

MW Magazine

MORGAN OWNERS GROUP
NORTHWEST

Vol. 19 No. 7

July 1999



1999 MOGNW CALENDAR

July 17	Sat	Western Washington ABFM at Marymoor Park & post function at Dick & Kathy Dow's home. DETAILS INSIDE	Dick Dow	(425) 868-0921
July 20	Tues	MOGNW Southerne Centre monthly social meeting 7:00PM at Portland Brewing Pub , 2730 NW 31st Ave	Heinz Stromquist	(503) 224-9576
July 30-31	Fri-Sat	MOGWest, Cambria , CA (central coast)	Bill Button	(206) 935-3616
Aug 1	Thur	Deadline for August Mogazine	Craig Runions	(206) 542-7137
Aug 14	Sat	Day tour to Morgan Spares (Bob Couch), Sequim, WA	Dick Dice	(206) 855-9628
Sept 4	Sat	Portland All British Field Meet at PIR		
Sept 18	Sat	Vancouver to Whistler British Car Run		
Dec 11	Sat	MOGNW Holiday Banquet , LaConner, WA	Bert McCabe	(360) 466-3284

TREASURER'S REPORT from Bob Hauge...

beginning balance, 6/1/99	\$4,009
plus dues	278
plus regalia (*)	2501
less June Mogazine	- 200
less misc	- 6
ending balance, 6/30/99 (*)	\$6,582

(*) substantial additional regalia funds are in transit to the bank and the approximate \$3,000 in car badge purchases have not been delivered or paid for.

COVER: "Near Heaven's Gate". Photo (in color for e-mail recipients!!) and caption by Cliff Baker, *Miscellany* Editor, showing the Morgan factory prototype 4/4 4-seater. More info and photos on pages 8 and 9.

ATTENTION ALL MOGNW MEMBERS. You're missing out big time if you haven't signed up for the **E-MAIL** version of *NW Mogazine*. What's to miss, you ask? How about **FAST DELIVERY**, even before it comes back from the printer and then is mailed (just how long does that take?). How about **COLOR PHOTOS** instead of black-and-white! How about **SAVING MONEY** for the club (please!) in printing and postage costs! How about a permanent **ELECTRONIC FILE COPY** on your computer! All you need is Adobe Acrobat Reader v3.0 or later (free off Adobe's website) to read and print the Mogazine, but... **YOU HAVE TO LET ME KNOW!** So, send me an e-mail request at mognw@aol.com. Thanx, Craig

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Business meetings are held quarterly as published in the calendar. Social meetings are held monthly (times and locations as stated above in the calendar): Northerne Centre (Vancouver/Victoria) as stated, Midlands Centre (Seattle/Bellevue) on the third Thursday, and Southerne Centre (Portland/Vancouver) on the third Tuesday. Dues are as stated on the Membership/Dues Form published frequently in this newsletter. Club merchandise can be ordered using the Regalia Order Form published frequently in this newsletter. Non-commercial advertising is free to MOGNW club members. **NW MOGAZINE** commercial advertising is payable in advance in US\$ and is based on camera-ready ad copy.

Business card size	\$ 5.00 per issue	or	3 for \$ 12.50	or	12 for \$ 50.00
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Full page	\$40.00 per issue	or	3 for \$100.00	or	12 for \$400.00

THE FLAT LINE



Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Only 17 days to badgexas. All you naughty members who haven't ordered your badge, better be in a hurry and be nice. There are only 16 badges left of the first numbered 100. The low number drawing will take place at the Dow's party after the Marymoor Field Meet. So get your orders in to me before then. We will also have some other gifts to raffle off which were so graciously presented to me by a Japanese club member at the Van Dusen party. Of course I took first pick of the gifts which is customary among MOG Club Presidents around the world who receive interclub gifts -- according to Gil Stegen.

Driving events are what Morganing is all about. Boating and Morganing in my book is the ultimate combination. Three of us Midlanders decided to sack the boring I-5 run to the border and the crossing and reverse of same. The Buttons, Glen Jewett, and the Joneses took the Princess Margueritte with our Mogs to Victoria on Friday. We then met up with the Island Cell Party in Chemamus. This Island Cell Party was beyond belief. The back road tour to the Cherry Point Winery which was the best winery tour/tasting I'd ever experienced, followed by a magnificent party at Carmel and Woody's estate which left us awe struck. There is a 2 mile winding lane leading to their place which Woody drives without head lights most nights, using only the light of the moon. Have you ever seen 18 chickens on one spit? Beautiful red wine flowing faster than Kay Jones could drink it? Professional quality homemade beer in snap cap bottles? Wood cooking stoves and sauna? All in one place? Everyone was tucked into cozy cottage rooms for the night. There was something to please everyone, including fishing, swimming, hiking, and of course, lots of Mog talking. It was pure utopia. Theresa and I had to miss the car show/picnic on Sunday because of family commitments, but had fun taking the Victoria/Port Angeles Ferry, then driving down to the Kingston/Edmonds Ferry and then driving home to Seattle. If you missed the Cell Party this year, I highly recommend that you do the Cell Party by MOG and boat next year because you have no idea what you missed. Thanks Roland, Pat, Carmel and Woody for a wonderful weekend. See you all at Marymoor.

