



MORGAN MOTOR  
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# *The Morgazette*

*The Newsletter of the Morgan Sports Car Club of Northern California*

***May ~ June 2019***

**Inside:**

- Spring Mog Observations
- Racing reports for Buttonwilow and Sonoma
- Dream Machines at Half Moon Bay
- 50 years' of Morgan Memories
- . . . and more





# *The Morgazette*

*Newsletter of the Morgan Sports Car Club of Northern California*

The Morgan Sports Car Club of Northern California (MSCCNC) exists to support and further the appreciation of Morgan motoring and the related activities of its members and friends. Our common interests start with enthusiastic support of the Morgan sports car experience and extend to the friendship and camaraderie amongst all like-minded persons.

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Tcherek Kamstra

## ***The Morgazette***

is the newsletter of the MSCCNC. It is published 6 times a year and is mailed free to members in good standing.

We welcome any and all original or reprint articles and/or photos labeled with the following information:

- 1) event; 2) date of the event;
- 3) names of all persons appearing in photos;
- 4) name of publication (in the case of a reprint);
- 5) names of authors and photographers.

The **DEADLINES** for receiving ads, photos and articles:

• July 22 • Sept 16 • Nov 18

The **Morgazette** is now available in a digital format as a web PDF. Contact the editor, or see the website..

**Photos** • please note: All photos in the Morgazette are used with the permission of the photographers. Any re-use must acquire new permission. Ask Donna Dell'Ario for attribution.

## ***Welcome New Members***

### **Rip Martin**

Incline Village, NV 89451  
1969 burgundy/black +8

### **Cover Photo:**

*Wondering what this hybrid Morgan is??  
Larry Ayers might bring it to MogWest, and also tell  
you all about it in a future Morgazette.*

Note: we need more submissions or suggestions  
for Centerfold cars/stories.



**\* MSCCNC Club Sponsored Event**  
Other events are listed for information only • Please let Activities Chair, **Angie Larson**, know if you would like to host or promote an event on the Calendar. (Contact info pg.2)

## POSTPONED

\* **TBD** • Oyster Run XXV Marin County– Contact Ayers/Dell’ Ario.

## JULY

\*12-14 FRI-SUN • MOG WEST – contact – Sam Logan & Dan Redmon **see flyers**

21 SUN • Hillsborough Concours d’Elegance, entry deadline May 15th

## AUGUST

9-19 MON-SUN • Monterey Car Week – [www.whatsupmonterey.com/events/monterey-car-week](http://www.whatsupmonterey.com/events/monterey-car-week)

\*16 FRI • Morgan BBQ Carmel Valley - contact Loren Steck

15-18 THUR-SUN • Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion (Laguna Seca Raceway)

18 SUN • Pebble Beach Concours de Elegance

## SEPTEMBER

\*Aug 31-Sep 2 SAT-SUN • Scottish Games Pleasanton – contact Paul Marchant

\*24-27 TUES-FRI • FlogMog –contact- John Burks

21-22 FRI-SUN • Tour-Gala-Concours Danville d’Elegance [www.danville-delegance.org](http://www.danville-delegance.org)

28 SAT • Ironstone Winery Concours de Elegance [www.ironstonefoundation.org](http://www.ironstonefoundation.org)

## OCTOBER

\*TBD • Octoberfest, Elections

## NOVEMBER

\* TBD • Turkey Trot/Gobble Wobble - contact- Martin Mieger, Gordon Craig

## DECEMBER

\*8 SUN • Holiday Party at Zio Fraedo, Vallejo – Elaine Fisher

\*26 THURS • Boxing Day – contact – Wendell Bain

## JANUARY 2020

\*TBD • Planning Meeting



Maker Faire Day, May 31st, Del Rey Grammar School....Beautiful Spring Day, plus Morgans in the play yard courtesy Grant and Angie Larson, photos from the Bamboo King....What’s Not to Like?

|                                                           |              |             |                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ROLEX MONTEREY MOTORSPORTS pre-REUNION                    | August 9-11  | Monterey    | <a href="https://www.weathertechraceway.com/monterey-pre-reunion">https://www.weathertechraceway.com/monterey-pre-reunion</a>                             |
| ROLEX MONTEREY MOTORSPORTS REUNION                        | August 15-18 | Monterey    | <a href="https://www.weathertechraceway.com/rolex-monterey-motorsports-reunion">https://www.weathertechraceway.com/rolex-monterey-motorsports-reunion</a> |
| CSRG 16th Annual Charity Challenge Vintage Car Road Races | October 4-6  | Sonoma      | <a href="http://www.csgracing.org/event-schedule">http://www.csgracing.org/event-schedule</a>                                                             |
| CSRG 52nd Season Finale & Awards Dinner                   | November 1-3 | Thunderhill | <a href="http://www.csgracing.org/event-schedule">http://www.csgracing.org/event-schedule</a>                                                             |

# Low Spencer has passed

## Major Morgan racing pioneer, late May

- from Dennis Glavis

This is heart-breaking news. He was an amazing driver, businessman, and human being. I followed him around the various California tracks in the 60's in my old, beat up '58 +4 Morgan, and proudly carry his number 45 on the +4 I now race in SOVREN in the Northwest. He was a Gentleman, and a gentle man. I am so sad, and so sorry. My sincerest condolences to his family, the many great friends of whom I know was the greatest, and to all of those he inspired. He was a role model, and example of the highest standard, and a Hero.

