

The Morganeer

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Hope Rising...



All Dressed Up... Nowhere to Go?



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A Word About Autumn MOG

The Gideon Putnam Resort, our venue for Autumn MOG this October is now closed and is not taking reservations until June 12. Therefore, we have decided that we can realistically postpone starting the deliberations on whether or not we should proceed with the event until the middle of June.

By then, we should all have gotten out at least on local roads in our Morgans, and we will have a better idea of further travel and social gathering restrictions called for for the summer and fall.

We will consider all the pluses and minuses, talk with the resort once they are open again, and make a decision. Stay tuned for further developments.

Your Autumn MOG Team

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

In these uncertain times, everyone will tell you it's important to keep your spirits up. To keep believing! I feel so uncertain at this point—I mean, will my flat rad throw a temper tantrum when we start it for the first time? What IS that slightly damp spot under the 4/4? Did I remember to put the stabilizer in the gas last fall? Will I EVER get this layer of dust off the car? WHEN WILL IT STOP RAINING SO I CAN GO FOR A RIDE?!!! All this uncertainly is really eating me up.

But experts say be positive! I am fairly positive that I remembered the stabilizer, and I'm not at all positive about that damp spot. And I'm positive that the dust is winning the battle...for now.

But let us lift our spirits. Spring is coming, Brian and I have both gotten our cars out on the road and started at least an initial cleaning. It can't rain forever. Hopefully. I think. Nothing has made any unholy noises, and no noticeable smoke has arisen.

My needs are simple, All I want is the car to sparkle in the sun and run properly. My joys are simple: a sunny day, an open road, a shiny car and no traffic in sight.

And despite all the craziness of our current situation, some things haven't changed. People still stop in the street and check out the car in the yard while I polish away. Drivers on the road still wave at stoplights and I get the thumbs up from passing motorcycles. And I still pray for no clunky noises or smoke.



Adding to my simple pleasures, a new group has been introduced to Morgans. As my older son Patrick's taekwondo training has been relegated to the garage, a whole new neighborhood has gotten to see the Morgans! To train with Brian in the garage, the flat rad gets rolled out to the driveway, where a whole new group of people get to walk by and point. Brian even took the car to the local gas station and met someone who knew that, in fact, it was NOT an MG, or a kit car. Miracles never cease.

To put it simply, our cars still help bring us these simple pleasures, so needed right now. They ground us, give us something to fulfill us, and bring a simple fundamental pleasure. More importantly, we can still share it, with the younger generation and with our neighbors, and even bring a bit of joy to those who might just see us passing. Who would not smile at a Morgan?

Stay safe,
M

PS - I know that these uncertain times have left you with a bunch of questions. We'll give you updates once we have more solid info ourselves.

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FROM THE EDITOR

"All dressed up with nowhere to go!" I guess maybe that describes both us and our beloved Morgans these days (unless you are one of those who lounges around in your PJs all day). It certainly applies to Spider's freshly restored Morgan gracing our cover.

But what's one to do, with this 'shelter in place', 'social distancing' and all the craziness going on these days. But, in the immortal words of George Harrison "all things must pass", and I'm sure at some point, hopefully sooner (like Summer!) rather than later (who wants to even consider!) we will be once more driving about in our cute little cars, soaking in the admiring glances of passersby, and socializing without having to think about social distancing.

In the meantime, this might be the first ever issue of *The Morganeer* which does NOT include coverage of at least one club (social) event. So I had to get desperate, scrounge around for ANYTHING the least bit Morgan related, make more stuff up than usual, and even delve into the, as yet unexplored, genre of automobile Science Fiction. There is a good bit of 'tech' stuff in the issue also, so I guess it might not be too much of a stretch to call it the 'Tech Issue'.

Soon to be your new editor, **Jonathan Kinghorn**, starts things off with another of his very well written and researched articles on the evolution, or in this case minor changes, in the 'classic' Morgan body style. Speaking of which, in a follow-on article reprinted from *Car and Driver* on the NEW Morgan Plus 4, we find, not surprisingly, that the New Plus 4 looks remarkably like the OLD Plus 4, except with totally redesigned chassis and suspension and BMW engines under the bodywork. AND they will be available for sale in the US in 2021, according to Linda at Morgan Motors of New England.

Next we have an enchanting tale/photo essay sent in by **Bob Cohn** telling of his grand daughter Bea's (with a little help from Dad) bright red Morgan creation for her scout group's Pine-wood Derby. With its clever English coins 'powerplant' the car managed a respectable second place finish. But it



was the styling that counted - sloping front grill, bright red color, and even the traditional bonnet belt. A future Morgan owner no doubt.

Editor-At-Large **Steve Schefbauer** contributed a heart felt tribute to his racing hero—Sir Stirling Moss—who passed away recently. Steve had even had an opportunity to meet his hero in person at a Lime Rock event held in his honor, which may have changed his life forever, since up to that point he seemed to be exhibiting some latent 'hot rodder' tendencies left over from his misguided youth. In our steadfast policy of only printing the truth in *The Morganeer*, and after extensive research, Steve had to come to the unbelievable conclusion that Sir Stirling may have NEVER driven a Morgan. SO sad!

Turning to the 'Tech' portion of the issue we start with another of my cautionary tales about first start up and drive of the season and the mysteries of car batteries and their charging vagaries. Once again I received another lesson of who is the boss in my long and rocky relationship with my Drophead Coupe. Maybe if my Morgan was a girl SHE would like me better. Probably not.

Courtesy of Moss Motors we have an interesting article on the history and endearing mysteries of the infamous 'Moss Box' transmission in our vintage Plus 4s and early Plus 8s. All of us who have Moss Box Morgans are familiar with its hard shifting, tons of torque, leaky front leather seal and other endearing qualities. But you must admit, they are pretty indestructible—provided, of course, that they are given proper lubrication.

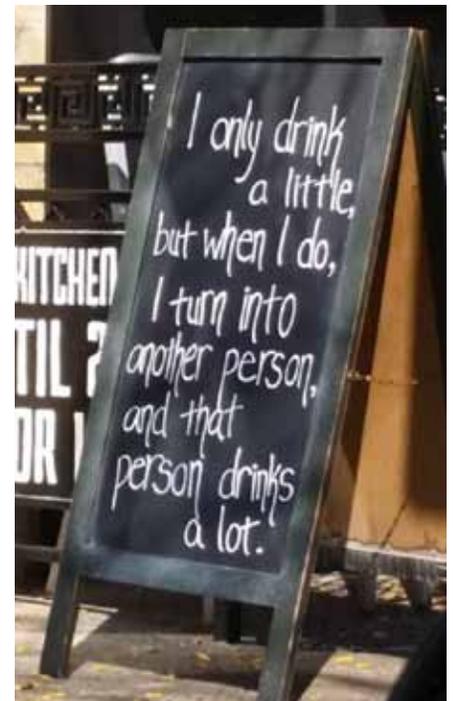
Which brings us to Spider's Tech Talk article, in which he, in typical Spider fashion, not only gives us a 'peak' into the inner workings, gears, bearings, pins and other mysterious and unexplainable components of the Moss Box, but also gives us a sermon on the lubrication options for the box and pluses and minuses of each option. Personally, I go with good old 80/90 weight (dinosaur) gear oil. I figure if it was good enough for old HFS Morgan, it's good enough for me and my Drophead (right Drophead?)

