#### CANADA'S MORGAN MAGAZINE



# PRICE LESS





January'89

# Blurb World Exclusive !!!!

## Part Two



"I've always liked that photograph, because, if you look very carefully, there are no other cars in sight, and it looks as though we won the whole thing. Of course, our people behaved just as though we had!"

BLURB The next question relates to Morgan employees owning Morgans. I believe you have about 130 employees - how many own a Morgan, and were there more or less in the days of the three-wheeler?

PETER MORGAN There were less in the three-wheeler times. More have them now. Quite a few now - I suppose four or five have works cars, either trials or different sales reasons, to take people out. On and off you get the staff purchasing them, not an awful lot, although the husband of one of the ladies in the office has one. Other than works cars, there must be about two or three. In the three-wheeler days I can't remember anybody having one, except works cars.

BLURB Yes - I read in an article that your father was very much of the "cloth cap and bicycle era", and would think he was paying a man too much if he was driving a car.

Oh yes, he was, very much so. Of course things have changed a lot now. The work force are, relatively, far better off than they used to be. We're as good as British Leyland now. And a lot of people don't really appreciate what's in the car. They see it on the stand, and say "That's a lot of money for a car like that". Then the same people come to the works, and go around and watch the cars being made, and say "God, that's not bad value. In fact, it's good value. There's a lot of hand work in a Morgan. I don't understand how you can do all that for the price".

BLURB That really leads quite nicely into the next question, which relates to the famous waiting list. I've heard estimates of four or five years, but does that really apply only to people ordering directly from the factory? I know, for example, that it can take much less in some overseas locations.

# THE PREZ SEZ!

#### PREZ.S PIECE:

A Happy New Year to all our members, may 1989 be a great Morganeering year for all.

Even though only a minority turned out to the Christmas Party owing to the Flu bug hitting, a good time was had, especially for those with good appetites, the deserts table was the ultimate for the sweet tooth, talk about THE selection for a real pig-out. An added surprise for this event was a phone call from the MCC-DC club with all their gang singing "We wish you a Merry Christmas" to our group, from their Christmas Party. We were also pleased to see Peter & Dorathy turn up for a meet, & Doug Price, good to see you all. Thanks Brian & Linda for the Hospitality.

The Great Lakes have a big plan for their Annual Meet for '89 & Ted Plafchan gave me a call with all the info for the weekend in Kitchener so dont forget to mark you calender for June 23-25 as its a firm date for our club event to join them.

1990; Another call a couple of days earlier was from Roger Moran in Belgium to talk about Morgans Across America (or MAA as Al Marsh of DC refers to it) it looks as if our Niagara Meet will be held a month earlier in 1990, I just await final confirmation as to which of 2 weekends it will be in early August so as to incorporate it into the Grand Tour for the Morganeers from Europe to join us, making Niagara the Finale of the whole tour.

Just Received; The Nov. issue of the Miscellany from MSCC, in which I read about 5 Morgans participating in the Vintage Club Relay Race in Westwood near Vancouver, it appears the boys are getting very active out there which is very good to hear, including our old member & friend Bob Walker & recently heard from Thor Frohn-Neilson so if anyone asks about Morgans on the West Coast they are getting the coverage in the news again. That is good news.

Speaking re being active its way past time we went back again to having some elections again, in the hopes we are not still suffering apathy, so how about some imput.toss out the Prez & get some new blood in.(sorry Freudian slip)

Audrey Beer.

#### GREAT LAKES ANNUAL MEET:

#### June 23-25/89.

The President of Great lakes gave me a call to confirm he has already completed the bookings for their Meet in Kitchener next June. It sounds like a good time. Starting on Friday afternoon with Registration, Fri. evening is Dinner & Noggin at the Heidelberg Brew Pub. Saturday brings first a drive around the Alora, St Jacobs area finishing with the Concours in Lovers Leap Park. Free time until a Tour/Cocktails & Dinner at the Seagrams Museum with Awards Sat. evening. Sunday is an open house at C.M.C. to close off the weekend. Dont forget this is now an official Toronto club event so mark your calenders, along with the Niagara weekend. Registration notices will be mailed direct to our members from the Great Lakes Club at a later date.

Audrey.

#### HOGMOG HOGMOG HOGMOG

riday, December 30, 1988

# FINANCIAL POST

# ON THE COMEBACK ROAD OUT 15 THE COMEBACK ROAD OUT 15 THE COMEBACK ROAD

MGB MAY BE BACK: The new model of the MGB Roadster on display at Abingdon, Britain. The car may be back in production one decade after the last model was killed off by British Leyland. The car is set to be produced by British Motor Heritage, costing £12,000 each.

Well, I think this will be an event! Some people even think the "B" is a sports car.

# HIR HER HER ARE

How time flies! It was only twelve months ago in my maiden editorial that I wrote "for many members, all they get in return for theirfifteen bucks per annum is an amateur newsletter". This, of course, is still. and always will be true.

reliable statistics available. but it seems unlikely that most of the paying members ever attend an event, so their membership is really nothing more than a magazine subscription. Under these circumstances, it seems fair that most of the membership dues should go towards the Blurb, with events being organised to be largely self financing. If the Blurb can be produced and mailed for less, so much the better.

That seems fine in theory, but how has it worked out in practice? For the period September 30,1986 to October 31,1987, total Blurb and mailing costs, as quoted by Audrey in the November, 1987 issue were \$916.83, with revenues from membership of \$975 plus \$45 US, or about \$1,040. Thus, in practice, nearly 90% of club membership fees were spent on the magazine.

In 1988, Blurb costs were \$266.23 and postage came to \$325.18 for a total of \$591.41. The membership was approximately 70, creating revenues of about \$1,050, and a surplus over Blurb costs of more than \$450, since less than 60% of fees were used. Costs were this low because I produced all issues, except the September one, when I was about to leave on holiday, on the photocopier at work, the club paying only for the paper. Audrey, of course, did not have access to such equipment.

I am not in favour of spending money for the sake of it, but I do believe this month's colour cover, which has been more than paid for by the savings in production expenses I have already achieved in 1988, is an appropriate next step. I know, it's my bloody car again, this time depicted in a fine watercolour painted from a photograph by my cousin, Richard Burtwell, in England. It is, I believe, a first for a North American club magazine, since I have not seen another which has used colour (or even color!).

Sadly, the comment in the January editorial which has not worked out very well is "an editor's job is to edit, not to compete for space with others". By default, I seem to have generated far more Blurb material than I would have liked. Hopefull as my tenure proceeds inexorably towards its termination, this will become less true, not just because I will produce fewer items. but because others will contribute.

