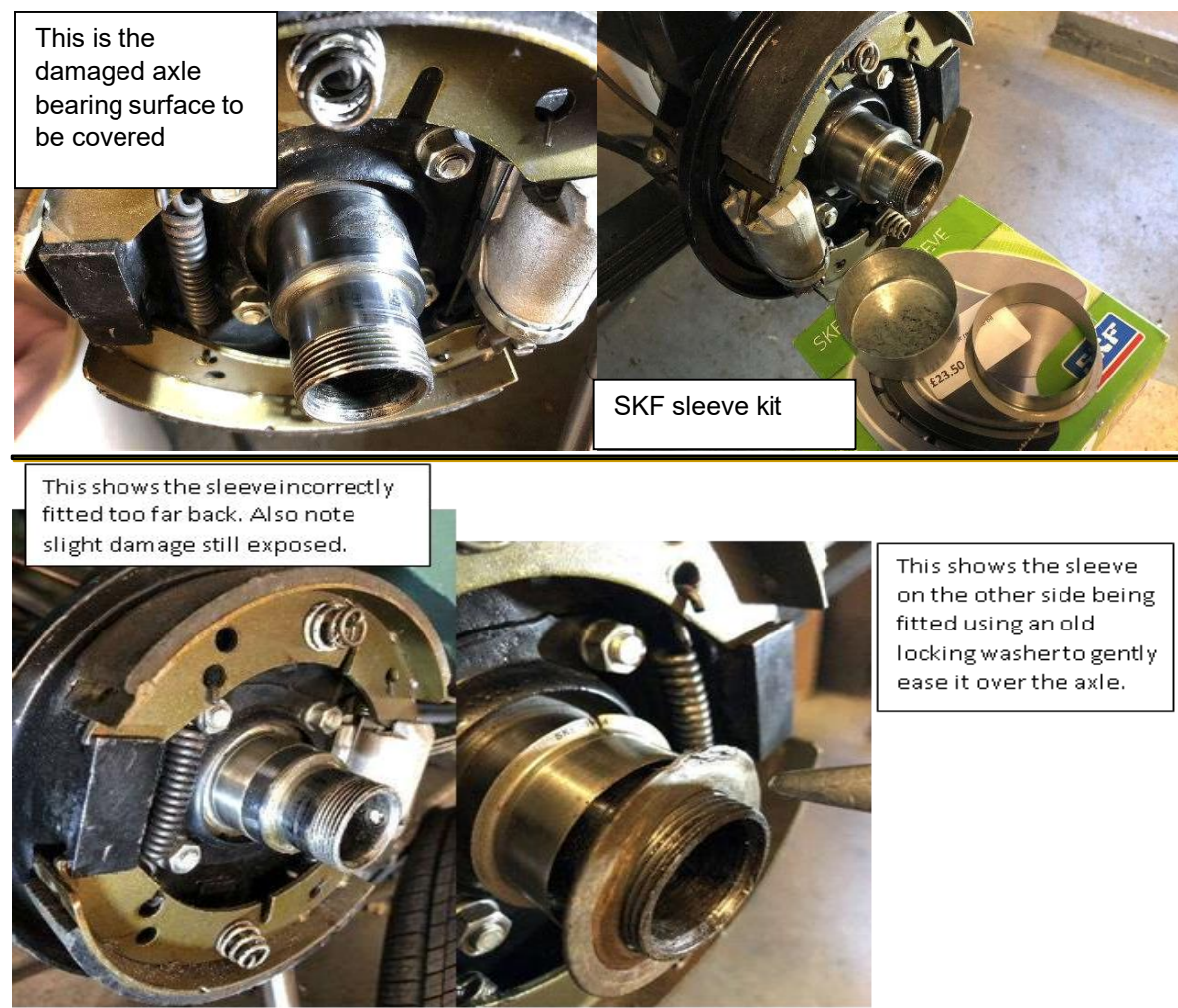
MIMOC

A recurring problem with Morris Minors is leaking oil seals in the rear hubs. This inevitably leads to oil getting on to the brake shoes and reinforces the widely held prejudice that Morris Minor brakes are just rubbish. There is another, probably more widespread problem which gives a similarly detrimental effect on the braking efficiency and that relates to corroded brake cylinders which leak brake fluid on to the linings. However, you can usually tell the difference since brake fluid is generally odourless and rear axle oil (EP90) does have a distinctive, rather unpleasant smell. Returning to the original leakage suspect, it is often the case that long life and high mileage will gradually cause wear to the running surface on the axle caused by the oil seal. Yes, I know it seems a bit unlikely that a rubber seal will wear down a hardened steel surface – but it does happen!

