



# The Blurb



Ready to head off to the March 6th pub brunch.

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### Prez Sez



Glen Donaldson

Welcome to another fine edition of The Blurb and thanks to those who have helped by sending in articles and to our long-suffering editor and web Guru Dave. I seemed to have a case of writer's block lately – must be further fun car withdrawal as this winter seems to drag on with cold and less than top-down weather. Yes, I can hear a few voices saying “but we have had some nice days” – having the fun cars in 3 different spots has made starting one for a fun ride a challenge – plus the annoying

friend CV-19 just won't buggger off so things get closed like the Hagerty Garage + Social when I could have had the 4/4 out for a spin. Volvo goes back outside next week and windshield back on the +8 so it can get out and about – 4/4 will come home and Spitfire will be on show at Hagerty as a local sleeping spot. Currently, the Spitfire is in Brampton and no offence to my Hwy 410 and Steeles Ave. neighbours, but the drivers out here are in a world of their own and with the big truck traffic, it is just not a great place to go for a drive let alone a drive in a wee sports car. Just back from a sunny and dry day at the Ancaster British Car Show and Flea Market – yup one of those breezy days up in Ancaster. Good turnout of British cars, but sadly no Morgan on show – we had our money on Dave Famer and his Plus 4 but guessing Dave was hip-hopping around for Easter. Our Club Table was a hive of activity and a social gathering spot as members pulled up chairs and had a visit. We did sign up a new member so welcome John Menear who just brought a 1960 +4 in from California and is busy getting her ready for the road – so watch out for a silver and black 2-seater soon. Ted Bridge also came back to the club and is looking forward to getting the red +8 out near its new home in the Algonquin Highlands as he and Theresa have almost finished the house renos as they enter the

next phase of life. Welcome John and welcome back Ted & Theresa. Many thanks to Mary & Ray Shier for supplying the popular easter eggs at our club table.

Busy schedule ahead and let's try and get out and support the club and events: May 1<sup>st</sup> Pub Lunch Queens Head – Alan & Kathy will be chairing as I am travelling that day. May 15<sup>th</sup> Bryan Trip and the Guelph Boys event – gathering at Aviator coffee then to the Waterloo Warbirds, then lunch and on to the Tiger Moth Boys. Condolences to Bryan, Julie & Ella on the recent passing of Indie the wonder dog after a life well lived for 12 ½ years. May 21<sup>st</sup> is the celebration of life for Brent Walker who passed far too young in April of this year. It goes from 2 pm to 4 pm at the Canadian Warplane Museum in Hamilton. As Brent was a regular and engaged volunteer there for many years. We will miss seeing Brent and his gorgeous yellow 4/4 at events and his interesting conversations about Morgans, airplanes, motorcycles and interesting cases from his forensic days with the Halton regional police force.

May 28<sup>th</sup> is the Morgans at the Farm in Gatineau Quebec at Luc Charette's farm. Luc and Gilles Lachance are hoping for a great turnout and so far I think we are at about 16 cars. Please make sure you have let Gilles and Luc know you are coming as dinner must be confirmed more than 2 weeks in advance. The cost is \$35 ea. for a hot dinner. The event runs from 1 pm to 9 pm. See the flyer in the Blurb and please make sure Luc & Gilles have you on the list.

June is also looking busy with the Pub on June 5<sup>th</sup>, and then I am suggesting a drive to the Headwaters British car show on June 11<sup>th</sup> at the Caledon Fairgrounds – show runs from 9 am till 2 pm and it was always a favourite of Alan & Marlies. Then June 18<sup>th</sup> is the club's picnic at Alan & Kathy's home – with the Morgans on the side lawn and the lady's synchro swim team back in action after a 2-year training session.

Time for me to wrap this up and let Dave finish off the Blurb...apologies for the delay. I also want to wish all our members a healthy and happy Spring – particularly those members who are recovering from surgeries and spring tune-ups as we all try to get back on our feet.

## Central Canada Morgan Events

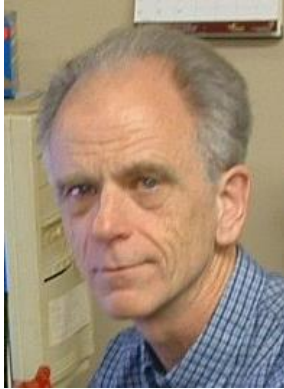
May 15	May-viation Tour, Geulph
May 21	Bren Walker Celebration of Life
May 28	Gatineau Get Together
June 11	Headwaters British Car Club Show, Caledon
June 18	Club Picnic, the Lytles'
July 17	Brits in the Park, Lindsay
August	????
Sept. 18	British Car Day, Bronte Park

**Check for updates and other events of interest and maps to the events on our web site at: [www.morgansportscarclubofcanada.com/events.php](http://www.morgansportscarclubofcanada.com/events.php)**





### Editor's Message



Dave Farmer

I have been driving the Morgan quite frequently this spring, as I explain in "The Toyota is in the Shop". Let's get lots of Morgans at the Canadian Warplane Museum for Brent Walker's Celebration of Life on May 21. Long time member Scott Barrie has written a history about himself and his Morgan. Arno Schmidt compares the Morgan and Aston Martin clubs in The Tale of Two Car Clubs.

Bill Fink who rowed to victory with Oxford has posthumously contributed to another victory for the Oxford eight. And past president Vern sent in a write-up about an outing in Australia.

Finally we have in person events, four posters for coming events are at the back of the issue.

What happens when Old Car Guys get sent to a nursing home ...



### Letters to the Editor

Historic Plate Renewal;

Hi Dave , I thought our members would like this update on renewing historic plate stickers - and non -historic ones

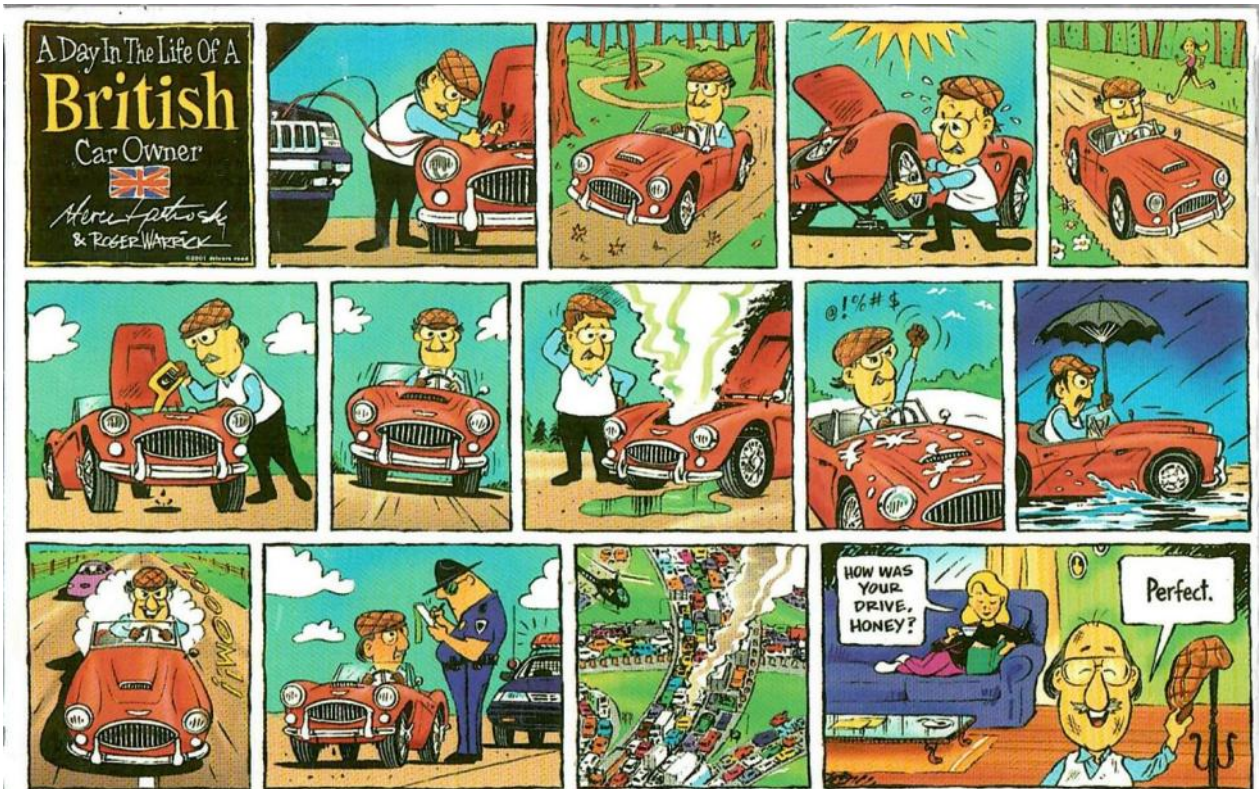
Suppose your plate sticker is out of date , ie was not renewed in 2021 or 2020 or for a few years . Of course this is pretty common as our cars may be off the road for a year or so , due to being undrivable

The Min of Transport will require catch up payment for those

years when the sticker was unpaid , unless proof can be shown that the car was off the road . The only proof that will be accepted , without a major hassle, is to show that the insurance was altered - to "comprehensive - non driven" or suspended.

