

THE MORCO STORY

REGD TRADE MARK



A tale of entrepreneurship starting in the time of the French Revolution



IN THE BEGINNING

Born in Barton-Upon-Humber, Thomas Bethal Morley crossed the estuary at the age of 24 to set up his own company in Kingston-Upon-Hull in 1792. It was known as T.B. Morley and Co.

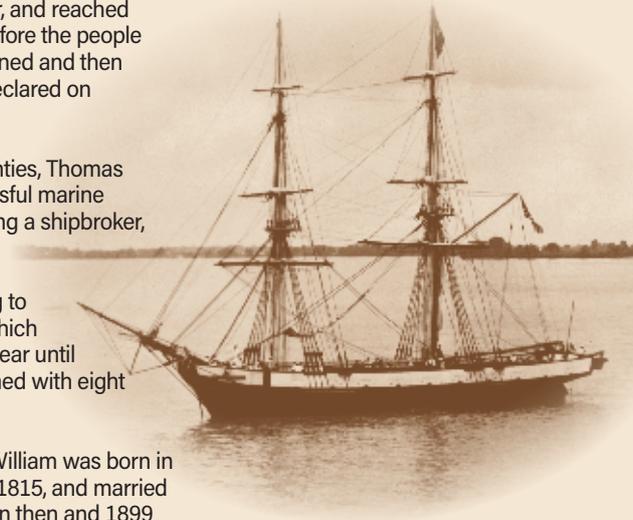
The country was going through perilous times. In France, the Revolution had started three years earlier, and reached new heights in the September Massacres before the people established the First Republic, having dethroned and then guillotined Louis XVI. A year later, war was declared on England.

Despite the economic and political uncertainties, Thomas nevertheless managed to establish a successful marine chandlers and insurance business, as well as becoming a shipbroker, trading from 36 High Street, Hull.

By 1812, his business had expanded from shipbroking to ship owning. It acquired the vessel 'Andrew Marvel' which sailed to the fishing grounds off Greenland from that year until 1834. She brought home record catches and was armed with eight cannon as protection against French privateers.

By 1842, Thomas had been joined by William Gillett. William was born in Chipping Norton in the year of the Battle of Waterloo, 1815, and married Sarah Bond of Hull. Many changes took place between then and 1899 when one of William's sons, Henry Meads Gillett formed the business into a private limited company and sold off the shipping side. He then opened a lead, glass and general plumber's merchants.

*Three generations working in Morco's business today:
(l-r) William Hildyard, Anthony and Charles Gillett*



The premises were moved several times, before occupying a new office building and warehouses in Beverley in 2007. Morco remain there to the present day.





Sydney Bond Gillett, the father of the present Chairman, joined his father Henry in 1912, shortly before the First World War in which he fought, serving as a captain in the East Riding Yeomanry during the Egyptian campaign and later at the Battle of the Somme.

The business continued to prosper after his return from war and an electrical wholesale department was added in 1920, followed by a branch office in Leeds in 1921. Branches in Oxford Street, London, Newcastle and Birmingham were added shortly afterwards. The London premises later became a casualty in the Blitz of 1941.

In 1936, an engineering factory was built in Doncaster for the manufacture of electric lighting fittings which was turned over to war work for the Air Ministry between 1940 and 1945. It was closed down in 1982, following difficult working practices in South Yorkshire at that time. After the Second World War, it was not possible to import lighting glass from Europe, so Morco set up a factory in Wakefield, West Yorkshire to manufacture its glassware in-house.

Richard Gillett and his brother Anthony, by now the fourth generation to work in the family firm, arrived in 1949 and 1951 respectively, following their military service in the Royal Air Force and the Army. Richard eventually looked after the Home Heating and Wholesale divisions until his retirement, whilst Anthony was put in charge of manufacturing.

In 1956, Anthony became involved with the caravan and marine industries. He started the LPG appliance division, initially for producing a humble gas light fitting (which was being produced at a rate of over 8,000 units weekly by 1972) and later, space and water heaters were made for touring caravans. He enrolled Morco into both the BH&HPA and NCC, becoming the chairman of the latter in 1984, a 'first' for a supplier member.

1970 saw the start of a close association with Paloma Industries of Japan, and the importation of instantaneous gas water heaters which were to become very popular in the emerging caravan holiday homes. By 1990, water heaters were being 'badge engineered' by Fagor in Northern Spain, and by the late nineties, the range had extended to combi-boilers to meet the trend for full central heating. ➤

MORCO
REGD TRADE MARK

MADE IN ENGLAND



MORCO

Gas and Electric Lighting and Heating Equipment for Caravans.
The natural choice for caravan and boat accessories.

The Paloma Mark V LP Gas Instant Water Heater

A multi-point appliance by Morco specially designed for residential and permanent holiday caravans. Also suitable for touring caravans, boats, portable buildings etc.

The Paloma Mark IV LP Gas Instant Water Heater

A single outlet appliance (can be adapted for dual-point delivery) by Morco. Specially designed for touring caravans. Also suitable for static holiday caravans, boats, portable buildings etc.

M70 flued LP Gas Convector Heater

Specially designed for static holiday and residential caravans.
The Heater with a Five Star performance

MORCO Quik-a-lite

This bright, new idea from Morco provides a simple, low-cost conversion for all Morco Coronet No.2 gas lighting fittings. (Also entirely suitable for a similar Meggit unit). It's the brightest idea for years...

Almost two million Coronets alone have been fitted to caravans in recent years. It's a convenient, low-cost idea that will appeal to every caravanner and, remember, there could be as many as six applications in most holiday caravans.