There is also the problem of the clumsy mechanic who has damaged the surface (see photos) which will add to the inefficiency of the oil seal. “What’s the answer, Brian” I hear you say. Well, SKF – a well known bearing and other parts supplier makes a repair sleeve which is very thin and will just fit over the axle bearing surfaces giving a new slightly larger diameter running surface. (Congratulations to whoever worked out which part number to specify for the Minor!)

My convertible project has been fitted with a very good condition axle casing that I picked up at our Dorset Branch show at Burley some years ago. It reputedly came from a South African car and had virtually no rust. However, the offside hub mounting had been attacked by ‘Mr Clumsy’ and the surface was quite badly damaged just where the oil seal runs. An ideal opportunity to try one of these repair sleeves was thus conceived. The sleeve comes as a plain ring with an application collar at one end. The collar can be removed when fitted as there is a groove around the circumference which is weakened in readiness. There is also a specially sized ‘cup’ which is intended to be used to slide the sleeve into position. However, due to the threaded projection which holds the large nut, this is of no use in this process – so it can go in the bin.

Now there is a problem at this point which I only realised after I had fitted the sleeve and discovered it was in the wrong place – thereby wasting the part as it cannot be removed without wrecking it. As the supplied ‘cup’ was of no use to install the sleeve, I put the hub back on as it is ideally sized to push the rim along the axle into position. When I had pushed the sleeve right back as far as it would go – it dawned that the new oil seal running surface was not in the correct position as it had been pushed right back beyond the reach of the seal which is quite close to the outer shoulder on the axle. The only answer was to fit a second sleeve(!) and trim it to fit the bearing shoulder. I made the expensive mistake so you don’t have to. I had decided to treat both sides – as I believe that it is better to keep things even – and so this gave the opportunity to try and get it right the second time. I ‘snipped’ the fitting collar prior to fitting so that it could be easily removed afterwards. You just have to be careful to just push the sleeve far enough along the axle so that it is flush with the shoulder – and no further. I have contacted ESM about this as I felt that a little advice on the website would have helped.





(Left) shows the sleeve fitted in the correct position with the 'snipped' collar ready to be removed.



(Below) shows the collar being torn off with the side cutters showing the finished article ready for reassembly.

REGALIA

<i>Flat Caps</i>	<i>R150.00</i>
<i>Baseball Caps</i>	<i>R 80.00</i>
<i>Union Jack/England Window Flags</i>	<i>R 30.00</i>
<i>Bumper Badges</i>	<i>R 180.00</i>
<i>Cap Badges</i>	<i>R 50.00</i>
<i>Dust Cap Remover</i>	<i>R 30.00</i>
<i>Cloth Rectangular Badge</i>	<i>R 35.00</i>
<i>Cloth Circular Badge</i>	<i>R 40.00</i>
<i>Key Ring</i>	<i>R 50.00</i>
<i>Bumper Stickers</i>	<i>R 20.00</i>

Magnet / Pin Badge	R 50.00
Rear Window Sticker	R 20.00
Morris Fridge Magnet	R 20.00
Licence Disc Holder	R 20.00
Club Pens	R 25.00
LRP Replacement	R 140.00

Any Regalia questions / needs call Mitford Roberts 083 268 0957
Email: mitfordr1951@gmail.com

CHRISTMAS IN JULY 20 JULY 2025



Gerda Muller

To organize a big event like this involves a lot of preparation, delegation and hard work on the day itself. The Committee members arrived at the clubhouse at 8.00 and started putting the tables and chairs out. While some of us started laying the tables, the others started decorating the clubhouse with Christmas paraphernalia.

