

The Morganeer

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Future Morgan Man Henry



“Mom, I even got to honk the horn!”

THE JOURNAL OF THE 3/4 MORGAN GROUP, LTD.

NEW CLUB MEMBERS

Warren Handelman New York, NY
'98 Plus 8

Gregory and Carmen Portsmouth, NH
Pollack '67 Plus 4

Jay and Debbie Rolls Livingston, TX
'63 Plus 4, 4 seater

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to see you at an event soon.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT *Joy in Little things*

It's been a somewhat rough summer. (Yeah, I know I have been rumored to be just a bit sarcastic.) I personally call myself a realist, I mean, maybe a negative sort of realist. I am the kind of person who looks at a good situation and wonders, "How good this can really be?" I make little plans in the back of my mind, wondering how to solve whatever might pop up next. So when someone says, "It's all good, just relax and don't worry" that sarcastic (realist) voice always manages to chime in. It sits on my shoulder saying things like 'Well you know it wasn't all good, really; it isn't going to work, so what WERE you thinking?'

I do have my inner school marm that says, "We have to try and find the good in every situation," and "Don't let it get you down" and other somewhat annoying but encouraging things. A slight tendency to "Pollayanna" a bit just to find something positive or upbeat regardless.

Some days, just the effort to find something positive and remind myself that I really ought to be happy, or that I ought to at least try to be happy, is actually hard work, no matter what pep talk I give myself. Some days, when I'm out driving my Morgan, I tell myself I SHOULD feel relaxed. Relax dammit! Right now! And sadly it doesn't always work. Too many things loom in my mind. It's that nagging thought that begins in the back of my head even when I go to start the car and think "and what if it doesn't start?"

Enter Henry. A charming 4-year-old who lives down the street from me, Henry loves machines. Any machine will do, but cars top his list for sure. (Though tractors are a close second.) Picture a sunny afternoon, both Brian's and my Morgans in the street, a bucket of soapy water, an afternoon off work, and just me and two cars to play with. And me telling myself that "This is supposed to be making me happy!"

Down the street comes Henry and sees the cars. Now, Henry doesn't talk much, but this was enough to rob him of any speech altogether. A keen observer, Henry clearly wanted to double-check my auto



detailing. After Henry's official once over I asked him if he wanted to sit in the cars and beep the horn. And the light descended from above and angels sang!

Honestly, I had forgotten what pure simple unadulterated joy looks like. Henry didn't need to remind himself to relax, didn't try to be happy. He simply radiated joy. Uncomplicated. And it was so wonderful to see.

We all enjoy our Morgans. We know when things are rough we are supposed to keep a positive outlook. We try our best to take time from the cares of our current everyday life and look after our own well being. It's just that some days it is hard. To make it easier, I would like to suggest a homework assignment for all of us (me included). Go back and find some old photos from events or days that remind us of the rare times when all the stars aligned. The spontaneous fun when your cats climbed into the car. Or your trophy. Driving to prom. A random fan at a car show seeing their first Morgan. Dad letting you drive in the parade. Mom and a helmet, and a cone. Watching everyone grin as the Mad Hatter makes his appearance. Little glimpses of times when happiness was as simple as letting a car happy 4-year-old toot the horn.

I'd love to see your pictures, so please feel free to share! (I did my homework mom!)



My dad (grandpa) and my sons 1999

From the President, Part II



My dad at Tony Newtown's after the first round of restoration. Circa 1990



Dad let me drive in the parade!



At the local Elks Club car show, a fan so happy to get to sit in her first Morgan!



Mom and her cone?



Ready to drive to the prom



Hey, you DO know that's MY trophy—right?



The Mad Hatter and acolytes



Mom ready to autocross



Future Morgan man Henry

FROM THE EDITOR

Well, if you have (hopefully) read Maura's heart felt From The President column you will understand how young Henry, who happened to be wandering down the street as she was out in her drive washing her Morgan, ended up as our cover photo. Yes, kids and Morgans do seem to go together. While many of our young adults seem uninterested in our antiquated sports cars (What? No radio, no bluetooth . . . no AC?), children seem to still be fascinated by our 'cool' cars. Does that say something about US as owners? Food for thought. I would often in my airline pilot days ask young people that came to visit the cockpit what they wanted to be when they grew up, and after hearing responses like 'a doctor', 'a lawyer', occasionally 'a pilot', I would then respond that I still didn't know what I wanted to be when I grew up. Do we continue to own and drive our Morgans at least partially as a protest against 'adulthood'? I think Ms Maura needs to answer that one.

I must give kudos once again to **Steve Scheffbauer**, my intrepid Editor-At-Large, for providing a major part of the input to this issue. He has been working tirelessly of late establishing (or I think you could say re-establishing) a strong and continuing relationship between our club and the management of Lime Rock Park in northwest Connecticut. It began with last fall's Labor Day weekend 'Gathering of the Marques' event at Lime Rock where Morgan was selected as a featured marque. Steve rallied the troops resulting in a great turnout from the club. He even arranged a few 'parade laps' on the track. (See the Nov/Dec 2019 *Morganeer*)

As a result of that relationship a select few of our members (limited to six cars with driver and co-driver) were invited to preview a new program at Lime Rock, called 'Track Tapas' day. Those who were lucky enough to respond quickly enough were allowed to run both the facility's autocross course AND the main racing track and given some driving instruction from the experts.

One of the participants, **Marc Wunderman**, enthusiastically describes his im-

pressions of the day in his article, and **Wes Fredericks**, who arrived for the event in his Lotus but did not drive, provided some excellent photography for both the article and Centerfold.

Steve was not done there though. He presented to me the idea of doing an interview with his contact at Lime Rock, V.P. **Walter Irvine**, and I gave him the go ahead. But when Steve presented the idea to Walter he responded that yes he could do the interview, but wouldn't we rather do an Interview with track owner, former F1 driver and creator of a now world famous driving school for fledgling auto racers, **Skip Barber**? Steve gave a big smiling 'of course', and so it came to pass that *The Morganeer* is privileged to print an exclusive interview with Skip, conducted in person at the track by Steve. Way to go old boy.

And what I would describe as a co-feature of this issue is a wonderful travelogue by **Warren Mann** of his 2017 European trip which began with a pilgrimage to the Morgan factory in Malvern. Not only did Warren and his wife Judy spend a few days at a lovely hotel in Malvern and visit the factory, they also spent a day driving a pre-arranged rental M3W through the beautiful countryside of the Malvern hills. Brave boy! You may have noticed that his travelogue, with MANY wonderful photos is posted on the home page of our club website—www.morgan34.org. I thought it appropriate to also fill some quality pages in *The Morganeer*. And you can look forward to seeing some of Warren's excellent photos of the Morgan factory as Centerfold of the next issue.

Next, one of our newest members, **Gregg Pollack** from Portsmouth, New Hampshire tells us the story of the purchase of his Morgan. After many years of careful consideration, missed opportunities and dabbling with other marques (such as a TR 6 he still owns), Gregg has finally happily joined our merry band of misfits. But I'll let him tell you the rest of the story. Including an introduction to the Lucas theory of smoke.

It has been a while since a Member Profile was featured in *The Morganeer*, so I decided to ask **Tom Austin** if he could give me some background information with which to profile him. Well, I was not expecting to get an 8 page mini-autobiography back from Tom, but it did



make for a VERY interesting profile on yet another of the diverse and accomplished members of our little club. Who would ever have suspected that a former Good Humor ice cream truck driver/vendor would end up as a Morgan owner? Wonders never cease, and our members never cease to amaze me with their interesting careers.

Filling out this issue is, once again, a very interesting review of the NEW (aluminum chassis, BMW powered, upgraded suspension) Plus Four courtesy of another of our long established relationships with **Hemmings Motor News**. I was just discussing this brave (or perhaps long overdue) quantum leap into the 21st Century by Morgan Motor Company with David Crandall, and we both agreed it would it would seem a bit strange to be driving a Morgan that was not constantly communicating to us with creaks, groans, rattles, squeaks, and shakes. Well, that certainly describes my Drophead, particularly on a less than smooth country road. But the important thing is that a Morgan STILL looks like a traditional Morgan, and I think they have now figured that one out.

So you may have noticed that I have graciously deferred my usual page 3 slot opposite Maura's *From The President* column in favor of her photo montage related to her excellent column.

I was particularly taken by the photo of a young Maura driving her Dad's Morgan that is now hers in a July 4th parade. Yes Maura, some of us, after all these years and despite life's attempts to add to our maturity and adult norms, are STILL children at heart. I'm on to you girl!

