

SIXTY YEARS OF THE MORGAN PLUS 4 CLUB PART 1



Left to Right: Stan Weinreich, Rudy Cley, Norm Hotchin, Regi Parsons, Curt Warshawsky, Gene, Mc Crary and Dare Miller. Photo taken December 1955 at the first Holiday Dinner.

This story of the Morgan Plus 4 Club of Southern California is written after reading sixty year old mimeographed copies of Morgan Plus 4 Club Formats. It is intended for enjoyment and may not have every historical event documented correctly. However, I hope you will enjoy reading about our Club History. Carolyn Klein

Hats off to the first decade of Club leaders; Presidents were Curt Warshawsky 1956, Norm Hotchin 1957 Chuck Talbot 1958, Chuck Teed 1959, Bill Becker 1960, Bob Hamilton 1961, Jim Bramble 1962, Roger Slowi 1963, Mike Evans 1964, and Chuck Mc Reynolds 1965.

The Format covers were hand drawn sketches of various Morgans as well as pictures of particular driving events or seasonal holidays. The first “unofficially unnamed and unstaffed newsletter”, The Morgan Plus 4 Format was published in October 1955, with a points policy recorded in May 1956 and the first elections November 12, 1956. The first Club Badge was \$10.00. There was an immediate tradition of a monthly Rallye which generally began in the Westwood section of Los Angeles. Worldwide Imports had tech sessions, with hands on mechanic work sessions for club members. Racing reports included the successes of, Bob Oker, Bob Bondurant and Lew Spencer.



Bob Oker racing in his Plus 4 in 1958.

Commencing with the December 1956 issue of the Format, it was noted it is now the “officially named” title of the monthly Club newsletter. Of note, this issue included a list of all Charter Members including Al Gebhard of San Pedro. Also included were Rallye articles for each month and a mention of one driver, a “feisty” Mollie Palmer (Miller).

Snoopy began in July of 1957, sharing club social news of marriage, babies, travel, and assorted ‘club gossip’. Each month had a short article about a club member and their interests. Tech tips were written to give mechanical instruction of keeping the Morgan running. The Morgan Plus 4 Club of Northern California regularly submitted news events for their Club.

In 1958, the tradition of the Sky Ranch tour in the Sierras began; where the Northern and Southern California Morgan Clubs shared a festive weekend. In September 1958, the Club Concours was held at the Long Beach Veteran Hospital.

British news was also covered, in the November 1958 Format, Peter Morgan took over leadership of the Morgan Factory when George Goodall retired. It was reported on June 15, 1959, that Mr. HFS Morgan died and his memorial service was held at Stoke Lacey Church, where perhaps some of you have visited.

By 1959, the traditional Rallye was recorded monthly and two tours were scheduled; with Sky Ranch and Monterey for car racing noted. In October 1959, Club minutes were printed in Format for Club Members who could not attend, and in November 1959, the Club By-Laws were included. As noted, the Club Roster printed in November had 71 members and the Holiday Dinner was \$4.25.

The location of the Club meeting was the Blarney Castle initially, until 1960, when the club moved to the Grand Prix Restaurant, and in 1962, meetings moved to the Cameo Room on Sunset Blvd. The Club meeting moved again in 1963, to the Kelbos Restaurant on Fairfax Avenue across the street from the Farmers Market. In 1964, the meetings were held at the Cockney Red Lion in Burbank, and July 1964 Pike’s Glen Oaks in Glendale.

The Morgan Club member participation was enthusiastic initially, and by 1962, an editorial noted club members had decreased participation and notes of encouraging attendance to make Club events successful were printed.

