

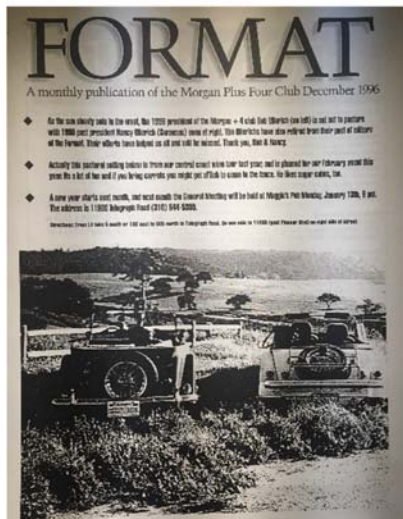
SIXTY YEARS OF THE MORGAN PLUS 4 CLUB PART 5

This story of the Morgan Plus 4 Club of Southern California is written after reading 20-year-old 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

The last half of the 1990's had too many tragedies to report, from the bombing at the Oklahoma Murrah Federal Building, the Atlanta Olympic incident and Columbine school tragedy in Colorado. Fortunately, there was fun entertainment to recall, James Bond Golden Eye, 1995, Titanic, 1997, and the first Harry Potter book came out in 1998. The best sporting news was Dale Earnhardt's win at the Daytona 500, after 20-years of competition, as well as the US Women Soccer team winning the World Cup in 1999.

The Morgan Club was led by President Bob Ullerich in 1996. General meetings were at the Me N Ed's Pizza in Lakewood. As usual, the Club outings included the Petersen Museum, a wine tour, the VARA races at Buttonwillow, the Highland Games, a Palos Verdes Tour, and of course MogWest in July and the Historic Vintage Races at Laguna Seca in August.

Definitely, the best item reviewed was the Final Thoughts from the Format Editor, as Nancy Ullerich summarized her eight years of Morgan Club and Format memories as editor. There were thanks to all the contributions for Cover Art, Doug Taber's great creative flyers (Aug 91, 93, 95). Nancy highlighted the Minutes printed in the Format, which was the reason the Club publication exists, and the Technical articles giving sound advice – Morgan Staines July 1989 'Safety Equipment You May Have Overlooked' along with Gerry Willburn's 'Technically Speaking' was published for five years. Other recognition went to Snoopy, Morgan Mart, Swap Shop, Competition Corner and the Mc Naughton's travel articles, all which made the Format a fabulous publication.



The Christmas Holiday dinner was celebrated at Sam's Sea Food in Huntington Beach.

Thanks to Randy Robertson for his leadership as President for 1997. The Morgan Club general meeting location was rotated between Maggie's Pub and Tom Bergin's Pub, so Club members could drive a British car and eat a hearty British meal and enjoy a tankard of ale.

The Morgan outings repeated the cycle of great events enjoying the Petersen Museum, a Central Coast Wine tour, Buttonwillow British Extravaganza, the Highland Games, MogWest and the Monterey Races. There was a great tour of Planes Trains and Morgans in the spring, and a fall road Rallye driving 38 miles from the Santa Monica Mountains to Malibu Canyon. Those great curvy roads made for a great Morgan Road Rallye. There was the Los Angeles Vintage Race, driving the streets of downtown Los Angeles with some metal bending twists and turns that some of the hardest Morgan Drivers will not forget. It is also with profound sadness that John and Bridget Leavens were fatally injured in a single auto accident, in their 39 Trike, on an Angeles Forest Highway on Sunday November 2, 1997.

This year on Oct 25/26, the BIG BLUE factory Morgan racing team took their Plus 8 out on the track. It raced Sebring, Florida with numerous problems, faulty fuel injector issues. The car raced only two laps

due to rear end issues, despite strong engine and transmission functioning, yet little power was reaching the rear wheels. Lap time 1:29 with average 90.5 mph and that's a FAST Morgan. Big Blue was also seen racing at Laguna Seca Raceway in Monterey that year.

The Morgan Club concluded its year end celebration at the Lakewood Country Club.

One of our present active member's J Dale Barry was the President of the Club in 1998, along with being Format editor, what a car enthusiast! The Morgan Club met at Maggie's Pub for the general meetings. Needless to say the Club started off with a Petersen Museum tour, then off to San Diego, Temecula and Antelope Valley Poppy Festival. The summer brought the annual Buttonwillow races, MogWest and Monterey races. There was a Morgan across America tour and Pebble Beach Concours was fortunate to have a Morgan from Bob Schmidt on display, and Adrian van der Kroft, from Holland race is SLR Morgan at Laguna Seca. Articles of interest to read this year included Randy and Dolores Wilson's tour of England, France, Belgium and Scotland, and the Visalia Vintage Motor Speed Festival on July 4th & 5th. In addition, there were Morgan technical articles to keep your car running well, and book review of "Morgan Sports Car the Early Years" by J. D. Alderson and Chris Chapman. The Long Beach Yacht Club was the venue for the December festivities.

