



THE PRICE LESS BLURB



SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1992

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**PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO TEAR OFF THE
COVER SHEET AND SEND IT IN TO CRAIG,
ALONG WITH YOUR DUES.**

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THE PREZ SEZ!

It is, perhaps, unfortunate that Niagara '92 is over, in that, as I pen my penultimate Prez Sez, I have to think of another topic. The meet was, as feared, not rich in numbers. Having said that, it was, in my opinion, an enjoyable one. Admittedly, the rain on Friday was quite heavy, but a dozen or so hardy souls turned up at the Roden's, and enjoyed their hospitality.

A bonus this year, perhaps made possible by the lower numbers, was a set of complimentary tickets for some of the Niagara Parks attractions, donated by a member who will remain anonymous, but who puts on a fine barbecue. On a flying visit to Niagara-on-the-Lake, to obtain a pint of the real stuff at the Angel to steady nerves after the Spanish Aerocar, and before the Healey Challenge Autocross (which we won again, by the way), we noticed tents outside Fort George and numerous characters in 1800's army uniforms throughout the town. It appears that scouts can get badges for making such uniforms, and lots of badges must have been earned just lately. It was quite an interesting sight.

Incorporating British Car Day into Niagara '92 was a success. Not only did 18 Morgans turn out, but about 650 other cars joined us, making this the most successful Niagara ever! So much so, that we should probably consider a different venue next year.

Which brings me to what I really should be writing about - next year. The club is in the doldrums, but is well able to weather that. There are, as has been shown earlier, adequate funds in the kitty. Events do not seem to be wanted by members - Lynn tells me a fall hay ride had to be cancelled

through lack of response, but that may change in the future. I was heartened to hear Al Sands say that he may offer to host a meet again next year after a bit of a hiatus, to see how things go. Piper's Hill has always been a popular venue, and hopefully will tempt out those who fondly remember past meets, as well as those curious to discover why they are so fondly remembered.

The club is in stable mode. Lynn says she will give Events one more year, even though this year has hardly provided the response her efforts so richly deserve. I have not confirmed it, but I believe Jenny will continue to publish the Blurb, Craig will continue to guard the dollars, and Ron will continue to look after membership. Audrey will continue to be Past President, and I will join her. All we need is a new President. I believe Vern's business commitments preclude his candidacy, but there are hopes that another member will find it possible to take up the reins.

Between now and the Christmas Party, resolution is needed. If you yearn for high office, please let me know. The position is being considered by a member at the moment, but there is nothing wrong, in fact, there is everything right, with having a ballot to choose between alternatives. You can make this possible.

John Collins.

P.S. Plan to attend the HogMog stand at the Autojumble, October 24, International Centre, Airport Road, Mississauga.

HOGMOG AHOY!

The portents were not good on August 8! The early news informed me that the QEII had, that morning, for the first time ever, run aground off the east coast en route for New York. And this was the day HogMog was to embark on its first cruise, albeit in the relative safety of the Welland Canal. I could have done without that news that morning.

The journey to Fred and Lynn's proved uneventful enough. I had planned to gas up, but, being about half an hour late, decided to delay that, and so HOGMOG was the first car to arrive! The Beers all arrived later, but in the Mazda and the Rolls, not in any of the appropriate vehicles they possess. Finally, Paul Donohue and Barbara arrived in ARCAIC, and, after viewing photos of the Washington meet and consuming more of Fred and Lynn's coffee, tea, juice and muffins, the convoy, containing three Morgans, set off for Port Dalhousie, from which we were to set sail (figurately speaking, that is).

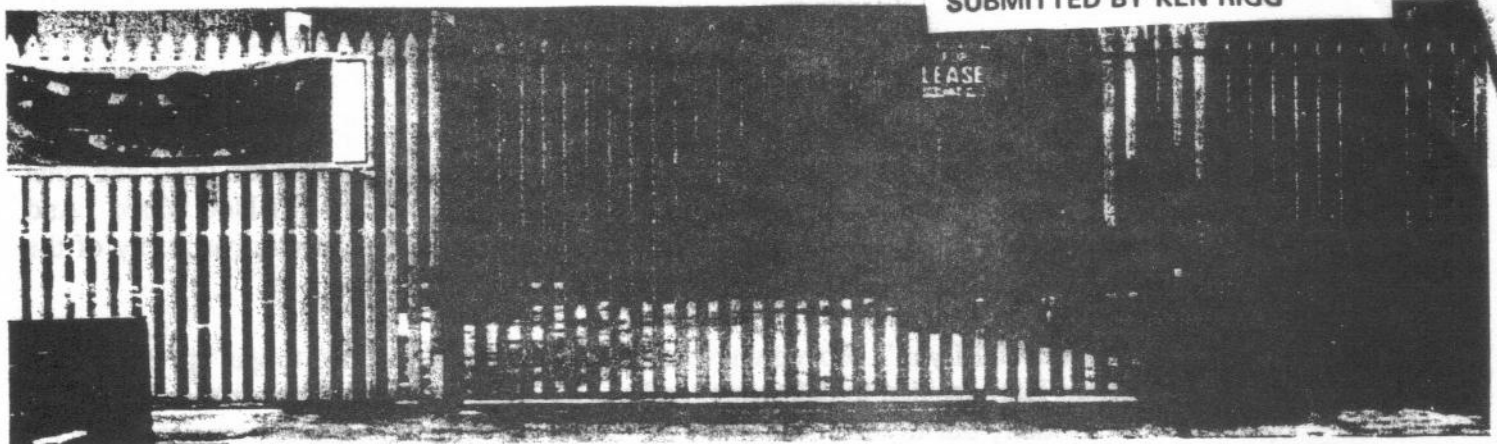
Reconnaissance paid off, and Fred led us by back roads around the congestion caused by repairs to the Queen E (not the QEII - we did not venture that far for a day trip, even with the Rolls in tow). The vessel that was to be our home for an hour or so turned out to be large, covered and contained a bar. There seemed to be very few passengers until just before sailing time, when a couple of busloads of excursioners arrived to swell the numbers. I had already spilled my first drink by then, though, and was nonplussed, whatever that means.