So if this might affect you , call your insurance broker and make the necessary changes. Doing that also will save a few dollars on the insurance premium .....Terry Brown

This came just before the Ontario government dropped the fee but who knows what may happen after the election. (ed)



"A Day in the Life of a British Car Owner"

Item# 01.023





## Brent Walker

Sad news to report this month that our friend and club member Brent Walker passed away March 19th at the young age of 77. You will likely remember Brent and Willy in their immaculate yellow 4/4 out at pub lunches or events. I first met Brent at the Hamilton British sports car club and told him what a great time Gabby and I were having with the Morgan club - they soon rejoined the Morgan club and enjoyed many events over the last few years. Our last meeting was in July as Brent rode shotgun in the +8 as we blasted and burbled up to Martin & Donna's while Willy chased us in the bright orange Honda Fit (wonderful colour to spot in the vibrating rear-view mirror).



Brent and Willy at the MSCCC 50th Anniversary Celebration on August 26/27 2017

Brent had led an interesting career with the Halton police and was responsible for establishing the early forensics lab. After retirement he was active as a volunteer at the Hamilton Warplane Museum. I can fondly recall how comforting a meet with Brent and Willy was back in October 2017 and how Willy had reassured me that life with a stent would be OK.

A celebration of Life is planned for Brent Saturday May 21st from 2 to 4 pm at the Canadian Warplane Museum.

Glen



A Morgan fender, an Indian wheel,  
A cat and a mouse.

Hendrik Rens



# **The Survival of ABK 756**



**by:**

**Scott Barrie**



## Part 1 - A New Home

It all began with a two-line ad in the Toronto Star that simply read, "Morgan Plus 4", followed by a telephone number. I knew what they looked like; there was a dentist in Brantford where I grew up who had one. It had wire wheels, was painted British Racing Green, and had that distinctive curved grill.

But that essentially brings us to the end of what I knew about Morgans.

Did that matter? I already knew I wanted it.

That was in the summer of 1973. I was in my early 20s, and at that point in life when I should have been planting my feet on a path towards a comfortable and secure future. Of course, what I needed most was an esoteric sports car that I knew nothing about. Truthfully, I knew very little about cars of any kind. The only one I'd ever owned was a Datsun 510 daily driver. Nevertheless, the following Saturday, a couple of friends and I made the trip to check out the Plus 4 and a couple of other cars they were interested in.

The Morgan was located in a gas station parking lot on Eglinton Avenue in the heart of Toronto. Pulling into the lot, we spotted the car, tucked almost out of sight in the back corner, its fire-engine red paint looking a bit faded and forlorn.

The owner explained that the car would run, but would not move under its own power, and he assumed that the clutch was toast. It was almost a non-issue, I had fallen in love with it the instant I saw it. In fact, that it ran at all struck me as a bit of a bonus. And, it was easy to overlook the black smoke when you heard the sound of the engine, which was sublime.

There was a definite appeal to the exposed spare tire and the rakish rear panel, not to mention the soaring wings and thick leather belt. And, as I began to clamber around it, I discovered so many other things that screamed 'this car is different': the air bladder seats, the holes in the floor for the jack to poke through, all the wood, the toggle switch for the turn signals, and the speedometer, that seemed to exist only for intimidation purposes, was placed squarely in front of the passenger seat, just to name a few.

The car, even standing still, was pretty cool.

A more expert purchaser might have questioned the welded-on trailer hitch and the snow tires on such a car. A more expert purchaser might have probed for more information about that whole, run-but-not-move, thing. A more expert purchaser might have poked around underneath a little more.

But I was not an expert purchaser, and I was sold.

The following Saturday I convinced my dad to make the hour or so drive to Toronto to bring it home. At the time, I didn't fully appreciate what a huge "ask" it was to pressure him into towing a car with a rope 60-odd miles from midtown Toronto to Brantford on a Saturday morning. His Plymouth sedan was, after all, not an ideal tow vehicle. But, with the benefit of almost 50 years of hindsight, it's easy to remember why he was my hero then and remains my hero now, a quarter of a century after his passing.

While he drove the tow car I rode behind in the Morgan, waving at pedestrians and trying to avoid running into the back of the Plymouth. The trip was surprisingly uneventful and passed almost without incident. The only thing that caused any sort of hiccup was late in the journey when we were only a few miles from home. My dad accelerated to pass a farm tractor that was pulling a load of hay along the shoulder of the road.

As the speed increased, the front of the Morgan suddenly started to bounce around like crazy. It got so bad that I was having trouble controlling it. I frantically started tapping on the horn button and waving for my dad to pull over. Thankfully, as the speed decreased so did the shimmy.

We pulled to a stop and, as I peered around under the front of the car, the only thing I could think of was that somehow the tow rope had become fouled up in the front suspension. While realistically that made no sense, at all, it was the only thing that seemed the least bit logical at the time.

Of course, any experienced Morgan owner would instantly know that I was now officially a member of the club. Even though the car couldn't propel me down the road under its own power, my rusted and faded treasure had still managed to introduce me to St. Malvern's Dance.





## **Part 2 - Bad News and Good**

Once the car was home, I wanted nothing more than to be driving it. So, I was anxious to get it sorted out. With luck, the clutch would be an easy fix and, with luck, there wouldn't be too many other serious issues to deal with. Unfortunately, luck runs hot and cold and I was about to see a little of both.

The first order of business was to thoroughly examine the car and determine what would absolutely have to be done to be able to enjoy driving it, comfortably, safely, and reliably.

The front fenders had been very crudely and clumsily moulded into the main body panels with Bondo. Why? I'm not sure. It wasn't original, and it wasn't attractive. But, I determined that I could live with it. Unfortunately, the rear fenders were in terrible shape. No doubt a direct consequence of running snow tires on the over-salted southern Ontario roads. So, they were added to the list of things to repair or replace, if new ones could be found. Truthfully, it seemed like the car - a 1963 Plus 4 - had sustained a decade of assault by salt... and it showed.

The second order of business was to get the car to move under its own power. Fortunately, I had a friend who ran a nearby MGB/Triumph dealership, and we towed the car there to let their mechanic take a look. Confident that a new clutch would solve my problem in short order, I headed home to deal with other issues.

There hadn't been too much good news so far. But my spirits remained high. I was learning lots and it seemed that every time I set to work on the car I discovered something else unique that added to its character. Who had ever heard of a button that you push with your toe to lubricate the front suspension with engine oil? Really?

All those little discoveries motivated me to work on the car whenever possible. That was not often easy. That same year I was actively competing in motorcycle trials, teaching school, and finishing up at university part-time. So, of necessity, the car was not always my highest priority. But, work did get done, and progress was made.

While poking around in the comfort of my parents' cramped single-car garage, I determined that the car had been blue and yellow at one point. Further, I didn't think either of those had been the original colour. That didn't sit well. For some reason, it was important to me to return the car to its original colour. But, I didn't know what that was. And, given that I had no idea if the Morgan company still existed, I was really not sure how to proceed.

Fortunately, included in the package of coffee-stained bills and receipts that came with the car, was a crumbling owner's manual that had a vague address on the front cover. So, in a flight of fancy, I wrote a short note asking if they could tell me what colour the car had been originally, and dropped it into a mailbox. Remember, this was 1973.

I didn't hold out much hope.

And, speaking of not much hope, I got a call from my friend explaining that the clutch in the car was fine. At first, that seemed like good news. But, he went on to say that there was a strange shaft between the engine and transmission and added something about splines which, unfortunately, my car was lacking.

Almost anyone who knows about Moss-box Morgans knows about the input shaft and the muff coupler. At that point in my life, I was not among that group. Further, I didn't really know where to turn. So, I found myself standing on the doorstep of my high school machine-shop teacher as he stared into the end of the muff and slid his finger around the bore.

"I don't think there's ever been splines in there," he said. "But, in any case, the tooling required to make a new one would probably cost more than you paid for the car." This was not the news I was looking for.

"Why don't you talk to my brother," he went on. "He used to be involved with Morgans."

His brother's name was Dave Elcomb, and, as I was to discover, Dave had been a longtime iconic fixture in the Canadian Morgan community, and an avid racer of Morgans, both 3 wheel and 4. I called him as soon as I got home, explained my situation, and he literally made my week.

"There's one hanging off the back of an engine out in the shop", he said. "twenty bucks and it's yours."

Given that it was all I needed to turn my rusty-red lawn ornament into a spirited road-burner, I was out the door



within seconds of hanging up the phone. And, by the following weekend, I was sitting on a Coke crate roaring up and down country roads, having the time of my life.