Finally, being an eternal optimist, I am counting on things to settle out enough by fall for us to still gather for our traditional BIG club event, Autumn MOG, the first weekend in October. We'll see how things play out between now and then (considering the event is in NY), but I for one think we can plan on it.

After all, traffic is light these days, which is nice: and, as always,

the road still goes on forever.
Frank

PS - Steve Schefbauer sent me this photo of a sign posted outside his favorite (currently closed) pub. I don't know about you - but I can relate. Cheers!



TO THE EDITOR

Frank,

I received the March/April Morganeer. I was impressed by your treatment of my editorial.

Very much appreciated. The recognition helps in blunting some of the trauma. Thanks.

Brian Tomalin
Editor, *The Morgan Ear*

I can only agree with everything I have read about Bill Fink. He has helped many owners solve unique problems. The transmission on my '81 Plus 8 needed a complete rebuild but that particular design had flaws so Bill provided a lightly-used 2002 tranny taken from one of his Mogvettes. With minor modification Larry Eckler installed it and provided me with a great combination of new and old. Many thanks to the experts.

Bob Cohn

Dear Frank,

Thanks for another great issue of (my beloved) *The Morganeer*!

I have this morning engaged a \$\$\$ private contract with the GRU (currently headquartered in DC) to find out who smuggled a cell-phone camera into Shiftright's Spanner & Mallet Works, Ltd. top-secret basement workshop, and intend to extract full payment in Whisky for that photo-scoop. As a follow-on to "Stephanie and the chair", I can report that Stephanie won the altercation. One quick chrono-correction, the car was hit in July 2014...so it's been almost 6 years in restoration, 3 more than reported in the *Ed. Note*.

Not to put too fine a point on the drift, but Bill Alexander's (beautiful) Plus 8 is neither the ONLY Yank to make it into the Morgan Sports Car Club (UK)'s calendar, nor is it the first. As the attached photo will show, our Great White Hope was the "Cover Girl" for MSCC's 2015 calendar. I submitted several photos and their committee chose this one: I had named it "The Hint", but they renamed it "Reflections".

Keep up the great tradition: it is mightier!

Run cool, Spider

Dear Spidey,

Yes, I do remember that you were a Morgan Club UK calendar 'Cover Girl', as previously reported in *The Morganeer* (see *The Morganeer* Jan/Feb 2015 issue page 21). Okay - worth a repeat I suppose.

ed



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How The Morgan's Body Changed As It Aged

Jonathan Kinghorn

I know, we've heard it all before—'Morgan Motors is stuck in a time warp ... it's been making the same car since 1936 ... put a brand-new Morgan next to one from the 30s and you won't see any differences'. But it's simply not true. Until their demise this year, traditional Morgans were built essentially the same way they always were, but thanks to continual evolution, they were different machines at the end of production. The engines and components fitted changed all the time for one reason or another. Similarly, there were many subtle changes to the details; wheel types came and went, fender fashions evolved, bench seat backs gave way to individual bucket seats, headrests were added, and so on. But the essential shape of the car always stayed the same—or did it? Nope, that changed too.

True—if you park a 1936 Morgan next to one fresh out of today's dispatch bay you'll immediately see the unmistakable family resemblance, but you'd also notice the many differences. Chinese Whispers (AKA Telephone) is the game where a phrase is modified slightly as each person mishears it before passing it on and ends up as something entirely different that sounds similar. Changes to the Morgan may not be noticeable from one year to the next, but over time—and these cars have been in production for decades—they can be similarly transformational. At a glacial pace, the Morgan's design has morphed.

Other than the Plus 4 Plus fiberglass coupe and the more recent Aero 8 experiments, Morgan Motors developed just three body styles for its regular production cars, the roadster, the four-seater, and the drophead coupe (in two and four seat variants). While each of these evolved similarly, let's focus on one—the roadster—to see what happened to it over time.

The initial appearance of the Morgan four-wheeler was created by H.F.S. Morgan (HFS) in 1935 based upon the F type three-wheeler that it was developed from. It wasn't formed in a wind tunnel or on a computer but by feel and instinct; HFS had an artist's eye and fussed over the prototype, marking it with chalk where he wanted changes and having it reworked until it looked right.

Thanks to World War Two and the slow market recovery afterwards, the phase one 4-4 roadsters didn't have much opportunity to evolve in the few years they were made before supplies of their engines dried up in 1950. The more powerful Standard Vanguard motor selected for the Plus 4 that replaced it was bigger, and that's what triggered the first major changes. To accommodate the larger engine the Morgan chassis was lengthened by four inches. At the same time, it was strengthened here and there and widened because the original tub was deemed too snug. The same body design was used, but with its dimensions modified. So, while early Plus 4s looked much like pre-war 4-4s, their measurements and proportions had changed.



Figure 1. The chrome grille of a 1939 4-4 Roadster. (DeFacto)



Figure 2. A 1954 "interim cowl" Plus 4 with "bean can" headlamp nacelles. (Hyman Ltd.)

A New Face

The first dramatic change was to the car's front end. The upright chrome plated radiator looked magnificent, but it was an expensive and increasingly passé component. When Lucas finally ended their production of the archaic separate headlamps used on these cars (and no others for years), HFS was prompted to redesign the front to give it a more modern, more rigid—and cheaper form. He widened the hood a little to accommodate twin SU carburetors and gave the car a painted cowl with a flat grille topped with a crescent shaped panel for the Morgan logo. Valances and wings curved all the way down to the bottom of the grille creating a more streamlined and up-to-date visage. Nacelles of almost tubular form were faired low down into the valances to house the rapidly-becoming-ubiquitous 7" Lucas headlamps.

The new look Morgan was unveiled at the London Motor Show in October 1953. The cars appeared much more contemporary, but truth to tell, this wasn't HFS' best piece of work. The proportions were off and the result clumsy. Peter Morgan didn't like it, and later referred to the clunky headlamp nacelles derisively as "bean cans." Fortunately, the change failed to take into account new UK regulations that came into effect on January 1, 1954, requiring headlamps to be set higher. Peter Morgan was able to swoop in to the rescue, substituting a more rounded cowl with a tall curved waterfall grille. He also raised the headlamp nacelles to regulation height and faired them into the valances as elegantly as those on a Jaguar XK 120. A further tweak in September 1957 lowered the height of the grill a tad. It thus took several iterations to create the harmonious Morgan face that has since become so familiar.

Only 19 of the retrospectively named "interim cowl" cars were reportedly built. Some were exported to the U.S., where the regulations that doomed the "bean can" nacelles didn't apply. Others proved hard to sell because a better-looking alternative had become available, and dealers sent several back to the works where they were quietly given Peter Morgan's better-proportioned version.



Figure 3. A 1956 "highline" Plus 4 with Peter Morgan's high waterfall grille. (Daderot)



Figure 4. A 1958 "highline" Plus 4 with lowered waterfall grille. (Thesupermat)



Figure 5. A 1981 Plus 4 with the "lowline" body and lowered grille. (Brian Snelson)



Figure 6. The “bustle back” of a 1939 4-4 Roadster. (DeFacto)

The Other End

The sloping back of the car with exposed spare wheel/tire has seen an equally dramatic but less fraught evolution. Originally, the Morgan roadster had an upright fuel tank with two vertically mounted spare wheels behind it. The rear panel curved down sinuously from the top of the fuel tank creating a “bustle back” profile. Two spare wheels were carried because deep treaded tires known as “knobbles” were widely used in off-road competition (field trials) back in the day, to improve the back wheels’ traction. The spare wheel’s support was mounted on the trunnions for the Morgan’s rear suspension; by the time these were dispensed with in 1955 knobbles had been banned and tire technology had improved. Morgan Motors was able to save weight and cost by dispensing with the second spare wheel. The rear panel lost its ‘bustle’ and arced smoothly down in a graceful curve, and the sole spare was set at a jaunty angle. The result was better, but not brilliant.