Kay Jones



(Right, Kay, it's hard work, but someone has to do it. Story on pg 5. Thomson photo)

Mutterings 'er Putterings (a return engagement by the POT)

Being asked by "OFF-LOAD-LES" our leader of the northern POD literati to do a column on the Morgan "activities" and as my attendance at the recent SCOTTISH GAMES event June 26th was considered somewhat mandatory I felt compelled to comply to our leader's wishes; as the threat of asking someone else was soon abated as there virtually was no-one else from the Pod as will be noted on the roll out of the comments on the event.

First the day was beautiful - I don't know how the Devil's Punch Bowl group felt about it, but for us it was just another "sunny" day in the Hebrides - where "SCOTCH MIST" is considered a "Sun Block 45" kind of day. We were also privileged to be hosting the King of LaConner - who somehow got his events mixed up and came up through the mist in his **Ach! Aye! It's a JIMMY** mumbling something about having to go to Seattle to get his Kilt etc. etc.

So on this morning of brightness (after several calls from others that were supposed to attend but were now somehow "too sick to play today") we pushed off with both the JAG and the MOG and the **Ach Aye** thing, due to us having Marianne and guest Emma along as well. So we just needed a lot of

cars I guess and you can be sure that the canny Scots at the gate did NOT let the **Ach Aye** thing in with us.

Arrival at the games counted about 20 cars of British descent mostly supplied by the OLD ENGLISH CAR CLUB and the JAGUR/MG bunch (still smarting from their 2nd place recognition at the Stadium!) - but YES! there was another MORGAN! - Late-for-Lunch Larry and family taking full advantage of the spacious 4-seater's charms and sumptuous decor and by gad! with the top up on such a day - can you figure?

Along with beer, beef, and bands galore the highlight for all was knowing that Larry and Tina's daughter Aleicia was in the beginners 8 years Highland Dancing competition for the very first time and that Larry was so calm for a dad. How did she do? A quick question to Tina at the Sheep Dog trials indicated that Aleicia would indeed be allowed to have dinner with the family and stay up late too - good going! as she got a big ribbon for participating in her first competition.

The three MOG members, families and friends then felt it was time to go home and dry out.

Mike Powley

Midlands Matters, from Bill But ton....

Our June Noggin was at the "Roanoke Inn", the oldest business on Mercer Island. They were extremely busy; however, we found a empty room for our meeting. Really cozy and we could hear each other very well. It was a little hard to sit in this cold dreary little room while looking out the window at the beautiful gardens (and people).

Attending were many Morgans and Ron Weiskind and Jeannette, Dick Dice, Kay Jones, Dave Wellington, Craig Runions, Jim Dietz and Patti, Hal Meden and Joan, Patton

Buchan, Gary Van Hook, Mike Anderson, Mike Amos and Daryl Ozuna. Mike Amos conducted his now famous drawing with prize which Dave Wellington won. Hal Meden auctioned off a pair of Lucas lights with Patton Buchan outbidding the rest.

Look forward to the All Brit at Marymoor park. Dick Dow has offered his home to host the party. Meeting in July will be at the All Brit. See you there.

Marymoor All-Brit Post-Function

The plan: At Dick and Kathy Dow's home in Redmond, the club will supply brauts, buns, and beverage, plus condiments, something to put this stuff on, and into our mouths. Club members are encouraged to bring salads, deserts, specialties and the like, **which Dick Dow will pick up at Marymoor during set-up and take home to refrigerate or maintain as required.**

The directions: The address is 23913 NE 54th Place, phone (425)868-0921. From the West entry/exit of Marymoor, go right, then left onto the Hwy 520 eastbound onramp. Stay in the right lane on 520, and at the light, turn right onto the Redmond-Fall City Road, Hwy 202. Get in the center or left lane, keep the Texaco on your right, and continue straight east for 5 miles. Watch for the Albertsons and BP (particularly handy for forgotten salads, deserts, gasoline.) Go left at light onto 236th NE and up the hill 7/10ths of a mile, turn right onto NE 54th Place into Rimwood, pass 4 houses on your right, go by an open space/retention pond, and turn right into the next driveway. **Park on the lawn, and relax. WELCOME!**

Devil's Punchbowl '99

by Craig Runions

Thanks again to the exceptional efforts of Heinz Stromquist, with some course work help from Bob Hauge, we had another great trip to the central Oregon coast. The party began Thursday night in Longview at the DoubleTree Inn. We had come from all corners of the northwest in lots of rain and that was to continue on Friday morning on the tour. By the first break, tops started coming down and soon all were topless, but the rain wasn't over quite yet. Another downpour really got us at the second break, but by lunch at the winery it was over.

