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EDITOR'S LETTER

Wow we have been busy this month, so much to do and not enough time as usual!

Peter Morgan would be celebrating his 100th birthday on the 3rd of November 2019 as this magazine is on its way to you through our greatly improved mailing system.

So in this issue, and the next, we have for the first time documented a very special interview that was recorded by a big Morgan fan, Richard Atherton. We hope you all enjoy the first part of this 2 part series, and please excuse the image quality. It's hard to get the quality of images we usually expect from 70 years ago, but with a lot of help from our friends at the Factory and all over the world we have managed, we hope.

Lots of the usual too in this issue from our fleet writers to more rumblings from the shed which apparently is getting a lot colder as winter draws in. We were all delighted to witness for ourselves the last race of the AR Motorsport Morgan Challenge at Snetterton, congratulations to all who took part this year, to Katy and the organising team and of course to Morgan for supplying the cars.

Travis, one of our feature writers brings to life a new series 10/100 looking at the Decades in his own way, and where Morgan were at that time. This month features the Fifties.

Finally a big thank you to all of you who have been in touch to tell us when the October issue landed through your letterbox, what an improvement that was and long may it continue.

All the Best

Nigel Bradford, Editor



010 PETER MORGAN

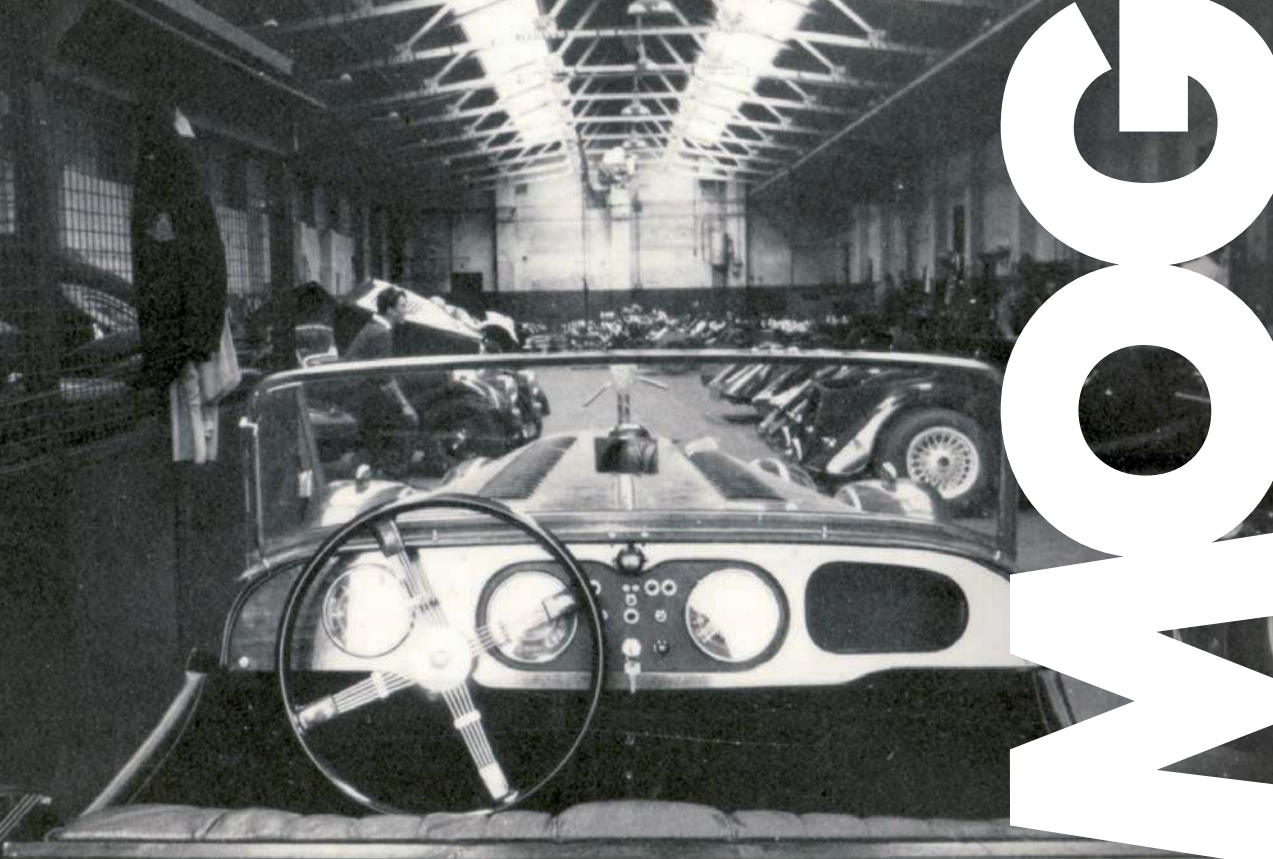
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NEWS BITES

Issue Eighty Eight – November 2019



MORGAN MOTOR COMPANY IS RECRUITING

The Morgan Motor Company is to ramp up its recruitment programme, despite economic uncertainty and a challenging automotive industry landscape.

The Company now employs a record 233 staff. Thanks to the recruitment drive, over 40 new roles have been created so far this year, and there are currently 10 open job vacancies across various departments and levels of the business, including a number of new senior roles. After starting 2019 with 204 employees, the company projects a workforce of 240 by the end of the year.

This news comes six months after Morgan announced significant investment from Investindustrial,

which is now the majority shareholder in the company. The increase in recruitment coincides with improvements to infrastructure at Morgan's factory in Malvern Link, which has been home to the sports car manufacturer for the last 105 years. A seven-figure sum has been set aside for continued improvements to the historic factory site, while a new Technology Centre and Visitor Centre are currently in discussion.

The investment in new staff and resources comes following the launch of the Plus Six, which has sold in record numbers and marks the beginning of a new era of sports cars from the firm. Morgan's Engineering and Design department has recruited almost 20 new job roles over the

last six months alone. The increased engineering capability ensures that Morgan can stay ahead of the latest legislative requirements and explore cutting-edge technology to match its unrivalled craftsmanship. Morgan has embarked on a journey to modestly increase production over the next five years and will expand marketing and distribution operations in order to meet this plan.

Steve Morris, CEO of Morgan Motor Company, said: "We are delighted to be recruiting an unprecedented number of new roles into the Morgan business..." "The news that our engineering and design departments are continuing to grow is significant, and we look forward to sharing some of their work during the next 12 months."

MOG AND NIGEL NIGHT

Many readers will remember our news story from May 2018 concerning the Asparagus's Run from the Fleece in Bretforton to the Gloucestershire and Warwickshire Railway in Broadway, and thence on to Cheltenham racecourse. Little did we know that the seeds of probably the biggest social event of this year, indeed of any year, were sown on that day. Editor Nigel Bradford was asked to drive one of the Morris dancers from the pub to the station in his Plus 8. When the gentleman got in, our editor greeted him with a handshake and said "Nigel". For a brief moment he was confused to hear the answer, "Yes, and who are you?" Two Nigels in one Morgan? What were the chances of that? As it happens, surprisingly small. The other Nigel turned out to be Nigel Smith the Landlord of the Fleece. He had recently discovered that no new Nigels had been registered in the UK during the past year,

despite the supposed popularity of one particular political individual. (That does rather make you think, doesn't it?) Both Nigels agreed on that short drive that something should be done about it, and so the plans for Nigel Night on the 28th of September 2019 were made.

The great day dawned and it must be said that the weather could not have been worse. Torrential rain fell all day and many south Worcestershire roads were flooded. Last minute instructions were sent out stating that most of the event was being held in the grounds of the pub, so dress accordingly. Of course no mention of cancellation was made. This was Our Night!

On arrival all Nigels were registered, and badges handed out. These badges proclaimed the wearer to be "Nigel" or "Not-Nigel". The Nigel badges ran out. But this was of no consequence as us Nigels just knew who to greet with a cheery "Nige!" and who to just pity for having a boring and common name. This was liberation, as lifetimes



of torment and mockery just didn't matter anymore. The night consisted of music from Nigels, stand-up comedians called Nigel, drinking vast quantities of Ale called Nigel, but no political Nigels. (Phew!) Over 400 Nigels were there, the greatest number ever assembled in one place. Nigels had travelled from all over the world. Any thought that there is nothing in a name that shapes a man's character were dispelled. Indeed, one Not-Nigel was heard to say to another Not-Nigel, "you couldn't have a Dave Night could you? It wouldn't be half as good".

BRANDS HATCH MORGANS SPONSOR FOOTBALL TEAM

The Kent Morgan Dealership has proudly announced that it is the new shirt sponsor of Borough Green under 12s football team. The boys are seen here during a photo shoot at the Dealership on Saturday 26th October. This initiative is certainly one way of getting the Morgan name out

there amongst a younger audience. The shirts look great with the BHM Logo on the chest, sadly there are no plans at present to market adult size replicas. Experience has shown that sponsorship of a particular team a car company often creates a bias towards that company in the club car park. So perhaps Sundays might begin to see a whole new type of

breakfast meetings at 10:30 in the surrounding area following what is expected to be a winning team.



Letters



CONTACT US AT:
letters@mogmag.co.uk

Last month we asked all subscribers to let us know as soon their copies of MOG arrived. Your responses were so overwhelming that we have decided to publish a few here. We are so pleased, and relived that MOG is

now as fast as it should be. We were also very touched by some of the little comments of encouragement that many of you attached to your communications. Thank you all so much. Ed.

DEAR MOG,

Two days ago (Oct 4th) I had the pleasure to find MOG In my mail box. September issue, of course. As I had little by little got used to this delayed delivery (having noticed it transited through Tallin....) I just ran through the pages , putting it aside for a deep reading during the weekend. I shouldn't have...

This morning, I found an October issue in my mailbox. No joke, October 2019!!!

Now I need time to read both of them. Thank you for this real improvement !

Daniel Favre

Saint Didier, France

DEAR MOG,

This month's issue of Mog received Saturday 5th October.

Keep up the good work.

Dominic Riley

Chairman of Morgan Motor Company

DEAR MOG,

Another couple of data points for your "study": I received my Oct issue on the 7th. Most surprising, since I normally get an issue about 2 months after the issue date. What

made it all the more surprising was that I just received my July issue only a week before – and I have yet to see either the August or September issue!! I suppose they're in some postal facility on your side or my side of the pond.

Glad to see that the delivery efficiency seems to be greatly improved. I really enjoy your magazine – it's most interesting to see the Mog news from the homeland. Keep up the good work!

David Wall

Campbell, California

DEAR MOG,

It is 1130am on Saturday 5 October 2019. The October edition of Mog mag has just flown through the letterbox and crashed on the mat! I am responding to your request.

PS Are you aware that older Morgan drivers on longer journeys suffer from "Morgan bladder"? Finding places to stop can be a big problem. Do other readers have this irritating condition and how do they cope? A local Morgan friend has solved the problem by selling his Plus 4 and buying a Porsche Boxster. I don't want to sell my 3.7 Roadster!



All the best. And keep the magazine going.

Ian Stewart

DEAR MOG,

As requested, my MOG arrived this morning 5th October in Bristol

Please keep up the quality of this publication with the diverse articles that are interesting even to me who has no intention of ever racing my beloved Morgan, just driving it and accepting the pleasure it gives.

Regards,

Ian Burke

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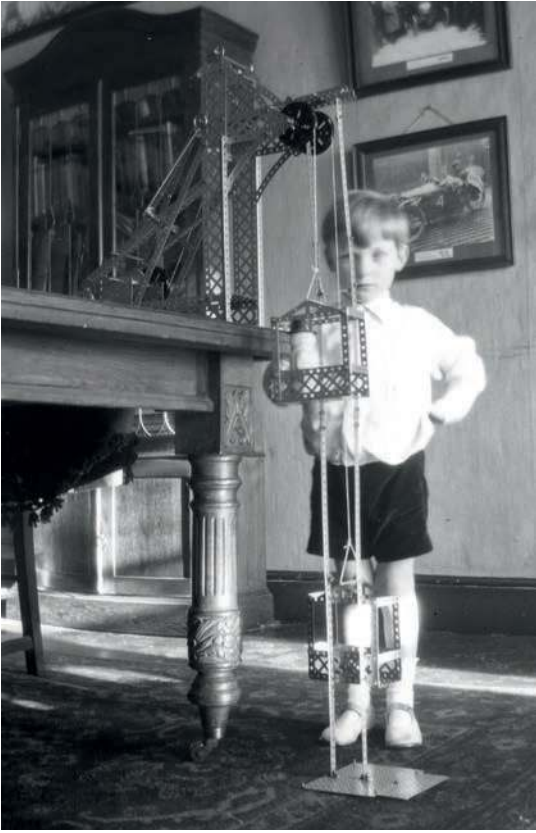
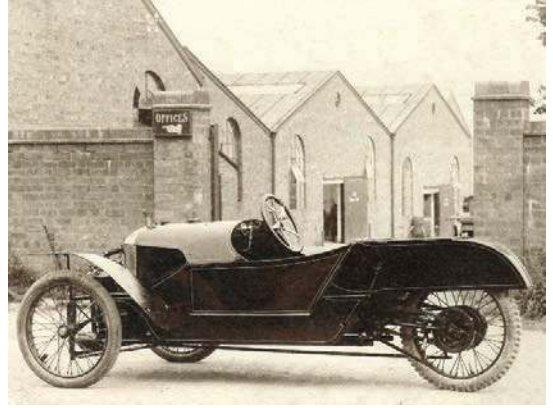
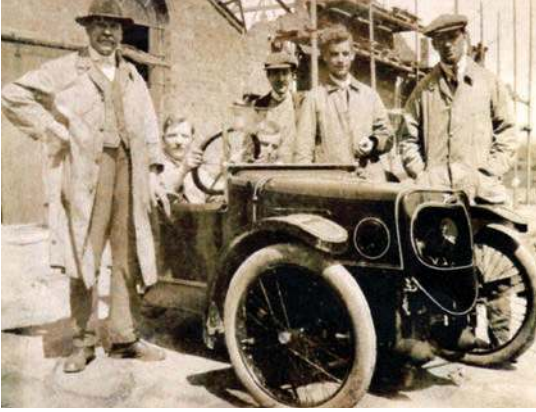
PETER MORGAN

Today, November 3rd 2019 would have been Peter Morgan's 100th Birthday. Here at MOG we decided to celebrate the date with something special. Peter Morgan telling his own story. We are indebted to Richard Atherton for letting us print a transcription of his 1990 film. So many readers will know of Peter's legendary charm and of course of his love for his family's little motor building company. A few will have been lucky to have met him, but very few will have heard the Great Man tell all of his own story.

As with many brilliant raconteurs Peter's style was slightly rambling, as he spoke without notes and didn't want to leave out any important details. So we make no apology for the length of some of the sentences! This is Peters own story, in print for the first time. We are sure you will enjoy it.

WORDS Peter Morgan PHOTOGRAPHY Morgan Motor Company





I was born in the little house next to, in fact it was adjoining, the factory, the original Worcester Road factory, I think it was called Chestnut Cottage. I was born there, in 1919. At what age are my earliest memories? I think it was probably pretty young - about five or six - I can remember my father's study, for two reasons, actually. First, he still at that time had the 1100cc cup (which was enormous) for his 60 miles in the hour at Brooklands, and it seemed vast to me; it must have been about two foot high, it was quite

impressive, we used to have it in the window of his study looking out towards the road. And, secondly, near to that there was a little door, a little wooden door; where you could walk in and out of the room and it was fabulous - you open this door and you heard whirring pulleys and belts and this and that, and you walked straight into the machine shop, where everything was. And when I was a little boy I was just so impressed, it was marvellous you know. In fact it hooked me, right from that day onwards - that this is where I want to be, this is where I want to



work when I grow up. And it was, it was so busy - there were so many things going on and it was where all the machining was done for things like the lugs and other things that had to be machined and certain gearbox casings and rear suspensions.

But it was all done there, in that shop.
And another thing I remember, so vividly, as a little boy - even before going through that door. At about

six, or just earlier than six o'clock you used to hear the gas engines they used to be started up, making the most peculiar noises tunk tunk , chuh chuh chuh, tunk tunk tunk chuh chuh chuh and it went off all day, like sneezing really - and it was shut off at about six o'clock in the evening. You could hear it when the power came on and off and it was really good and it meant a lot to me. The only disappointment I had about the factory



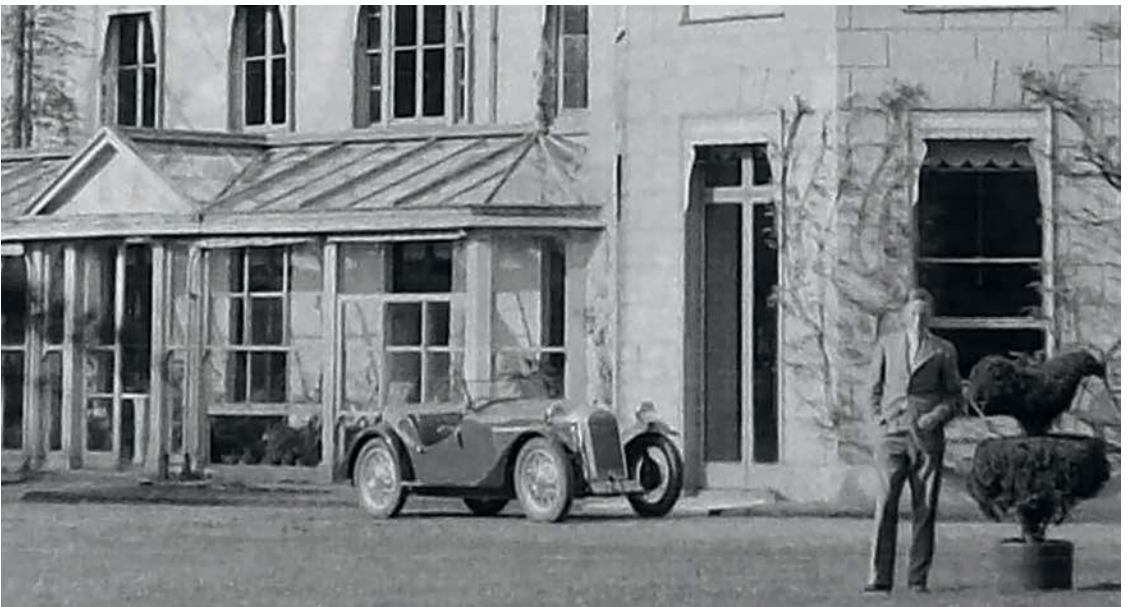


was that I thought it ought to have an enormous high chimney - it was like the best engineering places always had these amazing high chimneys.