**On Sat, May 25, Kas Kastner wrote:**

I want to inform racers that my best friend, the great Morgan and Team Cobra driver, Low Spencer, died on Monday the 20th of this month. Low had been going slowly down in his fight with Alzheimer's and tough guy that he was he finally lost that battle this week. Wish him well, a fine man and terrific driver

Low Spencer profile -

Low Spencer, United States (J. Lewis Spencer II)

Note: These statistics are based only on the results available in the RSC archive database.

They cannot be modified or updated on their own and do not cover entire driver's racing history.

Photo Gallery

**Full Archive**

**Results • General figures:**

**Data covers years:** 1954-1965

**Number of events:** 127 (including 6 races where did not start)

**Total entries:** 133 (contains 99 finishes and 18 retirements, finishing ratio: 84%)

**Photos in Gallery:** 12 (9% of all entries)

**Achievements:**

Wins: 12 Additional class wins 24

Second place finishes: 4 Top 3 finishes not applicable

Third place finishes: 9 Races finished on podium 25

Best result (count): 1st (12x) Pole positions 1

**Notes of interest:**

Most frequent co-drivers: Ken Miles (4), Phil Hill (3), Fireball Roberts (2), Bruce Kellner (1), Barbara Windhorst (1), Ralph Peterson (1), Gilbert Geitner (1), Jack Nethercutt (1), Bob Donner (1), Ed Diehl (1), Dave MacDonald (1), Bob Johnson (1), Carroll Shelby (1), Jim Adams (1), Bob Bondurant (1), Dan Gurney (1), Tom Payne (1), Don Sessler (1), Joe Sheppard (1), Bob Tullius (1)

Most frequent makes: Morgan (75), MG (13), AC (11), Devin (10), Sunbeam (10), Shelby (10), Triumph (1), Porsche (1), Dolphin (1), Austin-Healey (1)



WM\_Sebring-1962

Most frequent types: Plus 4 (62), TC (13), VKI (10), Cobra (9), Alpine (7), 4/4 (3), Tiger (3), TR4 (1), GT350 (1), Cobra Daytona Coupe (1), America (1), Ace (1), 718 RSK (1), 3000 (1)

Most frequent chassis: CSX2602 (1), CSX2301 (1), CSX2137 (1), CSX2136 (1), CSX2128 (1), CSX2127 (1), CSX2002 (1), 718-017 (1)

Most frequent tracks: Santa Barbara (25), Riverside (18), Pomona (15), Sebring (10), Paramount Ranch (8), Laguna Seca (8), Del Mar (6), Tucson (6), Bakersfield (5), Torrey Pines (4), Hourglass Field (3)

Most frequent countries: USA (133)



## *The Prez Says...*

*By Greg Powell, President*

Greeting Mogheads!

I need to take a moment to recognize the hard work that goes into this publication, to personally thank Donna and Gordon. They work hard to prepare not only the content of what you are holding in your hands, but they have also been in charge of stuffing and labeling envelopes to mail over 170 copies of each edition. Starting with this edition however, the Club will now focus their efforts on high quality content to leave the distribution work to Minutemen Press. I am so grateful that the Board supported this initiative and know that this change will allow both Donna and Gordon to be involved with the fun part of the publication of the Morgazette.

I recently took my Morgan +4 to the VARA British Extravaganza at Buttonwillow raceway for the first time in May. I was grateful to have my dad accompany me (his first outing after heart surgery), and we both enjoyed the racing, as well as seeing Greg Solow, Larry Ayers, Brian Howlett and Mark Pladson race their Morgans. It was a wild experience entering the race course for the first time ever, but after a few sessions, I got the hang of it and steadily improved my lap times. A highlight of this event was the participation of Kas Kastner and Peter Brock.

Next up for me is getting the Morgan ready for racing in Monterey for the Re-union as well as the Pre-reunion the week before. I will also again have the privilege to drive Dale Barry's 1935 Red Lion Special, the car that provided me with my first entry in this prestigious race event back in 2016. It will be a very busy week for me.

Finally, please consider attending this year's Flogmog that will be centered in Sutter Creek. For those that have not attended this event before, I encourage you to give it a try. I know for a fact that I have driven roads and seen places that I would likely never have seen had it not been for Flogmog (some amazing, and some Trona). Also, it is worth noting that gone are the days of several hundred mile drives each day, and I know that we will not spend any time in Tonopah!



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# Spring Mog Observations

By Lynne Gurley, Helen Cataldo, Ellen Jo Baron, Marty Meiger & Lexa Most

OBSERVATIONS, by Lynne Gurley  
Let's give a shout out to Lexa and Marty  
For planning this great three-day Morgan Party!

We started out with a great big bunch,  
Meeting in San Juan Bautista for lunch.

Then we drove for hours and hours,  
Seeing lovely green hills and wild flowers.  
Along the winding road there was lots to see

However, there was no place to pee!  
Glad we got there before it was dark -  
Did everyone notice as we drove by the shark?

