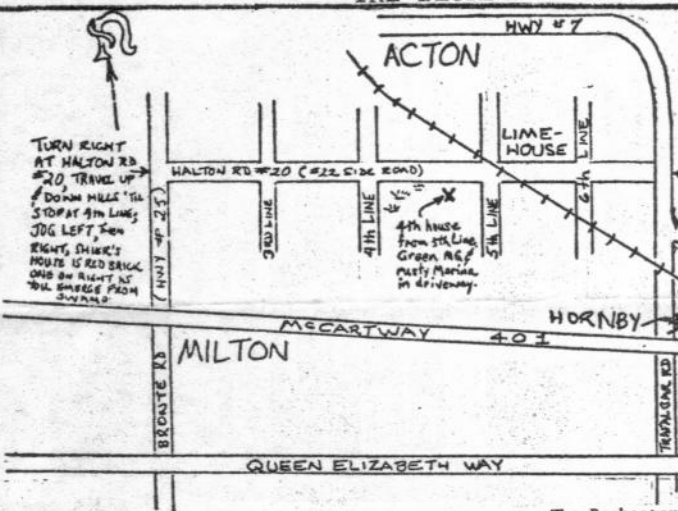




owners group blurb

THE BLURB ONLY AVAILABLE IN CANADA ! (PITY)



NOGGIN & NATTER

AT THE OLDE PUB, LIMEHOUSE, ONTARIO, 3:00 PM, SAT FEB 10.

When Ray Shier isn't rebuilding a Morgan he is probably constructing an olde worlde Englishe pub. As for all medieval monuments and motorcars this sort of thing takes decades to complete. However, the Shiers have been persuaded to give us a sneak preview and have invited all Mogmen to a Noggin & Natter (a Very British term for a Morgan "do" at a public house) in Limehouse. If anyone doesn't know his way to Limehouse, which as you know is the Lime capital of the World and possibly even North America, simply follow the map. Arrive about 3:00PM. Mary Shier will serve hot Gluwein to all that arrive with their tops down! Lesser breeds will kindly bring their own Brown Ale or Screech or whatever. Chili will be served at the supper hour. Please bring along your darts, dominoes, and shove 'a' pennies and Morgan memorabilia

NIAGARA

The Rochester MOG have have suggested a joint meet at Niagara, Ontario, for 1979 and we have tentatively accepted. Niagara-on-the-Lake with its historic ambience would probably offer the best potential; but any recommendations would be most welcome. Niagara would probably be the best place to intercept the 4 groups in Detroit, Ohio, Rochester, and Ontario.

Raid on Luray Virginia, Dominion Day Weekend

By now most of you will have heard great tales of the Washington, DC Morgan Car Club's big annual event in the mountains west of their city; this occasion has evolved into the Grand Epreuve for North American Morgans. In 1978 it even rated a half page spread in the Washington Post. People even drove in from Florida and California. This year we'll try to get a large contingent for this 500 mile blast down to Appalachia. More details anon, however the impatient might call Audrey Beer in Bolton at 857 3210.

Mog '79

KNEBWORTH HOUSE, HERTS, NORTH OF LONDON (UK)

MAY 19 & 20

Camping facilities have been made available at Knebworth to overseas visitors which strikes one as rubbing in overmuch the parlous state of our strike-ridden economy and depressed dollar. One would like our British counterparts to know that we wouldn't even consider camping! Unless it's really cheap.

Knebworth House is one of the Stately Homes of Britain set in a wooded park. The staff at Knebworth sound very keen on the idea and are even installing a Beer Tent on the grounds to serve something called Real Ale which we suppose must be some local brew. Hope its not like bitters. Events include a mystery rally, buffet/disco, concours, gymkhana, autojumble, and exhibition. Contact Doug. Price for details. 213 8342

RUNNING ON...

Received a letter from Ken Hill of Woodfidley Cottage, England, telling me that Steve Beer's Bugatti Blue Series 1 4/4 has been acquired by Clement Simmons of North Bay. So North Bay now adds to its fame as the terminus of the Polar Bear Express the distinction of being one of the northern outposts of the M.O.G. I believe that Mr Simmons likes to show his cars at suitable events and hopefully the Bugatti Blue will be seen on some occasions down here in the Banana Belt. Remember you saw this car advertised first in the Blurb!

MOG 80 Planning has commenced in Jolly Olde for a major celebration of the 70th Anniversary of the Morgan Company. You can count on your fingers (one hand) the marques that have survived longer without being merged or swallowed up by some combine. Even MOG 78, commemorating the mere 68th birthday attracted 300 cars from Britain and Europe. Presumably, following the pattern of the 60th Anniversary at Prescott, the 3 wheelers will show up in a rare spirit of ecumenialism - by and large the British 3 wheelers have never been able to accept the aberration of a fourth wheel. We will keep you posted of details as they emerge from the mists of Albion and perhaps we can manage a timely March on Malvern for 1980.

