

Warning – Wire Wheel Rear Brake Drums

by Ken Miles

I have just discovered what was wrong with my brakes on the Tulip run and thought it might be worth while warning fellow Morgan owners so that they can avoid what was a near disaster.

As you know I bought new splines for my wire wheels after I restored the 4/4. They came equipped with positioning bolts to hold the drums in place. These are large bolt heads that look like huge slot screws that I thought were firmly fixed into the splined hub backing plate. Unfortunately they came out sometime and this allowed the drum to be held in place only by the bolts that hold the drum to the spline. These bolts eventually sheered allowing the drum to rotate with the wheel when the brakes were applied.

I urge everyone to make sure to check that these positioning bolts are firmly in place (I could not move the ones on my old splines) as they came undone on my car before I even got through one set of brake shoes and must now be somewhere adding to the roadside junk. Luckily no damage was done and I think I can locate some more positioning screws from my supply of used splines (if I can get them out) but it could have resulted in my drums being scored or worse still a serious accident.

So please if you have new splines check your positioning bolts or get someone with knowledge to check them for you. The attached picture shows the splined hub immediately after I took the drum off with no positioning bolts and only two sheered off holding bolts. Note I remove the wheels every year and clean and inspect them and a year ago all these bolts were in place with on 8000 miles on the car since then.