When I was six years old we then moved up the road above the railway station (Malvern Link Station) and moved from their house to Fern Lodge, and this was a larger house and it was rather nice, had a nice garden, it was very convenient for the works and father at that time

had been building the new factory at Pickersleigh Road and that had been going on. My father was at Fern Lodge for ten years.

Archie Frazer-Nash came by one afternoon and he came in his own car, it was all polished aluminium, it looked magnificent and he was quite a driver, Archie. And he asked me, asked me would you like to come for a ride, and said I would love that and so I got in and he ➤





took the car round in circles on two wheels he proceeded to take off and he literally must have done six or more laps keeping it on two wheels. We finished up and the lawn looked absolutely dreadful - it was all done on father's front lawn on some flower beds - and it was a pretty tight circle. But father was absolutely tickled pink, he couldn't care less about the grass being cut up, he was really very impressed - and so was I, not that I've ever tried to emulate it myself.

A bit later on Gwenda Stewart came to visit father, yes she came to dinner later in the evening and I was already in bed, and I remember she came to my room and presented me with a signed photograph of herself and was talking about recent exploits and record-breaking.

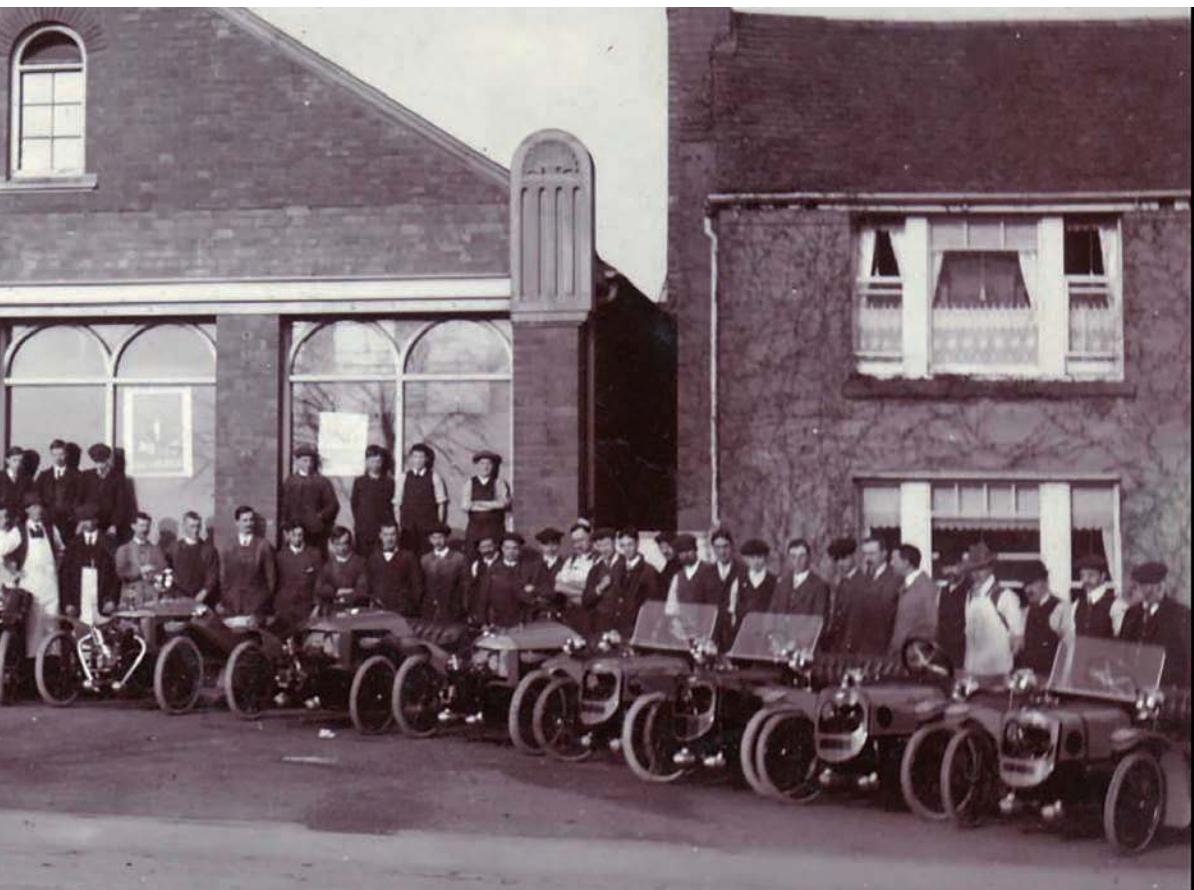
And even earlier than that I remember E. B. Ware who was the chief engineer at J A Prestwich and he was very good with the engines he also liked going on the track and he was quite fast in a Morgan but as well as this he was a very tall gentleman, and quite severe for me as a young boy, quite severe as an engineer, and I don't know why, don't know whether or not I think I was very

naughty, but mother was forcing me to read *Stool Peter*, which was full of quite a few gory stories for naughty little boys. And it was full of these terrifying illustrations like a little boy having his fingers cut off because he'd been naughty, and I nicknamed him from that book but that was quite an underhanded thing because he was a lovely fellow and just happened to be that size - I looked up to him, he was quite impressive.

Pickersleigh Road, I remember, in times of Fern Lodge I remember father and I used to walk across there in the morning, and I loved it.

In the top shop, which is now the dispatch bay, (in 2019 it houses the Heritage cars), they used to produce the wheels and it was incredible to see how quickly they spoked a wheel up and they lined it up, and they were all made here - nothing was brought in it was all made. The only thing we didn't produce, apart from the tyres obviously, were the gears and some bevel gears.

With father we used to go up to, and he had a Rolls at that time (in the mid-20s) and all the family, my four sisters, myself - we used to go to Birmingham on a ➤





A very young Peter in his school cap at Brooklands

Thursday and the sisters and mother would go shopping and I'd go with father to his suppliers and load the boot of the car with gears and castings and he'd come back. And we did have a truck as well, but I think he went in really to get the new stuff, the specialised stuff - the stuff that you wanted for development or anything like that and bring it back.

But really this is all just an emphasis on what a wonderful place this was to build a car, Malvern Link it's beautiful, people say it's a gorgeous part of the country and we're so lucky - and you're so close to your suppliers and industry in Birmingham.

I used to love going to Brooklands with my father, and we went pretty regularly to most meetings. Quite often three wheelers were running, in those early days they did mix it with the other cars. And I had one or two favourites, and any of those Morgan drivers who lapped more than 100 miles an hour were absolute kingpins as far as I was concerned. They were all terrific for me, but one of the highlights was watching the team three wheeler start against other cars scratch and they came second both times but I was much more thrilled with the fact that they were the fastest cars on the course and it

didn't let me down when they came second.

I went to the Link School, Malvern Link, it was next to Fern lodge and meant just walking over the little side road there, past Link Station and into the school. I went there until I was fourteen and then I went to Oundle in Northamptonshire, near Peterborough. That was quite an interesting school because every term you went in for a week to a workshop and it had a wide variety of workshops, it had a carpenter's shop, it had a forge, a foundry and a machine shop. Actually what I enjoyed the most was the forge, because we were the local forge and they had all the horses coming in and you didn't shoe the horse but you helped and you saw how it was done. And the foundry also was good fun, because they had these great castings in the foundry. It gave you a grounding, it gave you some idea of the work in different departments. And then after that, of course, father asked if I wanted to go to University or to an engineering college and I said engineering college and we decided on the College of Automobile and Aeronautical Engineering in Chelsea which was run in combination with the BSM School of Motoring at that time and it was a pretty good kind of grounding, in general automobile engineering and



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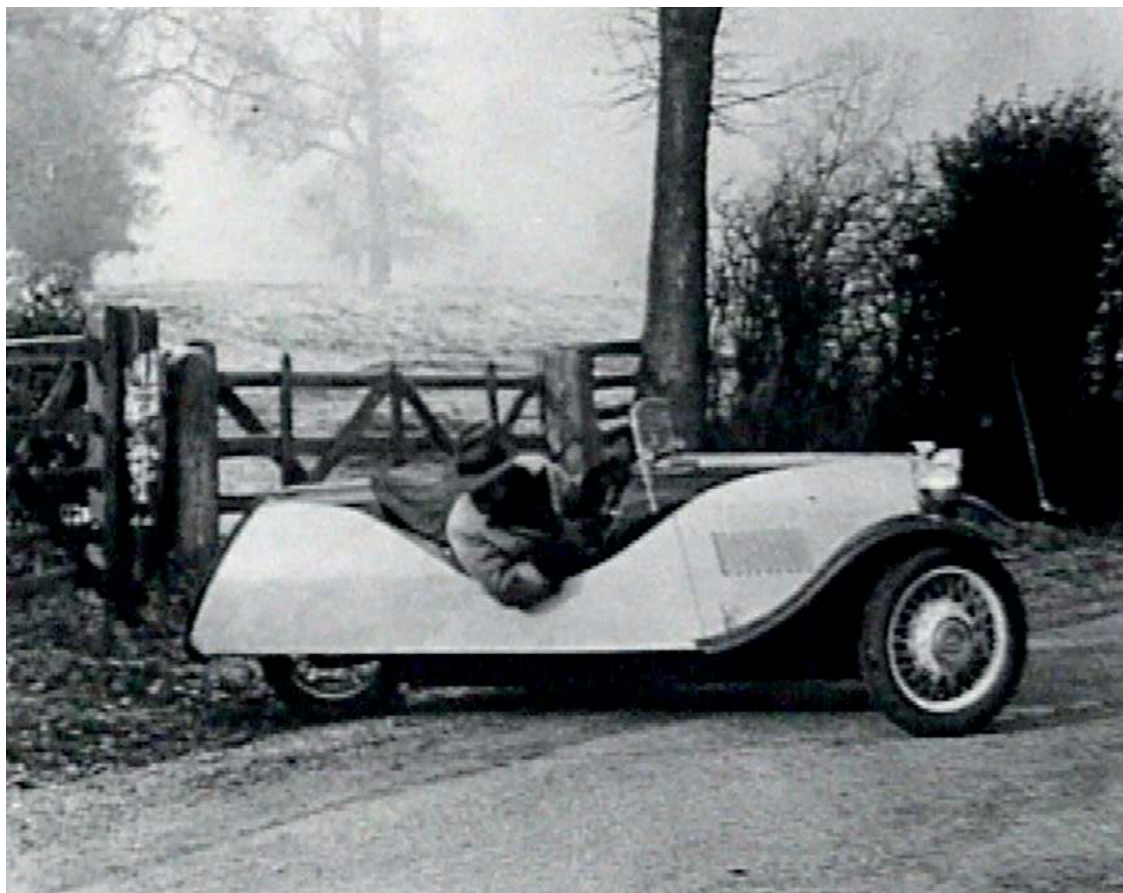
I certainly found it quite useful. I remember one term solidly I just filed square bits of metal and you have to get them filed completely square and that was really quite a good grounding. But eventually when you'd learnt your basics you went on to working on vehicles and I remember saying to father, 'I don't know why you're paying this place for me to work there because my job now is repairing BSM cars that learners have crashed and come unstuck with', and I said we pay them for us to go and repair their cars - which seems a bit odd to me. Anyway it was all good experience. During that time I had one job that was very impressive, it was a car called the Cord, an American Cord which had an electric gearbox, a magnetic gearbox, and that was quite difficult - it was interesting it was something different.

I learned to drive in the prototype 4-4 which was quite an interesting little car which had a 10 horsepower Ford it had started out as an F-type three-wheeler except the back had been converted to take a solid axle on two-quarter elliptic springs. And it was quite an effective little

car but I never drove it on the road, I just drove it around the paths of Canon Hill which was father's house in Berwick in Berkshire. It was quite a big area, as a garden, an estate and I remember one day dropping the front wheels into the lake and having to get two large pieces of timber to lever it out again - that was when I was learning to deal with a clutch. It wasn't entirely my fault, you see, I used to get myself into these predicaments in these tiny little places where you had to turn around and there just wasn't the room to manoeuvre it.

I remember actually, learning to drive, it was so amusing because father turned up with the car and said, "Oh Peter, you can learn to drive in this." and I said oh thanks, and he said, "Oh don't worry, just treat the clutch very carefully as if you were treading on glass" and that was it, that was my instruction on learning how to drive.

My personal car, the first one, was a three wheeler of course because although I'd started, I was 15 years old when I was driving the prototype, at 16 I could drive a car myself. I couldn't wait to pass my test, which I did ➤



PETER MORGAN, IN HIS OWN WORDS

Two years after the release of the video 'Handmade - The Making Of A Morgan' I desperately wanted to find a way to tell the story of the Morgan Motor Company in film. I'd trawled the Beaulieu Motor Museum's film library; I'd spent ages at The Imperial War Museum searching for Captain Morgan (and he really didn't like to be called that) and scoured every source of automotive film I knew. Several well-known Morgan authorities such as



Jake Alderson and Chris Booth offered, and indeed, helped with their knowledge of Morgans on film. But Morgan was no Aston Martin or Jaguar, let alone Bugatti or Mercedes Benz. Nobody filmed Morgans in the early days. Aside from a tiny bit at Brooklands of Clive Lones I had nothing but a handful of stills that I was kindly allowed to use from the factory. Oh, and we'd also found the 1952 RAC rally film. Then the film librarian at Beaulieu invited me to a talk that Peter Morgan was giving on the origin of MMC.

At that Beaulieu talk I had a revelation: why not get Peter to tell the story, after all, he was born in the little house attached to the factory in 1919?

And so he did. On a very hot day in August, the hottest day of the year, in fact. And Malvern was recorded as the hottest place in the country. That, and the fact that I pointed over 2000 watts of light at him, is why he can be seen visibly melting in front of the camera! And we had another day filming in Stoke Lacy and Moreton Jeffries with the loan of Roger Orford's 1923 Family. (I also spent a great day filming the stills with TV legend Ken Morse and his scarlet macaws. But that's another story!)

But what a story. There was literally no-one else alive who could tell it so comprehensively.

No less a revered journalist and automotive

authority as LJK Setright acclaimed it as 'an important piece of motoring history' and Giles Chapman, editor of *Autocar & Motor* called it 'the pick of the year's old car videos'.

I'd sold my Plus 8 to finance this film, had a 1000 VHS copies made and sold, over the years, about 350 copies! Peter was even good enough to sign 100 copies of a photograph taken of him sat in that Morgan Family outside Stoke Lacey as a special offer to encourage sales. But it didn't and I still have a few photos left! However, it is still the piece of work of which I am most proud. When VHS died out I had no choice but to throw away 100s of copies. Since then I think I may have sold about 100 DVDs and have just ordered another 50. But when they've gone that'll be it.

I was so privileged to spend time with Peter and I got to understand why so many held him in such high esteem. At the 1990 Motor Show he'd said, 'c'mon Richard, let's go walk-about'. We eventually got to the little gate in the small picket fence surrounding Rolls Royce's stand when someone rushed over to greet him and open the gate for him. That person was Peter Ward, the new Chairman of Rolls-Royce. Speaks volumes.

Richard Atherton



I'm glad to say, quite quickly. And it was an F2 it was an ex George Goodall car - he'd gone to a 4-4 at that time, series 1, and I had one of those. And I enjoyed it, it was really good, it was a nice little car for going down to Cornwall. But one thing amused me, it was quite quick, I remember going back over a humpback bridge and thinking good gracious the back is going to flip right over, it must have taken off about four foot from the bridge, back wheel in the air.

I can understand why people like the twins when it comes to touring, but I think the F-type (the four cylinder one) F-Type 4 cylinder with was so much

quieter, because the twins were very noisy for a long run. I mean I hadn't learnt about earplugs yet, but after my first drive from Malvern to Maidenhead I thought, well this is not for me. It was a bit too noisy for my liking because of course it just went bang bang bang, and seemed to keep on going for the rest of the evening after I'd got to Maidenhead!