OVERSEAS CLUBS Someone claimed that there are more Morgan clubs than for any other car. In addition to about 9 separate North American organisations, Britain has 18 four wheeler chapters (rejoicing in such titles as Taffmog - Wales, of course - Smog Mog, Sog Mog, Bog Mog, & Grog Mog), as well as many chapters in the 3 Wheeler Club. France has 5 chapters and seems quite willing to speak English to outsiders, going so far as to title its rather thick publication "The French Morgan Sports Car Club News". Of course it would really be more charming to call it "Les Nouvelles du Club Voiture Sportive Morgan de la Republique Francaise". Other European clubs include Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany ("MADMOG" with a very impressive and expensive badge), Holland, Luxembourg, Sweden, and Switzerland. There are also groups in Japan, Australia, and possibly Vancouver. Except for France, Britain, and America, it has not been easy to get addresses so any information would be welcome.

If any members are heading overseas we will attempt to put them in touch with events. It would make a BIG surprise for the wife. At staggering cost we have invested in a membership in the British 4 Wheeler club because their monthly 60 page rag ("Miscellany") is even better than the Blurb and a mine of useful information. Copies will be brought to MOG events for perusal. We also get occasional copies of the NEWS of France which will be of interest to linguists.

FLOGGERY
£ \$

Richard Nickell recently cornered the market in plastic bodied +8 models. These Jap "LS" models are 1:16 scale, about 10 inches long, and the manufacturer makes a virtue of the 160 separate parts. An electric motor is hidden in model engine. Richard is selling his stock to members at his cost and can be reached at (416) 232 2678.

Letters to the Editor:

Sir: Unaccustomed as I am to writing to journals yet I must put pen to paper to correct your account of the Bolton Rally in your otherwise unexceptional publication. After my having sold my vintage Plus 4 for a considerable sum partly on the basis of its excellent showing in the Bolton Rally, you published a scurrilous foot-note implying that it finished last along with 13 others. As a result, the the purchaser cancelled the sale after my investing thousands to pass the government safety check. I hold you entirely responsible and would be interested in learning by return post what satisfaction I might expect. ... Nigel Canard

(Our lists do not record your car making it off the starting line ...Ed)



NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE



Ground plan of Fort Mississauga

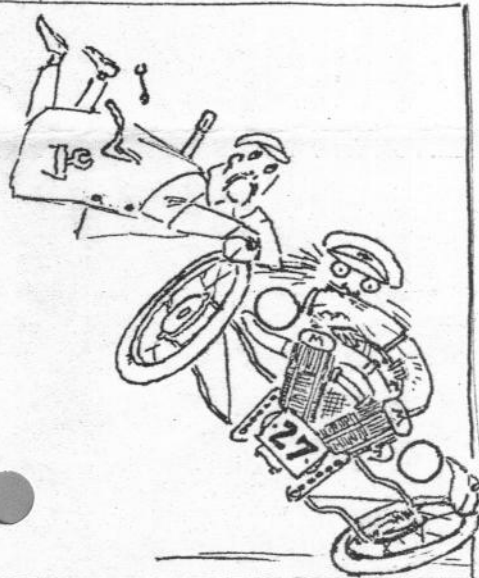




Some rude persons suggested that the map to the Oktoberfest venue was as clear as mud. However, we would point out that plenty of Morgans arrived and even an old "Twenty" Rolls Royce tourer. Once again Fanny & Brian Johnston hosted the Oktoberfest in their old stone farmhouse in Ancaster with lots of German food and corn-on-the-cob. Later in the evening we convened in the parlour for a slide show. Chris Charles showed up in the Psycedelic +8 which he recently acquired from Don Shabib. Good to see David Burgman from Guelph again who is rebuilding his Mog; I believe he has just built new wooden wheel arches.

Once again, our thanks to the Johnstons for a splendid winding up to the season.