Further tweaks to the design of the rear suspension in 1958 enabled the fuel tank to be lowered, the back panel to be flattened and set—along with the spare wheel—at the same angle as the rear wheel arch. This much sleeker look had been pioneered way back in 1938 on the 4-4 set up for Miss Prudence Fawcett to race at Le Mans. It has been an integral aspect of the iconic Morgan roadster look ever since it became standard on production cars in ‘58.

Other changes to the body of the Plus 4 have been much more subtle. While they were remodeling the back of the car in 1958, for example, Morgan Motors took the opportunity to widen the tub another two inches to give it a sliver of extra elbow room. The overall width of the car was not increased; instead the tub was extended out over the running board a tad, leaving room for only one tread strip.

The most dramatic change since 1958 has been the lowering of the scuttle and hood pioneered when TOK 258 was rebuilt to race at Le Mans in 1962. This sleeker ‘lowline’ look was continued on the Super Sports model that followed Chris Lawrence’s stunning success in the 24-hour race and was then adopted for the rest of the range in 1966. Since then the scuttle has been modified to accept longer doors and the wings have been widened to suit today’s wider tires, but that is about it.

If It Ain’t Broke, Don’t Fix It

“Traditional” Morgans have been admired for decades and have settled into an instantly recognizable form that seems unlikely to evolve much further. Back in the mid-60s, the short-lived Plus 4 Plus coupe both disappointed the wider market because its modern looks hid an archaic vehicle underneath, and appalled diehard Morgan fans because its appearance was so un-traditional. Conversely, the new Plus 4 launched in 2020 reproduces the dimensions and appearance of its traditional predecessor exactly, while beneath its skin it is an entirely new and thoroughly modern vehicle. Let’s hope that it fares much better in the market!



Figure 7. The revised back of a 1957 Plus 4. (dave_7)



Figure 8. A 1962 Plus 4 with the flat back panel introduced in 1958 and used ever since. (RL GNZLZ)

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Morgan Plus Four Looks the Same as Ever, Is New Underneath

With a new aluminum chassis and a modern BMW turbo-four underhood, Morgan's sports car is fresher than it might appear.

By Mike Duff Mar 3, 2020

- The Plus Four is Morgan's second new sports car built on a new aluminum architecture.
- It has a BMW-sourced 2.0-liter turbo-charged engine with 255 horsepower and offers either a manual or an automatic transmission.
- Morgan plans to start selling it in the U.K. this year, and says that plans for U.S. are "well advanced."
- Many new models have to replace a much-loved predecessor, but the new Morgan Plus Four faces a unique challenge: superseding a forerunner that was sold in barely altered form for no fewer than 69 years. Which is why we are not surprised that, despite sitting on an all-new platform and getting a modern BMW turbo engine, the new Plus Four looks so similar to the Plus Four it replaces.



Visually, the two cars are close enough to be practically indistinguishable to any but the most dedicated Mor-

gan-spotter. Compare the new model to the car we drove in California last year to see what we mean. Both generations use hand-formed aluminum bodywork over a non-structural forming frame made of ash timber. Like every other Morgan, the Plus Four will be assembled by hand at the company's Malvern factory in England. Yet beneath the surface, the new model is almost entirely new, sitting on the new aluminum platform (dubbed CX) that the company launched with the larger Plus Six last year.

That means the sort of technical upgrades that most automakers spread out over decades have been done all at once. The Plus Four's steel chassis has been replaced with a new bonded aluminum one, which is much stronger and sturdier yet weighs just 213 pounds. The Plus Four gains control arms at each corner, replacing



the old one's leaf-spring suspended live rear axle and sliding pillar front arrangement—a suspension system that was anachronistic even when the car was launched in 1950.

The new car has followed the Plus Six's lead into BMW power, in this case the 2.0-liter turbocharged four-cylinder engine producing 255 horsepower. This means a new option for buyers of a four-cylinder Morgan: an automatic gearbox, the same ZF eight-speed unit used in many BMW applications. But unlike the auto-only Plus Six, Morgan will still be offering the Plus Four with the six-speed manual transmission that is likely to suit the character of the car far better.

Selecting the manual will mean making sacrifices. It has less torque than the automatic version—258 lb-ft compared to 295 lb-ft—and is both fractionally heavier and slightly slower. According to Morgan's numbers, the stick-shift model is 9 pounds heavier than the automatic. The company claims a 4.8-second zero-to-62-mph time with the automatic gearbox and a 5.2-second time with the manual, with both cars having the same 149 mph top speed. Smaller-engined Morgans have always been impressively frugal, and economy remains a strength of the new car, with both versions scoring the equivalent of 33 mpg on the European WLTP testing protocol.



2020 Morgan Plus 4: Unchanged since 1950



The Morgan Plus Six Is Familiar but Brand-New



The cabin continues with Morgan's tradition of timber and leather, although upgrades include a small digital display screen behind the steering wheel, LED interior lighting and even the option of heated seats (buyers of earlier Morgans would just put on another layer of tweed). Air vents have also arrived, an omission in the Plus 4 that could be forgiven on the basis that the car was launched before they were first invented. There is even the option of a (mostly hidden) audio system with Bluetooth connectivity.

The Plus Four is designed for life with the roof down whenever possible. The top isn't power operated, and it requires both a powerful heave to get it in place and the use of numerous pop fasteners to hold in

in place. Side windows also need to be clipped in place on top of the cut-down door.

We are also delighted to see that the brand's trademark of triple windshield wipers with tiny blades are still present. Cabin space is more generous than the old car, and access past the A-pillar is claimed to be greatly improved. Yet modernity only goes so far: the bulbous steering wheel looks like it should contain an airbag unit, but doesn't, and although the car has ABS, it doesn't have traction or stability control.

Plus Four buyers will be able to continue to select their cars with traditional-looking wire wheels, although the company says these have been substantially strengthened to be able to deal with the much greater forces the chassis can generate. More conventional alloy wheels will also be available.



Morgan's launch for the Plus Four was disrupted by the cancellation of the Geneva auto show, at which the car was meant to make its debut. Undeterred by the fact the first cars had already been delivered to Switzerland, Morgan employees drove them back to the UK over the weekend to allow an online presentation to be made at the company's Pickersleigh Road fac-

tory in Malvern. The car goes on sale in the U.K. immediately with a price tag of around \$67,000 at current exchange rates. Although U.S. sales are further off, company insiders say that plans to bring both the Plus Four and Plus Six State-side under new replica-car legislation are well advanced. We will be able to tell you more soon.

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2020 Morgan Made In USA

Bob Cohn

In December of 2019 Beatrice Corey (the Cohn's granddaughter) learned that the boy scout troop was entering the annual Pine-wood (what, no ash?) Derby. When the scout leader suggested that the scouts explore racecar designs, Bea decided to duplicate Grandpa's Morgan.



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My 'Shelter In Place' Project

Frank Wnek

Well, actually I started it (the garage cleanup/refurbish) last fall, but took a break after the winter cold set in. When the COVID-19 stay at home directive started, I decided it was time to finish the project.