At the Chalets later Friday, some of us set about cleaning up dirty exteriors; others waited until Saturday morning. Mo's Chowder House was ready for us Friday night and we were ready for some chowder. Saturday was a 'free' day spent touring, shopping, playing golf, beach time, kite

flying, and just plain sitting around. Saturday night we had another great pot luck buffet feast.

By Sunday morning, it was about over. We left singly and in teams for the drive home. Destinations included Long Beach, Port Angeles, Sequim, as well as the bigger regular cities. Judy and I got home around 6 with 740 miles showing on the trip odo. The worst incident that I'm aware of was Dwight Smith's flat tire. Not bad.

Our group included Stromquists, Hauges, Buttons, Cammaranos, the Mike Mileses family and kid's guests (they took 2 cars!), Dwight and Clark Smith, Myerses, Buffons, Glovers, Harrises, Allinsons, Runionses, Stinsons, Dick Dice, Glenn Jewett and 2 new members: the Wards from Parkland (Tacoma) in their new 1999 Plus 8 and the Tildens from Oregon. 15 Morgans - what a sight all weekend long.

MORGAN RUN, BBQ, & PICNIC - JUNE 18 to 20, 1999

by Woody Thomson and Les Burkholder

With ominous black clouds looming over the Malahat, a multi-colored array of "tops down" Morganeers gathered at a farmer's market just north of Victoria.

Steve Hutchens and Celia Obrecht (Tacoma) in their Ivory/BRG '63 +4, Hal Irwin (Sidney) riding solo in his BRG '63 +4, Ron and Yvonne Theroux (Surrey) in his handsome Burgandy '58 +4, Marv Coulthard and Katy Foster (Saltspring Island) in a Grey/Black '60 +4, Roland and Pat Gilbert, our hardworking (Vancouver Island Cell) reps/chefs and Martini gourmets in that lovely smoke grey Lawrence-tuned '61 +4.

All the above were 4-seaters, rarely for passengers, just massive storage space for roofs, tents, tables, chairs, refrigerators and other essentials. Les and June Burkholder (Gibsons, BC) arrived in their butter yellow '69 4/4, and Carmel and Woody (Victoria) came in their dazzling yellow (attracts bees and wasps!) 4/4 Competition with the homemade fibreglass wings and a case of St. Malvern's dance in the front end. Woody cheats and stores his chairs, tables and side-screens where the tool box used to be, a GB Sterne inspiration, and plans to store those space-robbing roof bands in the engine room too.

Lead by Roland and Pat, we wove our way up Island, avoiding the highway as much as possible while shifting and braking on twisty and scenic back roads with names such as Cobble Hill, Koksilah, Quamichan, and Tzouhalem. Stopped at a mall ostensibly to buy ice creams but you should buy something when 12 people ask to use the washrooms.

A neat "Hat Trick" was invented (possible only in a low-door Mog) when Hal's cap blew off, bounced in front of Woody who swerved to retrieve with left hand, passed-off to Carmel, then booted it (those gas-sucking twin downdraught Webers can be useful) to catch a slowing-down Hal, the hand-off was made while under way, and we regained our places in the cavalcade without missing a beat.

At the Horseshoe Bay Inn, just south of Chemainus, we were joined by Leo and Trish Lee (North Van) red '70 4/4, Geri and Bill Button (Seattle) in their '64 cream/brown +4 4-str, Kay and Theresa Jones (Seattle) in the only flat rad, a '53 +4 4-str, Bill and Fay Sterne (Courtenay, BC) driving GB's white/black '72 +8, Glenn Jewett (Redmond) in his '66 +4 4-str, threatening to fashion a trailer from a chopped Mog (!), and Robert Fox (Maple Bay, Van Is) visited the parking lot briefly in his hot '70 4/4 with the yellow-painted spokes setting off the deep blue body.

The Inn was built in 1892. Included in the old guest register -- Pauline Johnson (Native Indian princess/ poet), JD Rockerfeller, and Andrew Carnegie. \$76 (cdn) for 2 included a quaint room, a delicious dinner of crab-stuffed sole, first-class continental breakfast, and gratuity. Our room received so much noise from the pub below that Carmel found it quieter in the lobby, where she slept after unscrewing the light bulbs!

After breakfast we strolled around Chemainus (a town rescued from oblivion when the mill closed by building an Opera/Theatre, and by painting historical murals on many exterior walls). Shops sell antiques (I found a long-sought cast iron waffle iron for my wood burning kitchen stove), ice cream, herbs and trinkets.

Carmel and I then headed back to Victoria to turn an old chicken coop plus wild fruitwood into cooking coals; the rest of the gang toured the Cherry Point Winery.

Helena and Wayne Ulrich welcomed the Mog group to their Bavarian style residence nestled in the Cowichan

hillside and treated them to what all agreed was a unique and unforgettable lecture, tour, and lunch. Helena's enthusiasm for wine-making, how they had been Saskatchewan farmers who lusted to make wine, moved to Vancouver Island in 1990 and planted vines, and, while adhering to their environmental scruples, solved the problems of damage done by local birds, deer, and bees while crafting some of the best premium wine in the region.