In Paso Robles we checked into the Inn,  
Is it almost cocktail time? Have a beer or some gin.

A group of us walked over to the pub  
Where we had fun talking and eating Irish grub.  
We're coming to an end, and thankful for the good weather,  
But most of all for the Morgan people getting together.

Wonderful event. Thanks, Marty & Lexa.

We wrote this haiku on April 23 on the way into Paso Robles. Bill Button had just fixed some tiny issue that he encountered with Itsa Bitsa, his bright red Morgan +8, and Jim and I were following Bill and his companion Tcherek into town.

Title: *Colors against shades of greens*  
*Tones of purple salvia and lupine.*  
*Hues of yellow: roadsigns, lines,.... & poppies.*  
*The only red?*

The "Button" in front of me.  
Should I push it?

And here is a photo of Bill and Tcherek taken at San Antonio Mission.

Cheers, Ellen Jo Baron  
Prof Emerita, Stanford



Helen Cataldo photos



## Day one observations • Helen Cataldo

Morgans

Back country roads just for Morgan's? hilltop cottages, barns, shacks and stables, grapes, vineyards, gold dandelions, yarrow, cow parsley, cowslips, daisies, wild roses and the California poppies. Grasses waving in the silent breeze, more barns, up hills, down dales, curvy roads, bumpy roads, pothole free back roads ....almost!!!

Spring time, nature in its greenest splendor, thank you for the abundant rain, the smell of fresh cut grass before Willow Creek, varieties of oaks and Pines, as well as dying skeletons from years of drought and budding leafy deciduous trees. Slow down – 30 mph, hold tight, curves, ranches, mountains and valleys, 85 mph. Hold tight, stay on the road. A lone Rusting windmill in the farmyard, stables, horses, beehives. Pinnacles national park, cows lazing under shade trees, chewing their cud, thankful for the breeze. Ponds, glistening in the sun, pale blue skies, and tilled fields awaiting seed in the valley of rich green moss. Occasional lanes leading to secret hideaway's. Inquisitive eyes from curious cows as they stare at the racing, noisy, Morgan convoy. Each Morgan born in a different land - in Malvern, the land I call home.



## From Marty Meiger and Lexa Most

When in the course of human events it becomes necessary to have fun, the Moggies gather. This time it was the second edition of Mar y Missiones under the guise of Spring Mog. The theme over years has been to get out in the countryside while it is still green, just after the rains. Once again, we got lucky and nature was in full cooperation.

Mar y Missiones is a version of Spring Mog in which one or more of the California missions and a visit to the ocean are included. This year we again met at El Jardines de San Juan restaurant in San Juan Bautista for lunch and the drivers meeting. We were able to sit in their beautiful patio gardens and share lunch and libations with friends old and new. At the drivers meeting the very confusing "instrucciones" were passed out and folks discovered that to do the run they had to read a series of paper maps included in the packet. This seemed to work for the most part as I verified that all had made it to the closing banquet on the second evening of a three-day run. But I am out of order.

The afternoon was spent driving south on the Airline Highway and an assortment of ranch roads which go through some spectacular country and provide an assortment of driving challenges with almost no other cars. If done in its entirety, no time need be spent on 101 to go to Paso Robles. I am not sure who made the best time, but I think it was Robert Horsley with Grant and Angie Larson hot on his tail. Additional excitement was provided by Bill Button with navigator Tcherek Kamstra whizzing past in the oncoming traffic lane announcing, "We have no clutch!" It turns out that Mr. Button was not disturbed by this as he said it had happened before several years ago. A little hydraulic fluid and we were off.

At this point you may be thinking that Uncle Marty likes to talk. This would be true, however this small taste of detail regarding the first afternoon is provided in the hope that you will be motivated to organize and/or attend more of the club events. With this much happening in the first afternoon you can only guess how much went on in the next few days.

In capsule, the first night and second day were more or less on your own. Some suggestions included dinner at an Irish pub and a drive to the coast the next day with some folks visiting Hearst Castle. This year marks the 100th anniversary of the collaboration of Billy Hearst and Julia Morgan to produce a place and collections which are an international treasure. It would take a joint venture of Jeff Bezos and Bill Gates to fund such a thing in today's dollars. They too might bankrupt themselves in the attempt.

This brings us to the second night of a three-day run and the closing banquet held at the Paso Robles Inn. We had a large private room with the bar right outside the door lest we suffer thirst. Don Henry and his lovely companion Grace took the best-dressed award. This was the night to clean up and gather with friends for a nice meal, drinks and the "Esemplastic Oration" contest. Many good writings were composed and read by the authors for the entertainment and edification of the assembled who were still awake. Prizes of great intrinsic value were

## Spring Mog cont'd

awarded by popular vote and fiat of the management. The award winners as well as those in attendance are too numerous to mention. Out of the thirty-two people who signed up for the event twenty-eight were able to attend. We were sorry that Club scribe, photographer and editor Gordon Craig and his charming wife Maggie as well as Carol Pittman and her daughter could not join us. The rest of you know who you are!