For a year I was driving the three wheeler, but of course I went over to a 4-4 and that's when Trials started. I had a Series 1 Climax engine in a standard two seater car which was very effective and I enjoyed that. About 1937 that, my first trial course in 1937 which was the ➤





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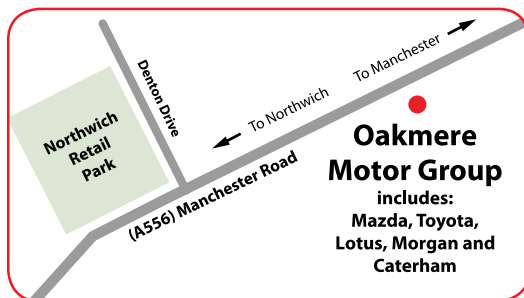
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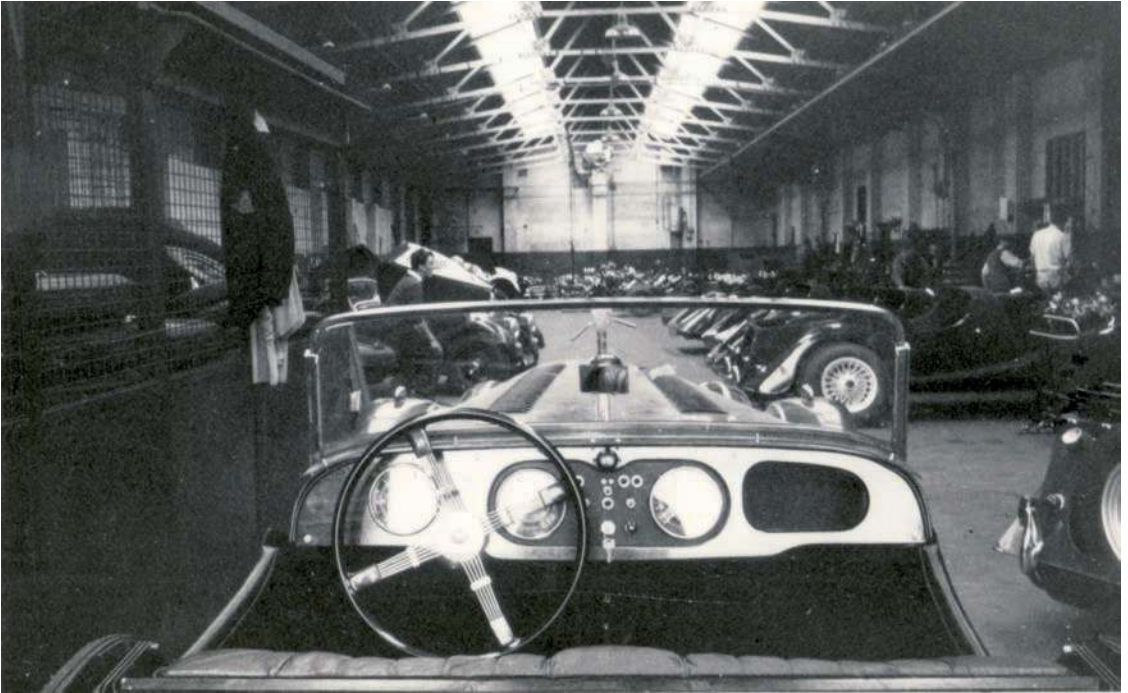


Edinburgh and regrettably I only got the second class award - I made a mistake because I happened to be in second gear, I was too nervous starting off and I was never going to make it in second. And I changed down into bottom and was caught for that one when the wheels stopped, and I lost my first class award.

Father insisted that I learn how to drive first, in other words I had to do trials first - no way could I - much as

I would have liked to - gone straight onto the track first. You had to qualify, to his thoughts in handling the car; you had to be able to start on a really steep slope and not let it run back, learning things like that - how to control the car. And then it was midsummer that I was entered for short races at Donnington park, which was great fun - I think it was an MCC event but I know the first race I did, which was a handicap race, I managed to win that





and later in the scratch race (I think it was up to 1500) there I was doing terribly well I think second or third and then it broke a rocker and that was the end of my race at that time. Later that year, again before the war, I was entered in a four seater 4-4 Climax 1122 engine for the high speed trial at Brooklands, which again was an MCC event and that took place end of September, early October; I went with my sister, and we had a great

event, but Brooklands is terribly bumpy, it really is, people don't realise how bumpy it is. People call it the Railway Straight Bump and that was true, it was a really good one. Anyway we managed to mill around really well, we covered 81 miles in the hour, which was a high speed and father was absolutely thrilled, we only used to claim 80mph for the car and that was on the two seater let alone the four. We brought the car into the pits, and it ➤



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was quite funny because my sister was terribly small and the car was very aerodynamic as she didn't stick up at all and it looked as though I didn't have a passenger, she was almost entirely underneath the scuttle, I didn't have a tonneau, as that would have covered her entirely - she was really very sporting my sister.

Bringing it in, after doing my trial, and the next thing I hear from Charlie Curtis who always used to go to the races, and he came up to me and he said it won't

start you know - all of the piston rings are broken, and I thought 'oh no this is awful' I won't get any more races now if I wreck an engine the first time I take it around Brooklands. So I went to tell father, and say I've done an awful thing I've broken all the piston rings, and father said, "oh don't worry - don't worry at all, you did a fine speed it was better because the rings were broken!" they often used to run car around with no rings because there was less friction. The only time you need the piston rings ➤





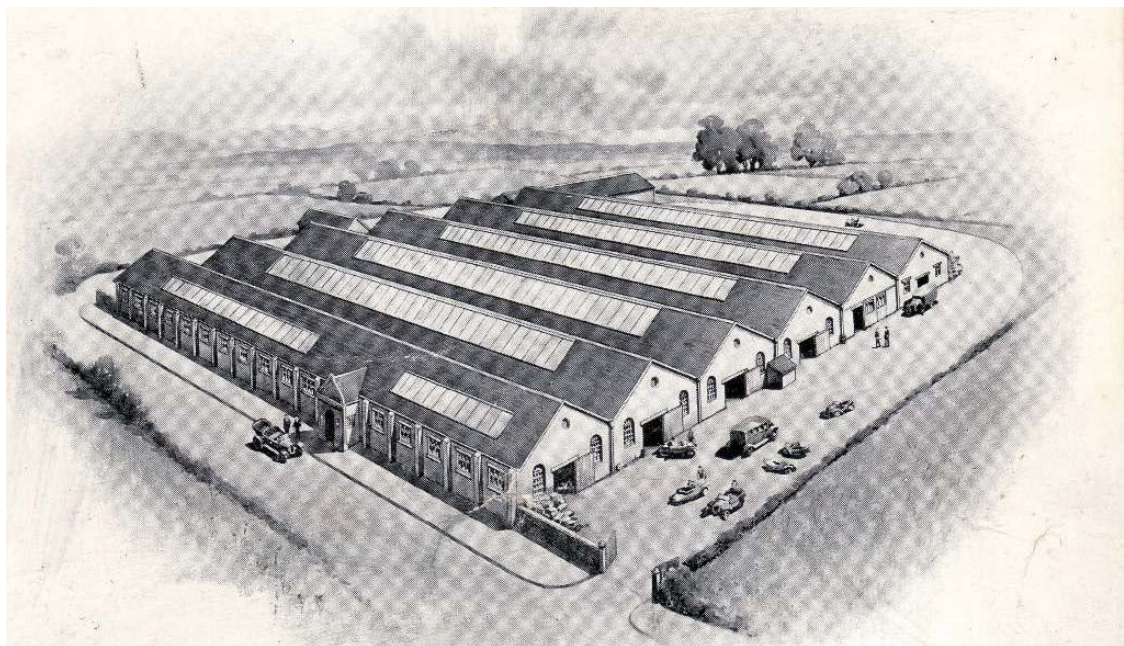
is to get the car started, once you're moving you don't need all of that compression - it was quite typical of the type of thing, the type of remark he would make, he was very down to earth - he knew the benefit of just fitting new piston rings after making a good time in a standard car - and it was standard of course.

The following year, 1938, there was another interesting development that occurred with the 4-4s and that was the development of the V8. Father had been interested in the performance and he looked at the size of the engine and this 22 horse Ford V8 came along from our supplier's, from Ford industrial units, and it was duly fitted in the 4-4 with not much difficulty as far as I know. Anyway, I was allowed to use this car and the performance really for those days was incredibly impressive, the acceleration was absolutely fabulous, but oddly enough it would go up to about 90 and then it was almost as if it had a governor you couldn't do anymore - it was quite good from a safety point of view that it wouldn't just go on and on, and it used to cut out anywhere from 90-92.

But I had a good example of its potential once when I going to race meet in Donington Park and on the way back I happened to come up behind Forrest Lycett in his 8 litre Bentley and that was a very potent car for those days and I passed him, fairly easily, and I don't think he liked that very much, and anyway he started hounding me and then he got by me on the straight, and then I got behind him again, in some traffic it all got a bit twisted until the next straight, because I had him on acceleration, but the final thing was - when we came to a longish straight - I had been in front twice ➤







I think, and he came by me and just as he was beside me he changed into top so I was doing my 90mph and I thought oh well this is it, that puts you in your place. And so he went way ahead and I didn't see more of him - he was going roughly the same direction, we both came from Berkshire. He did suffer badly though, from brake fade (which we knew nothing about at the time) but if you applied the brakes more than about twice you were liable to be in trouble - particularly in quick succession. We never knew anything about it until after the war and then of course everyone realised brake fade could occur from getting overheated, but it never really got to that stage of development, one knew - one was careful when driving it and you were careful about the brakes, but because of the tax implication - pound

per horsepower - father dropped it and then we came over to the Standard engine. We actually took the Ford engine out of the car and sent it back to Ford and the car was then fitted with the standard 8 Horse engine with the armoured blower which was quite effective - it was completely at the other end of the scale as far as taxation was concerned, right down from the 22horse Ford. And it was quite satisfactory from a performance point of view, it would do about 82-85mph and it was quite good but that finished virtually with the war and then of course it was also at that time when Sir John Black met up with father and said would you like us to build an engine? And it was about the same time when he offered the eight horse just for testing with the supercharger and the father said yes, he would and of course at that time >





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Sir John was making engines for Sir William Lyons and he eventually came out and we did receive one 1267 CC overhead valve Standard engine just before the war which I'm pretty certain I remember father fitted in his coupe but as far as I know no 1267 Standard engine was sold to the public before the war. I think it had just about broken out (oh yes it had, because I had just been on Holiday in Normandy) and France had just declared war. And I walked along one evening after work, and I didn't tell father to Admiralty House, because of course if this thing was going to happen then the place I wanted to be was in the Navy. And I went into one of these places and they took one look at me and of course they said; you need glasses, and I said don't worry about that because I want to be on the artificers' side and they said oh no well we haven't got any boats at the moment, and you won't be called for a long time and this and that and I thought, I came up rather crestfallen and thought well they don't want Peter Morgan in this lot and I just left. A few days later a school pal of mine rang and he said, 'what are you doing?' and I said nothing and he said, 'well I'm going up to the HSC next week would you like to join me?' and I said, 'yeah good idea.' And so we went up together and I saw this charming old Brigadier and he asked; oh you know, what have you done and he said oh well the lace

for you is the RASC (The Royal Army Service Corps) which of course was engineering, as REME hadn't really even started yet, And so I took that and my friend got into the RA (Royal Artillery) and we walked out and one was duly called after two months. I went into other rank training at Aldershot and then down to officer training in Boscombe and this was about the time of Dunkirk. I remember because we had a bit of an alert on the coast as it was going on.

And after that I was sent down to a motor coach company, in Third Division, which actually was Monty's division - Southern Command - and our job was I think sixty motor-coaches (all petrol engines) and I got there and what you had to do was knock out all of the windows and glass and put curtains in instead. The idea was to move to move the Third, Coldstream and the Grenadier guards up north anywhere as far as Scotland in case an invasion took place. And when I got there, I think out of the sixty coaches, only twenty-three were runners and I remember spending masses and masses of government money going up to Bristol and getting new engines because the people who had taken over these vehicles had taken them over in such ghastly states with cracked blocks and heaven knows what, all old bangers.

And anyway, after, I think I'd been there about eight



months - I managed to get it to fifty seven runners, I think three were still off road, and then I was posted to Africa.

I didn't know where I was going, I found myself after a rather nice journey on a troop ship - which I always enjoyed, going on troop ships. And went up to Sierra Leone, Free Town and I was based at a vehicle depot - I didn't have command there, I was second in command, but I was based at a vehicle reception depot in Free Town. And then I had a workshop and then we went to Gold Coast GHQ which was a very interesting place because if you were married (because of malaria and this and that) you came back to this country, any time between 15 or 18 months, and if were married you went to South Africa and apparently had a very good time too. But anyway I used to come back, and I started my second tour, I then went to GHQ in Achimota, which was good fun because I had a staff job and I went on a trip with the Colonel into Nigeria which meant going through Togo Land and Dahomey which were an ex-German territory and French territory and we were away for about three weeks all in all. And then that tour finished and I came back to England, and didn't do much, and after so many months in a unit down south in England I was posted to Nairobi where I had the base workshops in Nairobi there which was quite interesting and very useful for further

kind of education is it were in my job with Morgans because in actual fact the unit I had and had command of had more people than I have here. I think I think strength was somewhere in the region of 125 and 130 people and the other interesting part was that it consisted of so many kinds of different people, different races I had Italian prisoners of war (they were commanded by their own colonel in fact) and I felt very sorry for them because of course they were from Eritrea in North Africa, and poor things at the end of the war they never knew where they were going to end up at the end of the war. Most of them went down to South Africa, and they were really good mechanics and engineers. And then the other people I had were Chinese cooks and carpenters to look after, and Indian Sikhs and Hindus who were a bit of a nuisance which they never got on with each other. And then west africans and east africans, but everyone being together didn't do anyone any harm. But yes I loved east Africa, that part of the world, particularly at that time - even just before the war I know it wasn't many years ago, it wasn't developed anything like it is today and you used to go out into the bush and you could say; ah! Darkest Africa, I'm standing somewhere no white man has stood before and it was so easy, so easy to get off track - there weren't that many tracks, it was fabulous. **MOG**



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ECKINGTON MANOR

Eckington Manor is an award winning hotel and venue nestled in the beautiful Avon valley, near Pershore, Worcestershire, and is a rather special place. Founded by Judy Gardner, of Garner's Foods fame, which specialises in pickles and dressings, Judy believes that life doesn't get much better than good food in a relaxed, enjoyable atmosphere.

WORDS Granville Orange PHOTOGRAPHY Granville Orange and Eckington Manor

In 2004 Judy bought the run down Manor Farm in the historic village of Eckington and went about lovingly restoring the farm and its buildings, diversifying to offer outstanding accommodation. With an eye for design and attention to detail Judy and her team created what is now a stunning hotel and more, not least a cookery school offering a plethora of courses, teaching everything from basics to advanced courses for experienced professional chefs.

Judy states that "I have created Eckington Manor with a core belief that we should be encouraging people to buy British, favour local produce, and honour seasonality. In doing so, we all benefit from eating healthier, more flavoursome foods. Cooking should be relaxing and fun, a shared experience which enriches our lives."

At the heart of Eckington Manor is the farm, home of award winning herds of Aberdeen Angus and Highland cattle; Lleyn sheep; and Gloucester Old Spot pigs. The farm is recognised as part of the Higher Level



WHERE TO STAY



Stewardship Scheme operating in a manner which protects the environment and encourages wildlife by maintaining and protecting habitats whilst farming in an ethical manner. Wherever possible ingredients for the cookery school and hotel kitchens are sourced direct from the farm, the orchards, and vegetable and herb gardens. The hotel also produces its own cider, and offers local brewed ales and local cheeses.

The farm consists of 260 acres alongside the River Avon in an area of outstanding natural beauty, and guests are welcome to walk along the footpaths surrounding the farm and River Avon, and to enjoy the farm and the farming life that each day brings. Bring your binoculars and spend time in one of the hides and watch the abundance of bird species.

Eckington Manor has achieved many awards and accolades since opening, including, more recently, a

Gold by the British Tourism Authority; a Certificate of Excellence with Trip Advisor; Visit England Award for Excellence in 2016; Cotswold Life Food and Drink Awards 2017; a Mr & Mrs Smith listing; and in 2018 winner of the Luxury Lifestyle Readers' Travel Award for Best Hotel for Food.

The hotel prides itself on offering a warm welcome with attention to detail from the team of highly trained staff who go out of their way to make your stay very special indeed. The hotel can accommodate 32 guests in 16 lovingly restored and luxurious bedrooms, including 1 suite and four deluxe rooms. Where possible original beams and flagstones have been retained, with new additions such as hand printed wallpaper. The rooms are spread over four farm buildings - Lower End House, The Cyder Mill, The Grain Barn and The Milking Parlour.



If you are attending as a group of Morgan owners and should you need the facility, then there are a range of meeting rooms for hire, including the recently opened Grain Barn and Apple Store. Groups can also have some fun in the cookery school...from a simple two hour demonstration to full on tuition... a great idea for visiting Morgan owners and their passengers to add a little extra whilst staying in Worcestershire and visiting the factory in Malvern...which incidentally is just 15 miles away.

The restaurant and cookery school are open to non-residents too. See the web site for up coming courses. The restaurant is open Wednesday-Saturday evenings and Wednesday-Sunday for lunches, and guests staying on a B&B basis can enjoy the prize winning sausages and other treats.

The hotel web site has helpful links to the local area -

what to see, where to go, and forthcoming events, plus details of the special packages on offer including what is described as a "Foodie Heaven Package"...it sounds delightful...a real indulgence in luxury and top class cuisine....and more. Go on...spoil yourselves, this surely is a must for any deserving Morgan owner, and there is a large private parking area so your treasured motors will be quite safe during your stay.

