BALL BEARING STEERING DAMPERS

By Bill Button

In order to stop the “Dreaded Morgan Wheel Vibration” the Morgan Factory installs a brass plate with a damper blade clamped to the frame. There is considerable friction between the stub axle and the brass plate. In order to reduce this friction there are a couple of ways to install bearings. 1) a Thorsen bearing which uses needle bearings and is about 3/16” thick and 2) a Ball Thrust Bearing which is 5/8” thick. The Thorsen Bearing is used by several Morgan Owners with success. However I feel it is too vulnerable to dirt, & rust. Thus the Ball Bearing. These bearings cost about $25 USD each. One lip is 1 7/16” and will press onto the stub axle barrel. The other lip is 1.485” just slightly larger so that the bearing can turn. By relocating the grease hole .25” and plugging the old hole the bearing will be automatically greased from the stub axle (same as with the brass plate).

Here you can see the bearing mounted on the stub axle. The little hole is for greasing with a grease gun with a tapered fitting. Grease will come out here as well as on top of the bearing. As you will recall it is a little bigger than the pipe. This could be a problem as water and dirt can travel down the pipe and into the bearing. Maybe an “O” ring will help or some sort to rubber/ribbed tube that will cover the springs as well as bearing.

I cut the rebound spring removing 2 coils. Just trying to give the stub axle room to move. I may shorten the upper spring. However I will take it to a “Spring Company” so that I get the proper hardness etc.

TEST DRIVE:

WOW! It looks like this is the best modification I have made to improve the steering. Smooth as glass. Only a very small hint of the “Dreaded Morgan Wheel Wobble” at 57MPH. For the first time I feel I can give up the 17” Brooklands and go to a 14” steering wheel. Now if dirt, dust, grease and water don’t get into the bearing it whould be a resounding success. The car raised about ½”, however, I think that just took out about 40 years sag of the original springs.