The first and hardest part was cleaning out all the clutter - stuff I'd been saving from my two Morgan restorations for I don't know what reason. In several trips to the dump, I finally parted with an old rusty mangled bumper, a rear deck, rear fender arches, various rusty nuts and bolts, etc. (Hey, anyone want a worked last time used, rare and precious genuine Lucas starter?) Then insulating, putting up plastic vapor barrier followed by tongue and groove pine boards up and framing the windows.

Rummaging through several big plastic bins, I unearthed a virtual plethora of awards, plaques and posters going back MANY Autumn MOGs past plus a few from my local sports car club events.

The only thing missing was the coveted Best In Show award; for which my Drophead Coupe, even just following its restoration, was not really a contender. But that's okay. I don't have room for it anyway. HA!





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(in better days)







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- 1967 Morgan PLUS 4**, Four passenger SuperSport perfect clone, ground up restoration
- 1963 Morgan 4/4** New Cream and Red paint. Red leather, 1600cc Dual Webers, headers // 85% DONE
- 1963 Morgan PLUS 4 SUPERSPORT** 1 of 101 Factory SuperSports, Rolls Royce Green Velvet (dark British Racing Green), Black leather, Black mohair weather equipment, Black wire wheels // EVERY NUT AND BOLT CORRECT RESTORATION TO HIGHEST STANDARDS.

- 1962 Morgan PLUS 4** Four Seater Roadster, White with black leather
- 1958 Morgan PLUS 4** DropHead Coupe, Regency Red/Black // 100TH ANNIVERSARY BEST IN SHOW WINNER
- 1953 Morgan PLUS 4**, Ming Blue/Black Monterey Historics History, stunning!!

OTHER MARQUES:

- 1960 Austin Healey BUGEYE SPRITE** Healey Iris Blue/Navy 1275cc Weber 40, header + more // ALL UPGRADES POSSIBLE
- 1927 Bugatti TYPE 52** Alloy, 1 of 499 ever built Set up for battery propulsion forward or backward. Tan Leather interior, knock offs, cable brakes. // CHILDREN'S CAR



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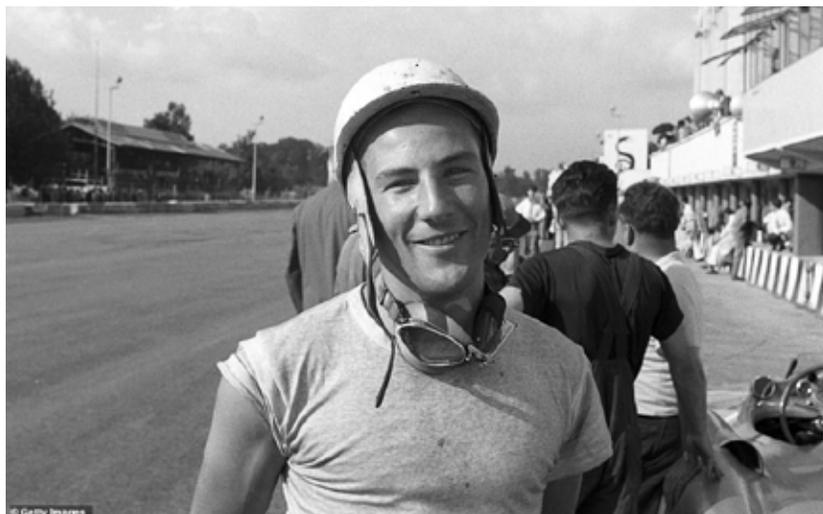
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MY HERO

Sir Stirling Moss

1929-2020

Steve Schefbauer



It was 1957 and I was in the 8th grade at Franklin Junior High School. I was slowly coming out of my *Hot Rod and Custom Car* years and progressing, slowly, into my *Sports Car and Formula 1* years. I started by not buying *Hot Rod* and *Rod and Custom* magazines in favor of *Road and Track* and *Sports Car Graphic*. Once I got into the new scene there was no turning back. So now, instead of talking about George Barris, Dean Jefferies and “Big Daddy” Ed Roth, I was talking about Fangio, Hawthorn, Collins, American Phil Hill and a young, charismatic, naturally talented British race driver, named Stirling Moss. As time went by I developed a great deal of respect for the gentleman who had the heart of a champion. Moss raced for British marques first and Italian marques when he could make a good deal.



I wish I could tell you he raced Morgans, but he didn't. However, according to his obit in *The Washington Post*, the first car he owned at 16 years old was an Austin 7, then graduated to a Morgan, then an MG. Morgan Motor Car Co. claims it was a three wheeler but I could not find a photo to back this up. There is a photo of Stirling, in his retirement, as a passenger in a chauffeur driven Morgan golf cart, made at Malvern specifically for him.

Stirling Moss became my favorite driver all through high school. There was just something about him, somewhat like racing royalty. Over time he became a legend. My friend Bob was also a huge fan and we were both taken aback when in 1962 on Easter Monday,

Photos:

Top: A young Sterling Moss
Middle: With one of his racing team mates
Bottom: Winning the Monaco Formula One Grand Prix race

Stirling had a horrible crash at Goodwood in England; at a 70 mph turn that he had taken so easily, many times before. No one knows, to this day, what exactly happened, but it was enough to put him in a coma for some time and break a few bones. When he finally came out of it and recovered, he tried practicing alone and came to the conclusion that he would not race again. He had to think too much about driving, making the apex, braking and all those things he did naturally without thinking before the crash. This affected me so much that in our yearbook as a farewell to my friend Bob, I had written “be careful of those 70 mph turns” as a warning for life.

Life went by and in the year 2000, Prince Charles, acting for the Queen, knighted him and he became Sir Stirling Moss. It wasn't until 2012 that I read Sir Stirling would be the Honored Guest at the Vintage Fall Festival at Lime Rock Park. Also there would be some of the actual cars he had driven to victory. Since I had planned to be up there anyway, I thought I would finally be able to meet him.

It was a particularly hot, late August day with the sun beating down and no shade. Folks, I won't wait in line for 15 minutes to get into a good restaurant, but that day I stood in line for 45 minutes, the sun beating down in the 90 degree heat and waited until I could meet him, shake his hand, give my regards and get his autograph—like some star struck teenager. His adorable wife, Lady Susie was just bringing him afternoon tea and he said to her “I don't want any tea, it's too bloody hot.”

That, my friends, is my tribute to the man who was a hero and living legend to me for a good portion of my life.

I'm glad I got to meet him.