The hotel recommends that you book with them direct to obtain the best rates, and in so doing, would like to offer our readers a little something special...quote MOG Magazine when booking and you will enjoy a wonderful complimentary champagne cocktail upon arrival ! **MOG**

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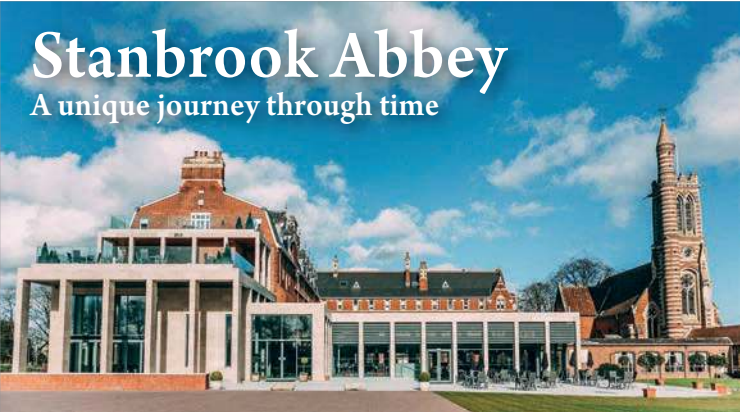


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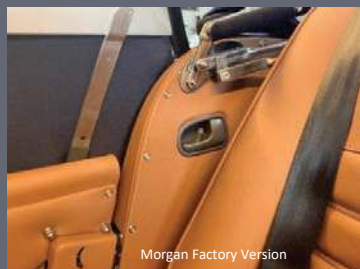
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THE FIFTIES

A look at the decades that helped define the Morgan Motor Company.

WORDS Travis Blake PHOTOGRAPHY Various



1950s Plus 4 (c. Morgan Motor Company)

The 1950s, forerunner of the 1960s, but very much the creator of the swinging decade to come, the birth of the teenager as an individual, no longer just a younger facsimile of parents from a bygone era, rock 'n' roll, Coca-Cola, denim jeans, motorcycles and Italian motor scooters all hitting the scene and our roads. A decade that begins while rationing is still firmly in place, not fully abolished until nearly half way through the decade in 1954, the 1950s was a turning point towards modernism.

As the Planet's Nations began to recover from the Second World War the Fifties was a decade of huge opportunities and development mixed with and almost

reined in by the shackles of the catastrophic events of the previous decade. Reparations, rebuilding and the gradual recovery from the effects of a global war aided national economies and began an increase in wellbeing, welfare and living standards for many in the western Countries with a world looking towards trade rather than war to move it forward.

Politically in the United Kingdom the Conservative Party returned to power in 1951 and stayed in government for the remainder of the decade, continuing with Labour's post war social reforms, a welfare state, the National Health Service and nationalisation of major industries and services, except for steel which

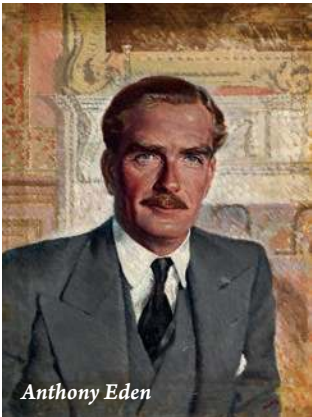




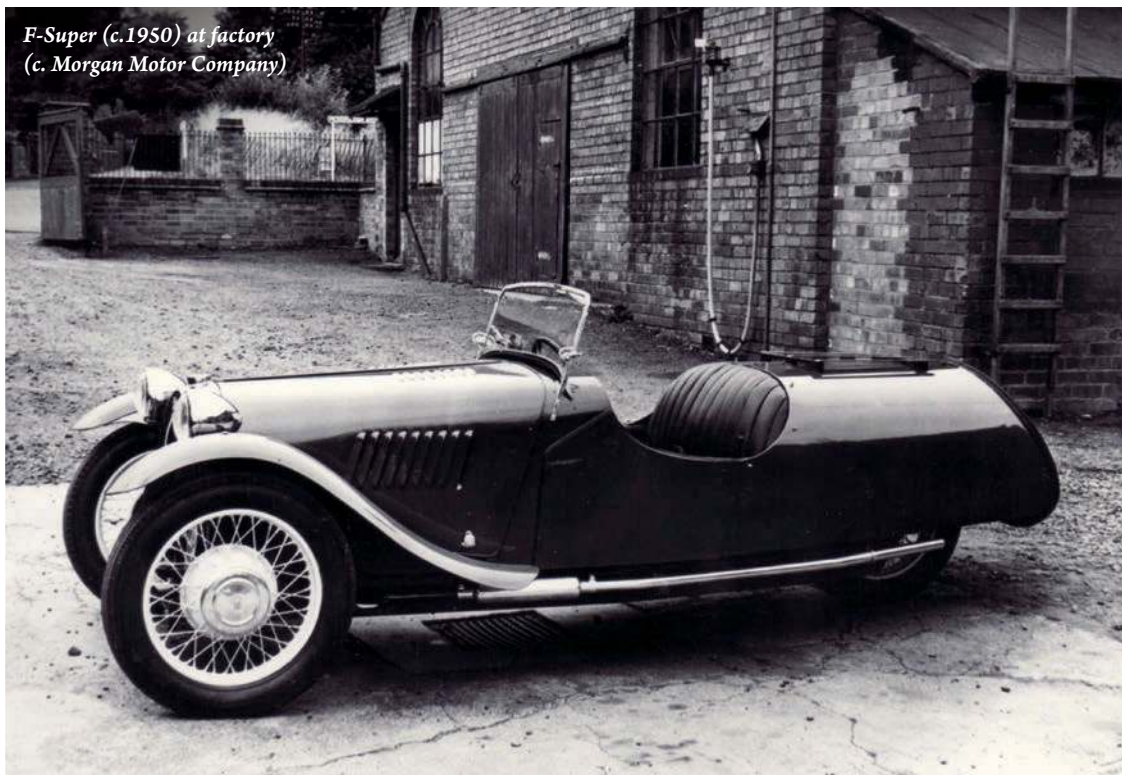
the Conservatives denationalised in 1953. This was a period of relative stability and economic growth, but international unrest was just raising its ugly head once more, this time further afield in North Africa. Sir Winston Churchill retired as Prime Minister; to be succeeded by Anthony Eden in 1955. In 1954 an international agreement had been signed pertaining to the running and use of the Suez Canal, a major international shipping canal that connects the Mediterranean to the Red sea. However in 1956, the Egyptian President Gamal Nasser, took it upon himself

to nationalise the Suez Canal Company in direct contravention of international agreements. Eden, based on experience from the preceding decade considered Nasser another Mussolini who must be stopped. Despite attempts to resolve the dispute peacefully Britain, France and Israel invaded Egypt and took control of the Canal Zone. Eden resigned from office after the Suez Crisis and was replaced by his Chancellor, Harold Macmillan, who saw decade out as Prime Minister and continued into the 1960s.

Advancements were being made in many industries



*F-Super (c.1950) at factory
(c. Morgan Motor Company)*



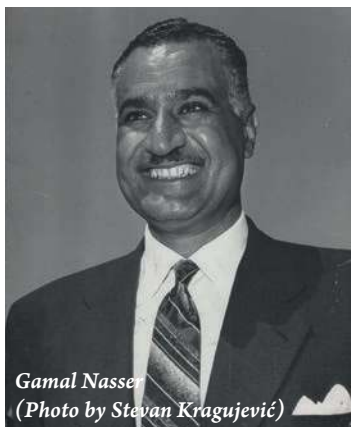
and taking a look at the 0 to 60 miles per hour times of sports cars in the 1950s to see the progress being made and what cars were achieving under the ten second threshold makes for some interesting reading. Coming in the lower regions we have some well-known European marques, both Jaguar's XK120 and XK140 achieving nine and a half seconds, the Mercedes 300SL also manages this time as does the Ferrari 195 Inter impressively hitting this time in 1950! The Americans were also competing at this level with the mighty 6.4 litre V8 Cadillac Eldorado hitting 9.6 seconds. These

acceleration times are pretty impressive given the limitations of the era, but there are some even more impressive times from auto houses that set a future president, for example you would not be surprised to know that between six and five seconds 0 to 60 miles per hour times are the Aston Martin DB4 GT and the Maserati 5000 GT, both at the end of the decade and the Alfa Romeo with the Disco Volante hitting 6.8 seconds very early in the decade in 1952. Between six seconds and five seconds the territory pretty much belongs to Ferrari, no surprises here. Do you want to go faster? Of

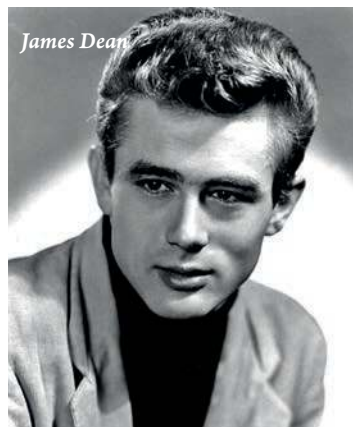
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Harold Macmillan in 1961



*Gamal Nasser
(Photo by Stevan Kragujević)*



James Dean

Ferrari 250 PF cabrio
(By Mr.choppers, CC BY-SA 3.0, Wikimedia)



Suez Canal

course you do. Well, at the thin end, the almost mythical acceleration from zero to sixty miles per hour in less than five seconds is the forerunner of the first British Supercar, the Jaguar D-type at 4.7 seconds in 1954. Yes, yes it is essentially a racing car but a great achievement all the same.

A pedigree sports car was essential for the up and coming of the decade, but they were not for the faint hearted, after all the Fifties lost one of its great actors, who had the potential to be a truly all-time Hollywood legend, James Dean, as the result of an accident in a Porsche 550 Spyder. This car was fundamentally a racing car and in fact Dean was travelling to a race meeting in it when the accident happened. Culturally the decade was one of great gains and advancements from the invention of the teenager, or clever marketing to extract young people's disposable income by creating an identity for them, and the tragic loss of current and future icons, James Dean and Buddy Holly being two of the higher profile deaths.

But what affect does a rapidly changing socio-political and cultural landscape have a on a low volume sports car builder based in the middle of the country, where the pace of life is more sedentary. After all it's not as if the car of the people is being produced and supplied from here and therefore the associated pressures are vastly different from the more industrialised motor manufacturers. During the Fifties the Morgan Motor Company is approaching the end of the stewardship of Henry Frederick Stanley Morgan, the Company's founder, known affectionately as H.F.S. Henry's son, Peter Henry Geoffrey Morgan, became the Morgan Motor Company's Vice Chairman in 1951, having joined his Father's business in the in the previous decade as a draughtsman.

At the turn of the decade Morgan launched a new model, the Morgan +4, replacing the previous 4/4 range of cars. This new Morgan used a Standard Vanguard 2088cc engine that developed 68bhp. The car was bigger than the previous model and also more expensive, a two-seater would set you back £625. Morgan were certainly



*Peter Morgan in Office, late '50s
(c. Morgan Motor Company)*



HFS & sisters, 1950s (c. Morgan Motor Company)



F-Super (c.1950) at factory

proving their sporting pedigree with the new car, in 1951 the RAC held the inaugural International Rally of Great Britain, a truly gruelling challenge over six days, with Morgan winning the team prize and Peter Morgan coming second overall, no mean feat given the strong competition in the class, including many Jaguar XK120s. Incidentally, Morgan went on to take the team prize in the 1952 RAC International Rally of Great Britain also! The early 1950s as well as being an opportunity for a new model also became the end of a much loved old favourite. As British motor manufacturers looked to export markets to increase their order books, the Morgan three-wheeler, which attracted UK tax benefits, unfortunately was not viable as an export model and the last two original cars were produced in 1952.

In 1955 after the styling and engine changes of the two previous years, Morgan were struggling with supply from Triumph of the TR2 engine, the reason why they had changed from the previous Standard Vanguard unit. Henry Morgan decided to introduce, or return

the 4/4 as the Series two 4/4, a two seater only tourer featuring a Ford (readily available) 10hp engine unit. This cheaper, more sedate model did have the benefit of introducing a wider audience to Morgan, but with a 0 to 60 miles per hour time of just under thirty seconds, it was considerably slower than its +4 stablemate that could achieve 60mph in 10.8 seconds. Interestingly, as the cars evolved throughout the decade and tyre performance improved Morgan no longer supplied two spares as one was deemed sufficient.

The Morgan Motor Company's end to the decade of the 1950's was bittersweet, with continued and increasing success in motor racing against an impressive list of completion, and the sad loss of the Company's founder and more importantly the Chairman's Father. H.F.S Morgan died in June 1959.

This is MOG signing off from the Fabulous Fifties, but don't forget to tune in next month when we'll be visiting another decade that helped shape the Morgan we know today! **MOG**

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This once-proud Black Country manufacturer's fortunes went up and down like the sun itself

SUNBEAM

WORDS Dave Smith PHOTOGRAPHY As credited

John Marston was born into a well-to-do landowning family in Ludlow, Shropshire, in 1836. At the age of 15, he went to Wolverhampton, where he served his apprenticeship at Edward Perry's tinplating and japanware outfit. At 23, he left Perry to set up on his own, buying a factory in nearby Bilston, and did so well that, when Perry died in 1869, Marston took over Perry's factory too.

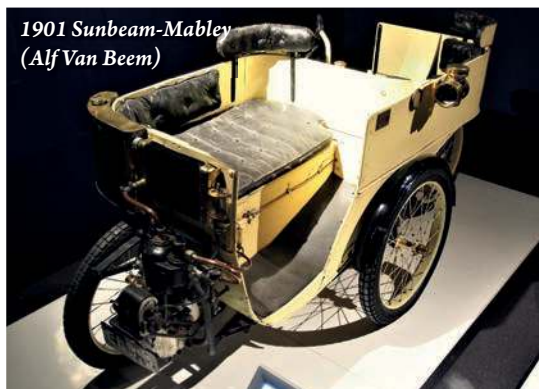
Marston was a keen cyclist, and cycle making was a booming business, so he cut himself a piece of the action and began making Sunbeam bicycles. It was his wife, Ellen, who suggested that he adopt Sunbeam as his brand name, and, in 1897, the ex-Edward Perry Jeddo Works factory became the charmingly-named Sunbeamland.

Thomas Cureton was a well-educated chap who had been apprenticed to Marston in the early days, and became his right-hand man at Sunbeamland for many years. He suggested that motor cars might be the next big thing, and perhaps Sunbeam should get on that bandwagon, too. The board of directors weren't keen on this new-fangled idea, but Marston and Cureton treated it as a side project, drawing up plans and eventually beginning work on a prototype in 1899.

John bought a disused factory in Villiers Street, Wolverhampton, and, in 1898, his son, Charles, began

making parts for Sunbeam cycles, as well as other manufacturers. This company, which Charles bought from his father in 1902, was Villiers Engineering, and would go on to patent and produce the freewheeling gear used by almost every bicycle made since. They would also produce millions of engines that powered everything from lawnmowers to motorcycles for most of the rest of the century. Anyway, Marston and Cureton had taken over a disused coach house in a parcel of land on nearby Upper Villiers Street, adjoining what would become Charles's factory, and set a couple of their best engineers to build their prototype. Upon completion, the two-seat, 4hp machine was tested around the local roads at up to 14mph. They built a second car, very similar to the first, which was exhibited at the 1901 National Show at Crystal Palace, and a third.

The first car to bear the Sunbeam name came about after Marston met a young architect named Maxwell Maberley-Smith at the Crystal Palace show. Maberley-Smith was displaying his new design, which, compared with the mainstream car designs, looked like an April Fools joke. His 'sociable' was a quadracycle, with four wheels arranged in a diamond formation. The 2.5hp DeDion engine was alongside the front wheel, driving the middle wheels via a leather belt, while the driver sat ➤



1901 Sunbeam-Maberley
(Alf Van Beem)



1912 Sunbeam Touring
(State Library of Queensland)

WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN



over the rear wheel, and one or two passengers sat in the middle, facing to the left. He offered it to Sunbeam as a project that was ready for production - hence avoiding development costs - and the Sunbeam-Mabley (sic) was born. It was cheap, eventually selling for £130, and sold a few hundred examples.

Meanwhile, Marston was preparing a more conventional 6hp car with bodywork by the nearby Forder coachbuilders. The automobile business was definitely taking off, and Marston sold all his japanning and tinware concerns to concentrate on cars in 1902. That same year, he employed Thomas Charles Pullinger as Works Manager, an engineer who had spent many years at Darracq in France, and designed, among other things, the water-cooled cylinder head. Pullinger persuaded Marston and the board that they should consider importing completed chassis, with running gear but minus bodywork to begin with, then with fewer and fewer imported components as they developed their own. He suggested Berliet chassis, and, late that year, the first of the 12hp, four-cylinder cars went on show.

The new cars, badged as Sunbeams, were entered in early trials to garner publicity. It worked - Sunbeam won the 100-mile Liverpool Reliability run in 1902, the London To Oxford Anniversary run, and the 1903 London To Glasgow Trial, and garnered plenty of press.

The 1903 Sunbeam was the Pullinger-designed



10/12hp model with a 2.4-litre four-cylinder engine. It was a success, and the 20 staff at the Upper Villiers Street factory were turning out 18 of the 500 guinea cars a month. A six-cylinder 16/18hp model followed in 1904, and the plant was expanded to cope.

In the spring of 1905, John Marston Ltd decided to spin off the automobile concern as a company separate from the cycles and other projects, and the Sunbeam Motor Car Company Ltd was formed, with Marston as Chairman. Pullinger had left to join Humber, and the first designs from his replacement, Angus Shaw, were by now ready to jump from drawing board to production. The first was the 1906 Sunbeam 16/20, and Angus himself drove the prototype from John O'Groats to Land's End and back without once stopping the engine - quite an achievement. The car sold well, and once again the factory needed to expand, this time into more land on Upper Villiers Street, with a new building that would soon become the Moorfield Works.