I was on roast potato and chicken duty. Having two air fryers to my disposal, I was able to cook over 90 halved potatoes and approximately 30 chicken thighs to golden perfection. **(Get yourself an air fryer pronto!!!)** Su Prins prepared another 30 chicken thighs, and Sandy Gush and I cooked the gammon. Ron Clark, who is renowned for his yummy fillet steak, with a choice of pepper and mushroom sauce, made the fire and started cooking the steak. Courtney Buckley made roasted vegetables, and Sandy also took care of the cauliflower with cheese sauce. Patsy Buckley and Mila Bouwer made their delicious malva pudding and Emma Carpenter “prepared” the custard.... well, she was prepared to buy them and bring them to the clubhouse!

By 12.30 all the food was done, in the bain-maries, and ready to be dished up. No one had any complaints; in fact, the compliments were overwhelming and there was enough food for the members to take home.

Raffle Ron and Sharon sold raffle tickets and Marie Loots was the lucky winner of a hamper full of delicious goodies.

The best dressed couple was Delarey Calitz and Veronique Plaatjies, and Veronique also won the prize for the most elegantly dressed lady.



Patsy Buckley who came as an over-decorated Christmas tree, won the prize for the most original outfit.

Washing 38 people's dishes at an event like this is really not a problem, because everyone pitches in and in no time, everything was clean and packed away. Thank you to those of you who helped as well.

A huge thank you to our Treasurer, Theo Smit, who allowed the Committee to sponsor the meat, and also to the ladies who donated the dishes they made. By doing this, we were able to charge only R50 per paid up club member and R100 for non-members.

In the words of the great Ethel Merman:

"There's no business like Morris business

Like no business I know

Everything about it is appealing

Everything that traffic will allow

Nowhere could you get that happy feeling

When you are stealing that extra chicken thigh
There's no people like Morris people
They smile when they are low
Yesterday they told you, you would not go far
But you drive a Morris, and there you are
Next day on the Clubhouse they've hung a star
Let's go on with the show!"





REMEMBER THIS

On 12 January 2019 Laura Morrison arrived in Cape Town in her blue Morris named Charlie after travelling 26 000km from Scotland through Africa.



Gerda received an email message from a gentleman called Barry who was passing through Maun Botswana when he spotted Charlie there. Below is the message and photo that he shared with Gerda:

I was passing through Maun, Botswana on Friday and saw this Morris 1000. The owner is Laura who drove this car down through Africa a couple of years ago. She was met by members of the MMC along the way and still appreciates the Clubs support!

The car is still her daily driver and very much part of her life!

***She sends greetings!
Regards
Barry***





THE TREK STORY



MMOC member, Tony Griggs, has just spent four months working as a sound recordist for a TV company making a series of drama documentaries on snow, cold water, jungle and desert survival. In the desert programme, the story of four Britons travelling to the UK from Kenya in a Morris Minor Traveller was re-created. This tragic journey undertaken in 1955 is described in detail in Paul Stewart's well-researched book, 'Trek'. The series of programmes have been made for the US Discovery Channel and has already been shown on Channel 5 in the UK earlier this year.