#### Meanwhile, if:

- 1) you have something original you believe would make a good colour cover (we should be able to afford at least one more);
- 2) you have access to a colour copier that the club could use at cost (see 1) above); or
- you would like to commission a Burtwell portrait of your car - to become a patron of the arts, please let me know. My address and telephone number are both cunningly concealed just to the left of your address label on the back cover!

#### HOGMOG HOGMOG HOGMOG

ADDITIONAL MEMBERSHIPS SINCE THE NOVEMBER ISSUE John Flavelle TOTAL MEMBERSHIP 64 CIRCULATION 82

David Gard

Michael Batterbee Ross Gardiner Alec & Iris Knight Richard Edmiston Thor Frohn-Nielson Kelly & Cheryl Stapleton Chris Skeat

MODEL OF CAR 1	MODEL OF CAR 2	NAME
1933 MX4 SS		John Flavelle
1933 S.S. D399		Alec & Iris Knight
1933 TRIKE SS 747		Dave & Pauline Smith
1937 4/4 342		Ross Gardiner
1952 +4 P2455 4 PL		Luch & Lilliana Ghislanzoni
1952 FLATRAD P2245		Geoffrey & Anne Farrar
1953 +4		Stu & Maria Harvey
1954 +4		Dr. F.C. Lockwood
1955 +4 3957	i <del>a</del>	
		Susan (Penny) Bates
1956 +4 3401		Ken Rigg
1956 +4 3386		Audrey & Reg Beer
1956 4+4 2PL		David And Laura Gard
1958 +4 3392		Peter & Heather Mccowan
1958 +4 3951		A. Norman Wright
1958 +4 3964		
		Bill Sullivan
1958 4/4 A402		Paul Fuller
1959 +4		Peter George
1959 +4		Greg & Cath Kaufman
1960 +4		Chris & Greta Geiselman
1960 +4 4107		Michael & Barbara Compass
1960 +4 4381 4 PL.		있는데 하다를 위하는 사람이 있다면 하면 하는데
		George Watson
1960 DHC		Doug Price
1961 +4 DHC 4542		Brian & Linda Rumohr
1961 +4 4754 4PL		Don & Barbara Buck
1961 +4 4859		Nancy & Dave Turnbull
1961 +4 4955		Gary & Sherry Macfarlane
1961 +4 82123		Brian & Brenda Morgan
1962 +4 4886		Ron Lohr
1962 +4 DROPHEAD		Michael & Donna Wheeler
1962 +4 5309		Peter & Dorathy Pfahl
1963 +4 5203		Scott & Susan Barrie
1963 DHC 4326 74 4/4		Orrin Geeting
1963 4/4 B811 57 4/4		Martin & Donna Beer
1965 +4 5622		John & Laura Porter
1965 +4 5767	1971 +8 R7336	Rob & Pam Boetger
1965 +4 6041 70 +8	7250 1950 3 WHEELER	Larry & Patricia Moss
1965 +4 6064		Nick & Linda Murphy
1965 DHC		Chris Tweedie
1966 4/4	1957 +4	Ray & Mary Shier
	1937 14	
1967 +4 4PL		Peter Dattels
1967 +4 6636		Joan & Dave Mcdonald
1968 +4 4 PL		Alan & Marlies Sands
1968 +4 6797		Tom Leseelleur
1968 4/4		John Collins
1968 4/4 B1761		Frank & Elsie Flinn
1968 4/4 6778		Carol & Tim Clarke
1969 4/4 B1972 4 PL		Don & Maire Lawson
1969 4/4 4 SEATER		Colin & Barbara Watson
1970 +8 R7200		Don & Donna Banham
1970 4/4 B 1990		George & Marylou Lafford
1970 4/4 B2308		Hendrik & Shelley Rens
1970 4/4 EB2194		Josef Schengili
1978 4/4 B4183		Kelly & Cheryl Stapleton
1985 4/4		Chris Skeat
		Joseph Magnet
1007 / //		
1987 4/4		Bob Moffat
1988 +8 R 9985		Dr. Andrew & Susan Struthers
31 AERO M512 54 +4		Peter & Rose Whitworth
34 JAPSS D1032	67+4 6716 31 SUPERAR	[2] "구는 '이 가는 사람들이 얼마나 있다. (C. C. C
53 ROADSTER V561ME	72 4/4 4PL 2C7A1185	Charlie & Caroline King
		마다 있었다면 하면 보고 있는데 이번에 집안된다면 하면 되는데 보고 있다면 하는데
67 +4SS 6427 34 JAP-	59 +44PL 4162	Steve & Jenny Beer
68 4/4 B1495		Craig & Tina Davis
81 4/4 B4921	64 +4+ A5758 62 +4SS	George & Kathi Fink

#### "PREPARE TO UNLOAD" RALLY & BARBEQUE

### Blue Mountain Week-End



At 2:30 PM (just half an hour after the first rally car was scheduled to depart from the Piper's Hill Start) the 'phone rang at the 'Prepare to Unload' chalet, the Finish point in the Blue Mountains.

"Hello, Rally Finish and Headquarters here... What do you mean 'You're lost outside Mono Mills'?"
(aside to co-official "Somebody claims they're lost in Mono Mills; why that's 20 miles further away than the Start! Maybe you should speak to them.")

"Hello, Blue Mountain Headquarters on the line. What seems to be the problem?.... No, there can't be a mistake in the instructions. We never make mistakes. ... Never mind the last rally.... I did not quite get your last name... There are other cars lost too? They were following you? That figures! .... You say they started to follow you after they found a mistake in the instructions? I'm sorry, I can't hear you for the noise... You say a green Morgan just raced past for the fifth time? Same direction each time!?... You

want panic, instructions all the way to Blue Mountain! Well hold on, let me get Harry.

"Walters speaking. Where is Mono Mills exactly? ...You sure are lost. ...TEN OTHER CARS??"(aside 'We'll never live this down, especially when ABS hears about it!.) ... Let me check the map ... '

"You know, Harry, I never did get his name but I'm sure the voice is familiar."

"... and then turn left at the next corner. Oh, Ann wants to know who's calling " ('Ann, I can't hear his name - ther's too much noise of engines revving and bird noises. 1)

"Bird noises? BIRD NOISES! Harry, that's ABS on the line! I should have recognised his voice. HANG UP, Harry! It's a collect call and we're not paying to hear his awful bird immitations".

click

"Remind me to grind glass in his barbeque sauce."

"Don't bother. He'd thrive on it."



Lost in Mono Mills? Reg and Audrey Beer rallying in the red Presidential Suite which has just acquired a Gothic Perpendicular grille.

Photos by Marlies Missaila

An understandably concerned Steve Beer looking at his newly acquired Morgan Barrelback MX+ and wishing that he hadn't left the ignition key in it before ABS insisted on sitting in it 'just to see what it feels like'.