The voyage was smooth and enjoyable. We did not run aground, sink, or find ourselves invaded by pirates, so perhaps the portents had been all wrong. In fact, we were fortunate enough to be out at a relatively quiet time, and were able to pass through one of the locks, something that is not possible when lakers are in abundance. Upon disembarking, we quickly found a restaurant, and proceeded to send seafood and wine down to reinforce the weakening efforts of Lynn's muffins to keep body and soul together, with notable success. Thereafter, a leisurely stroll around the town topped things off, and the journey home began.

Time was marching on, and it was deemed prudent, in light of the portents which had thus far proved unfounded, but could nonetheless not be lightly dismissed, to stop for a coffee. That having been done, I was just about to pull out of the parking lot, when Sonja began talking to the driver of a car that had just pulled in. He claimed to have owned a Morgan once. He was right - it was none other than Richard Nickell, of restored Flatrad fame from the late 70's. After quite a conversation, the interrupted pulling out of the car park was resumed, as was the journey home along the Queen E.

Glancing nonchalantly at the authentic, not totally accurate, fuel gauge, I remarked that I'd better pull off at the next exit, and get that gas I'd been meaning to get. And then it happened. After all, portents are ignored only at your peril. Just like the QEII, HOGMOG ran aground, if only for lack of fuel. Fortunately, it was within sight of an exit road, and I managed to walk to a service station and buy a can and gas, rather than having to get a tow truck. I really must be more careful in future, though. After all, I've owned the Morgan 20 years now, and that's the second time I've run out of gas.

John Collins.



VINTAGE HINDSIGHT

by David Shearer

On February 22, 1992, a group of customers of Chris Lawrence's LawrenceTune West (many of them VARA members) descended upon the shop and retrieved cars and parts they believed belonged to them. This precipitous action brought to a head a long series of events which surely has shocked and saddened anyone who has learned about them.

The February surprise came about when it was learned that Lawrence, former Tech Director and a long-revered member of VARA, had disappeared and possibly left the country amid allegations of fraud and stolen property. After some phone calls among alarmed owners, the shop was opened by an associate of Lawrence's and cleared of identifiable cars and parts.

The multiple stories and allegations have a long history, going back at least to 1989, and complaints against Lawrence range from shoddy workmanship to the selling of cars that didn't belong to him. In some cases, possibly the same car was sold to more than one person. The exact charges and names of all the people involved are not yet available, but this much is known:

Ken Chevis (see Backfires) has filed charges of fraud and conversion in connection with dealings with Lawrence, including the sale of two cars, a '67 Shelby Mustang and a '68 E-Jag Coupe.

Bob Swanson went to LawrenceTune West on Feb. 22nd, in search of his AC Bristol. He is seeking restitution from Lawrence for the value of the car, which now belongs to Randy Deselt of Foster City, who apparently bought it in good faith.

Don Queen brought in, for rebuilding, a Morgan axle that he had stripped last November at Palm Springs. The axle was ostensibly rebuilt and Queen's son went to the shop to pick it up on February 12th. Chris Lawrence was not there, but the younger Queen paid for and picked up what appeared to be the axle. It turned out to be a Jaguar axle. When called, Lawrence claimed a double mistake had been made and that the Jaguar owner must have picked up the Morgan axle. He promised to straighten things out. A few days later, Queen went to Lawrence's home in Laguna Nigel and found that he had disappeared. Queen still has the Jaguar beam axle, if anyone is interested.

Lawrence has returned to this country, according to Detective Bino Herrera of the LAPD, and will respond to charges. Joe Dickerson, who is representing Lawrence, would not comment except to say that he believes some of the material confiscated on the famous clearing-out was taken illegally.

The recent demise of this well-known vintage car repair and restoration shop amid allegations of fraud and "conversion" contains a lesson for all who job out some or all of the work on their cars.

In this particular case, and I'm sure there are others like it, there seems to have been a remarkable store of trust and good faith that went beyond the bounds of good sense; thousands of dollars of transactions were agreed upon merely by a handshake or a telephone call. It's as if the enthusiasm for the sport, and the spirit of bonhomie that's experienced at the track, precluded the application of normal business practices among fellow enthusiasts.

While it is pleasant to deal on the basis of honor and trust, there is nothing dishonorable about keeping things clear and on the record. It's just like cutting cards at the beginning of a friendly little game -- it's not a sign of distrust, it's just a convention that happens to lean toward honesty in the pastime.