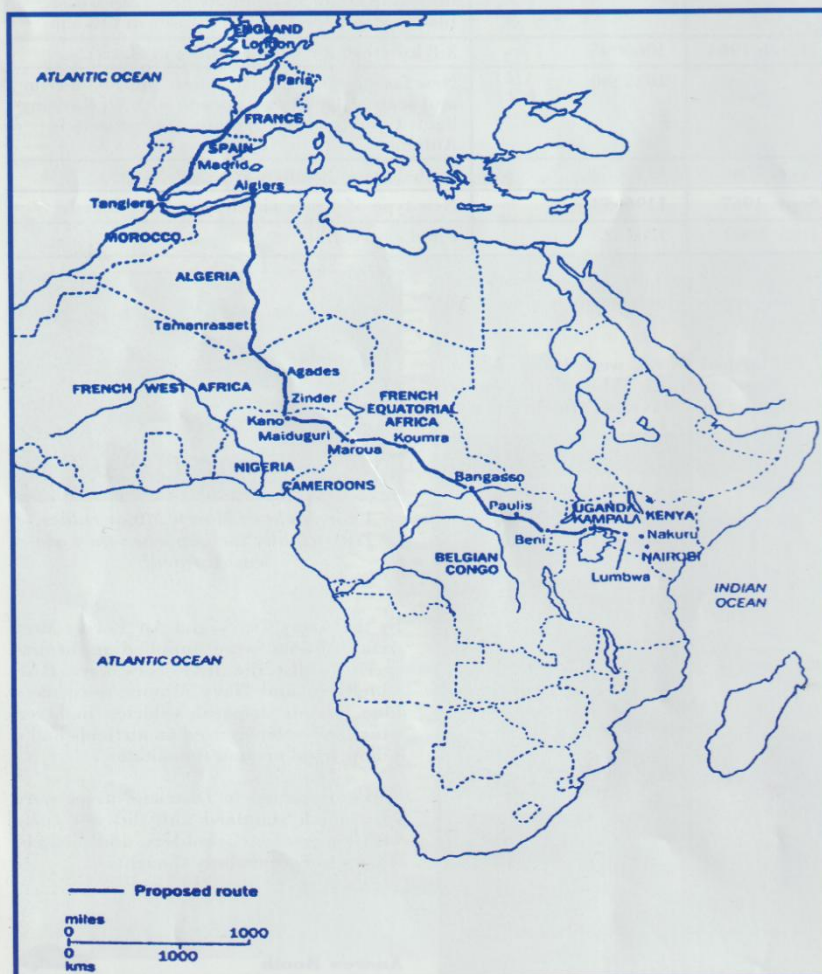
Coffee planter, Alan Cooper (47), the 'leader' recruited his fellow passengers after placing an ad in the local newspaper. Barbara Duthey (40) was a zoologist working in Kenya. Freda Taylor (50) was an English schoolteacher on sabbatical who had been on safari and wanted to see the Sahara on her way home. Peter Barnes (17) whose mother wanted his outlook on life broadened, thought this was a good way to see his grandparents in England. The trip was to cost them £175.

Considering Alan the leader had already completed the trip in 1933 in a two-seater

Morris 8, this Morris was not really well prepared for the trip. Painting the roof white to supposedly to keep the vehicle cool, was about the only concession he made. There were no tyre levers or foot pumps, sand mats or ladders, and very few spare parts. The French authorities insist upon two spare tyres and six inner tubes. He only had one of each and the capacity to carry ten gallons of water instead of the recommended 40. The ground clearance was also less than the required nine inches.

On 5 April 1955, KBY 779 left Nairobi very overloaded with 4 people and their

luggage. The journey started off reasonably well through Kenya, Uganda and Belgian Congo and French Equatorial Africa spending nights in government rest homes. It was in the Cameroon when things started to go wrong. Driving along a bumpy road, they hit a stone and careless Alan, instead of checking for damage, drove on only to have the oil light come on after a few miles. A hole had been ripped in the sump and all the oil had been lost. After getting this welded, with difficulty, in Nigeria, they then set off for the desert 700 miles away. The desert journey really began when they entered French West Africa on the 5 May.



Once into the desert proper, things really started to go badly wrong. Navigation across the desert was done by following bidons (44-gallon drums) placed along the roadside as markers every half a mile and following the tyre tracks of previous vehicles. Before long, the inevitable happened, the car got bogged down in the sand and with no spade, it was hard work digging it out. Getting stuck every few miles and consuming precious water, some 60 miles from In Guzzan with only 10 pints of water between them, Alan soon realised that the situation had begun to get very serious. And now with the car well and truly stuck, he decided he would have to walk and get help. While he was gone, Peter worked all that day digging the sand away with a hubcap and by placing a mattress under the car to give it some grip. With the two ladies pushing, they managed to get the car out at 11.00pm, absolutely shattered. They set off the following morning having discarded some of their luggage to make the car lighter. The car still got stuck quite regularly. However, when things seemed to be getting desperate, a speck on the horizon became bigger and bigger, and this eventually turned out to be two vehicles – an Algerian truck, whose driver, de Zorzi, had picked up a desperate Alan on the roadside, and a VW beetle driven by a Swiss couple who had been experiencing petrol vaporisation problems.