Our hosts, Ann and Harry Walters, too long absent in Texas had laid on the "Sometimes Annual Prepare to Unload Rally and Blue Mountain Weekend". This year they prepared a superlative steak barbeque at their "Prepare to Unload" chalet at the foot of the Blue Mountain. Avid skiers will instantly recognise the exhortation "Prepare to Unload" and perhaps hazard a guess at the namesign's provenance. Having wetted their whistle only hours before at the checkpoint set up by Claude and Pat Bucheau, Hogmoggers were ready to dig into the spread.

Ray Shier slipped away to take the offspring to their grandparents nearby. In the interval the editor drove Mary Shier over to the lakefront motel that had been booked for the Weekend. Mary booked in first as Mrs Shier and the (until then jovial) innkeeper was visibly upset when the editor booked a separate room. The innkeeper was thought to utter "Inverted pervert wierdo" and he wouldn't give up until he had them in adjacent rooms. Perhaps it's just as well that David and Pauline Smith didn't stay at that motel.

Sunday morning dawned latish as Hogmoggers stumbled over to the Prepare to Unload for the traditional Bloody Mary breakfast. By secret arrangement the hosts had organised a surprise inaugural demonstration of Limehouse Promotions Septic Gas Convented Mongan. In one stroke Chris Charles' CMC Enterprises new 4/4 model was upstaged! For the demonstration Paul Rich's newly septic gas tank converted Flat Rad was on hand. The only flaw in the planned demonstration was discovered almost too late. As the chalet had been unoccupied for almost two years the septic tank was empty. However Ann rushed into Collingwood and bought up all stocks of rhubarb barbeque sauce and by late in the first evening the septic system was full to overflowing.

And after a scenic drive in the Blue Mountains and the apple plantations on the plateau we had lunch at in a former mansion in Thornbury. Brian and Linda Rumohr were awarded a pair of engraved pewter tankards for their outright rally win (they claim it was their first rally). Paul and Edie Rich won a Flat Rad 'Goodman Loy' poster similar to their own car, the Septic Sizzler, with their second place. Ray and Mary Shier slipped into 3rd place just ahead of son Tim in the Fuego.

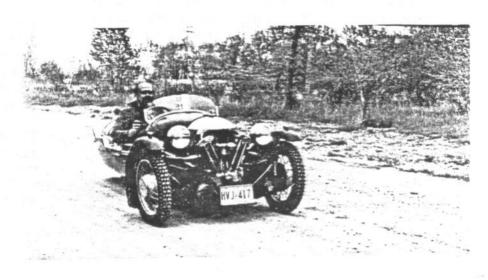


Editor participating in demonstration to lend credibility



Our thanks to Ann and Harry Walters and all who helped them for this nostalgic weekend - especially Audrey Beer and Claude and Pat Buchreau (sp?), our hosts at the Funny Farm.





PM You're quite right about that. That came about a number of years ago, really, when the rot set in here, because, like Rolls Royce-although they've burst their balloon now - there was a lot of speculation with the Morgan, because people knew perfectly well if they could get one - they didn't really want it for themselves - they could flog it and they could get, possibly, a thousand pounds over list. It's gone back to that situation again now, with the 8's and the wide body 4/4.

Now people would say "Why don't you make more cars?", and I said "Well, it's not as easy as that. It's a hand built car, and you can't just go out on the street and get staffyou have to train the people. Our age level used to be about 35 average, and we're training all the time, in every department, we're training young people to take the place of others when they go". Then they said "Well, if you're not going to make any more, why don't you put the price up?". I said "Yes, well grand, isn't it, but what about two years time when things might go the other way? You can't bring the price back. Actually, Aston Martin did that, and they lost a lot of customers - people who just before that time had bought an Aston said never again; I'm not going to take it again. And it did a lot of damage, so really, I've always believed that, OK, prices go up, but the last thing you want to do is That's very bring them down. dangerous. It can be done with another model, something like that, but no other way.

The waiting list. Well, here and now, and it's really a crystal ball quote, we quote four to five years, though some people have waited ten years.



BLURB Was that because it was a specialised one?

PM Not really. It's because some agents have got more orders than others. We spread them around: we can't supply them to one agent all the time. So, on average, four to five years is about right. That said, I know perfectly well we do lose out on orders at Motor Shows,



for instance. Some people say, "Well, I've got the money in my pocket, I want to buy that car". They just walk off when we say no. Other people will say "Four to five years - that's far too long". But you've got other people, of course. There's MacDonald's, up north, where there's a guy there - he's on his third Morgan now - he always maintains his deposit. We get a lot of people coming back.

The delivery delay. I think in Germany now it's about a year or eighteen months, and you can say that's pretty well universal throughout the rest of our markets: Japan, Australia, all of Europe. For your information - you may know, actually - there's one Morgan in the Falkland Islands. There's one in St. Helena.

So much so that I had someone who was a bit niggly, and complained about the car, and we discussed the various things. At the end of the day I said "Well, you've got so many moans, I don't think the Morgan really suits you". And he absolutely jumped up and said "Yes! Yes! I do! I do! I love your car!". And I said "Well, there you go!". It's a true story. He actually did. And the other guy who came and said "You know, the Morgan is not as well finished as my Rolls Royce", which is, of course, a far more expensive car.

After an extensive refit, HMS Hermes has been recommissioned as HMS Ark Royal. This has nothing to do with the Falklands incident!

It's amazing who you meet at Motor Shows. Peter Morgan and Jackie Stewart on the Morgan Stand, 1978.

BLURB NO, I didn't know that.

PM I've never worried about sending one car. I've always wanted the Morgan to have a really good spread throughout the world. The more Morgans there are around the world the better. And the other thing is I don't want any Morgans dying out. As the Americans say, even if it's totalled, don't throw it away. It's far too good a car for that.

The best way of selling a Morgan is by the owner. No doubt about it. Far better than advertising is what the owner would say. We're lucky. Virtually all our owners are tremendeously enthusiastic.

BLURB In terms of Morgans never dying, I seem to remember talking to Chris Charles about a Morgan that was rear-ended in the States. I believe he was able to get that one going again.

PM He did. It's on the road now. After the accident, when everyone assumed the petrol tank had blown up, it still had three gallons in it. Chris Charles got it back, and confirmed it, and the tank wasn't damaged.

#### ANY OLD OIL?

N EXCELLENT IDEA has come from BP to encourage do-it-yourself motorists to return their old engine oil to the garage for disposal or reclaiming, by offering cosh discounts or gifts in exchange for it.

Unfortunately the idea is to be restricted for moment to an experiment at six service etations in the West Country, the Midlands,

and the North of England.

