

Le Mans 62 Register

News Bulletin

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LeMans62



'Tally ho....'

Martin Cooper at the NorceMog Gymkhana, leading the field!

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Register News

Firstly a sad piece of news. Don Grayson recently passed away after an illness following major surgery in July. I had the pleasure of meeting Don and his son Richard at the Waddesdon Meet in May and at that time he was looking to having his operation and getting back behind the wheel of his cherished Le Mans 62 (Car 63). Richard has taken on the car and we look forward to seeing him at future events.

Wheels in Winslow

Every year the former market town of Winslow in Buckinghamshire hold their annual Winslow Show on the August Bank Holiday Monday. Traditionally a very 'country' themed event with Horse Show, Dog Show, Craft stalls, charity stalls, Tug of War, Fancy Dress and the inevitable Tea and Beer Tents!

In the past a parade of vehicles, usually classic cars and tractors, has opened the Show. Last year I was privileged to transport the Town Mayor in style. Due to the inevitable red tape that this now requires the parade had to be abandoned and I saw the opportunity to develop a more formal vehicle based event, and so 'Wheels in Winslow' was born.



The 'drive' to organise the event was both as a Morgan owner, with the thought of further

displaying more cars in the Centenary Year, but also with my 'Lion's Hat' (I am also a member of the Lions Club of Winslow and the show is jointly organised by the local Rotarians, Lions and Show Association) an opportunity to add another attraction to the format of this great little Show. Well a result indeed!

We attracted around fifty vehicles including fifteen Morgans from CranMog, FoxMog, OxMog, TVMog and TalkMorgan and very pleased that two other Le Mans 62 Registrants joined the display, namely Keith and Elizabeth Wait (Car 51) and Steve Elsey and Grandson (Car 52). Particularly satisfying was to

promote the 'Morgan Brand' even more by including Morgan Centenary Raffle Tickets to all entrants of the event. I am very pleased to report that we raised over £610 for the Children in Need Morgan Raffle, so Steve and Keith, thanks for joining us in what later turned out to be a beautiful sunny day and hopefully you can bring Y100 MMC with you next year when you have won!

We plan to repeat the event on next years August Bank Holiday Monday, put it in your diary!

Bottom Spring Gaiters

As autumn approaches with the thoughts of wet, muddy and gritty roads one thinks about the poor 'Sliding Pillars' and the rather exposed bottom spring.



Well I did anyway! –and thankfully so did Dave Wellings. Dave has featured many useful modifications to his beautiful car on the TalkMorgan website and amongst them was his creation of what I call the 'Wellings Welly' – basically a cover made from mohair material to the bottom spring. It is a simple solution and as always I

wonder why the factory has never thought of it (or anyone else to be fair). I purchased a set a few months and several 1000 trouble free miles ago and I must say that I and several others are very impressed. They take around 10 minutes to fit with Velcro fastenings and I did it even without jacking up the car. I have had cause to drive some rough lanes recently and even this has not detached these from their task – to keep the 'less than nice stuff' from the bottom of the sliding pillar. They are available direct from Dave at dave.wellings@btinternet.com, or send a cheque direct to him at: 17 Manor Farm Drive, Swinton, Mexborough, South Yorkshire, S64 8JB, they are £15 per pair and 50p for postage (obviously our European friends need to confirm postage costs with him directly)

Goodwood Revival 2009

(By Achim Niemeyer (Car 21))

(Editors Note - This was our second Revival and I must say 'As' if not 'More than' enjoyable as the last. This time we were lucky enough to be able to attend both the Saturday and Sunday races. Amongst which was the Fordwater Trophy with Keith Ahlers and TOK racing. This was an exciting event and what follows is great description of the race by Achim Niemeyer (Car 21) with some of my own photographs.)

After a fascinating qualifying on the Friday, Keith Ahlers put TOK on second row in fourth place – beside a Triumph TR4 in third, behind the powerful TVR Grantura in second and the Austin-Healey 3000 in pole.

With an overwhelming start the TVR stole the lead at Madgwick Corner, followed very closely by the Healey, the TR4 and Keith in his 'infamous' Morgan. Early in the second round Keith overtook the Triumph, with late braking, in Lavant Corner. Then, on the next lap TOK passed the Healey with a spectacular manoeuvre at St. Mary`s - over the apex curbs, with two wheels on the grass he pushed the big Healey back to third place!



TOK holding a lead over the Healey as they battle through Woodcote

Unfortunately for Keith, he was not able to enjoy this position for too long as a couple of minutes later the powerful three litre engine of the Healey easily passed TOK on the straight.