One must bear in mind that we are dealing with old cars, used parts, and in the case of many racing cars, none of the usual documentation one finds with street licensed vehicles. The chances abound for confusion, mistakes, and, yes, even fraud. So let the unfortunate experience of more than a dozen of your fellow members arouse your awareness of the problems involved and cut your chances of being had.

Even though most of this is obvious, it's worth noting: if you're buying a car, you ought to see it first or have someone you know see it. If you can't see it before you buy it, at least check it out once it's shipped to you or the shop where you're having it worked on. Check as many numbers as you can: chassis, engine, trans, etc. and note them in any agreement with the shop owner/manager. If it's something you brought in, take pictures of it -- lots of pictures. And get an agreement in writing about what is to be done, approximately how long it will take, and maybe even an estimate. And it doesn't hurt to take time out from a busy schedule from time to time to see how things are coming along. Oh yes, and check those numbers again when you pick up your treasures.

Good advice from another shop owner is never advance money for a repair job. If the shop needs money in advance for parts, for instance, it may be in shaky financial condition. In any case, having that money around is a great temptation to use it -- quite innocently, perhaps on something that is more pressing at the moment. And if you do give money, make sure its amount and purpose is well and truly recorded.

This sort of approach will not keep a shop from getting in over its head, but it will make it easier for those who do suffer losses to seek restitution. Oh, yes. If you happen to know where Don Queen's axle is, he might use it as a spare for the one he had shipped from England.

(FROM THE VARA NEWS LETTER)

INITIAL ISSUE - NOW AVAILABLE

Morgan Car Register of North America

June 1992

Maintained by J. Dale Barry

Morgan Plus 4 Club of Southern California

7871 Airline Ave

Westchester, CA 90045

(310)649-2796

The Morgan Car Register of North America was founded with the intent of providing a single list of all Morgan cars in North America for use by the Morgan car enthusiast. It is a source of reference information regarding the number and type of Morgan cars remaining operative in North America. The Register currently contains about 70% of the total number of Morgan cars known to be in North America. Morgan cars in North America are generally 1950 to 1970 models and represent the largest remaining number of such classic Morgan cars in the world.

The Register is computerized using a MAC computer and the entries are input into an Excel database for ease of entry, retrieval and manipulation. The data entered into the database are sorted into seven fields. These include: (1) car year, (2) body style, (3) model, (4) chassis number, (5) home state, (6) home club and (7) special particulars. Effort has been made to eliminate duplicate entries. However, as the chassis number is unknown for many cars and owners register with more than one club, duplicate entries are a possibility in some cases. Some duplicate chassis numbers will be noted in the Register which reflect duplicate chassis numbers currently in club rosters. The chassis number is normally found stamped onto the metal cross member directly behind the front seat on the passenger side.

The Register contains data explicitly related to the individual Morgan car and its particulars. The Register does not contain reference to the address and phone number of the owner. Contact with an owner must be made through the parent club representative. The names and addresses of the various club representative are provided in the Register for the appropriate contact by interested parties.

It is planned that the Register will be updated once per year and is available without charge. Corrections to data in the Register are requested and will be made in a future publication. The Register may be obtained by sending a SASE to the address noted above. The Register currently contains about 1400 entries and is over 20 pages in length so that appropriate postage will be needed.

Peter George

MORTIE'S OIL

Oil is the life's blood of any machine/engine comprised of moving parts. Oil has two major functions. Firstly it reduces friction between moving parts, consequently reducing wear and secondly it dissipates heat evenly throughout the machine/engine. Without proper respect and attention given to OIL the economic useful work life of the machine/engine will be adversely affected. With this stated I will focus now to internal combustion engines only.

However two quick questions first;

1. Can you name an external combustion engine?
2. Can you give an example of a machine with no moving parts?

Now onto OIL. Oil has numerous other jobs. Are you aware that oil provides enough cooling to the piston and enough slippery to the cylinder wall to prevent fusion of piston to cylinder wall which would be possible due to the generated heat of explosion.

Oil continues to work even when the engine is not in operation. The various internal parts of an engine are protected from rust and corrosion by a film of oil. And it is also this very film of oil that reduces the amount of effort or force required to turn-over an engine at the initial stage of starting.

We've mentioned that oil lubricates and cools but it also cleans and seals. Oil has a detergent capability. The products of combustion combined with moisture (condensation) and/or raw unburnt fuel can form sludge or varnish on engine parts that will effect efficiency and performance. Detergent oil will minimize the hazard by removing these sludge deposits. But here I will offer a "beware" Piston and piston ring design is an exacting science. The balance between the sealing capability required from the piston ring and the seal necessary between the piston and the cylinder can be irreversibly lost by sludge. Consider for a moment an engine whose oil has not been regularly changed.

Sludge deposits will build-up on the piston and its sealing ring. This sludge build-up will eventually become the supporting mechanism that ensures a good seal. Now if regular maintenance were to be re-instated the detergent oil would over period of time remove these sludge deposits. And with these sludge deposits removed the cylinder/piston seal would be lost. And we all know without a proper seal the engine loses compression and burns oil. In other words if you buy a used vehicle which has a dubious maintenance record do not use detergent oil in the engine. Further on in this article I will explain oil specification coding. And further still maybe in a future article I can delve into some of the thoughts behind piston and ring design.