For 1999, President, Nancy Ullerich enjoyed her term and gave us some fine memories. 1999 was the year of the glorious 90th anniversary of the Morgan Motor Company. There were tours of the Nethercutt, the Petersen and the American Military Museum during the year. Morgans gathered at the Queen Mary, racing at Speed Zone, and British Wheels and Wings at the Santa Monica Airport, and tour of the Angeles National Forest to Lake Castaic. The Morgan racers competed at Buttonwillow, Monterey Historic Races and there was the Annual gathering at MogWest.

It was a remarkable August with some not to miss events for all of us who love Morgans and the opportunity to celebrate our car with Peter Morgan himself. On Tuesday, August 24, The Morgan Club hosted a 'gala evening celebration' in Santa Monica, where the Club presented to Peter Morgan a lovely silver tray with decanter and four glasses with club logo. The marque celebration continued in Monterey with a banquet at the Monterey Hyatt on Friday Aug 27, where 185 Morgan enthusiasts along with a collection of 25 Morgans celebrated the 90th anniversary and everything Morgan. The longevity of the family owned car company for 90 years is certainly worth celebrating. At this visit, Peter Morgan presented the Club with a lovely silver salver, which is now our club annual award for the Best Event.



There was a window dedication at Stoke Lacey on 25 September 1999 commemorating the lives of John and Bridget Leavens.

Watch our Laguna Seca, Here WE Come, as the HMSA racing weekend in October where the Morgan car was the featured marquee of the weekend. This is rather special since HMSA rarely recognized a car marquee, outside of the August Monterey Historic races. Indeed, forty Morgans arrived at the race track for a weekend

of pure pleasure. Needless to say, the dedicated Morgan racers - 17- were all present and exercised their engines with lap after lap of racing. There were 33 Morgan spectators present to enjoy the weekend of racing. The highlight was the noon drive for Morgans only, on Saturday and Sunday, cruising the Laguna Seca track through the curves, down the corkscrew, and up the front straight to the start/finish. No event would be complete without a celebration dinner, and the Baja Cantina

restaurant on Carmel Valley road was the venue, where club members and friends enjoyed food and drink and everything Morgan.

The Club awards were presented at the Holiday Dinner, at the Lakewood Country Club.

Watch out here comes 2000, and while Larry Guzin presided over Morgan agenda, the country worried about Y2K and what the next century would bring. The review of Club events demonstrated a variety of new Club adventures. A tour of the NHRA Museum in Pomona, Queen Mary Scottish Festival, Art Astor's private museum tour, and another Speed Zone play day were the calendar of events for the first half of the year.

At the 70th Geneva International Motor Show, the Aero 8 has its inaugural presentation. A picture is worth a thousand words, so the impression of this new car, "far more Delahaye than the upright British roadster to which were accustomed" despite "the sliding pillar-less suspension", maintained the "swoopy wings, proper bonnet, Plus 4 Plus like windows and even a vestigial bustle-back", as noted by Club President Larry Guzin in View from the Gavel, created critiques and discussions on the Aero 8 Morgan.



The Format contained articles on technical matters, with remarks regarding the three quarters of the Club Members, who are only Format participants and encouraged everyone to submit pictures, stories and Morgan escapades. There was a one-page review of the 4 Pass Drophead Morgan, which some Morgan owners call 'Snobmog' because there are a few remaining models and thought of as most exclusive. In truth, all older model Morgans are in decreasing number and are costly while some folks may find this label insulting. Also of note, this year a long time dedicated member Al Miller passed away.



Racing Morgans and Team Morgan SCCSCC Regional Solo II slalom racing reports for this year had many highlights to review. The Historic class for vehicles pre 68 running stock engines was added with a class for Morgans. In class S K 2, Brian Howlett took first place, Historic class Michael Howlett took first place, and kudos to John Mc Naughton, Ted Robinson, Tom Mc Clung, and Sue Howlett for their racing recognition. Brian Howlett took high point award for receiving the highest points of all driver participants. What is finer than a great Morgan enjoying the speed and fast times of racing. Keep driving those Morgans!

The Holiday Party was arranged by Katherine Bard at the Smoke House Restaurant in beautiful downtown Burbank. The members enjoyed two interesting guests, Ed Berghino came dressed very well with his reindeer antlers and Derek Willburn dressed with his unicorn antler, perhaps a metaphor for the 4 wheel Morgan and the 3 wheel Morgan. The evening was complete with good food and drink along with recognition of Morgan participation of members.