After reviving themselves with water and some argument with Alan, it was decided that the three vehicles would travel southwards back towards Agades and the Morris would be replenished with supplies before trying the journey again. To reduce weight in the Morris, Barbara travelled in the lorry and with Alan still



badly dehydrated, Peter was given guidance by experienced desert driver, de Zorzi, on how to follow the track. The convoy set off with the Morris in front, the Volkswagen in the middle and the Citroen lorry at the rear. With no wing mirrors in the Morris, it was left to Freda to keep looking behind at frequent intervals to check that the others were still behind. All was fine for the first few hours and spirits were relatively high after their near calamity. But the VW was experiencing petrol vaporisation problems again and when it spluttered to a halt, the Morris unbelievably just carried on. When they did eventually realise that their companions were not behind, Peter ran to the top of some nearby dunes, and realised that they must have somehow deviated from the proper route. They had followed some old bidons

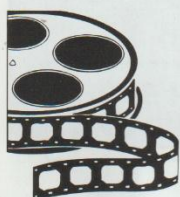
and not the track as instructed by de Zorzi. Before long, the sand became very soft and the car sank up to its axles and they were well and truly stuck once again. With very little water (all supplies were on the lorry), the situation soon became critical. The only water they had, in fact, was water drained from the radiator.

Making a tent from a tarpaulin to provide protection from the searing heat, they could only hope that the authorities would soon find them. At night, Peter would flash the vehicle headlights on and off and in the day he would go to the top of a nearby sand dune and search the horizon with binoculars, but all was to no avail.

Eventually, Alan, already in a poor state after his walk died a slow painful death. Freda was also getting very, very

weak and Peter began to panic. Somehow, he managed to dig the Morris out again and setting out with Freda, they managed to drive for about three miles, but without water in the radiator, the engine eventually stopped. Setting up camp once again, they could only wait. Freda soon gave up and died. Peter was sure now that he would go the same way, but luck was with him.

The following day, lying in a semi-conscious state, a French Foreign Legion search party found Peter. Some Nomads crossing the desert who had noticed the flashing headlights and reported the position to the authorities had alerted them. After three weeks recuperation in a desert hospital, Peter was re-united with Barbara and the pair flew to England. Both now still live in Kenya.



MAKING THE FILM

As the 'Trek' story took place in Africa, Morocco was originally considered a possible location. The Arizona/California desert was finally selected for the filming as the landscape, technical and personnel requirements for such a film were so readily available. The small town of Yuma on the USA/Mexico border was decided upon as the base with both scrub desert and sand dunes nearby. Finding a Morris Traveller in Yuma proved somewhat more difficult. The Production Manager had to travel to Los Angeles where there were several, but finding an owner who was willing to hire one to a film company to drive up and down rough desert tracks, deliberately getting it stuck in soft sand, was near impossible. But greenbacks talk and Morris enthusiast, Randolph Williams was persuaded to sell his '58 Traveller to the company. A road test on a ten lane LA freeway proved it to be a good runner and after a trip to the body shop before filming to spray it the correct colour with a white roof, and putting an aluminium strip down the windscreen to give it the split screen look, KBY 779 was ready for action.

Cameraman, Alex Hansen, Assistant James Moss and myself, flew to Phoenix and did our desert crossing to Yuma in an air conditioned Ford Explorer. On arrival at our motel, the Morris Traveller looked somewhat incongruous in the car park amidst all the large American

sedans. The first desert location was 20 miles out of Yuma and Director, Clive Maltby 'volunteered' me to drive him there in the Morris. The vehicle having been made for the US was a LHD version and on inspection had been modified with an MG engine and twin carburettors – not quite the car that Alan Cooper would have driven. It was here we got to meet the entire American crew and actors. The Production Co-ordinator said she had never even heard of a Morris Minor, let

alone seen one before, but the grips, electricians and the props guys all thought it rather quaint. 'How typically British for four people to drive such a stupid, little car across the desert. They all got what they goddamn deserved', was a remark I heard more than once.

With temperatures well over 100°F, starting work wasn't easy. The first two days were to be spent doing inside shots of the four actors travelling in the Morris across the desert. No time was wasted in preparing the vehicle. The digital Beta



Director, Clive Maltby, going over the script with the actors.



MAKING THE FILM (Continued)



camera was mounted on a platform fixed across the bonnet (hood!) well wrapped in polythene bags to keep the sand out. A small generator was fixed on the roof rack to run a couple of lights beside the camera, microphones were taped inside the car and connected to a recorder hidden amongst the luggage at the rear and all was ready to roll.