Motor oil is refined from crude oil. Everyone knows that. But did you know there are basically four types of crude oil, paraffinic, naphthenic, asphaltic and/or mixed. Lubricating oils are either paraffinic or naphthenic. The better lubricators are formulated from paraffinic base oils. Paraffinic base oils at elevated temperatures have superior oxidation stability (at higher temperatures this oil has less tendency to thicken) and are less volatile (at higher temperatures this oil has less tendency to vapourise or evaporate.)

Paraffinic oils are not as affected by temperature as are naphthenic oils. In my opinion there are only two oils worth mentioning Castrol or Quaker State. Both are paraffins. I use Castrol - who would use Pennsylvania crude in a British Car.

Now lets look at oil coding

VI - Viscosity Index

The VI number indicates the effect temperature has on the thickness of the oil. Higher the number the less likely the oil will thicken when cold or thin-out when hot.

Operational Standards

SD, SE, SF, SG - Gas Engines

CC, CD, CDII, CE - Diesel Engines

These standards reflect oil changes/improvements for various years of vehicles and certain oil characteristics such as oxidation stability, improved anti-wear performance, protection against engine deposits, rust and corrosion.

S.A.E. - Society of Automotive Engineers

H.D. - Heavy Duty and High Detergency

S.A.E.-30 Is a single grade non detergent oil that meets the Society of Automotive Engineers weight or viscosity.

S.A.E. 10W40 Is a multi-grade detergent all weather oil that meets S.A.E. standards.

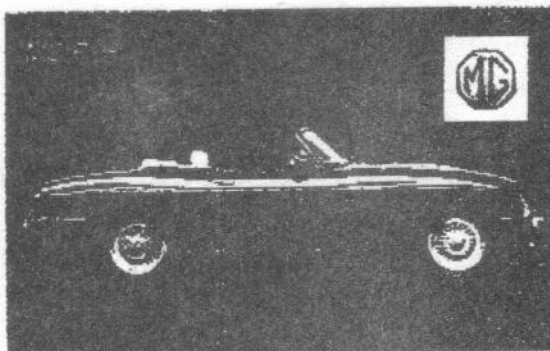
This is not an exhaustive list. I have not discussed foam or friction inhibitors or even detailed requirements of CCMC or JASCO engine tests. This article is only a layman's overview. Finally in closing I would like to add, "Change your oil regularly - additives don't last for ever."

MG returns

The MG sports car is about to return. More than 10 years after production of the MGB ceased, MG, part of the Rover company, will be back later this year in the form of the 3.9-L MG RV8. The car is based on the MGB (which first appeared 30 years ago) but with design and engineering changes to make it more compatible with the 1990s.

The car is due for launch at the British Motor Show in October. Performance is expected to show a 0-100 km/h time of about six seconds and a top speed of 225 km/h. At press time, only limited details were available about the car. Compared with the old "B," it has a different front suspension and revised live axle system at the back. The body is to be built by British Motor Heritage but assembled at Rover's Cowley factory. Only 15 cars a week are scheduled, and Rover says it has no plans to sell the car in the USA. The car's interior incorporates burr elm wood veneer on the fascia and centre console. Seats and steering wheel will be leather trimmed.

The MGB appeared in 1962 as a 1.8-



L roadster, with a GT incorporating a hatchback-style tailgate appearing in 1965. In the mid-1970s a V8 GT was added to the range. The revival in sports car popularity plus the high demand for pristine MGBs were elements in Rover's decision to produce the RV8. As part of British Leyland (Rover's forebear), MG had Triumph as a sister company. Triumph produced the 2.0-L four cylinder TR7 in the mid 1970s originally as a hardtop, later as a convertible. A 3.5-L V8 TR8 was added to the range in 1979 but only about 25,000 were produced—almost all exported. In the UK, Grinnall Cars is one of several companies which converts TR7s—particularly the relatively rare convertible—to TR8 specification; that factor was also an element in Rover's decision to support the RV8.

SUBMITTED BY GREG KAUFMAN

The origins of MG go back to 1923 with the production by Morris Garages (MG) of a tuned version of the Morris Oxford family car. The MG Car Company was subsequently formed, majoring on two-seaters which included the T-series, up to the 1500 cc TF of the mid 1950s, followed by the MGA and, in 1962, the MGB.