MORGANS IN ANGER



1978 has been another good year for Morgan racing as news trickles in from the remote outposts of the world. In Britain the main news is of the Morgan-Porsche Challenge series, the Donington Six Hour Relay, and the National Prodsports series. Circumstances reduced the Morgan-Porsche Challenge to 2 races; the first event (Silverstone) seeing the Morgans better represented and taking 1st & 2nd overall. The high displacement category had seven Plus 8's and a modified 4/4 against 5 Porsches (3 Carrera RS, a Carrera and a 911S). Porsche took 3rd, 5th, 10th, and 11th, although a 1600 cc 4/4 just nipped in ahead of the 5th (Carrera). The real race was between Charles Morgan in the 1968 +8 "MMC II" (now blue instead of orange) and Chris Cooke's highly modified 4/4. Cooke pushed Morgan hard throughout and made a supreme effort at the end only to spin and take 2nd place backwards! Angered, the Porsches arrived in force for the 2nd event at Donington. This time the Morgs did not have Charles' "MMC II" and the Plus 8's were almost obliterated. Chris Cooke was unable to recover from a bad start. Analysts more expert than I have noted that over the 2 races Morgans took 3 of 4 of the wins and of the fastest laps for the 2 classes. Totalling the points gained by all cars, Morgans took 214 and Porsches 133. Now doubt we may expect a determined try in 1979 by the Fatherland's parvenue answer to the Morgan.

In the past season two Morgan teams took 1st & 2nd in the Six Hour Relay, an established national fixture, also at Donington. Other teams in this handicap race were the Hesketh Le Mans car, Chevron, Escort, Alfa, MGA, Jaguar, Porsche, Aston, & Jowett. In a close race the Saxons just beat the Viking team for 1st place. If we can surmount the International Copyright Convention we will publish the lively accounts of these 2 teams printed in December's "Miscellany", otherwise you shall have to wait until they are in the "public domain". Good to learn that TOK 258, Chris Lawrence's 1962 Le Mans class winner, was competing.

Charles Morgan (of Morgan) won the National Prodsports (current production sports cars) series, again in the 1968 prototype +8 MMC II which retains the originally specified and beloved Moss Box.

Nurburgring: This venue has become a major fixture in collectible car racing, using the truncated 1.4 mile track. Race 2 pitted 1920-30 sports and racers against post-war 2-2.5 litre GT's. First place was taken by an English Morgan agent followed by 2 Bugatti 35's, a Healey Silverstone and thence by 4 Lancia Aurelias. Race 4 was largely Porsches which had, however, to relinquish first and second to a Dutch +4 and a Denzel respectively. Apparently one of the most popular events with the spectators pitted 3 wheeler Morgans against Formula Juniors and mid-engine Formula 3. It would seem that the Morgans took the first 6 places, led by the redoubtable Tuer. In the final Matadorenlauf event for the 23 most successful cars in previous races with Maserati 250F and Cooper Bristol monostops, Listers, Ferraris, ERA, and Lola, Tuer secured 16th place (well, you can't win them all). Some lap times are instructive; a class winning Lotus Elite 1min 10.5 sec, Tuer was recorded at 1m 11s in practice. Mind you, a Cooper Bristol did it in 1m 5.8s and a 4 litre Maserati (supercharged) turned in 1m 6.2 s. Perhaps the Morgan 3 wheelers are getting outclassed.

REPORT FROM THE SOUTH-WEST BY NORM KEAR

With some alarm, coupled with nostalgia, the undersigned realized the other day that it has been almost precisely two years since he foresook the cultivated comfort of the cultured East for the brash blandishments of the Golden State. My trusty old Drophead made the trip from Washington, D.C. to Los Angeles without incident through the worst blizzards of 1976, taking almost two weeks for the journey. I had driven across two months earlier in a borrowed Mercedes; the Morgan was in the back of a Mayflower van.

After an appropriate settling-down period, I sought out the local group of Morgan addicts. I ran them down in the back of a thriving Pizza Parlor near the Los Angeles International Airport, "temporary" meeting headquarters for the Club since its long-term previous home burned down several years ago. I am speaking, of course, of the Morgan Plus Four Club of Southern California.

In venturing into my first meeting, I was stricken by a sense of deja vu, for I had been a member of this club, by mail, for over ten years. Many of the names I knew well; the faces and personalities which I discovered went with them, however, were often quite a surprise.

It usually takes a while for a newcomer to be accepted, but I was distinctly impressed, from the very beginning, by the efforts made by the California Morgan people to welcome the uninitiated. The first thing that is to strike an immigrant from the East is the size of the Club's membership and its active participation. Accustomed to thinking that a "good turnout" at the D.C. Club for a monthly meeting might be a dozen people, I was overwhelmed to find more than forty Morgan enthusiasts present at the Pizza Palace. I stress, this was just a plain old monthly meeting with nothing of interest or consequence to draw all the members. Seldom have I seen attendance slip below the two dozen mark since.

The club has two meetings every month, one a general business meeting and the other a "Board" meeting. The latter is open to all members and is really a euphemism for a social gathering. In addition, a regularly sponsored event, the pre-assigned responsibility of a member, is hopefully held each month. Events seem well-balanced among the social, rallies, and slaloms, with an occasional wine-tasting tour, baseball game, or picnic thrown in. For an event-hungry Easterner it is like arriving in Morgan heaven.