And the road still goes on forever. Drive it!

Frank

TO THE EDITOR

(To the former Editor-At-Large)

Spider,

I hope you and your wife are well, avoiding the COVID successfully and maybe the forthcoming elections?

Just a quick note, meant to have been tapped before but unfortunately forgotten, sorry. Enjoyed reading *The Morganeer* and the article with "me" in it as too to your article on Mr Fink. A huge loss to the Morgan world.

Have been stuck in the desert since February so have not even seen my beloved Moggie, missing driving her anywhere and not actually sure when I will be able to take her off the wheel blocks. This COVID and its knock-on effects with air travel and economies is deviating.

Keep well.

Warmest regards,
Stephen

Social Distancing

Some of us have taken this 'social distancing' and COVID quarantining business a BIT too far—like all the way to Maryland's eastern shore. Barrie and Mara Abrams have relocated from New York and, as we see here, are suffering through the summer that wasn't along with the rest of us. Well, except for the GIANT pool, lovely gazebo and nice water view. Hope to see you somewhere along the Morgan byways soon you two! We miss you! Well, now that I mention it, I pretty much miss EVERYBODY (yes, even you Spider)!



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A DAY IN THE PARK

Track Tapas at Lime Rock

Mark Wunderman

In a recent e-mail exchange editor Frank Wnek aptly described this as “the summer of no summer,” referring to the cancelation of almost every one of the car events normally available to the 3/4 Morgan Group. The Plus Four has not been getting much solo use either. It just seems that I have no place I need to go. Then, there I was one afternoon sitting at my desk when a message popped up from Steve Schefbauer. He described a new program called Track Tapas being tried out at Lime Rock Park. Tapas is the Spanish food custom of serving up small bites or appetizers. The new Lime Rock Tapas program would offer one hour on the autocross track and one hour on the main track, both with an instructor. But there was a catch: Only six of us could attend, and it would be at

NO CHARGE, and all we had to do was agree to be photographed and interviewed. I wonder if Steve was surprised when I responded to his message in about 30 seconds. Usually one to think things over, I suddenly became that kid in your sixth grade class who was always first to put his or her hand up and saying ‘oooh oooh, call me, ooooo please!’

So it came to pass that I, along with five other Morganeers (later to become four) were invited to try out the new program. The rules were simple: one passenger or co-driver per person, masks to be worn at all times while on the park grounds, with a temperature check on entry. There would be no food service, but also no other groups present. The event was originally scheduled for July 8, but a dismal weather forecast persuaded everyone to agree to moving it to July 23.

I had some homework to do, as I have slacked off on Morgan maintenance lately. This was a good time to get out to the shop and give the car a thorough going over. Change the oil and oil filter; clean the air filter elements, drain and fill the gearbox, drain and fill the differential. A modest check for loose nuts and bolts didn’t reveal any issues, but I did find a partially stripped hose clamp on a fuel line, no doubt a result of having been over tightened—by you know who.

I decided to tow the car up instead of driving. While the route from home to Lime Rock is well suited to a Morgan, it would also be more hours in the sun than I need. And then of course there would be the possibility of afternoon thunderstorms to liven up the drive home. The truck and trailer had not been cleaned since last year’s Autumn MOG, so this looked like a good time to get some of that done too. Lynn asked me why it takes a full week to get ready to spend two hours at the track. I tried to explain ... but ‘it’s complicated.’

The day finally arrived. The forecast was just okay, not great, and it rained a little the night before. Driving up I encountered a few raindrops and I



Photo: Skip Barber (on right) greets the drivers as they arrive



remember thinking *can't we please have two rain-free hours?* And we did. While it stayed cloudy almost the entire time, that prevented it from becoming broiling hot. And there was even a welcome breeze almost the entire time, so chalk up a weather win for Team Morgan.

Besides myself, those attending were Jamie and James Goodson, Morgan Malone and Alison DeKline, Jim Nichol, Ed and Masako Lawson, and event organizer Steve Schefbauer. We also had cameo appearances by Wes Fredericks and Skip Barber. We gathered at the autocross track and met our instructor Walter Irvine. Lime Rock Park is a big place and I had never seen it empty before. In a way it was a bit eerie, but also welcome in these strange times, and I for one felt COVID comfortable the whole time.

Walter gave each one of us a walkie talkie so he could talk to us in our cars if need be. Next,



Photos: The players, clockwise from top left: Alison and Morgan, Jamie and James Goodson, Jim Nichol, Marc Wunderman, and Ed Lawson, a Lotus friend of Walter's

he explained the orange cones placed at points around the track. We were to try to come as close to those cones as possible to position our cars for the best line around each curve. I found some of the lines to be intuitive, and some not. Walter explained that just mashing your foot on the accelerator as soon as possible coming through a corner is not necessarily the path to the fastest lap time (*who me?*). Oh, and speaking of lap times, here was my big surprise of the day; there would be no timing. After a moment of surprise I realized that this would be absolutely liberating. We were not there to compete, we were there to learn something. Absent the pressure to go fast, you could concentrate on driving the cleanest line for each lap at whatever speed felt comfortable. What a great idea!

Walter began by leading the five of us around in his own car at a modest speed. The autocross track at Lime Rock is a second gear course for a Plus Four. And one thing I love about that track is that, unlike a course laid out with cones in a big parking lot, you don't need to tie up part of your brain trying to remember where the course is. You are either on the pavement or on the grass, so you can use your whole brain for driving. What a pleasure!

Next, he sent us out in groups of two, well separated. We would go around getting more comfortable with the course and more confident as we went.

Then we would take a break and let another two go out on the track. Eventually we all took a break for some shade, cold water and discussion of what we were doing. We learned about rising rate and falling rate curves. These were concepts I had sort of understood intuitively, but I found the discussion and explanations interesting and very helpful.

After everyone had cooled off we went back out. Walter would position himself next to a cone he thought we were taking too wide and would wave us in closer with each lap. When we would finally come close enough he would applaud and move on to another one. I really came to appreciate how getting the car in the right position on the track sets you up for whatever is coming next, and how that is more important than just stomping on the gas.

The hour we spent felt right, and then we moved on to the main track. Walter explained that Lime Rock is the shortest major track in the country, but also one of the most challenging to execute perfectly. He explained that we would experience pretty much everything we had on the autocross track, but on a larger scale and at higher speed. Then he once again led us around in his own car, and again there were cones at the edges showing us where to position our cars.

This time we would not be on our own, we would be following Walter the whole time. To avoid having any one of

us stuck as Tail End Charlie, we agreed that when he would turn on his turn signal on the straightaway, the car immediately behind him would move over and let everyone else pass, then catch up and become the new end of the pack. We would do this every few laps so that each of us had the opportunity to be directly behind the instructor. The fastest speed I reached was maybe 70 mph when I was catching up to the pack that had just passed me. Otherwise we were mostly in the 50 to 60 mph range. I never felt the need to go faster, which may have been my second surprise for the day. I also found that repeatedly cranking the car around a twisty track becomes tiring. And once again the allotted hour felt like a good place to stop.

I have been driving my Plus Four for 20 years, but I came away feeling that I still have plenty to learn, and that learning can be fun. I learned what I guess I already knew on one level, that there is more to going fast than just having a heavy right foot.

As I headed south the ominous looking sky cleared and I arrived home in full sunshine. Jim Nichol drove into the threatening clouds and got soaked minutes from home. Sorry Jim.

I can sum up the day by answering a few simple questions. Was it fun? Definitely. Would I do it again? Absolutely. Would I pay for the opportunity? In a heartbeat.



For more photos of the autocross and track laps see the Centerfold. Ed



Photos: Top: The Four Morganmen (or is it horsemen?)
 Left: Alison poses for a glam shot—'Yes, it's all about ME!'
 Opposite page: Lineup on the Sam Posey Straight



2005 Roadster for Sale

This Roadster is done in two Aston Martin colors with maroon leather interior. The car has 50k on the clock, all but 3k of that done by the Buckleys. The first owner had the car less than a year before selling it to them. The cloth top has quarter windows and zippered rear window; leather rimmed Moto-Lita steering wheel, 5k on Michelin Pilot Sport tires, stainless door stops, leather bound factory build book. This Roadster has no mechanical anomalies or problems(e.g., the revs do not drop when AC is turned on) as experienced by some Roadster owners. Call Judy (919-606-2054) or Pat (919-606 1944) for additional info or pics. Asking \$80,000.