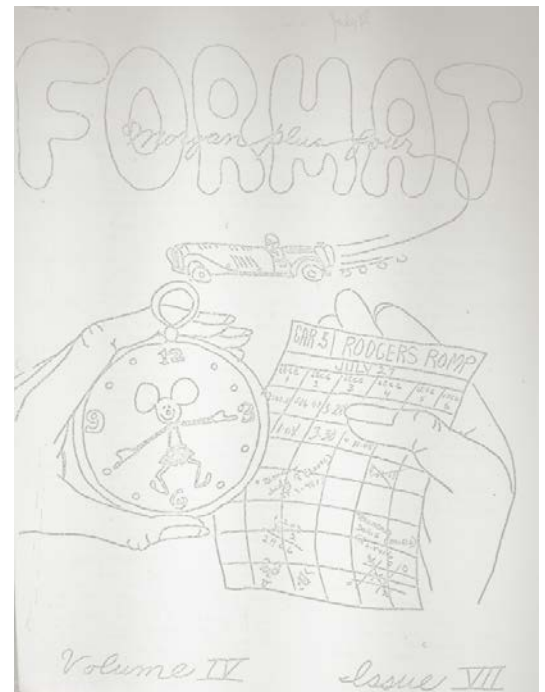
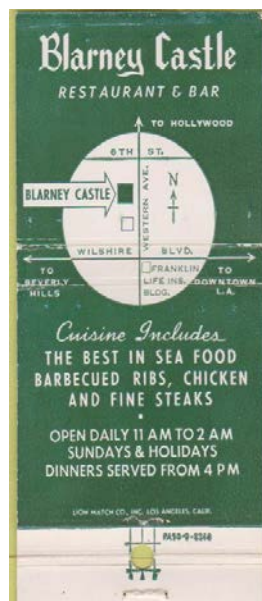
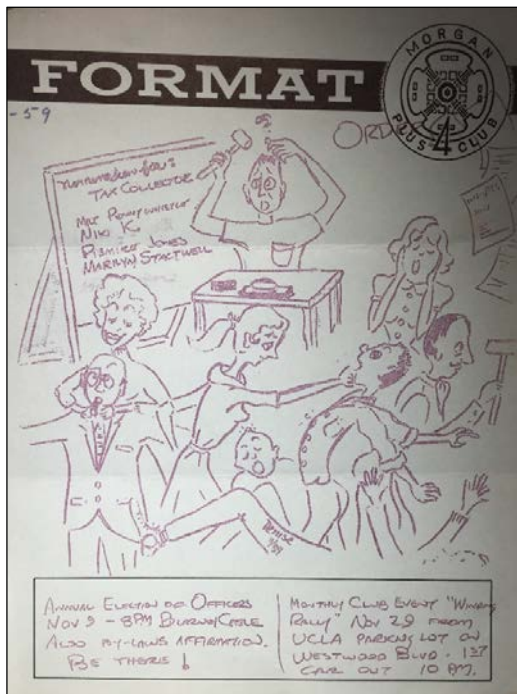
The Club Rallye tradition remained intact with a Head Rallye Master Chairmanship voted on in 1962 to 'guide and assist with Club Rallye routes'. It seems as though the rallye was considered a success if members would get lost in route. In 1960, there was printed a series on Rallye Navigation instructions, including an article on basic procedure for using Circular slide rule for Rallye assistance!

In Jan 1965 The Crow tradition was initially awarded at the Holiday/Christmas Dinner. The Format cost was \$5.00 along with Derek Willburn's birth announcement that year.

Racing enthusiasm continued with SCCSCC Slalom So Calif Council formation with 31 members. The Club Concours was at the Ambassador Hotel that year. June 1965, Club members voted on Membership definition of Regular, Auxiliary and Associate Member and Cub privileges.

An amusing Morgan poem I found was printed in the Nov 1964 Format

*My Morgan is my automobile, I shall not want another
It maketh me lie own in wet places
It soileth my soul
It leadeth me into deep waters
It leadeth me into the paths of ridicule for its name's sake
It prepareth a breakdown for me in the presence of mine enemies
Yea, though I run through the valleys,
I fear much evil while it is with me
It anoineth my face with oil
And its radiator boileth over
Surely to goodness the darned thing
Won't follow me all the days of my life
Or I will dwell in the house of the insane forever.*



Pictures from Michael Hattem