DIY motorists who return a gallon of old oil to the stations will receive 10p off the price of a gallon of new oil, or a gift such as a car maintenance book for their model, again confitional on a new oil purchase.

Any incentive to make it worth while for a motorist to save his old engine oil and return n for reclamation is to be applauded. Far too many people simply tip the old oil down the drain or onto a waste part of the garden. Not only are these practices extremely harmful and anti-social, but the tipping of oil down the sewers and drainage traps can cause pollution of rivers and streams, and wreck the delicate balance of filter beds of the sewage farms.

And while it is difficult for any of us to realize that our single gallons of oil can really be of any importance, with the diminishing natural supplies of crude oil in the world, the importance of the companies who reclaim old sump oil is bound to increase.

BP estimate that there are 7 million DIY enthusiasts in this country, and that only one in five new motorists take their cars to garages for servicing. On average each DIY motorist uses between three and four gallons of oil a year. That means that 25 million gallons of old oil are being disposed of in this country every

#### Grands Prix — a financial breakdown

HE idea of a package deal between the race organizers and formula 1 entrants for the finances of Grand Prix racing failed last week, when the entrants refused the final offer from the promoters. As a result, the organizers of the Spanish Grand Prix, entered into an indual agreement with the Formula 1 Associamon (representing the entrants), thus assuring weekend's race at Barcelona of a full formula 1 grid but making a future collective screement for the remainder of the European Grands Prix most unlikely.

Grand Prix International, the association of race organizers and promoters offered an average figure of £66,000 prize money per race. plus increases of 74 per cent for each of the next two years and one-third of the proceeds of any new source of revenue like global TV rights. The Formula 1 Association, who had earlier asked for a much higher sum, turned this down, standing out for 15 per cent rises in 1974 and 1975. GPI's intention, should no agreement be reached, was that they would negotiate as a body with each of the entrants in turn. Now by Spain's unilateral action (the terms for which are within GPI's scale - around £70,000, the sum including travelling allowances) the boot is on the other foot and the Formula 1 Association are in a position to negotiate with the organizers separately. It is a surprising turn of events, for had the organizers stood firm and united it is clear that they would have eventually won the battle; with so much sponsorship money from publicity-seeking firms tied up in the Grand Prix teams they would have been obliged to race in most of the World Championship events, whether or not their terms were met.

Several Grand Prix organizers are adamant that they cannot find more money for their races than that implicit under the GPI offer. Among them are the British, Austrian, Canadian and South African Grands Prix. Some others can' afford higher sums simply because they receive Government assistance and have, in effect, a mandate to organize their races at whatever cost. Does the breakdown between the two sides mean that the poorer relations will have to make do with a thin field of formula 1 cars supplemented by formula 2s, formula 5000s etc., as now allowed by the regulations? Probably not — though at least one formula 5000 entrant claims to have an entry for the Monaco Grand Prix. No. John Player, Yardley and Brooke Bond Oxo - to name just three - are hardly likely to allow their teams to stay away from the Players-sponsored British Grand Prix. As Ronnie Thompson, the chief of Philip Morris Europe, who sponsor the BRM and Williams formula 1 teams, said back in January: "No show - no money".

#### The Little Man on the Motorway

N a recent case heard at Bedford Crown Court, reported in the Watford Evening Echo, an appeal against conviction for driving without reasonable consideration for other road users on M1, was rejected. The man concerned was alleged to have driven a Ford Cortina in the third lane of the southbound carriageway north of Dunstable, and did not move to the nearside lanes. A police officer followed the car at a steady 63mph for three miles, during which time it stayed in the fast lane, although the centre lane was empty apart from a short stretch just before the Dunstable turn off. The police officer told the judge that for much of the distance the police car was in the centre lane, behind the Cortina, which remained in the third lane. The headlamps of the patrol car were flashed and the blue flashing lamp on the roof was turned on. It was not until the police car's alternating horns were sounded that the Cortina moved

The defendant claimed that his speedometer

had been showing a steady 69-70 mph, and his defence counsel submitted that as the accused had thought he was travelling at the legal limit of 70mph, he considered he was under no obligation to move over.

Judge Robert Lymbury, QC, said: "We utterly reject that contention. If a driver is in the fast lane, he should move over when the centre lane is clear - no matter what speed he is doing.

The judge added: "It is often the little-man who hogs the fast lane, who causes more danger on the motorway than the fast driver."

There is no doubt that this sort of driving, prompted by the 70mph speed limit, produces most dangerous bunching situations, with traffic reduced to minimal following distances and drivers exposed to extreme frustration, both of which are potentially dangerous. It is heartening to know that the law comes out so positively against such selfish, inconsiderate and unsafe driving.

#### DANGER-

#### LOOK OUT FOR THESE TYRES

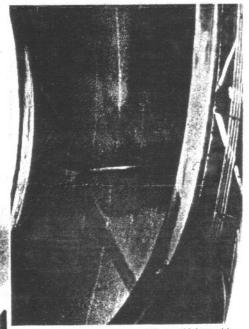
YRES WHICH have "appalling defects" and which should not be used on cars at all but on farm carts are being sold in this country for fitment to cars capable of more than 100 mph.

This is the startling information unearthed by the British Rubber Manufacturers Association after reports on the tyres have reached them from their field force.

The Association have found a Rover 3500 equipped with a set of the tyres - manufactured on the Continent, and due to production defects sold strictly as agricultural tyres limited to 30 kph. They also have reports of two quayside auctions of the tyres in Hull and London by unscrupulous tyre dealers who must know that every tyre sold to a car owner has an almost certain risk of blowing out at speed.

With the large agricultural market on the Continent it is normal practice for tyre manufacturers there to keep their badly deformed or distorted tyres and sell them for fitment to farm carts and wheeled agricultural trailers. Here in Britain all reputable manufacturers "knife" such tyres immediately the defect occurs to make sure that they can never reach the public.

The tyres should be recognizable by a marking on the sidewall "30 km/h max". However, as the recent discovery of XJ6 tyres sold as Beach Buggy tyres due to defects has proved. it is all too easy to buff markings off a sidewall. Apart from this marking it is possible that some of the tyres are almost indistinguishable from the genuine article. The utmost care should therefore be exercised when buying tyres from anything other than an absolutely reliable source.



This is an example of the type of fault which would cause a tyre to be destined for agricultural use crease has been moulded into the ply, substantially weakening the surrounding areas, and making the chances of a blowout highly likely if fitted to a car

#### OPEL IN SWITZERLAND

OPEL IS reported as "examining the possibility" of transferring the assembly of its Admiral and Diplomat models to Switzerland. It is probable that if the decision was taken, Opel would transfer production of the cars to Bienne where General Motors Switzerland are already assembling a few American models and a few types of Rekord models.

# MORGANOMICS

One thing is sure in this changing world. As long as there is an England, there will be a Morgan. But why?