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NEW 2019 Morgan 3.7 V6 ROADSTER Champagne Metallic/Sky Blue Yarwood leather, Black Wire Wheels

NEW 2019 Morgan 3.7 V6 ROADSTER Tribute '65 America, Avril Blue Pearl Met./ Saddle Leather with tan piping and accents, mohair top, alloy wheels, A/C in stock

NEW 2019 Morgan Plus 4 BMW Silver Glacier body, Morgan Sport Black wings, Scarlet with Royal Blue XT Leather trim, range of '110 edition' options

NEW 2011 Morgan AERO SUPERSPORT Black with Deep Grey Metallic wings and wheels, black leather 200 original miles // NEVER REGISTERED, 1 OF 33 MADE

2005 Morgan 3.7 V6 ROADSTER Panama Green Metallic, Biscuit Tan leather 1.8k original miles

2005 Morgan ROADSTER Acura Molten Copper Metallic exterior (special order) Yarwood Tan leather

Morgan +8+ conversion in 1995 by ISIS Motors included stock LS 1 Chevy, 6 speed, 4 wheel disc and alloy body, galvanized chassis

1991 Morgan Plus 8, Connaught British Racing Green/Tan leather // FULLY FRESHENED "TIME CAPSULE MACHINE"

1967 Morgan Plus 4, DropHead Coupe, Ivory/Green Wings, Ivory leather // NEW GREATLY REDUCED PRICING

1963 Morgan Plus 4 SUPERSPORT 1 of 94 Factory SuperSports Race cars built, Rolls Royce Green Velvet, Black leather, 2 inch lower body profile with LawrenceTune engine // CORRECT RESTORATION TO HIGHEST STANDARDS.

1963 Morgan Plus 4 Connaught Green, cost no object restoration of a standard Plus 4, true Pebble Beach quality restoration // INSTANT FUN OR CONCOURS WINNER

1962 Morgan Plus 4 Four passenger, Black lacquer with red interior // OLDER CHRISTOPHER LAWRENCE RESTORATION

1962 Morgan Plus 4 Four Seater Roadster, White with black leather // FULL RESTORATION

1958 Morgan Plus 4 Bustleback Roadster, Dove Grey/Burgandy wings, Cream leather // INSTANT CONCOURS WINNER AND A JOY TO DRIVE

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:

1974 Triumph SPITFIRE Robin's egg blue

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MORGAN AND ME

Gregg Pollack

My fascination with British sports cars started when I was in college in the late '60's. Several of my fraternity brothers had a range of British cars; MGA's, MGB's, Austin Healey's, TR3's, TR4A's, and a TR 250 (TR 5). I did not own a British sports car until I graduated and was able to afford a new 1971 TR 6, purchased just after I got married in August of 1970. I still have the TR6, and the wife (we will celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary next year).



I saw my first Morgan over 40 years ago. It was love at first sight. I have wanted one since then, but it made no sense for me to buy a second sports car. I had three children to raise, have their teeth straightened and send to college. And I would NEVER consider selling my TR6. So, I lusted after one in vain.

Nineteen years ago my wife and I moved, as empty nesters, from Connecticut to Portsmouth (New Hampshire, USA). We live in downtown, so I do not have a garage, which makes owning a second British sports car even more unwieldy. I just reconciled myself to the fact that I would never own a Morgan.

Then 3 years ago I had open heart surgery: a quadruple bypass, valve replacement and a pacemaker. I was rewired and replumbed. This life altering event caused me to reevaluate my priorities and outlook on life. In September of last year I decided that, although it made no sense practically, I was going to own a Morgan. I started my search using Hemmings Motor News. I was very specific in what I was looking for: a two seat Morgan Plus 4 from the 60's.

Last December I saw a listing for a 1967 Plus 4 low body for sale in St. Au-

gustine, Florida. It appeared to be just what I was looking for, and it was in my price range. I arranged for someone to evaluate the car. They came back with a positive evaluation, so I bought it in mid-January and had it trucked to me up here in New Hampshire.

I had Brit Bits, my local British car spot, go through the car thoroughly. They replaced the rear brake cylinders, replaced the water pump, installed a battery kill switch, repacked the wheel

bearings and numerous other little jobs. I also had them install a dual line brake master cylinder, which I HIGHLY recommend to any Morgan owner.

I have put antique vanity plates on my Morgan, "Graham". This is to honor the memory of my good friend Graham Pursey, an Englishman whom I met while he was on assignment from IBM here in the U.S. He passed away, way too early, two years ago.

So I started driving Graham during sunny days, it was exhilarating. I have to admit, it drives "differently" than my TR-6. No synchro in first, no overdrive and I'm convinced the wheels are bolted directly to the frame.

I am a member of BCNH, British Cars of New Hampshire. As we like to say, it is a social club with a British car fetish. We meet the second Wednesday of each month at 6:00 for dinner at a local restaurant. Driving home from a meeting in May, I turned the lights on for the first time (I had briefly flicked them on and off when I first got the car in January to make sure they worked). After about 3 minutes smoke started pouring out from behind the dashboard. I shut the lights off and the smoke subsided. Fortunately, it was still dusk, and I could drive home without killing myself, or anyone else.

The next day I removed the dashboard and saw where the fire had originated. At some point a previous owner had the fuel gage rebuilt and that necessitated a voltage stabilizer be installed.



Someone had used a piece of cardboard as an insulator; it had either shaken loose or worn through. In any event this was where the fire started.

My original plan was to replace just the damaged portion of the wiring harness. On closer inspection I was appalled at the condition of all the wiring: cold solder joints, splices with no wire nuts—only electrical tape, frayed wiring, you get the picture. So, I ordered a complete wiring harness, actually three, and completely rewired Graham. In the process I replaced several of the light sockets. A word here about my use of the word “I”. Although I know the basics, I’m not proficient in automotive mechanics. I come by this honestly, my dad was a polished, professional salesman. But he would kill himself with a screwdriver. I never saw him pop the hood on any car he ever owned, I am not sure he knew how. My good friend, Peter Benz, IS a car person. He owns six, or is it seven, cars of various makes, models and vintages. He has also rewired his RV. He volunteered to “help” me re-wiring Graham. In truth, my part in the re-wiring process was handing him the tools and holding the drop light when necessary. As part of the rewiring “I” fused the light circuit, something Morgan had chosen not to do.

Just before I put Graham away for the winter, I re-hung the driver’s side door. It is strange working on your car using wood screws. I drilled out the holes (in the door), inserted wood plugs and assembled it. Fortunately, I build furniture



as a hobby, so I have the skills and tools to maintain an ash framed car.

Graham is a long-term restoration project. This winter Brit Bits is going to install a Ford 5 speed transmission. It will be nice to have synchro in first and the fifth overdrive gear. In 2021 I will have it painted; I’ve not decided for sure what color(s), but I am leaning towards black wings with a pale-yellow body.

I also want to redo the interior; have the wire wheels chromed, and replace the hood and tonneau cover.

My TR-6 is classic, my Morgan is iconic.

Is it spring yet?



Photos, Above: A smoked wiring harness. Luca strikes again.



Our possible new paint scheme.

Swedish Connection

Making a long story short, as a result of a connection made between Spider (through Steve Schefbauer) and the owner of a similar Morgan in Sweden who wanted a 3/4 Morgan Group badge for his car, Spider purchased the 3/4 Group badge, dispatched it to Sweden via FedEx International, and after a week or so spent in anxious anticipation, received a reciprocal Morgan Club of Sweden badge.

There is more to this story (as there always is with Spider), including a link to Peter Morgan, but that will have to wait until our next issue.

I'm certain there must be other badge exchange stories in the club. If you have one I'd love to hear it. Here are the respective badges on Morgans across the pond from each other.



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Track Day At Lime Rock Park





INTERVIEW

My Lunch (and interview) with SKIP BARBER

Steve Scheffbauer, *Morganeer* Editor-At-Large

Here in Connecticut, in the northwest corner of the state, we are fortunate to have not one but two icons of Motor Sports and their history. The first is Lime Rock Park; the second is Skip Barber. On a recent Thursday, six of our club members were enjoying an afternoon of Autocross and track laps, courtesy of Walter Irvine, V.P. of Lime Rock, to use as a beta test and get feedback on what was called the Tapas Program—a taste of what Lime Rock has to offer. While the troops were engaged in testing the limits of their Morgans, I joined Skip Barber in the Chalet for lunch and an exclusive interview. This is a brief insight into that conversation.