After a tour of the vineyards (best known wines being Auxerois ("Ox-Air-Wa"), Pinot Noir, Pinot Blanc, Gewurztraminer, Ortega, and Valley Mist - created by mistake!), the gang entered a huge wooden Gazebo (with wood chip floor for wine-spitting), where after a wine tasting lesson got tastebuds all on edge, they tucked into a much-praised lunch. Wine was bought and carefully stashed in Mog luggage spaces. Thanks to those who bought Woody and Carmel a couple of bottles of white. Much appreciated.

Les, who in Woody's absence provided the Winery tour notes, recounts Ron Theroux's efforts in the small washroom to change from shorts to longs -- without removing shoes. "...sounds of a body bouncing off the walls ... like a herd of elephants thumping the floor!"

Leaving the winery, the Lees and Burkholders backtracked to a farm to check out local artisans at work before heading south to the BBQ.

Just on the outskirts of Victoria, the Thomson's live in a converted Barn on a 12 acre private lake; their great grandfather was a surveyor who in 1860 claimed the acreage and built a Hunting Lodge -- now the Family Cottage, where we arrived to see 18 chickens being cooked over a wood fire on a hand turned spit fashioned from a swing set.

We were joined by Mike and Rosemarie Powley (Vancouver) in the '72 4/4, his son David and friend Renee, and Jim and Mavis Bayer (Victoria) in their '68 +4. While some went hiking, Les and June went rowing, and Glenn fished for trout off the dock. Leo and Kay spelled Woody turning the spit (and testing Woody's red Zinfandel). After an hour or so the golden juicy chickens were taken off the spit. Carmel, Pat Gilbert, Yvonne Theroux, Fay Sterne, and Mavis Bayer produced salads and desserts. As evening fell with the moon over the lake, we gathered at the fire pit overlooking the lake before bunking down for the night.

On a cool and grey Sunday morning (Fathers day, Midsummers Eve), a breakfast in front of the woodstove was enjoyed by the 15 or so Morganeers who had overnighted in the Family Cottage bunks and bedrooms, the Boathouse, and the Barn's guestroom, while Steve and Celia tented among the buttercups in the meadow.

At 9:30am we wound our way through Victoria to the Beacon Hill Park British Car Picnic. A light drizzle and a Cricket match in the background added the British touch; we talked cars, sipped wine, and shared picnics (leftover BBQ chicken and baguettes). When Rocky Rochfort (honorary patron of the Island Mog Cell) arrived in his red '57 +4 (once raced by GB) and was joined by daughters and granddaughter who set up their white tablecloth picnic, replete with flower vase, we knew that this summer's Morganeering had begun.

On behalf of all who were there, we would like to extend our gratitude and appreciation to Carmel and Woody for being such gracious hosts, to Roland and Pat our hats are off to you for bringing this superb weekend together. This is one that will be remembered for a long time. THANK YOU!!

Island Cell BBQ etc

(Thomson digital photos by e-mail)



August Tour to Sequim

by Dick Dice

MOGNW will hold its first ever tour to the northern Olympic Peninsula on Saturday, August 14. A visit to Bob Couch's MORGAN GARAGE in Sequim has been arranged for the early afternoon. Although this tour is touted as a day-trip, it would be more fun and convenient to stay over night in Sequim and have time to enjoy a drive up to Hurricane Ridge, through the Olympic National Park, or along the Straits of Juan De Fuca to Neah Bay. (See over-night booking instructions below.)

Participants should plan to arrive in Sequim on Saturday between 12 and 12:45. Drive through Sequim and meet in the parking lot of the Red Ranch Inn on the right hand (north) side of Hwy 101 at 830 West Washington. We will then decide where to have lunch.

We are expected at Couch's garage at 1:45pm. From the Red Ranch Inn drive back toward the center of town (about two blocks) and turn left onto 5th Avenue. Stay on 5th Avenue for about 1 1/2 miles to a four-way stop and turn left there onto Old Olympic Highway. Drive about 2 miles to the detour sign at Towne Road, turn right onto Towne and then left onto Fasola Road. Look for the second house on the right (122 Fasola Road). Bob's telephone number is (360) 582-9020 or (360) 582-9006.

Several suggested routes with travel times to get to Sequim follow. (**NOTE:** Ferries are very crowded during the summer, especially on Saturdays!) Plan to be at the ferry dock at least one hour before departure time. You might consider arriving more than an hour before your boat to possibly permit you to spend more time on the tour. Schedule information is available from Washington State Ferries at 1-888-808-7977 [in WA] or on the web at www.wsdot.wa.gov/ferries/

From the north via Whidbey Island: Follow Hwy 20 on Whidbey Island south through Coupeville to the ferry at Keystone. Arrive at 9:45am for the 10:45 boat to Port Townsend. (Boats leave Keystone at 9:15, 10:00, 10:45, and 11:30.) Leave Port Townsend and follow Hwy 20 to the intersection with Hwy 101 at Discovery Bay and take 101

north to Sequim. If you are going to leave Sequim on Saturday afternoon, plan to arrive at the Port Townsend dock at 3:45pm to catch the 5:00 boat.