—SB

VIRGINIA
PICS



BOB MCLAIN & BROTHER "BUTCH"
STEVE BEER, PHOTO



RALLY MADNESS - THE CANUCKS & THE
BROTHERS MCLAIN.
JENNY BEER, PHOTO



SOME OF THE CANADIAN "DUCKLINGS" ON
THE ROAD BACK HOME.
DONNA BEER, PHOTO

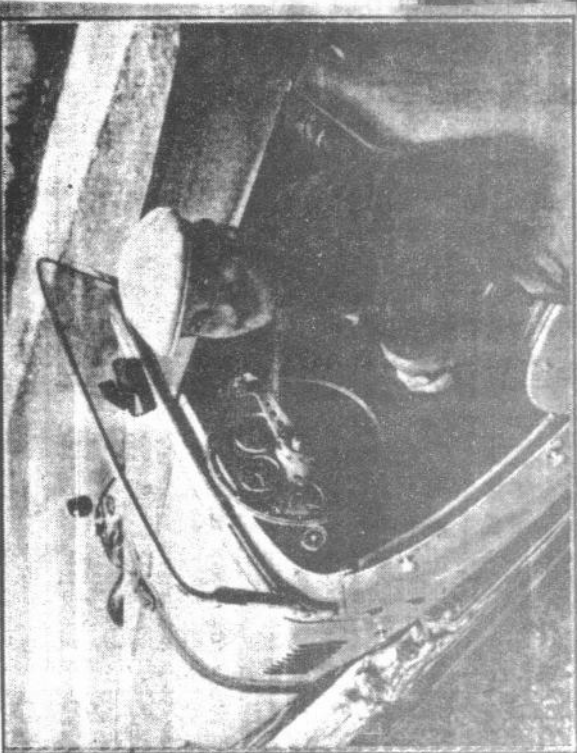
MG CANADA 92 REPORT

At the urging of the fellow who brought his MGA Coupe to Morgans Over America at Niagara, we attended the meet in Peterborough July 10 & 11. The host hotel was the downtown Holiday Inn but there were so many attendees, it spilled over to two more hotels. It seemed the whole town was taken over. There was plenty to do. Tech sessions, rally, boat tour, dance Friday night, show Saturday followed by a banquet. As it was the twenty-fifth anniversary of the MGB, the designer was in attendance. The dance was a lot of fun. Someone found a swivel chair for my incapacitated better half, so sans crutches we could boogaloo to the 60's British Invasion Music. The show had a large turn-out including vendors such as Brits and Pieces & Moss Motors. We were not the only "Not An MG" present, as there were two Healeys and a Morris Wagon. People were friendly and curious towards our car (except one official who warned "you don't want to bring it into the park, they mauled the last one." Its surprising how many MG owners also have a Morgan at home (in boxes of course). American clubs have quaint names such as "The Old Speckled Hen", & "Emerald Necklace" clubs. Our club received an invitation to the Buffalo Octagon Association Autumn Classic Show September 6th, 1992 in Ancaster New York. It is an all marque show.

Fred E. Lynn

This week's classic car is a '67 Morgan 4/4 Series V Roadster. A truly unique automobile, the two-seater convertible is the product of esteemed Morgan craftsmanship, where cars are still built from scratch and the emphasis is on tradition and quality. In the style of coach building, the 1500 cc Cortina GT motor and English Ford 4 speed transmission is housed in a specially treated wood frame. The floors and wheel wells are wood, too. The Morgan company, since 1909, originally built three-wheel vehicles. They are still making 4 or 5 hundred cars a year, but there's a waiting list. Owners Fred (pictured behind the wheel) and Lynn Kuzyk, of Burlington, are members of Toronto's Morgan Owner's Group.

PHOTOS BY JOHN HEWAK



E2 THE SPECTATOR, THURSDAY, JULY 2, 1992

WATKINS GLEN/1992

I felt that it was important to leave for the Sportscar Vintage Racing Association race at Watkins Glen by 10:00am Thursday which would allow time to be scrutineered that day. In the past we have left later and only managed to register on Thursday - this results in the nagging fear, because of the huge entry, that the first practice will be missed.

The Glen is so popular because of the challenging track, the area is steeped in racing history, the scenery, and for me a race close to home.

Surprisingly we were ready to leave at 9:30. It's definitely easier to be ahead of schedule for a 10:00 start than on time for 5:00am. This apparent advantage proved to be a detriment since we were in and out of torrential rains the entire length of Seneca Lake. We got ahead of the storm long enough to register then had to sit in the tow car for about half an hour till the storm passed.

The rain reminded me of the time, when the Morgan was new and I drove from Niagara Falls to Toronto with a Healey owner as passenger. The Healey was of course a modern car at that time. Thereafter he would gleefully recount that he expected rain around the side curtains, was surprised that it came in over the windshield but was astounded that his feet got wet from water splashing through the floor boards and around the rubber mats. In the mid fifties it appeared H.F.S. was supplied with the same type of packing crates that Henry Ford was reputed to have dismantled for floor boards. Well they still make Morgans so I feel somewhat vindicated.

Bigger may not always be better for officials and competitors but it certainly is for spectators. At SVRA events there is an incredible array of unusual and exotic cars both on display and racing. From a late forties dirt track car powered by a Ford V8 complete with an Ardun Hemispherical overhead valve conversion. Ardun as in Zora Arkus-Duntov before he became the guiding light at Chevrolet's Corvette project, to Ferrari's 40th anniversary car, the F40 which acquitted itself so well in the exhibition class one would wonder if it had been modified. Definitely a need for more performance here. Spectator's cars ran the gambit from Kaiser Darrins to hot rods. In addition to cars, support vehicles must be witnessed to be believed. There is something to be said for having the crew transport the cars then either pop over in the Lear Jet or motor there in the Testa Rossa.

The exhibition class is not as sedate as it may sound. Passing is not allowed in the corners but otherwise these guys are racing with late braking and hard cornering. I found it especially interesting because comparing a variety of cars from different eras was made possible. Mid eighties Porsche endurance cars, Can-Am cars, Listers, the featured marque, Allards, and pre & post war GP cars competed.