In the middle of this twenty minute race Keith turned on the headlights to circle through the back-markers and managed to increase the distance to the following Triumph. Shortly before the end of the race another moment of shock, lapping someone at Woodcote



Corner only the outer line was available but it appeared that the route Keith chose he was travelling too fast – but again he proved his class. Instead of trying it the 'hard way'

with the risks of slipping or crashing he went straight on, full brake up to the gravel and then smoothly "rolled" through the gravel back on track!

The gap to the following car was now reduced but not enough to really endanger Keith's third place at this late stage of the race.

Karsten Le Blanc showed much less nerve in his Austin-Healey, only several yards to the chequered flag he also pushed too hard through Woodcote Corner and lost his first place by only one and half seconds, being overtaken by the closely following Ian Bankhursts' TVR Grantura.

"It was a great race" Keith Ahlers stated later on in the paddocks, "after the qualifying I doubted I would be able to follow the much more powerful cars this close. To also finish before the Triumph is satisfying as well."

During the interview with 'Goodwood-TV' Keith explained why he could manage to be so close to those



TOK working her way through the 'back markers' at Woodcote

three respective 2.5 litre cars, *"As always, TOK runs perfectly. The handling of this tiny car is so much better – in St. Mary`s, Lavant and the Chicane I could run very much faster but of course at the high speed sections like Lavant Straight I do have to realise the power of these cars".* Ten minutes after the race, some rain drops appeared. *"Too late" Keith stated, "today in the rain TOK would not have been beaten by anyone..."*



'Ace Reporter' Achim with Keith Ahlers after the race.
(Photo by Achim – well at least his camera!)

Another 'Le Mans 62' drivers win.... this time at an Autumn Gymkhana (By Martin Cooper – Car 79)

Sunday 20th September dawned bright and fair and found me removing the cream hard top from my 'Le Mans 62' and popping on the tonneau. After breakfast Laura and I set off from Lowton en route to the September NorceMog gymkhana at the Red Lion in Lower Withington, Cheshire. Unfortunately, due to holidays and other commitments, we had been unable to attend any meetings since the last gymkhana at Myerscough.



On arrival at the venue we found John and Irene in their lovely blue +4 and the immaculate bright red +8 of Colin Hill. Colin and John were setting out the pegs for the first course before Colin went round with a wheelbarrow and a rake, removing the manure from some of our four legged, single horse powered vehicles. For a while we were worried there would be only three cars but, around 11.30am the tell-tale sound of throaty engines announced Adrian, Ivan and new Morgan owners Maurice and Pat. Typical, you wait thirty minutes for a Morgan and three turn up at once!

With the ladies settled on the picnic chairs with a coffee, the racing could begin. John went first to show us the way. The first run was almost over when John and Pat Faulkner arrived, looking well and laden down with tomatoes from their garden. After two courses we had a break from racing to enjoy lunch and a drink in the pub, then back out into the glorious sunshine (possibly the last of the year) for the last two races. John Faulkner was absent from the third race as he was whizzing my wife around Cheshire in his silver SLK. Thanks by the way John, Laura would now like one for her next car! After the final circuit, John totted up the times and announced the winners. In third place was Ivan, second and 'gentleman driver' went to Colin Hill and in first place was a very pleased me! And if I can find room on the trophy amongst Simon's name, I'll have it engraved with my own.

A very enjoyable day all round.

(Editors note – Martin was particularly pleased to have taken the prize as Simon Baines of Speedmog fame has won this event for the last five years. Well done Martin)

Some of the history of Car No 76' (by John Cadwell)

Originally purchased by a Mr. T L Morgan in Dec/Jan 2002/2003, registered in Jan 2003, from John Gill Ltd as a standard specification Le Mans 62 4/4. It was not long before the first owner made the decision to upgrade the suspension. In May 2003 roller bearings, up rated springs, panhard rod and Koni shock



absorbers front and rear were fitted. In addition it would seem that a little more power was needed. Later in May 2003 Specialised Engines Ltd. (who still advertise in the Morgan Magazine) modified the engine and fitted Kent Cams and carried out their Stage 3 modification to the cylinder head etc. Shortly afterwards (less than a week) a Dastek Unichip was fitted by Solent Race and Rally in Portsmouth. In July 2003 a Libra roll bar system was fitted and the radiator shroud was closed/ panelled in to ensure all the air from the grill went through to assist cooling. At this time lower seatbelt eyes and harnesses were provided. Apart from regular servicing, a few cosmetic modifications and a new sports silencer in 2007, there is little information on the car until I purchased it from Russell Paterson Morgan in Perth on 1 May 2009.