Dave also let me know about a parts source in Windsor, Ontario, and in short order, I had a new pair of rear fenders. I would be making more trips to Windsor, as time went on.

It was Canada Post that made the next week for me. Seemingly no time at all after I had sent that letter into the abyss, I got a very elegant and friendly letter from the factory, signed by a gentleman named P. H. G. Morgan. In it, he politely answered all the questions I asked and was kind enough to enclose a chip of the original paint from the car.

That letter solidified the allure of the Morgan mystique - a mystique that I still feel strongly very nearly a half a century on. Further, it sealed the deal. Plus 4 #5203 was once again going to become Imperial Crimson.

### **Part 3 - A Short Term Solution**

'Concours' was a word with which I was not familiar. As an early-twenties young man, I wanted a car that looked basically like it was supposed to - i.e. fabulous - but I didn't have the time, the interest, the ability, or the money to do a show-quality restoration. My goal was to get it roadworthy, and then drive it the way it should be driven.

So, what could be more timely than learning of a friend of a friend who claimed to be a great car painter? Apparently, he wouldn't do a poor job, even if you wanted him to. Perhaps I heard wrong. Because, as it turned out he could do a poor job even if you didn't want him to. To be fair, for a syrupy enamel, the paint wasn't horrible, but I sure wished he'd done things like mask behind the louvres in the bonnet, because, an Imperial Crimson engine was not the look I was going for.

Nevertheless, after what seemed like far too long, the car was drivable, licensed, insured, painted the correct colour... And ON THE ROAD!

For a while, at least, nothing else seemed to be important. And, for a while, I seemed to live in the car. I looked for excuses to have to drive somewhere and, as a result, I had to adjust my fuel budget. My Datsun was on its last legs and, for a period of time, the Morgan became my daily driver. The more I drove it the more comfortable I became, and the more aggressive I got. There was something about the car that just felt right,

I remember once I was running a little too heavy into a corner only to discover that the road was covered in fine gravel. The car went into a graceful slide that took us off of the tarmac, off of the gravel shoulder, and onto the grass beyond. My pulse quickened - dramatically. But, I pointed the car towards where I wanted to end up, and it took me there,

That one escapade, perhaps more than any other as long as I've owned the car, taught me a measure of respect for it. From that point on I felt that whatever adventures we were having, we were definitely in them together.

There were some personality traits to learn, for sure. Driving between 45 and 50mph was off-limits. At that speed, the front end of the car would dance all over the road. I had no idea what caused it. I just figured that it was a fact of life. Didn't really matter. I wanted to go faster than that, anyway.

As time went on, it became clear that the car and I were becoming friends. I loved driving it with the top down just after sunset on a balmy summer evening. I also loved driving it with the top up and the sidescreens on late at night. There was something quite visceral about being tucked into the cozy cockpit, with the comforting glow of the dash lights, the long-range beams of those big, close-







set, sealed beam headlights, and the wonderful growl of the Triumph engine. I felt remote, daring, and heroic in a Charles-Lindberg-crossing-the-Atlantic, kind of way.



Even the unintentionally intermittent windshield wipers were oddly endearing. In short, this was becoming a 'thing'. This car was going to be sticking around long-term.

But, unfortunately, there was a chink in its armour.

One day it occurred to me that perhaps the car was hugging the road a little too well. Really, it seemed to conform to the profile of the asphalt with what was becoming an uncanny accuracy. I decided to give it a critical look underneath.

One of the previous owners had slathered several thick applications of undercoating over everything in sight and so, on cursory inspection, everything seemed fine. However, as I scraped some of the undercoating off the frame, I discovered, frighteningly, that it was very badly rusted and cracked in several places.

A trip to a neighbouring friend's farm saw large steel braces welded to the frame on both sides. That made me feel more or less comfortable driving the car again, but it's hard to deny that from

then on, there was always a little voice in the back of my head reminding me that things were not ideal 'down there'.

In fact, the more I drove it, the more that little voice in the back of my head reminded me about those cracks in the frame and all the other insidious rust that, according to Neil Young, never sleeps. So, while I'm not sure whether it was an act of first aid, or obligation, or wanting to take care of a close friend, it had to be done.

So, I started to gather the parts needed to bring it back to a point that would be safe and confidence-inspiring. First came a frame, because that was the most critical problem that needed to be dealt with. But lots more parts followed: a new pair of front wings, new fender valances, kingpins, and more.

Once I had amassed the bulk of the necessary parts, I held my breath then, apprehensively, jumped in way over my head and started to take the car apart. Despite the fact that I had lazily sailed through an entire semester of grade nine Auto-Mechanics, I didn't feel entirely prepared for what lay ahead.

As work progressed, it became obvious that many parts could be cleaned up and reused. But, it was also obvious that there was much that was well past its best-before date.

Once the cowl, bonnet and fenders were off it was time to turn my attention to the firewall and body tub. Somewhat surprisingly, the wood was in pretty good shape. But the same could not be said for much of the metal skin, which was very badly corroded at the bottom all around the perimeter of the car. The firewall was as bad or worse.

I knew I needed help, made some inquiries, and really lucked out. There was an English gentleman by the name of Harry Woodford who had a shop near a little town called Kelvin, Ontario, not too far from Brantford. He was a likably eccentric character who referred to himself as an 'automobilist' and was one of the most broadly skilled people I have ever met. His shop was in a small barn on a rural property and, besides the shop, there was another long building that had been a horse barn. That building was full of all kinds of exotic cars - mainly British and European - that were awaiting Harry's attention.

His specialty was scratch-building body tubs for T-series MGs, but it seemed like there was nothing he couldn't do. There were a couple of English wheels in his shop for doing compound bends of metal, and the day I first dropped in, he was making repairs to a dual-plug setup for a vintage Rolls Royce distributor.

Harry refused to do things by half measure, he clearly knew his stuff, and I immediately realized I was in good hands. He was the perfect craftsman for the project. And, a short time later I delivered my body tub to his shop.



## **Part 4: We're Not In Kansas Anymore**

I had never seen a sky like that.

It was early August, in the summer of 1979, 6 years, almost to the day, since I bought the Morgan. I was working on a television series at Kleinburg studios, north of Toronto. Lots of curious things went on there. It was not unusual to pull into the parking lot and see a couple of goats, standing on top of a BMW, eating low-hanging leaves off of the trees in the parking lot. It was not unusual to see an elephant strolling around wearing circus gear, or people dressed in costumes from pioneer days.

But, even considering all that. I had never seen anything quite like this.

I vividly remember coming out of the main building and absently looking up to see a perfectly straight greenish-purple cloud stretching from one horizon to the other. Something was disquieting about it, and I just stood there looking up at it for the longest time. Finally, I shrugged it off and got on with my day.

The call came later that evening.

As it turned out, those clouds had been a signal. That day the town of Woodstock, in Southwestern Ontario, had been ravaged by a tornado. It was a devastating event that had a profound effect on hundreds of families, and thousands of lives. Two people had been killed and dozens injured.

And everything else that happened paled in comparison.

Touring the area a few days later, I saw houses that seemed totally untouched until I realized the entire roof was just gone. I saw huge, century-old trees lying roots-and-all in the middle of a field, with no hole in sight.

It was a tragedy that defied description.

The town of Kelvin is very close to Woodstock. Heartbreakingly close.

The tornado also had a profound effect on Harry, his shop, and his future. Miraculously, he escaped unhurt, even though he had been inside his shop when the tornado cut a swath through the area. The building collapsed around him, but thankfully it left him safe. Against another wall, he had a lifetime's accumulation of irreplaceable cardboard patterns he used to replicate irreplaceable parts for irreplaceable cars. Luckily - and amazingly - the wall collapsed on top of the patterns and they were saved.

But that's where the good news ended. Cars in the horse barn, which essentially no longer existed, had been picked up, twisted and dropped outside in various states of disarray.

Tools and furniture and machinery were littered across the surrounding farmers' fields. After numerous forays - stretching up to a mile or more - collecting tools, car parts, and other belongings, Harry and his sons simply gave up. I remember sitting in their dusty driveway watching the three of them coming back from one of their missions, riding on a big old farm cart laden down with the material they had recovered. A more depressing scene would be hard to imagine.

My Morgan body might well have been in that load. Who knows? And, it doesn't matter. It was in one of the loads and the news wasn't good. What had been found was crumpled up to about the size of a small lawnmower. The only thing worth salvaging was one damaged chrome sidescreen mount.

My restoration project was on hold.





## **Part 5 - Against All Odds**

Chris Charles is a name that is widely known and respected in the Canadian Morgan community. At the time, he owned and operated CMC Enterprises, the new Canadian source for all things Morgan. His shop was in Kitchener, Ontario.

It was great to have him so close to where the car was in Brantford. I visited him often to collect various bits and pieces, and just to get a Morgan fix. This time when I called him I was looking for something more. I was still reeling from the news of the tornado and was in panic mode. I explained the situation and asked him how long he thought it would take to have a body made at the factory. Over 40 years have passed but I can still 'hear' his two-word answer.