Photos:
Top: Sir Stirling at Lime Rock
Middle: Sir Stirling in the Morgan golf cart
Bottom: Sir Stirling in one of his Mercedes race cars

The 3/4 Morgan Group Ltd SCHEDULE OF EVENTS 2020

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>HOST/CONTACT</u>
Sun May 17 CANCELLED	Clambake in New Jersey The Cohn's, Ridgefield, NJ	Bob & Jeri Cohn 201-447-6982
Sun May 17 CANCELLED	Caffeine & Carburetors Pine & Elm St. New Canaan, CT	Tom Smith <i>tsmith@thomassmitharchitect.com</i>
Sat May 30 CANCELLED	Greenwich Concours RS Baldwin Park Greenwich, CT	Steve Schefbauer <i>sschefbauer@aol.com</i>
Sun Jun 6 CANCELLED	Cars and Motorcycles of England Hope Lodge, Port Washington, PA	Del Valley Triumph Club <i>www.dvtr.org</i>
Sun Jun 7 CANCELLED	British By The Sea Harkness Park Waterford, CT	Spider J. C. Bulyk <i>shiftright@icloud.com</i> 203-640-5700
Sun Jun 28 NO CHANGE	Roundhill Highland Games Limerock Park, CT	Steve Schefbauer <i>sschefbauer@aol.com</i>
Fri-Sun Jul 3-5 Postponed to 2021	MOG 50 Morgan Club of DC Mimslyn Inn Luray, VA	Spider J. C. Bulyk (as above)
Thurs-Mon Sep 3-7 NO CHANGE	Lime Rock Historic Festival Lime Rock Park, CT	Steve Schefbauer (as above)
Fri-Sun Sep 11-13 NO CHANGE	British Invasion Stowe, VT	Mike & Linda Baker <i>lindabaker8847@gmail.com</i> 802-578-0382
Sun Sep 20 NO CHANGE	Caffeine & Carburetors Pine & Elm St. New Canaan, CT	Tom Smith (as above)
Fri-Sun Oct 2-4 NO CHANGE	Autumn MOG Gideon Putnam Resort Saratoga, NY Rhinebeck	Deborah Spurgas <i>zumbadeb@nycap.rr.com</i>
Oct 9-11 NO CHANGE	2020 British Legends Weekend Plymouth, MA Morgan featured marque	Cape Cod British Car Club Jamie Goodson



Morgan 4/4 For Sale

1967 Morgan 4/4 Competition Series 5 or GT model (270 made) Chassis # B1380, Owned since August 2004. Red with new black leather interior Car completely disassembled and rebuilt (including new Morgan chassis) in early 2000's. Rear end rebuilt in 2019. Loads of factory options: Leather, wire wheels, bucket seats, Water Temp Gauge, Long range lamp, Heater, Defroster woodrimmed steering wheel. Competition Model or GT Model options: Tach, Tubular headers, High Compression Pistons, High lift Cam, Weber Carb, Ford Cortina GT. Engine (raised power from 65bhp to 83.5.) Factory Certificate comes with the car. Spent approx \$2200 prepping car for sale. Located in Allentown, PA but will be relocated to Belvidere, NJ area when I can leave West Palm Beach (May?). Car may be seen at either location. Morgan is great fun but down-sizing dictates sale. No rust. Lots of service records. Asking \$43000.

Contact Bob Wade 610-905-8311 (C) or rwade@rattlesnake-ridge.net

First Spring Run

Frank Wnek



We finally had a sunny day here in Maine with the temperature flirting at 60 degrees. I was tired of doing spring yard cleanup so I decided it was time to go fetch the Drophead and bring it back home to my recently cleaned up garage. It spends the winter in the spare garage bay of a neighbor down the street. I was also feeling a bit guilty that I had not visited since I had brought it over to its winter resting place late last October.

It usually starts once the starter has cranked long enough to get fuel to the carbs and a fuel/air mixture sucked into the cylinders, and I have in the past started it up on second or third try. But this year I decided I would connect a battery charger for a day before attempting to start. The next day I went over to see if it would start.

I disconnected the charger, turned on the battery disconnect switch, hopped in, pulled the choke out and turned the key. A weak ‘rrrr . . . rrrrr . . .’ is all I got and then just the click of the starter solenoid. ‘*What the #*&#!*’ I thought. The battery didn’t charge? Next I went to my neighbor’s and borrowed his battery charger with a start feature, which I had used before to start the car with a depleted battery. I hooked it up, put

it on start, and again turned the ignition—once again, too weak turns of the starter and that was it. Now I was really perplexed. My next brilliant idea was to connect the starter positive lead right to the start solenoid, bypassing the cable from the battery. Turned the key again, and the same two short weak cranks and that was it. ‘*What the #*&#!*’ I exclaimed again, this time in utter exasperation. I was out of ideas. I reconnected my battery charger to the battery, put it on high amps and left it alone for a while, thinking that maybe I had not connected the charger leads to the battery properly the first time—the battery not EXACTLY being in an easily accessible place.

Later in the afternoon, I had a further inspiration and called another neighbor who has a garage full of Model A Fords, hoping that he might have one of those nice portable battery starter packs. He responded in the affirmative, and we agreed to meet at my neighbors several hours later to give it a try. I arrived a few minutes before my neighbor, and just out of curiosity, I disconnected the charger and tried to start again. When I turned the ignition, amazingly, the starter turned the engine normally. I let it crank for about 10 seconds and turned it off for 30 seconds or so and tried it again. The starter turned again, but began to slow down and ran out of juice.

The engine had not even tried to fire. But I was now mildly encouraged.

Just about then my neighbor Jack arrived with his starter pack. He said we could try the battery pack, try a battery charger/starter he had, or he could connect jumper cables from his pickup. I said, “let’s try the battery pack, since you brought it.” He asked me if I had checked the battery voltage, which I hadn’t. He connected his voltage tester to the battery and said it was showing over 12 volts. He was about to go get his starter pack and I was standing next to the driver’s side door. Without even getting in the car, and with the choke halfway out I decided to try the ignition again. As SOON as I turned the key the engine jumped to life - like it had just decided to wake up from its winter slumber. AMAZING! I told my neighbor he must be an engine whisperer or something, and in my elation reached out and shook his hand. “Sorry Jack. Better wash that hand as soon as you get home” I said apologetically.

Once the engine had warmed up and I finished putting the rear deck back on and all the stuff I keep in the back, I took the old boy for a drive. It was running as smoothly as ever, and obviously chomping at the bit to get on the road again. I went and collected my grandson and gave him a promised ride to town to fill

the fuel tank—\$2.11/gal for mid grade octane. What a deal!

On the way back home, the engine smoothly humming along, I thought I might have heard my neglected Drophead say *'Don't EVER do that to me again!'* In Moglish, of course. Okay dude. Lesson learned. I'll never ever again not visit my Morgan all winter. Just an occasional visit to roll it forward or backwards a bit to prevent tire flat spotting, and maybe a quick caress on the nose cowl or friendly pat on the spare tire. Maybe even a few cranks of the starter.

I'll let a tech expert like Spider in his tech jargon expound on why the starter wouldn't crank my first several attempts. But I'm convinced the Drophead was just teaching me a lesson about who's REALLY boss. Message received old boy. But don't EVER do that to ME again!

IF YOU KNOW WHAT THIS IS



STAY HOME! YOU'RE IN THE HIGH-RISK GROUP

imgflip.com



FOR SALE

2013 Morgan 3 Wheeler, 1990 cc S & S Vee-Twin, 5 speed Mazda gearbox, Tonneau cover, new battery, Factory photo build book, Upgrades: Comfort Kit and Chassis upgrade. Approx. 6,500 miles

(New M3W is about \$55,000)

845 518-5453 or jhalfdime@mac.com



FOR SALE

1982 Morgan Plus 8 for sale. Royal ivory w/dark brown leather interior w/dark brown mohair top. Wings off restoration in '07 by Allon White in UK. RHD w/over 116K miles. 3.5L Rover V8 w/ Edelbrock intake manifold & Weber made 500 CFM carb. Call Joe Schell (302)697-3629 for details. More photos and list of work done during restoration and since available on request.