The SVRA normally run Morgans in group three which consists of Porsche 356's, Triumph 2, 3 & 4's and the odd Daimler, Alfa, MGA, Healey and Jaguar. The greatest rivalry appears to be between Morgans and Porsches and when numbers are sufficient they compete in a race of their own. Presently the Porsches appear to have a slight edge partly because of sheer weight of numbers. Perennial Morgan front runner Harry Gaunt got the jump at the start but ultimately placed second behind Mark Eskuche's faster Porsche. This immaculate black 1956 +4 carries #1 which impressed me a great deal. Harry explained he was merely an early SVRA racer, it was available, and he just asked for it. Because they fit best in group 3 the ever practical SVRA allows 4/4's with up to 1600cc's to compete as vintage cars. Many jurisdictions would consider them historic pitting them against Mustangs, Camaros and Corvettes. As a result of this practicality Jack Poteet's 4/4 is very competitive but Jack had a spot of bother on lap 1, made up a lot of time and finished just behind me in 17th place in a field of 45 cars.

Rob Varey of Port Dover Ontario races the brown & cream 57 +4 that was originally purchased by trike owner and racer Dave Elcomb. Rob was bumped off the track in practice by a Healey. His car sustained little damage but a wheel was cracked and having no spare with him, Rob's weekend was over. This was especially unfortunate since an engine problem had been solved and he would have been expected to place well up among the leaders.

Probably the most interesting Morgan present was the streamlined SLR coupe, one of 3 such conversions. It is especially striking in unpainted aluminum, graceful yet purposeful.

A police escorted tour of the original course was provided on Saturday evening for both competition

and road cars. It is over 6 miles in length and circles the Watkins Glen State Park. We took the tow car with some apprehension on my part about keeping up especially with a NASCAR stocker directly behind us. The pace turned out to be very sedate but the stocker dropped back a few times and accelerated hard. It was thrilling to hear the exhaust and watch him getting closer in the rearview mirror but that little bit of doubt about his ability to stop in time was there regardless.

It took a lot more courage to race in those days. No roll over or fire protection, unpredictable brakes, quirky handling, a stone bridge, off camber corners and deep ditches. Worst of all a long steep hill back into town with a turn that if missed would have the hapless driver careening downhill through yards, fences, sheds and possibly into houses at who knows what altitude.

Obviously one does not have to be interested in racing especially when the Watkins Glen area scenery is considered, to enjoy this event. Anyone interested in old cars or newer cars that are designed and built to appear old should enjoy it.

Ken Rigg.

In the next issue, we hope to have some photos of the various cars mentioned in this article.



- PHOTO BY PAUL CRONKWRIGHT

High-flying classics

Classic car fans are in for a real treat when the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum stages its ninth annual Classics of the Golden Age show to be held on August 8-9. The show's theme this year will be antique

trucks, but visitors will also be able to view plenty of classic cars, such as Studebakers, Cord and Packards, like this Preston Featherstone. The show will be held at Hangar #4 at the Mount Hope Airport.

OF SPORTS CARS AND AIRCRAFT

Fred Kuzyk

Comparing notes with a Mustang enthusiast awhile ago, we were amazed with some of the "advanced" features on the Morgan. Lucas electrics for all their notoriety do have some innovative aspects. The "bump button" on my starter relay, for instance, is very handy when setting points or when doing a compression test. I discovered this feature only by accident one day, as it wasn't mentioned in the Owner's Manual, the Morgan Four Shop Manual, or any other book I've come across!

My friend thought this feature was wonderful, for with American cars one must connect an external device to perform this function. Likewise, he was impressed with the advance/retard wheel on the distributor. It reminded him somewhat of the GM Delco distributor with the little window in the cap, through which one could adjust the points with a hex key while the engine ran. We both agreed the Lucas system is a great way to adjust ignition timing-and without a wrench!

He also liked the front disc brakes and commented that they were rather uncommon on cars of that era. True. I think Jaguar was the first to use these in 1959. But while discs were new and rare on cars of the early 1960s, they had been used for years on aircraft. An innovation from another industry....

One of my favourite car shows last year was a display of both classic autos and planes at The Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum, in Hamilton last August. This show is coming up again (see enclosed photo). This wasn't a typical car show. There were no trophies, no parts vendors. What there was instead, was a lot of history. Such as, the juxtaposition of an immaculately restored P-51 Mustang and a similarly immaculate '65 Ford Mustang sitting beside each other in a WW II hangar with the sounds of Glen Miller all around. These airplanes are not dusty museum pieces, they do fly! While primarily a static show, a couple of vintage planes did do fly-bys, much to my delight. I suppose the cars, or planes, by themselves would be interesting enough, but somehow together the sum is greater than the parts. The atmosphere triggered lots of memories. Perhaps the reason I enjoyed it so much was that it reminded me of my student pilot days and my time as an Air Force technician over ten years ago.

When auto enthusiasts gather you often hear debates about the performance, handling, or sound of a particular car or engine. An early T-Bird vis-a-vis a Corvette, the merits of a Hemi, a twin cam, or the sound of a Rover V-8. Motorcyclists will argue that a bike will beat anything with four wheels. Drivers recount the thrill of experiencing a

few laps at Shannonville, or of a pass down the 1/4 mile at Cayuga. Well, since I have an appreciation for a variety of machines (including antique fire trucks, Fender tube amplifiers and Stratocaster guitars), I gotta say the sweetest sounding engine is the Merlin in a Spitfire fighter (it saved Britain!) and the ultimate thrill is doing over Mach 1 in an old Voodoo jet fighter! And one of the most sleekest, elegant sights in my mind has to be the British Vulcan bomber. Not in active service now, at air shows during the '80s you could see this giant "manta ray" gracefully climb while its massive Rolls-Royce engines roared. Besides at air shows, one could have seen this aircraft if you were in the Falklands during this time period, however its temperment was less gentle while it dropped loads of armament against the Argentines!