"Years, probably."

There was a pause in the conversation as that sunk in. And, given that I really didn't know what to say next, I didn't say anything. You could have driven a couple of drop-head coupes through the pause, which seemed to last a lifetime. Then, Chris added, almost as an afterthought, "But, I've got one."

"Excuse me." I said, not quite sure what I'd just heard.

Chris went on to explain that he had a brand new body tub that had been ordered some time ago, but the purchaser had never come to collect it. It was sitting on the floor of his shop in its original primer. And, it wasn't just any body tub, it was the exact one I was looking for. Not a four-seater, not a DHC, not a low-line. It was my car... sans colour... and, sans rust. Sitting there, waiting for me.

I didn't even try to calculate the odds of that.

It clearly meant the difference between no car and a car. It meant the difference between piles of bits being carted around year after year in unfounded optimism and a completed restoration. Bottom line. I couldn't get to Kitchener fast enough.

Suddenly and, palpably, a project that had started weighing me down took on a whole new life. There was still a ton of work to be done, to be sure, and many problems to solve. But, the feeling I had was that moving forward, all the problems had suddenly become much smaller and more manageable.

The fact that I now had a brand new body to go along with the wings and chassis buoyed me up immeasurably. There were no more impenetrable roadblocks.

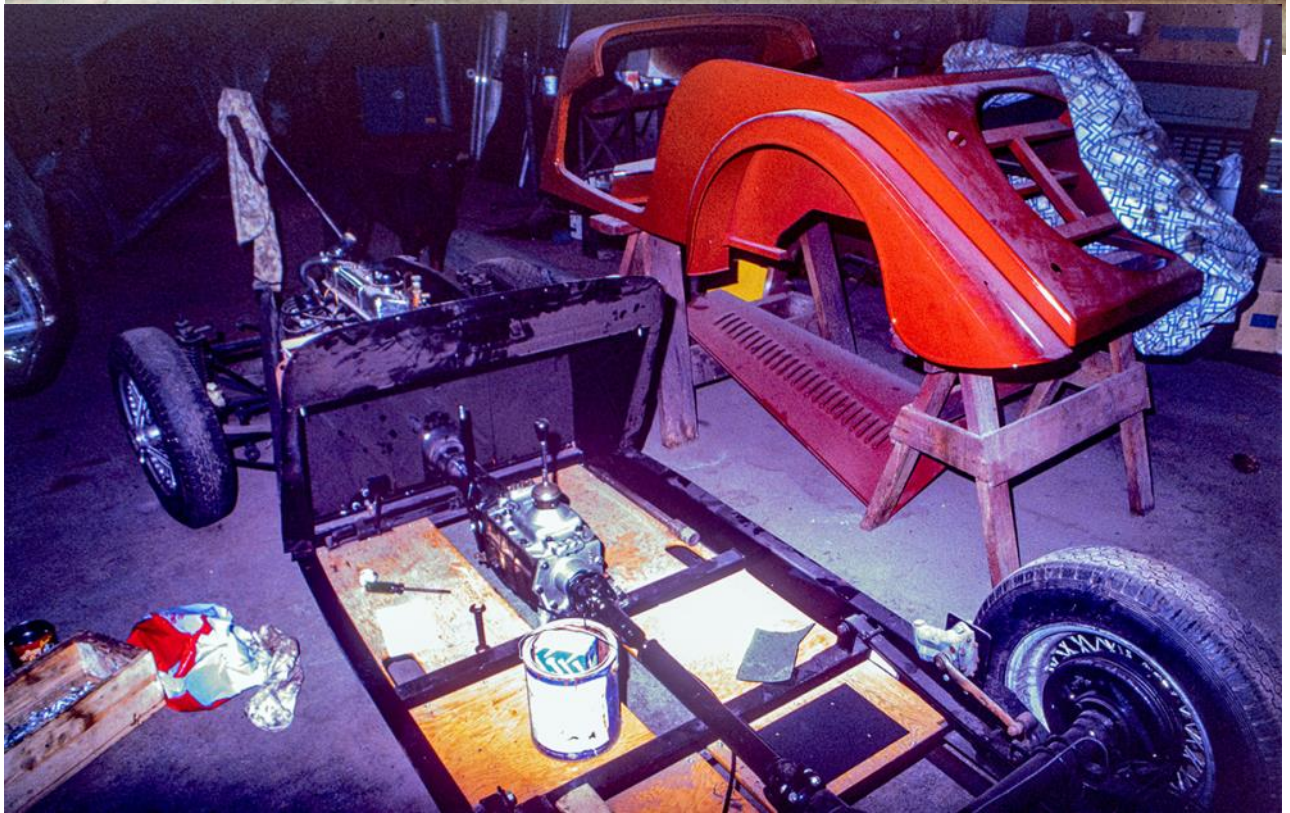
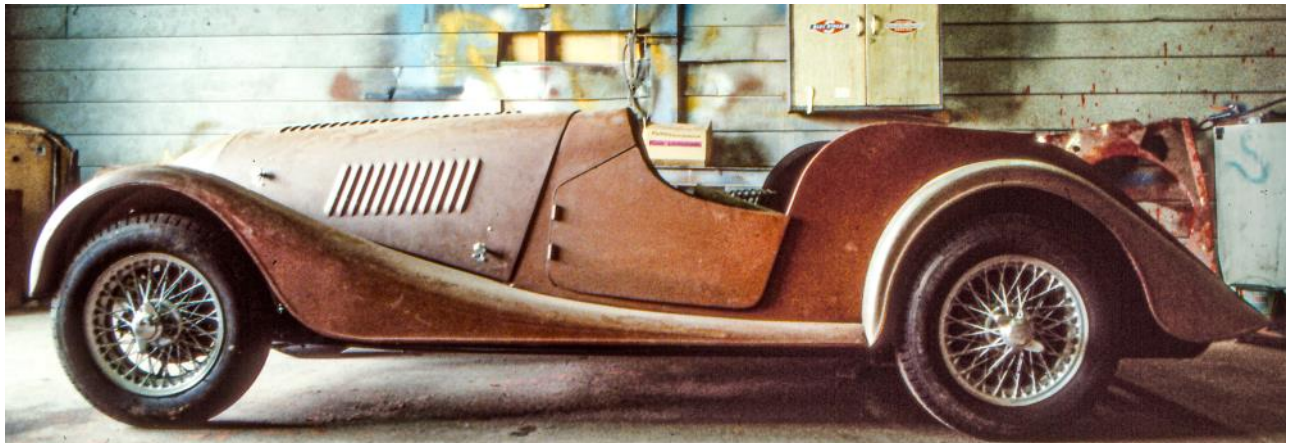


### Part 6 - The Never Ending Story

Throughout much of the restoration project, I was living and working in Toronto. I would go home every few weeks to try and make progress, but it wasn't easy, and it wasn't particularly productive.







In the meantime, Harry had moved into another shop, this one conveniently in town, and I was able to work there. He was helping transfer the brakes and suspension parts from the old chassis to the new one. He also made a new firewall and the work was exemplary. One of Harry's sons had started working with him and had become an excellent painter. So, while the chassis was being built up, Tony was applying many coats of lacquer.

But, from my end, things were moving more slowly than I would have liked. Tasks that should have taken hours were taking days. Tasks that should have taken days were taking months. The project itself was stretching from months into years.

I determined that if it was ever going to get finished the car would need to be closer. So, once the chassis was ready to roll, and the paint was complete I decided to move it to Toronto. From the mother of a friend, I rented a garage in the heart of the city near the university. And, with a borrowed van and trailer, moved the project within easy reach. Suddenly, I could squeeze in several work sessions a week, and I was always motivated to go.





By this time, all the actual refurbishing of bits and pieces had long since been finished. The engine, transmission and drivetrain were in. The engine had been totally gone over and freshened up with many new parts including pistons liners, etc. So, essentially, all that was left were things like the wiring harness, wings and rear fenders, and the general assembly of the sheet metal and other finishing bits. In other words, the fun part. And I did enjoy it.

Finally, after one long, hot summer work session, just as the last glow of sunlight was fading into a pleasantly cool summer evening, I looked around at the car and realized the last gate had been opened. There was actually nothing that was stopping me from starting and driving it. The bumpers and bonnet halves weren't on, but the car would move fine without them.

I dug around in my toolbox for the key, primed the carbs and nestled down into the driver's seat. Looking around the cockpit I felt a bit like a duck out of water. I put the key in the ignition and pulled out the choke control. I paused apprehensively. As far as I could tell, there was no reason not to turn the key and make some noise.

So I did.

It started remarkably easily and settled into a nice quick idle. I sat for a moment and savoured the feeling of the car, absorbing the vibration and throaty hum of a running engine.

I depressed the clutch pedal and nudged the transmission into reverse. I gently eased the car out of the garage and swung around into the laneway. Straightening the wheels, I nudged the car into first gear and gingerly headed off. All I did was drive around a single block. But I did manage to get the car as far as third gear. It felt tight and strong, and magical. It had been so long since I'd driven it, that I was simply over the moon.