The new 1907 25/30hp model's release coincided with a sudden slump in the car market, and the model would only sell 11 units that year, but the new 1908 20hp and 35hp models fared a lot better.

In 1909, Louis H. Coatalen joined the Sunbeam roster. Something of an engineering prodigy, he had served at Panhard, Clement and DeDion-Bouton before moving to Humber, in Coventry, in 1901. From there, he moved





1925 Sunbeam 20/60 (Alexandre Prévot)

down the road to Hillman, and the Hillman-Coatalen car impressed Thomas Cureton so much that, in 1909, he offered Coatalen the job of Chief Engineer at Sunbeam.

Coatalen brought a love of motor sport. His motto - "Racing improves the breed" - led to him entering his first design, the Sunbeam 14/20, in the RAC Ten Pound Note Trial, in which he achieved 21.3mpg on the 100-mile road section, then an average of 56.6mph around Brooklands. This led him to develop an overhead-valve, pressure-lubricated engine, then installing a 4.2-litre four-cylinder, 16-valve version of it into a racing monster called the Sunbeam Nautilus in 1910. The torpedo-shaped body led to overheating, so he designed a replacement, the Sunbeam Toodles II (apparently Coatalen's pet name for his wife, Olive) in 1911. That Easter, it achieved 83mph at Brooklands, and beat its nearest rival, a Napier, in a match race. Toodles II won 22 prizes and records that year, giving Sunbeam some much-needed publicity. Over the next few years, Sunbeams would race everywhere from the Isle Of Man TT to the French Grand Prix, with considerable success.

Meanwhile, Sunbeam road cars were becoming ever more popular, and the company branched out into aero engines. In fact, Toodles V was powered by a monstrous airship engine, and captured two dozen records in 1913, but then more pressing concerns became apparent as war loomed. Sunbeam continued building cars, motorcycles



1925 Sunbeam
Land Speed Record car (Rex Gray)

and ambulances for the war effort, until 1916 when the Ministry of Munitions ordered them to concentrate on aircraft engines.

Immediately after the war, there was tremendous upheaval at Sunbeam. Coatalen had been made joint Managing Director alongside William Iliiff in 1914. Marston had been preparing his third son, Roland, to take over as Chairman, but he died suddenly in March 1918. John Marston himself died the day after Roland's funeral, leaving Cureton to succeed him as Chairman.

In November 1918, production of the 16 and 24hp models recommenced, but the market was hardly buoyant, and the government were rather slow in paying their wartime bills. Shortly after the war, Darracq had bought up Clément-Talbot, then, in 1920, bought up Sunbeam. Sunbeam, Talbot and Darracq operated as three individual companies under the name STD Motors Ltd, and Coatalen became chief designer across all three. Cureton retired as Sunbeam Chairman that autumn, and sadly died within a year.

Coatalen's racing obsession was still strong, and he built Grand Prix racing Sunbeams for the likes of Henry Segrave. He built a 350hp, 27-litre airship-engined machine for KL Guinness to race at Brooklands, where it set a new speed record of 133.75mph in 1922. That car was sold to Malcolm Campbell, who renamed it BlueBird and topped 150mph at Pendine Sands in 1925. In 1926, ➤



1938 Sunbeam-Talbot Ten Drophead Coupé
(Andrew Bone)



1946 Sunbeam-Talbot 2-Litre



1952 Sunbeam-Talbot 90 (Steve Glover)



1954 Sunbeam Alpine

Segrave asked Coatalen to build him a car to crack 200mph, so Coatalen put two Sunbeam Matabele 420bhp V12 aero engines, each tuned up to 500hp, at either end of a chassis with Segrave in the middle. On March 29th, 1927, Segrave took the 1,000hp machine over 203mph on Daytona Beach.

Meanwhile, Coatalen had effectively moved back to France, working at Darracq's factory near Paris and occasionally popping back to Wolverhampton. After another land speed record project, the ill-fated Silver Bullet, Coatalen left Sunbeam in 1931. The company was still turning out high-quality, technically advanced and well-built cars in significant numbers, and even diversified successfully into buses and trolleybuses, but the unpaid war debts and a downturn in the aero side of the business dragged Sunbeam down. Sunbeam and Talbot called the receivers at the end of 1934; Clément-Talbot was still afloat, and was sold to Rootes Brothers. In July 1935, Rootes announced that they had bought the Sunbeam Motor Car Company too, though they simply closed car production at Moorfields and shelved the name.

Rootes' main concerns were mass-production and high-volume cars, and they were early exponents of badge engineering. Years of sleight of hand and name-changing between Darracq, Clément and Talbot confused the issue no end, and Rootes began making Talbot their luxury brand (by putting fancy Talbot bodies on Humber

chassis) until Anthony Lago bought Talbot of France and began also selling Talbots. So Rootes combined Clément-Talbot and Sunbeam into Sunbeam-Talbot Ltd, which Rootes then sold to Humber Ltd, even though Rootes owned Humber... Still with me?

Anyway, Sunbeam-Talbot, now based in Clément-Talbot's old Barlby Road, North Kensington, factory, debuted their 10 (previously a Talbot 10, previously a Hillman Aero Minx) and 3-Litre (basically a Hillman Hawk/Humber Snipe in a posh frock) at the 1938 Motor Show. The following year brought a Sunbeam-Talbot 2-Litre (a 10 with the Hillman 14 engine) and the 4-Litre (a 3-Litre with the Super Snipe engine). Unfortunately, that year also brought yet another scuffle amongst our continental friends, during which Sunbeam-Talbot production was halted entirely in favour of Karrier lorries.

In 1946, Rootes brought Sunbeam-Talbot out of the aging North Kensington plant and into the new family factory at Ryton-on-Dunsmore, Coventry. The pre-war models returned, although materials were short and the big 3- and 4-Litre engine production mostly went to Humber, so the range was basically the 10 or the 2-Litre. It would be 1948 before Sunbeam-Talbot got some modern styling in the handsome, Packard-flavoured shapes of the 80 and 90 saloons or drophead coupes. Underneath, though, they were still the 10 and 2-Litre respectively, though the underpowered 80 was dropped in 1950, while



1961 Sunbeam Rapier (Steve Glover)



1962 Sunbeam Rapier Series III



1957 Sunbeam Rapier Series I (David Parrott)



1959 Sunbeam Alpine, raced by Bernard Unett (John Willshire)

the 90 MkII got a new chassis with independent front suspension and a larger 2.3 engine. Success in road rallies, especially a podium sweep in the 1952 Alpine Rally, led to a new model, a two-seat drophead coupe called the Alpine in 1953.

In 1954, Rootes finally ended the previous confusion by dropping the Talbot name - all Sunbeams were now just Sunbeams, Rootes' sports and performance brand. By 1956, the 90 and Alpine had been phased out, and the badge engineering stepped up a notch.

The 1955 London Motor Show saw the debut of the new Sunbeam Rapier, the first of Rootes' 'Audax' family. A 1.4-litre, two-door hardtop coupe, it had been designed by the Loewy Studios, with transatlantic design cues from the contemporary Loewy-penned Studebakers, plus two-tone paint and column change. Its siblings - the Hillman Minx and Singer Gazelle - shared its underpinnings but debuted months later.

The Rapier Series II followed in early 1958, with the addition of a convertible, rear fins and a 1.5 engine. That was followed after just 18 months by the Series III, which looked very similar to the II but had an uprated aluminium cylinder head and front disc brakes from the Alpine.

Ah, yes, the new 1959 Alpine Series I, a handsome all-new two-seat sports convertible with styling from Loewy but underpinnings from the humble Hillman Husky. The Alpine was upgraded in 1960 with a new 1.6 engine and

revised rear suspension to create the Series II, while the 1.6 engine was dropped into the 1961 Rapier to make the Series IIIA. The early Alpine had already been successful at Le Mans, and was popular with American circuit racers, but surely achieved most fame being driven around Jamaica by Sean Connery in *Dr No*, the first of the Bond franchise, in 1962.

To expand on the Alpine's performance potential, Sunbeam investigated the possibility of equipping the Alpine with some American horsepower. In 1961, Ford had debuted a new, lightweight, small-block 221ci (3.6-litre) V8 engine, which soon grew to 260ci (4.3). Its compact dimensions just fitted the Alpine engine bay perfectly, and, with a little help from a certain chap called Carroll, who had experience in fitting American V8s into British sports cars, the Sunbeam Tiger debuted at the 1964 New York Motor Show. It was a roaring (literally) success on road and track, especially in America, and Rootes subcontracted the conversion work to Jensen.

Back in the real world, the 1963 Rapier Series IV was little changed. The Alpine had stolen much of its sporting cred, and Rootes were keener to go racing with the Tiger and the new Imp. The Series V Alpine and Series V Rapier both debuted in 1965, both featuring the new 1,725cc engine, but bigger changes were coming at boardroom level.

American giant, Chrysler, was keen to get a foothold in ➤



1964 Sunbeam Tiger engine bay (Greg Gjerdingen)



1965 Sunbeam Tiger (Steve Glover)

WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN



1970 Sunbeam Stiletto



1971 Sunbeam Rapier

Europe and began buying up Rootes shares in 1964; by 1967, Chrysler owned Rootes. The latest Tiger had just upgraded to Ford's 289ci (4.7-litre) V8, but Chrysler put the kibosh on the project - they'd be damned if they'd use rival Ford's engines. The new Rootes Arrow range of cars was ready to take over from the old Audax cars in 1967, and the Sunbeam version was a handsome hardtop coupe called the Rapier Fastback. The following year, a higher-performance Rapier H120 came along with a Holbay-tuned version of the 1,725cc engine, just as the Alpine was phased out. A lower-spec version of the Rapier fastback, badged the Alpine, was introduced in 1970, at which point production of the fastbacks was moved to the Linwood plant.

Linwood, in Scotland, was one of the nails in the Rootes coffin. It had been specially built to produce the new-for-1963 Hillman Imp, Rootes' late challenger to the Mini, but an under-developed product and industrial disputes had turned the place into an albatross. A performance Imp was badged Sunbeam Sport in 1966, with the Sunbeam Stiletto coupe following in 1967. To confuse matters further, most Rootes/Chrysler exports of all models in all ranges were soon badged as Sunbeams.

Singer, one of Sunbeam's siblings at Rootes, had died in 1970, and, with Chrysler concentrating on more modern products coming from their other European concern, Simca, the British arm was left treading water in the turbulent Seventies. After introducing the Hillman

Avenger in 1970, Chrysler showed little interest in the old Rootes brands, and the Sunbeam fastbacks struggled on until the Alpine was axed in 1975, the Rapier following in 1976.

The Sunbeam and Humber brands were quietly pensioned off together in 1976, never to be seen again, although, just to add some sprinkles to the trifle of confusion, the Imp's replacement in 1977 was called the Chrysler Sunbeam. It got even better when, in 1979, Chrysler cut their (considerable) losses and got out of Europe, selling their whole European concern to PSA (Peugeot-Citroen) for \$1. PSA instantly rebranded the whole Euro-Chrysler fleet as Talbots... so, 25 years after Sunbeam-Talbot finished, you could buy a Talbot Sunbeam.

In 1981, PSA ended production of the Talbot Sunbeam at Linwood and closed the plant. They closed the ex-Rootes plant at Ryton-on-Dunsmore in 2006, it was demolished in 2007, and Network Rail now owns the site. The old Barlby Road, North Kensington, factory became a Rootes admin building after 1946, later becoming a Thames Television studio, and is probably best known as Sun Hill Police Station from ITV's *The Bill*! It's currently a photographic/film studio called Sunbeam Studios, with settings including the Talbot Hall and the Rootes Hall... At least the name lives on somewhere, because PSA have shown no signs of doing anything with Sunbeam other than leaving it to be quietly forgotten. **MOG**



1971 Sunbeam Sport



1975 Sunbeam Rapier



**Race
Preparation
&
Restoration**



**SiFab prepared ARV6 wins 2019 Morgan Challenge
AR Motorsport Trophy**



**Radiators,
Header and
Expansion tanks**



Fuel Tanks



**Modified
Roadster
Sumps**



**Bespoke
Parts**



**Aero 8 S1
Parts**



**Panhard Rod Kits for
All Models**



THEY THINK IT'S ALL OVER...

Well it is now. The winner of the 2019 Aero Challenge was settled when the final round of the Championship took place at Snetterton, six months after the series had kicked off at Silverstone in April. WORDS Bob Bull PHOTOGRAPHY Tripos Media

Tony Hirst driving the Morgan Motor Company's Club Sport model claimed the honours ahead of Andrew Thompson and his ARV6 after a close and exciting season.

Going into the last race the situation had Andrew having to win and record fastest lap in his class and, with at least two other starters to enable him to score the maximum eleven points to keep his hopes alive. Tony on the other hand had only to finish second in Class 'S' to ensure he got his hands on the 'Peter Collins Tray' awarded to the Champion, but even before the red lights went out the matter was settled when only Simon Orebi Gann turned up in Class 'G'. This meant Andrew could not win overall no matter how Tony fared.

Qualifying saw Keith Ahlers sitting in pole position with Andrew Thompson beside him, and Richard Plant in a Class 'A' 4/4, and Simon Orebi Gann (ARV6) occupying

row two. Jack Bellinger, James Sumner, Phillip Tisdall, Stephen Lockett, Phill Thomas, and Tony Hirst completed the top ten. Further back on row eight it was good to see Peter Rafter returning after surgery that had kept him out of racing for many months.

From the off Andrew Thompson lead away with the faster starting ARV6 but the power of the Ahlers V8 soon established itself in front, and failing any reliability problems that was the last his pursuers were likely to see of him. Behind Andrew held off Richard Plant for several laps but once past the bright blue 4/4 rapidly established a gap, leaving Thompson unable to keep up, but well clear of any opposition from the rear. Phill Thomas in fourth was never able to relax as Phillip Tisdall was never far from his back bumper, the pair well clear of Brett Sydercombe leading Class 'D'. Behind Brett, World War 3 raced as Peter Sargeant, Stephen Lockett, James Sumner, and Jack



Keith Ahlers sets out to lap the field. If he can



The bright blue +4 of Richard Plant remained un-lapped in second place

Bellinger swapped places all around the lap, eventually coming home in that order. Greg Parnell made progress through the field from a lowly starting position after problems in qualifying, but found himself constantly under pressure from Peter Cole's nimble Roadster, while newcomer to the series, Robert Gilmore, kept close attendance in his black Roadster. Next up was Paul Bryan and he had a comfortable lead over Tony Hirst's Club Sport, Ian Sumner, John Richardson, and Peter Rafter brought up the tail end.

As explained at the start of this piece the Championship

already belonged to Tony Hirst, whose points advantage ensured he could not be beaten, finish or not. Maybe the team had not fully understood the position, because Tony drove a nervous race well down the order determined that nothing should go wrong. He confessed after the race that he could not wait for the chequered flag to appear.

So Keith Ahlers notched up his 105th Challenge win, the Morgan Motor Company, finally had a current model win the Championship, and Tony Hirst could breathe a sigh of relief.

Keith had set himself a target for the race, to lap the



Tail gunner! Jack Bellinger contemplates his next move forward



entire field and break his own lap record, however, he achieved neither ambition, failing to catch Richard and Andrew before the flag, and missing his second target by 0.059 of a second. Must try harder, Keith.

Sole retirement was Simon OG whose ARV6 developed engine problems.

All season it was Craig Hamilton-Smith who had caused Tony most problems, as they proved evenly matched at most circuits, however, while practicing in a soaking wet, and treacherous Friday session, Craig went off the road and damaged his Club Sport too badly to take the start on Saturday. Even so Craig had sufficient points to finish third overall, behind Andrew Thompson in the title race.

The AR Motorsport Trophy is awarded to the driver with the highest points score before three dropped scores are taken in to account, and as this was Tony Hirst, the Trophy goes to Andrew Thompson with the second highest score, as the rules do not allow the same driver to

win both. With 123 points to Tony's 124 it is just reward for a very gallant effort by the Derby man who but for lack of runners in Class 'G' most of the year, may well have been the Champion. Such are the vagaries of Morgan racing.

Once he had recovered his breath Tony spoke of his time in the Challenge from the time he started in a Celebrity race at the 2012 Silverstone Classic where he drove Sharlie Goddard's car, to winning the title.

"I have been overwhelmed by the Spirit of Morgan Racing, everyone has been so generous and helpful always willing to give advice." "I'm proud to be the first factory winner of the Challenge."

Team Manager Mark Evans was "Thrilled and delighted", and stated "The Morgan Motor Company will be thrilled."

We will bring you a full review of the season in a later edition of MOG. Don't miss it. **MOG**

A shining example, Ian Sumner's gleaming +4 must take a lot of polishing





Phill Thomas gained another supporter, as a young fan took a shine to the BabyDoll



The Bellinger 4/4 gets a little TLC from family members



To the victor the spoils, yet another trophy for the cabinet, Tony?



Victorious Tony Hirst acknowledges the marshals on his slowing down lap after a cautious drive



Yet another Class 'J' victory went the way of Phill Thomas's BabyDoll



The rear end of the Ahlers' Morgan V8 was all anybody else saw, as Keith racked up win 105



Peter Rafter returned to the fray in his familiar 'Pretty Red Car'



2019 AERO MORGAN CHALLENGE WINNER TONY HIRST

Tony Hirst driving the Morgan Motor Company's Clubsport model clinched the 2019 Aero Challenge title, at Snetterton, in the last race of the year, heading off stiff competition from Andrew Thompson, and his own team mate, Craig Hamilton-Smith.