From Edmonds: Arrive at the ferry terminal in Edmonds at 10:30am to catch the 11:30 boat. (Boats leave Edmonds at 10:10, 10:50, 11:30, and 12:10.) Arrive at Kingston and follow Hwy 104 through Port Gamble and over the Hood Canal bridge to Hwy 101. Follow Hwy 101 north to Sequim. (Kingston to Sequim is about 45 miles.) If you are going to leave Sequim on Saturday afternoon, plan to arrive at the Kingston dock at 4:00pm to catch the 5:10 boat.

From downtown Seattle: Arrive at the Colman Dock at 9:00am to catch the 10:15 boat to Bainbridge Island. (Boats leave Seattle at 9:30, 10:15, and 11:00.) Arrive at Bainbridge Island and follow Hwy 305 north across the Agate Pass bridge through Poulsbo to Hwy 3. Drive north on 3 to the Hood Canal bridge. Cross the bridge and follow Hwy 104 to Hwy 101. Follow 101 north to Sequim. (Bainbridge Island dock to Sequim is about 60 miles.) If you are going to leave Sequim on Saturday afternoon, plan to arrive at the Bainbridge Island dock at least by 4:30pm to catch the 6:00 boat.

From the south: From Olympia (on I-5) take Hwy 101 north along Hood Canal through Hoodspout (101 is now open north of Hoodspout) to Sequim. (Olympia to Sequim is about 110 miles.)

Overnight accommodations in Sequim have been arranged for at the Red Ranch Inn on Hwy 101 at 830 West Washington, (360) 683-4195. A block of seven rooms has been reserved **ON MY MASTERCARD** at the Inn: four with two queen beds for \$65 and three (one a smoking room) with one queen bed for \$55. **CALL THE INN BY AUGUST 7** and mention that you are booking rooms reserved for the Morgan Club. **AND THEN CALL ME** to let me know. I want to take unused room reservations off of my MasterCard before they charge me for them. Questions? Call Dick Dice at (206) 855-9628.

A NEW SPORTSCAR FROM MORGAN

Morgan Motor Company Ltd. Press Release 26th May 1999

The Morgan Motor Company, manufacturers of cars since 1909, has announced plans for a new sports car. The car will rely on simple, effective design with low weight and long term durability as the two most important goals. The chassis of the car will be extruded aluminium and special, high tensile aluminium sheet. Morgan's core coach building skills will still be in evidence in the new car, which will have a body frame of European ash hardwood clothed in a combination of hand formed and 'superformed' aluminium panels.

The new car design, the largest development project ever undertaken by the company, began with Morgan's GT2 racecar. Two versions of the racer ran with existing Morgan bodywork in the 1996 and 1997 BPR and FIA GT series. A chassis for the racer was developed with the help of resources at Birmingham University under the supervision of Professor Jim Randle. Both this chassis and various combinations of components were tested for durability during long distance races with high loadings and often in extreme conditions. Racing also gave a competitive edge to the project and speeded up feedback and new design iterations. During this development phase, the stiffness of the original chassis was improved, and the chassis has now been tested to current European crashworthiness requirements using facilities at MIRA.

Though the racecar became competitive, any outright class wins were out of reach due to the aerodynamics of the traditional Morgan bodywork. When launched, the new car will sport an entirely new shape styled by Morgan and developed in the full-size MIRA wind tunnel. This new design will successfully combine low drag with negative lift at the front and rear axles, but Morgan is keeping details of the styling under wraps until the car's launch in March 2000. However, the car will be instantly recognisable as a product from the Malvern factory. The new model will be an addition to Morgan's range of open top sports cars, not a replacement.

Like Morgan's founder's sliding pillar design, the suspension for the new model will be manufactured by the factory. It will make a good use of aluminium extrusions to reduce unsprung weight. The braking system has been designed with competition in mind so that owners will be able to take the car circuit racing with no modification.

The interior will feature craftsmanship in leather and exposure of hardwood features of the ash frame. Air conditioning and electric windows are likely to be fitted, but attention will need to be paid to keeping the weight of the car to a class-leading minimum. As with current models, customers will still be able to choose from an almost infinite range of body colours and interior leather trim options to customise their car to their own specification.

Compliance with at least 50 separate requirements for European Whole Vehicle Approval has been Morgan's objective since the start of the project. Emission standards will be to the latest levels, incorporating evaporative controls and misfire detection. Like the current Morgan flagship, the Plus 8, the new car will be powered by a large capacity V8, though the engine supplier still remains to be confirmed. With finished cars expected to weigh in at around 1000kg, performance is expected to be stunning. The company aims to have the car in production by mid-2000 at a higher price than the current Plus 8 which will continue in production alongside the new car.

The New Four Seater 4/4

Special to *NW Magazine* by Cliff Baker, *Miscellany* Editor [MSCC 55]

With the change in regulations requiring rear seat belts to be lap and diagonal, and the mounting points to be a certain height, the current Plus 4 four-seater could not continue in production. A new design was both necessary and compulsory; for many years the Morgan factory has made a four seater for the family man. The fixing for the longer part of the seat belt had to be much higher than the body shape would allow. Thus a complete redesign would be required.