Well, I was until the cockpit filled up with smoke.

Fortunately, at that point, I was close enough to the garage that I could almost coast home. And, even though it





was only a few seconds before I was able to shut the car off and get out, the smoke had already cleared.

I thoroughly went over every inch of the wiring harness, and all the electrical connections, and frustratingly, never actually found a culprit. I changed a few wires that seemed a little suspect and made sure that things that were supposed to be grounded were, and things that were not supposed to be grounded, were not. Fortunately, that was the end of it.

So, work continued. I fit the bonnet and bumpers and finished a few other jobs to the point where I could put the car back on the road legally with plates and insurance.

This was getting serious.

At the time I was working in a studio on the Lakeshore in Toronto, so the next outing would be a run right down Spadina Avenue to work and back. I waited for the perfect weather day and left the office at lunchtime to run up to the garage to switch vehicles.

I knew the Morgan was running on fumes, so I turned into the first gas station I saw. As I stood there pumping the fuel I gazed around in disbelief that, after what was now 5 years off the road, the car was now reborn and safely drivable again. I reflected back on that Saturday morning over a decade earlier when I was towed down that same street and on out of Toronto by that now, long-gone yellow Plymouth. I thought about all that had transpired in the interim. Then, the car had been weary, neglected, and undrivable. Now, it was freshly restored, repainted in the original colour and - I hoped - looking forward to the open road.

I had never undertaken a project of this sort of magnitude before and the learning curve had been long and steep. But I felt that I had done the right thing for a good friend.

## Part 7 - Life Goes On

My Morgan Plus 4 restoration project more or less wrapped up in the mid-eighties. The car was looking good and the engine was fresh and tight and strong. There was no unsightly sculpted Bondo. There was no trailer hitch, and there was no ugly buildup of undercoating hiding serious problems.

However, as time flowed by and I started to put on some miles, it became obvious that it wasn't everything I'd hoped for. Unfortunately, there was this nagging vibration. I couldn't isolate the cause and I couldn't cure it. So, while I loved driving it and always looked forward to the opportunity, the cause of the vibration was always in the back of my mind. Further, downtown Toronto was not an ideal environment for a roadster that didn't like stop-and-go traffic.



And, beyond that, life kind of got in the way. I had two young children whom I loved to spend time with. Also, my career demanded more and more of my time, including a 6-month project in South Africa that was all-consuming. I tackled a couple of motorcycle restorations, and our family had moved to a rural property that required both renovations and upkeep.

My much-cherished Morgan followed me through several moves, and was always loved, well-housed and well

taken care of. But, it wasn't driven as much as I would have liked.

I did various things over the years to try and sort it out. First, I had all the wheels rebalanced and, when that didn't work I bought a new set of 72 spoke wires and replaced the 30-year-old Pirellis with a set of Vredesteins. And, while everything I did helped a little, there was still a vibration there that wouldn't go away.

I figured that the only way to fix it would be to pull the engine and transmission but I really didn't have the space or equipment necessary.

However, while all this was going on, my son Alex had grown up, become a master-machinist, and put together his own fully equipped shop. He'd also established his own business that, among other things, included fabricating special one-off parts for high-end collector and race cars, and repairing - or making from scratch - unobtainable mechanical parts for all manner of equipment. He gained some experience with his own cars, as well. He coaxed well over 100 horsepower out of a 1970 VW Beetle and resurrected a 1967 13 window VW micro-bus - previously well-past-the-point-of-no-return - into a reliable transporter in high demand for weddings and photoshoots.

One day, out of the blue, he happened to say, "Come on Dad, let's sort out the Morgan."

I was beaming. He sure didn't have to say it twice.

So, in the summer of 2017, his bus moved into my garage, while the Morgan took up temporary residence in his. I knew I was in good hands. And, besides the fact that there is no better way to spend one's time than working on some sort of greasy-hands project with one's son, I knew that the Morgan was going to be better for the experience.

During one of the first sessions, the engine and transmission came out of the car, and shortly after that, the bell housing was off.

And, there, hanging off the back of the engine were the flywheel and clutch. The pressure plate has three 'fingers' used to disengage the clutch. Curiously, and inexplicably, one of those fingers had failed, meaning the pressure plate was no longer centred... And hence, was undoubtedly the cause of my vibration. It was like there was a huge highlighted, circled and underlined neon arrow pointing to the pressure plate saying, 'look here... this is your problem!'. Alex and I just looked at each other and broke out laughing. It was almost too easy.

It was never clear what caused the clutch to fail. It was brand new when it went in the car, had relatively little service time, and certainly no trauma. But it didn't matter. The part was readily available and it was an easy and inexpensive fix. The car could be back together in no time.

Then, the wheels started to turn.

Since we'd come this far, we decided to attack a few other jobs, as well. Alex chucked the flywheel up on his lathe and skimmed off a little excess weight. We pulled out the crankshaft and took it, the flywheel, and the fan for balancing. We got the exhaust manifold ceramic coated.





The bell-housing had been worn ever-so-slightly out of round by the aluminum sleeve that disengaged the clutch. So, Alex clamped the bell-housing up in his mill and took a very light skim, just to bring it back to round. Then, he turned up a new sleeve that would take a throwout bearing in place of the original graphite block that was starting to fail. We also installed a new seal on the back of the engine to try and make it more oil-tight.

The speedometer drive in the transmission exhibited a lot of wear so it was replaced. At the same time, we replaced the caged roller bearing inside the transmission, and a near-invisible crack in the oil pan was repaired. There were some other things done to improve the driving experience.



A steering damper was added. New brackets were made to allow the seat-back to recline further for a better seating position. And, for the first time in the car's life, seatbelts were installed.



The first test drive demonstrated beyond doubt that the problem had been solved, and the car felt solid as a rock and drove better than I could ever remember. I have had nothing but fun since. The car has been dead reliable and vibration-free throughout. Also, the old bugaboo - St. Malvern's Dance - has yet to come to the prom.

With everything else having been tended to, the car just seems to delight in its rebirth. It definitely loves to run and I just love being behind the wheel when that's happening. Is the project 'finished'? Nope. There are a lot of little 'finishing-up' details that still need to be taken care of, and I'll get to them eventually. But, I'm not sure it matters, I'm enjoying it as much as I ever did. It has taken me back to those magical days 45 years ago when I first came under the Morgan's spell. The grin spreads across my face every time I settle in behind the wheel and turn the key to fire it up, and it lasts until I tuck the car away in the garage at the end of the outing...

And, really, I think that's the point of it all.



## **A TALE OF TWO CAR CLUBS OR WHY BIGGER ISN'T ALWAYS BETTER**



**Morgan and Aston Martin are both venerable British carmakers. Both have a great history with many ups and downs and people who buy and drive the cars are ardent followers of the brand. Indeed, in the past, before the www and YouTube, one might argue that, out of necessity, owners of these special vehicles had to band together into clubs to share maintenance tips, parts sources and enjoy the camaraderie of fellow owners. Often the clubs stepped in when the carmaker failed to support the older cars they had made. The social aspects of the clubs have provided a basis for great long-lasting friendships, many times on a local, regional, national or even international scale.**

**The clubs generally have a volunteer base that forms the glue to keep the club tuned to the needs of the members, and organizes events of interest such as pub nights, concours d'elegance, road trips, etc. Importantly, these volunteers run the administration of club affairs like collecting dues, publishing magazines**





or maintaining websites. Without these volunteers, the clubs would not exist. We, as members, need to treat club volunteers with utmost respect. As an aside when I was assisting another car club with their bylaws (the club had grown and hosted one of the largest Marque specific events in North America) I took them to my lawyer. Upon greeting us the lawyer looked at the club directors and said, "Let me guess, you are the 6 volunteers who do the work all year long. There are 12 others who support you at big events, 20 who come out regularly to meetings and you have 500 members." The directors were shocked, the lawyer had no prior brief on the club but nailed the numbers exactly. My point being that the "workload to time available ratio" for a car club volunteer director is very very large.

Getting back to the tale of two car clubs, the Aston Martin Owners Club (AMOC) is a large international club, I estimate there are 4,000+ members in 24 UK sections and a further 33 international areas. Current new Aston Martin owners, some who do join the club, pay \$300,000 to \$2.8M for their cars, ironically often less than what it costs to buy a pre or post-war classic Aston!!!



The Honorary President is Diane Viscountess Downe (the Viscount raced Astons in the '70s). Nominally the volunteer board (called the Committee of Management or COM) has 12 members. More volunteers run subcommittees that manage major functions like a concours program, club shop, publications, etc... Some have paid staff. Because Aston Martin is ingrained in the lore of LeMans, Formula 1 and Sportscar racing from the 1920's to the present day; - and oh yes, that James Bond fellow helped as well, the club and its assets (car collection, archives, museum and events) have become tremendously valuable and often profitable.