Getting the actors out of the air conditioned motor home into the sweltering heat was the next problem, but three of the four were ex-pat Brits living in Arizona and were looking forward to renewing their acquaintance with a Morris Minor. The American playing Peter was starring in his first 'movie' role and it was all quite a novelty for him.

Various scenes were to be played inside the vehicle especially to show what an irresponsible leader Alan could be. The actors were given their instructions by the Director for a particular scene, the camera and sound equipment buttons were pressed and off the Morris would go. They followed a track that had been laid out with a few 44-gallon drums to resemble the Sahara crossing. When they returned, the relevant take was reviewed to see if everything was technically and artistically okay. When two or three takes were necessary, because the windows were closed for sound reasons, in that heat, the actors were soon pining for their air conditioned Cadillacs. Before filming the sequences with Peter driving, the young American had to have a crash driving course as he hadn't ever driven a 'stick shift' before, but he picked it up quite quickly.



One Morris with four people, camera and mount on the front, generator on the roof, full to the brim with suitcases



Sound Man, Tony Griggs, recording Alan's words of despair.

and camping equipment, driving along bumpy tracks deliberately getting stuck and revving to get out – it could only be a matter of time before something went wrong. It did, but it took five days to happen. When one of the electricians came over to me (I was the honorary unit mechanic) with the steering wheel in his hand saying, "Gee, Tony, what sort of Limy workmanship is this?" Clive overheard this and went pale – he had just driven the car 20 miles along the freeway from the motel!! I removed the horn button and replaced the wheel on the spleen and tightened the nut in about two minutes. The other slight problem occurred when the accelerator cable snapped near the carburettor and three inches of outer sheathing had to be peeled away. These instances illustrated the simplicity of the Morris' mechanics only too well to its many American sceptics.

As well as the flat desert surrounding Yuma, there is also a spectacular area of sand dunes where the Star Wars film was made. This background was essential for some Sahara shots. The trouble was that it was also very popular with dune buggy enthusiasts and it was often very difficult to keep them out of the shot. Although the Morris couldn't compete with the buggies, it was quite surprising how well it

travelled over the soft sand with 10 lb. pressure in the tyres.

The reason for filming of the 'Trek' story was that it illustrated very graphically a lot of the things that could go wrong when travelling across a desert. The reconstruction lasts about 20 minutes in a 50-minute film, which also includes two other desert disasters. We also filmed with the USA border patrol rescuing Mexicans trying to cross the desert into America and some time was spent with the US Army showing desert survival techniques used during Operation Desert Storm in Iraq.

The desert sunsets that I saw were truly spectacular. One day I would like to travel to the Sahara to see one. I have a Morris Traveller and a Vauxhall Frontera in the garage at home and I know which vehicle I will be taking.

Tony Griggs



WORDS OF WISDOM

By Gerda Muller

We are all familiar with the weekly Sunday evening emails from our esteemed Secretary keeping us updated with what the Morris family is getting up to. Here is a list of the ***Words of Wisdom*** that she has been sharing with us:

1. Wrinkles will only go where the smiles have been - *Jimmy Buffet*
2. It's not how *old* you are, it's how you are *old*. The secret of a good *old age* is simply an honourable pact *with* solitude.
3. Most *people* don't grow up. Most *people age*. They find parking spaces, honour their credit cards, get married, have children, and call that maturity.
4. Interactions are so much faster- you dare to hang up the phone when you don't want to talk anymore, reverse course down the street to avoid the obnoxious, say "no" often, sometimes very loudly!
5. Enjoy every minute to the fullest and don't sweat the small stuff.
6. The one thing that unites all human beings, regardless of age, gender, religion, economic status, or ethnic background, is that deep down inside, we all believe that we are above-average drivers.
7. Keep learning: Learn more about the computer, crafts, gardening, whatever... Never let the brain get idle. 'An idle mind is the devil's workshop.' And the devil's name is Alzheimer's!
8. Thou shalt never weigh more than thou fridge.
9. There is a very fine line between "*hobby*" and "*mental illness*."
10. Age is something that doesn't matter, unless you're a cheese.

A BIG thank you to all who contributed articles and pictures.