WORDS Bob Bull PHOTOGRAPHY Tripos Media

Better known as a TV actor, Tony's introduction to motor racing was at the 2012 Silverstone Classic when he was one of a number of celebrities invited to take part in a race for Morgans, finishing fourth after battling for the lead. A spin dropped him out of the top three, however, the Morgan Motor company were sufficiently impressed to ask him to drive an official entry in the 2013 Morgan Aero Challenge series.

A total of 13 points was the result of his novice season, improving year by year until 2018 when he finished third in the Challenge, and winning the AR Motorsport Trophy.

All season Tony has faced a determined challenge from his factory team mate, Craig Hamilton-Smith, and the pair provided much of the excitement as they went wheel-to-wheel at most rounds, until a coming together at Mallory Park sent Tony's, Clubsport into retirement.

A word from Team manager, Mark Evans, ensured that there were no more incidents.

Tony admits to being a 'petrolhead' and is passionate fan of Morgans, and the Aero Challenge, about which he has nothing but praise for everyone involved.

Since joining the series he has been overwhelmed by



the 'Spirit of Morgan Racing', finding that his rivals were always generous with help, and advice, yet fierce competitors on the track. He is proud to be the first winner of the challenge for the factory, yet it was not

until Mark Evans told him at Castle Combe that he needed to win there, to ensure he was in the running for the title. Up until that point he had not considered the possibility of winning the Challenge outright. Prior to the final round at Snetterton Andrew Thompson was the only person able to defeat Tony, however, his challenge relied on not only winning his class with



Craig Hamilton-Smith never made it easy for Tony. A familiar sight at Silverstone

fastest lap, but also on there being at least three entrants in the class. When only Simon Orebi Gann turned up, that ended Andrew’s chances. Somehow this fact was not relayed to Tony who was under the impression that he only needed to finish second in his class to secure victory, and so drove a most untypical, cautious race at the back of the field, stating he was never so glad to see the chequered flag.

Not only is Tony Hirst a worthy winner of the ‘Peter Collins Tray’, but also a likeable presence around the

Paddock, always cheerful and approachable, (well most of the time), with a great sense of humour. When asked about his experiences in n the Challenge he recalls a very wet Brands Hatch as the one time he really wondered what he was doing racing Morgans. Luckily he survived the conditions and continued to entertain both on and off track.

What of 2020? No doubt both Tony and Craig will be back in Clubsports to attempt a factory double. Another nail biting season is in prospect. **MOG**



Tony Hirst at the Silverstone Classic first time in a Morgan



A must win situation at Castle Combe brought out Tony's best



A careful drive at Snetterton clinched the Championship



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CONVERSATION STREET

It's 1954, The usual suspects, or their fathers and grandfathers, are all sat in the Rover and Standard on the Guarlford straight mile and Peter Morgan has just joined us.

We are all drinking pints of finest foaming ale, only the Americans are drinking bottled lager, and no one is on the orange juice. He's concerned. He's just had a long chat with his dad, HFS, and they have decided that Peter's remodelling of the front of the front of the car, along with the recent ceasing of three wheeler production is the way forward for the Company. (For

the technical minded, sliding pillar suspension is remaining, and so is all the wood.) But he's noted that MG are launching the MGA and the Austin Healy 100 has appeared on the scene. Both are futuristic Jaguar XK lookalikes. Have the Morgans made the right decision, or is something more radical called for? But for all his worries, Peter seems very pleased with himself.

Peter: Well that was easy, persuading the old man. The cost implications of having an enclosed cowl is fantastic though the extra cost of adding the lights to the wings is a bit steep. Overall, it's a financial winner though. No more expensive radiators for F types and the new +4. I miss the little 4/4 though. Maybe we'll bring it back in a few years.

Mmm ... but I like that radiator, you know, the 'flat' one. Looks really classy with its smart, polished nickel surround. Get the point about the cost of producing it though. And if you're thinking about a modern, sleek sports car surely you'll start competing with those Jaguars and MG ... and Triumph. Can you afford to do that?

He places a photo on the table and as everyone takes a look, and murmurs their approval.

Peter: Jaguar? No. MG?... they're competing with us! Triumph? Taught them everything they know! I like the look of the Jensen 541 too. Had a word with Eric Neale recently. He's got a nice style about him. Interesting use of new materials too. Bit worried about their tie-in with Austin-Healey though. And I hear that Donald is working on a small sports car himself.

Nah, those monocoque cars will never sell. Don't make one. Bet you it wouldn't sell. We like the Morgan to be traditional. Let's face it, your old man got it right back in '36.

Peter: But in the back of my mind I'm thinking that we ought to have a 'monocoque' car, something a bit more modern. I'm going to work on it, though I know Father won't approve. I like the look of the Jaguars.

Peter: Yes, I think if we're going to survive we'll have to keep on making the traditional Morgan. Might try a monocoque alongside one day. Be interesting to see how it goes down.



Good idea. Your round!

I can see that even then some people are hankering for the innovative as a status symbol, whereas others are already looking back to the good old days when a footman with a flag walked in front of the car. There have always been those who want the latest in leading-edge innovation, whereas others crave the tried and tested. There is a market for both and in many ways Morgan has catered for both views and has been successful in doing so. What matters more than anything is that both types of motorist demand quality and the personal touch in making a car unique to the individual owner. This is where Morgan should excel. I think there is a good chance that this slight modification in shape might just go on for ever. Think about it. The basic shape was born in 1936, the same year as the Spitfire first flew. That arguably became even more strikingly beautiful right up to the ones that are just leaving service now. Yes the RAF has some wonderful looking jets now, Meteors, Vampires and that new Hunter is a wonderful looking thing. But everyone would still rather fly in a Spitfire.

You do go on, but you're right and it's your round now!

You know, it might be the beer, but at the back of my mind I think I have read that last year Chevrolet had started mass producing a glass fibre car.

Peter: I think that might be one step too far for our small family company, at this time. But it's an interesting idea and it may be something to look into

Well it would certainly keep the weight down

Exactly, and a body like that would surely just fit onto the current chassis. That would keep costs down

Perhaps even a modern three wheeler with a streamlined shape? I believe the Germans, are just about to produce something like a wingless aeroplane on wheels.

You know what? This bottle of lager really is rather warm, I'll have what you all are having next

round. Word from Germany though is its not just about three wheelers. You remember that chap that designed the VW Beetle, Ferdinand Porsche? Well my army pals in Germany have heard rumours that he's developing his design into a two seat sports car, a sort of squashed beetle if you like.

Engine at the back?

Yes.

Never catch on! What can be more thrilling than sighting the corners down a long bonnet?

Absolutely, apparently it's Messerschmitt building the little three wheelers.

Really, perhaps someone will build a new sports car and call it a Spitfire?

Peter: I think we will carry on as we are.

CHEERS!

The Rover and Standard was turned into a care home years ago and Peter's subsequent "monocoque" design failed in the 60s. Perhaps just the timing was wrong? But the Iconic Morgan shape born that year lives on, with a few tweaks, and long may it do so.



Products

NEW RANGE OF PLIERS AND SIDE CUTTERS

Starting from £8.23 | www.kamasa.co.uk

Kamasa Tools has just released a new range of pliers and side cutters that is suitable for a wide range of applications from automotive or electrical use through to home DIY.

These are sturdy tools and comfortable to use; manufactured from S45C carbon steel, their TPR (thermoplastic rubber) handles have a soft grip but remain resistant to tears and abrasions, with excellent weather and chemical resistance.

The range comprises: side cutters 150mm in length (part number 56122); long-nose pliers 200mm (part number 56123); combination pliers 175mm (part number 56124); larger combination pliers 200mm (part number 56125) and water pump pliers 250mm (part number 56126), which have a 60mm maximum jaw diameter making them particularly useful for plumbing and pipe work.



POWER EXTENSION BARS

Starting from £15.55 | www.lasertools.co.uk

Two useful new additions to the tool box, these power extension bars from Laser tools (parts numbers 7470 3/8" drive and 7471 1/2" drive) are 500mm long and designed to be driven by a cordless drill fitted with a quick-chuck.

The special extended length lets you get into these hard to access areas, particularly useful if you're working under the car and having to reach up under wheel arches, rear axles, etc, to reach an elusive fastener. And releasing and removing the fastener takes seconds when using a cordless drill.

Both extension bars are manufactured from chrome vanadium 6150 spring steel, a material suited to cordless drill use as it is hard, has high tensile strength, abrasion-resistant and very tough with great shock resistance.



STAINLESS STEEL DRIP TRAY

£18.29 | www.lasertools.co.uk

We would like to think that our cherished cars and motorcycles never drip oil, but alas, that's not always the case. An old piece of cardboard or even a plastic tray can be messy and unsightly, but Laser Tools has an alternative: their stainless steel drip tray (part number 7352) is just the job.

The tray is usefully sized at 600mm long, 400mm wide and 48mm deep; it is manufactured from Type 201 stainless steel which is exceptionally tough and strong. It will slip easily under the lowest



sports car, looks professional if your car is on display, and is very easy to clean.

It can be used with the Laser



Tools oil absorption pads if required. Altogether a convenient and robust drip tray that also has many non-automotive uses.

COMPREHENSIVE SCREWDRIVER SET

£49.54 | www.kamasa.co.uk

This truly comprehensive new screwdriver set from Kamasa Tools (part number 56131) offers a fine selection of good quality screwdrivers but also includes a bit-driver and two sets of hex keys (metric and imperial).

There are 17 soft-grip handled screwdrivers, the drivers manufactured from chrome vanadium steel with a satin chrome finish. They include 3 Star screwdrivers T8 x 75mm, T10 x 100mm and T15 x 100mm; 4 Phillips Ph0 x 75mm, Ph1 x 75mm, Ph1 x 100mm and Ph2 x 100mm; 4 PzDrive Pz0 x 75mm, Pz1 x 100mm, Pz2 x 100mm and Pz3 x 150mm; and 6 flat drivers, 3mm x 75mm, 3mm x 75mm, 5mm x 75mm, 5mm x 100mm, 6mm x 100mm and 8mm x 150mm.

The hex key sets include 8 metric: 1.5mm, 2mm, 2.5mm, 3mm, 4mm, 5mm, 5.5mm and 6mm; and 8 imperial: 1/16", 5/64", 3/32", 1/8", 5/32", 3/16", 7/32"



and 1/4". The included bit driver is of the same specification as the screwdrivers and is supplied with 10 25mm bits: flat 5mm, 6mm and 7mm; Pz1, Pz2, and Pz3; plus Star

T7, T8, T9 and T10.

The set is supplied with a useful plastic stand that makes all the drivers and accessories easily accessible.

Rumblings From The Shed

SEAT LOWERING, PART 2

Continuing from last Month:

SEAT PREPARATION

We need to raise the seat positioning lever up now we have lowered the nose of seat so you don't trap our fingers on the Morgan's cross member. This is just in front of the seat, but not so close to the nose of the seat that it will not lift the seat locking position latch allowing the seat to move on the runners. To do this;

Step 1a. Mark where to bend on both sides of the seat positioning lever

Step 1b. Remove the seat positioning lever using a prying tool (aka screwdriver)

Step 1c. Bend the seat positioning upward in a vice.

Step 1d. Install the seat positioning lever and check the angle against the seat base and also check you can release the latch allowing the seat to move on the runners.

SEAT INSTALLING PREPARATION

Before we can install the seat we

need to lower (slightly flatten) the Forward leaf-spring mount cover that is under the seat. To do this;

Step 2a. Remove all the screws holding the cover in place

Step 2b. Remove the seat belt mount bolt cover, a screwdriver is ideal

Step 3a. To remove the seat belt mounting bolt, you will need a spanner and a socket on an extension. (step 3b shows the location of the nut)

Now with the cover off, you need to measure the allowable



Step 1a. Mark where to bend on both sides of the lever



Step 1b. Remove the lever



Step 1d. Install the lever



Step 2a. Removal all the screws holding the cover down



Step 3a. Using a spanner and socket on an extension



Step 3b. Show location of the seat mount bolt nut



Step 4a. Measure the minimum front cover depth



Step 4b. Measure the rear cover minimum depth

heights for the cover (**steps 4a & 4b**) then mark this onto the cover using masking tape (**step 4c**). You now need to bend the cover at the new height. To do this, use the equipment you have to hand.

Step 5. With the bend in place, drill corresponding screw holes in the cover.

Step 6. Now the cover is lowered, you will need to ensure that the Seat belt mounting bolt can pass through the cover. Again place it in position, mark the new location, remove and extend the hole.

Step 7. You are now ready to install the new lowered cover in to place. For some of the screws you may need to drill pilot holes for the self-tapping screws as this will make it easier to secure them in place.

Note: When installing the seat belt mount, do not over tighten as it does need to move.

INSTALLING THE SEAT

Place the seat in the cockpit on its forward position, check you finger gap to the cross member if it's good

carry on with the installation, if not revisit steps 1a to 1d!

Using the reverse process from the removal process (last month). Top Tip, change the seat bolts at the rear fixings for Cap-head screws as these use an Allen-key tool that makes it easier to remove and install seat.

Step 8. Shows cap-head screws being used

Step 9. Fill the "new" hole that we made in the floor panel with silicone. This can be done by the person that's under your Morgan!



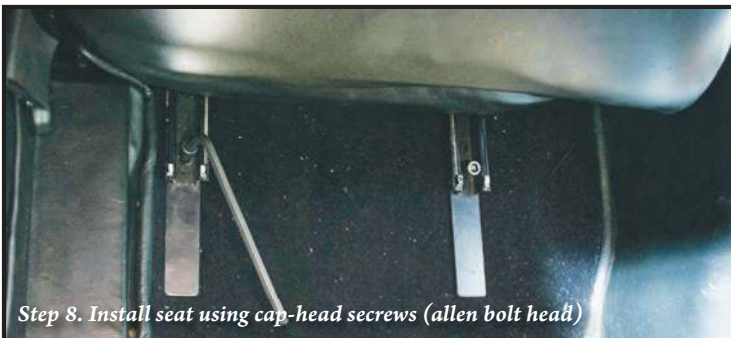
Step 4c. Mark on the cover the desired depth



Step 5. Drill new screw holes to accommodate the new cover height



Step 6. Mark the new seat belt mount hole position and enlarge as needed



Step 8. Install seat using cap-head screws (allen bolt head)



Step 9. Fill the seat location hole with silicone from the underside of your Morgan

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A NEW PLUS 4 FOR A NEW YOUNG OWNER IS NOW READY TO FLY

This Month we continue with the story of Alex Easten and the build and delivery of his unique Plus 4, "Hurricane". WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY Nigel Bradford

On Alex's last visit to the factory "Hurricane" his Plus 4 was sat in Final Finish, anything but finished. That day he couldn't stop grinning, as he knew he'd made the right decisions over the car's specifications. Her colour was just right, "Photo Recce Blue", and now he knew his tribute to Uncle Bertie was going to be just right. Ironically Hurricane's wings had yet to be re fitted after painting, so Alex was overjoyed when he found them hanging around the corner. (It was his idea to pose in front of them as if they were his own and he was about to unfurl them and take flight!)

Another idea, still requiring a little imagination, was to sit in the car's bare cockpit and imagine the long louvred bonnet stretching out in front, pointing the way to new adventures, as the bonnet panels were also waiting to be fitted. They were easy to locate nearby, as Alex had specified a bonnet scoop in tribute to the tropical air filter fitted to Bertie's Far Eastern mount. But at least Alex will now be able to visualise the 2 litre Ford unit working hard under the bonnet, when he's imagining it to be a Merlin.

Work and geography prevented Alex visiting the Factory again before completion as by the end of that ➤





week the car was completed, tested and had arrived at Williams. So it was on the following Monday that Alex and his Mum drove from the North East to the West Country for the Great Day.

Of all the days of our late summer this was the least suitable for Morgan driving, but it had already been decided that Williams' driver Grahame Turner would take the car to Alex's home. But of course Alex was going to have that first drive across the yard and onto the trailer.

As Alex and his Mum arrived the weather broke and the sun just started to peak through the angry clouds, almost certainly portending to sunny days ahead for "Wor Hurri".

"Oh Look at you!" exclaimed Alex as the doors of the showroom were opened by Lindon. His joy was palpable



and infectious. He walked around the car and then the handover process began with Lindon opening the bonnet to start the process off showing the new owner of what is where and how to do it. But this was a very special moment indeed, as inside the bonnet were the signatures of all who had contributed to the car's build. Alex was visibly moved, he had wondered if this might happen, but he had no idea that it had. He is very grateful to everyone who signed.

Next came the cockpit and controls. The car is wonderfully appointed in walnut and tan leather. The dark brown Moto Lita wheel tops it all off. Somewhat more luxurious than the cockpit of Bertie's Hurricane, it was easy to imagine the dashing Squadron Leader at the controls, far away from the dangers of the Burma





Campaign and the trials of a Japanese POW camp. Bertie will always be riding with Alex as his Squadron's motto has been subtly embroidered into a door lining. Looking at the all the wood, Alex was reminded of how he had once seen a film in which Charles Morgan had exclaimed that if anyone thought a Morgan was expensive, they should see how little metal you get attached to a piece of wood when you buy a shotgun from a bespoke gunmaker!