AMOC owns the club HQ building in the UK. The museum collection, worth millions of Pounds, is housed in a converted 17<sup>th</sup>-century tithe barn owned and converted for the purpose by AMOC and the Aston Martin Heritage Trust (AMHT) which controls the museum and its collections. Dues are \$300 per year which supports AMOC and the AMHT. Members do get a flashy four-colour







magazine quarterly and a stunning small paperback book on Aston History (published by AMHT) twice a year. All major AMOC sponsored events are UK-based other than two annual pilgrimages to LeMans. Also included is access to the AMOC website and for a nominal extra fee, a slick booklet newsletter is snail-mailed to you monthly. The member sections/areas get little or no share of the dues or income AMOC collects. These local sections/areas, some small, some large, organize local events and pub nights on their own dime. As a senior member of AMOC, I was awarded a lapel pin a few years ago, a very nice pin.

Morgan has also left an indelible mark on the car industry, albeit its past history of conservative family ownership had a less dynamic cultural impact. Notwithstanding some of the recent "Super Morgans"; prices are still reasonable. But import restrictions for small car companies like Morgan have cramped new North American sales. Morgan owners typically take a road less travelled. The club seems more locally-focused and organized around bands of the faithful. Our Morgan club under the recent past leadership of Alan and the smooth transition to Glen is a well-organized bundle of enthusiasts with ongoing key events, a great web-based publication (thank you Dave) and many personal connections. There may be an international Morgan Club but it has never been a presence in my 20-year association with the club. Dues are \$35 per annum, badges are extra.

So much for the overall lay of the land; let's look at the current day. The Morgan Club soldiers on through COVID controls. AMOC however hit a major road bump when elections were recently held for the Committee of Management (COM). When elections were called, a whole new slate of candidates ran against the existing COM members. One new candidate began circulating pre-filled ballots which some existing COM members saw as a violation of club etiquette. The results of the election were not published pending an investigation. Some new candidates then basically seized control of the AMOC website and used it to denigrate the existing committee members. The latter promptly shut down the entire website. One new candidate then sued the old committee and AMOC claiming they were damaging the club and illegally concealing the election results. The case made it to the UK High Court. In its



judgement, the Court ruled in favour of the existing volunteer committee and chastised the litigant member for his spurious claims and poor behaviour.

At the next COM meeting 24 individuals including the litigant showed up claiming a seat based on past and newly (assumedly) elected members. Clearly, this was unworkable. A special team of old and new COM members was struck to find out why this mess had happened, figure out a way forward and review some changes to AMOC bylaws to avoid similar problems in the future. The team lasted two weeks before some of the old COM guys walked out, citing numerous procedural irregularities and issues of interpersonal trust. After some expert advice and the counsel of some AMOC luminaries like Peter Sprague and George Minden (the Canadian hotelier of – Three Small Rooms, The Windsor Arms, etc.) whose finances rescued Aston in the late '70s, it was decided to go to the membership via an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) to ratify the election (sounds like the recent election in the USA absent the guy in the Norse helmet storming AMOC HQ) and adopt new bylaws – including electronic ballots for future elections.

All seemed to be progressing when someone noticed the current bylaws require EGM voting to be done in person - no exceptions. This required emailing and snail mailing EGM notices and proxies to all members along with a list of prospective people going to the EGM to whom members could give their proxies. Well, the electronic proxies didn't work, the AMOC server treated returned proxies as spam messages. Then it became clear that the physical EGM gathering violated the British government COVID rules of the number of attendees at a meeting. The EGM has been postponed, I suspect the new dates are shaky. AMOC HAS RUN AMOK!

Meanwhile, as I write this the Morgan Club will have a virtual pub night this afternoon. I plan to attend via Zoom. And all is well.

One last thought on AMOC; I am reminded of what Groucho Marx replied when he was told that an exclusive New York Gentlemen's Club had proposed





him for membership, even though the club had a policy barring Jews from becoming members. Groucho said, "I refuse to join any club that would have ME as a member".

Cheers,

Arno Schmidt

1970 Morgan 4/4 2 Seater 1600 Crossflow

January 2, 2022

**Post Script:**

David

If you wish to add a sequel to my article;

Received this update just before going to press from the Aston Martin Owners Club and thought it appropriate to add to the article.

The Extraordinary Meeting of AMOC did finally take place and the resolution to adopt new bylaws was promptly defeated (67.9% against and 32.1% for). The committee of management similarly voted against accepting the internal report on why the wheels have fallen off the club bus. The newly elected Chairman has resigned. I have lost count on the number of club directors who have left the building. Unfortunately while this stops infidels from hijacking the club it also means AMOC continues to lurch on to an unknown future and simple things like virtual meetings and electronic voting are not permitted.

Meanwhile (as Stephen Colbert says) the Morgan Club is off to another fine season. I can almost smell the burgers broiling at the Lytle's party.

Cheers

Arno



## Bill Fink Wins the Boat Race



The Oxford eight in their newly christened shell the Bill Fink won the 2022 Boat Race in a commanding style, two and a quarter lengths in front of the Cambridge shell.  
D.F.



Full article:  
[www.yale64.org/news/fink2.htm](http://www.yale64.org/news/fink2.htm)

Christning video:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=8zTpFqMcSc8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8zTpFqMcSc8)

Full Boat Race video:  
[youtu.be/pi9cT561RCo](http://youtu.be/pi9cT561RCo)





## Vern Dale-Johnson, Cronulla NSW Australia

The Sydney area has been COVID locked down for the better part of 2 years with scarce opportunities for a "run". Now that the majority of Morganeers have been vaxxed up to the max it was time, come rain or shine, for a run. David Lyon & Andrew Lippold used the notes given to me from a golfing mate who is a member of the MG Restorers Group. The Feb 24 run was conceived as a gathering in Heathcote south of Sydney, then a run up to a lookout over Woolongong at Mt Keira before dropping down to the Mount Kembla Village Hotel where we had been offered their outdoor venue as a packed lunch or pub lunch stop



Originally the route was an enjoyable drive through the Royal National Park then along the scenic Sea Cliff Bridge to the Bulli Pass for a short run on the motorway before taking Picton Road up to the lookout for some viewing and comfort... The group that gathered in the rain south of Sydney at Heathcote (about 24 members, including 3 Morgans) was told the original plan had been aborted and we'd now run down the motorway to Picton Road to tap into the original plan. When we arrived at the lookout the good news... no one there... the bad news, drizzle and fog meant no chance at a view but the toilets were open!

After that quick stop, we took what is usually a very scenic road down to Mt Kembla Village. Usually scenic but due to the heavy rains, there was a lot of crap on the road and several washouts. Thankfully most of the attendees were in tin-tops. My thoughts were with the Morgans... especially Stephen Figgis's +8 "Aero" that had already been damaged/repared due to its lack of sump clearance.

We all arrived safely and enjoyed not the planned picnic but beautifully prepared lunches from the hotel's kitchen in the hotel's garden room. Lots of catch-up with old friends and some newer members some coming from further south of Woolongong. About 30 attendees in total. Although COVID has meant we have isolated for the better part of two years it did not take us long to get back into the joy of face-to-face chats.

By 3:00 we decided it was time to again tackle the weather and the group took their chosen routes home. Amanda & I arrived in Cronulla in the rain... more of the same weather that as I write this, a week later, is still with us and expected to continue for at least another week.

The ground is saturated, the dams are full, and flooding is now rampant. We're on the high ground and our apartment is on the 3rd floor so the water sloshing in our streets/gutters is no more than a bother but as many on the West Coast of North America have experienced early this year we have communities all along our East Coast underwater. I've just had the yearly safety check done by my local mechanic -- only 1835 km for the year. That's after only 1287 km the year before. Frustrating but hopefully we'll be back to our 5000+ yearly average in 2022.



## The Toyota is in the Shop

It's a good thing I have one reliable car. I took the '04 Matrix in to get the brakes and steering checked back at the beginning of March to then get told that the high pressure gas line was leaking near the tank and one would have to be made in Japan as there were none in Canada.

So the Morgan is now my only car for :

Meeting up with the Southdown Striders for our Saturday morning run.



And it is quite practical for hauling home a load of groceries.  
D.F.





# The Great May-aviation Tour

Join us for the Great May-aviation tour in the Guelph and KW area! Details below. No fee but access by Donation to Waterloo warbirds at their hangar.

Please rsvp to Bryan\_trip@hotmai.com

Sunday May 15

8:30 am - meet in Guelph at Lost Aviator Coffee company for some morning jet-fuel local roasted coffee and baked goods. Parking in used car lot next to coffee shop.

404 York Road, Guelph

<https://www.lostaviatorcoffee.com/>

9:15 am - depart for Waterloo regional airport, Waterloo Warbirds Hangar.