I would be most interested to know if the car was used competitively and any other information from the period 2004-2007. At sometime the Dastek Unichip was removed and I had this replaced and changed the KN RC8440 air filter to a KN Apollo with cold air induction. This cured a tendency to cut out when coming back to idle with the engine hot and also stopped the throttle/ revs from hanging apart from the



period when the engine is warming up to normal running temperature. In July and August this year I covered over 5,000 miles with a trip to the South of France and down to Southampton from Scotland. Cruising at 85-95 mph on the French auto routes was no problem even in 35 degrees of heat. I can't say the same for the driver and passenger who nearly expired stuck in a traffic jam south of Lyon in these temperatures. We both needed more water but the Morgan took it all quite happily and never missed a beat.

The only issue is that there were quite a few thunderstorms with forked lightning and if there was any lightning activity close the alternator warning light came on but was easily reset by turning the ignition off and restarting. This still persists but hey!! Who wants to drive a Morgan in a thunderstorm?

Just recently I have replaced the standard catalytic convertor with a 200 cpsi sports cat, fitted an FSE power boost valve and had the Unichip remapped. The end result is 153 BHP at 7,000 rpm and 127 ft/lbs Torque at 5,000 rpm. Driveability is excellent and the mid range 3,000- 4,500 rpm dip in the Torque curve has been eliminated. Other than working out how to achieve better cold air induction (presently the intake is vertical above the front axle) without hacking holes in the car. I would be grateful for any suggestions. I don't intend to carry out any more modifications to the engine.

Without doubt the main improvements to performance were the work/modifications carried by Specialised Engines Ltd and I am most grateful to Ian Melville for confirming the work carried out in 2003 that gave the major improvements in performance and a car that still runs very well some 20,000 miles and 6 years on.



'Le Mans 62 at Angouleme (by Alistair and Yvonne Skinner (Car 46))

It was a double celebration this year as it was the 70th Anniversary of the Circuit des Remparts at Angouleme and the organisers had also offered 20 Morgans (examples of all the different models) the opportunity to do 3 parade laps around the circuit to mark the Morgan Centenary.

We had the honour of being the Le Mans 62 representative and we were so looking forward to getting on the track, but that was on the Sunday...we had a few events of our own arranged prior to that.

Our English guests arrived on the Wednesday, just in time for lunch (of course!) They had, unfortunately, brought some English rain with them, but it didn't last long (and anyway, we really needed it as we've only had about 12 hours rain in the last 2 months!)

On Thursday, we showed our guests around our old medieval town of Confolens where we had lunch before returning home for tea and cakes on the sun-drenched terrace (sorry!)

On Friday, we visited Chauvigny - a historic, fortified town about 60kms to the north - with our guests. Alistair chose the most scenic route and we had a very pleasant drive through the Vienne region, taking in the lovely scenery, pretty villages and catching glimpses of the Vienne river now and again. We had a very good lunch before exploring the old town. We were lucky enough to watch a display of birds of prey flying from the top of the old castle- quite breathtaking with stunning views too.

It was my turn to drive back so of course the sunshine disappeared and the rain was hard enough to warrant putting the hoods on. Fortunately it had more or less dried up when we were not far from home so I was able to take full advantage of a 5km stretch of fantastic driving road which leads to our house - I knew that the others couldn't get lost, but it did cause a few comments! Great fun though, but must remember to change down to 2nd for the hairpin next time!

Saturday was a very early start (8am) for the drive to Angouleme to watch about 200 assorted classic and historic vehicles set off for their 'route touristique'. It was a mizzly morning, but fortunately it soon brightened up as we set off for our own 'route touristique' around the Charente- Limousin. The original 5 Morgans in our party had grown to 11 with the addition of an extra 2 English Plus 8s and another 4 Morgans belonging to some of our French friends who wished to join us.

The first few kilometres out of Angouleme were a bit nondescript, but we were soon on the open, rural roads heading east. It was a tad annoying to find that one lovely stretch of road had been resurfaced in the week since we checked it out so there were a few loose chippings- ooops!

We headed to the Lakes of the High Charente for a welcome, warming cup of coffee before setting off for lunch at our local lakeside Auberge at the foot of the Blond Mountains. The chef did us proud with a delicious 4-course meal and a free coffee! We then had the opportunity to show our guests some of the stunning countryside around our home: tranquil lakes, picturesque river valleys and verdant forests and some fabulous twisty roads- tailor-made for Morganning!