By Pete Lyons

arlier this year, there was an announcement that Morgan, the English manufacturer of the world's most, er, traditional sports cars, might soon re-enter the American market on a substantial scale. The announcement turns out to be somewhat premature.

The company is indeed interested in the U.S., and the present trickle of 18 or 24 cars per year will continue, but there are a number of problems that still need resolution.

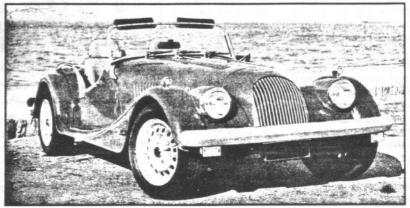
One concerns federal air quality standards. Those cars sold here now run on clean-burning propane, which seems an entirely workable solution to many and a serious drawback to others. Now that the Range Rover V8, used on Morgan's top-of-the-line Plus 8, is certified, there one day may be gasoline in the U.S. Morgan's tank, but there are enough regulatory hoops intervening that that is by no means certain.

Another worry is the trend toward passive restraints. Convertibles are currently exempt from the federal requirement for

either airbags or automatic seatbelts, and Morgans are nothing if not ferociously open to the elements. But regulations have a way of changing, and the Morgan people are understandably chary about setting up ambitious import plans for a car that may become impossible to import, for there is at present no way to fit passive restraints to the car.

Even with these factors out of the way, however, there would remain the simple lack of manufacturing capacity at the factory. The American importer, Bill Fink of Isis Imports in San Francisco, believes he





A living evolutionary link, the Morgan Plus 8 has a niche all its own. This is motoring for those who take weather reports seriously, who prefer close-quarters combat with the wheel and who have an unquenchable taste for retro style. Plus \$36,000

could move 100 cars a year. However, each and every Morgan takes several months to build, a build undertaken by about 120 craftsmen. They are trained by the factory itself in a program that can take as long as five years, so there is little prospect of massive additions to the workforce. Nor is the physical plant big enough. It's running just about at capacity right now to turn out eight or nine cars a week—some 420 to 430 a year. Every one has long since been spoken for by Morganics in much easier markets than the U.S. So it may well be quite some time before we'll start seeing as

many long, louvered Morgan bonnets as we do, say, Lamborghinis.

If you knew nothing else about the Morgan, you would have to be impressed by the waiting list. According to the factory, anyone placing an order right now will have to be patient for another five years. Some customers taking delivery right now have been waiting nine. Isis's arrangement in the U.S. allows it to quote a bit less than one year. If buyers' patience is the standard, the coveted Morgan must be the best sports car design in the world today.

But if that's true, then it's been true for a

amateurs who

whole lot of yesterdays. The vehicles currently being crafted, mainly by hand, in a little workshop-factory at the edge of a village in the bucolic far west of England date back over 50 years; in several particulars their lineage can be traced to 1910.

To some of Great Britain's automotive apologists, the very existence of Morgan seems to be a minor embarrassment. They would rather visitors went to visit, say, the McLaren or Walkinshaw race shops. How can a nation capable of world champion-ship-winning carbon fiber technology share its image with a tiny, family-owned enterprise that builds cars out of ... of WOOD?

"Well," sniffs Charles Morgan, "our wood is all ash, and it's quite a rare commodity. I mean, it's all at least a hundred years old, for a start. Obviously, the sort of fiber you get in ash, its property of springing back to the same section from where it started, is one of the main reasons we're using it. I think carbon fiber finds it difficult to get some of the properties that wood has for the same weight.

"For example, our wheel arch with the three laminations of ash, with the grain going opposite directions, is actually quite high-tech."

Charles, a third-generation Morgan, is obviously a real one. It was his grandfather, H.F.S.-Henry-who founded the firm to make three-wheeled, motorcycle-engined sporting runabouts. Unlike several competitors, the small company outside the Victorian spa town of Malvern prospered. By 1936 it felt ready to take the momentous step of adding another wheel, along with the first of a variety of automobile engines. But the basic design principles, already hoary with a quarter century of "Moggie" tradition behind them, were carried through. Thus the first Morgan four-wheelers had a curious slidingpillar independent front suspension system perhaps inspired by early Lancias, a whippy, Z-section steel chassis frame, separate fender bodywork consisting of hand-made metal panels mounted on hand-made wooden formers, and resolutely flat windshield glass. And so do the very latest Morgans.

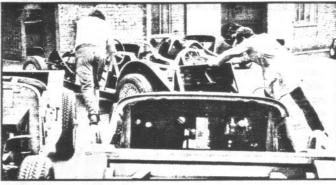
Yes, they are anachronisms. Yet do not suppose the Morgan factory is solely responsible for this seemingly crotchety iconoclasm. Periodic attempts have been made to wrench the Morgan into modernity. But, rather as Porsche found when it thought to discontinue the aging 911, fanatically loyal customers have a say in what you make. At one stage in the early '60s, after inheriting ownership of the firm, Henry's son, Peter, tried to introduce a more modern Morgan. Called the Plus 4 Plus, it was an aluminum-bodied coupe not dissimilar in appearance to the Lotus Elite. It wasn't a hit, and he settled back into producing the traditionally styled 4/4s and Plus 4s while he prepared to take another tack.

In 1968 he introduced a new car that looked very little different from its conven-



Morgan asserts its handwork and ash-wood technology are more efficient than one might imagine:

Cross-grain laminated ash has properties carbon fiber can't match for the weight, and skillled workers catch subtle quality problems at once



tional sisters, although it was both longer and wider to accommodate the 3.5-liter Rover (nee Buick) V8. It is this Plus 8 that now forms the bulk of the annual production, although there has always been a demand for the lighter, cheaper, 1600cc Fordengined model.

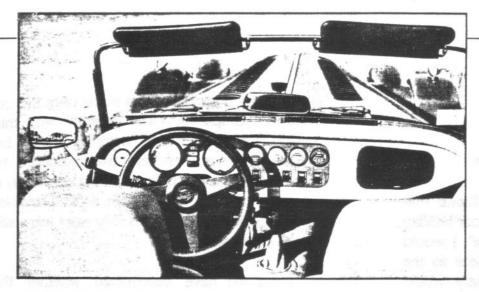
Then, just recently, Morgan replaced its third engine—a twin-cam 2.0-liter supplied by Fiat that the Italian company changed to front-drive and therefore outside the Morgan gestalt—with a 16-valve, twin-cam 2.0-liter by Rover. This little screamer and the sedate Ford are offered both in two-seater and 2+2 body styles, while the V8 is strictly a two-seater.