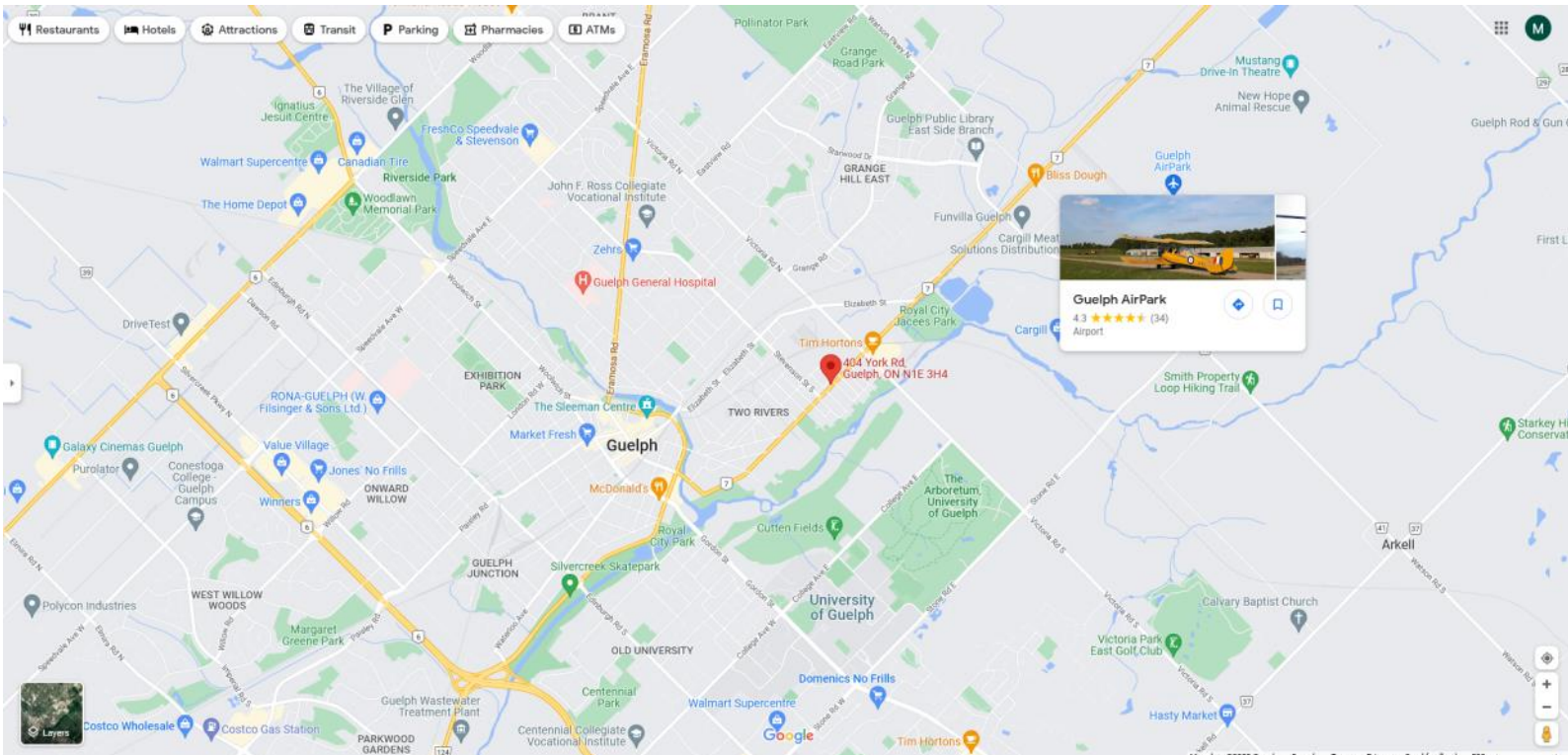
10:00 am to 12:30 - We have exclusive access to the warbirds hangar, they will pull out their Vampire and T33 jets for pictures with the Morgans. They will have a photographer there. This access is by donation.

<https://waterloowarbirds.com/>

1:00 pm - lunch at the Old Marina Restaurant overlooking Puslinch Lake.

3:00 pm - ( to be confirmed )- visit to the Tiger Boys shop at Guelph Airpark to see their biplane restorations (Tiger Moths) and museum like shop. Also by donation.

Voyage home at cruising speed.





**You are cordially invited to a  
Morgan owners meeting**

**When :** Saturday, May 28<sup>th</sup> 2022  
13h00 to 21h00

**Where :** Luc Charette's Farm  
1083 chemin des Terres  
Gatineau Qc  
J8V 3W9

**Details :** This meeting will occur rain or shine (hopefully shine!!!),  
Best-half, friend, children are welcome,  
A hot meal will be served by a caterer at 18h00,  
Cost of meal is \$35,00 per person.  
BYOB (bring your own beverage, beer, wine...),  
The farm house will be accessible to all,

Remember "Morgan at the Farm" with the late Greg Kaufman and Ed Burman?

**Hotel suggestion :**

Sheraton Four Points de Gatineau  
35 Rue Laurier, Gatineau (10 min. from meeting place)  
Tél. : 819-778-6111  
Secure indoor parking

**Reservation :** Please advise of your presence by May 22<sup>nd</sup> 2022 to :

Luc Charette  
chagren@sympatico.ca  
tél. : 819-561-6714

or Gilles Lachance  
gilles\_lachance@videotron.ca  
Tél. : 418-999-9754





You are Invited to the 28<sup>th</sup>  
*Brits-in-the-Park*  
*Triple Play*  
(2020/2021/2022)

**July 17<sup>th</sup> Victoria Park, Lindsay Ontario**  
**Gates open at 9:00 a.m. from Peel Street**  
This year we showcase three British classics each 60 years young



*Introduced in 1962 and in production until 1980, over 314,000 Triumph Spitfires were sold*



*Introduced in 1961, the MG Midget sold 224,817 units before production ended in 1979*



*The Lotus Elan was produced from 1962 through 1973 with 12,224 cars reported*

*Brits is a Celebration of British Motoring*  
*Where Old Friends Meet and New Friends are Made*

**17 Vehicle Classes – \$20 Admission**

**All Covid protocols will be followed**

Draw prizes throughout the day

1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Awards in Each Class

Awards for Queen's Choice, President's Choice and Mayors' Choice

*New Awards:* Best in Show, Car of the Year, and British Car Council

*Food & Beverage and British Vendors in the Park*

**Come Saturday and stay overnight. Accommodation at**

**Ramada 705-328-1743 or Days Inn 705-328-0100**

**Join us Saturday for a 4:30 car run starting at A&W Kent Street W adjacent to Canadian Tire; Enjoy burgers and ice cream along the way**

Contact [britsinthepark@gmail.com](mailto:britsinthepark@gmail.com) for more information