Moss Gear

By Terry Shea from April 2015 issue of Hemmings Sports and Exotics

Founded more than a century ago, this supplier was geared for success

Don't be fooled by the name. The Moss Gear Company finds its origins not with our friends Moss Motors, American purveyors of parts for seemingly all things British, but with a family out of Aston Manor, Birmingham, in 1910.

But those engineers who established the company were not named Moss, but Duckitt. Originally from Moss Side, Yorkshire, some 85 miles north of Aston, they took their name from their hometown when establishing their first factory. At first, they began production with spiral bevel gears, and quickly added complete transmissions for motorcycles and automobiles.

MOSS
A NAME OF FAME IN
GEARS

It is no exaggeration to say that the name and reputation of 'MOSS' for high class Automobile Gearing is without rival.

'MOSS' are privileged to supply leading Manufacturers with all their requirements in Spiral Bevels, Differential Assemblies, and complete Axles.

Superb quality of materials, expert control of treatment and precision in manufacture combine to make 'MOSS GEARS' the most efficient, silent, durable and dependable under all conditions of service.

Why not avail yourself of 'MOSS' specialised service in the production of these parts?

Especially Spiral Bevels

THE MOSS GEAR Co. Ltd.
CROWN WORKS,
TYBURN · BIRMINGHAM.

As their reputation grew, so did their product line, with industrial gears and differentials, along with complete axles, landing on the product list. The Duckitt family clearly established its works at the right time as it was soon supplying not only the automobile and motorcycle markets, but also heavy truck companies and even the aircraft industry. Moss's expertise in machining led to it supplying steering gears, rear axle bevel gears and even camshafts. In the 1920s, Moss advertised complete three- and four-speed gearboxes, steering gear assemblies and rear axles, along with virtually every type of machined gear: spur, worm, bevel, spiral bevel, straight bevel and internal gears.

OLYMPIA,
STAND No. 405.

MOSS GEARS
For 1923.

Buyers and Manufacturers alike will be intensely interested in the range of Moss Gears for 1923, which will be exhibited at Olympia.

The 1923 models include new designs and are the epitome of ripe experience, the latest car gear practice and the highest quality materials for which Moss Gears are famed.

There is no Car which would not be improved by the incorporation of one or more of the Moss components, which include :

1-SPEED GEAR BOXES, 4-SPEED GEAR BOXES, REAR AXLES, STEERING GEARS, MULTISPEED GEAR FOR FORDS, PETROL ENGINE CAM-SHAFTS, SPIRAL BEVEL GEARS, STRAIGHT BEVEL GEARS, WORM GEARS, SPUR GEARS, ETC., ETC.

You are welcome to our Stand. Come and see the whole range of Moss products and witness the results of our efforts toward the "better" car by the production of higher-class components.

THE MOSS GEAR CO., LTD.,
Aston Manor, Birmingham.
Tel.: East 306. Grams: "Mossgear, Birmingham."

Having outgrown its original works, Moss built a newer factory just a few miles east of Birmingham at Tyburn in the late 1920s, calling it the "Crown Works." During this time, in 1935, Moss became a publically traded company, making Walter Duckitt, his son Sydney Lawrence Duckitt and his brother Samuel Duckitt, all very wealthy as the stock offering proved very popular, with plenty of suitors turned away as the sales were nearly eight times over-subscribed.

By 1938, Moss Gear Company Ltd., employed over 2,000 people. With success in the automobile business, supplying gearboxes to the likes of Standard and other Standard-powered automobiles, such as SS, Moss was poised for even greater growth. The company added heavy-duty axles for use in agricultural equipment, driveshafts, universal joints and other driveline-related components to its product range.

But World War II changed Moss's course, as it did so many other companies. Taken over by the Ministry of Defence, Moss manufactured heavy-duty transmissions for tanks and oth-

er vehicles. The Ministry of Defence added additional capacity for Moss by opening another factory in a cluster at Castle Bromwich, just across the River Tame from Tyburn. As the location for Spitfire production and other important wartime materiel, Castle Bromwich was a frequent target of the German Luftwaffe. During the Battle of Britain, the Moss works was bombed, but the damage turned out to be very slight, and production continued, virtually uninterrupted.

Postwar, Moss jumped right back into the automobile fray, providing transmissions for the newly renamed Jaguar. Initially, Moss supplied the gearboxes outright, but Jaguar soon began phasing in its own production based on the Moss designs, which Jaguar continued to use through the mid-Sixties. Notably, Moss supplied Jensen, Morgan, Alvis, AC and even Triumph, for the TR2 and TR3, with transmissions for a time after the war. Morgan used Moss gearboxes up until about 1973. Though not the smoothest transmissions, Moss gearboxes had a reputation for ruggedness and durability.

In the 1960s, Moss produced a wide variety of automobile components, from complete front and rear axles to driveshafts, u-joints and still transmissions. But its focus changed, as the industrial gear and transmission business proved stronger in the long run. In 1966, Moss closed the Tyburn factory and split production between a facility in Wales and another in northwest England in Accrington.

In 1982, senior management at the Accrington plant bought out that factory during a Moss restructuring. Named after those managers, Basil Fone, Frank Pickles and Len Wilson, F.P.W. Axles Ltd. took over where Moss left off, specializing in axles. The following year, the company acquired the rights to British Leyland's Light Axle Division during the divestiture of that enterprise.

Today, F.P.W. continues to make axles, but rather than for the automotive industry, it supplies the likes of utility vehicles, such as street sweepers, forklifts, other electric-powered vehicles and even some agricultural applications.



THE MOSS GEAR COMPANY, LIMITED.

Transmission Units and Parts, Gear Boxes, Rear Axles, Steering Gears, for post-war arrangements. Accurately Machined moving parts for Automobile and Aircraft Work. Finest Materials and correct heat treatment giving most reliable results. Extended Plant makes it possible for us to treat with new clients. Our Experience is always at your disposal, and Our Reputation is one of the best with the leading Light Car Builders.

We are now negotiating for post-war requirements.

COMPONENTS

THE MOSS GEAR CO., LIMITED,
Thomas Street, Aston, BIRMINGHAM.



SPIDER'S TECH TALK

More Moss Box Madness

Hi Spider,

I see from Miscellany that you are the early Plus 4 adviser?

Just after an opinion really, with recent enforced “free” time I have been catching up on my 1960 Plus 4 four seater maintenance schedule and one of the items is to change the gearbox oil. A while ago I bought some GL4 MTL redline oil as I read that this was a good alternative but having drained the gearbox I am having second thoughts as someone has

said it is a little “thin” for the Moss box?

Just wondering what your opinion was and what oil you would recommend? The manual says EP 90 and I think that when it was in with Richard Thorne a couple of years ago he used EP 80, so I am a little confused as to the best option! Your thoughts greatly valued!

Many thanks.
Ian Parsons (UK)

Hi Ian,

Actually, even in these dark times, having the excuse to putter with the car is gift.

I've enclosed several photos for you.

Here's a peek inside your gear box. In the pile of parts on a paper towel you can see all the tiny bearing needles. Also note the big roller bearing with the red metal.