Marty's photo at Hearst Castle

The third day of the event took us from the Paso Robles Inn to Mission San Antonio de Padua. This is one of the least visited of the missions and both W. R. Hearst and Julia Morgan figured heavily in the use, restoration and addition to properties in this area. The route was kindly suggested by John and Lyn Willburn and it delivered. A private tour of the mission with a catered lunch followed the drive with folks continuing on to ever greater adventure on the highways and byways of California, Oregon and Washington. Long distance awards to Button, Horsley, Burks' and Schaw's.

Thank you all who kindly commented on their experiences. Grab a young person and bring them to a club event. MogWest is coming right up with a series of other events all year. What could possibly be more fun than to drive one of the most improbable cars still being made with a group of like-minded people? Perhaps volunteering to do an event. • Submitted in the name of good fun. Uncle Marty and Lexa



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# Morgan Racing at Buttonwillow 2019

Story & Photos by Larry Ayers

The 3-5 May 2019 event at Buttonwillow Raceway, 35 miles from Bakersfield, contained a field of 6 Morgans. VARA hosts this British Extravaganza event annually. Friday is registration, tech, and practice for entries who pay extra. Racing is both Sat and Sun with a car show and awards on Sat and a BBQ on Sat evening with a karaoke. Entry to the track is only ten dollars for both days of racing. At registration, decals depicting Peter Giddings in his Alfa Romeo were given out to commemorate our departed prewar racer who may now be racing in another dimension. The decals were displayed on the prewar cars.

Only one three wheeler in prewar made an appearance, my 2013 5 Speed. Another 1932 Morgan trike was registered but was a no show. The Saturday AM session was a timed qualifying and the PM race was the qualifying race. On Sunday, the AM session was a warm up. Before noon a Union Jack Challenge was open to all British cars with several Morgans participating. The Sun afternoon sessions hosted all 7 of the groups for their respective Flag Races meaning that all vehicles placing first in their group was awarded a checkered flag. However, all the prewar/historic drivers who finished the event were each presented with a flag. A side event, the Kastner Cup, open only to Triumphs, was won by Brian Howlett who was racing his very fast 1965 TR4A. Brian had the misfortune with his Morgan shearing a left rear axle on Sun AM while maneuvering through the esses and experienced several anxious moments bringing the car under control. Considerable damage to the Morgan's body work resulted in this unfortunate turn of events, but Brian was okay.

Greg Powell, Greg Solow, Mark Pladson, John Miller, and Brian Howlett all had their Morgans in tune and enjoyed a nice weekend with the exception of Brian's bad luck. John Miller was entered in the prewar/historic group 4 piloting his 1951 +4 Flat Rad and took a first place on Sun for the Flag Race with my 5 Speed 3W finishing in 3rd place out of the 9 entries in the field. Yes, there were some dropouts in the prewar/historic class as is usually the case. The old machinery is kept in fine fettle by their owners/drivers but metal fatigue is sometimes the culprit.

The weather cooperated producing around 85-90-deg temps on Fri and Sat under mostly blue skies, but was a little cooler on Sun with the wind a factor as it sometimes created mini dust bowl conditions on the

track. And if someone exits the track it compounds the situation. There was some of the latter, but without any serious consequences. Over all, a splendid weekend celebrating a large variety of British vehicles and their owners who participated in two fun-filled days of the British Extravaganza and became reacquainted with their friends and racing buddies.



Mark Padson & Brian Howlett



Greg Solow



Lynn & Greg Powell (Greg's photo)



Larry Ayers

## **1964 Morgan + 4 • Owned by Wilson B. Cosby (Morgan Club Founder)**

### **Morgan Reminisces by Jon Cosby**

I am writing this as I prepare, emotionally, to let go of my Father's last Morgan and with the hope that a new owner will get as much pleasure from it as my Father did and I have.

My Father, Wilson Cosby, was a founder and first President of what was then called the Morgan + 4 Club of Northern California.

He was a native San Franciscan and became interested in a new adventure when maintaining a boat and sailing on the Bay became too arduous. A nephew, who owned an MG TC said he should look into a Morgan. This was in 1953'.

He did, and became interested in the car and its classic style. Then the fun began.

It took a year of sleuthing before he found a car that was for sale (a red 1953). The challenge was that it was in Venezuela! He arranged to buy it and have it shipped to Long Beach on a freighter. He was there to pick it up when it arrived (possibly with some assistance from members of the Southern California Club).