Skip, the perfect host, had provided us with Lime Rock Park Catering's best, a large turkey wrap, chips, chocolate chip cookies, assorted condiments, and a bottle of Gatorade. Due to the current health concerns we sat at separate tables about 10 feet apart, ate, and chatted.

Morganeer: When you left the hallowed halls of Harvard in 1959, where did you see yourself in 10 years?

I didn't really have a plan. All I knew was, I wanted to go racing. So I devoted all my time and energy to working to raise money for that pursuit.

What was your racing experience?

First race at Lime Rock was a regional race in 1959 in a Sprite, F- production National Champ in 1962. I raced a Lotus 23, a Brabham, and then on to a McLaren. (In 1963 Skip actually beat the famous F1 star Jim Clark at Mosport in an identical car. EAL) I won three SCCA National Championships in a row and finished third in the 1967 USRRC. In the 1971-72 Formula 1 seasons I drove a March with pretty good success and that led to a contract with March for Formula 5000 in 1973. That car was a disaster and almost overnight my F1 career was over.

Tell us about the Skip Barber Racing School.

I started in 1975, first at Lime Rock. It became the largest driving school in the

world, with classes at tracks all over the U.S. (Skip is too humble to say this but his graduates read like a who's who of celebrities and motor sports drivers...some of the best in the world. EAL)

How did you become President and Owner of Lime Rock?

In 1983, former owner Harry Theodoracopulos had retired from racing and decided that the track needed a new owner. So I put together six investors and myself and made him an offer. Slowly over a period of time, I bought out the six investors so now it's just me and the bank.

I know there are books that have been written and films made about Lime Rock Park, but can you give us the condensed version of its history?

The track opened in 1957 and there were races almost every weekend. Sports Car Club of America was very big back in the beginning decades, but its importance has faded over time and is now replaced by other organizations. In 1959 we had what was arguably the most sig-



Photos:

Above: Skip Barber—race driver, racing school entrepreneur, owner of Lime Rock Park

Left: Skip and Steve sit for their interview



nificant race ever held. It was the first time amateurs raced against professionals, something that was forbidden in all sports, at the time The Formula Libre, sanctioned by USAC, pitted Europe's best cars, Indianapolis cars and the world's finest drivers against a four cylinder Offenhauser Midget, the oldest, smallest and maybe the slowest car in the race, driven by USAC's Roger Ward. And Roger won, to everyone's surprise!

Who holds the lap record at Lime Rock?

P.J. Jones set the record in 1993 in an IMSA Toyota, run by Dan Gurney's All American Racers. Lap time was 43:112 at an average speed of more than 123 MPH. PJ was quoted as saying "we had 900 + horsepower and 10,000 lbs. of down force". That's a record that will probably be around for a long time— incredible down force.

What changes have been done to the track over the years?

There have been big improvements over the years. It was like an open pit where you shoveled money, over a period of time. The big changes happened in 2006 when the track was totally rebuilt. There were a lot of tree stumps under the dirt holding things up, and in 2015 we finally got the drainage under control and the paddocks modernized efficiently. All along we have improved the landscaping, making it more of a park where you felt good about bringing the family, and, of course, the facilities, rest

rooms were all greatly improved.

How important was the VSCCA at Lime Rock?

They were very important in the development of the Vintage Fall Festival and have sanctioned it every year along with some big sponsors like BMW and Rolex.

How did The Gathering of The Marques start at The Vintage Fall Festival?

It started as a car show put on by local car clubs. We thought that everyone who was not in the Concours should still be able to show their cars, hence The Gathering of The Marques.

Since you have owned the track,

have you ever said to yourself "thank God I own this track"?

I hate to say this because I'm usually a modest guy, but I saved this track, over the years and got it into the condition of being able to pass it along to the next caretaker with no concerns.

Skip, when I entered the track this morning, I had my temperature taken (forehead scanner) was asked the definitive questions about COVID-19 and was told to wear my mask. Is this business as usual for Lime Rock Park?

We have worked with and are being monitored very carefully by the State of Connecticut for compliance in this pandemic crisis. We have chosen to do, over and above, what the state requires because the health and safety of our staff, visitors and guests is so very important to all of us here at Lime Rock Park. We are limiting ticket sales to 25% of capacity, have staggered the sinks and facilities in the restrooms, installed hand sanitizers throughout the Park and will require face masks and temperature checks for all who arrive at the gate. We are planning to proceed with the

Photos:

Top: Morgans and their owners gather at the 2019 'Gathering of the Marques' organized by Steve in Sept 2019

Bottom: Morgans on the Lime Rock track



Vintage Fall Festival and want to be sure everyone's safe.

Skip, that about raps up my questions. There is so much more that I could cover but our space and your time are limited. Thank you for your hospitality, openness and honesty. I've enjoyed our time together and wish you more success than you have already had in your very successful life. Stay safe and healthy.

Photo: Lime Rock Park paddock and control tower among the Berkshire hills of northwest Connecticut





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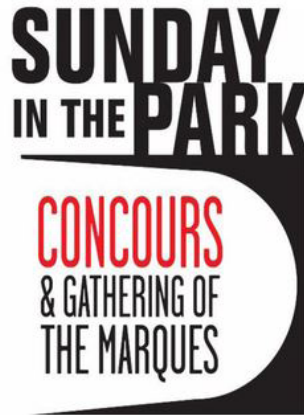




PLUS 4 FOR SALE

A rare 1984 Morgan Plus 4, Green (BRG)/Black int. with 22,000 miles, factory 2000cc Fiat twin over head cam, aluminum body, 5 speed close ratio Abarth box, 2 barrel weber carb. Car has been gone over from bumper to bumper including replacing rubber components and more. Have documentation of work done. A solid, beautiful Morgan.

732-804-1590 John



September 6th, 2020 Gathering of the Marques is on. Face Mask is required as well as social distancing.

It will be Concoeurs and Car Clubs only, no spectators except for Club members. Arrive between 8:00AM and 9:00 AM Sunday.

Purchase tickets in advance on line at limerock.com Print out ticket and bring with you, use CODE-- British15-- for a club 15% discount. Check in at "Will Call" to register and get everything you need.

PLEASE LET ME KNOW IF YOU'RE COMING: we need a head count. Let's all get behind this; it may be the only time this year to get together.

Steve Schefbauer sschefbauer@aol.com

For Sale

Gas tank for Morgan 4/4.
Series IV \$100



Prices do not reflect shipping
Contact: Perry Weiner. 215-778-6987
mogowner@gmail.com



Olde World Restorations

Call Penny Bates for Parts,
Service, Restoration
PO Box 111
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215-947-8720
OldeWorld@iglide.net



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

MEMBER PROFILE

Tom Austin— Photographer, Ace Mechanic, World Traveler, Morgan Man

Frank Wnek



I first got to know Tom Austin soon after he became a new club member, when I realized we shared an interesting Morgan related connection. Knowing who he had purchased his Plus 4 from (and its previous ownership) I realized that his Morgan and both of mine, the 4/4 and Plus 4 Drophead Coupe, had ALL been previously owned (although not at the same time) by a very pleasant fellow named George MacIntyre out in Chico, California.

Tom and his wife Elaine became very active members of the club soon after joining, and his excellent photography has graced the pages of *The Morgan-eer* for many years now, adding visual enhancement to reporting on many Autumn MOGs and other club events. Knowing that his employment afforded him the opportunity to travel to the far corners of the world, I became intrigued with what his background, education and experience had led him in this direction.

Tom grew up as a city boy in Brooklyn, NY and went to (the now defunct) Jesuit Brooklyn Prep High School. He was a 'car guy' from as far back as he can remember, toying with the idea of becoming an auto designer early on, and like many of us children of the 50's claims back then he could recognize the make of any car just by a glimpse of a tail fin or front grill. I wonder if that

held true for Morgans? At 16 he passed his drivers license test on the second try, claiming that the first examiner failed him simply because he seemed "too sure of himself!"

He went on to undergraduate college at Georgetown in Washington, DC, and purchased his first car sophomore year—a 1960 Austin 850 Mini for which he parted with the huge sum of ninety dollars. As he explained, it was "not the speediest of cars traveling the NJ Turnpike unless there was a great tailwind, but it met the need, going back and forth from NYC to DC." He had also considered a Morris Minor AND a Morgan which he found "somewhere in Queens", but they needed work and he had neither time nor money.