Although the market for Morgans varies according to each country, regulations like this make a small firm like Morgan spend a great deal of money on development. Just for sound regulations, one has to hire a special sound room which costs about £2000 a day for a minimum of two days.

I am told by many owners that the 4-seater is so much more practical than the 2-seater because of its carrying capacity, that to drop the model would be a great disappointment. Many whose older children no longer want to "go out in the Morgan", still keep to a four seater particularly when they are campers or like to carry large quantities of wine on Continental forays!

So Bill Beck and Mark Reeves, who make up the Development Team at Pickersleigh Road, have been hard at work developing a "New Four Seater". Bill designed a large centre mount for the rear seat belts, which also doubles up as the rear mounting for the front seat belts and the base for the spare wheel mounting. This bolts to the chassis giving great strength to the rear of the car. One of the advantages of having the high mounting point in the middle of the rear, is that when getting in and out of the car one is not likely to trip over the seat belts.

Bill has designed the two separate rear seats to be shaped and mounted about 4" lower in the back of the car. The back part of the seat can hinge forward enabling a choice of 3-seater with loading space, or even a 2-seater with almost pick-up carrying capacity in the rear. The front seats have also been raised slightly to give more foot room for the rear passengers. With the new design, although the rear passengers do sit slightly higher than the front passengers, they do not tower over them as previously experienced. There is a small storage area between the rear seats, and the high level brake light is fixed and is actually in the hood material, instead of in a separate pod. The front seats are mounted on wooden blocks spaced wide apart to prevent any rocking or rattling; many will find this area handy for odd items like warning triangles etc. This also enables rear passengers to have their feet partly under the front seats.

The hood does not have any rear quarter windows, but the aluminium side screens extend much further back than before. The protection for the occupants is considerably more than previously experienced by Morgan 4-seater passengers, whilst still taking in the "country air". The whole hood frame has been redesigned and is symmetrical; the rear of the hood is mounted to the body via two large clips, which provide the tensioning of the hood.

The rear shock absorber mounting bar is the same as the two seater as the new rear seats are shaped in such a way there is sufficient clearance. The new body frame has slightly less width than the +8 but bigger than the 4/4; it has been designed so it can also be fitted to the +4 / +8 chassis.

For the time being it will only be fitted to the 4/4 chassis. (At present only two types of chassis are made: 4/4 and +8 although there is a galvanised option.) The car was developed with three different wood frames and the final version has the largest door of all, enabling rear entry and exit to be made considerably easier. With the rear seats folded down the rear area is vast and I know many owners who make Continental trips will be amazed at just how many bottles of wine can be loaded when only two up.

Although many of us still prefer a two seater shape, if you need the space, the four seater is a much better alternative to driving one of those Japanese buzz boxes; one can still get the vintage feel of a Morgan and the wind in your hair experience. With my short but large body frame I could not believe how much easier it is to get in and out of than my current albeit 18 year old 4/4, and certainly much easier than previous 4-seaters.

I recently visited the factory and was privileged to have the opportunity of travelling in both the front and rear of the second prototype which is the first using a 4/4 chassis. The first prototype was based on a +4 chassis and is cream in colour. This new 4/4 is resplendent in light metallic blue paintwork, which I think particularly suits this body style. As a front seat passenger I was surprised at just how quiet this car was on the open road. The journey was the first time Bill Beck had actually driven this 4/4 and we went to the local weighbridge to check weight and weight distribution of the unloaded car. Later we returned with a fully loaded car, with a tankful of petrol and a full complement of passengers, for further checks.

With my wide rear beam, I was still able to sit in the rear in one of the sculptured rear seats using the lap and diagonal seat belts. These belts are fitted in the reverse to those fitted to most saloons, in that one pulls the belt (the tongued part) from the middle of the car to the outside of the car and inserts it into the short end. The front seat belts (short end) are now both actually fixed to the seat frame. Previously, the passenger side has been bolted directly to the chassis. The regulation pull test, which entails putting a weight on each seat and pulling with an immense pull (of several tonnes), checks whether the fixings can take the extreme pressures necessary when involved in an accident; they were found to be more than adequate for the requirements.

The big advantage is no matter where one moves the seat, the fixing is in the same position on the seat. As the back of the rear seats are lowered one is surprised to learn there is enough room to store two headrests behind either one. There is no tonneau as the hood can be raised so quickly. There are no longer any lift-the-dot fasteners on the top of the screen. The front of the hood has a stainless steel channel, which fits over the top of the windscreen frame and includes a hook either side, which fits between the windscreen frame and the two side support bars. The hood is tensioned by pulling on the two clips behind the rear seats. The main frame of the hood has a symmetrical action, which springs out either side of the main central bar, enabling the hood to have excellent support throughout its length. This combination virtually eliminates any buffeting of the hood material at speed. (continued next page)

Four Seater 4/4 (continued)

This prototype 4-seater featured a duck material hood which gives both a high quality look and feel to the hood, and enables it to be easily rolled to the rear of the car where it is neatly held by two straps. The rear window can also be hinged forward as there is a zip either side. The four side screens are much larger than previously used, and together with the lowered seats, mean that the rear passengers have a great deal more protection from the elements. This means long drives will no longer make hood-up driving almost mandatory.