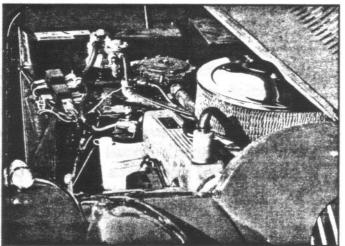
Bill Fink, a longtime Morgan fanatic who does this more out of love than any sensible motivation, is bringing in both the Ford inline four and Rover V8 models, both modified to meet federal safety standards (bumper heights, door beams, center brake lights) in addition to his propane conver-

sion. Fink is looking at adding the new 16-valve unit to his lineup now.

Further proving the factory is not locked in some Golden Age slumber, two years ago it implemented a thorough upgrade of the build quality. All fasteners are now of stainless steel, the ash body framing is treated with gold-toned Cuprinol rather than the grubby black paint of yore, all the steel chassis parts are finished either by powder-coating or in a galvanizing bath, and the body is painted in epoxy. All this added some 10 percent to the factory's build cost, says Peter Morgan, but it's turned out to be worthwhile from the image standpoint. "Even Morgan owners who have been with us for a long time, and very loyal, they say, 'By God, the new ones aren't half good."

Still hale and energetic today at 69, Peter Morgan is still very much in charge, although he is clearly grooming his own son for eventual ownership. Young Charles is familiar with every aspect of the business,





The description 'classic' is more fairly attached to the Morgan's dash than that of any other new car on the road. And the long, louvered nose, slightly awkward to manipulate in traffic, is just so attractive that one keeps getting distracted. But don't be: the Rover V8 (left) blasts this roadster to speed at the slightest opportunity

and well-versed in why the traditional Morgan ways are best ways. "For example," he says, "it's better actually to hand-beat a piece of metal than it is to bang it with a giant press. It doesn't take so much out of the metal. The molecules won't be so disturbed, obviously, if you work a piece of metal into a shape as they would if you force it into a shape.

"The philosophy is that, while we certainly aren't averse to using new materials and new technology, we think the old style of craftsmanship complements the modern materials."

There are human factors involved, too, he continues. "You know, there's a lot to be said for hand-machining, because if you're hand-machining stub axles, which we always are, from a drop forging, or from a casting, then so long as you're not doing too many, that guy's really watching what he's doing. And if there is a porosity in the forging, or if the casting's got air holes in it, he's going to reject the whole batch. And you have to have some pretty sophisticated computers to do that. So there's a lot to be said for humans being involved, if they care about what they're doing.

"And I think they all do, I think they're great. I mean, we've got a fantastic workforce. We're lucky, I suppose, in having a product that they can see at the end, and talk

to owners as well. Obviously, we encourage people to come and sort of watch their car being built, if they want to."

Why is there that small, but steady and relentless demand for the car? Charles reckons it's the performance factor. A Morgan, he says, is "a lightweight sports car that is great fun to drive. I don't think the concept of the car as it is at the moment really needs changing that much. Actually, I must admit I'm very happy with the existing car. It's a great car, it really is, I must say. It's great to drive and it does everything a sports car should, I think."

A Morgan is not a typically easy car to drive, he admits, and says that's a positive thing. "It's a car that encourages you to think about driving. It's not a car that you can sit back and forget about. It brings out a sort of safety-conscious approach, I think."

Morgan senior thinks the basis of the appeal is style more than anything else. "I don't apologize for the fact that somebody says, 'Well, it looks like a 1930s car,' because personally I think the finest and most comprehensive range of cars, not necessarily the best cars, were built actually in the late '20s and '30s. When you go through your own country, you think of the cars you could buy in America in the '30s. The Duesenberg, and some beautiful machines. You had such a variety, every type of body

style and this and that. After the war the manufacturers started telling people what they would buy."

Bill Fink, who bought his own first Morgan in 1962, when he was an American student in England (he crewed for Oxford on the river Isis), has his own ideas about who the Morgan owner is. "A bit eccentric, like the car. A doctor, lawyer, successful businessman. They've usually had prior exposure to a Morgan, and a lot of them have wanted one for 20 years. There's little impulse selling.

"A Morgan requires attention to drive well. It's not a car for everybody. It's like a motorcycle versus a car, or a sailboat versus power. The Morgan is very responsive, and it will tell you what the road is like and what the car will do. And it's funny, but the wood makes the car seem almost living; some days the car seems a bit livelier than others. It can be a very sensual experience."

It can indeed. First, though, one notices the aged ergonomics. Even the larger Plus 8 cockpit is not a generous place, and drivers undisciplined of waistline will find access a bit of a struggle. Once in, everyone finds the wheel rather close. That means steering is a hand-over-hand business, good for impressing British driving instructors, not so good for serious driving. However, the Plus 8 is quite a light car by modern standards—1826 pounds dry—and the non-powered steering is by no means heavy.

The driver's view of the outside world is good in most quadrants, or would be if that long, louvered bonnet weren't so attractive as to keep drawing the eye. Trouble does lurk in traffic before one grows accustomed to its length, because there's simply more car out front than with, say, an MR2.

The "sensual experience" really comes into focus with the ignition of the sweet little aluminum-block V8. In either petrol or propane forms, it's a delightful fountain of responsive, easy torque. In English lanes, it blasts the car into the 80s at any opportunity. On San Francisco streets, it will chirp the tires on the steepest hills and thrust you skyward like a rocketman.

Morgan ride quality is infamous for its firmness, but it can fairly be described as reasonably comfortable on all but the worst city potholes.

Based on limited, if varied, Plus 8 driving, it also seems fair to say that Morgan ownership would be a pleasure providing a more conventional car were available for conventional journeys—commuting in bad weather, shopping, long business trips. As the same thing can be said about motorcycles, it is a matter for the individual to judge whether the \$36,000 Isis requires for a new Plus 8 is well-spent for restricted, albeit vivid, road experiences. Truly, the Morgan is "not for everybody."

Novice Morganics, however, will discover that Morgan drivers still wave at one another.

#### MOGGINING: - SPOOK TO NAT.

#### by Peter George

There is a vacationing rule of thumb that states, "before leaving home, double your holiday money and forget half of your luggage". I would like to extend that same type of advice to the restoration of older cars. The corollary would then be, "when estimating the cost and time requirements for an older car restoration, always double the money and triple the time". For example, I know a chap who thought that his Healey rebuild project would take two weeks; eight years later the car was finally roadable.

Now this example is truly an exception, but it does emphasize that there are hidden pitfalls on the path to car refurbishing. This article as you may well have guessed is an exposé on restoration fallacies and a warning of dangers that could be lurking in the tool box. It is not my intention to wax extemporaneously on how to restore but rather to expound on decisions that must be made.