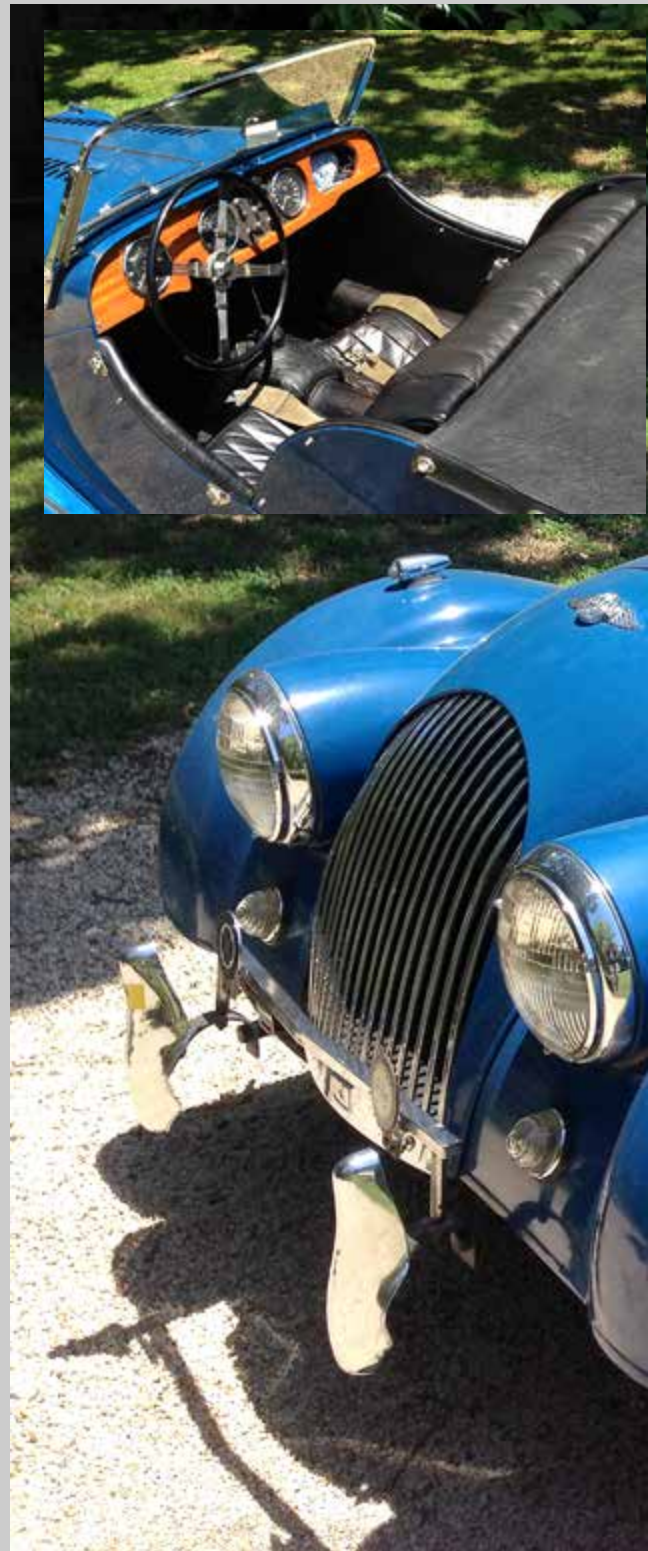
With the car running, he headed North on Highway 99 toward home (Berkeley). Along the way he would stop to call home and give updates on his progress. A group of friends and car enthusiast had gathered at the family home to celebrate the anticipated arrival.

The trip started in good weather and then it began to rain. Not a problem, he had a top even though it was a little leaky. As he approached Tracy, evening started to fall and he would need head lights. Unfortunately, they didn't work...bad wiring.

Another phone call home. The response to the situation was immediate! A caravan was needed to escort the Morgan home! A call to the cars ensued! Four cars, drivers and friends of the drivers headed for Tracy (including me age nine). On arrival in Tracy, the caravan quickly surrounded the Morgan and headed to Berkeley, arriving without incident. I got to ride home in the passenger seat and, with no side curtains; I kept my head outside with the pelting rain in a state of sheer euphoria.

The car had more problems than simply the wiring. Father engaged a mechanic at C J Motors in Berkeley to assist him on Saturdays in the rebuilding of the car. At the end of the Saturday shift, my Father would be given a set of tasks to be completed before the next Saturday session. The restoration, including a new lacquer paint job (red), took several months to complete.

During this time, and after the car was running, Father found out through random sightings and through the Southern California Morgan Club that other Morgans were in Northern



California. Morgans seeing Morgans would always stop to chat. This led to a meeting at Clate Meredith's house in Marin (1956/1957?). There were five Morgan owners there: Clate, my Father, Bill Hinshaw, Rudy Pabst (I think) and an Air Force Captain Holmes from Hamilton Field. It was decided that the Northern California Chapter of the



Club should be formed and my Father was elected President.

For the first few years, the Club had monthly meetings held at member's homes, with brunch, talk about car issues, and generally a car tour. The Club members would attend local rallies, gymkhanas and races (where some of the members would compete).

Over the years the family had four Morgans...the 1953 red+4 roadster, a 1953 green four seater, a 1958 blue+4 and a 1964 blue+4. My father would always take care before driving to make sure all fluids were at a proper level, and that the car was sound.

He passed away in 1974

**See FOR SALE information on page 19**

Mogs at Dream Machines, Half Moon Bay, April 1st - Combined reports from Jon Rosner and Fred Winterburn, great turnout, Morgans right at home with Blastolene Special, many thanks to Chris Hall for organizing the Club presence, cheers, ed.

## Dream Machines

Story & Photos from Jon Rosner



**Michael Leed's Big Bertha** was built on a 1941 Seagrave's Fire Engine Chassis, Michael started working on it in 1974.

Michael is still lovingly chipping away at his creation. Otherwise known as the "Tank Car." One of Michael's biggest claims to fame

is that, as an illustrator, he was one of the two Blastolene Brothers and was heavily involved in the design and build of the Blastolene

Special now owned by Jay Leno. His Blastolene brother, Randy Grubb, also had something special at the 2019 Dream Machines.