Climbing into the car Alex said, "It's beginning to feel like it's mine". Many Morgan owners will be able to identify with that feeling. But it happens at all sorts of different parts of the journey of ownership

As the car was being trailered to the North East, Alex had insisted that the thin white protective foam strips



stay on the car. So, in not quite delivery finish, Alex sat at the controls and started her up. As they slowly crossed the gravel yard towards the trailer it was noticeable how the white stripes resembled the recognition strips carried by allied aircraft during the Burma campaign. Alex drove the car up onto the trailer like a seasoned pro, the car was secured and the start of her journey was underway. Delivery went without a hitch and Hurricane now sits in her bespoke garage at Alex and his Wife's home. This is likely to be where she stays for a little while, as like Mogs, housing estates take time to finish and the road to Alex's house is not even out of the Trim Shop yet. But next summer we'll be seeing more of Our New Young Owner and his car! **MOG**





IN THE COCKPIT

Richard Davis

What Are You Driving?

It's a 1959 Plus Four, upgraded to SuperSports Specification.

The upgrade was initially done by Chris Lawrence in 1961 for Jim Banbury. Jim hill climbed and sprinted the car for three seasons !960, 61 and 62. So it has a well-documented history.

I bought it in 2006. A colleague saw my Morgan and told me that she had one in her garage, would I like it? I said yes... Having established that it really was a Morgan and not some kit car!

Wow, what sort of state was it in?

Her brother had put it in her garage around 1976. It had stood for about 30 years in a rather damp concrete sectional garage and had deteriorated an awful lot. I did nothing to it for around four years, then on good advice I sent it to Terry Foxen at G.E.E. He did all the chassis work

and straightened out the cross frame and axle and so the restoration was underway.

So it's not your first Morgan?

I bought a 1961 Series 3 with a push-me pull-you gear lever in 1975, but I had to sell that for the deposit when I moved house. Then in the early 80s, after we had two kids, I bought a Four Seater. We had enormous fun doing all sorts of Morgan events and various other things. But I'd always hankered after a Plus 8, so I managed to buy a 1986 one in 2003. I really enjoyed that and it lived alongside the Four Seater. It was OK having two Mogs, but when I bought this Plus 4 my wife said one of the other two had to go. I sold her beloved Four Seater, so I've never been forgiven!

Which is your favourite?

I don't know, it's like being asked which is your favourite child. The



Plus 8 is far better for long drives, but I enjoy the Plus 4 far more on track days. They are both very different cars, but both equally enjoyable overall.

What has been your favourite Morgan Moment?

Oh dear, I've had so many. But if I had to pick, it's just doing hill runs at Thrill on the Hill at Prescott and Shelsley and parade laps on the big circuits around the country.

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A



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C



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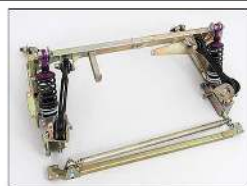
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MOG *Fleet*

CAIN POULTON

DAMP AND A LITTLE WET



Our day of rest started out damp and a little wet! The Met Office's forecast included weather warnings for heavy rain and possible flash flooding for what seemed to be the first day of Autumn this year, but it's our day to play... nothing was going to stop the Wolf Cafe Racer from having a country road blast through the Suffolk Countryside on our way to Monks Eleigh just south-ish of Lavenham. The destination was in honour and thanks for all the

volunteers that helped out over the Folk Mog's Victory Mog weekend. As with all these things not everyone was able to attend, unfortunately, but it was a good gathering mainly made up from FolkMog, AngleMog and FringeMog members.

As we headed out in the wind and light rain, determined to use as many twisty roads as possible, we headed out over the Cambridge Gog Magog hills (yes, we do have undulations in Cambridgeshire..... we are not the Fens ya' know!) for Fourwentways,

Linton and onto Haverhill where we said goodbye to Cambridgeshire and headed into Suffolk!

Even as we just "stepped" into Suffolk we were greeted with rural idylls, with their ubiquitous village greens and chocolate box cottages meandering along our definitely twisty route. A route that lead us through New England. That is actually on the A1017 and not in the USA. To Baythorne End (it did not stop!) then turning left onto the A1092 heading for Stoke by Clare



and then Clare (mental note made: to stop in Clare and have a good nose around when not in a hurry).

As we kept on our twisty journey we came to Long Melford yet another idyllic village with two halls. At this point the Hobbit made a noise as we passed the one called Kentwell Hall, I was thinking she was wasting away with the lack of food; as I had not seen her hide a second breakfast in the Wolf Café Racer, but no. She decided to reminisce of visiting Kentwell Hall when she was

at primary school (just a few years ago, me thinks!) while learning about the Tudors and having chance to wear her nettle-dyed costumes that her and her class-mates had made.

Luckily we swiftly arrived at Lavenham, so to stop the mutterings of "Cake" from the Co-Drivers seat, we pulled up outside the Lavenham Guildhall as the skies broke and the rain subsided, to take some atmospheric photos of the Café Racer. We met some fellow Lavenham sightseers who were just

as interested in the 'Ye Olde Morgan' as in the Ye Olde Guildhall. Not to miss the opportunity of a good photo the Racer's door was opened and the invite to have a sit was extended, it was taken up like little kids whining to Mum, for a ride on a "Hahs Gaited Mechanical Horse" outside a Supermarket!

Some of you will recognise Lavenham's Market Square from the Film 'Witchfinder General' with Vincent Price in the lead role, along with more recent magical film like



Harry Potter and Deadly Hallows Part One and Two. Lavenham was also the setting for John & Yoko's Lennon 1970 film 'Apotheosis'. Now for those that love well directed drama's you may recognise Lavenham from the world famous "Last Tango in Lavenham" the final episode of the lovable Antiques rouge Lovejoy, broadcast in the December 1994.

One last ode and not to be outdone by legendary Cornish smuggling rings, the infamous Welsh Marijuana smuggler Howard Marks was arrested in the bar of the Swan Hotel Lavenham. There is a film called "Mr Nice" starring Rhys Ifans about his life but it wasn't shot in Lavenham!

What can My Lady and I say about Lavenham, other than "it is said to be the best example of a medieval wool town in England", and that it is me' duck! (said in a thick Suffolk accent) and no wonder why Lavenham is featured in many a Film or TV drama.

With the sound of the Hobbit's tummy rumbling in the cockpit and the hands of the clock getting

closer to our appointment with The FolkMog Crew, we headed off towards our final destination, Monks Eleigh Village hall and lunch. The Wolf Cafe Racer took her place as honorary Gate Guard at the mouth of the gravel car park with a glorious green 4-seater.

As we entered the hall the Met Office's forecast of prevailing wind and rain hit with vengeance. Inside the Village Hall the Hobbit found

sandwiches, nibbles, tea and Cake and all was well with the world.

It was still wet, windy and grey for the journey home as the day slipped away the onset of the autumnal twilight, we prepared for the journey home removing the Cibie Spot Light covers and with lights on we headed off into the twilight with the Hobbit's secret stash of cakes carefully stored and ready for second afternoon tea! **MOG**



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PHIL ROYLE

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My dream garage

Like many of us who are of a mature age, we no longer have to take our holidays during the school breaks and enjoy the very reasonable prices on offer outside of the peak holiday times. Over the past few years we have enjoyed fantastic weather around the end of September or early October. This year, we decided to go to Stratford upon Avon which is almost on our doorstep but somewhere I had never been.

We booked a small cottage about three miles outside Stratford (it was

actually a converted Cow Pen) which was very comfortable, a bargain at this time of year, had secure parking and convenient for the Park & Ride. However, as the holiday approached the weather forecast looked like something from the Biblical book of Revelation and so we decided to leave the Mog at home and go in the Fiesta. This was a wise decision as there were several torrential downpours and flooded roads which would have meant soggy bottoms had we been in the Morgan.

We visited several National Trust

sites which were very enjoyable and made good use of the catering facilities there as food is generally very good and wholesome, plus, as a volunteer for the NT I have the added bonus of 20% discount in the shops and cafes.

Our first port of call in Stratford itself was the MAD museum which is a brilliant exhibition of automata and marble runs etc. Although very small in area it is well laid out, largely interactive and entertains all ages for well over an hour. If in Stratford – GO!!



I'd settle for just one of these



or these



I'll have this one

Apparently, there was a resident of the town who wrote a few plays and poems – I think his best-known one is the screenplay for the animation film *Gnomeo and Juliet*. However, whilst we were there, we visited all the sites associated with him :- Shakespeare's birthplace, his grave, his house, his mother's house, his daughter's house, his wife's house – I think you get the drift. There was his school, his pub, his Public Convenience (to pee, or not to pee?), his Starbucks and his chippy where Liz had to restrain me from going in

and ordering "Fry Cod for Harry, England and St. George!". We saw his arboretum (once more unto the beech) and were disappointed that at his wife's house, in the café, they did not serve Anne Hathaway's pottage. Mary Arden's Farm was a great place to visit and showed Tudor life as it would have been lived and included a falconry display in the barn with a beautiful Eagle Owl called Bella who was magnificent (I know owls are not falcons – but they can bring down sizeable edible animals including small deer).

We visited Warwick Castle which was half price for English Heritage members so the entrance fee became within our financial limit. It was an excellent day out and had a wide variety of displays and exhibitions. It had withstood the assault of various armies over the centuries but up until about 3pm seemed to have been overrun by school parties – alas, poor Warwick!

During the whole trip I sighted not a single Morgan or any other classic car which made me ponder "Wherefore Alfa Romeo?"





You're Bard!



Arm candy - what a beautiful bird!

Now I shall finish writing here
About the playwright named
Shakespeare

And stop these puns before you
curse, hat I have gone from Bard to
verse.

Meanwhile back home and Megan went in to the local garage for service and MOT. During the check-over it was decided that as work had been done in the Summer, she did not a full service and so it was a grease, nuts & bolts tighten top up fluids and MOT which she passed with flying colours. There was a post-it note that I might like to think about new windscreen wipers – however

I explained that I had put new ones on the day before and that wipers on a Morgan did not clear the screen but merely redistribute the water. While she was up on the ramp, I had brought in a couple of cans of chain wax which were sprayed liberally over the leaf springs in the hope that it may protect over the winter. I'll let you know how it has worked in the Spring (on the springs).

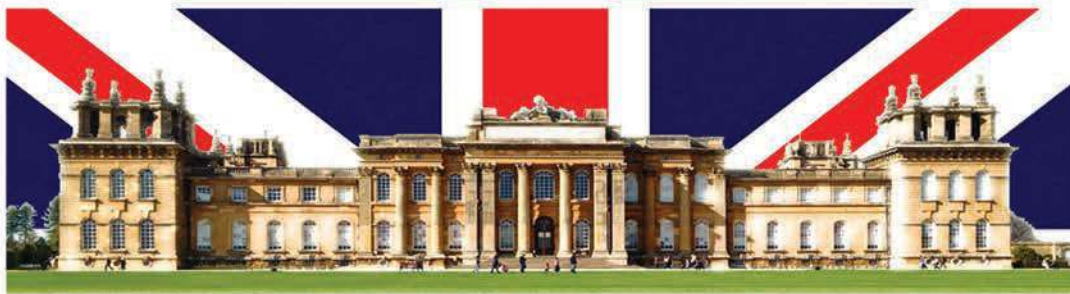
A few of us from our local MSCC centre visited one of our members who has a collection of motorbikes. When we arrived, the garage doors were open to reveal a very early Morgan Flat Rad Drop Head coupe

which was immaculate, a Morgan 3 wheeler, a space where another three wheeler lived but was out for repair, a couple of racing bikes – used regularly by Pat and his wife Ann – a motorbike and sidecar, plus a few other bikes of various ages and stages of repair housed under a large shelf. Most of us assumed that this was the collection and were impressed that one couple had such a great garage full of wonderful machinery. After coffee, we were told that the garage was merely the overflow and that the collection was in another building which we entered to be amazed by a collection of thirty or more motorbikes of various ages and marques. We were told that it was probably the largest collection of Dot motorbikes in the country and possibly in the world. It was a fascinating visit and Pat and Ann were both very knowledgeable and had a great passion for not only restoring these bikes, but taking them out and using them on road and on track whenever possible. It amazed us to learn that Pat was approaching his 80th birthday and he and Ann are still going all over the place in his Morgans and racing motorbikes. They are my heroes and an example to us all as we find ourselves gaining in years. Growing old is inevitable, but growing up is optional – long may we all continue to enjoy our passions.

We then headed off to the Cock Inn for a very good lunch. A perfect trip should conclude with food.

That's it for now – off to go through the paperwork for the Classic Motor Show at the NEC, which will probably be in full swing when this arrives in your hot little hands. **MOG**

ALL MORGANS' DAY



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Parking spaces inside the Great Court are now SOLD OUT however plenty of spaces in the surrounding grounds and drives are still available.

A minimum donation of £5 secures a Parking Place around the Palace Grounds and Drives.

A heavily reduced Blenheim Palace entrance fee is being negotiated for everyone arriving in a Morgan, pre booking required, details will be published nearer the event time.

The event will include: exhibitor representations by The Morgan Motor Company and the Morgan Sports Car Club, plus a number of other interesting Trade Stands.

Pre registered Morgans will receive a Commemorative Rally Plaque kindly sponsored by Insurers Gott & Wynne.

A 2020 AMD car badge and associated merchandise will be available and released nearer the event date.

Gates will open at 8:30am

To book, please contact Rosemary on: 07935 708190 or email allmorgansblenheim@gmail.com

Further news on All Morgans' Day may also be found at:

www.facebook.com/allmorgansday and www.twitter.com/blenheimmorgans



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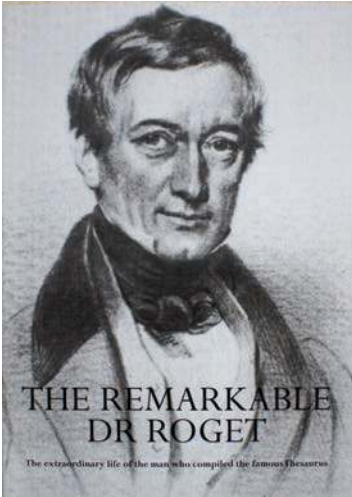
Over these past 18 months of contributing articles to MOG Magazine we have written about several well known and historic persons who have graced Malvern (the home of Morgan motoring) with their presence... the list is impressive, particularly for a relatively small town, and includes of note Sir Edward Elgar, Charles Darwin, CS Lewis, Charles Dickens, Florence Nightingale, and George Bernard Shaw. We have yet to mention Walter de la Mare, Algernon Charles Swinburne, William Wordsworth, and Wilfred Gibson - all visitors to West Malvern, albeit all now deceased. The living exception is the violinist Nigel

Kennedy who was a near neighbour of ours in West Malvern for several years, and whilst we might return to these famous writers and musicians, our focus in this article is Dr Roget, compiler of the famous Thesaurus of which most readers will be familiar... indeed probably have a copy on their bookshelves...but of the compiler much less is known. It is time to put that right.

On Saturday the 14th September Chris and I attended a talk in the village church of West Malvern, St James's, commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the death of Dr Roget, who is buried in the churchyard here. It coincided with the church having a Flower Festival

over the weekend, it was a lovely late sunny summer day, and off we set in MOG 3W. Local historian Colin Jackson delivered the talk entitled "The Good Doctor", and we were treated to an informative insight into the life and times of Dr Roget, about whom we knew little.

I am always interested in what seem like surprising twists of fate. When we lived in West Malvern we enjoyed many a good evening in the village pub - The Brewers Arms, where Nigel Kennedy would from time to time make an appearance, and if we were lucky, would arrive with a violin under his arm, and sometimes accompanied by other well known musician friends from



the world of popular music. Chris and I recall fond memories of a stunning concert Nigel did, free of charge, in this same St James's church to raise funds to refurbish the village pub which had been badly damaged in a fire. There, lying buried in the churchyard, is Dr Roget ! When Roget stayed in West Malvern he did so at Ashfield House, 225 West Malvern Road. We lived at 220 West Malvern Road for a number of years ...life's little serendipities !

Dr Roget was born in London on the 18th January 1779, and died aged 90 on the 12th September 1869 following short illness whilst on one of his regular visits to West Malvern. He married Mary Hobson in 1824,

Roget being 45 and Mary 16 years his junior. They had two children (Catherine was born in 1825, and son John followed in 1828) prior to Mary's death just nine years later, it is said from cancer. Roget never remarried. Catherine, who cared for her father during his latter years, is buried with her father upon her own death in 1905. His grave, marked by a large granite slab, curiously lies north/south in contrast to all the other graves in the cemetery. The grave was suitably decorated with fresh flowers to commemorate the anniversary of the Good Doctors death.

Peter Mark Roget was a physician, natural theologian, and lexicographer, but today is best known for

publishing his "Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases" in 1852, when he was aged 73.

Exploring possible links between Dr Roget and the Morgan family must be a tenuous task. HFS Morgan was born in August 1881, some 12 years after the death of Dr Roget. Henry's father, Rev George Morgan, was born in 1852, some 17 years before the death of Roget, who we know was a religious man. However, to think that their paths might have crossed whilst Roget was visiting Malvern would be speculative, especially bearing in mind that there were no Morgans around at the time...or indeed any motorised vehicles ! Stoke Lacy would have seemed (and was) a significant distance from Malvern if travelling by horse and carriage as one would have had to do then, albeit the age of steam was just beginning.

The first steam locomotive to haul passengers on a public railway was, as most of us know, built by George Stephenson and his son George. This was on the Stockton and Darlington Railway in 1825. It was not until the 22nd October 1877 that the Great Western Railway Company opened the line from Worcester to Bromyard. However the line between Worcester to Malvern was opened on 17th May 1860, and the line was extended to link Hereford, Malvern, and Worcester with Oxford, London and beyond on the 17th September 1861, making it conceivably possible that Dr Roget could, in his latter years, have travelled to Malvern by train.