There are three important elements to the lube in the Moss: correct volume, viscosity in 75W - 90 range, APL/GL-4 (not GL-5)

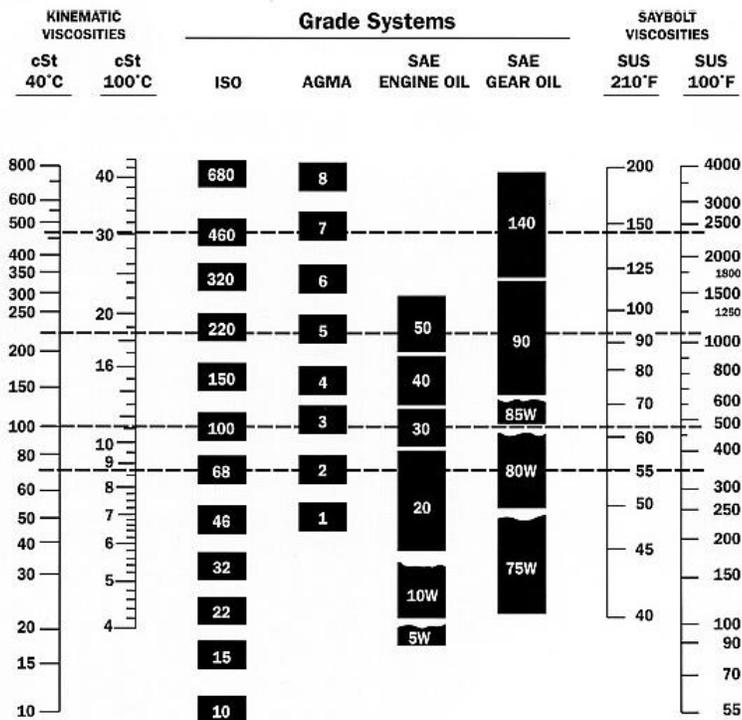
Here are two lubricant shelves at Quantumechanics, the high-end Moss specialist in Northeast USA



Here's the famous chalk board at the legendary F. H. Douglass, London's oldest Morgan dealer (now gone as I may remember)



Have a lookee-see at the Oil Viscosity and Application chart.



Viscosities can be related horizontally only. For example, the following oils have similar viscosities: ISO 460, AGMA 7 and SAE GEAR OIL 140.

The viscosity/temperature relationships are based on 95 VI oils and are usable only for mono grade engine oils, gear oils and other 95 VI oils.

Crankcase oils and gear oils are based on 100°C viscosity. The "W" grades are classified on low temperature properties. ISO oils and AGMA grades are based on 40°C viscosity.

PDF of Oil Viscosity and Application

The more important issue is to stay with GL-4 (not 5). The Moss has bearings containing or made of red metal. GL-5 (may or may not depending) have chemical elements that attack red metal, or may at least be unfriendly to red metal. The rest of the automotive world has moved up to APL/GL-5 so GL-4 is not always easy to come by. My US brands may not be available in UK, but I use Sta-Lube which I find at stores catering to farm equipment, tractors, and industrial machinery. On the F.H. Douglass chalkboard, he uses Castrol Hypo 80 straight weight in the gearbox, but I suspect the information to be dated in terms of what Hypo-80 was like then and now (if you can still find it) and also dated in terms of what else might be available. For the record, I do use Castrol Hypoy 85W-90 APL/GL-5 in the DANA Rear Axle, as it is a fine lubricant and there's no red metal back there.

The differences in oils, other than rating and nomenclature, are usually more about chemical content (say, engine vs. gear) than actual viscosity. I run 85W-90 in my 1956 Moss (High Ratio = HR) box, which should be very similar to yours. Because of the gear tooth cut, the box is inherently noisy and can be cantankerous to shift. I find that the 85W (cold temperature viscosity) is sufficiently low to provide acceptable shifting at lower temperatures and the 90 (high temperature viscosity) provides sufficient lubricant to not do damage, allowing smooth shifting, and (almost) quieting the beast. I know others using 75W-90 with no ill effects. Brands aside, any reputable brand in the range of 75W-90 with APL/GL-4 should do nicely for your 60 Plus 4.

In terms of the advantages of using higher or lower weight oils in the Moss, the lighter weight (say, 80) might provide slicker shifting but the heavier weight (say, 90) will work harder on longevity. The upper number (not the "W" number) will govern things, since this is the temperature range the box will be running at most of the time.

I know there are autocrossers, hill climbers, and racers who use 30W engine oil (again refer to Viscosity chart) in the Moss... but they don't care how long the box lasts, as long as they can speed-shift their way to a trophy!

I hope this all helps and would be happy to answer any further questions you might have... or which the preceding may have prompted.

Good luck and take care of that baby: four seaters forever!

Run cool, Spider

FROM THE ARCHIVES: *Techspeak*

In the 'nothing is new under the sun' category as far as Morgan tech subjects are concerned, I found this piece in the 1983 Issue 4 of The Morganeer, which was almost entirely comprised of different 'Techspeak' articles, as they were called back then. The club Tech Advisor at the time was a gentleman named Robert Couch.

You may recall in a recent Morganeer issue an exchange between someone calling himself 'The Mad Hatter' and PPlus 4 Tech Advisor Spider regarding an errant Temp gauge, which ended up being nothing more serious than the radiator not being properly grounded. Who knew? So please place this reprint in your Tech Talk folder under 'Temp gauge' Spider, so you will have the answer for the next PPlus 4 owner experiencing a malfunctioning Temp gauge. ed

Temperature Gauge

Morgans have thermal/electric type indicators consisting of the dashboard gauge and the transmitter bulb in the radiator. The gauge will read generally between "normal" and "hot" - usually more toward "hot" (this is normal).

Actually, "hot" is more normal than "normal" is normal. *(I did NOT know this! Sounds like more Spider tech speak to me! ed)*

Faults usually occur due to improper grounds, either at the gauge or at the

transmitter. *(Why didn't anyone tell ME this? ed)* The gauge can be checked visually. However, the bulb should be removed and separated from the locking nut which holds it to the radiator. Carefully clean any corrosion from the unit and from the radiator threads. Also make sure that the radiator is grounded. This oversight cost me \$40.00 for a new bulb which was not needed! *(Ditto my last editorial remark. ed)*

According to "the book", your thermostat should be fully open at 90 degrees C/194 degrees F, so you can as-

sume that normal running temperature should be about 185F. Take your MOG for a spring warm-up and note where your temperature gauge sits. Mark it with some tape or a white crayon. Then, at your leisure, you can warm up your car to that point and check to see what your normal running temperature actually is. Use a thermometer or calibrated mechanical gauge.

If the location of the pointer on your gauge in the hot zone and your actual temperature is normal, you can install a 10 or 15 ohm resistor between the sensor and the gauge lead. *(Yes, you never told me this either Spidey! ed)* This will relocate the pointer into the normal zone.

SO, I guess the bottom line here is if your temp gauge does not appear to be working correctly, first check that the gauge and radiator are grounded, and if so just ignore the gauge reading, since it is obviously incorrect. Of course! It's a Morgan after all, isn't it. Right Spider? ed

At An Autumn MOG Past

From club historian Jim Nichol

(One Morgan to another, overheard by Jim)

"Hey, did you hear Sally is 'infested'?"

"Oh no! We better start washing our tires. AND social distancing!"

"Yes. I hear it's VERY contagious. And testing is just NOT available yet."

"Really! I hope Sally's at least wearing a mask. Best not get too close."



The Rendezvous

The Mad Hatter



Sometime in the near future . . .

He drove, trying to ignore his anxiety and concentrate on the road ahead, dim in the headlamps of his precious Morgan. He didn't enjoy driving at night anymore—even less so on a curvy, unfamiliar country road in the middle of nowhere. He didn't even know what town he was in—not that it mattered. The instructions—delivered by anonymous text—were to be at a certain GPS coordinate at a certain time: ONE AM.