3 photos: Michael Leed's Big Bertha, Jon Rosner  
Magic Bus photo courtesy of Design Boom

A prodigious designer and builder Randy Grubb made **the Magic Bus** five years ago. "This is my ultimate Haight Ashbury Tribute Piece."

Built on a 1974 GMC Motorhome chassis, the lower nose is from a 1947 Divco Milk Truck and the VW Bus up top is a 1962 23 window VW Bus. It features an elevator inspired by the Lost In Space. "The Jupiter 2 in Lost in Space had a similar elevator."

Said Randy Grubb "I call myself an Automotive artist creating full size sculptures that you can drive." "My first sculpture was the Jay Leno Tank Car built 15 years ago."



## Dream Machines cont'd • Comments and photos from Fred Winterburn

Hi Gordon, these are a few shots of the event on the 28th. John has some better shots with more people. At the end of the event Grant Larson throttle line broke. He found a guy with two bikes and was able to pedal to Princeton with his new friend Ed to Ed's shop. There they took apart the brakes of a bike and pedal back to the event cable in hand. After some pounding on the end stud, bending the carburetor throttle bracket and on Twining the cable of it it worked. Grant made it home safe and sound.

Hope you're doing well. Cheers, Fred Winterburn



Photo  
by Jon  
Rosner



# The Inaugural 2019 Sonoma Speed Festival

Story & Photos by Jon Rosner

Take two parts Monterey Historics/Reunion, one part Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance, one part Concorso Italiano, add spices of Gooding and Company, a dozen top wineries, shake and pour; the result: The Inaugural 2019 Sonoma Speed Festival.

This was the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Sears Point Raceway:

If seeing, hearing and feeling the ex-Mercedes AMG Petronas Formula One car tearing the wind, hammering around the track, a screaming banshee quite liable of disturbing the tranquility of the delicate vines surrounding the track does not make your jaw drop – Then maybe the featured 1966 to 1969 Trans Am cars were more to your liking. Watching two full blown AMX race cars leave a slew of fast Mustangs in their wake was sparkling fun. If you went to grab something from the Food Park or to the Sip and Savor Wine Pavilion, sampling the delightful wines you might have missed the Mercedes W154, McLaren F1 GTR, Aston Martin DBS and Ferrari GTO being flung around the track.

The Evolution of Speed concept was well displayed.

No you're not mistaken, that funny looking little yellow and green car with the wheels further out on one side was THE Lotus-Ford that Jimmy Clark drove to victory at the Indianapolis 500 in 1965. The car was beyond revolutionary. It introduced the concept of "add lightness," rear/

mid-engine design, a high performance engine based upon a street-car design. In an instant the old tall front engine roadsters that derived their designs from the ancient beach and boardwalk racing cars had been relegated to the history books.

Next section displayed a series of historic front engine drag racers. Massive engines, scrawny frames, bicycle tires up front and several hundred horsepower coming down the not particularly well-shielded drive shaft positioned between the driver's legs to the differential and the massive rear wheels.

There was no mistaking the old timers when they were out on the track. Sounding wizened, clanky, cranky, roaring like World War One aircraft and delicately sliding around corners on their tall, spindly wheels. The blend of oil, burnt rubber, unburned fuel wafted into the grandstand. The drivers and



mechanics sporting ear to ear grins, wagon buckboard comfortable very upright seating. Chugging along, unsynchronized gears gnashing in splendid delight. White pant legs and shirt sleeves flapping vigorously. Races could and did turn deadly in the pre-war days, but not now, still it takes arms and legs of steel to hustle these beasts around a course.

For an event that was pulled together in around eight months with little general publicity



the 2019 Sonoma Speed Festival was well attended matching the Monterey Reunions of the last few years. Yes, a much smaller footprint than the big week in Monterey. But with cars, auctions and food all in short walking distances it was much easier to see most of what was on order, a truly enjoyable event.



## **Ike Smith: Those who were there in the day**

One of the great aspects of an event like the 2019 Speed Festival of Sonoma is the number of people who quietly come out of the woodwork to attend. Taking a break from shooting the hot cars idling and ready to launch into race mode this scribbler sat down and next to Ike Smith.

"Jim McNeil brought this car out of New York" for

this event. "This is the car that Enzo Ferrari gave John Surtees when he made the switch from motorcycles to cars in 1962." I remember "1974, Steve Earle and four friends up in Vacaville – that was the start of the whole Historics trend." "Before that there was US Road Racing, I've been doing this for a long time."

Ike was a mechanic/fabricator/crew chief. "My favorite car was the Lola T-70, Mark 1 or Mark 2. We won the USRRC Championship with Chuck Parsons in a Chevy powered McLaren Mark 2 in 1966." "It was a great time for racing, but we were too busy (to notice). We worked "seven days a week for the season." There were only "two people working on the car." "We towed from Carmel straight through to Bridgehampton. We did "Las Vegas, Riverside, Laguna Seca in three weeks," then we did " Bridgehampton, St Jovite, and Mosport in the next three weeks." "Then we'd tow back to California." We stopped in Chicago, Mike Anderson Chevrolet, "biggest Chevrolet Dealer in the United States at the time. We just worked out of a mechanic's stall, whoever was on vacation. We spent one Summer in Chicago." "It was fun, it went by too fast, a blur."

