

NEWSLETTER

MORGAN OWNERS GROUP
Toronto

2 Sept. 1971
#3

MORGAN owners here comes another letter full of interesting articles.

OLD BUSINESS:

Terra Cotta Inn outing on the 17th July 1971 saw 4 three wheelers 2 +4's and 1 4/4 make a short but fun filled trip for those who attended even at short notice.

Innus Lake outing with rain everywhere managed a few more Morgans than the earlier gathering which shows more interest every time a small and informal meeting of Mogs is mentioned.

NEW BUSINESS:

The Morgan Owners Group have some slides and pictures now developed from the Morgan Concours held in Pennsylvania. These are very interesting and it is hoped that in the near future these will be shown at some selected evening for all interested.

ANTIQUE AND CLASSIC CAR CLUB CONCOURS:

Held on 18th Sept. 1971 at the INN in the PARK (Eglinton & Leslie) starting on or about 12 noon. This should be very interesting and I hope to see some Morgan faces I have not met yet.

COMING EVENTS:

MORGANS! MORGANS! MORGANS! come to rattle snake ridge!

Date: 19th September, 1971
Meeting Place: SHOPPERS WORLD corner of hwy #10 and Steeles.
Time: 2.00 P.M.

Rain or Shine this will be a short run to Milton for the afternoon. Route will be down Steeles to hwy 25 then down to Milton.

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!SEE YOU THERE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

HAVEN HILL:

Sunday October 10th & 11th 1971
COST: \$17.00 per person
This price includes Dinner with wine Sunday night one nights accommodations and Breakfast the next morning.

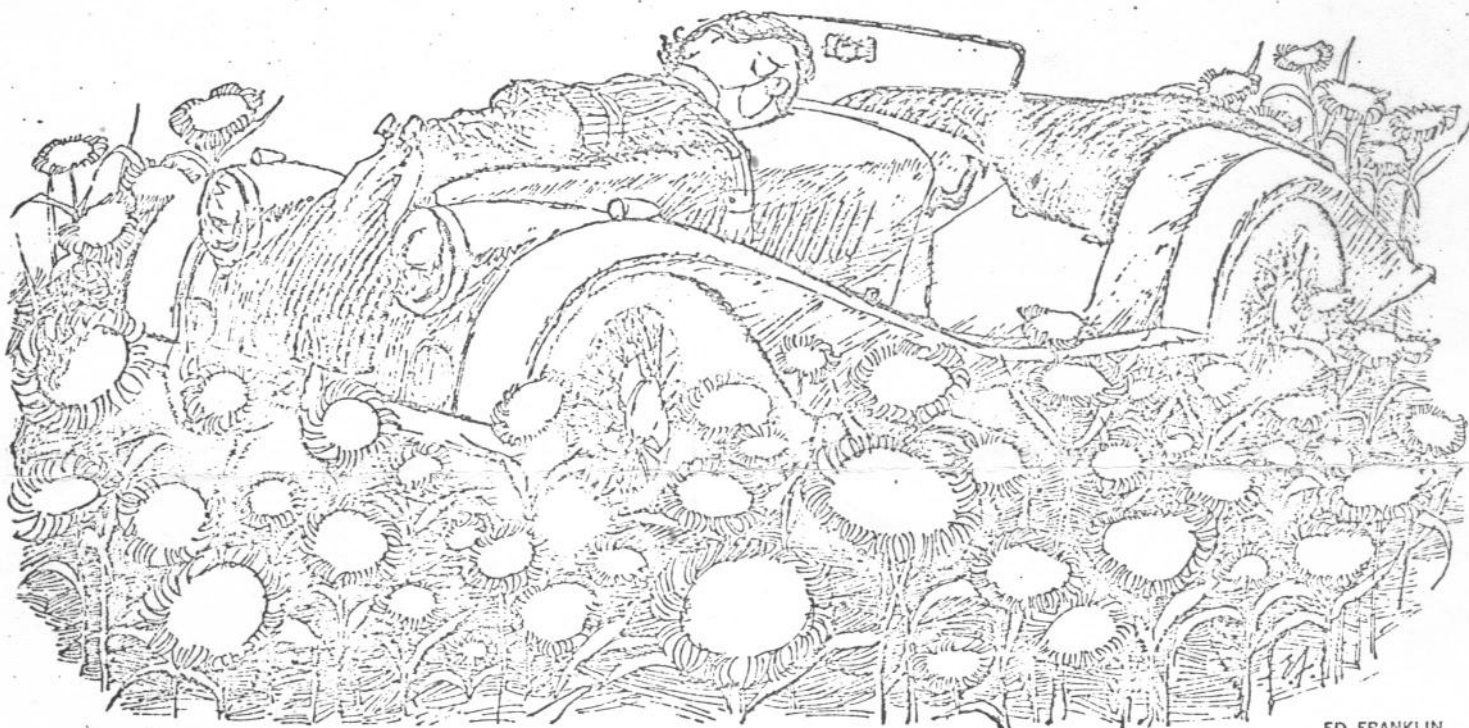
The Great Lakes Morgan Owners Group are a very friendly group of people. You'll enjoy this informal and Picturesque outing near the ex Ford country estate. Twelve people have already indicated their interest, we are still waiting to hear from more of you.

Dave Smith
21 Welsford Gdns
Apt. 301
Don Mills 449 8644

Mike Geluch
84 Burrows Ave
Islington 239 2684

Norm Hendrycks
161 Church St
Apt # 606
Brampton 459 9847 (home)
454 1560 (Bus)

Car badges still available!
How many Mogs are there in Toronto? Write us a note telling us who you are, your address and Model and year of your Morgan



ED FRANKLIN

MY HEART BELONGS TO MORGAN

BY LESLIE MILLIN

About 20 new Morgans are sold each year in Canada, and I suppose about as many used ones, and everyone buying a Morgan for the first time is buying an automotive virus that will settle down in his bloodstream happily and forever.