Just a flick and it's lit!





TODAY'S TEAM

After graduation and working abroad for a year or so, Charles Gillett became the fifth generation to join the family firm in 1987, its name having changed to Morco Products Limited in 1976.

In 1996, Anthony Gillett relinquished his role as Managing Director and handed this responsibility to his son Charles, having changed his own title to Non-Executive Chairman, a position he holds to the present day.

John Rowley, Commercial Director, joined the business in 2006. He is well known and highly regarded throughout the caravan industry and has helped guide the business through a period of considerable expansion. John has also written many technical articles for the BH&HPA Journal with the aim to support park business in managing

the installations for customers. 2014 saw the appointment of Anthony's grandson and Charles's nephew, William Hildyard who was recently promoted to Sales and Marketing Director.

With the beginning of combi-boiler sales came the development of the 'central heating kit' which includes not only the boiler, but the radiators and every single pipe, valve and fitting, including insulation and even the antifreeze solution which is pumped into the system.

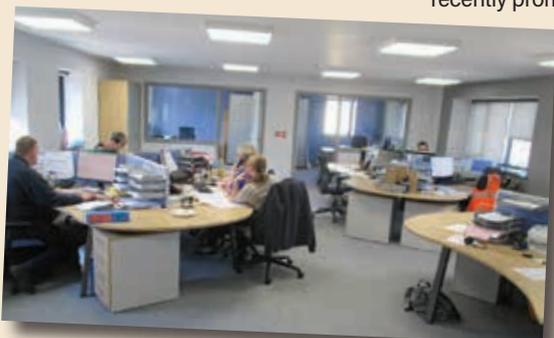
Morco specialise in the supply of central heating kits for caravan holiday homes. They begin with the manufacturer's layout, calculating the size and output of radiators required

for each room to comply with the relevant standards and create a central heating kit unique to that holiday home. The kit contains a Morco combination boiler, flue, radiators, and towel rails, pre-made to measure copper piping, radiator valves, pipe and lagging, antifreeze and all necessary fittings needed to complete the installation. The holiday home manufacturers then order the kit for lineside delivery on a just-in-time basis. Typically, a Morco Central Heating package takes less than 30 minutes to be installed on the production line.

Over the years, an important change has taken place in that all the main components in the kit are sourced in the UK, making the supply chain shorter and more reliable; this is essential to maintain the reputation for reliability of supply which Morco enjoys.

Morco combi-boilers are now made in Hull by Ideal Boilers, one of the leading brands in the UK producing over 350,000 units per year. Radiators come from Myson in the north east, valves from South Yorkshire and Ireland, and plastic plumbing pipe and fittings from Middlesex.

The supply of instantaneous gas water heaters to holiday home manufacturers has declined over the years in line with the increase of those now fitted with full central heating. However, with the increase in central heating comes an increase in gas consumption and Morco's focus has been energy saving. Solutions consist mainly





of smart controls for the central heating and water regulating devices to control the flow of hot water. These devices are mainly designed to limit or control the use of the boiler and as such are essential for holiday hire fleet operators, where the end user has little or no interest in economy. Some fleet operators have reported savings of up to 30%.

In addition to supplying holiday home manufacturers, the immediate availability and supply of replacement appliances and spare parts to parks is a vital part of Morco's business. This is a crucial activity, especially in March when many parks open for the season. Spares for water heaters and combi-boilers going back 20 years are stocked and it is rare for the part required not to be available either via national merchants, specialist industry distributors or from Morco's own e-commerce website.

Morco aim to provide a first-class aftersales service and work very hard to ensure the appliances and systems perform well on parks. They do this by investing heavily in stock so that spare parts are readily available for immediate despatch.

Product training is provided free-of-charge, and around 300 engineers come for training at Morco's purpose-built training facility in Beverley each year. This gives Morco unique access to hundreds of LPG Gas Safe engineers spread around the country, ready to resolve problems both within the two-year warranty period, and beyond. Morco's training has also been provided at BH&HPA Conference and branch meetings.

The key to an efficient warranty service is co-operation, and to this end Morco have forged relationships with many of the distributors and key stakeholders across the parks industry. Where possible, Morco will work with, and authorise, the park's own engineers to carry out warranty work on their behalf. In addition, the sale of 'hospital' kits provides parks with a ready stock of spare parts on hand, either for their own use, or warranty use (which can be replaced free of charge after the event).

Morco recognise the importance of forming partnerships with parks to satisfy warranty problems, rather than imposing hard and fast rules. They do insist on proper commissioning of new installations, which is the law, but never try to impose their own service regimes to maintain warranty. Morco firmly believe that the park owner has the right to decide how their own safety checks and maintenance are conducted. Extended warranties on Morco combi-boilers are available.

It is hoped that what was started by an eighteenth-century entrepreneur will continue to serve customers across the parks industry for another 226 years! ■



Editor's note: The website www.morcoproducts.co.uk provides instruction manuals, factsheets, clear exploded diagrams and general advice. There is also a technical helpline with a team of three staff (two of whom are Gas Safe registered) who have over 60 years' combined experience of LPG appliances in caravan holiday homes. Morco report they are always pleased to meet and speak with parks and help them resolve problems, be it over the phone, at the Lawns, BH&HPA Conferences or the various dealer trade shows that they support.

BH&HPA Members may apply for a login to see Morco's discounted prices and technical information by emailing their company details to info@morcoproducts.co.uk. The Morco technical helpline is available on 01482 386585.