Before starting a restoration project one must decide at the onset, "will this project be an investment or a hobby". The project, as an investment, will cost big bucks. But as a hobby it will be a sinkhole for money. Once this decision is made please do not change your mind. A change of intention will only lead to dissatisfaction and self-recrimination. For example, he who says, "I've spent too darn much money", has just flipped his project from the hobby side of the fence to the investment side. Or conversely, he who says, "I must do that over again", has decided not to sell the car, but rather to drive it.

And the next mistake is to decide that the

'sell or keep' decision will be made once the car project is completed. The reasons why this decision is needed at the beginning should be obvious, however, here are two questions to reinforce them. One could ask, "who would pay a restored price for a Healey with a 283 Chevrolet engine?", or "does a cheap shoddy paint job instill a pride of ownership?".

Once we have determined whether the restoration project is for pleasure or profit the selection of the car can be made. This choice must consider such things as purchase price, overall condition, complexity of original construction, availability of spare parts, extent of restoration work needed, and finally, car value upon completion. These considerations are very important. Another individual I know attempted to restore a 1929 Dodge Bros. coup. The project fast became a retrofit. Critical original items such as headlamps, radiator cowl and bumpers could not be found and consequently he used whatever was available. Dodge in 1928, supposedly built less than 100 of his model of car. Rare cars are nice but where does one find spare parts?

Now the pendulum can swing to the other extreme. An acquaintance recently bought a rather nice 1950 'plain Jane' Oldsmobile. In my opinion the purchase price was very over-inflated and to date he has doubled his original cost by, firstly, obtaining that all important safety certificate and secondly, by 'band-aid' repairs to the engine. And the value is still less than the original purchase price.

I have always been a tinkerer. My mother can attest to that fact and if you happen to see a lady with the name 'Sam' inside a red heart entwined with snakes, tattooed on her right arm, be sure and ask her. My first restoration endeavour was a 1934 'Reo, Flying Cloud', affectionately dubbed 'Spook'. That '34' was the

first of many. After the Spook, I switched to British cars. At different times I have wondered if this change was prompted by deeply-rooted masochistic tendencies.

But to continue. I've just mentioned a few decisions that should be made before towing home that future concours winner. Now I would like to dispel a few perceived truths. Dismantling is not restoring. Dismantling is the ACT of taking something apart. Restoring is the ART of putting something together again. These two activities are not the same. And do remember that a car torn apart is worth less than it was as an original wreck.

The next myth to be dispelled is, "given sufficient time a restoration is a good place to learn new skills". A car restoration project if it is your own car is not a good place to learn new skills. New skills are learned either from knowledgeable friends or from continuing educational-type classes. Imagine for a moment approaching the first stop sign after having completed your own very first brake rebuild, and wondering if all the springs clips and retaining washers had been installed correctly.

Now let's look at a few truths about spending money. The cheapest purchase regardless of the price is the vehicle workshop manual. And if you can also buy the parts book, so much the better. The reason for the manual is obvious. A manual instructs an individual to do repairs to the level of his own competence. However, the reason for the parts book is not so clear. The parts book will, or could, give you the alternative to replace a defective component rather than purchasing the entire assembly. And some parts suppliers have cross-reference numbers that offer available after-market items. but only if original parts numbers are known. Whenever I buy anything for Nat, I always try to

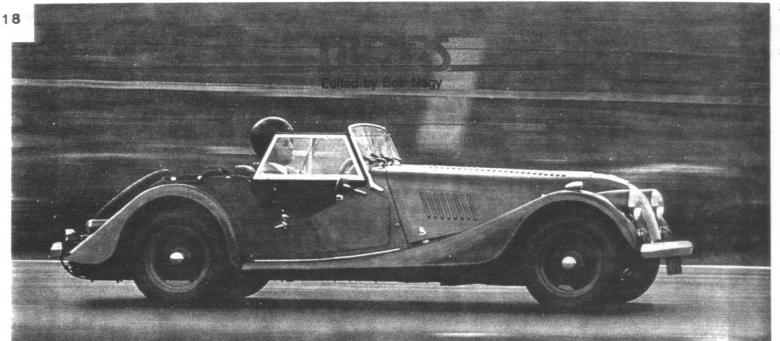
cross-refer the original part numbers back to the supplier's/manufacturer's I.D. numbers. In this manner I am building my own referencing system.

The next truth is also basic. "It is cheaper to replace than to repair." For example a generator repair can cost \$65.00, but a factory rebuilt could cost only \$100.00. The difference between a repair and a rebuild is obvious. Only the failed component has been replaced in the repaired unit whereas the entire rebuilt unit is returned to original manufacturing limits. And we all should agree that the rebuilt unit will provide reliability while the repaired unit has another worn part waiting for the right moment to fail. Only numerous repairs will eventually establish reliability.

Now I will agree that it's not always possible to buy rebuilt items. And if this is the case then repair is the only answer. Please note I have only used two words - rebuild and repair. I have not offered substitution an alternative. 25 Substitution and modification are the 'shun twins' and should be avoided like the plague. I have a friend, also a Plus 4 owner, who intends to replace the generator with an alternator. He believes that this substitution will eliminate a potential problem. He may rightly be avoiding a problem. I don't know. But as a purist, I do know he is lowering the value of his car.

I would like to conclude this article by offering some simple encouragement in the form of an old Chinese proverb which states, "A mountain is moved by the first shovelful". My next article is going to be a change of pace. In an attempt to improve the already notable quality of our Blurb, father and daughter will proffer poetry. And to close, I would like to use a Jimmy Durante-ism. "Goodnight Spook, wherever you are!"





#### MORGAN PLUS FOUR TURNS SWEET 16

The Rover V-8-powered Morgan Plus Eight remains one of the all-time favorites of fans of the Malvern marque. Now, the Plus Four model is being reintroduced, this time carrying Rover's 16-valve M16 2-liter four underhood. The engine, also used by Rover in its European 800-series sedans, makes 140 hp. Installed in the hand-built roadster weighing a mere 1900 lb, the 16V power-plant provides scintillating performance.

Peter Morgan, second generation of the dynasty, and his son Charles avoid quoting specific acceleration figures. Quite simply, with a five-year waiting list for their cars, the Morgans feel it's unnecessary to make any claims. But interpolating from numbers generated by the Ford CVH-powered 4/4 model, the rejuvenated Plus Four should be good for a 0-60-mph time of under 7 sec and have a top end of roughly 115 mph. The elder Morgan also admits that Rover is working on a U.S.-spec version of the M16, and that he hopes to offer the new Plus Four for sale here sometime next year. The numbers will be small, since half the 400 cars produced annually are sold in other countries throughout the world.