Not for the rest of you to have rainwater in your ear and slush in your lap, and a perpetually roasted left ankle, and scar tissue on left knuckles from hitting the horn button every time you turn the wheel.

The Morgan is a car whose heritage goes back more than half a century, almost always delivered in open, two-seater form. It is made in a small factory in Malvern Link, England, largely by methods that would not have seemed odd or advanced 40 years ago. Automotively speaking, it is one of the last of the dinosaurs.

Specifically, the Morgan uses a front suspension designed by the company founder, H. F. S. Morgan, well before the First World War. It has a frame made of fine English ash, a rear suspension which is only slightly developed beyond what most Edwardian sporting cars boasted, and body styling, which—although undeniably handsome—must have looked slightly old fashioned when the present basic shape emerged in 1936.

The elder Morgan, whose son Peter took over the business after his father's death a few years ago, was a clergyman's

son who studied mechanical engineering around the turn of the century and devised a three-wheeled runabout as a way of getting around the countryside. Three-wheeled vehicles were not uncommon when the automobile was young, but Morgan's front suspension design was distinctly unusual.

He used (and patented) a sliding pillar method of independent front suspension, most unlike the standard practice of the day, which was simply to hang a beam axle from the front of the vehicle and put a wheel at each end. Morgan's sliding pillar design, according to the Morgan company, has "since been used with every satisfaction."

Sometime in the Nineteen Thirties, H. F. S. Morgan noticed that four-wheeled cars had come into vogue, and accordingly designed the radically new and different Morgan 4/4. The model designation indicated, albeit somewhat tersely, that the car had four wheels and four cylinders.

After the Second World War, the Morgan 4/4 continued to be produced without much change. But in 1950, a new model was introduced: the Plus 4, with a bigger engine and more power, after 1955 supplied by a TR2 engine. The Plus 4 initiated me into Morganhood.

Driving the Plus 4 was work, no doubt about it. The steering wheel had to be heaved around, and the pedals required a firm

foot, and through it all the driver had to hang on tightly because the harsh suspension transmitted a great deal of the road shock to the driver.

The Plus 4 driver sat on a small cushion on a small plywood platform placed directly on the floor. The cushion was the inflated bladder type, basically a balloon. The common seatback was of the same, so that when a large passenger sat down hard, the driver was propelled into the steering wheel.

Since the whole car was so light, so flexible and so relatively free of crossbracing, vibration throughout was something of a Morgan specialty.

The rearview mirror was obviously something distrusted at Malvern Link. On the Plus 4, it was just a small mirror with a suction cup on the back, to be attached to the windshield at the driver's whim. The vibrations of the car rendered the mirror useless at any speed much above 10 miles per hour.

It was largely redundant anyway, because no Morgan driver worth his salt would drive with the top up except in very extreme conditions, so the easiest way to see what was behind was for the driver to turn his head.

Putting the top up was so difficult and time consuming that most Morgan owners simply said the hell with it, particularly since the car was just as drafty with the top up as with it down. The Morgan was designed so that

a driver could escape the rain with the top down by driving a little faster.

Like many other Morgan owners, I drove mine with the top down in both summer and mild winter on the West Coast, bundling up in a duffle coat during periods of heavy frost, and keeping the passenger seat and the luggage space behind the seats covered with the tonneau.

This meant a certain amount of rainwater in the ear, admittedly, and in winter passing trucks were wont to dump slush into one's lap over the low, cut-away door, but the only time it was the subject of genuine discomfort was the day I was caught in a hail storm, which made the Morgan clang like a bell by bouncing egg-sized hailstones off the bodywork of both the car and the driver.

Ah, but there were advantages.

The Morgan Plus 4, even if just delivered, looked at least 30 years old. A fat Detroit musclecar sitting at a stop light could easily be induced to engage in some mild drag racing, and unless the musclecar's driver was exceptionally alert, and possessed a car with substantial bite in its clutch, the Morgan would be well down the block while the musclecar was still getting off the line.

On a wet road, the Morgan would outrun anything short of an "out and out" sports-racing car. When H. F. S. Morgan de-

signed the suspension, he somehow built in—apparently because of the flexibility of the chassis—an amazing ability to deal with slightly slippery surfaces. (The other aspect of this flexibility was that if the car was parked on a very uneven surface, the body could twist enough to jam the doors.)

Morgan owners, in any case, felt superior to the drivers of mass-produced sports cars ("assembly-line junk"), Detroit musclecars ("juke-box styled jokes"), Jaguars ("Yankee sell-outs, though of good stock").

But the others kept improving their machinery, and Morgan was forced to do likewise. Adopting the 3,500 cubic centimetre Rover V-8 engine raised the horsepower to 184 from about 115, and since the weight was not markedly increased, the Plus 8 has quite remarkable acceleration.

It still looks like an honest car, a car that looks like what it is, something for drivers only, not passengers with luggage.

Many of the other automotive dinosaurs—sports cars like the Singer, the Squire, the Lea-Francis, Bugatti, Delahaye, Frazer-Nash, Invicta, Lagonda, and Mercer—have sunk in the swamps of mass production, never to emerge. Morgan lives, and even if there has been evolution not entirely pleasing to the eye of a Morgan fancier of earlier times, a dinosaur is still well worth having around.

THE GLOBE MAGAZINE



JOHN H. SNEALLY II PHOTOS