To help with college expenses he took on some interesting part time jobs. The first while home for the summer was, believe it or not, a Good Humor truck driver/vendor. (Does this make any of you other than me instantly salivate and remember that chime theme song blaring from a speaker mounted on the top as the Good Humor truck started down your street?) This was a bit challenging because he was just filling in for full time drivers on their day off, and ended up with a different 'route' almost every day. He must have gotten to know all the streets of Manhattan

pretty well, at least. Moving up rapidly in the 'sales rep' job ladder, his next job while at Georgetown was as a Kirby vacuum cleaner salesman. (Honestly I'm NOT making this up!) This paid a little better, and the clientele was a bit more sophisticated, but it also offered new challenges. This may explain how he developed his 'magnetic' personality.

Photos: Top: Normally the 'man behind the camera' Tom is second from right in this photo from a recent event on the Cape

Bottom: High school Sweethearts Tom & Elaine—life partners to be

Opposite page: Tom at Lime Rock



Tragedy struck the poor Mini in association with a sad chapter of US history. Tom had brought the car to a garage to have some work done—an overheating problem as he recalls—and left the car there overnight parked in the garage lot. That was the very night in 1968 when Martin Luther King was assassinated, and when Tom went to pick up the car several days later he discovered both the garage and his Mini were reduced to smoldering ruins. He was able to sell the car for \$25 for parts.

Tom does claim to have learned some shade tree mechanical skills from that first car. His favorite story was taking a drive into the countryside one weekend with a friend. He knew he had a brake leak somewhere because he was losing fluid, so he just took some spare fluid with him and hit the road.

Somewhere along the way he discovered that the leak was coming from one of the front brake lines, so for a roadside repair he detached the line from its brake cylinder, bent the line back over itself, crimped it closed with some locking pliers (note: a MUST for every Morganeer's tool kit) and just for good measure, pounded on the crimp with a handy roadside rock! And amazingly, it did stop the leak! But you can just imagine what happened every time he gingerly pressed on the brakes for his drive home with only one front brake. Right?

With his newly discovered mechanical skills, his next job would be—you guessed it—doing minor repairs on some of his college buddies' cars. And with some of his pocket cash he managed to purchase his next vehicle, a '63 Austin Mini Cooper for the tidy sum of \$125. This vehicle ended up with some severe overheating issues, and after taking the entire engine apart Tom decided it was not worth rebuilding, so he sold it again for parts (Do we see a trend showing here? Also some Morgan 'genes' developing?)

His next car purchase (and this is where it starts getting bizarre) was

a '60 Jaguar Mark IX Saloon. I'm sure he must have taken a peek under the bonnet before purchasing and saying to himself 'yeah, I got this. Piece of cake.' He has two remembrances of this car as well. The first: hoping to impress his new girlfriend Elaine (to become his life's partner) Tom purchased a 4 x 8 ft sheet of Masonite,



painted one side white and then wrote HAPPY BIRTHDAY on it, and proceeded to—yep, you guessed it—strap it to the roof of the Jag and drive from Georgetown to the Hamptons, NY to present it to her. Of course he spent most of that 4 or so hour drive with his left arm out the window holding down his birthday card so it wouldn't take flight. Second, on a subsequent trip from NYC to Georgetown, Tom stopped a few miles from campus to get gas, and as he stopped at the pumps the steering wheel came off in his hands. (Thus proving once again my mantra—'if you want to DRIVE a Jaguar, own TWO Jaguars!!')

At this point Tom decided he was DONE with old cars! Sure Tom. We'll see how long that lasts. This story is TOO good to be over yet!

Filling in the years just a bit between Tom's Jaguar experience and his Morgan ownership, we find that Tom graduated from Georgetown in 1970 with a degree in Psychology. He landed his first job several months later working for *The Washington Post*, where he sort of worked alongside a junior fellow reported named Carl Bernstein (ring a bell?).

His claim to fame there was giving Carl a tip on a for-profit school ripping off its students, and Carl proceeded to steal his scoop and wrote a 6 page expose on it before Tom even had placed the first piece of paper in his typewriter.

So Tom decided that journalism was not his thing, and after perusing the 'help wanted' ads posted on the U Maryland campus nearby where he and Elaine had taken up residence, found a job on campus as a research assistant for American Institute for Research. He could even commute to work on his 10 speed bicycle. But Tom soon decided he liked the research part of his job more than the actual job itself and he could concentrate on research if he went back to school. He applied to graduate schools just as Elaine announced she was with child—perfect timing.

He was accepted at a PhD program at University of Massachusetts in Bio-Psychology. He milked this for 4 years, along with a fellowship from the National Institute For Mental Health, and upon graduation took an Assistant Professor position at a college in Pennsylvania.

There he enjoyed teaching classes such as Intro to Psychology and Neurophysiology. There he also discovered an interest in Computer Managed Instruction techniques, and after several years decided to explore career opportunities related to his interest in computer technology applications. After seeking the assistance of a DC based career headhunter he landed a job at Digital Equipment Corporation, thus moving back to the Washington, DC area.

After moving up the career ladder starting as a software specialist at DEC, he took the opportunity to take a position with DEC that opened up an Massachusetts, and they moved there in 1979. Elaine also having taken a position at DEC. Tom moved into a marketing position there, and found himself involved in DEC's contracts with the Dept of Energy. In his next promotion he found himself in the engineering

department managing OEM ‘Original Equipment Manufacturer’ issues for DEC. He was certainly becoming well rounded as a manager.

Soon after, his work at DEC provided frequent travel opportunities. In one 18 month period he travelled to Austria 13 times to work with a client there. Subsequent trips took him to the Netherlands and France.

Unfortunately, business troubles for DEC started in 1992 when a major investment in a computer mainframe product to compete directly with IBM faltered. Seeing the handwriting on the wall, Tom started looking for a new job opportunity and was hired by Gartner in early 1994. There he starting working in Office Systems Management and did a lot of writing. He quickly started up the opportunity ladder there, as he described; “In 1996, I was made a Vice President. In 1997, my title was elevated to Research Fellow and Vice President.” Some top level short term CEO shake ups soon soured Tom to corporate politics and he eventually fell back on being a fellow and analyst, where he brought iCloud and several other innovations to the company before leaving for retirement in 2016.

Tom and his wife Elaine go back to high school days, believe it or not. He at a boys parochial high school and Elaine at a girls school, both in Brooklyn. They first met at a debating tournament. They dated on and off through college and were married upon graduation in 1970. Their son Tom Jr. was born in No-



vember of 1971. And Tom proudly adds “We celebrated our 50th anniversary this year.”

And now on to Morgan ownership (finally!) After Tom’s youthful dabbling in British Marques detailed above, he settled on becoming a boring Toyota Corolla owner for most of his working career. You know those indestructible Japanese cars that you could drive into

the surf, leave it overnight for the tide to come in and out and go back and drive it away the next day. (Don’t try this at home kids!) But later in his career he did have short affairs with a Triumph Spitfire and several late model Mustang GT convertibles. But that seed planted in his youth of the Morgan he passed up in favor of, he thought, a more reliable Mini never went away. It just took a while to germinate.

So it came to pass that, after perusing several issues of *The Morganeer* given to him by some unknown angel (likely Herb Loeffler) during a visit to the Lars Anderson Museum, in the year of our Lord 2010, Tom went up to the mountain and came down with his beloved Morgan Plus 4 Roadster. Another biblical prophesy fulfilled.

Subsequently, Tom and Elaine and their maroon and black Morgan have



Photos:

Top: Tom at the wheel of Moggie
Middle and Bottom: In our sad Covid summer, Moggie searches for kindred souls - at the British Beer Company—no one there - at the beach—no one there

become regular participants in the Northern New England club events and Autumn MOGs. Elaine, to her credit has even been so bold as to try her hand at autocrossing (taking Autocross 'Rookie of the Year' honors at Autumn MOG 2019). And their car is always exceptionally turned out for the concours. Of late Tom has been intimately involved in the planning for the last several Autumn MOGs, making good use of his organizational and management skills.

Tom's answer to my question about his greatest Morgan 'misadventure' is quite interesting. As only he could tell it:

Clutch slip led to new clutch which led, 2 years later to clutch slip which leads to new clutch which leads to new engine seals leads which lead to observing significant engine bearing wear leads to rebuilding the short block. Larry fixed it right. (The first clutch replacement was done quickly by another mechanic pressured by me to get it done in three days.