Ike just sat placidly on the wall in the hot pit. Watching the cars launch and standing when the competitors sailed past start finish. He dropped back into quiet mode, the little smile only receding slightly. Clearly he was enjoying himself immensely. If this is what the folks from the Speed Festival could pull off in eight months one has to wonder what they might be able to come up with for 2020.

# 50 Golden Years of Club Membership, continued

By Larry Ayers

*Continued from the Morgazette  
March~April issue*

Owning my first four-wheeler led to the purchase of my first three-wheeler in 1970, the result of reading an article about Morgan trikes. This was a 1934 MX Family, purchased for the princely price of \$564 during a trip to the U.K. Shipping by freight for \$200 brought it to Martinez where I took possession. This trike later sold for \$8K and found a new home in Idaho, moved on to the Washington State, found its way to New Zealand, and was there until recently. A covey of other trikes have since found their way into my stables. At last count, slightly over twenty have come and gone, with five currently alive and well. Two Snobmogs have also been enjoyed in the past, and a 2005 Aero 8 alongside a 2013 5 Speed 3W are now exercised on a weekly or monthly basis.

A trip in 1975 took me to Waterville, ME to purchase a derelict 1931 JAP Super Aero that I secured (it barely fit) on a used snow mobile trailer purchased for \$75, and I delivered it to San Francisco behind my 1970 Chevy Impala. I later sold the trailer for \$200. This 3W has changed hands several times, and now resides with Brian Pollock in Washington State. It was during this trip that I stopped by Niles, MI and first saw Red (a 1930 JAP Super Aero) that I desired. Two years of correspondence with owner, Vic Hyde, and a swap for two of my B.S.A. three wheelers met with results, and Red was mine. This historic Brooklands trike was raced in the 1930s in the U.K. by Henry Laird and his brother, Richard, and was awarded Best of Show in 1988

at Mog West. Thank you, Roy Lane, for your excellent selection.

My first trip to attend a Morgan Three Wheeler Club AGM in England in 1977, after joining the club in 1970, was an initiation of sorts. About 35 trikes were in the car park at The Abbey Hotel and I was elected to judge them, with no assistance, and report the winners at the awards ceremony. Since then, I've become much more knowledgably about the various Morgan 3W models.

I've traveled to England a number of times, and attended the MTWC AGM (Morgan Three Wheeler Club Annual Group Meeting) on another occasion. On this trip, Morgan 3W owner, Stan Thorpe, who lived in Blackburn, recruited me to pilot his 1934 JAP SS, because his arm was in a cast. He navigated as we traveled from his home to Great Malvern and the Abbey Hotel, a journey of around 200 miles. Over the weekend, I put more miles on the trike while participating in a fun khana event at Madresfield. Over 450 miles were covered by the time I returned his trike to Blackburn in The Midlands. What super hospitality and a fun adventure for this Yank!

I began Vintage Racing in 1996, and now with over 60 track events logged while racing my Red 1930 J.A.P. Super Aero Brooklands Morgan. Owning this historic trike inspired me to author a book about its complete history, "A Morgan Called Red, Brooklands to Laguna Seca." Another trike owner, Dale Barry, from the Southern CA Plus 4 Club, accompanied me to race our trikes at Buttonwillow and inspired VARA (Vintage Auto Racing Association) and Dan Longacre to

organize a prewar group that has been successful. Dale and I traveled to Lime Rock, Watkins Glen, and Road America in 2004 and 2009 to race. During the past three years, I've been racing the 2013 Morgan trike at Buttonwillow with VARA in prewar, as an exhibition entry. Dale retired from racing his trike because of a neck and spinal injury experienced while racing at the Sonoma Raceway in a Morgan F-Model owned by Karen Barry who previously raced it at Laguna Seca. Brave lady! She was, and still is, the only female driver to race a Morgan trike in the U.S. as far as I know.

I could write a book just on the racing adventures I've experienced with Red for the past 20-some years and through that time my amazing Crew Chief, Donna Dell'Ario, has provided her support in addition to replacing upholstery and a rear wheel beetle back cover. She has also fabricated tops (hoods) tonneau covers, and created seat upholstery for my various 3W models. It's quite a talent that she's developed over the years. I must also thank, Michael Anthony, (Mog Dog Restorations) for coming to the rescue with his welding talents when I tried to obliterate Red's chassis after a wall contact at Sonoma Raceway. I lost a wheel on another occasion, and Bob Angell (U.K. resident) supplied new stub axles. There are several other mishaps I've experienced over the years, so don't get me started. Those are subjects for another article. However, I must thank my crew(s) for their support that has been most appreciated.