During my four year tenure with the Queen, I experienced a multitude of aircraft. Multi-engine transport planes are comfortable and roomy, somewhat like luxury saloons, they fly straight and level: boring! Except perhaps to the airlines, they like transport pilots. Helicopters are agile like a Cooper. Great in the curves and can stop on a dime. But rotary-wing craft are inherently limited with regards to acceleration and top speed. A Harrier jump jet, however, can maneuvre like a chopper but doesn't suffer from the limitations. Yes, the real sports cars of the aeronautical world are the jet fighters. They accelerate like a dragster with lots of top speed (in the order of Mach 2.5) and possess nimble handling. Fast cars are endowed with names that evoke images of speed, power even ferocity. Names such as Ace, Cobra, Tiger, Avanti and Jaguar. So it is with jet fighters - Tomcat, Eagle, Falcon, Hornet. And before those, names like: Vampire, Sabre, Banshee, and Meteor. As there was a golden era of British sports cars, the golden era of Canadian aviation was the 1950s. Canada was the 4th largest military power after the war, and it was a world air power in that decade. This was a position that Canada may have found uncomfortable and unnecessary after Korea.

Standing at the end of the runway at Canadian Forces Base North Bay in the late '70s, I remember the sight of the last remaining CF-100 Canucks (nicknamed "Clunks") passing overhead on takeoff. These craft were over 25 years old. Although obsolete and dated, they still seemed air-worthy and looked great. At one time, there were almost 700 of these birds, some were even purchased by the Belgian Air Force. Built by A.V. Roe (AVRO) Aircraft of Toronto, this was the first and last all-Canadian operational jet fighter. It was a twin-engine, all weather subsonic interceptor. I was working out of the Alert hangars which were then empty. During earlier times, these hangars housed pairs of North American Air Defence (NORAD) interceptors which stood ready, 24 hours a day, to intercept Russian bombers before they could get close to the populated south. At a moments notice, air crew and ground crew would fire them up right in the

hangar. They'd roll out and being by the end of the runway, they'd practically takeoff right out the door! When I was there, 414 Black Knight squadron was the last "Clunk" squadron. No longer in a combat role, they were being used for electronic warfare, which is playing the part of bad guys in exercises and trying to jam our radar. I tried my hand one day on the CF-100 simulator. What an experience! One moment you're at several thousand feet, the next, on the deck. Trying to land it, I crashed and burned three miles short of the runway. My thirty-five hours as a pilot in a Cessna didn't prepare me to be a jet-jock! Anyway, the Clunks were retired in 1981, on their 30th anniversary. Their life-span had exceeded all expectations, it's just that they couldn't get engines for them anylonger.

CFB North Bay was fascinating for me for other reasons. Although I never went looking, I was told you could still find the remains of the Bomarc missile bunkers up in the hills. The Bomarcs were large anti-bomber missiles equipped with nuclear warheads. There was a big debate about these weapons, in the early '60s which helped bring down the Diefenbaker government. Bomarcs weren't accurate enough without the nukes, so they were eventually fitted. although we had the missiles, I'm told American personnel held the keys to arm the warheads! The Bomarcs were a boondoggle, and shortly after their inception it was announced that further implementation was cancelled. It could never replace a manned fighter. As a result, 446 Missile Squadron at North Bay was one of only two batteries that came into being. By 1972, these were finally scrapped and air defence was solely the realm of fighters once more.

CFB North Bay is also home of the Canadian Norad Headquarters. The nerve center here receives signals from the radar stations of the DEW (Distant Early Warning) line, and co-ordinates the fighter defences in our region. This command center was called the SAGE (Semi Automatic Ground Environment) but was better known as "the hole". Over six hundred feet below ground through the solid rock of the Canadian Shield, a three story building sits within a cavern. Access is via two tunnels, the main one over a mile long. Propane buses take you down past the thick blast doors. The complex can be totally self-contained, when "buttoned-up". Having its own power plant, water supply, sanitation, hospital and food stores - it was meant to survive a direct nuclear attack. The building even sits on rubber insulators, to minimize shock. The place was awesome! It housed the two largest computers in the world. 50,000 vacuum tubes. Occupying whole rooms, they were state of the art in 1959 but bulky and antequated in 1979. IBM staff did constant maintenance, mostly replacing tubes according to schedules. Controllers monitored radar screens, the computer identifying planes by referring to flight plans. The war room was shades of "Dr. Strangelove" with its maps, displays, and boards showing the current threat to North America and our stage of alert readiness. I decided if I had

to be somewhere during atomic attack, this was the place!