Tom's other interest or hobby is his photography. Never to be seen without a camera slung around his neck (even at the Autumn MOG banquets), his portfolio contains lots of interesting people, places, and Morgans of course. When he decided to get serious about his photography he thought he would get some professional training and attended a one week course taught by The National Geographic Society Expeditions in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He has done underwater photography (in his scuba diving days), and other subjects include his grandchildren, and travelogues of trips to South Africa, Ireland and Belize. After purchasing his Morgan he thought he should practice up a bit on automobile photography before his first Morgan meet, so he spent a whole day at the Ralph Lauren collection exhibit at the Boston MFA. His camera of choice, a Canon EOS 20D.

So there you have it. Another of the diverse, very interesting and accomplished couples in our little Morgan club. Yes folks, we don't take any just ordinary Joes . . . or Toms . . . or Dicks or Harrys.

Morgan Books For Sale

Gary Bell, aka Cuthbert Twillie, author of A Yank At Malvern, has put up his extensive library of Morgan related books for sale. If you have an interest in any of these books please contact him with an offer. 360-877-5160 garyb6158@gmail.com

Morgan Sweeps the Board

Alderson and Rushton hardback

Morgan Four Owner's Workshop Manual

R Clark soft back

Morgan Three Wheelers

Peter Miller hardback/flyleaf

Morgan. First and Last of the Real Sportscars

Gregory H. Bowden hardback/flyleaf

More Morgan

H. Bowden hardback/flyleaf

Morgan Plus 8

Graham Robson hardback/flyleaf

Morgan Sports Cars, The Early Years

Alderson & Chapman hardback/flyleaf

Morgan. The Cars and the Factory

John Tipler hardback/flyleaf

A Morgan Called Red

Larry Ayers soft back

Morgans to 1977

Roger Bell hardback

Moggie. Purchase, Maintenance & Enjoyment

Colin Musgrove hardback/flyleaf

Morgan Sport and Turenwagen

(In German) hardback

Four Wheeled Morgans, Vol I. Flat Rad Models

Ken Hill hardback

Four Wheeled Organs, Vol 2.

Ken Hill hardback

Morgan, The Last Survivor

Chris Harvey hardback

Famous Car Factories Morgan.

Bengt A. Holm hardback/flyleaf

Morgans. Pride of the British

John H. Shealley II hardback/flyleaf

The Rare Ones. Peter Morgan and the Plus 4 Plus

John H. Shealley II soft back

The Vintage Years of the Morgan. Three Wheeler

William Boddy soft back

Morgan Plus 4 and 4/4

Gold Portfolio Brooklands Books soft back

Morgan Plus 4 Super Profile

John Teague Hardback

Morgan Best of the British in Old Photographs

Ken Hill soft back

Morgan Cars

Gold Portfolio Brooklands Books soft back

Completely Morgan, A 3 Vol Trilogy

Ken Hill hardback/flyleaf

Morgan 75 Years on the Road

Ken Hill hardback/flyleaf

Morgan In The Colonies. Across The Pond

John H Shealley II. hardback/flyleaf

Morgan Cars 69 to 79

Brooklands Books soft back

70 Years of Morgan Motoring 1910 to 1980

soft back

Morgan Sports

Auto Car soft back

Morgan Yearbook 1980/81

soft back

Morgan Restoration and Buying

Practical Classics soft back

Notes From a Morgan Garage

Fred Sisson

A Yank at Malvern, 5th Edition

Cuthbert Twillie

M3W For Sale



- 2017 SA9M32856HP202024
- Black with Honey Tan Interior
- Stage 1 exhaust kit
- Polished Stainless Steel Exhaust
- Updated windscreen
- Brooklands Steering Wheel
- Elastic storage pockets
- UK Enamel Flags
- Stainless Headlamp Stone guards
- Badge Bar
- 1440 miles
- Price: \$45,000, ONO

Because of an old cycling injury flare-up, I have to sell my M3W. Condition: Immaculate.

Location: So. Vermont. Additional Photos available. Tel 802 365 4500

Judy and Warren Mann's Cars and Castles Tour 2017

Warren Mann



The inspiration for our trip was the 100th Anniversary of Zündapp being celebrated at a commemorative Motorcycle Rally in Germany. As long as we were going to Germany, why not visit England? And as long as we were going to be on the other side of the pond, a week's visit with relatives in Sweden seemed in order as well! Especially once we learned our trip would time to celebrate cousin Per-Olof and Margareta's 40th Anniversary.

Our trip begins with a stop in England where MG Banners greeted us at the airport. "So you went to London to see Big Ben, London Bridge, The Queens Palace, Changing of the Guard and the like?" Well, no. Our visit to England had one purpose in mind... a pilgrimage to the Morgan Motor Car Factory in the Malvern Hills south of Birmingham.

Since my days in college, I have wanted a Morgan sports car. But somehow, whenever we went shopping for a Morgan we would end up buying something else. After 48 years of looking at classified ads, keeping an eye on *Hemming's Motor News*, and eBay, we actually only looked at a few Morgans for sale. We never found the right car, at the right time, in the right place, at the right price. But alas, our time finally came in 2016. I was flogging a 1932 Ford Model-A Tudor Hot Rod on eBay when on a whim I asked someone who was offering up a Morgan for sale, if he would have any interest in trading. I never dreamed he would. But sure enough, I traded up even for a 1989 Morgan 4/4 with less than 2,800 original miles on it. The Hot Rod was trucked out to Texas where the Morgan was retrieved. We did the deal on faith, sight unseen.

So now that we were Morgan Owners,

it seemed only proper that we visit the Morgan Factory in Malvern, England.

Our flight from Boston took us to Amsterdam where we changed planes to fly into Birmingham, England. It's an overnight flight from the USA with the time zone changes, and no sleep on the plane we arrived in England as weary travelers. It was supposed to be only a 90 minute drive from the airport to Malvern. But my sleepless wits were not up to the challenge of driving on the wrong side of the road seated on the wrong side of the car. Especially challenging were the roundabouts, which travel in the opposite direction of elsewhere in the civilized world. The directional and traffic signs were totally puzzling and before long we found ourselves sucked off in the wrong direction and heading towards London. We finally calmed down and got back on course. Off the highway and onto the secondary roads we were faced with the biggest challenge of driving in the UK. The roads are not much wider than a driveway. They are just barely two cars wide. But making matters worse, cars park on both sides of the road so you have to play chicken with oncoming traffic. It really is crazy.

We arrived much the worse for wear at our Hotel in the village of Malvern. Oh, I forgot to mention, KLM airlines didn't just lose our bags; they lost the entire plane's luggage. The plane left Amsterdam with no luggage loaded on the plane. Thankful-

Photos:

Top: Warren & Judy relax in their hotel after a LONG day

Bottom left: The cozy Cotford Hotel

Bottom right: The lovely village of Malvern



ly we had carried on bags with a change of clothes and essentials. I cannot go without mentioning that KLM should be avoided. They have very friendly people, but the airline is totally out of control. They have no idea what gates the planes will depart or arrive from until the very last minute. Constant gate changes are the norm and expecting that luggage will arrive on the same plane as the passengers is just asking too much.

Cotford Hotel advertises in *MOG*, the Morgan magazine. It is a storybook Inn of Gothic Victorian architectural style. It was built in 1851 as the summer residence for the Bishop of Worcester.

What was the Bishop's private chapel is now the restaurant *L'Amuse Bouche*. On arrival, they brought two cold beers to our private courtyard. After a brief nap it was off to the reception room for drinks and then into the dining room, I ordered Lock Fyne scallops from Scotland. Judy had wild venison from Balmoral, Queen Elizabeth's II's estate in Scotland. Some said, don't expect much from the food in the UK. To that I would respond... "rubbish". Currently owned by a couple named Morgan (no relationship they insist), he is a well-known chef; she runs the business side of things. The service and food alone were worth the trip. But enough of the food.

The next morning we were off to the Morgan factory, just a few miles down the road. We roamed the factory grounds, visited the gift shop, and checked-in with the rental desk to see if the 3-wheeler would be running the next morning. "It is still tentative," It turns out the rental car had been used by *Autocar* magazine for a long-term test and, no doubt, it was given a thorough workout.

We had booked a mid-morning organized tour with about 20 other people



from various corners of the world. Only a few of us were Morgan owners, some were thinking about buying one, and others were just interested in a factory tour of the oldest, still operating, automobile factory in the world.