SUNDAY SEPT 18th 2022

# BRITISH CAR DAY<sup>®</sup>

presented by the **Toronto Triumph Club**  
Bronte Creek Park, Oakville, Ontario

## Special Anniversary Cars

Triumph Spitfire - 60 years

Morgan Plus 4 - 70 years

Jaguar E-type - 60 years

Triumph Stag - 50 years

Triumph TR4 - 60 years

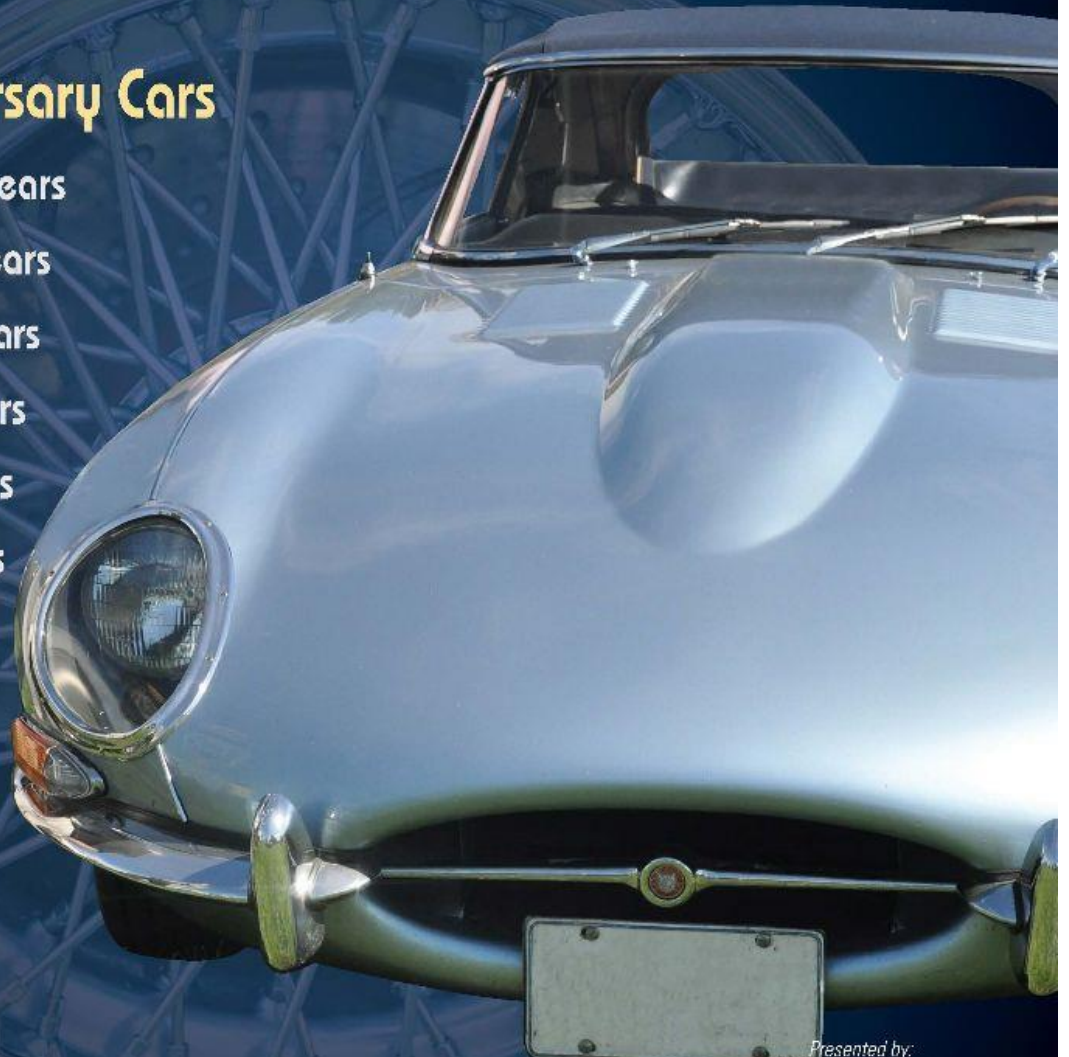
MG Midget - 60 years

Lotus Elan - 60 years

Delorean - 40 years

MGTD - 70 years

MGB - 60 years



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Gates Open at 8am for Show Cars, 9am for Spectators, Rain or Shine.  
Entrance off Burloak Drive

**COME EARLY!** Awards Ceremony 2pm to 3pm.

Some show cars travel a long way and start to leave around 3pm.

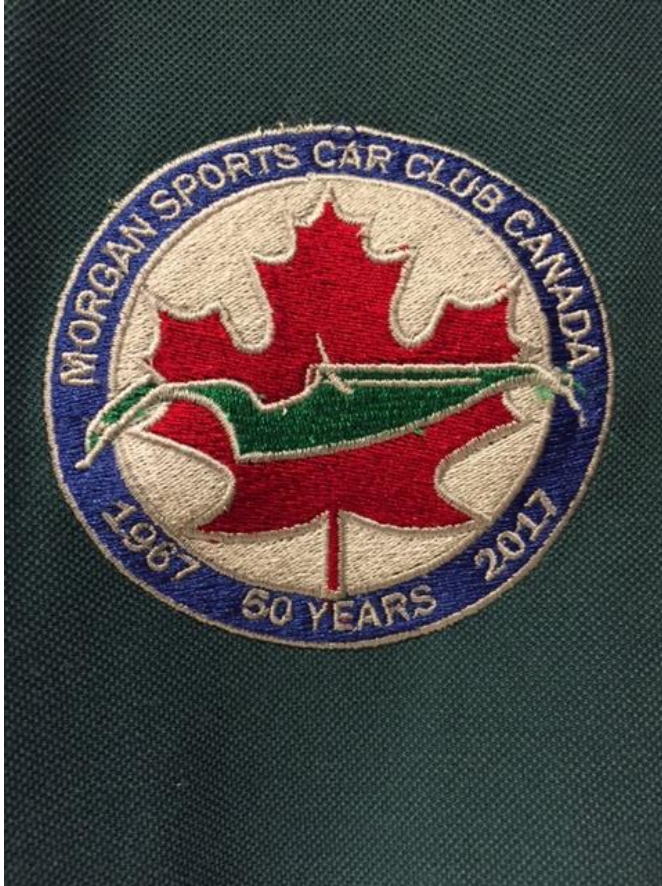
Presented by:



www.TorontoTriumph.com

[www.BritishCarDay.com](http://www.BritishCarDay.com)





## Regalia

Get the 50th Anniversary Badge embroidered on your; shirt, jacket, hat, etc. Or how about one on that special dip stick rag you only use for the Morgan?

\$8 + HST = \$9.04 to embroider your item.

Contact Sharon Roden, our Regalia officer, to get your badge embroidered. She also has a catalogue of clothing you can buy and have embroidered.

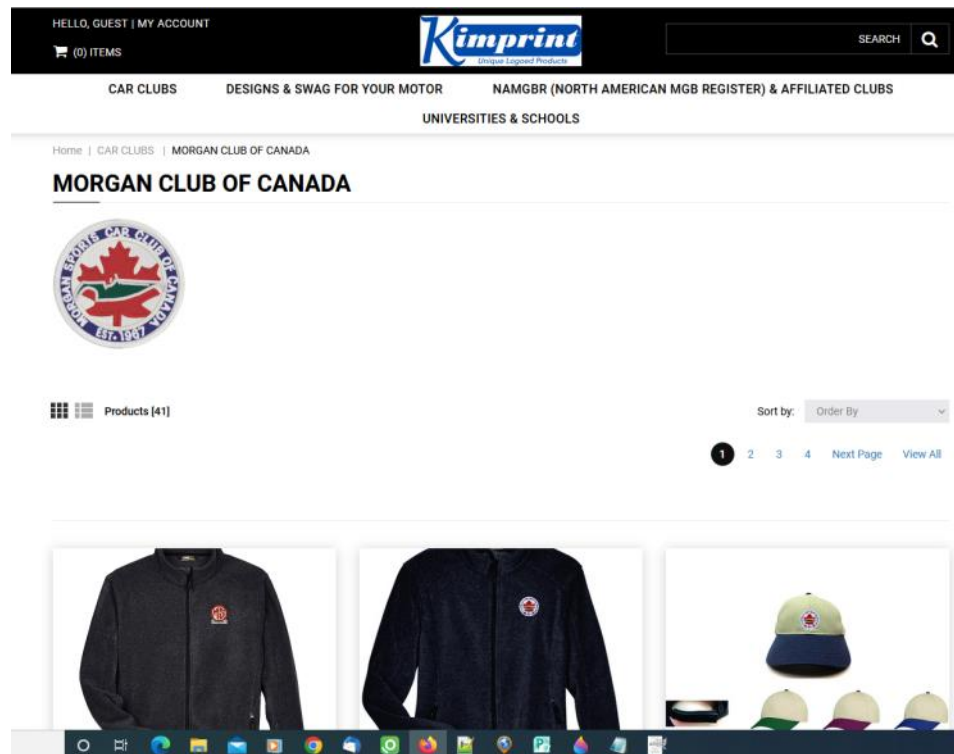
Phone: (905) 892-6907

Email: [jsroden@vaxxine.com](mailto:jsroden@vaxxine.com)

Regalia is also available from Kimprint at:

[www.kimprint.ca](http://www.kimprint.ca)

And select the car clubs link to find us.





**Membership Application / Renewal**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
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 City/Province: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tel. Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Business: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Morgan(s) owned:  
 Model: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_ SN: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Colour(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Model: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_ SN: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Colour(s): \_\_\_\_\_



Membership fee \$35.00\* for the year. Payable January 1st of each year.  
\*Canadian \$ for membership dues please.

Please make cheque payable to Morgan Sports Car Club of Canada and mail to:  
MSCCC Treasurer,  
940 Hedge Dr.  
Mississauga, Ontario  
L4Y 1G1,  
(905)-273-5542

## **MSCCC Executive**

**PRESIDENT:**  
Glen Donaldson  
905- 635-2532  
spitfiremorgan44@gmail.com

**EVENTS COORDINATOR:**  
Colin Bray  
416-698-0336  
cjbray@es.utoronto.ca

**CLUB LIAISON:**  
Colin Bray  
416-698-0336  
cjbray@es.utoronto.ca

**TREASURER:**  
Brian Hawkins  
905-273-5542  
hawkinsb@sympatico.ca

**REGALIA:**  
Sharon Roden  
905-892-6907  
jsroden@vaxxine.com

**FACEBOOK EDITOR:**  
Bryan Tripp  
519-826-9655  
Bryan\_trip@hotmai.com

**SECRETARY:**  
Ray Stevens  
905-659-6366  
rstevens11@cogeco.ca

**WESTERN SCRIBE:**  
Ken & Pat Miles  
604-576-8036  
kengmiles@telus.net

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the TREASURER.

**BLURB EDITOR:**  
David Farmer  
905-278-3219  
d.farmer@sympatico.ca

**DOWNUNDER SCRIBE:**  
Vern Dale-Johnson  
vern.dalej@bigpond.com

**WEBMASTER:**  
David Farmer  
905-278-3219  
d.farmer@sympatico.ca

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