We then returned to our house for yet more home-made cakes and tea in the sunny garden (sorry again!) It was lovely to hear the buzz of conversation as everyone

tucked in- it's what summer is made for isn't it? My courgette and chocolate cake went down very well too!

Sunday was the main event- the Circuit des Remparts- and another early 8am start. It was a mizzly morning again, but no hoods required, apart from our hard-top which we put on by request for the parade of Morgans. Alistair parked our Morgan in the designated area for those taking part in the Morgan Parade and we put on our plaque, specially commissioned by Lyn and Graham Peek (former AngleMoggers) who were the brains behind organising the Parade. We had a chat with Steve Elsey, fellow Francophile and Le Mans 62 owner, who was taking part in the Parade in his Anniversary Plus 8. We ribbed him a bit because he was indirectly responsible for our (or should I say, Alistair's decision) to buy a Le Mans 62 Morgan. We had had a really good nose around his Le Mans car at Angouleme last year and it ticked all the boxes on our wish list and the rest, as they say, is history!

After coffee and a natter with our fellow Morgan owners, we had a mooch around the pits looking at the vehicles taking part in the racing: Bugatti, Bentley, Alpine Renault, French 3-wheelers (Darmont and Sandford), Jaguar, Bristol, Porsche, Alvis, Triumph etc - a very noisy and busy place, as you can imagine! But the smell of Castrol R and the sounds of ripping exhausts really gets the pulses racing!

Then it was our turn to hit the track! It was very exciting sitting in the pit area with the other Morgans waiting to go. There had been the usual last minute breakdowns and the Plus 4 Plus nearly didn't make it but Mr. Sebba managed to get it going again. Alistair had an ear-to-ear grin (there was NO argument about who would be driving!) and our friend Phil was as excited as a little boy in his Banana yellow Aero8! Then we were off! The circuit was shorter than I had realised - only 1.279kms - but very twisty and turny- the infamous hairpins were very exciting- Alistair had to resist the temptation to overtake Graham Peek's Plus 8 on one of them - it wouldn't have gone down well at all! It was great to see all the spectators waving and cheering (especially as it was lunchtime!) We ended up doing an extra 2 laps, which was a bonus. It was a fantastic, memorable experience- great to be on the track, but I bet it was quite a spectacle to watch too but one can't be in two places at once!

We managed to watch a bit of the racing after lunch, in between the showers. One of the drawbacks of Angouleme is that, because of it's hillside situation, it is hard to find a good viewpoint as any space to view the racing over the ramparts soon fills up with spectators - it was even harder this year because there were more spectators, but the atmosphere was fab- even when it rained (would you believe that it's the first time it's rained at Angouleme for a number of years?) and the city itself is well worth a visit because of its hilltop setting and historical buildings.

We had a dryish drive back to our friends, fellow Morganeers Lin and Mike's, house which is between our house and Angouleme, for another round of home-

made cakes and tea and a natter about the days events etc before setting off home for an early night! Alistair took the wheel again 'cos I was a wee bit tired - too much fresh air and fun!

On Monday we could have a bit of a lie-in as we were not due for lunch at Lin and Graham Peek's house near Cognac until 12.30. We set off a bit earlier so that we could take a scenic route- 5 Morgans this time- 2 4/4s, 2 Plus 4s and the banana yellow Aero bringing up the rear! The west Charente is such a contrast to the East- the scenery is much flatter as it levels out towards the coast and mainly consists of vineyards, the grapes of which are mostly used to make Cognac and Pineau. We were too late to catch the sunflowers at their yellowy best, which was a shame as they make a stunning picture.

Fortunately, the weather was fine and so the tables were laid in the garden of Lyn and Graham's beautiful home (see www.cottagesandclassics.com) . 45 people sat down to a delicious lunch with wine and, again, we had a chance to have a natter and make new friends. There were at least 22 Morgans parked in and around the garden- a very pretty sight.

The return route was pretty straightforward, through the vineyards and pretty villages, but we did manage to include the road which followed the Vienne river, which was a bit more exciting, before arriving home for a welcome cuppa followed by a final glass of Kir Royale to mark the end of a fantastically enjoyable weekend.

It was a bit ironic that, within 30 minutes of our English guests leaving the following morning, the sun came out and we had a gorgeous sunny day without a cloud in the sky!

Looking forward to next year's Circuit des Remparts - we won't be doing laps of the track, but it's a really great event - come and join us!



To look at some more excellent photos of the event taken by our friend, Ian Wilson, click onto:

<http://tinyurl.com/Angouleme2009>

*A bumper edition this time, so thanks to all that contributed and remember that it is not too long until the Spring!!
Rita and Keith Hofgartner*