When attending the races at Laguna Seca, as early as 1972, the

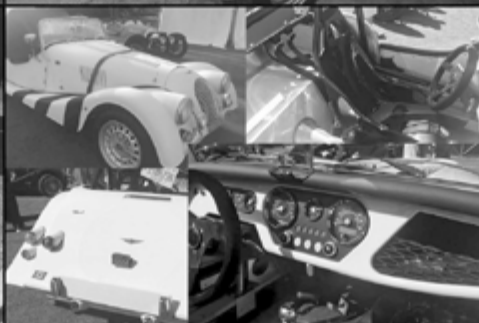
*Continued on page 18*



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#### **2010 Morgan AERO SUPERSPORT**

Alcatraz Silver Grey Metallic/two tone grey quilted leather interior, black wheels and tops, 2,800 miles

**2005 Morgan 3.0 V6 ROADSTER** Dark Silver Metallic, Yarwood Pale Grey

**2005 Morgan AERO 8 SuperSport**, Rhodium Silver Metallic/Blue

**2005 Morgan 3.0 V6 ROADSTER** Dark Silver Metallic, Yarwood Pale Grey

#### **2003 Morgan PLUS 8 35TH**

**ANNIVERSARY EDITION**, Mulsanne Green Metallic, Magnolia leather, 6.7k miles

#### **2003 Morgan PLUS 8 35TH**

**ANNIVERSARY EDITION**, Jaguar Platinum Silver/Muirhead Mulberry Leather Sport Seats

#### **2003 Morgan PLUS 8 35TH**

**ANNIVERSARY** Bugatti Blue/Black leather with blue piping

#### **2002 Morgan PLUS 8 LEMANS**

'62 BRG body-white hard top/Black leather // RIGHT HAND DRIVE - #01 OF 40

#### **2000 Morgan PLUS 8**

Cranberry Metallic/Ivory // BEST IN CLASS WINNER

#### **1998 Morgan PLUS 8 Cranberry**

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## 50 Years, Cont'd

Morgan Club had their own corral parking area in the infield, sharing it on occasion with the Alfa Romeo Club. Parking in the track infield eventually became rather pricy and congested, and marked the end of that exercise. Boo Hoo.

Attending Mog West over the years has introduced me to many wonderful Morgan enthusiasts resulting in some great friendships. Co-hosting the reception darts with Donna certainly stands out as a fun and delightful experience as well as attending the many vehicle displays and rallies. The rallies organized by John Willburn contained many instances of surprise and endurance. When Donna and I took the 1932 JAP Aero on a 95 mile rally (the 2nd time) that was exciting. The first time it overheated on the Santa Cruz Road and Jim Taylor came to the rescue with his trailer. What a guy! He and I have each experienced trike failures on the rally events. More than once for me. R.B. Ward was involved in a rescue another time. At least, his nice Flat Rad kept humming along even though he didn't rally. The car judging under Gerry Willburn's guidance over the years has also been most appreciated, even though on occasion the judges who inspected the Morgan 3 wheelers didn't know much about them, and therefore made some erroneous decisions.

There was a little event in 2000 called the Pan-Pacific Road Race Celebration that ran from Los Angeles to Visalia. The original course in the early teens ran from Sacramento to L.A. Enthusiasts ran half of that distance for the event organized by Brian Blain of prewar racing fame. George Tollworthy and I trailered our trikes to L.A. joined

other vintage cars, and ran the event on back roads with stops at schools and small towns where the reception for our group of vehicles was very welcomed. The second leg of that event from Visalia to Sacramento never materialized due to the many logistics of arranging lodging and eating establishments on back roads for a large group.

Ah, the Oktoberfest. The Club used to meet at Xanadu in Napa when Elliott Silver hosted our group. "Fingers" was a wild man on his violin, and "Bobbie and The Titanics" entertained us with their antics. Lynne Gurley remembers this vividly as she was part of the group. We partied wildly at Xanadu and some club members bedded down under the pool table. Outside games were a common attraction at this and other locations like the Haines' residence in Los Gatos, and later when they moved to Loomis. Steve Roake hosted Oktoberfest at his place in Cloverdale and who can forget the games of sweep at the pool, and the darts? Some participants took part in the "talent show" at these gatherings. Club members had their moments of fame during these outbursts of talent.

Writing for the Morgazette over the years, as well as for several other Morgan newsletters, has provided a great outlet for my pent-up creativity. I can't recall how many articles I've done since 1996, but who's counting? Writing continues to be fun and enjoyable as long as I can spel(?). Donna continues to be my Chief Editor, and we enjoy working on each and every issue of The Morgazette with Gordon.

The Oyster Run that Donna and I began hosting twenty-five years ago is celebrating its Silver Anniversary in 2019. What a delightful event

this has been over the years with interesting themes and lunch stops at locations like Tony's Seafood Restaurant in Marshall. The journey through Marin County with its many hills and scenery is always pleasant and the participants continue to have fun. No more flats, Mel, and no more towing of Morgans we trust that would interrupt adventures in the future.

Prior to the traffic on our Bay Area Freeways becoming so congested, and coupled with the aging of our club's members, we had no excuse for not holding monthly board meetings, enjoying a variety of restaurants and pizza parlors centrally located. I miss both of those, but can't argue with the changing times that have negated that.

Time marches on, as someone said, but what a fun 50 years it has been being a member of our great Morgan Sports Car Club of Northern California, of the Morgan Plus 4 Club, and others around the world. So many Morgan Club members feel like family, and countless memories have been experienced and enjoyed. May the fellowship and fun continue! A toast to the future! Keep on Mogging.



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*See more photos in Centerfold this issue*



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