As the rear of the car is so well upholstered with the individual seats, the rear axle is now hardly audible and the whole car is amazingly quiet. There is now a rubber stop at the base of the framework for the seat belts which stops the rear axle from having excessive travel. Indeed with 4 passengers, we traveled over some bumps which would have caused crashes and bangs in previous models because of excessive rear axle movement.

The car is a prototype and small changes will occur in production versions, but the attention to detail and improvements to both access and comfort are amazing. The new shape has to be a compromise and although to some may not be as aesthetically pleasing as a 2-seater, the practicality and many improvements make this 4-seater a far more

useful package for those who only own one car, or need the extra seats or space. With the large side screens in place and the hood up the light and airiness inside the car make it far less claustrophobic when one first gets in the car than the previous 4-seaters.

Although I did not get a chance to drive the new car, it certainly felt very stable when cornering; one felt completely secure with the sculptured seat and lap and diagonal seat belt holding you comfortably in place. The car featured is fitted with centre lock wire wheels of the 'Cobra' style. These are so named as they were fitted to AC Cobras of the early sixties, incredibly strong for a wire wheel, and really nice looking as previously used on the +4. Having this splined centre fixing will also give the possibility of having a centre lock alloy wheel as used on the centre lock +8. This car was fitted with a steering rack which made it both light and sensitive; from July 1st all Morgans models will feature a steering rack as standard. There is no space inside the car for the 4 sidescreens, but with Libra Motive's help they are developing a new luggage rack which will incorporate a sidescreen carrier. Those who have experienced this style of carrier on a 2-seater have found it to be very useful addition, and I am sure will be 'de rigueur' for new owners.



Heard on the street.....
"Holy head restraints!" and
"Sufferin' shoulder belts!"

Items of note: Cobra style center laced wire wheels, l-o-n-g doors and side screens, stainless hood frame, fold down rear seat backs with removable head restraints, high brake light fixed in rear of hood (not visible), rear seat mounting in the center for both rear and front (all 4) center-pull shoulder belts – verrrrrry clever!

Photos by Cliff Baker
Comments by your Editor



An Interview with Robert Couch

by Bill Button
(first of 2 parts)

After the All Brit at VanDusen, Craig Runions and I visited Robert Couch. Robert is an internationally famous Morgan restorer and the owner of "Morgan Spares". He has recently moved to the Northwest in Sequim, Washington and has opened "The Morgan Shop". Just west of downtown Sequim, Robert has built a 2 - bay work shop including an office and apartment on the end for temporary housing until he builds his home. The shop may be expanded as needed in the future. He has about an acre of land, so expansion is very possible. His 2 bays are already full with Kirby McDonald's "Super Sport" in for some suspension work and a +8 Robert is completely restoring for a Colorado customer. While there, Robert looked my +4 4-seater over and told me some interesting things. Panels had been repaired. It did not have the original engine, the front suspension had a questionable repair (he made a couple of suggestions as how to make it safe) plus other comments that I found helpful.

Q. How did you get into the Morgan Car business anyhow?

First a brief history of my life up to the point of my first restoration project in 1977, which was a Morgan, which will then explain how I got involved in the Morgan car business.

I was born and raised in a small New England town in NW Connecticut and got hooked on the mysteries of cars as a child. My grandfather started a Chrysler dealership in 1936 and he, my dad, and my uncle ran it. We were the second oldest Saab dealer in the US and I cut my teeth on the old Saab 93's. Growing up I worked for my dad as a gas pump attendant. That was when if someone came in for a dollar of gas (4 gallons) you would check the tire pressure, wash the windows, check the battery and water, and smile nicely. I learned at a young age that service and quality were more important than the bottom line, and that the customer was the greatest asset that a business had. Our town was very small and everyone knew just about everybody. You had to be honest and friendly to stay in business. We supplied some really hot cars to the local police department-they were always fun to service and then road test. The garage also supported the factory Saab team racing at Limerock Park when it first opened. They ran a race called "Little LeMans", an endurance race of sorts. There are some pictures in the book, *Lime Rock Park*, which was published a few years ago about the history of the track, that I supplied compliments of my dad, that show the factory Saab team and their hot 93 Monte Carlos. As I grew up at the garage I eventually made my way into the mechanical department and started to learn the trade and also spent some time in the parts department
(continued next page)

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Couch Interview (continued)

learning the supply side of the business. It was in my early twenties that I decided that I did not want to be a new and used car mechanic, I wanted something more from cars.