The first Morgans were 3-wheelers. Two wheels in the front, one wheel in the back with a hearty V-Twin motorcycle engine, (the likes of Matchless, J.A.P) mounted at the very front of the car. Morgan has never manufactured engines, they simply do not build enough cars to warrant the expense, but they have always used the best engines from other makers (Triumph, Rover, BMW to mention a few). But the most common engine in 4-wheel Morgans are European Fords.

Why on earth would anyone make a three wheel car? Three wheel cars are considered to be "motorcycles," and as such they are taxed at a far lower rate. So basically, the three wheel car was a tax dodge. They represented a lightweight vehicle that was far more comfortable and more respectable than a motorcycle with a sidecar. This was an affordable performance vehicle that was considerably less expensive to own and operate. But beyond

the tax advantage they are thrilling to drive...

The Morgan Motor Company was founded over a century ago, in the fledgling days of the automotive industry. Since the first car in 1909, the Morgan family has owned the Company.

From the beginning, Morgans were more than a means of transportation, they extolled a newborn

spirit of personal freedom and excitement and a new age. Lightweight and powerful, even the early Morgans harnessed the imagination of all who drove them.

In early competition, the Morgans excelled in trials competition and on road tracks. In 1936 the first 4-wheel Morgan was produced. It was designated the Morgan 4/4, (four wheels, 4-cylinder engine). In 1938, a 4/4 was entered into the 24 Hours of Le Mans race and it finished in the top 13.

Needless to say, much has changed in the way automobiles are designed and manufactured today. But in Malvern, England in a series of brick sheds, much remains the same as it was in the very early days of the automobile industry. Morgan never embraced the merits of Henry Ford's assembly line mass-production technology. Today, each car is still built one at a time with one man responsible for taking the car through the various stages of production.

The process begins in the Chassis Shop where the fabrication of the frame, suspension and steering takes place. The car is then rolled to the next building. This process is made easy by the fact that the buildings are on a hillside and each stage of production is one building down the hill. In the Wood Shop, the body frame is created in age-old craftsmanship with hand tools, vats of glue, steam and pressure-bending clamps, tacks, screws and wood – much in the way fine furniture, wooden boats, early airplanes and most cars were originally fabricated. The Morgan philosophy for the



Photos:

Top: Arriving at the Morgan Works

Left: The Morgan 'works', as it was, is and ever shall be

most part is that if it worked then, it likely still works now, so why change? That is not to say that in some capacity Morgan has not embraced new technologies.

The Aero line of cars is crafted with space-age technology and materials. A new electric Morgan will soon go into production. But the classic line of cars is still, for the most part, fabricated the way they were originally. Each car receives the metal panels, which form the car's exterior. Working with small hammers, the metal panels are fitted to the wood frame. The swooping fenders had for years been hand formed using what is called an "English Wheel" to stretch, bend and shape flat metal panels into compound curved fenders.

Today, a process of machine forming the swooping front fender takes place at a vendor facility. Fender panels arrive at Morgan where they are individually hand fitted to the rest of the body. These cars are very organic. Every piece of the car is hand fit and the finished pieces from one

car will not fit another car. It is a joy to watch the men hand fitting, sanding and hammering away on the panels.

The entire body is fit to the car and much effort is put into aligning the doors, panels and seams. The body is then disassembled and the pieces of the body are taken to the "Paint Shop" where they are painted in an endless variety of colors to the new owner's specifications. This includes traditional and totally outrageous colors.

Each car at Morgan is what is called "Bespoken." That is to say it is custom created to the specifications of whoever ordered the car. Every day, paint is delivered to the paint shop from an outside vendor. Only a day's worth of paint is delivered at a time, specifically for the cars that will be painted that day. If you want, say, a bright orange Morgan to match your girlfriend's hair color, with electric blue leather seats with magenta stitches and orange seatbelts with a purple cloth convertible top... they will build it that way for

you and you will have the only one in the world like it.

On a good week, Morgan completes about 14 cars. There is no stockpile of unsold cars at the factory or on dealer lots. Cars are sold before they are built. You order a car and wait 6 to 8 months for delivery. If you are very lucky, your local Morgan dealer may have "reserved" a build slot in Morgan's calendar that is unsold for. But better hurry!

You can choose from 3 models in the Classic Line. The 4/4 has a Ford 1.6 liter motor; the Plus 4 has a Ford 2000cc motor; and the "Classic" now has the powerful Ford Mustang V-6 engine. However, if

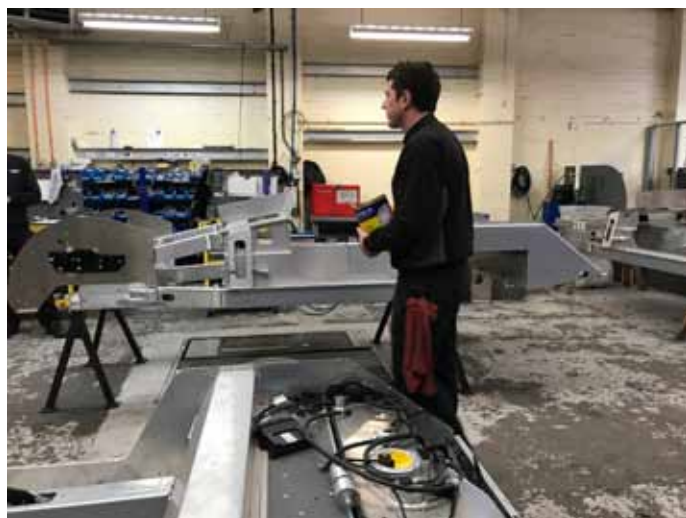
Photos:

Top left: The 'new' Morgan chassis. "Let's see, how will this go together?"

Top right: Believe it or not, every new Morgan begins as a 'bin'

Bottom left: Peter Morgan's office—now a shrine

Bottom right: In the factory 'museum'—Lady Jane Morgan's one off PLUS 8 DHC



you live in the USA, you can only order a three wheel Morgan. Our Morgan is a 1989 4/4 model, (4 wheels, 4-cylinder engine). The 4/4 is the oldest model, still manufactured, by any automaker in the world.

During the factory tour I asked a number of questions about our car back home. If the tour guide did not have an answer he'd stop the tour and ask one of the factory workers. "Say Lyle, you were here in 1989, we have a question about the door beams, do you recall?"

With roots in racing and competition, Morgan returned to Le Mans once again in 2004 and the Aero 8 racer completed the Challenging 24 hours of Le Mans. And since then, two modified Aero Super Sports competed in the 2009 GT3 race series, winning the first two races of the season at Silverstone. This was a magnificent achievement, and throughout the season the Morgans ran in the top five of a grid of 35 of the best sports cars in the world. These are remarkable feats of engineering excellence when you consider that they have been achieved competing against the largest companies in the world with financial resources that dwarf Morgan. During our factory tour, it was mentioned that in the last major race Morgan entered, the catering budget alone for the Audi team was larger than Morgan's entire budget for participating in the race (cars, parts, support, drivers, mechanics and the like.)

Three wheel Morgans initially went out of production sometime in the 1950s. But in 2010 Morgan reintroduced a new 3-wheel car as a commemorative salute to their past. At the time, they anticipated building a very limited number of this model, as they couldn't dream that people would want this old design. When the new 3-wheel Morgan was unveiled at an automobile show, the crowd went wild and hundreds of orders were taken on the spot. Everyone at the factory is still dumbfounded by the success of the new 3-wheel Morgan. As of the end of 2016, they have built 2175! And that is a very big number indeed for a company that completes only a few cars a day.

The 3-wheel Morgan also has been received well in the USA because 4-wheel Morgans have been unavailable for many years as the cars simply do not comply with high-speed crash tests, air bags, high impact bumpers and all the federal regulations of the day. But the 3-wheel Morgan

is considered to be a motorcycle trike, so it meets the USA standards of a motorcycle.

We saw our first new 3-wheel Morgan a few years ago at an Antique Motorcycle meet in Rhinebeck, New York. I found it interesting but not as attractive as the old original 3-wheel Morgans from the 1940s with classic Matchless and J.A.P. V-twin motorcycle engines. The body lines on the original cars are also more pleasing. But after one drive in the new 3-wheel Morgan I'm sold on the virtues of this exciting little car. The V-Twin engines from S&S in Wisconsin - a 2-liter, 117 horsepower version of their Harley derivative engine delivers gobs of torque, plenty of speed and a very sweet exhaust burble that is music to the ear. It is paired with a Mazda gearbox. Weighing just over 1100 pounds, these little cars fly along at 120 miles per hour. But the sensation is of far greater speed.