Like HFS Morgan, Roget's father was also a pastor, his father being of the French Protestant Church, part of the Huguenot community in ➤



London. Sadly Roget's father died when Roget was a young boy, aged just 4. At the age of 14 Roget enrolled to study medicine in Edinburgh, graduating at 19 having delivered his thesis in Latin. In 1802 Roget set out for the "Grand Tour of Europe" as was the thing to do then...and this was not without its adventures and dangers ! In 1814 Roget invented the forerunner to the slide rule... he went on to publish academic papers on a whole range of topics, and contributed over 300,000 words to the Encyclopaedia Britannica... all in the days before typewriters - a truly monumental effort ! He spoke many languages, in addition to English and French he was fluent in

Latin and Greek, and later mastered German and Italian. He was a learned member of numerous academic institutions of the time, gaining numerous letters after his name, not all of which he used. He was a brilliant chess wizard, and in 1840 published a paper having worked out how to move the Knight over every square on the board without going over the same square twice, and invented the first travelling chess set. He was (almost) the "Father of the Movies" having worked on the principle of creating an illusion of movement by using a rapid series of still images "frames". He worked on designing a new and cleaner sewage and water system for London at



the request of King George IV, and had previously been called upon to investigate a mysterious outbreak of illness amongst the 400 prisoners at the then new Millbank Penitentiary, where the Tate Gallery is sited today. During his life he built up a huge library of books - more than 4,000, of which 1,000 or so were in French. Shortly following his death the whole collection went to auction but fetched less than £200. His collection of over 50 books on chess went for less than £5.

Since being a young boy, Roget was known for his lists. He continued throughout his life to compile lists of words and phrases according to the ideas they represented, but it was not until he was in his seventies that he began to expand this work into his famous Thesaurus..."The Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases, Classified and Arranged so as to Facilitate the Expressions of Ideas and Assist in Literary Composition". The work was an immediate success, and Roget personally supervised 25 editions and printings and was still working on expanding the collection upon his death some 17 years later. Roget's son John Lewis Roget continued as editor, followed by his son Samuel Romilly Roget who then sold the family rights to Longman Press in 1950. Still in print today, sales exceed one million !

Roget, when aged 80, wrote the following:

"Time wastes us all, our bodies and our wits

But we waste time, so Time and we are quits"

No one could accuse Peter Mark Roget of having wasted his ninety years on earth ! **MOG**

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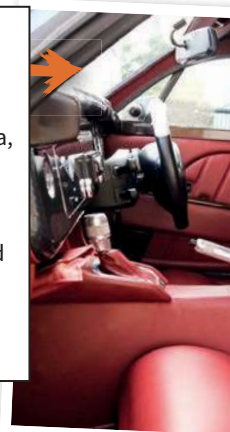
PITCH PROWLER

There was a time when if a stranger were to ask me what my favourite car was, I would have probably replied with all the solemnity an eight year old can muster; the Batmobile.

Now, that might seem off topic, why bring up a fictional vehicle that has gone from groovy bubble-top, through sleek sinuous roadster, and arrived (somehow) at full on tank - when I'm here to talk about a breathtakingly British piece of automotive theatre? It's because I cannot look at this month's subject, a rare Aeromax, without thinking; 'That's the Batmobile.'

Where the Aero 8 might have seen Morgan's first new design since the 60s, it was the Aeromax that saw the company truly engage in the world of modern automotive design and luxury. One of only a hundred made, this particular specimen is a credit to that oh so exclusive production run - with only one owner from new and a scant 2800 miles on the clock, travel back in time with this second chance for the Aeromax.

In a selective aesthetic that takes the clean lines of the Aero 8 and makes them pure Gotham drama, with a gunmetal metallic grey exterior encasing a mulberry leather interior with burbinga wood - and dare I say there's a touch of Adam West in that particular colour palette?



The baby of former Morgan Motor Company CEO, Charles Morgan, the original prototype was an exclusive project created for this story's very own Bruce Wayne - Prince Eric Sturdza, an avid car collector and Morgan enthusiast, it was his love of the Morgan brand and style that saw lit the fire underneath the company's progression into modern motor design.

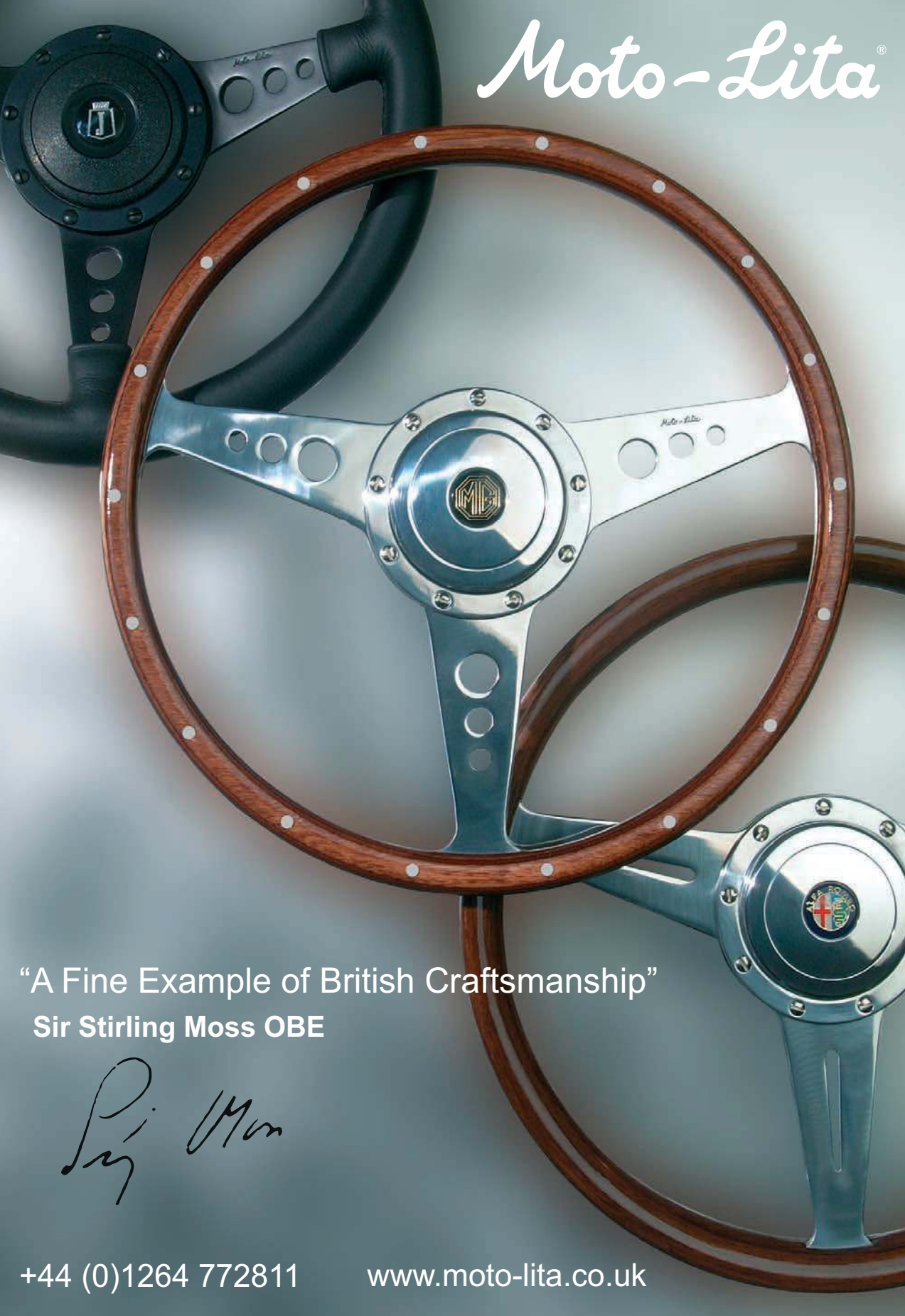


Whilst I could obviously list every little technical detail that the skilled designers at Morgan put together to make the definitive Aero, I think that pictures truly paint a thousand words here, just as it would on any public road - take to the streets in a car that was built from the ground up to fulfil a fantasy. And whether than fantasy is the royal idea of the perfect British sports car, or just my idea for feeling like a caped crusader - there is no question that this beauty is here to inspire and delight. This isn't just a car, to my mind this is the perfect example of what the Morgan Motor Company is all about - and what the Morgan ownership experience should be, a little bit of drama, a whole lot of car, and a never ending joy to hit the road.



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If you would also like to be Batman (I know it's not just me) you can take this beauty back to the Batcave - simply contact the team at London Morgan on 020 7244 7323 to find out more today, or see more details at www.londonmorgan.co.uk



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AVIATION LEATHERCRAFT

Part of the famous British steering wheel manufacturer, Moto-Lita, this producer of premium leather handmade British jackets will fly you to a bygone age!

WORDS Travis Blake

When I was young, well, when I was younger, a good Mate of ours, we'll call him Dave for the purpose of this article, owned a Triumph Spitfire. Dave's Spitfire was the envy of many a young buck, add to this that Dave was also the figure of many a young belle's desire, due to his Spitfire I suspect, and you can see that our Dave was quite the boy about town. As for me, I'm not a particular fan of the Triumph Spitfire, I prefer the more grown up Stag, but there was one thing that Dave had that I,

like the other young pretenders, coveted and that was his leather jacket. Dave's jacket was not an ordinary leather jacket, sixty quid from Blackbushe Airport Market, nor was it a designer piece from the finest Italian houses; Dave's leather jacket was a World War Two pilot's jacket. Yes, Dave had an original Irvin RAF Sheepskin Flying Jacket!

Looking back, obviously Dave's jacket was an amazing piece of history in itself but I'm not sure any of us were really that aware of the importance of this amazing item ➤





of clothing and I don't know if Dave still has the jacket in his possession. Back then of course you couldn't simply buy an Irvin jacket, there were no retail outlets, no internet connecting us to purveyors of anything you can think of, in fact the Irvin jacket as a new piece of clothing, we thought, did not exist!

Created by Leslie Leroy Irvin, who was already a big light in the aviation world having invented, patented and manufactured the parachute rip cord system, and clearly a pilot's favourite as his invention was a lifesaver, the Irvin sheepskin flying jacket was a design classic. Irvin had set up Irvin Air Shute in 1919, a company that manufactured parachutes for the United States Government. Aviation was having something of a purple patch in this period with innovation and development creating serious gains in the abilities of aircraft performance and as a result aeroplanes were flying at higher altitudes than ever before. As we all know the higher the altitude the colder the temperature becomes and the colder the crew become, which can have some serious, potentially catastrophic, outcomes. Leslie Irvin was very aware of the effects of plummeting

temperatures due to altitude and uninsulated cockpits being experienced by pilots and crews of military aircraft approaching the beginning of the Second World War. To enable the pilots and crews to continue to reach the heights Irvin developed what was to become the Irvin RAF Sheepskin Flying Jacket.

In 1926 Irvin Air Shute setup a factory in Letchworth, Hertfordshire, as the company had become the biggest parachute manufacturer in the world and was supplying forty five countries including Germany. The jackets were also manufactured at the Letchworth factory and supplied to the RAF in the Battle of Britain and throughout the majority of World War Two. Made using the finest quality heavyweight sheepskin, as the wool creates superb insulation and although the skin and wool were thick the jacket overall was light and very comfortable to wear. It was very important that the skin of the jacket was easy to move about in and not stiff in anyway as the inside of these fighter and bomber planes were cramped spaces so being able to have unrestricted movement was vital, especially on longer operations. The Irvin jacket really is a design masterpiece that gave ➤





ultimate warmth, comfort and flexibility all in one, now iconic, piece of clothing.

Designed with long fitting sleeves complete with zip opening so that gauntlet style gloves could be worn, the jacket featured a wide wool lined collar that could be fastened around the neck and lower head and also had a belt fitted to the waist to provide warmth and maintain the wearer's body temperature. The jacket proved to be

very very popular indeed, so much so that the company had to outsource some of the production to other manufacturers in order to keep up with the demand and fulfil the number of jackets that were required. This outsourcing resulted in there being some deviation from the standard jacket and variations in design. Of course there was a war in progress and therefore, certain levels of improvisation were required from time to time! ➤



Spitfire 1500 brochure





After the Second World War production of the Irvin RAF Sheepskin Flying Jacket reduced as demand for this high quality piece of clothing rapidly declined and ultimately production stopped. There has always been a cult following for the Irvin jacket and this helped keep some second-hand ones in circulation which came up for sale from time to time, but as the years passed good examples became increasingly difficult to obtain.

Simon Green, a man you may have heard of or know of the British steering wheel manufacturing company that he formed in 1958 a certain Moto-Lita, is a qualified and enthusiastic pilot. Simon concluded having seen photos and films of pilots and magnificent men in their Irvin flying jackets that this was the look for him, for practical as well as sartorial reasons. However, there was a problem or perhaps an opportunity? Yes, you've guessed it, there was very limited availability it was difficult to buy a good Irvin Sheepskin Flying Jacket at that time.

Being the entrepreneurial type Simon decided, after some considerable research, including help from the RAF museum at Hendon to make his own Irvin style sheepskin flying jacket. The results of this endeavour

were very pleasing, and his creation proved to be very comfortable, exceptionally warm and just right for taking to the skies. Simon Green was contacted by one of Irvin's original subcontractors who supplied some patterns and original machinery used to produce the jackets, and the Irvin company approved the use of the Irvin name. Today Aviation Leathercraft is proud owner of the Irvin trademark, which is sewn into each jacket as a mark of authenticity.

This "new" Irvin style flying jacket was proving to be a hit and soon friends and associates began to ask if they too could have a jacket made. Simon started to accept orders and soon the demand grew sufficiently for Aviation Leathercraft to be established. As the supply of original World War Two jackets continued to reduce the demand for the new jackets continued to increase. The craftsmen and women at Aviation Leathercraft soon became very busy maintaining production to meet demand from flyers, bikers, motorist and others who wanted a high quality handmade British sheepskin flying jacket. Soon word was spreading about these excellent pieces of clothing and then one of Her Majesty's Royal Air Force



Squadrons came knocking, wanting Simon to design a leather flying jacket just for them. The Company has since gone on to deliver several bespoke commissions for many Military groups including the Red Arrows and of course the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

Today Aviation Leathercraft not only manufacture the, as close as you will get, original Irvin RAF Sheepskin flying jacket, but also a variety of other leather flying and pilots jackets along with gilets and trousers, all suitable for flying and indeed open top driving or whatever you may choose to wear them for. The company's products are absolutely top quality with an excellent attention to detail that you would expect from an independent British manufacturer. To find out more and see how you can keep warm and stylish while looking for the sky's limits, check out Aviation Leathercraft's website or give them a call directly, details below. **MOG**

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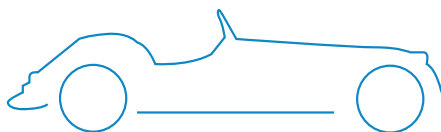
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Life



ULTIMATE MOG DOG

Readers will know we love to put a Mog Dog of the Month on this page. Well this month, courtesy of Morgan Motor Company we are proud to bring you the premier Mog Dog picture, taken as Peter Morgan left the Pickersleigh Road Factory in his Plus 8.

But please don't try this at home, as these days Rule 57 of the Highway Code states: "When in a vehicle make sure dogs or other animals are suitably restrained so they cannot distract you while you are driving or injure you, or themselves, if you stop quickly. A seat belt harness, pet carrier, dog cage or dog guard are ways of restraining animals in cars." Oh to live in happier times, when a dog could be your co driver.



SOMEWHERE TO PUT YOUR MUG

During the 1980s all decent, top of the range hot hatch, and XR3is had big rear spoilers. These accessories were often referred to as Mechanic's coffee tables. Recently spied at the MG meeting at Snetterton was this enormous aluminium slab. Clearly with some marques the joke has become reality.

In the factory and beyond



BONFIRE OF INSANITY

A cutting found in Peter Morgan's own scrapbook from 1960 is possibly even more shocking to modern eyes than it was almost 60 years ago. Could this really be members of the same Morgan 3 Wheeler Club that we know and love today? Did they actually burn the car, or is this a nasty early example of fake news? Here at MOG towers we are shocked at the barbarity of these Lancastrian folk. If any reader has any more information about this black moment in history we'd love to hear from them.



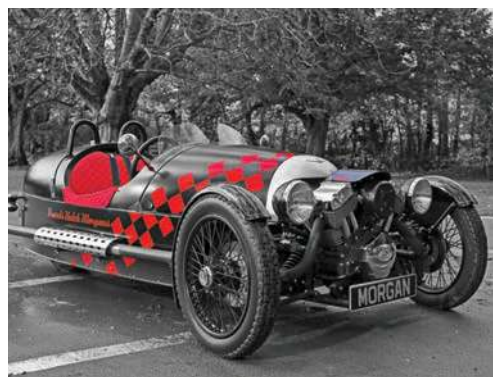
MANCHESTER'S FINEST

Celebrating his championship win driving his Club Sport in this year's Morgan Challenge with a bottle of, in his own words, "Manchester's Finest" Tony Hirst avoided the temptation of a Formula 1 style bottle shake. Well it might play havoc with that white suit! Seriously though, it was great to see the championship taken by a Morgan Works Team Driver.

LEST WE FORGET

Snetterton Circuit's former history as RAF Snetterton Heath, home to aircraft of the USAAF 3 Bombardment Group during the Second World War is commemorated by a stunning memorial by the main entrance. On the day of the final meeting of the Morgan Challenge it looked particularly splendid in the early autumn sunshine.





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