By comparison, too, the Club here is very well organized. The President and officers actually go through parliamentary procedure at every meeting, business is conducted in a reasonably formal fashion, and yet it somehow does not seem stilted or pretentious. The size of the group permits rather good delegation of responsibility. Particularly impressive is the "Speres Chairman" role, filled by a member who actually manages a very sizeable inventory of Morgan parts, stocked by occasional massive shipments direct from the factory and by acute collecting of whatever happens to be available from the members, other sources, etc. In addition, there are active members participating as Social Chairman, Membership Chairman, etc. Thus, yours truly discovered one of the great dichotomies of the West: One would expect that with the great distances to be covered out here participation and membership would be minimal; quite the reverse is true. Yet, in the relatively confined East it takes a lot of hard work to get more than a handful of Morgan people together for other than a major event.

For a while, a newcomer begins to notice certain distinct differences in style in terms of approach to Morganism. For instance, a close relationship is maintained with the competition-oriented Southern California Sportscar Club. A large group of Morgan Club members here are very competition-oriented, and while there are often sharp differences of opinion as to overall Club direction, it does not seem to generate the conflicts I have seen in the past elsewhere. In another aspect, Club members here tend to be somewhat more "purist" in the way in which they set up their cars. This has caused some slight discomfort to yours truly, whose badge-

encumbered drophead, "Most Readable Morgan in the West," has been the butt of constant, ill-timed comments rendered in utmost bad taste, including the local "pig" award for the last two years. I have begun to note, however, a distinct and growing tendency towards more badges and similar appertinances on local cars of late, which I ascribe to a growing Eastern cultural influence.

There are two other Morgan clubs in the West that I am acquainted with. One is in the Pacific Northwest, centered around the Portland-Seattle area, and the other in the San Francisco Bay area of California. The latter is interesting in that it was once part and parcel of an overall California Morgan Club. It seems that some years ago the San Francisco-oriented members decided to break away and form their own group. The two California clubs have very distinct and not always harmonious personalities, but considerable positive interchange seems to go on. A good deal of parochialism or what seems to be that - does dominate. For instance, our annual concours is a totally in-Club event. This is manageable, for in the last two years, approximately forty Club members displayed their cars for competition. No other clubs participated, although I suppose their members can as individuals. This seems to characterize the California scene - a rather "closed shop." Distance, of course, has a lot to do with it. There are 400 miles between the Bay area and Los Angeles.

For many years in the past, a kind of annual meet was held, often at a place called Sky Ranch. This was mostly a social event and did not embody a concours, etc. For the last two years, however, something very different has been developing. Towards the end of August, each year, the annual historic car races take place at the Laguna Seca race track near Monterey, relatively near San Francisco. Due to the dedicated efforts of some of the Northern California Club members, notably Goodman Loy (the West Coast version of Ed Zielinski), the historic car races have become a focal point for Morgan activities on the annual-meet level. Last year, the event was almost entirely social, but more scheduling of events is beginning to occur. This year, for instance, a very enjoyable rally was sponsored by the host Northern Club. Compared to the Pocono/Luray event, however, MOG-WEST still has a long way to go in terms of organization and activities. It is still primarily seen as an adjunct to the races and does not boast a concours. In this form, however, it has a certain relaxed and informal chara that sometimes tends to be lost when a more rigid format is adopted.

This year, the historic car races at Laguna Seca were the scene of one of the most significant events in recent US Morgan history. Three Morgans (one a rare SLR) competed in different races. In the fifth race, Brian Howlett, immediate past president of the Morgan Plus Four Club of Southern California, driving a 1962 Plus-4 roadster, utterly humiliated the two Porsche's that were his strongest competition to win what proved to be the most exciting race of the series. Needless to say, the joy among the many Morgan enthusiasts in attendance was unbounded and the Morgan marque has been indelibly imprinted on Southern California motor racing for some time to come.

Even though the Laguna Seca event tends to grow in both popularity and organization each year, there has been recent talk in Southern California Morgan circles about the possibility of a separate "major meet." Current speculative plans call for such an event to be held in the Spring, possibly in Reno, Nevada, with a Monte Carlo-type rally to the scene. So far, this is just talk, but with the strength of the clubs concerned and the high level of enthusiasm held by the members, such an event may well become a reality. There has also been increasing talk among a number of Morgan owners here about journeying to Luray next year. As you know, a couple made it this past year, and the Luray meet continues to be the focus of national Morgan attention.

N. Kear