My college roommate, Jeff Craig (who I personally hold responsible for the tens of thousands of dollars I have spent on British cars since meeting him, not to mention the countless hours of wrenching on said cars) introduced me to Morgans, other British cars and vintage motorcycles. He had a 1967 Plus 4 during our college years and

Photos:

From top to bottom:

New M3W assembly shed

A new M3W in work

Getting checked out before our M3W rental

A narrow country road "elbows in dear!"



we spent many mornings over coffee looking through classic car and motorcycles books and magazines. I was in college to learn, after all.

Last year or so, Jeff had a chance to drive one of the new 3-wheel Morgans during a test drive weekend with his friend Peter Egan, who is a famous author and columnist for *Cycle World* and *Road & Track* magazines. Jeff sent me a photo of himself behind the wheel of a 3-wheel Morgan with a beaming smile like the Cheshire cat. He told me the experience of driving the car was unlike any other. Perhaps the closest thing to an open-wheel, single-seat race car or an early open-cockpit airplane. I agreed at some point I would have to drive one of these crazy 3-wheel “new” Morgans.

Judy and I were on a mission to visit the Morgan Factory, an almost religious pilgrimage of touring the plant and seeing the cars being made, but I was also keen on driving a new 3-wheel Morgan and had made arrangements months in advance with the factory. The little plant in Malvern is the original site where Morgans have always been built. It is the oldest operating automobile factory in the world. The factory organizes daily tours and also rents half a dozen cars for the day as a marketing tool to help excite prospective buyers. But there is only one 3-wheeler in the rental fleet.

We got to rent a Land Rover Graphite Blue 3-wheeler that had just recently completed a 3-month road-test review with *AutoCar* magazine. No top and no side curtains. After a quick checkout and some instructions we were off. Some of the narrow lanes were a bit of a challenge, but the drive through the lovely Malvern hills country roads was magical. After a while Judy turned to me with a smile on her face and said “I think we need one of these.” We did encounter some rain along the way (typical English weather), but just pulled under some trees to wait it out. Midday we stopped at a roadside pub for an outside lunch. We parked the little Morgan at the curb and snapped on the tonneau cover in case the rain picked up. We walked into a local pub and asked the bar keep if he served lunch. He sized me up and said, “Here’s what you want to do, mate. You see that meat shop across the street? You take yourself right over there and order a sandwich. Bring it back here and you can sit and have a nice pint while you eat!”



That’s a new one on me.... BYOF? “Bring your own food!”

After lunch we meandered our way back to the factory on some more picturesque roads in the English countryside. All in all a lovely experience.

Before leaving Morgan, we visited the Parts Department, while they only mail order parts through the dealer network, if you are visiting the factory you can pick up parts and take them with you. The day before I had asked the tour guide if I would be able to buy a glove box door for my car. He suggested it would be best to make my own. When he saw us the next day he handed Judy a big swatch of tan leather and said, “Should be enough to make that glove box door!”

As we planned for our departure, there was some concern with traffic headed back to Birmingham as a highway had been closed due to the discovery of an unexploded World War II bomb found during a construction project along the roadside. Speaking of the war, Morgan uses Ash wood exclusively in their body frames. In harvesting old Ash lumber they often have problems when working the wood, as they will run their tools into scrap metal and bullet fragments embedded in the trees during the WW II bombings! The trees grow around the fragments only to be revealed in the wood shop as a reminder of the terror of years past.

Next stop... Sweden calling!



Photos:

Top: A country road in the Malvern hills—perfect for a Morgan drive

Bottom: Waiting out the rain during our M3W drive

MORGAN GOES MODERN

After 84 Years, Aluminum Chassis Replace Steel Frames

Mark J. McCourt on July 9, 2020 at 8:00 a.m.

Images are courtesy of the Morgan Motor Company



Morgan CX-Generation aluminum platform in front of the traditional steel chassis it's replacing

While the notion of England's Morgan Motor Company as being the most hide-bound of all the world's automakers is a popular one, it's not wholly accurate; just think about how different from the standard Morgans the Aero 8 was upon its debut 20 years ago. That revolutionary model used a racing-derived pre-formed, bonded aluminum chassis fitted with modern suspension components, cloaked with a streamlined body that sported traditional styling elements. The Aero 8's aluminum coachwork did retain ash wood framing that linked it to the four-wheeled sports cars the company had been building since 1936.

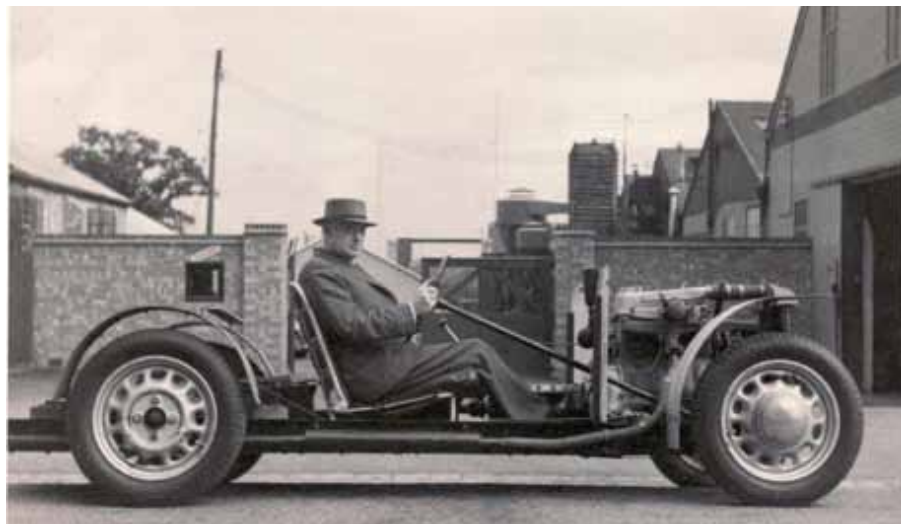
It may have taken a couple of decades, but the Aero 8's influence is now complete, as Morgan has retired its traditional steel frame in favor of the new "CX-Generation" aluminum platform construction method.

The original four-wheeled ladder-style chassis, developed under the eye of Morgan founder and namesake Henry Frederick Stanley (HFS), would retain its basic design principles through model changes including the

4/4, Plus 4, first-generation Plus 8, and the modern-day V-6 Roadster; the automaker claims it's the longest-ever running production car architecture anywhere in the world.

As Morgan itself explains, "The chassis' famous design elements include its combination of sliding pillar front and leaf spring rear suspension. The sliding pillar setup, in particular, marked a defining characteristic of the platform, having been used by very few other car manufacturers. With this arrangement, the hub and wheel assembly moves vertically, on a kingpin fixed rigidly at its top and bottom. It ensures there is no wheel camber

change during compression or rebound, maximizing lateral cornering grip. In total, 35,000 four-wheeled Morgan cars with a steel chassis have been made, exported to 65 countries around the world. Many of these models, adored by their owners, are still in active use today."



HFS Morgan and the 4-4 experimental chassis at Pickersleigh Road, circa 1935



The final steel frame, being assembled in the Chassis Shop.

The final Morgan to be underpinned by a steel chassis - a Plus 4 70th Edition, one of 20 individually numbered examples featuring a gold-painted chassis and Platinum Metallic paintwork, among other upgrades - left the Pickersleigh Road plant in Malvern, England, at the end of June, bound for the collection of a prominent Morgan enthusiast.

While sharing its basic footprint with the superseded steel frame, the new lightweight CX-Generation platform chassis offers nearly eight more inches of room for occupants and their luggage, enhanced crash survival protection, mounting for a double-wishbone suspension, and a not-insubstantial 100-percent boost in torsional rigidity.

It entered production in March 2019, first riding under the new flagship, BMW-turbocharged straight-six-powered Plus Six, followed by the fresh, similarly BMW-motivated Plus Four.

Steve Morris, CEO and chairman of Morgan Motor Company, said: "The steel chassis has been fundamental to Morgan's production for more than eight decades, found beneath the skin of some of the most important and successful models in the company's history. Its unique driving charm is loved by many and, in fact, demand for steel chassis cars is still strong. However, with the introduction of our CX-Generation platform, which underpins our revolutionary new range of four-wheeled products, the time has come to bid farewell to the steel chassis. We are delighted to present this final steel chassis car to a long-standing friend of the factory, who we know will enjoy it alongside his extensive Morgan collection."



The last steel-chassis Morgan built on the factory grounds in Malvern.

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