AVRO Aircraft was a busy place in the 1950's. Besides the Canuck program, they had also built the first jet airliner, called the Jetliner. Sales to airlines never materialized, however Howard Hughes bought one as a personal toy. AVRO was also commissioned by the US Air Force to attempt to build a "flying saucer". Called the Avrocar, it was a huge fan that hovered only a few feet off the ground with poor control. Their most ambitious project was the CF-105 Arrow fighter. The RCAF (Royal Canadian Air Force) was looking to the future and realized that a supersonic replacement for the "Clunk" would be needed. Friends and foes were developing such planes. Required were powerful new engines, and the RCAF desired a modern weapons control system along with a guided missile for a weapon (a vast improvement over the existing "dumb" rockets and guns): A formidable package that would have taken the RCAF through the 1960's and beyond. Canadian Westinghouse was given the task of creating the "Velvet Glove" missile and ASTRA fire control, while Orenda designed the massive engines. As the major contractor, AVRO designed the airframe would assemble the components. The Arrow's design was decades ahead of its time. Its delta wing shape had proven itself easily capable of supersonic speeds. Its twin Orenda Iroquois engines were capable of 25,000 pounds of thrust each. This is the level of power of present day fighters, far beyond anyone else in the late '50s. Arrow #6 was to have been flown with these engines in 1959. Had it done so, it surely would have set records for top speed, climb rate, and altitude. Sadly, the whole project was cancelled a few months before it was ready. Costs had gotten out of control. The RCAF wanted the best of everything, and perhaps should have went with existing weapons and engines. The government had spent some \$300 million on all the development and Arrows would have costed an additional \$3-\$4 million a copy, when the government hoped to spend about a million each. Originally, about 500 were to be built. Even for as few as 100 planes, the further cost was high. Our allies, though interested in the technology and potential of the project, they expressed no firm interest in buying the plane. They had to protect their own companies. Authorities have said had we made 20 or so aircraft operational, one squadron, and it was shown what it was capable of, the American forces would be clamouring to have it built under licence in their country. Much like the English Harrier was later built for the US Marines. The Diefenbaker government also felt that the bomber threat was diminishing (it still persists today) that ballistic missiles were the new threat, manned fighters then being obsolete. It was the missile age, and the Conservatives mistakenly put a lot of faith in the Bomarc for our defence. These assumptions were wrong. Within two years of scrapping the Arrow, the politicians had no choice but to buy American, obtaining McDonnell CF-101 Voodoos for NORAD duty. Likewise, to replace our Korean war

Sabres in Europe, they purchased Loughheed CF-104 Starfighters for our NATO contingent. Cheaper and adequate, but not in the same league.

When Dief pulled the plug, the results were devastating. AVRO immediately went out of business (a desperate political move perhaps) putting nearly 15,000 employees out of work. All five of the flying Arrows, as well as the completed sections on the assembly line, were cut for scrap. Our greatest aviation achievement and not one was saved for research or for display at the National Museum at Rockcliffe. The government also torched plans, drawings and other artifacts. Engineering expertise and future research and development was lost. A whole industry destroyed. Some of the talented AVRO engineers went on to NASA and helped put an American on the moon.

The CF-104 Starfighter was a single engine, stubby winged craft. I remember that it had a strange howl when taxi-ing if a little throttle was applied. Pilots dubbed it "the widowmaker". Our role in Germany required that it fly low and fast, not what it was intended for. It's wings didn't allow it to glide well, so if the engine flamed-out, it dropped like a rock. Hence the nickname.

I attended a helicopter course at CFB Chatham (New Brunswick) in 1980. This was the home 416 Lynx Squadron, one of our three NORAD interceptor squadrons, which was still flying the Voodoo. Since I had a High Altitude Indocrination qualification (a three day course that allowed one to ride in a jet fighter: teaching the effects of lack of oxygen, explosive decompression, the art of ejection, survival at sea or in the wild, etc.) I was eligible for a ride. This was indeed an experience. The bang of the afterburner kicking in, the feel of G-force, the silence at supersonic speed (the noise is behind you) winging over the Gulf of St. Lawrence. 416 was involved with NORAD exercises at the time. Fighters scrambling from the alert hangars. The windows in my barracks room would rattle and plaster would fall from the ceiling as these planes thundered off in the night. Fantastic: yes, but I couldn't help but wonder "what if"? Canada was again purchasing foreign replacements for these planes and "the widowmakers". The cost of the contenders was in the \$ 20-25 million a copy range. The US CF-18 Hornet was chosen and the existing fighters would retire shortly. If the Canuck lasted thirty years, I wondered if I would have gotten a ride on the Arrow instead?

I guess we're not meant to be high Tech producers. The experience of the Jetliner, Arrow, and the ill-fated hydrofoil "Bras D'Or", would confirm this. After all, there isn't a Canadian car company or sports car either.

Editorial

I guess this nearly draws our driving year to a close. Sure, some of us may keep our cars on the road for a little bit longer, hoping for one last gasp of a summer that if it ever arrived, was far too short in these parts. As John says in his piece earlier, this year was not exactly flushed with activities for us to partake in, no fault of Lynn's, but it was probably just as well, as only about 4 weekends were without rain.

For once the newsletter is filled with other people's writings instead of my own. What a treat! Many thanks to the people who have sent in goodies - please keep them coming. If this keeps up, I might start to enjoy this job. Only joking, but it sure makes the task a lot easier. Our next scheduled outing is the Autojumble this weekend, and after that...

Jenny

Bundle up warm, see you at the Autojumble!



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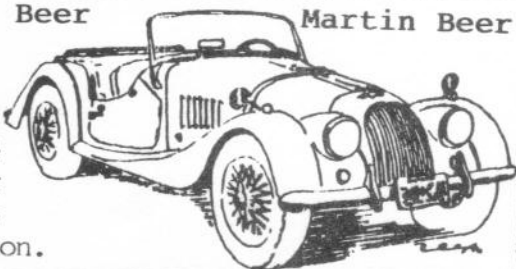
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