So then in 1972 a friend and I started a company called "Racing International". We were headed for England to race Formula Three cars. Then the energy crisis hit and we lost our sponsorship, so we went to England and started importing Mini Cooper S's and Lotus Super Sevens. We had an apartment and 2 lockup garages in which I repaired the cars as needed and sent them to the USA for my partner to sell. In 1975 we got involved with a large collector of cars in New Jersey and went to work for him. In the summer of 1977 I met Jack Artley and he was interested in my detail work and wanted to know if I would be interested in restoring some vintage race cars that he was thinking about buying. Up to this point I had never restored a car. I was very tired of the situation in New Jersey so I took him up on his offer and headed back to England for a much needed vacation and with a goal to find rare race cars. I happened to find a Morgan advertised as a rare factory TT race car and inquired about the car. Jack and I determined that in fact this was a rare find and purchased the car to ship back to the US for a total restoration. The restoration started in the winter of 1977 and in the summer of 1980 the car made its debut at the national Morgan meet in Luray Virginia and won the hearts of everyone there. The car won best in show and the people's choice award and I was off into the Morgan restoration business. After Luray, the car we now know as CAB 652 was put on a trailer back to Connecticut where it was immediately entered in the 2nd Annual Chinetti International Concours d'Elegance for Competition Cars held at Lime Rock Park where it again won "Best In Show" (beating out, by-the-way, an absolutely gorgeous newly restored Testa Rosa Ferrari owned by Joel Finn). The Best in Show cup was presented to Jack Artley, the owner, by Rene Dreyfus. Certainly a very memorable moment. Immediately thereafter *Road & Track Magazine's* Art Director, Bill Motta, photographed CAB 652 where it was later featured in the Salon section of the August 1980 edition of the magazine. The next year I was off again to Luray, this time driving from Mass. with the owner a 1959 +4 4-Seater that I had just finished. Again a best in show award was in hand. I realized then that much to my amazement and without any real planning that I was at the right place at the right time and Morgans were to become for me a passion of my life for years to come.

Q. Tell us about the car that was shipped to the UK for the 75th anniversary of the Morgan Co. and how Morgan Spares Ltd. came to be, and also how the parts book was conceived.

In 1981 after restoring more Morgans and repairing quite a few others I realized that there was a real need in this country for a comprehensive parts outlet for Morgans. Having been trained at my dad's garage in the parts department for a while, I had a fairly good idea what was needed. The first thing was a comprehensive parts book, and the Morgan Spares Parts +4 Manual was birthed. I approached Peter Morgan about my ideas for the book and a factory authorized parts dealer here in the states and he

gave me his blessing and away I went. I hired a professional artist and had over half of the drawings in the book done from scratch, copywritten and filed. These drawings have somehow made their way into other parts books but Morgan Spares is responsible for their existence. Lucas/Girling industries was also very helpful in supplying many of their drawings by permission.

In 1983 Morgan was planning to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Company in July 1984. I was restoring one of the 50 legal USA +8's imported to the states by the factory in 1971. The owner decided that the show in England would be a great place to show off the new restoration and I decided that it also would be a great place to launch Morgan Spares Ltd. and the parts book. Preparation for the show and for the launching of Morgan Spares Ltd. and the new parts book were planned for the summer of 1984. Up until 1984 my business was still called Racing International, left over from our racing days in the early seventies. So in July 1984 my wife and I headed for the UK, and Bill Gould the owner of the car shipped the +8 to the UK. Sid and I traveled in the UK for 2 weeks and met Bill and the car in Malvern for the show week. The car was a great hit, it won best paint job from ICI Belco, best in class and was I believe only one point away from best in show. The parts book was an instant success with the Morgan owners and with the factory. It was a indeed week to be remembered.

Q. How did you pick Sequim, Washington?

Sidney my wife and I had for years a desire to move west, don't know why, was just one of those things that kept nagging us. For years we would take forays into the west looking in Idaho, Oregon, Washington. In 1987 Sidney's parents moved to Sequim from Chicago where Sidney grew up. We of course started to come and see her parents and Sequim started to look nice, kind of like New England, nice and green, and four seasons, but not the cold winters and hot summers. And of course compared to back east the taxes and cost of living were looking real nice. Then in the spring of 1997 we decided that after 20 years together in New England we would take the dive, sell out and move west, and that will lead into the answer for your next question.

Q. What is your relationship to Morgan Spares now that you have moved west?

Back home again from the show in the UK, I now had two businesses to run - cars and parts. How could one person run both? Enter Larry Eckler a friend who wanted to get out of heavy equipment repair and into something more fulfilling. Larry came to work for me and trained under my care. I realized very quickly that Larry had what it takes to do this line of work well and so before long he started doing lots of work in the shop while I concentrated on the parts. Then he got married and after a while his wife Linda came and worked for me in the parts department. We got fairly heavy in vintage racing for a few years and did quite well but that's another story. Then in 1995 Larry and Linda left and I was back at it myself again.

(to be continued next month)

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FIRST CLASS

IN THIS ISSUE

- =====
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- new 4/4 4-seater
- Island Cell party
- Couch interview
- Morgan press release
- the POT returns
- August Sequim tour