Unlike the Rover sedans, the M16 is a longitudinal installation in the Plus Four. The four-banger is mated to a Rover 5-speed manual gearbox via a hydraulic clutch and drives through a Salisbury live axle with a 3.7:1 overall ratio. This rather tall cog was chosen to ensure that the car complied with Swiss noise legislation, the strictest in Europe (77dB max at top speed in 2nd gear). But an optional 4.1:1 gear should give the Morgan 6-sec 0-60-mph capabilities.

Typical of all 4-wheeled Morgans, the Plus Four uses a Z-shaped section chassis with five boxed or tubular cross members. Its ashwood body frame is mounted to the chassis and covered with either the stand-

ard steel or optional aluminum body panels. The Plus Four's front suspension retains the independent sliding-pillar design originated by company founder H.F.S. Morgan in 1909. The rear underpinnings are based on 5-leaf Duraflex springs.

The Plus Four had its formal introduction at Brands Hatch Raceway. During our brief flog around the legendary racing venue, we found the newest Morgan delivered good ride comfort with exceptional control and responsiveness. Although unboosted, its huge 11-in. disc/9-in. drum brakes provided excellent stopping power. We did note substantial wind noise, though—you won't mistake it for a Jag XJ-S convertible.

With a tax-paid price of £13,500 in Britain (U.S. \$25,500), the Plus Four is bound to have strong appeal to classic sports car buffs. A 4-seater version of the car will be available in the U.K within a few months. This year, the first five-digit 4-wheeler chassis plate will be attached, a milestone that denotes the production of 10,000 vehicles over the last 52 years.

For more information, contact Isis Imports, Ltd., P.O. Box 2290, U.S. Custom House, San Francisco, CA 94126, or Canab Motors Ltd., 1802 Summit Dr., Haymarket, VA 22069.

—Michael Cotton



OK, Tim, here's where you go to solve that problem!





# My relationship with 1960 Morris a love-hate thing

By Bob Swift Knight-Ridder Newspapers

I'm not a real foreign car fan.
VW Beetles? Never liked a car
that had the battery under the rear
seat. Porsches? They annoy me.
They roar impatiently, beep that
obnoxious horn and zoom past
with a certain arrogance that says:
"It costs more to tune up my six
carburetors than you made all last
year, dummkopf!" True. But
annoying.

Japanese cars? I remember Pearl Harbor. Sept. 7, 1941, right? (Remember U.S. Vice-President George Bush's recent error in a speech to veterans.)

Me? Shoot, I drive a good old American Chevy pickup, manufactured right in, uh . . . Mexico.

#### Homely car

I confess to an undying admiration for only one breed of foreign auto — English. I have owned two, a Jaguar and a Morris Minor. I am moved to reminisce about the latter because the London Times reports the death of Sir Alec Issigonis, 81, who designed it after World War II.

I had a love-hate relationship with a 1960 Morris for 12 years and 193,000 kilometres (120,000 miles). The car was so homely it was beautiful. Even when brand new, its bluish-gray paint job looked faded.

Its pedals belonged in a kiddie car. Its seats were thin. Passengers risked permanent damage to the coccyx, and at ride's end, would swear someone had Novocained their buns.

The engine would fit comfortably in a carry-on bag and drown out in a spilled drink of Scotch.

Sometimes the starter solenoid would go on strike, requiring the driver to jump out, open the bonnet and flail at it with a blunt object.

#### Need pliers

Then it would start, provided you reached into the depths of the engine and turned the starter spindle with a pair of pliers.

The Morris leaked. It was slow. But it ran and ran and ran.

And it had two other characteristics that made me love it.

Its little engine was basically the same one that, with the addition of a second carburetor, propelled the Minor's sporty sister, the MG.

(The MG's long hood disguised the fact that its engine took up only two feet of room; the rest of the space housed the driver's legs.)

Also, the Morris had the MG's responsive rack and pinion steering, at a time when such exotica was unknown in America.

Thus, at the wheel of the rotund little Morris, I sometimes took on the persona of a real sports car driver. Going through the gears — grrrrate, grrrrind — I felt as though I were at the wheel of an MG-TD, even though I might be downshifting into second — rowrrrr — at a blazing 16 km (10 miles) an hour.

#### Wanted a Morgan

Or, more often than not, I might imagine I was driving the first and last of the REAL English sports cars, the Morgan, which has always been the Holy Grail of cars to me. That's what I really wanted when I bought the Morris, but I couldn't afford one.

Did you ever see a Morgan? Really old-fashioned looking, in the classic 1930s mode. Bigger engine than an MG, sometimes an eightcylinder Rover powerhouse. . A naked spare tire (sometimes two!) on the rear end. Real "louvers" on the long, rakish hood! A huge air scoop on the side of the hood! Fog lights! And, I say, a wide leather strap over the hood.

It was, — is — a true English sports car. Noisy. Leaky. Uncomfortable. Owners bragged that the "Selectaride" feature on their Morgans allowed them to choose four different degrees of hard.

It was the only car, it was said, in which a driver could run over a penny and tell whether it was heads or tails.

But for all its eccentricities, Morgans outraced sleeker Jaguars, Triumphs, Healeys and Porsches.

#### Moment of madness

They say confession is good for the soul and that admission of your weaknesses makes you a stronger person.

So, you know what I did?

I bought an AIR SCOOP and fastened it to the hood of my Morris Minor!

I bought fog lights!

In a moment of madness, I searched for a big leather strap! Yes! I was going to BUCKLE DOWN THE HOOD of my Morris Minor! Never mind that its hood was fat instead of long and lean. Never mind that it never went over 60.

Fortunately, I never found a suitable strap and so was saved the embarrassment of having a real Morgan owner cock an eyebrow at my strapped-down Morris.

No, it wasn't a Morgan. But I was perversely proud of it, warts and all, in the grand tradition of Morris owners. One night, in Orange Bowl Parade traffic, a red Corvette pulled up beside us. Two Nebraska fans were in it, wearing red cowboy hats.

#### Like a Singer

The Corvette driver raced his engine: Vroom-rroocom! As its bellow died, I pressed my foot on the accelerator of the aging Morris:

Vrooooom-vroooom!

To the Nebraskans, it may have sounded rather like a Singer sewing machine in full cry, but to me it sounded just like a Morgan.

Startled, they looked around. There we were in the roly-poly Morris, laughing.

They laughed, too, doffing their red hats to us, and to the Morris.

When we win the Lotto, Elvalee promises me, she'll buy me a Morgan. With a big leather strap on the hood. I wouldn't mind another Morris, too. The little sucker got almost 40 miles to the gallon . . . in

## Calendar of Events

Great Lakes Annual Meet

Niagara '89

June 23 - 25

See Page 5.

September 8 - 10

REGALIA

REGALIA

Details later

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Joan McDonald, R.R.#4, Box 1078,

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Joyce Tomsett, 25 April Gardens,

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EDITOR:





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