

1971 MORRIS TRAVELLER WOODY WAGON

Owned by Garth and Sharon Scott, Hantsport, N.S.

One day in July of 2003, I received a call from a gentleman who was a salesman for Forbes Chev-Olds, saying that I should come down as they had just received a number of antique vehicles, including a 1958 Edsel, which he thought I would be interested in. So, I went down that day and came upon a very amazing, unorganized scene of 16 vehicles that this dealership had just purchased from the K.C. Irving estate. Without anyone else knowing about the cars, they had brought them to Dartmouth with the intention of selling at least 12 of them. It was a great variety from Model T's to Cadillacs and many others in between.

On looking over the vehicles, I came upon one (other than the Edsel) that particularly drew my attention: a 1971 Morris Minor Estate Sedan (Woody Wagon), which had been the personal vehicle of the late K.C. Irving, Founder of Irving Oil. 1971 also happened to be the final year of production for the Morris Minor, which started in 1948 and continued on in England until 1968, while the Morris wagon was extended through to 1971. Although it is not a really large vehicle, it was fairly sizeable considering where it had spent most of its years: the Island of Bermuda, where you were allowed only one vehicle per family, regardless of how many persons were in the family.



1971 Morris Minor Estate Traveller, formerly belonging to K.C. Irving, now owned by Garth and Sharon Scott.
Seen at the 2017 British Motoring Festival. (Photo Donna Sutton)

The vehicle was brought to Saint John, NB after K.C. passed away in the late 80's. It was briefly stored there, until daughter Sandra registered it in 1992 and drove it for a year. Then it was put away again until 2003. The vehicle was in good solid condition, the wood trim on the outside was all original, the original leather interior was very good, the exterior was a bit faded from the Bermuda sun, while the brakes and exhaust, gas lines, etc. needed some attention. Speaking to the Sales Manager at Forbes Chev-Olds, I expressed my interest in purchasing the Morris. He said – Yes, you and many others want that car. So I replied – How do I get it?

He answered – Well, we're offering a package deal on that car and two others: a '58 Edsel and a '64 Mercury Hardtop. Then he quoted a price, whereupon I told him I was very interested in all three vehicles. Nobody else had been willing so far to accept the package. I asked if I could have until the next day to confirm my decision. He said I could do that, as long as I came back before noon with our agreed price. So after discussing it with Sharon, I called him the next morning to confirm the agreement, and made arrangements to get a trailer and some drivers to fetch the vehicles. We sold the Mercury to a party in Quebec within less than a month. The Edsel needed some engine attention and brakes, so I wasn't sure whether to keep it or sell it. After about a year, I advertised it and it sold in the Halifax area.

I had the mechanical aspects of the Morris – new brake lines, new gas lines, new tires and other necessities – looked after, and made arrangements with a specialty painter to strip the car and to change its colour from white to a combination of Bermuda Blue and Ivory. A pinstripe was added to the outside of the vehicle and to the dash area.

The Traveller has been in collector vehicle shows in Halifax, Hantsport, Grand Pre and Moncton, where it has received a great deal of attention and has been a pleasure to show. I am proud to say that the car has been especially appreciated at the British Motoring Festival in Windsor, a quality show that attracts between 150 and 200 vehicles to the campus of King's Edgehill School.

Our automotive collection includes eight additional vehicles housed in a building on our property in Hantsport, along with a significant accumulation of memorabilia (including an original leather-bound 1750's English stage coach chest) that emphasizes transportation and music.



Garth and Sharon Scott's museum of automotive and musical memorabilia, Hantsport NS. (Photo Ron Macnab)