ONE AM! he thought. *This is crazy!* I should be in bed asleep! But he was desperate—and glancing down at the fuel gauge only heightened his desperation. It was showing less than a quarter-full, and he never let it get that low. He found himself imagining the engine sputtering, then cutting out and the Morgan coasting to a stop on the roadside short of his destination. He crossed his fingers on the steering wheel, took a deep breath and drove on. He was almost there.

In addition to the time and place, the instructions had been specific:

“At the GPS coordinates there will be a small turnoff on the west side of the road. Park there facing north, turn off motor and extinguish ALL lights. I will arrive from the north. When I see your car, I will flash my lights twice. Do NOT get out of your car. After I stop, I will flash my lights three times. Then you can get out of the car. Have payment ready—cash only. I will tell you the per gallon price when we meet. Don't tell anyone where you are going. DO NOT stop and park if there is a car behind you.”

He was now approaching the rendezvous. He had just gone around a gentle right turn with a slight uphill grade and as the road flattened out, he saw the turnoff to the left. A glance in the rearview mirror assured him no one was following. He pulled over and parked in the turnoff facing north, switched off the ignition and doused the lights. It was 12:45 AM. He wanted to make sure he was on time. Being a bit early eased at least some of his anxiety.

In the final minutes he lovingly looked over the Morgan. It was unique—so beautiful, so . . . quirky. He didn't care that his friends made fun of the car when they spotted it in his garage. Of course, he had to swear them all to secrecy about it.

And he was very careful about keeping the garage bay open during daylight hours. And it saddened him immensely that he could no longer risk driving it in daytime—especially near his home. The sound of the exhaust would certainly be a high alert, a trumpet call to any law enforcement who might be within hearing distance. A sight of the car would be even worse—a red flag to the cops. Clearly it was contraband, one of those outlawed non-fuel-injected, non-catalytic-converter-equipped, non-biofuel antiques. A fossil-fuel-burning fossil!

How did it come to this? he wondered. How could the government have made such a foolish decision? Was it his fault that the glaciers and the icepack were melting away? No! His other car, the everyday car, was a zero-emission EV! (He had to admit he enjoyed driving it.) But the Morgan was something else. *The last of its breed indeed*, he thought. He just couldn't bring himself to give it up, and he knew that if he no longer drove it, it would only be a matter of time before it was snatched up in a crane's pincers and dropped into a crusher. He shivered at the thought. *No, not as long as I live and breathe!*

He glanced at his watch, straining to see the hands in the darkness. Even that was an antique. He decided it showed five minutes past 1:00. The man was late! By smartphone he verified his GPS position—mostly to pass the time. Then he swiped through his photos, especially the photos of the precious Morgan, and allowed himself a short reminiscence with each one. Such good times, good friends, pleasant rides, socializing, kicking tires, having a few beers. *When will the next time be?*

Then he heard the sound of a vehicle off to the north. Definitely a truck and definitely running on fossil fuel. Illegally. There could be no mistake. The sound grew louder, and with it his anticipation. He grabbed the door handle and began to turn it before remembering his instructions: Stay in the car! He noticed he had a death grip on the steering wheel and his palms were sweating. *This is crazy*, he thought. It was easy to convince himself of that one.

He saw the lights before the vehicle rounded the bend to the

north. Then the light beams swung with the curve as the vehicle appeared and then rolled slowly to a stop about 30 yards away. All he could see was the headlamps. Then they went off . . . then on again . . . then off . . . then back on. Two flashes. Then he heard the engine rev and the vehicle slowly moved toward him until it was nearly kissing the Morgan's lovely grille. The lamps went out, then on and off again three times. He shielded his eyes. Seconds that seemed like minutes passed.

Finally, he remembered his instructions and opened the door and stepped out of his car. His vision was returning. The other vehicle was a pickup truck—not new and shiny and tall, but old and rusty. No front license plate. The truck door opened slowly as the air filled with nervous tension.

The driver was tall, with a scraggly beard, dirty jeans and a Patriots hoody. There was a ball cap pulled down to his ears and his eyes were barely visible. “Ya got the money?”

“Yes, of course” he blurted, immediately thinking he should not have said “of course.”

“Show me!”

“Uh, yeah, sure.” He reached into his pocket.

“Take it out SLOW!”

He slowly pulled out the wad of twenties and spread them out like a pack of playing cards to show that there was \$200 there.

“Okay” hoody man said. “Ya get 10 gallons, 12 bucks a gallon. This is the good stuff—aviation fuel. No ethanol!”

He thought, *this is a drug deal!* But he said, “Not sure it will take 10 full gallons.”

“Ten gallons, 12 bucks a gallon” was the response.

He peeled off six twenties and handed them over. Hoody man stuffed the bills in his pocket and barked, “Don’t go no-where!”

Hoody man slid behind the wheel of his truck and reversed around to the rear of the Morgan. There were two rusty 55-gallon drums in the truck bed. One had a hand pump and hose on it. No tailgate. Hoody man climbed into the bed of the truck and handed him the nozzle at the end of the hose. “Let me know when you’re ready.”

He popped the fuel cap, inserted the nozzle into the filler and nodded to hoody man, who began cranking the handle of the pump atop the drum. He couldn’t see any indication of what was coming through the hose but decided not to mention it. He would just say “whoa” when the tank was full. Hoody man wasn’t much for small talk.

All of a sudden hoody man said, “Nice wheels. That a kit car?”

Best to stick with the truth. “No, it’s a Morgan.”

“Morgan. Never heard of it.” Honesty, that’s good.

After a time, hoody man stopped cranking the pump. “That’s it.”

He pulled the nozzle from the filler and saw the tank was almost full. He knew it only held eight gallons or so. He decided

it wasn’t worth mentioning. He was, however, bold enough to ask, “when can I get another fill-up?”

“Ya get 10 gallons a month. I got other customers, ya know.”

“So . . . same place next month?”

“No way!” Hoody man replied. ‘New rendey-voov next time. Can’t be too careful these days. I’ll let you know. And do *not* give my number to anyone.’

He thought about saying ‘thanks’ but knew it would be wasted. As hoody man got back into his truck, he ordered: “Don’t start up or go anywheres until 10 minutes after I’m gone. And be sure to head back south.”

With that, he slammed the door, started up and turned back to the north and was gone in a mild haze of oil smoke. There was no license plate on the back of the truck either. Soon the sound of the truck faded. Surely 10 minutes had passed.

He slid back into the Morgan and turned the key. The engine lit with that wonderful throaty roar. He engaged first gear and did his own U-turn across the road to the south. The fuel gauge needle stood at F.

It was now close to 2:00 AM, but life was good. The petrol tank was full, the engine was humming, the breeze freshened his face, and he had this elated feeling that he had just outsmarted The Man. Who were They to tell him he couldn’t drive his ancient fossil-fueled car? What did They know anyway? Probably never drove anything but a Prius or Leaf! Probably had never driven a car that let you feel the road, take the curves at speed, downshift, let the rear end drift a bit, hammer the throttle and power out of the turn . . .

Well, he didn’t actually do that sort of thing anymore. Still, there was something special about driving a Morgan. Always was. Always would be. He was a Morgan man. Now and always. As long as he could get fossil fuel. Thank you, hoody man, whoever you are.



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